

For immediate release... November 15, 2004



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New Jersey supports farming the Garden State

A majority of New Jersey residents (57%) say that New Jersey is called the Garden State for its cultivation of produce and vegetables but 43% have other ideas or just don't know. According to a PublicMind study sponsored by the New Jersey Farm Bureau, Jersey residents nonetheless have some sympathy for the plight of farmers in the Garden State and support their property tax breaks. Three of four residents say it's very important to grow fresh fruits and vegetables in-state and 85% say farming should play a valuable role in the future of New Jersey while 83% say it's appropriate for farmers to pay taxes at reduced rates on land under cultivation.

"Despite images of turnpike traffic and suburban sprawl, farming remains an important part of the state's identity," said John Schiemann, a professor of administrative science at Fairleigh Dickinson University and director of research for PublicMind.

Four out of five adults say they've stopped by a Jersey farm, mainly to buy produce, although younger people are more likely to have been there as an educational outing rather than to take advantage of fresh fruits and vegetables.

New Jersey residents believe it is increasingly difficult for New Jersey farmers to stay in business and remain profitable. Large majorities support farmers on a range of issues including wildlife damage to crops, compensation for lost property values due to zoning changes, and water usage during droughts. "Even those in urban areas like the idea of home-grown produce and are generally sympathetic with farmers," added Schiemann. According to the Census Bureau, there are 9,924 farms in New Jersey and 86% of these are family owned. Nineteen cents of the retail dollar goes directly to farmers.

Respondents who have visited a farm or read about farming in the past year are more likely to support farming interests. "It may be that a little familiarity with farming goes a long way in providing support for New Jersey farmers," Schiemann said. "The irony is that in the long run suburban sprawl and farming are really at odds with each other."

Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind poll of 906 New Jersey residents was conducted from October 15 through October 24 and has a margin of error of +/- 3 percentage points.

Methodology, questions, and tables are available on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>

Radio actuality line: (201) 692-2846.

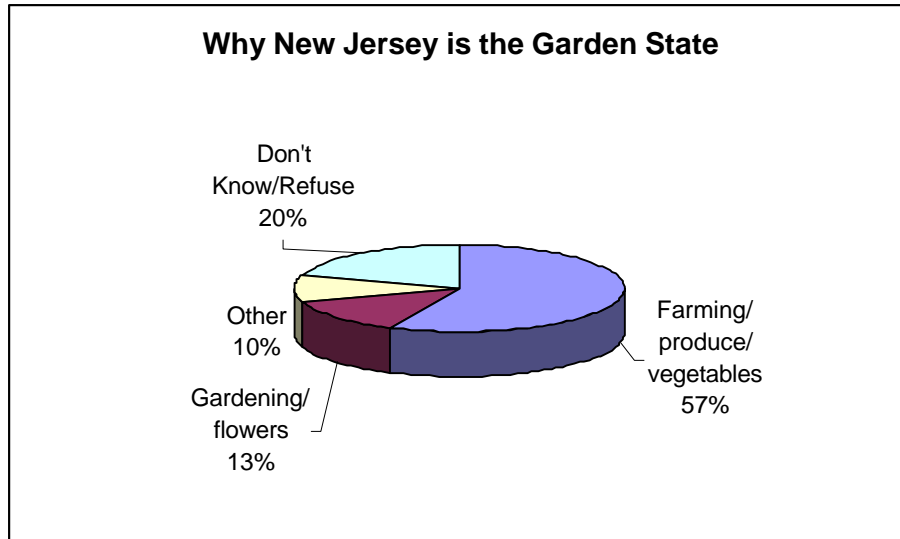
For more information, please call (201) 692-7032.

Background Memo

The PublicMind poll was sponsored by the New Jersey Farm Bureau and conducted by telephone from October 15 through October 24 using a randomly selected, state-wide sample of 906 New Jersey residents aged 18 and over. The sampling error for 906 adults is +/- 3.3 percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence. Results are weighted to match known demographics. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from a number of factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations among interviewers. All interviews are conducted by professionally trained interviewers using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection is obtained through computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a phone number an equal chance of being selected including those with unlisted numbers.

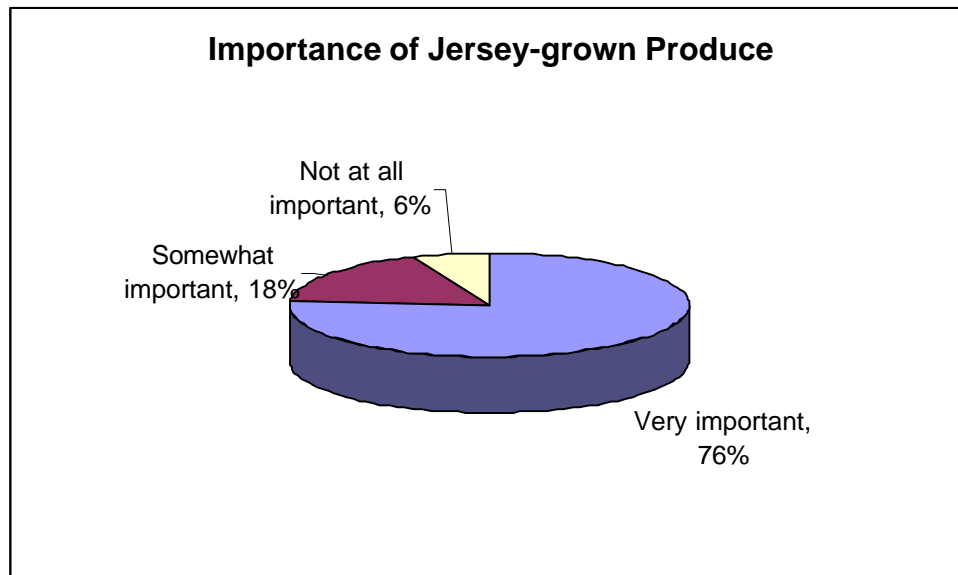
Tables and Charts

To the best of your knowledge, why is New Jersey called the Garden State? [OPEN-ENDED, PRE-CODED]



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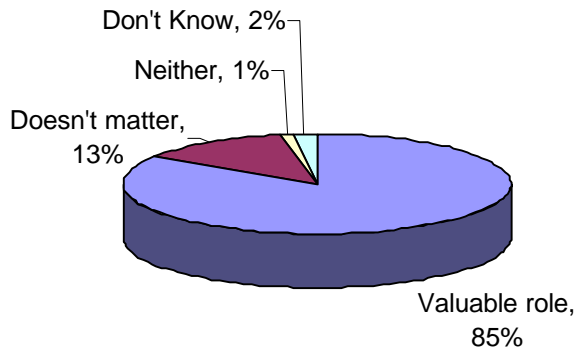
How important is it to you to have fresh fruits and vegetables grown in the state?



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Do you feel that farming should play a valuable role in the future of New Jersey or does it not really matter?

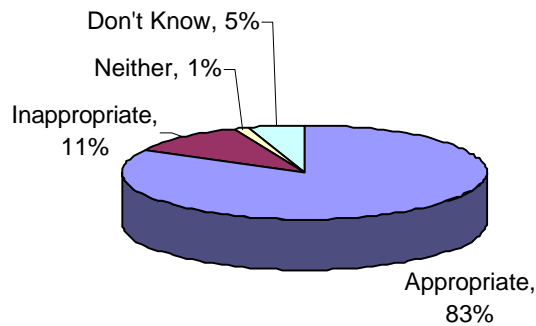
Farming's Role in the Future of New Jersey



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Owners of working farms pay the same property taxes as everyone else for their homes, but they receive reduced tax rates on the land they grow crops on. Do you see this as appropriate or inappropriate?

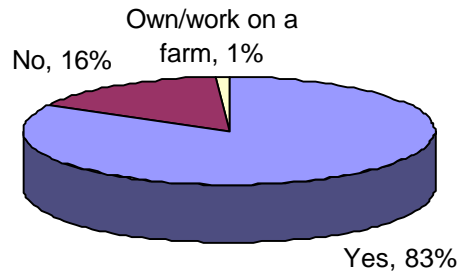
Reduced Tax Rates on Croplands



N=906.

Have you ever visited a farm in New Jersey?

Ever Visited a Farm in New Jersey

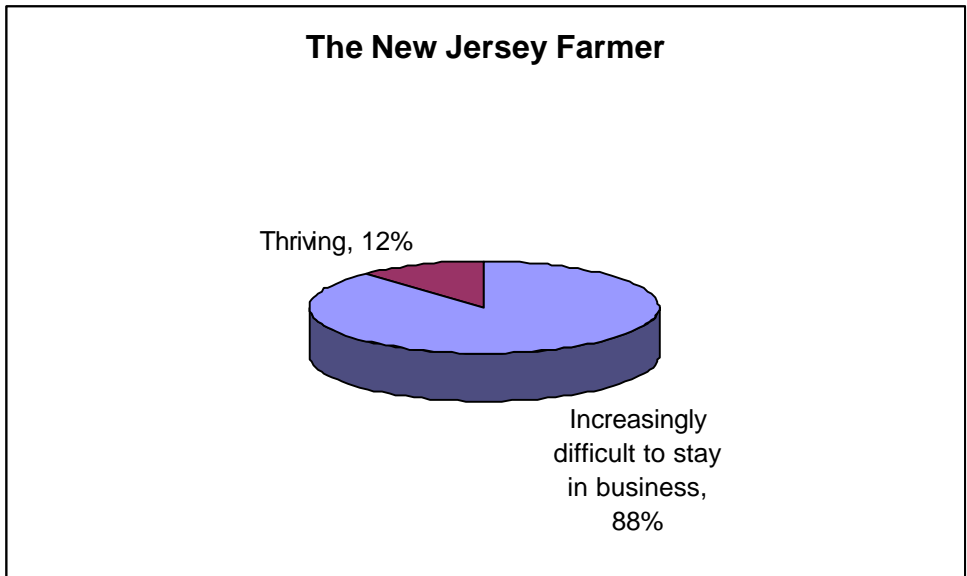


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What was the reason for your visit...[ROTATE]?

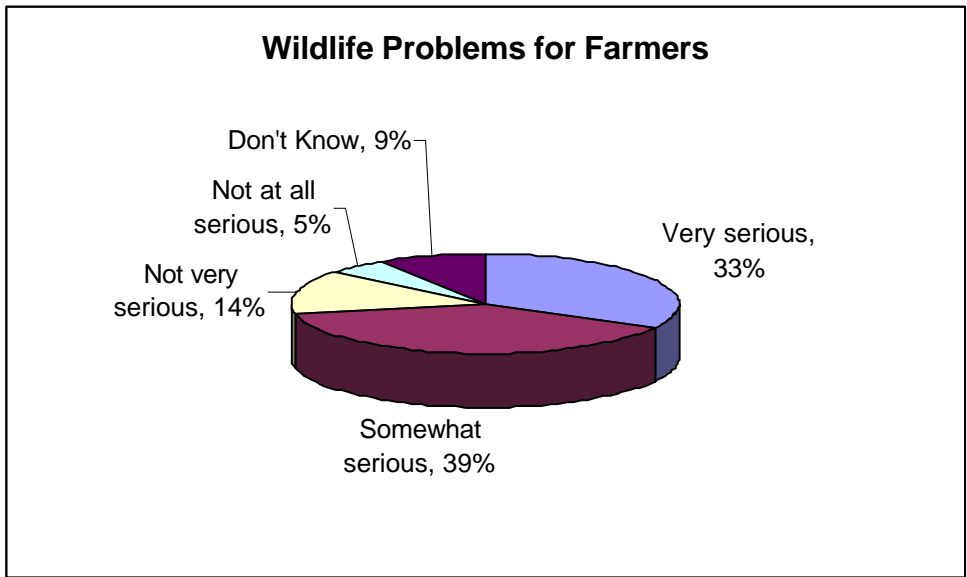
Response	Response Percentages					
	Total Survey	18-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65+
Touring/historic/public	19	12	26	17	18	22
Buying farm products	48	38	41	48	57	44
Educational outing	14	25	15	18	8	6
Own or work on farm	6	2	3	6	5	9
Other	14	20	15	11	13	18
DK/Unsure	1	2	-	-	-	1

Some say Others say.... Which comes closer to your view? [ROTATE]



N=906.

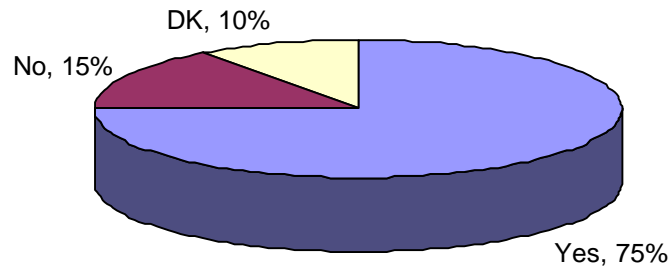
How serious a problem do you think wildlife such as deer and Canada geese are for New Jersey farmers?



N=906.

Farmers can lose value on their properties because government sometimes changes land regulations or zoning. Do you think government should pay compensation to farmers for this lost value or not?

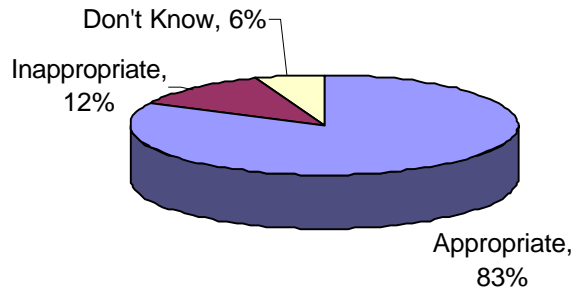
Compensation for Lost Property Values due to Zoning Changes



N=906.

Now, thinking about water... Those farmers who report their water use to the state and adopt water conservation practices can use as much water as they need during a major drought. Do you see this as appropriate or inappropriate?

Water Usage by Farmers During Droughts



N=906.

Again your best guess, for every dollar you spend on food at your grocery store, how much of that food dollar do you think goes to the farmer?	Total Survey	Visited a Farm in New Jersey		Read/Heard about Farming	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
+ 75 cents	4	4	4	3	4
50-75 cents	8	8	7	6	9
25-50 cents	29	28	35	30	29
Less than 25 cents	51	53	41	56	48
DK	8	7	13	4	11

Owners of working farms pay the same property taxes as everyone else for their homes, but they receive reduced tax rates on the land they grow crops on. Do you see this as appropriate or inappropriate?					
Appropriate	83	85	76	89	79
Inappropriate	11	10	14	6	14
Neither	1	1	2	1	1
DK	5	5	8	4	6
Now, thinking about water... Those farmers who report their water use to the state and practice water conservation can use as much water as they need during a major drought. Do you see this as appropriate or inappropriate?					
Appropriate	83	85	69	87	80
Inappropriate	12	10	22	9	14
DK	6	5	9	4	7
Do you support or oppose hunting wildlife to limit crop damage?					
Support	57	61	37	64	52
Oppose	32	29	49	26	37
Neither	4	4	6	3	5
DK	6	6	8	7	6

N=906.

Questions

First of all, let's think about New Jersey as the Garden State... [PROGRAMMER: FOR NON-LIKELY VOTERS]

Shifting gears for a minute, let's think about New Jersey as the Garden State... [PROGRAMMER: FOR LIKELY VOTERS]

FB1. To the best of your knowledge, why is New Jersey called the Garden State?

[OPEN-ENDED, PRE-CODED]

Farming/produce/vegetables

Gardening/flowers

Other

DK/REF [DON'T READ]

FB2. Have you ever visited a farm in New Jersey?

Yes [GO TO FB3]

No [GO TO FB4]

Own or work on a farm [DON'T READ: enter "own or work" for FB3, GO TO FB4]

DK/REF [DON'T READ GO TO FB4]

FB3. What was the reason for your visit...[ROTATE]?

Touring a historic or open-to-the-public farm

Buying farm products

Educational outing

Own or work on a farm [DON'T READ]

Other [DON'T READ]

DK/REF [DON'T READ]

FB4. In the past year, have you heard or read anything about farming or farm interests in New Jersey?

Yes [GO TO FB5]

No [GO TO FB6]

DK/REF [DON'T READ] [GO TO FB6]

FB5. Where did you get it ...[PROMPT AS NECESSARY AND ROTATE]?

Newspapers

Magazines

TV

Radio

Brochures

Other [DON'T READ]

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB6. What's your best guess to how many full-time, owner-operated farms there are in New Jersey?

+10,000

5,001-10,000

1-5,000

Less than 1,000

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB7. Again your best guess, for every dollar you spend on food at your grocery store, how much of that food dollar do you think goes to the farmer?

More than 75 cents

50-75 cents

25-50 cents

Less than 25 cents

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB8. How many of New Jersey's farms would you say are family farms?

Most of them

About half

Very few

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB9. Some say Others say.... Which comes closer to your view? [ROTATE]

it is increasingly difficult for farmers to stay in business and remain profitable

New Jersey farmers are thriving

Neither [DON'T READ]

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB10. To the best of your knowledge, do you think most New Jersey farmers are subsidized by the government?

Yes

No

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB11. Owners of working farms pay the same property taxes as everyone else for their homes, but they receive reduced tax rates on the land they grow crops on. Do you see this as appropriate or inappropriate?

Appropriate

Inappropriate

Neither [DON'T READ]

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB12. How important is it to you to have fresh fruits and vegetables grown in the state?

Very important

Somewhat important

Not at all important

FB13. Given a choice, would you buy locally grown produce over produce shipped in from outside the New Jersey region.

Yes [GO TO FB14]

No [GO TO FB15]

No difference [DO NOT READ. GO TO FB15]

DK/REF [DON'T READ: GO TO FB15]

FB14. Why is that... [ROTATE]?

Freshness

Price

Support of farming in New Jersey

Other [DON'T READ]

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB15. Farming makes use of fertilizers and pesticides to grow crops. On balance, do you think these fertilizers and pesticides...[READ AND ROTATE]

Have a minimal impact on the environment

Have a serious impact the environment

Neither or somewhere between [DON'T READ]

Both [DON'T READ]

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB16. Now, thinking about water... Those farmers who report their water use to the state and practice water conservation can use as much water as they need during a major drought. Do you see this as appropriate or inappropriate?

Appropriate

Inappropriate

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB17. Would you say organic foods are, [READ AND ROTATE]

Safer than other foods

Less safe than other foods

About the same [DON'T READ]

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB18. How serious a problem do you think wildlife such as deer and Canada geese are for New Jersey farmers?

Very serious

Somewhat serious

Not very serious

Not at all serious

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB19. Do you support or oppose hunting wildlife to limit crop damage?

Support

Oppose

Neither [DON'T READ]

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB20. The government sometimes changes land regulations or zoning in ways that cause farmers to lose value on their properties. Do you think government should pay compensation to farmers for this lost value or not?

Yes

No

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

FB21. On balance, which of the following statements comes closer to your view...or... ? [READ AND ROTATE]

Farming is an environmentally friendly use of land,
Farming contributes to the degradation of the environment
Neither/in-between [DON'T READ]
Both [Don't READ]
DK [DON'T READ]
REF [DON'T READ]

FB22. Would you personally mind living next to a working farm?

Yes
No
DK [DON'T READ]
REF [DON'T READ]

FB23. How important to you personally is it to have farming and farmland preservation in New Jersey?

Very important
Somewhat important
Not very important
Not at all important
DK [DON'T READ]
REF [DON'T READ]

FB24. Do you feel that farming should play a valuable role in the future of New Jersey or does it not really matter?

Valuable role
Doesn't matter
Neither [DON'T READ]
DK [DON'T READ]
REF [DON'T READ]

FB25. Are there any farms in your town?

Yes
No
DK [DON'T READ]
REF [DON'T READ]

FB26. Do you consider the town you live in to be urban, suburban or rural?

Urban or a city

Suburban

Rural

None of these [DON'T READ]

DK [DON'T READ]

REF [DON'T READ]

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