

# Montana State University Extension Statewide Needs Assessment Report



MSU Extension's mission is to improve the lives of Montana citizens by providing unbiased, research-based education and information that integrates learning, discovery and engagement to strengthen the social, economic and environmental well-being of individuals, families and communities.

The results from this survey will help MSU Extension identify and better understand needs and opportunities across the state, inform conversations and dialogue around meeting those needs, and provide information to inform strategic allocation of resources to collectively work towards meeting the organizational mission.

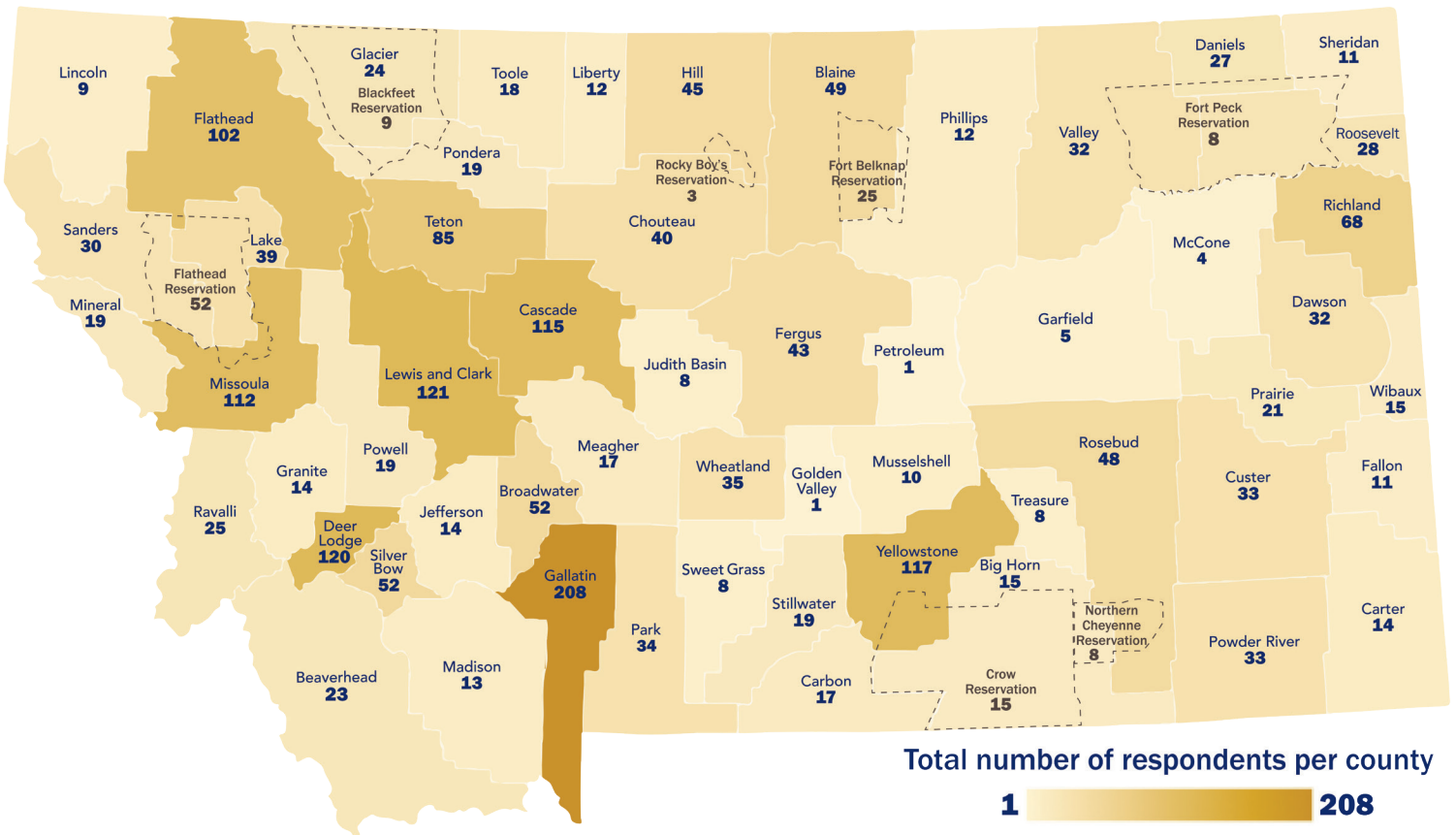
# DEMOGRAPHICS

**2421**  
**MONTANANS**  
 completed the survey

**49**

**Average age**  
 of respondents

488 survey respondents had never used MSU Extension services



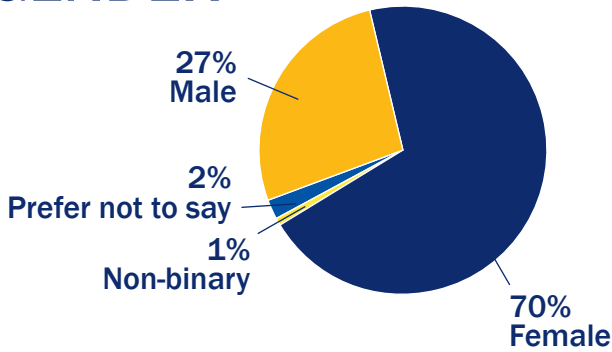
All Montana counties and reservations were represented

**Average number of**  
 people per household **3.8**

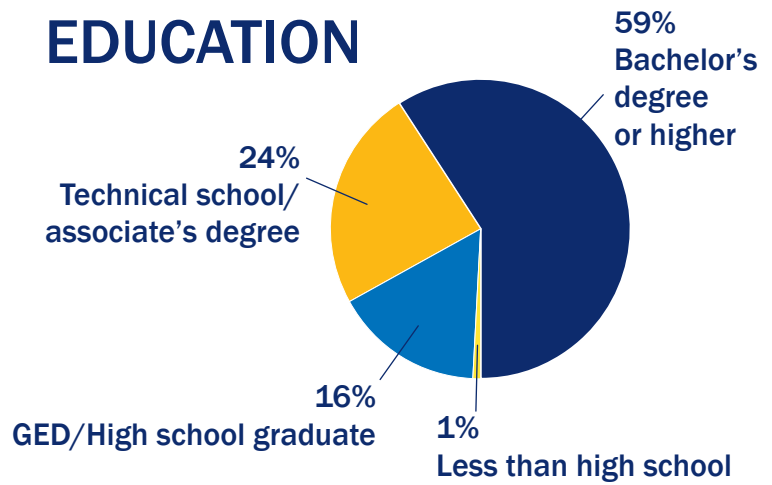


# DEMOGRAPHICS

## GENDER

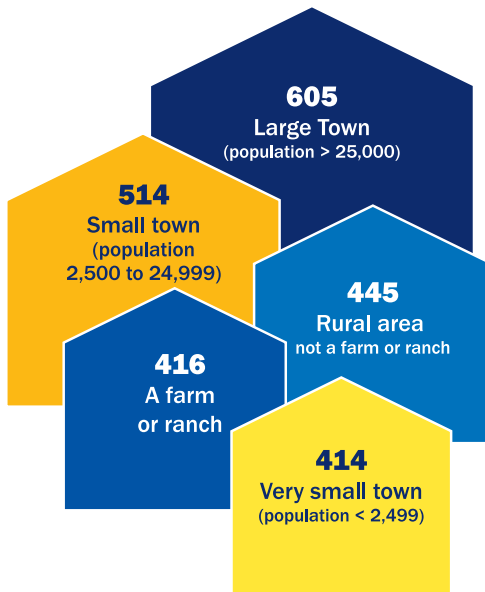


## EDUCATION

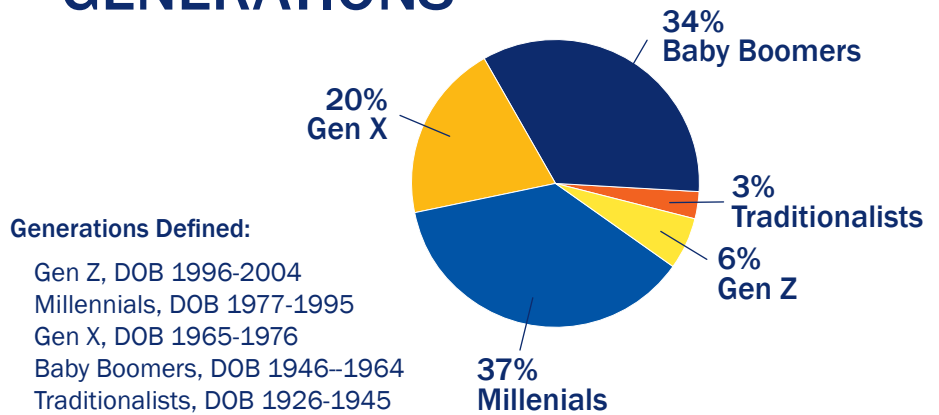


## LOCATION TYPE

Number of Respondents



## GENERATIONS



## RACE/ETHNICITY

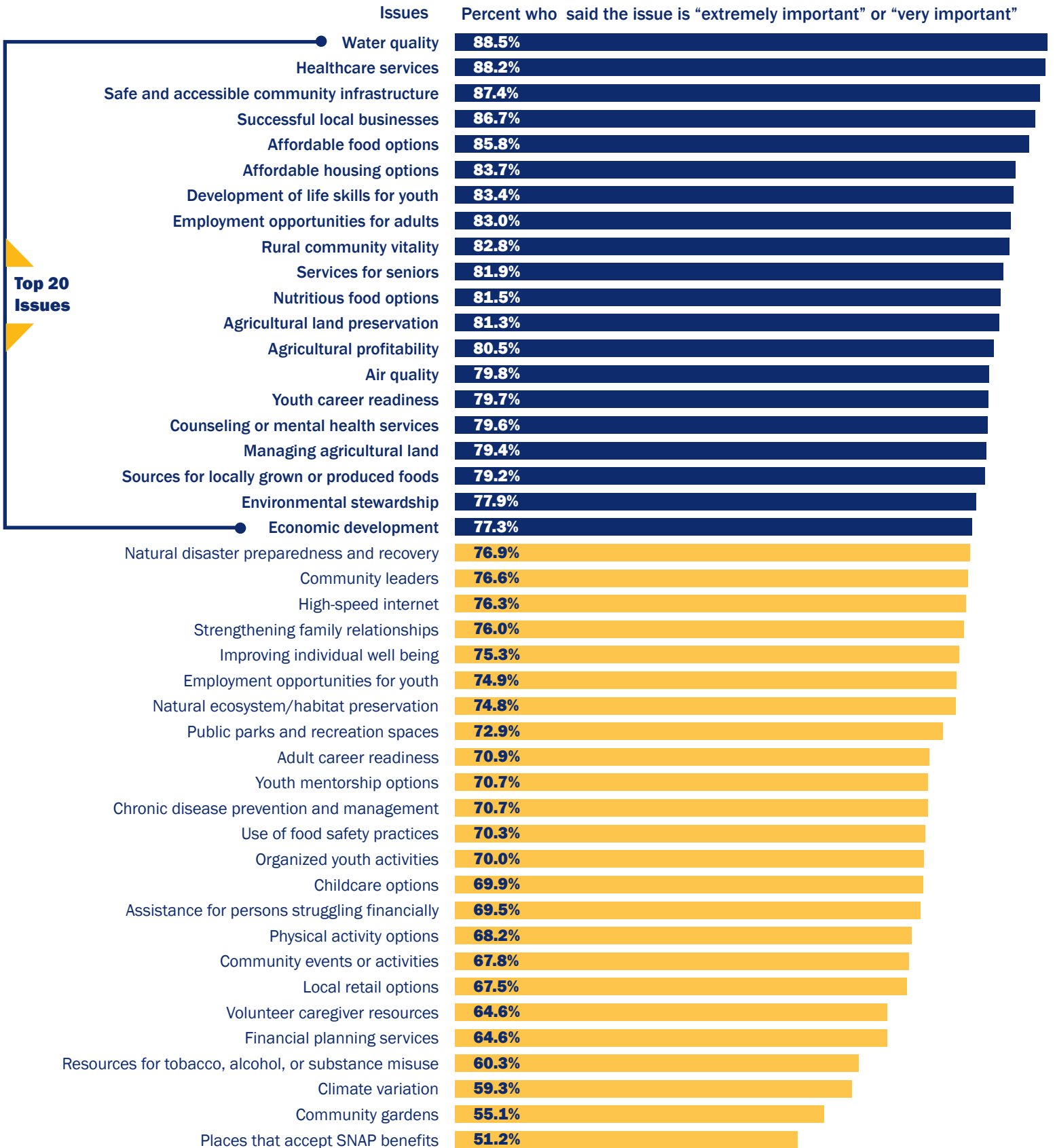
Caucasian or White	87.2%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	6.4%
Multiple Ethnicities	3.4%
African or Black	1.7%
Pacific Islander	0.6%
Asian	0.5%
Middle Eastern	0.2%
Non-Hispanic	86.2%
Hispanic/Latino	6.7%

## TRIBAL AFFILIATION

Tribe	# of survey respondents
Assiniboine	32
Blackfeet	13
Cherokee	6
Chippewa	19
Cree	14
Crow	3
Gros Ventre	17
Kootenai	34
Little Shell	8
Northern Cheyenne	11
Salish	36
Sioux	16
Other (Navajo, Pend d'Orielle, Mandan, etc.)	22

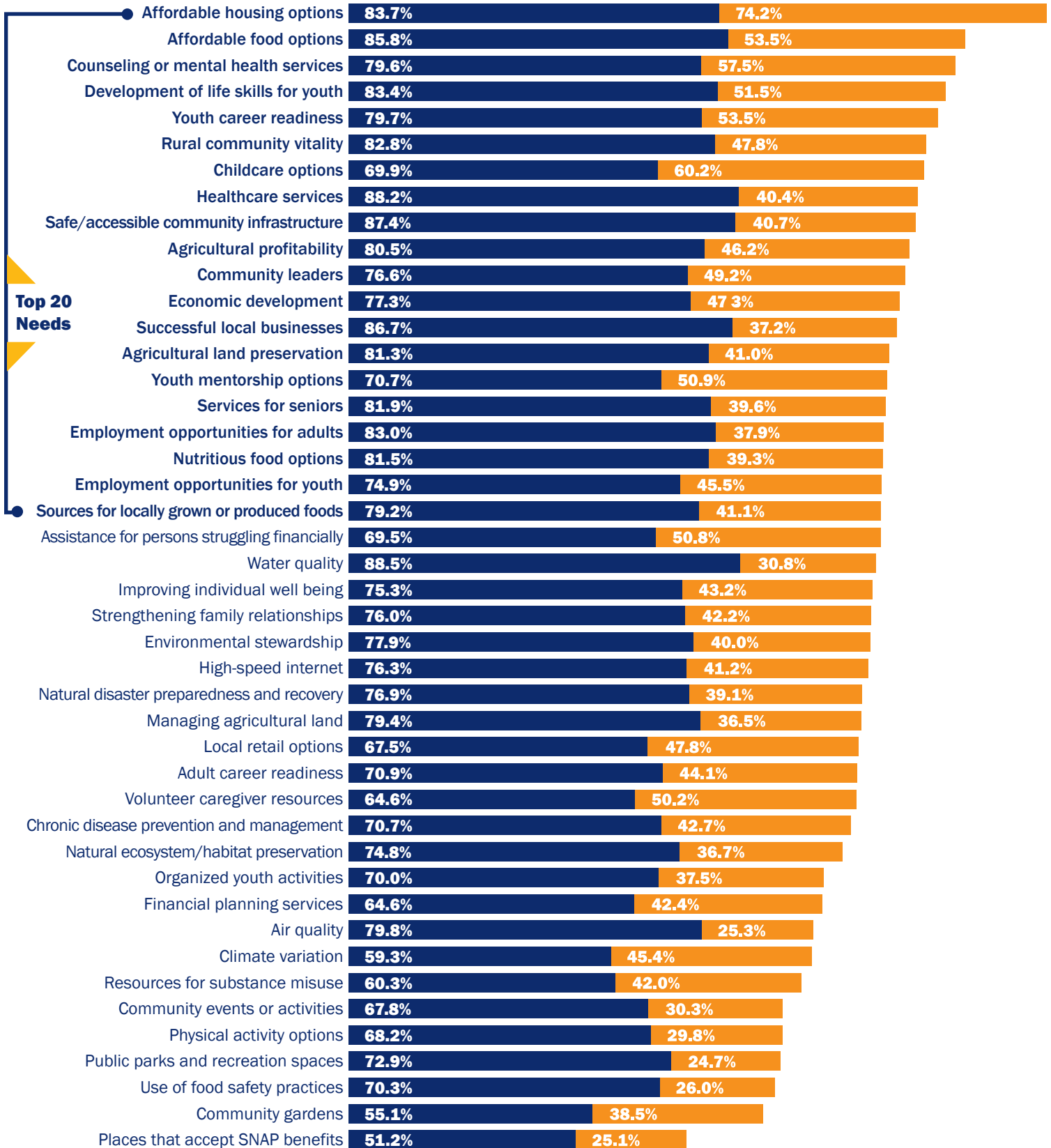
# SURVEY RESULTS: Importance of Issues

Survey participants were asked “how important are the following issues to you?”



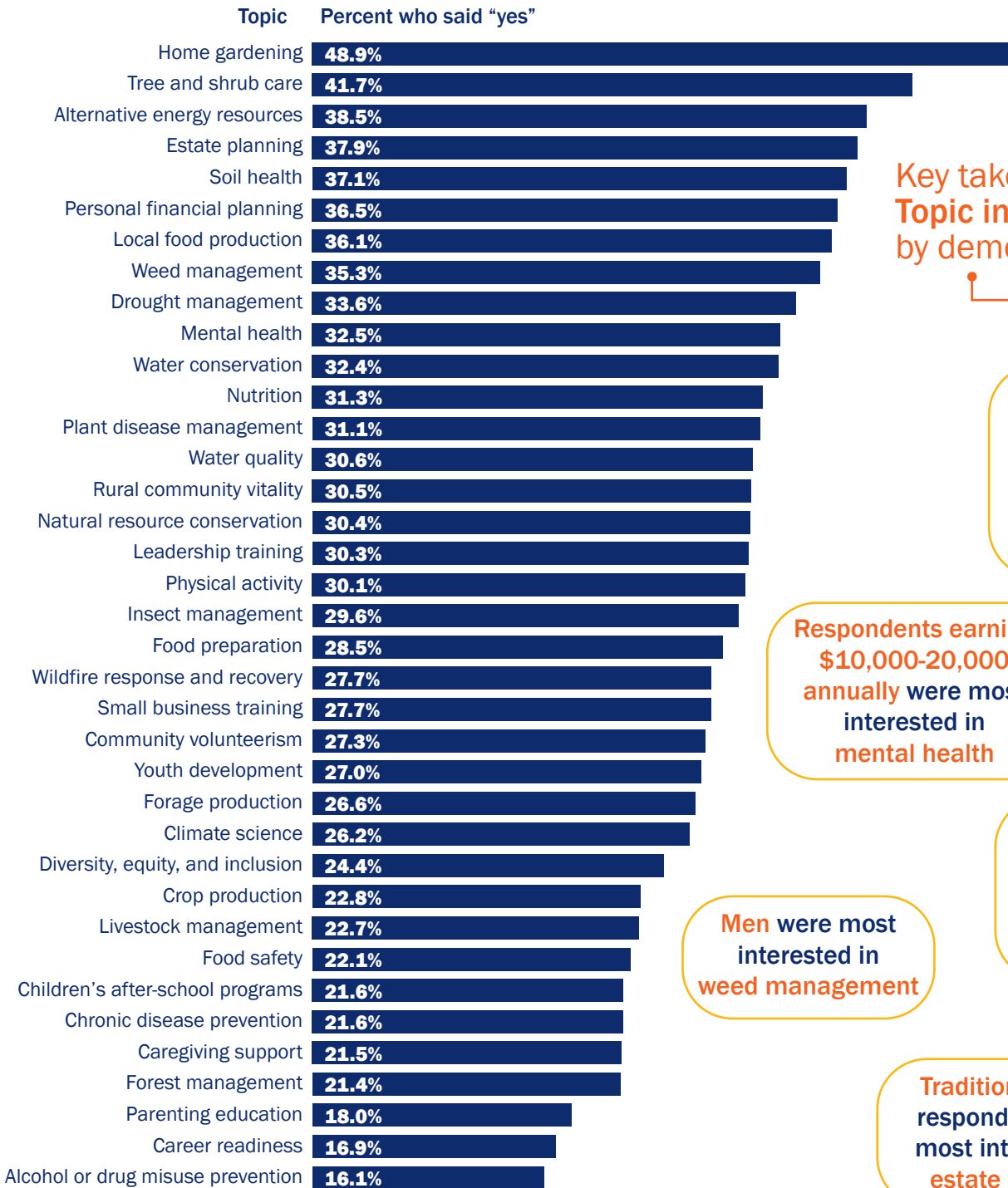
# SURVEY RESULTS: Need = Importance + Dissatisfaction

The blue portion of the figure represents importance, with longer bars equaling greater importance. The orange portion of the figure represents dissatisfaction, with longer bars equaling greater dissatisfaction. Consider the length of the combined bars as the need; the longer the bar, the greater the need.



# SURVEY RESULTS: MSU Extension Programs

Survey participants were asked to indicate if they would attend MSU Extension programs (in-person or virtual) on the following topics.



Key take-away:  
Topic interests varied by demographic group

Respondents who had never used MSU Extension services were most interested in home gardening

Respondents earning \$10,000-20,000 annually were most interested in mental health

Farmers and ranchers were most interested in drought management

Men were most interested in weed management

Traditionalist age respondents were most interested in estate planning

MSU Extension Faculty and Staff worked together to identify the top challenges that their constituents and communities were facing in 2022. Top challenges identified included financial issues such as affordability and cost of living, challenges associated with changing demographics in the state, challenges related to mental health and stress, and challenges associated with changing environmental conditions throughout the state.

# SURVEY RESULTS: Dissemination Strategies & Social Media

Survey participants were asked “how likely are you to want to receive information, resources, or training through the following delivery methods?”

Dissemination strategy	Percent who responded “somewhat likely” or “extremely likely”
In person workshops/classes	81.6%
Website	80.7%
Online/web-based classes, with an instructor	77.8%
Field days/demonstrations	77.7%
Printed materials	77.1%
Online/web-based classes, self-led	75.3%
Personal contact with Extension employee	73.2%
Videos	72.6%
Social media	60.0%
Podcasts	57.0%
Newspaper articles	56.9%
Television	47.5%
Radio	40.8%

Current users of MSU Extension preferred in-person workshops or classes

Respondents with a bachelor’s degree or higher preferred websites

“A blend of both options including both online training and personal contact is helpful.”  
-Survey respondent

Key take-away: a variety of delivery methods is needed to reach all audiences

Survey participants were asked how often they use these social media platforms.

Social media platform	Percent who answered “frequently”
Facebook	56.0%
YouTube	26.7%
Instagram	23.2%
Pinterest	15.5%
Snapchat	14.1%
TikTok	12.6%
Twitter	10.5%
LinkedIn	7.8%
WhatsApp	6.7%
Tumblr	5.6%

Survey participants were then asked to indicate “how often you use social media to do the following?”

Social media used to:	Percent who answered “frequently”
Learn about new events	44.6%
Connect with my community	38.6%
Learn new information	38.4%
Learn about organizations	36.1%
Find trusted information	22.3%
Engage in discussions	21.9%



Key take-away: Regardless of demographic, Facebook is the social media option likely to reach the most people

Participants were asked to think about the MSU Extension information, resources, or programming they have received.

88% said  
“I have **used MSU Extension information.**”

75% said  
“My MSU Extension experience helped me **solve a problem.**”



74% said  
“I have **shared MSU Extension information with others.**”

71% said  
“My MSU Extension experience **improved my life.**”