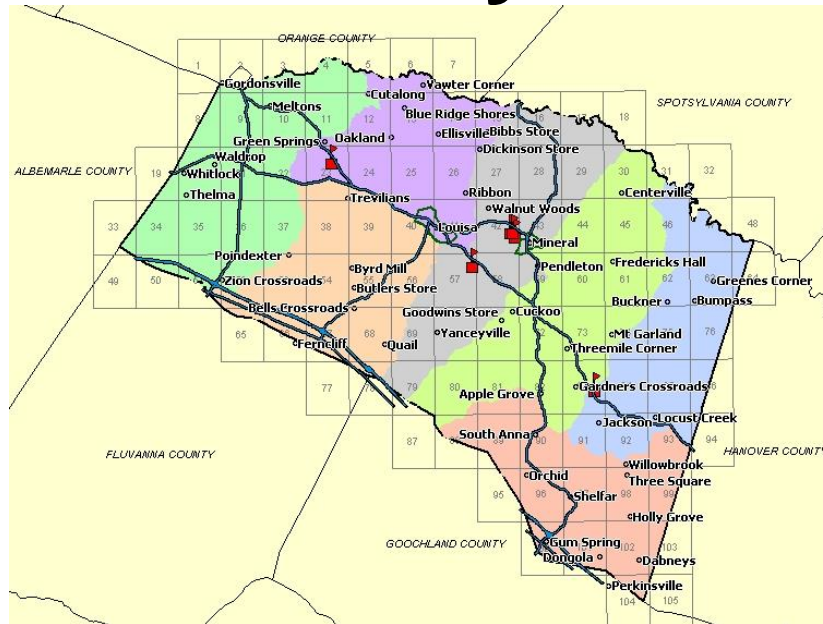




Situation Analysis Report



Louisa County

2018

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Introduction

Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) takes pride in the premise that vital programming is based on the issues, problems, and needs of the people. A thorough analysis of the situation provides context for understanding these problems. This is a process of determining what situations exist at local, regional, and state levels, and for determining which problems have become issues of major public concern. Situation analysis provides the foundation and rationale for deciding which problems should receive the time, energy, and resources of VCE.

Unit Profile

Louisa County is located in the Central Piedmont region of Virginia near the geographic center of the state. Louisa County's border is approximately 15 miles west of the Greater Richmond area, 25 miles east of Charlottesville, 25 miles south of Fredericksburg and 95 miles southwest of the Washington, DC metropolitan area. The incorporated towns of Mineral and Louisa are located within the county borders. Lake Anna, home to Dominion Energy's Nuclear Power station provides hundreds of miles of lake front property and is a thriving center for recreational activities.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau the 2018 population estimate is 35,860. The population growth rate in Louisa County has increased by 8.1% from 2010 to 2017. The estimates indicate population growth increased from 33,168 to 35,860. According to United States Census Bureau 2017 data, the poverty level in Louisa County was 10.8%, almost equal to the state average 10.6%. Also, educational attainment of high school graduate or higher from 2013 to 2017 is 84.6%.

2018 estimated racial population of Louisa County (U.S. Census Bureau)

Race	Number	Percentage
White	28,796	80.3
Black	5,773	16.1
American Indian/Alaskan Native	215	0.6
Asian	251	0.7
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	36	0.1
Two or more races	825	2.3
Hispanic	1,040	2.9

The Virginia Employment Commission reports the unemployment rate in Louisa County as of June 2018 was 3.0% compared to the state rate of 3.2%. According to the 2012 agriculture census, Louisa County ranks 64th in the state in agriculture receipts (\$14,515,000) which was a 19% increase from 2007. Crop sales represent 47% of receipts with livestock sales representing 53%.

Community and Resident Perspectives

Based on current demographic data for Louisa County and resident perspectives, the following broad issues were identified.

Priority Issues

Based on the unit profile and data analyzed, the following top priorities were identified for Louisa County:

- **Teen Community Involvement/Teen Leadership**

Teens today are bombarded with choices and pressures of drugs and alcohol, gangs, unhealthy lifestyles and negative role models. In order to offset all of the negative choices available, youth need positive activities and opportunities. VCE-Louisa will provide educational and social opportunities that are developmentally appropriate, provide structure, and the opportunity to develop positive relationships with caring adults. By offering programs that build character, instill strong values, and teach a variety of life skills and decision making, we will work to prevent youth from seeking acceptance and satisfaction from negative sources. Through partnerships with the Louisa County Public Schools, Louisa County Parks and Recreation and other organizations, VCE-Louisa will work to provide opportunities for teens to develop leadership skills, mentor younger children and to volunteer in the community. Programming for teens will be provided through a variety of delivery modes including 4-H clubs, 4-H camp, in-school programming, workshops and forums.

- **Water Quality**

Water quality and quantity is a top concern in Louisa County. Many residents rely on private water sources such as wells and springs and must maintain and test the safety of the supply themselves. The concern in the county is not surprising due to the 2011 5.8 magnitude earthquake's center having been located in Mineral, VA. Since the earthquake, many have found reduced to no water flow and discolored water from their private wells. These findings are not unusual following an earthquake. Earthquakes do commonly cause fluctuations in the groundwater levels and damage to water wells

systems. VCE in Louisa will be offering water testing at an affordable rate through the Virginia Household Water Quality Program to county residents in June 2019. The findings will be discussed with each participant along with a recommended treatment.

- **Health and Wellness**

One of the Thomas Jefferson Health District's "Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnership" (MAPP2Health) top priority areas to improve the lives of those in its district was addressing mental health and substance abuse. Mental and health disorders and substance misuses and abuse have long lasting impacts on a person's life. In support of this priority, VCE - Louisa County applied for and was awarded a portion of a grant to assist in its efforts to minimize the opioid epidemic in Louisa County. The PROSPER (PROMoting School-community-university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience) Model will be implemented in 4 Virginia communities, including Louisa County. This community engagement system uses evidence-based programs with middle schoolers (ages 11-13) and their families. It has been scientifically proven effective, realizing increased positive outcomes for high-risk populations. Programs delivered using PROSPER build youth assets (e.g., problem solving and decision-making, workforce readiness, and positive parent-adolescent relationships) and reduce problem behaviors (e.g., alcohol and drug use, including opioid misuse; delinquent activity). PROSPER further supports the sustained delivery of evidence-based programs in a way that maximizes the resources of Extension and partner organizations.

Another top priority of the MAPP2Health was addressing Healthy Eating and Active Living. As the county's population continues to increase, the rate of obesity, disease and chronic illness rises accordingly. In 2015, 34% of adults in Louisa were considered obese. VCE-Louisa is partnering with Louisa County Public Schools to promote the Healthy Weights for Healthy Kids curriculum in the schools. VCE-Louisa and the Central Virginia Master Gardeners, in partnership with the Nutrition Department for Louisa County Public Schools have garden projects at each of the four elementary schools and the high school. Additionally, VCE-Louisa has partnered with the Louisa County Public Schools Summer Feeding Program to provide healthy activity and nutrition education during the summers.

- **Child Development**

Childhood development is very important to the success of a child's life and education. Louisa County has several child care centers throughout the county as well as private child care providers. Each provider is always eager to learn skills to better prepare the children in their care for entering school. VCE-Louisa provides educational materials and programs to support the providers in meeting their required annual educational hours.

- **Agriculture Sustainability/Preservation**

The production of cattle and calves is the number two ranked agricultural enterprise in the State of Virginia only second to broiler production. The 1650 producers in the counties of Louisa, Orange, Madison, Albemarle, Nelson, Greene and Fluvanna account for 90,000 head or 15% of Virginia's total cow/calf inventory. These Central Virginia communities face the reality of rapid residential development that threatens the very existence of the regions cattle operations and family farms. If these cattle operations are not sustainable, valuable farm land and natural resources will be lost forever. The communities could be transformed to unusable agricultural states and face the risk of losing their rural character.

Virginia Cooperative Extension's Agriculture and Natural Resource agents in Louisa, Orange, Albemarle and Fluvanna counties have developed extended learning opportunities for residents in Central Virginia to improve the sustainability and management of their cattle farms. Extension led in the formation of the Central Virginia Cattleman Association in 1998 as a means for education and marketing cooperation. The Central Virginia Cow-Calf Short Course was developed to cover beef cow-calf management, genetics, nutrition, herd health and animal husbandry. In addition the Louisa Cattleman's Club was formed to provide a forum for local cattle producers to share and learn from one another while also receiving research based lectures and instruction to further enhance their learning experience. These meetings along with the addition of newsletters and on farm consultation visits by extension staff have worked to solidify this effort.

References:

United States Census Bureau Quick Facts

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/louisacountyvirginia,US/PST045217>

Virginia Department of Health, Thomas Jefferson Planning District 2019 MAPP2HEALTH Progress Report <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/thomas-jefferson/plan-mapp2health/>

Virginia Employment Commission Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate June 2018

<https://www.vec.virginia.gov/sites/default/files/06-2018%20Pre%20%20--%20%20Estimated%20Labor%20Force%20Components.pdf>