

American Farmland Trust Survey of Agricultural Land Owners in Five States

You may recall recently receiving a letter from Dick Esseks explaining that you were randomly selected from farmland owners in your county.

The letter contained ten first-class postage stamps to thank you for your participation in the survey.

Question: 1

The letter explained that a representative group of farmland owners in your state is being interviewed about taxes, federal financial assistance, and other public policies affecting owners.

We will report summary findings to legislators, farm organizations, and other interested groups, but individual responses are completely confidential.

The survey will take just a few minutes. Is this a convenient time?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO - SCHEDULE APPOINTMENT

Question: 2

By yourself or with your spouse or other persons, do you own at least 10 acres of land that this year is being used for raising livestock, field crops, orchard crops, turf grass, or any other agricultural products?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 3

Ask if Answer to Q2 # 1

We need to speak with persons who own at least 10 acres of land that is currently being farmed. Thank you for your time.

Question: 4

In the last two years, either in 2000 or 2001, has any livestock like beef, calves, dairy cattle, hogs, sheep, poultry, or horses been raised on the your land?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO

Question: 5

In the last two years were any orchard or vineyard crops like fruits or nuts raised on your land?

- 1> YES

2> NO

Question: 6

Were any field crops like wheat, hay, corn, soybeans, grain sorghum, cotton, vegetables, or rice raised on your land in the last two years?

1> YES

2> NO

Question: 7

Any fruit or vegetables grown in fields?

1> YES

2> NO

Question: 8

Any ornamental crops like shrubs, trees, turf grass, sod, or flowers?

1> YES

2> NO

Question: 9

Are there any other kind of agricultural activity on your land in the last two years?

1> YES

2> NO

Question: 10

Ask if Answer to Q9 = 1

What other kinds of agricultural activity?

Question: 11

Now, I am going to read you some objectives or goals in owning farmland.

Please tell me if each one is very important, moderately important, slightly important, or not important at all to you.

How important to you is the objective of seeing the dollar value of the land increase over time?

Would you say it is...

1> Very important

2> moderately important

3> slightly important

4> or not at all important

Question: 12

How important to you is the objective of earning money year to year by leasing your land to farmers or ranchers?

Would you SAY...

- 1> Very important,
- 2> moderately important,
- 3> slightly important,
- 4> or not at all important?

Question: 13

How important to you is the objective of earning money by farming or ranching the land yourself or with partners year to year?

WOULD YOU SAY...

- 1> VERY IMPORTANT
- 2> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 3> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT

Question: 14

How important to you is the objective of you and your family enjoy recreational opportunities on your land, such as walking, picnicking, riding horses or hunting?

WOULD YOU SAY...

- 1> VERY IMPORTANT
- 2> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 3> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT

Question: 15

How important to you is the objective of protecting your land from soil erosion?

WOULD YOU SAY...

- 1> VERY IMPORTANT
- 2> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 3> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT

Question: 16

How important to you is the objective of protecting streams and other bodies of water from pollution from farming activities on your land?

WOULD YOU SAY...

- 1> VERY IMPORTANT
- 2> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 3> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT

Question: 17

How important to you is the objective of having the next one, two or more generations of your family owning and benefiting from the land?

WOULD YOU SAY...

- 1> VERY IMPORTANT
- 2> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 3> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 4> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT

Question: 18

Do you have any other objectives or goals for your land?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO

Question: 19

Ask if Answer to Q18 = 1

What other objectives or goals?

Question: 20

From the objectives I just asked you about, Which one would you consider the most important to you...

- 11> earning money from leasing the land to farmers or ranchers
- 12> earning money by being involved with farming the land yourself
- 13> *****
- 14> enjoying recreational opportunities on your land
- 15> protecting your land from soil erosion
- 16> *****
- 17> *****
- 18> protecting streams and other bodies of water from pollution
- 19> your descendents owning and benefiting from the land
- 20> seeing dollar value of land increase
- or
- 21> another objective

Question: 21

From the objectives I just asked you about, Which one would you consider the second most important to you.

- 11> EARNING MONEY FROM LEASING THE LAND TO FARMERS OR RANCHERS
- 12> EARNING MONEY BY BEING INVOLVED WITH FARMING THE LAND YOURSELF
- 13> *****
- 14> ENJOYING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ON YOUR LAND
- 15> PROTECTING YOUR LAND FROM SOIL EROSION
- 16> *****
- 17> PROTECTING OR IMPROVING WILDLIFE HABITATS ON YOUR FARM
- 18> PROTECTING STREAMS AND OTHER BODIES OF WATER FROM POLLUTION
- 19> YOUR DESCENDENTS OWNING AND BENEFITING FROM THE LAND
- 20> SEEING DOLLAR VALUE OF LAND INCREASE
- 21> another objective

Question: 22

I am going to read you a list of ways that the government may be able to help you achieve your farm ownership objectives. Please tell me how important each way currently is or how important it would be, if you had access to them.

How important is it or would it be, for you to have property taxes based on the land's agricultural value rather than on its current market value?

READ ALL RESPONSES

Would you say that it is...

- 1> Not at all important
- 2> slightly important
- 3> moderately important
- 4> or very important?

Question: 23

Ask for California only

I am going to read you a list ways that the government may be able to help you achieve your farm ownership objectives. Please tell me how important each way currently is or how important it would be, if you had access to them.

How important is it or would it be, for you to have property taxes based on the land's agricultural value rather than on its current market value or its Proposition 13 value?

Would you say that it is...

- 1> Not at all important
- 2> slightly important
- 3> moderately important
- 4> or very important ?

Question: 24

Ask if state=California or Texas

How important is it or would it be, for a governmental agency to supply reasonably priced water to irrigate field crops, orchards, or vineyards for you?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

Question: 25

How important is it or would it be, for the government to provide technical assistance in finding seasonal or part-time workers for your farm?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REFFERS TO SHOWING OR TEACHING FARMERS HOW TO DO IT

Question: 26

How important is it or would it be, for the government to help with the cost of insurance policies that insure against damage to crops from drought, flood, hail, or other severe weather?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

Question: 27

How important is it or would it be, for the government to give payments to you to offset low market prices for crops?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

Question: 28

How important is it or would it be, for you to get technical assistance and loans to diversify the mix of crops or livestock raised on your land?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REFFERS TO SHOWING OR TEACHING FARMERS HOW TO DO IT

Question: 29

How important is it or would it be, for you to have technical assistance and cost-sharing to minimize the amount of chemical pesticides or fertilizers used on your agricultural land?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REFFERS TO SHOWING OR TEACHING FARMERS HOW TO DO IT

Question: 30

Sometimes farmers market their products at their own farm stand, at farmers' markets, or to homes that sign up for products.

How important is it or would it be, for you to have technical assistance and loans for marketing agricultural products from your land directly to consumers?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REFFERS TO SHOWING OR TEACHING FARMERS HOW TO DO IT

Question: 31

How important is it or would it be, for you to have technical assistance and loans to make your land attractive to paying tourists, such as hunters, birdwatchers, fishermen, or families wanting to visit a working farm?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REFFERS TO SHOWING OR TEACHING FARMERS HOW TO DO IT

Question: 32

How important is it or would it be, for you to have technical assistance and loans to produce organically grown food?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REFFERS TO SHOWING OR TEACHING FARMERS HOW TO DO IT

Question: 33

Ask if Answer to Q4 # 2

How important is it or would it be, for you to have technical assistance and cost-sharing to minimize water and odor pollution from livestock?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT

4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REFFERS TO SHOWING OR TEACHING FARMERS HOW TO DO IT

Question: 34

How important is it or would it be, for you to have technical assistance and cost-sharing to minimize water pollution from crop production?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REFFERS TO SHOWING OR TEACHING FARMERS HOW TO DO IT

Question: 35

How important is it or would it be for you, to have technical assistance and cost sharing to protect or improve wildlife habitat?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

-TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REFFERS TO SHOWING OR TEACHING FARMERS HOW TO DO IT

Question: 36

Ask if Answer to Q4 # 2

How important is it or would it be, for you to have local government zoning regulations that permit livestock operations to expand to economical levels?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT
- 3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT
- 4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

Question: 37

How important is it or would it be, for you to have local government zoning regulations that aim to limit conflicts with non-farmer neighbors by restricting the quantity of non-farm residences built near your farmland?

WOULD YOU SAY THAT IT IS...

- 1> NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT
- 2> SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT

3> MODERATELY IMPORTANT

4> OR VERY IMPORTANT

Question: 38

Some American farmers receive direct payments from the federal government to help offset low market prices.

Some Members of Congress believe that almost all American farmers should be eligible for these payments with higher levels of support going to farmers willing to apply conservation practices.

I am going to read you a list of seven types of conservation practices that may qualify for higher payment levels from the government.

Question: 39

This year, does any of the farmland you own have applied to it one or more methods that aim to minimize soil erosion?

1> YES

2> NO

3> NOT SURE

Question: 40

Ask if Answer to Q39 = 1

What is main method you use to minimize soil erosion?

Question: 41

Ask if Answer to Q39 # 1

In order to be eligible for federal conservation payments, would you contribute time or money to apply to your land methods that minimize soil erosion?

1> YES

2> NO

3> NOT SURE

Question: 42

This year does any of the farmland you own have applied to it one or more methods that aim to minimize the flow of chemical fertilizers or pesticides into surface water or groundwater?

1> YES

2> NO

3> NOT SURE

Question: 43

Ask if Answer to Q42 = 1

What is the main method you use to minimize the flow of chemical fertilizers or pesticides into surface or ground water?

Question: 44

Ask if Answer to Q42 # 1

In order to be eligible for federal conservation payments, would you contribute time or money to apply to your land methods that minimize the flow of chemical fertilizers or pesticides into surface or ground water?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 45

Ask if Answer to Q4 # 2

This year, does any of the farmland you own have applied to it one or more methods that aim to minimize the flow of livestock waste into ground or surface water?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 46

Ask if Answer to Q4 # 2

AND Answer to Q45 = 1

What the main method you use to minimize the flow of livestock waste into ground or surface water on your farmland?

Question: 47

Ask if Answer to Q4 # 2

AND Answer to Q45 # 1

In order to be eligible for federal conservation payments, would you contribute time or money to apply to your land methods that minimize the flow of livestock wastes into surface or groundwater?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 48

This year, does any of the farmland you own have applied to it one or more methods that aim to protect or improve wildlife habitats?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 49

Ask if Answer to Q48 = 1

What is the main method you use to protect or improve wildlife habitats on your farmland?

Question: 50

Ask if Answer to Q48 # 1

In order to be eligible for federal conservation payments, would you contribute time or money to apply to your land methods that protect or improve wildlife habitat?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 51

Ask if Answer to Q4 # 2

This year does any of the farmland or ranchland have methods applied to it that aim to minimize overgrazing or other damage to pasture or rangeland?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 52

Ask if Answer to Q4 # 2

AND Answer to Q51 = 1

What is the main method you use to minimize overgrazing or other damage to pasture or range land?

Question: 53

Ask if Answer to Q4 # 2

AND Answer to Q51# 1

In order to be eligible for federal conservation payments, would you contribute time or money to apply to your land methods that minimize overgrazing or other damage to pasture or range?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 54

Ask in California or Texas.

This year does any of your farmland or ranchland have any irrigation methods applied to it that aim to minimize the quantity of water used or minimize the rate of water evaporation?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 55

Ask if Answer to Q54 = 1

What is the main irrigation method applied to your land?

Question: 56

Ask if Answer to Q54 # 1

In order to be eligible for federal conservation payments, would you contribute time or money to apply to your land irrigation methods that minimize the quantity of water used or minimize the rate of evaporation?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 57

This year does any of your farmland have methods applied to it that aim to protect or improve wetlands?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 58

Ask if Answer to Q57 = 1

What is the main method you use to protect or improve wetland on your farm or ranch?

Question: 59

Ask if Answer to Q57 # 1

In order to be eligible for federal conservation payments, would you contribute time or money to apply to your land methods that protect or improve wetlands?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 60

In some states, farmland owners who are under pressure to sell their land for housing development can instead receive government compensation for agreeing never to develop the land. These owners are paid the difference between what the land is worth for development and its value for farming, which can be several thousand dollars per acre.

Have you ever entered into such an agreement not to develop agricultural land you own?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO

Question: 61

Ask if Answer to Q60 # 1

When farmers enter into an agreement not to develop their land, it is usually with a state or local government agency or a private nonprofit organization, which is responsible for making sure the agreement is kept.

Would you be interested in being paid for agreeing not to develop agricultural land you own?

- 1> YES

- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 62

Next I have a few questions about the farmland you own.

Are you an operator of any of the agricultural land you own, that is, by yourself or with others, do you make decisions about the day-to-day operation of the farm, such as what to plant or raise, when to harvest, and when to market the crops or animals?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO

Question: 63

Ask if Answer to Q62 # 1

Who makes the day-to-day decisions?

- 1> A farm manager
- 2> the operators of the farmland, or
- 3> someone else?

Question: 64

Ask if Answer to Q63 = 3

Who else makes the decisions?

Question: 65

Ask if Answer to Q62 # 1

In the past, were you ever a farm operator?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO

Question: 66

Ask if Answer to Q62 = 1

Do you also lease out any of the farmland you own?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO

Question: 67

Ask if Answer to Q62 # 1

OR Answer to Q66 = 1

For the leased land, do you share in any of the costs of producing crops or livestock, such as paying for part or all of the cost of seeds, chemicals, livestock, equipment, fuel, or custom harvesting?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO

Question: 68

Ask if Answer to Q62 # 1

OR Answer to Q66 = 1

Some written leases of farmland contain provisions for the application of agricultural conservation practices such as for soil, water, wildlife, or wetlands conservation. Some leases do not include any such provisions. Do any of your current leases require the operator to apply any conservation practices?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 69

Ask if Answer to Q62 # 1

OR Answer to Q66 = 1

Independent of written leases, some owners ask their farm managers or operators to apply agricultural conservation practices. Some owners do not.

In the past year, did you ask any operator of your farmland or ranchland to apply any conservation practices?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 70

Please think ahead 5 years from now and about the status of your agricultural land.

Do you expect that five years in the future...

- 1> First, all of that land will either be farmed or lie fallow,
- 2> Second, all of it will be developed for housing or other non-farm uses,
- 3> or third, some combination of developed non-farm use and farmland either used or lying fallow?

Question: 71

I have a few last questions to make sure we have heard from a broad range of farm or ranch land owners.

What year were you born?

Question: 72

About how many total acres of farmland including pasture do you own?

Question: 73

Ask if Answer to Q62 # 1

Was your father or mother a farm operator or an employee on a farm?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO

Question: 74

Ask if Answer to Q62 # 1
Is your primary residence on any land attached to agricultural land that you own?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO

Question: 75

Ask if Answer to Q62 # 1
AND Answer to Q74 # 1
How often in the past year did you visit any of the farmland you own?

Would you say you ...

- 1> never went there,
- 2> went there only one time,
- 3> went there 2 or 3 separate days,
- 4> or went there more than 3 separate days in the past year?

Question: 76

INTERVIEWER Enters in the respondent's gender:

- 1> MALE
- 2> FEMALE

Question: 77

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- 11> SOME GRADE SCHOOL (1-8)
- 12> SOME HIGH SCHOOL (9-11)
- 13> GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL (12)
- 14> TECHNICAL/VOCATIONAL SCHOOL (TRADE SCHOOL)
- 15> TWO-YEAR COLLEGE DEGREE (ASSOCIATES DEGREE)
- 16> SOME COLLEGE, BUT NO DEGREE
- 17> GRADUATED COLLEGE (BA OR BS)
- 18> SOME GRADUATE SCHOOL (MORE THAN BA OR BS), NO GRADUATE DEGREE
- 19> GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL DEGREE (DOCTOR, LAWYER, Ph.D., MASTERS, ETC)
- 20> OTHER

Question: 78

Ask if Answer to Q77 = 20
OTHER EDUCATION....

Question: 79

Are you currently retired?
1> YES

2> NO

Question: 80

Ask if Answer to Q79 # 1
What is your occupation?

Question: 81

What do you consider to be your race?

- 1> WHITE
- 2> BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN
- 3> HISPANIC
- 4> ASIAN
- 5> NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN?
- 6> OTHER

Question: 82

Ask if Answer to Q81 = 6
OTHER RACE....

Question: 83

In the year 2000 did you personally receive any payments directly from the federal government to compensate for crop or livestock losses due to disastrous weather like drought, flood, or hail?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO

Question: 84

In the year 2000 did you receive payments directly from the federal government to offset the effects of low agricultural market prices, such as Market Transition Act payments, production flexibility contract payments, non-recourse commodity loans, or loan deficiency payments?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO
- 3> NOT SURE

Question: 85

Please consider your total gross receipts in the year 2000 from agriculture, that would include any sales of agricultural products, rents on your land, agricultural services you provided, and any government payments you received

Was last year's income

- 1> lower,
- 2> typical,
- 3> or higher than usual?

Question: 86

Ask if Answer to Q85 = 2

Please stop me when I get to your level of total gross receipts in 2000 from agriculture...

- 11> Under \$10,000 dollars
- 12> Under 25,000
- 13> Under 50,000
- 14> Under 75,000
- 15> Under 100,000
- 16> Under 150,000
- 17> Under 175,000
- 18> Under 200,000
- 19> \$200,000 or more?

Question: 87

Ask if Answer to Q85 # 2

Please stop me when I get to your level of typical total gross receipts from agriculture...

- 11> Under \$10,000 dollars
- 12> Under 25,000
- 13> Under 50,000
- 14> Under 75,000
- 15> Under 100,000
- 16> Under 150,000
- 17> Under 175,000
- 18> Under 200,000
- 19> \$200,000 or more?

Question: 88

Here are the last 3 questions. USDA has a program called the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program or CREP. This program encourages farmers to make environmental improvements on their land. Farmers and ranchers volunteering through CREP receive assistance to plant grass buffers and trees, install fences, and create wetlands. CREP not only reimburses for the costs of materials but also pays rent on the land being used in conservation.

Have you heard, read, or seen something about this program?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO

Question: 89

Have you ever participated in CREP?

- 1> YES
- 2> NO

Question: 90

To what extent are you interested in taking part in CREP in the future?

Would you say you are...

- 1> Not at all interested,
- 2> slightly interested,
- 3> moderately interested,
- 4> or highly interested?

That was my last question. Thank you very much for your cooperation.
We appreciate your help in this study of agricultural land
owners and how government may help them to achieve their ownership
objectives.