



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.

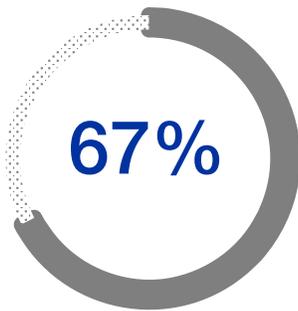
Secondary Data

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.

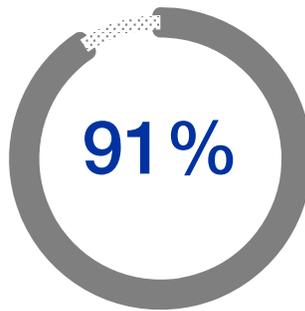
Next Steps

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.

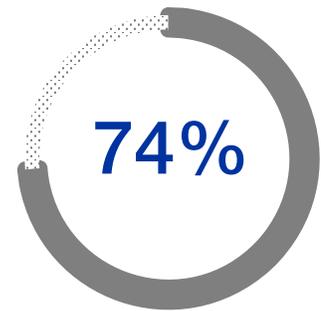
454 Respondents



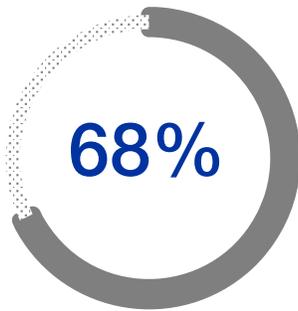
are Female



are White
(non-Hispanic)



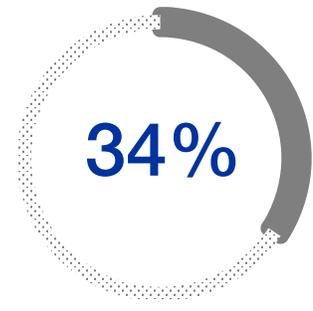
are 25-64 years old
(working age)



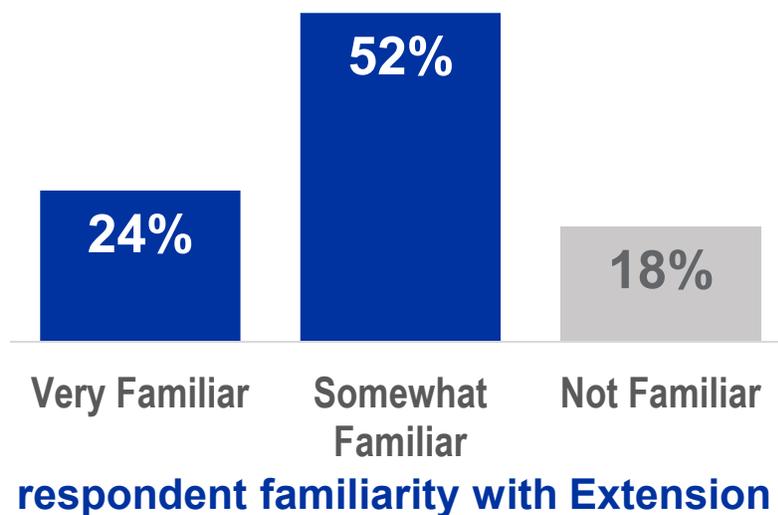
work or are
self-employed



are retired



currently participate
in Extension
programming



ISSUE IMPORTANCE

454 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

3.84 ■ More jobs paying good wages with benefits	3.54 ▲ Better use of food safety practices (hand washing, storage, preservation, etc.)
3.77 ■ Trustworthy and effective law enforcement	3.54 ♥ More child and partner abuse prevention resources
3.77 ▲ Improved affordability of health care insurance	3.53 ♦ Sustainability of family farms
3.76 ▲ Fewer chronic diseases (diabetes, heart disease, cancer, etc.)	3.52 ■ Better employee “soft skills” training (communications, team work, etc.)
3.75 ♥ More youth life skills training (money management, life decision making, etc.)	3.52 ♥ More support for relatives raising children of family members
3.74 ▲ Improved access to quality affordable health care providers (medical, dental, etc.)	3.51 ▲ Safer community places to walk, run, bike, etc.
3.73 ▲ Fewer overweight or obese youth and adults	3.51 ▲ More individual physical activity opportunities
3.73 ■ Responsive emergency services	3.5 ● More citizens helping to solve local issues
3.72 ♥ Better family skills in reducing debt, increasing savings, and financial planning	3.5 ♥ More senior citizen support programs
3.69 ▲ Improved availability of health care insurance	3.49 ● More effective cooperation between community organizations
3.69 ■ Increased support for small business	3.49 ● More active community volunteers
3.66 ♥ Better youth and adult career readiness	3.43 ♦ More awareness and support for agriculture and agribusinesses
3.65 ▲ Safer use of prescription medications	3.43 ▲ Better skills for selecting and preparing healthier food
3.64 ● More qualified leaders to prepare community for the future	3.42 ● More community marketing efforts (tourism, industry attraction, etc.)
3.64 ♥ More support for prevention of school violence and bullying	3.4 ♦ More market opportunities for farmers
3.62 ♥ More support for families with mental and emotional health issues	3.4 ▲ Improved sidewalks and crosswalks
3.6 ♥ Affordable, quality child care	3.4 ♦ More profitable farms
3.59 ■ Safe and accessible public water and sewer	3.4 ▲ More healthy snacks and food options at restaurants and community events
3.59 ▲ More sources for buying safe, affordable, fresh local foods	3.36 ■ More part-time and summer job opportunities
3.59 ■ Better roads and bridges	3.35 ■ Better utilities (water, sewer, etc.) to attract industry
3.58 ■ Access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet service	3.34 ♦ Less pest, disease, and weed issues
3.58 ♥ More affordable, quality elder care options	3.33 ♦ More crop and livestock production opportunities
3.58 ▲ Availability of substance use treatment	3.26 ♦ More land available for food production
3.58 ● More pride in the community and its assets	3.18 ♦ More community gardens
3.58 ♥ More support for families and individuals with special needs	3.16 ♦ More farm-related jobs
3.57 ♦ Less illegal dumping and littering	3.15 ♦ More community parks and green spaces
3.57 ▲ Availability of substance use prevention programs	3.11 ♦ More training for food gardening skills
3.55 ■ More qualified employees for existing or new jobs	3.11 ♦ Increased tree and forestry management
3.55 ♥ Stronger parenting and relationship building skills	3.08 ■ More public transportation options
3.55 ▲ More sources for buying safe, affordable, fresh food	3.02 ♦ Better landscapes for improved home value
3.55 ● More youth community leadership opportunities	2.99 ■ More tourism-related businesses

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.

320 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. More qualified employees for existing and new jobs
3. Increased support for small businesses

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. More support for prevention of school violence and bullying
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 pride in the community and its assets
3. More youth community leadership opportunities

The Union County Extension office facilitated an interactive focus group consisting of members of the County Extension Council. The conversation 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 group are summarized below.

Vision for a More Vibrant Community

The following themes were raised by focus group participants when asked about their vision for a more vibrant community:

- Rejuvenated towns throughout the county
- Many good job opportunities
- Lots of activities for kids
- A grain elevator to support more grain storage
- Youth with a strong work ethic and soft skills

Identified Priorities

- Finding people to fill jobs
- Communications infrastructure
- Road/bridge infrastructure
- Health and wellness

Priorities Discussion

Focus group participants indicated that a pressing issue is finding people to fill jobs. One person commented that people do not want to both work and stay in Union County. Participants suggested that a barrier to filling jobs is a lack of vocational training.

Another pressing issue is communications infrastructure, particularly internet availability and speed, with Uniontown identified as a specific place needing improvement. The focus group also brought up roads and bridges as a priority, and cited safety as an implication. Another implication is that good roads increase the opportunity for businesses to come to Union County. In many Kentucky counties keeping up with road maintenance is a challenge because of falling revenues and reduced state funding for repair and improvement.

Another priority theme which participants discussed was health and wellness, calling for programs and facilities to be more accessible and available more locally. They noted the implication of better access is a healthier community, and that residents could prevent further or more prolonged health problems.

In discussing obstacles to making progress on issues in the county, participants mentioned a need to increase the population, a lack of money, and the quality of parenting.

Resources which focus group participants thought would be helpful to address the identified priorities included political education, mentoring, recreation, a walk-in clinic, and better use of resources they already have.

Thirteen interviews were conducted with County Extension Council representatives in Union County. The interview followed a similar format to the focus groups seeking information on County needs, implications, barriers to addressing issues and asking what information or resources are needed to address issues confronting the county. The interview perspectives are compiled and summarized to represent key discussion ideas.

Identified Priorities

- Decline in community health
- Workforce and economic development
- Infrastructure
- Land use planning, development, and property maintenance

Priorities Discussion

Informants brought up several issues related to a decline in community health, including the opioid epidemic, drug use, smoking, and obesity. Respondents acknowledged there are not enough doctors, and a walk-in clinic could be beneficial to the community to help address the health of residents of Union County.

Workforce development was identified as a pressing need in the interviews. Preparing graduates for the local workforce, soft skills for students, and better use of local job corps in international job training were recognized by respondents. Economic development was acknowledged by respondents in terms of increased industry, lack of middle-class jobs, and expanding the Chamber of Commerce to help businesses grow. Interviewees raised the need to improve and update infrastructure, including roads and sidewalks.

Land use planning, development, and property maintenance was acknowledged by informants as a pressing topic in the county, as well as abandoned properties and declining property values.

Other priorities mentioned by the informants included a lack of community pride and a need to rebuild trust within the community. Also identified was the lack of activities for kids, young people leaving and not coming back, and poverty.

Informants were asked what information or resources would be useful to help them address the identified issues. Topics acknowledged included:

- More education
- Prevention, wellness care, and access to healthy options
- Soft-skills training
- Accountability and transparency
- Strong relationships between groups

UNDERSTANDING YOUR SECONDARY DATA PROFILE

As part of the Community Assessment process, each county is provided with a profile of secondary data. The goal is to supplement the survey, focus groups and interviews with a wide range of secondary data. The data selected for the profiles correspond to the topics covered in the survey and a list of variables provided by the committee that designed the assessment process.

As counties begin to understand the results from their surveys, focus groups and interviews, these data provide an additional dimension to understanding the role of particular issues in each county.

Profile Data

Data in each profile are organized as follows: county demographics; families and households; agriculture; jobs, economy and labor force; youth; and health and wellness. Because we all relate to data in different ways, within each section, the data are presented using three different formats:

- Tabular data
- Narrative
- Graphic

Comparison data over time or comparisons with the state as a whole are provided where space allowed.

County Demographics
Families and Households
Agriculture
Jobs, Economy and Labor Force
Youth
Health and Wellness

Finding More Data

If you need additional data, many sources are available. On the back page of each profile, we provide information for each of the data sources we used. We also provide a list of websites where you may access them.

For easy access to a wide array of data, visit [Kentucky: By The Numbers](#), the [Building Strong Families Profiles](#) from Family and Consumer Sciences Extension, and the [County Data Profiles](#) from the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK).

If you need help in finding more data or if you need assistance in understanding this secondary data profile, please feel free to contact Dr. Julie N. Zimmerman (jzimm@uky.edu) in the Department of Community and Leadership Development.



Union County Data Profile

Union 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.

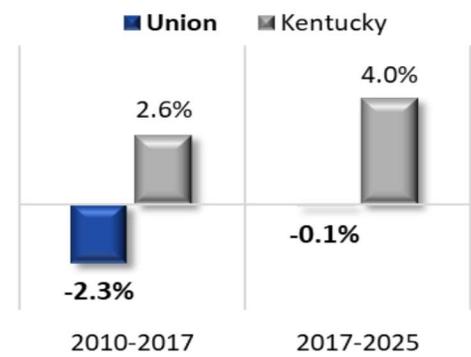
For more information on the Community Assessment process, visit <https://extension.ca.uky.edu/communityassessment>

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	15,007	14,668	14,654
Ages 65 and over	2,057		2,875
		2010-2017⁴	
Net Migration (in/out)	-379		
Race/Ethnicity	2010 ¹	2016 ⁵	
White	12,678	12,194	
Black or African American	1,805	1,998	
Asian	50	117	
Other and 2 or more races	231	288	
Hispanic	243	283	

Percent Change Total Population⁶
2010-2017 and 2017-2025

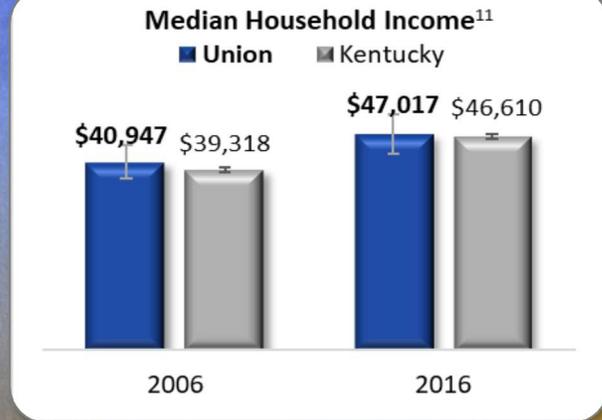


- From 2010 to 2017, the total population in Union County **decreased** by **-339** people.²
- Between April 2010 and June 2017, there was an estimated **net out migration** of **-379** people.⁴
- In 2016, the composition of Union County's population is estimated to be **81.9%** White, **13.4%** Black/African American, **0.8%** Asian, **1.9%** other and 2 or more races, and **1.9%** Hispanic.⁵
- From 2017 to 2025, the total population in Union County is **projected** to **decrease** by **-14** people.³
- As baby boomers are entering retirement, between 2010 and 2025 the population ages 65 and over in Union County are **projected** to **increase** by **39.8%** compared to 51.9% for the state as a whole.³

Union County Data Profile

Families and Households

Families	2010 ¹	2012-2016 ⁷
Married couple		
... with own children	1,081	1,046 (+/- 124)
Female householder		
... with own children	358	273 (+/- 95)
Male householder		
... with own children	138	159 (+/- 156)
Nonfamily households (live alone/unrelated)	1,697	1,856 (+/- 205)
Poverty		2012-2016⁷
Percent of families with related children who are below poverty		24.8% (+/- 6.9%)
Percent 65 and over below poverty		10.2% (+/- 3.3%)



Grandparents living with and raising grandchildren ³	2012-2016 ⁷
	239 (+/- 96)

- In 2016, Union County's official poverty rate was **18.6%** (15.4% - 21.8%), compared to 18.2% (17.9% - 18.6%) for the state as a whole.⁸
- In 2017, there were **8** child care centers in Union County. Of these **5** were STARS certified.⁹
- Between 2012-2016, **2.0%** (+/- 0.6%) of people ages 5 and over spoke a language other than English at home.⁷
- The Urban Institute estimates that **11%** people in Union 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	325	310
Percent of land in farms	91.5%	88.8%
Average farm size (acres)	618	629
		2012¹³
Income from agri-tourism and recreational services		N/A
Number of farms marketing products directly to retail outlets		1
Average value per farm of agricultural products sold directly to individuals for human consumption		\$0



Percent of Principal Operators	2012 ¹³
... who are female	7.1%
... under age 35	6.5%
... farming as primary occupation	46.1%

- In 2012, the total market value of agricultural products sold in Union County was **\$96,493,000**.¹³
- Of the total market value of agricultural products sold, **92.3%** was the value of crops and **7.7%** was the value of livestock, poultry, and their products.¹³
- The total farm production expenses (average per farm) was **\$272,094** compared to \$62,002 for the state.¹³
- In Union County, there were **293** hired farm labor workers on **80** farms.¹³
- **83.6%** 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.

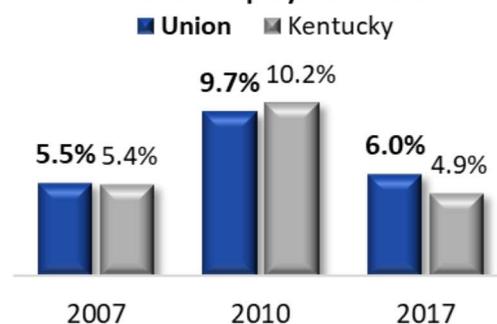
Union County Data Profile

Jobs, Economy, and Labor Force

Jobs and Businesses	2010	2016
Total Employment (# of jobs) ¹⁵	8,247	7,015
Total Establishments (w/ employees) ¹⁶	288	250
... % with 1-9 employees	70.8%	70.0%
... % with 10-20 employees	17.0%	16.0%
Total NonEmployer Establishments (w/o employees) ¹⁷	707	718

Education	2012-2016 ⁷	
Percent of population 25 and over		
... with HS or higher	84.9% (+/- 2.2%)	
... with bachelors or higher	12.2% (+/- 2.6%)	
	Men	Women
Median Earnings (2012-16) ⁷	\$30,519 (+/- \$3,460)	\$20,167 (+/- \$3,673)

Annual Unemployment Rate²⁰



Avg Weekly Wage¹⁸

	2017
... All Industries (Private & Govt)	\$821
... Goods-producing (Private)	\$1,208
... Service-providing (Private)	\$638

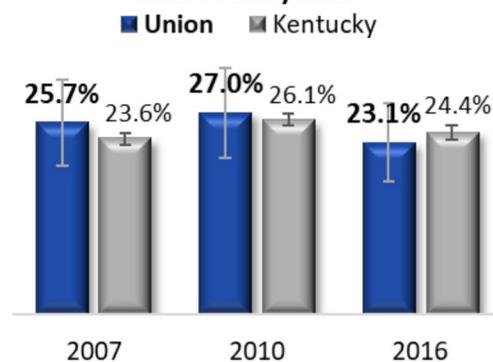
- In 2017, the number of private establishments covered by unemployment insurance in Union County was **65** for goods-producing, **236** for service-providing, and **30** for hospitality & leisure.¹⁸
- Between 2012 and 2016, of the **6,173** (+/- 326) workers ages 16 and over, **77.4%** (+/- 3.6%) worked inside the county, **16.5%** (+/-2.0%) worked outside the county and **6.1%** (+/-2.0%) worked outside Kentucky.⁷
- Between 2012 and 2016, **6.7%** (+/-2.8%) 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
- **33.5%** 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	920	772	764
5-9 years old	919	703	770
10-14 years old	950	746	676
15-19 years old	1,432	1,324	1,290

Children by Relationship to Householder	2012-2016 ⁷
... Own Children (Biological, Adopted, Stepchild)	2,531 (+/- 157)
... Grandchild	266 (+/- 106)
... Other Relative	68 (+/- 51)
... Foster/Unrelated	141 (+/- 102)

Child Poverty Rate²³



24.4% of students entered KY public postsecondary institutions underprepared in one or more subjects (2015).²¹

- Between 2012-2016, there were an estimated **230** (+/-117) youth ages 5-17 who had a disability.⁷
- **51.1%** of 3rd grade students in Union County scored proficient or distinguished on math in the 2015-16 school year compared to 47.7% for the state.²²
- **1,165** (+/- 230) 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

Union County Data Profile

Health and Wellness

Percent of Adults

... reporting poor or fair health (2016) ²⁴	22.8% (21.9%-23.7%)
... with hypertension (2013-15) ²⁵	27.3% (17.5%-40.1%)
... with obesity (2014-16) ²⁵	25% (15.9%-36.1%)
... with diabetes (2014-16) ²⁵	11.9% (7.2%-19.0%)

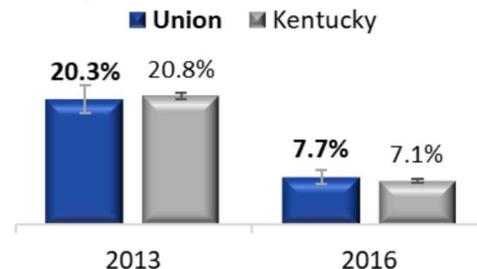
Number of Individuals

... receiving SNAP (food stamps) (2017) ²⁶	1,967
... who are food insecure (2016 estimate) ²⁷	2,680

Number of Overdoses²⁸

	2008-2010	2015-2017
... fatal overdoses	9	12
... nonfatal overdoses	120	107

Percent of Population Ages 18-64 who are Uninsured²⁹



Number of Care Providers²⁴

... Primary Care Physicians (2015)	3
... Dentists (2016)	6
... Mental Health Providers (2017)	2

- The estimated food insecurity rate for Union County is **17.8%**, compared to 15.5% for the state.²⁷
- From 2010 to 2016, the number of grocery stores **decreased** by **28.6%**, from **7** to **5** stores.¹⁶
- In 2013-2015, **30.0%** (24.4%-36.0%) of adults ages 20 and over reported no leisure time physical activity.²⁴
- The Urban Institute estimates that **27%** of people in Union County with a credit bureau record in 2016 had medical debt in collections compared to 27% for the state as a whole.¹⁰
- **9.5%** (4.4%-19.1%) 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

Sources

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- Population Projections – Vintage 2016. Kentucky State Data Center.
- 2017 Population Estimates Components of Change. Kentucky State Data Center.
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- 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. U.S. Census Bureau. American FactFinder.
- 2016 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE). U.S. Census Bureau.
- 2017 Early Childhood Profile. Kentucky Center for Statistics (Formerly KCEWS).
- Debt in America: An Interactive Map. Urban Institute.
- Chart: 2006 and 2016 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE). U.S. Census Bureau.
- 2007 Census of Agriculture. U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- 2012 Census of Agriculture. U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Chart: 2007 and 2012 Census of Agriculture. U.S. Department of Agriculture.
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- County Business Patterns. U.S. Census Bureau. American FactFinder.
- NonEmployer Statistics. U.S. Census Bureau. American FactFinder.
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- 2018 High School Feedback Report. Kentucky Center for Statistics (Formerly KCEWS).
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- Chart: 2007, 2010, and 2016 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE). U.S. Census Bureau.
- 2018 County Health Rankings. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.
- Kentucky Health Facts. Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky.
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Websites

- 2012 Census of Agriculture. <https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/>
- American FactFinder. <https://factfinder.census.gov>
- BEA Regional Economic Accounts. <https://apps.bea.gov/itable/iTable.cfm?ReqID=70&step=1>
- County Health Rankings. <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>
- Debt in America: An Interactive Map. <https://apps.urban.org/features/debt-interactive-map/>
- Food and Nutrition Service. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>
- Kentucky Center for Statistics (Formerly KCEWS). <https://kystats.ky.gov/>
- Kentucky Health Facts. <http://www.kentuckyhealthfacts.org/>
- Kentucky State Data Center. <https://factfinder.census.gov>
- Kids Count Data Center. <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/>
- Local Area Unemployment Statistics. <https://www.bls.gov/lau/>
- Map the Meal Gap. <http://map.feedingamerica.org/>
- Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). <https://www.bls.gov/cew/>
- Small Area Health Insurance Estimates (SAHIE). <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sahie.html>
- Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE). <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe.html>

Additional data are also available at:

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

Union County Priority Responses
320 Respondents

Jobs and Infrastructure

More jobs paying good wages and benefits	50.66%
More qualified employees for existing and new jobs	11.97%
Increased support for small businesses	9.76%
Better roads and bridges	6.65%
More public transportation options	6.64%
Better employee "soft skills" training (communications, team work, etc.)	6.21%
Trustworthy and effective law enforcement	5.54%
Access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet service	4.88%
Safe and accessible public water and sewer	4.66%
More tourism-related businesses	4.43%
Responsive emergency services	3.99%
More part-time and summer job opportunities	2.22%
Better utilities (water, sewer, etc.) to attract industry	2%

Agriculture and Environment

Sustainability of family farms	25.94%
More market opportunities for farmers	23.5%
Less illegal dumping and littering	20.31%
More community parks and green spaces	14.32%
More support for Kentucky agriculture and agribusiness	11.97%
More profitable farms	11.75%
More crop and livestock production opportunities	11.09%
More training for food gardening skills	10.35%
Less pest, disease, and weed issues	8.65%
Increased tree and forestry management	7.73%
More community gardens	7.32%
More farm-related jobs	6.65%
Better landscapes for improved home value	5.74%
More land available for food production	4.66%

Health and Wellness

Improved affordability of health care insurance	20.09%
Fewer chronic diseases (diabetes, heart disease, cancer, etc.)	15.89%
Improved access to quality, affordable health care providers (medical, dental, etc.)	13.91%
Fewer overweight or obese youth and adults	11.26%
More sources for buying safe, affordable, fresh local foods	9.93%
Availability of substance use treatment	9.27%
Better skills for selecting and preparing healthier food	8.83%
Availability of substance use prevention programs	8.39%
More sources for buying safe, affordable, fresh food	8.39%
Improved availability of health care insurance	7.06%
More healthy snack and food options at restaurants and community events	6.4%
Better use of food safety practices (hand washing, storage, preservation, etc.)	5.74%
Safer community places to walk, run, bike, etc.	5.08%
Safer use of prescription medications	4.42%
Improved sidewalks and crosswalks	3.08%
More individual physical activity opportunities	2.64%

Youth and Families

More youth life skills training (money management, life decision making, etc.)	27.97%
More support for prevention of school violence and bullying	20.09%
Better family skills in reducing debt, increasing savings and financial planning	17.44%
Better youth and adult career readiness	17%
Affordable quality child care	10.82%
Stronger parenting and relationship building skills	10.15%
More support for families with mental and emotional health issues	10.15%
More affordable, quality elder care options	8.81%
More support for relatives raising children of family members	6.4%
More support for families and individuals with special needs	5.08%
More senior citizen support programs	4.86%
More child and partner abuse prevention resources	4.86%

Community Vitality

More qualified leaders to prepare community for the future	31.35%
More pride in the community and its assets	21.41%
More youth community leadership opportunities	18.32%
More citizens helping to solve local issues	17.62%
More effective cooperation between community organizations	14.13%
More community marketing efforts (tourism, industry attraction, etc.)	13.69%
More active community volunteers	13.66%

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/>	Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/>

What other comments and/or suggestions do you have about important issues in your county?
<hr/>
<hr/>
<hr/>

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).



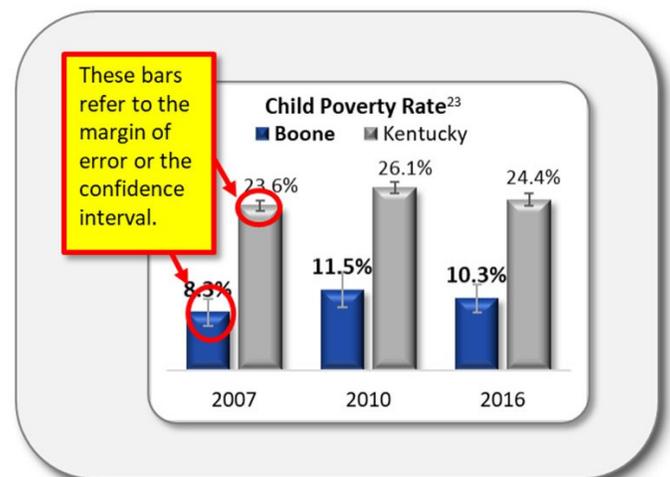
We can also think of margins of error and confidence intervals as “wobble room.” The larger the range, the more “wobble room” there is for the estimate. In other words, when the margin of error is smaller, the estimate is more precise or the focus is sharper. When the margin of error is larger, the estimate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