

# OSU EXTENSION LISTENS TO OUR COMMUNITIES

Findings From A Regional Community  
Engagement Forum Hosted In Custer County



Custer County

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## Custer 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](https://extension.okstate.edu/communityforums).

## Top Issues and Action Ideas for Regional Forum Hosted by Custer County

### Children, Youth and Families

#### **Support Family Cohesion and Stability**

- Establish a community fair to educate families on what is available
- Provide parenting information through a variety of media outlets

#### **Enhance Parenting Skills**

- Establish programs involving parents and youth doing common activities
- Suggest schools keep calendar free on Sunday/Wednesday nights for family time

#### **Promote Healthy Living**

- Support healthy living ambassadors in all counties (facilitated by OSU)
- Establish a partnership between OSU and TSET to educate youth/adults on substance abuse
- Establish community gardens — partner with career tech/community leaders
- Provide education through OSU Extension on what constitutes healthy food choices
- Educate families on how to convert raw food into meals
- Promote fitness challenges to educate youth/adults on fitness

#### **Increase Social Responsibility Among Youth**

- No action provided

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

#### **Provide Education and Support for Programs to Address Environmental Issues**

- Improve school system quality
- Establish OSU Extension as a virtual clearing house for information collection and dissemination
- Disseminate information on proper disposal for chemicals, computers, etc.
- Work with 4-H youth to address local issues
- Provide producer education opportunities

#### **Invest in Skills of Local Workforce and Diversity Commerce**

- Identify emerging technology industries to find out what skills sets are needed and have OSU Extension train
- Build community pride through marketing that highlights businesses and people (e.g., a 'leadership hall of fame')
- Have community leaders mentor others

#### **Enhance Civic Pride and Improve Quality of Life**

- Host trash to treasure workshops to provide education on recycling and refurbishing
- Host a city wide 'pride' clean up day

#### **Stopping Outmigration Through the Use of Technology**

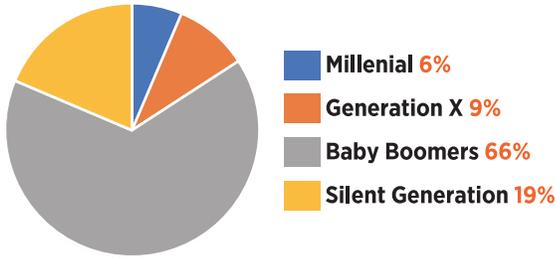
- No action provided



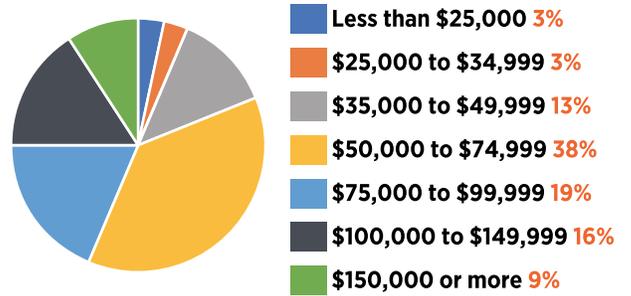
## Responses from Regional Forum Hosted by Custer County

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number

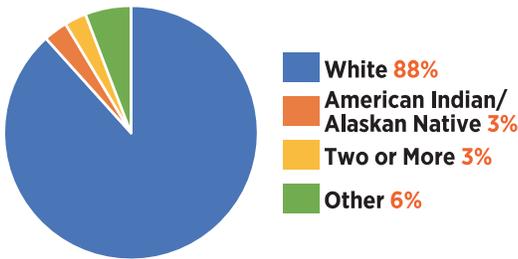
### Age Range



### Income Range



### Race/Ethnicity



### Gender



### Military Veteran



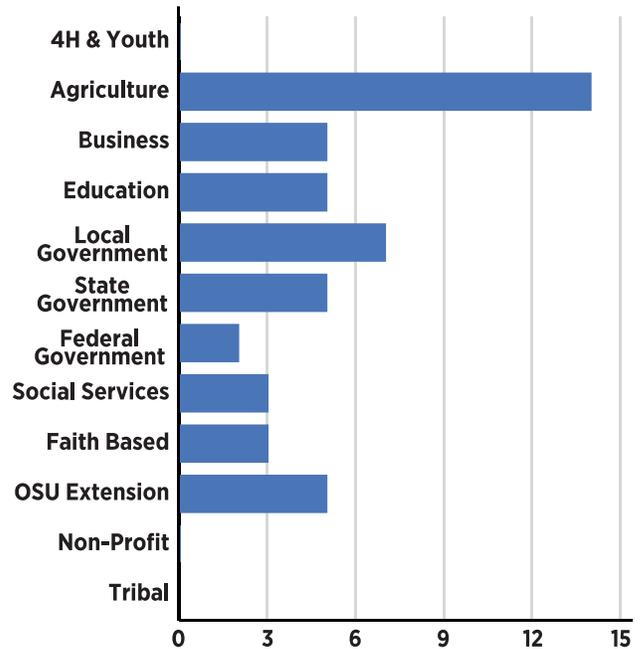
### Have a Disability



### Attended OSU Extension Program Previously



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