

Optimism in **Canadian Agriculture**



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Vision Research: Optimism in Canadian Agriculture

National Findings

Optimism remains

Despite uncertainty in the industry, more than half of all respondents (55%) remain optimistic about the future of agriculture. This is consistent with optimism levels in 2007 (53%) and 2008 (54%) in spite of respondents' concerns around issues such as falling commodity prices and rising input costs. Although more than half of all respondents (60%) believe that their farms or businesses are better off now than they were five years ago, respondents in 2009 (19%) are significantly **less** likely to state that they believe that their farms or businesses will be much better off in the next five years than they reported in 2007 (21%).

In 2009 respondents continue to see career opportunities in agriculture: respondents are more likely to state that they have recommended a career in agriculture in 2009 (40%) than in 2007 (36%), and respondents remain advocates for careers in agriculture or an agricultural field as two thirds (67%) would encourage a friend or family member to enter the field in 2009.

Agriculture continues to present challenges

Respondents continue to identify challenges in the agriculture sector; however this year the list of top challenges has broadened. In 2009, respondents were **less** likely to cite rising input costs (26%) as the greatest challenge facing agriculture compared to 2007 (41%), whereas in 2009 respondents were more likely to cite making a profit (24%) as the greatest challenge compared to 2007 (17%). Conversely, respondents continue to see a variety of opportunities in agriculture, specifically an increased demand for products (11%), public demand for products (11%) and protection of supply management (10%). In 2009, a shift in opportunities identified by producers occurred; respondents are significantly **less** likely to cite commodity prices (7%) and ethanol/biofuel production (6%) as the greatest opportunities in agriculture compared to 2007 (15% and 17% respectively).

Regardless of the challenges that agriculture presents, respondents continue to look forward and focus on the opportunities, as one quarter of respondents (23%) stated that they are planning to expand their farms or businesses. The hope and commitment to the future of agriculture is a true testament to how resilient Canadian producers and agribusiness owners truly are.

Background and Details

Farm Credit Canada undertook its third annual proprietary research study on the state of agriculture in Canada with all of its Vision panel members in the fall of 2009. The results include levels of optimism in the agriculture industry, as well as what members of the agriculture community view as the greatest opportunities and challenges facing them today. Additionally, the research is an opportunity to enable the ideas and opinions of Vision panelists to help shape the general understanding of agriculture for everyday Canadians.

Methodology

The Research team within Farm Credit Canada sent invitations to participate in the study to all active FCC Vision members from across the country, totaling 8508 people. Vision membership is composed of both producers and non-producers, FCC customers and non-customers, and has representation from all provinces and agriculture sectors. The survey was mailed to participants on October 6, 2009, with requests to return the survey by October 23, 2008. Members had the option of completing the survey via mail, fax or online. All data was subsequently weighted to reflect the actual demographic makeup of farms in Canada, with the exception of hogs. Data from the hog sector was weighted to the *Statistics Canada, Hog Statistics, Third Quarter 2009, Catalogue no. 23-010-X, vol. 8, no. 4.* to better reflect the current state of the sector.

Confidentiality

To ensure greater candour in their responses, participants were given a guarantee of confidentiality throughout the course of this research. No individual responses are revealed in the course of the report.

Response Rate

A total of 4515 people out of a possible 8508 responded to the survey for a response rate of 53%. The margin of error is +/-1.43%, 19 times out of 20 on a sample of this size. Demographic subgroups will have a higher margin of error.

Note on the Analysis of Subgroups

When reference to subgroups of respondents (for example, differences in results between dairy and crop producers) is made throughout the text, only those differences that are *both* statistically significant *and* relevant will be highlighted.

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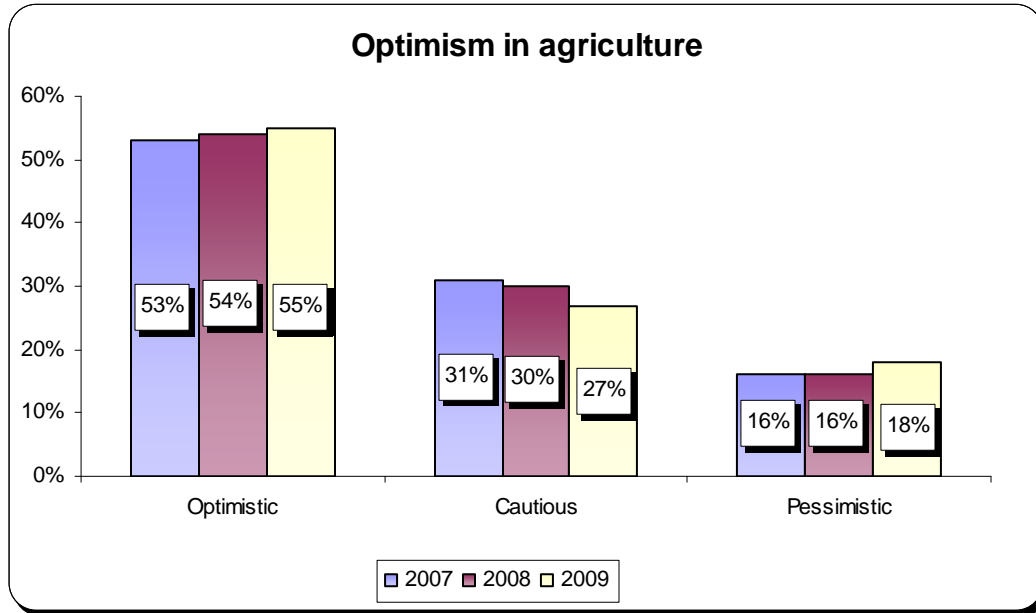
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Results: Optimism in agriculture

There has been no significant change in the level of optimism in agriculture in Canada since 2007: half of all respondents (55%) in 2009 state that they are optimistic about agriculture. With that being said, respondents in 2009 (18%) are significantly more likely to state that they are pessimistic compared to respondents from 2008 and 2007 (16%, 16% respectively).



"I believe agriculture is on the doorstep of prosperity!"- Ontario beef producer

Definition of optimism

The results of two key survey questions are combined in order to create this optimism indicator. The first is, "Looking ahead, do you believe that your farm or business will be better off or worse off in five years than it is now?" An answer of either a little better off or much better off counted towards the optimism score. The second question is, "If a friend or family member was considering a career in agriculture or an agricultural related field, would you encourage them to enter the field?" An answer of either slightly encourage them or strongly encourage them counted towards the optimism score.

If a respondent reported that they believe their farm or business will be better off **and** they would encourage a career in agriculture, they were defined as optimistic. If a respondent reported that they **either** believe their farm or business will be better off **or** they would encourage a career in agriculture, they were defined as cautious. If a respondent reported that they **do not** believe that their farm or business will be better off **and** they would discourage a career in agriculture, they were defined as pessimistic.

Annual comparison by sector¹

As in previous years, dairy respondents (70%) remain the most optimistic about agriculture. In 2009, respondents in the poultry (26%) and crop (27%) sectors are significantly **less** likely to report that they are cautious compared to what they reported in 2007 (42% and 30% respectively). Additionally, beef producers in 2009 (27%) are significantly more likely to state that they are pessimistic than in 2008 (21%).

Annual comparison by province

Respondents from Saskatchewan are significantly more likely to be pessimistic in 2009 (18%) than 2007 (12%). In contrast, respondents from Ontario are significantly more likely to be optimistic in 2009 (59%) than 2007 (49%).

Results by sector: 2009

Respondents in the dairy sector (70%) are significantly more likely to be optimistic than respondents in most sectors. Respondents in the beef sector (27%) are significantly **less** likely to be optimistic than those in many other sectors. There are no other significant differences to report.

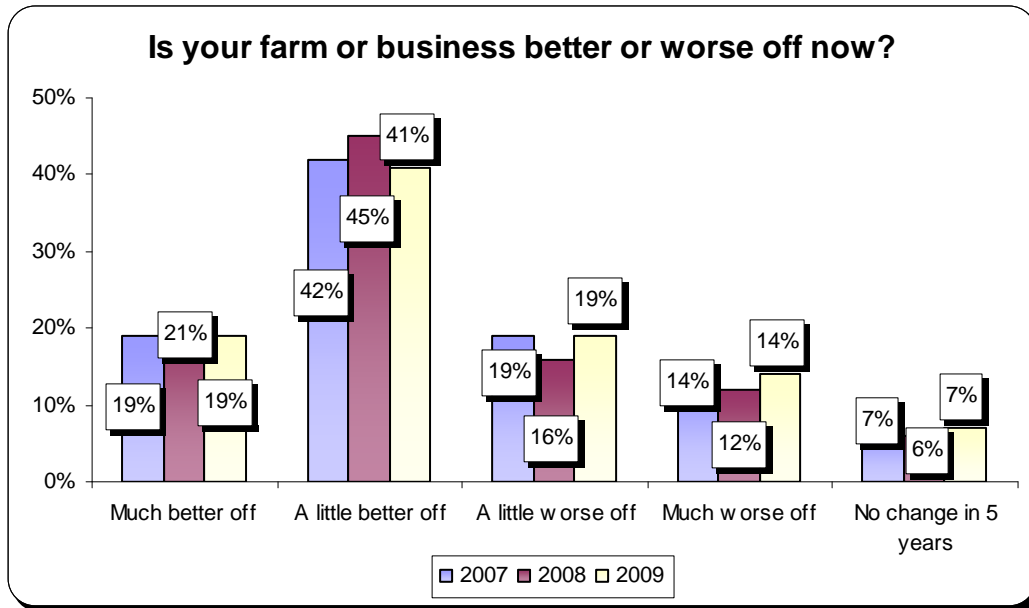
Results by province: 2009

Respondents from Alberta (46%) and British Columbia (43%) are significantly **less** likely to be optimistic than those from most other provinces. There are no other significant differences to report.

¹ The annual comparison will compare the 2009 responses to the benchmark responses collected in 2007. Differences between the 2009 and 2008 responses that are *both* statistically significant *and* relevant will be highlighted as well.

Results: Is your farm or business better or worse off now?

Respondents in 2009 are significantly more likely to state that their operations are both much worse off (14%) and a little worse off (19%) than they were in 2008 (12% and 16% respectively).



Overall, do you believe that your farm or business is better off or worse off now than it was five years ago?
(n = 3647, 2007; n = 4309, 2008; n = 4515, 2009)

"I think things have improved over the last few years. However, input costs are really rising and competition is as fierce as ever."- Ontario crop producer

Annual comparison by sector

Crop respondents in 2009 (26%) are significantly more likely to believe that their farms are much better off now than they reported in 2007 (20%). Compared to 2007 (24%), hog producers are significantly more likely to believe that their farms are much worse off now (49%), while other animal² respondents are more likely to believe in 2009 (25%) that their farms are a little worse off now than in 2007 (9%).

Annual comparison by province

In 2009, respondents from Alberta (23%) and British Columbia (25%) are significantly more likely to state that they believe they are a little worse off now compared to what they reported in 2007 (17% and 13% respectively). Meanwhile, respondents from Saskatchewan are significantly more likely to believe that they are much better off in 2009 (27%) than in 2007 (21%).

² Other animals include but are not limited to sheep, goats, bison, etc...

Results by sector: 2009

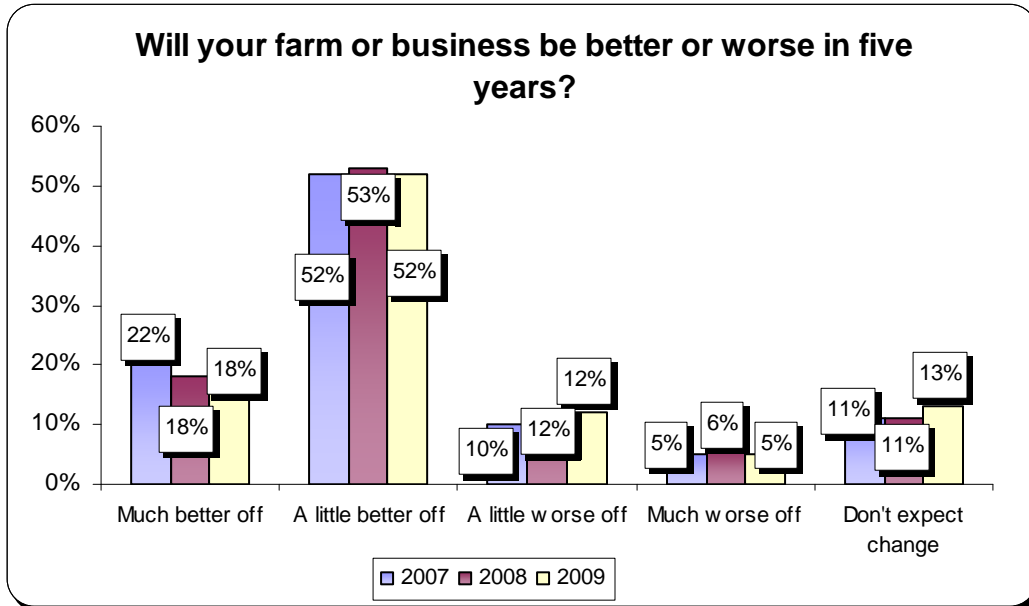
Respondents in the poultry (29%), crop (26%) and dairy (21%) sectors are significantly more likely than those from other sectors to cite that they are much better off now than they were five years ago. Conversely, respondents in the beef (27%) and hog (49%) sectors are significantly more likely than all other sectors to report that they are much worse off than they were five years ago.

Results by province: 2009

Respondents from Saskatchewan (27%) are significantly more likely than those from most other provinces to report that they are much better off than they were five years ago. In contrast, respondents from the Alberta (19%) and British Columbia (25%) are significantly more likely to report that they are much worse off now than those from most other provinces.

Results: Will your farm or business be better or worse off in five years?

Respondents in 2009 (18%) are significantly **less** likely to state that they believe that their farms or businesses will be much better off in the next five years than they reported in 2007 (22%). However, in 2009 respondents are significantly more likely to state that they don't expect any changes to their operations in the next five years (13%) compared to respondents from 2008 (11%) and 2007 (11%).



Looking ahead, do you believe that your farm or business will be better off or worse off in five years than it is now? (n = 3647, 2007; n = 4309, 2008; n = 4515, 2009)

“The future of agriculture always has a bright future as it is always growing and changing, as is our business. Even though the immediate picture may be dim the over all picture is positive and exciting, just look at how farming and farm business have grown over the last 20 years.”- Saskatchewan beef producer

Annual comparison by sector

In 2009, crop respondents (12%) are significantly more likely to state that they don't expect any changes in the next five years than they reported in 2007 (10%). Additionally, crop respondents in 2009 (15%) are **less** likely to believe that they will be much better off in the next five years than they reported in 2007 (22%). There are no other significant differences to report.

Annual comparison by province

Saskatchewan respondents are significantly **less** likely in 2009 to believe they will be much better off (16%) or a little better off (54%) in five years than they reported in 2007 (22% and 59% respectively). However, in 2009 they are significantly more likely to state that they don't expect any change in the next five years (13%) compared to 2007 (9%). Respondents from Alberta are also significantly **less** likely to believe in 2009 (15%) that

they will be much better off in five years than they reported in 2007 (19%). Conversely, respondents from the Atlantic provinces in 2009 (52%) are significantly more likely to believe that they will be a little better off in five years compared to what they reported in 2007 (38%).

Results by sector: 2009

Respondents in the horticulture (24%), dairy (25%) and other animal (29%) sectors are significantly more likely to state that they believe their farms will be much better off in the next five years compared to crop (15%) and beef (16%) producers. Meanwhile, crop producers (56%) are significantly more likely to believe that they will be a little better off in the next five years compared to beef (49%), hog (44%) and horticulture (47%) producers.

Results by province: 2009

Looking ahead, Quebec respondents (28%) are significantly more likely to believe that their farms or businesses will be much better off than those in other provinces. Respondents from Alberta (7%) and British Columbia (11%) are significantly more likely to believe that in the next five years they will be much worse off than respondents Saskatchewan (4%), Ontario (4%) and Quebec (2%).

Results: Guarded optimism

We asked respondents to comment on the previous two questions, specifically if their farm or business is better or worse off now than five years ago, and if they believe it will be better or worse off in five years. While respondents remain optimistic about the future of agriculture, their optimism is tempered by a number of factors such as commodity prices (18%), rising input costs (16%) and an overall limited view on optimism (12%). A sample of the comments is detailed below.

“The economics of agriculture historically has been more stable than a lot of other industries have been in the past. We base our optimism for the future on the past.” – Saskatchewan crop producer

“Costs of inputs going up, value of products not going up as fast.” – Alberta crop producer

“There are challenges in the future, [however] I do feel confident that we should be able to adapt and survive and grow in the future.” –Manitoba crop producer

“Staying on top of expenses, and trying to make a profit, seems increasingly difficult.” – Manitoba beef producer

“My input costs are rising rapidly. Our price for our products is dropping. My equipment is wearing out and we can not afford to replace it.” – Saskatchewan crop producer

“Continually rising input costs, little or no increase in commodity prices make life difficult. Expansion is only a partial option because additional labor is almost non existent.” – Saskatchewan beef producer

“Opportunity exists everywhere. The key is in finding those opportunities and figuring out how to capitalize on them.”- Prince Edward Island Agriculture professional

“Prices are going back down & inputs are going up. Until this changes, there will be no forward movement as far as profitability.” – Ontario crop producer

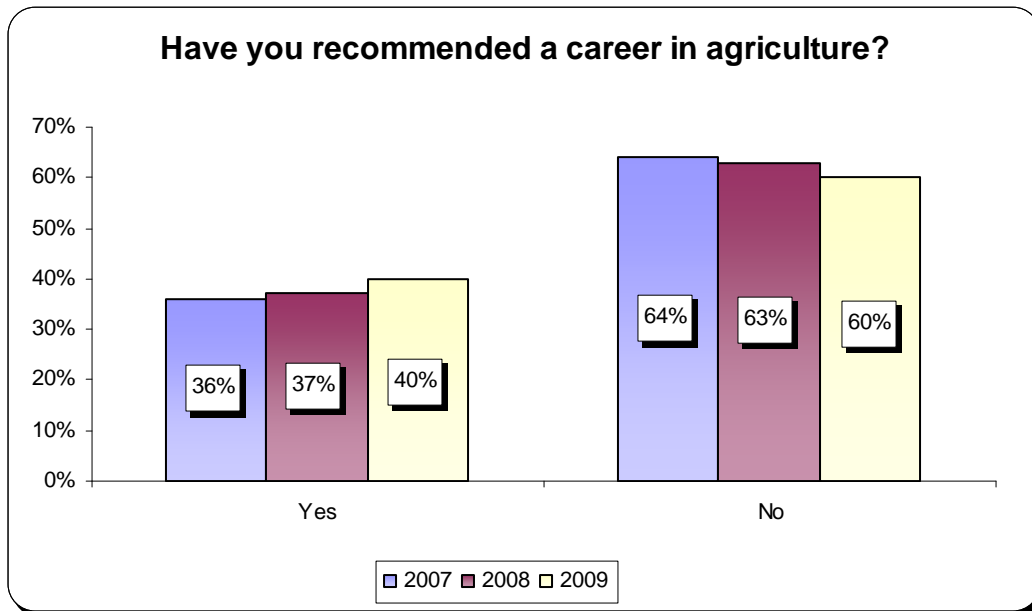
“I see no end in sight for the continued horrible weanling prices. I am also very discouraged with the support or lack there of from our governments...” – Manitoba hog producer

“The past few years we have been growing the business and we believe that it is starting to pay off.” – British Columbia fruit, vegetable and horticulture producer

“We are a little better off than we were because of improvements to our current operation which allow us to offset rising input costs and stable or falling commodity prices. Hopefully our next improvements will continue this trend. If a small farm can't continuously improve efficiency today, it doesn't last long.” – Quebec crop producer

Results: Have you recommended a career in agriculture?

Respondents are significantly more likely to state that they have recommended a career in agriculture in 2009 (40%) than in 2007 (36%).



Over the past year, have you recommended a career in agriculture or an agricultural related field to a friend or family member? (n = 3647, 2007; n = 4309, 2008; n = 4515, 2009)

“Being an optimist with a love for agriculture, I would help and encourage them as much as possible.” –Manitoba crop producer

Annual comparison by sector

Respondents in the crop (39%), poultry (53%) and other animal (48%) sectors are significantly more likely to have recommended a career in agriculture in 2009 than in 2007 (35%, 38% and 27% respectively).

Annual comparison by province

Ontario (43%) and Alberta (35%) respondents are significantly more likely to have recommended a career in agriculture in 2009 than in 2007 (35% and 27% respectively).

Results by sector: 2009

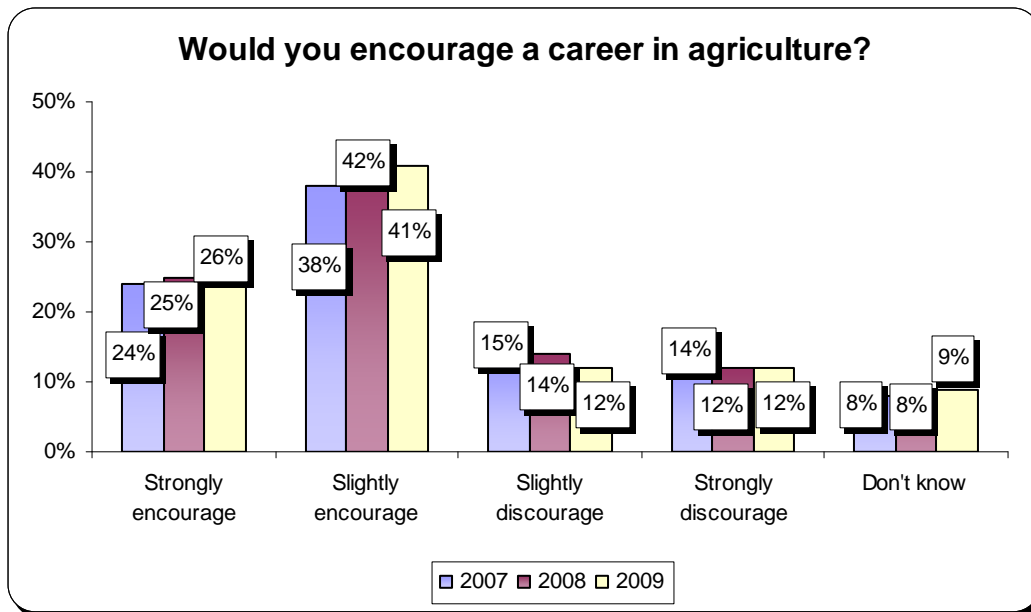
Respondents in the dairy (56%) and poultry (53%) sectors are significantly more likely than those from most other sectors to state that they have recommended a career in agriculture in the past year. In contrast, respondents in the beef (73%) and hog (69%) sectors are the most likely to have not recommended a career in agriculture.

Results by province: 2009

Compared to respondents from most other provinces, Quebec respondents (50%) are more likely to state that they have recommended a career in agriculture over the past year. Conversely, respondents from Saskatchewan (65%) are significantly more likely to state that they have not recommended a career in agriculture over the past year compared to respondents from Manitoba (61%), Ontario (57%) and Quebec (50%).

Results: Would you encourage a career in agriculture?

In 2009, respondents are significantly **less** likely to state that they would slightly discourage (12%) or strongly discourage (12%) a career in agriculture compared to 2007 (15% and 14% respectively).



If a friend or family member was considering a career in agriculture or an agricultural related field, would you encourage them to enter the field? (n = 3647, 2007; n = 4309, 2008; n = 4515, 2009)

“Once we get past this down turn in the economy, I believe that things will slowly turn around for the better. Once this happens this industry is going to need young people to replace all the retirements that are coming very quickly in agriculture.”
 – Saskatchewan fruit, vegetable and horticulture producer

Annual comparison by sector

Respondents in the crop (26%) and other animal (26%) sectors are significantly more likely to state that they would strongly encourage a career in agriculture in 2009 than they were in 2007 (23% and 12% respectively).

Annual comparison by province

In 2009 respondents from Ontario (44%) are significantly more likely to slightly encourage a career in agriculture than they were in 2007 (36%). There are no other significant differences to report.

Results by sector: 2009

Respondents in the dairy (42%) sector are significantly more likely than respondents in most other sectors to report that they would strongly encourage a career in agriculture. On the other hand, respondents in the beef (23%) and hog (27%) sectors are

significantly more likely to report that they would strongly discourage a career in agriculture than those in all other sectors.

Results by province: 2009

Quebec respondents (43%) are significantly more likely to strongly encourage a career in agriculture than respondents from all other provinces. Respondents from Alberta (16%) are significantly more likely to strongly discourage a career in agriculture than respondents from Saskatchewan (12%), Ontario (10%) and Quebec (9%).

Results: Why would you encourage / discourage an agriculture career?

Respondents continue to encourage careers in agriculture, but don't want to ignore the heartaches that come with agriculture. Respondents expressed that in agriculture you are not rewarded for your efforts (21%); however they believe that optimism factors make agriculture look more encouraging as there are opportunities (12%), that agriculture is a good lifestyle choice (12%) and is a necessary part of society (9%). Respondents are also quick to point out that agriculture is a demanding career (8%) and that perhaps a career in an agriculture field is a better choice than becoming involved in primary production (8%). A sample of the comments is detailed below.

"I would not encourage them to be a producer but would encourage them to get into the field of crop sciences or sale of agricultural products." –Saskatchewan crop producer

"We are optimistic, do not really know why, and know that we have to encourage and support the next generation. Otherwise Canada will become reliant on the rest of the world to live after us." –Ontario dairy producer

"There is a lot of opportunity in all areas of agriculture for a career that can be profitable and lead to a vast and diverse future." –Manitoba crop producer

"Agriculture is a career that doesn't pay well in money. It pays greatly in personal satisfaction though. Not everyone is driven that way. A lot of youth are all about little work lots of pay jobs. Many of the youth don't want the long hours and the physical work that farming can bring. I'll admit there are some agriculture related jobs that can be financially rewarding in ag related fields." –Ontario dairy producer

"I would strongly encourage them to go with a career in agriculture because we are in a great need of more farmers and mostly younger farmers. But also farming is not just a career but more of a lifestyle, and a great lifestyle." – Atlantic poultry producer

"Living on a farm and farming are a good way of life, I feel, also raising children on the farm gives them different opportunities than being raised in a city." – Alberta crop producer

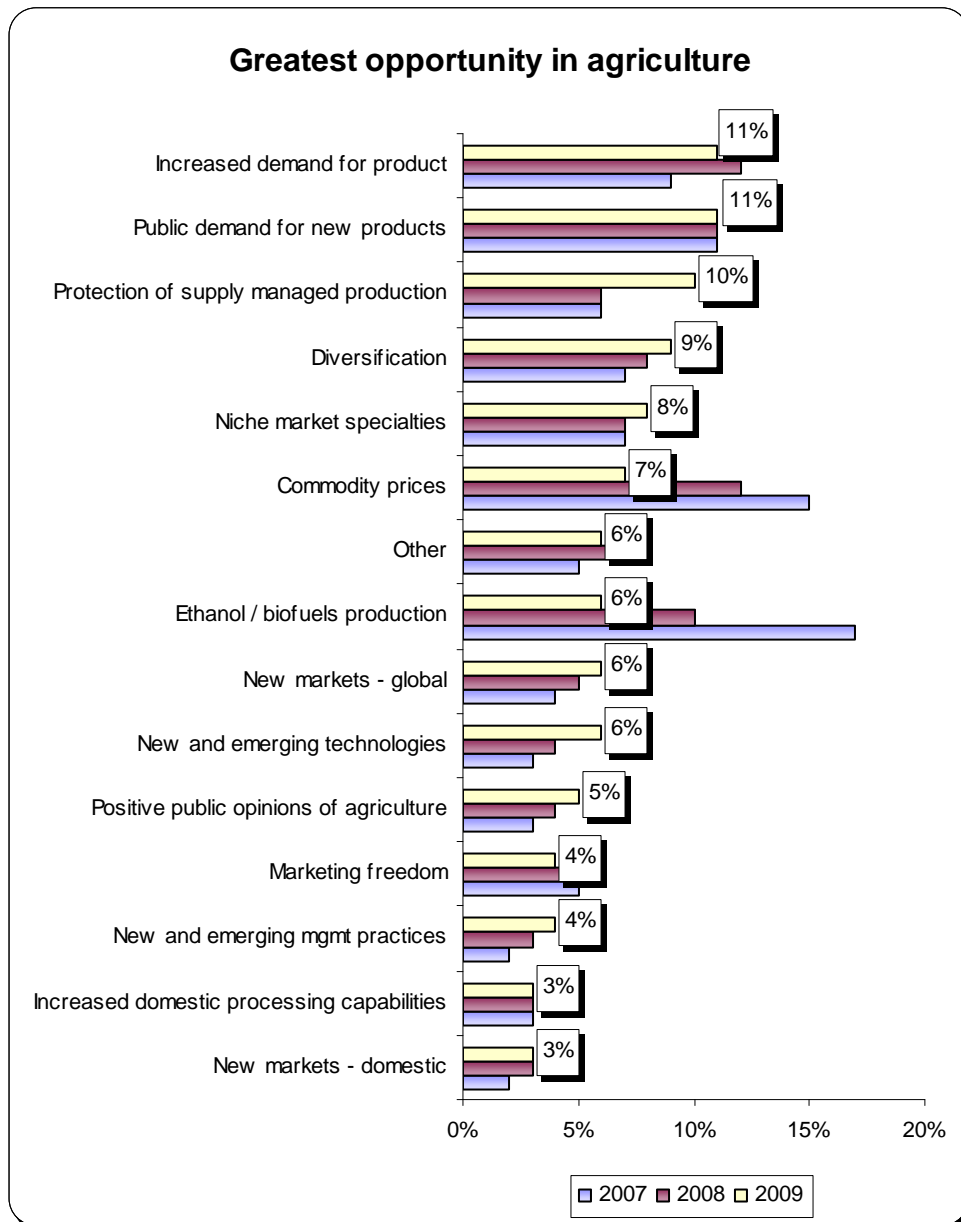
"It's getting harder and harder to make a decent living in running your own farm. I would recommend to anyone that working around agriculture is one of the best jobs in the world, as long as you aren't the one worrying about bills." –Ontario crop producer

"It is more and more difficult to earn a lucrative income farming. There are so many factors out of the farmer/producer's control that have a bearing on farming income as well as expenses, i.e. machinery dealers can set prices for equipment but when a farmer takes his calves to an auction he is unable to set his price." – Alberta beef producer

"There is no better feeling than growing a crop that will feed people all over the world." –Saskatchewan crop producer

Results: Greatest opportunity in agriculture

Respondents continue to see a variety of opportunities in agriculture over the next year. Compared to previous years, respondents in 2009 are significantly more likely to report opportunities in the following areas: protection of supply management (10%), diversification (9%), niche market specialties (8%), and new emerging technologies (6%). In 2009, respondents are significantly **less** likely to cite commodity prices (7%) and ethanol/biofuel production (6%) as the greatest opportunities in agriculture, both of which were the most commonly mentioned opportunities in 2007 (15% and 17% respectively).



What do you see as the greatest opportunity in agriculture as a whole over the next year? Please select one only. (n = 3647, 2007; n = 4309, 2008; n = 4515, 2009)

Annual comparison by sector

Respondents in the beef (4%) and crop (10%) are significantly **less** likely to cite ethanol / biofuel production as the greatest opportunity in 2009 than in 2007 (17% and 22% respectively). Crop respondents are also significantly less likely to cite commodity prices as the greatest opportunity in 2009 (10%) than in 2007 (27%). In 2009, respondents in the dairy sector (44%) are significantly more likely to cite protection of supply management as the greatest opportunity than in 2007 (33%).

Annual comparison by province

In 2009 respondents in Alberta (7%), Saskatchewan (8%), Manitoba (6%), Quebec (3%) and the Atlantic provinces (6%) are significantly **less** likely to identify ethanol/biofuel production as the greatest opportunity in agriculture than in 2007 (20%, 18%, 16%, 14% and 16% respectively). Additionally, Alberta (7%), Saskatchewan (9%) and Manitoba (10%) respondents are significantly **less** likely to cite commodity prices as the greatest opportunity in 2009 than in 2007 (15%, 30% and 20% respectively). On the other hand, respondents from British Columbia (19%) are significantly more likely to cite diversification as the greatest opportunity in 2009 than in 2007 (7%).

Results by sector: 2009

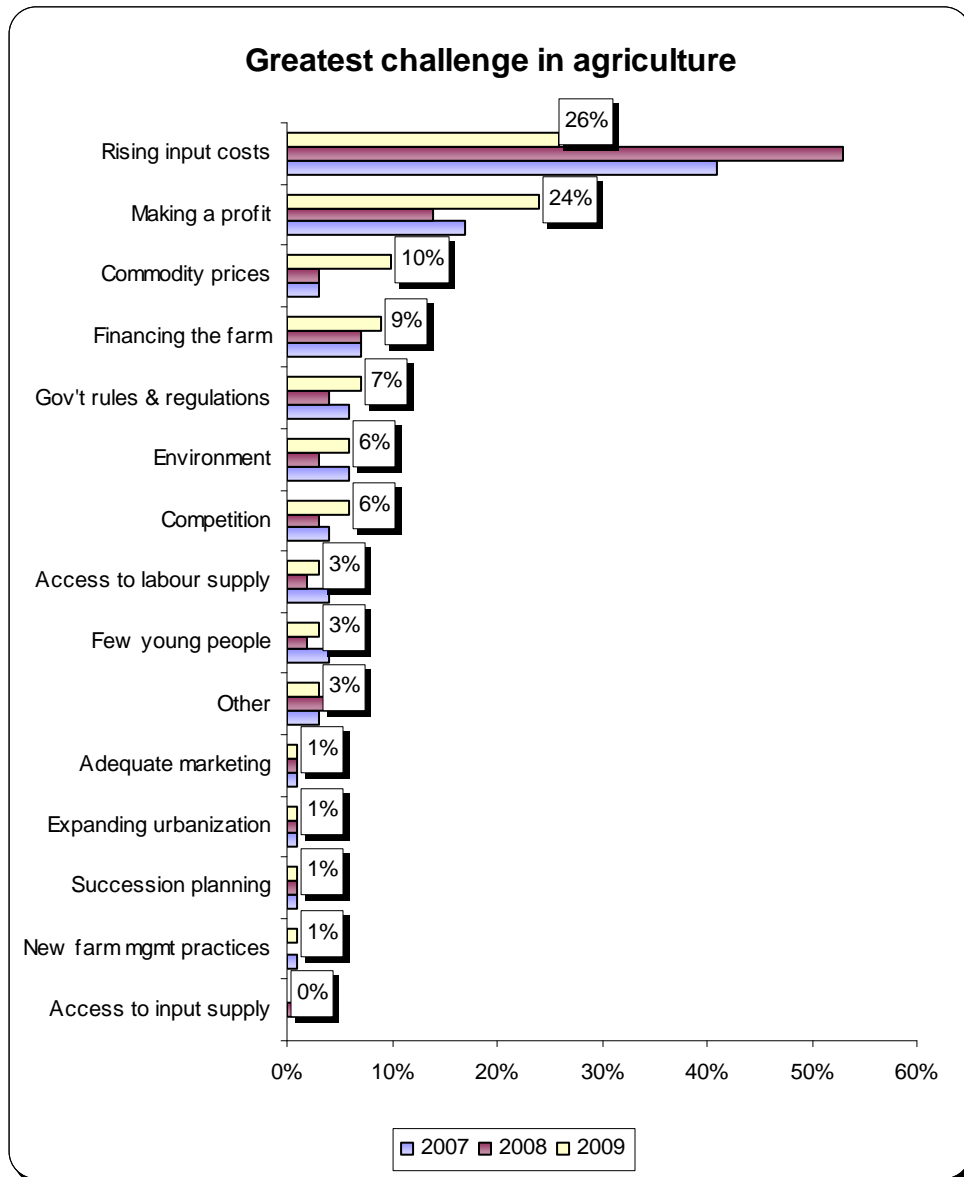
Similar to previous years, each sector identified different opportunities that they see in agriculture over the next year. Respondents in both the dairy (44%) and poultry (36%) sectors are significantly more likely than those in other sectors to cite the protection of supply managed production as the greatest opportunity over the next year, while respondents in the fruit, vegetable and horticulture sectors see the greatest opportunities in public demand for new products (24%) and niche market specialties (18%). Respondents in the crop sector are significantly more likely than those in other sectors to cite opportunities in ethanol / biofuel production (10%), increased demand for product (15%), and commodity prices (10%).

Results by sector: 2009

Respondents in Quebec (19%) and British Columbia (15%) are significantly more likely than those from other provinces to cite diversification as the greatest opportunities in agriculture over the next year. Respondents from Ontario (14%) and the Atlantic provinces (15%) are more likely to indicate public demand for new products as the greatest opportunity compared to respondents from Saskatchewan (7%). Meanwhile, respondents from Alberta (12%), Saskatchewan (18%) and Manitoba (15%) are more likely to report that they see increased demand for products as the greatest opportunity compared to respondents from all other provinces.

Results: Greatest challenge in agriculture

In 2009, one quarter of respondents cited rising input costs (26%) as the greatest challenges facing agriculture, this is significantly **less** compared to 2007 (41%) and 2008 (53%). Conversely, one quarter of respondents cited making a profit (24%) as the greatest challenge in 2009, this is significantly more than 2007 (17%) and 2008 (14%). Additionally, respondents in 2009 are significantly more likely to cite commodity prices (10%) and competition (6%) as challenges facing agriculture compared to respondents from 2007 (3% and 4% respectively) and 2008 (3% and 3% respectively).



What do you see as the greatest challenge in agriculture as a whole over the next year? Please select one only.
(n = 3647, 2007; n = 4309, 2008; n = 4515, 2009)

Annual comparison by sector

In 2009, respondents in the crop (28%) and beef (22%) sectors are significantly **less** likely to cite rising input costs as the greatest challenge than in 2007 (54% and 42% respectively). However, crop and beef respondents are significantly more likely to cite making a profit (22% and 36%) and commodity prices (16% and 9%) as the greatest challenges in 2009 than in 2007 (profit; 12% and 26% respectively) and (prices; 3% and 4% respectively).

Annual comparison by province

In 2009, respondents from Saskatchewan (25%), Manitoba (28%) and British Columbia (25%) are significantly more likely to cite making a profit as the greatest challenge than in 2007 (12%, 12% and 13% respectively). Additionally, Alberta (11%), Saskatchewan (19%) and Manitoba (12%) respondents are significantly more likely to cite commodity prices as the greatest challenge in 2009 than in 2007 (3%, 2% and 2% respectively). Meanwhile, respondents from Manitoba (12%) and British Columbia (16%) are significantly more likely to cite financing the farm as the greatest challenge in 2009 than in 2007 (5% and 5% respectively).

Results by sector: 2009

Respondents in both the crop (28%) and dairy (32%) sectors are significantly more likely to cite rising input costs as the greatest challenge over the next year than those in the poultry (20%), beef (22%) and hog (15%) sectors. Compared to all other sectors, hog (32%) and beef (36%) respondents are significantly more likely to cite making a profit as the greatest challenge facing agriculture. Additionally, crop (16%) and beef (9%) respondents are more likely to identify commodity prices as the greatest challenge in agriculture compared to respondents from other sectors. Respondents from the poultry (13%), hog (13%) and fruit, vegetable and horticulture (10%) sectors are more likely to cite competition as the greatest challenge facing agriculture compared to those in the crop (5%) and beef (3%).

Results by province: 2009

Quebec (6%) and Saskatchewan (6%) respondents are significantly **less** likely to cite financing the farm as the greatest challenge facing agriculture compared to those from all other provinces. Respondents from Alberta (11%), Saskatchewan (19%) and Manitoba (12%) are more likely to state commodity prices are the greatest challenge facing agriculture than those from all other provinces. Compared to respondents from most other provinces, those from Ontario (5%) are more likely to cite few young people involved in agriculture as the greatest challenge while those from Quebec (9%) and the Atlantic provinces (10%) are more likely to cite competition.

“Opportunities [exist] in product development by adding added value from raw material to the end user. Challenges are little is made in encouraging youth to get into agriculture, even our education system is ignorant about it.” –Ontario poultry producer

“New technology provides some effective labour saving opportunities. This produces economies of scale to smaller producers. Cost must be competitive.” – Ontario dairy producer

“There are many challenges in agriculture but one must keep informed, especially with the high cost of inputs, so that you can make the right decisions for your continued farming success.” –Saskatchewan crop producer

“I think that, but regret to say that there are fewer opportunities than challenges in the farming sector. Cost increases, labour shortage and a changing environment are some, but the increase of even stricter government rules and regulating [create] greater barriers than anything else.” –Atlantic poultry producer

“Opportunities are going to be available through technology and broader thinking. The right people on your side.” –Ontario dairy producer

“The weather is always a challenge. Most often we are one rain away from a disaster; however forward planning can alleviate many of these difficulties. It can mean some nerve racking decisions, but that is business.” –Saskatchewan crop producer

“Commodity prices are the major challenge. Fall inputs, fertilizer, and some chemicals are back to lower prices which is an opportunity.” –Manitoba crop producer

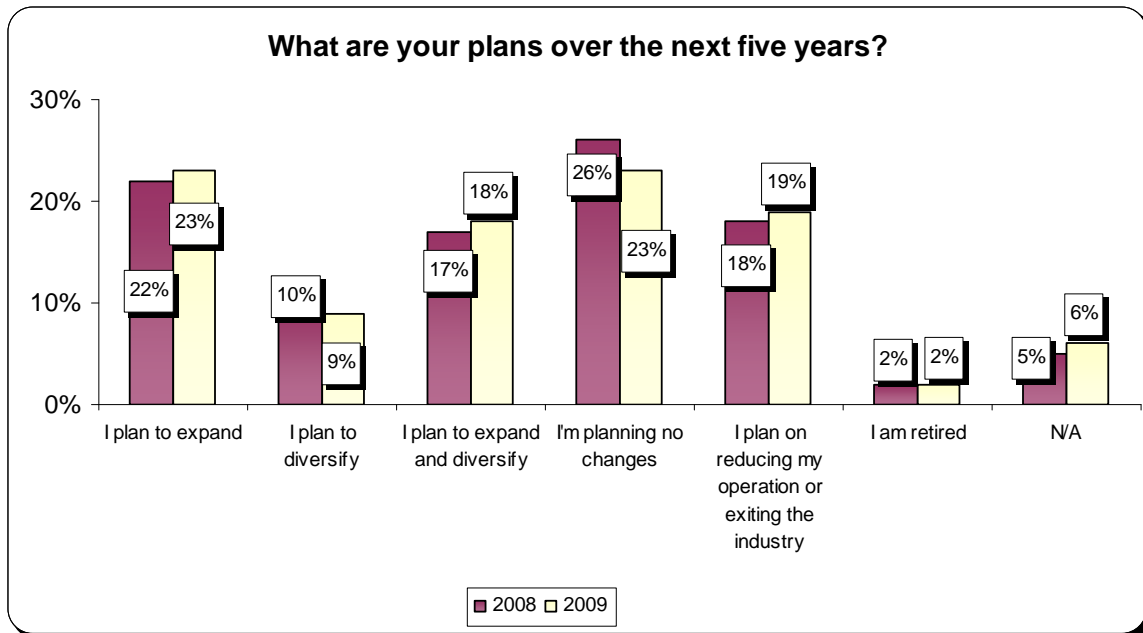
“Dealing with costly and unpredictable government policy is a big challenge. Our beef processing costs have doubled in the last two years largely because of new provincial regulations.” –British Columbia beef producer

“Marketing of commodities is important and there should be some way the farmer should get his fair share of the sale price just like those who sell inputs. One does not want handouts, just a fair net income for the work one does.” – Alberta crop producer

“The challenge is to be competitive with the global market, increase the productivity and reduce production costs in order to preserve our markets and to create new places for our products.” – Quebec crop producer

Results: Future plans³

In 2009, respondents are significantly less likely to report that they plan on making no changes to their operation in the next five years (23%) compared to respondents in 2008 (26%).



Looking ahead, what are your plans for your farm or business over the next five years? (n = 4309, 2008; n = 4515, 2009)

“With expansion, my farm is better off than before but the world of agriculture is so up and down, you need to flow with the waves.” – Alberta crop producer

Annual comparison by sector

In 2009 dairy respondents are significantly more likely to report that they plan to expand their operations (39%) than in 2008 (31%). Meanwhile, crop respondents are more likely to state that they plan to expand and diversify their operations in 2009 (16%) than in 2008 (12%). Hog producers in 2009 (23%) are significantly **less** likely to state that they plan on making no changes to their current operations compared to 2008 (39%).

Annual comparison by province

Respondents in Quebec are significantly **less** likely to state that they plan on making no changes to their operations (10%) or that they plan to diversify (8%) in 2009 than in 2008 (35% and 15% respectively). Meanwhile, Ontario respondents are significantly **less** likely to state that they plan on reducing their operations in 2009 (11%) than in 2008 (14%).

³ This was a new question added to the 2008 survey, therefore there is no comparison to 2007.

Results by sector: 2009

Compared to respondents in all other sectors, respondents in the hog sector (8%) are significantly **less** likely to report that they plan to expand their farms or businesses over the next five years. Respondents in the poultry (28%) and fruit, vegetable and horticulture (28%) sectors are significantly more likely to plan to expand and diversify over the next five years compared to respondents in most other sectors. Dairy respondents (7%) are significantly **less** likely to state that they plan on reducing their operation or exiting the industry compared to those from all other sectors. Meanwhile, respondents in the crop sector (26%) are most likely to state that they are planning on making no changes to their current operations compared to those from all other sectors.

Results by province: 2009

Ontario (10%) and British Columbia (15%) respondents are significantly more likely to state that they plan to diversify over the next five years compared to those from Saskatchewan (6%) and Manitoba (6%). Respondents from Saskatchewan (12%) and Manitoba (12%) are significantly **less** likely to report that they plan to expand and diversify compared to those from most other provinces. Meanwhile, respondents from Quebec (10%) are significantly **less** likely to report that they plan on making no changes to their operation compared to those from all other provinces. Additionally, respondents from Ontario (11%) and Quebec (14%) are **less** likely to report that they plan on reducing their operations or exiting the industry compared to those from all other provinces.