

Delaware Speaks Out!



A survey of citizens on key issues facing Delaware

Delaware is a small but diverse state. From the cities, to residential communities, to the farm there are issues that challenge us. These issues call for a response from citizens, businesses, organizations, universities, and state and local governments. Delaware Speaks Out! is a survey designed to get at the opinions of Delaware citizens on critical issues today and in the future.

The survey was administered in the spring and summer of 1999. The survey was originally sent out to 2,400 residents in Delaware. Of the names in the original sample list, some were removed because the subject moved or was deceased. A total of 633 useable surveys were returned for an adjusted response rate of 30 percent. The data were adjusted by age, race, and county of residence using a weighting scheme in order to remove biases due to selective response.

This booklet provides a summary of the data for the entire state. Most of the numbers reflect the percentage of the respondents who responded to the question. In some cases, such as age and years in Delaware, an average is presented.

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College of Agricultural and Natural Resources

We would like to begin by asking a few questions about the community in which you currently live. By community we mean the town, city, or residential area where you reside and with which you identify as home.

1. The following is a list of things which affect our lives. Please indicate how satisfied you are with each of the following items, from Very Satisfied (1) to Very Dissatisfied (4), or indicate that it does not apply (5).

| | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | No Opinion |
|---|----------------|-----------|--------------|-------------------|------------|
| a. My house, apartment, or mobile home | 43.5% | 44.9% | 9.1% | 2.4% | 0.0% |
| b. My neighborhood as a place to live | 37.2% | 50.6% | 10.4% | 1.5% | 0.2% |
| c. My community as a place to live | 30.1% | 54.1% | 13.4% | 2.4% | 0.1% |
| d. My standard of living (things you have, like your house and car) | 36.4% | 54.0% | 5.5% | 2.8% | 1.2% |
| e. My family life | 47.5% | 42.8% | 6.0% | 1.5% | 2.3% |
| f. The beauty and attractiveness of my community | 21.3% | 62.7% | 12.7% | 3.1% | 0.3% |

2. How would you rate the seriousness of the following issues in your community, from Not a Problem (1) to a Very Serious Problem (5)? (Circle your response)

| | Not a Problem | Small Problem | Problem | Serious Problem | Very Serious Problem |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------|-----------------|----------------------|
| a. Loss of historic land or properties | 32.5% | 31.9% | 20.9% | 8.5% | 6.2% |
| b. A decline in quality of life | 28.0% | 26.6% | 24.6% | 12.6% | 8.1% |
| c. The quality of instruction in the local public schools | 14.5% | 20.4% | 26.0% | 21.6% | 17.6% |
| d. Loss of natural resources such as woodlands and wetlands | 16.8% | 18.0% | 26.3% | 21.3% | 17.6% |
| e. Loss of farmland | 14.6% | 19.6% | 25.3% | 19.5% | 20.9% |
| f. Traffic congestion | 6.6% | 17.6% | 21.7% | 21.2% | 32.8% |
| g. Loss of open space | 17.8% | 20.7% | 27.9% | 17.1% | 16.6% |

| | Not a Problem | Small Problem | Problem | Serious Problem | Very Serious Problem |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------|-----------------|----------------------|
| h. Employment opportunities | 31.1% | 31.6% | 19.6% | 11.4% | 6.3% |
| i. Crime and vandalism | 11.1% | 39.2% | 26.6% | 12.7% | 10.5% |
| j. Pollution | 13.5% | 29.6% | 29.9% | 14.4% | 12.7% |
| k. Sprawl | 14.0% | 28.5% | 28.1% | 15.9% | 13.5% |
| l. Drug and alcohol abuse | 11.5% | 27.0% | 28.0% | 17.6% | 15.8% |

Are there other issues in your community which you are concerned about?

There are many aspects of our lives that cause us to worry. For each of the following please indicate the degree to which you worry about it in your life. If the item does not apply to you mark it so or leave it blank.

| | Not Worried | Somewhat Worried | Worried | Very Worried | Does Not Apply |
|---|-------------|------------------|---------|--------------|----------------|
| a. My personal finances and debt load | 30.1% | 36.6% | 17.5% | 14.8% | 1.0% |
| b. The quality and safety of the food I eat | 37.7% | 39.7% | 14.6% | 7.9% | 0.2% |
| c. My ability to afford health care | 36.5% | 28.9% | 16.0% | 17.6% | 1.0% |
| d. My personal safety from crime | 21.3% | 48.7% | 20.1% | 9.8% | 0.0% |
| e. The quality of education for my children | 14.2% | 16.2% | 21.2% | 21.1% | 27.3% |
| f. Balancing work and family | 27.9% | 22.0% | 17.4% | 15.7% | 16.9% |
| g. Quality of child care | 22.7% | 16.5% | 12.1% | 11.2% | 37.5% |
| h. My job security | 37.0% | 27.1% | 9.2% | 9.2% | 17.6% |
| i. Managing stress | 27.4% | 33.1% | 16.4% | 18.4% | 4.7% |

4. There are many strategies for economic development available to state and county governments. From your own perspective, please rate each of the following economic development strategies from the Lowest Priority (1) to the Highest Priority (7).

| | Lowest Priority | | | | Highest Priority | | |
|--|-----------------|------|------|------|------------------|------|------|
| a. Expanding and assisting existing businesses | 9.9 | 8.4 | 18.7 | 26.8 | 13.4 | 13.8 | 9.0 |
| b. Promoting tourism | 19.6 | 10.4 | 20.5 | 20.5 | 13.7 | 10.0 | 5.4 |
| c. Recruiting new manufacturing using incentives | 13.4 | 13.9 | 17.0 | 19.0 | 14.9 | 11.4 | 10.5 |
| d. Recruiting other companies (e.g., banking, corporate headquarters) using incentives | 15.2 | 12.0 | 11.5 | 19.3 | 19.1 | 10.5 | 12.6 |
| e. Helping new business start-ups | 8.6 | 6.5 | 11.8 | 21.5 | 18.0 | 17.2 | 16.4 |
| f. Providing training programs for workers | 5.8 | 6.2 | 9.5 | 19.3 | 17.9 | 19.8 | 21.6 |
| g. Improving infrastructure, such as roads and communication | 2.6 | 4.6 | 5.7 | 18.1 | 18.0 | 27.1 | 24.0 |

5. The next set of statements are concerned with agriculture, development and efforts to preserve farmland in Delaware. Please read each one carefully and answer if you Strongly Agree (1) to Strongly Disagree (6) with each of the statements.

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Somewhat Agree | Somewhat Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|----------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|
| a. We should allow free market forces to shape future growth in Delaware. | 9.1% | 15.5% | 33.3% | 16.2% | 15.3% | 10.6% |
| b. Development should be directed to land which is not well suited for agriculture. | 32.2% | 38.4% | 18.2% | 5.5% | 3.5% | 2.3% |
| c. Continued growth will hurt the quality of life in my community. | 25.6% | 20.8% | 28.2% | 12.2% | 6.2% | 7.0% |
| d. We already have too much land use regulation. | 41.9% | 27.6% | 20.9% | 5.4% | 2.6% | 1.7% |

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Somewhat Agree | Somewhat Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|----------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|
| e. We should require developers to pay impact fees to cover the cost of roads and schools from new development. | 7.5% | 11.4% | 27.7% | 18.2% | 22.0% | 13.2% |
| f. The state should provide more oversight and coordination in land use planning. | 31.4% | 30.9% | 27.8% | 4.6% | 2.4% | 3.0% |
| g. I favor using state tax incentives to attract new industries to Delaware | 8.3% | 21.3% | 35.1% | 18.4% | 9.1% | 8.0% |
| h. I support the state's efforts to preserve farmland by purchasing development rights from farmers | 29.0% | 29.8% | 26.2% | 6.9% | 3.8% | 4.2% |
| i. Our most productive farmland should be preserved for agriculture. | 56.1% | 27.4% | 12.5% | 1.8% | 1.0% | 1.3% |
| j. Farmers can be trusted to protect the environment | 8.1% | 19.0% | 33.2% | 14.0% | 15.5% | 10.2% |
| k. I support programs to help farmers remain in business | 38.5% | 31.1% | 23.4% | 3.1% | 1.8% | 2.1% |

There are various reasons to protect farms and the agricultural industry in Delaware. For each reason listed below indicate if you Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree with it as a reason to preserve farms.

We should preserve agriculture in Delaware in order to

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Somewhat Agree | Somewhat Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|----------------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|
| l. preserve open space and a rural landscape | 41.2% | 38.0% | 13.4% | 3.3% | 2.1% | 2.1% |
| m. preserve the tradition of the family farm in Delaware | 33.1% | 35.5% | 20.0% | 7.1% | 2.6% | 1.7% |
| n. help agriculture remain a viable part of the Delaware economy | 50.4% | 35.7% | 11.3% | 1.5% | 0.0% | 1.2% |

o. Currently Delaware is dealing with issues of poultry manure and its impact on the environment. Have you read or heard anything about this issue?

NO 27.7% YES 49.5% YES, A LOT 22.8%

p. Part of the discussion on poultry waste management involves who should be responsible for the management of poultry waste. Suppose we thought

of responsibility as being shared by the grower (farmer), the poultry processing companies (e.g., Perdue, Allen's, Tyson), and government (state and federal). What percentage responsibility would you assign to each group? Note: you can assign all the responsibility to any of the groups, but the total should sum to 100%.

| | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Poultry Growers | 36.4% |
| Poultry Processing Companies | 48.0% |
| Government | 15.4% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

8. The University of Delaware is involved in teaching, research, and outreach programs. For each of the following activities, please indicate if you feel it is Very Important, Somewhat Important, or Not Important.

| | Very Important | Important | Somewhat Important | Not Important |
|---|----------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------|
| a. Undergraduate teaching – teaching college students | 61.3% | 31.0% | 7.1% | 0.7% |
| b. Graduate teaching -- teaching students toward an advanced degree | 52.9% | 37.2% | 9.1% | 0.8% |
| c. Teaching classes to older students who are returning to school, but not necessarily to earn a degree | 28.1% | 45.9% | 22.3% | 3.7% |
| d. Off-campus extension work, that is providing educational programs to people in their communities | 37.3% | 45.6% | 14.9% | 2.2% |
| e. Research on problems facing businesses, residents, and state and local governments | 32.6% | 44.2% | 21.0% | 2.1% |

9. Imagine you had \$100 of taxpayer money to spend on higher education. How would you distribute this money to teaching students on-campus, off-campus education and technical help, and for doing research?

| | |
|--|----------|
| a. Teaching students on-campus | \$ 45.67 |
| b. Off-campus education and technical help | \$ 30.33 |
| c. Doing research | \$ 23.49 |
| | \$100.00 |

The following questions refer to the Delaware Cooperative Extension program sometimes known as the agriculture extension service which is provided locally by county extension agents).

| | No | Yes | | | |
|---|--------|-------------------------------------|-------|------------|------------|
| 10. Have you ever heard of Delaware Cooperative Extension ? | 47.2% | 52.8% | | | |
| 11. Have you ever heard of Extension agricultural programs (this refers to programs for crops, livestock, forestry, lawn and garden care)? | 51.5% | 48.5% | | | |
| 12. Have you ever heard of Family and consumer sciences programs (these include nutrition and food safety, personal finance and family economics, parenting and family relationships)? | 46.0% | 54.0% | | | |
| 13. Have you ever heard of Extension 4-H and youth programs (these include 4-H clubs and school activities)? | 14.6% | 85.4% | | | |
| If , where you a 4-H member as a youth? | 88.1% | 11.9% | | | |
| 14. Have you ever heard of Extension community development programs (these include helping communities and groups on critical issues)? | 70.3% | 29.7% | | | |
| 15. Have you or a family member ever contacted an Extension educator/agent or used the services of Extension? | 77.8% | 22.2% | | | |
| a. If Yes, did you or a family member contact Extension or use the services within the past year? | 62.4% | 37.6% | | | |
| b. If you have used Extension within the last year, which program areas did you use (check all that apply)? | | | | | |
| Agricultural programs | 56.1% | Family and Consumer Sciences 25.5% | | | |
| 4-H and Youth Programs | 16.7% | Community Development Programs 9.5% | | | |
| 6. The Delaware Extension Service is involved in many types of programs. Please indicate how high a priority should be given to Extension programs which focus on the following topics. | | | | | |
| | Slight | Moderate | Great | Very Great | Don't Know |
| a. Food production | 2.1% | 20.3% | 39.8% | 29.1% | 8.6% |
| b. Human nutrition | 0.5% | 17.2% | 43.3% | 31.8% | 7.1% |
| c. Personal finance | 9.4% | 32.0% | 32.5% | 19.5% | 6.7% |

| | Slight | Moderate | Great | Very Great | Don't Know |
|---------------------------------|--------|----------|-------|------------|------------|
| d. Youth programs | 1.8% | 11.6% | 32.0% | 51.7% | 2.9% |
| e. Food safety | 1.0% | 13.9% | 36.2% | 45.4% | 3.5% |
| f. Water quality | 0.7% | 8.6% | 27.0% | 60.1% | 3.6% |
| g. Home gardening and lawn care | 16.8% | 46.8% | 25.0% | 8.0% | 3.4% |
| h. Community development | 7.6% | 26.5% | 39.4% | 21.8% | 4.8% |
| i. Family life | 4.4% | 17.4% | 28.7% | 43.7% | 5.8% |

A project at the University of Delaware is looking at how homeowners and renters manage their lawns and gardens, particularly with your use of lawn care services and fertilizer. **If you do not have a lawn or garden skip to question 25.**

17. Which of the following best describes the way your household handles fertilizing your lawn. (Check only one answer)

| | |
|---|-------|
| I (or someone in the household) apply fertilizer myself | 45.2% |
| I/we contract with a professional service to fertilize the lawn | 13.1% |
| I/we do not fertilize the lawn | 41.8% |

If you or someone else **does not** apply fertilizer to your lawn, **skip to question 18.** Otherwise, please answer the following questions.

a. What do you typically apply to your lawn? (Check all that apply)

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| Turf Builder (Nitrogen) | 52.2% |
| Weed & Feed Broadleaf | 44.8% |
| Weed & Feed Crabgrass | 53.8% |
| Fertilizer and Insect Control | 46.1% |

b. When do you apply fertilizer to your lawn? (Check all that apply)

| | | | | | | | |
|--------|-------|--------|-------|------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| Spring | 75.4% | Summer | 26.7% | Fall | 48.6% | Irregular, as needed | 17.9% |
|--------|-------|--------|-------|------|-------|----------------------|-------|

18. Do you fertilize trees or shrubs on your property? 38.3%

19. Do you fertilize a garden on your property? 35.5%

20. How often do you conduct a soil test?
 Never 76.7% Every few years 16.0% Yearly 4.4% Other 2.9%

21. When you mow your lawn, what do you typically do with the clippings? (Check the one that you do most often)

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-------|----------------|-------|---------------|------|
| Leave on lawn | 71.1% | Bag and remove | 21.1% | Bag & compost | 7.8% |
|---------------|-------|----------------|-------|---------------|------|

2. Do you irrigate your lawn? 43.4%

| | | | | |
|---|------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| If Yes, how do you irrigate? | Manual sprinkler | 86.7% | Automatic | 13.4% |
| How often do you irrigate in the summer? | Daily | 2.9% | Several times/week | 20.1% |
| | Weekly | 13.3% | As needed | 63.7% |

3. Could you give an estimate of your current lot size, in either acres or square feet, and what percent of your lot is in your lawn?
 1.9 acres or 83062.9 sq ft and 55.6% in lawn

4. In terms of a new tree, how confident are you in selecting, planting, and maintaining a new tree on your property:

| | Very Confident | Confident | Unconfident | Very Unconfident |
|---|----------------|-----------|-------------|------------------|
| a. Selecting a tree that is appropriate for my site | 26.7% | 46.7% | 22.7% | 3.9% |
| b. Planting a new tree | 27.2% | 48.5% | 20.1% | 4.3% |
| c. Maintaining a new tree once planted | 29.5% | 49.9% | 16.4% | 4.2% |

The next set of questions relate to a project by the University of Delaware, DELDOT, and the Delaware Center for Horticulture on how alternative plantings might enhance Delaware's highways. By plantings we mean, for example, mowed grass, large masses of colorful annual flowers, or thickets of shrubs.

5. How do the plantings along the roadside impact your traveling experience on a relatively short trip (less than 20 minutes)?

| NO IMPACT | LITTLE IMPACT | MODERATE IMPACT | SIGNIFICANT IMPACT | MAJOR IMPACT |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 13.7% | 26.1% | 28.7% | 26.2% | 5.3% |

6. How do the plantings along the roadside impact your traveling experience on a relatively long trip (1 hour or more)?

| NO IMPACT | LITTLE IMPACT | MODERATE IMPACT | SIGNIFICANT IMPACT | MAJOR IMPACT |
|-----------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 6.4% | 10.7% | 34.1% | 32.3% | 16.4% |

7. The following scenes can be found along Delaware's roadways. For each one please rate whether it has Low Appeal(1) to High Appeal (2) to you as you are driving.

| | Low Appeal | | | High Appeal | |
|--|------------|-------|-------|-------------|-------|
| a. Mowed grass | 2.7% | 6.7% | 22.7% | 39.1% | 28.8% |
| b. Unmowed grass | 52.0% | 24.9% | 13.5% | 6.2% | 3.4% |
| c. Billboards | 45.0% | 25.3% | 25.6% | 2.6% | 1.5% |
| d. Unscreened industrial sites | 51.4% | 25.5% | 16.5% | 5.0% | 1.6% |
| e. Office complexes with well-manicured landscapes | 2.3% | 10.2% | 35.0% | 34.6% | 17.9% |
| f. Wooded areas | 1.2% | 3.1% | 15.5% | 45.5% | 34.7% |
| g. Wetland area | 3.3% | 6.7% | 27.3% | 37.0% | 25.7% |
| h. Open meadow | 0.3% | 2.8% | 19.9% | 41.2% | 35.8% |
| i. Large masses of colorful flowers | 1.2% | 1.7% | 9.7% | 28.4% | 59.1% |
| j. Thickets of shrubs with seasonal interest | 1.4% | 5.0% | 23.6% | 30.4% | 39.6% |

28. How do you rate Delaware's roadway scenery? (circle your response)

| VERY POOR | POOR | AVERAGE | GOOD | EXCELLENT |
|-----------|-------|---------|-------|-----------|
| 2.3% | 11.1% | 55.2% | 28.4% | 3.1% |

Can you name a road or stretch of road in Delaware where you liked the scenery? _____

29. Compared to other states, do you think Delaware's roadway scenery is Better, Worse, or About the Same.

| BETTER | WORSE | ABOUT THE SAME |
|--------|-------|----------------|
| 19.2% | 17.7% | 63.1% |

Is there a state(s) that you feel does an excellent job of roadside planting? _____

30. Please indicate your level of support for state dollars spent on efforts to beautify Delaware roadways.

| NO SUPPORT | WEAK SUPPORT | DON'T KNOW | SOME SUPPORT | STRONG SUPPORT |
|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|----------------|
| 3.2% | 7.9% | 29.1% | 47.0% | 12.8% |

