

2019 County Commissioner Satisfaction Survey: CSU Extension Services in Colorado

Survey Results Summary Report

September 2020



**COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION**

Introduction: 2019 County Commissioner Survey

The twelfth annual County Commissioner Satisfaction Survey was conducted from September 16 to October 25, 2019. The design and methodology were approved by the CSU Research Integrity and Compliance Review Office in 2012. A five-point scale was used for evaluation. The study variables included: (1) the quality of programs and services provided by local Extension offices; (2) the expertise and knowledge of Extension personnel; (3) the responsiveness and service level of county Extension personnel; (4) the perceived value to citizens of Extension programs and services; and (5) respondent insights and comments regarding CSU Extension.

Methodology

CSU Extension and the Office of the Vice President of Engagement designed the survey. As in years past, the survey was conducted by an independent contractor for the Office of Engagement. The confidential survey protocol allowed survey administrators to see which counties did and did not respond. Participants received a letter directly from the Colorado State University President containing the link to take the survey online. A hard copy of the survey and a pre-paid return envelope were also enclosed, offering the choice to complete a paper survey. The letter stressed the importance of the input, the confidential nature of the survey and the voluntary nature of the survey. Roughly two weeks after the initial letter, a second reminder letter and second hard copy survey were sent from the Chief of Staff, Office of the President, only to those counties that did not respond. Final email reminders were sent only to counties that had not yet responded. All results were received, compiled, and analyzed by the independent contractor.

Surveys are sent annually to all Colorado county commissioners/council members in counties where CSU has Extension offices or provides Extension services. The survey cover letter and email, however, recommend that only commissioners who have contact with and/or knowledge of CSU Extension complete the survey. As many counties appoint one commissioner or council member to serve as the Extension liaison, not every commissioner is expected to complete the CSU Extension survey.

Per-county responses (N = 58) are calculated using the mean of all commissioner responses for that county to that question. As begun in 2010, data is reported here as per-county response. Where relevant, commissioner responses (N = 91) are also reported in this document. Each graphic indicates the type of data calculation used.

A total of 210 surveys were sent to all commissioners/council members in all counties where CSU has Extension offices or provides Extension services. Commissioners were encouraged to complete the survey if they worked with Extension, or to forward the survey to the appropriate commissioner contact if they did not work personally with Extension. The total number of returned surveys was 91, for an overall response rate of 43%.

The per-county response rate was 95%, with 58 of the 61 counties surveyed by CSU extension responding. San Juan, Lake, and Pitkin counties were not surveyed in 2019. Response rates by

region were very strong: Front Range region (Front Range urban corridor), 100%; Eastern Peaks and Plains region (Southeast, Northeast Golden Plains, and the San Luis Valley), 93%; Western region (all Western Slope counties), 95%. Counties that did not respond to the survey were: Conejos, Costilla, and Gunnison.

One additional survey was received after the postmarked deadline. This survey was excluded from the following analysis. Information from the excluded survey was conveyed separately to Extension directors.

Summary of 2019 Survey Results

Commissioners and county officials responded favorably to questions about Extension. Program quality and agent responsiveness scored particularly high. Scores tend to form a curve at the positive end of the scale. As in past years, comments indicate that lower scores may be tied to county desires for specific services and/or better agent coverage.

Survey Results: 2018–2019 Key Indicator Comparison of County Responses

As begun in 2010, data is analyzed primarily at the county level. This standardizes any potential systematic bias caused by some counties having a larger number of commissioners respond versus a county in which the Board of Commissioners assigns only one member to respond to the survey. This methodology levels the playing field and allows for a survey of *county attitudes and satisfaction*, rather than *county commissioner* attitudes and satisfaction.

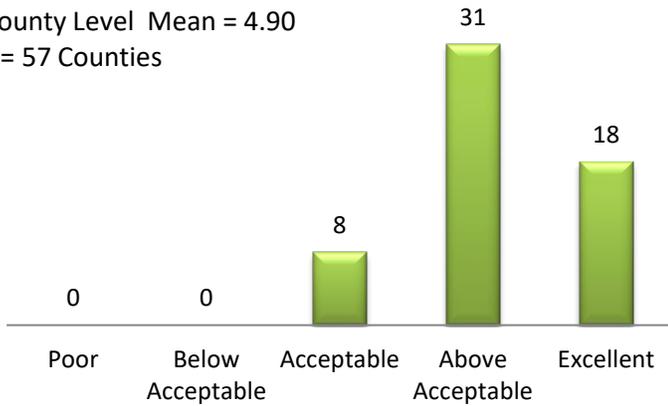
Overall, *counties* responded favorably to questions about program quality, value, responsiveness, and overall satisfaction. We compared 2019 data on four key indicators to 2018 data and found that all four key indicators for quality, responsiveness, value, and overall satisfaction trend slightly higher in 2019. All four indicators are above a 4 on a 5-point scale. These trends can be seen in both the averaged scores and in the graphs of individual responses below. All four scores have trended consistently high since 2012.

The four key indicators are graphed below for both 2019 and 2018 county responses. This includes the “overall satisfaction” question used to indicate mean satisfaction with CSU Extension.

Rate the quality of the programs and services provided from your local Extension office.

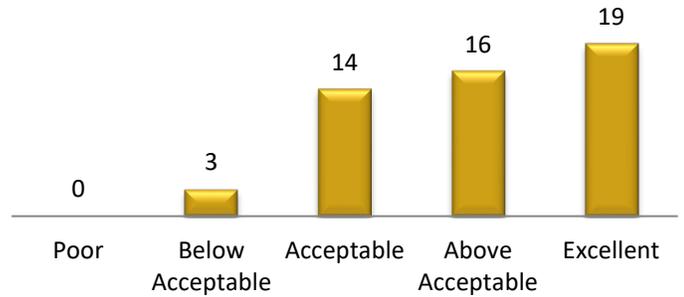
2019 Quality of Programs/Services

County Level Mean = 4.90
N= 57 Counties



2018 Quality of Programs/Services

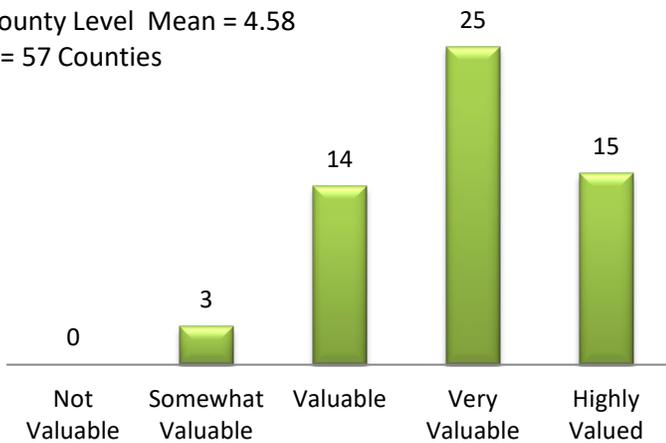
County Level Mean = 4.26
N= 52 Counties



How would you rate the value received by the citizens of your county from programs and services delivered by Extension?

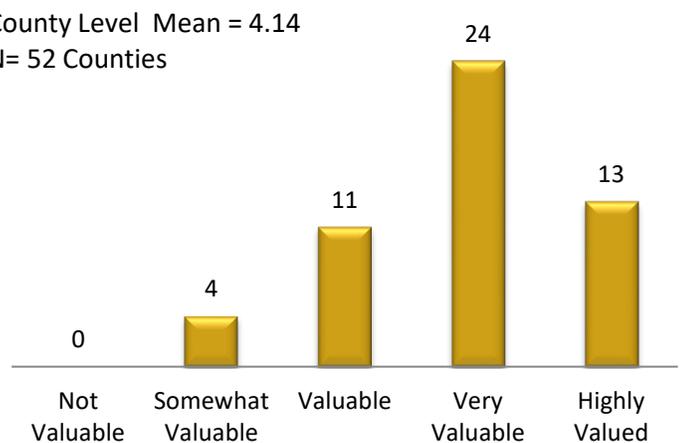
2019 Value Received by Citizens

County Level Mean = 4.58
N= 57 Counties



2018 Value Received by Citizens

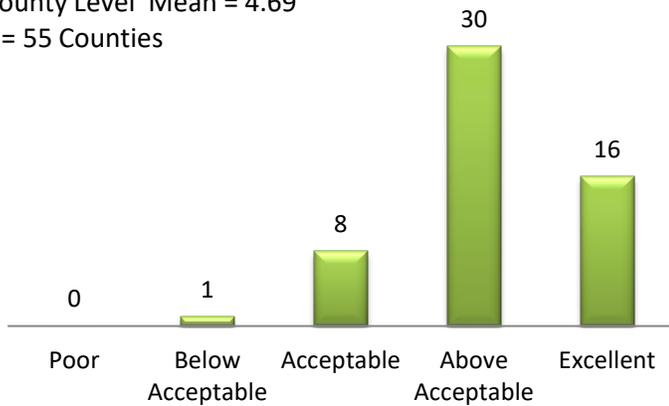
County Level Mean = 4.14
N= 52 Counties



Rate the responsiveness and service level of your county Extension personnel in meeting the needs of your county citizens.

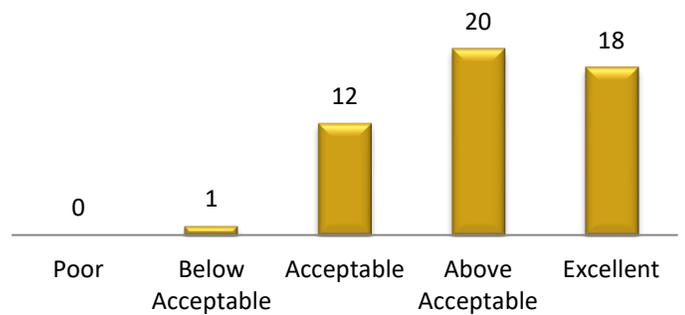
2019 Responsiveness & Service Level

County Level Mean = 4.69
N= 55 Counties



2018 Responsiveness & Service Level

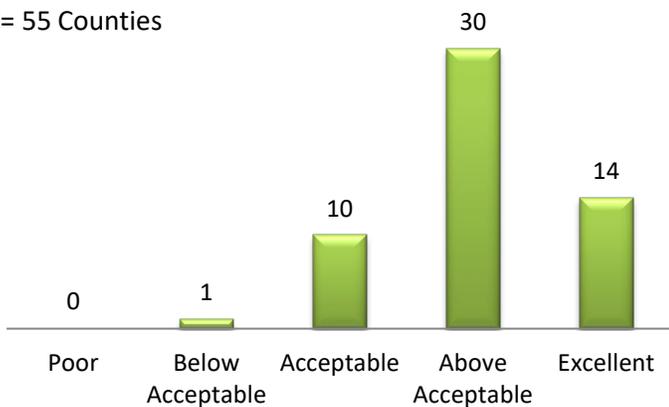
County Level Mean = 4.24
N= 51 Counties



Rate your overall satisfaction with the service the citizens receive from your local county/area Extension office.

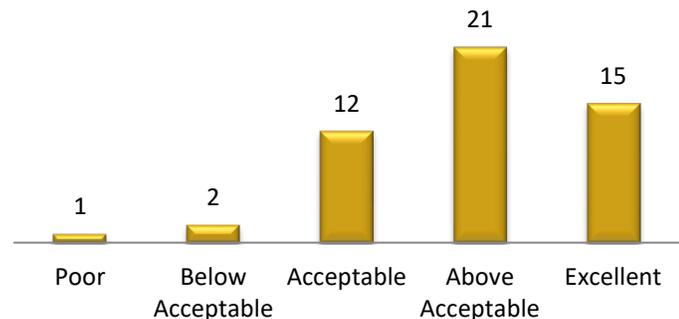
2019 Overall Satisfaction

County Level Mean = 4.63
N= 55 Counties



2018 Overall Satisfaction

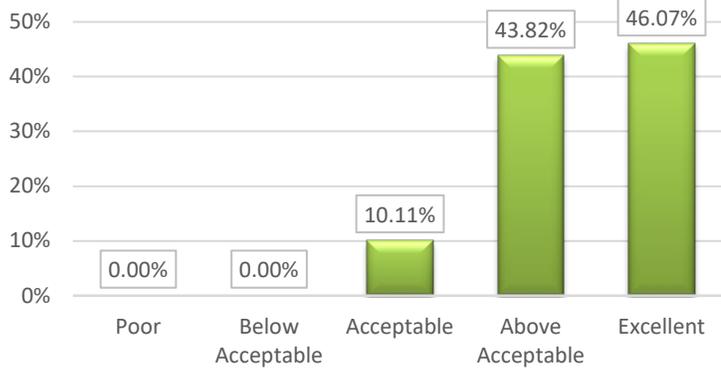
County Level Mean = 4.12
N= 51 Counties



Survey Results: Commissioner Level Data on Program Quality and Agent Ability

As indicated below, commissioner responses were overall positive about CSU Extension program quality and the responsiveness of local agents.

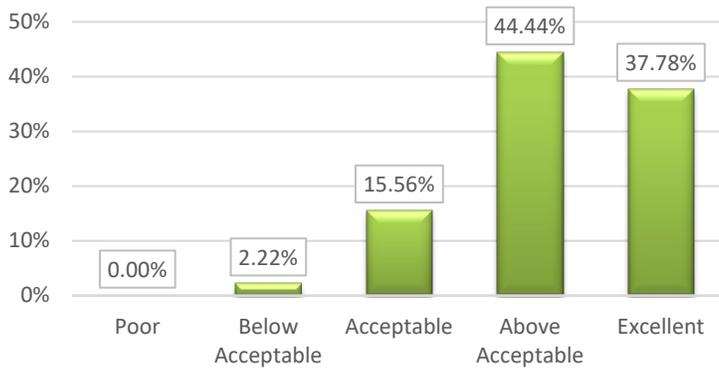
Rate the quality of the programs and services provided from your local Extension office.



*Commissioners rated the **services provided from local Extension office** favorably, with 100% rated as acceptable, above acceptable or excellent.*

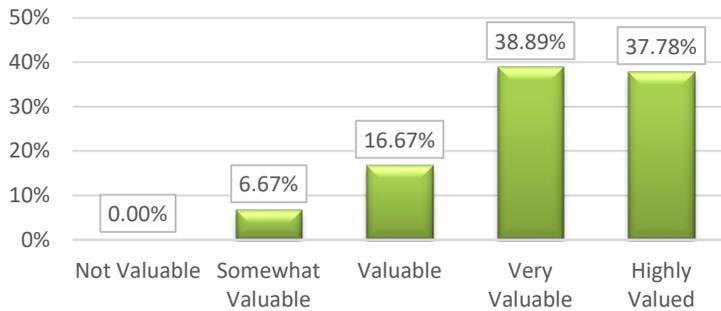
One commissioner commented: “Staff are very engaged with the community and do a great job connecting with the various communities that they work.”

Please rate the local offices’ ability to meet the needs of your county.



*Commissioners were satisfied with the **local offices’ ability to meet the needs of each county**, with 97.78% rated acceptable, above acceptable or excellent.*

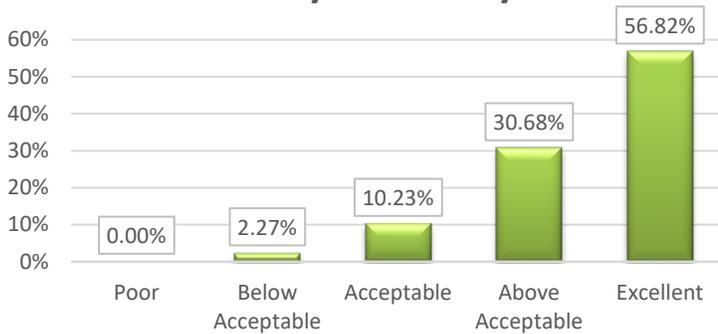
How would you rate the value received by the citizens of your county from programs and services delivered by Extension?



The value received by the citizens from programs and services delivered by Extension was valuable, very valuable or highly valuable according to 93.34% of respondents.

One commissioner noted: “Feedback from the citizens is highly valued and have vocally expressed it to the commissioners.”

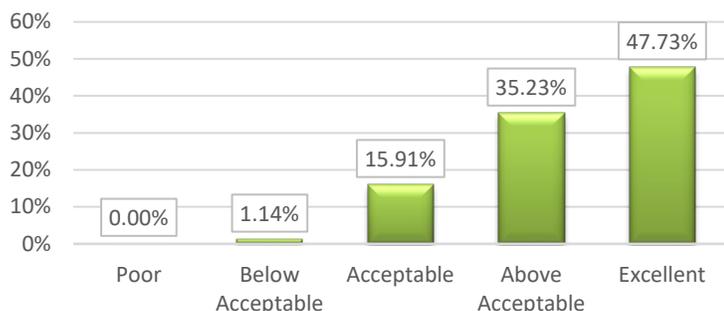
Rate the expertise and knowledge of your county Extension personnel in meeting the needs of your county citizens.



Commissioners rated the expertise and knowledge of Extension personnel positively, with 97.73% rated as acceptable, above acceptable or excellent.

As one commissioner commented: “Tremendous passion, dedication, and knowledge.”

Rate the responsiveness and service level of your county Extension personnel in meeting the needs of your county citizens.



The responsiveness and service level of Extension personnel in meeting the needs of citizens was found to be 98.87% acceptable, above acceptable or excellent.

One commissioner comments: “I believe that our Extension staff is very responsive to the individual resident as well as to ascertaining and responding to the overall, changing needs of the community.”

Regional Results Comparison: Commissioner Level Data

The table below reports commissioner responses divided into the three CSU Extension regions as percentages. As these percentages indicate, the three regions vary in their response trends. Program quality is rated consistently high across all three regions. Overall, regions are most positive about Extension personnel knowledge and responsiveness; scores trend slightly lower with regard to value.

2019 Regional Results Comparison									
	Excellent/Above Acceptable			Acceptable			Below Acceptable/Poor		
	Front Range	West	East	Front Range	West	East	Front Range	West	East
Program Quality	100%	87%	87%	0%	13%	13%	0%	0%	0%
Capacity	95%	80%	77%	5%	20%	18%	0%	0%	5%
Value	81%	77%	74%	14%	17%	18%	5%	7%	8%
Knowledge	95%	83%	87%	0%	14%	13%	5%	3%	0%
Responsiveness	86%	77%	86%	14%	20%	14%	0%	3%	0%
Satisfaction	95%	72%	79%	5%	24%	21%	0%	3%	0%

Each question on the survey allowed for comments. 2019 survey data indicate that county officials feel positively about their agents and are highly satisfied with CSU Extension. Comments raised concerns about local and regional capacity, understanding and considering changing needs through Extension programming and collaboration, as well as suggesting the need for increased public awareness.

Conclusion

In December 2019, Blake Naughton joined CSU as vice president for Engagement and Extension. In this role, he advances CSU's engagement and outreach missions and oversees CSU Extension, CSU Extended Campus including CSU Online, and the Colorado Water Center. Ashley Stokes serves as associate vice president for Engagement and Extension and provides day-to-day leadership of CSU Extension. After joining CSU, one of Naughton's first priorities was to engage in conversations with team members and community partners to learn more about services, programs, communities, and community needs to inform future planning.

In 2020, the Office of Engagement and Extension is embarking on a statewide community needs assessment process. This formal process will consist of four main elements including a perception survey, secondary data analysis, key informant data and a community needs assessment survey. In addition to the county commissioner survey, these data sources will collectively contribute to a detailed understanding of needs in our communities and enhance planning and inform program priorities in future years.

This report and future updates will be made publicly available on the CSU Engagement and Extension website. A link to the report also is emailed to county commissioners, and survey results are shared with Extension program leaders and regional directors to be used in planning and recommendations.