

# OSU EXTENSION LISTENS TO OUR COMMUNITIES

Findings From A Regional Community  
Engagement Forum Hosted In Pontotoc County



Pontotoc County

# OSU EXTENSION LISTENS TO OUR COMMUNITIES

## Pontotoc 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 Pontotoc County

## Children, Youth and Families

### Promote Development of Basic Life Skills for Families

- More educational advertisements on social media
- Increase OSU Extension's role
- Offer a financial management program
- Offer monthly programming for life skills
- Educate parents first

### Promote a Strong Work Ethic

- Establish a mentoring program
- Build community pride through a train-the-trainers program
- Encourage intergenerational cooperation

### Improve Health and Well Being

- Provide education on programs that are available
- Establish a community share program
- Work with legislature to improve SNAP participants nutrition
- Provide training and education on drug prevention and mental health

### Increase Agricultural Education Opportunities

- Create and use outdoor classrooms
- Work with policy makers to put agricultural standards into state mandated testing
- Work to educate teachers on best practices for incorporating agriculture into their lesson plan

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

### Provide Education on Water Management and Conservation

- Partner with other water resource boards
- Provide more workshops and tours to educate youth and adults
- Establish a flood control plan
- Work with policy makers on a potential tax on water usage/transfer

### Provide Opportunities and Incentives for Next Generation to Stay in Community

- Offer community pride training
- Use local producers

### Promote and Support Agritourism

- Work with county/city to provide info for marketing
- Invest in tourism department
- Support more marketing for communities

### Engage People Who Disagree in Policy Discussions about Agricultural Issues

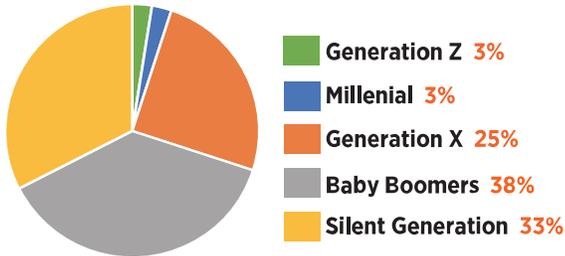
- Train folks with differing views to have effective dialogue and deliberation about agriculture issues



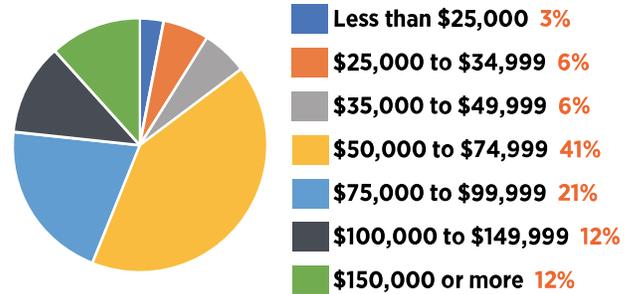
## Responses from Regional Forum Hosted by Pontotoc County

Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number

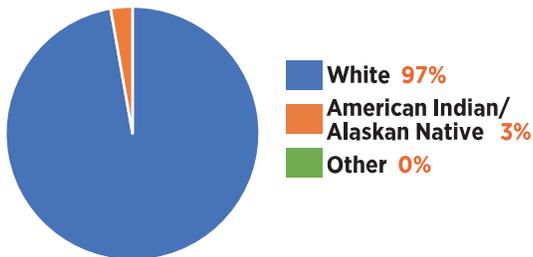
### Age Range



### Income Range



### Race/Ethnicity



### Gender



### Military Veteran



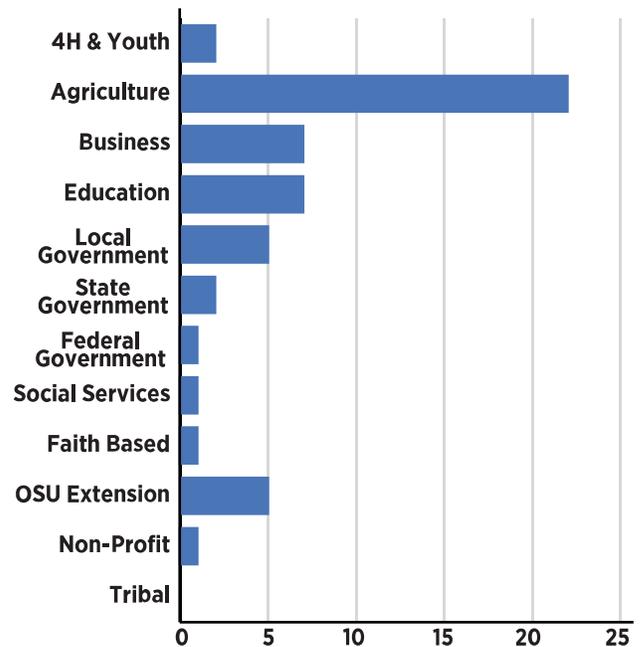
### Have a Disability



### Attended OSU Extension Program Previously



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