

# Ministry of Agriculture Public Trust Survey

Insightrix Research, Omnibus Survey, May 2020

# Executive Summary

The Ministry of Agriculture has participated in omnibus polling since 2013 to achieve a number of objectives: (1) to gain insight into public perceptions of the agriculture and agri-food industry, (2) assess the impact of efforts to build public trust, and (3) to establish benchmarks for future initiatives.

The 2020 Public Trust Survey, conducted by Inshtrix Research in May, asked 805 Saskatchewan residents for their perspectives on 10 statements, including two that were new for this year. The results continue to show that there is an overall positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture. 91 per cent of 805 respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” to the statement “I have a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture.” Also, 88 per cent of respondents trust Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers.

The positive responses to other questions such as the humane treatment of animals and environmental stewardship in Saskatchewan have remained high for the past several years. 66 per cent of respondents answered positively when asked whether government’s regulations for agriculture protect the interests of the public. When asked if the agriculture sector’s communication is transparent, 54 per cent answered affirmatively. These responses illustrate that increased communication around current regulations is important, as is the sector’s ability to transparently communicate its practices.

The new statements provided interesting insight into the importance of credible information and innovation. Sixty-nine per cent of respondents agreed they have access to credible information about agriculture and food. Further analysis revealed that access to credible information about agriculture is an important driver of other responses. When analyzed against the rest of the survey, agreeing that one had access to credible information about agriculture made a person more likely to agree with the other questions. This illustrates that access to credible information is crucial to gaining the public’s support for agriculture and food production. The second new question shows that 79 per cent of respondents agree that innovation in agriculture ensures food affordability, highlighting that there is an understanding of the importance of continued innovation in the sector.

The demographic analysis provides additional insight into the survey results. For example, women were more likely to respond that they are unsure. Respondents from southern Saskatchewan had a tendency to agree to a majority of the questions. On the other hand, respondents with a university degree are more likely to disagree. These insights into the demographical considerations can help ensure the ministry and industry partners are better able to reach people who are interested in learning more about modern agriculture in Saskatchewan.

The overall higher values in the “don’t know” category relative to the “disagree/strongly disagree” category demonstrate that there is an opportunity to further connect with consumers who are interested in learning more about how their food is produced.

A comparison of the results derived from this study to similar polling conducted by the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity (CCFI), reveals that Saskatchewan residents are more accepting of a number of agricultural practices when compared to the broader Canadian population. Statements focused on the overall perception of the industry, humane treatment of livestock, environmental stewardship, and trust in producers/ranchers, among others, were more favourable among Saskatchewan residents when compared nationally.

The results of the 2020 Public Trust Survey will help inform the agriculture sector in regards to work on policies, programs and initiatives, with the goal of building society’s trust in modern food production.

See APPENDIX for a summary of all of the results.

# Results

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

### 2020 Results

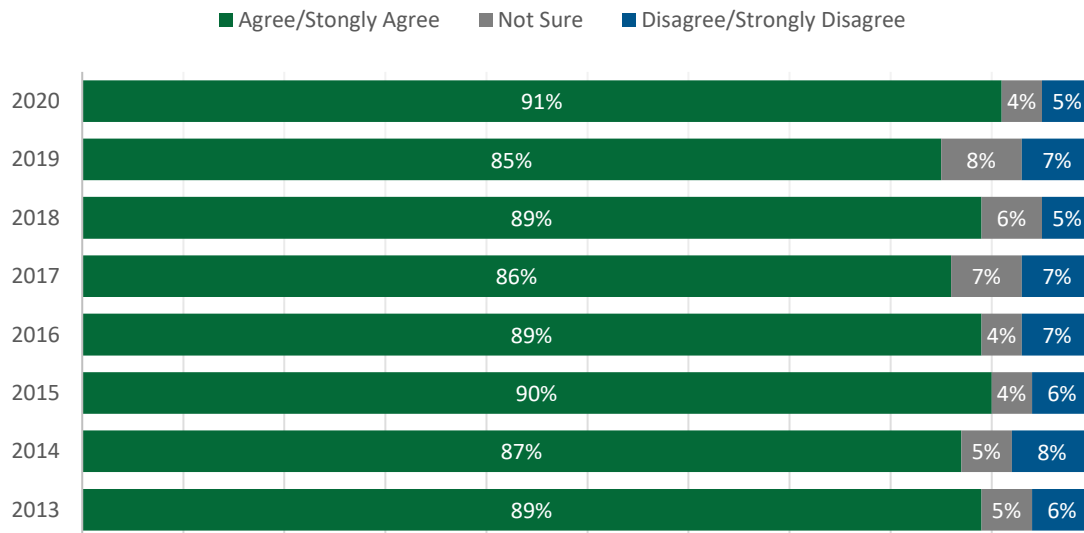
Agree/Strongly Agree	91%
Not Sure	4%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	5%

### Notable

- The rate of agreement increased with level of education:

High School	College	University
86%	91%	93%

### Yearly Comparison



## 2. Saskatchewan livestock are treated humanely.

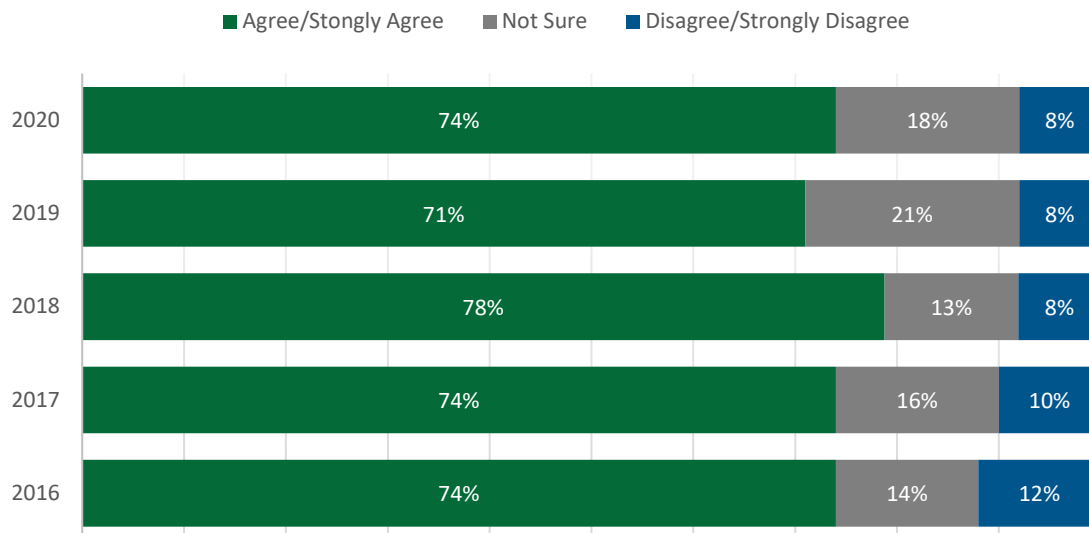
### 2020 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	74%
Not Sure	18%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	8%

### Notable

- The statement used in 2016-2018 was “I believe livestock in Saskatchewan are treated humanely.”
- Respondents from the 18-34 age group (13 per cent) are more likely to disagree compared to the other age groups.
- Respondents from the south region of the province are more likely to agree compared to the respondents from other regions.
- Respondents with an income level of \$120,000 or more were more likely to agree.

### Yearly comparison



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

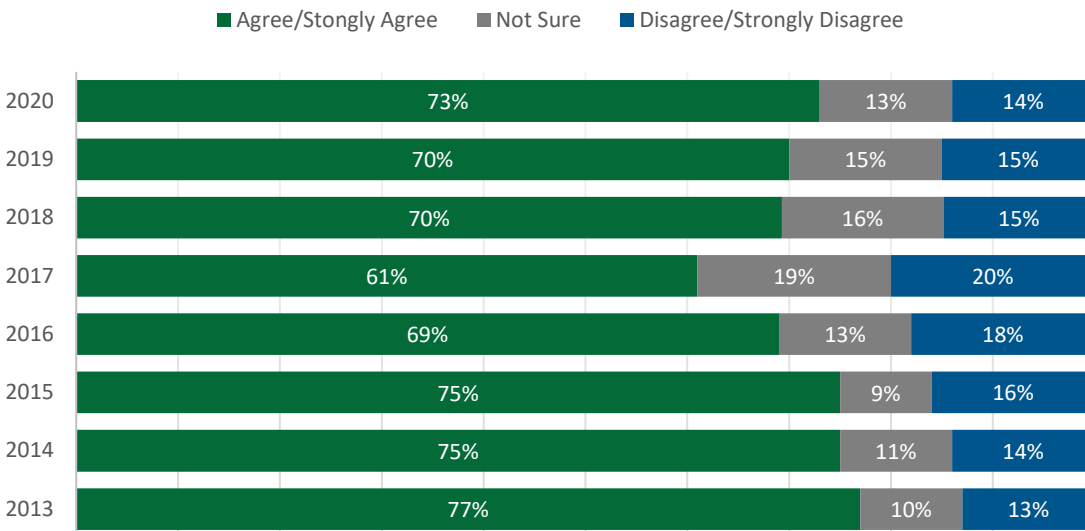
#### 2020 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	73%
Not Sure	13%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	14%

#### Notable

- The statement used in 2013-2015 was “Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers are good stewards of the land, sustaining the environment for future generations.”
- Men (18 per cent) disagree more than women (11 per cent).
- Respondents from the south region (78 per cent) are more likely to agree compared to the respondents from other regions: north region (73 per cent), Regina (65 per cent), and Saskatoon (72 per cent).
- The respondents with university education are more likely to disagree.

#### Yearly Comparison



#### 4. Government’s regulations for the agriculture industry protect the interests of the public.

##### 2020 Results

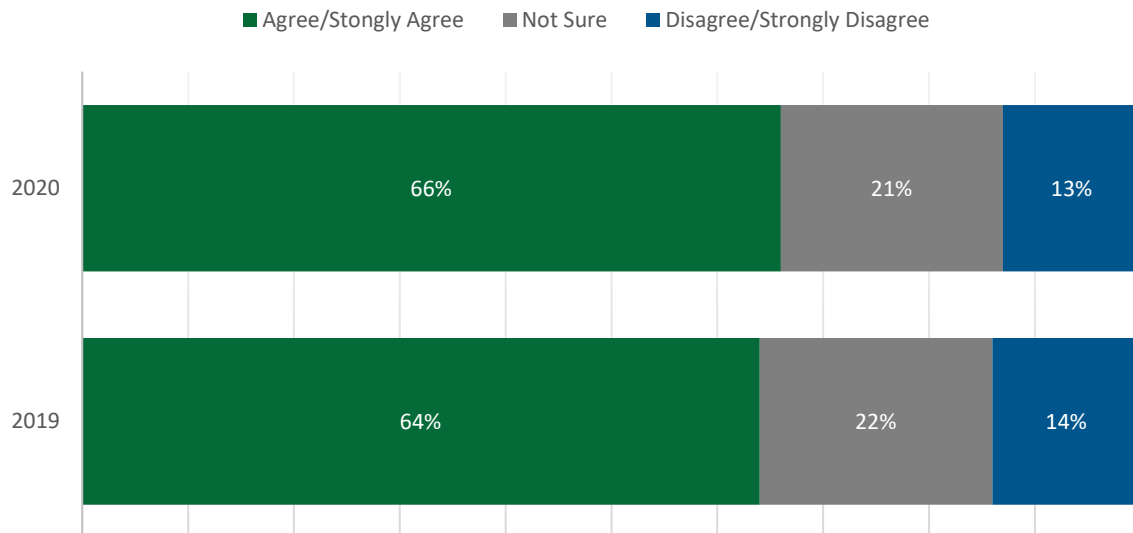
Agree/Strongly Agree	66%
Not Sure	21%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	13%

##### Notable

- The question was first asked in 2019 as “Government’s agriculture regulations protect the interests of the public.”
- A significant portion of respondents (21 per cent) were *not sure* that government’s regulations for the agriculture industry protect the interests of the public.
- Men are more likely to disagree compared to women.
- The respondents of the 18-34 age group are more likely to be unsure, whereas respondents in the 55+ age category are more likely to agree. The rate of agreement increased with age:

18-34	35-54	55+
57%	65%	75%

##### Yearly comparison



## 5. Farmers and ranchers follow government and industry rules and regulations.

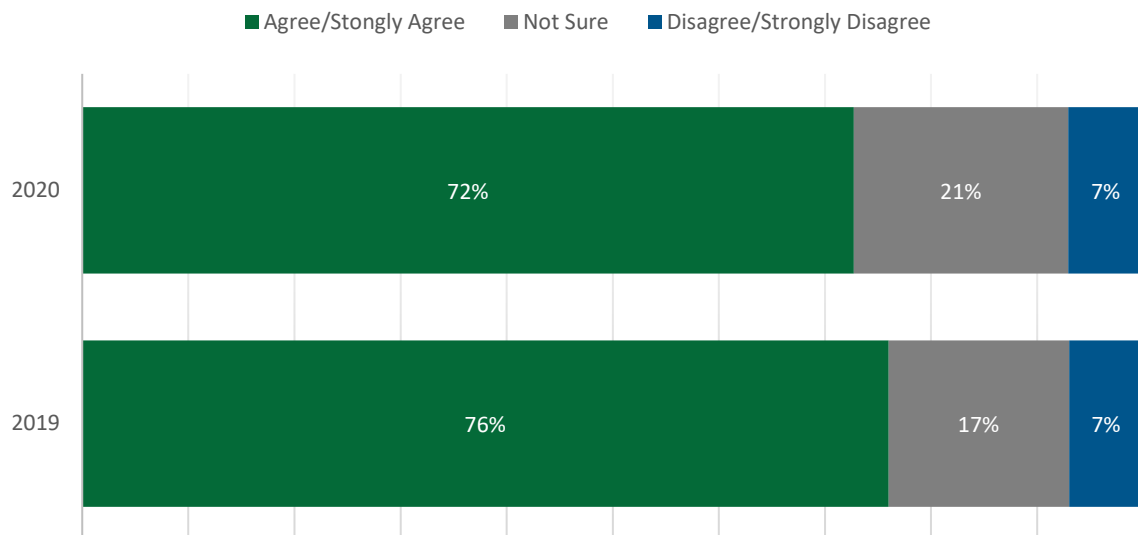
### 2020 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	72%
Not Sure	21%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	7%

### Notable

- The question was first asked in 2019.
- Men (11 per cent) are more likely to disagree compared to women (4 per cent)
- The 18-34 age group (26 per cent) are more likely to be unsure, whereas 55+ are more likely to agree (76 per cent).
- The respondents from the south region of the province are more likely to agree and respondents from the north region are more likely to be unsure.

### Yearly comparison





## 6. I support the growth of intensive livestock development in my community.

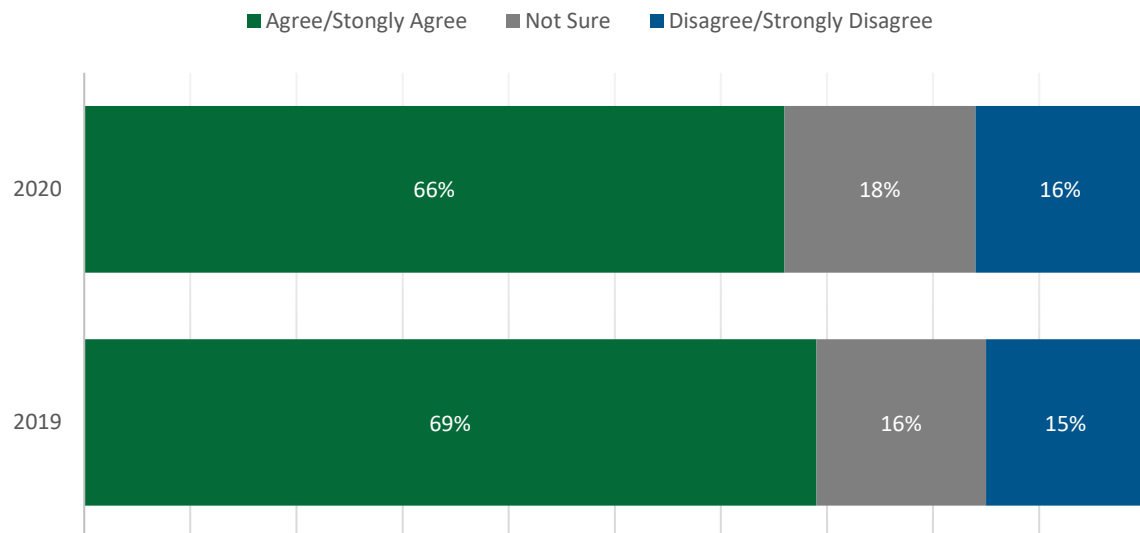
### 2020 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	66%
Not Sure	18%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	16%

### Notable

- This question was first asked in 2019.
- Men (70 per cent) agree more than women (63 per cent) and women are more likely to be unsure.
- Respondents who have completed university are more likely to disagree, while those who have completed a technical certificate or college diploma are more likely to agree.
- Respondents that are 55+ are more likely to disagree

### Yearly comparison



## 7. The agriculture sector transparently communicates about their practices.

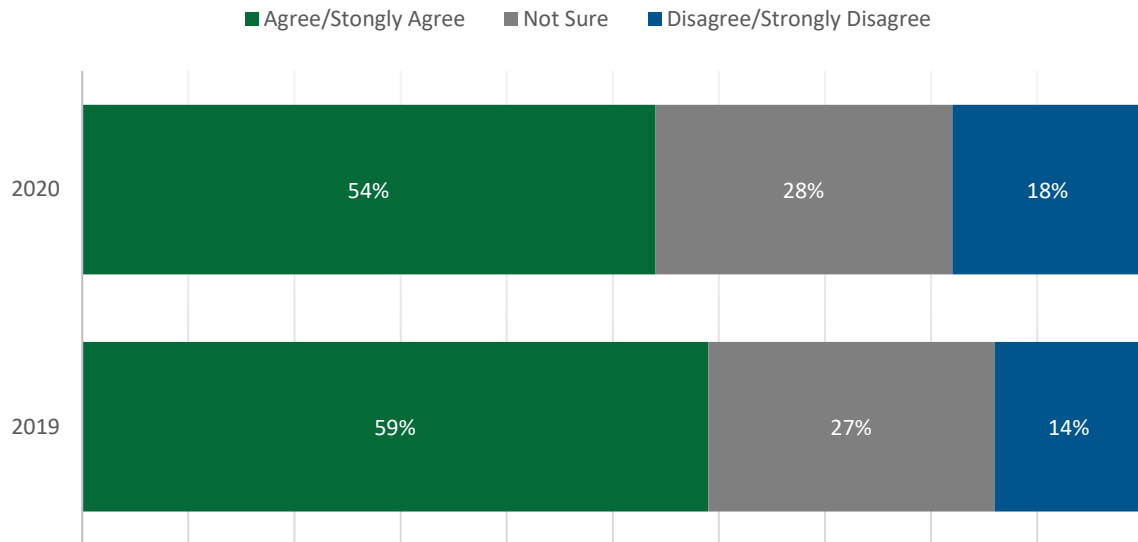
### 2020 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	54%
Not Sure	28%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	18%

### Notable

- This question was first asked in 2019.
- Twenty-eight per cent of respondents were not sure if the agriculture sector transparently communicates about their practices
- Women respondents (32 per cent) are more likely to be unsure and men are more likely to agree (23 per cent).
- Respondents from the north region of the province are more likely to be unsure and respondents from Regina are more likely to disagree. Those from the south region are more likely to agree with the statement.
- The respondents that completed university education are more likely to disagree compared to the respondents that completed technical education.

### Yearly comparison



## 8. I trust Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers.

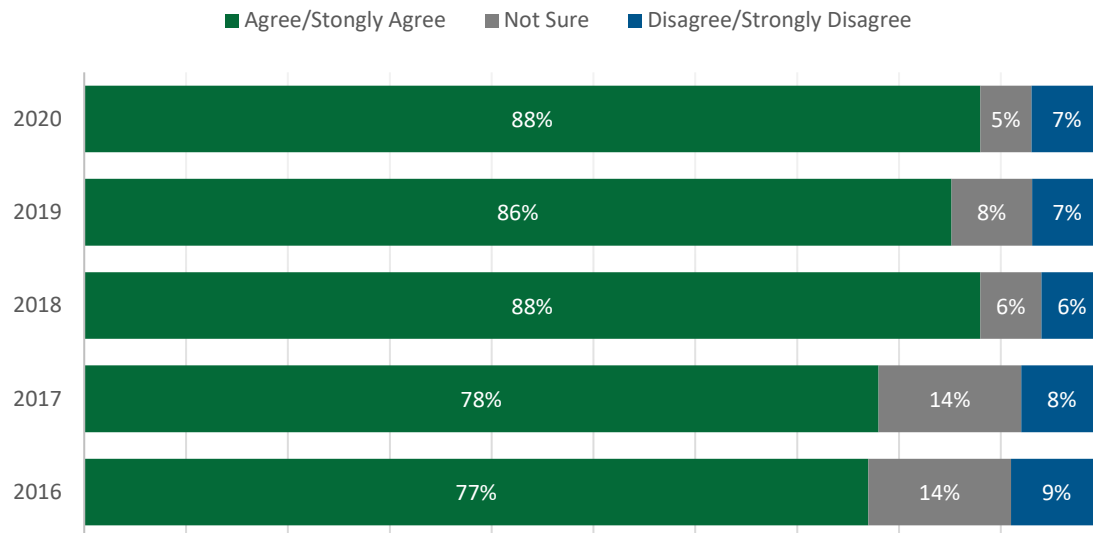
### 2020 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	88%
Not Sure	5%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	7%

### Notable

- The statement used in 2016 and 2017 was “I trust Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers to make the right choices.”
- The respondents who completed university education are more likely to disagree.

### Yearly comparison



## 9. I have access to credible information about agriculture and food.

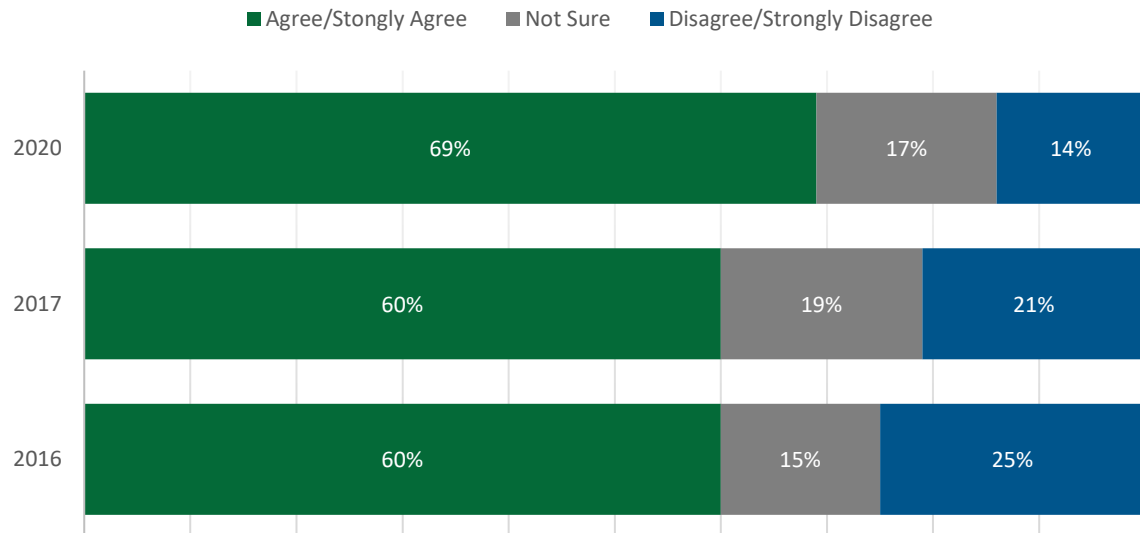
### 2020 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	69%
Not Sure	17%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	14%

### Notable

- The statement used in 2016 and 2017 was “I know where to find credible information about agriculture and food.”
- Women are more likely to be unsure (20 per cent) and men are more likely to agree (72 per cent).
- The respondents from the 18-34 age group are more likely to be unsure.
- The respondents from the south region are more likely to agree with this question while the respondents from Regina and Saskatoon regions are more likely to disagree.

### Yearly comparison



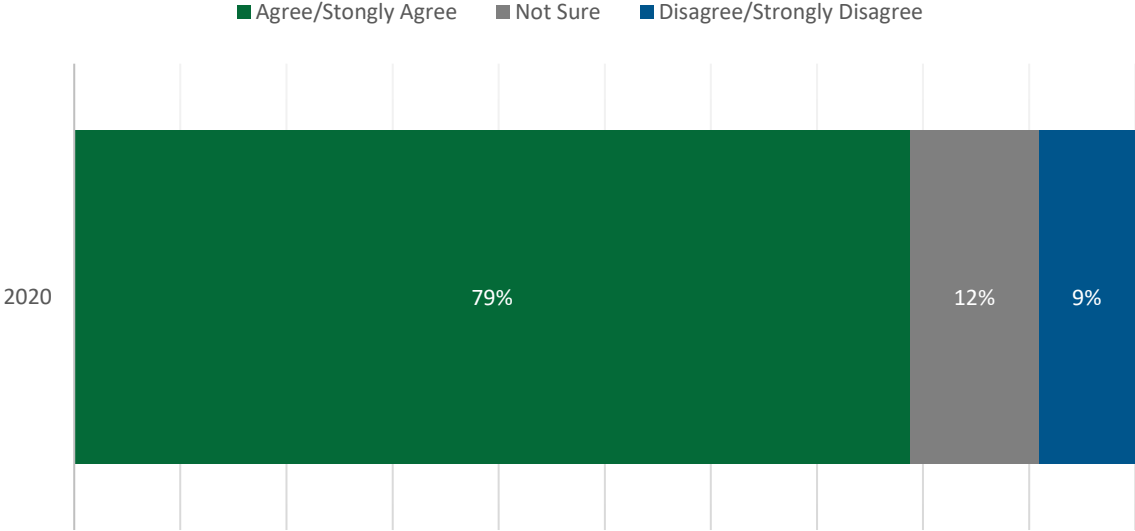
# 10. Innovation in agriculture ensures food affordability.

## 2020 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	79%
Not Sure	12%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	9%

## Notable

- This is the first year this question was asked.



## APPENDIX. 2020 Public Trust Omnibus Results at a Glance

QUESTIONS/INDICATORS	Agree/Strongly Agree	Not Sure	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
1. I have a positive a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture.	91%	4%	5%
2. Livestock in Saskatchewan are treated humanely.	74%	18%	8%
3. Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers take care of the environment.	73%	13%	14%
4. Government's regulations for the agriculture industry protect the interests of the public.	66%	21%	13%
5. Farmers and ranchers follow government and industry rules and regulations.	72%	21%	7%
6. I support the growth of intensive livestock development in my community.	66%	18%	16%
7. The agriculture sector transparently communicates about their practices.	54%	28%	18%
8. I trust Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers.	88%	5%	7%
9. I have access to credible information about agriculture and food.	69%	17%	14%
10. Innovation in agriculture ensures food affordability.	79%	12%	9%