

# Easy as PIE – March 2018


## Assessing the Needs and Impacts of Florida's County Extension Professionals Following the 2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season



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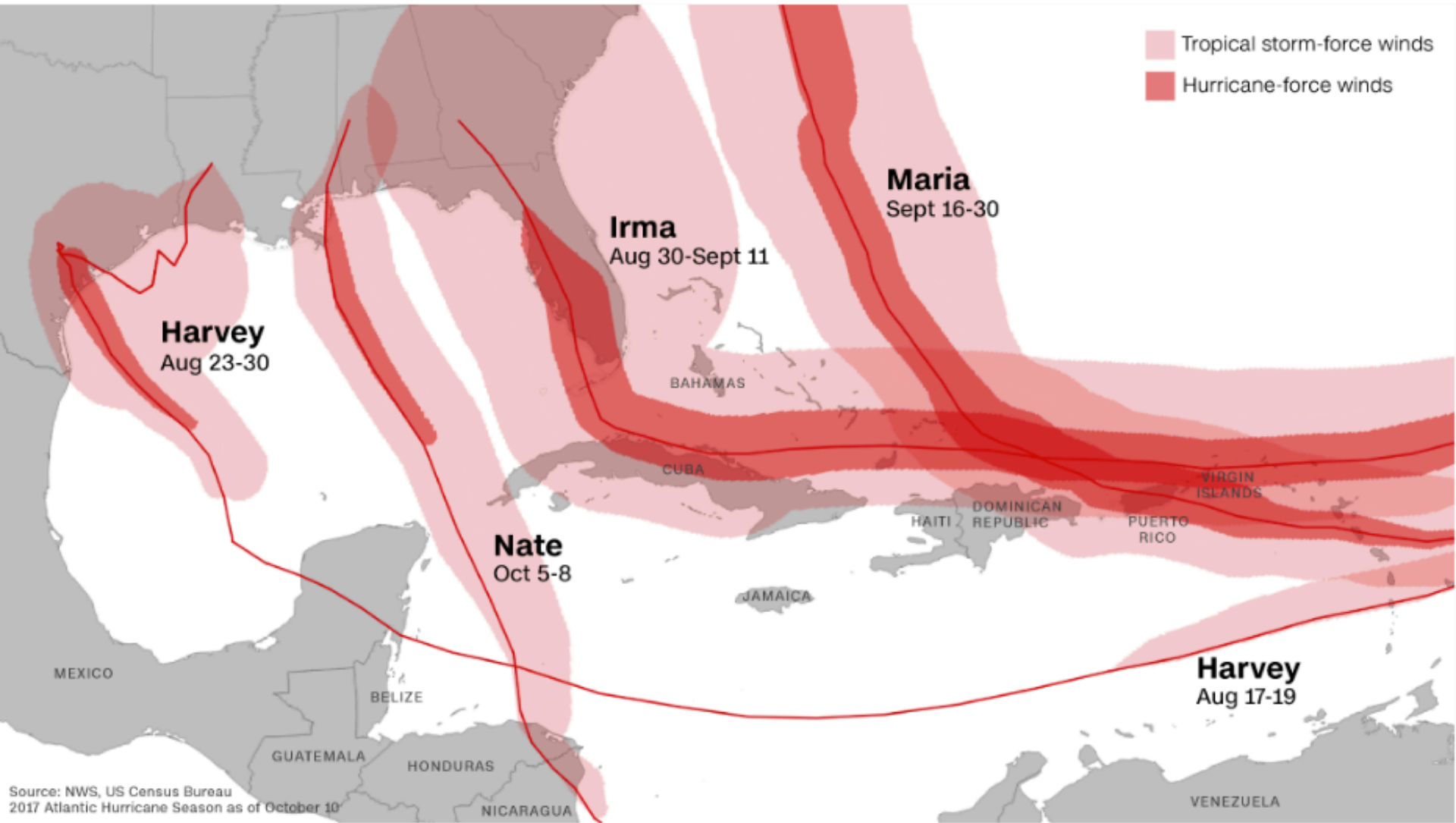


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**Assessing the Needs and Impacts of  
Florida's County Extension Professionals  
Following the 2017 Atlantic Hurricane  
Season**

**A General Overview of Survey Results**



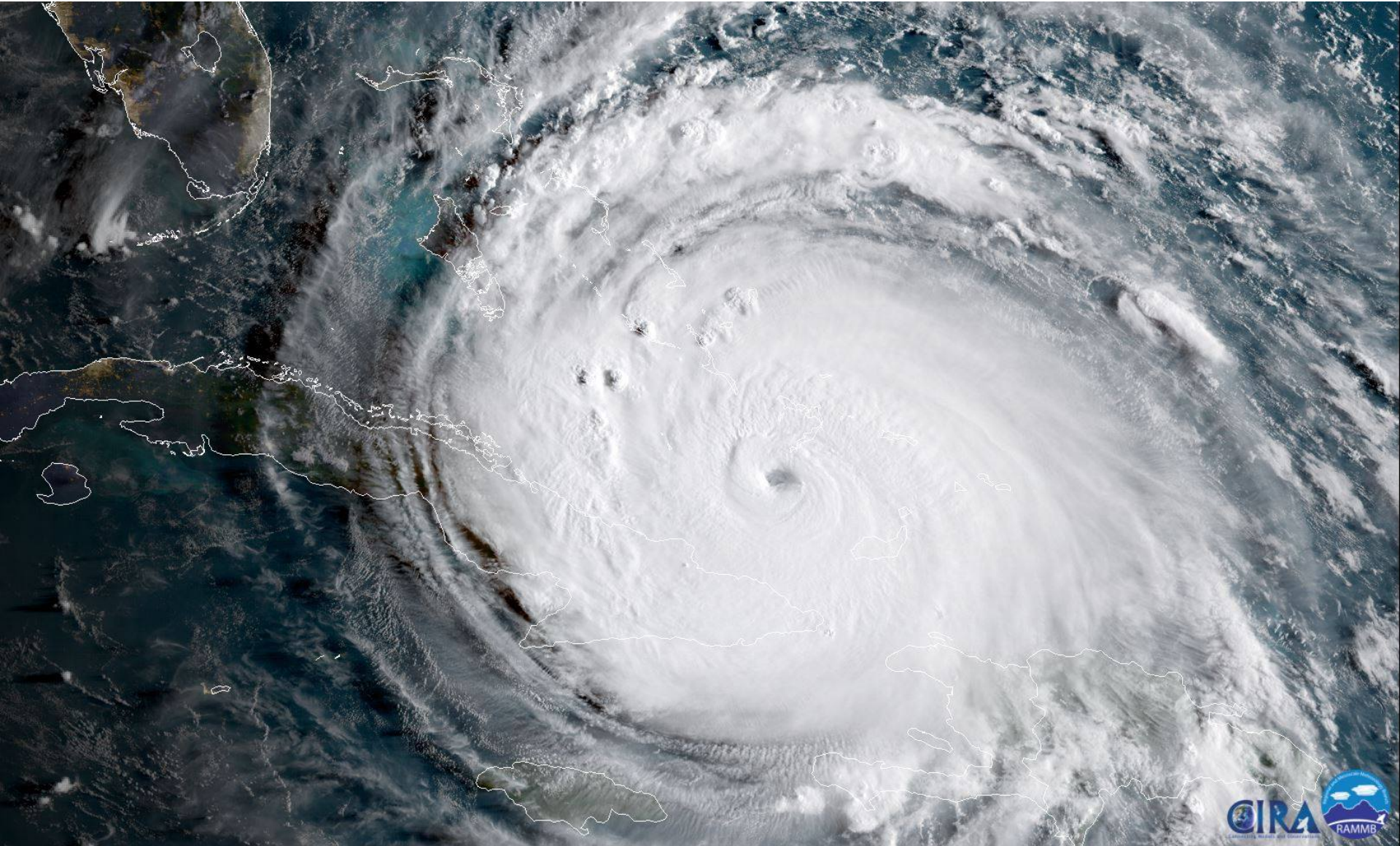
Source: NWS, US Census Bureau  
2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season as of October 10

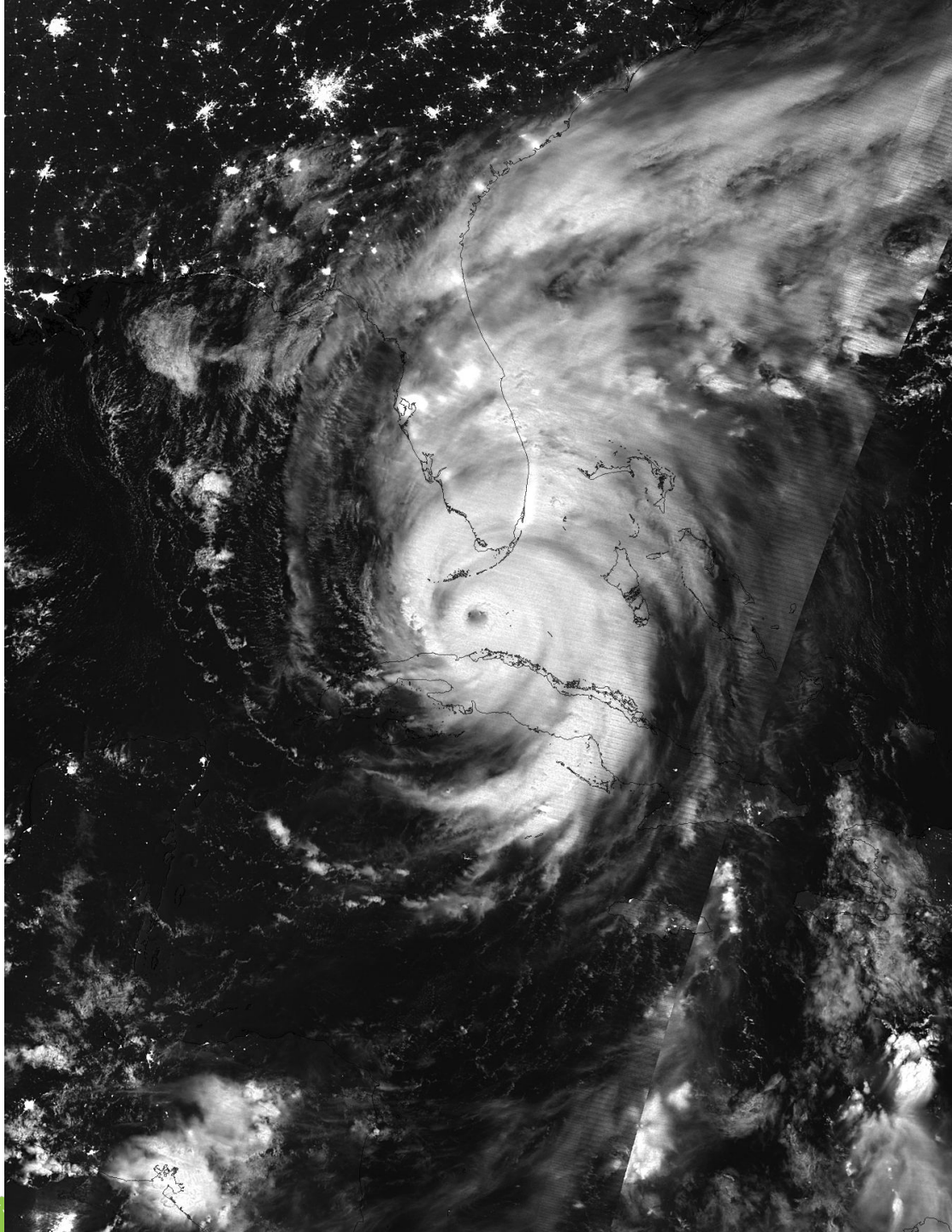


# Introduction/Background

- Hurricane Irma
  - Maximum winds of 185 mph
    - Sustained for 37 hours
    - 3 days as category 5 hurricane (longest of any cyclone to maintain that intensity)
  - 5<sup>th</sup> costliest weather disaster on record for the U.S.
  - Approximately 20 million people in the U.S. lost power due to hurricane Irma.









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# Purpose of Study

- To gain a better understanding of UF/IFAS Extension's involvement and impact during the 2017 hurricane season.
- Results will guide:
  - Extension's future role in hurricane preparedness and relief efforts.
  - An understanding of the personal and professional needs of Extension faculty.
  - The development of effective communication, training, curriculum, and resources in preparation for future hurricanes and other emergencies.



# Methods

- 56-question online survey.
- Sent to all county and district Extension faculty (n= 362).
- Survey very similar to the one sent out after the 2004 hurricane season (Hurricanes Charley, Francis, Ivan, and Jeanne).
  - Will compare results to help identify changes since 2004 and what still needs to be implemented.



# Demographics

- Response rate
  - 105 responses (29% response rate)
- Years of service in Extension in Florida
  - 58% with 13 years or less (post 2004 hurricane season)
  - 30% with greater than 13 years (pre 2004 hurricane season)
  - 12% Not reported



# Demographics

- Program areas
  - 31% Agriculture
  - 11% Lawn and Garden
  - 8% Natural Resources
  - 11% Family Resources
  - 15% 4H/Youth Development
  - 14% Other
  - 10% Not Reported

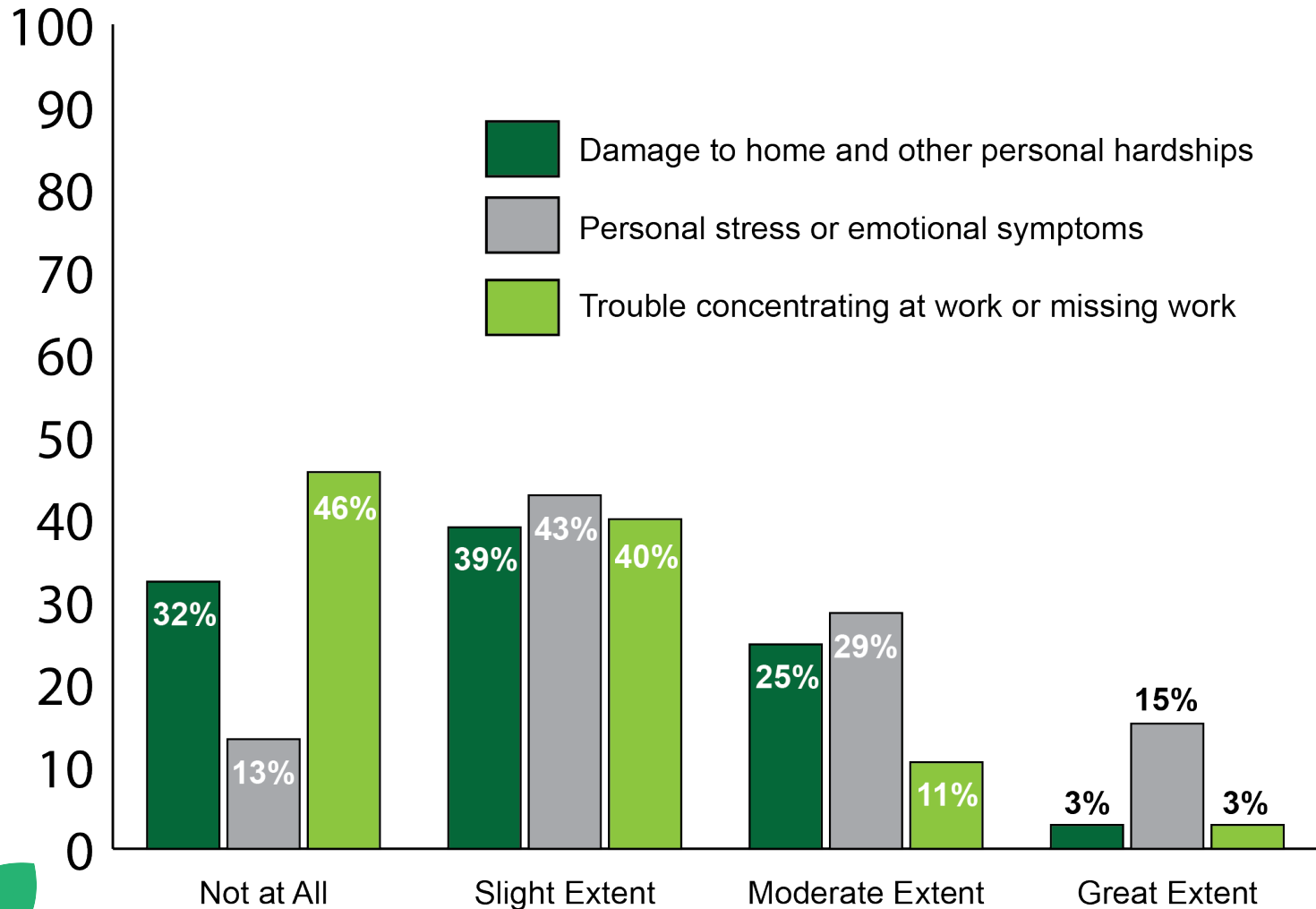


# Personal Needs

- 67% experienced damage to their home or other personal hardships.
  - 28% to a moderate or great extent
- 87% experienced personal stress or emotional symptoms while involved in hurricane preparation and relief efforts.
  - 44% to a moderate or great extent
- 53% had trouble concentrating at work or missed work



# Personal Needs



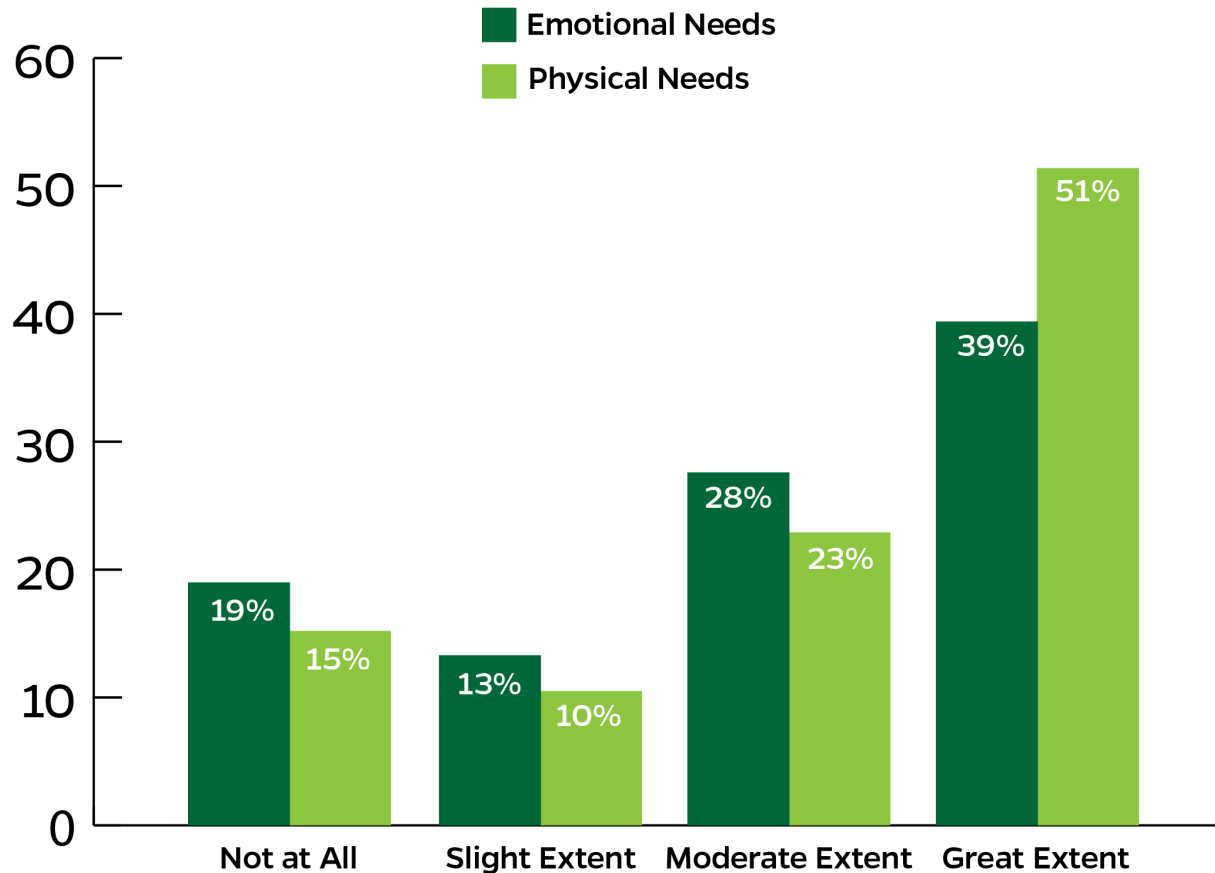
# Personal Needs

- 80% had sources of support for personal emotional needs.
  - 67% to a moderate or great extent.
  - Most common: Family, Friends, Church, Colleagues.
- 85% had sources of support for personal physical needs (shelter, food, water, electricity).
  - 74% to a moderate or great extent.
- **19%** had no support for emotional needs and **15%** had no support for physical needs



# Personal Needs

## Source of Support



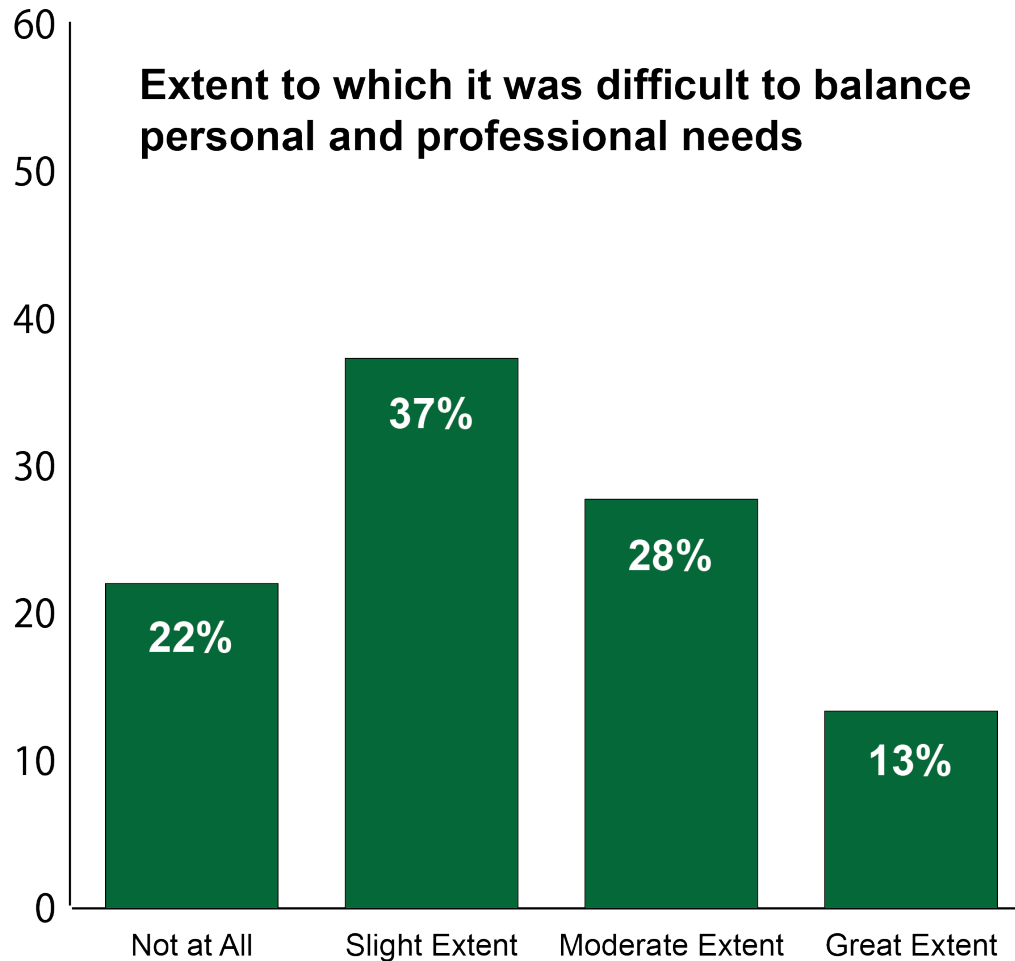


# Personal Needs

- Extension faculty reported difficulty balancing the responsibilities of home and job.
  - *“Biggest issue is always personal and family preparation and cleanup balanced against need to return to work by the next morning to do Ag. disaster assessment.”*
  - *“The county did not allow staff time to prepare their own home or make sure their own families were safe. ... There was limited gas available in the county and staff were expected to be on hand to help residents. While many of us don’t have an issue helping we need to be able to make sure our families are safe first.”*



# Personal Needs



# Personal Needs

- Extension faculty found it difficult and stressful when given short notice to be a mandatory volunteer at emergency shelters.
  - *“I did not have enough time to prepare my home and family ahead of the short notice local county government gave to those employees, like me, selected as mandatory volunteers to work at emergency shelter.”*



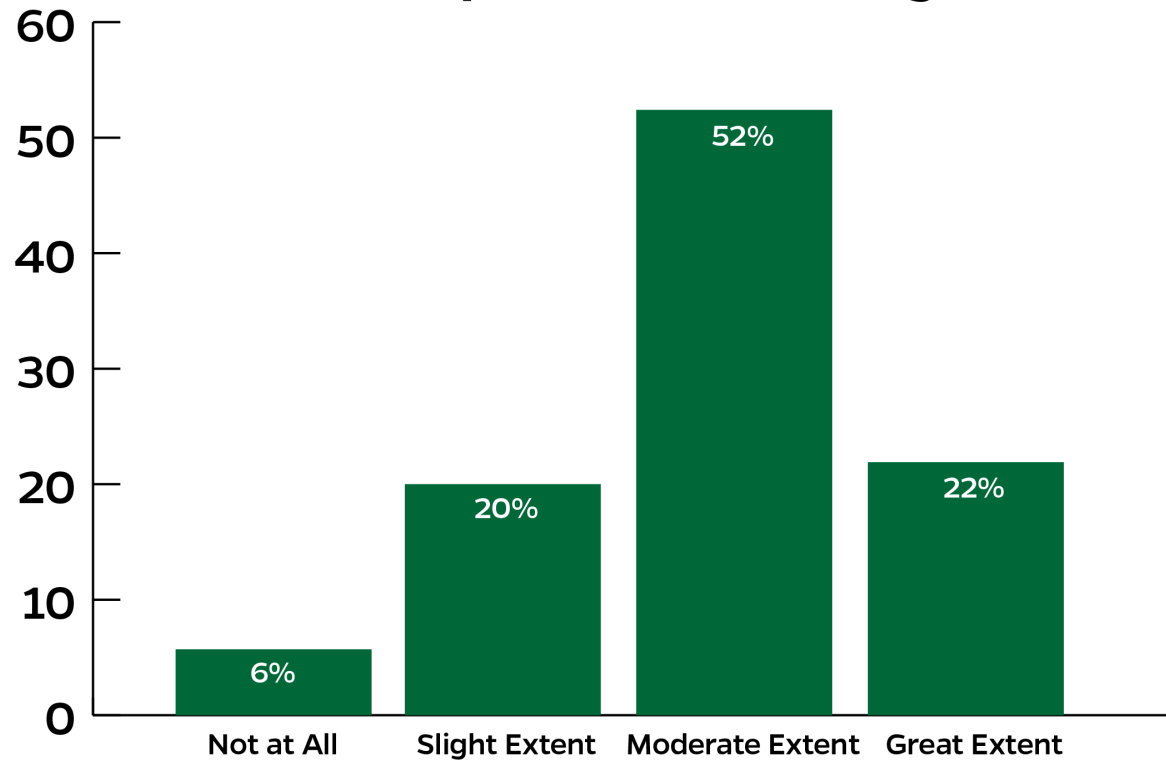
# Personal Needs

- Extension faculty found it difficult and stressful when given short notice to be a mandatory volunteer at emergency shelters.
  - *I was informed with less than 48 hours notice that I would be expected to work at a shelter for the duration of the storm. I had prepared for riding the storm out at home, with my prepared supplies and my spouse. With that notice, I experienced a great deal of stress because everything we had planned for had been disrupted. I had to take vacation time to finish preparing my home because offices were open for regular hours, even with an unpredictable storm rapidly approaching.*



# Faculty Preparedness

**Extent to which faculty were prepared to address professional challenges**



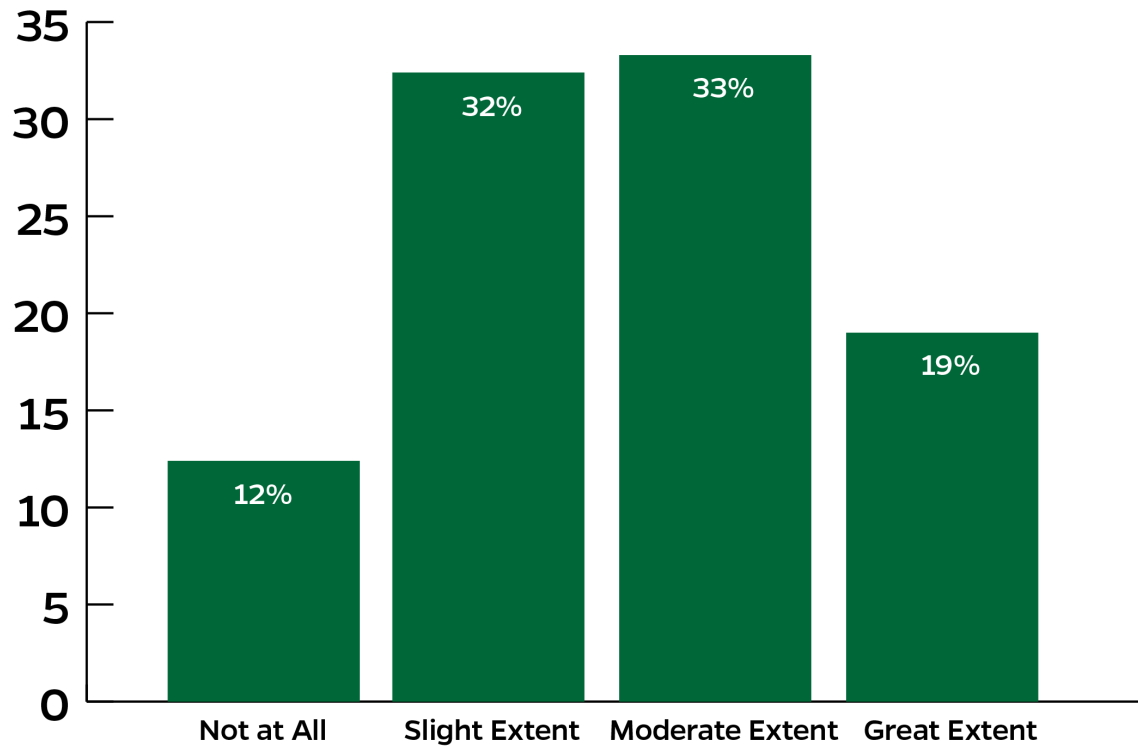
# Professional Needs

- Most common professional challenges reported by Extension faculty (in no particular order)
  - Programming and work responsibilities: canceling and rescheduling activities; catching up on work from missed time.
  - Communication: lack of power and inconsistent cell service made communication difficult.
  - Balancing work and personal needs.
  - Understanding professional expectations before and after hurricane.



# Professional Needs

**Extent to which clientele that faculty assisted exhibited stress or emotional symptoms**



# Communication Plan

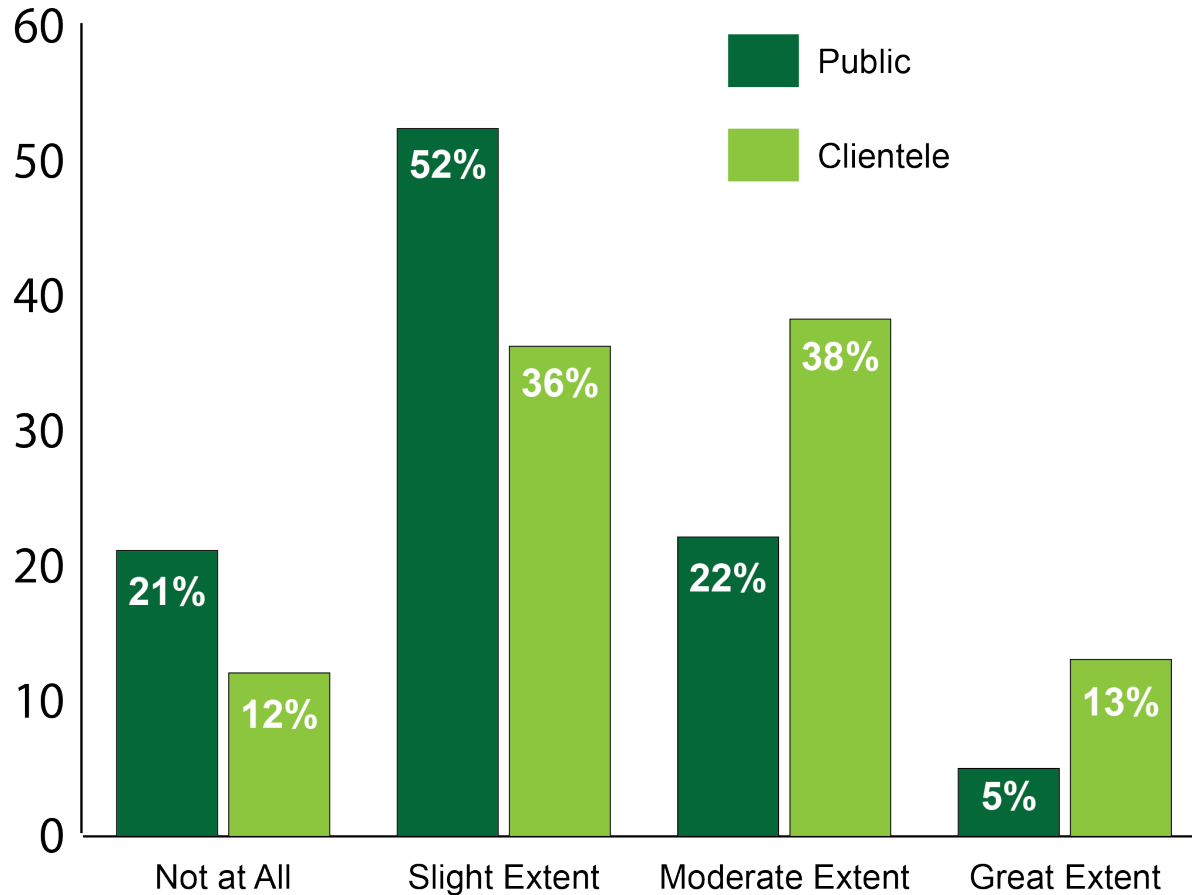
- **82%** said their Extension office had a plan to manage internal communication efforts in a crisis situation such as hurricanes.
- **55%** said their Extension office had a plan to manage external communication efforts in a crisis situation such as hurricanes.
- Facebook was reported as the most effective method of communication to clientele by a significant margin.
  - Facebook (39%)
  - E-mail (18.2%)
  - Phone (12%)





# Public and Clientele Awareness

Extent to which Extension believes the public and clientele were aware of Extension's efforts during hurricane



# Resources Used

- The resource used to the greatest extent by Extension agents during Hurricane Irma at the:
  - Local level: County Emergency Management Office (M = 2.42, slight extent)
  - State level: UF/IFAS (M = 2.50, moderate extent)
  - National level: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
    - NOAA's National Weather Service (M = 2.50; moderate extent)
    - NOAA's National Hurricane Center (M = 2.40; slight extent)
      - *Scale from 1 - 4, not at all to great extent*



# Extension Organizational Response

- Extension agents reported that there was a coordinated organization response to a moderate extent from Extension during Hurricane Irma at the:
  - County level (M = 2.80)
  - District level (M = 2.58)
  - State level (M = 2.70)
    - *Scale from 1 – 4, not at all to great extent*



# Professional Development Needs

- Overall, Extension agents expressed higher need for professional development in areas of hurricane disaster recovery, helping clientele cope with stress, and applying their subject matter in disaster situations than other areas of professional development.



# Likelihood to participate in the following training formats in preparation for hurricanes or other emergency situations

	Not at all	Slight Extent	Moderate Extent	Great Extent
Statewide Conference	26%	38%	27%	9%
District Meeting ●	5%	23%	37%	35%
Web-based	20%	31%	25%	24%
Telephone	33%	32%	23%	11%
Video ●	13%	29%	36%	21%
Print ●	8%	32%	37%	23%
Facebook Live	36%	31%	22%	11%
Social Media Updates	23%	32%	25%	18%



# Extension's Impact

- Agents listed efforts such as obtaining and distributing food, water and goods, damage assessment, operating emergency shelters, clean up efforts, communication efforts, assisting producers with agricultural damage.







**Thank you!**

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