



Virginia Cooperative Extension

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Situation Analysis Report

Montgomery County

2013

Montgomery County Extension Staff

Michelle Dickerson, Unit Coordinator, Extension Agent, 4-H Youth

Kelli Scott, Associate Extension Agent, ANR – Horticulture

Dawn Barnes, Senior Extension Agent, FCS

Montgomery County Extension Leadership Council

Rick Weaver, ELC Chair

Bill Brown

Patricia Gaudreau

Nick McNeil

Keith Mileski

Greg Miller

Dianne Rhody-Scott

Deborah Ring

Introduction

The Montgomery County Extension Leadership Council (ELC) conducted a comprehensive Situation Analysis during the calendar year 2013. The process was led by members of the ELC following guidelines, procedures and training provided by VCE personnel from Virginia Tech. Each of the 11 members of the ELC participated in some or all of the regular or special meetings that were used to prepare and plan the process, gather and analyze the data, and assemble and edit the final report. Several of the ELC members provided a list of key informants from the community groups or organizations of which they represent.

Community and resident perspectives were obtained through key informant surveys. Key informants represented Montgomery County Public School Administration, the Department of Social Services, the Virginia Department of Health, the agriculture community and industry, county and town government officials, New River Valley Community Services, teachers, 4-H club leaders and parents, and other community leaders. ELC members helped to develop a Qualtrics survey instrument which asked informants to prioritize Montgomery County community issues and needs. The ELC met to review survey results and to summarize data from both closed and open ended questions measuring respondent's perceptions of the most important and relevant issues for Montgomery County citizens.

Unit Profile

Basic Demographics

Montgomery County is located in the southwestern part of Virginia. It is bounded by Craig, Roanoke, Floyd, Pulaski, and Giles counties. The county is home to over 95,000 residents in its 393 square miles and includes two of Virginia's four largest towns, Blacksburg and Christiansburg. Virginia Tech, one of the nation's leading educational and research universities, and the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, are located in Blacksburg. The major employers for the county are Virginia Tech, BAE Systems (explosives), Corning Inc. (ceramic fibers), Moog Components Group (security products), Rowe Industries (furniture), and Lewis Gale Montgomery Hospital.

Population, Age, Gender

Census data indicates that the estimated population for Montgomery County was 95,194 in 2012. This represents a population increase of 13.8% since 2000 (83,629). Also in 2010, there were approximately 243.9 people per square mile of the county. This is slightly higher than the state's population density of 202.6 people per square mile and is significantly higher than the population density for other planning district counties (Giles, Floyd, and Pulaski).

Over the last 10 years, age distribution data for Montgomery County has remained relatively unchanged. The only age range with increases in population falls in the 25-54 year old group. From 1970 to 2011, the median age of Montgomery County citizens has been 22.9 years to 26.1 years of age. (VA NRV 2013 Regional Data Book)

In terms of 2010 gender data, the percentage of males (51.72%) and females (48.27%) is relatively balanced. The racial makeup of the county based on 2010 data is as follows: 82,643 (87.55%) White, 3716 (3.93%) African American, 204 (0.21%) American Indian and Alaska Native, 5,112 (5.41%) Asian, 30 (0.031%) Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, 1,971 (2.08%) Multiple Races, and 716 (0.758%) Other (self-described). In 2010 the ethnicity for Montgomery County was 91,856 (97.31%) Non-Hispanic or Latino and 2,536 (2.68%) Hispanic or Latino. Data for 2010 shows an increase in American Indian, Asian, and Pacific Islander races, while the Hispanic ethnicity showed a slight decrease.

Overall, the Montgomery County population is well-educated, with 59.98% of the population in 2010 having some college or higher. Approximately 34.5% of the population has a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Housing & Economic status

In 2011 there were 38,979 (2011 Quickfacts) housing units in Montgomery County, an increase of 5,562 over the number in 2002 (33,417), representing a 17% percent increase in the number of housing units. Census Data indicates that the majority of Montgomery housing was built between 1960 and 1979. The next period of increased building was from 1990 to the present when 33.85 % (12,886 units) of the housing was constructed. In terms of home assessments in Montgomery County, the median value in 2000 was \$114,600 and increased to \$196,300 in 2011, representing an approximate 71% cost increase. In comparison to surrounding NRV counties, the 2011 median home value for Floyd and Pulaski Counties were \$147,900 and \$127,600 respectively.

Comparisons of the cost burdens of renters (44.95%) and housing owners (55.05%) indicate the cost burden for renters is greater than that of the other NRV county averages. The majority of the 15,549 renters in Montgomery County (35.2%) are paying an average monthly rent of \$500.00 to \$749.00. The next largest group of renters (27.8%) is paying a higher average rent of \$750.00-\$999.00. The median value renter for the county is \$771.00. The average age for persons in Montgomery County is 26 years of age, compared to the Virginia state average of 37.

According to the 2010 census, Montgomery County has a per capita income of \$22,861 and median family income of \$44,231. Virginia's New River Valley Regional Data Book: June 2013 lists the Adjusted Gross Income for all Montgomery returns was \$51,062 in 2010, which is a higher level than the New River Valley PDC and the remaining NRV counties. Also listed are the poverty levels. Montgomery County's 2007-2011 figures show 23.6% of persons falling below poverty level. This percentage is an average of 8-10 points higher than the surrounding counties in the NRV and well exceeds the Commonwealth average of 10.7% of people below poverty.

The average resident age of Montgomery County, VA is 10 years younger than the state average, due to the location of Virginia Tech. Almost half of the county is renting. 23.6% of the residents fall below the poverty level. This data provides Virginia Cooperative Extension with the opportunity to continue to offer programing in the areas of financial education and debt

management. Virginia Cooperative Extension will continue to educate youth with “reality store” programing. The program is offered at the secondary level and is a great experiential learning activity where high school students are given a real life scenario with career and family and must make financial decisions about their monthly expenses similar to those adults make in their lives.

Unemployment

The Montgomery unemployment rate for August 2013 (5.6%) is slightly under the average rate for the Commonwealth and lower than most of the other counties in the New River Valley. Montgomery and Floyd County are currently tied at a 5.6% unemployment rate. The state's 2013 unemployment figure is 6.0% as compared to Montgomery County's rate of 5.6%. This rate has risen 51.42% since 2002 (2.72%).

Virginia Cooperative Extension will combat the rising unemployment rate with educational programing and skill building. We will continue to work with Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Community College programs to offer real life skills and training educating the next workforce of the New River Valley.

Crime

Virginia's New River Valley Regional Data Book: June 2013 reports a decrease in crime in the NRV from 2004 (5,561 incidents per 100,000 population) to 2010 (4,822 incidents per 100,000 population). The numbers for Montgomery indicate a 13% decrease during that period. At 4822/100,000, Montgomery's crime rate is at a median rate for the New River Valley.

Health - based on the Virginia Department of Health, County Health Profiles for 2004 and 2011.

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/HealthStats/Montgomery04.htm>

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/HealthStats/Montgomery11.htm>

The leading causes of deaths in Montgomery County and in Virginia are heart diseases and malignant neoplasms followed by lower respiratory diseases, unintentional injury, and cerebrovascular diseases. In 2004 (rates based on per 100,000 population), 160.7 deaths in Montgomery County were attributed to heart diseases, 125.0 to malignant neoplasms, 38.1 to lower respiratory diseases, 34.5 to unintentional injury, and 32.1 to cerebrovascular diseases. In 2011, these rates had increased to 162.3 (heart diseases), 163.0 (malignant neoplasms), 57.4 (lower respiratory diseases), 53.3 (unintentional injury), and 44.4 (cerebrovascular diseases). In comparison, the 2011 Virginia rates for these causes of death were as follows: 161.3, 169.5, 38.4, 33.4, and 41.4 respectively.

These statistics show an increase in deaths from the above causes from 2004 to 2011 and slightly higher rates for Montgomery County in deaths caused by heart diseases, lower respiratory diseases, unintentional injury, and cerebrovascular diseases than those rates for Virginia in 2011. This data suggests a continued need for education related to preventative health care and healthy lifestyles.

Pregnancy rates in Montgomery County are declining for teens under 19 years old. In 2004, the number of pregnancies among teens between the ages of 10 to 19 was 18.7 (rate based on per 1000 population). Delineating this into smaller age ranges, the rates for teens under 15 years old, between 15 and 17 years old, and between 18 and 19 years old were 0.5, 23.1, and 28.3 respectively. In 2011, the number of pregnancies among teens between the ages of 10 and 19 was 9.3. The rates for teens under 15 years old, between 15 and 17 years old, and between 18 and 19 years old were 1.5, 14.0, and 11.7 respectively. In comparison to the 2011 Virginia rates, the number of pregnancies among teens between the ages of 10 and 19 was 18.6. The rates for teens under 15 years old, between 15 and 17 years old, and between 18 and 19 years old were 0.5, 16.3, 62.2 respectively.

Teenage pregnancy rates for Montgomery County have decreased since 2004, and the rates are consistently lower than those for Virginia, especially in the 18-19 age range. Though these numbers are optimistic, in order to assure that this downward trend persists, there is a continued need for positive youth activities that help teens make wiser decisions about their futures.

In 2004, Montgomery County had 840 live births, a birth rate of 10.0 out of 1000 estimated population. In 2011, this number had increased to 891 live births, 9.4 per 1000 population. The Virginia birth rates were respectively 13.9 and 12.7 per 1000 population. In 2004, 92.5% of females in Montgomery County received pre-natal care during the first trimester. In 2011, this number had decreased slightly to 89.1%. This was, however, above the 2011 Virginia rate of 82.7%. There were 67 natural fetal deaths for Montgomery County in 2004 and 24 in 2011.

Of the live births in Montgomery County in 2011, 7.0% were low weight births, compared to 8.0% for Virginia. The infant mortality rate was 6.7 per 1000 live births. This was up from the 2004 rate of 3.6% for Montgomery County but still below the state rate of 7.4 percent in that year.

Although these numbers do not seem alarming, educational programs may address healthy lifestyles (good nutrition, exercise, abstinence from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco) for females in childbearing years and planned pre-natal health care.

According to the 2002 Community Health Report Card, the top five issues associated with communicable diseases for the New River Health District include immunizations, sexually transmitted diseases, foodborne illnesses, tuberculosis, influenza, and pneumococcal disease. Source: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/LHD/newriver/reportcard/index.htm>

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org>, reported 219 incidences per 100,000 population of sexually transmitted infections in Montgomery County in 2013, an increase of 37 since 2010 (182 incidences). These numbers are lower than the 2013 Virginia estimate of 385 but are significantly higher than the 2013 national value of 92.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that each year roughly 1 in 6 Americans (or 48 million people) get sick, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die of foodborne diseases.

According to the New River District health report card, the reported numbers of foodborne illnesses fluctuate each year but efforts should continue to reduce the number of incidences.

In terms of communicable diseases, educational efforts should focus on simple, commonsense practices that can reduce one's risk from these threats. Examples include positive youth activities for at-risk youth and education on food safety related to shopping, handling, and storage.

Child Well-Being - based on Kids Count data: <http://www.aecf.org/kidscount>

In 2007, 13.6% of Montgomery County children (1925 total children) under the age of 17 years old lived in poverty. This number had increased to 17% (2411 total children) by 2011. This compares to rates of 12.9% (2007) and 15.6% (2011) for Virginia. In 2007, 8930 children participated in SNAP public assistance. By 2011, that number had increased to 10,993.

In 2013, 27% of children lived in single-parent households. This number is lower than the state rate of 30.0% but is higher than the national rate of 20.0%. From 2006-2010, 46.3% of grandparents living with their grandchildren were also responsible for the care and well-being of those children. This is a decrease from the rate in the 2005-2009 time period of 57.4%. In 2008, the number of children in Montgomery County living in foster care was 2.1 per 1000 population. This is a decrease from the 2004 rate of 2.3 per 1000. Compared to the Virginia rates of 4.0 and 3.7 for 2004 and 2008 respectively, the Montgomery rates are lower.

The rate of children involved in child abuse and neglect, per 1000 children, in 2007 was 5.7. This increased to 7.3 in 2011. These numbers are higher than the Virginia rates of 3.4 and 3.3 respectively.

Child Well-Being data suggests a continued need for positive youth programming to address the diversity of needs for families in different households or family structures and provisions for children in low-income households who might not otherwise benefit from programming opportunities.

Education

Enrollment in Montgomery County Public Schools in 2007 included 912 students in nursery or preschool, 920 in kindergarten, 5975 in elementary or middle school (grades 1 -8), and 2916 in high school (grades 9-12), a total of 10,723 students. By 2011, the total enrollment numbers had increased, including 1089 in nursery or preschool, 709 in kindergarten, 6547 in elementary or middle school, and 3092 in high school, a total of 11,437 students. The total number of students enrolled in public schools increased by 714, representing a 6.7% increase over 5 years.

Results of the Virginia Assessment Program, including Standards of Learning (SOL) tests and other statewide assessments in English, history/social science, mathematics, and science, are provided in the table below for all students in Montgomery County Public Schools. The following table shows comparisons of percent of youth passing assessment tests in 2010-

2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013 for the Montgomery County School Division and for Virginia respectively.

Percent of Students Passing Assessment Tests

Subject Area	10-11	10-11	11-12	11-12	12-13	12-13
	Division	State	Division	State	Division	State
Grade 3						
English, Reading	89	83	90	86	73	72
Mathematics	92	91	67	64	68	65
History, Social Science	89	85	84	87	85	87
Science	92	90	89	90	84	84
Grade 4						
English, Reading	89	87	94	88	75	70
Mathematics	90	89	78	70	76	74
Grade 5						
English, Reading	92	89	92	89	78	73
English, Writing	81	87	83	87	79	71
Mathematics	90	89	72	67	79	69
Science	89	87	88	88	77	75
Grade 6						
English, Reading	89	87	92	89	73	73
Mathematics	78	73	75	74	78	77
Grade 7						
English, Reading	90	89	89	88	74	74
Mathematics	76	77	56	58	56	61
Grade 8						
English, Reading	90	90	89	89	73	71
English, Writing	88	88	86	88	68	70
Mathematics	64	82	38	60	33	61
History, Social Science	-	-	100	88	100	81
Science	91	92	94	92	80	76
High School						
English, Reading	90	94	93	91	88	89
English, Writing	89	93	90	93	87	87
Mathematics						
Algebra 1	88	94	63	75	69	76
Geometry	79	87	65	74	74	76
Algebra 2	89	91	58	69	69	76
History						
VA/US History	80	83	78	85	84	86
World History I	75	81	77	84	77	84
World History II	82	82	85	85	87	85
Science						
Earth Science	86	89	90	90	81	83
Biology	92	90	90	92	83	83
Chemistry	96	93	94	93	90	86

Assessment tests results indicate an overall trend of declining scores from 2010-2011 to 2012-2013. Extension programming can provide supplemental hands-on instruction correlated to

the Virginia Standards of Learning, especially in areas of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) competencies.

Since 2008, the percentages of students who graduated from high school on time has steadily increased, from 80.4% in 2008 to 84.8% in 2012. Montgomery County Public Schools enrolls over 4000 students in grades 7 through 12. In the 2007-2008 year, 97 of the students (2.2%) in this grade range dropped out of school. Since then, that number has gradually declined. In the 2010-2011 year, only 50 students (1.2%) in grades 7 through 12 dropped out of school.

Although dropout rates seem to be declining, it is essential to continue efforts to educate high school students about the benefits of a high school education and to encourage teens to stay in school. Extension can positively influence this by providing programming on career exploration and highlighting career options through curriculum project and activities.

Since 2007, the percent of Montgomery County youth continuing education post high school has ranged from 63.35% in 2007 to 65.45% in 2011. This compares to the 2011 state and national rates of 61.6% and 57.1% respectively. The percentages of Montgomery County individuals having a bachelor's degree or higher were 41.8% in 2007 and 40.7% in 2011, each higher than the 2011 state and national rates of 34.4% and 28.2% respectively.

As a university community, Montgomery County boasts a highly educated citizenry. This has implications for volunteer development and involvement in Extension programming efforts. Adults having diverse educational backgrounds and expertise provide an excellent volunteer resource for helping to disseminate research-based information for public needs and education.

Agriculture Industry – based on 1997 Census of Agriculture

Total land area for Montgomery County is 248,473 acres with 89,411 acres of farmland. A little over 28% of this is described as “woodland” or forestland at a total of 153,686 acres for the county. Private landowners own 123,486 acres of this amount, and the National Forest Service owns 26,263 acres of forestland. Woodland pasture accounts for 7,981 acres of forestland for livestock production.

The number of farms, 628 is down from 650 in 2002. The average farm size is 142 acres, a 10 acres decrease from 2002. Agriculture is a major industry in Montgomery County and mirrors the state in employment and economy. The county has an estimated market value for land and buildings of \$587,681 or approximately \$4,128 per acre. The estimated \$19 (\$18,977,532) million production of livestock, forestry, and horticultural products, within Montgomery County, is the agri-industry base.

Each county farm (628) has an average market value of agriculture products sold equal to \$30,219 annually. Livestock and related sales accounts for almost half of that average, with an estimated \$13,734 sold annually. Cow/calf sales are the highest market value product for the county. Of the 628 farms listed for Montgomery County, approximately 337 of them are producing beef, with 25 additional dairies (milk cow production). There is a total of 45,427

acres of pastureland to support livestock. The major crop for the county is corn, which an average of 800 acres is produced for grain, and 2,550 acres of corn is produced for silage or greenchop to support livestock production. Wheat and barley are the 2nd and 3rd most produced crops for the area.

State Agriculture Data:

According to the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), Agriculture is Virginia's largest industry by far, with nothing else coming a close second. The industry has an **economic impact of \$52 billion annually and provides more than 357,000 jobs in the Commonwealth**. The industries of agriculture and forestry together have a total economic impact of almost \$70 billion. The total employment impact was approximately 414,700 employees. Every job in agriculture and forestry supports 1.6 jobs elsewhere in the Virginia economy. Production agriculture employs nearly 60,000 farmers and workers in Virginia and generates approximately \$2.9 billion in total output. Value-added industries, those that depend on farm commodities, employ an additional 76,000 workers and generate \$34.6 billion in total industrial output. The total impact of agriculture-related industries was over \$52 billion in total industry output, approximately 310,900 jobs, and \$25.9 billion in value-added.

The majority of the farmland area in Montgomery County is traditional production agriculture devoted to forage, livestock, and timber production which maintains sound land stewardship and protection of the environment. Profitability in agriculture depends on the ability of producers to maintain competitiveness and increase diversified markets. Increased sustainability, profitability and competition will require dissemination of new technologies, best management practices, and development of expanded markets.

Although, Montgomery County has predominately a traditional type of agriculture production, the county has also seen a large increase of direct market farmers supplying the local food system through direct farm sales, farmers markets, agritourism, community gardens, and seasonal festivals. The "farm to table" movement has increased in the area, and Virginia Cooperative Extension has assisted in breaking down the barriers and restrictions with farm to school, farm to institution, and farm to restaurant sales. Virginia Cooperative Extension has been an active collaborator in the production of the New River Valley Local Food Guide describing opportunities across the region. We are also working with local producers to ensure food safety on all levels of production and distribution.

Community and Resident Perspectives

Based on trends identified in the unit profile, and through discussions with ELC members, we developed a Qualtrics survey (see appendix) focused on issues relevant to Montgomery County. ELC members assisted in identifying key community leaders to rate the importance of these issues to Montgomery County citizens and to prioritize the most important issues for the county.

We distributed the online Qualtrics survey to a total of 380 key informants representing a diverse cross-section of community leaders and Extension clientele. In terms of response rates, 80 started the survey and 65 completed it, representing a 17% response rate. Sixty-one

	Issue	Number of Incidents	Mean
were	Agriculture	6	4.03

percent (61%)
familiar with
Virginia

Cooperative Extension (VCE) and 62% have participated in VCE educational programs. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of respondents were female, and 31% were male. Ninety-three percent (93%) of respondents had at least a college degree level of education. The largest number of respondents fell in the 40-49 age range (32%) or the 65+ age range (29%). In terms of ethnicity, 2% of respondents were Hispanic or Latino. In terms of race, 2% were American Indian or Alaskan Native, 3% were Black or African American, 92% were white, and 3% were other. Thirty-six respondents reported having children 17 years old or younger.

Key informants were asked to rate the importance of 51 issues on a scale from (1) very unimportant to (5) very important. Participants could also choose a “no opinion” option and could list up to 3 additional issues under an “other” option. Respondents were then asked: “For the issues you rated very important, please select your top 5 and provide additional information.” The following table provides the mean score for each of the 51 issues and the number of times an issue was listed in respondents’ top 5 list.

Agriculture Production/Profitability	3	4.01
Agriculture Sustainability and Preservation	7	4.12
Alternative Agriculture	1	3.95
Farm Transition	1	4.0
Horticulture	2	4.03
Invasive Species	4	3.98
Local Food Systems	7	4.14
Land Use	4	4.03
Pests and Pesticides	5	4.09
Public Awareness of Agriculture	2	4.18
Wildlife Control	3	3.94
Total, Agriculture	45	
Youth Development	12	4.11
Before and After-School Issues	3	4.05
Career Exploration	1	3.97
Life Skills, Decision Making	7	4.14
Leadership	3	4.03
School Dropout	1	4.06
Positive Youth Activities	2	4.12
At Risk Behaviors	2	4.15
Youth Volunteers	2	4.02
Community Involvement	2	4.03
Total, Youth Development	35	
Home Family & Finance	6	4.02
Aging Population	4	3.95
Child Development	3	4.05
Finances, Financial Management	2	4.02
Parenting	8	4.06
Long Term Care	1	3.89
Foods, Nutrition, and Health	10	3.98
Chronic Disease	1	3.86
Obesity	5	4.08
Health Care	4	4.06
Total, Home Family & Finance	42	
Environment	6	4.07
Energy	3	3.96
Alternative Energy	2	3.88
Natural Resource Production & Profitability	2	3.93
Water Quality	1	4.16
Total, Environment	14	
Community Viability	6	3.85
Community Planning	2	3.79
Local Government	1	3.78
Small Business, Entrepreneurs	3	4.0
Tourism	3	3.7
Total, Community Viability	15	

Of the 51 issues identified for the survey, the following had mean values of 4.2 or higher: water quality (4.23), public awareness of agriculture (4.22), youth development (4.21), environment (4.2), and local food systems (4.2). The following issues were mentioned at least 7 times in comments about the top 5 priority issues: agriculture sustainability and preservation, local food systems, youth development, life skills and decision making, parenting, and foods, nutrition, and health. Considering these results in conjunction with the results from other closely related themes, we developed the following priority issues for Montgomery County.

Priority Issues

Based on the unit profile and the community resident perspectives, the following top priority issues were identified for Montgomery County.

Issue 1: Agriculture Sustainability and Preservation

The unit profile indicates that agriculture and agri-industry significantly impact the Montgomery County economy with an estimated nineteen million dollar market value. The County is steeped in traditional agriculture production with livestock production remaining the driving commodity. Respondents to the community survey (needs assessment) indicate maintaining agriculture and the rural character of the county is of high value. Respondents equally determined the promotion and support of Local Food Systems as very important. This data reflects the trends seen nationally and across the Commonwealth; the public desires a connection to where their food comes from. Who is producing their food, how and where are agriculture products produced?

Virginia Cooperative Extension-Montgomery County will continue to work with local officials and specialist promoting and expanding educational opportunities and resources that would encourage appropriate, diverse markets offering safe, locally produced farm products. This demand is not only seen from the viewpoint of the consumer, but also from farmers looking to expand production and markets. Montgomery County has the potential to become a food-hub for our region expanding rural enterprises, marketability of the region, and tourism. Every job in agriculture supports other distribution, storage, and retail industries, which contributes to the overall community viability and economy of the county. Encouraging the public's connection to all types of agriculture also supports the overall public awareness of agriculture.

Issue 2: Environment

Agriculture and sustainable, suitable development for Montgomery County is directly related to the environment. The county maintains a high acreage of forestland, most being privately owned with the potential for development. The key informant needs assessment data shows equal importance between agriculture and the environment suggesting that all development and production be implemented with best management practices and a land stewardship focus.

Proper management, handling, and application of pesticides is an ongoing priority for Extension programming. Maintaining water quality is also a high concern for the respondents of

the needs assessment. Virginia Cooperative Extension will continue to collaborate with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) regulatory programs and Virginia Tech's Pesticide Safety Programs offering certifications in the area of proper fertilizer applications (FACT), private pesticide applicator licenses, as well as commercial pesticide applicator licenses. Virginia Cooperative Extension-Montgomery County offers local recertification workshops where applicators can gain educational credits to maintain current certification and licenses status.

Montgomery County, in collaboration with Virginia Household Water Quality Program and Virginia Master Well Owner Network offered Well Water Safety Clinics beginning in the winter of 2012. These clinics provide citizens with the opportunity to test and correct any well water issues, including bacterial issues. This model has proven to be effective, and we will continue to offer these types of clinics in the future.

Issue 3: Life Skills and Decision Making

Unit profile data suggests that although the number of youth completing their high school education and pursuing post-high school education is increasing, there is a continued need for enrichment education related to the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs). Through in-school enrichment and before or after-school programs, Montgomery County 4-H can provide students with hands-on activities to illustrate concepts related to the Virginia SOLs and hopefully provide students with a greater and more in-depth understanding of those concepts.

Respondents to the needs assessment survey indicated that the development of life and decision making skills among youth should be a priority for Extension programming efforts. Many of the survey comments describing the priority issues for Montgomery County indicated a need for programs that better prepare youth for joining the workforce by helping them develop better critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The 4-H life-skills model targets a wide variety of skills to help youth become productive members of society including relating, caring, giving, working, living, being, thinking, and managing dimensions. The Montgomery County 4-H program targets many life and decision making skills in programs like Junior 4-H Camp, 4-H club and project work, civic and community service programs, and leadership development opportunities. Programming efforts should continue to emphasize these life skills and should seek new opportunities to provide youth with more meaningful and substantive experiences that comprehensively targets many of these skills.

Though 4-H programming already addresses the development of life skills and decision making in many of its youth programs, this situation analysis shows a need for more family oriented and intergenerational programming efforts to promote family togetherness and greater parental involvement in youth programs.

Issue 4: Family Well-Being

The unit profile indicates that there are a significant number of families and children living in poverty in Montgomery County. In addition, as is the case at the state and national level, chronic diseases like heart disease and cancer still persist. The family unit dynamic is much

different now than it was decades ago. There are many children living in single parent households or in foster care. Many grandparents are raising their grandchildren. There are still many children living in situations of abuse and neglect.

The combination of these family and social conditions suggests a greater need for programs related to healthy living, parenting, financial management, and positive youth programming. This was confirmed with the results of the community and resident perspectives survey. Survey respondents discussed youth development and foods, nutrition, and health extensively in their top 5 priority issues. Extension provides many programs in these areas and should continue to seek additional opportunities for programming to address these needs as well as those related to overall family health and well-being (mental, physical, social, financial, and spiritual health).

Issue 5: Parenting

Many of the comments related to the top five priority issues for Montgomery County citizens reflected a need for parenting education and greater parent engagement in the education and extracurricular activities for youth. Parental involvement can have a positive correlation to the success of youth in academic performance, success in endeavors related to personal interests, and character development. It can also have a strong and very positive influence in reducing the likelihood of youth engaging in risky behaviors.

Though many agencies provide parenting classes that help parents develop skills related to role modeling for children, child welfare and well-being, understanding child growth and development, setting boundaries, building self-esteem, communication skills, and dealing with anger, frustration, and stress, Extension can help with these programming efforts through partnerships and collaborations.

Children often emulate the attitudes, behaviors, interests, and aspirations of their parents or guardians. Providing Extension programs that allow parents and children to share common interests and to participate in activities that build knowledge and skill sets related to these interests can help to strengthen the family unit. This area of need can be addressed through cross-programming efforts in Agriculture and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, and 4-H Youth Development. For example, Extension might provide gardening and community garden programs that provide opportunities for children and their parents and guardians to participate in a shared project.

Appendix

Situation Analysis Key Informant Survey

The purpose of this survey is to gather information about issues in Montgomery County. Please take a couple of minutes to share your opinions. The results of this survey will help in shaping Virginia Cooperative Extension programs in Montgomery County. Survey responses are completely anonymous. Please respond to the survey by October 25th.

1. Please rate the importance of the following issues in Montgomery County.

	Very Unimportant (1)	Somewhat Unimportant (2)	Neither Unimportant nor Important (3)	Somewhat Important (4)	Very Important (5)	No Opinion (6)
Agriculture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Agriculture Marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Agriculture Production/Profitability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Agriculture Sustainability/Preservation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Alternative Agriculture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Farm Transition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Animal/Livestock	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Horticulture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Invasive Species	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local Food Systems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Land Use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pests/Pesticides	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public Awareness of Agriculture	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wildlife Control	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth Development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Before and After School Issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Career Exploration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Life Skills/Decision Making	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School Dropout	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Positive Youth Activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At-Risk Behaviors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth Volunteers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Involvement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Home, Family, & Finance	<input type="radio"/>					
Aging Population	<input type="radio"/>					
Child Development	<input type="radio"/>					
Consumer Issues	<input type="radio"/>					
Dependent Care	<input type="radio"/>					
Finances/Financial Management	<input type="radio"/>					
Housing/Home	<input type="radio"/>					
Parenting	<input type="radio"/>					
Long Term Care	<input type="radio"/>					
Foods, Nutrition & Health	<input type="radio"/>					
Chronic Disease	<input type="radio"/>					
Food Safety/Preservation	<input type="radio"/>					
Obesity	<input type="radio"/>					
Health Care	<input type="radio"/>					
Environment	<input type="radio"/>					
Energy	<input type="radio"/>					
Alternative Energy	<input type="radio"/>					
Natural Resource Production/Profitability	<input type="radio"/>					
Wildlife	<input type="radio"/>					
Water Quality	<input type="radio"/>					
Community Viability	<input type="radio"/>					
Community Planning	<input type="radio"/>					
Community Services	<input type="radio"/>					
Local Government	<input type="radio"/>					
Science and Technology	<input type="radio"/>					
Small Business/Entrepreneurs	<input type="radio"/>					
Tourism	<input type="radio"/>					
Other	<input type="radio"/>					
Other	<input type="radio"/>					
Other	<input type="radio"/>					

2. For the issues you rated Very important, please select the top five and provide additional information in the boxes below on why you feel they are important for Montgomery County and what you think might be done to address them.

Please type in the issue name, why you feel it is important, and what might be done to address it.

Please type in the issue name, why you feel it is important, and what might be done to address it.

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Please type in the issue name, why you feel it is important, and what might be done to address it.

3. Please provide any additional information on what direction you believe Extension programs should take in Montgomery County.

4. How familiar are you with Virginia Cooperative Extension?

- Not familiar at all (1)
- Somewhat familiar (2)
- Familiar (3)
- Very familiar (4)

5. Have you ever participated in educational programs offered by Virginia Cooperative Extension?

- No (1)
- Yes (2)

6. If you answered Yes to the above question, which VCE educational program(s) did you participate in and what was the value to you?

7. Please tell us about yourself (the person completing the survey). These questions are optional.

8. What is your sex?

- Female (1)
- Male (2)

9. Which of the following describes your highest level of education?

- Less than high school (1)
- Some high school (2)
- High school graduate/GED (3)
- Some college (4)
- College graduate (5)
- Some graduate work (6)
- Master's degree (7)
- Doctorate degree (8)

10. In which category is your current age?

- 18-29 (1)
- 30-39 (2)
- 40-49 (3)
- 50-59 (4)
- 60-64 (5)
- 65+ (6)

11. How many individuals reside in your home?

	0 (1)	1 (2)	2 (3)	3 (4)	4 (5)	5 (6)	6 or more (7)
Adults (18 years and older) (1)	<input type="radio"/>						
Children (17 years and younger) (2)	<input type="radio"/>						

12. How many years have you lived at your current address?

- 0 - 3 (1)
- 4 - 6 (2)
- 7 - 10 (3)
- 11 - 15 (4)
- 16 - 25 (5)
- More than 25 (6)

13. Which category best describes your ethnicity?

- Hispanic or Latino (1)
- Not Hispanic or Latino (2)

14. Which category best describes your race?

- American Indian or Alaskan Native (1)
- Black or African American (2)
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (3)
- White (4)
- Other (5) _____

