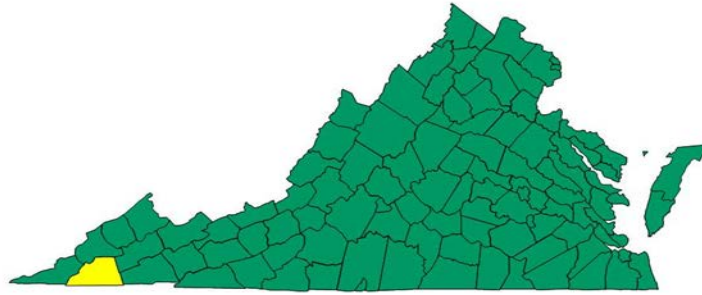




Situation Analysis Report



Scott County

2018

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Introduction

Scott County conducted a situation analysis update during 2018. The greatest Virginia Cooperative Extension impacts occur when areas of critical needs are addressed through Extension program. Virginia Cooperative Extension collaborated with the Extension Leadership Council, local partnering agencies, as well as individuals from within Scott County to identify and prioritize major needs that need to be addressed. Data and information was gathered through programming efforts performed by VCE faculty and staff, as well as a community survey giving feedback from the citizens of Scott County. Demographic data in the Situation Analysis of 2018 was reviewed in contrast to the updated demographic data from the US Census 2010 and US Census of Agriculture 2007 in order to familiarize itself with trends and shifts in trends that could be addressed through educational programming provided by Virginia Cooperative Extension.

Unit Profile

Scott County is a rural, largely agrarian county located within the Appalachian Valley of Southwest Virginia. This southwestern county covers 539 square miles and is on the Tennessee border. Because of the location, Scott County's population is considered part of the Johnson City, Kingsport, and Bristol Combined Statistical Area (CSA).

Demographics

Population

The United States Census Bureau statistics reports the Scott County 2018 population as 23,334. This indicates an overall slight increase (0.15%) compared to the 23,300 cited in the SA 2004 and an increase of 0.68% from 23,177 in 2010. There was a population decline of -5.5% compared to Virginia's growth of 5.5% from 2010 to 2017. The population decline seems to be moderating when rates of 4.27% and 6.92% in

1970 and 1980, respectively, are compared. Six incorporated towns were located within the county boundaries in 2012; the county seat, Gate City (pop. 2,008), Clinchport (pop. 69), Duffield (pop. 90), Dungannon (pop. 326), Nickelsville (pop. 376), and Weber City (pop. 1,293). The trend was a reduction in population within city limits with the exception of Duffield and Dungannon.

Age Distribution

- The median age of Scott County residents in 2018 is 44.7 indicating an increase compared to 33.4 in 1980 and 41.4 in 2000.
- Age distribution in 2011 was 26.68% under the age of 25 years; 46.97% ages 25-59; and 26.35% 60 years and older.
- Compared to 2007, those in the 25-59 age bracket decreased while the 60+ increased in similar fashion.

Racial Composition

The racial composition of Scott County remains relatively unchanged at 98% white and 2% non-white.

Household Data

- Per capita income during the period 2007-2011 was \$20,501. An increase from \$17,944 from the 2001 data cited in the SA 2004, but still only 63% per capita of other Virginians. The percentage of population (all ages) living below the poverty level increased from 13.9% in 1999 to 18.3% during the same 2007-2011 timeframe, indicating a poverty level 75% higher than others in Virginia. Children in poverty saw similar increases from 22% in 2010 to 25% in 2013.
- 20.1% of households are in poverty compared to the state average of 11.4%
- Unemployment remains a concern standing at a rate of 5.3% compared to the state average of 4.3%.
- Percent of housing without plumbing is 1.08% compared to Virginia's rate of 0.31%.

- Median value of owner-occupied housing increased 23.6% from 2000 (\$69,100) to 2011 (\$90,400).
- Persons listed as disabled follow a trend higher than the State of Virginia as shown as 5-20 (8.1% vs. 8.1%), 21-64 (28.6% vs. 17.5%), and 65+ (54.4% vs. 42.1%)

Medical Conditions

- Premature deaths (yrs. lost before age 75 per 100k) increased from 8,902 in 2010 to 10,984 in 2018. This trend follows morbidity estimates increasing from 22% to 24% during the same timeframe.
- Adult obesity has decreased 2% from 30% to 28%, however is higher than the state average of 25%. Excessive drinking also increased 3%, while teen birth rate remained level at 49 per 1000 females ages 15-19, though higher than the state average of 21 per 1000 females ages 15-19.
- Chronic diseases, such as heart disease (233 vs. 218), malignant neoplasms (205.3 vs. 190), cerebrovascular diseases (63.2 vs. 58.3), COPD (40.3 vs. 39.2), and Diabetes (27.1 vs. 21.7) trend higher than state averages per 100,000 people.
- Healthcare is limited both geographically and economically in Scott County. Uninsured persons increased two percent, with 14.1% of Scott County residents being entirely without insurance compared to 12.5% of Virginians. Primary care physician ratios (3,862:1) are approaching three times the ratio for the State (1067:1), however this statistic should be evaluated with discretion due to patient access to physicians in the Kingsport, Bristol, and Johnson City, Tennessee area.
- Percentage of residents lacking health insurance is 11.5% compared to Virginia's 10.7%
- Drug overdose deaths 23.7 per 100,000 compared to the national average of 20.6 per 100,000.

Education

- 57.09% of children receive free/reduced lunches compared to Virginia's rate of 41.22%

- Population with a high school diploma or higher is 70.3% compared to Virginia's 88.6%

Agricultural Data

- Total farms have decreased 6% to 1,396 (male operators decreased to 1,250 and female operators decreased to 146) while acreage in farm land (153,689) decreased 2%. An increase in farmer age from 54.9 to 57 was observed.
- Cattle numbers remain static, with 26,885 head, goat numbers almost doubled (1,231 vs. 2,201), sheep numbers quadrupled (1,022 vs. 4,417), and laying hens increased 80% from 397 to 1,952.
- Corn crops have increased for both silage and grain corn, while tobacco acreage dramatically decreased by 300% following the tobacco quota "buyout" of 2004. Forage acreage decreased five percent to 22,993. Vegetable acreage remains consistent.

Community and Resident Perspectives

The Scott County Extension Leadership Council and the Extension Office identified key individuals to send electronic surveys where these individuals ranked issues as Very Important, Somewhat Important, Neither Important or Unimportant, Somewhat Unimportant or Very Unimportant. Representatives from county leadership, agriculture, youth and education, and health care were some of the facets of the county that responded. Issues were then grouped based on rankings of "Very Important" and categorized through coding. The final task was to prioritize these issues into by importance and the ability of Virginia Cooperative Extension to address. 44% of all started surveys were completed, with a majority of respondents 95% of respondents either being "somewhat familiar, familiar, or very familiar" with extension. 69 % had participated in extension educational programs. The demographics were evenly split with 45 % female and 55 % male respondents. The majority were white, with one American Indian, (73.9 %) possessed a bachelors degree or higher, were over the age of 30, and had incomes \$ 30,000 or higher.

Priority Issues

Aging Population

Elder Care – Due to increasing median age in the county, we know the population is aging. While programs such as Mountain Empire Older Citizens exist, there is limited access to other facilities such as senior centers and improved social interaction events. Creation of activities or events promoting interaction with the aging community would allow them an opportunity to interact and become more mentally and physically active.

Health Care – With the recent merger of Wellmont and Mountain States Health Alliance, uncertainty in medical services as we know it has come to the forefront of concerns. Combining these concerns with the aging population further exacerbates the need to address chronic illnesses and healthy choices for the adult clientele through community programs such as nutrition education, gardening, and local food sources.

Youth Development

Leadership Development – To be successful in the future, leaders must be developed to address the changing economic and cultural future of the county. Emphasis could be placed in areas of leadership skills through programs already offered (4-H, FFA, FCCLA, etc). For adults, similar programs such as the Horizons Leadership class can assist in developing these skills. Additional programs or activities to keep school age children involved and busy in the community may assist in their desire to be involved with community events and activities in the future.

Volunteerism – Increased use of technological devices has led to youth being disassociated themselves with needs in their communities. “Areas of Need”

could be organized and plans made for volunteer opportunities to assist especially high school students with opportunities to accumulate volunteer hours for scholarship opportunities such as TN/VA and AIM scholars. Additionally, having a space for youth to meet and engage would be beneficial.

Life Skills – A much needed training for youth to prepare them to address adult issues. A life skills class could be offered teaching everything from balancing checkbooks and managing finances, credit card debt, household budgets, job interviews, taxes, basic vehicle maintenance (changing oil and tires), washing clothes, menu development, shopping on a budget, etc.

Family Support

Home Based Business – There is a need for home based businesses and entrepreneurs, for primary or supplementary income. Educational programs to assist in identifying and managing HBB would be beneficial. New business opportunities might be beneficial for students and young adults to develop new careers beyond those well known in the region.

Child Development – Supplementation of what is provided by schools; support parents as they raise children and provide opportunities for children to learn hands-on skills.

Nutrition Education

Chronic Illnesses – Obesity, Heart Disease, and Diabetes remain among the highest chronic illnesses in the county. Educational programming to assist in managing these diseases through diet, lifestyle choices, and activity would be beneficial.

Agriculture (Economics, Sustainability, Marketing)

Commercial

Farm Transition – As farmers age, and family members either do or do not wish to continue farming, information is needed to assist in successful farm transitions.

Marketing – Continue branded animal marketing programs and search for alternative markets, and alternative crops that could be grown and sold.

Animal Health and Wellbeing – Continue programming to assist with nutrition, disease management, and factors affecting finished product.

Residential

Gardening – Increase programming in home based gardening; alternative gardening such as vertical, raised bed, mulch gardening, etc.

Small Farm Support – Continue support for small farmers in animal and crop production.

Alternative

Tourism – Use the natural resources to assist in job development, increased revenue through tourism, ecotourism, guide services, etc.

Local Government

Careers – Most jobs are located outside the county, other than limited manufacturing jobs. There is a need for local, higher paying jobs.

Land Use

Water Quality – Concern over logging and other activities that may be degrading water quality in the county.

Environmental Sustainability – Increased thought should be given to subdivision of land and allowing of farm acreage to be easily split into residential tracts. This leads to viable farm land being permanently removed from production.

One comment summed up the challenge in Scott County, and the Extension Office with the programming. “This is a well-planned list that addresses the many issues in our community. Personally, the widespread apathy in our county makes it difficult to enlist the number of dedicated community volunteers needed to put solutions into action. Is there a way to combat this issue?”