

Building Farmers



Washington State University Extension
**Western Center for
Risk Management Education**

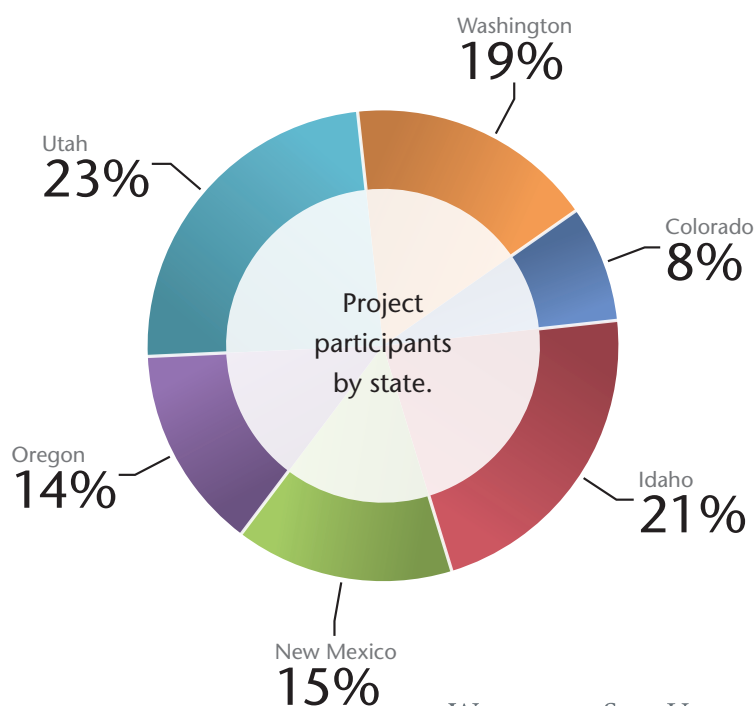


Special Report: November 2011

Creating New Capacity, Community, and Opportunities for Specialty Producers

Building Farmers in the West—a seven-state collaborative project—is building capacity and offering business development and management training to farmers and ranchers.

This project is helping beginning food producers across the Western United States to acquire relevant knowledge, skills and tools to help them successfully launch or grow their operations in emerging markets for specialty fresh produce and livestock products—markets whose growth is fueled by the growing demand for local, fresh foods.



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A Future for Agriculture

Changes in Attitude, Knowledge, and Behavior

- All participants have started a business plan.
- 48% have completed a viable business plan during the workshops.
- 90% of participants are planning to continue farming or start farming.
- 87% increased their network of farming colleagues and will draw on them for information and resources.
- 90% would recommend the program to other farmers or potential farmers.

A significant outcome was participants' recognition of the need for a business plan and the business planning process.

Farmer/Rancher Experience

New farmers with less than one year of experience are the majority of classroom participants, with intermediate and experienced farmers helping to create a richer learning environment.

- New: 49%
- Intermediate: 37%
- Experienced: 13%



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food and
Agriculture

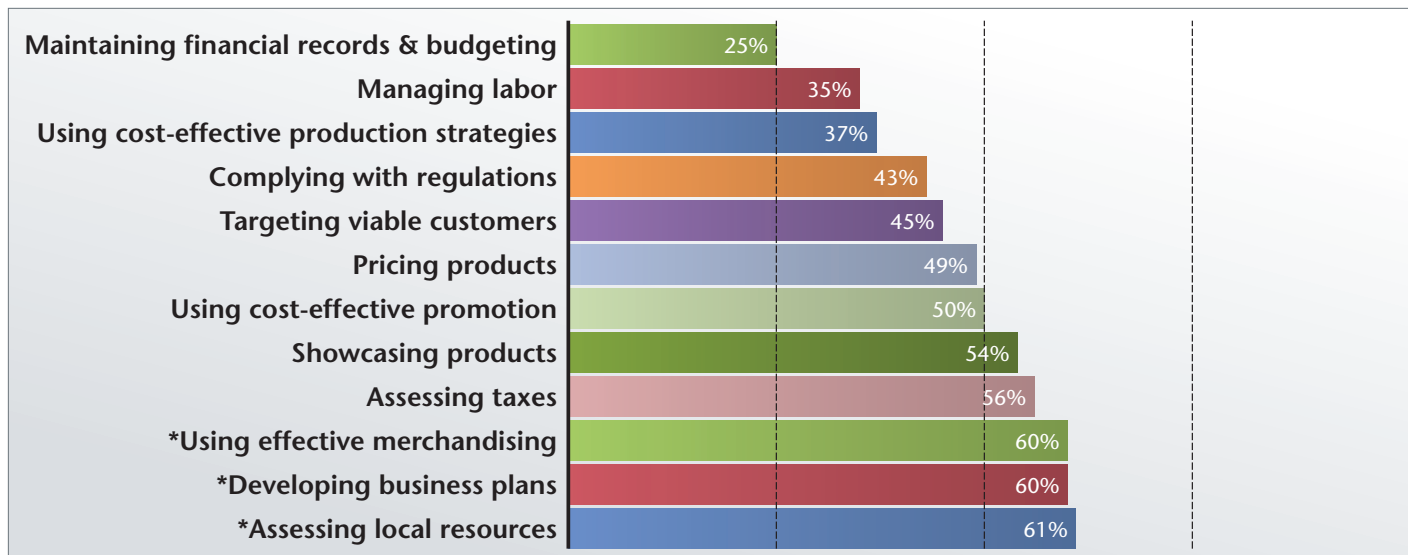
Funded by the USDA Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Development Program (Award #2009-49400-05877).

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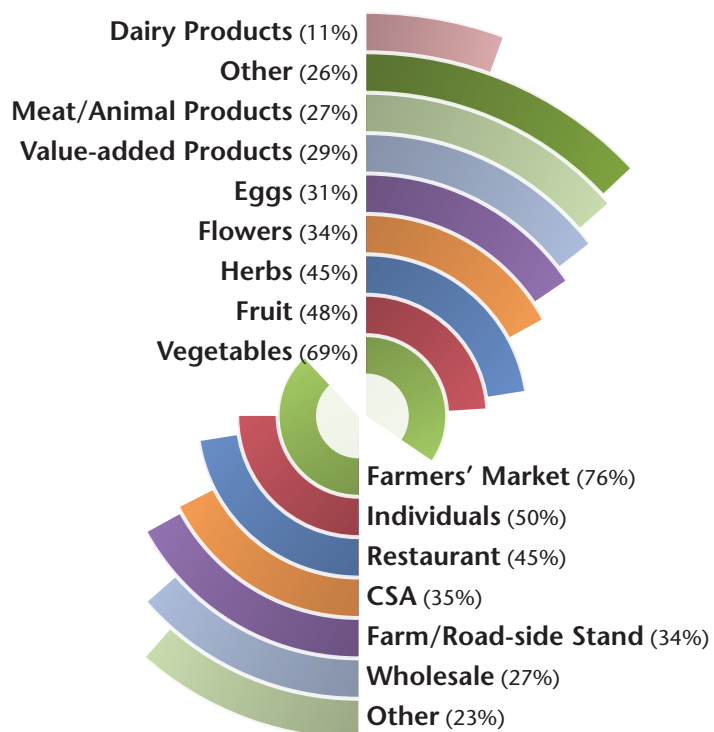
Outcomes & Goals Accomplished by *Building Farmers in the West* Participants

Respondents reported increased knowledge in the following areas, with the highest increases* related to:

- Finding local resources and support
- Developing business plans
- Using effective merchandising for direct markets



Below: Percentage of participants reporting that they will produce new products.



Above: Percentage of participants reporting that they will use new markets.

After the program, participants who follow a:



Curriculum and Outreach Materials Developed

The *Building Farmers in the West* team leaders from a seven-state consortium created a multi-state farm business planning teaching curriculum in the first year of the project. The foundation curriculum and outreach materials for beginning farmers and ranchers is included on the *Building Farmers in the West* project website.

www.buildingfarmersinthewest.org**

**A tour of the website and the *Building Farmer in the West* program is also provided on the project's website.