

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CANADIAN AGRICULTURE BY UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCE OF FARM WOMEN

FINAL REPORT
2023



FARM MANAGEMENT CANADA
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CENTRICENGINE

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Heather Watson, Executive Director

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Robert Wilbur Strategic Perspectives

Bob Wilbur, Principal

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About the Authors

Maurice Allin is a management consultant, researcher and speaker specializing in understanding decision-making among farmers and veterinarians. He is the President of CentricEngine and formerly the VP Strategy with an Ag focused marketing/communications firm, a senior Manager at Deloitte Consulting and began his career in Ag Extension.

Bob Wilbur is a consultant working to address strategic initiatives in the agriculture and animal health industries. His career as an agri-marketer has been focused on helping organizations develop a better understanding of their customers to create a differential advantage in the marketplace.

Heather Watson is the Executive Director of Farm Management Canada, a national non-profit organization dedicated to increasing the awareness, appreciation and adoption of farm business management practices to help position Canada's farmers for sustainable growth and prosperity.

The Research Team recognizes the diversity of gender identities. The use of the terms woman/women and man/men in this report are not intended to be exclusive to any other gender identity. In using these terms, no distinction is made or assumed between cisgender and affirmed gender identity.

Executive Summary

Although women have been contributing to the success of farming in Canada since time immemorial, their roles are often undocumented, unacknowledged and unquantified. As such, the contribution farm women make to the industry has historically been unrecognized, uncounted and undervalued. There is ample anecdotal evidence to suggest that women are influencing and positioned to influence farming in Canada in ways that go far beyond current measurements. Articles in farm publications, social media posts and the growing membership in organizations for women in agriculture point to an increase in women's involvement in both the operational and managerial aspects of farming. Data from agricultural colleges and universities report growing numbers of women students. The lack of a body of work on the topic of the experience and contributions of farm women is both a challenge and an opportunity; a challenge in that little guidance is offered for establishing a framework to study the experience and contributions of farm women, and an opportunity to fill a significant knowledge gap for Canadian agriculture.

Today, women are involved in a broad array of on-farm activities. As well, they take on responsibilities for many family-related matters and in some cases additional employment and entrepreneurial activities both farm-related and otherwise.

One must consider what impact this lack of data is having on policy and program decisions, skills development, innovation and growth opportunities. As well, from a commercial perspective, there appears to be a customer group that needs to be better understood.

Therefore, it became imperative to initiate a study that would go beyond generalizations, stereotypes and anecdotes to create a foundation of facts to accurately identify the range of the roles undertaken by farm women and develop an understanding of their experiences, that is, their motivations, aspirations, challenges they face, and contributions to the success of farming in Canada.

Here, we provide a brief summary of the findings of this undertaking. The complete detailed report and analysis follows.

Objectives

To improve our understanding of the roles and experiences of farm women.

1. By developing a data set in order to replace stereotypes with evidence of the activities undertaken by farm women.
2. By gaining an understanding of the experiences of farm women including their motivations, challenges and aspirations.

Research Methods

To achieve these objectives, the research team:

- Created a project Steering Committee of farm women representing agricultural women's groups from across Canada
- Undertook an environmental scan of existing literature and data
- Conducted one-on-one interviews with farm women
- Conducted a nationwide survey with farm women
- Summarized the survey findings
- Performed further analysis and interpretation of the results

Considerations

This research is ground-breaking in terms of both scope and content. It required both the adaptation and invention of several techniques. In addition, the nature of many findings is complex and surprising. These topics include Survey Recruitment; Terminology: "Farm Women"; Terminology: "Roles"; Diversity of Experience; Limitations of Demographics and Farmographics and are described more fully in the detailed findings.

Key Findings

Limited research exists pertaining to the experience, contributions, motivations, aspirations, challenges and barriers faced by farm women. Any existing data is limited to anecdotal information or to regional observations. See Environmental Scan (<https://fmc-gac.com/programs-services/research-analysis/#farmwomen>).

- There is no overarching schema or framework available for documenting the roles, activities, and responsibilities involved in running farm operations and farming households, or the relationship between these undertakings. The broad range and diversity of activities undertaken underscores that there is no typical role for a farm woman and that viewing the data in aggregate or as averages provides very limited insight into individual experiences.
- The drivers of experience for farm women are centered around human factors. That is, it is their interaction with others that most determines the type of experience they are living; not their age, ethnicity, marital status, education, employment, economic status, farm size, farm structure, location, or production type.
- Viewing the data through the lens of human experience provides a compelling set of five distinct patterns of experience.
- The level of involvement and satisfaction with farm-related communication is a critical dimension in determining the nature of the experience of farm women.

- The nature of interactions and relationships with others is also a significant dimension in determining the nature of the experience of farm women. That is, whether they feel supported, and their contributions valued, and whether they feel their interactions with family members, other farmers and farm service suppliers would be better if they were a man.

Recommendations

- Create and enhance programs and resources that specifically address the needs of farm women.
- Dedicate efforts beyond Women in Agriculture to focus exclusively on supporting farm women.
- Support gender equity and equality initiatives.
- Promote communication and interpersonal skills along with business management practices as essential parts of farming.
- Expand existing research to more effectively capture data related to farm women.
- Conduct additional research on the experience and contributions of farm women, factors that influence farm success, and a comparative study of farm men using the same human-centered lens.

Viewing the data through the lens of human experience provides a compelling set of five distinct patterns of experience.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CANADIAN AGRICULTURE BY UNDERSTANDING THE EXPERIENCE OF FARM WOMEN

DETAILED RESULTS



Introduction

Although women have been contributing to the success of farming in Canada since time immemorial, their roles are often undocumented, unacknowledged and unquantified. While the Census of Agriculture¹ reports that close to 30 per cent of farms have a woman as a primary decision maker (either as sole proprietor or in a partnership), there is ample anecdotal evidence to suggest that women are influencing and positioned to influence farming in Canada in ways that go far beyond Census measurement. Articles in farm publications, social media posts and the growing membership in organizations for women in agriculture point to an increase in women's involvement in both the operational and managerial aspects of farming. And data from agricultural colleges and universities report growing numbers of women students. The lack of a body of work on the topic of the experience and contributions of farm women is both a challenge and an opportunity: a challenge in that little guidance is offered around establishing a framework to study the experience and contributions of farm women, and an opportunity to fulfill a significant knowledge gap for Canadian agriculture.

It became imperative to initiate a study to provide a valid, quantified assessment of the experience of farm women including their roles, responsibilities, motivations, aspirations, and contributions to Canada's farming sector.

There is a lack of data about farm women, which is having an impact on policy and program decisions, and skills development, innovation and growth opportunities.

Therefore, it became imperative to initiate a study to provide a valid, quantified assessment of the experience of farm women including their roles, responsibilities, motivations, aspirations, and contributions to Canada's farming sector.

This report is organized as follows. First, we provide a description of the research methods used, followed by a discussion of several considerations that are important to understanding and interpreting the study findings. The findings of the quantitative research are introduced with a description of the demographics of the respondents. The survey findings are included in two distinct sections – the first being a presentation of information relating to the context of farm women, and the second being a detailed exploration of the experiences of farm women.

Further analysis and interpretation are presented utilizing multivariate statistical methods to reveal patterns in the data that would not be evident through cross-tabulation. Finally, the report contains detailed conclusions and recommendations based on the findings.

¹ Statistics Canada. Census of Agriculture. 2021. www.statcan.gc.ca/en/census-agriculture.

Research Methods

In order to develop a robust data set as well as corresponding insight, the research team employed a variety of methodologies.

Steering Committee

At the outset, the project team established a Steering Committee comprised of farm women representing a mix of regions, production sectors and roles both on and off the farm. The Steering Committee helped to shape the parameters and criteria within the study and brought forward their personal perspective and those of their immediate communities. They also provided valuable guidance on terminology, language used and interpretation of the data.

Environmental Scan

The focus for the Environmental Scan was to answer four specific questions:

1. What data exists today that describes the activities of women on farms in Canada? This information may provide a baseline for assessing changes in the situation as well as provide insight into methodological approaches and their accompanying strengths and weaknesses.
2. How might we describe the activities – what schemas exist for articulating the specific contributions that comprise the management and operation of a farm?
3. What data exists that accurately captures the current and desired contributions of women to the success of farm operations in Canada and how are they being recognized for these contributions?
4. What are the range and extent of barriers to women in undertaking these activities?

An extensive review of pertinent literature derived from academic and grey literature and internet keyword search confirmed the lack of data specific to the activities and experience of farm women including those entering the sector. There has been considerable work on women in agriculture in general, particularly identifying the challenges and barriers that they face. However, most efforts did not focus on farm women specifically, or were regional in scope.

An excerpt from a chapter in a 1995 book titled *Changing Methods: Feminists Transforming Practice*², Nettie Wiebe, former President of Canada's National Farmers' Union observed:

"Farm women face a complex array of challenges. Their position remains largely invisible, their farm work unremunerated and indeed their status as legitimate farmers unrecognized. The working reality of farm women includes not only the work they do but also how this work is described, counted and valued. But a history of leaving farm women's work uncounted, discounted and undervalued inhibits attempts to collect accurate data using standard methods..."

² BURT, SANDRA, and LORRAINE CODE, editors. *Changing Methods: Feminists Transforming Practice*. University of Toronto Press, 1995. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/j.ctt2ttjzb.

This observation has been reinforced by the results of the Environmental Scan; the literature revealed little in the way of the activities and contributions of farm women today.

However, the scan identified that research has surfaced showing that:

- farm women experience greater stress levels, specifically related to farm transition and maintaining family and farm team harmony
- farm women are more likely to adopt business practices in support of reducing stress and anxiety
- there is a lack of available programming for farm women specifically or any information regarding the success of current initiatives.

See Environmental Scan (<https://fmc-gac.com/programs-services/research-analysis/#farmwomen>).

With this dearth of information as a backdrop, the project team set out to design a study that would shine a light on the contributions, roles and experiences of farm women.

Qualitative Research Phase

The initial phase of primary research involved 21 one-on-one interviews with farm women from across Canada in order to understand their range of activities, experiences and opinions. This exercise was both enlightening and daunting due to the broad range of experiences and opinions that were shared. Individual situations included sole ownership of an operation that had been started from scratch, full partnership in a large multi-generational operation structured across multiple corporations, and involvement through a spouse with little remuneration or recognition. Opinions ranged from women who felt they were in a good situation, facing little to no unique challenges to those that felt there were barriers at every turn and had difficulty making progress.

Opinions ranged from women who felt they were in a good situation, facing little to no unique challenges to those that felt there were barriers at every turn and had difficulty making progress.

The women interviewed demonstrated involvement in an incredible diversity of farm-related activities from bookkeeping and financial management, to marketing, customer relations, purchasing, field work, livestock management, logistics planning, processing, human resource management, safety assurance, administration and general labour. In addition, these women often had additional roles through off-farm employment, entrepreneurial pursuits and family-related responsibilities such as childcare and meal preparation.

Given the complexities inherent in this range of experiences and attitudes, a broader approach was taken in developing a survey instrument for the next phase of the project that would encompass what was learned. Guidance from the Steering Committee helped to ensure terminology was accurate and the range of experiences had been captured.

Quantitative Research Phase

The second phase of primary research involved a national online survey of farm women from across Canada. The goal of this phase was to provide statistically valid metrics that provide a baseline understanding of the range and prominence of involvement in activities in support of the farm and experiences including motivations, aspirations, challenges and opportunities for farm women across Canada. Questions were asked in various formats including open-ended, selecting from a list, ranking choices and rating choices provided. The survey garnered 1,025 respondents representing all regions, commodities, farm types and demographics providing a significant sample size for analysis and future study.

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Analysis & Interpretation

The application of a mix of data analysis techniques allowed for a more in-depth review of the meaning of the survey results.

Specific techniques used included:

- Cluster analysis – to identify patterns in experience and to help observe, better understand, and analyze the differences in patterns.
- Factor analysis - to understand the distinct themes emerging, that is, the dimensions that were driving the differences.
- Discriminant analysis – to further highlight the differences and identify distinct groups of farm women based on their experience.

This methodology allowed for the observation of the data through a human-centred lens, which would prove to be much more meaningful than traditional demographic or farmographic analysis.

Considerations

Survey Recruitment

Survey respondents were recruited using two different methods. First, using a “recruit to web” method calling farms by telephone utilizing a qualified list of 19,000 farms in Canada and inviting farm women to complete the online survey. This portion of the responses can be considered a random sample (subject to consideration of non-response bias). This approach yielded 490 completed surveys by farm women at a 2.5% response rate representing 48% of respondents. Typical response rates for random calling “recruit to web” surveys in agriculture are in the 1% range – indicating the possibility that respondents were more motivated than on average.

Second, an “open link” was created to invite any farm women who were interested to participate in the online survey. The link was shared through the Steering Committee and the project team and project partners’ email databases and social media channels to ensure that farm women who desired a voice in the survey had the opportunity. This effort yielded a further 530 completed surveys by farm women representing 52% of respondents. For analysis and reporting, the data has been aggregated between both types of respondents into a single database.

Terminology: Farm Women

Early planning discussions regarding the desired respondents to the survey highlighted complexities and subtleties in terminology that could result in a potential respondent scoping themselves out the survey or potential respondents who had nothing to do with the farm. The resolution was to use the term “farm women” as a more encompassing term to include women in farming, women on the farm, or farming women, and to focus on women who were directly involved in activities that support the farm operation. Level of involvement in the farm operation was asked in the screening process.

Results (Figure 1) show that the majority of respondents have a high degree of involvement in the farm.

Terminology: Roles

One of the objectives for this project was to provide data on the roles and activities that women undertake in the farm operation. The Environmental Scan included significant effort to identify a recognized schema for defining and classifying farm roles, however no suitable schema was found.

How would you describe your level of involvement in the farm?

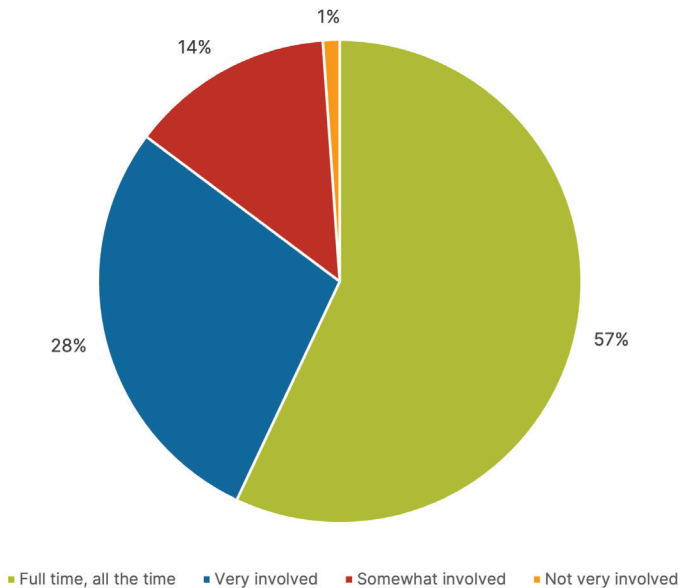


Figure 1: Respondent Involvement in the Farm Operation (% of Respondents)



The project team defined a total of 31 roles and activities under four categories:

- Farm Business Management
- Livestock & Poultry Management
- Crop Production & Management
- Post-Harvest & Marketing

The major challenge was to create a list that was comprehensive enough to include any and all activities that may be present on the farm and yet not create such a lengthy list that would result in respondent fatigue.

Diversity of Experience

There is a tremendous diversity of experiences among the survey respondents encompassing an incredible range of circumstances. To consider only the numerical averages, median or modal responses, would do little to describe the richness of individual experiences. In a study of this scale, the intention is to provide a sense of the overall shape of the data, but recognize that when all dimensions are considered, few respondents can really be considered “average.”

Limitations of Demographics and Farmographics

Quantitative research in the agricultural industry tends to rely heavily on demographics (age, ethnicity, gender, marital status, education, etc.) and farmographics (farm size, structure, production, etc.) as key facets of data interpretation and analysis i.e., How do respondents from large scale farms differ from smaller scale? How are livestock producers different from crop producers? How do young farmers respond differently? Our observation from reviewing the breadth and scope of responses to this survey indicates demographic and farmographic factors are far less significant in describing or explaining the variations in responses regarding the experiences of farm women.

Instead, this report focuses on uncovering what the anthropologist Gregory Bateson called the “differences that make a difference.”

***Demographic and farmographic factors are far less significant
in describing or explaining the variations in responses
regarding the experiences of farm women.***

Survey Demographics

The following provides an orientation to the survey respondents who participated in the study. As a frame of reference, the regional orientation and production sector of the respondents are shown in the chart below (Figure 2). Overall, the sample is representative of farming in Canada generally. The distribution of respondents, however, warrants the following commentary:

- Potential Manitoba respondents may have been affected by an uncommonly late spring overlapping with the time the study was in field.
- British Columbia and some of the traditionally smaller commodity categories are slightly overrepresented in the survey. Anecdotal information suggests that this may be due to social networks playing a role in raising general awareness of the study and participation.

PRINCIPAL COMMODITY	TOTAL	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	ATLANTIC
Total	1025	100	159	173	63	203	229.6	97
Beef cattle ranching and farming	169	29	54	34	14	20	11	7
Dairy cattle and milk production	217	22	9	0	3	70	86	27
Hog and pig farming	24	0	1	0	2	5	13	3
Poultry and egg production	30	5	1	0	2	11	8	3
Sheep and goat farming	26	0	1	0	1	7	13	4
Other animal (equine, bison, emu, deer, apiculture, etc.)	21	2	2	2	1	7	5	2
Oilseed and grain farming	239	2	49	100	29	35	22	2
Vegetable and melon farming	72	10	3	0	0	11	29	19
Fruit and tree nut farming	41	6	1	2	0	6	13	13
Greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production	27	9	4	0	2	4	8	0
Other crop farming (maple syrup, ginseng, hops, etc.)	22	0	1	1	0	7	10	3
General mixed farm (livestock and/or crops) with no predominant single commodity	137	15	33	34	9	20	12	14

Figure 2: Sector of Respondents (# of Respondents)

A sample size encompassing 1,025 respondents contains a wide diversity of individual situations, providing a robust framework for interpretation and analysis of results. For example:

- Both official languages are represented in the survey: 22% of respondents opted for the French language version, and 78% for the English (Figure 3)
- Survey respondents encompass a range of educational levels, and those who achieved a post graduate level are slightly over-represented in the survey when compared to the general population (Figure 4). A significant portion of the survey respondents (40%) have an educational background encompassing at least some agricultural studies.
- The respondents to the survey are overwhelmingly (86%) in a married or common law relationship (Figure 5.)
- All age categories are represented. The Canadian Census of Agriculture reports on age and sex of principal operators but does not provide a reference point for others on the farm, and hence cannot be directly compared. 2021 Census data reports 60% of all farm operators are 55 years and over³. This may indicate that the survey sample underweights the oldest group (those over 70 years of age) (Figure 6).

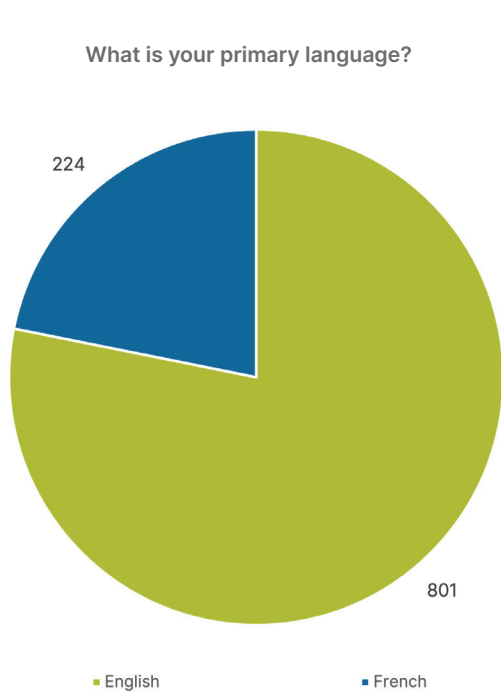


Figure 3: Respondent Language (# of Respondents)

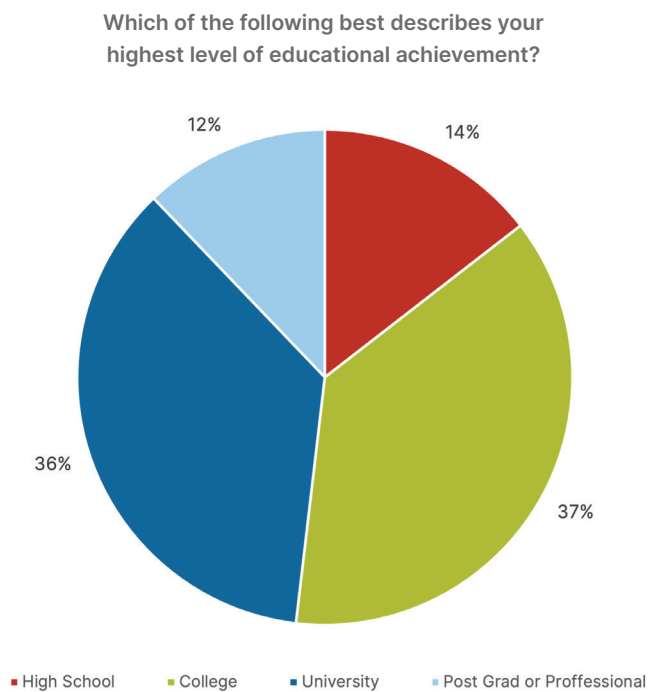


Figure 4: Respondent Education (% of Respondents)

³ Statistics Canada. Census of Agriculture. 2021. www.statcan.gc.ca/en/census-agriculture.



Which of the following best describes your marital status?

MARITAL STATUS	% OF RESPONDENTS
Single (never married)	7%
Married	73%
Living common-law	13%
Divorced	2%
Widowed	3%
Separated	1%
Prefer not to answer	0%

Figure 5: Respondent Marital Status
(% of Respondents)

Which of the following age group are you in?

AGE GROUP	% OF RESPONDENTS
18 to 30	11%
31 to 40	22%
41 to 50	15%
51 to 60	25%
61 to 70	20%
Over 70	6%
Prefer not to answer	1%

Figure 6: Respondent Age
(% of Respondents)

While it is important to recognize the representativeness of the sample base, it is also important to recognize that a key finding of this research is that the demographics of the respondents are not strongly indicative of involvement in any particular activity or experience related to farming.

Survey Results

The Environmental Scan revealed that there is little information regarding the context of farm women's participation in the farm enterprise. The following are the tabulated responses to a broad range of questions regarding the experiences of farm women and the context of those experiences. This exploration of context places the respondents in perspective based on:

- Sense of identity or willingness to describe oneself using the terminology of "farmer."
- Previous experience with farming and rural life prior to becoming a farmer.
- Mechanism for becoming a part of the farm.
- Level and nature of ownership.
- Decision-making style of the farm enterprise and respondents' role in that decision-making.

Many women struggle with identifying themselves as a farmer.

Identity as a Farmer

One of the early findings from the Environmental Scan and the qualitative phase of this project indicated that many women struggle with identifying themselves as a farmer. Results show that only a slight majority of respondents strongly agree with the statement “I consider myself a farmer,” and almost one quarter of respondents disagree (Figure 7). An unexpected finding is that responses did not tend to correlate with their involvement on the farm.

For example, 66% of farm women who strongly agree with the statement “I consider myself a farmer” reported their involvement on the farm as “full time, all the time”. Similarly, 61% of farm women who strongly disagreed also rated their involvement in the farm as “full time, all the time.”

Experience on Farms and Path to the Farm

The qualitative research indicated that one’s history may affect their perspective today. For instance, qualitative respondents who grew up on farms may have different expectations of roles and different skills from women who did not grow up in an agricultural setting. The survey asked respondents about their previous experience with farming and how they came to be involved in the farm setting today. A slight majority (57%) of respondents grew up on a farm operation, but only a small number (20%) had “no previous experience” (Figure 8).

Almost half of respondents joined an existing farm operation, compared to 11% of respondents who took over the family farm (Figure 9).

The survey examined the participation in ownership of the farm by farm women (Figure 10). While the vast majority of respondents had some form or level of ownership, 11% had no ownership at all. Of those who are partners in the farm, the vast majority shared that partnership with family members — most commonly, a spouse (Figure 11).

How strongly would you agree or disagree with the following statement: ‘I consider myself a farmer’?

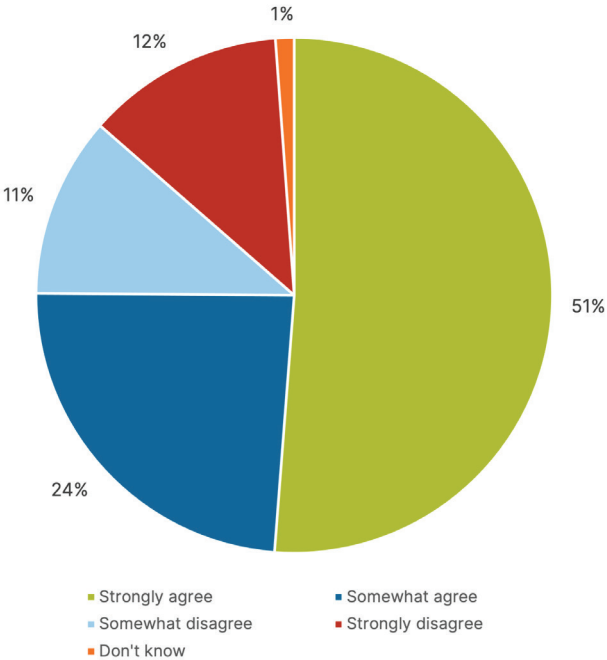


Figure 7: I Consider Myself a Farmer (% of Respondents)

What is your personal background as it relates to farming?

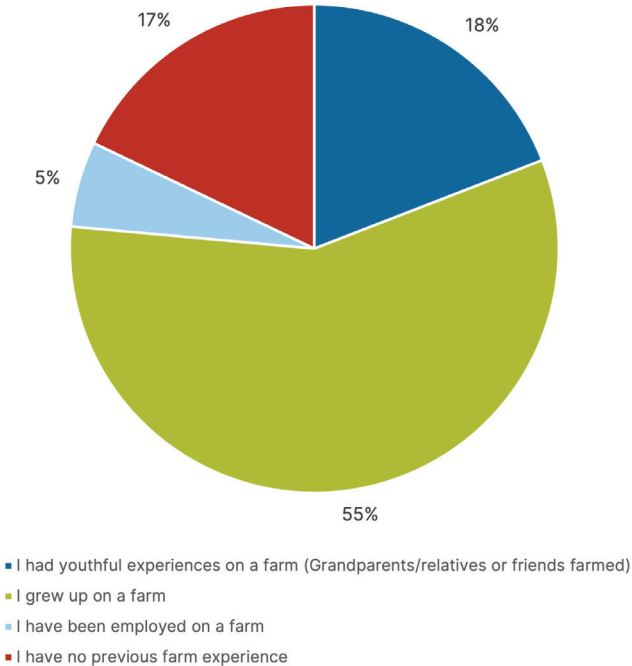


Figure 8: Experience Prior to Farming (% of Respondents)



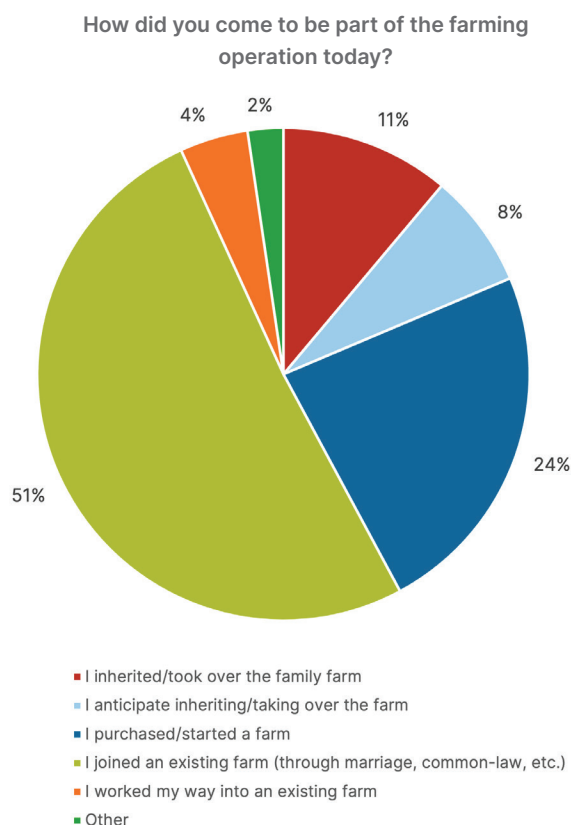


Figure 9: Path to the Farm
(% of Respondents)

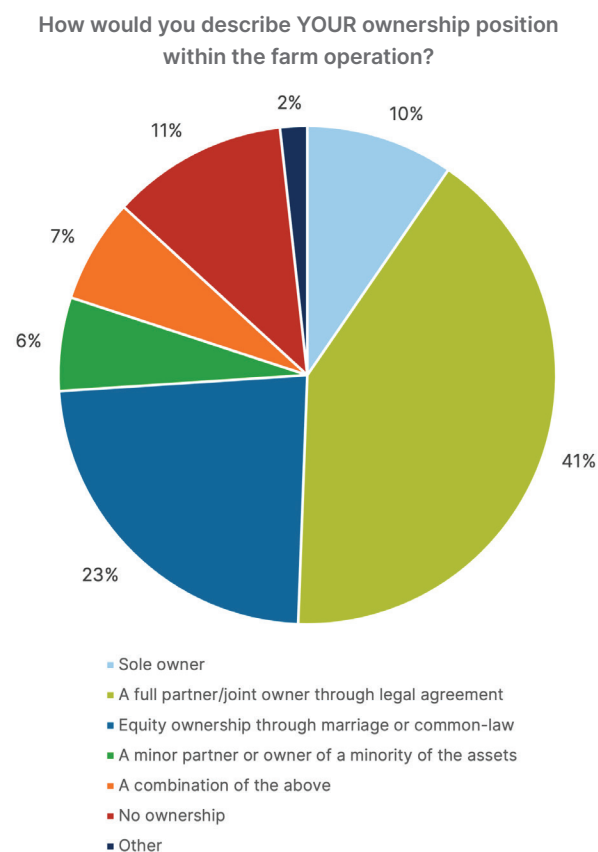


Figure 10: Participation in Farm Ownership
(% of Respondents)

“I have my fingers in everything on the farm. We share a lot of the decisions, but I don’t really ‘own’ anything.”

The study also examined decision-making on the farm. Half of respondents reported that the decision-making style of the farm as a whole is a “high degree of collaboration” and 6% reported being the “sole decision maker” (Figure 12).

Who are the other partners/owners?

OTHER PARTNERS/OWNERS	% OF RESPONDENTS
Spouse	86%
Immediate family (excluding spouse)	29%
In-laws	9%
Extended family	3%
Non-family	1%

Figure 11: Other Partners/Owners of the Farm
(% of Respondents)

In general, how do decisions get made on the farm operation?

DECISION STYLE	% OF RESPONDENTS
I am the sole decision maker	6%
High degree of consultation	50%
Some consultation	22%
Specific areas of responsibility have the autonomy	18%
Other	4%

Figure 12: Decision Making Style for the Farm
(% of Respondents)

Respondents are remunerated in a number of ways, while 27% are not remunerated at all. 6% of respondents are only remunerated through a promise of “future participation” in the farm operation (Figure 13).

As it regards the farming operation specifically,
how do you get paid?

RENUMERATION	% OF RESPONDENTS
I don't get paid at all	27%
I don't get paid but have the promise of future ownership or assets	6%
Exclusively hourly wage or salary	23%
Exclusively dividend/profit sharing	19%
Combination of above	24%
Don't know	1%

Figure 13: Respondent Remuneration
(% of Respondents)

***Respondents are remunerated in a number of ways,
while 27% are not remunerated at all.***

Participation in Farm-Related Activities

A challenge in measuring women's participation in farm related activities is the lack of a recognized schema for measuring participation. Unable to identify an existing set of roles, definitions, or an appropriate scale despite efforts through the Environmental Scan of existing literature, a list of roles was created using a range of source material drawn from existing extension information and project team experience. A total of 31 roles were defined under four categories:

- Farm Business Management
- Livestock & Poultry Management
- Crop Production & Management
- Post-Harvest & Marketing



Farm Business Management

- Strategic and/or business planning
- Succession and transition planning
- Financial planning, and analysis (budgeting, cash flow, investments, etc.)
- Financial bookkeeping
- Payroll and benefits
- Staff planning & evaluation (recruitment & retention, compensation, etc.)
- People management (orientation, training, task allocation, supervision, etc.)
- Farm safety (training, oversight, securing and maintaining protective equipment, etc.)
- Environmental management (soil, water and biodiversity, etc.)
- Regulatory compliance
- Submitting and managing paperwork for farm support or funding programs
- Information technology planning
- Information technology operations & maintenance
- Community outreach

Post-Harvest & Marketing

- Sales/marketing planning (contracts, negotiations, etc.)
- Transportation & logistics
- Direct sales & customer relationships
- Advertising and promotions (including website, social media etc.)

Livestock & Poultry Management

- Herd & flock management and oversight (purchasing, selling, breeding, ration formulation, etc.)
- Day-to-day production activities (feeding, moving, health and welfare, etc.)
- “Harvesting” animal products (milking/shearing/ butchering/gathering and grading, etc.)
- Equipment/housing maintenance and repair
- Record-keeping (livestock)

Crop Production & Management

- Crop planning (rotation planning, etc.)
- Crop input purchasing (including seed, nutrient and crop protection)
- Equipment maintenance and repair
- In-season and harvest crop management/ logistics/supervision
- Day-day fieldwork and operations
- Operator support (filling in, parts run, meals to the field, etc.)
- Processing, grading & storage
- Record keeping (crop)



Level of Involvement in Farm-Related Activities

Similarly, a scale was developed to measure the level of involvement in each particular role:

1. Not at all involved in this activity
2. Minor or occasional involvement
3. Somewhat involved
4. Deeply involved
5. Sole responsibility for this activity

The data shows women are making an extraordinary contribution to farming in Canada with a high degree of involvement in virtually every aspect of the operation. Figures 14 through 17 represent the percentage of farm women who are deeply involved or solely responsible for each activity.

Looking at farm business management activities (Figure 14), women have sole responsibility or are deeply involved in Financial Bookkeeping (69%), Financial Planning and Analysis (61%), Managing Paperwork for farm support programs (61%), Strategic and Business planning for the farm (51%) and Payroll and Benefits (51%). As well they have significant involvement in Regulatory Compliance (48%) and farm Succession or Transition planning (48%).

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virtually every aspect of
the operation.***

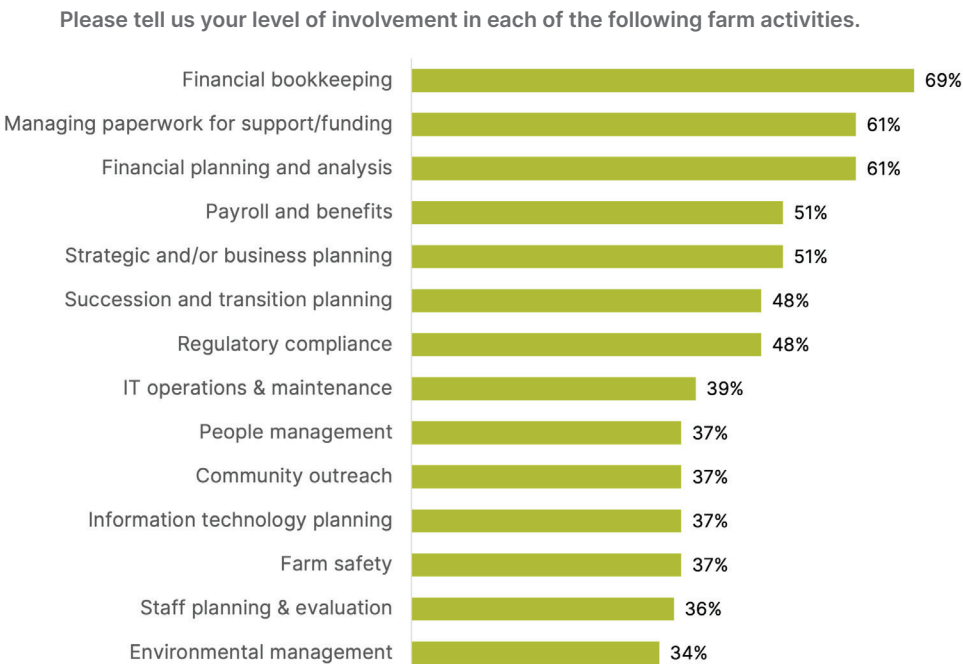


Figure 14: Farm Women Participating in Farm Business Management Activities
(% of Respondents Responding “Deeply Involved” or “Sole Responsibility”)



On livestock and poultry operations (Figure 15), women take an active role in Record-Keeping (65%), Day-to-Day Production activities (58%), Harvesting Animal Products (53%) as well as Herd & Flock Management (52%).

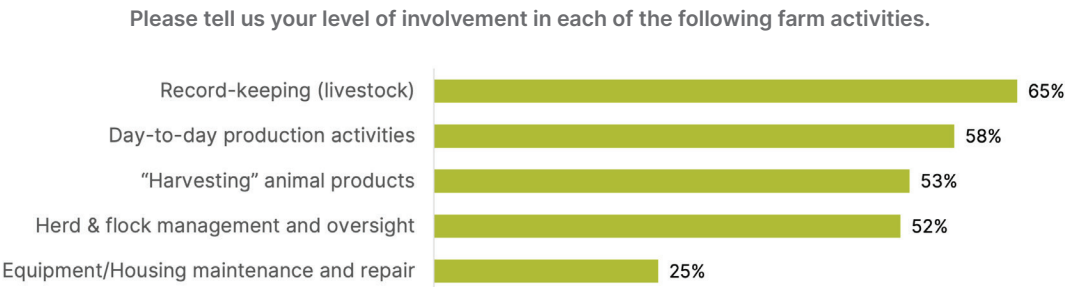


Figure 15: Farm Women Participating in Livestock Activities
(% of Respondents With Livestock Responding "Deeply Involved" or "Sole Responsibility")

From a crop production perspective (Figure 16), women contribute significantly to Operator Support (57%), filling in for labour, making a "parts run", preparing and bringing meals to the field, etc. They are also heavily involved in Record-Keeping (40%) and contribute to Day-to-Day Fieldwork and Operations (28%), Harvest (27%), Crop Planning and Input Purchasing (24%).

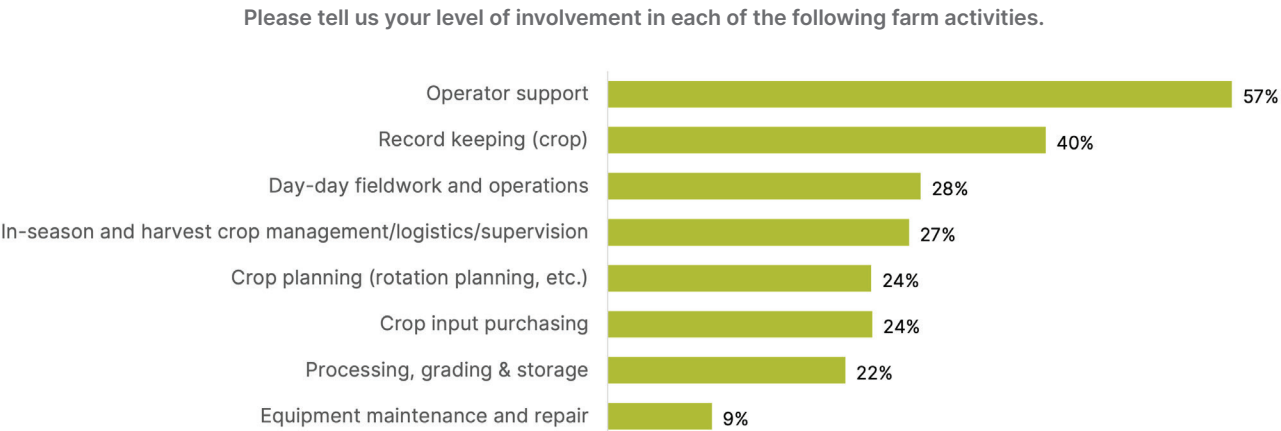


Figure 16: Farm Women Participating in Crop Activities
(% of Respondents Responding "Deeply Involved" or "Sole Responsibility")

Although a small number of women are involved in Equipment Maintenance and Repair for both livestock and poultry and crop operations, this has been identified as a skill they wish to acquire.

Women have a high involvement in Post-Harvest activities (Figure 17) including Advertising and Promotions (58%) and Direct Sales and Customer Relationships (47%) – particularly those respondents who are involved in horticulture and/or specialty livestock operations.



Please tell us your level of involvement in each of the following farm activities.



Figure 17: Farm Women Participating in Post Harvest Activities
(% of Respondents Responding “Deeply Involved” or “Sole Responsibility”)

Overall, the data shows a trend in the level of involvement in farm roles based on several farmographic and attitudinal variables. The overall level of involvement in farming roles is highest amongst those respondents who:

- Strongly agree with the statement “I consider myself a farmer”
- Describe their role on the farm as “full-time, all the time”
- Inherited the farm

Respondents who are sole owners or who report their ownership status as “A full partner/joint owner through legal agreement” are far more likely to report high involvement in strategic, financial, and transition planning and human resource management-related roles.

Time Spent on Farming Activities

Time spent on farming activities was measured in hours per week. For 42% of respondents, farm related responsibilities exceeded 40 hours per week, with 14% exceeding 60 hours per week. For 16% of respondents, their time commitment was a full time equivalent, between 31 and 40 hours per week (Figure 18).

How many hours, on average, do you commit to farm activities per week?

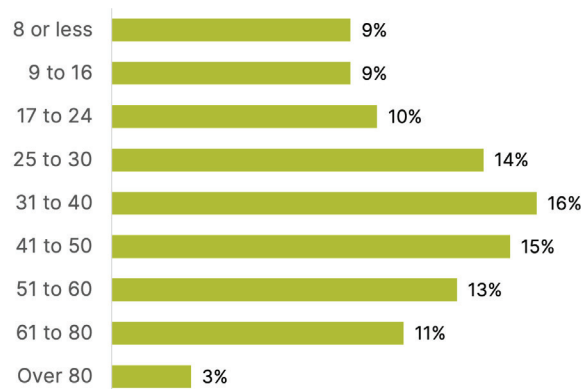


Figure 18: Time Spent on Farming Activities (% of Respondents)

The average amount of time spent on farm related activities is 39.7 hours and is remarkably consistent across most farmographic categories. As might be expected, the most variation occurs based on the level of involvement in farm activities (Figure 18a). The survey also shows that defining oneself as a farmer has a bi-modal response – both those respondents most likely and least likely to define oneself as a farmer spend more time on farm related activities in a typical week (Figure 18b).

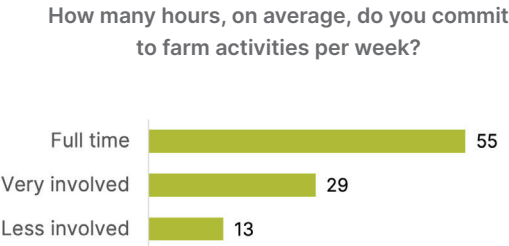


Figure 18a: Time Spent on Farming Activities – by Level of Involvement
(Hours Spent by Level of Involvement in the Farm)

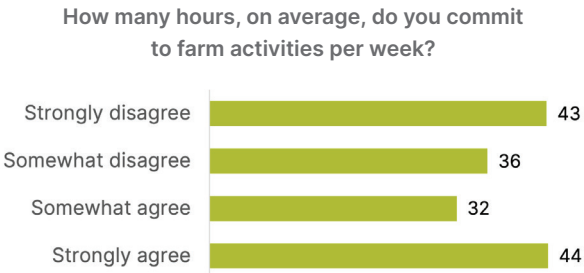


Figure 18b: Time Spent on Farming Activities – by Identity as a “Farmer”
(Hours Spent by Level of Agreement with the Statement “I Consider Myself a Farmer”)

Off-Farm Activities

While the majority (58%) of farm women are working over 30 hours per week on farming activities, a high proportion also have formal and informal off-farm roles (Figure 19). Family related responsibilities dominate for 65% of respondents, followed by volunteer activities (43%). Farm-driven value-added businesses and off-farm employment were reported by nearly 1/3 of respondents. The average respondent reported at least two distinct off farm activities.

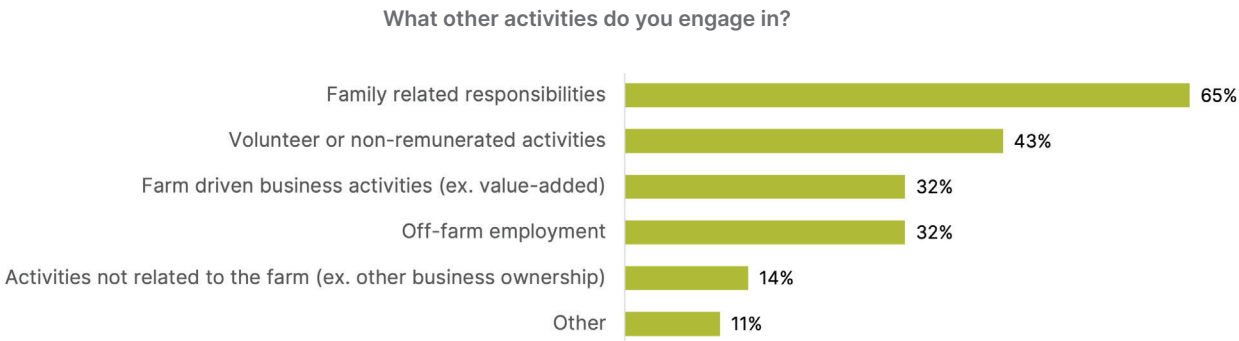


Figure 19: Off-Farm Activities (% of Respondents Who Participate in Activity)

Respondents were also asked their reasons for pursuing off-farm activities. 56% of respondents reported their involvement in off-farm activities was related to securing additional income, with 34% seeking additional income to support the farm. 19% of respondents pursued off-farm work in pursuit of their own career goals (Figure 20).

What is the PRIMARY reason that you are engaged in off-farm activities?

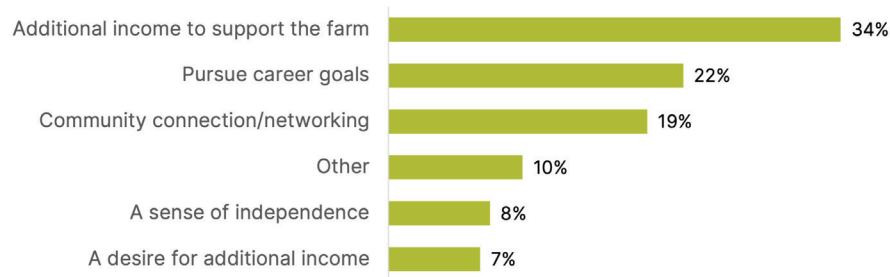


Figure 20: Drivers of Off Farm Activities (% of Respondents Who Participate in Off-Farm Revenue Activities)

“When I married into the farm, I expected to become an investor and a partner. That didn’t happen, but the farm needed my help, so I have no room to use my skills off the farm.”

Skills Brought to the Farm

Women are bringing a diverse set of skills to the farm operation. Respondents were asked to share the single most important skill they brought to the farm. Responses were categorized based on the number of mentions. As might be expected based on the level of involvement by women in financial management and bookkeeping, those skills topped the list. However, there is a significant difference between the number of women who play a role in “bookkeeping” as described in the roles section of this report, and the principal skills brought to farm. This could indicate that many women are involved in activities that aren’t necessarily the contribution they value the most.

Technical or Job-Specific Skills brought to the farm (in order of frequency of mentions):

- Financial skills including accounting and bookkeeping
- Organizational skills
- Agronomic skills
- Animal care and veterinary skills
- Management and leadership skills
- Planning skills
- Communication skills
- Marketing skills including digital marketing
- Record-keeping, administration and paperwork

Personal Qualities brought to the farm (in order of frequency of mentions):

- Dedication, commitment, work ethic
- Helpfulness, providing support, empathy
- Adaptability, flexibility
- Attention to detail
- Critical thinking, problem solving
- Listening, Inquisitiveness
- Ability to learn
- Versatility

Desired Skills

Respondents also desire a diverse set of skills. Respondents were asked to share the skill or capability they wished to acquire. Responses were categorized based on the number of mentions. In contrast with the skills contributed, desired skills tended more towards technical or job-specific skills including skills related to operating and maintaining equipment. Financial skills related to accounting and bookkeeping also surface as highly desired.

Technical or job-specific skills desired (in order of frequency of mentions):

- Operating equipment
- Financial skills including accounting and bookkeeping
- Agronomic skills including crop and soil management and knowledge
- Mechanical abilities including equipment maintenance
- Computer and technological skills
- Animal care and veterinary skills
- Marketing skills including digital marketing
- Management and leadership skills
- Human resources management
- Planning skills

Personal qualities desired (in order of frequency of mentions):

- Listening, Inquisitiveness
- Ability to learn

Farm Safety

Farms are a place where work and family life often intersect. The farm is often regarded as a great place to raise children. However, farm safety is a serious consideration, not just for children, but everyone on the farm. Farm safety therefore has many dimensions, as does the experience of women in relation to farm safety.

The survey included a set of attitudinal statements relating women’s involvement in farm safety and their perspective on specific safety topics. 46% of farm women reported they are responsible for creating and implementing a safety plan on their farm. Results highlight a significant numbers of farm women are experiencing challenges when it comes to farm safety (Figure 21).

Farm safety has many dimensions, as does the experience of women in relation to farm safety.



Figure 21: Experiences Regarding Farm Safety (% of Respondents Who Agree)

Defining Success – Farm & Personal

A key component of understanding experience is to understand the context of the experience. One way to do so, is to understand how success is defined. Respondents were asked about their definition of both farm success and personal success and allowed to select up to three response options for each. Results reveal there is seldom a singular definition of success – from both a farm and a personal viewpoint, respondents chose more than two definitions of success on average (Figure 22).



Choose up to 3 options that are most representative of your definition of success for the farm operation.

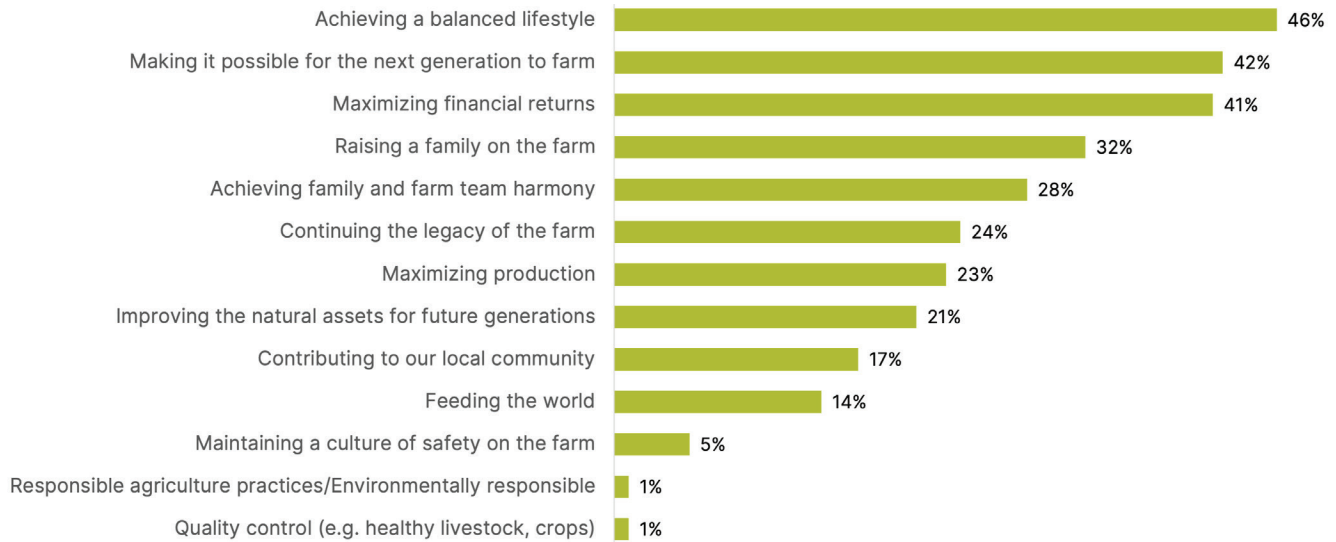


Figure 22: Defining Success for the Farm (% Mentioning – Up to 3 Allowed)

The most often cited definitions of farm success were achieving a balanced lifestyle, making it possible for the next generation to farm, and maximizing financial returns. These results complement findings from the Environmental Scan that show farm women experience higher levels of stress than men, and are stressed by the unpredictability of the agricultural sector and feeling a loss of control, workload pressures, financial pressures, farm transition, and maintaining family and farm team harmony.

The most often cited definitions of personal success were financial security, positive relationships, and raising a family (Figure 23).

Choose up to 3 options that are most representative of your definition of personal success.

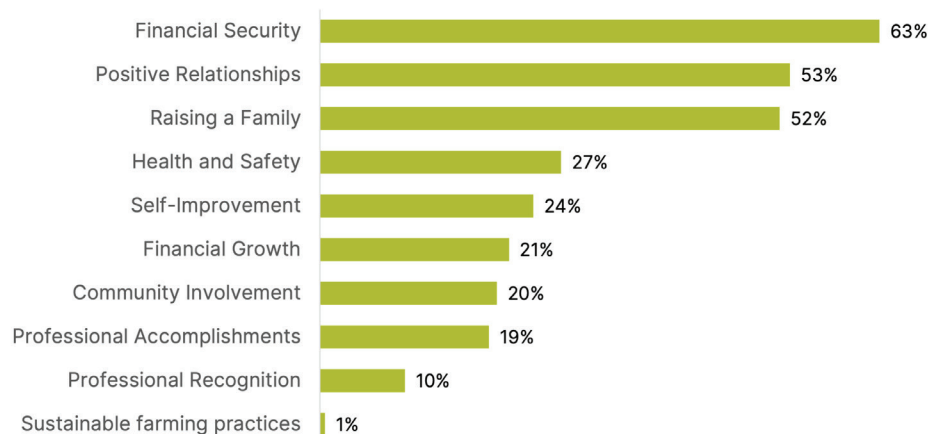


Figure 23: Defining Personal Success (% Mentioning – Up to 3 Allowed)

Experiences as a Farm Woman

In order to understand the day-to-day experiences of farm women, a series of attitudinal statements were presented. Respondents were asked for their level of agreement with each of these statements. These responses are a useful gauge of how respondents see themselves and farm women in general.

63% of respondents agree that agriculture in general would be better off if women were more involved in farm management.

The results show that the majority of farm women see their personal situation in a positive light:

- ✓ My contribution to this farm is valued by those who matter 89%
- ✓ I have the training and skills I need to fulfill my role(s) on the farm 87%
- ✓ I am satisfied with the direction of the farm business 83%
- ✓ I have the support I need to do the things I am required to do 81%

“Women bear the burden. It was just expected that I would be the one to make the sacrifice.”

This farm operation is my passion 78%

However, they are less likely to agree that others share the same view:

- ✗ Certain responsibilities fall to me solely because I am a woman 61%
- ✗ My skills and abilities don't get recognized to the same degree as my male counterparts 44%
- ✗ Activities and needs on the farm prevent me from achieving my personal goals 43%
- ✗ Others from off the farm don't take me seriously as a farmer 42%
- ✗ I invest more time and effort on farming than others feel I should 31%
- ✗ My skills and abilities are under-utilized on this farm 25%
- ✗ Others feel I should invest more time and effort on farm activities than I do 18%
- ✗ The role I play on this farm is NOT the one I would choose for myself 16%

Challenges & Barriers

An important objective of this study was to create a better understanding of the nature and extent of challenges and barriers facing farm women. The qualitative research showed that not all farm women define or even conceptualize barriers in the same way. First, the terminology of “barriers” proved to be problematic. Respondents to the qualitative research spoke of varying degrees of challenges rather than absolute barriers. Many respondents regarded challenges as synonymous with obstacles that many had overcome, whereas barriers were regarded as impeding any progress. Second, the challenges and barriers

referenced in the literature included examples either from the corporate world or framed in corporate language that did not resonate with the Steering Committee. Finally, the range of potential obstacles is vast, including those that are physical, financial, societal, personal, emotional and sometimes invisible. These findings led us to design our survey in a novel manner.

In order to evaluate the severity of the challenge or barrier, the following scale was created:

- 1. No challenge at all
- 2. An irritation
- 3. A slight to moderate challenge
- 4. A major challenge
- 5. A barrier to reaching your goals

“It doesn’t have to be a barrier in order to make you feel valued less.”

A “Not Applicable” and “Don’t Know” response option was included as well.

Based on the initial research phases, 27 statements were created to describe factors that could be evaluated on this scale.

- Facing double standards (one set of “rules” for men; a different one for women)
- Inability to be accepted by the “old boys club”
- Traditional expectations regarding women
- Lack of authority
- Lack of acknowledgement of your authority
- Use of derogatory terminology by others
- Need for co-signers or verification from men
- Lack of access to training and skills development opportunities
- Lack of a particular skill(s) related to the farm operation
- Unfamiliar terminology
- Lack of networking opportunities
- Lack of role models
- Lack of confidence in your own abilities
- Pressure to make sure everyone is safe on the farm
- Care of dependents (including children, elderly parents, etc.)
- Domestic responsibilities
- Lack of time
- Pressure to maintain family and farm team harmony
- Lack of access to support services in a rural setting (ex. daycare, healthcare, etc.)
- Domestic violence
- The prospect of separation or divorce
- Sexual harassment
- Remoteness of location
- Pressure to ensure the next generation a place on the farm
- Pressure to continue the farm legacy
- Lack of access to capital
- The need to earn income from off-farm sources



Interpretation of the results of this question must be made with care. How much of a challenge is too much? Are certain challenges or barriers more of a concern than others? As an example, domestic violence was mentioned infrequently as a major challenge or barrier, but is obviously of huge consequence to those who experience it.

Based on the qualitative research, the survey was careful to discriminate between challenges (which can be overcome) and barriers (which are insurmountable and obstruct one's ability to reach a goal).

Results show an alarming majority of respondents see the majority of all 27 factors as significant challenges, as well as barriers to varying degrees (Figure 24).

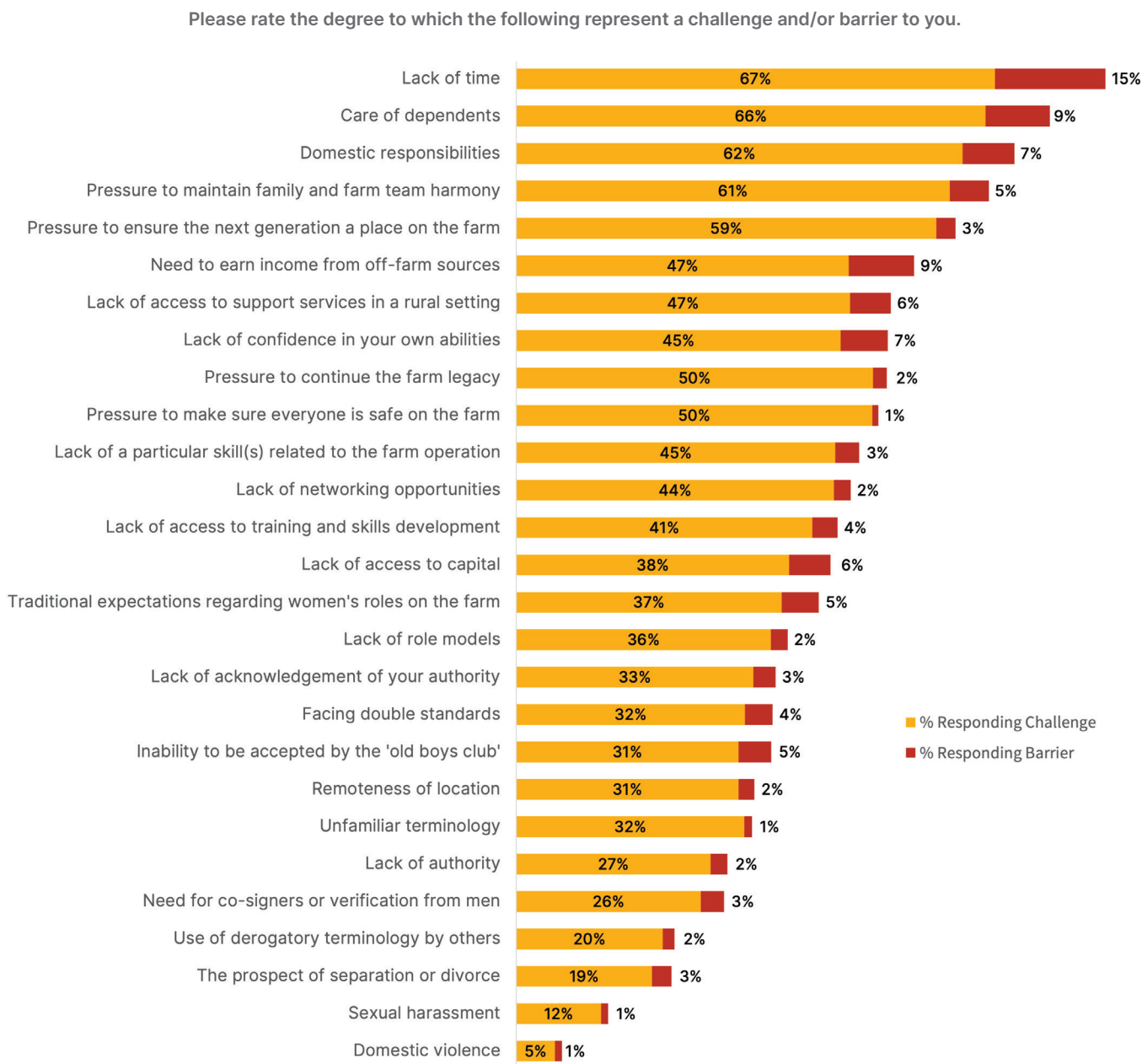


Figure 24: Challenges and Barriers (% of Respondents Reporting Challenges and Barriers)

Perhaps one of the most surprising findings of this research is the lack of systematic correlation between challenges and barriers (collectively or individually) and any particular demographic or farmographic subgroup with the possible exception of sole proprietors, younger respondents and those who had attained a higher level of education, who tended to rate challenges as being more significant.

The inclusion of 27 distinct potential challenges/barriers is both illuminating and problematic. It is illuminating because each challenge/barrier examined is discreet and meaningful at the individual level. It is problematic because, from a policy or programming perspective, it is difficult to address each challenge/barrier at the individual level.

Relationships With Others

A key theme that emerged from the qualitative research was the experience of farm women in relation to service providers, other community members and family.

Attempts to bypass women under the assumption that a man makes the decisions, condescending language and stereotyped expectations were all mentioned as challenges in relationships with others. Respondents were asked how they feel the relationships might be different if they were a man and the results are striking. In almost every instance, more than a third of respondents reported that being a woman posed a challenge to the relationship (Figure 25).

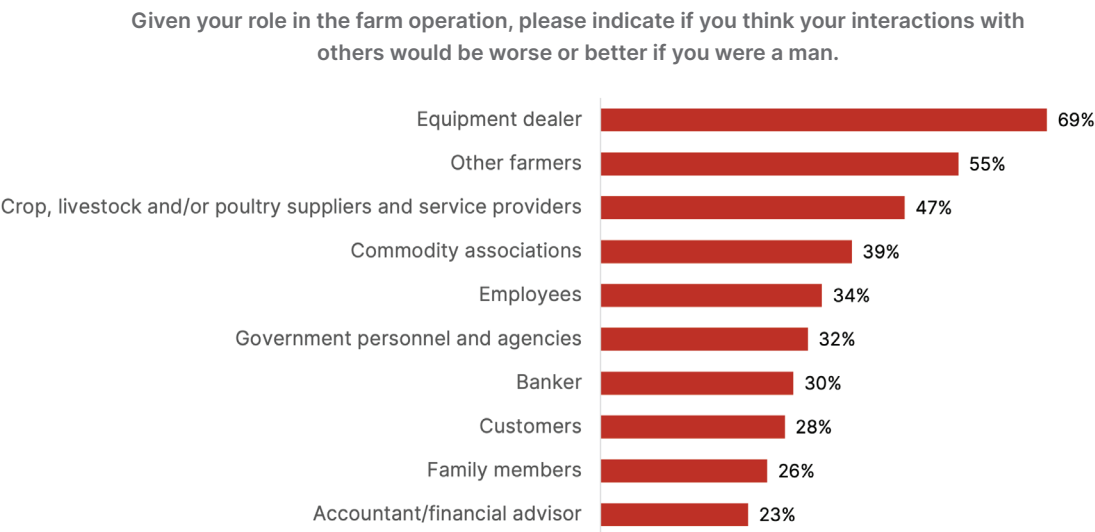


Figure 25: Relationships with Others (% Responding “Somewhat” and “Much” Better)

“It took a while for suppliers to realize that this was my decision, those that have been around for a while have learned to come directly to me, but every now and then I get a newbie that I have to train.”



While accountants and customers fare relatively well in the survey results, other groups are reported as less supportive of farm woman. Equipment dealers, other farmers, crop, livestock and poultry suppliers, other service providers, and commodity associations are called out specifically.

Communication

The qualitative research pointed out the potential role that communication between farm women and others on the farm might play in affecting their experience. The survey examined the level of involvement in various communications, satisfaction with the level of communication, and the level of communication desired. As the Analysis and Interpretation section of the report will show, the level of communications and respondents’ satisfaction with that level becomes an important finding in this study.

Communication was examined in the context of four discrete areas of the farm operation including:

- Day to day operations
- Seasonal work plans
- Annual farm business planning
- Long term strategic planning for the farm

Between 2/3 to 3/4 of respondents feel they are frequently or always involved in all types of conversations, with participation highest for long term strategic planning (Figure 26). Overall, the survey results show that levels of involvement, satisfaction and desire for more/less involvement tend to remain similar on a respondent-by-respondent basis. That is, respondents who are highly involved in communications about one topic, were highly involved in all topics. Desire for more involvement is correlated (inversely) with satisfaction, meaning farm women who are less involved in each type of conversation desire more involvement. However, it should be noted that a small percentage of respondents (ranging from 6-10%) actually desired less involvement in communications about the farm (Figure 27).

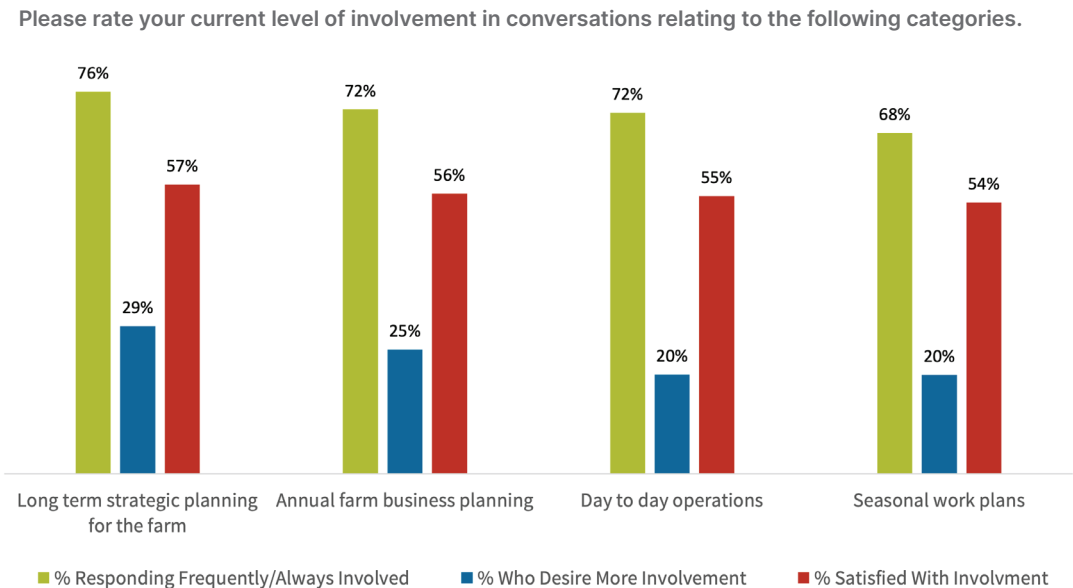


Figure 26: Involvement in Communications (% Responding)



Please rate your current level of involvement in conversations relating to the following categories.

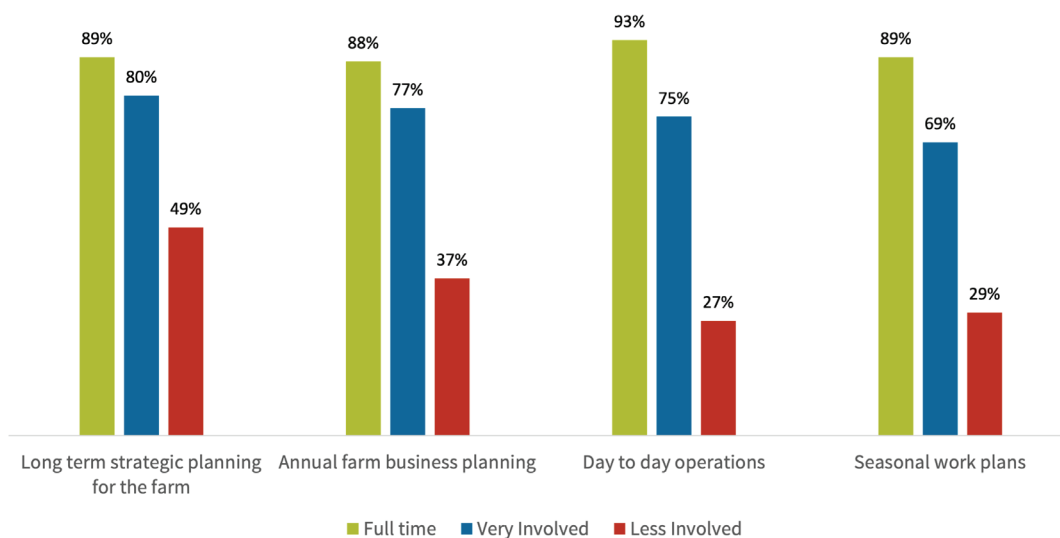


Figure 27: Involvement in Communications by Involvement in the Farm (% Highly or Extremely Satisfied)

As might be expected, respondents' level of involvement in the farm operation overall is strongly correlated with their involvement in communications. Those who are "full time" on the farm operation are only marginally more involved in communications than those who are "very involved" and there is a steep drop for those who are "less involved" in the farm operation.

One should not draw the conclusion that the lack of involvement is consensual. The data shows that women with relatively less involvement in the farm operation generally desire a high degree of involvement in the conversations around the farm business, with particular interest in longer term strategic and business planning conversations (Figure 28).

Please rate your desired level of involvement in conversations relating to the following categories.

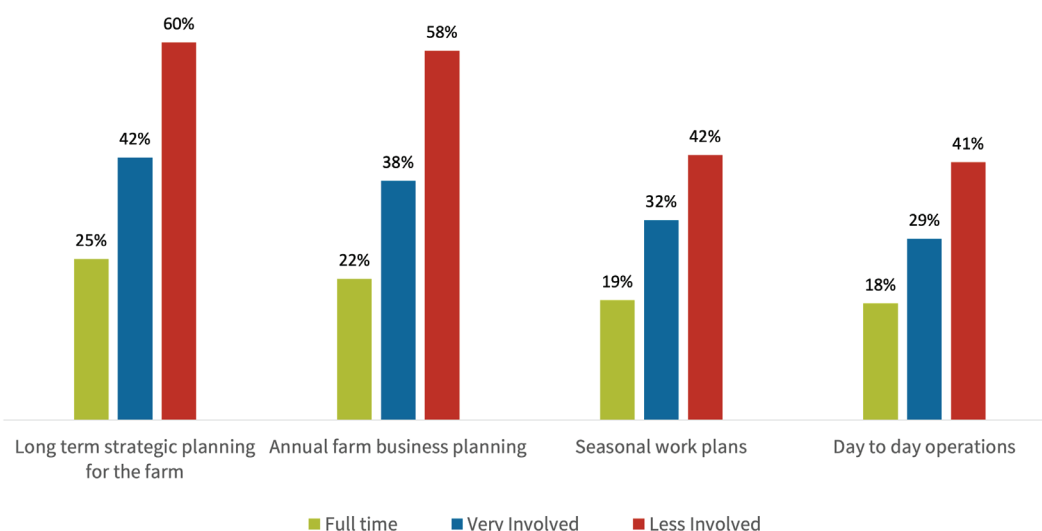


Figure 28: Desired Level of Involvement in Communications by Involvement in the Farm (% Desiring More/Much More Involvement)

One should not draw the conclusion that the lack of involvement in communications is consensual.

Respondents as a group are relatively unhappy regarding a number of aspects of communication on the farm (Figure 29). A majority believe that more proactive communication would be beneficial to the farm operation. And, feel that they are the drivers of the “tough” conversations and feel stress from resolving differences when difficult situations erupt on the farm.

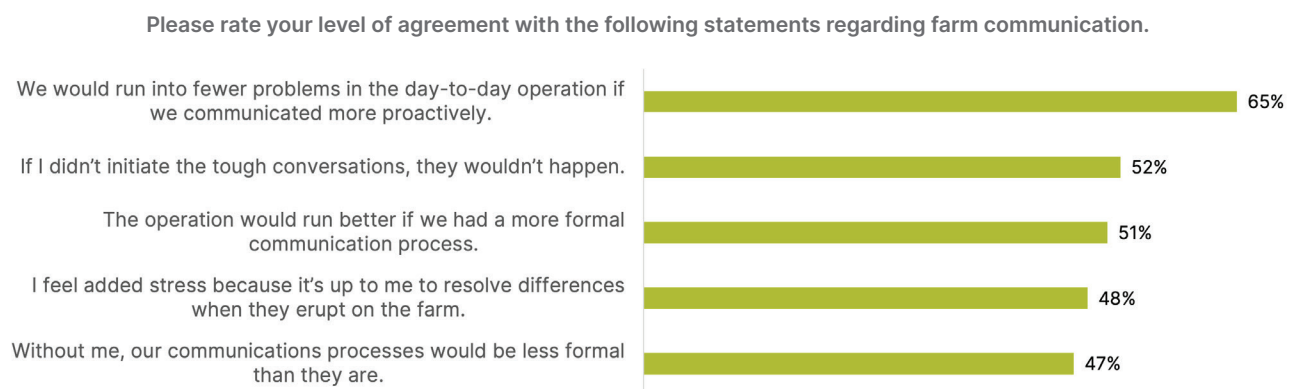


Figure 29: Attitudes Regarding Communications and Farming (% Who either “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”)



Analysis & Interpretation

As much as the data above provides a wealth of information about farm women where virtually none existed before, it does not help to explain the differences observed between farm women as it relates to their experiences and opinions.

In order to explore these differences, a different approach is needed. Instead of trying to observe differences using a traditional lens of demographics (age, education, marital status, etc.) and farmographics (farm size, structure, production sector, etc.), a segmentation analysis was performed to identify patterns in their experiences, so that the data could be viewed and analyzed through the lens of those patterns.

This approach involved the use of the following data analytic techniques:

- Factor analysis - to understand the distinct themes emerging, that is, the dimensions that were driving the differences.
- Cluster analysis – to identify patterns in experience and to help observe, better understand and analyze the differences in patterns.
- Discriminant analysis – to further highlight the differences and identify distinct groups of farm women based on their experience.

By using this human-centered approach, five dimensions surfaced as the “differences that make a difference”

Challenges and Barriers Grouped into Themes

A factor analysis was performed to identify potential themes and linkages between challenges and barriers. Factor analysis is a statistical method used to describe variability among observed, correlated variables in terms of a potentially lower number of unobserved variables called factors. Simply put, it shows where individual respondents collectively put their emphasis. Using the first factor (Family Foundations) below to illustrate, respondents who cited “care of dependents” as a challenge were also more likely to cite “domestic responsibilities” as a challenge.

Six factors were observed:

Family Foundations

- Care of dependents (including children, elderly parents, etc.)
- Domestic responsibilities
- Lack of time
- Pressure to maintain family and farm team harmony
- Lack of access to support services in a rural setting (ex. daycare, healthcare, etc.)

Social Equality

- Facing double standards (one set of “rules” for men; a different one for women)
- Inability to be accepted by the “old boys club”
- Traditional expectations regarding women
- Lack of acknowledgement of your authority
- Lack of authority
- Use of derogatory terminology by others
- Need for co-signers or verification from men

Farm Legacy

- Pressure to ensure the next generation a place on the farm
- Pressure to continue the farm legacy

Skills & Confidence

- Lack of access to training and skills development opportunities
- Unfamiliar terminology
- Lack of networking opportunities
- Lack of a particular skill(s) related to the farm operation
- Lack of role models
- Lack of confidence in your own abilities
- Pressure to make sure everyone is safe on the farm

Isolation and Intimidation

- Domestic violence
- The prospect of separation or divorce
- Sexual harassment
- Remoteness of location

Financial Independence

- Lack of access to capital
- The need to earn income from off-farm sources

This analysis provides a strong conceptual framework to guide both further research into causal factors and potential policy and program development to address the situation.

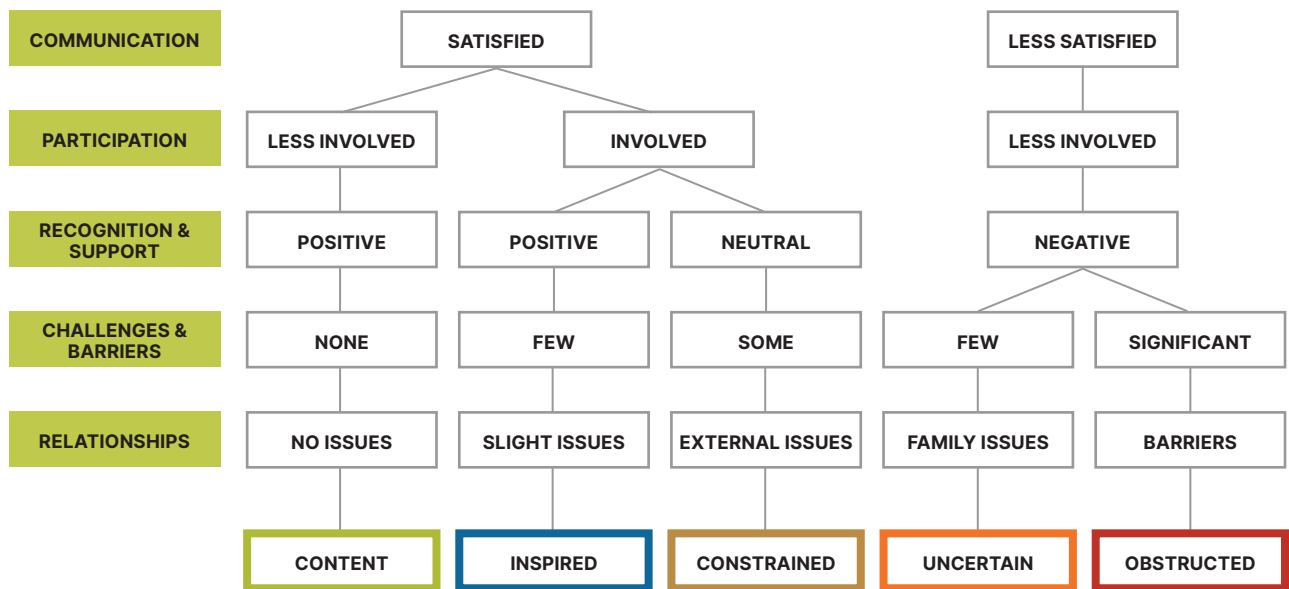
By using this human-centered approach, five dimensions surfaced as the “differences that make a difference” among survey respondents. In other words, these five dimensions help explain the variation in the experiences farm women encounter.

Five Dimensions that Make a Difference

1. Communication about the farm business: the level of satisfaction with involvement in farm-related communication
2. Participation in farm activities: the level and nature of involvement in farm activities
3. Recognition and support: a combination of feeling valued by those who matter, having their skills utilized and feeling supported
4. Challenges and barriers: level of agreement with the presence of a range of challenges and/or barriers
5. Relationships: level of agreement with the statement “My relationships would be better if I were a man” with others involved in the industry including service suppliers, other farmers, and family members

The following diagram illustrates how the respondents differ along these dimensions. The first and most significant divide comes at the level of Communication; those respondents who are satisfied with their involvement in communications related to the farm business and those who are not. The analysis shows that the level of satisfaction with communication is highly correlated with the overall experience of farm women. The second dimension, Participation, identifies the level of involvement in farm activities, especially long term and financial planning for the farm. The Recognition and Support dimension ranged from positive to neutral to negative, further differentiating the experience of farm women. The Challenges and Barriers vary widely between the five groups, with some women experiencing very little difficulty while others are facing significant barriers on all fronts. There is also considerable variation when it comes to Relationships. Some women experience no issues, while others experience barriers in most, if not all cases. Some respondents have issues with only external stakeholders (service providers, suppliers, etc.), while others face issues with only family members. Further explanation on the influence of each dimension on the different experiences of farm women is offered below.

The Differences that Make a Difference



The segmentation analysis provides a mechanism to represent the survey respondent base of 1025 women in five discrete groups or segments according to their experiences. Labels have been created to help describe each group and provide an interpretation of the differences observed between groups.

■ **Content:**

This group represents 21% of respondents. They are very satisfied with their level of involvement in communication. Although they are less involved in farm-related activities, they are regularly involved in long term planning for the farm including strategic and financial planning. They feel supported and feel the contribution they make is valued by those who matter. They do not encounter challenges or barriers, nor do they have issues related to relationships. To sum up their experience, they might say “I am doing as much as I want in relation to the farm, and I feel good about it.”

■ **Inspired:**

This group represents 26% of respondents. They are very satisfied with their level of involvement in communications and are very active in all aspects of the farm including long term planning for the farm such as strategic and financial planning. They feel supported and feel the contribution they make is valued by those who matter. The challenges they face are primarily related to family foundations (time pressures, dependent care and lack of access to support services). They also face some minor relationship issues, particularly with service providers. To sum up their experience, they might say “I am capable of doing what needs to get done and try not to let anything hold me back.”

■ **Constrained:**

This group represents 23% of respondents. They are satisfied with their level of involvement in communications and are very active in all aspects of the farm including long term planning for the farm such as strategic and financial planning. They feel unsure about the level of recognition and support they receive and face a higher level of challenges and barriers. They feel their relationships with service providers would be better if they were a man. To sum up their experience, they might say “I feel I am capable of more, but outside forces are keeping me from reaching my full potential.”

■ **Uncertain:**

This group represents 18% of respondents. They are not satisfied with the level of communication related to the farm business and are not involved in long term planning for the farm including strategic and financial planning. They do not feel good about the recognition and support they receive from those who matter. Although they do not feel there are many challenges or barriers in general, they face relationship issues that are family related. To sum up their experience, they might say “I would like to contribute more, but I am not sure of my value and my place in this farm.”

■ **Obstructed:**

This group represents 12% of respondents. They are not satisfied with the level of communication related to the farm business and are not involved in long term planning for the farm including strategic and financial planning. They do not feel good about the recognition and support they receive from those who matter, and they face significant challenges and barriers in many areas. They feel strongly that their relationships with both family members and service providers would be better if they were a man. To sum up their experience, they might say “I would like to contribute more, but there are major roadblocks, both internal and external, holding me back.”

Summary:

Looking at the experience of farm women through the five distinct dimensions shines a light on the spectrum of experiences they encounter and the driving forces behind their involvement in the farm operation. It also highlights that one size does not fit all when it comes to policy and program development. There are some farm women who may feel they don't need any additional support at all, some who feel they need support in specific areas while others need significant support to overcome many challenges and barriers that are preventing them from moving forward.

Conclusions

An accurate understanding of the roles and experiences of farm women helps to shine a light on the breadth and depth of the contribution they make to the agricultural industry, a contribution that up until now has been unrecognized, uncounted and undervalued. The results of this study have provided a schema for identifying the activities undertaken by farm women and has provided a data set where none existed before. The diversity of activities undertaken by farm women far exceeds conventional views and underscores the fact that there is no typical role or average experience for a farm woman. Viewing the farm women experience through a human-centred lens provides a clearer understanding of their situations and creates opportunities for more effective actions. Observing the experiences through a segmentation viewpoint emphasizes that one size does not fit all when it comes to policy and program development. The level and satisfaction with communication about the farm is highly correlated with experience and the level of challenges encountered. Study results confirm farm women continue to face significant challenges and barriers that need to be addressed.

The results of this study have provided a schema for identifying the activities undertaken by farm women and has provided a data set where none existed before.

Recommendations

Although there may be different ways to segment the respondents, the provocative approach taken by this study illustrates that any action taken should be tailored to those who would benefit the most. Each of the five segments identified within, has a unique set of needs.

1. Create and enhance programming, development opportunities and resources that specifically address the needs of Farm Women:
 - Enhance participatory initiatives including government and industry policy and program development, and skills development and learning opportunities to accommodate the unique challenges and barriers to participation faced by farm women, taking into consideration timing, duration, provision of childcare services, etc.
 - Use the Five Patterns of Experience (Content, Inspired, Constrained, Uncertain and Obstructed) to focus efforts on meeting the needs of farm women based on their distinct situations
 - Create learning and networking opportunities dedicated exclusively to farm women focused on enhancing their desired skills (ex. equipment operation and repair) and designing solutions to overcome their unique challenges and barriers (ex. building confidence, supporting farm transition, etc.)
 - Enhance services in rural communities including daycare and support for farm women experiencing sexual harassment and domestic violence
2. Dedicate efforts beyond Women in Agriculture to focus exclusively on supporting Farm Women
 - Create a national coalition focused specifically on addressing the unique challenges and needs of farm women, ensuring long-term, stable funding and other types of support for longevity and maximum impact
 - Seek collaborative programming between Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, agricultural organizations and women-focused government bodies and organizations including Women and Gender Equity Canada, Status of Women Canada and the Women Entrepreneurship Knowledge Hub to leverage and maximize efforts and support dedicated to farm women
 - Create a national promotional campaign recognizing and celebrating farm women
 - Create a national and regional awards program that celebrates and honours farm women
 - Enhance initiatives focused on “women in agriculture” to recognize and meet the unique needs of farm women in policy, programming and resource development including learning events through, for example, the formation of special committees
3. Support gender equity and equality initiatives:
 - Promote and support inclusivity and the implementation of the 50-30 challenge on farms and within farm organizations and academic programs to ensure farm women are represented and their participation is supported and encouraged

- Implement an agricultural policy and program development process that includes input from farm women to identify and address the unique needs of farm women
 - Create dedicated gender equality and equity learning opportunities in academic curriculum and industry extension for government, equipment dealers, agricultural suppliers, commodity associations and farmers at large, to highlight the challenges of farm women and opportunities to better support them
 - Ensure marketing, promotions and communication efforts around farming include depictions of farm women and the variety of activities they are involved in – for example, farm ownership, management and leadership
 - Design farm equipment, machinery and safety apparel with women in mind
 - Provide farm safety equipment and apparel for women specifically that is affordable and on par with the cost of men's
4. Promote communication and interpersonal skills along with business management practices as essential components of farming
- Create resources and tools to support the adoption of effective on-farm communication processes and practices for all types of communications including long-term planning and day-to-day operations
 - Enhance skills development and learning opportunities dedicated to leadership development including interpersonal relations and effective communication for the farming sector
 - Create a national promotional campaign to highlight the business and leadership skills and practices required by farmers including effective communication and interpersonal relations
 - Support enhanced financial management and performance tracking to increase farm profitability and reduce the need for off-farm work that exceeds full-time farm employment
 - Support enhanced compensation strategies and practices on farms to recognize and better document contributions by everyone, including family members, to the success of the farm
 - Support enhanced long-term planning for the farm and activities that create a space for those less involved in day-to-day operations to be included, such as an annual general meeting
 - Support farm safety training and increase the participation of women in farm safety training on and off the farm
 - Support the development of HR policies and planning including transition planning for everyone on the farm to understand the work required, their responsibilities and authority, and opportunities for growth and development in the future of the farm
 - Create a tool to help track and share domestic responsibilities between family members and service providers
 - Support the adoption of performance evaluations for farms and their supply companies and service providers that take into account measures of feeling valued, recognized, supported and empowered

5. Expand existing research:

- Work with Statistics Canada to improve the collection, analysis and reporting of data from the Census of Agriculture to capture farm women with high levels of involvement in the farm operation that may not self-identify as primary or secondary operator
- Expand the research conducted in Quebec to a national scope, for example: Measuring the amount of time farm women spend on various activities in support of the farm and farming household, and the recognition of women on farm paperwork including ownership, lending and other agreements and legal documents compared to men

6. Conduct additional research:

- A comparative study of farming men to understand their activities and experience including motivations, challenges and contributions to the success of the farm
- Measure and quantify the value (ex. economic) of the contributions of farm women compared to farming men. For example, saving costs on daycare and bookkeeping services.
- Measure the earnings of farm women compared to farming men
- Measure the time farm women spend on various activities that contribute to the success of the farm/farming household
- Measure farm women's off-farm and non-farm work and contribution to household and farm economic viability compared to farming men
- Further define and measure "invisible work" of farm women that contributes to the success of the farm/farming household
- Further investigate the imperceptible or "invisible" challenges and barriers farm women face due to cultural and societal norms
- Further understand the activities farm women want to undertake in contributing to the farm operation
- Study gender as a contributing factor to farm safety challenges and opportunities
- Measure women's enrollment in post-secondary agricultural education including programs of study, attrition, and post-graduate activities and fulfillment
- Understand the programs, resource and support available to farm women including accessibility, use, impact, gaps, and opportunities
- Understand the characteristics of top managers and leaders that influence farm performance and contribute to success