

Ministry of Agriculture Public Trust Survey 2022

Insightrix Research, Omnibus Survey, May 2022

Executive Summary

The Ministry of Agriculture has participated in omnibus polling since 2013 to gain insight into the public's perception of the agriculture and agri-food industry, to assess the impact of efforts to build public trust and to establish benchmarks for the future initiatives.

The 2022 Public Trust Survey, conducted by Inshgtrix Research in May, asked 802 Saskatchewan residents for their perspectives on 16 questions to gauge how Saskatchewan residents' perception of agriculture has changed over the last ten years (Appendix A).

The 2022 survey results showed that Saskatchewan residents continue to have an optimistic outlook of agriculture. Eighty-seven per cent of Saskatchewan residents responded that they have a positive perception of agriculture. In fact, overall public perception of agriculture has continued to remain strong over the last 10 years, with an average of 88.2 per cent.

The survey results also showed strong public confidence in environmental stewardship and humane treatment of animals by industry. The results also show confidence in the safety of foods produced in Saskatchewan and in the farmers and ranchers who produce them. For the last seven years, 90 to 93 per cent of Saskatchewan residents have also found it important that Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers have freedom to use modern technologies for food production. The 2022 survey also included a new question exploring if Saskatchewan residents support the use of crop protection products. The result showed that two-thirds of the respondents support the use of crop protection products (e.g., herbicides, fungicides, insecticides).

However, Saskatchewan residents have shown lower positive perception regarding government's regulations for protecting the interests of the public, the industry transparently communicating about their agriculture practices and food produced from genetically modified organisms (GMOs). These responses illustrate that there is room for improvement. The results also suggest the importance of informing consumers about Saskatchewan's robust regulatory framework.

When asked what the agriculture industry could do to be more transparent, many respondents suggested that the industry should honestly communicate their practices. One respondent commented, "Welcome those who may disagree with their (producer) practices to give them factual information about how things are done and how animals are treated."

In 2022, Saskatchewan residents have moderate agreement on where to find credible information about agriculture and food. [The 2021 survey](#) revealed that access to credible information about agriculture continued to be a driver of public trust. When analyzed against the other public trust questions, agreeing that one had access to credible information about agriculture correlated with respondents being more likely to agree with the other questions. The survey results underscore the importance of organizations like Agriculture in the Classroom and Farm & Food Care Saskatchewan, who aim to provide accurate, science-based information on farming and food to students, teachers and the general public.

The demographic analysis shows that the rate of agreement, in general, increased with household income. The respondents from the higher income group are more likely to agree than the lower income groups to more than 50 of the questions which include: positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture, safety of food produced by Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers, food made from GMOs, the importance of Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers having the freedom to use modern technology to improve their production efficiencies and government's agriculture regulations protect the interest of the public. The results suggest that gains can be made in improving public trust among the low-income groups.

The respondents from the south and north regions, mostly rural areas, are more likely to agree or strongly agree than the Regina and Saskatoon regions to nearly 50 per cent of the questions which include: humane treatment of animals, industry's environmental stewardship, the importance of farmers having freedom to use modern technologies, farmers and ranchers follow government and industry rules and regulations and transparent communication.

As in previous years, the respondents in the 18-34 age group are more likely to be unsure, disagree or strongly disagree with several questions which are included in the survey. These results seem to suggest that the gains to increasing public trust can likely be achieved by focusing on the younger generations of the province.

The respondents with an Indigenous ancestry are more likely to disagree than the respondents from a non-Indigenous ancestry to nearly 50 per cent of the questions which include: positive perception to Saskatchewan agriculture, safety of food produced by Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers, food made from GMOs and trusting Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers. The results suggest there are gains to be made in public trust among the Indigenous population.

When compared to the national polling conducted by the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity (CCFI), Saskatchewan residents continue to show more acceptance/agreement on several agricultural practices such as: overall perception of the industry, humane treatment of animals, environmental stewardship, food safety and trust in farmers and ranchers (Appendix B).

Results

1. I have a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture.

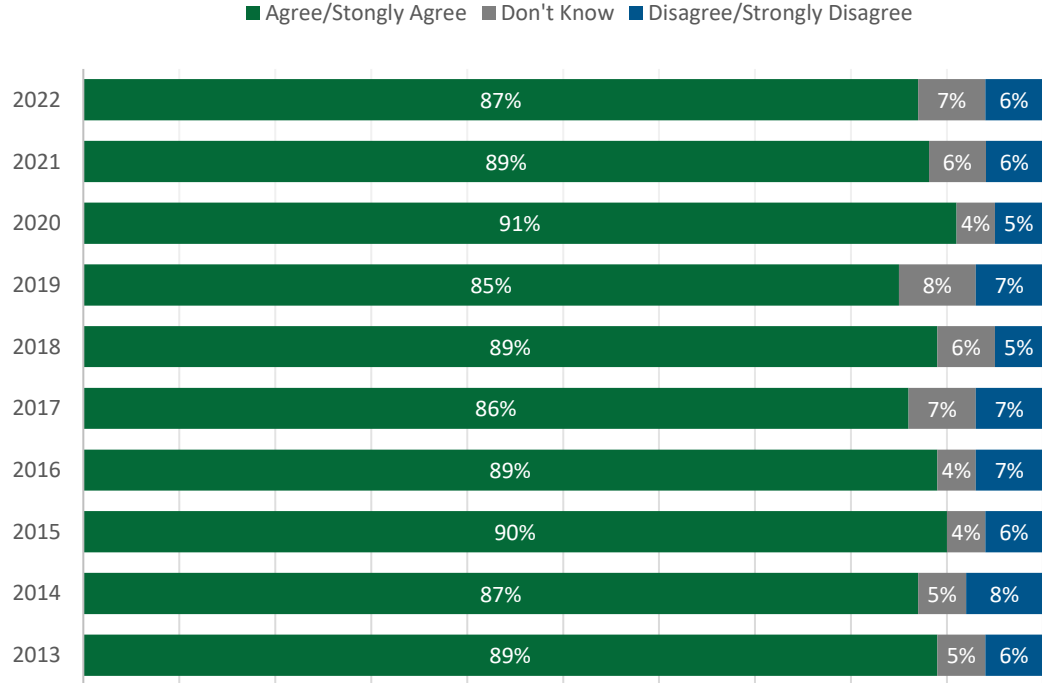
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	87%
Don't Know	7%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	6%

Notable

- The rate of agreement increased with household income.
- Respondents from the Indigenous ancestry are less likely to agree than the respondents from the non-Indigenous ancestry.

Yearly Comparison



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

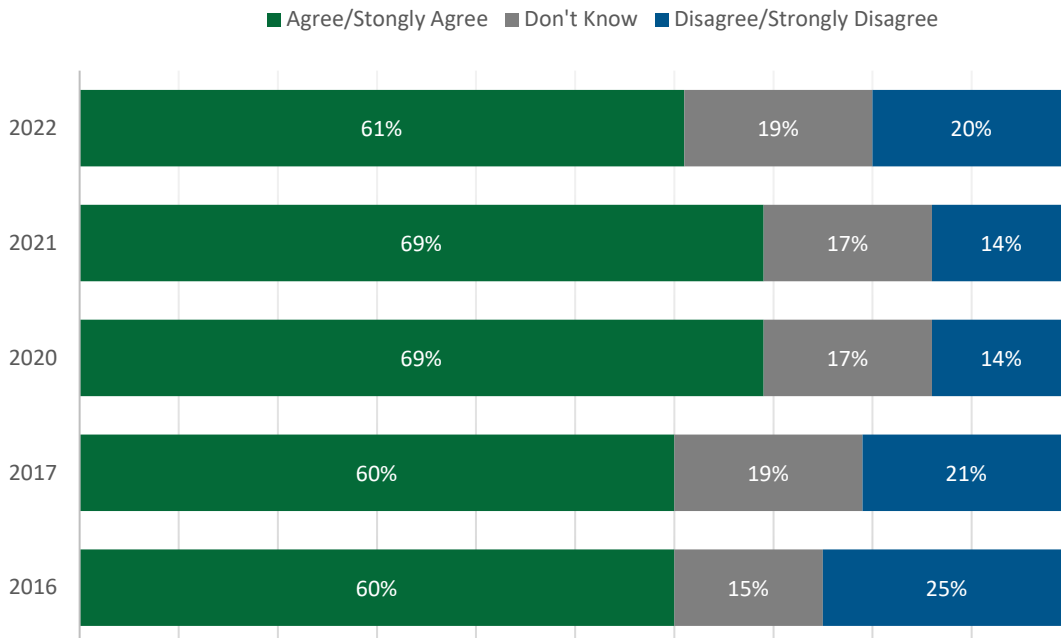
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	61%
Don't Know	19%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	20%

Notable

- The question asked in 2021 and 2022 was, "I have access to credible information about agriculture and food."

Yearly Comparison



3. I am interested in learning more about how food is produced.

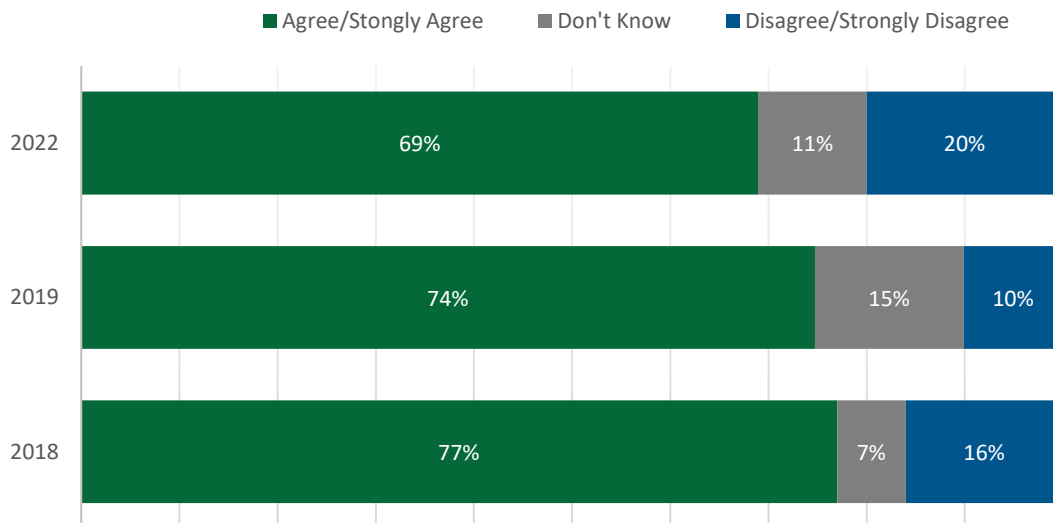
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	69%
Don't Know	11%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	20%

Notable

- The question asked in 2018 and 2019 was, "I am interested in learning more about how my food is produced."
- The rate of agreement decreased as the age group rose: 76% (18 to 34), 67% (35 to 54) and 65% (55+).

Yearly Comparison



4. Food produced by Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers is safe.

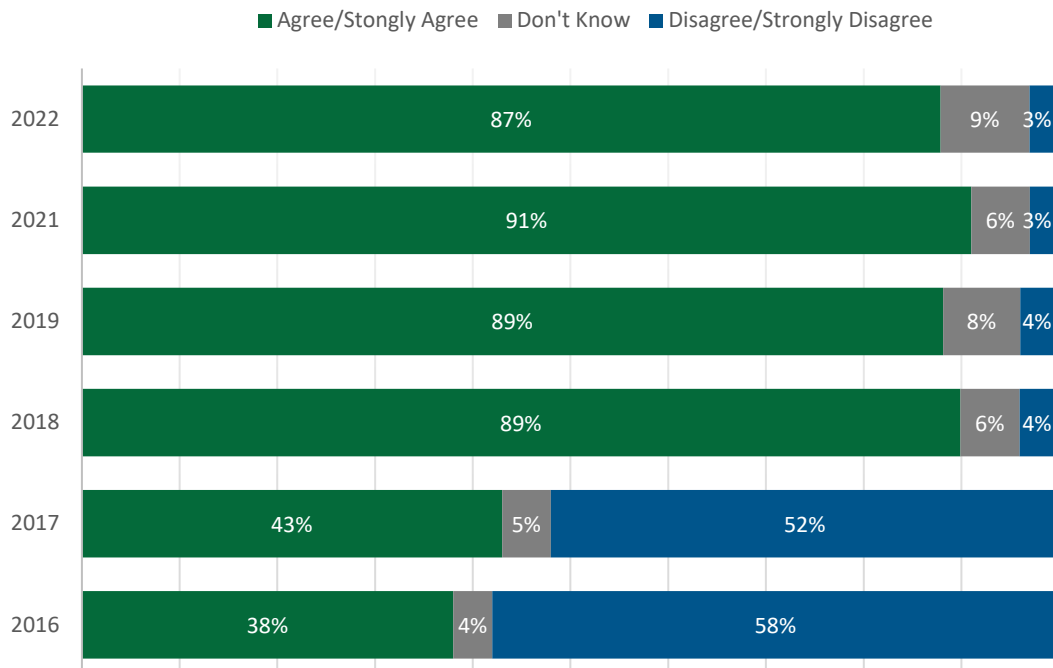
2022 Results¹

Agree/Strongly Agree	87%
Don't Know	9%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	3%

Notable

- The question asked in 2016 and 2017 was, "I believe all food in the grocery store is safe". The question asked in 2019 was "Food produced in Saskatchewan is safe".
- Respondents from the non-Indigenous ancestry are almost twice as likely to strongly agree than the respondents from the Indigenous ancestry.
- The rate of agreement increased with household income.

Yearly Comparison



¹ The results (per cents) do not total 100 due to rounding.

5. I trust food made from genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

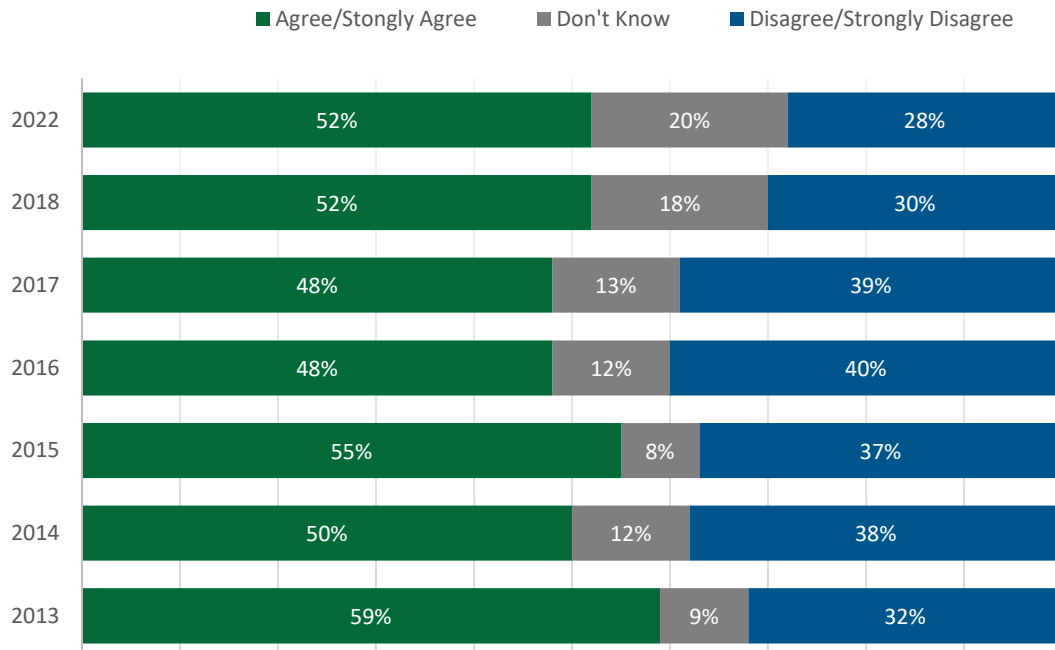
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	52%
Don't Know	20%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	28%

Notable

- The question asked in 2013-2017 was, "I trust food made from genetically modified technologies". The question asked in 2018 was, "I trust food made from genetically modified crops."
- Women are less likely to trust food made from GMOs than men.
- The youngest respondents (18-34 age group) are more likely to trust food made from GMOs than the older respondents.
- The rate of trust increased with household income.
- Respondents with higher levels of education are more likely to trust food made from GMOs.

Yearly Comparison



6. Livestock in Saskatchewan are treated humanely.

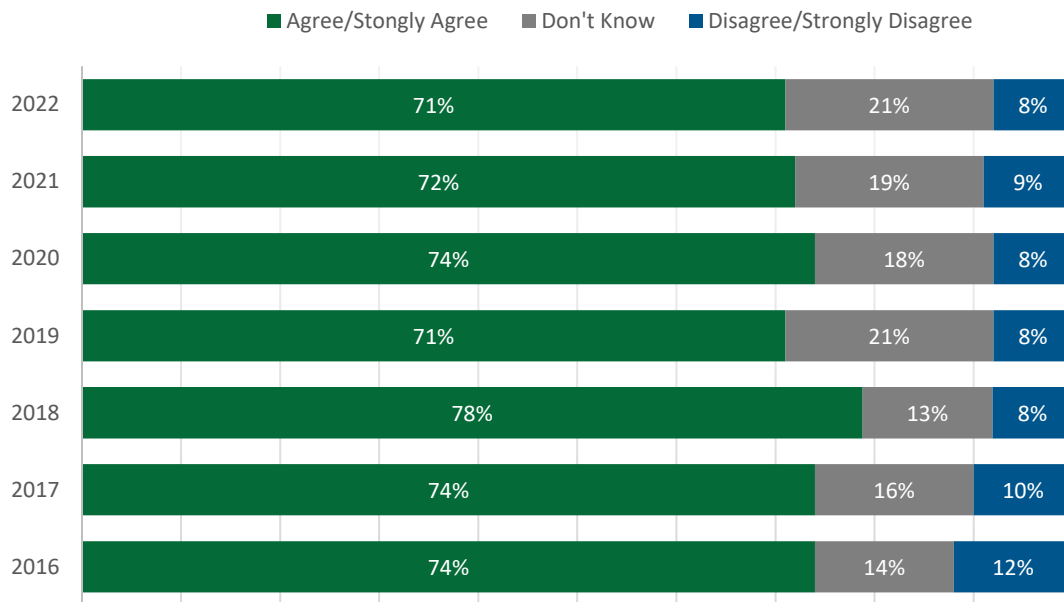
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	71%
Don't Know	21%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	8%

Notable

- Respondents from the south and north regions are more likely to agree than the respondents from the Regina and Saskatoon regions.
- Respondents in the 18-34 age group are more likely to strongly disagree, while those in the 55+ group are more likely to agree.

Yearly Comparison



7. Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers take care of the environment.

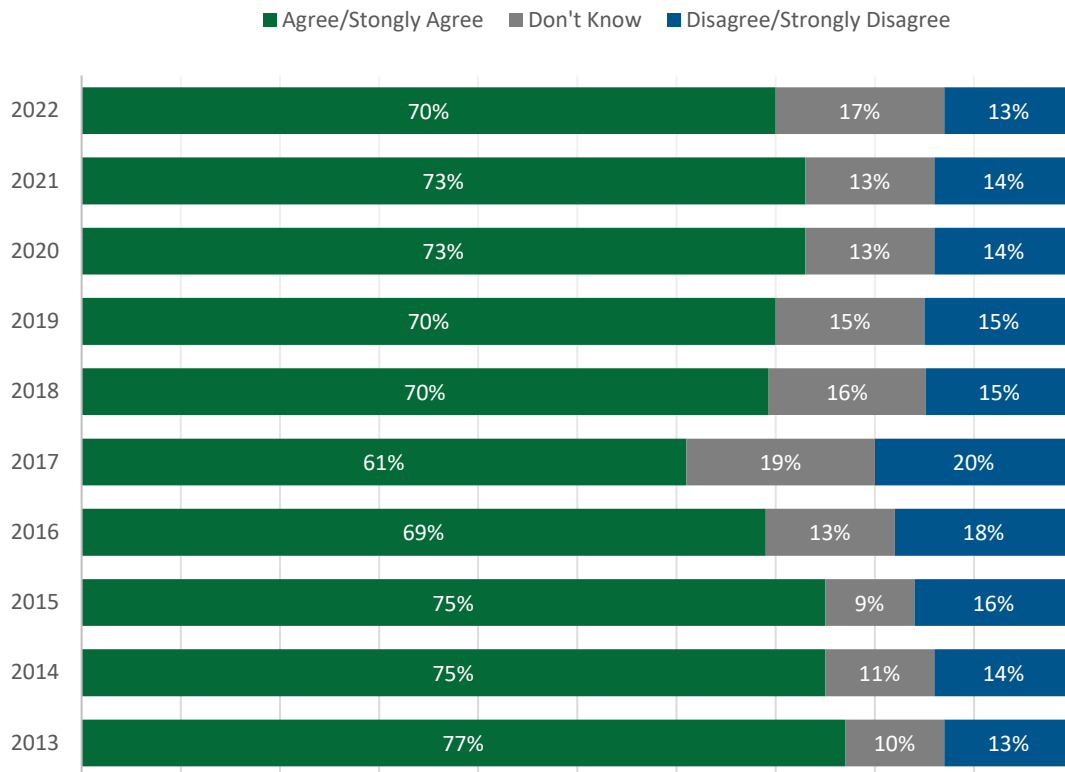
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	70%
Don't Know	17%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	13%

Notable

- Respondents from the south and north regions more likely to agree than the respondents from the Regina and Saskatoon regions.

Yearly Comparison



8. I trust Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers.

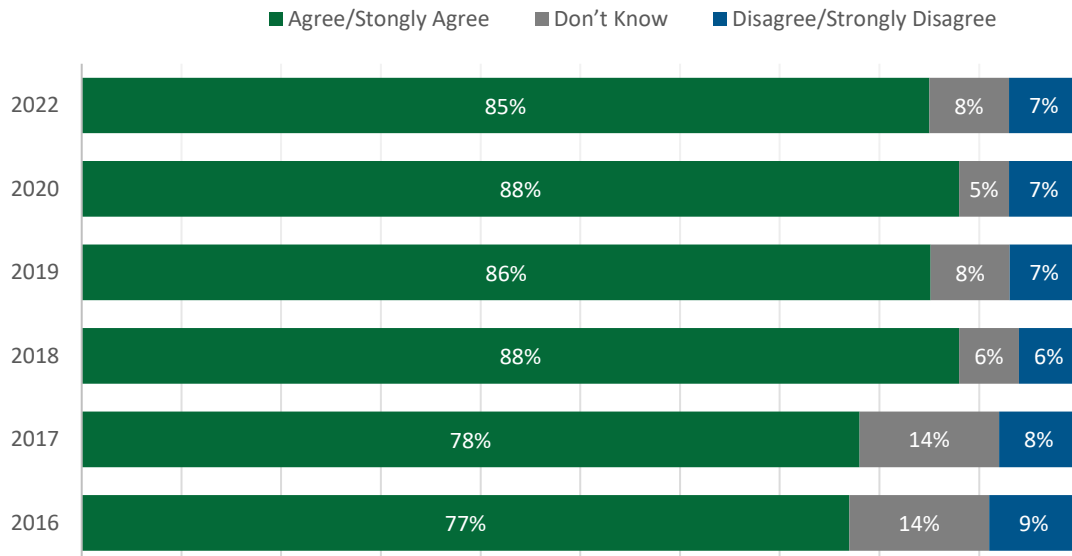
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	85%
Don't Know	8%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	7%

Notable

- Respondents from the south and north regions more likely to agree than the respondents from the Regina and Saskatoon regions.
- Respondents from the Indigenous ancestry are more likely to disagree than the respondents from the non-Indigenous ancestry.

Yearly Comparison



9. Majority of Saskatchewan farms and ranches are family business.

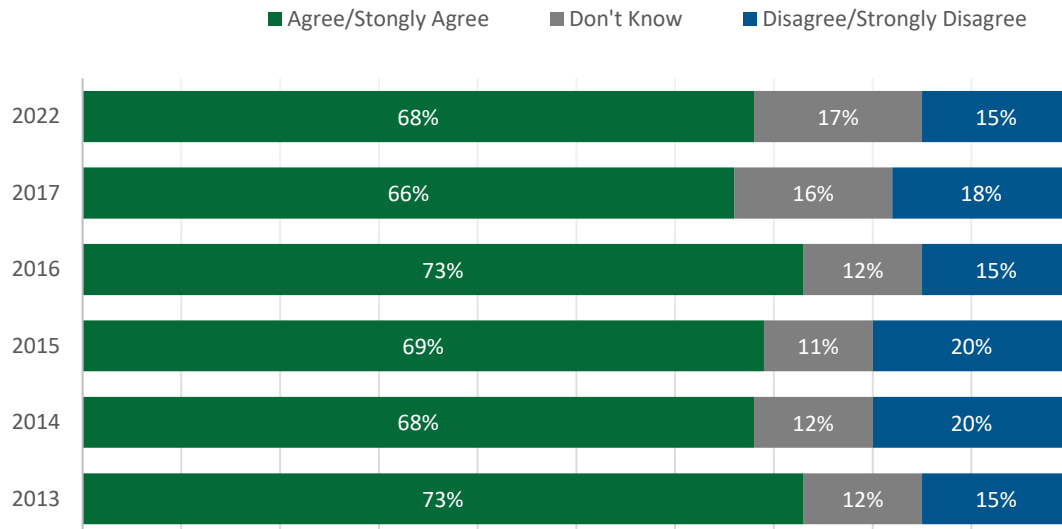
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	68%
Don't Know	17%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	15%

Notable

- Respondents from the south and north regions more likely to agree compared to the respondents from the Regina and Saskatoon regions.
- Respondents in the 35-54 age group are less likely to disagree, while individuals in the 55+ age group are more likely to disagree.
- Women are more likely to agree than men.
- Disagreement to this question increases with education level.
- The highest income group (\$120,000 or more) are most likely to disagree.

Yearly Comparison



10. It is important that Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers have the freedom to use modern technology to improve their production efficiencies.

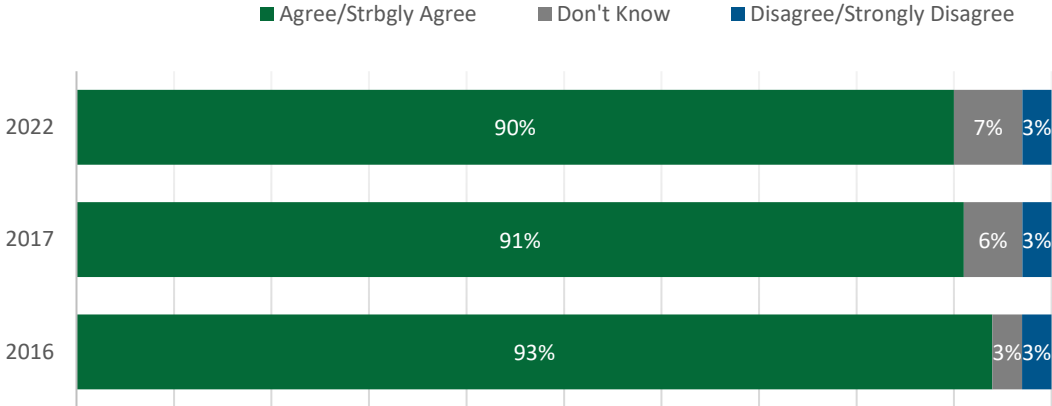
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	90%
Don't Know	7%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	3%

Notable

- The question in 2016 and 2017 was, "It is important that Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers have freedom to use modern technology".
- Respondents from the south and north regions are more likely to agree than the respondents from the Regina and Saskatoon regions.
- The rate of agreement increased with education level.
- The respondents from a non-Indigenous ancestry are more likely to agree than the respondents with an Indigenous ancestry.
- While the rate of agreement increased with household income, the lowest income group is significantly more likely to choose "Don't Know" than the other income groups.

Yearly Comparison



11. Government’s agriculture regulations protect the interest of the public.

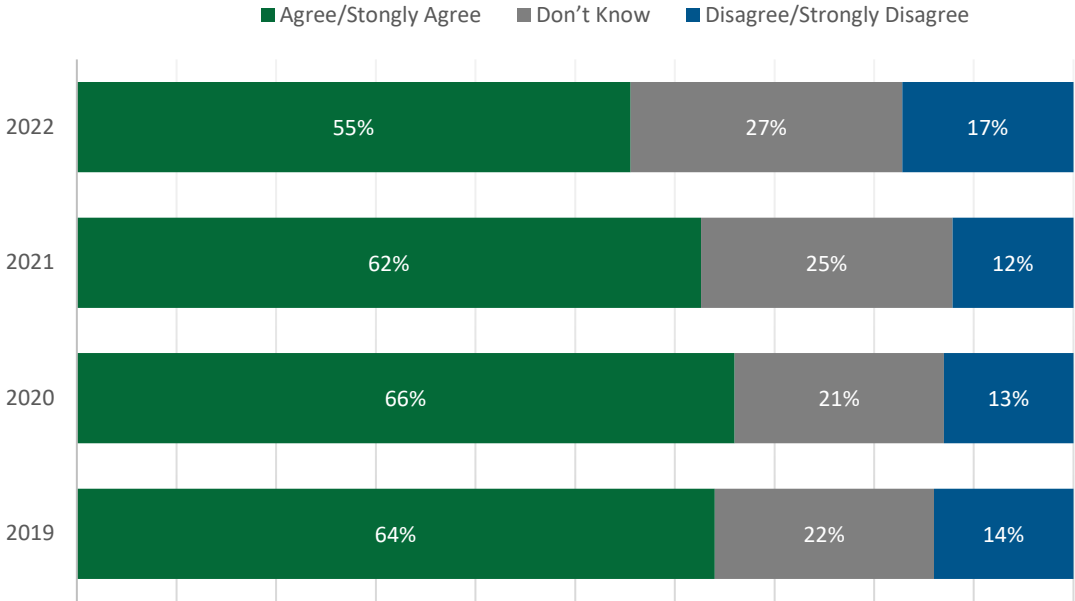
2022 Results¹

Agree/Strongly Agree	55%
Don’t Know	27%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	17%

Notable

- While nearly twice as many men are more likely to strongly agree than the women, women are also more likely to choose “Don’t Know” than men.
- While the respondents from an Indigenous ancestry more likely to strongly disagree than the respondents from a non-Indigenous ancestry, the respondents from an Indigenous ancestry are also more likely to choose “Don’t Know” than the respondents from a non-Indigenous ancestry.
- Respondents with an income of \$120,000 or more are more likely to strongly agree.

Yearly Comparison



¹ The results (per cents) do not total 100 due to rounding.

12. Farmers and ranchers follow government and industry rules and regulations.

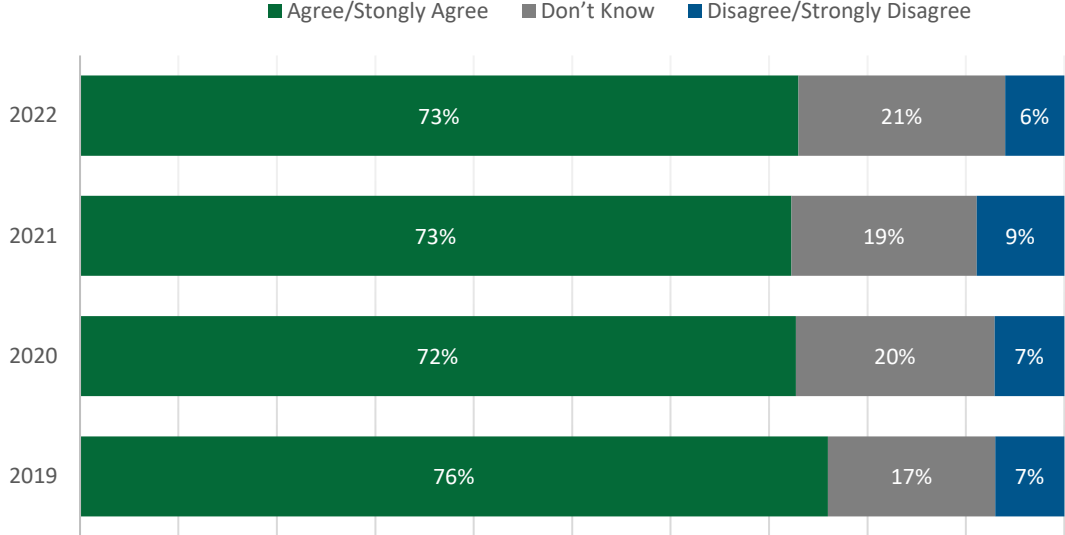
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	73%
Don't Know	21%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	6%

Notable

- The respondents from the south region are more likely to agree.
- The families with one or more children are more likely to disagree than the other family groups.

Yearly Comparison



13. I support the growth of intensive livestock development.

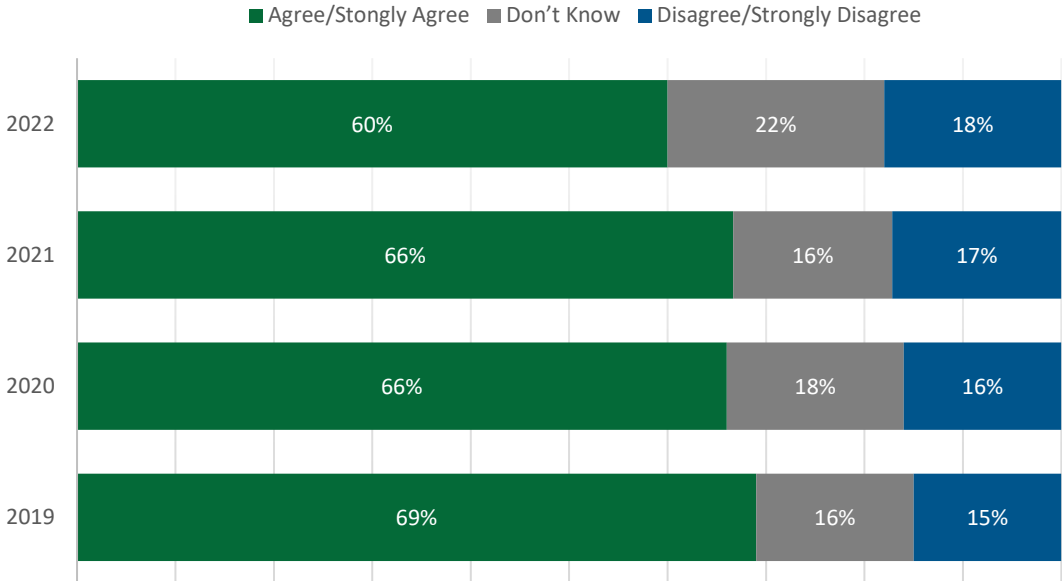
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	60%
Don't Know	22%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	18%

Notable

- The question in 2020 and 2021 was “I support growth of the intensive livestock development in my community.”
- The older age group (55+) is more likely to disagree than other age groups.
- The lowest income group (<\$30,000) is more likely to choose “Don't Know” than the other income groups.
- The highest household income group (\$120,000 or more) is more likely to agree.

Yearly Comparison



14. The agriculture sector transparently communicates about their practices.

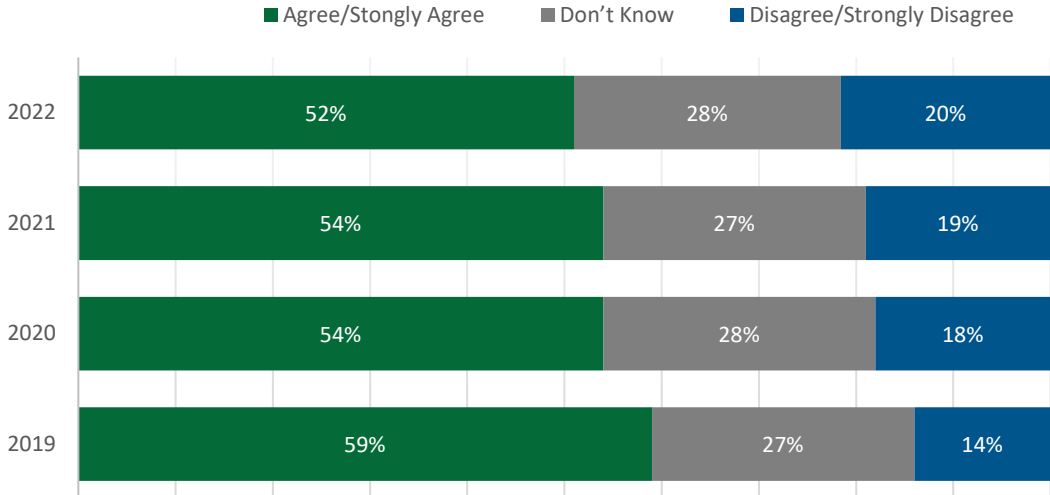
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	52%
Don't Know	28%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	20%

Notable

- Respondents from the south and Saskatoon regions are more likely to agree.

Yearly Comparison



15. Innovation in agriculture ensures food affordability.

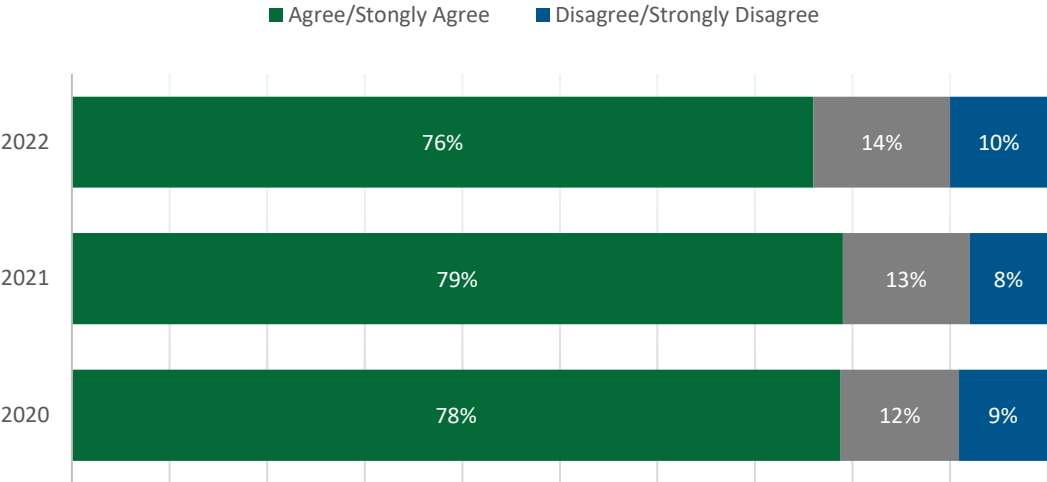
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	76%
Don't Know	14%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	10%

Notable

- Men are more likely to strongly agree than women.
- The respondents with an Indigenous ancestry are more likely to strongly disagree than the respondents with a non-Indigenous ancestry.
- The lowest income group (<\$30,000) are more likely to choose "Don't Know" than the other income groups.
- The highest income group (\$120,000 or more) are more likely to strongly agree.

Yearly Comparison



16. I support the use of crop protection products (e.g., herbicides, fungicides, insecticides) in Saskatchewan agriculture production.

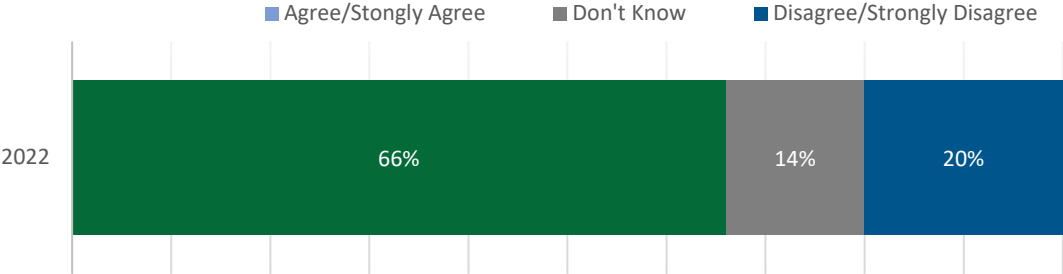
2022 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	66%
Don't Know	14%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	20%

Notable

- Men are more likely to strongly agree than women.
- The rate of disagreement increased with age.
- The respondents with an Indigenous ancestry are less likely to agree than the respondents with a non-Indigenous ancestry.
- The lowest income group (<\$30,000) are more likely to disagree as well as to choose "Don't Know" than the other income groups.

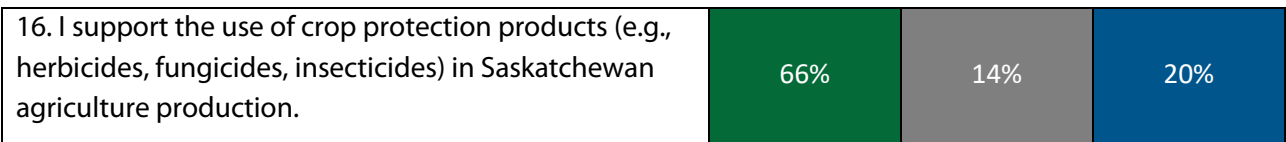
Yearly Comparison



APPENDIX A: 2022 Public Trust Omnibus Results at a Glance

Note: Number in brackets is the change in percentage from 2021 aside from question three, five, eight, nine, and ten which were last asked in years other than 2021.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements:	Agree & Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Disagree & Strongly Disagree
1. I have a positive a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture.	87% [-2]	7% [+1]	6%
2. I know where to find credible information about agriculture and food.	61% [-8]	19% [+2]	20% [+6]
3. I am interested in learning more about how food is produced	69% [-5]	11% [-4]	20% [-10]
4. Food produced by SK farmers and ranchers is safe*.	87% [-4]	9% [+3]	3%
5.I trust food made from genetically modified organisms (GMOs).	52%	20% [+2]	28% [-2]
6. Livestock in Saskatchewan are treated humanely.	71% [-1]	21% [+2]	8% [-1]
7. Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers take care of the environment.	70% [-3]	17% [+4]	13% [-1]
8. I trust Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers.	85% [-3]	8% [+3]	7%
9. Majority of Saskatchewan farms and ranches are family business.	68% [+2]	17% [+1]	15% [-3]
10. It is important that Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers have the freedom to use modern technology to improve their production efficiencies.	90%	7%	3%
11. Government's agriculture regulations protect the interest of the public. *	55% [-7]	27% [+2]	17% [+5]
12. Farmers and ranchers follow government and industry rules and regulations.	73%	21% [+2]	6% [-3]
13. I support the growth of intensive livestock development.	60% [-6]	22% [+6]	18% [+1]
14. The agriculture sector transparently communicates about their practices.	52% [-2]	28% [+1]	20% [+1]
15. Innovation in agriculture ensures food affordability.	76% [-3]	14% [+1]	10% [+2]



APPENDIX B: Comparison to Canadian Centre for Food Integrity Data

The Canadian Centre for Food Integrity (CCFI) is a non-profit organization with a mandate to help the Canadian food system earn trust through research, resources, dialogue, and training. The CCFI conducts an annual national survey on public perception of agriculture and modern food production. In 2021, they surveyed 2,202 people across the country.

For more information on CCFI's research, visit www.foodintegrity.ca.

2022 Saskatchewan Survey		National (CCFI) Survey	
Saskatchewan residents have a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture.	87%	60%	Have a positive view of Canadian agriculture. (2019)
Saskatchewan residents agree livestock in Saskatchewan are treated humanely.	71%	39%	Concerned about humane treatment of animals in Canada. (2021)
Saskatchewan residents agree the agriculture sector transparently communicates about their practices.	52%	34%	Canadian farmers/producers provide open and transparent information. (2018)
Saskatchewan residents agree farmers and ranchers take care of the environment.	70%	34%	Believe Canadian farmers are good stewards of the environment. (2021)
Saskatchewan residents agree food produced in Saskatchewan is safe.	87%	45%	Canadians are concerned about food safety (2021)
Saskatchewan residents support farmers use crop protection products (e.g., herbicides, fungicides, insecticides) in agriculture production	66%	41%	Canadians are concerned about use of pesticides in crop production (2021)
Saskatchewan residents trust Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers	85%	42%	Canadians trust farmers and ranchers (2019)