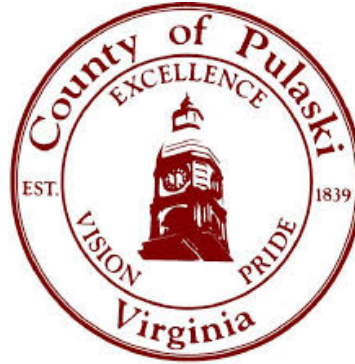




## Situation Analysis Report



## Pulaski County

# 2018

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## Introduction

Pulaski County conducted a comprehensive situation analysis during the calendar year 2004. The situation analysis process was led by the Extension Leadership Council (ELC) with input from three subject matter advisory groups. A Pulaski County Unit Profile was developed with community and resident perspectives compiled on county issues and problems. Data and information from these activities were analyzed by the ELC with priority issues identified.

In 2013, an updated situation analysis was completed and results shared with the community. In 2018, the ELC met twice during the situation analysis process. At the first meeting an overview of the situation analysis process was presented. An initial situation analysis plan was developed that included tasks and timelines for ELC members and VCE staff. Based on this, the unit profile was developed using the data set from the VCE Situation Analysis Resource website and other Pulaski demographics data. This information was compiled by VCE staff and reviewed by ELC members and local community leaders.

A needs assessment survey was mailed out to over 5,000 county residents through the Pulaski County PSA in May 2018. 159 responses were received. Those results were compiled and used as a baseline for the ELC and advisory groups to prioritize and identify the top needs.

## Unit Profile

Pulaski County is a rural county located in Virginia's New River Valley. Pulaski is part of the Blacksburg/Christiansburg-Radford Metropolitan Statistical Area. It is located on Interstate 81 about an hour southwest of Roanoke. Census data from July 1, 2017 estimated a population of 34,184; which is down 1.9% from April 1, 2010.

In Pulaski County, 30% of the residents were between 35-54 years of age in 2011 compared to Virginia's 15%. Also, 2017 estimates showed 22% of Pulaski's **population were age 65 and older**, compared to 15% for Virginia. This high percentage leads to further questions about available housing, health care facilities and senior recreation activities in the county.

The **number of uninsured people** in Pulaski from 2013 – 2017 has decreased from 16% to 9%.

The **racial composition** of Pulaski County is 92% White, 5% Black, and 2% Hispanic, compared to 70% White, 20% Black, and 9% Hispanic in Virginia.

2017 data shows that those 25 years and over who have completed a **bachelor's degree or higher**, is 18% in Pulaski County, compared to 37% in Virginia.

The **median household income** in 2016 was \$49,469 in Pulaski County, compared to \$66,149 in Virginia. The percentage of population from Pulaski County **living in poverty** is 21.3% compared to 12% in Virginia.

In July 2018, the **unemployment rate** in Pulaski was 3.6% compared to 2.9% in Virginia and 4.4% nationally.

For the 2017-2018 school year, 59% of students were **eligible for free lunch** compared to 39% overall in Virginia.

**Premature death (measured as years of potential life lost before age 75 per 100,000 population)** was calculated 9,600 in Pulaski County compared to 6,100 in Virginia in 2016.

**Adult obesity** in Pulaski County was 31% compared with 28% in Virginia in 2014.

Data on **teen birth rate** indicated that Pulaski County population was 44 individuals per 1,000 in comparison with 21 in Virginia in 2016.

In Pulaski County, 20% of **children live in poverty** as compared with 14% in Virginia in 2016

Data on **adult smoking** indicated that in Pulaski County 17% of the population smoke compared to 15% in Virginia in 2016

**Physical inactivity** in Pulaski County was 27% compared to 22% in Virginia in 2014.

Data stated that children in **single-parent households** in Pulaski County was 33% compared to 30% in Virginia in 2016

Infant death rate was 3.0 in Pulaski County, as compared to 5.8 in Virginia in 2016.

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Data Sources:

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/HealthStats/Pulaski13.htm>

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/virginia/2014/measure/factors/40/data>

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/virginia/2018/measure/outcomes/1/data>

[http://166.67.66.226/HealthStats/documents/pdf/2016/2016-inf\\_1-1.pdf](http://166.67.66.226/HealthStats/documents/pdf/2016/2016-inf_1-1.pdf)

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

<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

## **Agriculture and Natural Resources Profile**

Based on the Pulaski Situation Analysis Survey and an agriculture focus group meeting in 2018, the top 5 programs of interest to Pulaski County residents were Water Quality, Local Food, Natural Resources, Land Use, and Agriculture Profitability. The top 5 issues concerning producers in the county were as follows: Land Use and Taxation, Farm Profitability, Public Awareness of Agriculture, Field Crops, and Livestock.

The most recent survey data available is from the 2012 Census. The data collected by the USDA in their 2018 Census of Agriculture is still being compiled and not available. Between the 2007 and 2012 surveys, we saw the total number of farms increase from 415 to 445, an increase of 21%, 154 acres, or 28%. The average farm size in Pulaski increased 19%, from 182 to 217, slightly larger than the state average for Virginia at 180. Much of this increase is due to an increase in mid - large size farms. Between 2007-2012 the number of mid-size farms (180-219 acres) increased from 9 to 23, while the number of large farms (500-999 acres) increased from 19 to 36.

In 2012, livestock sales was responsible for 92% (\$25,760,000) of the market value of all agricultural products sold, while crops made up the remaining 8% (\$2,379,000). Cattle and calves are the top livestock entity in the county by far, ranking 17th in the state. Forages used for hay, haylage, and silage are the top crop items in the county by far, ranking 22nd in the state. Land in Pulaski County is used for pasture (51%), crops (28%), woodland (19%), and other uses (3%). Compared to Virginia, Pulaski has a smaller proportion of cropland and woodland, while utilizing significantly more of its available land for pasture.

## **Youth and Educational Profile**

Based on the 2018 Pulaski Situation Analysis, Extension Leadership Council and Pulaski County Board of Supervisors, the top five youth concerns to Pulaski County residents were as followed: Career & Workforce Development, 4-H After-School Clubs, Youth Leadership and Life Skills Development, Child Development and Education, and Youth Activities.

From 2018 survey data, there were 6,216 youth in the community with 4,548 K – 12<sup>th</sup> graders enrolled in school programs. The breakdown of youth is as follows: 309 of youth in Pre-School, 7.3% of youth in Kindergarten; 28.3% of youth in grades 1-4; 28.6% of youth in grades 5-8, and 35.8% of youth in grades 9-12. In the 2016-2017 school year, roughly 2,310 (54.6%) youth were receiving free and reduced lunch.

From the population of 25 years and over, 85.4% (up from 80.5% in 2013) have attained a high school degree or higher. 18.5% (up from 14.7% in 2013) have attained a bachelor's degree or higher. As of the 2015 data results, 1,522 residents were enrolled in college or graduate school.

There are five elementary schools, two middle schools and one high school located in Pulaski County. Annually, 1,000+ youth, ages 5-18, participate in 4-H programs in Pulaski County, roughly 22% of the total student body.

## Family and Consumer Sciences Profile

Based on the Pulaski County Board of Supervisors meeting and the 2018 Pulaski Situation Analysis Survey results, the top 5 Family and Consumer Science (FCS) needs include: Health, Parenting, Child Development, Aging Population, and Nutrition.

The issues of **Nutrition and Health** are related and include topics such as eating balanced meals, exercising, getting enough sleep, and stress management. In 2018, the adult obesity rate in Pulaski County was 31%, 3% higher than the Virginia rate of 28%. Several obesity-related conditions include heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and preventable death. The issue of **Substance Abuse** has become another piece encompassed by this topic. From 2015 to 2016, the state of Virginia saw a 38.9% increase in the number of drug deaths. This is the biggest single year increase ever recorded in the state. From 2016-2017, there was an additional 7.2% increase. Opioids were involved in 67.8% of all United States drug deaths in 2017. FCS will promote nutrition and overall health education to all age groups in Pulaski County. This will also encompass part of the **Aging Population** need, as health education and resources can aid in the transition to older adulthood.

The topics of **Parenting and Child Development** are opportunities to invest in the community. Providing educational programs that prepare new parents with resources for positive child development can alleviate some of the stress and hardships that come along with raising a family. 33% of children in Pulaski County live in single-parent households, 3% higher than the Virginia percentage. There is also an increasing trend of children being raised by grandparents, adding more pressure on the aging population.

### Community and Resident Perspectives

To access community needs to be addressed by the Pulaski Extension Unit, there were surveys generated to over 5,000 households, input collected from the three subject matter advisory groups, our local ELC and a focus group comprised of the Board of Supervisors and ELC members.

In May 2018, approximately 5,000 surveys were distributed to Pulaski County residents with their water/utility bills. Surveys were also distributed to Extension Group Listservs including 4-H In-School, 4-H After School, 4-H Advisory Council, 4-H All Stars & Alumni, along with 4-H Projects Clubs. Surveys were also shared with associates/partners of New River Valley Community Services. The Pulaski Extension staff collected demographic data in May 2018 using numerous resources and databases suggested by Virginia Tech. The collected material, along with the survey results were reviewed by the ELC and Extension staff.

The Unit Staff met with key members from advisory committees and previous surveys to receive input on which issues the Extension office can and cannot realistically address. The group reviewed and analyzed the survey data and developed a top 10 list of issues in Pulaski County. From this list, 6 priority issues were selected based on their level of need and Extension's ability to address them.

## Top 10 Issues

1. Youth Life Skills and Development
2. Water Quality
3. Child Development and Education
4. Health
5. Parenting
6. Aging Population
7. Youth Activities
8. Employment Options
9. Housing
10. Local Food

## Priority Issues

Based on the unit profile, department profiles, and resident perspective data from above, the following top priority issues were identified for the Pulaski County Extension Office.

- Issue 1: Youth Life Skills and Development – On a daily basis, Extension and 4-H programs teach life-skills development. Currently, this is being done through 69 4-H In-School Clubs, 4-H After-School Clubs, and Project Clubs. Along with these clubs, our Extension Office also works to this focus through interdisciplinary programs like 4-H Embryology Project, 4-H Junior Hokie Showcase, 5th Grade Agriculture & Natural Resource Day, 4-H Camp, and Realty Store. Career & Workforce Development Skills are also honed through 4-H Teens In Action!, our leadership and service learning club, 4-H Livestock Club and our 4-H Shooting Education Club.
- Issue 2: Farm Profitability and Marketing -- Livestock are the leading agriculture commodity for Pulaski County. Producers face a multitude of challenges finding reliable labor, accessing land, dealing with government regulations, and identifying the best markets and managing input costs. With projected profit margins for agriculture much tighter than they have been in some time, finding ways to add value to their products and maximize their returns is essential to profitability. Extension can provide research-based information to help producers to better understand these challenges and make the best decision for their operation. This information will be delivered through Pulaski Ag Extension Producer Programs, field days, regional conferences, educational newsletters, and coordination of added-value marketing programs such as the Virginia Quality Assured feeder cattle program.
- Issue 3: Child Development and Education -- Extension educates through all program areas offered. There are many factors that individuals face when raising a family and supporting their children. VCE works to offer programs across the board that can benefit and prosper the children of Pulaski County, as well as their families. The Childcare Conference and Resource Fair is a yearly program that targets informal caregivers in the area to provide resources and training opportunities to better their skills. Efforts can be made to reach out to other childcare facilities in Pulaski County to provide resources and trainings based on the individual center and their staff needs.

- Issue 4: Food and Nutrition -- Pulaski County Cooperative Extension strives to promote healthy well-beings through the function of food. It is inevitable that everyone must eat to survive, so providing positive mindsets and attitudes towards food and its function is key in educating and opening doors for positive changes. Extension is focusing on reaching out to all audiences to provide meaningful education tailored to the needs of the individuals, which could include their disease state, budget, allergens, food availability, and time constraints. We offer one-on-one meetings based on individual needs, Kids in the Kitchen programs to target children, after school cooking clubs, informative lessons at the Senior Center, as well as highlighting exposure of healthy eating to preschoolers in the county through hands-on learning. Efforts can be made to work with the schools to offer Food, Nutrition and Health programs to all 2nd and 3rd graders focusing on healthy food choices and the importance of daily exercise. Additionally, programs like Kids In the Kitchen, Chef In Training, and teen programs like Let's Make a Pizza and Let's Make Cinnamon Rolls, are designed to educate older youth on budgeting, shopping, and making healthy meal choices for the home and family. Additionally, Extension can work with the community to teach home preservation skills through canning, hot water bath, and pressure canners/cookers.
- Issue 5: Youth Activities -- Although this focus area can be quite broad, 4-H is making a reasonable attempt at filling the gap through our 4-H After-School Clubs at Critzer, Pulaski and Riverlawn Elementary Schools through 4-H Junior Master Gardeners, 4-H Garden Clubs, 4-H Arts & Crafts Clubs and 4-H Sewing Clubs. Additionally, we offer programs like Kids In the Kitchen, Let's Make a Pizza, Let's Make Cinnamon Rolls and our newest program, Chef In Training.
- Issue 6: Local Food -- Demand for local and regional foods continues to grow in Virginia and across the United States. It has also generated economic and social opportunities for agricultural producers, entrepreneurs, and communities. Many residents of Pulaski County lack availability and budget to purchase high quality, nutritious food. VCE is working to emphasize marketing programs like farmer's markets, pick-your-own, agritourism, and other direct sale opportunities. These marketing strategies can help producers and consumers alike get the most for their money, choose a healthy meal, and support their community through the process. Extension can also make efforts to teach the community more about home gardening and fruits/vegetables best grown and suited to our climate, including plants for the different seasons.

## Appendices

Community and Resident Perspectives Survey



Virginia Tech • Virginia State University

The purpose of this survey is to gather information about issues in Pulaski County. Please take a couple of minutes to share your opinions. The results of this anonymous survey will help in shaping Virginia Cooperative Extension programs in Pulaski County. Please return the completed survey to the Pulaski County Extension Office located at:

143 Third St, NW, Suite 3, Pulaski, VA 24301 or online at [www.tinyurl.com/va7h6qc9](http://www.tinyurl.com/va7h6qc9)

***Please Submit By May 15, 2018***

**Please rate the importance of the following issues in Pulaski County.**

	Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Very Important	No Opinion
After-School Care			Water Quality	
Aging Population/ Long Term Care			Youth Activities	
Agriculture Profitability/Sustainability				
Agricultural Marketing				
Agritourism				
Beginning/Small Farmers				
Careers Awareness				
Child Development				
Chronic Disease				
Community Outreach				
Community Planning				
Community Services				
Consumer Issues				
Dependent Care				
Employment Options				
Environmental Protection/Land Use				
Family Activities				
Farm Transition				
Field Crops/Pasture				
Finances/Financial Mgmt				
Food Safety/Preservation				
Health				
Home Lawn/Garden				
Household/ Backyard Pets				
Housing				
Leadership				
Life Skills for Youth				
Livestock Production				
Local Food				
Natural Resources				
Nutrition/Obesity				
Parenting				
Pest Management				
Public Awareness of Agriculture				
Small Business /Entrepreneurism				



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

**Issue 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Issue 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Issue 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Issue 4:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Issue 5:** \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please provide any information on what direction you believe Extension or community programs should take in Pulaski County.

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3. How familiar are you with Virginia Cooperative Extension (with programs in 4-H, Family and Consumer Sciences and Agriculture & Natural Resources)?

- Not familiar at all
- Somewhat familiar
- Familiar
- Very familiar

4. Have you ever participated in educational programs offered by Virginia Cooperative Extension?  No  Yes

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

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**Please tell us about yourself. These items are voluntary to complete.**

6. What is your gender?  Female  Male  65+

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

- Less than high school
- Some high school
- High school graduate/GED
- Some college
- College graduate
- Some graduate work
- Master's degree
- Doctorate degree

8. In which category is your current age?

- 18-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-64

9. Which category best describes your race?

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000-\$19,999
- \$20,000-\$29,999
- \$30,000-\$39,999
- \$40,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$59,999
- \$60,000-\$69,999
- \$70,000-\$79,999
- \$80,000-\$89,999
- \$90,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000 or more

10. Which of the following categories best represents your gross total family income during the last year?