

Climate Survey of Illinois Extension Professionals: Findings and next steps

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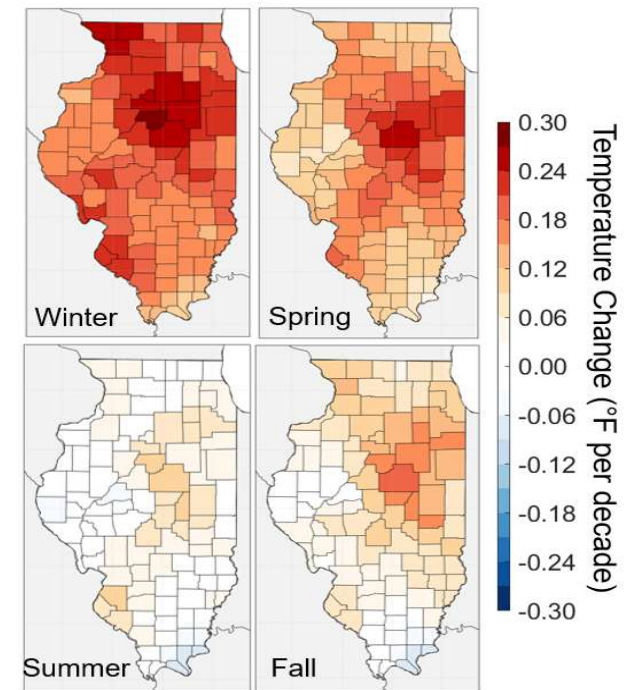
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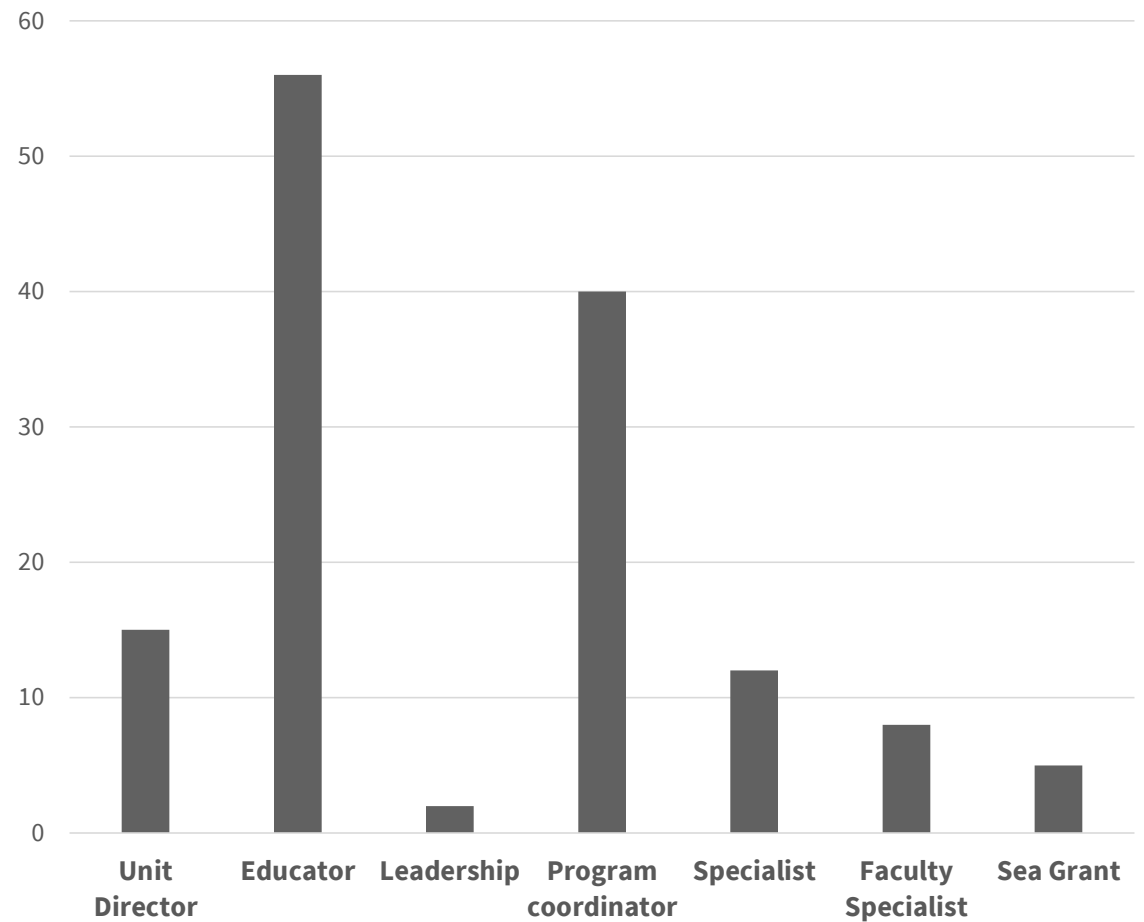
Source: Illinois State Climatologist Office

Climate Intersections Conference, Duluth, MN
July 13, 2022

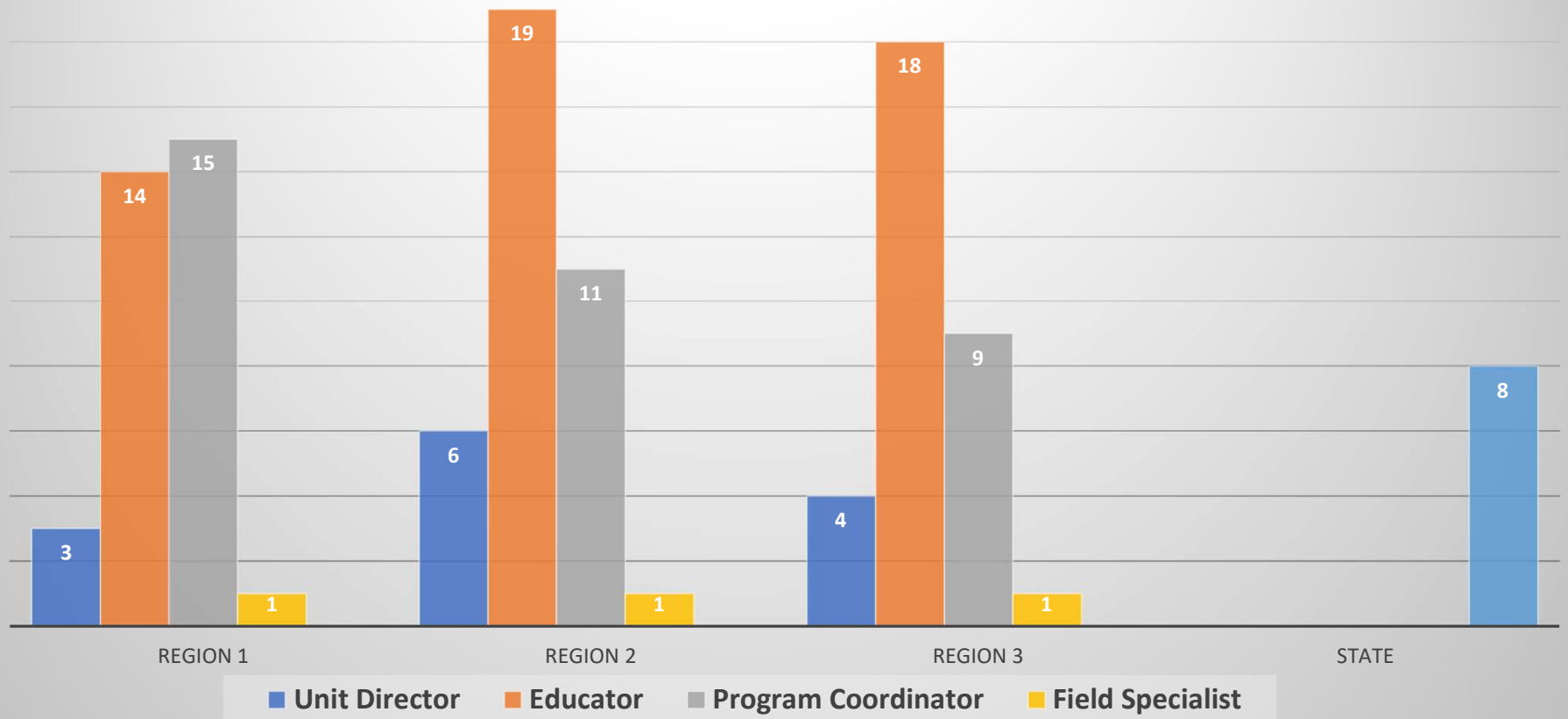
Climate Survey Goals

- Identify the extent of current climate-related programming
- Identify interest in providing climate programming in the future
- Identify people with interest in connecting around these issues
- Identify barriers to providing programming
- Identify resource needs for educators wanting to use climate programming

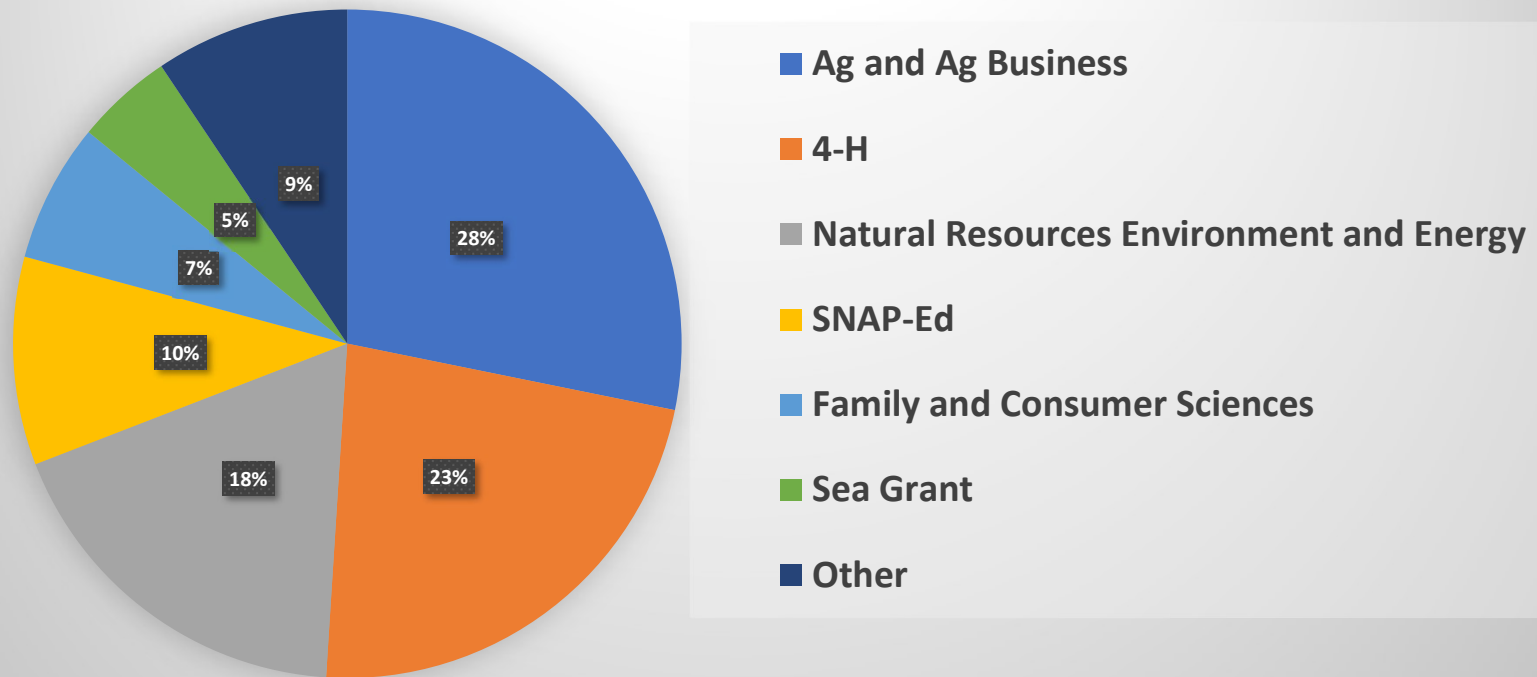
Respondents by Extension Role (N= 145)



Respondents by Position and Region



Respondents by Program Area



Have you integrated
climate change
related content into
your outreach or
applied research?

- Yes 33%

Which aspects of
climate related
content have been
included in your
programs/research?

Awareness/ understanding
46%

Adaptation/resilience
29%

Mitigation/prevention
25%

Have any of your stakeholders or clients expressed interest in or asked for expert assistance related to climate topics or conditions?

- Yes, many: 6%
- Yes, a few: 33%
- No: 61 %

Planned or recent
climate -related
outreach programs or
applied research

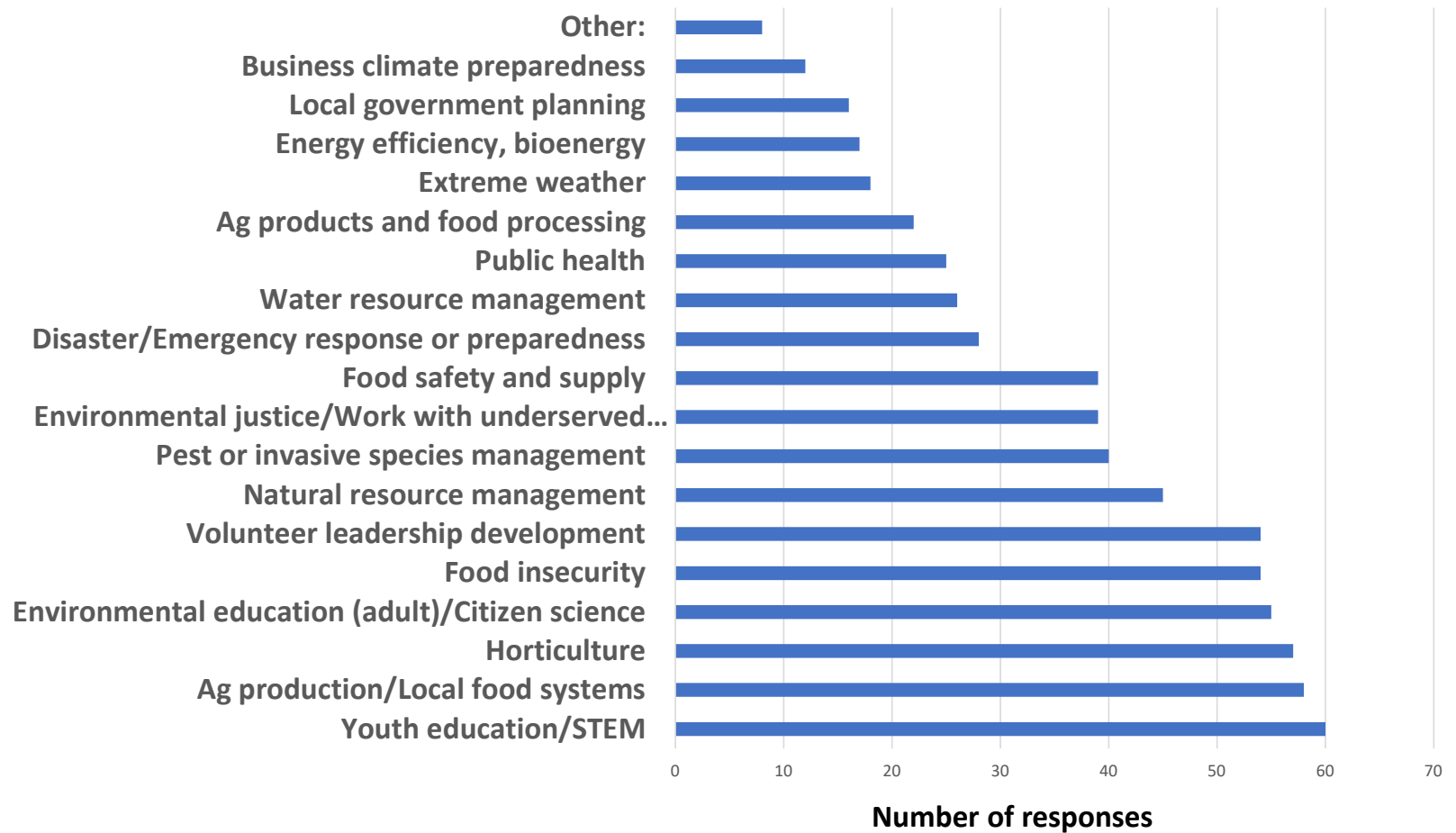
2021 Climate Assessment, Contributing Author
<https://stateclimatologist.web.illinois.edu/illinois-climate-change-assessments/>

4H Ag Innovators- Curbing
our Carbon Appetite

Drainage water management
in a changing climate

Climate Reality programs

Current climate-related outreach work areas



Overall, how important do you think it will be to incorporate climate change into Extension programs in the next few years?

Very important
68%

Somewhat important
28%

Not important
4%

Are you interested
in incorporating
climate change
related content in
future
programming?

Yes
54%

Not sure
38%

No
9%

Please tell us how important it will be for stakeholders to have access to climate change related programming

Ag production/local food systems

Disaster/emergency response/preparedness

Water/natural resource management



Top concern on
climate-related
programming

Presenting complex climate
information accurately
(51%)

Please let us
know how we
can keep you
engaged with
new climate
change-related
initiatives and
information

Please notify me about updates,
resources, and events.

61%

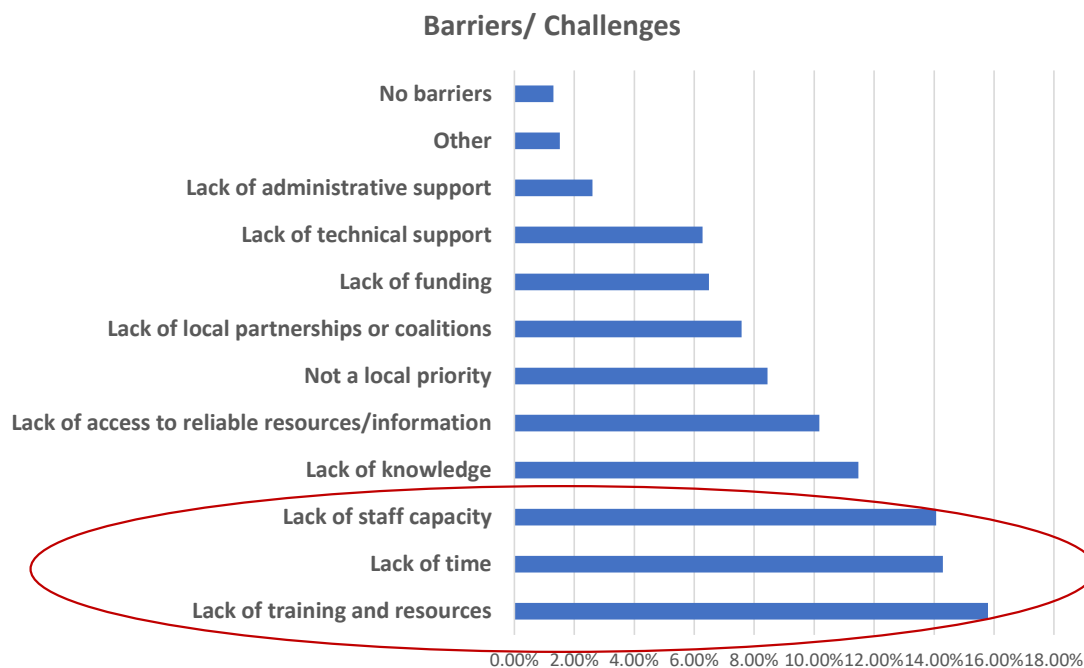
Provide information and training
at regional and/or state meetings

59%

I am interested in connecting with
others working in this area.

31%

Barriers, comments



I'm concerned about the combination of politics and climate change.

This is one more topic area to teach on when we already have lots of topics. So, overload is my concern.

I think an issue is that climate change is an existential threat, but one that is still a ways off. When I'm talking to growers, they're concerned about what to do this year or next year, so not sure how climate change impacts those decisions.

Summary

- Limited number of educators/ program coordinators have incorporated climate change programming into existing program
- Most are interested in incorporating climate change programming and believe its very important to do so
- Existing programming addresses mostly awareness and adaptation, with less on mitigation

Summary

- Majority of the stakeholders/clients have not asked for this programming
- Need to increase knowledge/confidence of educators/program coordinators to talk about climate issues
- A few Extension employees are not wanting to be involved with the issue either due to time constraints or don't believe it's a pressing problem

Future of Climate Programming in Illinois

- Adopting California Climate Stewards Program
 - As an advanced training for Master Naturalists
 - Might also be a stand-alone program
- Training Illinois Extension Educators for developing climate programming into their subject areas
 - Increasing their knowledge on climate change and ways to communicate (train-the-trainer)
 - Relating climate change to their subject specialties to make it relevant

Future of Climate Programming in Illinois

Contd..

- Climate Change Content
 - Master Naturalist curriculum
 - New Jr. Master Naturalist program
- Collaboration on several fronts
 - Illinois State Climatologist
 - Promotion of citizen science (including Master Naturalist and Master Gardener volunteers)
 - Monitoring with the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow (CoCoRaHS) project and Evapotranspiration (flash drought)
 - Advance notification of extreme heat episodes to coaches/school administrators
 - Local government and disaster programming



Thank You!

Questions?

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