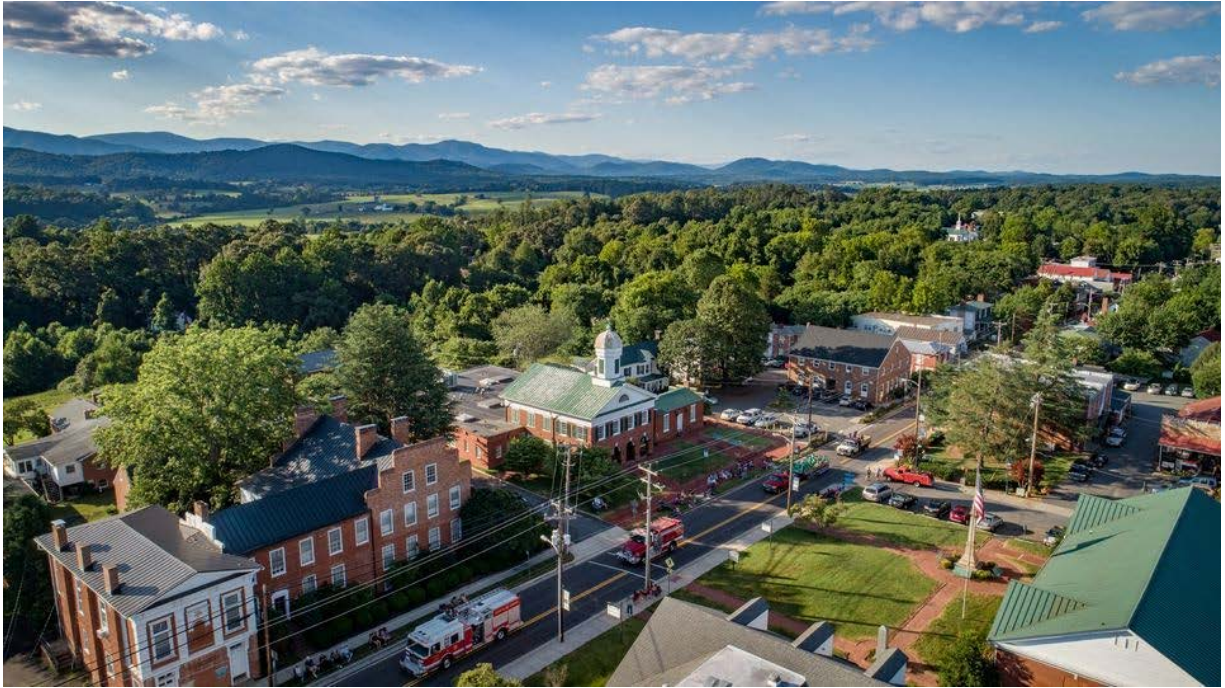


Madison County 2024 Situation Analysis Report



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Madison 4-H Volunteer Leaders

Madison Farm Bureau

Madison Master Gardeners

Madison Board of Supervisor's Comprehensive Plan

Madison Young Farmers Association

Madison Farmers Market Association

Culpeper Soil and Water District

Priority Issue	Planned Unit Response
Food Safety and Healthy Lifestyles	<p>Continue to address these needs through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Safety training for businesses and community members. • Educational workshop on food preservation and safe food handling for youth and adult audiences • Educational programs to teach healthy lifestyle skills to youth and adults • Connecting growers with community residents
Environment & Best Management Practices	<p>Partnerships with several local agencies will aid in addressing this need in our community. Programming can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational programming to local producers and homeowners in the proper use of pesticides and fertilizers • Support soil testing for producers and homeowners and analysis of results. • Continue to offer household water testing clinics for citizens. • Assistance with nutrient management planning to meet regulations and reduce environmental impact. • Sharing Best Management Practice updates and opportunities for cost sharing with producers • Provide environment, natural resource and agriculture literacy educational programming to youth and adults audiences.
Workforce/Career Development and Readiness	<p>Partnerships with schools and other community organizations to offer diverse opportunities that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for soft skill development • Partner with school on CTE programming efforts
Youth Support, Services and Community Activities	<p>Partnerships with schools and other community organizations to offer diverse opportunities that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expose youth to impactful experiences inside and outside of the local community • Provide leadership opportunities. Help guide youth through making important decisions for themselves • Continue school partnerships to ensure programming reaches applicable ages and a diverse audience

Introduction

The Madison Extension Staff, volunteers and community partners develop educational programs based on the issues and needs of the people. A thorough analysis of the local situation provides the foundation for defining and understanding community issues that can be addressed by Extension programs or foster new collaborations that can address the existing and/or emerging issues. Situation analysis provides the basis and rationale for deciding which issues will receive time, energy, and resources.

Cooperatively determining VCE programming priorities involves a variety of people in analyzing the local situation to identify authentic issues, needs, and opportunities. Involving a diverse group of people who are representative of the population, including both users and non-users of VCE programs and provides a variety of perspectives.

The 2023 Madison situation analysis was led by the Madison Extension staff and involved key community partners in gathering local information and local surveys to stakeholders to determine issue that could potentially be addressed with extension programs and/or resources. Local workgroups that provided information included 4-H volunteers, farmer groups, community groups and government agencies. We adopted the state level survey and modified it to collect information regarding the unit where respondents live or work. In addition, this survey was distributed to the Extension mailing list (4H and Agriculture), Madison Young Farmers, Madison Farm Bureau Board, Madison Farmers Market Association, Madison Master Gardeners and shared via the Madison Extension Facebook page. The 29-question survey resulted in 39 completed surveys returned for evaluation. Survey data was summarized and evaluated to determine priority issues in each Extension program area, which includes Agriculture and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Science and 4-H Youth Development. In addition, data from the county wide needs assessment survey, distributed by the Madison County Planning Commission (n255), was reviewed and utilized. The Planning Commission's survey goal was to help the county government and government service providers gain a better understand the community needs and priorities regarding:

- Land Use
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Transportation and Mobility
- Recreation, Community Facilities and Utilities

Unit Profile

Madison County is a scenic, rural county with a population of 13,731 residents (2021 U.S. Census data). There is one incorporated town with 210 people. The county is in the upper Piedmont and is bordered by the Blue Ridge Mountains to the west and surrounded by Greene, Orange, Rappahannock and Culpeper Counties. All the surrounding counties, except for Rappahannock, have larger populations than Madison County. Large urban areas of northern Virginia and Charlottesville are 70 and 50 miles away, respectively.

Population Data

Madison County has shown a steady growth the last four decades, but not the overwhelming increase seen in some neighboring counties. According to the United State Census Bureau, the total population has seen a 3.98% increase in the last ten years (2010 to 2020) The data did indicate the age distribution as follows: 23% youth ages 0-19; 54% ages 20 -64; 23 % age 65 and over. The 2021 Census data reports 49% male and 51% female residents. The racial make-up of the Madison County is 84.67% white and 7.41% black or African American. The Hispanic or Latino ethnicity includes 3.15% with 432 residents.

Housing and Income

In 2022, there were 6,153 housing units in the county. Of these, 79.2% are owner occupied. The median value of owner-occupied housing is estimated at \$311,500. The median household income for Madison County was \$74,586 and the per capita income was \$35,772. Census data reports that 10.7% of persons in Madison County live in poverty with CountyHealthRankings.org reporting 14% of children are considered living in poverty. Twenty-one percent of children live in single parent households.

Education

Seventeen percent (2,347 youth) of the population are youth ages 5 – 18. The youth population has decreased by 23% over the last 10 years. Approximately 1619 students attend our public school system that includes one primary school, one elementary school, one middle school and on high school The remaining students are home-schooled or attend private schools in the area. The graduation rate is 97% with 17% attending college. According to schoolquality.virginia.gov all schools are accredited. The chronic absenteeism rate in 19.62%, which is above the state average of 16%.

Agriculture

The county is dominated by agricultural, and forest uses. Agricultural uses occupy 37.6% of the County's land area (down from 48.9% in 2002). Forest lands, both commercial and National Park, make up the largest single land use in the county at 57.6%. The gently rolling fields of Madison County's Piedmont produce cash grains, forage, beef and dairy products. According to the 2022 Census of Agriculture, the total amount of land in farms is 99,536 acres (-7%) with the average farm size of 223 acres (+11%). Crops (primarily corn, soybean and hay) make up 55% of agricultural sales (\$21 million) and Livestock (primarily beef cattle) make up 45% (\$17.8 million)

Employment

The 2021 Census indicated government (19%), retail trade (13%) and manufacturing (11%) are the top employment categories. The largest five employers in Madison County are: the Madison County School Board, Plow & Hearth, Woodberry Forest School, County of Madison and Cardinal Home Center. In March of 2024, Plow and Hearth LLC the county's third largest employer, announce the facility will be closing its doors by the end of the year resulting in more than 100 layoffs. The Virginia Employment Commission reports Madison County's unemployment rate of 2.0% as of Dec 2023.



Community Health

According to countyhealthrankings.org, Madison County falls below the state average for health factors but is better than the average county in the nation. Adult obesity is the primary health concern measuring at 36% of the population. The ratio of primary care physicians to county residents is 4,440:1. This translates to roughly 3 doctors in a county of 13,700 (state average is 1320:1) indicating Madison is greatly underserved. Twelve percent of the population is uninsured.

Community and Resident Perspectives

Madison County Survey Results

ANR Top Five Issues Identified

- Strengthening the local food system (*State*)
- Promoting agricultural, natural resources, and environmental literacy
- Protecting water quality (*State*)
- Building capacity for farm to school programming
- Assisting farmers and forest landowners in production and profitability

FCS Top Five Issues Identified

- Protecting water quality (*State*)
- Getting more adults involved in mentoring youth
- Ensuring safe food handling practices to prevent foodborne illness (*State*)
- Preserving foods for home use (canning, dehydrating, fermenting, freezing)
- Promoting economic development

4-H Top Five Issues Identified

- Helping youth develop leadership, citizenship, and other life skills
- Promoting agricultural, natural resources, and environmental literacy
- Getting more adults involved in mentoring youth
- Building capacity for farm to school programming
- Strengthening workforce readiness

VCE Statewide Survey Results

Top 10 Issues respondents selected as very high or high effort

Issues in maroon are Environmental Health & Safety Issues

Protecting water quality	75%
Ensuring safe, high-quality foods	73%
Ensuring safe food handling practices to prevent foodborne illness	69%
Protecting freshwater resources	68%
Strengthening the local food system	67%
Protecting air quality	66%
Addressing hunger issues	64%
Preventing suicide	63%
Protecting the marine environment	63%
Managing natural habitats and ecosystems	62%

Madison County Comprehensive Plan Results

- Goal 1 *** Preserve, protect, and enhance the natural beauty, rural character, and air and water quality of Madison County, and sustain agriculture/forestry as the County's primary land use.
- Goal 2** Promote tourism and tourist/visitor-related enterprises, attractions and events, and aggressively market Madison County as an attractive place to visit.
- Goal 3** Promote sensible, orderly business/industry growth and expanded employment opportunities.
- Goal 4** Promote County-wide availability of affordable and accessible high-speed internet service and cell phone service through private providers
- Goal 5** Promote the availability, where appropriate, of adequate water, sewer, and electric transmission utilities for Madison County homes and businesses, while minimizing negative effects of these utilities on the County's natural and human environment.
- Goal 6 *** Support public schools, vocational and continuing education opportunities, recreation facilities, and cultural opportunities for Madison County residents.
- Goal 7** Work with VDOT to ensure that Madison County residents and businesses/industries have a safe, efficient highway transportation system.
- Goal 8** Support the availability of adequate, affordable housing and social services for Madison County residents.

*Indicates issue identified by Madison County and Statewide Surveys

Community Issues

The unit Extension Leadership Council met May 1, 2024, to determine the top issues Madison Extension programming should address for the next five years. Using survey data, key informant interviews, and working knowledge of and personal experience in our community, they determined these four issues:

Food Safety and Healthy Lifestyles

A food system is a collaborative network that includes everyone involved in putting food on our tables, whether that table is in our homes, a restaurant or our kids' cafeteria. This system integrates food production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste management to enhance the environmental, economic and social health of the region. Food safety and security begins at the farm level and continues throughout the food production, distribution, and consumption chain. Food safety was stated as an important issue for residents of the county, whether the food is prepared at home or as part of the food service industry. Ensuring safe, high-quality foods is an issue that requires an interdisciplinary approach within Extension and partnerships with other agencies and organizations. What we eat is one of the biggest drivers of health and well-being. Food and health are closely related, and a healthy diet can help prevent many chronic diseases:

These issues align with the State Situation Analysis (Spring of 2023) identified need for Environmental Health and Safety (#3) and Health Promotion (#4)

Environment & Best Management Practices

Agriculture and forestry form the economic base of the county. Sustainability and profitability in these industries include protecting water quality, promoting agriculture and natural resources and environmental literacy. Improving land management practices also has an economic impact, specifically for agriculture. As land management improves, land productivity improves through better soil health and decreased external inputs. This has the potential to either increase revenue or decrease costs. Both of which can enhance profitability and sustainability.

These issues align with the State Situation Analysis (Spring of 2023) identified need for Environmental Health and Safety (#3)

Workforce/Career Development and Readiness

Promoting the development of healthy and productive citizens is always a priority in any community. Through this survey, it was found that there is a need to build workforce skills in both youth and adults. Job training and workforce development are not interchangeable terms. Job training is learning a set of skills and behaviors that are necessary for any job. Workforce development is about building a bridge between today's job demands and tomorrow's opportunities. It involves investing in the right training and the intentional development of employability skills, sometimes called soft skills to equip citizens with the tools for a successful future.

This issue aligns with the State Situation Analysis (Spring of 2023) identified need for Building Healthy Communities (#1)

Youth Support, Services and Community Activities

Young people face many social, emotional, and physical challenges in today's society. Drugs, alcohol, gangs, unhealthy lifestyles, negative role models and social media are constant influences. Youth need positive activities and opportunities. It is important for youth to have positive peer and adult interactions, feel connected to their community and the opportunities to learn life skills. Research has consistently shown that participating in community activities improves social-emotional well-being. Local communities play a vital role in supporting youth programs by creating a network of resources, providing funding and volunteers to help youth grow and thrive.

These issues align with the State Situation Analysis (Spring of 2023) identified need for Building Healthy Communities (#1).

Future Programming to Address Community Issues

The Madison County extension staff will provide diverse programming to address current community issues based on identified needs and regular input from local stakeholders.

Food Safety and Healthy Lifestyles

Family and Consumer Science (FCS), Agriculture and Natural Resources (ANR) and 4-H Youth Development programming are all essential in addressing food safety and healthy lifestyle issues. VCE Madison County will continue to offer food safety, nutrition and wellness programs to both youth and adult audiences. We will continue to deliver ServeSafe courses to local businesses and community groups. Youth can learn and form good food habits that may carry over to better food choice as adults. Ag literacy programs will teach youth how their food gets from farm to plate. VCE will work to promote the production and marketing of locally grown foods to provide healthier food choices. Food preservation workshops can provide knowledge and skills to provide healthier food options to combat obesity. Diabetes prevention programming and education will give support to those seeking positive changes in their personal nutrition.

Environmental & Best Management Practices

Madison County is the headwater of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. VCE clearly has a role to assist and educate farmers on achieving the Virginia Resource Management Plan (RMP) priority conservation practices with programming and assistance on nutrient management planning, precision agriculture, pesticide safety, cover crops, pasture/grazing management and livestock exclusion. Extension staff will continue to work with the Culpeper Soil and Water Conservation District (CSWCD) on promoting agriculture best management practices and the septic system mitigation grant project. VCE will focus on profitability, employee management, farm transition planning, land use, and agricultural literacy and advocacy. All Madison County citizens, youth and adult, play a vital role in protecting our water and land resources. VCE will continue to offer environmental, agriculture natural resource, and landowner education programming you both youth and adult audiences.

Workforce/Career Development and Readiness

Community members have expressed a need for increased life skill development and workplace readiness in teens and adults. VCE has established relationships with the school system and will continue to provide hands-on real-life simulations that give youth the ability to explore career opportunities and make lifestyle and financial choices. Additional programming can be offered by VCE in the areas of soft skills development and general employment skills. A Career & Technical Education Center would address this need but has not had available funding in the local community. Virginia Cooperative Extension will continue to focus on developing leadership, citizenship, and other life skills in youth. VCE will continue to work with local correctional centers to teach re-entry skills and provide certifications.

Youth Support, Services and Community Activities

VCE will continue to plan structured activities that provide youth with opportunities to develop life skills and interact with other youth and adults who serve as role models. 4-H programming will focus on positive outcomes desired for youth, not on prevention. 4-H club work, camping and other programs focus on life skill development such as communication, decision making and problem solving. Cultivating established connections with the school and other youth serving organizations will provide the opportunity for diverse opportunities. In addition, positive adult role models can dramatically affect behavior choices youth make daily. Recruiting and maintaining adult volunteers who can commit the time to youth development is a challenge. Additional efforts need to be explored to better address this issue.

References

United States Census Bureau, Census Data 2010, 2020 <https://www.census.gov>

United States Census of Agriculture 2022 <https://nass.usda.gov/AgCensus>

Madison Comprehensive Plan Survey

<https://www.madisonco.virginia.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1961/Madison-Countys-2023---2024-Comprehensive-Plan-Survey-Results-PDF?bidId=>

County Health Rankings & Roadmap <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/virginia/madison?year=2024>

Virginia School Quality Profiles: <https://schoolquality.virginia.gov/schools/madison-county-high>

VCE Statewide Needs Assessment

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tliuICIMIXwTB7h7iVwxwObAQPR0mwbI/view>

Barry, Clark, Morreale and Field. Evidence of the Effects of Community-based programming on Young Peoples Social and Emotional Skills Development (2017) <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40894-017-0055-2>

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