

A photograph of an organic orchard. The image shows rows of trees with lush green foliage. A path of grass and weeds runs through the center of the orchard. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, italicized font.

*Organic orchards:  
needs and priorities*

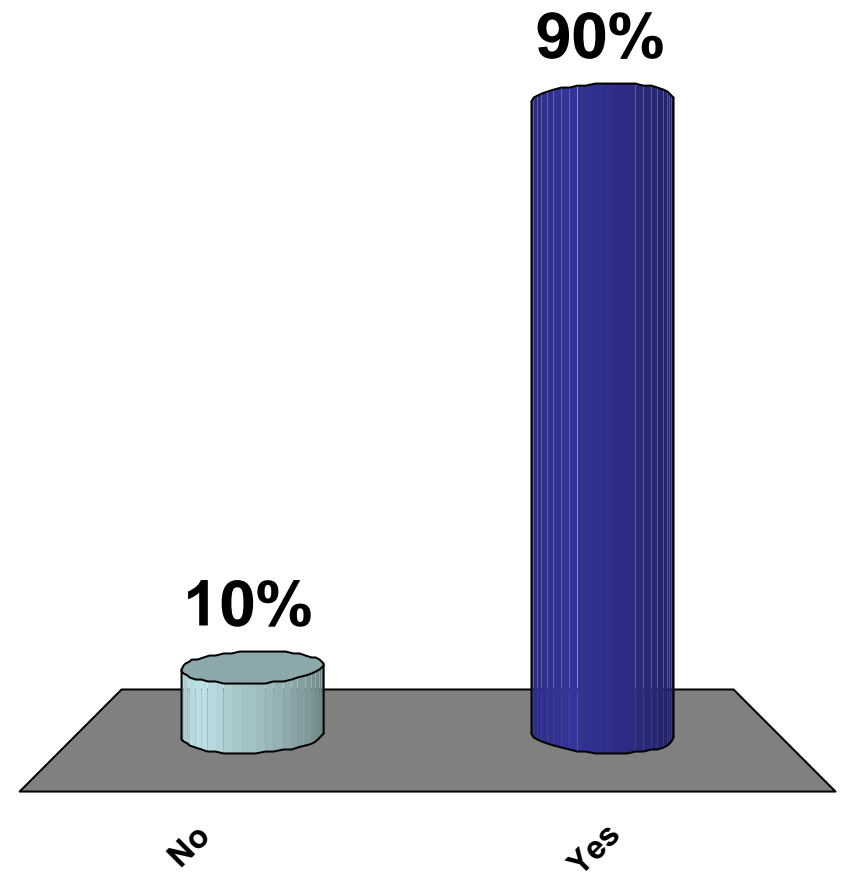
**David Granatstein, WSU CSANR  
Mark LaPierre, Wilbur-Ellis Co.  
Nadine Lehrer, WSU TFREC**



The data presented here were collected from growers attending the Wilbur-Ellis organic grower meeting on Feb. 19, 2010, in Prosser, WA. Each person was able to response to the questions using the Turning Point technology, a real time audience participation system. There were about 60 respondents to the questions.

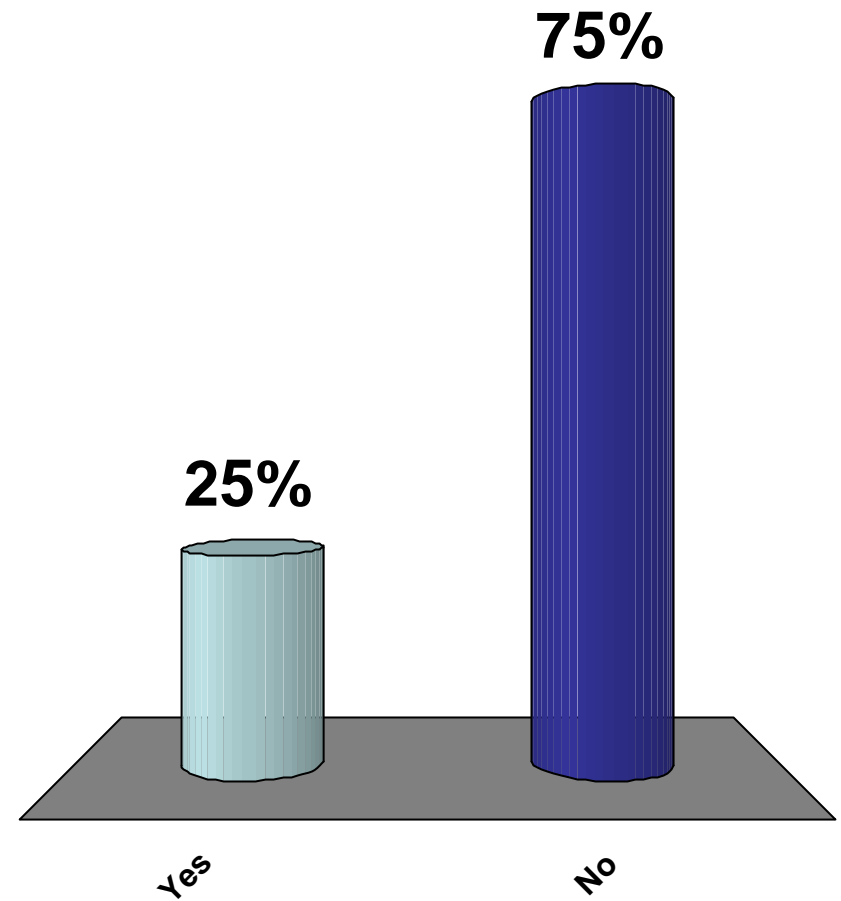
# Do you work with organic orchards?

1. No
2. Yes



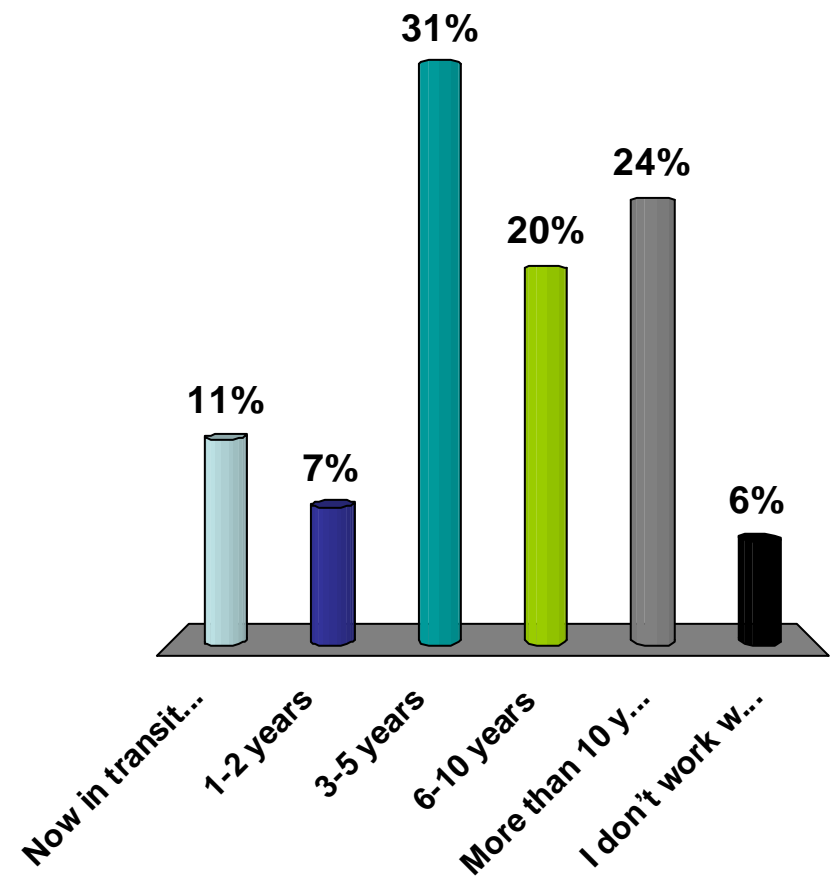
# Did you participate in this survey earlier this year ?

1. Yes
2. No



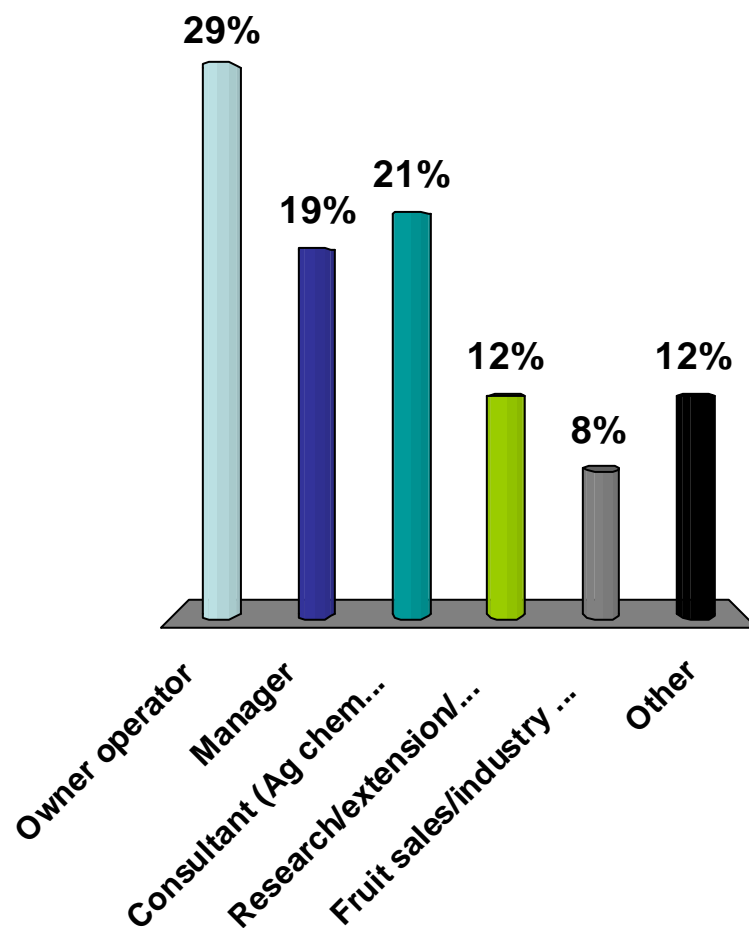
# How long have you been in organic orcharding?

1. Now in transition
2. 1-2 years
3. 3-5 years
4. 6-10 years
5. More than 10 years
6. I don't work with organic orchards



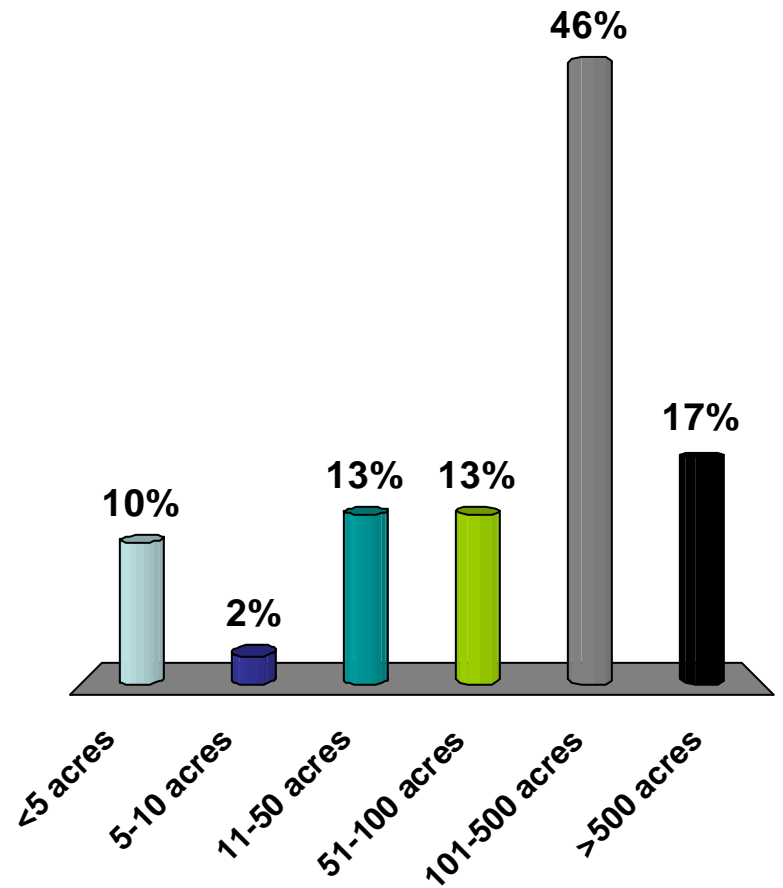
# What is your primary role in organic orcharding?

1. Owner operator
2. Manager
3. Consultant (Ag chem, warehouse, private)
4. Research/extension/government
5. Fruit sales/industry support
6. Other



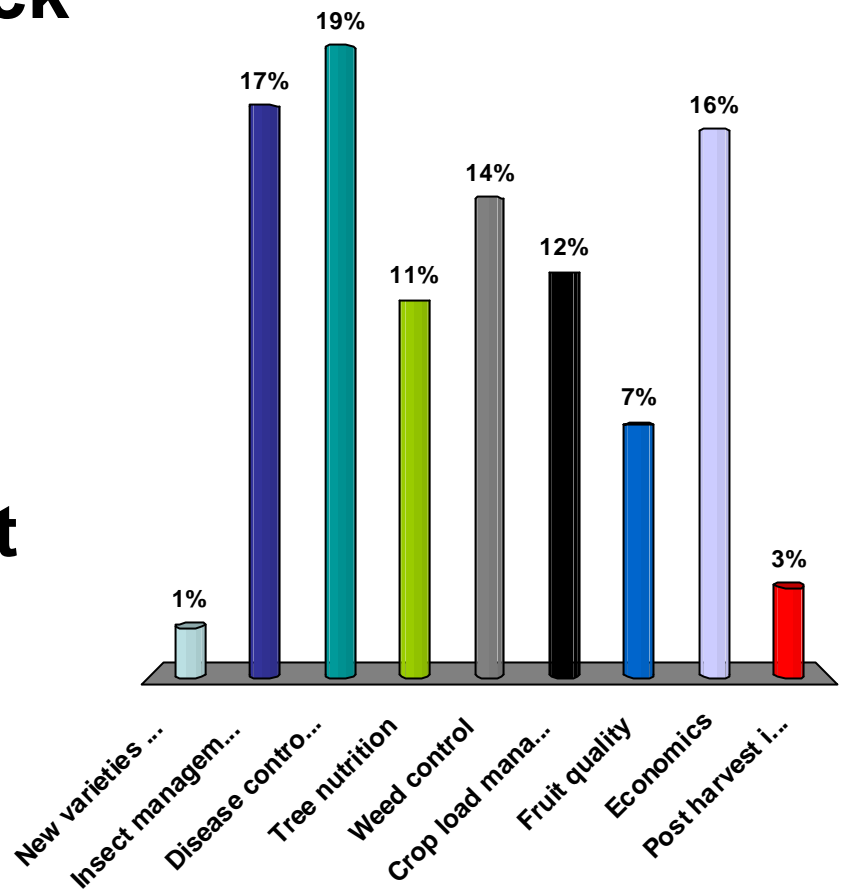
# How many acres of organic orchard do you work with?

1. <5 acres
2. 5-10 acres
3. 11-50 acres
4. 51-100 acres
5. 101-500 acres
6. >500 acres



# What are the **3 most serious problems** you face in organic tree fruit production? (rank from most to least)

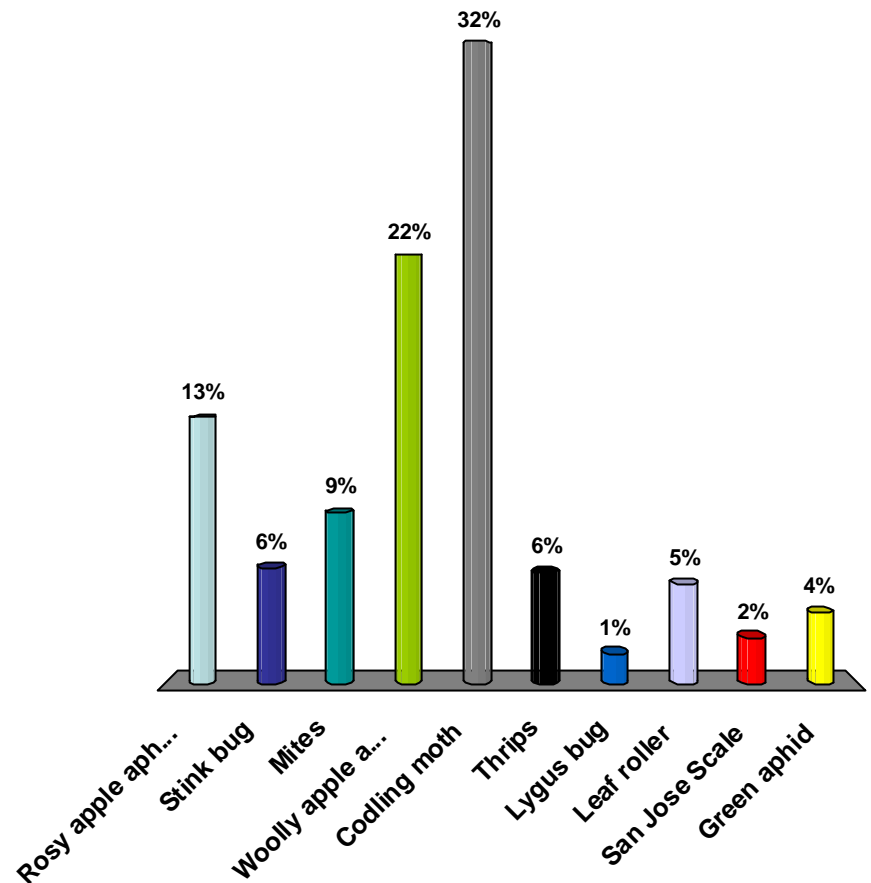
1. New varieties / rootstock
2. Insect management
3. Disease control
4. Tree nutrition
5. Weed control
6. Crop load management
7. Fruit quality
8. Economics
9. Post harvest issues





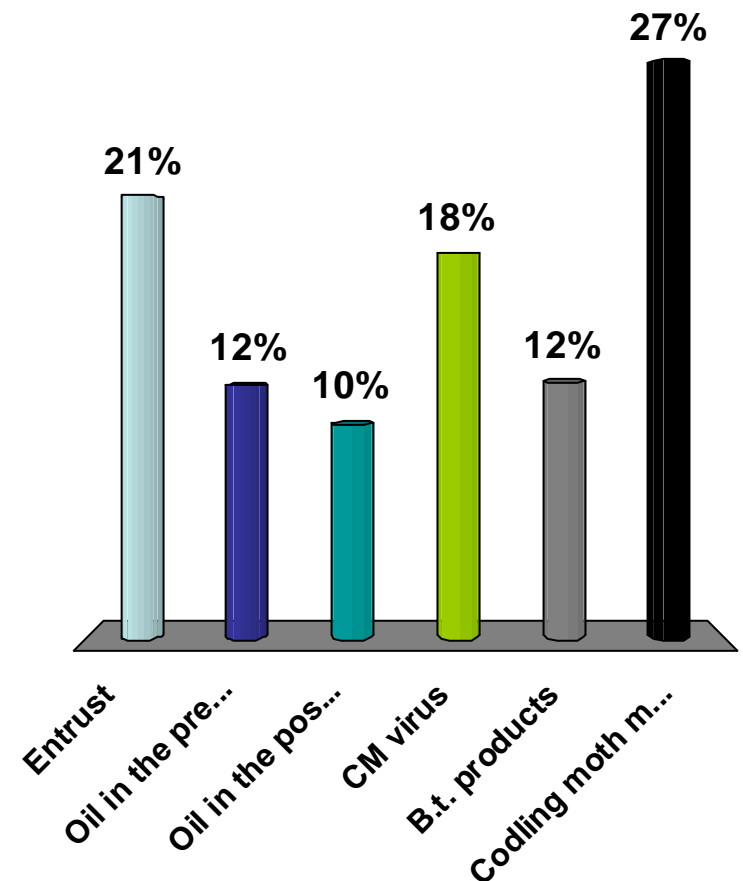
# Rank the **3 most** difficult insect pest to control in organic apple production (with the worst first).

1. Rosy apple aphid
2. Stink bug
3. Mites
4. Woolly apple aphid
5. Codling moth
6. Thrips
7. Lygus bug
8. Leaf roller
9. San Jose Scale
10. Green aphid



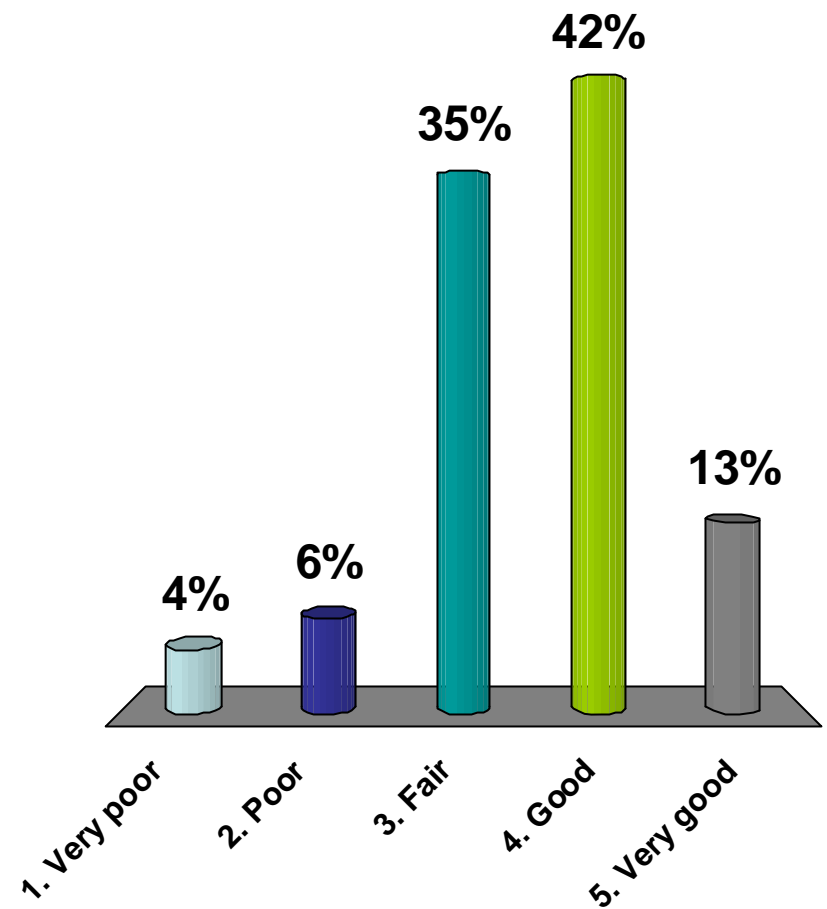
Which of these **products** did you use or recommend in 2009 for codling moth / leaf roller / other caterpillars? (select all that apply, starting with the most important first)

1. Entrust
2. Oil in the pre-bloom period
3. Oil in the post-bloom period
4. CM virus
5. B.t. products
6. Codling moth mating disruption



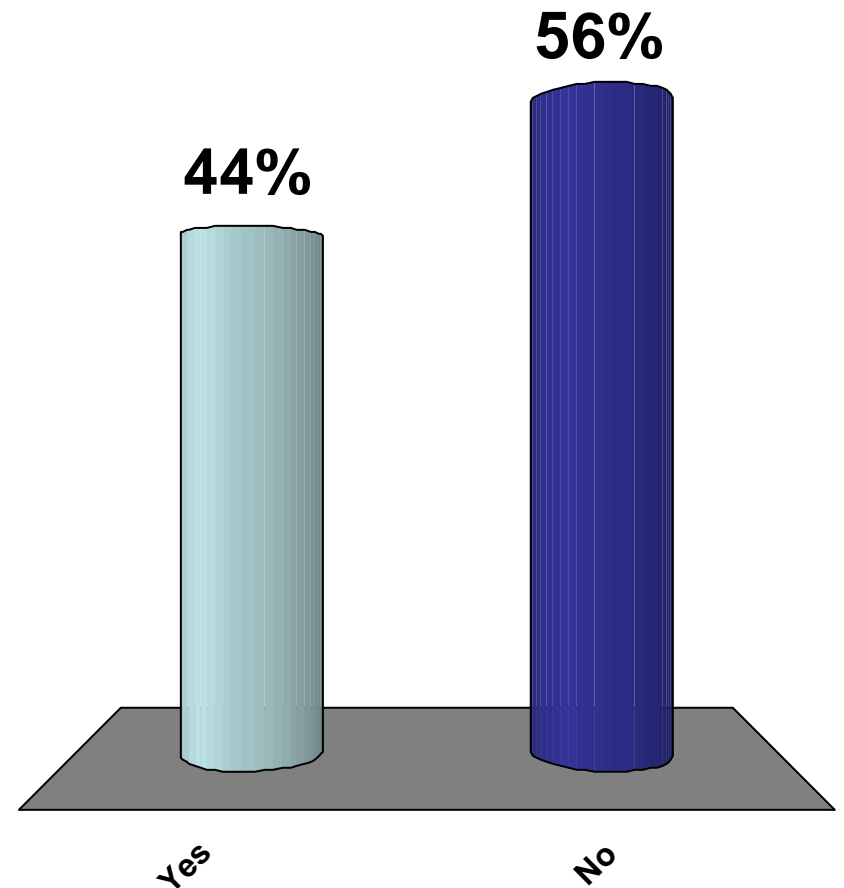
# Rate the ability of existing tools to control codling moth in an organic orchard.

1. Very poor
2. Poor
3. Fair
4. Good
5. Very good



# Did codling moth cause unacceptable damage in organic apple orchards that you own, manage, or consult on in 2009?

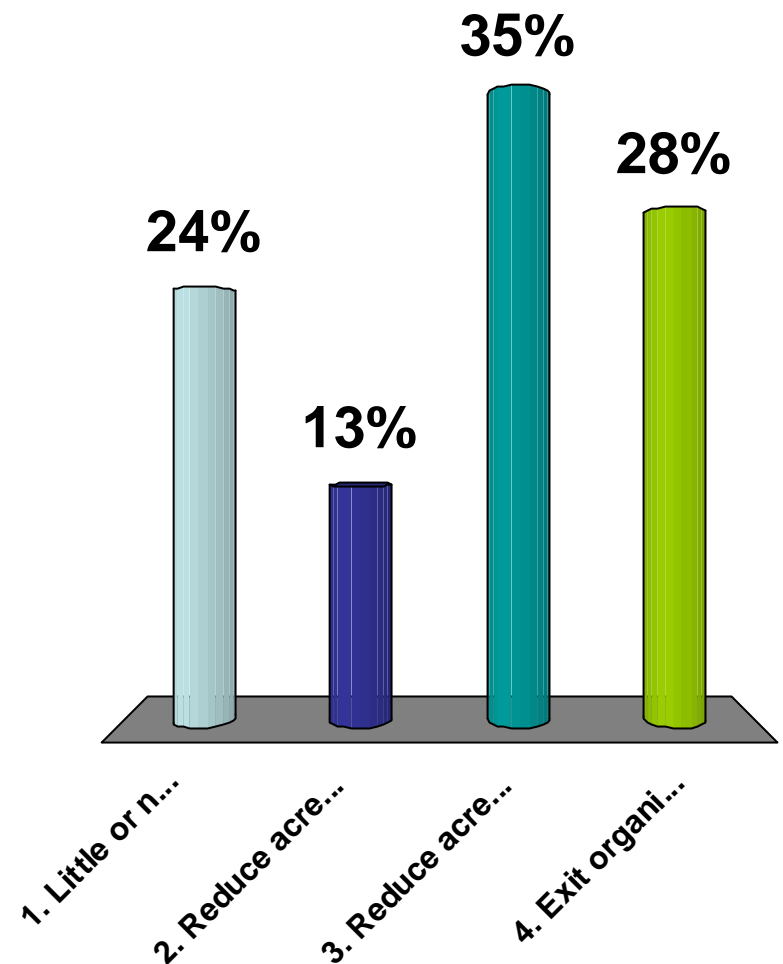
1. Yes
2. No





# How would the loss of antibiotics for fireblight control impact your operation?

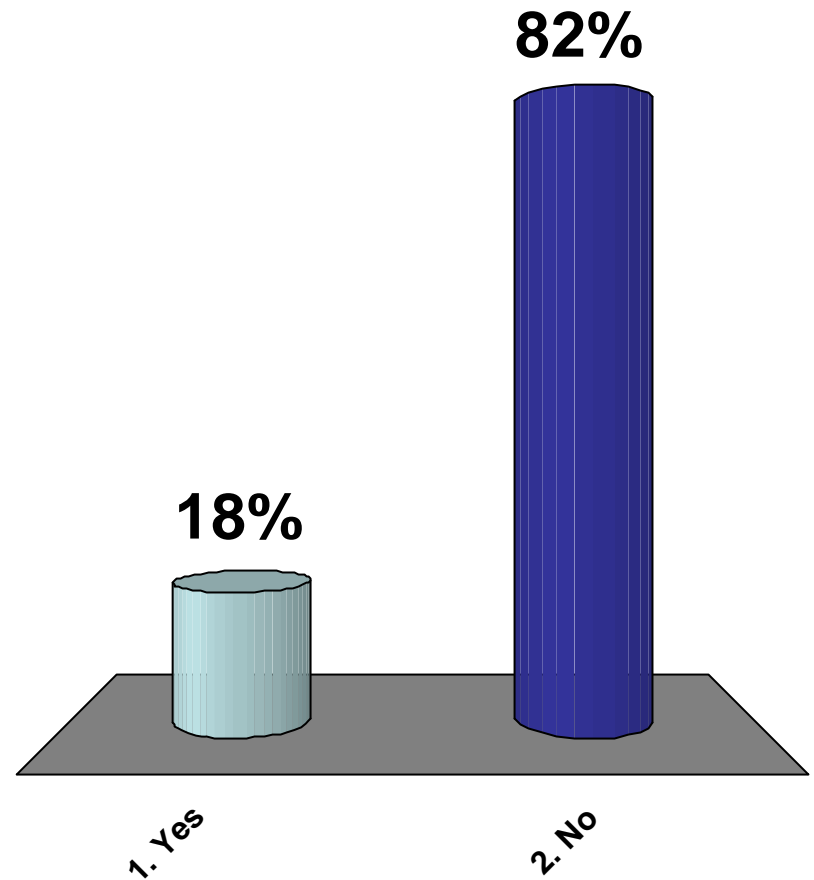
1. Little or no effect
2. Reduce acres of organic pears
3. Reduce acres of susceptible apple varieties
4. Exit organic apple and/or pear production



In a severe fireblight year (**Cougarblight hi, >700-800**), would you be able to control fireblight without antibiotics?

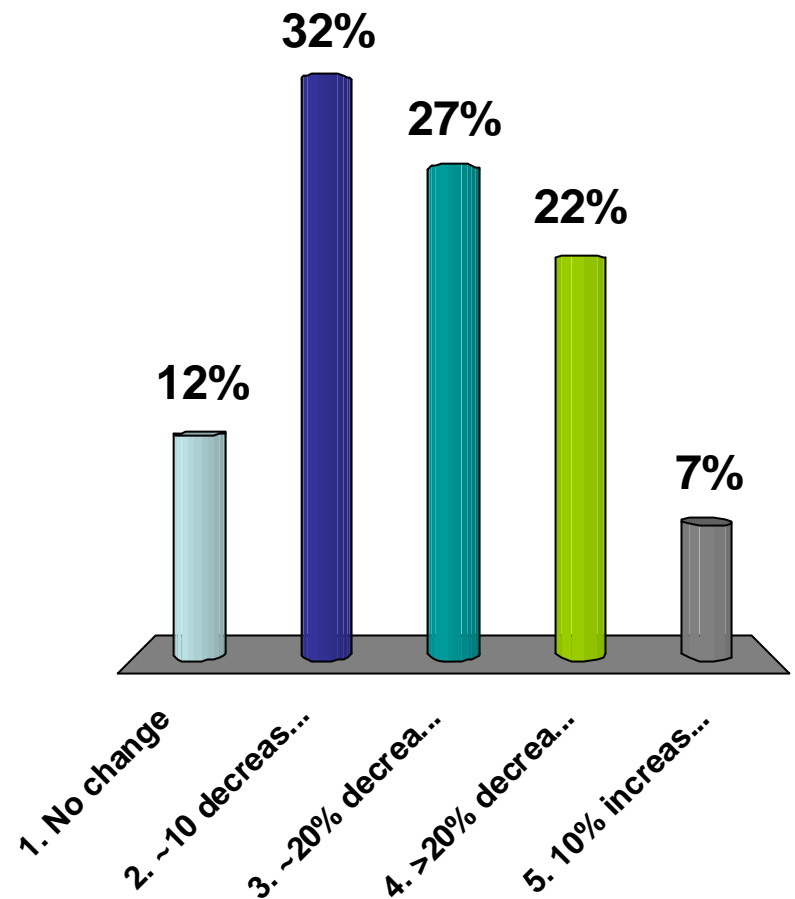
1. Yes

2. No



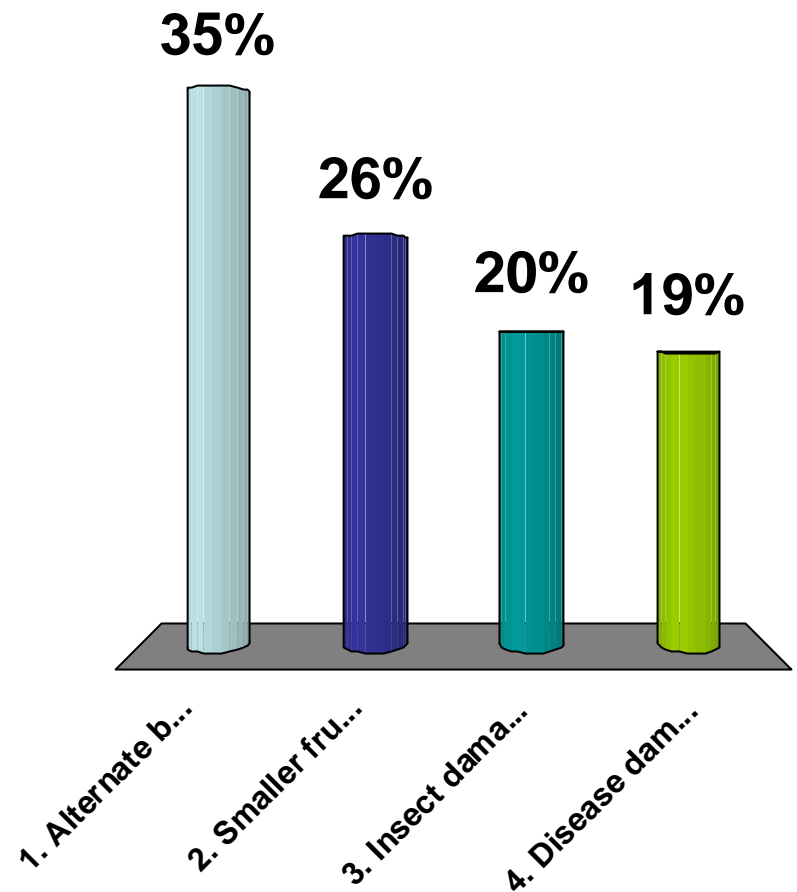
# How has organic production impacted your fruit **yields** (e.g. bins/acre)?

1. No change
2. ~10 decrease
3. ~20% decrease
4. >20% decrease
5. 10% increase or more



If you have experienced reduced **yields**, what are the main causes (rank in order of most important first)?

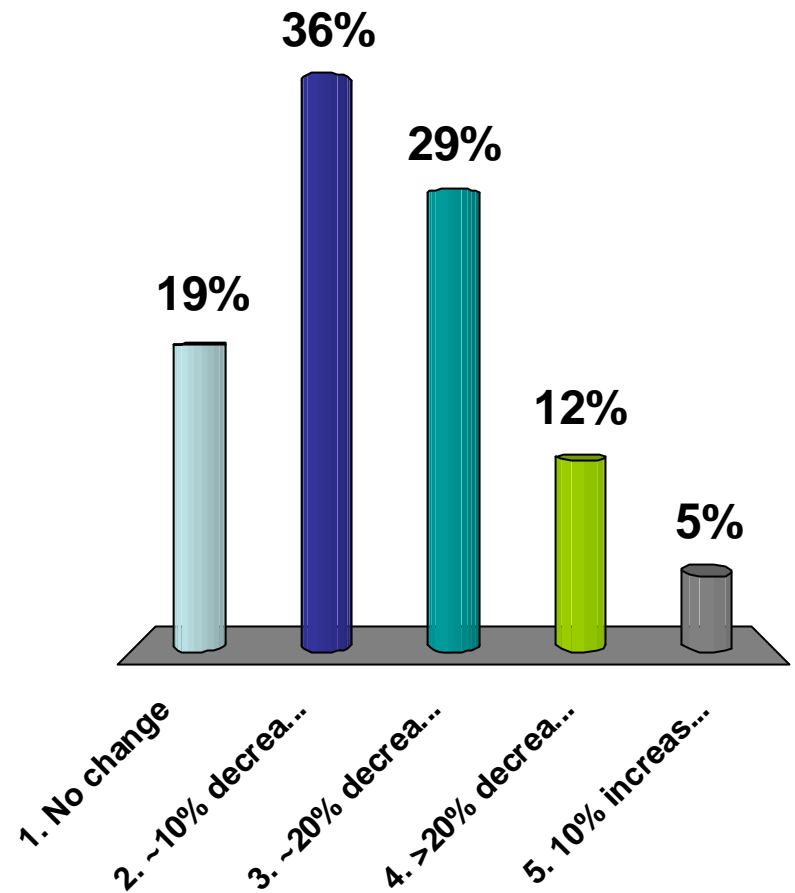
1. Alternate bearing
2. Smaller fruit size
3. Insect damage
4. Disease damage (e.g. fireblight, mildew)





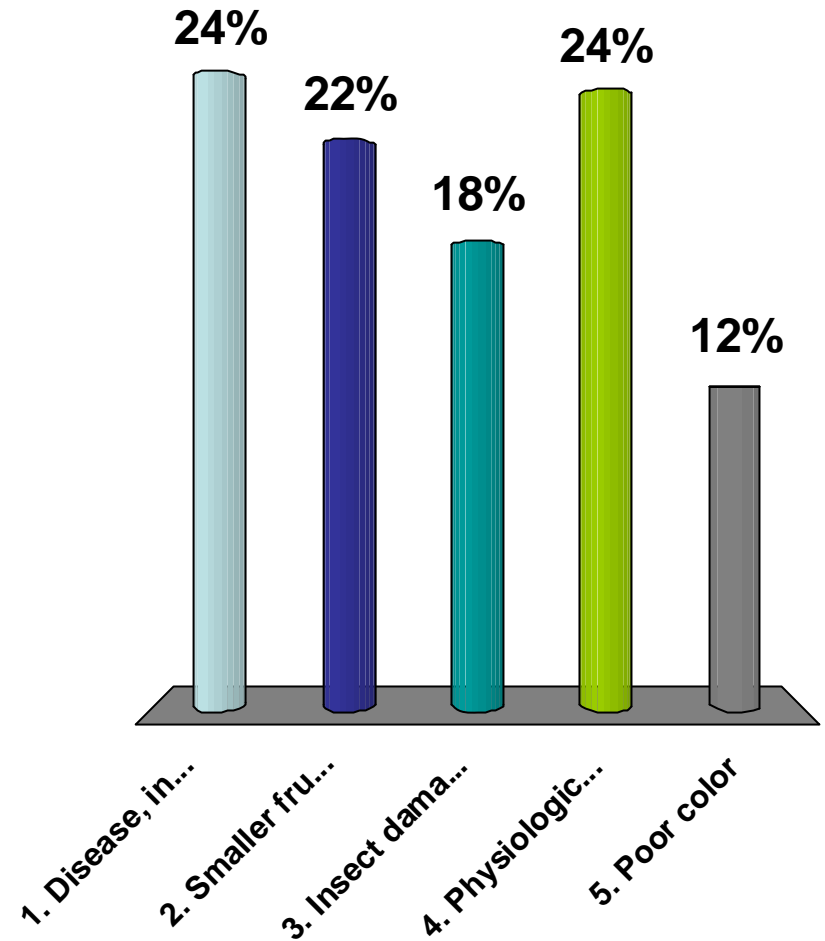
# How has organic production impacted your fruit **packout**?

1. No change
2. ~10% decrease
3. ~20% decrease
4. >20% decrease
5. 10% increase or more



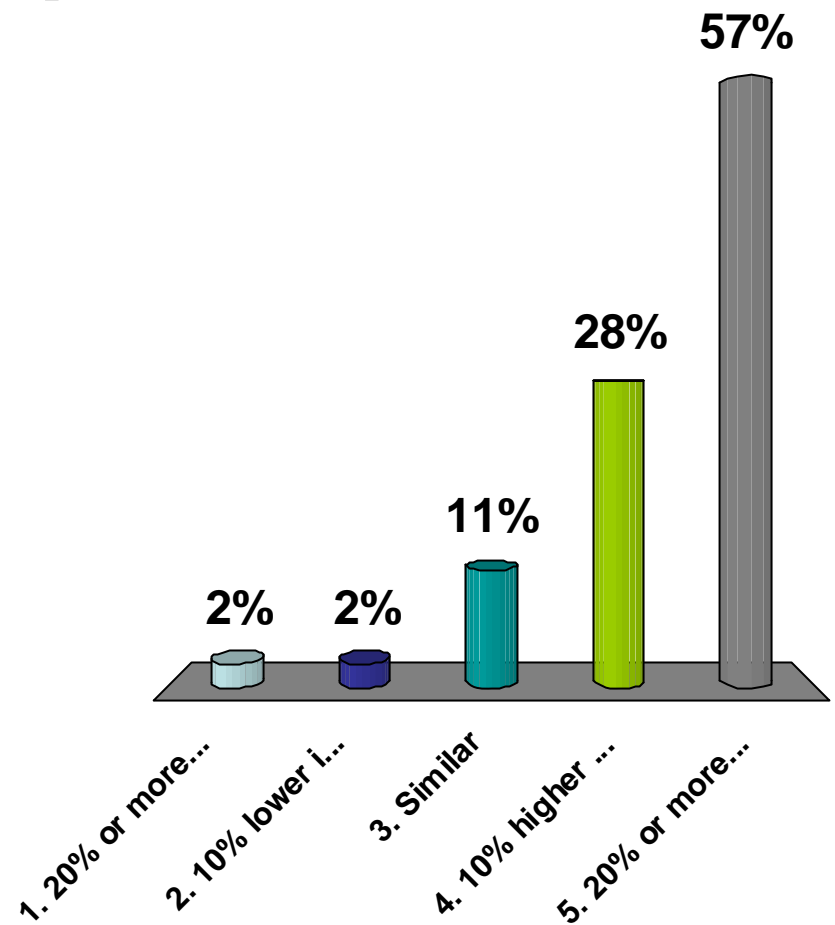
If you have experienced **reduced packout**, what are the main causes (rank in order of most important first)?

1. Disease, including storage rot
2. Smaller fruit size
3. Insect damage
4. Physiological disorders (e.g. bitterpit)
5. Poor color



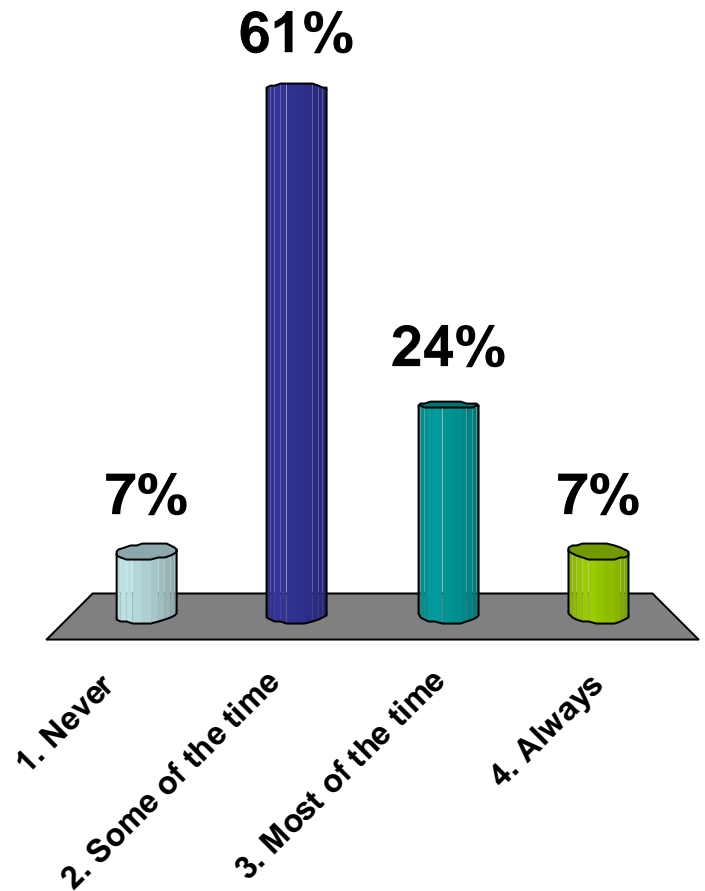
# How would you compare the **cost of production** for organic tree fruit to similar conventional production?

1. 20% or more lower in organic
2. 10% lower in organic
3. Similar
4. 10% higher in organic
5. 20% or more higher in organic



# Do the returns from organic production offset the added costs of growing fruit organically?

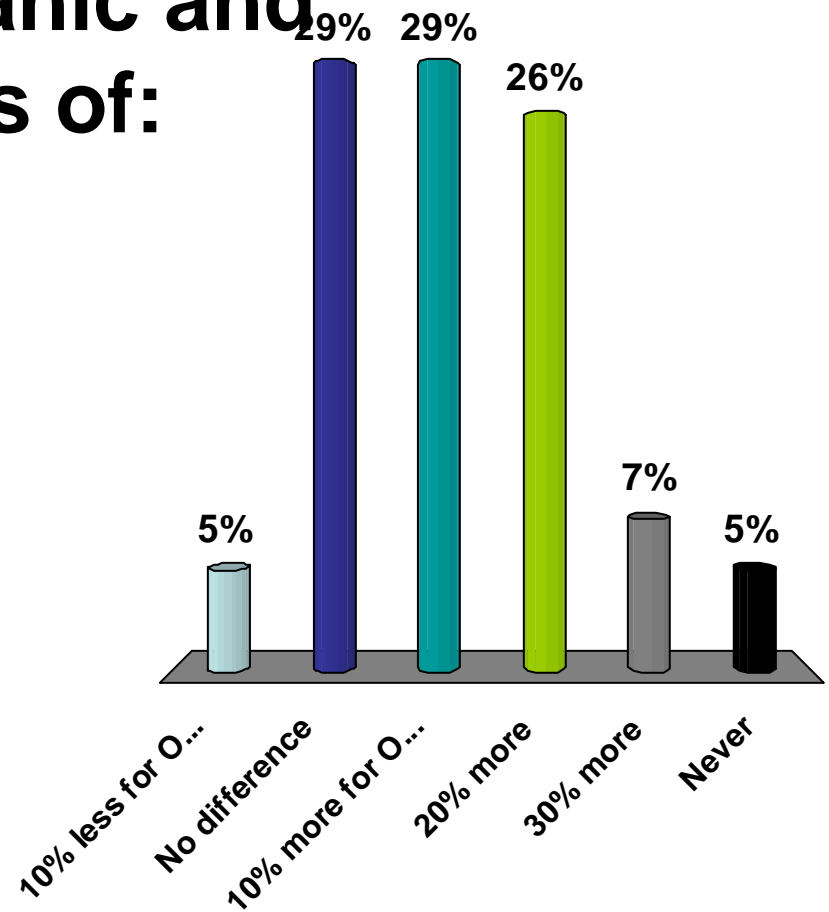
1. Never
2. Some of the time
3. Most of the time
4. Always





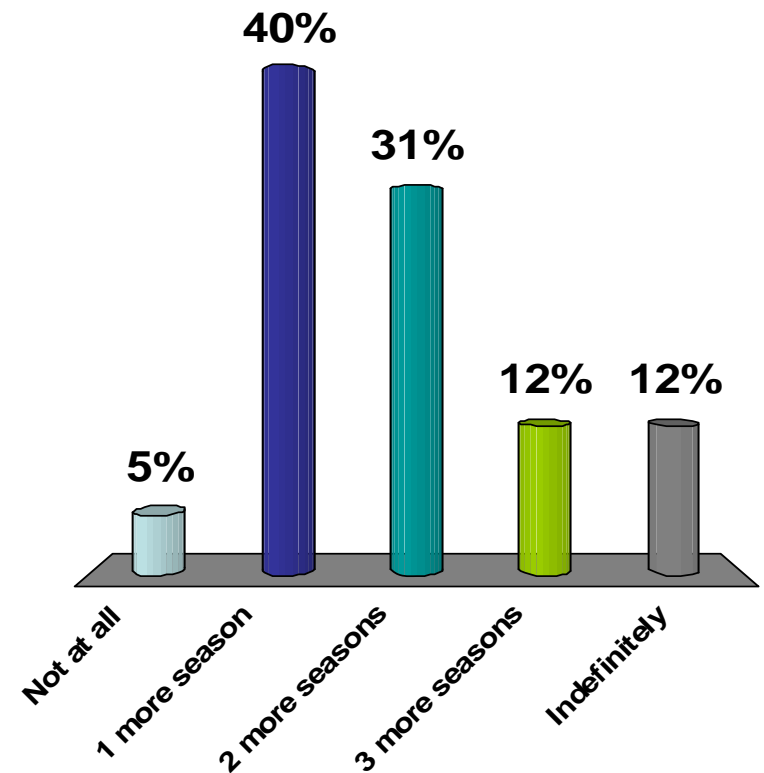
**At what point would you consider switching back to conventional production – minimum difference between Organic and Conventional bin returns of:**

- 1. 10% less for Org.**
- 2. No difference**
- 3. 10% more for Org.**
- 4. 20% more**
- 5. 30% more**
- 6. Never**



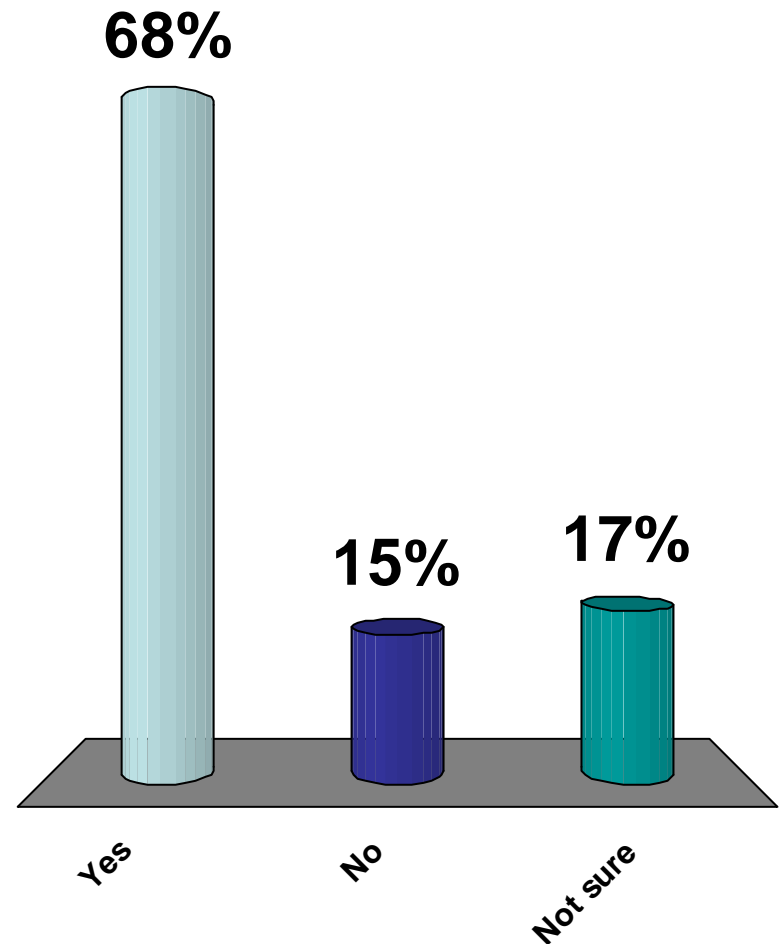
**If organic premiums did not cover the increased costs, how long would you be willing to stay with organic production, given the 3 year transition to re-enter?**

- 1. Not at all**
- 2. 1 more season**
- 3. 2 more seasons**
- 4. 3 more seasons**
- 5. Indefinitely**



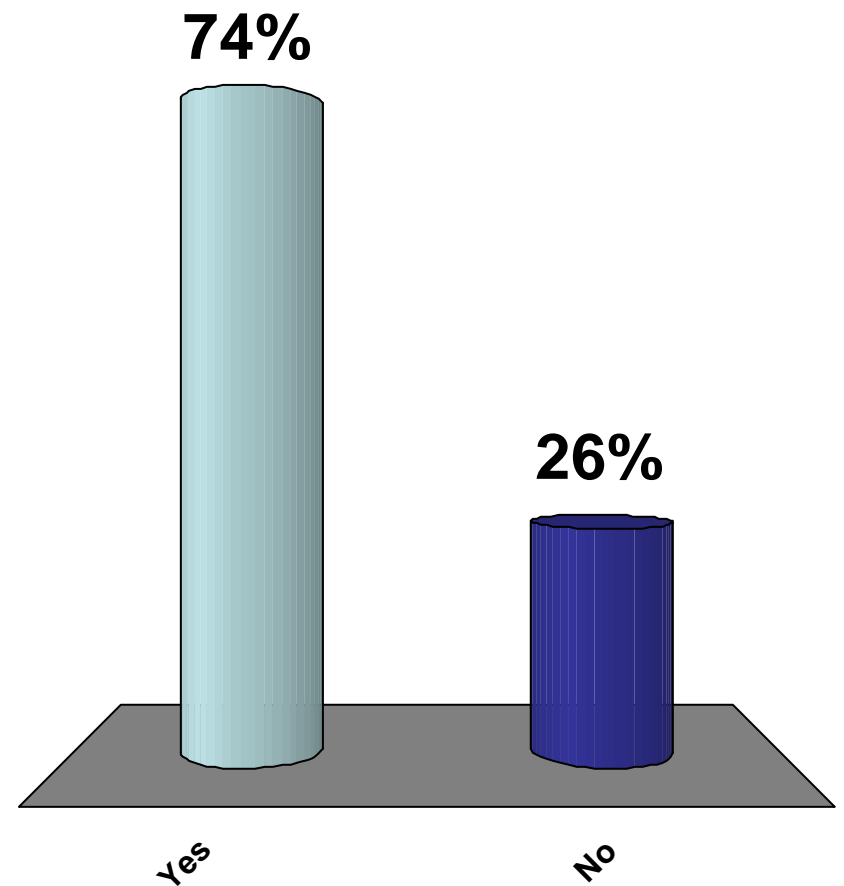
# Would you (or your banker) find a crop enterprise budget for organic apples (or pears, cherries, etc.) a useful tool/resource for your business?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure



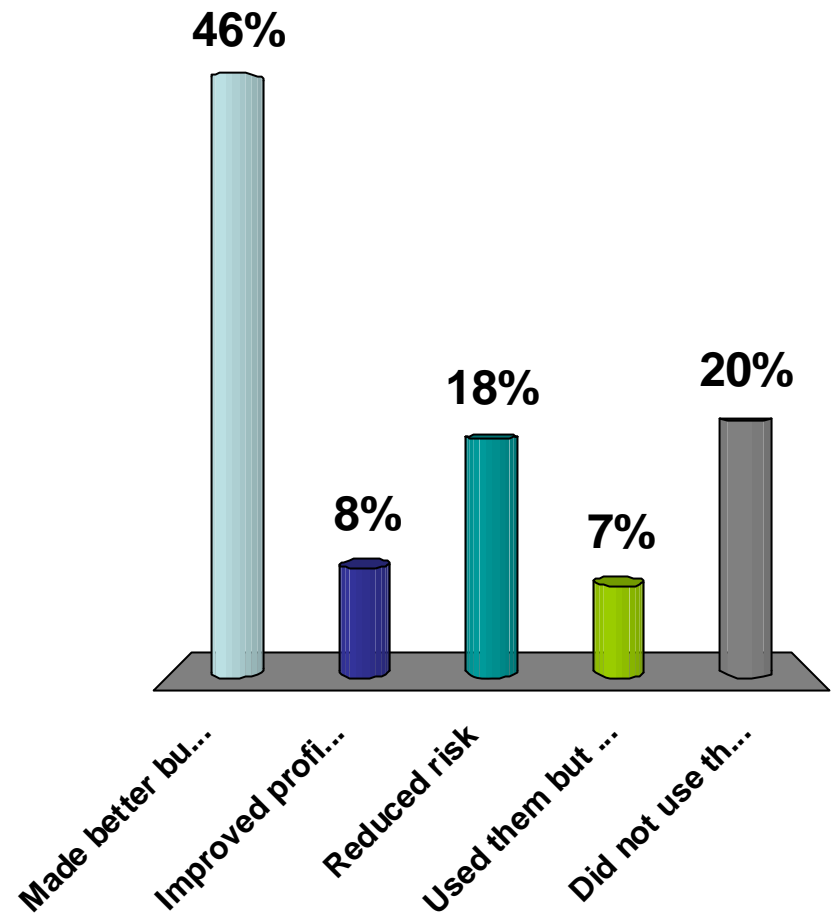
# Do you use the organic tree fruit trends statistics that are generated by WSU each year?

1. Yes
2. No



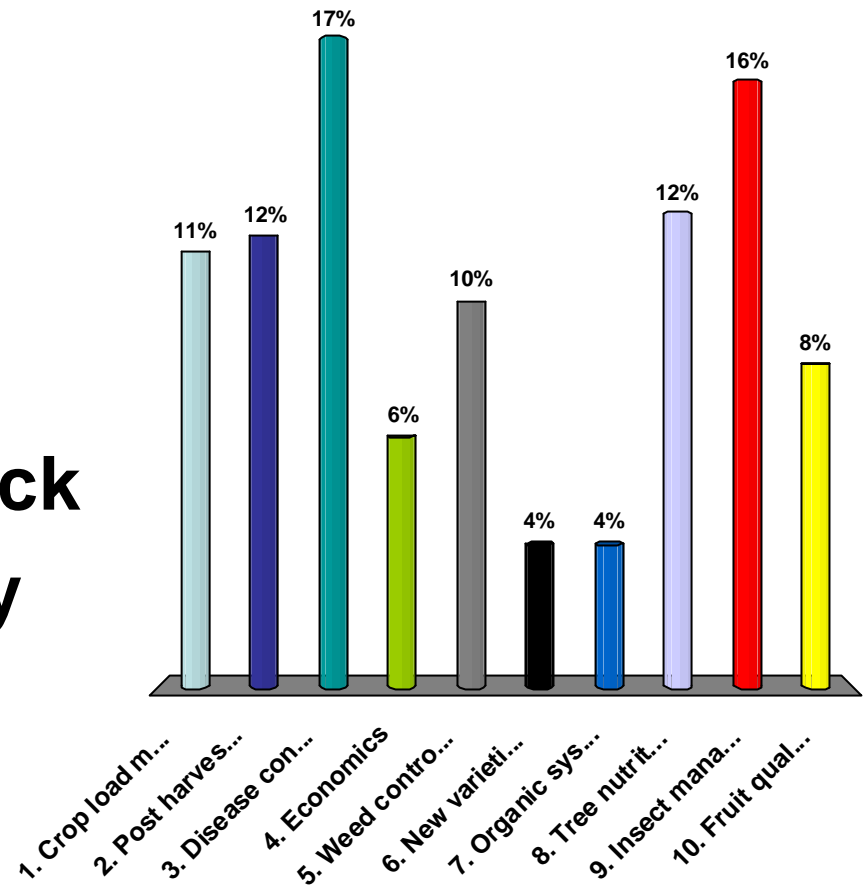
**How have the organic tree fruit stats helped you? Select those that apply, in order of most important to least important.**

- 1. Made better business decisions**
- 2. Improved profitability**
- 3. Reduced risk**
- 4. Used them but were not helpful**
- 5. Did not use them**



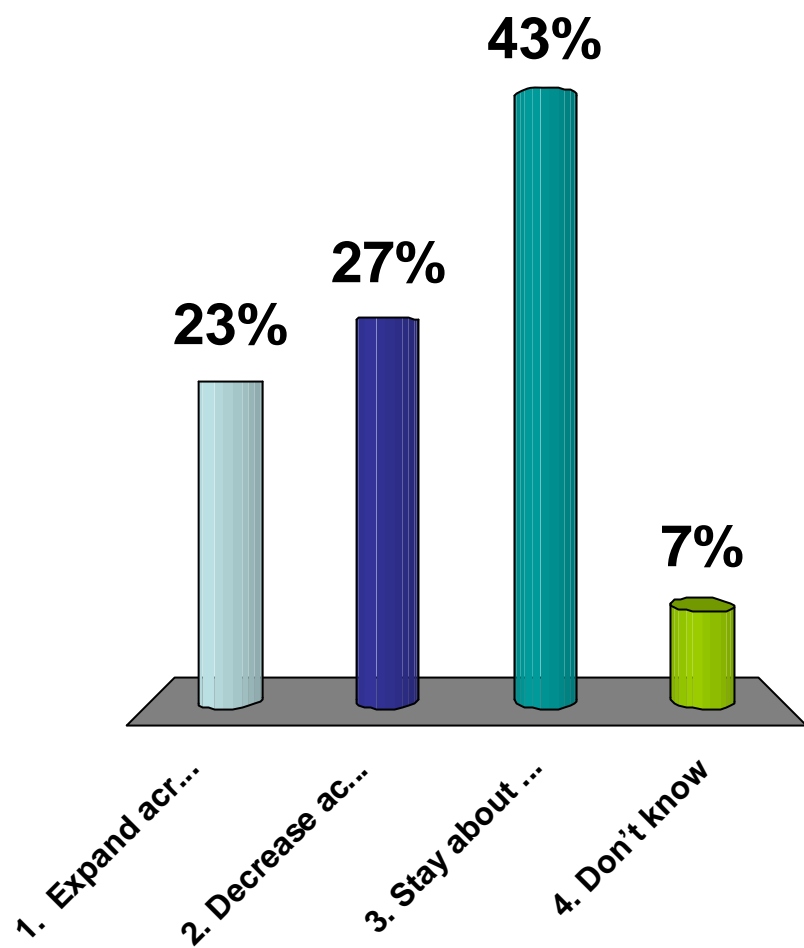
Choose your **3** highest priorities for  
organic tree fruit research.  
(with highest priority first)

1. Crop load management
2. Post harvest issues
3. Disease control
4. Economics
5. Weed control
6. New varieties / rootstock
7. Organic systems study
8. Tree nutrition
9. Insect management
10. Fruit quality



# How do you see your organic fruit production changing over the next five years?

1. Expand acres under organic management
2. Decrease acres of organic management
3. Stay about the same
4. Don't know







*Thanks for  
participating !*