

# Ministry of Agriculture Omnibus Survey

Insightrix Research, May 2017

# Executive Summary

To gain insight into public perceptions of the agriculture and agri-food industry, assess the impact of awareness initiatives and to establish benchmarks for future efforts, the Ministry has participated in omnibus surveys annually since 2013. The 2017 survey, conducted by Insightrix Research in May, asked 800 Saskatchewan residents for their opinions on agricultural technologies (including genetic modification), livestock welfare, food safety, farm management, and the impact agriculture has on society and the environment. The survey also gauged the public's knowledge of credible sources of agriculture information and their overall trust of farmers and ranchers.

Maintaining the public's trust in modern agriculture is vital to achieving the industry's ambitious goals for sustainable growth. Improving the public perception of the industry is a strategic priority for the Ministry of Agriculture and necessary in securing agriculture's social licence. If producers do not have the freedom to use the tools and technologies best suited to their operations, their capacity to contribute to local and global food demand will be constrained. That said, we cannot gain or maintain the public's trust if we do not listen to, understand, and address their concerns.

This year's results suggest that Saskatchewan producers continue to have the public's support. Maintaining that support, however, requires continued efforts to build public awareness around production practices and Canada's robust regulatory and assurance systems.

The Ministry and industry must work together to ensure we do the right thing and build awareness around what we do and why. Data collected in this and other surveys, coupled with a commitment to constant improvement, will help shape policy and programming to help build society's trust in and acceptance of modern food production.

# Results

## 1. Society benefits from advancements in agriculture.

### Results

Agree or strongly agree: 91%

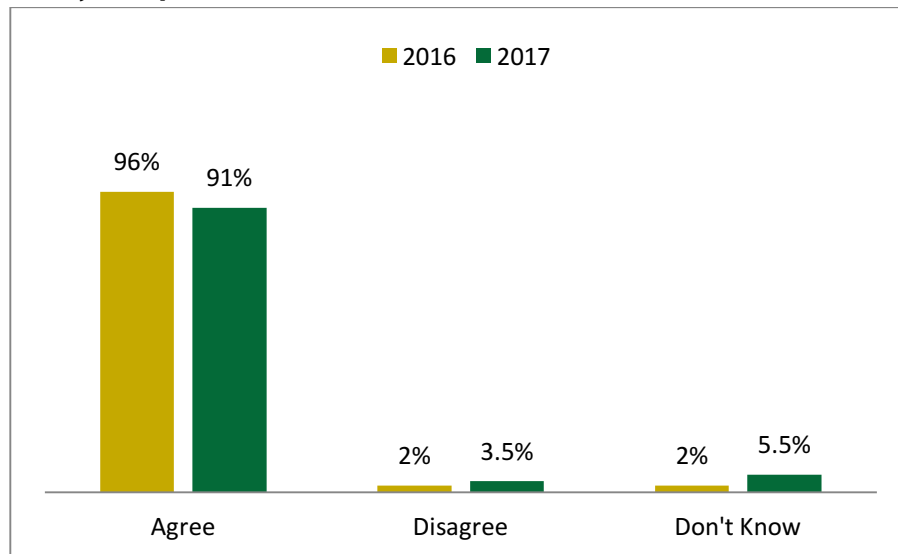
Disagree or strongly disagree: 3.5%

Do not know: 5.5%

### Notable

- This question was first asked in 2016.
- Males agreed 3% more than females.
- Individuals in the age range 18-34 and 55+ agreed more than individuals in the age range of 35-54 (18-34, 94.2%; 35-54, 88.8%; 55+, 90.4%).
- People living in the North region answered “don’t know” significantly more than the other regions (North 10.9%; Saskatoon 5.7%; South 4.5%; Regina 1.9%).
- The Regina region agreed the most with this statement.
- As the level of education increased among respondents, the rate of agreement did as well.

### Yearly Comparison



## 2. I believe all food in the grocery store is safe.

### Results

Agree or strongly agree: 43%

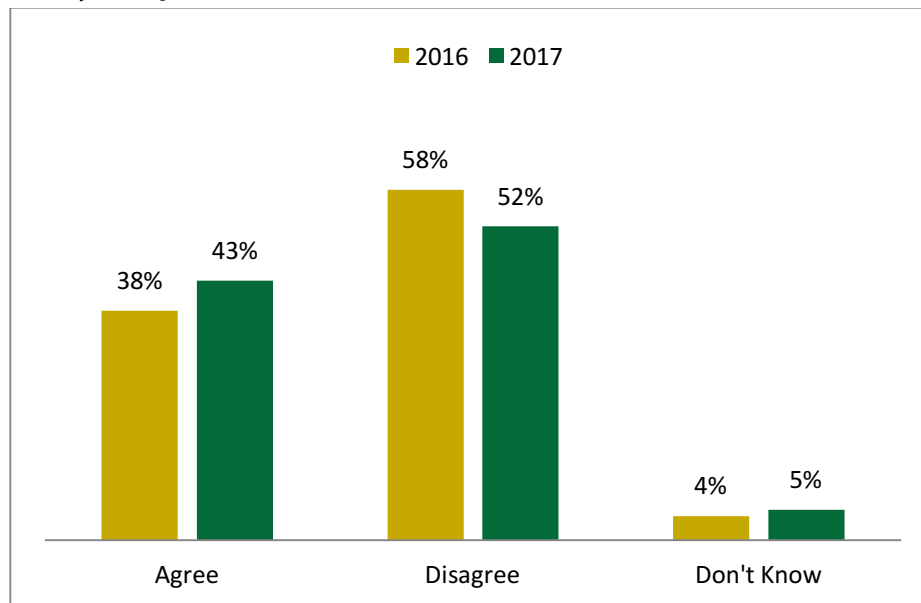
Disagree or strongly disagree: 52%

Do not know: 5%

### Notable

- This question was first asked in 2016.
- Females disagree more with this statement than males by 12%.
- Ages 18-34 agree more with this statement than those from ages 35-55+ (18-34, 49%; 35-54, 39.9%; and 55+, 41.6%).
- Individuals inhabiting the North region disagree more than those in the other regions (North, 57.7%; Saskatoon, 51.7%; South, 51.6%; and Regina, 47.4%).
- The rate of agreement goes up with the level of education.
- Children, aboriginal ancestry, income level do not influence rate of agreement/disagreement.

### Yearly Comparisons



### 3. There is a wide choice of career options within the field of agriculture and food.

#### Results

Agree or strongly agree: 63%

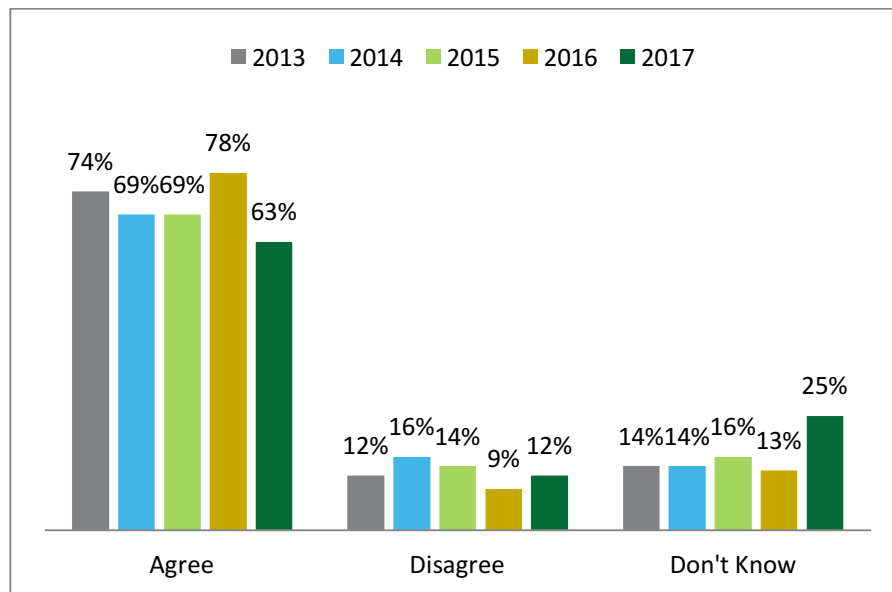
Disagree or strongly disagree: 12%

Do not know: 25%

#### Notable

- Males agreed with the statement 7.2% more than females.
- The Regina region disagreed more with this statement than the North, South or Saskatoon region (Regina 14.1%; South 12.8%; North 11.5%; Saskatoon 9.7%).
- Individuals with no indigenous ancestry agreed with this statement 8.9% more than those with indigenous ancestry.
- Higher income respondents disagreed more than others (16.3%; 14.6%).

#### Yearly Comparison



## 4. I believe Saskatchewan livestock are treated humanely.

### Results

Agree or strongly agree: 74%

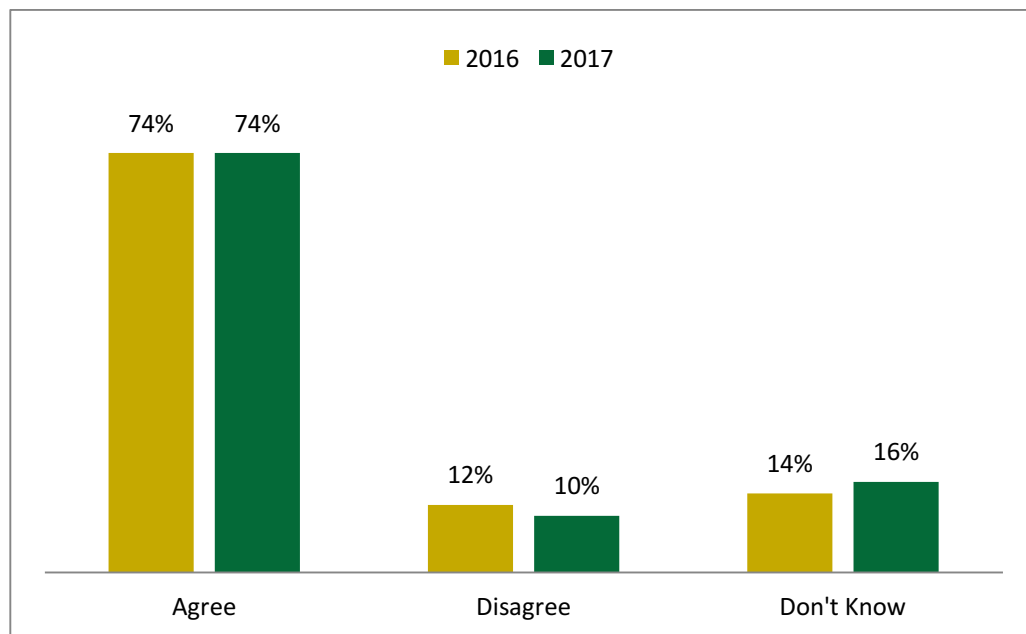
Disagree or strongly disagree: 10%

Do not know: 16%

### Notable

- This question was first asked in 2016.
- Women answered “don’t know” 8.2% more than males.
- North and Saskatoon regions answered “don’t know” more than the Regina and the South regions.
- Respondents with no indigenous ancestry agreed with the statement 16% more than those with indigenous ancestry.
- As education level and income level increase, the rate of agreement rises as well.

### Yearly Comparison



## 5. I trust food made from genetically modified technologies.

### Results

Agree or strongly agree: 48%

Disagree or strongly disagree: 39%

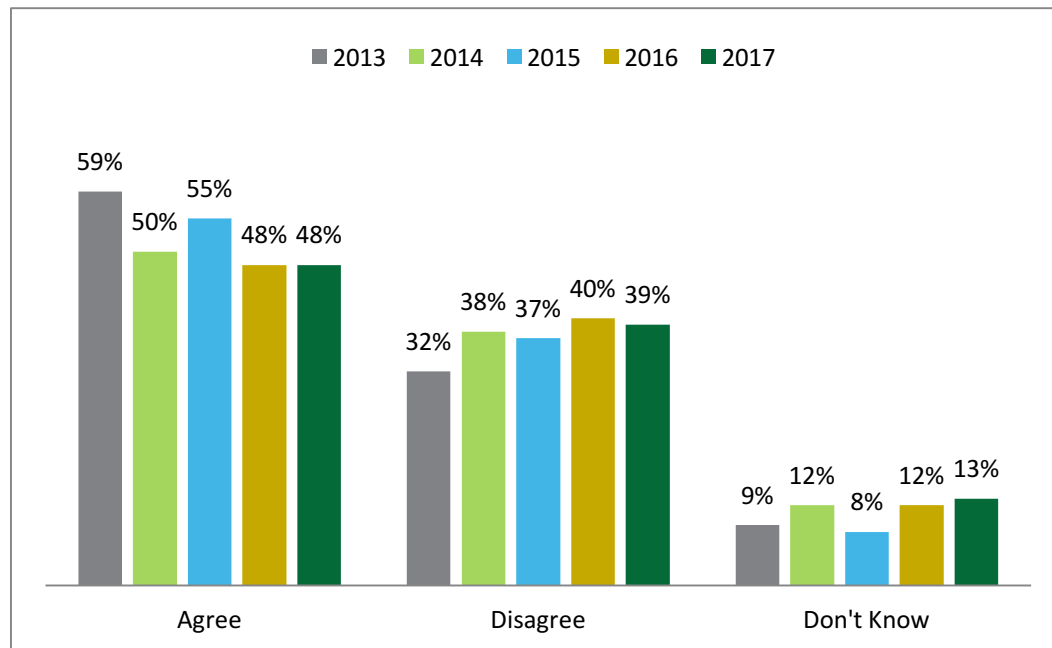
Do not know: 13%

### Notable

- Males agreed more with this statement (males 57.6%, females 39.2%).
- Younger respondents were more likely to agree with this statement (18-34=58%, 55+=45%).
- Respondents with one or more children agreed with the statement 5% more than those without children.
- The rate of agreement increases as the education level rises.

### Yearly comparison

The statement used for 2013-2015 was “advancements in agriculture, including genetically modified crops, are necessary in order to feed the growing world population.” The statement used in 2016 and this year was “I trust food made from genetically modified technologies.”



## 6. Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers take care of the environment.

### Results

Agree or strongly agree: 61%

Disagree or strongly disagree: 20%

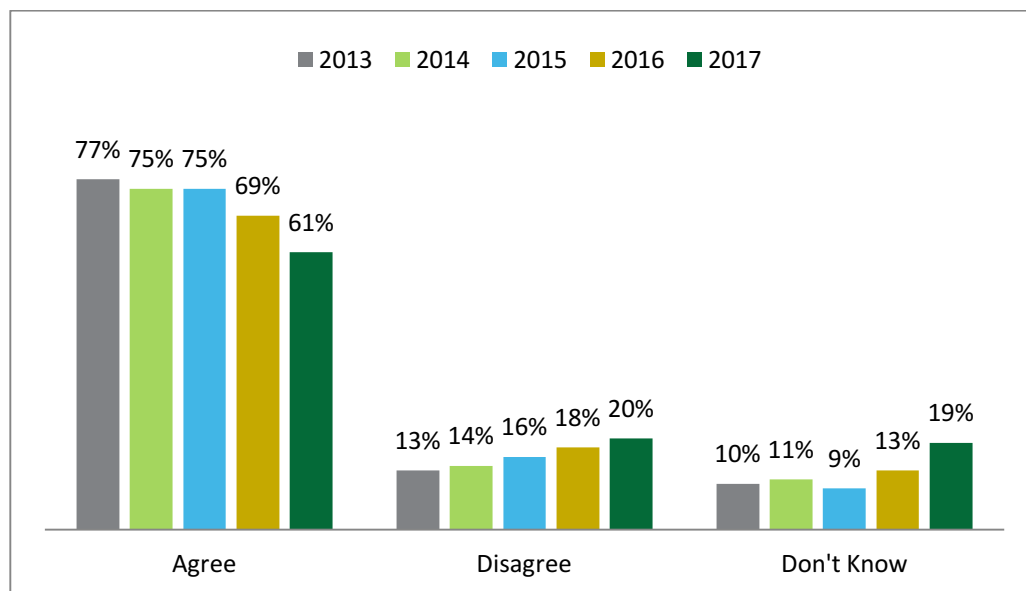
Do not know: 19%

### Notable

- Female respondents were more inclined to respond “don’t know” (female 23.4%; male 13.4%).
- Respondents aged 34-54 agreed less than those aged 18-34 and 55+ (18-34, 63.9%; 34-54, 56.5%; 55+, 63.3%).
- The Saskatoon region responded “don’t know” more often than the other regions (Saskatoon 27%, Regina 20%, North 18.6% and South 12.8%).
- Respondents with no indigenous ancestry agreed more than those with indigenous ancestry (63.1%; 45.8%).
- Education level, income level and number of children had little statistical impact.

### Yearly Comparison

The statement used from 2013-2015 was “Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers are good stewards of the land, sustaining the environment for future generations.” The statement used in 2016 and this survey was “Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers take care of the environment.”





## 7. The majority of Saskatchewan farms and ranches are family businesses.

### Results

Agree or strongly agree: 66%

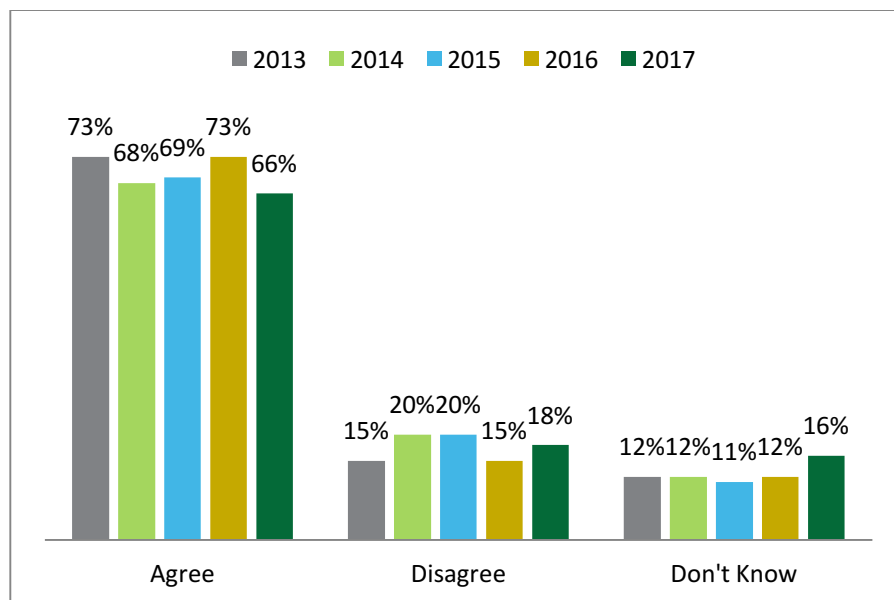
Disagree or strongly disagree: 18%

Do not know: 16%

### Notable

- Males disagreed more than females by 6%.
- Younger respondents agreed more than the older age range (18-34, 71%; 35-54, 67%; and 55+, 61%).
- Respondents in the South region agreed more than the other regions (South 78%; North 69%; Regina 55%; and Saskatoon 52%).
- Respondents with children agreed more by 9%.
- Less educated respondents agreed more than those with higher education level (high school 75%, post-secondary 60%).
- Respondents with income less than \$30,000 responded that they “don’t know” more than any other income level (24%).

### Yearly Comparison



## 8. I have a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture.

### Results

Agree or strongly agree: 86%

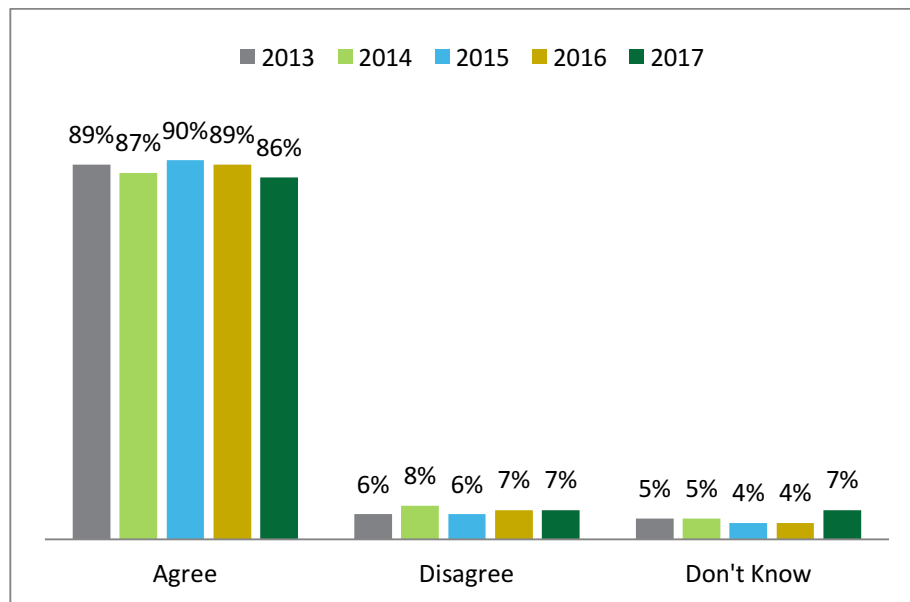
Disagree or strongly disagree: 7%

Do not know: 7%

### Notable

- Females were more likely to respond “don’t know” than males (females 10.2%, males 4.1%).
- Respondents over the age of 55 agreed more than the other age ranges (89%).
- Respondents with no children agreed more than respondents with one or more child (87% versus 82%).
- Respondents with no indigenous ancestry agreed more than those with indigenous ancestry (88% compared to 73%).
- The rate of agreement increased with household income
- Individuals who had completed a university degree/technical or college diploma agreed more than those who had not.

### Yearly Comparison



## 9. I know where to find credible information about agriculture and food.

### Results

Agree or strongly agree: 60%

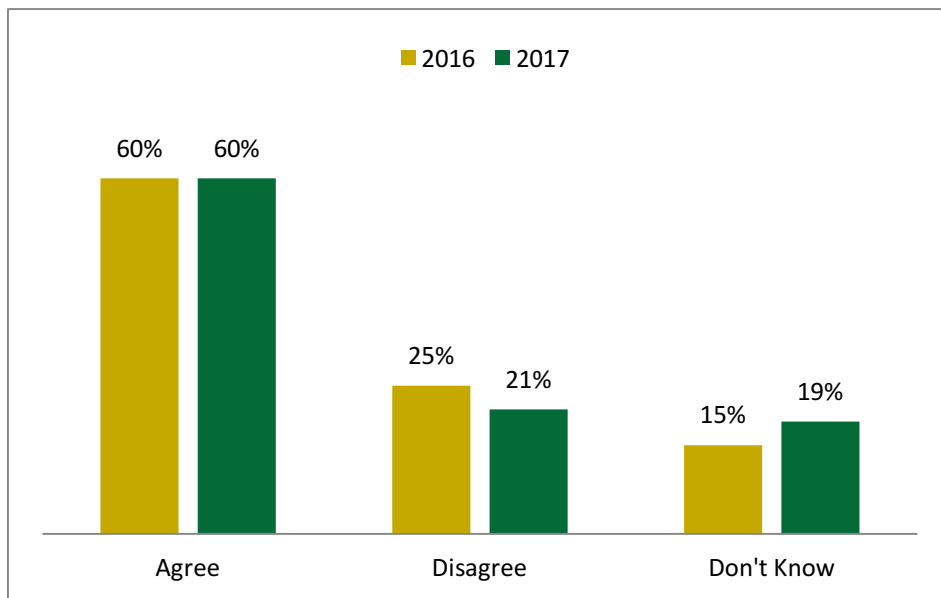
Disagree or strongly disagree: 21%

Do not know: 19%

### Notable

- This question was first asked in 2016.
- Male respondents agreed more by 7%.
- Respondents aged 55+ agreed more than those under the age of 55 (64%).
- South region respondents agreed more than Saskatoon, Regina or North region respondents (South 65%; Saskatoon, 62%; North 53%; Regina, 51%).
- Those respondents with no indigenous ancestry agreed more than those with indigenous ancestry (61% versus 51%).
- As education levels increased, the agreement level increased.

### Yearly Comparison



## 10. It is important that Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers have the freedom to use modern technology.

### Results

Agree or strongly agree: 91%

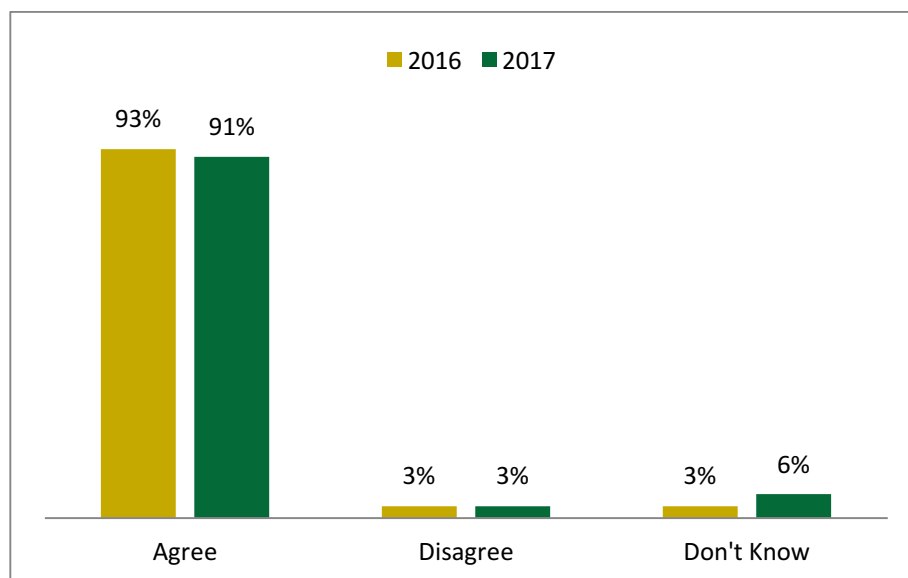
Disagree or strongly disagree: 3%

Do not know: 6%

### Notable

- This question was first asked in 2016.
- Males agreed more than females (94% vs 88%).
- Respondents with no indigenous ancestry agreed 12% more than those with indigenous ancestry.
- Respondents with less than \$30,000 household income disagreed more than other levels of income (4.2%).

### Yearly Comparison



## 11. I trust Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers to make the right choices.

### Results

Agree or strongly agree: 78%

Disagree or strongly disagree: 14%

Do not know: 8%

### Notable

- This question was first asked in 2016.
- Respondents in the rural regions agreed more than those in the urban regions.
- Respondents with one or more child agreed more than those without children (81% vs 77%).
- Respondents with no indigenous ancestry agreed 14% more than those with indigenous ancestry.
- Gender, age, education, and income had no statistically significant impact.

### Yearly Comparison

