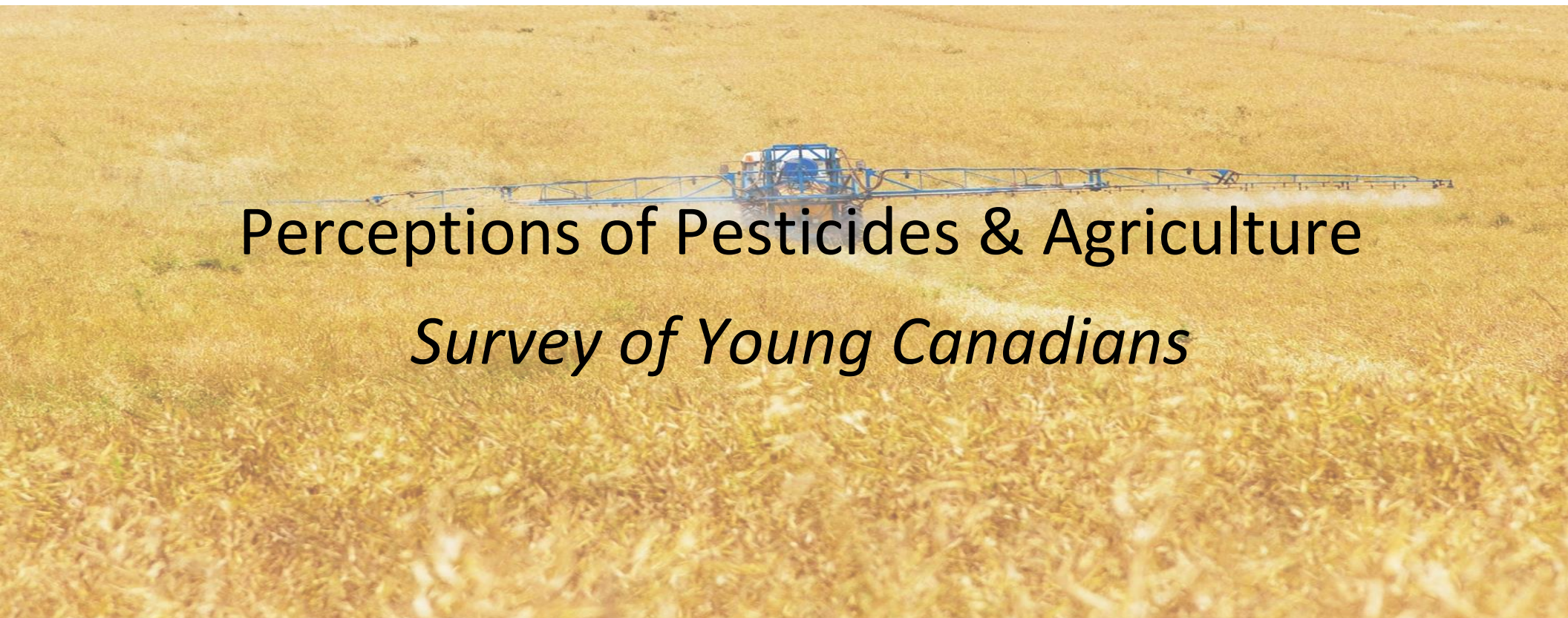




Friends of the Earth  
Les Ami(e)s de la Terre



Perceptions of Pesticides & Agriculture  
*Survey of Young Canadians*



November 2022



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# Methodology & Logistics

The following represents the results of a November 2022 national omnibus telephone survey of N=450 young Canadians. Interviews were completed between the days of November 24<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. The results contained in this report are from the questions subscribed to by Friends of Earth on issues related to biodiversity, pesticide use and environmental protection.

Only those aged 18 to 29 years of age were asked these questions. The following is the sample breakdown by region/province from the N=450 sample.

<i>Atlantic</i>	<i>N=27</i>	<i>6%</i>
<i>Ontario</i>	<i>N=171</i>	<i>38%</i>
<i>Quebec</i>	<i>N=104</i>	<i>23%</i>
<i>Manitoba / Sask</i>	<i>N=33</i>	<i>7%</i>
<i>Alberta</i>	<i>N=54</i>	<i>12%</i>
<i>BC</i>	<i>N=61</i>	<i>14%</i>

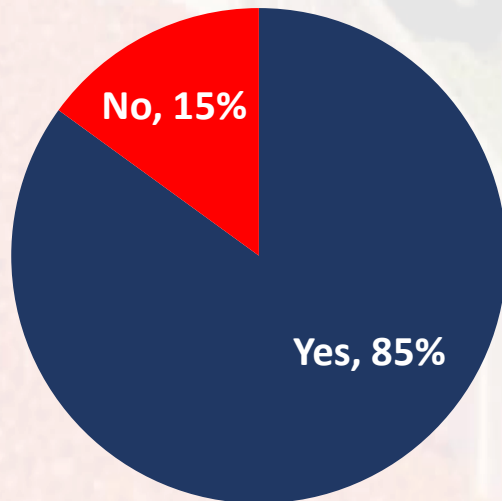
All surveys were conducted using computer-assisted techniques of telephone interviewing (CATI) and random number selection (RDD). A dual sample frame random database was inclusive of landline and cellular telephone numbers.

The margin of error for the sample is  $\pm 4.6\%$ , 19 times out of 20.

# Interest in Agriculture

All respondents were first asked if they are interested in how food is produced in agriculture.

*Q1. Are you interested in how food is produced in agriculture?*



Eighty-five percent of Canadian youth are interested in how food is produced.

## *Interest by Region*

Atlantic	78%
Ontario	82%
Quebec	89%
Manitoba / Sask	82%
Alberta	83%
BC	90%

# Aspects of Buying Food

Respondents then rated the importance of eight aspects related to buying food using a scale of very important, important, unimportant, or completely

*How important are the following aspects to you when buying food? Please use a scale of very important, important, unimportant, or completely unimportant.*

	<i>Completely unimportant</i>	<i>Unimportant</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Very important</i>
Q2. Bee friendly	3%	6%	13%	78%
Q3. Organic farming	3%	2%	10%	86%
Q4. Healthy	2%	2%	12%	84%
Q5. GMO-free	3%	4%	16%	77%
Q6. Without pesticides	3%	2%	13%	81%
Q7. Fairtrade production conditions	4%	3%	14%	79%
Q8. Beneficial insect friendly	6%	13%	21%	60%
Q9. Favourable pricing	1%	2%	8%	90%

All eight areas scored high in terms of total importance (important & very important). Rated strongest as being very important was pricing, next followed by organic farming and being healthy. The next highest rated tier of areas included buying products without pesticides, which are fairtrade, bee friendly and GMO free. Lowest rated was the area of being beneficial insect friendly.

# Agricultural Topics

Using a five-point scale from one very important to five completely unimportant, respondents rated the importance to them of seven areas related to agriculture.

*How important are each of the following agriculture topics to you? For each area that I read please respond using a scale from one very important to five completely unimportant.*

	<i>Completely unimportant</i>	<i>Unimportant</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Very important</i>	<i>TOTAL IMPORTANT</i>
Q10. Protection from water pollution	1%	1%	2%	13%	83%	96%
Q11. Fair wages for farmers & farm workers	3%	2%	7%	19%	68%	87%
Q12. Healthy soils	1%	2%	6%	14%	76%	90%
Q13. Free-range livestock	1%	4%	8%	10%	78%	88%
Q14. Protection of bees	2%	2%	13%	9%	74%	83%
Q15. Natural insect pest control	3%	3%	14%	10%	69%	79%
Q16. Protection of beneficial insects	4%	4%	19%	11%	62%	73%

# Agricultural Topics

Young Canadians placed their level of importance (combined important & very important) on the protection of water at 96%, with the strongest very important rating of 83%. This was followed by 90% that said healthy soils are important or very important, next by free range livestock (88%), closely by fair wages for farmers and farm workers (87%).

More than eight in ten or 83% rated the protection of bees as important or very important and 79% natural insect pest control. Lowest scored in terms of importance was the protection of beneficial insects, but still by almost three-quarters or 73%.

# Views on Pesticides

Respondents were asked which of four statements best reflected their opinion on pesticide use.

*Q17. Which of the following best reflects your view on how pesticides should be used? In your opinion, should pesticides be:*



A 55% majority of youth are of the opinion pesticides should be outright banned, while 25% stated they should be used only a last resort under exceptional conditions. Sixteen percent feel they should be used sparingly, while only 4% want their use to be unrestricted.



# Pesticide Concerns

Youth were next asked about their level of concern with the effects of pesticides on the following four areas.

*How much of a concern are the effects of pesticides on each of the following? For each area, please respond using a scale of very much, somewhat, or not at all.*

	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Very much</i>
Q18. On your health	3%	20%	77%
Q19. On water bodies & ground water	2%	13%	86%
Q20. On the health of people in other countries with less strict laws	7%	22%	70%
Q21. On migratory workers on Canadian farms	5%	21%	74%

Concern was expressed for the effects that pesticides have on all four areas. The highest level was for the impact on water bodies and ground water as expressed by 86% that are very much concerned. Next highest at 77% very much concerned was for the effects on health and 74% on migratory workers on Canadian farms. While results were lower for the impact on the health of those living where laws are less strict, seven in ten were still very much concerned.