

A SURVEY OF GEORGIA CITIZENS ON THEIR ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS ASSOCIATED WITH WATER

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Abstract. To accurately determine the effectiveness of educational efforts related to water resources, it is important both to establish base-line information about public perceptions and literacy, and then to measure change in public attitudes and actions over time. Furthermore, to identify the best opportunities for successful regional programming, it is imperative to understand the similarities and differences that exist among the target audiences.

As part of the NIFA national water program, a survey instrument was developed to provide base-line information on public attitudes regarding water resources in 2002 from which future Extension programming outcomes can be measured (Mahler, Simmons, Sorensen, & Miner, 2004). This initial regional survey documented public attitudes about water resources in over 40 states around the United States. In 2009 and 2010, this survey tool was used to measure responses from a statistically significant sampling of randomly selected Georgia citizens. The objectives of this article are to document baselines in the public's perception of water resource priorities, identify the information sources used by the public, and examine recent and future water resources learning opportunities most likely to be used by the public. Responses to the 50 question survey will be shares and compared to results of surveys conducted in other Southeastern States.