



Lake County Agri-business Business Retention and Expansion Program – August 2016

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Introduction

Retention of existing businesses and community encouragement of local firms' continued growth has become an essential aspect of many local and regional economic development programs. While attraction of new businesses is a highly visible aspect of most economic development programs, studies have shown that businesses which already exist in a community account for up to 70% of all net change in local employment, and up to 86% in rural areas.¹

“Not only does the success of existing businesses allow for a strong tax base, increased local spending, enhanced public services, and an overall better quality of life, but strong local businesses also play a major role in the attraction of new business to an area. Satisfied existing businesses can serve as a community's best ambassadors when recruiting new firms as well as being a source of leads when seeking new firms to recruit.”²

Recognizing the importance of local agricultural businesses, the Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District, in conjunction with Ohio State University Extension, the Ohio Sea Grant College Program, Lake County Development Council and Lake County Farm Bureau established a Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program to assist these companies in achieving their growth objectives and to improve the overall business environment of Lake County's agricultural and nursery industry.

BRE Program Objectives

The objectives of the Lake County Agri-business BRE Program are to:

- Identify and address concerns and issues of existing agri-businesses by creating a value-chain of partners, including local and state government as well as private organizations and enterprises.
- Identify opportunities to stimulate local job growth.
- Establish and maintain an ongoing program that develops and fosters long-term positive/productive relationships among public and private entities related to the Lake County agri-business industry.

¹ Kraybill, D. 1995. Retention and Expansion First, Ohio's Challenge. 8(2):4-7 [Department of Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH]

² Morse, G. 2004. The Retention and Expansion of Existing Businesses. CARDI- Cornell, Ithaca, NY.
http://www.cdtoolbox.net/economic_development/000195.html

BRE Program Outcomes

Expected outcomes of the program are to improve services, grow existing businesses (e.g., new markets, new products, partnerships, spin-offs, suppliers, etc.), enhance organizational visibility of the Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District and retain and improve the quality of life in Lake County.

BRE Program Methods

In 2016, the Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District, led by Mr. Dan Donaldson, District Administrator, surveyed 36 existing agri-businesses about their perceptions, plans, and concerns moving forward. A partnership was established with the Ohio State University Extension BRE Program utilizing Survey Gold software for survey analysis and other BRE tools to assist in accomplishing an effective local program. The county-wide BRE program was sponsored by the Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District, with Maurine Orndorff acting as Coordinator and Joe Lucente and David Civittolo acting as BRE Program consultants.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE- LAKE COUNTY³

- As of 2014, Lake County's population is [229,873 people](#). Since 2000, it has had a population growth of 1.04 percent.
- The median home cost in Lake County is [\\$123,100](#). Home appreciation the last year has been 4.30 percent.
- Compared to the rest of the country, Lake County's [cost of living](#) is 5.60% lower than the U.S. average.
- Lake County public schools spend [\\$11,623 per student](#). The average school expenditure in the U.S. is \$12,435. There are about [17.7 students per teacher](#) in Lake County.
- The unemployment rate in Lake County is [5.90](#) percent (U.S. avg. is 6.30%). Recent job growth is positive. Lake County jobs have increased by 0.10 percent as of June 2014.
- The median age is 42.5. The US median is 37.2. 54.02% of people in Lake County, OH are married. 11.94% are divorced.
- The average household size is 2.4 people. 31.04% of people are married, with children. 13.25% have children, but are single.
- 93.35% of people are white, 3.31% are black, 1.27% are Asian, 0.09% are Native American, and 0.58% claim 'Other'. 3.38% of the people in Lake County, OH claim Hispanic ethnicity (meaning 96.62% are non-Hispanic).
- Lake County, OH sales tax rate is 7.00%. Income tax is 3.76%.
- The income per capita is \$29,143, which includes all adults and children. The median household income is \$56,231.
- Average one-way commute time in Lake County is 23.02 minutes in 2014 compared to 22.98 minutes (Ohio) and 25.44 minutes (U.S.).

³ Information obtained from Sperling's Best Places <http://www.bestplaces.net/> and US Census Bureau <http://www.census.gov/> which reflect most current information (2014).

People	Lake, OH	State of Ohio	United States
Population	229,873	11,533,561	309,138,711
Population - 2010	230,041	11,536,504	308,745,538
Population - 2000	227,511	11,351,677	285,036,114
Population - 1990	215,498	10,845,228	251,960,433
Pop. 1990 to Now	6.67%	6.35%	22.69%
Pop. 2000 to Now	1.04%	1.60%	8.46%
Pop. Density	1,010	282	88
Land Area	227.493	40,860.70	3,531,905.42
Water Area	751.705	3,964.89	264,836.79
Median Age	42.5	38.8	37.2
Female Population	51.26%	51.18%	50.83%
Male Population	48.74%	48.82%	49.18%
ESTIMATED TOTAL POPULATION BY AGE			
Age 0 to 4	5.38%	6.18%	6.51%
Age 5 to 9	6.05%	6.51%	6.57%
Age 10 to 14	6.54%	6.68%	6.68%
Age 15 to 17	4.07%	4.20%	4.17%
Age 18 to 20	3.27%	4.35%	4.45%
Age 21 to 24	4.26%	5.18%	5.52%
Age 25 to 34	11.21%	12.32%	13.32%
Age 35 to 44	13.03%	12.85%	13.34%
Age 45 to 54	16.24%	14.95%	14.44%
Age 55 to 59	7.61%	6.80%	6.37%
Age 60 to 64	6.14%	5.81%	5.48%
Age 65 to 74	8.56%	7.46%	7.12%
Age 75 to 84	5.46%	4.71%	4.25%
Age 85 and over	2.18%	2.00%	1.78%
RACE			
White	93.35%	83.04%	74.17%
Black	3.31%	12.17%	12.56%
Asian	1.27%	1.70%	4.81%
Native American	0.09%	0.19%	0.82%
Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0.01%	0.02%	0.17%
Other	0.58%	0.78%	4.79%
Two or More Races	1.40%	2.10%	2.68%
Hispanic	3.38%	3.08%	16.35%
Non-Hispanic	96.62%	96.92%	83.65%

FAMILY	Lake, OH	State of Ohio	United States
Households	94,389	4,555,709	115,226,802
Family Households	61,731	2,962,217	76,595,548
Non Family Households	32,658	1,593,492	38,631,254
Household Size	2.4	2.46	2.61
Married Population	54.02%	51.18%	51.40%
Single Population	45.99%	48.82%	48.60%
Now Married	52.84%	49.36%	49.23%
Married but Separated	1.18%	1.82%	2.17%
Never Married	26.80%	30.34%	31.83%
Widowed	7.25%	6.61%	6.02%
Divorced	11.94%	11.87%	10.75%
Married, w/children	31.04%	30.28%	32.53%
Married, no children	46.65%	43.59%	41.14%
Single, w/children	13.25%	17.11%	16.88%
Single, no children	9.07%	9.02%	9.45%

Economy in Lake County, Ohio⁴

Economy	Lake, OH	State of Ohio	United States
Unemployment Rate	5.90%	5.30%	6.30%
Recent Job Growth	0.10%	1.00%	1.18%
Future Job Growth	34.30%	36.70%	36.10%
Sales Taxes	7.00%	6.75%	6.00%
Income Taxes	3.76%	3.76%	4.72%
Income per Cap.	\$29,143	\$25,857	\$28,051
Household Income	\$56,231	\$48,246	\$53,046
Family Median Income	\$70,018	\$61,163	\$64,585
ESTIMATED HOUSEHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME			
Income Less Than 15K	9.16%	13.96%	12.61%
Income between 15K and 20K	4.75%	5.83%	5.33%
Income between 20K and 30K	10.53%	11.40%	10.57%
Income between 30K and 40K	10.32%	10.84%	9.90%
Income between 40K and 50K	9.74%	9.50%	8.95%
Income between 50K and 60K	8.80%	8.42%	8.08%
Income between 60K and 75K	11.56%	10.47%	10.09%
Income between 75K and 100K	14.59%	12.02%	12.25%
Income between 100K and 150K	13.65%	11.12%	12.82%
Income between 150K and 200K	4.24%	3.54%	4.78%
Income greater than 200K	2.66%	2.90%	4.64%
POPULATION BY OCCUPATION			
Management, business, finance	13.70%	13.45%	14.36%
Engineering, computers, science	5.58%	4.67%	5.24%
Community, social services	1.36%	1.63%	1.66%
Legal	1.04%	0.94%	1.17%
Education, library	5.12%	5.73%	6.10%
Arts, design, media, sports, entertainment	1.21%	1.39%	1.88%
Healthcare practitioners and technology	6.65%	6.22%	5.49%
Healthcare support	2.33%	3.02%	2.47%
Firefighters, law enforcement	2.01%	1.90%	2.24%
Food preparation, serving	5.49%	6.08%	5.61%
Building maintenance	3.29%	3.63%	3.97%
Personal care	2.56%	3.05%	3.54%
Sales, office, administrative support	26.52%	24.79%	24.89%

⁴ Information obtained from Sperling's Best Places <http://www.bestplaces.net/> and US Census Bureau <http://www.census.gov/> which reflect most current information (2014).

Farming, fishing, forestry	0.16%	0.34%	0.73%
Construction, extraction, maintenance/repair	7.49%	7.59%	8.56%
Production, transportation, material moving	15.49%	15.57%	12.10%

Cost of Living in Lake County, Ohio⁵

Cost of Living	Lake, OH	State of Ohio	United States
Overall	94	88	100
Grocery	109.4	99.2	100
Health	109	98	100
Housing	72	66	100
Utilities	101	99	100
Transportation	102	100	100
Miscellaneous	103	98	100

- Cost of living indices are based on a U.S. average of 100. An amount below 100 means Lake County, OH is less expensive than the U.S. average. A cost of living index above 100 means Lake County, OH is more expensive.
- Overall, Lake County's cost of living is 94.
- As of 2014, the total of all the cost of living categories were weighted subjectively as follows: housing (30%), food and groceries (15%), transportation (10%), utilities (6%), health care (7%), and miscellaneous expenses such as clothing, services and entertainment (32%). State and local taxes are not included in any category.
- Compared to the rest of the country, Lake County's cost of living is 6% lower than the U.S. average.

⁵ Information obtained from Sperling's Best Places <http://www.bestplaces.net/> and US Census Bureau <http://www.census.gov/> which reflect most current information (2014).

BR&E Survey Highlights

The following is a summary of the 2016 Lake County Agri-business Industry Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) survey findings:

- There were 36 total respondents to Lake County's agri-business BRE survey.
- Of the 36 respondents, 53% were nursery businesses, 22% classified themselves as "other agriculture" related businesses, 14% were viticulture businesses, 8% were crop production businesses and 3% were animal agriculture businesses.
- Most respondents were small businesses with 61% having fewer than 10 employees. 3% of businesses reported having 11-20 employees, 19% of businesses reported having 21-50 employees, 6% of businesses reported having 51-100 employees while only 11% of businesses in this survey reported having more than 100 employees.
- The respondents reported their business operations as 50% privately held and 50% family-owned businesses. 69% of agri-businesses have been operating in their current locations in Lake County for more than 20 years and 19% have been operating between 10 and 20 years.

Growth Plans/Employment

- Twenty-three of the thirty-six businesses that responded to the BR&E survey reported that they plan to expand, modernize or renovate their businesses with six of these firms planning to add jobs within the next 12 months. The number of new employees expected to be added overall is estimated to represent between 53-150 new full-time equivalent jobs (FTE).⁶
- The addition of 53 new jobs is estimated to represent \$54,961 in additional income tax revenue and would contribute an estimated \$1,461,740 in personal income to the Lake County economy.⁷
- Comparatively, 150 new jobs are estimated to represent \$155,551 in additional income tax revenue and would contribute an estimated \$4,137,000 in personal income to the Lake County local economy.⁸ Jobs are projected as being added in the agricultural sector.

⁶ Federal definition available at:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/a11_current_year/s85.pdf

⁷ Assuming Lake County income tax rate of 3.76%

⁸ NAICS Code 452092 mean wage of \$27,580. Estimated personal income is derived from May 2015 Occupational Employment Statistics via the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics web site at:

data.bls.gov/oes/releasedata.do

- As a result of the BRE agri-business survey, the Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District has learned that 36 businesses plan to retain between 690-1,034 jobs and create an estimated 53-150 new FTE jobs.
- 69% of businesses expect their number of customers to increase while 28% expect customers to remain the same.
- 64% of agri-businesses indicated that they are very likely or somewhat likely to expand in Lake County in the future.
- 36% of respondents reported that they derive less than 25% of their annual income from agriculturally-related ventures in Lake County, 19% reported they earned between 25-50% of their income and 44% reported earning more than 50% of their annual income from their agri-business ventures.
- During the past three years, 53% of agri-businesses reported that their financial situation improved, 33% reported that it remained the same and 14% reported that the financial business situation deteriorated.
- Within the next three years, respondents reported that their finances will increase (69%), stay the same (28%) or decline (3%).
- 30% of respondents reported that they have a written estate plan for their agri-business while 70% do not.
- 20% of respondents report having a written plan in place to transfer business to the next generation upon retirement or death while 80% do not.
- Five businesses are considering closing; one business is considering selling and one business is considering changing product or service focus.

Labor Force/Training

- The labor quality was ranked “fair” to “good” by 50% of employers surveyed.
- Availability of labor was ranked “fair” to “good” by 81% of employers.
- Stability of the labor was ranked “fair” to good by 80% of employers.
- Affordability of labor was ranked “good” to “fair” by 89 % of employers.

Community Services

- 78% percent of respondents indicated a “good” to “excellent” agri-business climate in Lake County.
- 83% of agri-businesses indicated their overall opinion of Lake County as a place to do business as either “good” or “excellent”.

Action Plan

The primary objective of any business retention and expansion program, outside of creating a narrative of the strengths and weaknesses of a local economy, is to identify a course of action for local community, public and business leaders as well as economic development professionals. This action plan should work to address identified concerns from the collected BRE data. Changes in the local economy will not take place in the short-term and therefore the action plan must also lay the groundwork for sustaining local economic prosperity.

Objective One: Enhance and encourage cooperation between business leaders, government leaders and education leaders to further the goals and purposes of the Agri-business BRE program.

Collaboration and cooperation among local leaders remains the number one factor that can either enhance and/or limit the success and effectiveness of the BRE program. A gathering of resources and efforts from many individuals is necessary to disseminate and collect survey information as well as make company visits.

This cooperation also extends outside of the actual data collection into carrying out the objectives of the BRE program. Local policy and decision changes are made by a number of individuals. The more closely these individuals are exposed to the BRE program and collected data, the more informed their decision making can become and ultimately the better they can serve their local businesses and residents.

Objective Two: Improve the quality and quantity of the local workforce to satisfy the current and anticipated future needs of local agri-businesses.

The BRE survey notes that workforce, particularly the availability and stability of needed workforce, remains one of the larger issues facing employers. This issue is wide-spread and not unique to the Lake County Agri-Business Industry. Organizations in many areas of Ohio and the nation face problems finding skilled and trained talent. Many labor market experts, through examining available government data, estimate as many as 25 million, or 47% of all new job openings from 2010 to 2020 will fall into the ‘middle-skills’ range, which the U.S. is already seeing a shortage of qualified workers in.⁹

⁹ Kochan, T., Finegold, D., and Osterman, P. (2012) Who Can Fix the “Middle Skills” Gap? Harvard Business Review, 90(12), 81-90.

Local businesses have difficulty recruiting talent, but the majority also lack any relationship with local educational institutions that train the type of talent they seek. Establishing new relationships between local industry and education as a direct means to convey the need for certain types of skilled labor, or exposing local students and school administrators to the types of positions in high demand by local employers are just a few instances of how the local skills gap can begin to be addressed. Not only do labor positions remain in high demand, but employers are also finding it increasingly difficult to recruit unskilled labor as well.

Objective Three: Connect local agri-business leaders to programs, services and other resources available through local, state and federal agencies.

Another underlying reason for conducting a business retention and expansion program for the Lake County Agri-Business Industry is to identify needed resources that can be brought to local businesses to help them prosper and grow. Local community leaders and economic development professionals have knowledge of these resources and programs from which local agri-businesses can benefit. The direct line of communication that the BRE program creates between business leaders and local leadership allows for the identification of programs to satisfy the local needs. A strong BRE program functions as an outlet of communication to community and policy leaders, which results in a more business and growth-friendly environment for local businesses.

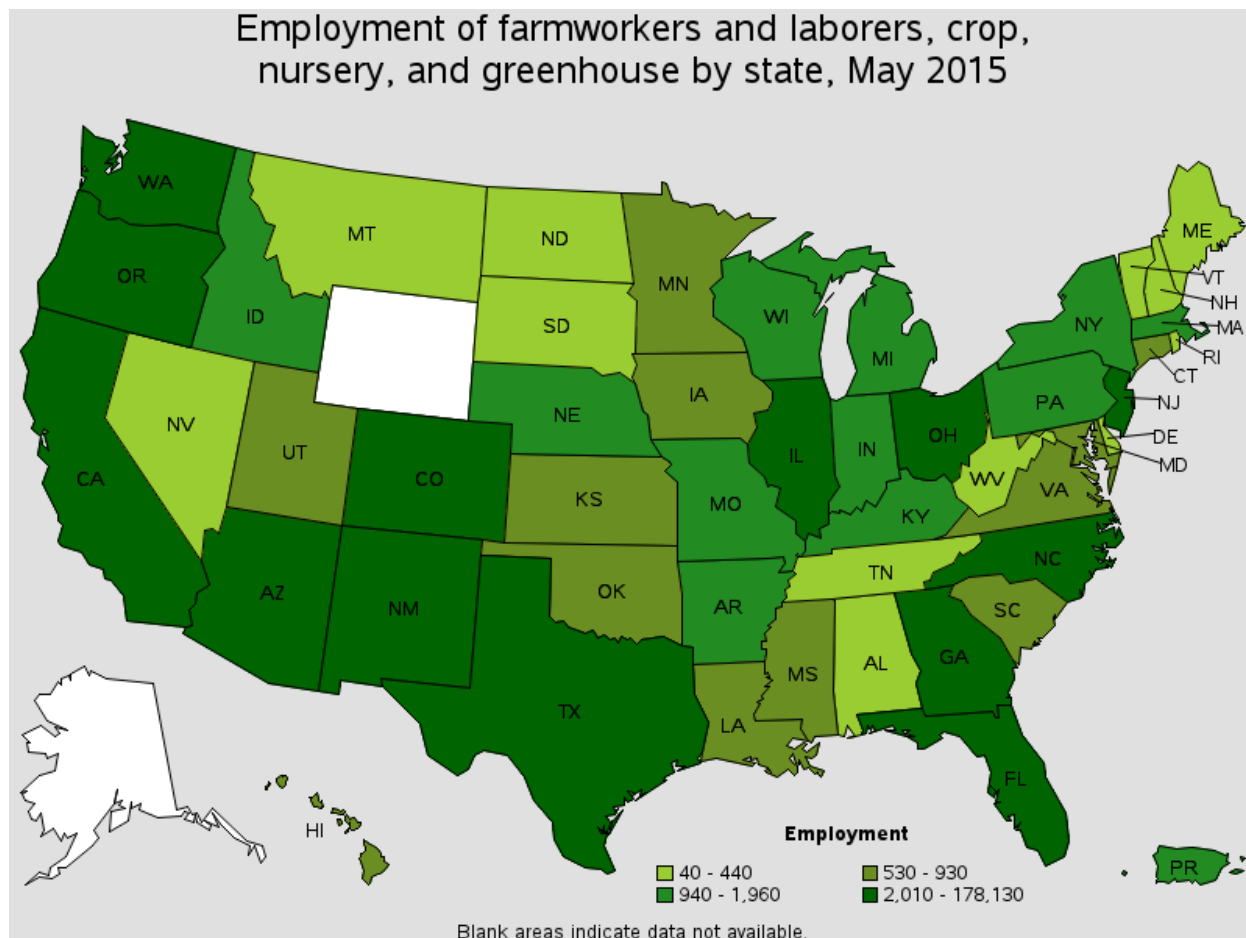
Objective Four:

Next Steps

The BRE Coordinator will meet with local partners and plan to follow up with Lake County agri-businesses that requested a formal business visit in 2016/2017. Businesses that will be chosen for a formal visit will consist of those that:

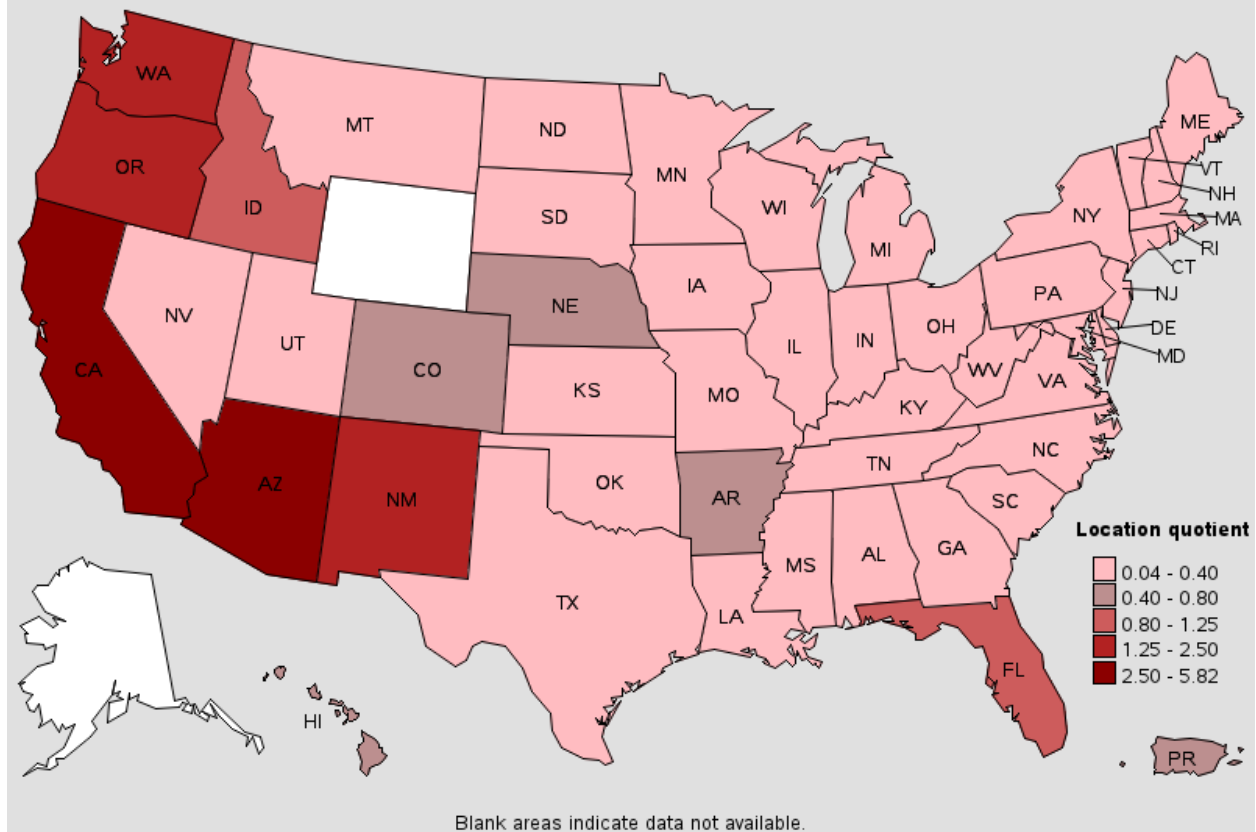
- 1) Requested a formal business visit,
- 2) Were “flagged” or otherwise identified to seek more information,
- 3) Are targeted by local partners because of their importance to Lake County’s agri-business industry and,
- 4) Businesses that indicated plans for expansion, plans for closing or if there was a specific identified problem.

APPENDIX A: AGRICULTURE EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS¹⁰



¹⁰ Agricultural employment information available from Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics at:
<http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes452092.htm>

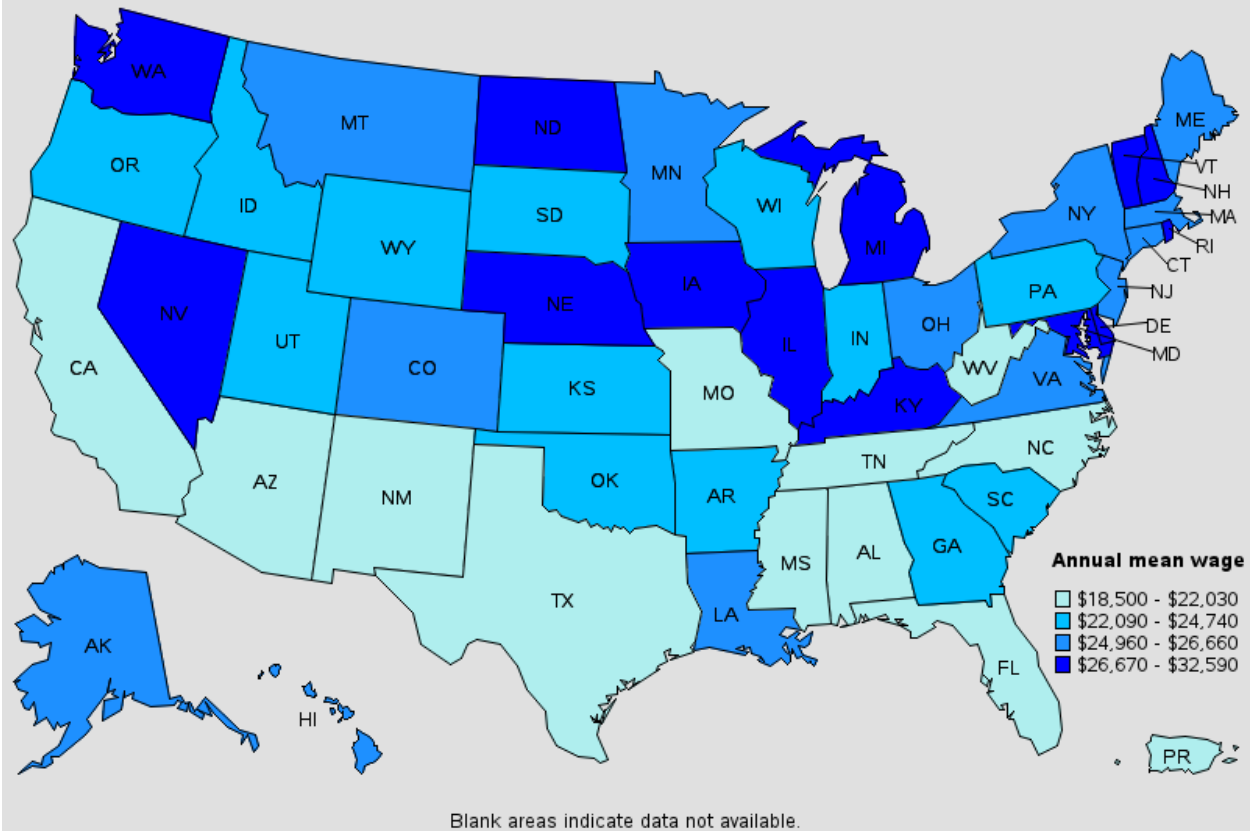
Location quotient of farmworkers and laborers, crop, nursery, and greenhouse by state, May 2015



*The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration.

A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

Annual mean wage of farmworkers and laborers, crop, nursery, and greenhouse by state, May 2015



APPENDIX B- BRE SURVEY RESULTS (AGRI-BUSINESS)

Survey Results

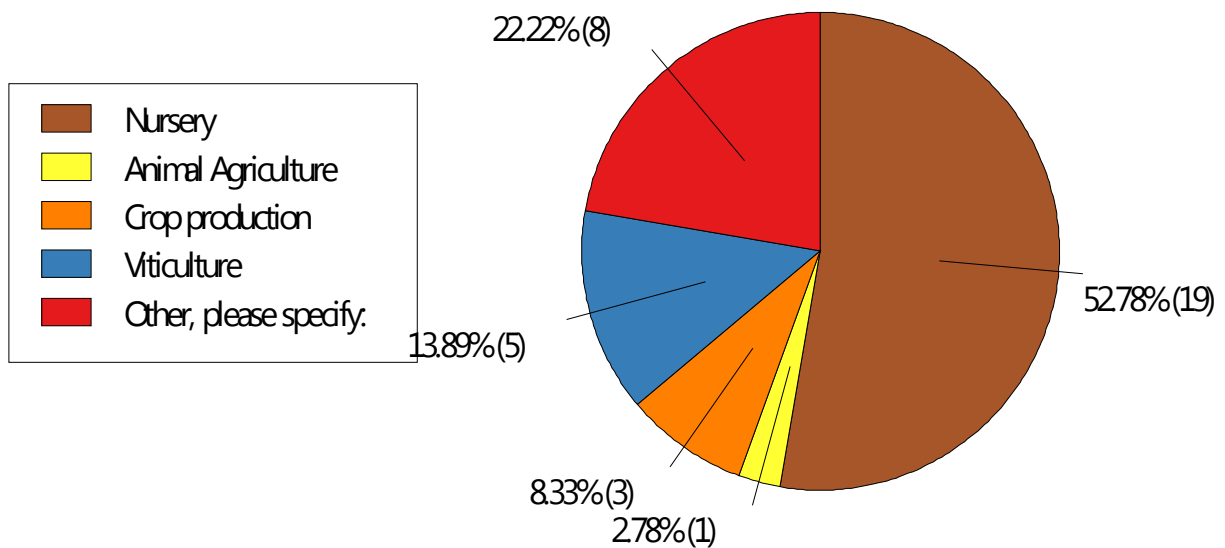
The following is a graphical depiction of the responses to each survey question. Additional comments provided by respondents, if any, are included after each graph.

Section - General Business Information

1. Today's date

N/A

2. Which of the following best describes your agri-business?



Comments/Notes for "Other, please specify":

Animal Agriculture

combination

financial

floriculture/agri-tourism

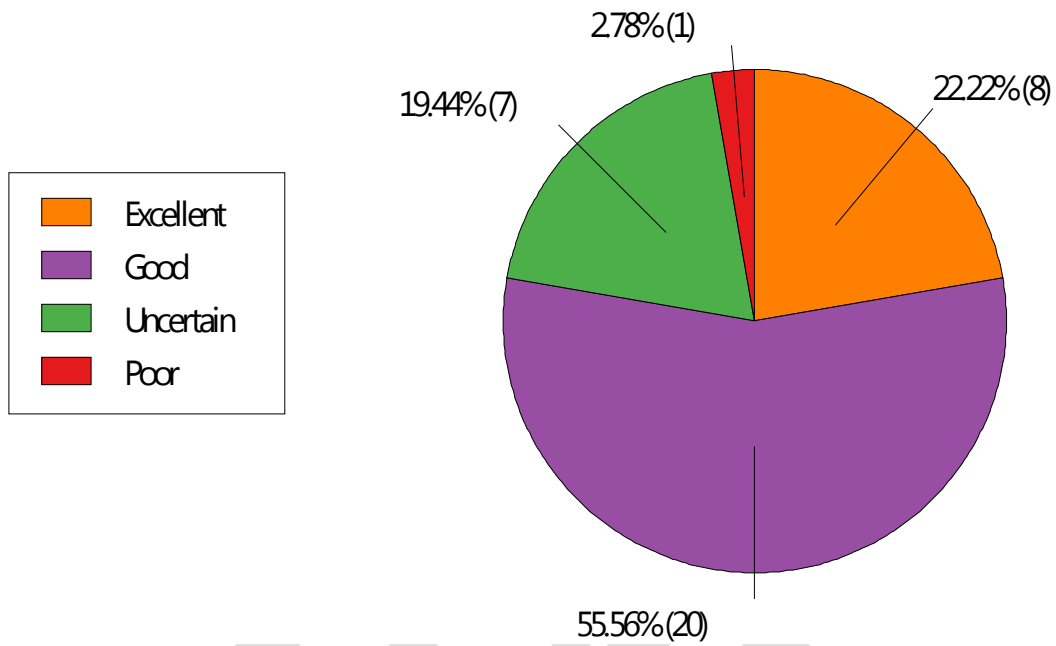
hay

Nursery and Forestry production

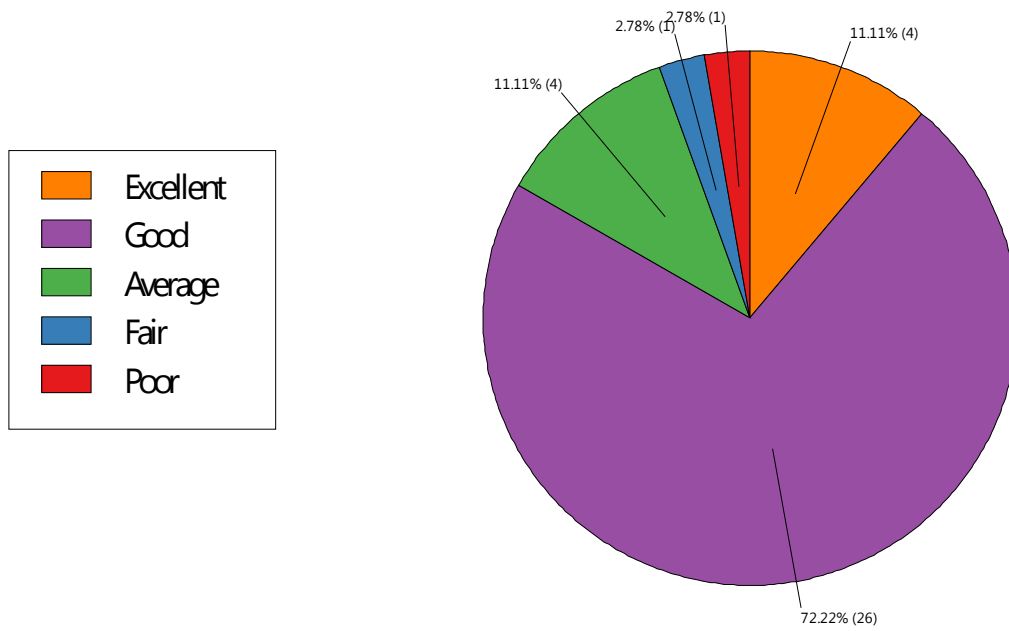
sales

wine production

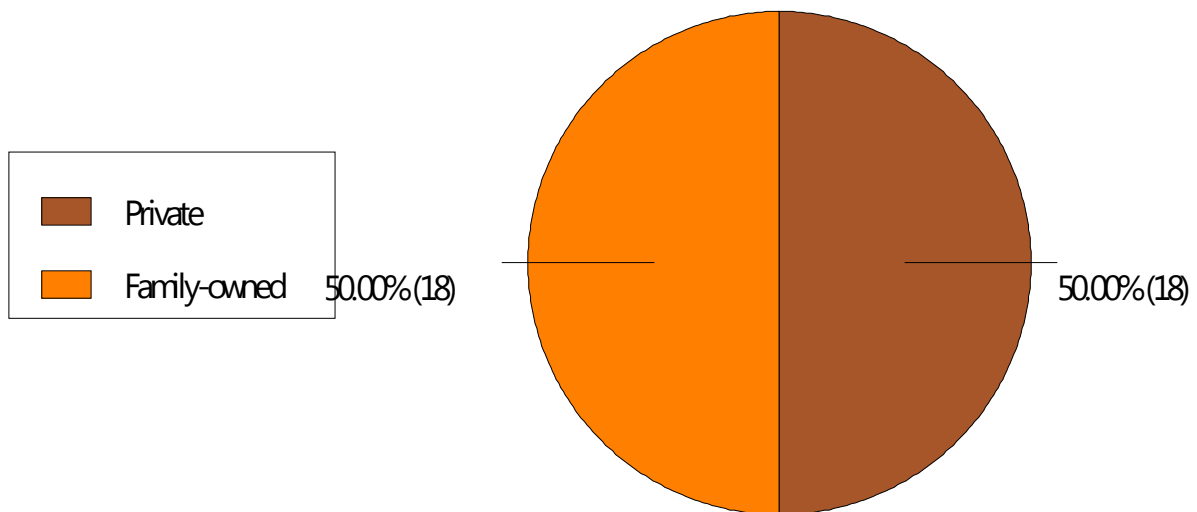
3. Please rate the agri-business climate in Lake County.



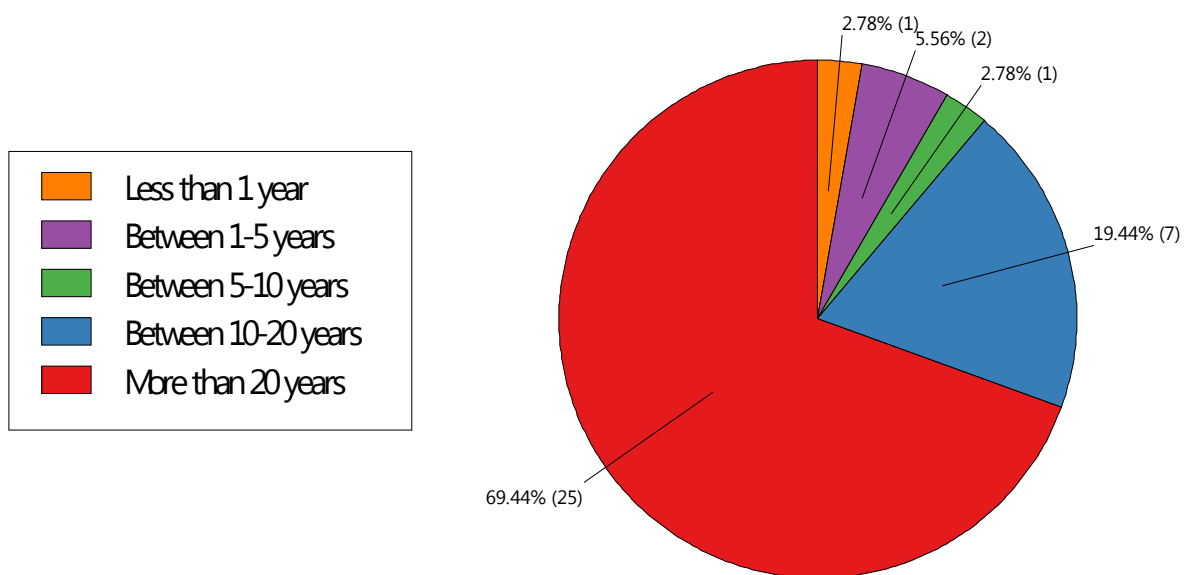
4. What is your overall opinion of Lake County as a place to do business?



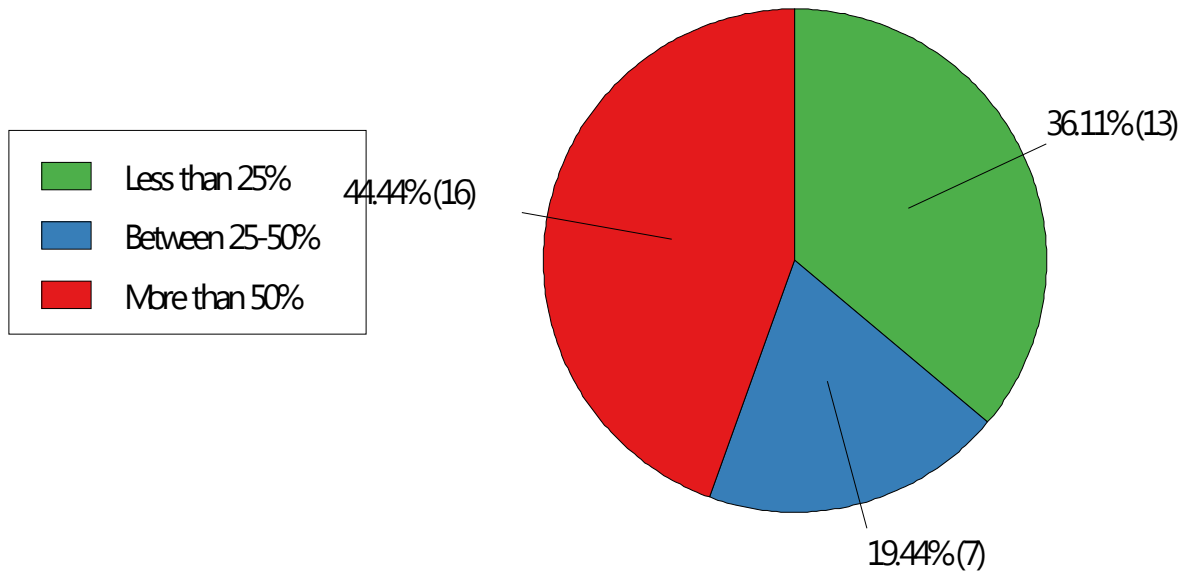
5. Which of the following best describes your agri-business?



6. How long has this agri-business been operating in Lake County?

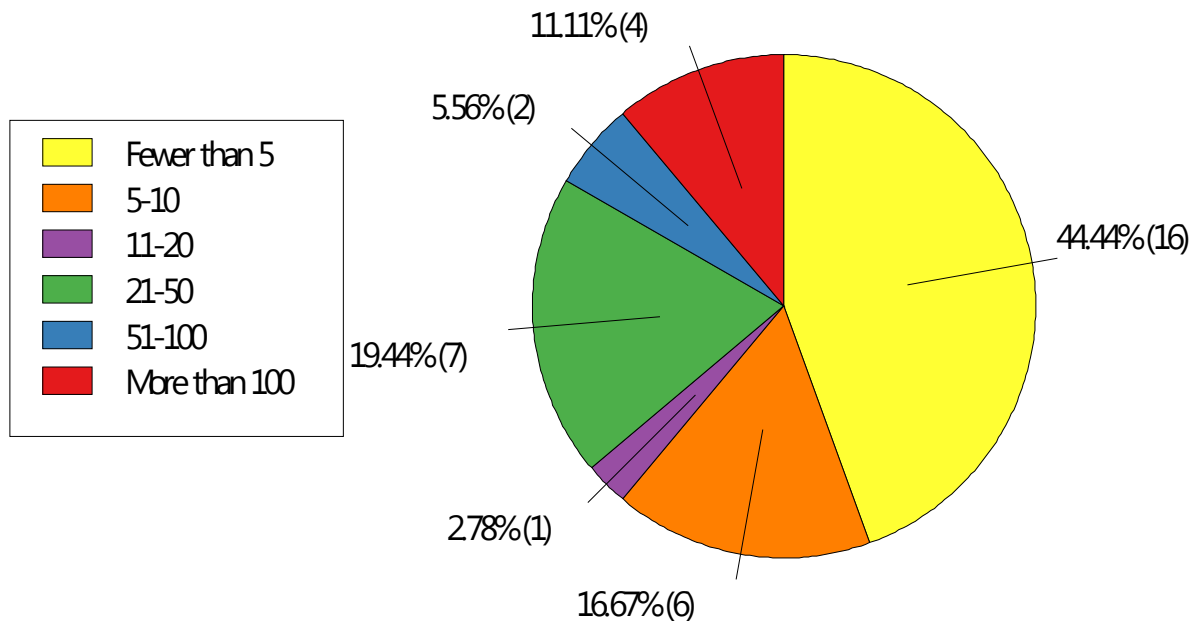


7. What percentage of your annual income comes from agriculturally related ventures in Lake and surrounding counties?

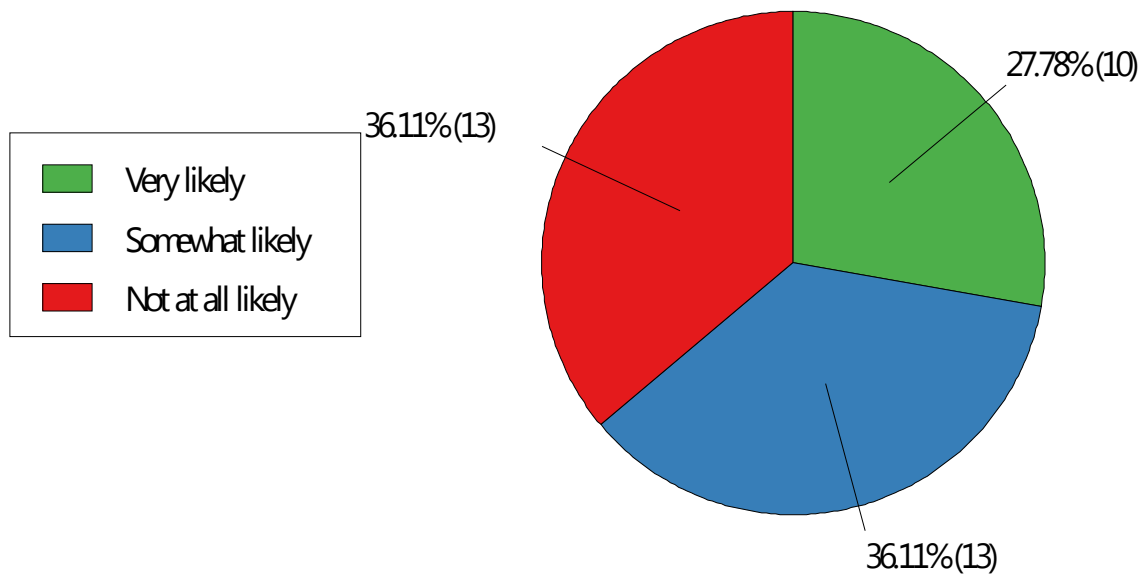


Section - Future Plans: Expansion

8. Currently, how many employees work at your business during peak season?

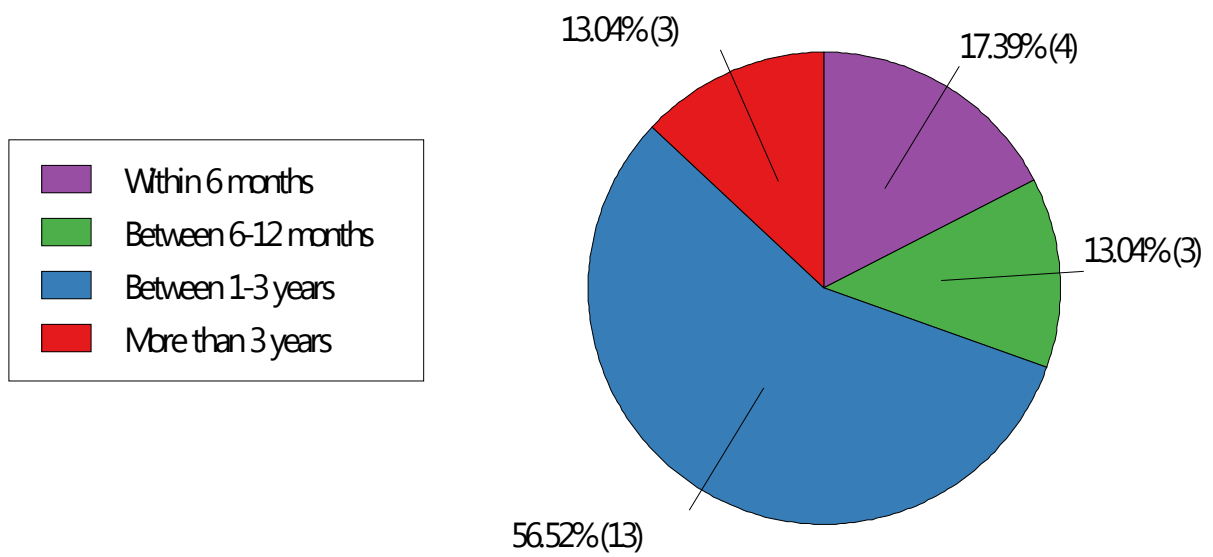


9. What is the likelihood that this business will expand in Lake County in the future?

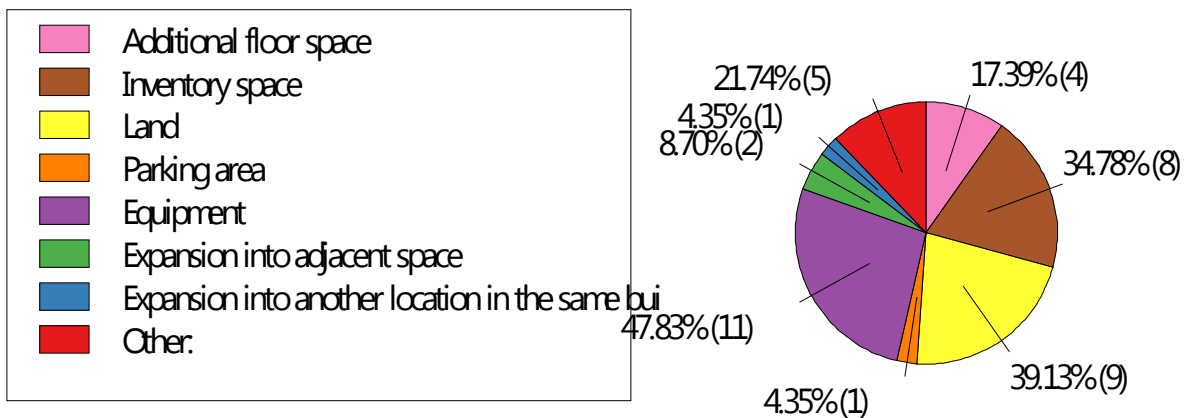


Section - Future Plans: Expansion 2

10. When would this expansion begin?



11. What specific expansion are you considering? Check all that apply.



Comments/Notes:

agritourism attractions

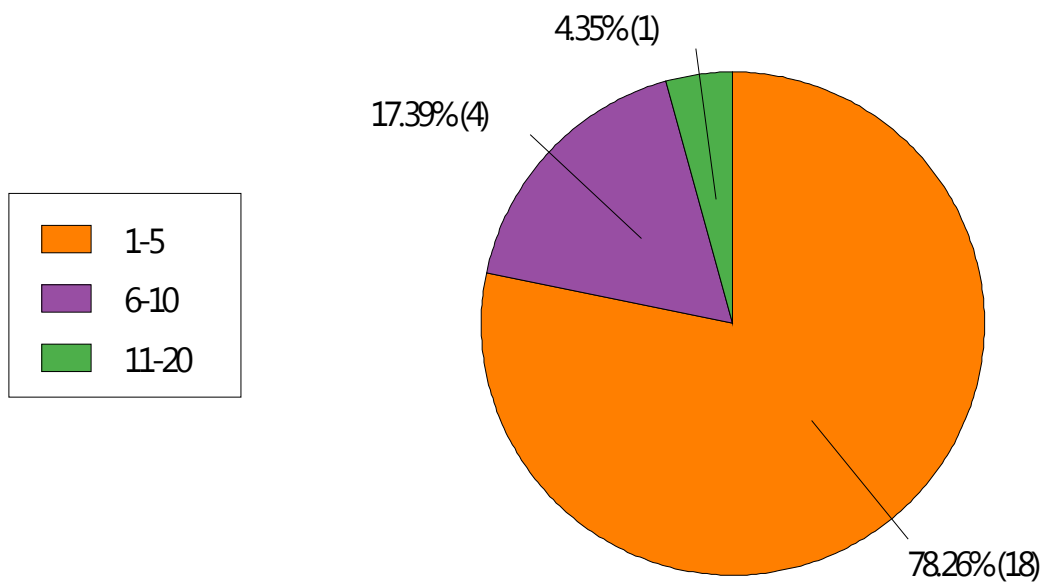
expanding customer base

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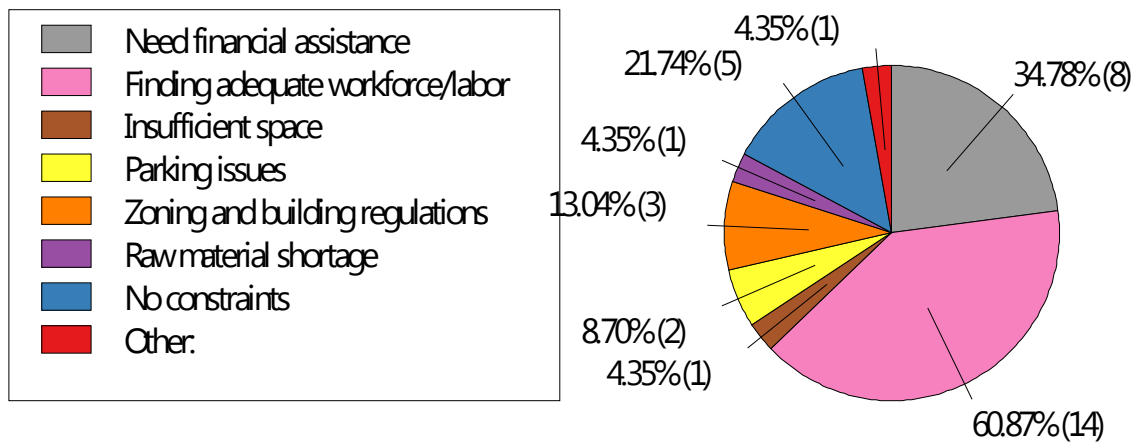
most of the above

Unknown if any

12. What is the number of new full-time (equivalent) jobs that would be created as a result of the expansion?

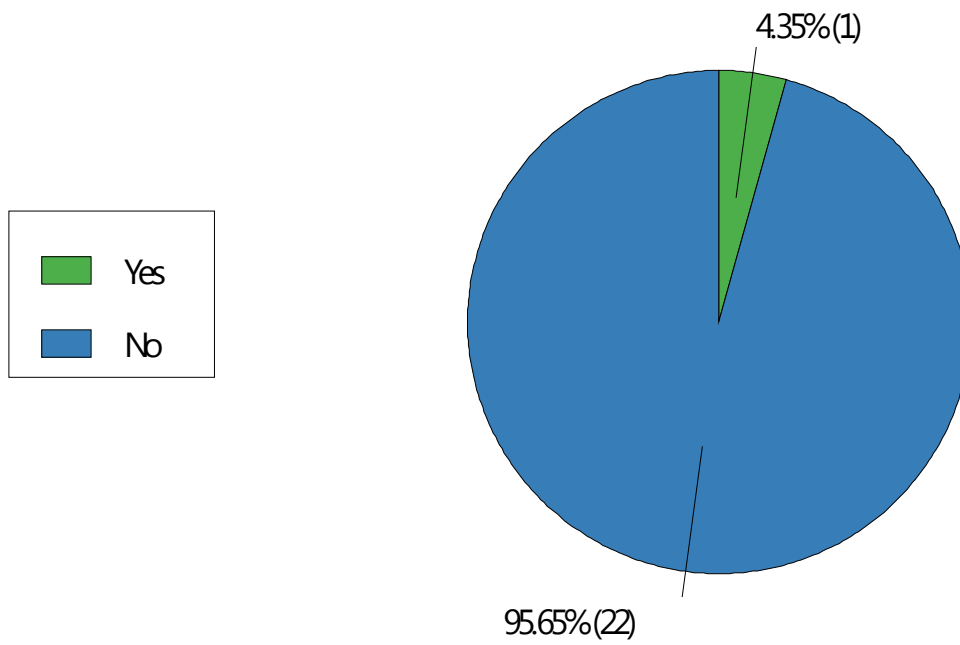


13. What local constraints to expansion do you face? Check all that apply.

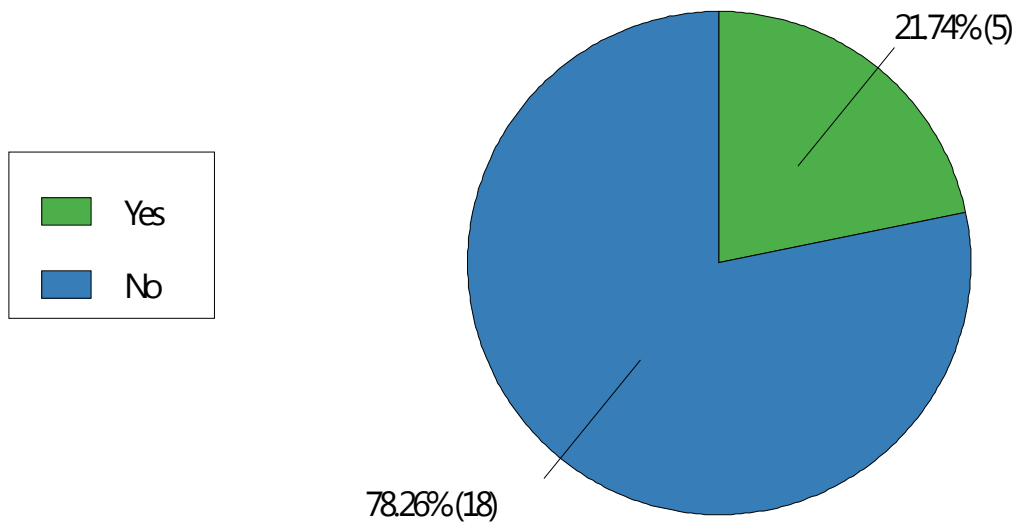


Comments/Notes:

14. Is access to financial planning expertise a barrier to expansion?



15. Is access to financial lending a barrier to expansion?

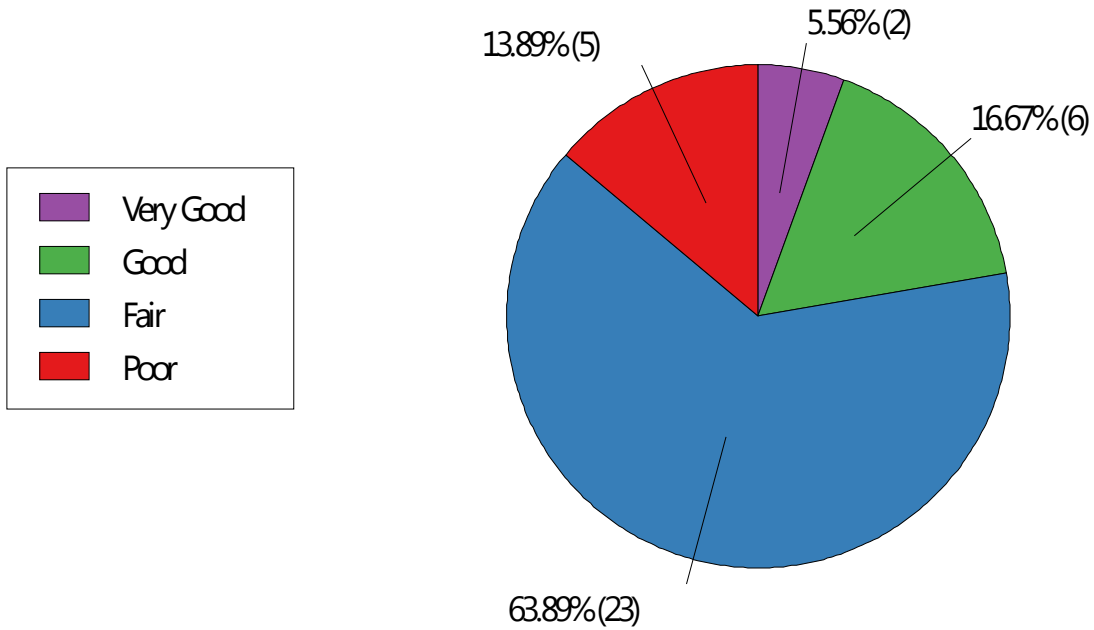


Section - Workforce

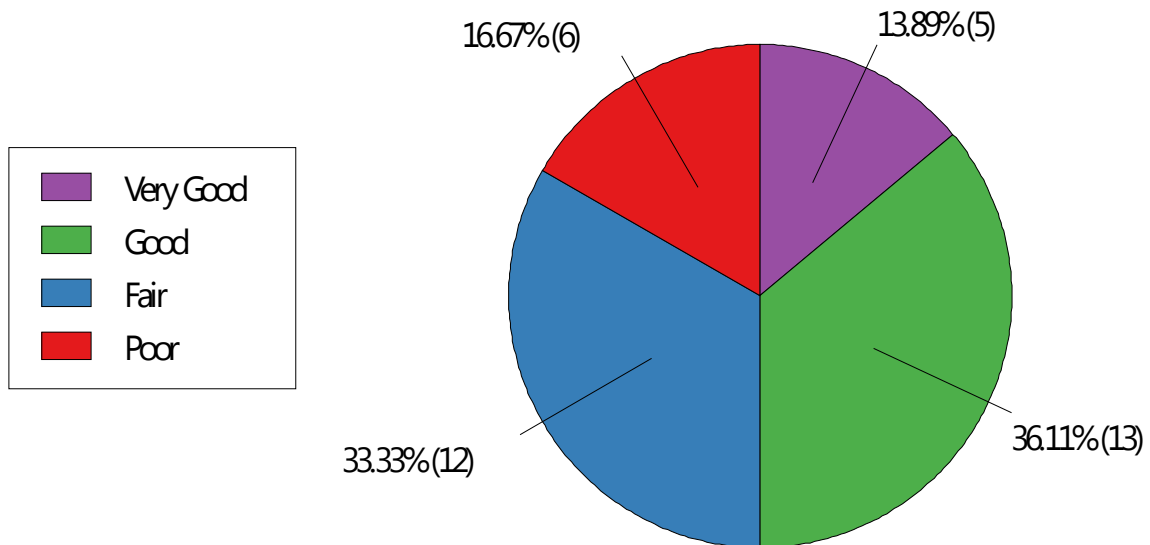
Instructions Provided To Respondents

What is your opinion of the availability, quality and stability of the workforce?

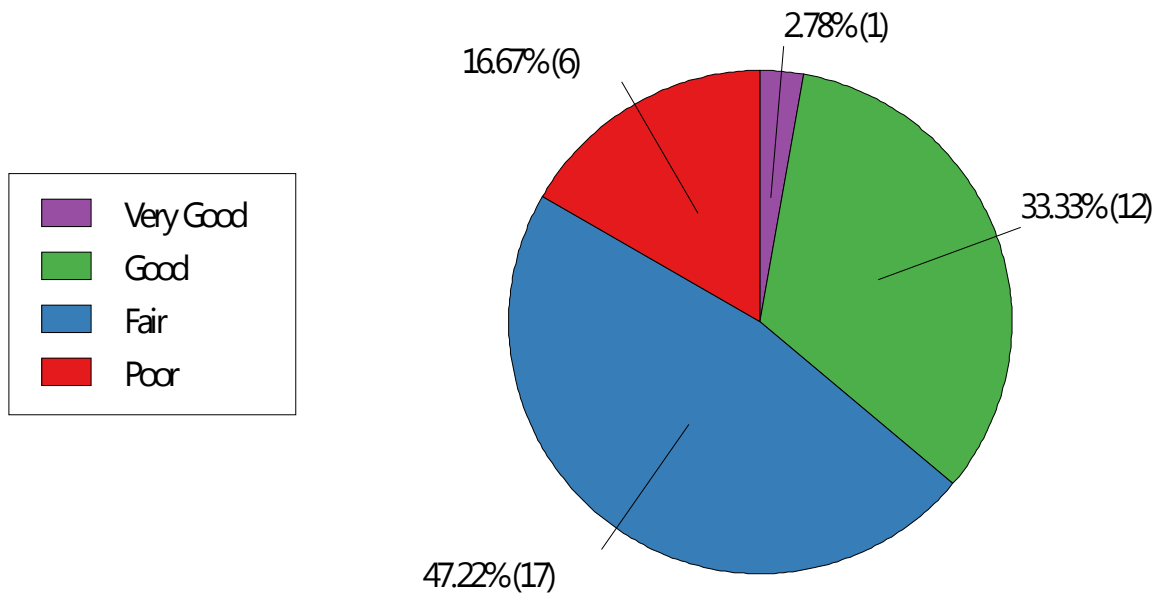
16. Availability



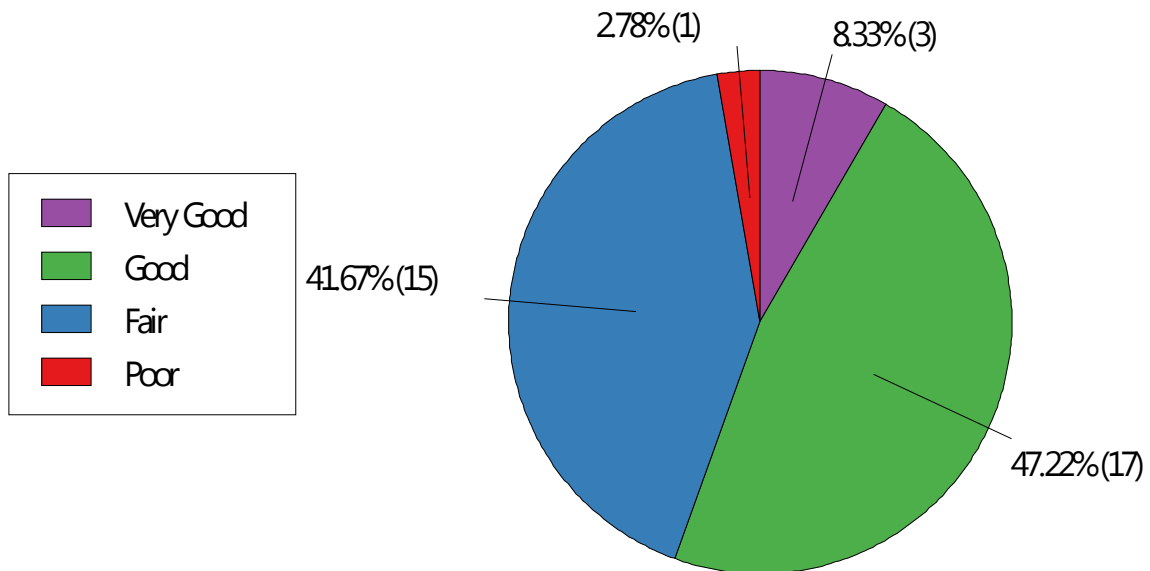
17. Quality



18. Stability

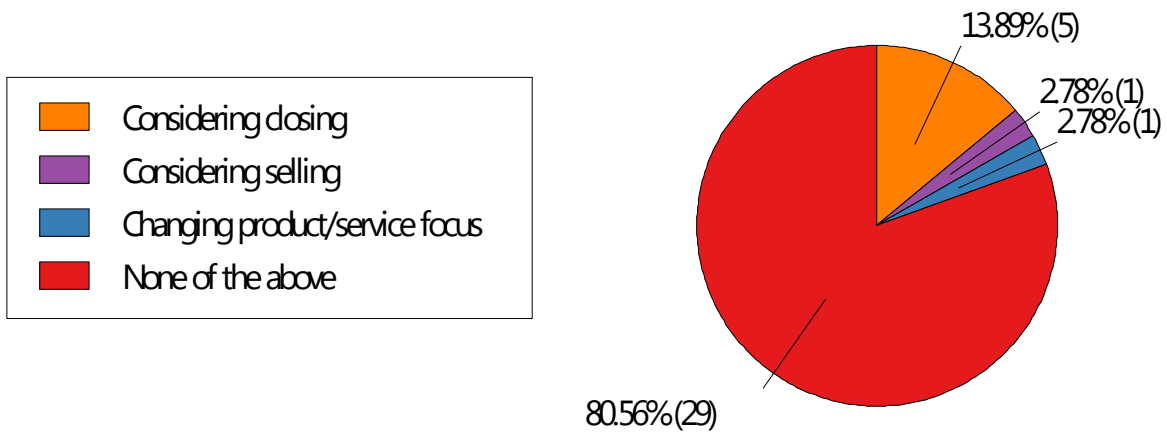


19. Affordability



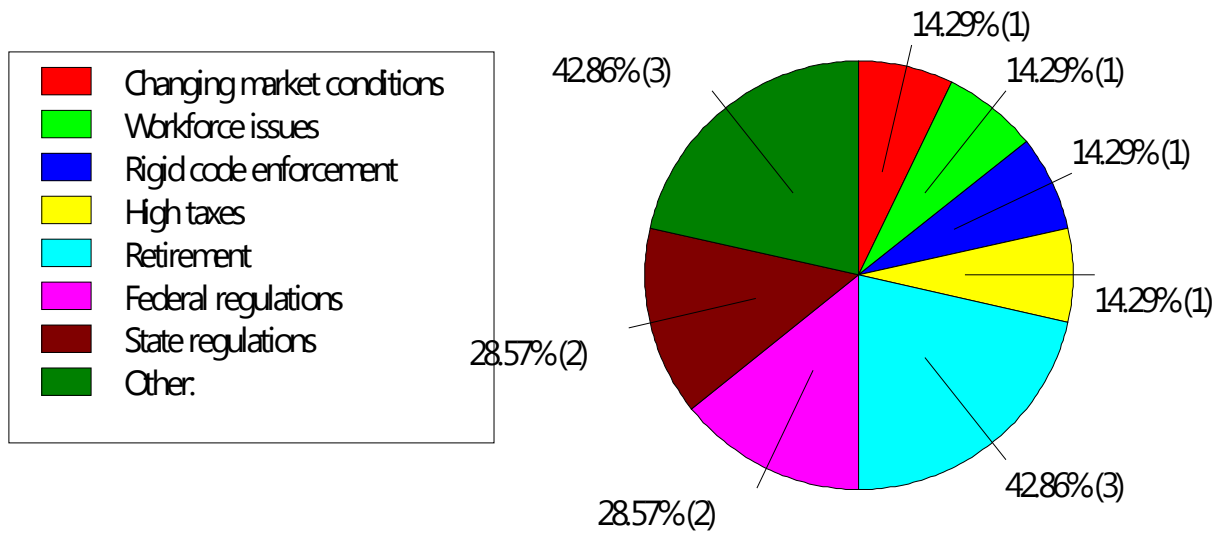
Section - Future Plans: Closing

20. At this time, are you considering moving, closing, selling, merging with another company, or changing your product/service focus?



Section - Why are you considering...

21. Why are you considering this action? Check all that apply.



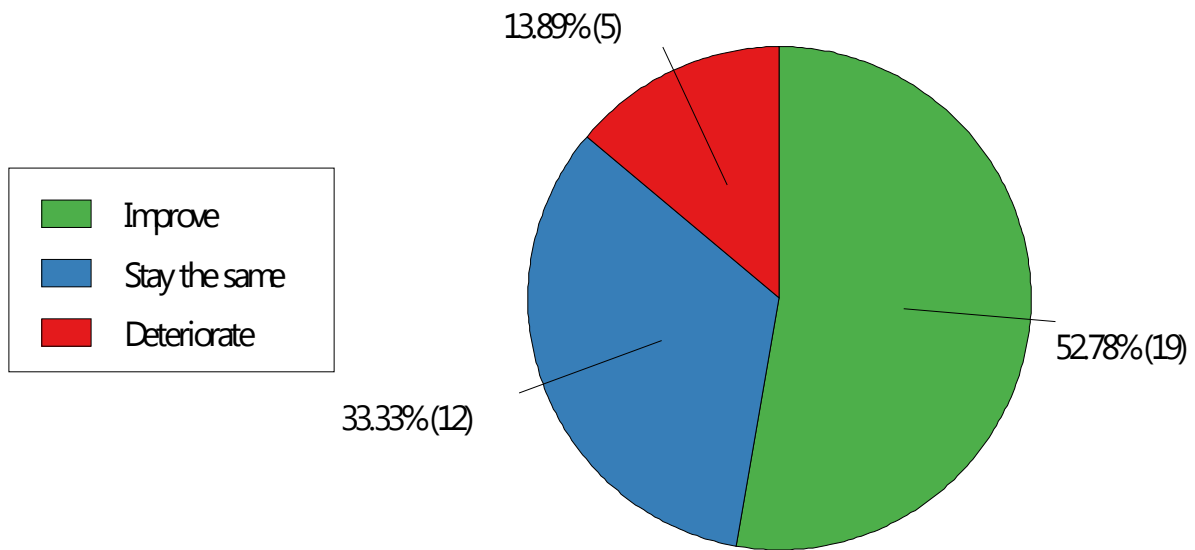
Comments/Notes:

City of Willoughby Hills poor attitude against farming

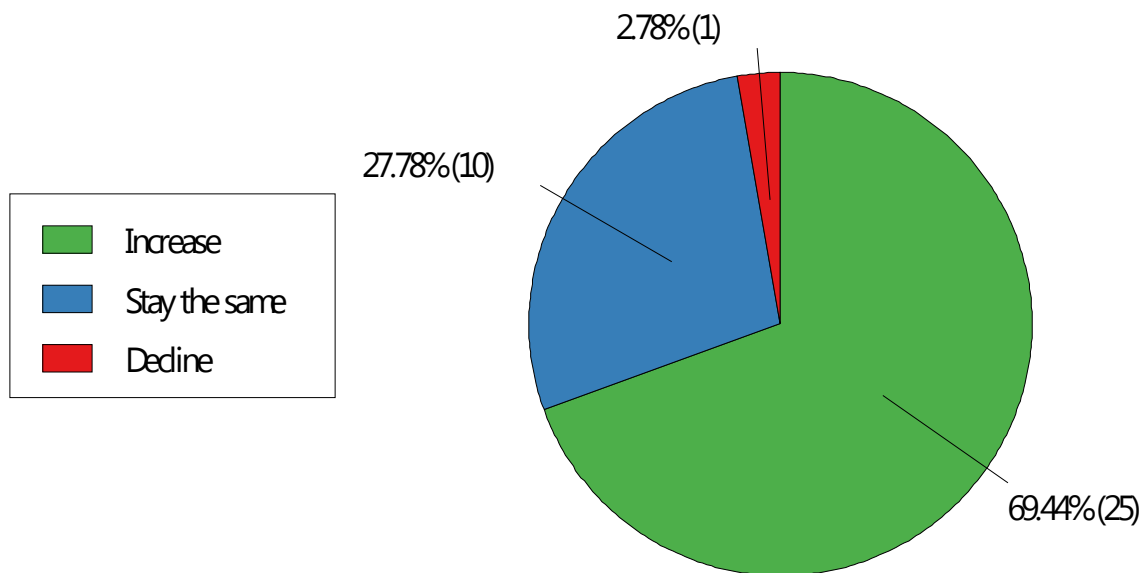
not profitable

Section - General Financial

22. During the past three years, did your business financial situation:

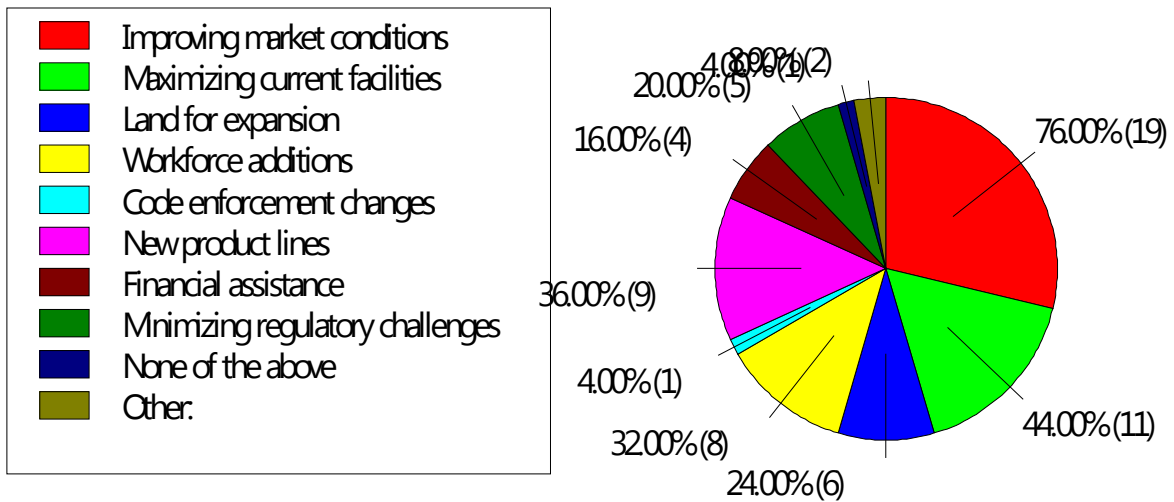


23. Within the next three years, do you think your business finances will?



Section - (SKIP TO) General Financial

24. Which of the following factors affecting your business will cause income to increase over the next three years? Check all that apply.

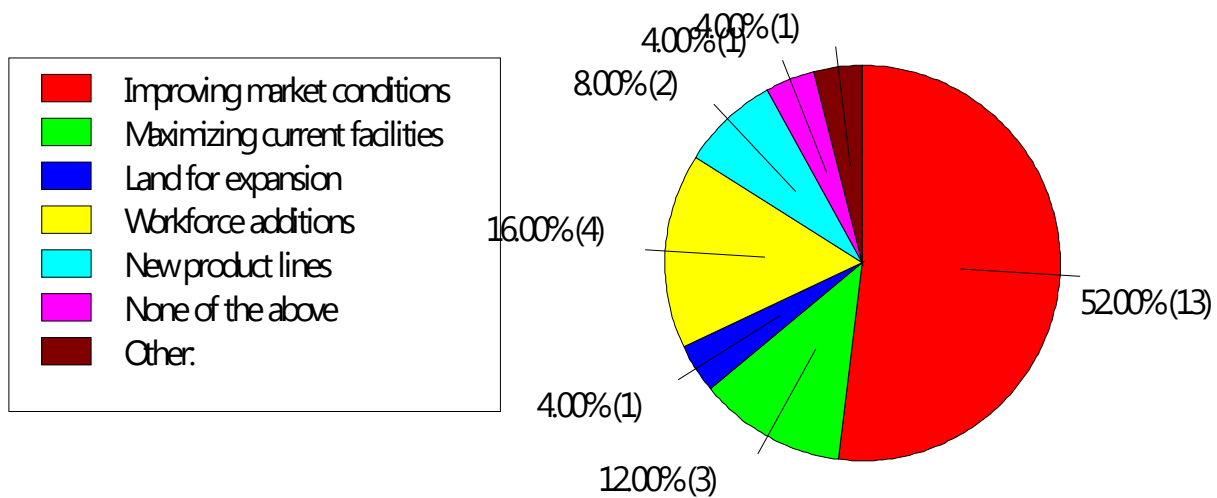


Comments/Notes:

additional marketing

Good Weather

25. Which one is the most significant factor?

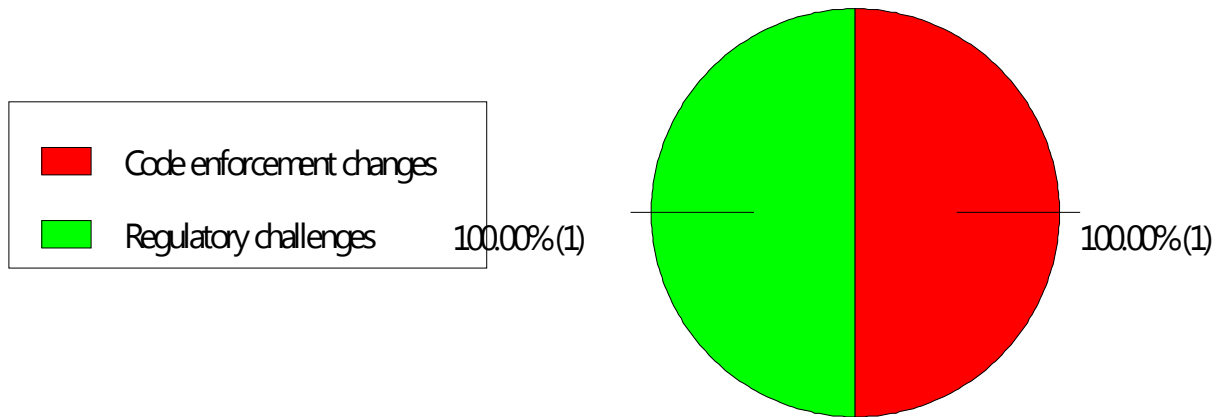


Comments/Notes for "Other:"

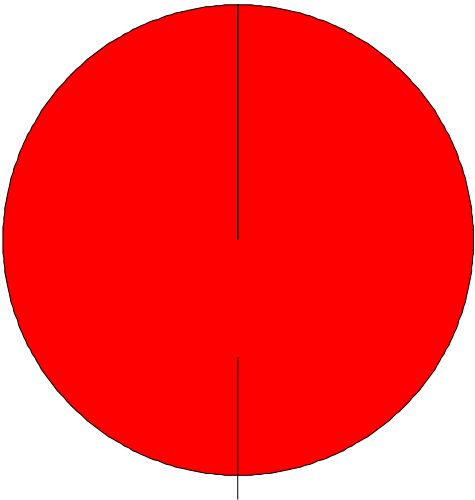
product shortage

Section - (SKIP TO) General Financial 2

26. Which of the following factors affecting your business will cause revenue to decline over the next three years?



27. Which is the most significant factor?

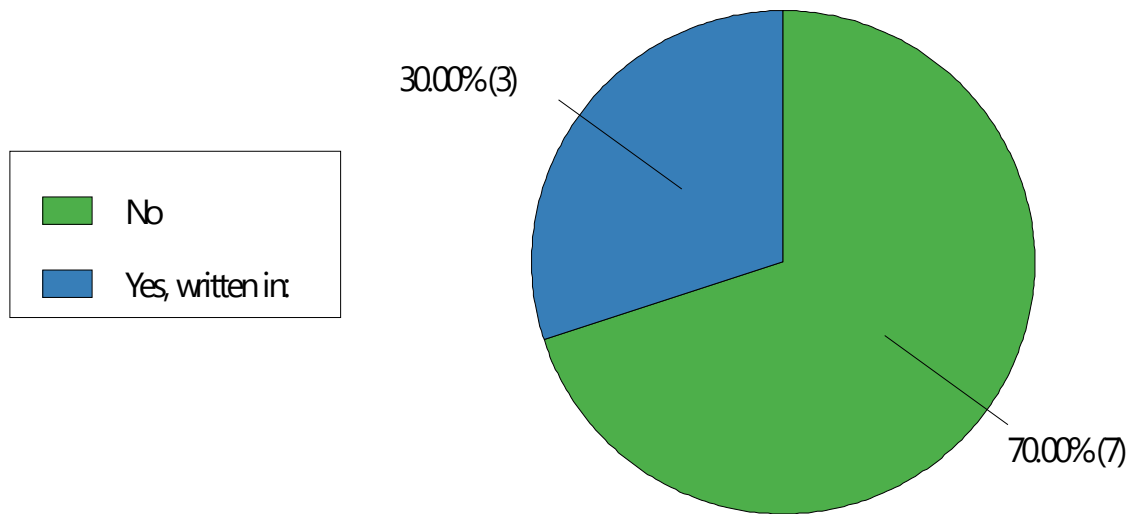


100.00%(1)

DRAFT

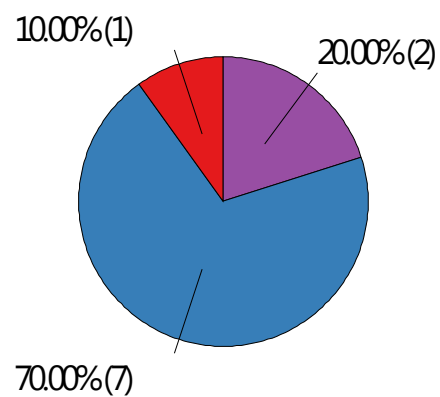
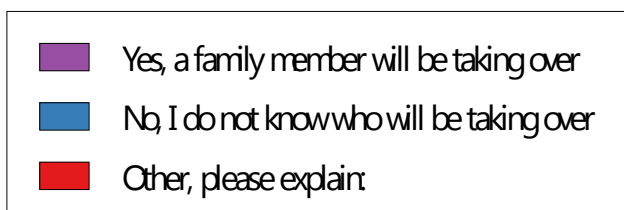
Section - Future Succession

28. Do you have a written estate plan for your operation?



Comments/Notes for "Yes, written in":

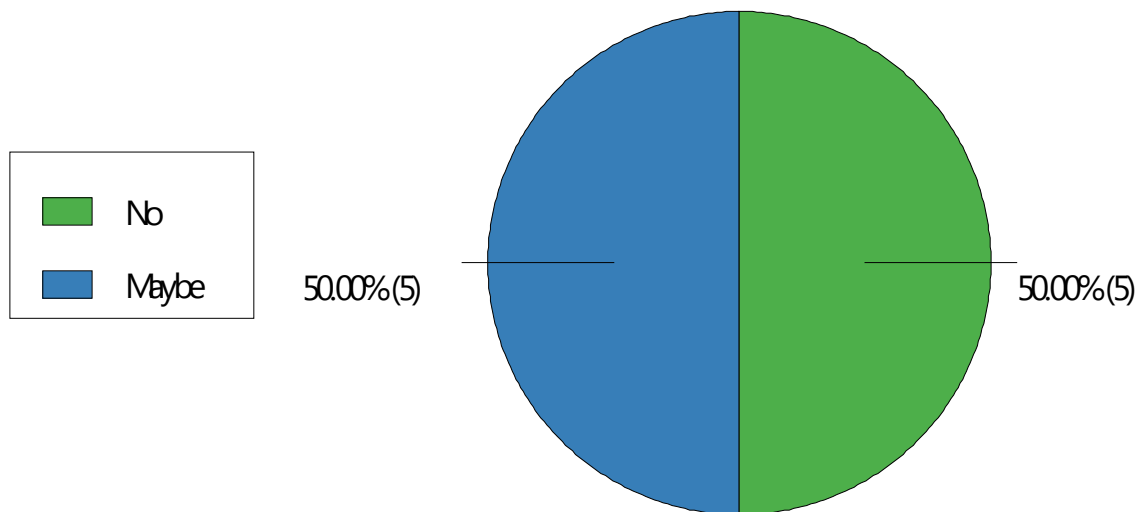
29. Is a written plan in place to transfer your business to the next generation upon your retirement or death?



Comments/Notes for "Other, please explain:"

likely to be sold as non-business

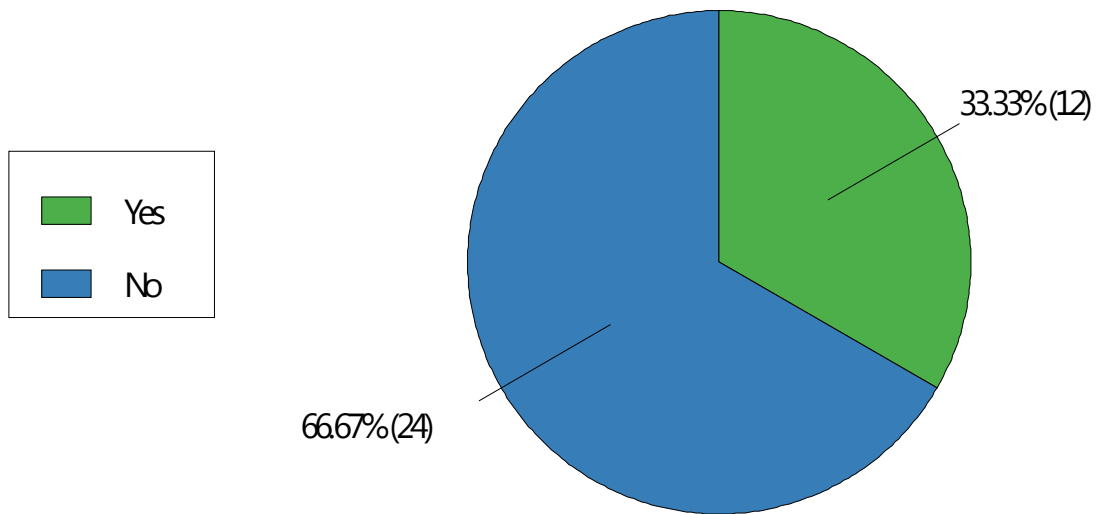
30. Do you plan to sell or transfer your business within the next five years?



DRAFT

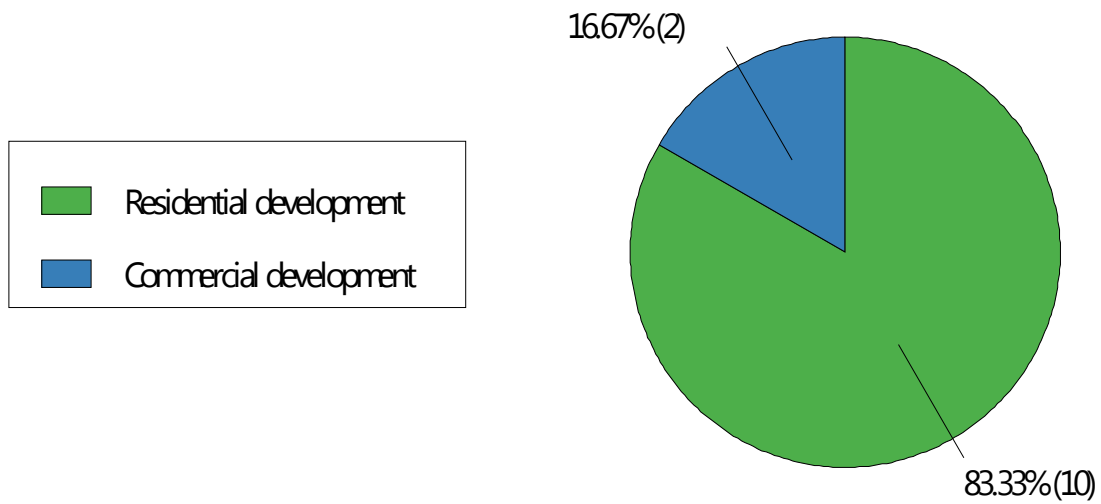
Section - Development Pressure

31. Do you feel pressure from development going on around your business?

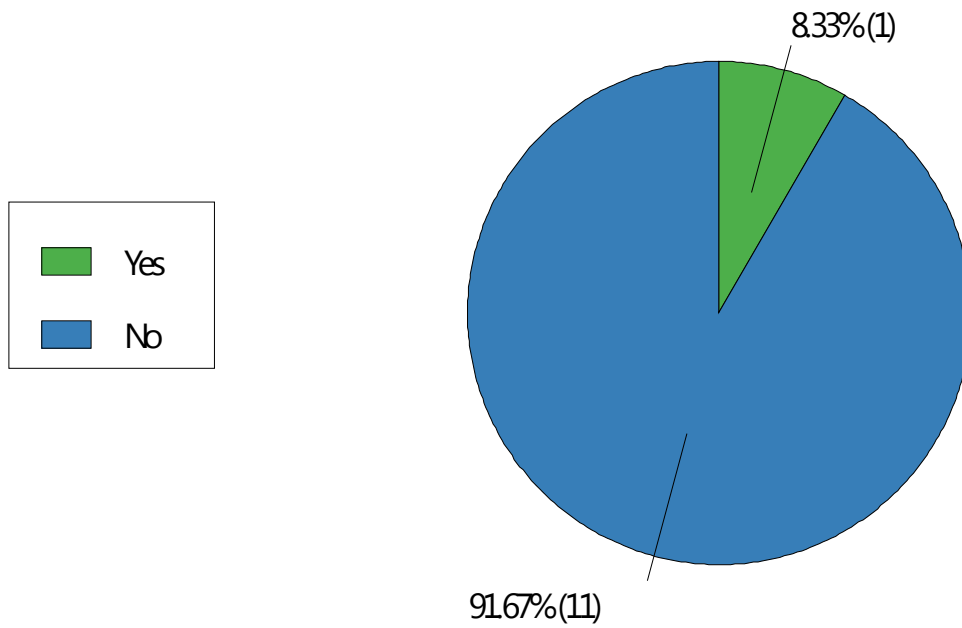


Section - (SKIP T0) Development Pressure

32. Which kind of development is it?



33. Have you sold any of your land for development during the past five years?

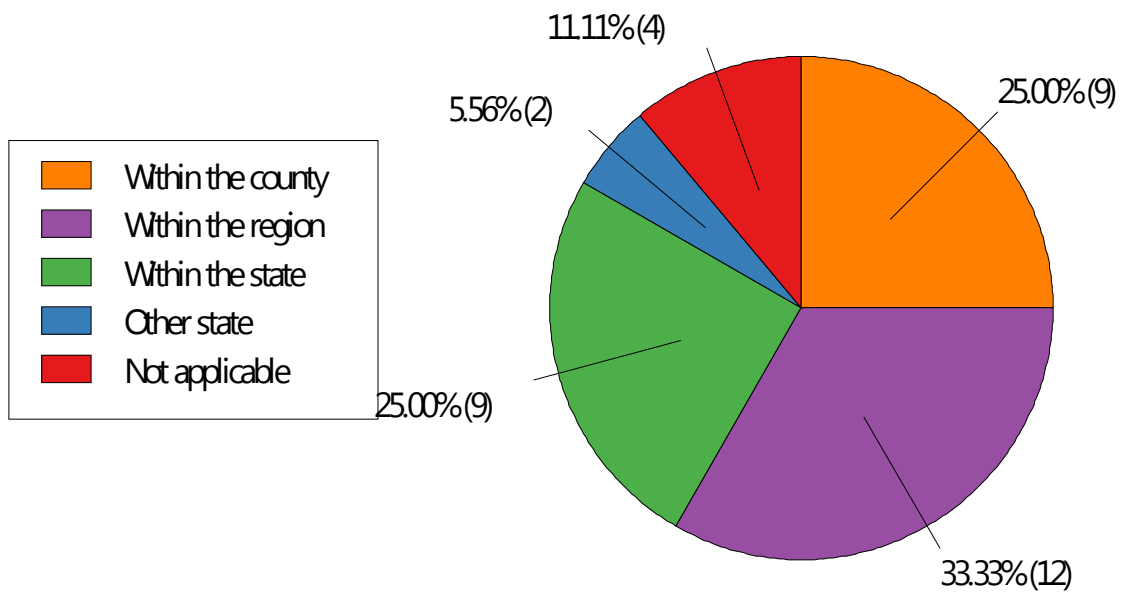


Section - Business Supply Farm

Instructions Provided To Respondents

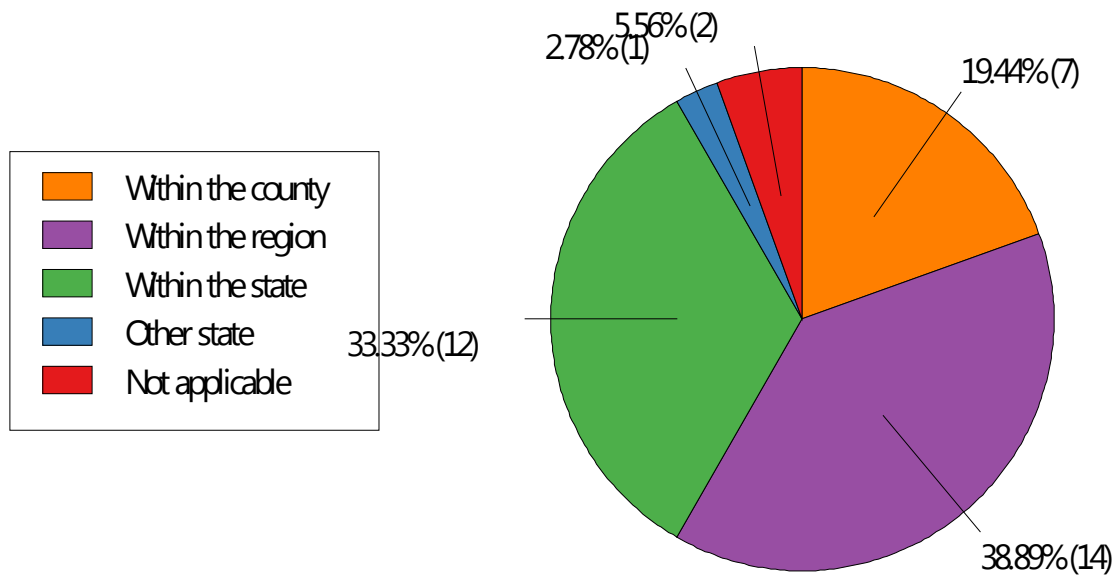
Where do you purchase the majority of your agri-business supplies?

34. Farm inputs (i.e. supplies, raw materials, parts, materials, equipment)



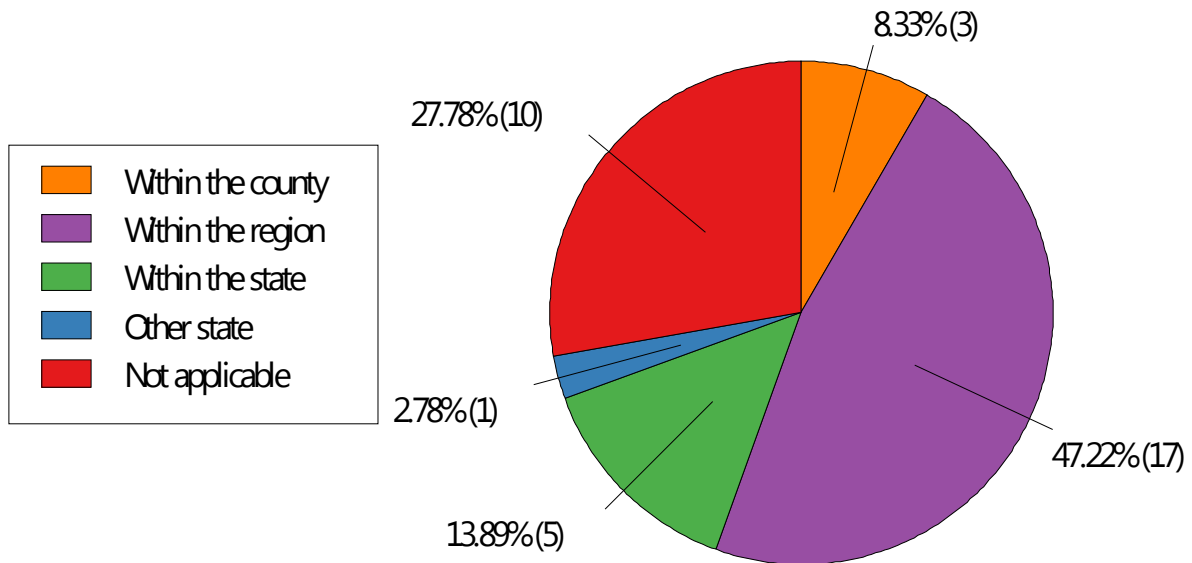
Section - Business Supply Manufacturing

35. Manufacturing supplies related to agriculture



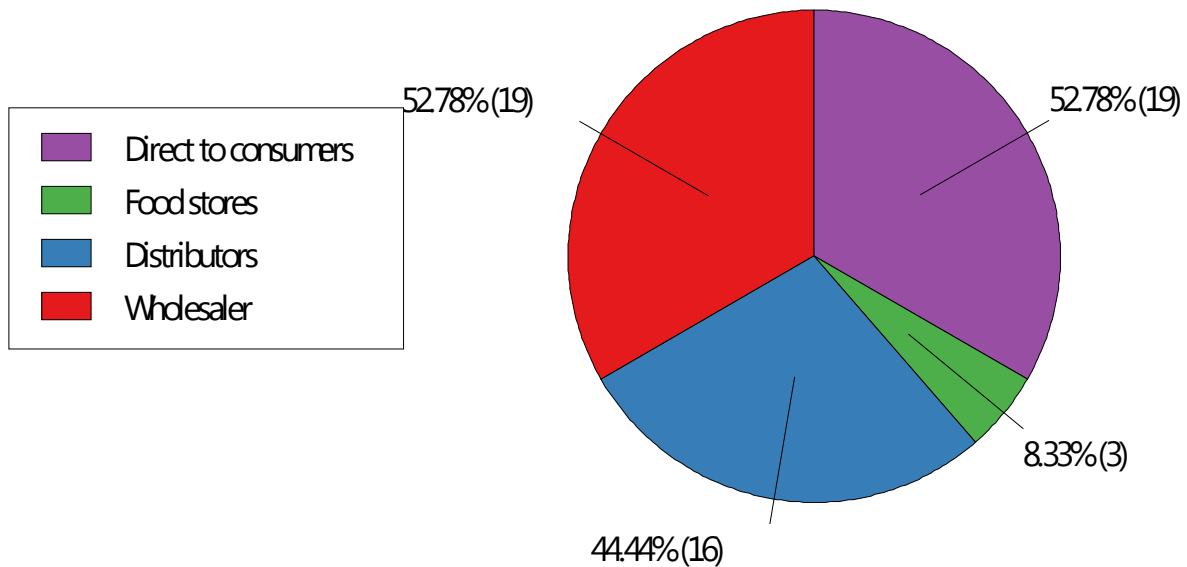
Section - Business Supply Wholesale

36. Wholesale trade (Mining, machinery manufacturing, farm product raw material, merchant wholesaler & miscellaneous nondurable good merchant wholesalers)

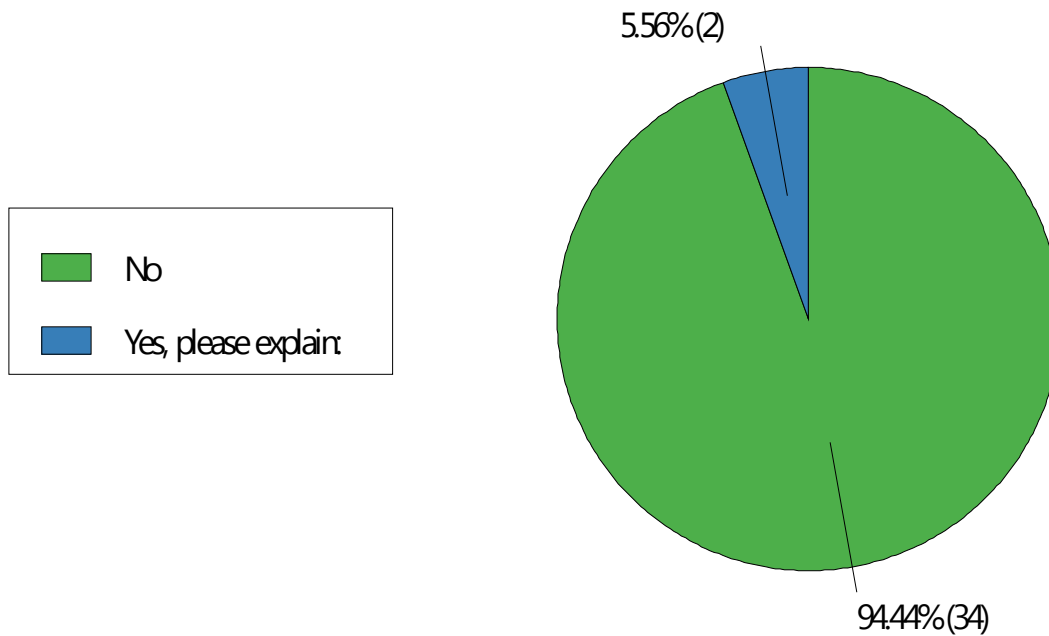


Section - Business Supply 2

37. Where do you sell your products? Check all that apply.



38. Is lack of access to markets affecting your agri-business?

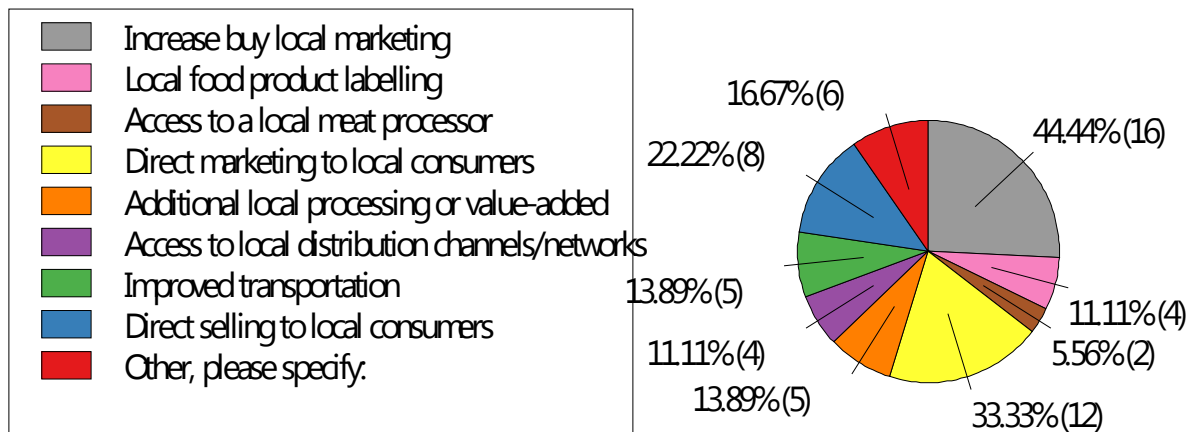


Comments/Notes for "Yes, please explain":

People do not frequent farms in mentor...stores are too convenient - one stop shopping

Regulatory restrictions raise costs to certain markets

39. How could the local market potential of your agricultural products be enhanced? Check all that apply.



Comments/Notes:

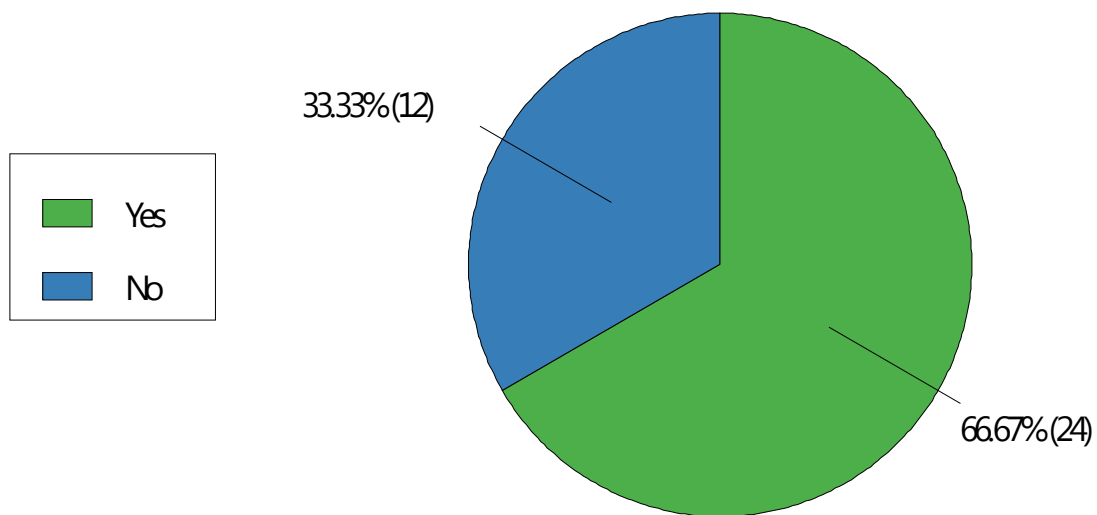
being able to add value

Our market is not in this area

Stronger Workforce

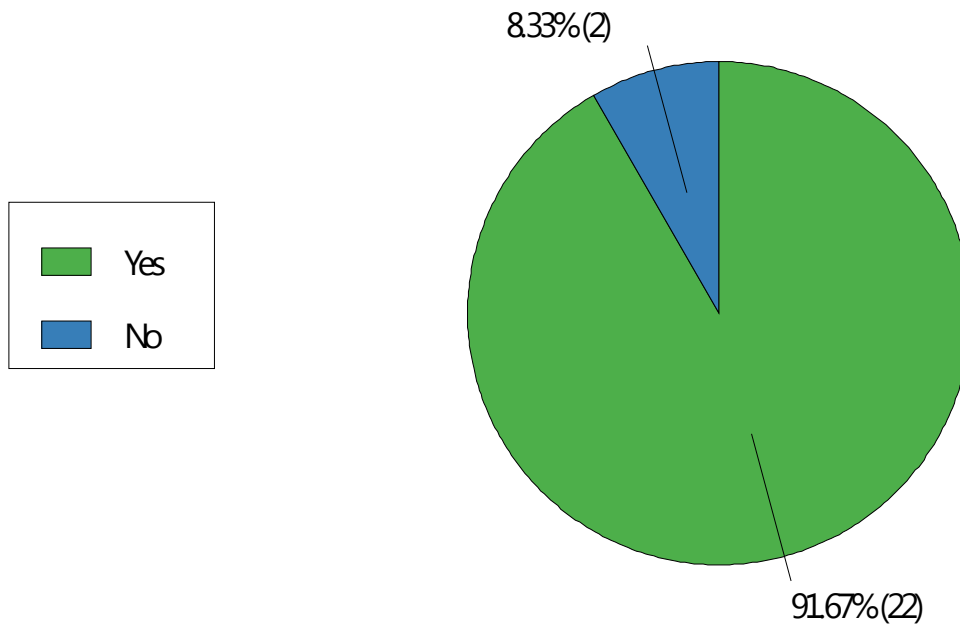
Section - Group Sharing/Awareness

40. Are you active in any formal or informal group where you can confidentially share your experiences and learn from peers?



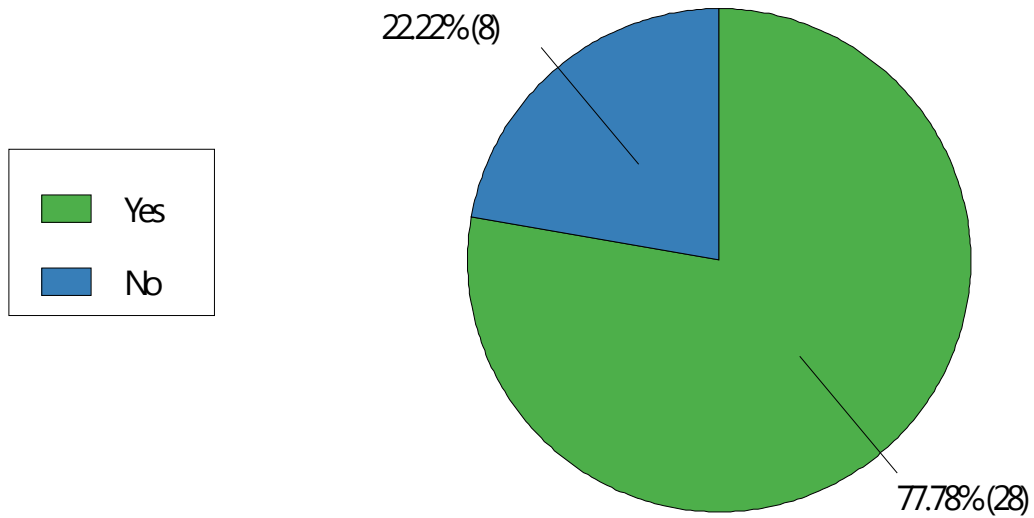
Section - (SKIP TO) Group Sharing/Awareness

41. Are these local groups?



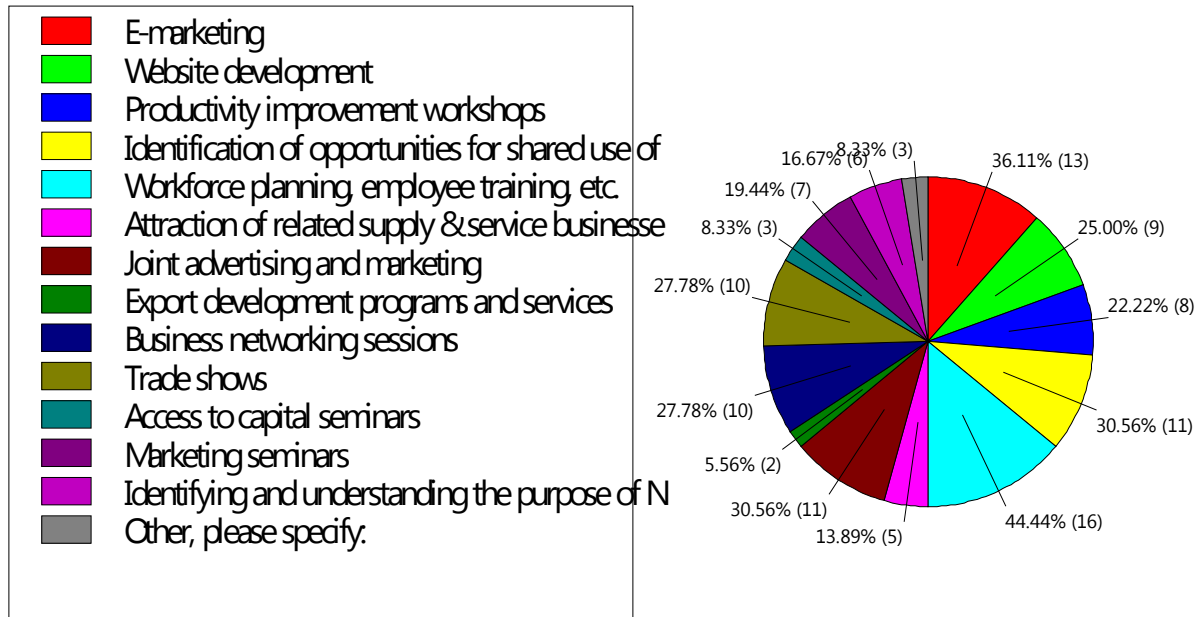
Section - (SKIP TO) Group Sharing/Awareness 2

42. Is it important to you to be connected with other agri-business leaders?



Section - Assistance, Opportunities and Challenges

43. What assistance could local organizations give to support your business? Check all that apply.

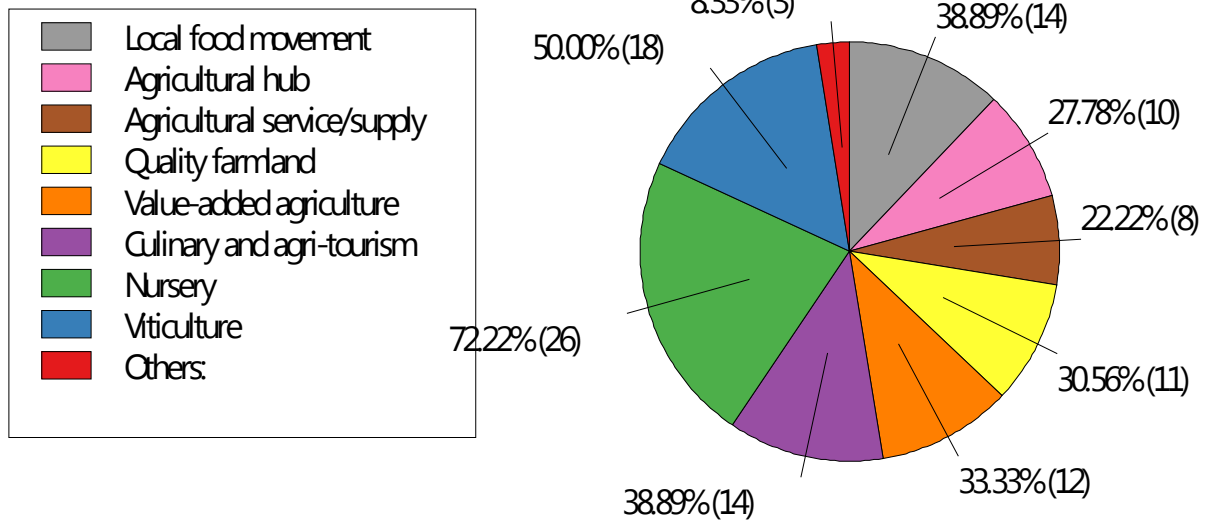


Comments/Notes:

prevent City Govt from interfering with farming/horticulture and silviculture

we have a niche product -- mostly sold out of state

44. What are the biggest opportunities for agri-businesses in Lake County? Check all that apply.



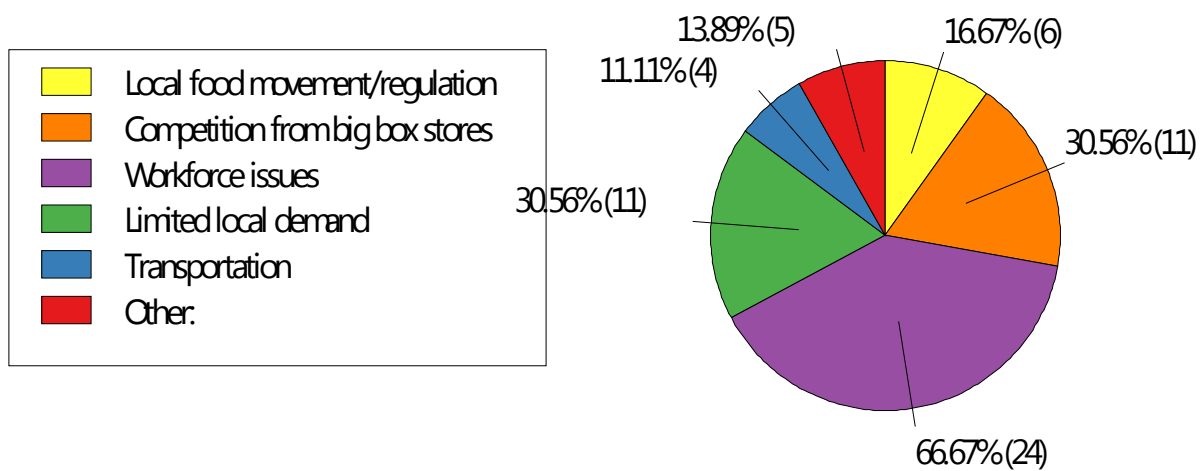
Comments/Notes:

horticultural hub

hydroponic

silviculture

45. What are the biggest challenges facing agri-businesses in Lake County? Check all that apply.



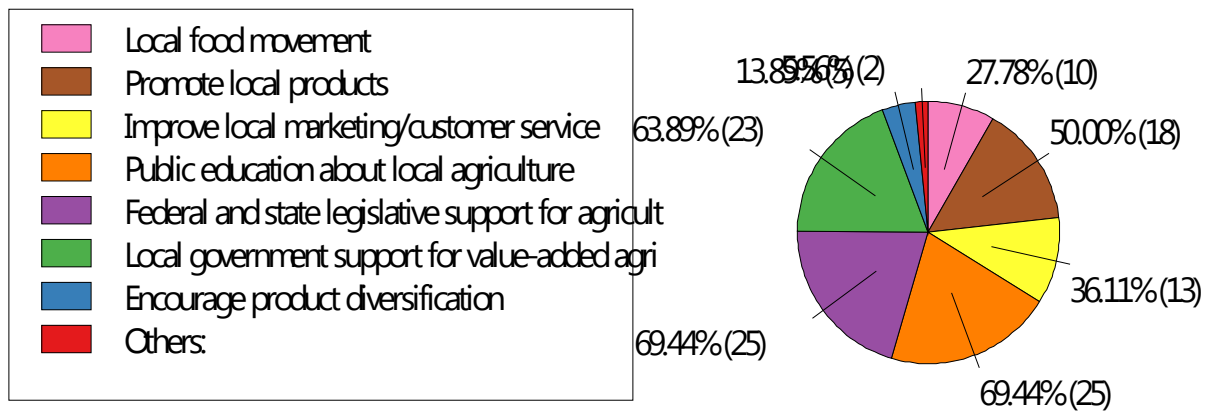
Comments/Notes:

Competition

Federal and some State Regulation

Local Govt. interference

46. What are your recommendations to improve the local business climate? Check all that apply.



Comments/Notes:

low possibilities with our niche product

Support for agriculture, not cheap food.

Section - Conclusion

47. Please describe any business needs or concerns that you have.

access to seasonal funding for non-AAA borrowers. industry pricing/cost-recovery improvement.
reliable work-force. very concerned about potential minimum-wage increase.

Adequate labor supply

I am not in Lake County, but Ashtabula. Most of my business is with nurseries/wholesalers in states east of here. Prices that local nurseries charge are way to low as compared to the Eastern markets.

Keep CAUV valuations in line with our land use practices. Access to skilled labor.

Lake County needs to look at some of the over regulation from the federal government and put a stop to the acceptance of these regulations. The question not asked is; How is the Tax structure affecting the price of agricultural goods and services within the county ie; CAUV valuations, Taxing of wetland buffers, pond and lake acreage, retention basin requirements, retention basin Land Valuation for Tax Purposes, Sales Tax, and land use requirements. How is Zoning and building regulations affecting Agri-Business?)

Our biggest concern is our workforce.

Some of the biggest uncertainties come from outside the county: unpredictability of the tax code from year to year, Federal Agency Regulation/Rule Changes, inability of Local/State/Federal regulatory agencies to process and approve properly filled out forms and applications. This last one delays expansion of ag projects by YEARS sometimes (2 years to get a wetland determination, 5 months to get a farm field culvert/entrance off of a state highway, 150 days to get a TTB Winery Permit, etc., etc.). I think we are at the point of "peak regulation" where even if you comply with all of the rules, the agencies do not have the staff to even understand their own regulations, let alone, process all of the paperwork they require.

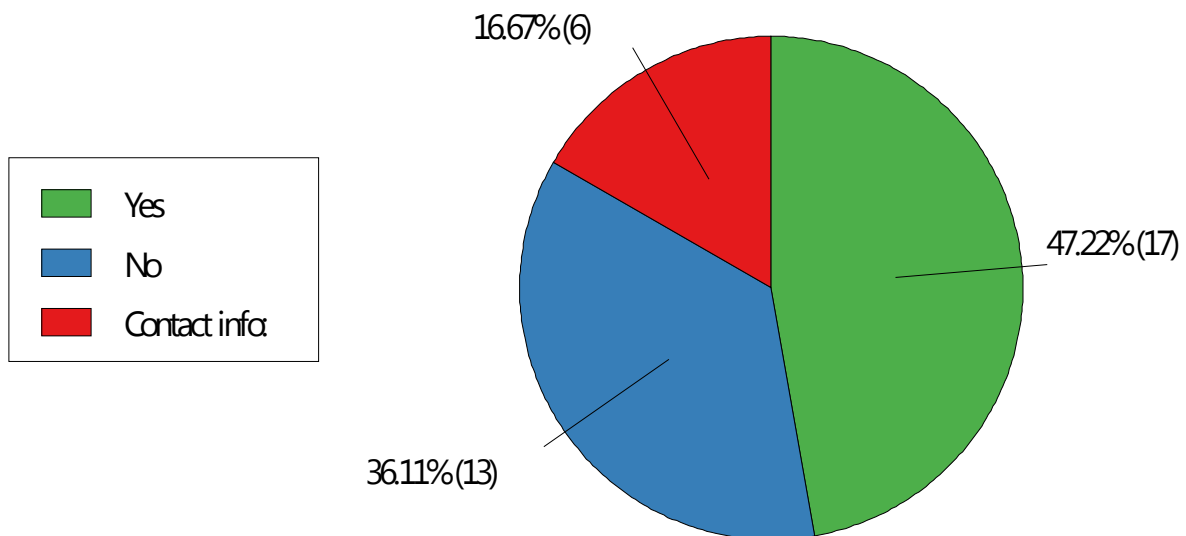
Speculators buying land for future development plowing or leaving it in non-developed condition & the runoff damage is considerable to adjoining farms, ponds & county ditches & no action is taken by local authorities or they when they skip town for new opportunities or they claim bankruptcies. This 120 acre farm is damaged by speculators buying 10 or 20 acres then leaving.

Stop local Govt. (City of Willoughby Hills) Building Commissioner, Mayor and Law Director from harrasement and intimidation, even using Local Police Force,trying to prevent me form operating a small hobby type farm-not disturbing anyone and maintaining good forest Mgmt. Prevent Govt from trying to control private land (like in communist and fascist dictatorships)

tax relief,the taxes are killing my ability to expand

Total collapse of food production within county. It is so limited now. If I cannot add value and direct sell, I cannot afford to farm. NO one can.

48. Would you like to learn about the results of this survey?



Section - Thank you.

Instructions Provided To Respondents

Thank you for completing this survey.

If you have any questions, please contact the Lake County Soil and Water Conservation office at 440-350-5863, attn. Maurine Orndorff or email at: morndorff@lakecountyohio.gov