

Ministry of Agriculture Public Trust Survey

Insightrix Research, Omnibus Survey, May 2024

Executive Summary

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

The 2024 Public Trust Survey, conducted by Insightrix Research in May, asked 800 Saskatchewan residents to gauge their perception of agriculture in the province (Appendix A).

The survey results showed that Saskatchewan residents continue to have a positive view of agriculture. Eighty-four per cent of Saskatchewan residents responded they have a positive perception of agriculture. Although this year's level of positive perception remains below the target of 85 per cent by one per cent, the overall public perception of agriculture has proven to be very high (87.4 per cent) for the last 12 years.

The survey results showed strong public confidence (77 per cent) in Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers being good stewards of the land, sustaining the environment for future generations. The survey continues to show that two-thirds of the respondents support the use of crop protection products such as herbicides, fungicides and insecticides.

The 2024 survey also included two new questions on irrigation and food affordability. Close to two-thirds of Saskatchewan residents surveyed find irrigation expansion brings benefits to the province of Saskatchewan. Close to 60 per cent of the Saskatchewan residents believe Saskatchewan agriculture is making strides to keep food affordable. As food affordability continues to be a top concern for most Canadians, linking the use of crop technologies and innovations to keeping food affordable will help the public to see the benefit of these practices.

However, Saskatchewan residents continued to show lower positive perceptions regarding the effectiveness of government regulations (48 per cent) and the industry transparently communicating about their practices (54 per cent). The results suggest the importance of better informing consumers about Saskatchewan's robust regulatory framework and encouraging producers and industry to share more information about how our food is grown and processed.

A regression analysis was conducted with "I have a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture" as the dependent variable and the remaining questions as independent variables. The regression model determined which statements influenced the dependent variable the most. Those statements were: farmers and ranchers are good stewards of the land; farmers and ranchers are seeking to improve and move in the right direction; and Saskatchewan agriculture

is making strides to keep food affordable. Focusing on increasing agreement to these statements will have the most influence on improving overall perceptions of the sector.

A review of the demographic analysis of survey respondents determined that engaging with women, specifically from urban areas, would likely have the greatest impact on efforts to build trust in agriculture. This demographic group was more likely than men to be unsure of how to respond to survey questions. Through targeted educational outreach, industry may be able to help increase the understanding of modern agriculture for women living in urban areas, allowing them to share their agreement or disagreement with future survey questions.

In February 2024, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture hired Insightrix Research to conduct a focus group of urban women, aged 18-44 to better understand perception drivers and determine ways to effectively communicate with this target group. This study found the majority of participants have a positive impression of Saskatchewan agriculture, however only have a limited understanding of the industry.

The ministry is committed to working with industry at all levels to better engage with women and those living in urban areas. It is not only important for those with a rural background to be confident in the food they are eating and sharing with their families, but all citizens, regardless of their age and place of residence, should have the ability to know where their food comes from.

Results

1. I have a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture.

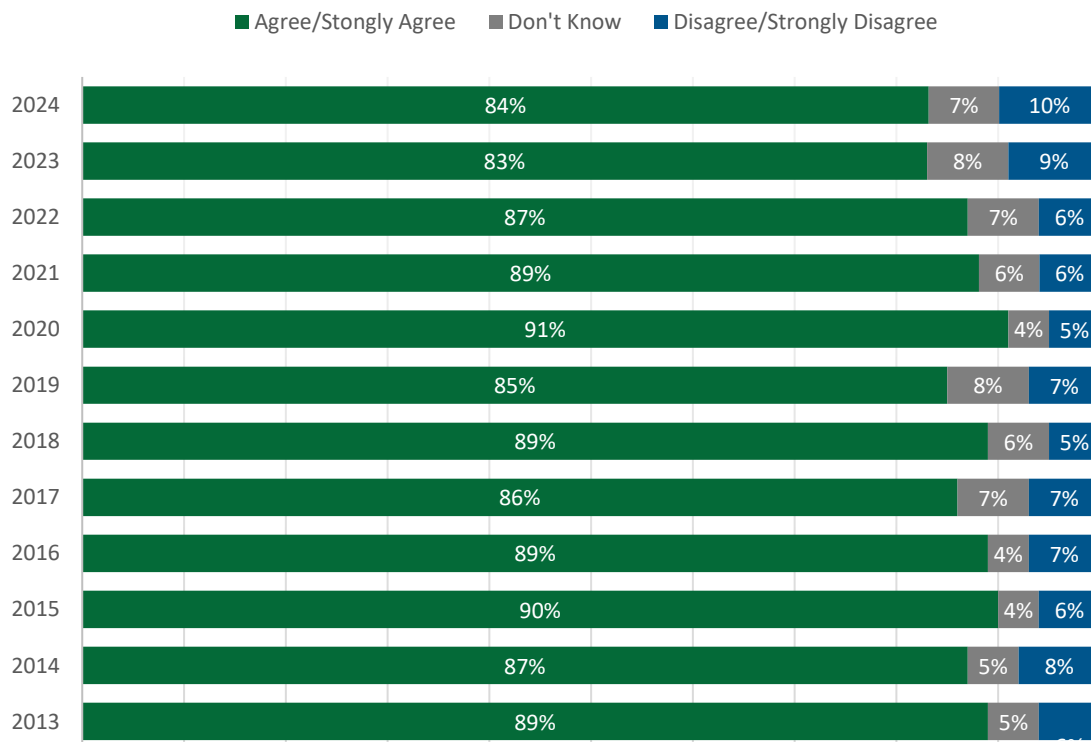
2024 Results¹

Agree/Strongly Agree	84%
Don't Know	7%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	10%

Notable

- Men are more likely to agree
- The Saskatoon region was more likely to disagree or respond unsure compared to other regions.

Yearly Comparison



¹ The numbers do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

2. Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers are good stewards of the land, sustaining the environment for future generations.

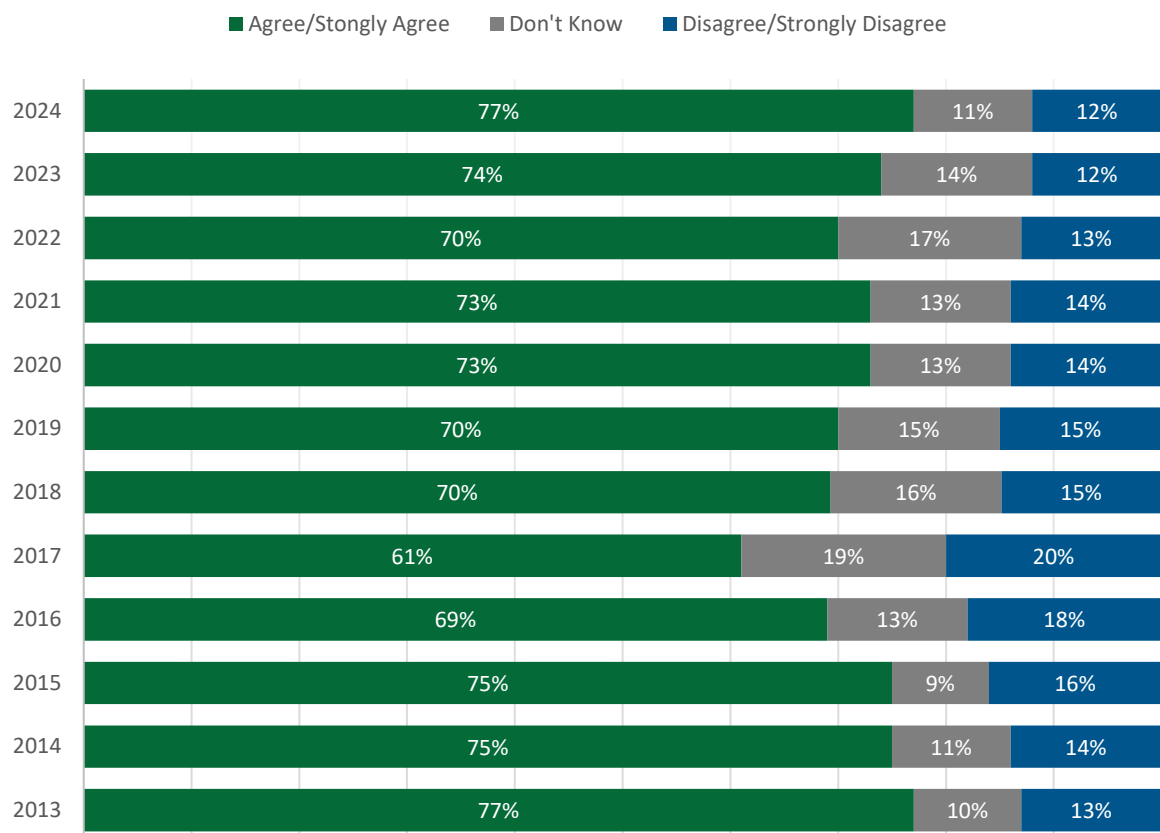
2024 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	77%
Don't Know	11%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	12%

Notable

- The question in 2022 was, "Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers take care of the environment."
- Men and the north and south regions are more likely to agree
- Those with more than high school education likely to disagree
- Women and Saskatoon are more likely to respond "Don't Know"

Yearly Comparison



3. Government's agriculture regulations protect the interests of the public

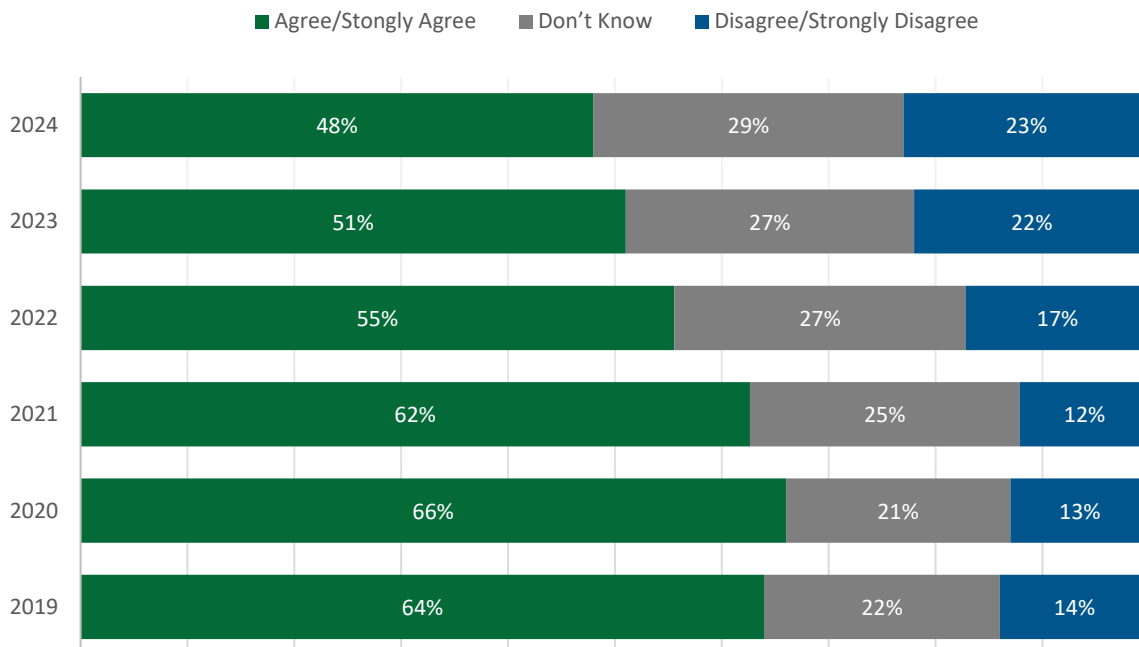
2024 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	48%
Don't Know	29%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	23%

Notable

- Men and residents from the south region are more likely to agree
- Residents of Indigenous ancestry are more likely to disagree
- Women and the 35-54 age group are more likely to respond "Don't Know"

Yearly Comparison



4. The agriculture industry is open and transparent about their practices.

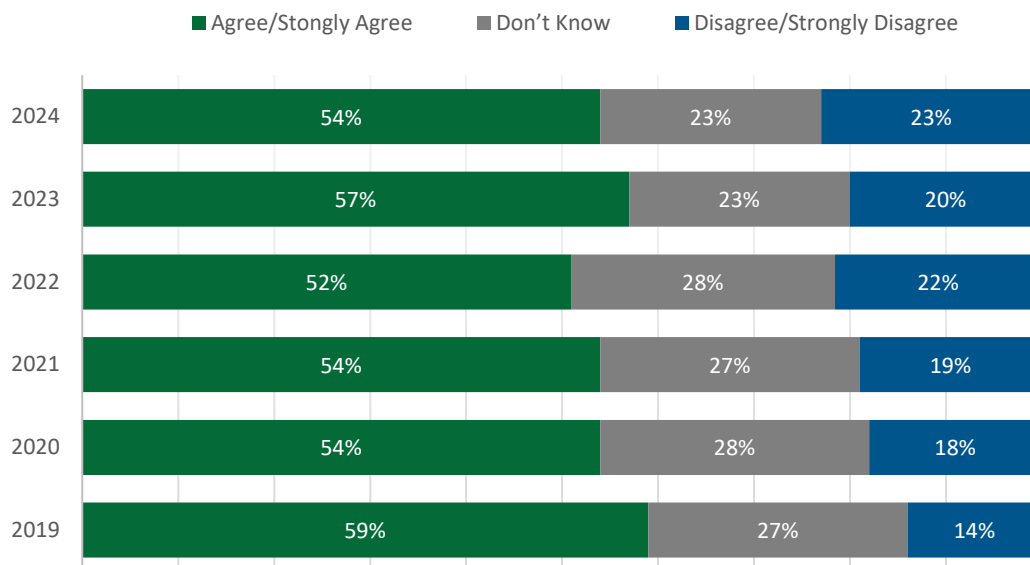
2024 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	54%
Don't Know	23%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	23%

Notable

- Men, 55+ age group, north, Regina and south regions and those with high school education or less are more likely to agree
- Regina and Saskatoon regions and those with a university degree or higher are more likely to disagree
- Women and Saskatoon residents are more likely to select "Don't Know"

Yearly Comparison



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

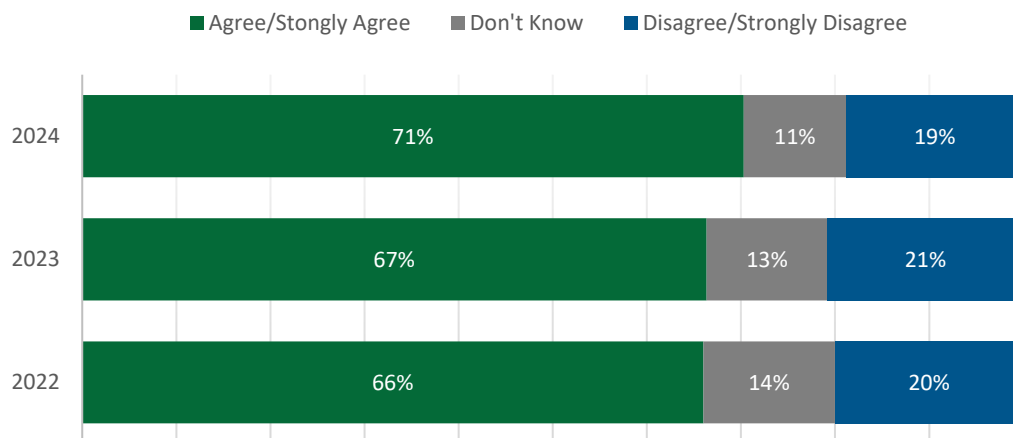
2024 Results²

Agree/Strongly Agree	71%
Don't Know	11%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	19%

Notable

- Men, south region, non-Indigenous residents and people with incomes higher than \$150,000 are more likely to agree
- Women, residents of Indigenous ancestry, and residents with household income less than \$30K are more likely to disagree
- Women, and those in the 35 - 54 age group are more likely to select "Don't Know"

Yearly Comparison



² The numbers do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

6. Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers are seeking to continually improve and move in the right direction.

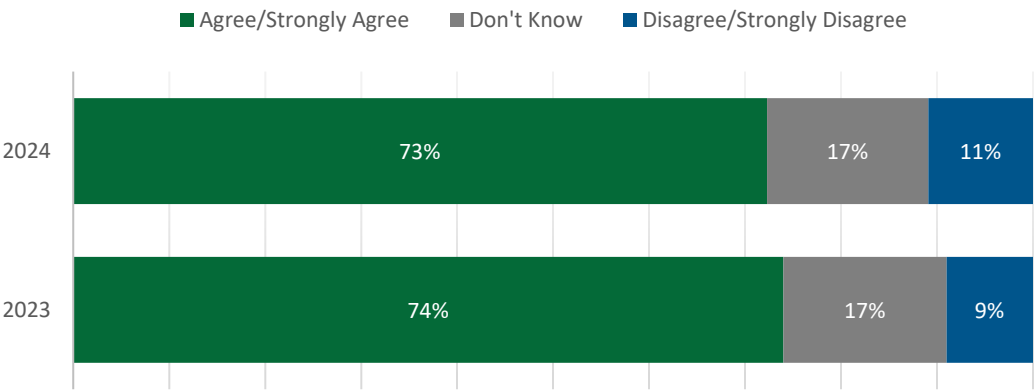
2024 Results³

Agree/Strongly Agree	73%
Don't Know	17%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	11%

Notable

- Men, 55+ age group and north and south regions are more likely to agree
- Women, 18-34 age group and Saskatoon region are more likely to answer “Don’t Know”
- The Saskatoon region is also more likely to disagree.

Yearly Comparison



³ The numbers do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

7. Companies making products from Saskatchewan grown agricultural goods are seeking to continually improve and move in the right direction.

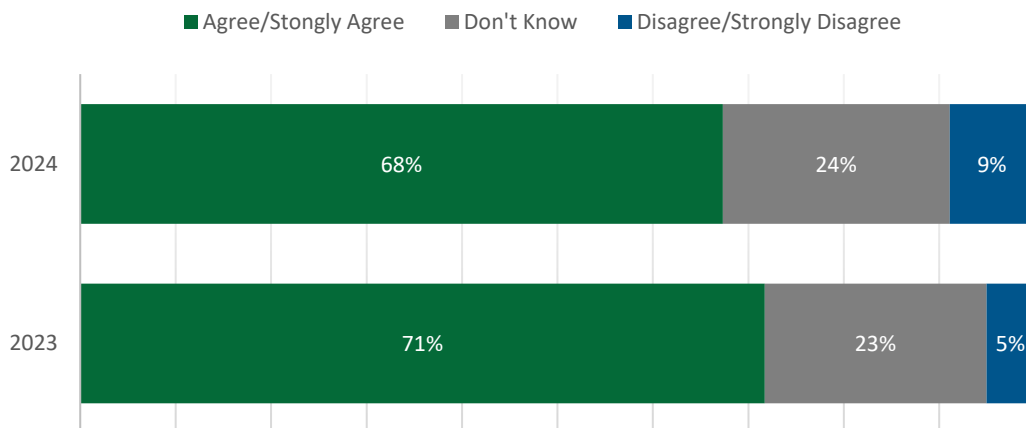
2024 Results⁴

Agree/Strongly Agree	68%
Don't Know	24%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	9%

Notable

- Men, Regina and south regions are more likely to agree
- Women and the Saskatoon region are more likely to answer "Don't Know"

Yearly Comparison



⁴ The numbers do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

8. Livestock in Saskatchewan are raised in a sustainable manner

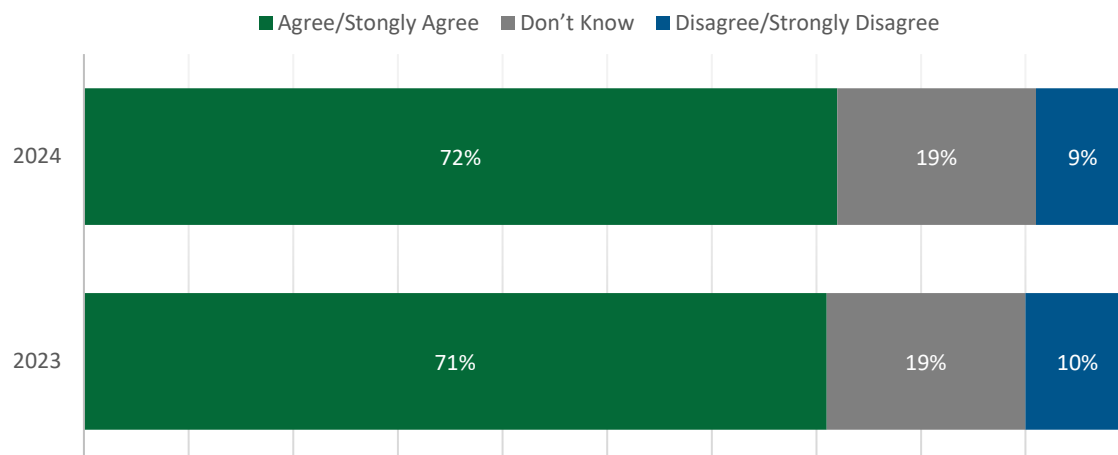
2024 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	72%
Don't Know	19%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	9%

Notable

- Men, 55+ age group, north and south regions and residents with high school or less education are more likely to agree
- Women and Saskatoon region are more likely to disagree
- Women, 18-34 age group, Regina and Saskatoon regions and residents with university degree or higher are more likely to answer "Don't Know."

Yearly Comparison



9. Irrigation expansion brings benefits to the province of Saskatchewan

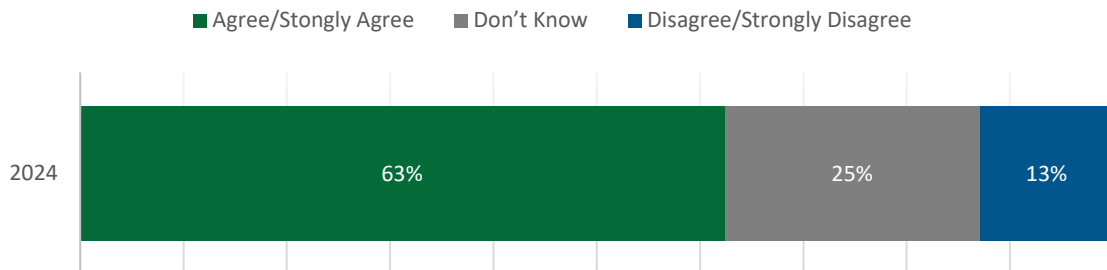
2024 Results⁵

Agree/Strongly Agree	63%
Don't Know	25%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	13%

Notable

- Men and those from the north and south regions are more likely to agree
- Women, 18-34 age group, north, Saskatoon and Regina regions and households with children are more likely to answer "Don't Know"

Yearly Comparison



⁵ The numbers do not add up to 100 due to rounding.

10. I believe Saskatchewan agriculture is making strides to keep food affordable

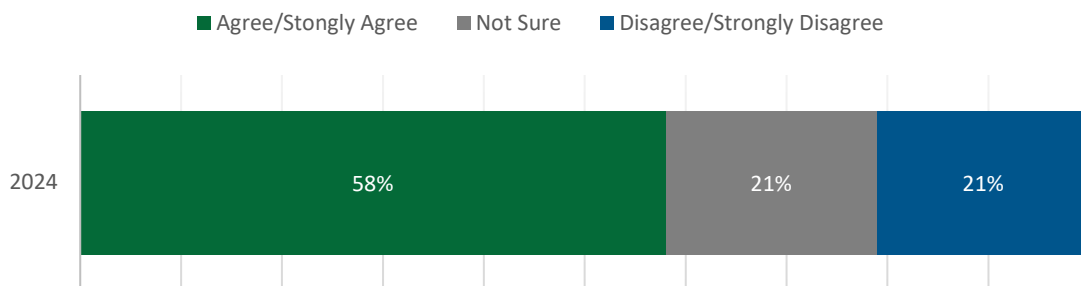
2024 Results

Agree/Strongly Agree	58%
Don't Know	21%
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	21%

Notable

- Men and those from the south region are more likely to agree
- Regina region is more likely to disagree
- Women and Saskatoon region are more likely to answer "Don't Know"

Yearly Comparison



APPENDIX A: 2024 Public Trust Omnibus Results at a Glance

Note: Number in brackets is the change in percentage from 2023 survey results aside, from questions nine and 10 which are new questions.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following statements:	Agree & Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Disagree & Strongly Disagree
1. I have a positive perception of Saskatchewan agriculture.	84% [+1]	7%[-1]	10% [+1]
2. Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers are good stewards of the land, sustaining the environment for future generations.	77% [+3]	11% [-3]	12%
3. Government's agriculture regulations protect the interests of the public.	48% [-3]	29% [+2]	23% [+1]
4. The agriculture industry is open and transparent about their practices.	54% [-3]	23%	23% [+3]
5. I support the use of crop protection products (e.g., herbicides, fungicides, insecticides) in Saskatchewan agriculture production	71% [+4]	11% [-2]	19% [-2]
6. Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers are seeking to continually improve and move in the right direction.	73% [-1]	17%	11% [+2]
7. Companies making products from Saskatchewan grown agricultural goods are seeking to continually improve and move in the right direction.	68% [-3]	24% [+1]	9%
8. Livestock in Saskatchewan are raised in a sustainable manner	72% [+1]	19%	9% [-1]
9. Irrigation expansion brings benefits to the people of Saskatchewan	63%	25%	13%
10. I believe Saskatchewan agriculture is taking strides to keep food affordable	58%	21%	21%