

OSU EXTENSION LISTENS TO OUR COMMUNITIES

Findings From A Regional Community
Engagement Forum Hosted In Choctaw County



Choctaw County

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Choctaw County One of 16 Community Engagement Forums Held Statewide

In spring and summer 2019, OSU Extension hosted community forums at sites across the state of Oklahoma. The forums sought to ensure that a wide range of community members were engaged so that their opinions and perspectives on important issues would be represented in OSU Extension's strategic planning.

About OSU Extension

Oklahoma State University Extension is a thriving, sought-out, science-based educational resource dedicated to improving the lives of all Oklahomans. With a presence in all 77 counties, OSU Extension has the knowledge and leadership to help the state's citizens solve local issues and concerns, promote leadership and manage resources wisely through programs focusing on agricultural enterprises; natural resources and environmental management; food, nutrition, health and safety education; and youth, family and community development.

OSU Extension Community Engagement Statewide Forums

Executive Summary

More than 400 people participated in one of the 16 OSU Extension community forums. They were asked to provide input on what they thought the most important issues facing their communities were going to be over the next 3 to 5 years. They were specifically asked about issues related to Families, Youth and Children, and about issues related to their Community, Economy (Farms and Businesses) and Natural/Environmental Resources. Based on the results of the community forums, researchers at OSU provided site hosts with results specific to their communities, as well as perspective on issues that came up as common themes statewide.

The forum results are summarized in a series of handouts and on the OSU Extension website. Extension educators will be using their results to engage the community in action planning around the identified issues and action ideas. Trainings for follow-up engagement activities are being offered to Extension educators so they will have an even greater ability to engage their communities authentically and effectively.

Results can be found online at extension.okstate.edu/communityforums.

Top Issues and Action Ideas for Regional Forum Hosted by Choctaw County

Children, Youth and Families

Provide Basic Life Skills Education in Schools

- No action provided

Enhance Job Skills and Improve Community Work Ethic

- Conduct community career needs assessments
- Establish new scholarships and internships
- Start afterschool agriculture programs
- Promote trade school careers
- Provide hands-on training and community service programs through OSU Extension
- Character education programs

Support Family Cohesion and Stability

- Encourage effective communication skills within families and the community
- Promote structure and discipline by creating more family involvement in youth programs

Support Mental Health, Addiction and Suicide Prevention for Youth

- Increase funding for programs
- Hire more extension educators
- Encourage cooperation with schools for programs and education

Community, Economy (Farms and Businesses) and Natural/Environmental Resources

Invest in Treatment Facilities and Enhance Regulations to Address Drug Abuse

- Open more rehab facilities
- Work with doctors and policy makers to implement more regulations on prescribing drugs

Promote Economic Development through Infrastructure Investment and Workforce Development

- No action provided

Invest in Industrial Infrastructure and Become Competitive with Online Shopping Sites that are Negatively Impacting Retail Outlets

- Develop industrial infrastructure, especially natural gas distribution
- Encourage local retail sector to develop a quality online presence
- Work with OSU Extension to assist with needs assessments and training in web resources

Find Ways to Increase Land Available for New Operations

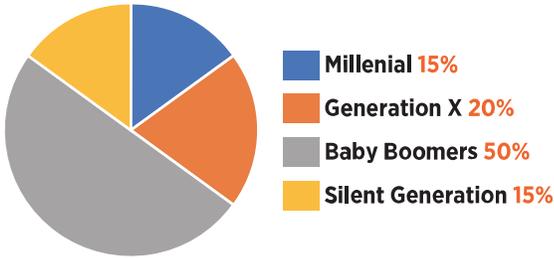
- Establish community educational programs for resources available to assist producers and land owners
- Provide programming through OSU Extension for producers, site assessments, and legal descriptions



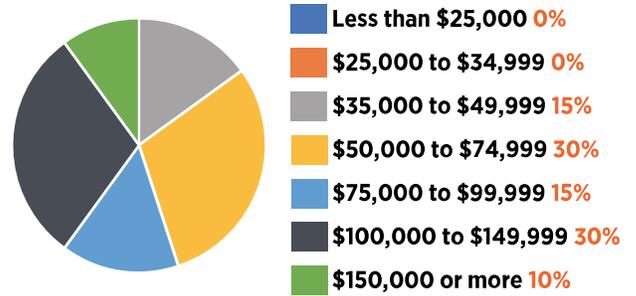
Responses from Regional Forum Hosted by Choctaw County

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number

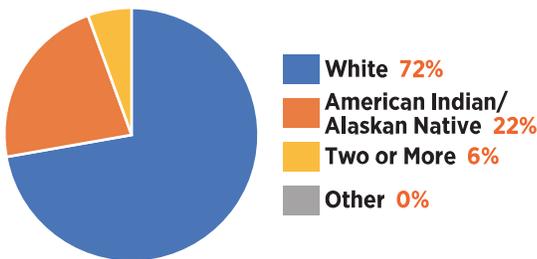
Age Range



Income Range



Race/Ethnicity



Gender



Military Veteran



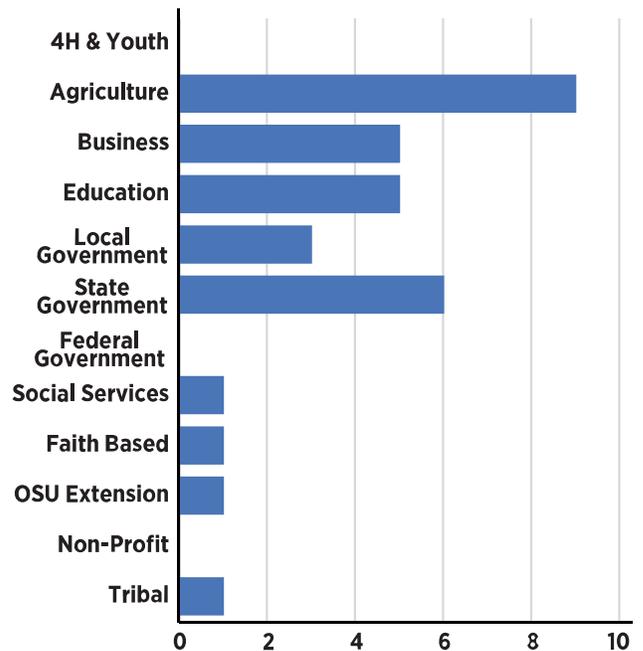
Have a Disability



Attended OSU Extension Program Previously



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