



Virginia Cooperative Extension

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Richmond County 2023 Situation Analysis Report

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Table 1. Top 10 issues identified in the 2023 Situation Analysis of Richmond County, Virginia.

Protecting water quality	94%
Strengthening the local food system	88%
Protecting Air Quality	86%
Helping youth develop leadership, citizenship, and other life skills	86%
Ensure safe, high quality foods	82%
Ensuring safe food handling practice to prevent foodborne illness	80%
Getting more adults involved in mentoring youth	78%
Protecting freshwater resources	76%
Controlling invasive pests	76%
Teaching health relationship skills to teens	74%
Teaching youth good money habits	74%
Protecting the marine environment	74%

Introduction

Extension educational programming starts with an understanding of community needs. Local programming efforts should address high priority community needs. To help local units determine the priority issues and needs of their communities VCE facilitates a locally driven, in-depth situation analysis every five years.

In 2023, we started with a state level needs assessment survey. This survey will provide data on what Virginians view as high priority needs and issues in their communities. The data will inform program team planning as well as other state level programs. The findings from this effort will be shared with the system and program teams by late March.

In 2023, to collect unit level information, we adopted the state level survey and modified it to collect information regarding the unit where the respondent lived or worked. Our survey was intended to collect information from families who lived and or work in Westmoreland and Richmond Counties. This survey was shared on paper at public events and electronically through social media, email blasts and directed emails.

Other data from the unit profile and from VCE Data Commons will be used to shape future Extension programming.

Unit Profile: Notable Trends

Total Population: 8,902

Demographics

The demographic makeup of Richmond County is 60.25% White, 27.06% Black, 7.38% Hispanic, 4.85% two or more races, 0.42% American Indian, 0.04% Asian and 0.01% some other race.

Age

Richmond County has fewer school aged children and more people 60 years old and older than the rest of the state.

School age population is 14.52% or 1293 people. School age population in Virginia is 19.03% Population 60 years old and up is 28.82% or 2566 people. Population 60 years old and up is 23%.

Agriculture and Forestry

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, agriculture is a \$16.8 million industry in Richmond County. There are 98 farms in Richmond County. 24% of those farms earn more than \$100,000 in sales followed by 40% earning less than \$2,500. Top crops by acres planted are soybeans, corn, wheat, forage and barley. Top crops by sales are grains. 45% of the farming population is in the 35-64 age range and 41% are 65 years old and older. 97% of the farming population is White. 14% are Hispanic.

Health Summary

Premature death (years lost before age 75 per 100k) was higher at 9300 for Richmond County when compared to the state at 6700.

People reporting poor or fair health is at 19% which is higher than the state at 12%

Adult obesity is high at 40% in Richmond County when compared to the state rate of 32%.

Richmond County is medically underserved. The ratio of primary care physicians to residents is 9070:1 when it is 1320:1 for the state.

78% of Richmond County residents are high school graduates compared to 91% in the state.

Children living in poverty is at 20% in Richmond County whereas it is 13% for the state.

Business and Employment

2,769 residents are employed.

The top 3 employers in Richmond County are local, state & federal government (36.4%), health care and social assistance (12.4%) and retail trade (10%).

Public Education

There is one school division in Richmond County with 1 preschool, 1 elementary/middle school and 1 high school. Total enrollment in the schools for 2023-2024 is 1374.

Community and Resident Perspectives

Results of data collected in the Richmond County survey sorted by highest level effort indicated. Table 2 lists all issues in the survey in ranked order from highest effort to lowest. There are 12 issues that make the top 10 for Richmond County. These 12 issues are highlighted in gold.

Table 2. Results of the 2023 Situation Analysis of Richmond County, Virginia sorted from highest level of effort to lowest.

Issue	High effort	Very high effort	%
Protecting water quality	18	30	94.1%
Strengthening the local food system	22	23	88.2%
Protecting air quality	15	29	86.3%
Helping youth develop leadership, citizenship, and other life skills	18	26	86.3%
Ensure safe, high quality foods	21	21	82.4%
Ensuring safe food handling practice to prevent foodborne illness	21	20	80.4%
Getting more adults involved in mentoring youth	25	15	78.4%
Protecting freshwater resources (lakes, rivers, springs, wetlands)	16	23	76.5%
Controlling invasive pests (plants, animals, insects)	17	22	76.5%

Teaching health relationship skills to teens	19	19	74.5%
Teaching youth good money habits	17	21	74.5%
Protecting the marine environment	18	20	74.5%
Preserving farm and forest land	13	24	72.5%
Addressing hunger issues	19	18	72.5%
Protecting the coastal environment	15	22	72.5%
Reducing misuses and overuse of pesticides and fertilizers	12	25	72.5%
Promoting agricultural, natural resources, and environmental literacy	15	21	70.6%
Helping communities be better prepared for and respond to natural disasters	21	14	68.6%
Conservation and utilization of forest resources	19	16	68.6%
Managing natural habitats and ecosystems	12	23	68.6%
Addressing poverty	19	16	68.6%
Providing physical fitness education	22	12	66.7%
Helping communities improve their quality of life	20	14	66.7%
Building capacity for farm to school programming	15	19	66.7%
Assisting farmers and forest landowners in production and profitability	19	14	64.7%
Preventing suicide	16	17	64.7%
Strengthening workforce readiness	17	16	64.7%
Preventing youth violence	12	21	64.7%
Preventing chronic disease	17	15	62.7%
Addressing adult and youth mental health	13	19	62.7%
Promoting economic development	13	18	60.8%

Assisting forest landowners with sustainable management practices	17	14	60.8%
Helping consumers make healthy food choices	15	16	60.8%
Building health families	18	13	60.8%
Teaching people to manage their money	16	15	60.8%
Promoting scientific literacy among youth	13	18	60.8%
Addressing before and after school challenges	17	14	60.8%
Preserving foods for home use (canning, dehydrating, fermenting, freezing)	15	15	58.8%
Composting, reducing, and recycling consumer goods	17	13	58.8%
Strengthening parenting skills	12	17	56.9%
Reducing obesity	13	15	54.9%
Assisting local government and businesses with land use decisions	16	12	54.9%
Supporting businesses which engage in agritourism	14	14	54.9%
Facilitating civic engagement	15	11	51.0%
Strengthening couple and/or marital relationships	13	13	51.0%
Teaching people to protect themselves from identity theft, frauds, and scams	6	20	51.0%
Promoting alternative agriculture	16	10	51.0%
Helping Virginians' become more energy efficient in their homes, farm, and businesses	14	11	49.0%
Promoting small business entrepreneurs	11	14	49.0%
Addressing prescription drug abuse	8	16	47.1%
Strengthening dependent care	12	12	47.1%
Building the capacity of community nonprofits	14	9	45.1%
Helping households reduce water use	15	7	43.1%

Addressing alcohol abuse	8	11	37.3%
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Of these top identified issues, 6 of them were also identified in the state top 10 results and are listed below.

- Protecting water quality
- Strengthening the local food system
- Protecting air quality
- Ensure safe, high quality foods
- Ensuring safe food handling practice to prevent foodborne illness
- Protecting freshwater resources

Community Issues

The priority issues selected were identified by the respondents in the survey but limited by the staff serving Richmond County: Helping youth develop leadership, citizenship and other life skills. This was the #4 issue identified in Table 2.

Future Programming to Address Community Issues

ISSUE: Developing Youth Leadership, Citizenship and Life Skills

4-H youth development programming will focus on building leadership, citizenship and life skills. 4-H will partner with the school division to offer school enrichment programs that are correlated with SOL's. School administrators and teachers can request programs to reach goals and build particular skill sets. Nutrition and physical activity programs for youth in schools are also available from our Family Nutrition Program staff. To build these programs, we will make sure that school divisions are aware of the programming that can be offered.

Environmental education and stewardship programs will be offered in school and through local day camps. This aligns with at least 3 of the top 10 issues identified that are not focused directly on youth. Local partners in these efforts can include Northern Neck Master Naturalists, Friends of the Rappahannock, Menokin, Tidewater Oyster Gardeners Association and others.

Leadership building programs will be offered through Teen Leadership and possibly through 4-H clubs programming. Practicing and building leadership skills can happen locally and at higher levels and in partnership with other organizations. New opportunities will be examined and shared.

To measure impact in any of these program areas, evaluations can be conducted that measure knowledge gained, skills improved and behavior changes adopted.

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