

Two chains were excluded from this research: Lowe's and Walmart. Lowe's was excluded because the nearest location in Ventura does not sell or stock compost products. Walmart was excluded because their nearest location in Santa Maria offers similar products to Ace Hardware and Amazon, with Amazon consistently offering lower pricing. Therefore, customers in the greater Santa Barbara area are most likely to either order gardening supplies from Amazon or simply shop at local brick-and-mortar garden centers.

Included in Appendix C of this report is an in-depth competitive analysis data chart. This document expands upon the data and insights mentioned above.

## SURVEY ANALYSIS

The survey results were analyzed through qualitative and quantitative methods in accordance with the aforementioned survey goals. Analytic tools available within Qualtrics XM enabled Strategy Consultants to evaluate participant responses by cross-referencing individual questions in conjunction with other relevant factors. These factors included but were not limited to: residential area, line of work (i.e., landscaping, nursery management, etc.), and compost purchasing habits.

Cross-referencing was crucial in providing a multi-dimensional view of the data, offering richer insights than examining a single data point in isolation. By correlating various factors, underlying trends and relationships that are not immediately apparent are identified. This method aids in understanding the nuanced needs and behaviors of different customer segments, thereby enabling the development of more targeted and effective strategies to bolster IVCC's sales and customer engagement.

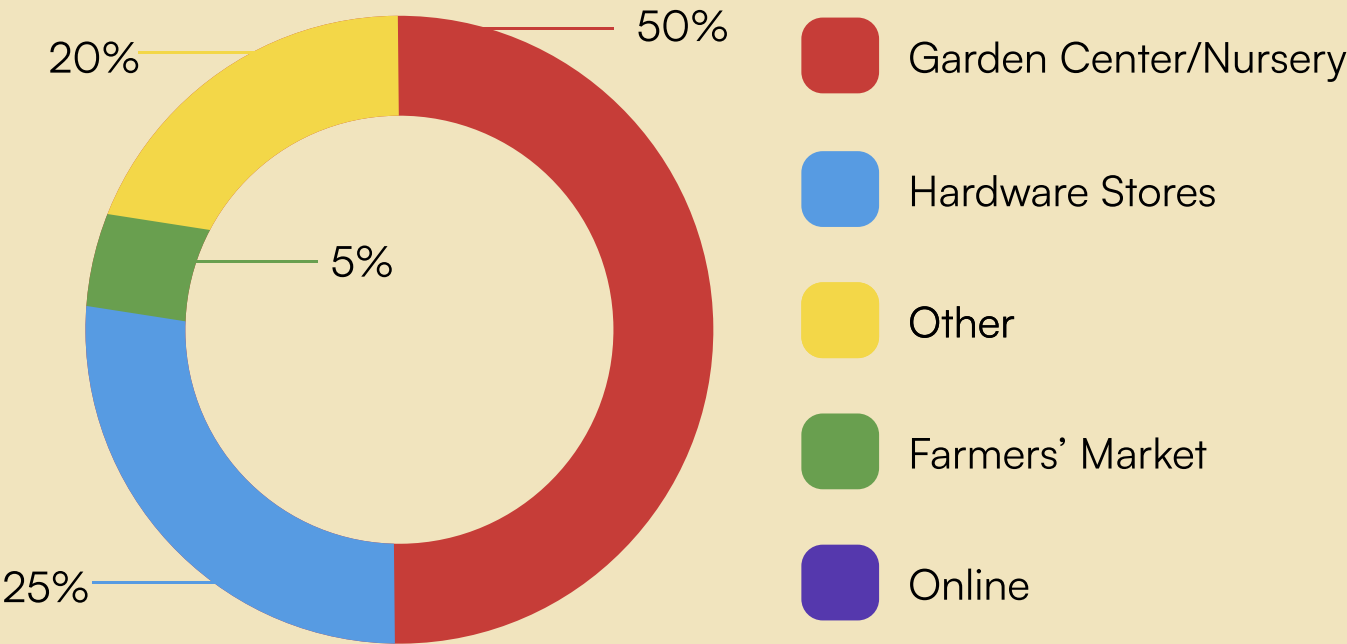
To illustrate one example, the value placed by nursery owners on compost quality for plant health can lead to the creation of tailored marketing messages that highlight those specific benefits, thereby enhancing product appeal and driving sales to a specific demographic.

# TARGET AUDIENCE RESULTS

Sixty participants were surveyed, revealing valuable insights regarding consumers' motivations and incentives in purchasing compost. Additionally, pain points and barriers consumers faced when purchasing compost were evaluated. The competitive landscape of the local compost market was also uncovered through this process, accompanied by an extensive competitive analysis using primary and secondary data. The survey revealed a noteworthy demand for compost in the greater Santa Barbara area, while simultaneously exposing a gap in the local compost market for locally sourced, high-quality compost products offered at a competitive price. Furthermore, the survey demonstrated that the target demographic is eager to support local businesses that display an active commitment to sustainability.

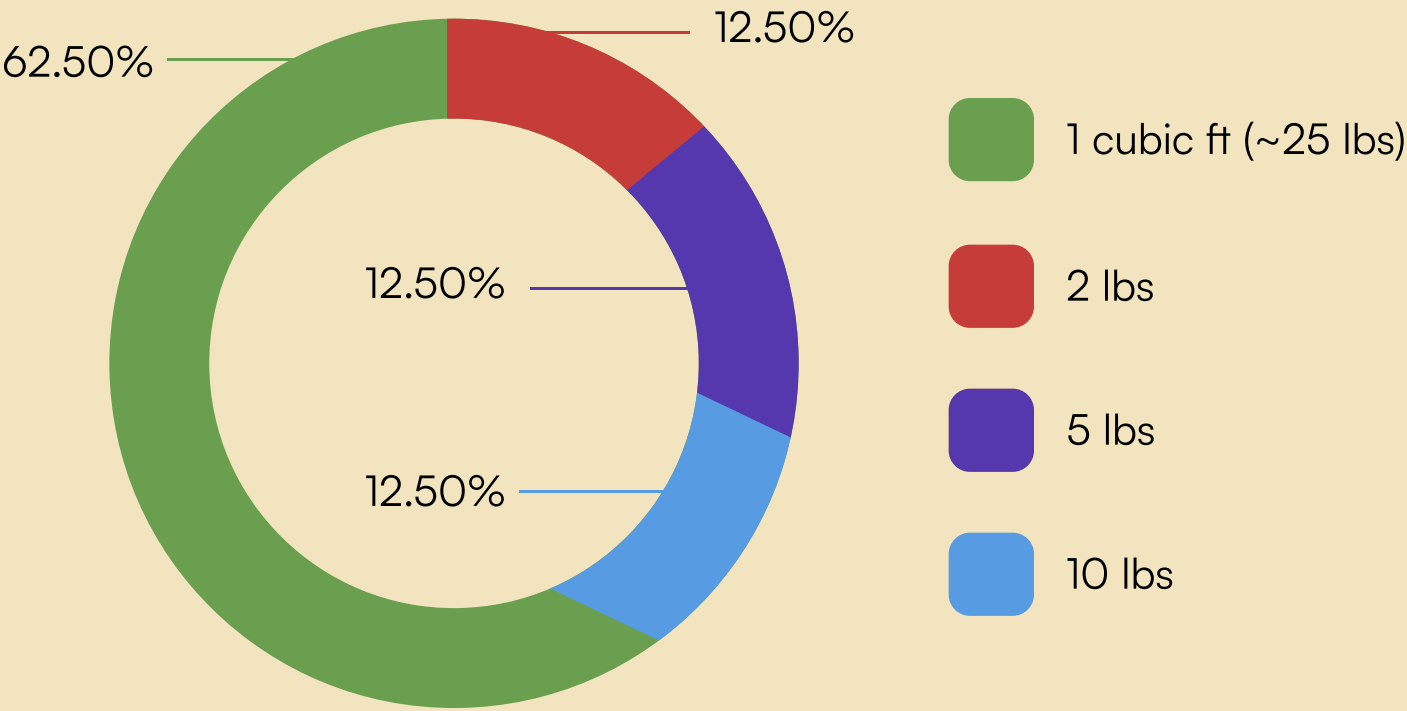
Survey results showed that 67% of respondents used compost for personal gardening, while 22% of respondents used compost for business practices. Respondents primarily purchased compost from garden stores and nurseries (48% of respondents), or hardware stores (24% of respondents) (See Figure 1.1). This insight displayed that the majority of demand for compost was derived from individual consumers. Furthermore, this data reveals that individuals prefer to purchase compost from businesses with an array of gardening supplies. Utilizing this insight, garden stores were identified as an important niche for product placement.

FIGURE 1.1



Among respondents currently purchasing compost, 60% purchased 1 cubic foot per transaction, with the other 40% purchasing smaller quantities ranging from 2 lb to 10 lb bags (See Figure 1.2).

FIGURE 1.2



IVCC’s target consumers are residents aged 25-65 in the greater Santa Barbara area who value locally sourced materials, competitive pricing, and a high-quality compost product. The following section will delve deeper into how to reach and connect with the aforementioned audience.



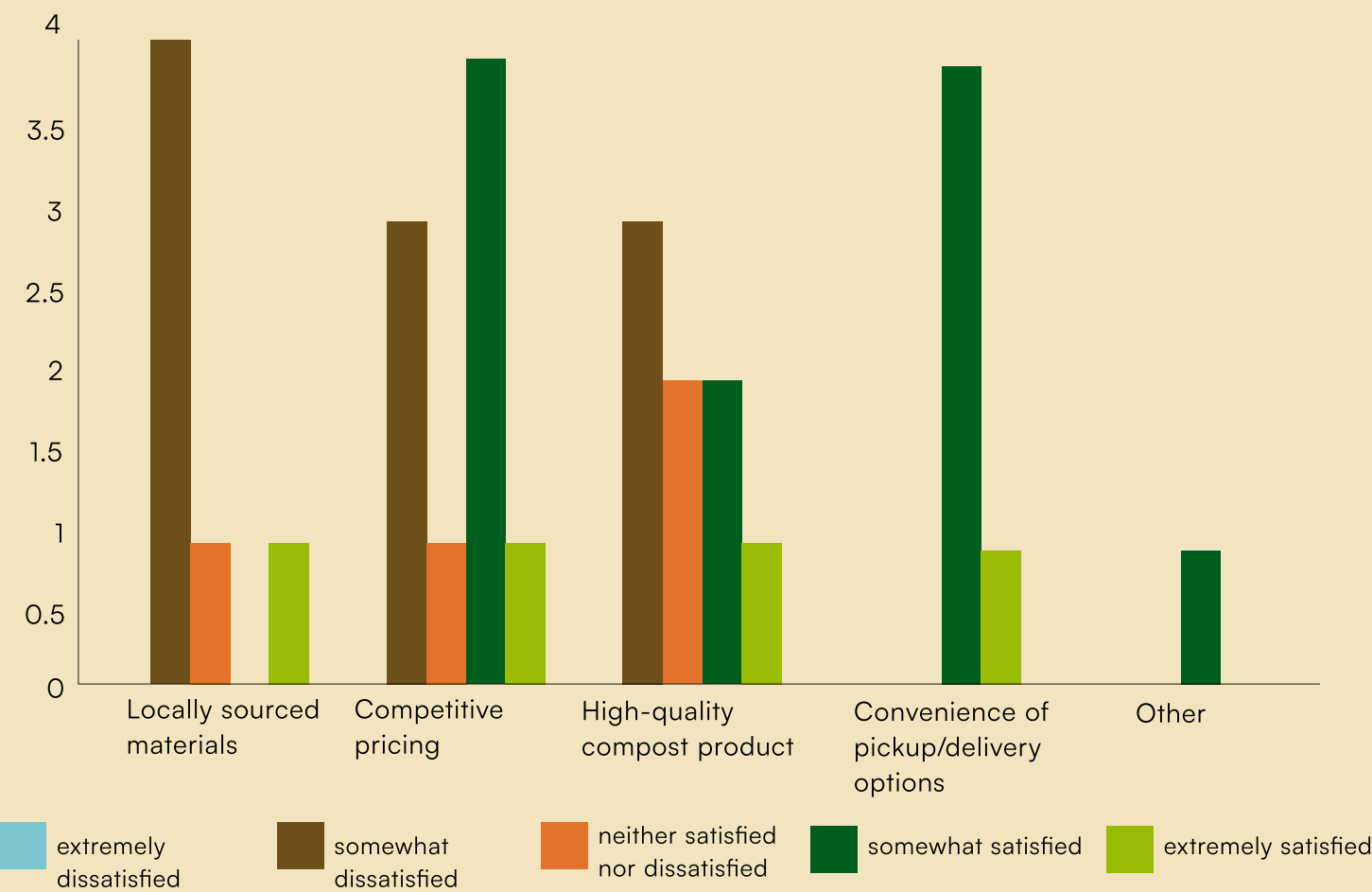
# DATA GRAPHICS

Before expanding further into the recommendations, crucial data visualizations are included below to help IVCC better understand the following recommendations.

## INSIGHT 1

This insight shows that customers who value locally-sourced compost above all other factors are generally dissatisfied with currently available compost options. This is also true for those seeking a high quality compost product. Given that IVCC is looking to sell a high-quality, locally sourced product, there is a demand in the market that is currently not being met by competitors.

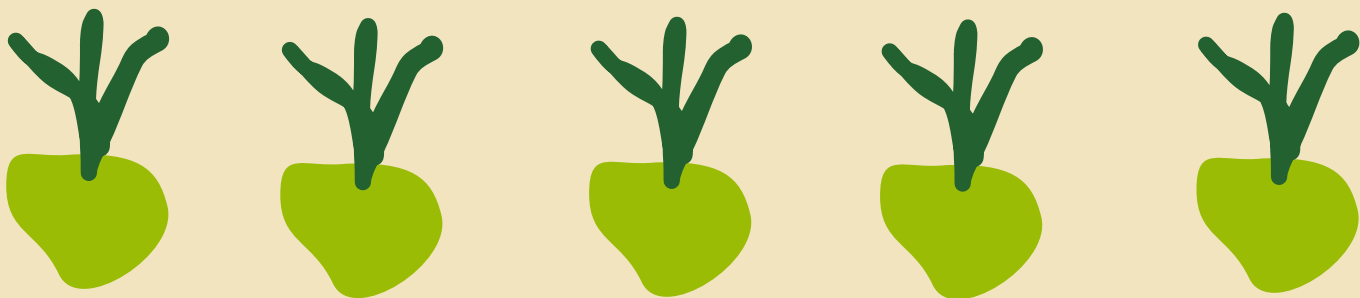
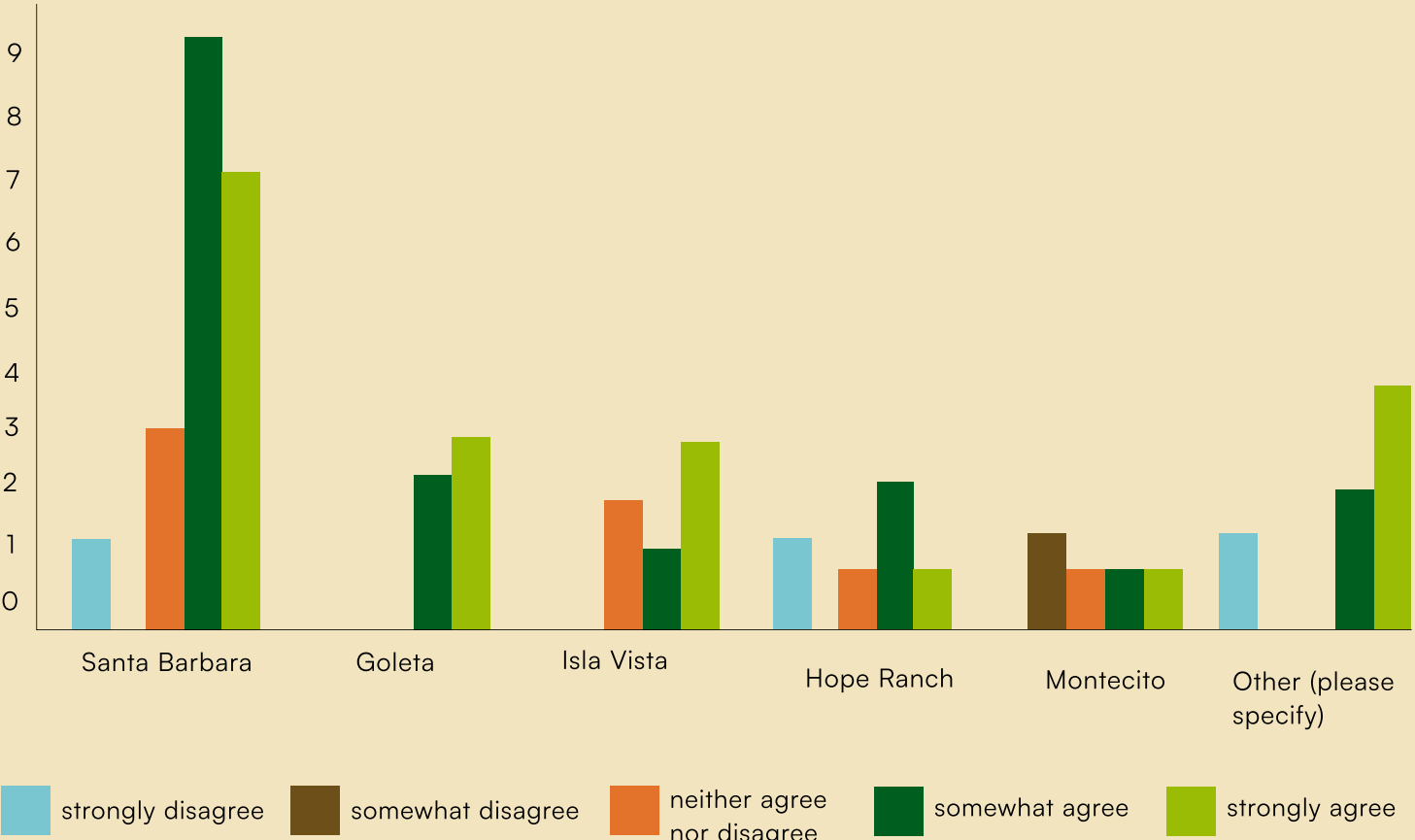
## VALUED FACTORS X SATISFACTION WITH COMPOST MARKET



INSIGHT 2

This data shows that most residents of Santa Barbara County are inclined to support small businesses. Respondents from Santa Barbara and Goleta are more willing to support small businesses than residents of Montecito and Hope Ranch, suggesting that IVCC should target their marketing to Santa Barbara and Goleta.

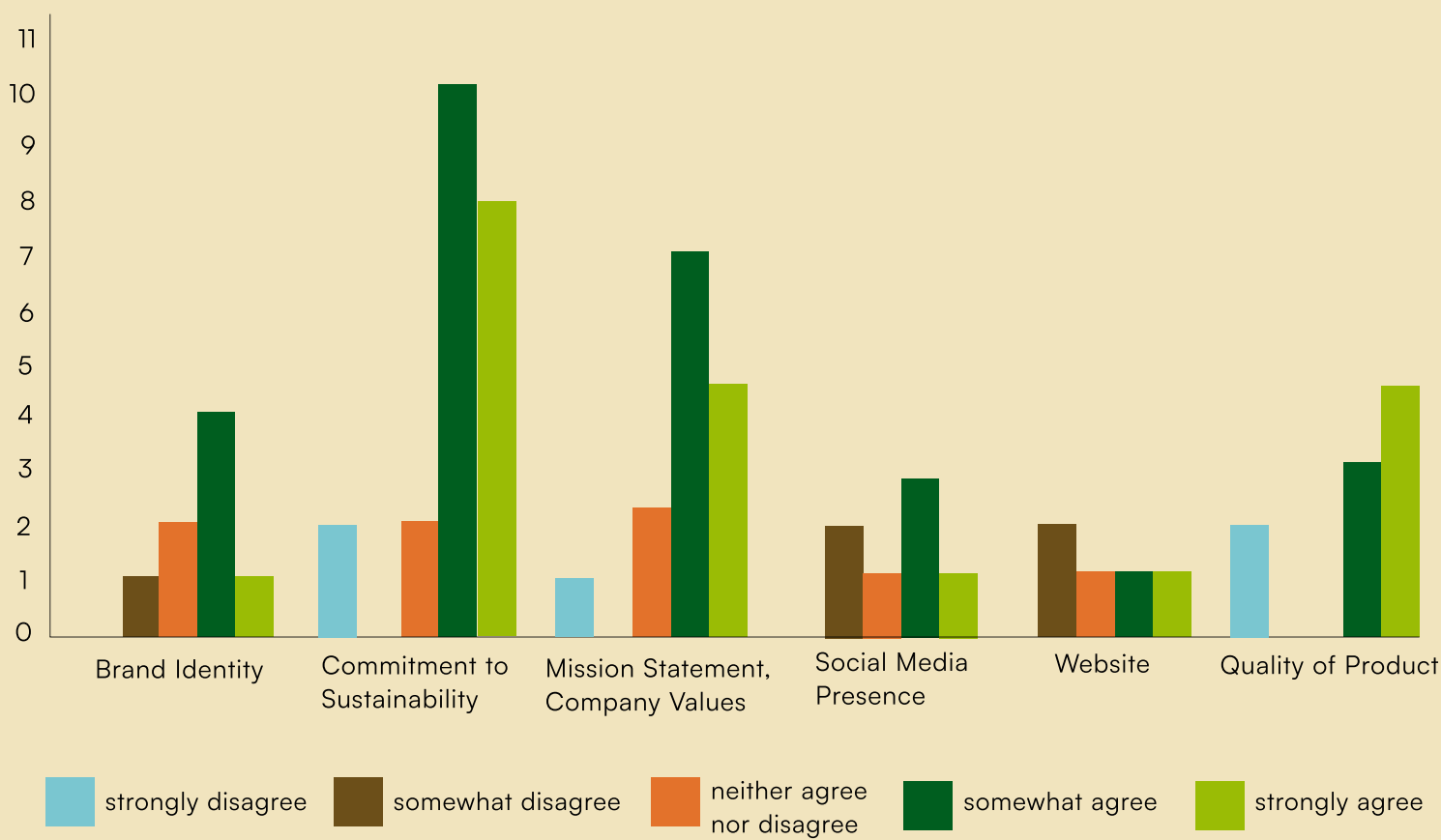
IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES X VALUED FACTORS



### INSIGHT 3

Respondents who think that it is important to support small businesses also value a company's commitments to sustainability, mission statement, and quality of product, in descending order.

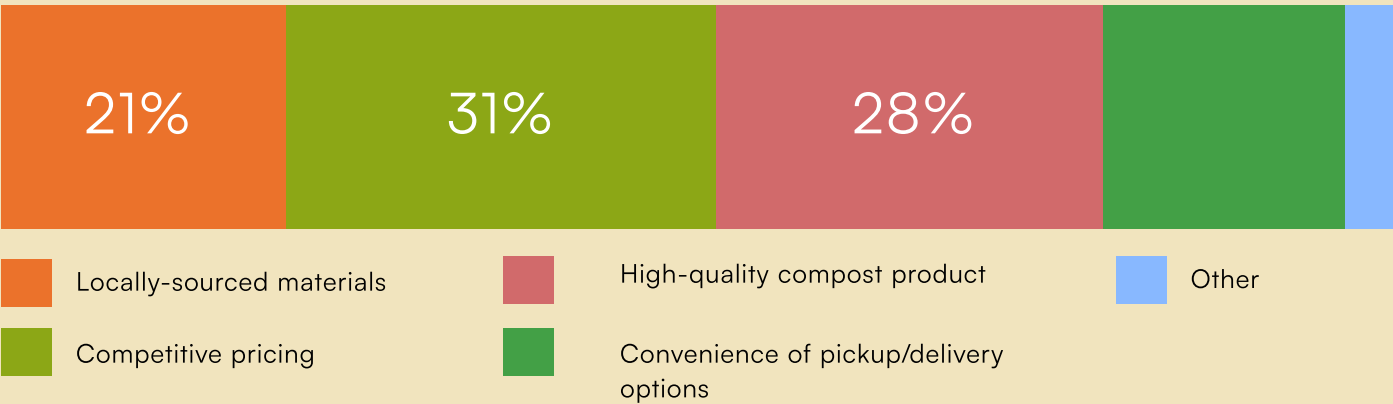
## IMPORTANCE OF COMPANY VALUES



### INSIGHT 4

Among respondents currently purchasing compost, competitive pricing was their most important consideration when purchasing compost, closely followed by a high-quality compost product. By optimizing packaging to convey quality and value, IVCC can appeal to the majority of compost consumers.

## PRIORITIES FOR PURCHASING COMPOST



INSIGHT 5

Among respondents aged 39 and older, a company’s commitment to sustainability emerged as the primary factor that influenced their purchasing decisions. Incorporating elements of sustainable packaging will help IVCC appeal to the incentives of this age group.

MOST IMPORTANT PURCHASE DECISIONS

