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Campbell County 2023 Situation Analysis Report

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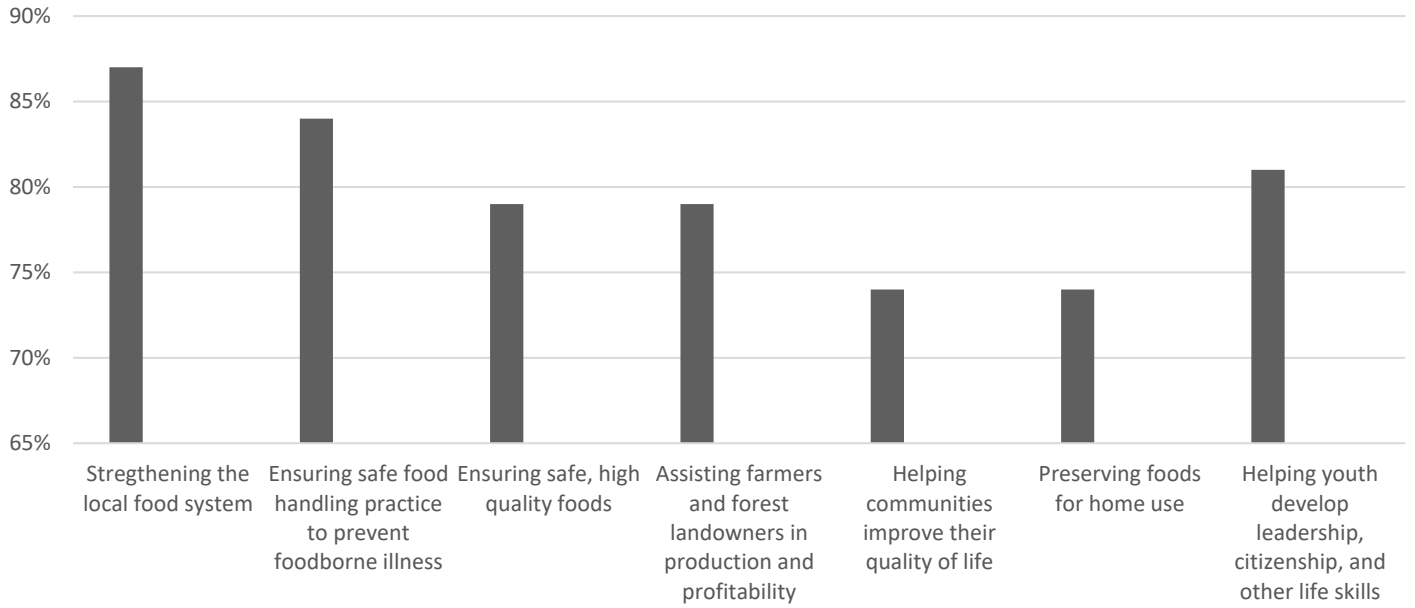
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Top Seven Issues for Campbell County in 2023 According to Percent of Respondents indicating it was a high priority need



Introduction

The Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Campbell County Unit conducted a comprehensive situation analysis during the calendar year of 2023. The unit coordinator of the Campbell County Office led the situation analysis process. The staff assisted with developing the Campbell County Unit Profile as well as gathering community and resident perspectives on issues in the county through a survey. Data and information from the survey and recently completed area needs assessments were analyzed and recurring themes were identified leading to the creation of the priority issues.

The Campbell Extension Unit met during regularly scheduled staff meetings to discuss the situation analysis. It was decided that we would use the provided Qualtrics survey and then follow up with focus group discussions. Using available resources from VCE, Campbell County, and state/federal sites, the unit profile was developed. Focus groups were identified, and surveys were distributed throughout the community. Findings from the surveys and focus groups were discussed by the staff and top priority issues were identified.

Unit Profile

Campbell County is located in the Southern Piedmont of Virginia. On the northern side of the county is Lynchburg City the twelfth largest city in Virginia. The majority of residents live near the Lynchburg-Campbell County borders. The towns of Brookneal and Altavista are both in Campbell with each having their own town council. Campbell County covers over 511 square miles in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

In 2021, Campbell County, VA had a population of 55,656 people. 51% of the population is female while 49% of the population is male. The population is 80% White Alone, 14% Black or African American Alone, 4% Two or More Races, 3% Hispanic, 1% Asian, 0.2% American Indian, 0.02% Native Hawaiian or Pacifica Islander.

As of 2021, the federal poverty line for a family of four is \$26,500. Campbell County currently has a median household income of \$53,918 and 16% of children in Campbell County are living in poverty. 19% of families in Campbell County are single parent households.

The Campbell County Public School system consists of two high schools, two high and middle combined schools, two middle schools, seven elementary schools and one alternative school. All schools in Campbell County are fully accredited.

The major employers in Campbell County are Babcock and Wilcox Nuclear, Campbell County Schools, Abbott Laboratories, and Moore's Electrical & Mechanical. The current unemployment rate for Campbell County is 3.8%.

According to the state community health rankings, Campbell County is ranked 45th out of 133 counties. Centra's Lynchburg Area Community Health Needs Assessment reported the top five health needs for Lynchburg and the surrounding areas including Campbell County as poverty, access to health care, mental health concerns, issues impacting children and their families (child care/child abuse) access to healthy food, and aging/eldercare.

Community and Resident Perspectives

To assess resident perspectives, our unit utilized two formal strategies. However, our unit also strives to informally assess the needs of our community with constant engaged conversations.

1. Community survey. This survey was widely distributed throughout Campbell County. In addition to the links posted on our VCE social media pages, it was also available on the Campbell County website and Facebook page. We emailed links to our office-maintained distribution lists that included Cattleman's Association, 4-H parents, and Campbell County Department Heads. A QR code was also available at the Amherst County Fair and respondents were able to spin the wheel for a prize once the survey was completed.
2. Review of recent area needs assessments including Centra Health's 2021-2024 Health Needs Assessment.
3. Focus group discussions with members of the ELC and Agricultural Boards

Responses indicated that Campbell County had similar priority issues as our state results with emphasis in the areas of Environmental Health and Safety and Building Healthy Communities. Identified issues included strengthening the local food system, preventing foodborne illness, helping youth develop leadership, citizenship and life skills, preserving farm and forest land, helping communities improve their quality of life, and promoting agricultural, natural and environmental literacy. VCE is equipped to offer expertise in addressing these complex interdisciplinary issues that span across programming areas.

Community Issues

Unit faculty and staff met during the Community Resident and Perspective phase. Surveys and recent needs assessments were reviewed and it was determined that the top issues were linked and could be grouped into three priority issues.

Table 1. Top Issues Selected by Respondents based on a series of choices

Issue	Rank
Strengthening the local food system	1
Ensuring safe food handling practices to prevent foodborne illness	2
Ensuring safe high-quality foods	3
Helping youth develop leadership, citizenship, and other life skills	4
Assisting farmers and forest landowners in production and profitability	5
Helping communities improve their quality of life	6
Preserving foods for home use	7
Building healthy families	8
Strengthening workforce readiness	9
Building capacity for farm to school programming	10
Promoting agricultural, natural resources, and environmental literacy	11
Teaching youth good money habits	12

Top three priority issues

Priority Issue #1

Improve land management and profitability

Priority Issue #2

Opportunities for youth to access positive experiences to develop leadership, citizenship, and life skills

Priority Issue #3

Build healthy families

Future Programming to Address Community Issues

Priority Issue #1: Improve land management and profitability

Agents will work to connect local government entities with local producers on developing strategies to keep agricultural land viable and productive. The agents will work with Virginia Farm Bureau, Economic Development and agricultural groups to develop workshops on market initiatives, business tools and procuring grants. Agents will assist local producers in experimental field trials, disseminate the information gleaned from said trials and work to address concerns of food safety. Agent will continue to work with local producers and the Campbell County CSA program to strengthen the local food system and support local agriculture. Agents will collaborate to address agriculture literacy within the schools and bring the farm to school programming to the Campbell County area.

Priority Issue #2: Opportunities for youth to access positive experiences to develop leadership, citizenship, and life skills

The Campbell County office has been without a full-time 4-H agent since June of 2022. A part-time position was used to fill the void beginning in August of 2023 and a full-time agent will begin in January of 2024. In school programming began in the fall of 2023. To address current emerging community issues moving forward, agents will collaborate on bringing Reality Store, Real Money-Real world and Kid's Marketplace programming back into area schools to help aid in the development of good money habits. 4-H will also focus on building the teen club back up and providing leadership opportunities for the members. Workforce readiness skills will be incorporated into classroom lessons and teen club meetings and activities. Agents will work together on the development of some farm to school programming as well; and will start by looking into already developed programming and reaching out to specialists on campus.

Priority Issue #3 Building healthy families

Agents will work to address the increasing requests for ServSafe training. In addition to this formal training, programming to support safe food handling and food preservation workshops will also be offered. Plans to add an FNP program assistant for the Campbell County office to assist with adult education for SNAP recipients are in place for the coming year. Agents will be trained in the "Dealing with Dementia" curriculum and will be offering programs to address the aging population as soon as training is completed. Parenting classes will continue offering programs to address the population of children age newborn to teenagers.

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