



# Understanding the Needs of Washtenaw County Land-Seekers

## FINDINGS OF THE 2021 SURVEY OF WASHTENAW COUNTY FARMERS

### Purpose

This survey was developed to inform the creation of a land-link program in Washtenaw County.

### Survey Design

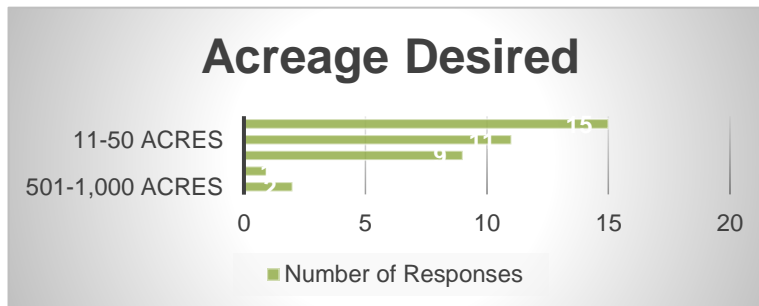
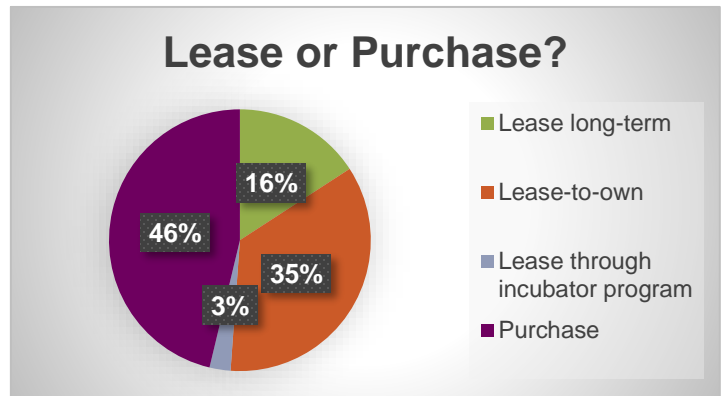
The survey was developed by representatives from MSU Extension, Washtenaw County Agricultural Lands Preservation Advisory Committee (ALPAC), the Ann Arbor Greenbelt, and Legacy Land Conservancy. Using the MSU Extension Qualtrics platform, the survey was distributed via the Southeast Michigan Local Farm Newsletter (managed by MSU Extension), the SocialFarmers listserv, and the Washtenaw County Farmers Facebook Group. Thirty-six responses were received.

## What Type of Land Do Farmland-Seekers Seek?

Farmland-seekers are fairly split between those who wish to lease land and those who wish to purchase land. Many respondents chose both, indicating no preference for either. Eighty-one percent of survey respondents ultimately want to own their land (purchase + lease-to-own responses).

The majority of survey respondents seek 0-10 acres of land. The median response is 10 acres.

When asked about the ideal distance from an urban center (Ann Arbor or Ypsilanti), the majority of survey respondents indicated they seek farmland that is 6-20 miles from Ann Arbor or Ypsilanti.

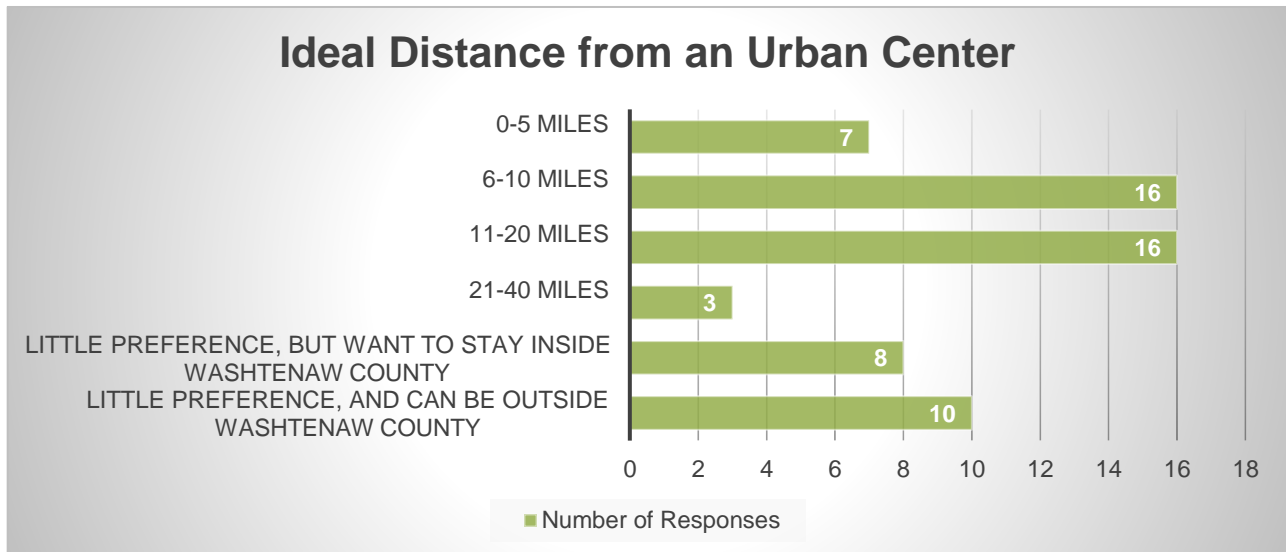


Questions? Contact Jae Gerhart at [gerhart1@msu.edu](mailto:gerhart1@msu.edu)

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## What are Major Barriers to Land Access?

Survey respondents indicated their major barriers when seeking farmland include:

- › **Finding farmland that fits their budget – 30%**
- › Finding farmland that fits desired specifications (acreage, location, soil quality) – 19%
- › Knowing what farmland is available – 18%
- › Access to capital (for a down payment) – 15%
- › Access to financing – 14%

## Purchasing Land with a Conservation Easement

When asked about their interest in purchasing land with a conservation easement, **26 out of 27 respondents indicated they were interested in this option**. Of those that indicated interest, half (13 respondents) were not familiar with this option.



Credit: Lake Divide Farm

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