

SUPER

System for University Planning, Evaluation & Reporting

Needs Assessment Toolbox

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Table of Contents

Introduction to the Needs Assessment Module	3
Search Needs.....	4
Enter Info	6
Search Data Indicators	9
Civil Rights Planned Participation and Civil Rights Plan	12
Definitions.....	12

Introduction to the Needs Assessment Module

What are the needs of people? To answer this question, first and foremost, Extension professionals listen to people. They observe the needs in their lives. They examine Census data. They examine other data sources such as the local newspaper or data provided by the Chamber of Commerce. They seek strategies to involve a diverse audience.

Issues are often obvious. Three home fires in one month in one neighborhood will get everyone's attention. This provides a teachable moment for fire prevention and home safety programs. Taking advantage of such teachable moments speeds adoption of recommended safety and fire prevention practices.

Likewise, issues are just as likely to be hidden from the casual observer. The personal bankruptcy rate, for example, is one problem that people may not be willing to discuss. Affected individuals just don't stand up and say "I have a problem managing my money and I need help."

The SUPER needs assessment module has been designed to support the way Extension professionals assess needs. The SUPER needs assessment is revolutionary. The module displays key data indicators, such as those from Kids Count CLICKS or the United States Census Bureau. It allows you to produce your county profiles by base program area, topic and/or audience. It also tracks local needs identified by Extension professionals through interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, and more; and allows for a statewide look at those collective local needs.

Think of SUPER as seven filing cabinets. Think of the "Planning" cabinet as having three drawers. These drawers are labeled: Individual Annual Plan, State Action Agenda and Needs Assessment. In the needs assessment drawer, there are six files: Search Needs, Enter Info, Search Data Indicators, Go to Blackboard LMS, Civil Rights Planned Participation and Civil Rights Plan (Figure 1).

SUPER

The screenshot displays the SUPER Needs Assessment Module. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Plans, Delivery, Profile, Training/Registration, Enrollment, Operation, and Reports. Below these are sub-tabs: Individual Annual Plan, State Action Agenda, and Needs Assessment. The 'Needs Assessment' sub-tab is active. On the left, a sidebar menu includes: Search Needs, Enter Info, Search Data Indicators, Go to Blackboard LMS, Civil Rights Planned Participation, and Civil Rights Plan. The main content area is titled 'Search Needs' and contains the text: 'You can search by any combination of the following criteria:'. Below this are several search criteria, each with a dropdown menu: 'Location of Benefit' (showing a list of 11 counties: Anderson County, Bedford County, Benton County, Bledsoe County, Blount County, Bradley County, Campbell County, Cannon County, Carroll County, and Carter County), 'From Year' (2006), 'To Year' (2006), 'Program Area' (Any), 'Topic' (Any), 'Audience' (Any), and 'Assessment Strategy' (Any). At the bottom of the search criteria are 'Search' and 'Cancel' buttons.

Figure 1. SUPER Needs Assessment Module

Search Needs

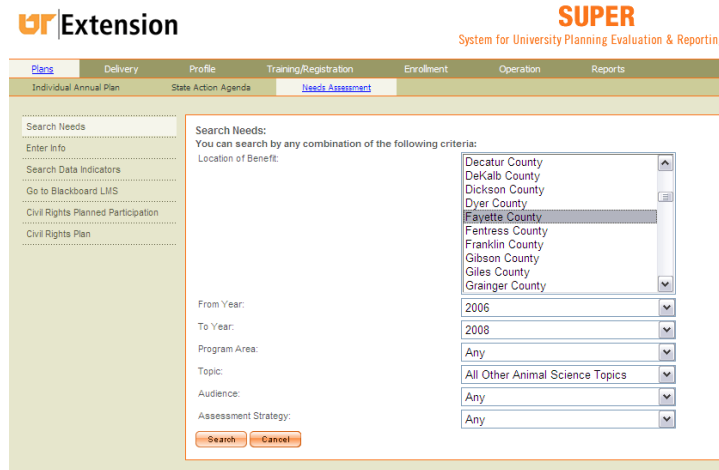
In the menu, click Plans. Now click Needs Assessment in the submenu. Notice that the Search Needs tab appears. This allows you to search needs that have been previously entered into SUPER by Extension Agents who conducted local needs assessments. Begin by establishing your search criteria, like this:

Location of Benefit – select the county by clicking on the county name. Select more than one county by holding the control key at the same time you click on the names of the counties. Notice that it is possible to search across all counties by selecting the “statewide” location of benefit.

- From Year – select the year you want to begin the search.
- To Year – select the year you want to end the search.
- Base Program – select the base program for your search; or search all of the base programs by using the default “any”.
- Topic – select the topic for your search; or search all of the topics by using the default “any”.
- Audience – select the audience description for your search; or search all of the audience descriptions by using the default “any”.

- Assessment Strategy – select the assessment strategy for your search; or search all of the strategies by using the default “any”.

Let’s say you want to see the needs identified in Fayette County for 2006, 2007 and 2008 for “All Other Animal Science Topics”. Notice how the search criteria is established (Figure 2) and how the results are returned in a results table (Figure 3).



An enlarged view of the search criteria is shown below.

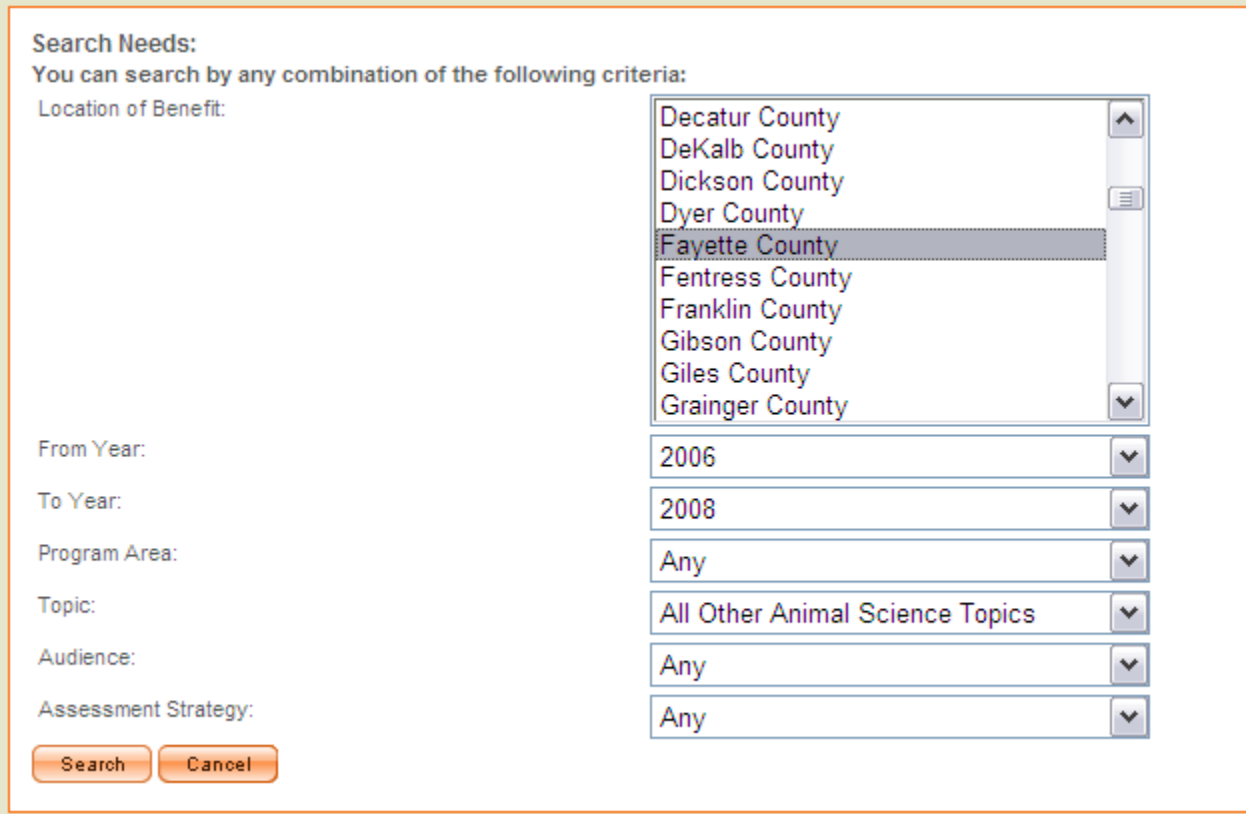


Figure 2. Setting Up Search Criteria

Needs:

LocationOfBenefit	Year	ProgramArea	Topic	Audience	AssessmentStrategy	▲Need
Fayette County	2006	Agriculture and Natural Resources	All Other Animal Science Topics	Advisory Committee Leaders	Advisory Committee Meetings	A Bull Soundness Examination is needed again for Fayette County
Fayette County	2006	Agriculture and Natural Resources	All Other Animal Science Topics	Advisory Committee Leaders	Advisory Committee Meetings	Bull Soundness Exam needs to be done Training is needed on new Credentialing for DART is needed Farm Safety education is need Production Management practices need to be shown Education on Information is needed on water quality issues related to beef
Fayette County	2006	Agriculture and Natural Resources	All Other Animal Science Topics	Advisory Committee Leaders	Advisory Committee Meetings	More information is needed on Production Management
Fayette County	2006	Agriculture and Natural Resources	All Other Animal Science Topics	Advisory Committee Leaders	Advisory Committee Meetings	Training is needed on new Homeland Security equipment

1

[Search Again](#)

Figure 3. Search Results

The results table is organized with seven columns: location of benefit, year, program area, topic, audience, assessment strategy and need. By clicking one of the column headers, you organize the data in alpha-numeric order under the column. For example, by clicking the header “need”, all of the needs are organized in alpha-numeric order. Notice that an orange triangle shows which header has been clicked (Figure 3).

Enter Info

Click Enter Info in the contents section on the left side of your screen. Notice the orange add button (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Enter Info Tab

When you click the orange add button, SUPER provides a pop-up box for you to describe your needs assessment. Enter a descriptive title if you choose. Next enter your county and other information regarding scope, such as an integrated research and extension program. Now enter a target audience. The audience that you enter is the audience you intend to target with education, or the object of the needs assessment. Please do not enter three or more audience descriptions. If you have assessed the needs of more than three audiences mark only General Public. To enter two multiple audience descriptions, hold the control

key while clicking. If you do not see an applicable audience description on the lists, enter General Public. Click one or more base programs.

An example of the descriptive data entered to set-up your needs assessment is shown in Figure 5.

Joseph L Donaldson Edit Needs Assessment 2007

Title (Optional)
Knox Co. Needs Assessment

Year
2006

Location(s) of Benefit
 Tennessee (state-specific)
Knox County

State-wide
 Multi-state
 Integrated Research and Extension
 National
 International

Target Audiences
Farmers/Producers
FCE Members
Food Handlers
Food Stamp Recipients
General Public
Government Officials
Landowners
Limited Resource
Older Adults
Parents
People with Chronic Diseases
People with Disabilities
Professionals
Volunteers

Program Area(s)
 4-H Youth Development
 Agriculture and Natural Resources
 Family and Consumer Sciences
 Resource Development

Once saved, these settings can NOT be altered. Please make sure that all of the information is complete and accurate before clicking SAVE.

Save Changes Cancel

Figure 5. Needs Assessment Set-Up

Do not be intimidated by the statement “Once saved, these settings can NOT be altered. Please make sure that all of the information is complete and accurate before clicking SAVE” (Figure 5). If you enter the wrong information, you are able to delete the assessment and start again. After you have clicked “Save Changes” on the needs assessment set-up screen (Figure 5), SUPER displays the title and year of your needs assessment (Figure 6). Click the plus sign to open the needs assessment. Now enter the assessment strategies (Figure 7).

Joseph Donaldson -- Need Assessment 2007

Local Need Assessment 1 Knox Co. Needs Assessment

[Delete Assessment](#)

Figure 6. Needs Assessment Display

Joseph Donaldson -- Need Assessment 2007

Local Need Assessment 1 Knox Co. Needs Assessment

Year
2007

Location(s) of Benefit
Tennessee (state-specific) Knox County

Program Area(s)

- Agriculture and Natural Resources

Audience(s) Who has these needs?

- General Public

Assessment Strategies
Please enter number of sessions for each strategy and for each type of contact.

Strategy Type	Associated with Extension	Not Associated with Extension
Number of Advisory Committee Meetings	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Number of Focus Groups	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Number of Interviews with Key Informants	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Number of Needs Assessment Documents Reviewed	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Number of Open Listening Sessions	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Number of Other	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Number of Surveys	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Number of Targeted Invitation to stakeholder groups	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Demographics

\	White/Not of Hispanic origin	Black/Not of Hispanic origin	Hispanic	American Indian/Alaskan Native	Asian or Pacific Islander	Total
Female Adult	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Female Youth	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Male Adult	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Male Youth	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
Total	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>

Needs

Topic	Need	
Consumer Horticulture	Homeowners need education in plant selection for the home landscape.	Delete
<input type="text" value="4-H Volunteer Development"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Figure 7. Needs Assessment Data Entry

You are entering the number of sessions conducted for the needs assessment strategies. In the example in Figure 7, the agent conducted two meetings with an advisory committee. The meetings are entered in the “associated with Extension” column because most of the committee members were already on one or more Extension mailing lists. If most of the committee members were not previously on Extension mailing lists, the number of sessions would be entered in the “Not Associated with Extension” column. Definitions of these needs assessment strategies are found in the definitions sections of this document. Then you enter the gender, race/ethnicity of the individuals contacted during the needs assessment. Next, type the need. The need should be one sentence. Notice the example in Figure 7: “Homeowners need education in plant selection for the home landscape.” You should answer the question “Who needs what according to whom?” Knox County Homeowners represent the “who” and their needs for plant selection education answer the “what”. The “according to whom” is the advisory committee.

Associate the need with at least one topic, and click “save changes”. If you do not find an applicable topic, use the “all other” designation, as in “All Other Plant Sciences Topics”. You may type another need, associate it with one topic, and click “save changes.” Notice that if you type the need incorrectly, or select the wrong topic, you may delete the entry and start again. Please enter the one, two or three most critical needs identified. Those are the needs that will be the focus of your local educational programming, and those are the needs specialists and program leaders want to consider for region-wide and statewide planning purposes. The needs you have entered may now be accessed from the “search needs” tab.

Search Data Indicators

The feature called “search data indicators” allows you to search for indicators of community needs and assets from multiple data sources such as: United States Department of Agriculture, 4-H Enrollment Reports and the United States Census Bureau, to name a few.

Click the “search data indicators” tab. Notice the search criteria. The first criterion is searching by either county or state. Both are selected by a click. Next, select the year or years for the search. Click the box if you wish to see the closest prior years if data is not available for the years you selected. Notice the search criteria selected in Figure 8. The search criteria will produce a profile for Knox County for the years 2000 to 2007. This profile will be limited to the base program agriculture and natural resources.

Needs Assessment -- Search Data Indicators

Search by:

County

Entire State

From Year: 2000

To Year: 2007

Pick closest prior year(s) if chosen year(s) not found

View Results By: Program Area

4-H Youth Development
 Agriculture and Natural Resources
 Family and Consumer Sciences
 Resource Development

Search

Figure 8. Needs Assessment Data Entry

By clicking search, the profile appears. A sample of the profile appears in Figure 9.

Data Indicators -- Knox County

[-] Collapse All [+ Expand All

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Name	Year	Source	Value
Cattle and Calves Inventory (farms)	2002	USDA Census of Agriculture	771.0
Corn for Grain (acres)	2002	USDA Census of Agriculture	484.0
Corn for Silage or Greenchop (tons)	2002	USDA Census of Agriculture	9438.0
Farm Households (#)	2000	2003 Tn Statistical Abstract	369.0
Hogs and Pigs Inventory (#)	2002	USDA Census of Agriculture	193.0

Figure 9. Profile

Notice that search may be limited by program area, audience or topic. Let's say you wanted to produce a profile of the topic "teen parents". Select topic from the "view results by" drop-down. Now select the appropriate knowledge area. Notice that you may select multiple knowledge areas. The topics associated with those knowledge area(s) are now displayed. Select the appropriate topic. Select more than one topic by holding the control (Ctrl) key on your keyboard. Now click the right arrow to move the topics to the box labeled "find data indicator for the following topic." Click Search. (See Figure 10.)

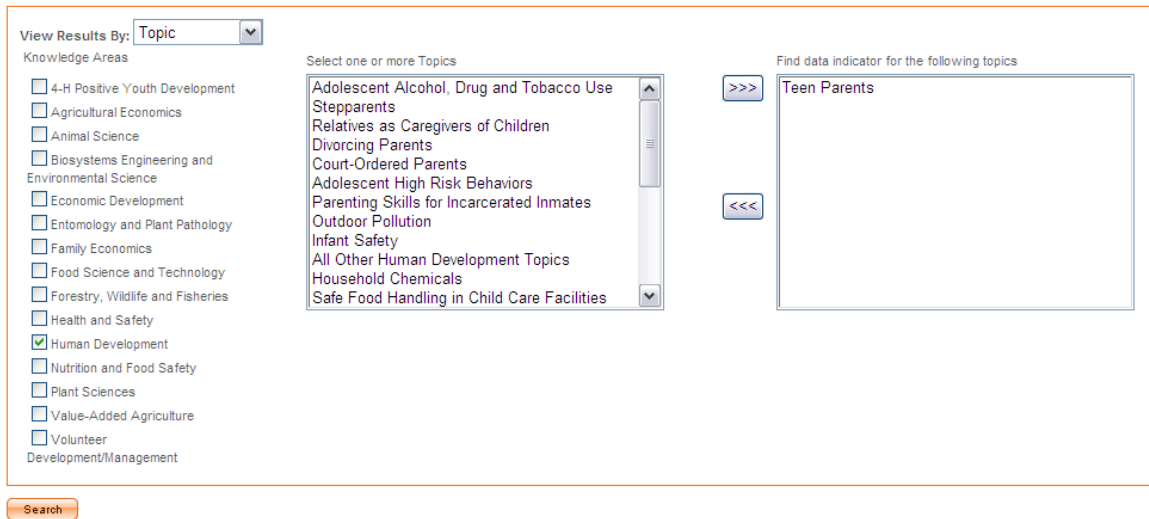


Figure 10. View Results by Topic

Let's say you wanted to produce a profile of the audience "food stamp recipients". Select audience from the "view results by" drop-down. Now select the audience description. Select more than one audience description by holding the control (Ctrl) key on your keyboard. Click Search. See Figure 10.

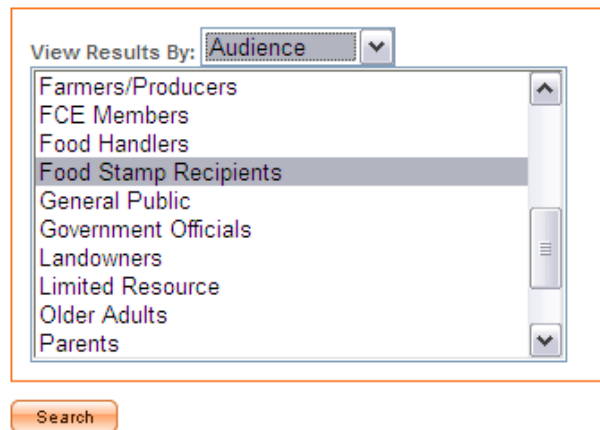


Figure 10. View Results by Topic

Civil Rights Planned Participation and Civil Rights Plan

More information will be available at a future date.

Definitions

Assessment Strategies –

- Focus Group – You invite a group of 5-7 individuals and ask leadoff questions, probing questions and follow-up to determine the needs in the community, who has those needs, and perhaps how the target audience is best reached.
- Needs Assessment Documents – This involves your review of needs assessment documents completed by government agencies or other community groups.
- Open Listening Session – Similar to an advisory committee meeting except that the session is open to all and advertised in the local media.
- Survey – Various surveys and questionnaires used to elicit needs of the community.
- Advisory Committees – A local group you organize for the purpose of providing input into the Extension program and helping to promote Extension programs and participation by diverse audiences.
- Interviews with Key Informants – Key informants are people who have specific information about a given audience or need. A nurse practitioner might be an excellent source for a community health assessment.