

# Using Needs Assessment Data to Improve Access for Rural Farmers and Farm Families



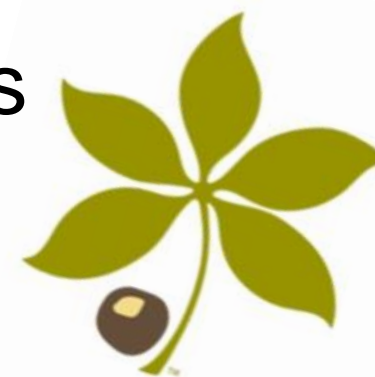
Emilee Drerup, MPH, Jill F. Kilanowski, PhD, RN, CPNP-PC, FAAN, S. Dee Jepsen, PhD, Patricia Brinkman, MA, Sonia Duffy, PhD, RN, FAAN

## Background

Farm and rural populations have higher rates of age-adjusted mortality, disability, and chronic disease compared to urban and suburban residents. They are also at higher risk for work related injury, lung disease, skin disease, mental health problems, and more. Farmers experience barriers to health care access and, there is limited data on the availability of health resources in rural areas. The objective of the study was to identify health behavior interventions available to farmers and barriers to providing these services.

## Methods

- A 46-item Qualtrics survey was used to survey rural health care providers in Ohio.
- Surveys were distributed to five identified rural health care providers including:
  - 73 Ohio State Extension offices
  - 121 Federally Qualified Health Centers
  - 81 Local health departments
  - 54 Rural health clinics
  - 33 Critical access hospitals



## KEY FINDINGS

51 counties were represented by at least one organization in the data which accounted for 68% of Ohio's rural counties. (Figure 1)

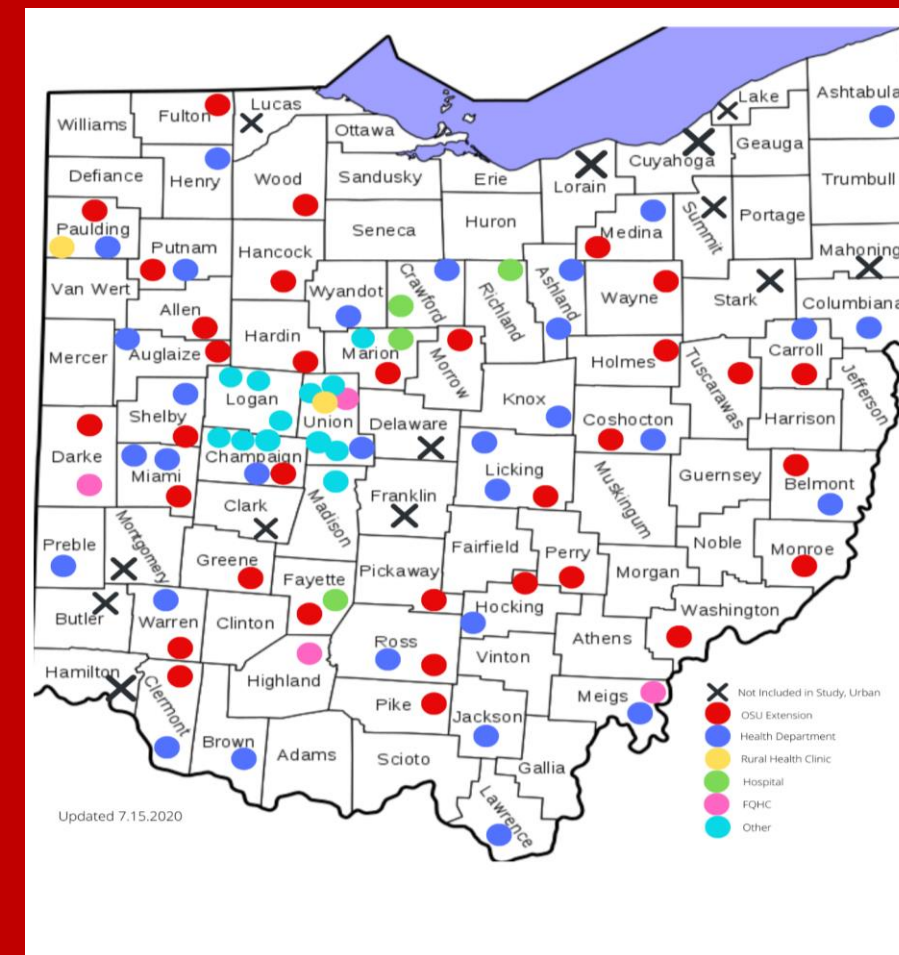


Figure 1: Statewide distribution of responding type of rural organizations

OSU Extension and local health departments were more likely to provide education-based services compared to the other providers.

Nutrition/healthy eating (91.2%) ranked highest in perceived importance and sleep ranked lowest (68.1%).

Lack of personnel was the most common barrier to providing mental health and opioid abuse related services and only 2.8% of organizations surveyed provided treatment types services related to these health behaviors.

For more information, please contact Emilee Drerup at [Drerup.23@osu.edu](mailto:Drerup.23@osu.edu)

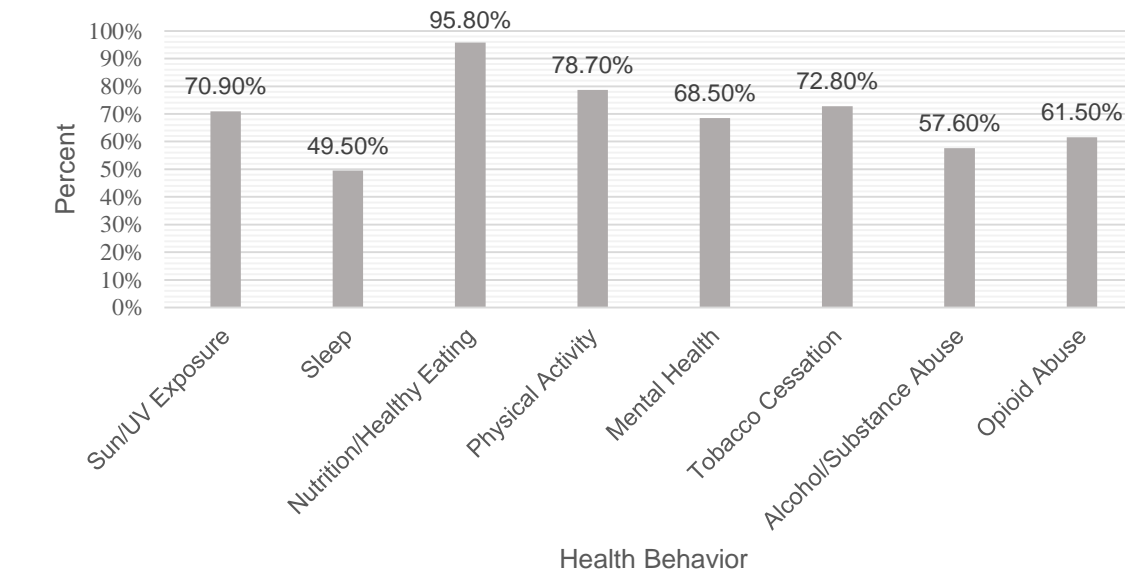
To see the full 46-item survey tool scan our QR code:



## Results

- Nutrition/Healthy Eating related health services were provided most often (95.8%) and sleep services were least often reported (49.5%).
- Organizations were most likely to offer health education resources via print or social media over other types of services such as treatment, diagnosis, and one-on-one or group education.
- The top barriers to providing services to farmers were lack of financial resources and lack of personnel.

Figure 2: Percent of Ohio Rural Organizations Surveyed that Offer Services by Type of Health Behavior



## Future Directions for Research

Agencies and organizations that serve farmers may be unaware of the existence or lack of health behavior services available to their clients. These findings highlight identify gaps in services. This information can then be shared with rural health stakeholders and organizations to assist in the determination of priorities and help avoid duplication of efforts.

This information may be used as a platform for collaborative work on future farm wellness projects and prompt joint efforts between organizations to ultimately improve the health behaviors of farmers and farm families in rural Ohio.

References available in notes section of presentation