2020

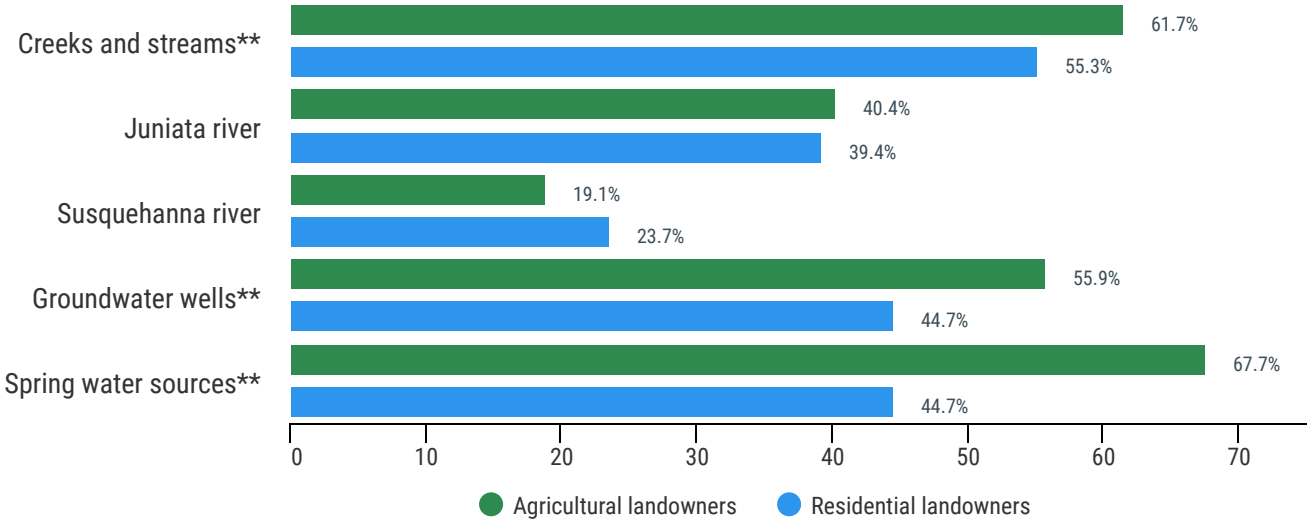
Agricultural and Residential Landowners Survey
Mifflin County, Pennsylvania

Summary of Results

WATER for AGRICULTURE

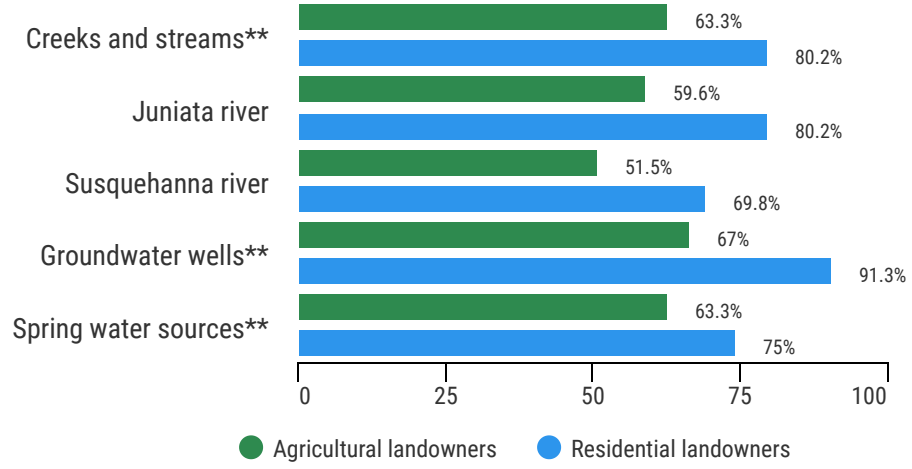
The Water for Agriculture project conducted a mail survey of both agricultural and residential landowners in Mifflin County, PA. The mail survey assessed landowner values, beliefs and behaviors related to streams, rivers and groundwater. Addresses for the survey were obtained from publicly available property tax records. A sample of 500 agricultural landowners were sent surveys, and 135 responded (for a response rate of 27%). A sample of 500 residential landowners were sent surveys, and 79 responded (15.8%). These numbers are consistent with or above the national average for mail survey responses.

What percentage of landowners rate water quality in Mifflin County as "good" or "excellent"?*



** Results are a combined percentage of respondents who rated the location's water quality as "good" or "excellent."*
*** Near the respondent's home.*

What percentage of landowners are "moderately" or "very" concerned about water quality in Mifflin County?*

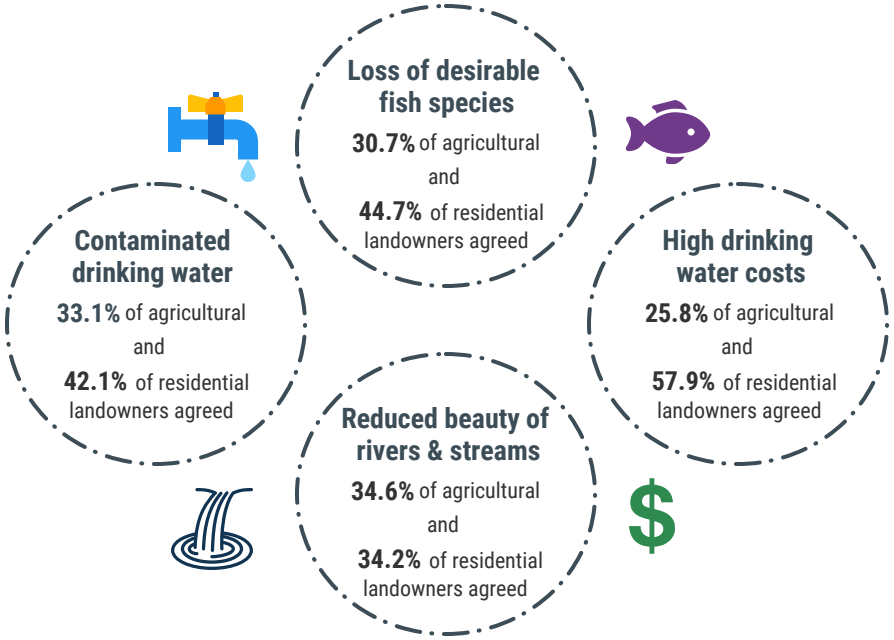


** Results are a combined percentage of respondents who were "moderately" or "very" concerned about a location's water quality.*
*** Near the respondent's home.*

Why this survey?

The survey was developed by Penn State in conjunction with the Water for Agriculture program's Mifflin County Local Leadership Team to better understand the perspectives of landowners in Mifflin County regarding ground and surface water issues. Our leadership team and its partners will use these results to inform and prioritize its activities to meet the most critical water and agricultural needs facing Mifflin County. To learn more, visit http://water4ag.psu.edu or contact Walt Whitmer at wew@psu.edu or 814-865-0468.

What are the biggest quality of life impacts related to water problems in Mifflin County?

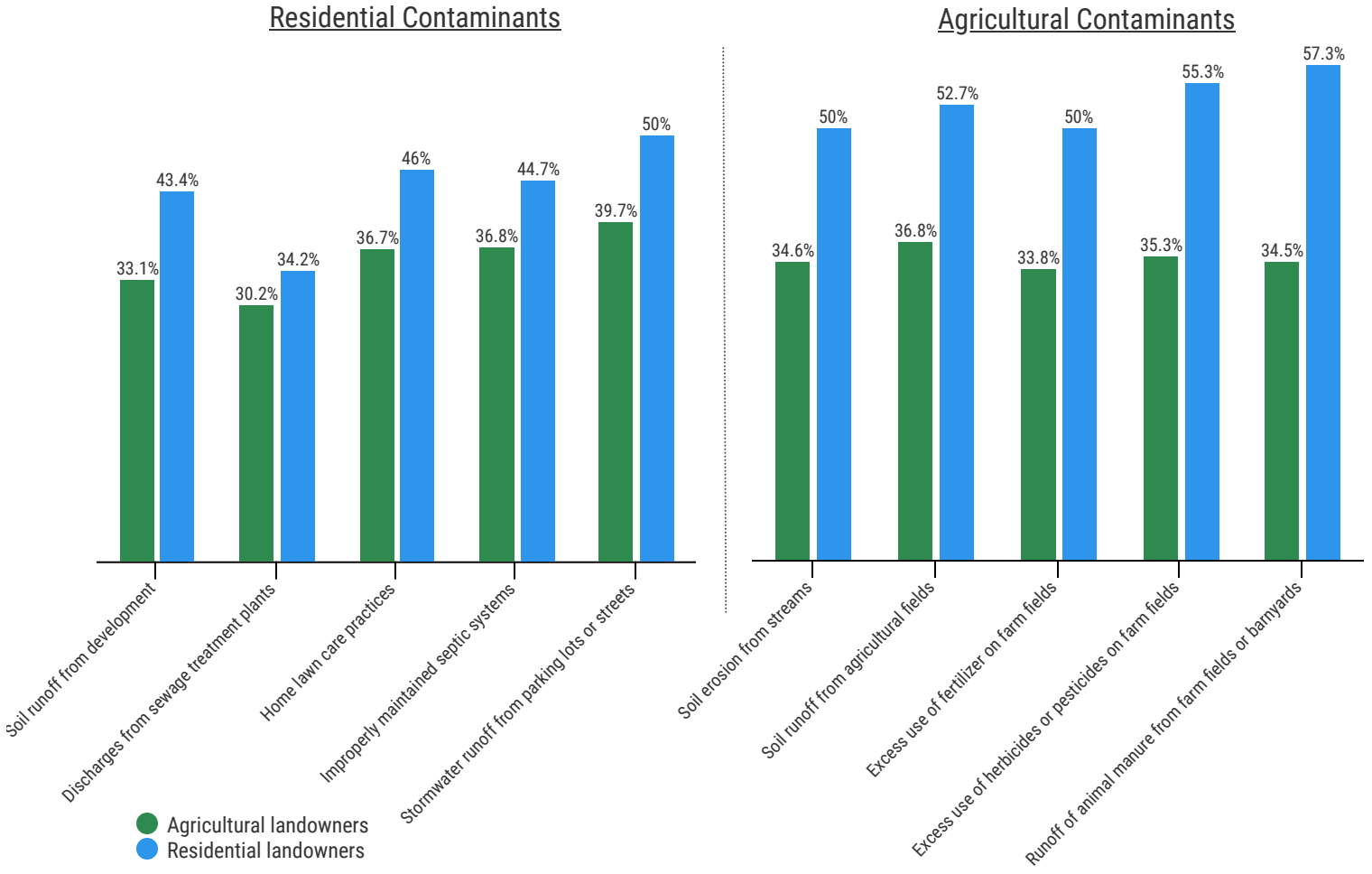


Groundwater, River & Stream Contaminants

Agricultural and residential landowners surveyed differed only slightly on perceptions of sediment, nitrogen, phosphorus, chemicals and E. Coli being problematic contaminants for groundwater, streams and rivers in Mifflin County.

About half of residential landowners believed each contaminant was a problem, while slightly less than half of agricultural landowners believed each contaminant was a problem.

How much of a problem are these sources of contamination for water quality in Mifflin County?*



** Results are a combined percentage of respondents who rated the contaminant as "moderately" or "very" concerning.*

Landowner attitudes about efforts to address water quality*:

82.2% think that it is their personal responsibility to help protect water quality.

79.3% think the quality of life in their community depends on good quality surface and groundwater.

63.6% think that people near them would expect them to protect water quality.

51.4% would be willing to change their land management practices to improve water quality and quantity.

41.1% are eager to learn more about opportunities to address water quality issues in their communities.

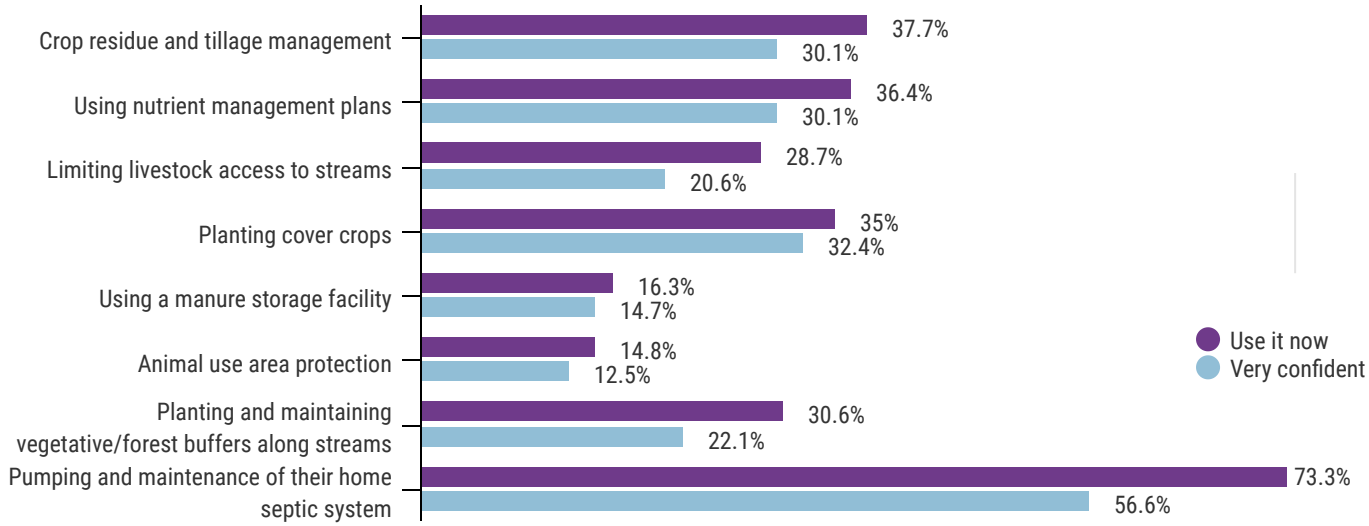
21.7% think investing in water quality protection puts local farms & businesses at an economic disadvantage.

18.4% think they are able to influence how local water quality and quantity issues are addressed.

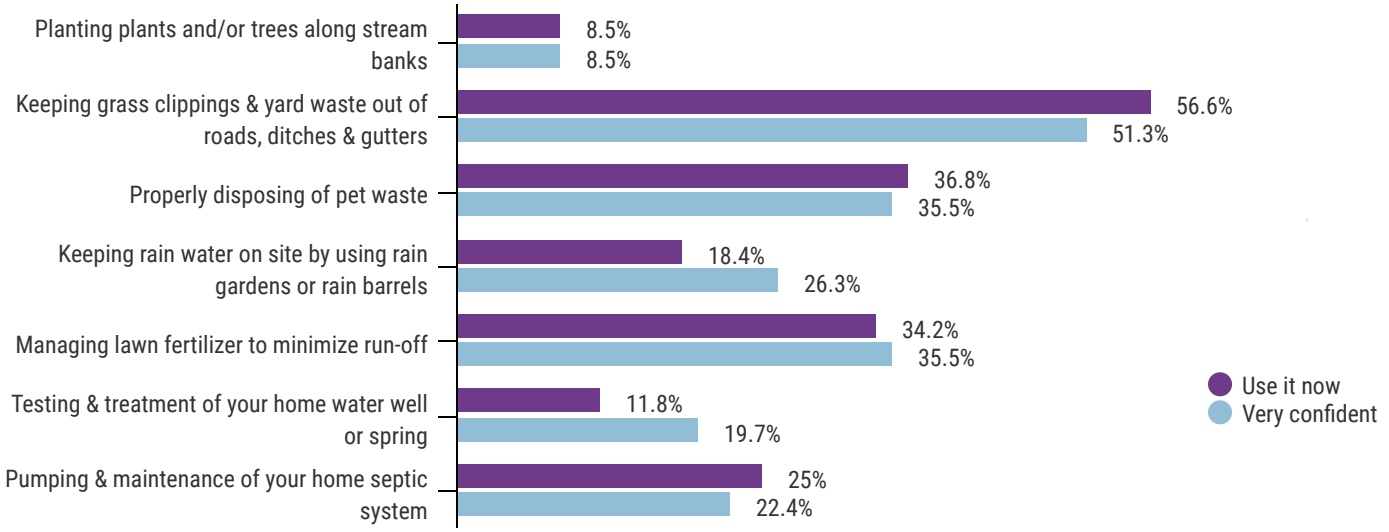
13.6% think that taking action to improve water quality is too expensive for them.

* Results are a combined percentage of respondents who "agree" or "strongly agree" with the statement.

Agricultural landowners' use of and confidence in their ability to implement the following practices*:



Residential landowners' use of and confidence in their ability to implement the following practices*:



* Results indicate the percentage of respondents who "use [the practice] now" and are "very confident" that [they] could use [the practice] on the majority of [their] fields/lawn in the next 1-3 years.

Landowner-specific information

Total number of acres owned or leased by agricultural landowner respondents:

12,100

Average number of acres managed by agricultural landowner respondents:

62.1

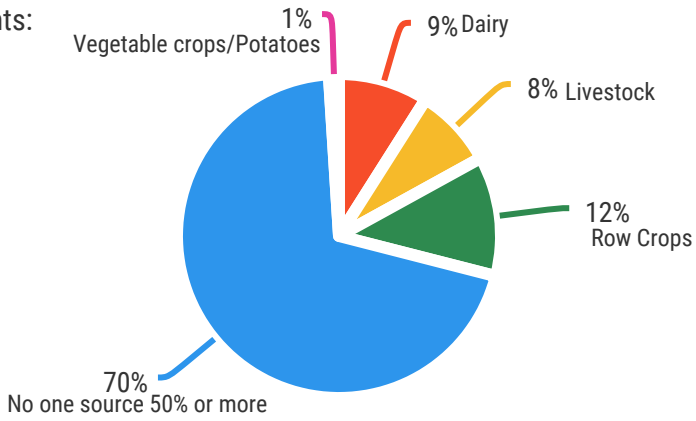
% of agricultural landowners who have **off-farm employment:**

50.9%

Average approximate size of residential landowners' property (in acres)

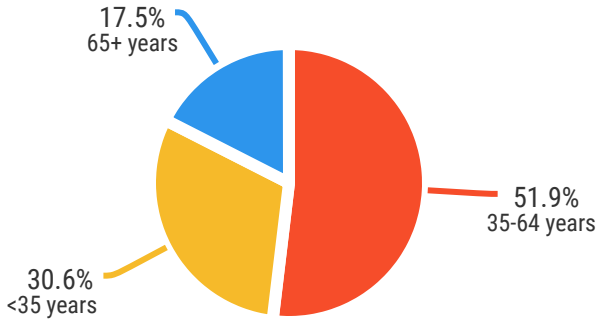
1/2 to less than 1

Type of farm

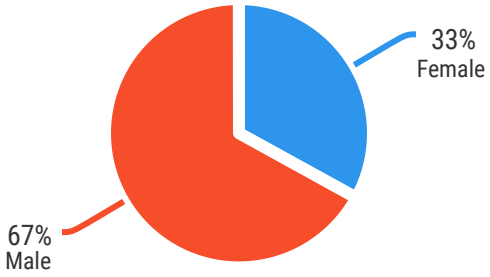


Survey respondent demographics

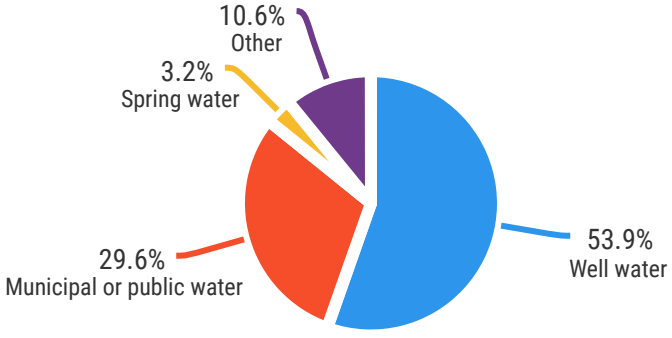
Age



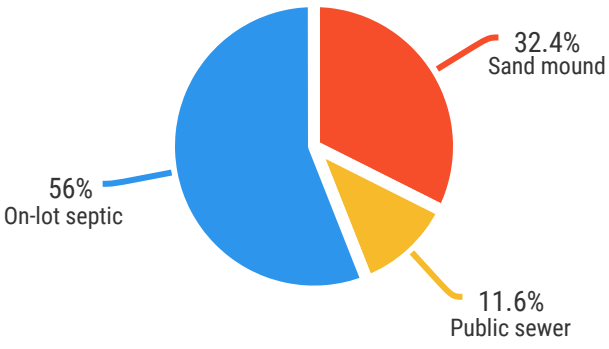
Gender



Type of drinking water source



Type of wastewater treatment



*This summary report was designed by Hannah Whitley with assistance from Lydia Carey.

*This study was led by the Penn State supported Water for Agriculture project in collaboration with local agencies and organizations. Project partners include Pennsylvania State University, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and Arizona State University. Project funding was provided by the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Water for Agriculture grant no. 2017-68007-26584/project accession no. 1013079 from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. For more information about the study, contact Walt Whitmer at wew2@psu.edu.