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**NC State Extension 2017 Needs Assessment**

**County Manager Interview Script**

I appreciate you taking the time to meet with me/us today. My name is *[insert]* and I am the District Extension Director with NC State Extension in the *[insert]* district. *[If County Extension Director is attending interview, introduce as well]* As part of our ongoing efforts to implement educational programs that directly address the current and most important needs of our citizens and local communities, we are undertaking a needs assessment process that includes interviews with county managers, surveys of county commissioners, focus groups with stakeholders, and citizen surveys across our state.

I/We are excited that you have accepted our invitation to share with us what you think are the important issues and opportunities facing *[insert county name]* County, both today, and in the years ahead. NC State Extension offers a variety of programming across the state focused on our three core program areas: agriculture and food, health and nutrition, and youth and families. In the area of agriculture and food, NC State Extension connects farmers, agribusinesses and communities with vital research-based information and technology. Research at NC State targets society's grand challenges. Extension delivers this research directly into the hands of North Carolinians, helping them to translate knowledge into everyday solutions. In health and nutrition, Extension offers a wealth of educational programs that address public health issues, improve economic well-being, and help people make healthier, better-informed decisions. Programs range from local foods, food safety, and food preservation to gardening and environmental efforts. Finally, within youth and families, 4-H is the largest youth development organization in North Carolina. Hundreds of thousands of young people learn the skills to succeed through 4-H educational programs and camps. NC State Extension conducts 4-H programs where youth learn by doing.

*[Describe specific programs that are offered in the county]*

*[If recording: We are recording this session just so we can go back and make certain we understand accurately what you said. As called for in NC State guidelines, these recordings will be used to make a written copy, or transcription, of the interview today. Then, they will be destroyed.]*

**Examples of Extension Programs**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Agriculture & Food** | **Nutrition** | **Youth Development** | **Families** |
| * New production practices * Farm management * Agriculture field days * Pest & weed management * Master Gardener * ServSafe * Food safety and processing * Local foods programs * Pesticide safety * Beef/Pork Quality Assurance * Animal Waste Applicator training * Landscape contractor training | * Safe home food handling, preservation, or preparation practices * Nutrition education * Fitness programs * Shopping for healthy foods * Preparing healthy foods * Steps to Health * SNAP-ed * Farm to childcare | * 4-H science programs * 4-H nutrition & fitness programs * 4-H citizenship & leadership programs * 4-H programs for at-risk youth * 4-H competitive programs – judging, essay, quiz bowl, etc. * 4-H day and overnight camps * 4-H afterschool programs * 4-H in-school programs * 4-H clubs * Juntos | * Disaster readiness * More in my basket * Gardening and landscapes * Volunteer readiness * Healthy homes * Energy conservation * Composting * Resource management * Parenting * Healthy relationships * Older adult programs |

**Question 1:** Let’s begin by talking about what you see as the most important program or service offered by Extension.

**Probe 1:** What would you identify as the one Extension program or service that you believe is the most important in your county?

**Probe 2:** Why is this such an important program or service?

**Question 2:** Let’s focus now on those challenges and issues related to agriculture and food.

**Probe 1:** What would you identify as the one agricultural or food production challenge or issue that you believe is the most important one facing the county today?

**Probe 2:** Why is this such an important issue or challenge?

**Probe 3:** What priorities in the area of agriculture and food do you feel Extension should address in the future?

**Question 3:** Let’s focus now on those challenges and issues related to nutrition and nutrition related diseases.

**Probe 1:** What would you identify as the one nutrition challenge or issue that you believe is the most important one facing the county today?

**Probe 2:** Why is this such an important issue or challenge?

**Probe 3:** What priorities in the area of nutrition do you feel Extension should address in the future?

**Question 4:** Let’s focus now on those challenges and issues related directly to the county’s youth.

**Probe 1:** What would you identify as the most important challenge or issue facing the county’s youth today?

**Probe 2:** Why is this such an important issue or challenge?

**Probe 3:** What priorities related to youth do you feel Extension should address in the future?

**Question 5:** Let’s focus now on those challenges and issues related directly to the county’s families.

**Probe 1:** What would you identify as the most important challenge or issue facing the county’s families today?

**Probe 2:** Why is this such an important issue or challenge?

**Probe 3:** What priorities related to families do you feel Extension should address in the future?

**Question 6:** Let us now move on and discuss if there are things that Extension could do to improve our service to [insert county name] County.

**Probe 1:** What are we doing well?

**Probe 2:** What are we not doing well?

**Question 7:** Now let’s talk about what Extension must do in the future to remain relevant to the needs of [insert county name] County.

**Probe 1:** Is there anything you believe Extension should be aware of that could help our mission, county center, or programs?

**Probe 2:** Do you anticipate any issues on the horizon that we could help you with?

**Question 8:** Before we finish up, is there anything we have not talked about you believe is important for the future of Extension?