

MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDEX

Staff members at the MSU Product Center surveyed members of the Food and Agriculture Roundtable, a group of 100 leaders in the state's food and agriculture system, in April 2013. A rating of 100 on the index is considered neutral; ratings above 100 signal increasingly positive confidence, and below 100, increasingly negative confidence.

Overall food and ag index: 147

Food and ag leaders are bullish on their industry. Though they give the current state of Michigan's overall economy a considerably lower rating of 115, they feel the overall economy is getting better.

Sales index: 133

Food and ag leaders generally believe that sales are going to increase in the next 12 months and over the next three years.

Investment index: 122

Food and ag leaders feel that investments will be stronger over the next 12 months than the level over the next three years. Additional surveys should provide further insight into investment plans by survey participants.

Employment index: 132

Almost 43 percent of those surveyed indicated that they may increase their labor force over the next 12 months, and almost two-thirds may increase their labor force over the next three years. Very few employers are considering reducing their labor force.

Labor issues are a major concern for food and ag leaders. They worry about finding good seasonal and full-time labor, as well as finding ways to encourage young people to enter the food and agriculture system.

Many noted that the impact of the Affordable Care Act on healthcare costs for employees and employers is a concern.

When asked "What keeps you up at night?", food and ag leaders provided these open-ended responses:

- Regulations (34 responses)
- Access and cost of inputs (22 responses)
- Business marketing and strategy (22 responses)
- Government policy (18 responses)

Future surveys will be conducted every six months to keep track of the results and sector trends over time. Results will be released in January and June beginning in 2014.

Michigan Agriculture and Food Index by the numbers

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Employment index	132

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