

Kentucky Extension Community Assessment Barren County Report 2019



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

 University of
Kentucky
*College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment*





University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture, Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

Dear Community Member,

Thank you for your support and participation in the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service Community Needs Assessment. The purpose of this assessment is to better serve you through targeted educational programming.

The Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service is the outreach arm of the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment and Kentucky State University College of Agriculture, Communities and Environment. With offices in all 120 counties of the Commonwealth, Extension provides practical, research-based educational programs and information.

Extension values community input into educational program development and has from its inception more than a century ago. Every four years, each Extension office prepares a plan of work that includes gathering information from community members as well as secondary data to inform the plan.

Our state is changing, and new areas of need are emerging. To standardize our plan of work process, a committee of Extension personnel and community members developed the community needs assessment process to formalize that data gathering portion.

We expected a large response and we were not disappointed. Over 38,000 people completed the survey. More than 500 interviews and focus groups were conducted. We will use this information to develop local plans of work in our counties as well as regional and statewide initiatives to make a positive impact in the lives of Kentuckians.

We look forward to continuing to serve you.

Sincerely,

University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service Administration

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

In the fall of 2018, the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service began a statewide assessment of community issues and priorities from across the Commonwealth. County Extension offices led the effort by collecting feedback from various county residents, stakeholders, and organizations. Each county collected feedback through surveys, focus groups, and interviews with community stakeholders. The goal of this project was to gain a better understanding of the needs and priorities facing communities in Kentucky. Gathering information from each county allowed both a broad view of state community issues and an opportunity to detail and address issues specific to counties. Utilizing the results, the University of Kentucky and Cooperative Extension Service can align resources and improve services and partnerships in response to the priority needs of each county. This report is a summary of the data collected in this county.

Community Survey

A community needs assessment survey was developed by a committee representing a mix of county Extension Agents, Extension Specialists from departments across the University of Kentucky, and community stakeholders. The assessment survey was shared with each county Extension office. In turn, Extension Agents invited county residents to participate in the community needs assessment survey. The survey was electronically distributed by social media and email, and was distributed on paper to individuals, groups and organizations to be completed.

Focus Groups

County Extension office staff convened community members in interactive focus groups in the fall of 2018. The focus group listening sessions were designed to allow community members to discuss their ideas on the future of the county in more detail than allowed on the survey. Participants in the focus groups were invited to discuss their vision for a more vibrant county, issues for the future, barriers to issue resolution, resources or information that would help the issues, and ideas for an improved future. A summarized reporting of the results of these listening sessions are included in this report.

Interviews

In addition to the survey and focus group sessions, county Extension Agents also conducted interviews with individuals in formal leadership roles in the county. The interview questioning followed a similar format to the focus groups, seeking information on pressing needs, long term needs, and exploring the role that Extension might serve to address future issues confronting the county.

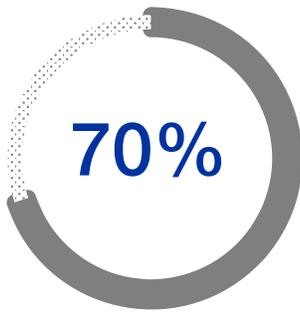
Secondary Data

To complement the survey, focus groups, and interviews, detailed data profiles have been compiled for each county that correspond to topic areas covered in the survey. This information provides additional context to understand the role of identified issues in each county as well as historical data to highlight trends.

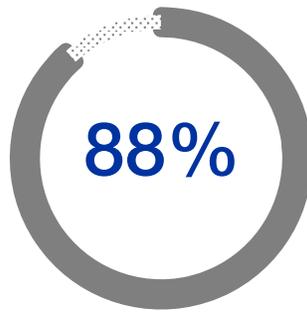
Next Steps

This report summarizes the information collected for this county. The report and the included secondary data compilation can serve as a starting point for deeper investigation into the issues of concern and priority for community members. The University of Kentucky and Cooperative Extension Service will support the county in addressing the priorities identified through this assessment.

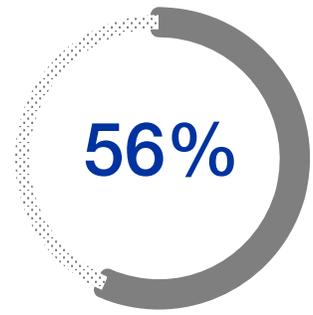
347 Respondents



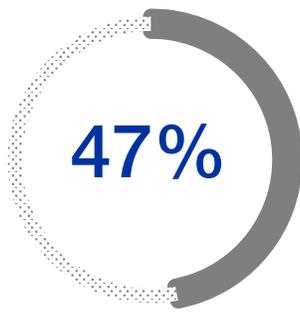
are Female



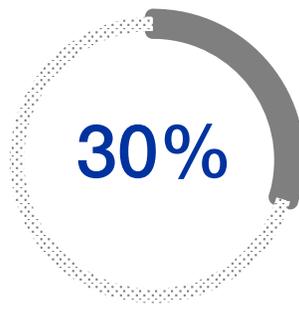
are White
(non-Hispanic)



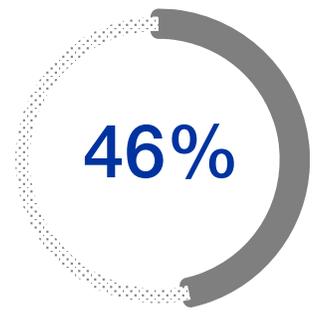
are 25-64 years old
(working age)



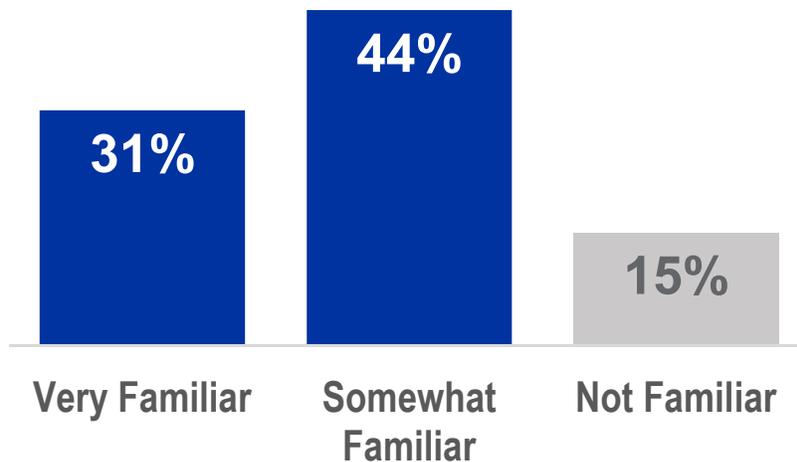
work or are
self-employed



are retired



currently participate
in Extension
programming



respondent familiarity with Extension

ISSUE IMPORTANCE

347 respondents ranked 62 community issues on a scale of “very important” to “not important.”

The table below lists all 62 community issues. The numerical value listed next to each issue represents the average rating across all respondents. Below is the scale used to determine the average rating:

Very important = 4 Important = 3 Not that important = 2 Not important = 1

The table is organized into two columns: the most important issue (on average) is listed at the top of the left column.

Category Legend:

▲ Health and Wellness ♥ Youth and Families ♦ Agriculture and Environment ■ Jobs and Infrastructure ● Community Vitality

3.76 ■ More jobs paying good wages with benefits	3.49 ♦ More profitable farms
3.73 ■ Trustworthy and effective law enforcement	3.49 ▲ Availability of substance use prevention programs
3.71 ▲ Fewer chronic diseases (diabetes, heart disease, cancer, etc.)	3.48 ● More pride in the community and its assets
3.7 ▲ Improved affordability of health care insurance	3.48 ● More citizens helping to solve local issues
3.69 ▲ Fewer overweight or obese youth and adults	3.48 ♥ Affordable, quality child care
Improved access to quality affordable health care providers	
3.67 ▲ (medical, dental, etc.)	3.47 ♥ More senior citizen support programs
More youth life skills training (money management, life decision	
3.66 ♥ making, etc.)	3.47 ♥ More support for relatives raising children of family members
	Better employee “soft skills” training (communications, team
3.66 ♦ Less illegal dumping and littering	3.47 ■ work, etc.)
3.66 ■ Responsive emergency services	3.45 ▲ Better skills for selecting and preparing healthier food
3.63 ♥ More support for prevention of school violence and bullying	3.45 ♥ Stronger parenting and relationship building skills
3.63 ♦ Sustainability of family farms	3.43 ● More effective cooperation between community organizations
3.62 ▲ Improved availability of health care insurance	3.41 ● More active community volunteers
3.61 ● More qualified leaders to prepare community for the future	3.41 ■ Access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet service
3.6 ■ Increased support for small business	3.41 ♦ More crop and livestock production opportunities
Better family skills in reducing debt, increasing savings, and	
3.6 ♥ financial planning	3.4 ▲ Safer community places to walk, run, bike, etc.
	More healthy snacks and food options at restaurants and
3.59 ▲ Safer use of prescription medications	3.4 ▲ community events
3.59 ▲ More sources for buying safe, affordable, fresh local foods	3.4 ▲ More individual physical activity opportunities
	More community marketing efforts (tourism, industry
3.58 ■ More qualified employees for existing or new jobs	3.35 ● attraction, etc.)
3.57 ♥ More support for families with mental and emotional health issues	3.35 ♦ Less pest, disease, and weed issues
3.55 ♥ More affordable, quality elder care options	3.34 ♦ More land available for food production
Better use of food safety practices (hand washing, storage,	
3.55 ▲ preservation, etc.)	3.28 ♦ More training for food gardening skills
3.55 ♦ More awareness and support for agriculture and agribusinesses	3.27 ■ Better utilities (water, sewer, etc.) to attract industry
3.53 ■ Safe and accessible public water and sewer	3.25 ▲ Improved sidewalks and crosswalks
3.53 ▲ More sources for buying safe, affordable, fresh food	3.25 ■ More part-time and summer job opportunities
3.53 ♥ Better youth and adult career readiness	3.21 ♦ Increased tree and forestry management
3.52 ▲ Availability of substance use treatment	3.2 ♦ More farm-related jobs
3.51 ♥ More support for families and individuals with special needs	3.17 ♦ More community gardens
3.51 ♥ More child and partner abuse prevention resources	3.16 ♦ More community parks and green spaces
3.51 ♦ More market opportunities for farmers	3.15 ■ More tourism-related businesses
3.5 ■ Better roads and bridges	3.13 ■ More public transportation options
3.49 ● More youth community leadership opportunities	3 ♦ Better landscapes for improved home value

TOP PRIORITY ISSUES

After respondents ranked the importance of issues in their community, they were asked to identify the top three priorities for their community in each issue category.

234 respondents chose issues by priority, and the resulting top three priorities for each issue category are listed below.

By prioritizing the issues, respondents are not just identifying how important each issue is for their community, but rather *which issues they would prioritize in their community*.

Jobs & Infrastructure

1. More jobs paying good wages and benefits
2. Increased support for small businesses
3. More qualified employees for existing and new jobs

Agriculture & Environment

1. Sustainability of family farms
2. More market opportunities for farmers
3. Less illegal dumping and littering

Health & Wellness

1. Improved affordability of health care insurance
2. Fewer chronic diseases (diabetes, heart disease, cancer, etc.)
3. Improved access to quality, affordable health care providers (medical, dental, etc.)

Youth & Families

1. More youth life skills training (money management, life decision making, etc.)
2. Better youth and adult career readiness
3. Better family skills in reducing debt, increasing savings and financial planning

Community Vitality

1. More qualified leaders to prepare community for the future
2. More citizens helping to solve local issues
3. More youth community leadership opportunities

Two focus group sessions were facilitated in Barren County by Extension agents. One focus group consisted of members of the County Extension Council and the second with Family Youth Service Center Directors. The conversations focused on identifying the priority issues facing the county and proposed ideas of what residents would like to see in the future. While focus groups only offer a small sample of attitudes within the county, they do provide insightful first-hand perspectives from residents. The responses from the focus groups are summarized below.

Vision for a More Vibrant Community

The following themes were raised by focus group participants when asked about their vision for the future of the county:

- A community with affordable child care, senior activities, mental health and substance abuse treatment facilities, and a homeless shelter
- A community with a diverse farmers market, more healthy eating options, restaurants, and a closer grain market
- A community that provides more high paying jobs, more support for local businesses, with public transportation in the county

Identified Priorities

- Increased community engagement
- Increased public services
- Increased employment/jobs
- Address drugs and homelessness

Priorities Discussion

Improving community engagement was a key priority in discussions. The focus groups noted the importance of getting more people involved to work together to address community issues. Participants highlighted the importance of providing opportunities to get more youth involved in the community.

Participants prioritized support services to help people in need, supporting farmers and the farmers market, and having more healthy eating options. Quality public services were discussed as priority, particularly centered around responding to drugs and homelessness. Participants discussed the need for mental health treatment facilities, substance abuse treatment facilities, and a homeless shelter. There was a clear intent to support vulnerable populations and address poverty both as an immediate and ongoing priority.

The creation and availability of jobs was identified as an immediate and longer-term issue. Ideas shared included the need for higher paying jobs and more jobs available.

Other pressing issues identified in the focus groups included increasing the accountability of landlords to maintain rental properties to improve the quality of living options in the community and making public transportation available in the county.

Barren County Extension conducted four key informant interviews to gain a deeper insight from the perspectives of community leaders of organizations highly engaged in public service. These interviews allowed deeper insight from the perspectives of people highly engaged in community activities. The interview followed a similar format to the focus groups, seeking information on pressing needs, long-term needs, and exploring ways that Extension might serve to address issues confronting the county. The interview perspectives are compiled and summarized to represent key discussion ideas.

Identified Priorities

- Employment/jobs
- Responding to drug issues
- Addressing hunger and social issues
- Communication and connection

Priorities Discussion

Issues relating to additional industry and more jobs were mentioned multiple times throughout key informant interviews. The need for a willing and able workforce, industry recruitment and retention, and local jobs for citizens and graduates was discussed as both immediate and long-term priorities. Interviewees identified the implications of the lack of jobs to include the loss of county residents due to no or lower paying jobs, loss of/decrease in county revenue and taxes, and Barren County becoming a bedroom community for surrounding counties. It was noted that lack of stable employment can lead to an increase in homeless and transient students and adults. One solution identified was to make Glasgow/Barren County a regional employment hub.

Interview discussions also focused on finding additional land for development, development along the interchange of parkway and 249, downtown revitalization, and making certain the county has adequate infrastructure as priorities to support a vibrant economy in the community.

Another common priority was to address social issues in the community. Stress, health issues, hunger, and substance abuse issues were all identified as issues that needed increased support. Comments from interview participants reflected that reducing the drug problem would help with other issues. There was expressed concern for disabled people who did not have access to food, financial and health concerns for senior citizens, individuals on government assistance, and safety for teachers, staff, and pupils in schools. Improving race relations, community diversity training efforts, and encouraging increased diversity was also discussed.

A third issue frequently raised was the need for improved community communication and improved collaboration. It was expressed that better communication between agencies and organizations could bring in more, and better, programs to help correct issues. “Pushing people to be involved” in the community, including youth and parents, would help to increase a sense of community.

County leaders elaborated about types of information or resources the University of Kentucky and the Cooperative Extension Service could provide to help address the priority issues in Barren County. These ideas were suggested:

- Providing leadership classes, collaboration, networking events or programs, and other programs to open lines of communications
- Increase educational programs to help folks off government assistance
- Educate about land use options and community design
- Educate youth about career and workforce opportunities
- Recruit agribusinesses and processors in the area
- Provide diversity training, parenting resources, community engagement, citizenship awareness, statistics on key issues, training in safety procedures, health awareness and prevention issues
- Make the Extension office a training facility and use the space better.



Barren County Data Profile

Barren County's Data Profile is provided by the **Kentucky: By The Numbers** program in the Department of Community and Leadership Development for the Community Assessments conducted by the University of Kentucky's Cooperative Extension Service. These secondary data profiles supplement the survey, focus groups, and key informant interviews conducted in each county across the state through the County Extension Offices and coordinated by Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK).

The overall goals for the Community Assessments are:

- To gain a better understanding of the county's pressing issues;
- To enhance Extension's place-based approach by providing information on locally relevant issues in counties;
- To gain a better understanding of how Extension can support important community change to improve Kentucky;
- To provide a statewide view of how top issues are distributed across the state.

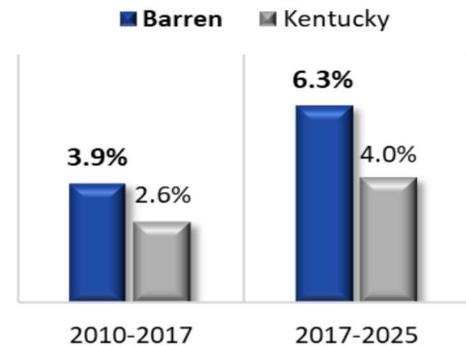
For more information on the Community Assessment process, visit <https://extension.ca.uky.edu/communityassessment>

For additional data or other data-related assistance, contact: Dr. Julie N. Zimmerman (jjimm@uky.edu)

County Demographics

Population	2010 ¹	2017 ²	2025 ³
Total	42,173	43,801	46,580
Ages 65 and over	6,500		9,383
	2010-2017⁴		
Net Migration (in/out)	1,148		
Race/Ethnicity	2010 ¹	2016 ⁵	
White	38,638	39,863	
Black or African American	1,627	1,769	
Asian	181	334	
Other and 2 or more races	617	674	
Hispanic	1,110	1,353	

Percent Change Total Population⁶
2010-2017 and 2017-2025



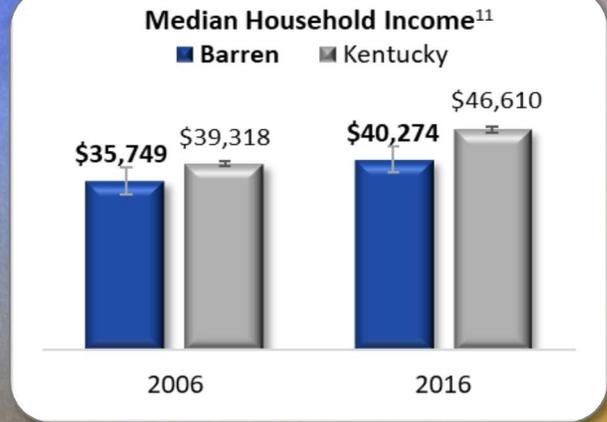
- From 2010 to 2017, the total population in Barren County **increased** by **1,628** people.²
- Between April 2010 and June 2017, there was an estimated **net in migration** of **1,148** people.⁴
- In 2016, the composition of Barren County's population is estimated to be **90.6%** White, **4.0%** Black/African American, **0.8%** Asian, **1.5%** other and 2 or more races, and **3.1%** Hispanic.⁵
- From 2017 to 2025, the total population in Barren County is **projected to increase** by **2,779** people.³
- As baby boomers are entering retirement, between 2010 and 2025 the population ages 65 and over in Barren County are **projected to increase** by **44.4%** compared to 51.9% for the state as a whole.³

Barren County Data Profile

Families and Households

Families	2010 ¹	2012-2016 ⁷
Married couple		
... with own children	3,333	3,203 (+/- 346)
Female householder		
... with own children	1,205	1,327 (+/- 240)
Male householder		
... with own children	414	257 (+/- 137)
Nonfamily households (live alone/unrelated)	5,286	5,211 (+/- 363)

Poverty	2012-2016 ⁷
Percent of families with related children who are below poverty	24.2% (+/- 4.3%)
Percent 65 and over below poverty	16.7% (+/- 3.3%)

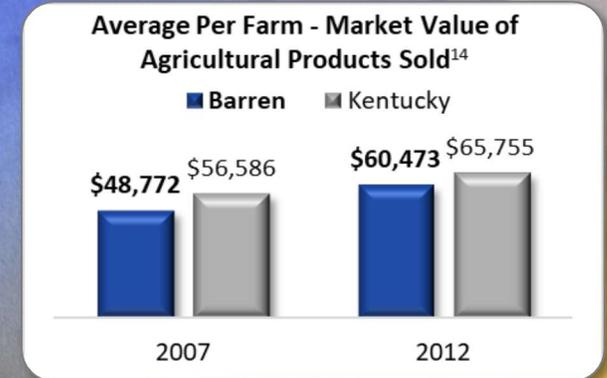


Grandparents living with and raising grandchildren ³	2012-2016 ⁷
	526 (+/- 178)

- In 2016, Barren County's official poverty rate was **21.8%** (19.0% - 24.6%), compared to 18.2% (17.9% - 18.6%) for the state as a whole.⁸
- In 2017, there were **15** child care centers in Barren County. Of these **8** were STARS certified.⁹
- Between 2012-2016, **3.8%** (+/- 0.7%) of people ages 5 and over spoke a language other than English at home.⁷
- The Urban Institute estimates that **13%** people in Barren County with a credit bureau record in 2016 had student loan debt compared to 16% for the state.¹⁰

Agriculture (Data from the 2017 Ag Census will be available in 2019)

Farms*	2007 ¹²	2012 ¹³
Total number of farms	2,170	1,869
Percent of land in farms	84.8%	79.7%
Average farm size (acres)	122	133
		2012¹³
Income from agri-tourism and recreational services		\$6,000
Number of farms marketing products directly to retail outlets		26
Average value per farm of agricultural products sold directly to individuals for human consumption		\$5,158



Percent of Principal Operators	2012 ¹³
... who are female	8.9%
... under age 35	6.5%
... farming as primary occupation	51.1%

- In 2012, the total market value of agricultural products sold in Barren County was **\$113,025,000**.¹³
- Of the total market value of agricultural products sold, **33.4%** was the value of crops and **66.6%** was the value of livestock, poultry, and their products.¹³
- The total farm production expenses (average per farm) was **\$57,303** compared to \$62,002 for the state.¹³
- In Barren County, there were **1,624** hired farm labor workers on **500** farms.¹³
- **93.2%** of farms were operated by a family or an individual compared to 91.0% for the state.¹³

* A farm must sell at least \$5,000 to be defined as a farm operation.

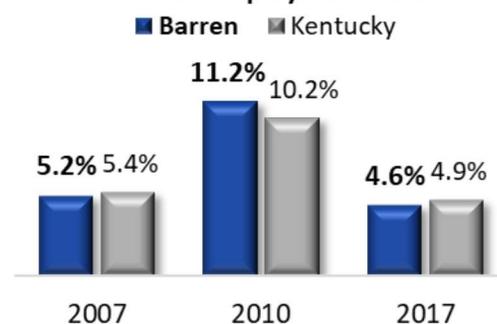
Barren County Data Profile

Jobs, Economy, and Labor Force

Jobs and Businesses	2010	2016
Total Employment (# of jobs) ¹⁵	23,038	25,022
Total Establishments (w/ employees) ¹⁶	891	878
... % with 1-9 employees	72.3%	70.6%
... % with 10-20 employees	15.2%	12.9%
Total NonEmployer Establishments (w/o employees) ¹⁷	3,306	3,295

Education	2012-2016 ⁷	
Percent of population 25 and over		
... with HS or higher	81.7% (+/- 1.6%)	
... with bachelors or higher	15.5% (+/- 1.5%)	
	Men	Women
Median Earnings (2012-16) ⁷	\$27,489 (+/- \$1,802)	\$21,104 (+/- \$1,511)

Annual Unemployment Rate²⁰



Avg Weekly Wage¹⁸

	2017
... All Industries (Private & Govt)	\$685
... Goods-producing (Private)	\$870
... Service-providing (Private)	\$613

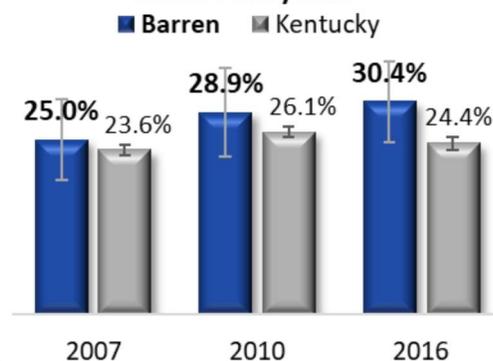
- In 2017, the number of private establishments covered by unemployment insurance in Barren County was **131** for goods-producing, **836** for service-providing, and **120** for hospitality & leisure.¹⁸
- Between 2012 and 2016, of the **18,335** (+/- 558) workers ages 16 and over, **75.7%** (+/- 1.9%) worked inside the county, **22.7%** (+/- 0.5%) worked outside the county and **1.6%** (+/- 0.5%) worked outside Kentucky.⁷
- Between 2012 and 2016, **5.0%** (+/- 1.8%) of workers ages 16 and over who worked full-time year round were below poverty compared to 3.5% (+/- 0.1%) for the state as a whole.⁷
- **25.3%** of 2016 HS graduates in the county earned an industry certificate compared to 19.2% for the state.¹⁹

Youth

Population by Age	2010 ¹	2017 ²	2025 ³
Under 5 years old	2,756	2,852	2,870
5-9 years old	2,760	2,785	3,054
10-14 years old	2,889	2,974	3,028
15-19 years old	2,812	2,667	3,010

Children by Relationship to Householder	2012-2016 ⁷
... Own Children (Biological, Adopted, Stepchild)	8,909 (+/- 296)
... Grandchild	758 (+/- 254)
... Other Relative	262 (+/- 102)
... Foster/Unrelated	305 (+/- 151)

Child Poverty Rate²³



17.1% of students entered KY public postsecondary institutions underprepared in one or more subjects (2015).²¹

- Between 2012-2016, there were an estimated **799** (+/- 235) youth ages 5-17 who had a disability.⁷
- **43.9%** of 3rd grade students in Barren County scored proficient or distinguished on math in the 2015-16 school year compared to 47.7% for the state.²²
- **3,860** (+/- 479) youth under age 18 lived in households that received supplemental security income (SSI), cash public assistance, or food stamps/SNAP in the past 12 months (2012-2016).⁷

Barren County Data Profile

Health and Wellness

Percent of Adults

... reporting poor or fair health (2016) ²⁴	21.4% (20.6%-22.2%)
... with hypertension (2013-15) ²⁵	34.7% (26.6%-43.7%)
... with obesity (2014-16) ²⁵	32% (25.0%-40.9%)
... with diabetes (2014-16) ²⁵	11.0% (7.7%-15.6%)

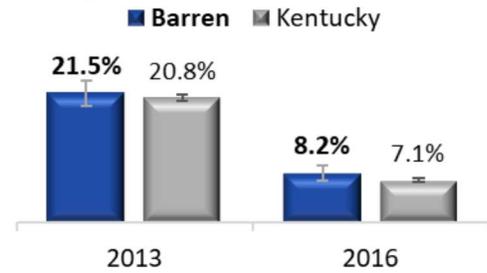
Number of Individuals

... receiving SNAP (food stamps) (2017) ²⁶	6,893
... who are food insecure (2016 estimate) ²⁷	6,540

Number of Overdoses²⁸

	2008-2010	2015-2017
... fatal overdoses	7	21
... nonfatal overdoses	402	420

Percent of Population Ages 18-64 who are Uninsured²⁹



Number of Care Providers²⁴

... Primary Care Physicians (2015)	37
... Dentists (2016)	15
... Mental Health Providers (2017)	58

- The estimated food insecurity rate for Barren County is **15.1%**, compared to 15.5% for the state.²⁷
- From 2010 to 2016, the number of grocery stores **did not change** by **0.0%**, from **11** to **11** stores.¹⁶
- In 2013-2015, **31.4%** (26.8%-36.2%) of adults ages 20 and over reported no leisure time physical activity.²⁴
- The Urban Institute estimates that **29%** of people in Barren County with a credit bureau record in 2016 had medical debt in collections compared to 27% for the state as a whole.¹⁰
- **14.3%** (9.1%-21.9%) of adults reported that there was a time in past year when they needed to see a doctor but could not because of the cost.²⁵

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<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sahie.html>
- Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE).
<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saie.html>

Additional data are also available at:

Kentucky: By The Numbers (<http://www2.ca.uky.edu/snar/index.htm>),
 the FCS Building Strong Families profiles (<http://hes.uky.edu/StrongFamilies>),
 and the CEDIK county profiles (<https://cedik.ca.uky.edu/CountyDataProfiles>).

Barren County Priority Responses
234 Respondents

Jobs and Infrastructure

More jobs paying good wages and benefits	63.64%
Increased support for small businesses	20.51%
More qualified employees for existing and new jobs	18.65%
Better roads and bridges	16.94%
Better employee "soft skills" training (communications, team work, etc.)	16.57%
Trustworthy and effective law enforcement	13.02%
More public transportation options	10.44%
More tourism-related businesses	8%
Responsive emergency services	7.57%
Access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet service	7.07%
Safe and accessible public water and sewer	6.15%
Better utilities (water, sewer, etc.) to attract industry	3.43%
More part-time and summer job opportunities	1.69%

Agriculture and Environment

Sustainability of family farms	46.89%
More market opportunities for farmers	35.57%
Less illegal dumping and littering	30.2%
More support for Kentucky agriculture and agribusiness	27.17%
More profitable farms	21.69%
More training for food gardening skills	21.36%
More farm-related jobs	16.32%
More crop and livestock production opportunities	16.3%
More community parks and green spaces	15.18%
More community gardens	11.29%
More land available for food production	10.75%
Increased tree and forestry management	10.64%
Less pest, disease, and weed issues	9.5%
Better landscapes for improved home value	5.49%

Health and Wellness

Improved affordability of health care insurance	29.17%
Fewer chronic diseases (diabetes, heart disease, cancer, etc.)	28.57%
Improved access to quality, affordable health care providers (medical, dental, etc.)	23.2%
More sources for buying safe, affordable, fresh food	20.97%
More sources for buying safe, affordable, fresh local foods	19.67%
Fewer overweight or obese youth and adults	17.71%
Availability of substance use treatment	15.85%
More healthy snack and food options at restaurants and community events	15.68%
Availability of substance use prevention programs	14.67%
Better skills for selecting and preparing healthier food	13.51%
Improved availability of health care insurance	12.57%
Better use of food safety practices (hand washing, storage, preservation, etc.)	10.06%
Safer community places to walk, run, bike, etc.	7.91%
Safer use of prescription medications	6.11%
Improved sidewalks and crosswalks	5.08%
More individual physical activity opportunities	2.82%

Youth and Families

More youth life skills training (money management, life decision making, etc.)	46.27%
Better youth and adult career readiness	31.35%
Better family skills in reducing debt, increasing savings and financial planning	27.18%
More support for prevention of school violence and bullying	23.16%
More support for families with mental and emotional health issues	22.51%
More affordable, quality elder care options	20.43%
More support for relatives raising children of family members	15.59%
Affordable quality child care	14.67%
Stronger parenting and relationship building skills	12.5%
More support for families and individuals with special needs	10.81%
More senior citizen support programs	10.38%
More child and partner abuse prevention resources	6.7%

Community Vitality

More qualified leaders to prepare community for the future	43.69%
More citizens helping to solve local issues	39.2%
More youth community leadership opportunities	35.38%
More pride in the community and its assets	31.25%
More effective cooperation between community organizations	25.26%
More active community volunteers	19.27%
More community marketing efforts (tourism, industry attraction, etc.)	19.15%

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



DATE

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY, KY ZIP

Cooperative Extension Service

(Your) County
Street address
City, KY zip-speed
(000) 000-0000
Fax: (000) 000-0000
<http://extension.ca.uky.edu>

Re: _____ County Extension Community Survey

Dear _____,

The **Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service (Extension)** is the local outreach arm of the **University of Kentucky** College of Agriculture, Food and Environment and **Kentucky State University** College of Agriculture, Communities, and the Environment. The goal is to provide practical, research-based education that helps individuals, families and communities solve problems and improve lives. Extension provides value to communities through educational programs and information in areas like farming, gardening, parenting, budgeting, healthy living, and youth, community, and economic development.

We are interested in better understanding the issues that are important to you in your community. In response, the Kentucky Cooperative Extension System can tailor new and existing programs to address the highest priority issues that directly impact you, your family and your community. You do NOT need to be familiar with Cooperative Extension to complete this survey. The survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete and all of your responses will be completely anonymous and confidential.

Please return this survey to (Local office name and address) by _____.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact (local office name and phone number).

Sincerely,

Cooperative Extension Service
Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.
LEXINGTON, KY 40546



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

1. Please rate each of the following community issues on a scale of "Not Important" to "Very Important" by placing a check mark or "X" in the corresponding space. If you are uncertain if an issue is important to your community, select "I don't know."
2. After evaluating the importance of each issue within this category, please select the **TWO** issues you consider the highest priority for your community.

Jobs and Public Infrastructure

	1.					2.	
	Not Important	Not that Important	Important	Very Important	I don't know	Select 2 issues	
More jobs paying good wages with benefits	<input type="radio"/>						
More tourism-related businesses	<input type="radio"/>						
Increased support for small businesses	<input type="radio"/>						
More part-time and summer job opportunities	<input type="radio"/>						
More qualified employees for existing or new jobs	<input type="radio"/>						
Better employee "soft skills" training (communications, team work, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>						
Better utilities (water, sewer, etc.) to attract industry	<input type="radio"/>						
Access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet service	<input type="radio"/>						
Safe and accessible public water and sewer	<input type="radio"/>						
Responsive emergency services	<input type="radio"/>						
Trustworthy and effective law enforcement	<input type="radio"/>						
Better roads and bridges	<input type="radio"/>						
More public transportation options	<input type="radio"/>						
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>						

Agriculture and Environment

	Not Important	Not that Important	Important	Very Important	I don't know	Select 2 issues	
More farm-related jobs	<input type="radio"/>						
More market opportunities for farmers	<input type="radio"/>						
More crop and livestock production opportunities	<input type="radio"/>						
More profitable farms	<input type="radio"/>						
Sustainability of family farms	<input type="radio"/>						
More awareness and support for agriculture and agribusinesses	<input type="radio"/>						
More land available for food production	<input type="radio"/>						
Less pest, disease and weed issues	<input type="radio"/>						
More community gardens	<input type="radio"/>						

This section continues on the next page.

Please rate each of the following community issues on a scale of "Not Important" to "Very Important" by placing a check mark or "X" in the corresponding space. If you are uncertain if an issue is important to your community, select "I don't know." After evaluating the importance of each issue within this category, **please select the TWO issues** you consider the highest priority for your community.

Agriculture and Environment, continued

	Not Important	Not that Important	Important	Very Important	I don't know	Select 2 issues
More training for food gardening skills	<input type="radio"/>					
More community parks and green spaces	<input type="radio"/>					
Increase tree and forestry management	<input type="radio"/>					
Less illegal dumping and littering	<input type="radio"/>					
Better landscapes for improved home value	<input type="radio"/>					
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>					

Health and Wellness

	Not Important	Not that Important	Important	Very Important	I don't know	Select 2 issues
Better skills for selecting and preparing healthier food	<input type="radio"/>					
More healthy snacks and food options at restaurants and community events	<input type="radio"/>					
Better use of food safety practices (hand washing, storage, preservation, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>					
More sources for buying safe, affordable, fresh food	<input type="radio"/>					
More sources for buying safe, affordable, fresh local foods	<input type="radio"/>					
Fewer chronic diseases (diabetes, heart disease, cancer, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>					
Fewer overweight or obese youth and adults	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved access to quality affordable health care providers (medical, dental, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved availability of health care insurance	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved affordability of health care insurance	<input type="radio"/>					
Safer use of prescription medications	<input type="radio"/>					
More individual physical activity opportunities	<input type="radio"/>					
Safer community places to walk, run, bike, etc.	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved sidewalks and crosswalks	<input type="radio"/>					
Availability of substance use prevention programs	<input type="radio"/>					
Availability of substance use treatment	<input type="radio"/>					
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>					

Please rate each of the following community issues on a scale of "Not Important" to "Very Important" by placing a check mark or "X" in the corresponding space. If you are uncertain if an issue is important to your community, select "I don't know." After evaluating the importance of each issue within this category, **please select the TWO issues** you consider the highest priority for your community.

Youth and Families

	Not Important	Not that Important	Important	Very Important	I don't know		Select 2 issues
Better youth and adult career readiness	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More youth life skills training (money management, life decision making, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
Better family skills in reducing debt, increasing savings and financial planning	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More support for prevention of school violence and bullying	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More support for families with mental and emotional health issues	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More support for families and individuals with special needs	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More support for relatives raising children of family members	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More child and partner abuse prevention resources	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
Stronger parenting and relationship building skills	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
Affordable quality child care	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More senior citizen support programs	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More affordable, quality elder care options	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				

Overall Community Vitality

	Not Important	Not that Important	Important	Very Important	I don't know		Select 2 issues
More qualified leaders to prepare community for the future	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More youth community leadership opportunities	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More citizens helping to solve local issues	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More effective cooperation between community organizations	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More active community volunteers	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More pride in the community and its assets	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
More community marketing efforts (tourism, industry attraction, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>				

Demographics

Please select your age:	Under 18	18-24	25-44	45-64	65 and over
	<input type="radio"/>				

Please select your gender?	Male	Female	Non-binary
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please select your Race/Ethnicity?	
White, Non-Hispanic	<input type="radio"/>
African-American	<input type="radio"/>
Hispanic, Latino	<input type="radio"/>
Asian-American	<input type="radio"/>
Two or more races	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>

What is the highest level of education?	
Some high school	<input type="radio"/>
High school degree	<input type="radio"/>
Some college	<input type="radio"/>
Associate's degree	<input type="radio"/>
Bachelor's degree	<input type="radio"/>
Advanced degree(Masters, Doctorate, JD, MD, etc)	<input type="radio"/>

Please select the option that best describes your current employment status:						
Retired	Unemployed	Self-employed	Do not work	Work full-time	Work part-time	Student
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How familiar are you with the programs and services of the Cooperative Extension Service?		
Very familiar <input type="radio"/>	Somewhat familiar <input type="radio"/>	Not familiar <input type="radio"/>

Do you, or someone in your family, currently participate in any Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service program?	
Yes <input type="radio"/>	No <input type="radio"/>

What county do you live?	Do you live in the county seat?
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black;"/>	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>

What other comments and/or suggestions do you have about important issues in your county?
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black;"/>
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black;"/>
<hr style="border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black;"/>

FOCUS GROUP PROCESS

Focus groups are a commonly used method for gathering feedback or perspectives from a sampling of stakeholders. For this initiative, county Extension educators convened two or more small group meetings of community members to facilitate discussion on community priorities. Participants were invited to discuss their vision for a more vibrant county, issues the county is experiencing, barriers to issue resolution, resources or information that would help address the issues, and ideas for an improved future.

The questions were not intended to focus solely on Extension related priorities. Rather, the questions sought to learn about what county residents were concerned about and how those issues impact residents. The focus group also sought to learn what quality of life issues residents are most interested in addressing.

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

- What is your vision for a more vibrant county?
- Based on your experiences, what would you say are the most pressing issues for this county in the next four years?
 - Follow up questions: How do these issues affect you or your neighbors? What other quality of life aspects does this issue affect?
- Based on your experiences, what barriers prevent us from addressing these issues?
- What type of information or resources would help to address the issues?
- Given everything discussed, what final thoughts would you add on being a vibrant county? Have we left anything out?

INTERVIEW PROCESS

County Extension Educators were asked to conduct interviews with individuals in formal leadership roles in each county. These could include elected or appointed government leadership, public service or business organizational leaders, or leaders of healthcare or education institutions. The interview questioning followed a similar format to the focus groups, seeking perspectives on pressing needs, long term needs, and exploring the role that Extension might serve to address future issues confronting the county.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Based on your experiences, what would you say are the most pressing issues for this county in the next year?
- Based on your experiences, what would you say are the most pressing issues for this county in the next four years?
- What do you see as the broad (county wide) implications of the priorities you have identified?
- Based on your experience, what barriers obstruct addressing the issues?
- What type of information or resources could the University of Kentucky/Extension provide to help address these issues?

UNDERSTANDING SECONDARY DATA RELIABILITY

A key issue in understanding the secondary data profiles is to be aware of the ways in which sources report the reliability of their data. Both margins of error (+/- ##) and confidence intervals (### - ###) tells us the range within which the estimate most likely falls. The American Community Survey provides a margin of error for each estimate. Health data often report a confidence interval as do estimates on poverty and income from the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates and those on health insurance from the Small Area Health Insurance Estimates.

Because their reliability can vary, we always need to look at the margin of error or confidence interval when we use data from these sources.

While we might not realize it, we encounter margins of error every time we hear about a poll in the news. When we see poll results and they say “plus or minus 5 points,” they are telling us the margin of error.

One way to think about margins of error or confidence intervals is to think of them as our “grain of salt.” We often use this phrase when we need to be cautious about taking something at face value. For instance, if the estimate is 30 (+/- 25), you will want to use a larger “grain of salt” than if your estimate is 30 (+/- 1).



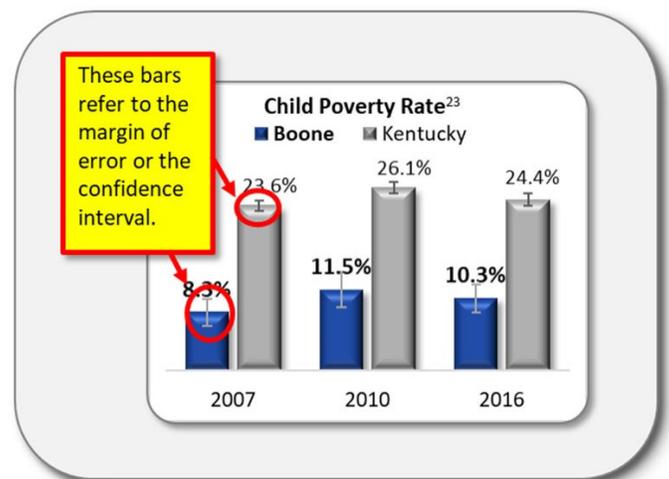
We can also think of margins of error and confidence intervals as “wobble room.” The larger the range, the more “wobble room” there is for the estimate. In other words, when the margin of error is smaller, the estimate is more precise or the focus is sharper. When the margin of error is larger, the estimate is more ‘fuzzy’ or ‘blurry.’

While a confidence interval gives us the actual range, for margins of error (or simply MOE) the plus/minus number gives us the information we need to determine the range. Since the estimate is generally the midpoint, finding the range represented by the margin of error is as straightforward as it seems.

To find the top of the range, add the margin of error to your number. To find the bottom of the range, subtract the margin of error from your number. (Remember, since confidence intervals already give the range, the math is already done.)

In the secondary data profiles, you will see the margins of error (+/- ##) or confidence intervals (### - ###) when they are part of the original data source. You will also see these reflected in the charts. They are called error bars. They look like the letter “I” and are located at the top of each bar.

One reason that margins of error and confidence intervals are important is because there will be times when they can be VERY large. This is especially the case for small groups or small places. Remember that “grain of salt?” The larger the range represented by the margin of error or confidence interval, the more cautious we need to be when it comes to interpreting the data.



It starts with us

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability. UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY, KENTUCKY STATE UNIVERSITY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AND KENTUCKY COUNTIES, COOPERATING