

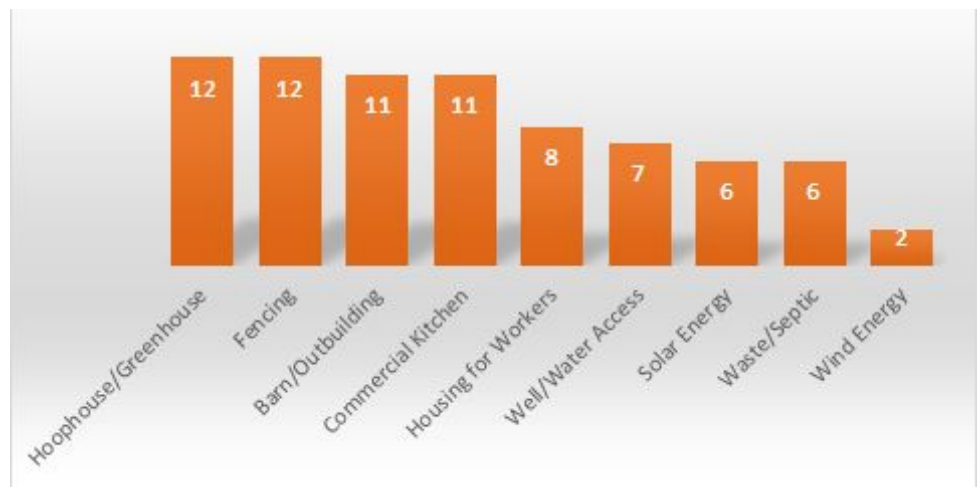
Barriers to Infrastructure for Small Farmers

In WASHTENAW COUNTY



INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

In the next 5 years, Washtenaw County farmers would like to build:



ABOUT THE SURVEY

The *Barriers to Infrastructure* survey was developed by members of the Farmers Policy Action Team of the Washtenaw County Food Policy Council (WFPC) and distributed to local farmers using the socialfarmers listserv, the Washtenaw County Farmers Facebook group, and the MSU Extension Local Food Coordinator's email list. The survey was open from May to August 2021. Sixteen responses were submitted.

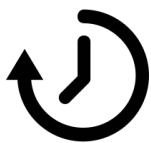
GREATEST INFRASTRUCTURE CHALLENGES



LACK OF CONTRACTORS AND BUILDERS

"A major challenge has been finding builders appropriate for farm-based infrastructure. Ann Arbor has a lot of "home remodel" type builders, but few who are willing or interested to work on farm infrastructure."

"There is a lack of experienced farm consultants available for advice, design, and installation of infrastructure."



TIME

"The biggest challenge is actually time. Most farms are busy making farm operations work so there is typically not enough time to work on infrastructure. Every new improvement takes knowledge gathering, resource finding, and a whole bunch of time."



ACCESS TO FINANCING

"Loan applications are overwhelming, time consuming, and terms can be quite short (7 years)."



LOCAL ZONING

for building a residence or farm worker housing.

The Farmers Policy Action Team is a working group of the Washtenaw County Food Policy Council (WFPC). The WFPC is a subcommittee of the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners who provide guidance on laws and rules that impact our community's systems for growing, processing, distributing, and disposing of food. The WFPC serves all residents of Washtenaw County, and our work also impacts those who go to school here, or work here.

With support from

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension