



**Virginia Cooperative Extension**

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# Situation Analysis Report

## Carroll County

# 2018

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## Introduction

The Carroll County Unit of Virginia Cooperative Extension conducted a situation analysis during 2018. The purpose of the analysis was to identify key issues facing the community and provide extension staff with current information to use when developing educational programs for the community. Extension staff working with ELC members developed a community survey and distributed to community members. The survey results indicated which community issues that extension unit need to continue direct their programming efforts toward and which issues need to address with program efforts.

## Unit Profile

Virginia Cooperative Extension provided a Carroll Unit profile from 2013. It listed demographic, education, health, agricultural and economic data for Carroll County. It was updated with more current information from the US Census. The most current agriculture is from the 2012 census ag as the 2017 census of ag has not been released. Here are some important factors from the profile.

### Demographics:

- The population of Carroll County remained nearly the same from 2011 to 2017.
- 95.2% of the population is white and 3.0% is Hispanic.
- 22,7% of the county population is over 65. For Virginia, 14.6%

### Agriculture

- Number of farm decreased by 2%
- The average size of farms has increased by 19 acres (15%)
- Ranked in top four Virginia counties in all vegetable, pumpkin and corn production
- Average age of producers is increasing
- Farms with sales of more than \$100,000 is increasing
- Farms with sales of less than \$2500 is decreasing

## **Business**

- 3459 more people commute out of the county to work than commute in
- Carroll County unemployment rate is 4.7% vs. 3.8% for Virginia
- The Southwest Virginia Training Center officially closed in June 2018. It was the third largest employer in the county.
- Agriculture is the largest segment of the county economy. \$43,400,000 in agriculture products sold. 21<sup>st</sup> in the state.

## **Health, Social and Education**

- High school graduation rate has dropped. 89% in 2013 to 86% in 2018
- Children in single-parent household has increased. 29% in 2013 to 37% in 2018
- Teen birth rate is higher 35 (1/1k) than for Virginia 21(1/1k) and the US 15(1/1k)
- Children in poverty, 23%. Virginia, 14%
- Adult obesity rate is 31%. State average 26%
- Substance abuse in the county is a major problem

## **Community and Resident Perspectives**

The extension staff of the Carroll County Unit constantly listens to the concerns and needs expressed by citizens of the county. The staff then develops programming to meet these needs as much as possible.

For the 2018 Situational Analysis Carroll Extension staff working with the ELC developed a community survey to gather information about the issues in Carroll County.

The survey listed forty-three issues that affect Carroll County and participants were asked to rate this issues as very important, somewhat important, neither important or not important, somewhat unimportant or very unimportant. The issues on the survey involved animal agriculture, economic, financial, food safety, health and diseases, aging, nutrition, youth and teens and community services.

The survey was administered in August and September of 2018. Participants had the opportunity to complete the survey online or complete a paper copy.

The survey was promoted during the Carroll County Fair and the Carroll County Farm Bureau Annual Picnic. Articles about the survey were published in the Carroll County News, the Carroll Extension Ag Newsletter and on Facebook. In addition the survey was promoted at extension and community events such as Rotary Club meetings.

One hundred eighty-six surveys were completed and compiled. Fifteen issues were identified from the survey where more than 71 percent of the survey respondents indicated that the issue was very important. The fifteen very important issues identified were 1) Health 2) Food safety/preservation 3) Parenting 4) Youth activities 5) Animal/livestock 6) Life skills/Decision making for Youth 7) Water quality/quantity 8) Environment 9) Youth Volunteers 10) Nutrition 11) Teen community involvement 12) Agriculture Production/Profitability 13) Youth Violence 14) Teen Leadership and 15) Obesity.

These issues were then grouped into priority issue categories. The categories were 1) youth and teen with six issues identified 2) health, family and nutrition with five issues identified and 3) agriculture/environment with four issues identified.

## **Priority Issues**

### **Teen and Youth Development**

Community survey respondents were most concerned with youth related issues. Six youth related issues (youth activities, life skill decision making for youth, youth volunteers, teen community involvement, youth violence and teen leadership) of 43 total issues were in the top fifteen issues. Many comments written on the survey indicates that there are not enough opportunities and activities for youth in the county. VCE strives to address these issues with 4-H youth development programs. These programs should continue and be enhanced.

### **Food, Nutrition, Health and Parenting**

Community survey respondents indicated that health and nutrition are major issues in the county. Health and food safety/preservation were ranked as the number 1 and 2 issues on the survey. Nutrition and obesity ranked in the top 15 issues. VCE should continue to emphasize the EFNAP and SNAP-ED programs conducted by program assistants. In addition, provide more programming for food preservation. The Carroll Unit does not have a full time FCS agent. The unit shares a FCS agent with five other counties. A full time FCS agent would be able to provide programming to help address these issues.

## **Agriculture and Environment**

Animal/livestock agriculture, agriculture production and profitability were cited as important issues by survey respondents. Agriculture is a major segment of the economy in the county with the market value of products sold being over \$43,000,000. Seventy-five percent of amount is from livestock sales. VCE should continue to devote major programing efforts to support agriculture.

Water quality and the environment were also issued cited as important issues. VCE should continue to provide and enhance programing related to this issues. The Virginia Household Water Quality program is an example of a VCE currently offered.

