

Iowa Farmer Preferences on 2007 Farm Bill Issues with Comparisons across Farm Size Groups and National Farmer Preferences *

Iowa Report prepared by

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* This survey of Iowa farm operators was conducted by the Community Vitality Center (CVC) Iowa State University in collaboration with the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Iowa Field Office, Joseph J Prusacki, Director. A National Task Force of agricultural economists and public policy educators supported by Farm Foundation and Land Grant University collaborators designed the survey questionnaire and sampling methodology. For purposes of maintaining consistency of data and methods across state survey projects, sampling and data management was coordinated by the National Task Force Chair, Dr. Bradley D. Lubben at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

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For more information on the national report, “The 2007 Farm Bill Survey: U.S. Producer preferences for Agricultural, Food, and Public Policy” and survey questionnaire, please see: <http://www.farmfoundation.org/projects/06-02ProducerSurvey.htm> .

Enhancing Small Beginning Farmer Opportunities and Renewable Energy are Top Farm Bill Priorities for Iowa Farmers

Ames, IA., June 15, 2007--Iowa farmers ranked “enhancing opportunities for small and beginning farmers” and “renewable energy” as top goals for the next farm bill. These goals were closely followed by increased competitiveness, protecting natural resources, and enhancing rural economies according to a survey of 736 Iowa farm operators coordinated by the Community Vitality Center at Iowa State University as part of a National Agricultural Food and Public Policy Preference Survey project.

The national effort was conducted in 27 states by Farm Foundation and the National Public Policy Education Committee. The Iowa results were released as part of a 2007 Farm Bill Lunch and Learn Web Forum series organized by Iowa State University Extension.

Bioenergy production incentives, followed closely by food safety programs, head the list of programs producers would target for new or reallocated funding. “This is one area where Iowa farmer preferences mirror those at the national level,” said Mark Edelman, Director of the Community Vitality Center at ISU which coordinated the survey of Iowa Farmers.

When asked to rank existing programs that should continue to receive funding, Iowa farmers put disaster assistance at the top of the list, followed closely by other safety net programs such as commodity loans and LDPs, working lands programs, land retirement programs, counter-cyclical payments, and insurance programs.

“It is interesting to note that the preferences do vary some by farm size,” said Edelman. “Iowa’s large and medium farm operators place higher preferences on commodity loans, LDPs, counter-cyclical payments, and insurance programs, while Iowa’s small farms place higher preferences disaster assistance, land retirement, and working lands programs,” he said.

Including labor, environment, and food safety issues in trade negotiations received the greatest level of agreement among six agricultural trade policy strategies from both Iowa farm operators and those in the national survey.

Regarding conservation and environmental policy, the survey asked farmers to indicate their preferences on a number of conservation and environmental policy goals. In order of priority, Iowa farmers and farmers nationally indicated highest support for technical and financial assistance to achieve goals related to (1) soil erosion, (2) water quality, (3) air quality, (4) wildlife habitat, and (5) animal waste management. Iowa's small farmers indicated a higher level of plurality support for air quality and wildlife habitat assistance than did larger farmers.

On risk management program strategies, Iowa farmers and those nationally, indicated the highest level of preference for tax-deferred savings accounts. However, Iowa's large and medium size farm operators, indicated a higher preference for increased coverage levels and subsidies for crop production and revenue insurance than did Iowa small farmers.

Regarding rural development strategies, Iowa farmers and those in the national survey indicated the highest level of agreement for business education and training assistance, grants for business development and job creation, and access to capital, respectively.

The survey results show that while farm program payment limits are supported by the weighted sample of farm operators nationally, Iowa farm operators see lower program payment limits as being more important than farmers nationally.

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Or visit the Community Vitality Center web site for the full Iowa Farm Bill Survey Report and access to the National Farm Bill Survey Report: www.cvcia.org.

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Survey Methods and Response Attributes

Iowa State University Extension and the National Agricultural Statistics Service-Iowa Office collaborated with the National Task Force of the National Public Policy Education Committee, Farm Foundation, and USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service in conducting a survey of Iowa farm operators to ascertain their policy preferences regarding a wide range of 2007 Farm Bill topics. This survey was conducted simultaneously in 27 major agricultural states from November 2005 through March 2006.

The report contained herein includes the results of the survey administered to a stratified random sample of 3,000 Iowa farm operators. Of the total, 736 usable responses were received for a survey response rate of 24.5 percent. Small farms, defined as farms reporting sales of more than \$1,000 and less than \$100,000, accounted for 297 responses or 40.4 percent of the total useable survey responses. Medium farms, defined as farms with \$100,000 to less than \$250,000 in sales, accounted for 212 responses or 28.8 percent of the total useable responses. Large farms, defined as farms with \$250,000 or more in sales, accounted for 227 responses or 30.8 percent of the total useable responses.

Farm numbers by size strata are based on 2002 Census of Agriculture adjusted to 2005 based on USDA-NASS data. Iowa reported a total of 89,000 actual farms, which include 60,300 small farms (67.8%), 15,100 medium farms (17.0%), and 13,600 large farms (15.3%). To provide statistical precision in the sampling process across all sizes of farms, the survey methodology over-sampled the medium and large farms strata. As a result, weighted means and weighted sample preferences are reported to reflect the actual distribution of farms by size that existed in Iowa at the time of the survey.

Farm Program Goals

“Enhancing Small/Beginning Farmer Opportunities” and “Reducing Dependence on Non-renewable Energy” were the two top goals for Iowa farmers who were asked to rank the goals for farm program budget priorities (see Table 1). These two priorities were also the top two priorities for the national weighted sample. However, the priorities varied by farm size, as the “Enhancing small/Beginning Farmer Opportunities” response was the top priority for Iowa’s small farm operators, with “Renewable Energy” as second. On the other hand, “Renewable Energy” was the top priority for Iowa’s large farm operators, but “Enhancing Small/Beginning Farm Opportunities” was the second priority goal for this farm size group. It was interesting to note that farm operators in the national weighted sample placed a higher level of priority on “Assuring Safe Food Supply”, “Increasing Competitiveness,” and “Enhancing Farm Income” than farmers in the Iowa weighted sample.

Table 1. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on 2007 Farm Bill Goals (Survey Question 1) *

Farm Bill Goal	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Enhance Farmer Income	3.77	3.75	3.71	3.76	4.08
Reduce Risk	3.70	4.00	3.94	3.77	3.85
Increase Competitiveness	4.09	4.04	4.08	4.08	4.19
Enhance Small/Beginning Farmer Opportunities	4.45	4.32	3.90	4.36	4.32
Protect Natural Resources	4.15	3.85	3.80	4.06	3.98
Enhance Rural Economies	4.07	3.88	3.90	4.03	4.03
Assure Safe Food Supply	4.04	3.76	3.94	3.99	4.29
Reduce Dependence on Non-renewable Energy	4.30	4.33	4.46	4.33	4.32

* Scores are based on a scale of 1=least important, 2=less important, 3=neutral, 4=important, and 5=most important among respondents expressing an opinion.

Farm Program Budget Priorities

When asked for priorities about funding for selected farm program areas (see Table 2), “Disaster Assistance Programs” was clearly the top preference in the National Weighted Sample. While “Disaster Assistance” was the top preference among Iowa farm operators, other preferences were nearly as important, including “Commodity Loans and LDPs”, “Working Lands Programs”, “Land Retirement Programs”, “Counter-Cyclical Payments,” and “Insurance Programs.” Iowa’s large and medium farm operators place higher preferences on “Commodity Loans and LDPs”, and “Counter-Cyclical Payments”, and “Insurance Programs” than other areas, while small farms place higher preference “Disaster Assistance”, “Land Retirement”, and “Working Lands Programs.”

Table 2. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Maintenance of Funding for Existing Programs (Survey Question 2) *

Existing Program	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Fixed Decoupled Direct Payments	3.40	3.73	3.52	3.46	3.44
Counter-Cyclical Payments	3.55	3.88	3.84	3.64	3.47
Commodity Loans and LDPs	3.58	4.02	4.16	3.72	3.54
Livestk Commodity Supports	3.17	3.00	2.89	3.11	3.23
Land Retirement Programs	3.78	3.39	3.40	3.67	3.35
Working Lands Programs	3.73	3.44	3.52	3.67	3.56
Land Preservation Programs	3.57	3.05	3.03	3.43	3.44
Insurance Programs	3.52	3.69	3.85	3.59	3.58
Agricultural Credit Programs	3.46	3.31	3.31	3.42	3.44
Disaster Assistance Programs	3.80	3.58	3.45	3.73	4.00

* Scores are based on a scale of 1=least important, 2=less important, 3=neutral, 4=important, and 5=most important among respondents expressing an opinion.

Priorities for New Program Funding

“Bioenergy Production Incentives” was the top priority for new funding resources for both Iowa farmers and farmers nationally (see Table 3). The second highest preference for new program funding was “Food Safety Programs” for both Iowa farmers and those in the national weighted sample. While Iowa’s small and large farm operators indicated a similar priority, Iowa’s medium size farmers rated “Supports Tied to Farm Income” as the second priority for new program funding.

Table 3. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Provision of New or Reallocated Funding for Select Programs (Survey Question 3) *

Program	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Supports Tied to Farm Income	3.46	3.54	3.39	3.46	3.45
Supports for Non-Program Commodities	2.93	2.60	2.45	2.82	3.06
Incentives for Farm Savings Accounts	3.14	3.14	2.92	3.11	3.39
Bioenergy Production Incentives	3.71	3.91	3.84	3.75	3.78
Biosecurity Incentives	3.42	3.34	3.38	3.40	3.41
Food Safety Programs	3.65	3.44	3.46	3.60	3.71
Traceability and Certification	3.35	3.25	3.24	3.33	3.28

* Scores are based on a scale of 1=least important, 2=less important, 3=neutral, 4=important, and 5=most important among respondents expressing an opinion.

Preferences in Selected Strategies for Reduced Program Funding

“Targeting Payments to Small Farmers” was the highest preference among farmers in the national weighted sample as a program strategy for reducing funding (see Table 4). “Elimination of the Three-Entity Rule” was second. Iowa farmers switched these top two priorities for reduced program funding by giving a higher preference for “Elimination of the Three-Entity Rule” than “Targeting Payments to Small Farmers.” The results show that lower program payment limits is more important to Iowa farmers than farmers nationally.

Table 4. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Reduced Commodity Program Funding (Survey Questions 4-9) *

Implementation Issue	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Phase Out Commodity Payments (4)	2.47	2.11	2.18	2.38	2.37
Reduce Commodity Payments (5)	2.77	2.55	2.56	2.71	2.48
Target Payments to Small Farmers (6)	4.07	3.95	3.35	3.96	3.78
Lower Program Payments Limits (7)	3.65	3.74	3.60	3.66	3.06
Eliminate the Three-Entity Rule (8)	4.08	4.28	4.13	4.11	3.69
Eliminate Unlimited Commodity Loan Gains (9)	3.64	3.87	3.65	3.67	3.42

* Scores are based on a scale of 1=least important, 2=less important, 3=neutral, 4=important, and 5=most important among respondents expressing an opinion.

Preferences for Risk Management Programs

Regarding risk management program strategies, Iowa farmers and those nationally, indicated the highest level of preference for “Tax-deferred Savings Accounts” (see Table 5). However, Iowa’s large and medium size farm operators, indicated a higher preference for “Increased coverage levels and subsidies for crop production and revenue insurance”

Table 5. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Risk Management Programs (Question Z2)*

Risk Management Program Alternative	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Increased Coverage Levels and Subsidies for Crop Production and Revenue Insurance	3.35	3.72	3.78	3.46	3.35
Increased Coverage Levels and Subsidies for Livestock Revenue Insurance	3.06	2.93	2.91	3.02	3.15
Increased Coverage Levels and Subsidies for Whole-Farm Income Insurance	3.08	2.86	3.00	3.04	3.24
Tax-Deferred Savings Accounts	3.84	3.61	3.52	3.76	4.02
Incentive Payments for Use of Risk Management Tools	3.26	3.07	3.15	3.22	3.44

* Average scores are based on a scale of 1=least important, 2=less important, 3=neutral, 4=important, and 5=most important among respondents expressing an opinion.

Supply Control Policy Preferences

Iowa farmers and farmers in the national weighted sample indicated disagreement with “Mandatory Non-Paid Set-Aside Acreage Programs” (see Table 6). Large Iowa farms indicated a higher level of disagreement than did small Iowa farm operators. On the other hand, Iowa farmers and farmers in the national sample indicated a slightly more than neutral favorable response to “Voluntary Paid Set-Aside Acreage Programs.” Nationally, farmers indicated a small measure of agreement for a “Farmer-Owned Reserve Commodity Storage Programs,” while Iowa farmers indicated a small measure of disagreement for a “Farmer-Owned Reserve.” Small Iowa farm operators were more neutral toward a “Farmer-Owned Reserve,” while medium and large farms responded with a greater level of disagreement toward returning to this program concept.

Table 6. Iowa Farm Operator Preference on Supply Control (Question Z3) *

Supply Control Alternative	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Mandatory Non-Paid Set-Aside Acreage Program	2.63	2.12	1.93	2.46	2.41
Voluntary Paid Set-Aside Acreage Program	3.25	2.94	2.76	3.14	3.22
Farmer-Owned Reserve Commodity Storage Program	3.02	2.65	2.64	2.91	3.14

* Average scores are based on a scale of 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree among respondents expressing an opinion.

Program Buy-Out Preferences and Dairy Program Preferences

Leading up to the 2007 Farm Bill debate, a number of innovative commodity program buy-out concepts were discussed (see Table 7). The largest respondent preference from farm operators in Iowa and nationally indicated that they didn't know enough about the concepts to form an opinion. Of the farmers who registered an opinion, a greater percent were opposed to the buy-out concepts than were in favor. However, farm operators were more evenly split if the buy-out program was conducted over a longer 25 year period in comparison to a shorter 15 year period. Preferences for Iowa farmers generally mirrored the national preferences.

A plurality of Iowa farmers and farmers nationally support reauthorization of dairy price support programs and payments (see Table 8).

Table 7. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Commodity Program Buy-Out Issues (Question 10) *

Commodity Program Buy-Out Issue		Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Offer Producers a Buy-Out?	YES	14.9	21.8	15.6	15.9	23.0
	NO	44.6	50.2	60.4	47.4	42.0
	Don't Know	40.5	28.0	24.0	36.7	35.0
15-Year Buy-Out with Lump Sum Payment	YES	22.6	24.6	27.4	23.5	25.0
	NO	32.1	45.5	42.6	35.2	34.0
	Don't Know	45.3	29.9	30.0	41.2	41.0
15-Year Buy-Out with Installment Payments	YES	23.8	23.7	27.7	24.3	24.0
	NO	31.5	42.2	42.0	34.3	33.0
	Don't Know	44.8	34.1	30.4	41.4	42.0
25-Year Buy-Out with Lump Sum Payment	YES	29.7	33.6	34.1	30.8	30.0
	NO	30.4	40.3	34.1	32.2	30.0
	Don't Know	39.9	26.1	31.8	36.9	39.0
25-Year Buy-Out with Installment Payments	YES	29.7	38.9	36.2	31.8	27.0
	NO	29.4	32.7	34.8	30.5	30.0
	Don't Know	40.9	28.4	29.0	37.7	42.0

* Responses shown are percent of respondents answering "Yes", "No", or "No Opinion/Don't Know" for each separate question. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 8. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Dairy Programs (Question 11) *

Policy Alternative	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Eliminate all dairy support programs	28.2	31.8	29.6	28.9	28.0
Eliminate the MILC program and retain the price support program	17.1	15.6	20.4	17.3	16.0
Eliminate the price support program and make payments through MILC	15.0	19.6	13.4	15.4	13.0
Re-authorize both the price support program and the MILC program	39.7	33.0	36.6	38.4	43.0

* Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the four policy alternatives. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Conservation and Environmental Policy

Regarding the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a plurality of farmers in Iowa favored “Allowing Highest-Ranking Contracts to Re-Enroll Automatically” followed by “Allowing Contracts to Expire and Compete for Re-Enrollment.” Farmers nationally reversed these top two plurality preferences (see Table 9).

Regarding the Conservation Security Program (CSP), a majority of farm operators in Iowa and in the national weighted sample favor “Continued Implementation on a Watershed-by-Watershed Basis” (see Table 10).

Farmers in Iowa and in the national sample were asked to indicate their preferences for technical and financial assistance in regards to a number of conservation and environmental policy goals (see Table 11). In order of priority, Iowa farmers and farmers nationally indicated the highest plurality of support for technical and financial assistance to achieve goals related to (1) soil erosion, (2) water quality, (3) air quality, (4) wildlife habitat, and (5) animal waste management. Iowa’s small farmers indicated a higher plurality for air quality and wildlife habitat technical and financial assistance than did larger farmers. Iowa farm operators indicated a higher level of support for “Animal Waste Management” technical assistance only than did the national weighted sample.

A majority of Iowa farm operators and farmers nationally agree in principle with the concept of distributing funding for conservation programs in the form of state block grants (see Table 12).

Table 9. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Conservation Reserve Program (Question 14) *

Future Policy Alternative	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Allow Contracts to Expire/ Compete for Re-Enrollment	33.5	32.5	29.9	32.9	34.0
Allow Highest-Ranking Contracts to Re-Enroll Automatically	39.4	42.1	42.1	40.1	29.0
Reduce CRP Acreage and Restrict Future Enrollments to Environmentally-Sensitive Lands	19.4	18.7	22.2	19.6	18.0
Eliminate the CRP as Current Contracts Expire	7.7	6.7	5.9	7.4	18.0

*Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the four policy alternatives. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 10. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Conservation Security Program (Question 15) *

Future Policy Alternative	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Continue Implementation on a Watershed-by-Watershed Basis	57.5	59.1	57.5	57.7	55.0
Increase Funding for Immediate Nationwide Implementation	28.2	20.2	18.7	25.9	22.0
Eliminate the Program as Current Contracts Expire	14.3	20.7	23.7	16.4	22.0

* Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the three policy alternatives. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 11. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Environmental Goals and Conservation Programs (Question 12) *

Environmental Goal		Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Water Quality	No Assist.	4.8	5.7	4.5	4.9	7.0
	Tech. Assist	15.2	17.1	22.1	16.4	19.0
	Tech/Fin Assist	71.6	70.5	67.6	71	65.0
	Don't Know	8.3	6.7	5.9	7.8	9.0
Soil Erosion	No Assist.	5.2	6.6	4.0	5.3	7.0
	Tech. Assist	18.8	13.7	21.4	18.5	23.0
	Tech/Fin Assist	70.4	74.5	71.4	71.1	65.0
	Don't Know	5.6	5.2	3.1	5.2	7.0
Air Quality	No Assist.	9.1	14.3	13.9	10.4	11.0
	Tech. Assist	30.4	36.2	36.8	32.0	30.0
	Tech/Fin Assist	50.3	37.6	38.6	47.1	46.0
	Don't Know	10.1	11.9	10.8	10.5	13.0
Wildlife Habitat	No Assist.	16.0	21.7	24.6	17.9	17.0
	Tech. Assist	25.7	35.8	34.4	28.2	28.0
	Tech/Fin Assist	46.2	34.0	31.7	42.7	44.0
	Don't Know	12.2	8.5	9.4	11.3	10.0
Open Space Protection	No Assist.	17.1	26.4	27.8	19.7	19.0
	Tech. Assist	22.6	31.1	26.0	24.2	25.0
	Tech/Fin Assist	33.8	20.8	23.8	30.7	35.0
	Don't Know	26.5	21.7	22.4	25.3	21.0
Animal Waste Management	No Assist.	9.8	15.1	13.0	10.9	13.0
	Tech. Assist	40.4	38.7	44.4	40.7	31.0
	Tech/Fin Assist	40.4	40.6	38.6	40.2	43.0
	Don't Know	9.4	5.7	4.0	8.2	12.0
Carbon Sequestration	No Assist.	11.8	19.4	18.8	13.8	13.0
	Tech. Assist	30.0	29.9	30.4	30.0	24.0
	Tech/Fin Assist	21.4	27.0	25.0	22.7	26.0
	Don't Know	36.8	23.7	25.9	33.5	39.0
Biodiversity Maintenance	No Assist.	8.9	16.2	16.1	10.8	13.0
	Tech. Assist	27.0	31.4	29.5	27.9	24.0
	Tech/Fin Assist	30.9	28.6	26.3	29.9	30.0
	Don't Know	33.3	23.8	28.1	31.3	33.0

*Responses shown are the percent of respondents answering “No Federal Assistance”, “Technical Assistance Only”, “Technical and Financial Assistance”, or “No Opinion/Don't Know”. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 12. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Conservation Program State Block Grants (Question 13) *

Agreement on Transferring Block Grants to States for Conservation	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farm	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Strongly Disagree	7.3	5.7	9.3	7.4	19.0
Disagree	4.2	7.7	7.0	5.0	
Neutral	23.8	23.4	18.6	23.1	17.0
Agree	31.1	37.3	35.3	32.5	53.0
Strongly Agree	21.0	20.6	24.7	21.4	
No Opinion/Don't Know	12.6	5.3	5.1	10.7	11.0

*Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the four policies alternatives. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Agricultural Trade Policy

Regarding six selected agricultural trade policy strategies, Iowa farm operators and those in the national weighted sample indicated the highest level of agreement for “Including Labor, Environment, and Food Safety in Trade Negotiations” (see Table 13). Iowa farmers across all size groups appear to more strongly disagree with the notion of “Withdrawing from the WTO World Trade Organization” than respondents in the national weighted sample.

Table 13. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Trade Policy Issues (Questions 16-22) *

Trade Policy Issue	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Pursue Free-Trade Agreements (16)	3.77	3.69	3.83	3.77	3.42
Include Labor, Environment, and Food Safety in Trade Negotiations (17)	3.88	3.77	3.83	3.86	4.08
Eliminate Export Credits and Industry Payments to Comply with WTO (18)	3.35	3.21	3.26	3.31	3.19
Emphasize Domestic Economic and Social Policy Goals Rather than Trade (19)	3.17	3.00	3.08	3.13	3.28
Withdraw from WTO (20)	2.53	2.74	2.62	2.58	2.82
Eliminate Unilateral Sanctions on Food Trade (22)	3.31	3.33	3.41	3.33	3.22

* Average scores are based on a scale of 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree among respondents expressing an opinion.

Food Source Identification and Regulatory Issues

Regarding identification and regulatory policy issues, Iowa farmers and those nationally indicated the highest favorable preference for “Implementation of Mandatory Country-of-Origin Labeling”, “Improved Food Product Traceability”, and “Adoption of Mandatory Animal Identification” (see Table 14). Farm operators in the national weighted sample showed a higher level of agreement with “Labeling Biotech Food Products” than did Iowa farm operators. In fact, Iowa large and medium size farmer groups disagreed with “Labeling for Biotech Food Products, while only Iowa small farms were in agreement with “Labeling Biotech Foods.”

Table 14. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Food System and Regulatory Policy Issues (Questions 23-29) *

Food System and Regulatory Policy Issue	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Implement Mandatory Country-of-Origin Labeling (23)	4.16	3.96	3.90	4.10	4.31
Develop Voluntary Country-of-Origin Labeling Guidelines (24)	3.42	3.24	3.31	3.38	3.31
Improve Food Product Traceability (25)	3.89	3.68	3.63	3.83	3.91
Adopt Mandatory Animal Identification (26)	3.66	3.32	3.35	3.58	3.54
Adopt Government-Mandated BSE Testing (27)	3.38	3.13	3.23	3.33	3.22
Establish Guidelines for Voluntary Industry BSE Testing (28)	3.47	3.39	3.37	3.44	3.38
Label Biotech Food Products (29)	3.36	2.84	2.63	3.19	3.51

* Average scores are based on a scale of 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree among respondents expressing an opinion.

Rural Development Policy and Programs

Regarding rural development strategies, Iowa farmers and those in the national weighted sample indicated the highest level of agreement for “Business Education and Training Assistance”, “Grants for Business Development and Job Creation”, and “Access to Capital”, respectively.

Table 15. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Rural Development (Question Z5) *

Rural Development Program Alternative	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Access to Capital	3.63	3.55	3.59	3.62	3.59
Business Education and Training Assistance	3.74	3.58	3.70	3.71	3.72
Rural High-Speed Internet Access	3.37	3.57	3.62	3.43	3.43
Funds for Infrastructure and Services	3.25	3.26	3.42	3.27	3.31
Grants for Business Development & Job Creation	3.71	3.54	3.62	3.68	3.61

* Average scores are based on a scale of 1=least important, 2=less important, 3=neutral, 4=important, and 5=most important among respondents expressing an opinion.

Research and Extension Funding

A majority of Iowa farmers and those in the national weighted sample favor “Maintaining the Current Mix of Formula and Competitive Grant Funding in contrast to three other alternatives presented. The top priorities for research were “Biofuels & Renewable Energy”, “Water Quality”, and “Food Safety.”

Table 16. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Research and Extension Funding (Question Z8) *

Research and Extension Funding Alternative	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Maintain Current Mix of Formula and Competitive Funding	57.6	61.3	56.9	58.0	56.0
Increase Formula Funding	22.5	15.2	26.6	22.0	21.0
Shift to Competitive Funding	14.1	15.2	12.8	14.1	15.0
Eliminate Funding	5.8	8.3	3.7	5.9	9.0

* Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the four policy alternatives. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 17. Iowa Farm Operator Preferences on Research Funding Priorities (Question Z9) *

Research Funding Alternative	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Biofuels & Renewable Energy	4.53	4.60	4.52	4.54	4.42
Biotechnology	3.74	3.72	3.72	3.73	3.68
Production Agriculture	3.74	3.60	3.68	3.71	3.92
Biosecurity	3.81	3.49	3.50	3.72	3.68
Food Security	3.98	3.71	3.62	3.89	3.97
Food Safety	4.10	3.88	3.80	4.03	4.11
Nutrition and Obesity	3.38	3.08	3.11	3.30	3.34
Air Quality	3.86	3.43	3.32	3.73	3.73
Soil Quality	3.98	3.71	3.61	3.90	3.91
Water Quality	4.28	4.04	3.90	4.20	4.22
Private Forest Land Management	3.13	2.78	2.77	3.03	3.21
Community and Economic Development	3.47	3.37	3.22	3.43	3.31

* Average scores based on a scale of 1=least important, 2=less important, 3=neutral, 4=important, and 5=most important among respondents expressing an opinion.

Farm Operator Demographics of Survey Respondents

Table 18. Age of Respondent (Question 30) *

Age Category	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Under 25	.3	0.0	.4	.3	0.0
25-34	2.7	4.3	2.7	2.9	2.0
35-44	11.9	14.2	15.0	12.6	11.0
45-54	28.8	37.9	41.2	31.6	27.0
55-64	24.4	32.7	26.5	25.8	28.0
65 and Over	31.9	10.9	14.2	26.8	31.0

* Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the age categories. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 19. Gender of Respondent (Question 31) *

Gender	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Male	91.1	97.6	97.3	92.8	88.0
Female	8.9	2.4	2.7	7.2	12.0

* Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the gender categories. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 20. Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino Background of Respondent (Question 32) *

Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino Background	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Yes	1.1	.5	.5	.9	2.0
No	98.9	99.5	99.5	99.1	98.0

* Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino categories. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 21. Race or Ethnicity of Respondent (Question 33) *

Race or Ethnicity	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
White	99.7	100.0	99.5	99.7	98.0
Black or African American	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
American Indian or Alaska Native	.3	0.0	.5	.3	1.0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asian	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

* Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the race or ethnicity categories. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Table 22. Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold on Farm or Ranch (Question 34) *

Market Value Category	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	National Weighted Sample
Under \$10,000	10.2			31.0
\$10,000-\$49,999	17.0			28.0
\$50,000-\$99,999	13.2			23.0
Total Small Farms	40.4			82.0
\$100,000-\$249,999		28.8		9.0
Total Medium Farms		28.8		9.0
\$250,000-\$499,999			20.2	5.0
\$500,000-\$999,999			7.5	2.0
\$1,000,000 and Over			3.1	1.0
Total Large Farms			30.8	8.0

* Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the market value categories. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Table 23. Share of Farm or Ranch Cash Receipts by Commodity Group (Question 35) *

Source of Receipts		Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Program Crops	Grains	34.85	41.01	37.79	36.09	19.1
	Oilseeds	26.76	34.12	28.13	27.96	10.1
	Cotton	.13	.24	.00	.12	2.5
	Pulses	.16	.00	.02	.12	0.3
	Peanuts	.02	.00	.00	.01	0.6
	Sugar	.02	.00	.00	.01	0.2
Non-Program Crops	Fruits	.02	.00	.00	.01	3.8
	Vegetables	.25	.00	.00	.19	2.2
	Nursery Crops	.56	.07	.04	.42	3.9
	Forages	.13	.24	.44	.18	6.3
	Tobacco	4.53	.92	.82	3.54	0.6
	Other Crops	3.62	.97	.64	2.86	4.4
Livestock	Dairy	.38	.00	.09	.29	5.5
	Sheep	1.73	1.10	1.10	1.56	2.6
	Aquaculture	.83	2.97	2.68	1.37	0.7
	Cattle	3.30	7.07	16.76	5.61	29.3
	Hogs	2.04	1.58	1.08	1.58	1.7
	Poultry	.33	.00	1.31	.41	2.0
	Other Livestock	4.73	.76	.15	3.58	4.3

* Responses shown are the percent of farm or ranch cash receipts by each of the commodity groups. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

** Pulses are included in the broad category of "Program Crops" though not all pulse crops are eligible for commodity loan programs.

Table 24. Share of Farm or Ranch Cash Receipts from Organic Production (Question 36) *

Source of Receipts	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Organic Receipts	3.23	.57	1.55	2.66	5.98

*Responses shown are the percent of farm or ranch cash receipts from organic production.

Table 25. Share of Family Income from Farming or Ranching (Question 37) *

Share of Family Income From Farming or Ranching Category	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
None	4.1	.5	.4	3.2	7.0
1-25%	37.5	4.7	2.7	28.6	37.0
26-50%	25.4	17.5	8.8	22.2	16.0
51-75%	15.8	27.0	20.4	17.9	12.0
76-100%	17.2	50.2	67.7	28.1	27.0

* Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the share of family income categories. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 26. Education of Respondent (Question 38) *

Last Year of Education Completed	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Grade School	4.1	2.4	1.3	3.5	2.0
Some High School	3.8	.5	1.3	3.0	5.0
High School/GED	37.1	33.2	30.2	35.7	30.0
Some College/Technical School	34.0	36.5	34.7	34.4	32.0
College Bachelor's Degree	12.7	22.3	28.0	16.0	21.0
College Advanced Degree	8.2	5.2	4.4	7.4	11.0

* Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the education categories. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 27. Federal Farm Program Participation (Question 39) *

Federal Farm Program Category	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
Commodity Programs	78.1	98.1	95.6	83.0	51.0
Land Retirement Conservation Programs	40.1	41.0	48.9	41.3	22.0
Working Land Conservation Programs	13.1	17.5	29.5	15.8	13.0
Wildlife Habitat, Agriculture Land, and Grassland Preservation Programs	6.1	6.6	5.3	6.0	5.0
Risk Management Programs	22.9	48.6	57.7	30.7	20.0
Agricultural Credit Programs	5.7	7.5	9.7	6.5	5.0
Disaster Assistance Programs	10.4	24.5	18.9	13.4	26.0
Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs	1.0	0.0	.4	.8	0.0
Other Federal Farm Programs	6.1	5.2	4.4	5.7	7.0

*Responses shown are the percent responding that they participated in each of the program categories. Totals do not add across categories.

Table 28. Farm or Ranch Tenure (Question 40) *

Share of Farmland Owned Category	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
None	14.6	7.5	6.3	12.6	7.0
1-25%	12.9	27.4	26.0	16.5	12.0
26-50%	9.8	26.4	31.4	14.8	11.0
51-75%	6.8	18.9	13.5	9.2	10.0
76-100%	55.9	19.8	22.9	46.9	61.0

* Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the farm tenure categories. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Table 29. Expected Farm or Ranch Transition (Question 41) *

Expected Transition	Iowa Small Farms	Iowa Medium Farms	Iowa Large Farms	Iowa Weighted Sample	National Weighted Sample
To be Operated by Spouse	6.6	3.9	2.7	5.7	6.0
To be Operated by Children	31.3	37.4	51.6	34.7	43.0
To be Operated by Other Relatives	10.1	8.4	9.4	9.8	7.0
To be Operated by Non-Relatives in Current Operation	7.3	1.5	3.1	6.0	3.0
To be Operated by Individuals Outside Current Operation	36.1	45.8	32.3	36.9	22.0
To be Converted to Non-Farm Use	8.7	3.0	.9	6.9	18.0

* Responses shown are the percent of respondents choosing each of the farm or ranch transition categories. Totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.