

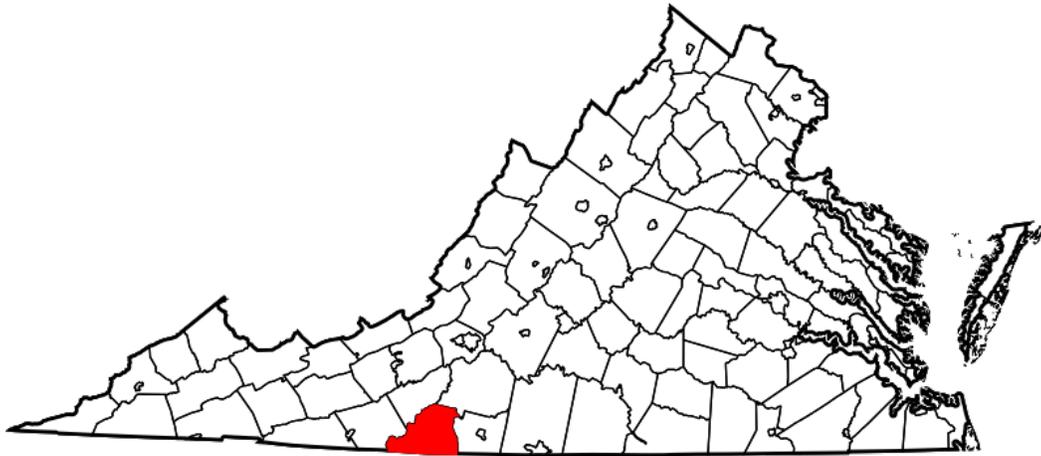


Virginia Cooperative Extension

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Situation Analysis Report



Patrick County

2018

UNIT Extension Staff

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Introduction

Patrick County conducted a comprehensive situation analysis during the calendar year 2018. This process was led by the three Extension Agents that serve Patrick County. A Patrick County Unit Profile was developed with community and resident perspectives based on county issues and identified areas of concern. Data and information was analyzed by Extension personnel and priority issues were identified.

Agents met frequently during this situational analysis process. Using data from a variety of reputable national and state resources, a unit profile was developed. A number of issues were identified from this statistical snapshot of Patrick County. Based on these findings, agents determined that the best way to gather perspectives from county residents was to conduct both a paper and electronic survey. At the final meeting, key findings from the unit profile, and surveys were presented and discussed and the priority issues for Patrick County were identified, including those that could be addressed with current VCE resources and those that were outside the scope of current VCE resources.

Unit Profile

Demographics

Patrick County is a rural county located in Virginia's central piedmont area with neighboring counties of Carroll to the west, Floyd and Franklin to the north, Henry to the east, and Stokes and Surry County, North Carolina to the south. Year 2013 census indicated a population of 18,180. The population in Patrick County has steadily decreased over the last 13 years, with census data showing over a 6% decrease the time period 2000-2013. Additional data from the Virginia Employment Commission show this trend of decreasing population in the county continuing through at least 2040. In Patrick County there are six elementary schools, serving grades Pre-K through 7th grade, and one county high school, serving grades 8-12. Current census data shows that 88% of residents have at least a high school diploma, compared to 95% nationwide. Of those residents who continued their education past high school, 21% received an Associates, Bachelors or Master's degree.

The Patrick County population ages 0 to 44 (45%) falls well under the state average (60%) for this age group while the Patrick County population age 45 and older (55%) is well over the state average (40%). An ever increasing aging population in Patrick County must be considered when identifying health and wellness priority issues related to programming.

The racial composition of Patrick County changed only slightly since the last situation analysis report. While the white and black population showed small decreases in numbers, the Hispanic population continues to show a steady increase. While Hispanics only make up 3% of Patrick

County's population, their growth represents an ongoing change in the racial makeup of the county.

Economic

The median household income in Patrick County (\$35,999) is slightly higher than neighboring Henry County (\$34,992), and lower than neighboring Carroll County (\$37,048), and Franklin County (\$48,720). Income is still significantly lower than the state median income of \$66,149. The Virginia Employment Commission data shows Patrick County's unemployment rate fell from 8.3% to 4.5% from 2013 to 2017. This is still a significantly higher unemployment rate as compared to the state average of 3.8%. Recent closures of both the hospital and a large manufacturing plant in the county point to a continued period of unemployment for residents. Of those who are employed, a 2014 report from the Virginia Employment Commission showed that 2765 people both lived and worked in Patrick County while 4353 residents worked at positions located outside county lines. Henry County, VA and Surry County, NC were the two highest locations that residents commuted to for employment. Patrick County's largest employers are in the fields of education, healthcare, textile manufacturing and customer service.

Health and Well-being

Current data shows 28% of children in Patrick County live in poverty, compared to 14% statewide. Added to a high rate of children living in poverty are the 31% of children living in single parent households, compared to 14% statewide, and 12% nationwide. Over 18% of Patrick County's population is in poor or fair health, with obesity rates staying consistent at 29% of the population. Tying into this troubling health statistic are doctor patient ratios of 6,020 to 1 for primary care physicians, compared to 1,320 to 1 statewide, 8,960 to 1 for dentists, compared to 1,490 to 1 statewide and 4,480 to 1 for mental health providers, compared to 680 to 1 statewide. Limited access to healthcare in the county due to the closure of our only hospital does not bode well for improving statistics in these areas.

Community and Resident Perspectives

Based on issues areas identified in the unit profile, a paper and an electronic version of a survey was distributed throughout the county to residents, business owners, educators, and volunteers. An email link to our Qualtrics survey was provided when necessary. The survey link was also shared on our local Extension Facebook page. More than 50 residents responded to our survey. Of those who responded, 80% were female, 20% male. All respondents had at least a high school diploma, with 35% having at least a Master's Degree. Almost 70% of those surveyed were 50 years of age or older, and close to 75% had lived at their current address for more than 16 years. Eighty-seven percent of respondents categorized themselves as white, with the remaining 13% categorized as black or African American.

Agriculture

Issues that surfaced during the situation analysis process were similar to needs identified by needs assessments done over the last five years. The top 3 issues identified by the survey are listed below in order.

- 1) Farm Business Management and Profitability
- 2) Value added marketing of ag products
- 3) Agriculture Awareness/Consumer Education

With volatile markets and rising input costs, farmers are forced to become better managers in order to stay in the business. Value added marketing efforts can help increase profitability for most, if not all, farms, even in years where markets are lean. Value added marketing also helps to build a relationship with buyers/consumers. Educating the buyers/consumers on just what they are buying/consuming and the process from Point A to B is increasingly important. Farming is getting a lot of false/negative advertising as generations are becoming further removed from farming. This separation from farming leaves the consumer vulnerable to marketing “campaigns” that cast a shadow of doubt on the industry and common practices used to feed the world.

Family and Community

The following were the top issues identified as it related to Family and Community.

- 1) Nutrition (obesity, managing food resources, making healthy choices).
- 2) Job Skills Training (resume, job interview, computer skills).
- 3) Life Skills (adolescence)

The health of individuals and families in Patrick County was listed as the highest priority issue in this category. Concerns included the county’s continued hospital closure, high rates of obesity from poor food choices made on limited incomes, chronic health conditions, and the need for nutrition education beginning with youth through adults and seniors.

Job skills training was listed as another needed focus area. Unemployment rates continue to remain high in Patrick County, with few opportunities on the horizon. Providing skill based training for residents to increase potential for securing employment is a step toward helping the county’s current unemployment rate.

Teaching youth life skills was listed as the third highest priority issue in Family and Community. Giving youth tools that are needed to make good decisions and helping them to see their future as bright and full of promise can help end the cycle of generational poverty that pervades this county.

Youth Development

The following were the top issues identified as it related to youth development.

- 1) Hands-on learning and education
- 2) Positive role models and mentors
- 3) Self-confidence, Perception and Esteem

One of the high level concerns expressed regarding the development of our local youth included access to and use of hands on learning. Students are under great pressure to perform successfully on standardized testing which leaves less time during classroom instruction for hands on learning. Providing hands on learning in the classroom allows all students, including different types of learners, the opportunity to learn in a multi-faceted and creative manner.

Another concern identified for youth development is the lack of positive role models and mentors in our community. Due to the socioeconomic state of our community the stability of home life that some local youth experience has changed greatly and with that change many of our youth no longer have a positive role model in their home. Through the recruitment and thorough training of respectable adult volunteers we will provide positive role models to the youth in our community during camp, school programs, and clubs.

Self-confidence and self-esteem was identified as a high priority concern within our community. Coupled with the socioeconomic status of our community and stressors our local youth face on a daily basis these can both affect their self-confidence and self-esteem. Providing multiple easy to access programs, clubs, and opportunities for positive youth development engages youth in their community, school, and family in a manner that enhances youth's strengths and promotes positive esteem and grows/nurtures self-confidence.

Priority Issues

Issue 1: Farm Business Management and Profitability:

Description: Patrick County producers make business decisions on a daily basis. Increasing farm receipts, reducing expenses, and daily management decisions must be made with careful consideration on its impact to the farm. Making the right decision can lead to increase in receipts, cutting costs and working smarter, not harder. Bad decisions are risky, but often are used in a positive way to reinforce management decision assessments to ensure proper steps are taken towards profitability.

VCE's role in addressing this issue: Each farmer's situation varies and assistance with decisions such as efficiency, profitability and continuation oftentimes require one-on-one assistance from the agent(s). Agents can and do currently provide educational programs about farm management techniques, financial matters, industry certifications, value-added program efforts and consultations to help provide assistance as the needs arise in the communities.

Issue 2: Hands on Learning and Education

Description: Hands on learning experiences provided through 4-H In School Enrichment programs inspire young minds and provide multi-faceted learning environments. Hands on learning also allows different types of learners (visual, auditory, reading/writing, kinesthetic) the opportunity to learn through a different , and sometimes more effective, teaching method other than direct classroom instruction of subject matter content.

VCE's role in addressing the issue: VCE fills this gap for all types of learners (visual, auditory, reading/writing, kinesthetic) through the 4-H program by providing meaningful and standards based classroom instruction through hands on learning experiences that are not necessarily offered or available in a traditional day to day classroom lesson.

Issue 3: Health and Nutrition

Description: Limited knowledge of what constitutes healthy eating coupled with restricted financial resources are major contributing factors in Patrick County's high rate of obesity. Obesity is a precursor to more serious conditions such as type-2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke, all of which are growing health concerns with county residents. One out of every five children in the county is considered overweight or obese, making this an epidemic that spans entire lifetimes of residents. Patrick County's only hospital closed in 2017. Lack of access to healthcare facilities play a contributing role as many residents can't afford to travel out of the county to seek medical care or advice.

VCE's role in addressing this issue: VCE is involved with educating and emphasizing the importance of nutrition and chronic disease prevention through a variety of educational programs. Programs that address these health concerns will be held frequently and in more areas of the county, so those with limited access to transportation can participate. Senior nutrition programs will continue to be offered to help older residents make better food choices with limited incomes. Youth nutrition programming will expand in our county schools with our Snap-Ed program assistant facilitating programs in all elementary schools, involving more grades than previously done.

Issue 4: Value-added Marketing opportunities

Description: Patrick Co producers are often very good at producing a high quality product, but often struggle to market those items in a way that captures the true "value" of the product. Farmers need to be aware of marketing opportunities available in their communities, region and state where their products are wanted and needed to fill consumer demand. Locating markets, how to package and price value-added products, innovative marketing opportunities and other marketing tools can be of use to our producers.

VCE's role in addressing this issue: The Patrick Co VCE office conducts programming on value added marketing strategies of all agriculture products. The goal of these sessions is to

enhance sales of products currently in production and also encourage production of other agriculture products where a market for the product exists and the Patrick Co environment is conducive to production of that product. The Patrick Co unit collaborates with the Patrick Co Cattlemen's Association to market over 300 head of value added feeder cattle each year.

Issue 5: Teaching Life Skills in Adolescence

Description: County youth were identified as needing resources to better equip them for life after high school. With generational poverty a concern in the county, many youth have grown up in homes with multiple unemployed family members spanning generations. Income status, limited transportation and education are all contributing factors in a lack of preparation for adulthood and the responsibilities that come with it.

VCE's role in addressing this issue: The Patrick County Extension Office offers programs such as Reality Store and Kid's Marketplace provided to elementary and high school students to encourage them to become financially responsible adults. In school programs in various high school CTE classes will continue to be expanded that teach life skills such as basic cooking and sewing. A potential after school program at the high school will emphasize additional life skills such as car repair, food safety, and job search/interview skills. The confidence that will come from these learning opportunities may help reduce the dangerous outside influences that impact many of our county youth and impede their future success in the workforce.

Questionnaires

Gathering Data on Extension Programming Needs Agriculture

Questionnaire

Below is a list of issue statements. Please indicate to what extent each issue is currently important by circling the appropriate number.

Issue	Important issue	Moderate issue	Minimal issue	Not an issue	Don't know
Farm Business Management and Profitability	5	4	3	2	1
Hemp Production	5	4	3	2	1
Farm Labor	5	4	3	2	1
Environmental Regulations	5	4	3	2	1
Niche Markets/Direct Marketing	5	4	3	2	1
Agricultural Tourism	5	4	3	2	1
Hops Production	5	4	3	2	1
Vineyard Production	5	4	3	2	1
Value Added Livestock Marketing	5	4	3	2	1
Estate Planning/Farm Transition Planning	5	4	3	2	1
Consumer Education/Awareness of Ag	5	4	3	2	1

Gathering Data on Family and Community Needs

Patrick County Extension Office – Family and Consumer Sciences

Below is a list of issue statements.

Please indicate to what extent you think each issue is currently important by circling the appropriate number.

Please CIRCLE the top THREE issues you feel are most relevant to our county.

Issue	Important issue	Moderate issue	Minimal issue	Not an issue	Don't know
Early childhood education (quality of preschool care, quantity of preschool care, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
Adolescence (life skills, afterschool activities, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
Parenting (parent/child relations, discipline, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
Aging (elder care, caregiving, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
Nutrition (obesity, managing food resources, making healthy choices)	5	4	3	2	1
Chronic Disease Prevention (diabetes, heart disease)	5	4	3	2	1
Internet Safety (kids, adults, seniors)	5	4	3	2	1
Food safety (home food safety, preservation, commercial restaurants, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
Healthy Lifestyles (exercise, stress management, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
Financial Management (debt, changing income, retirement prep, budgeting)	5	4	3	2	1
Consumer issues (fraud, scam, ID theft)	5	4	3	2	1
Home-based Business (agritourism, economic development)	5	4	3	2	1
Housing (obtaining and maintaining affordable housing, etc.)	5	4	3	2	1
Job Skills Training (resume, job interview, computer skills)	5	4	3	2	1

4-H EXTENSION PROGRAMMING NEEDS

Below is a list of issue statements.

First: In the left hand column, please draw a circle around the TOP #3 ISSUES you feel are currently important.

Second: In the right hand columns, please indicate to what extent each issue is currently important by circling the appropriate ranking number.

Issue	Important issue	Moderate issue	Minimal issue	Not an issue	Don't know
Hands on Learning/Education – In School	5	4	3	2	1
Hands on Learning/Education – Out of School	5	4	3	2	1
Higher Education and Career Preparation	5	4	3	2	1
Adolescence (Student Truancy, Dropout, and Retention)	5	4	3	2	1
After School Programming and Extra Curricular Activities	5	4	3	2	1
Community Involvement and Community Service	5	4	3	2	1
Positive Role Models/Mentors	5	4	3	2	1
Leadership Skills and Personal Development	5	4	3	2	1
Family and Childhood Obesity (exercise, nutrition, stress management, etc)	5	4	3	2	1
Self Confidence, Perception, and Esteem	5	4	3	2	1
Substance Abuse	5	4	3	2	1
Transportation to participate in activities	5	4	3	2	1
Involving Youth with Disabilities in 4H	5	4	3	2	1
Social Media (Cyberbullying, Mental Health, Youth Anxiety)	5	4	3	2	1
Social Media Usage (Parent Strategies, Youth Self-Regulation)	5	4	3	2	1

PATRICK COUNTY 4H