

Growing West Virginia's Agricultural Economy Survey Results

Fall 2018

Overview

This survey was conducted by the West Virginia Agriculture Steering Committee as part of a statewide strategic planning process from August 6th to August 24th. Below are some of the noteworthy results of the survey.

This survey, along with background research, will be used at the 14 community meetings occurring throughout the state between October 1st and October 11th.

Demographics



Total respondents: 519
Respondents from WV: 504



Counties represented: 52
Respondents did not identify being from Boone, McDowell, or Logan



Average survey respondent age: 50.6¹

Types of Respondents



Farmers/producers: 310



Personal farmers/producers²: 90

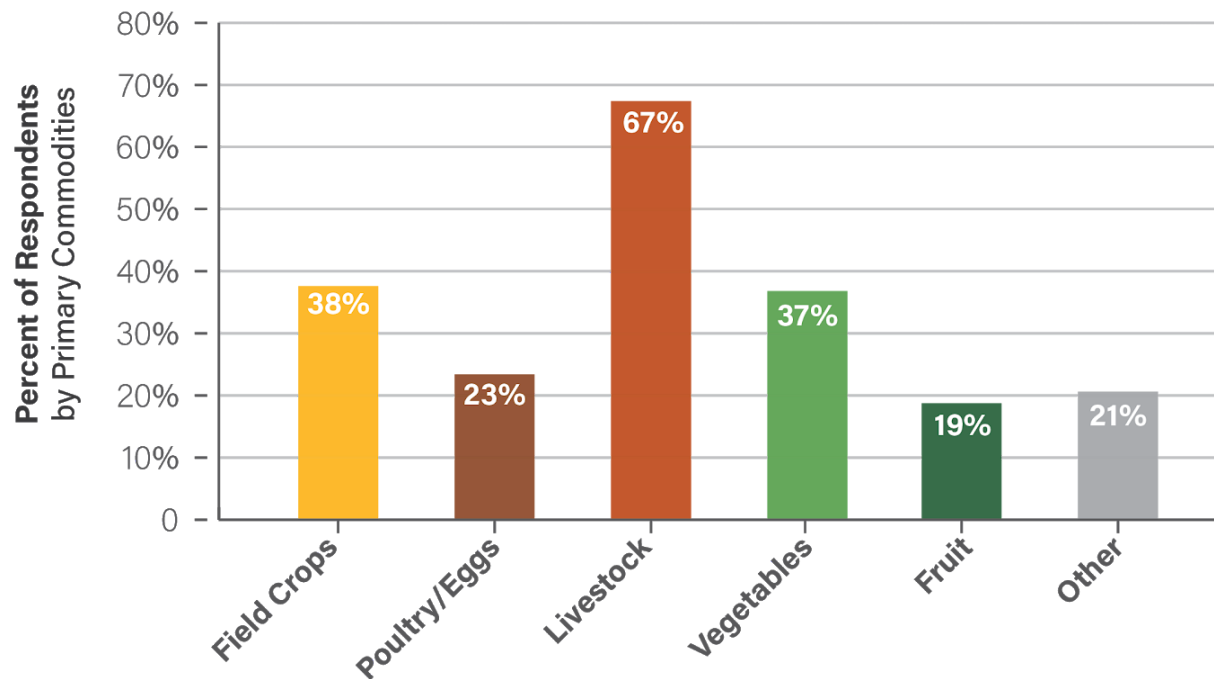
Everyone else (not a producer): 119

¹ Note: 497 out of 519 respondents provide age data.

² This category ("Personal Farmers/Producers") refers to respondents who produced for only personal consumption or supplemental income, and did not list themselves as farmers or agricultural producer businesses.

Primary Sectors

The majority of our respondents identified as being involved in producing “traditional” agricultural products. Respondents were able to select as many primary sectors that applied to their production. These categories are not exclusive (e.g., if a respondent produced both field crops and livestock as primary commodities, they would select both.) The largest number of respondents were involved in livestock.



Matrix: Primary Production Areas and Opportunity Commodities

How to read this matrix:

In each cell of the main table, the number of respondents who reported growing both the primary commodity (in the column) and the opportunity area (in the row) is listed. Below that are listed the corresponding percentages of A.) the percentage of all respondents in that primary commodity who produce that commodity, and B.) (visa versa) the percentage of all respondents in that opportunity commodity who are also active in that primary commodity.

For example: Looking at the top left cell in the main body of the table, we see that 4 respondents produce both Field Crops as a primary commodity and grow Hemp. Those 4 represent 44% (4 out of 9) of the total respondents who grow hemp and 3% (4 out of 122) of the total respondents who grow Field Crops as a primary commodity.

Note: Respondents can be active in multiple primary/opportunity commodity.

		PRIMARY COMMODITIES					
		Field Crops	Poultry	Livestock	Vegetables	Fruit	Total
OPPORTUNITY AREAS	Hemp	4 respondents 44.4% 3.3%	3 respondents 33.3% 3.0%	4 respondents 44.4% 1.8%	5 respondents 55.6% 3.0%	3 respondents 33.3% 3.8%	9
	Med. Marijuana	0 respondents - -	0 respondents - -	0 respondents - -	2 respondents 100% 1.2%	1 respondents 50% 1.3%	2
	Maple	8 respondents 25.8% 6.6%	14 respondents 45.2% 14%	11 respondents 35.5% 4.9%	17 respondents 54.8% 10.4%	9 respondents 29% 11.5%	31
	Honey	17 respondents 23.6% 13.9%	28 respondents 38.9% 28%	36 respondents 50% 15.9%	35 respondents 48.6% 21.3%	17 respondents 23.6% 21.8%	72
	Wine Grapes	7 respondents 33.3% 5.7%	5 respondents 23.8% 5.0%	7 respondents 33.3% 3.1%	13 respondents 61.9% 7.9%	9 respondents 42.9% 11.5%	21
	Cider	4 respondents 22.2% 3.3%	9 respondents 50% 9%	6 respondents 33.3% 2.7%	11 respondents 61.1% 6.7%	8 respondents 44.4% 10.3%	18
	Hops	5 respondents 20.8% 4.1%	11 respondents 45.8% 11.0%	7 respondents 29.2% 3.1%	17 respondents 70.8% 10.4%	6 respondents 25% 7.7%	24
	Jerky	5 respondents 17.9% 4.1%	17 respondents 60.7% 17%	16 respondents 57.1% 7.1%	16 respondents 57.1% 9.8%	9 respondents 32.1% 11.5%	28
	Lavender	6 respondents 14% 4.9%	15 respondents 34.9% 15%	13 respondents 30.2% 5.8%	30 respondents 69.8% 18.3%	11 respondents 25.6% 14.1%	43
	Ginseng	6 respondents 14.6% 4.9%	13 respondents 31.7% 13%	15 respondents 36.6% 6.6%	23 respondents 56.1% 14%	12 respondents 29.3% 15.4%	41
	Nursery	6 respondents 17.6% 4.9%	9 respondents 26.5% 9%	10 respondents 29.4% 4.4%	25 respondents 73.5% 15.2%	12 respondents 35.3% 15.4%	34
	Cottage Foods	5 respondents 9.6% 4.1%	19 respondents 36.5% 19%	21 respondents 40.4% 9.3%	36 respondents 69.2% 22%	13 respondents 25% 16.7%	52
Total Respondents		122	100	226	164	78	

Interest/Disinterest in Specific Commodities

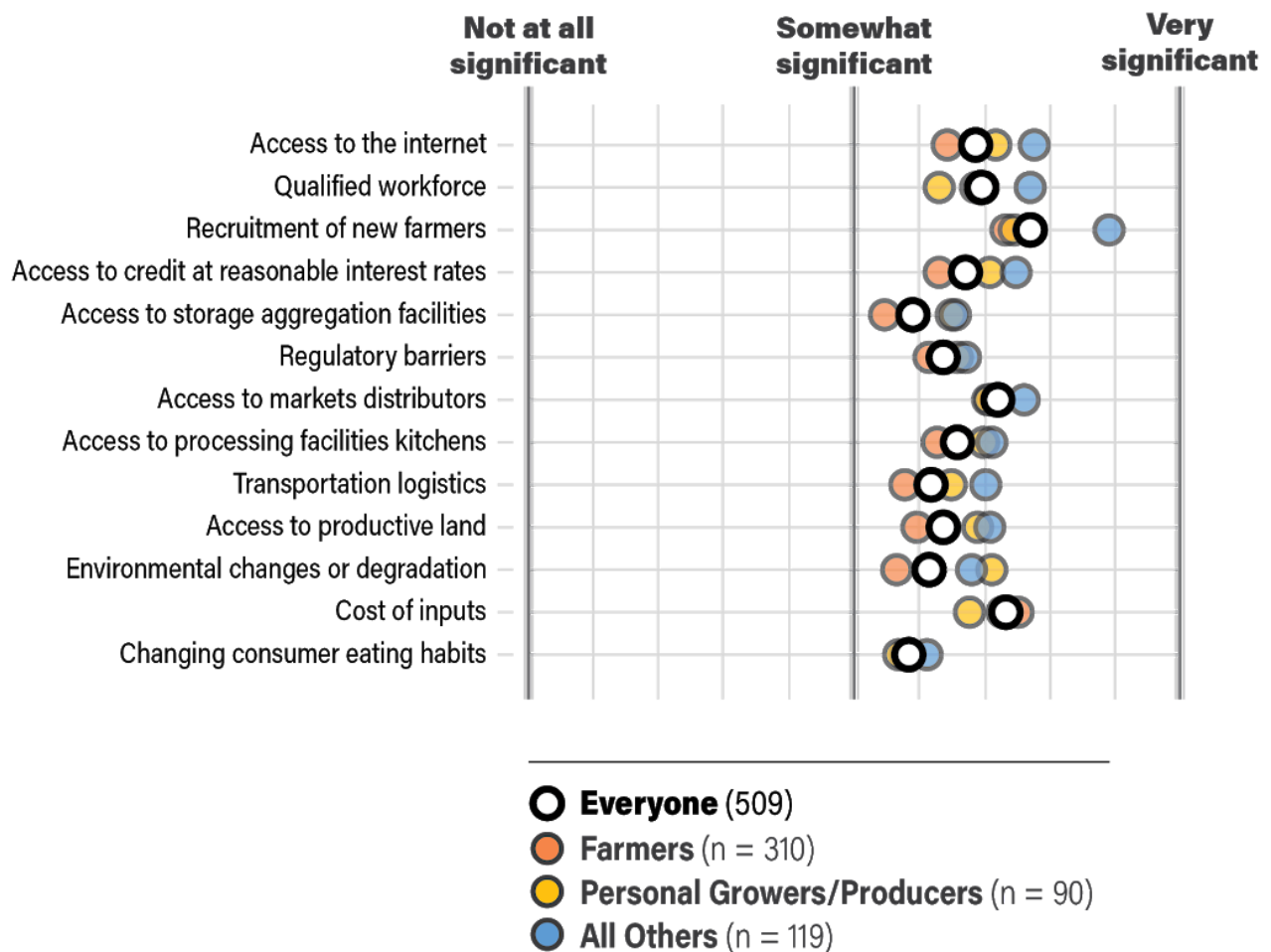
We asked people in our survey if they 1) were already producing these commodities (either as a primary or secondary product) and 2) had any interest in producing these commodities. The table below is ranked in accordance to the percent of respondents who indicated they are already producing the commodity as a primary crop or product. Results indicated that **7% of people were already producing honey as a primary product** and **14% of people were interested in producing honey**.

Table: Opportunity Area Responses				
	Yes, as a primary crop/product	Yes, but not as a primary crop/product	No, but I would like to	No, and I would not like to
Honey	7.1%	14.0%	38.4%	40.5%
Cottage foods	3.6%	10.6%	21.3%	64.5%
Nursery/landscaping plants	2.4%	9.4%	16.4%	71.7%
Ginseng or other forest farming crops	1.4%	9.8%	33.1%	54.5%
Maple sap/syrup	1.2%	8.4%	28.3%	62.1%
Hops	1.0%	5.3%	20.0%	73.7%
Hemp	0.9%	1.4%	36.8%	60.8%
Lavender	0.5%	11.9%	33.1%	54.5%
Cider	0.5%	4.6%	24.3%	70.6%
Wine grapes	0.2%	5.3%	24.0%	70.5%
Medical Marijuana	0.0%	0.5%	33.3%	66.3%

Challenges for the WV Agricultural Economy

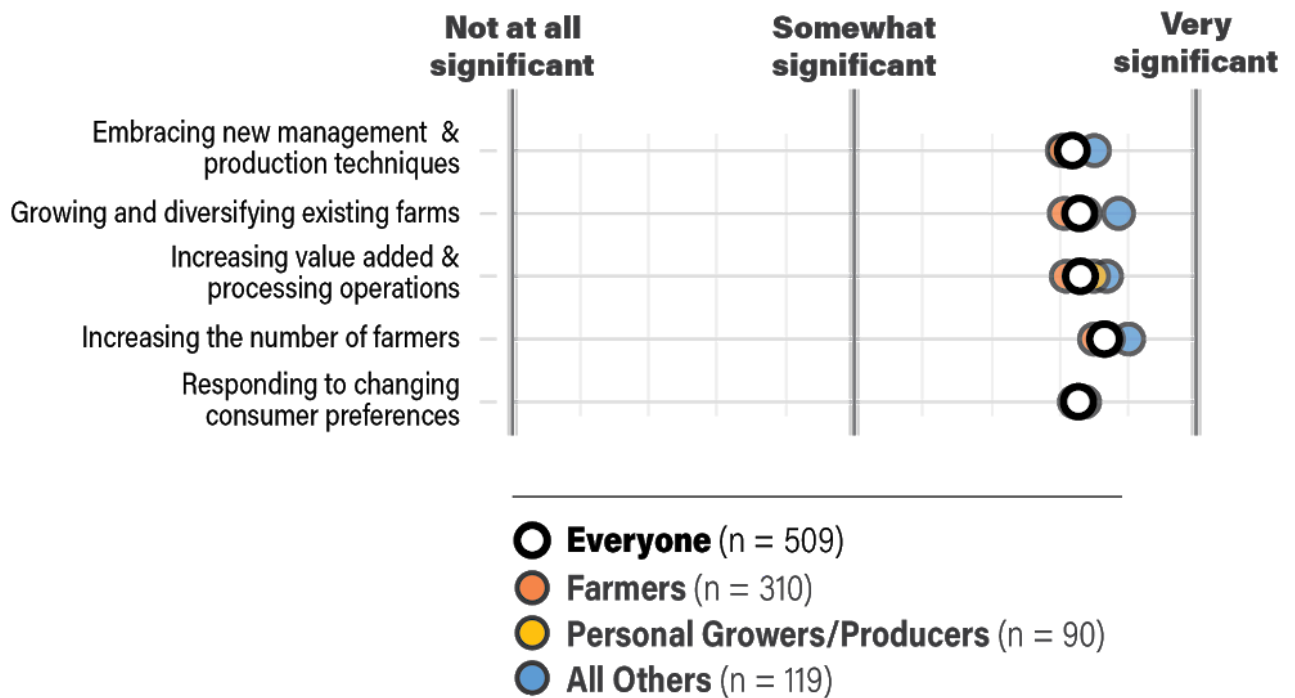
We asked respondents about how significant each of the following challenges were to growing the West Virginia agricultural economy. All challenges overall were thought to be at least somewhat significant across all main respondent groups. Overall, farmers tended to rate almost all challenges as less significant than non-farmer respondents.

Recruitment of farmers was the most significant challenge (but that was driven disproportionately by non-farmers) and costs of inputs was the challenge most farmers ranked as most significant.



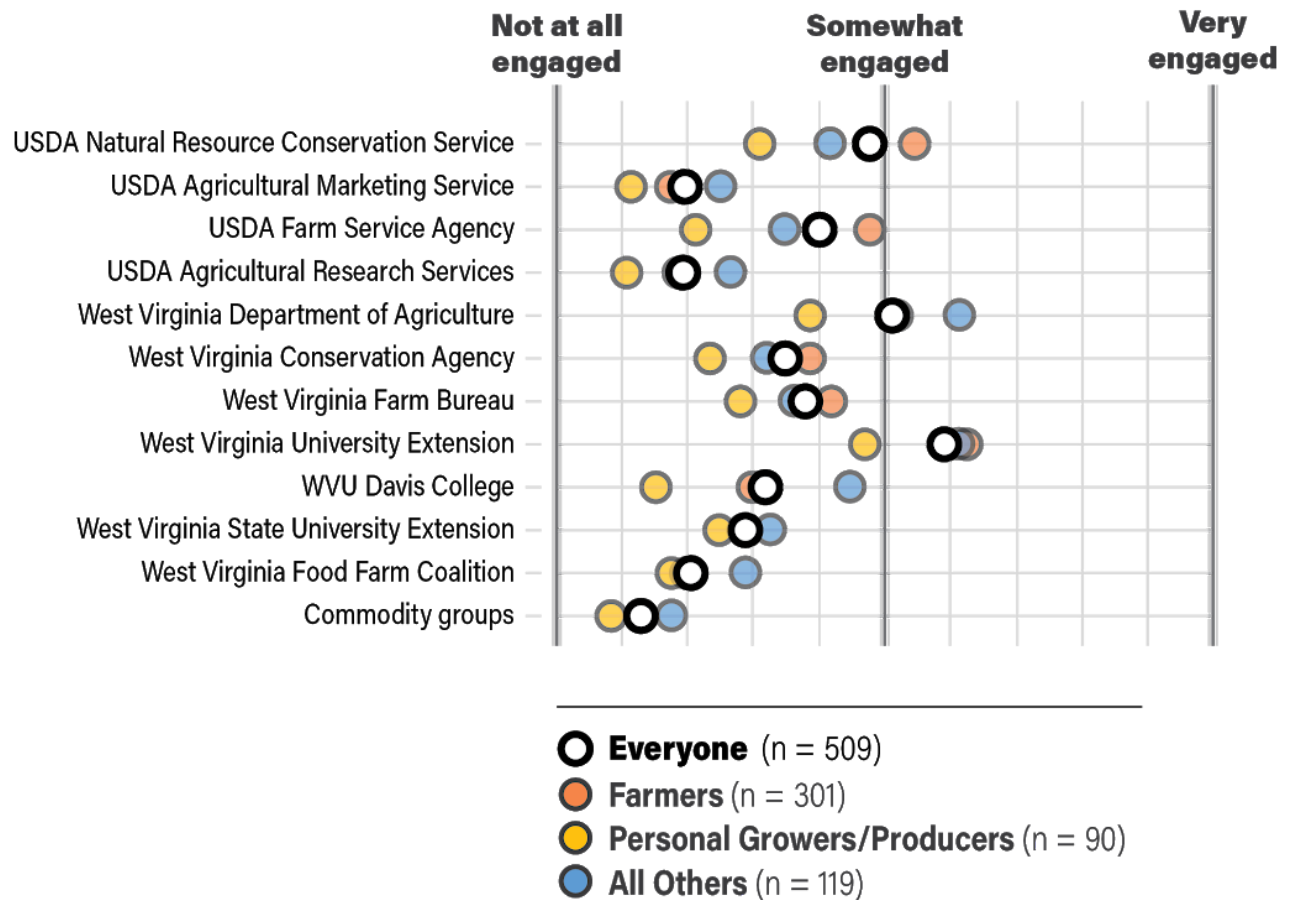
Opportunities for WV Agricultural Economy

We also asked respondents about how significant each of the proposed opportunities were for the West Virginia Agricultural Economy. Overall, there was broad agreement among respondents that all five opportunities listed are very significant. Increasing the number of farms received the most significant response.



Engagement & Communications

We asked respondents about how engaged they were with various agencies and groups involved in the agricultural economy. WVU Extension had the the most engagement for all groups of people.



Needs

We asked respondents to identify what help with they utilize from these various agencies and groups mentioned above. People had the option of choosing 1) I already use this, 2) I don't use this but would like to, and 3) I have not interest in using this. Respondents appear to be using communication through publications and newsletters the most but have the most interest in support for their marketing and connections to commercial buyers.

