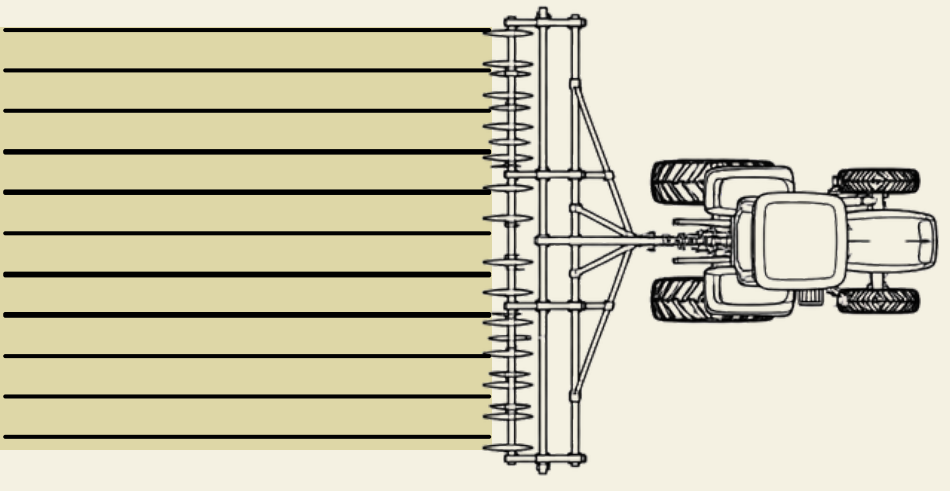


Views from the Field: Exploring Producer Perceptions of Costs, Concerns, and Farm Policy

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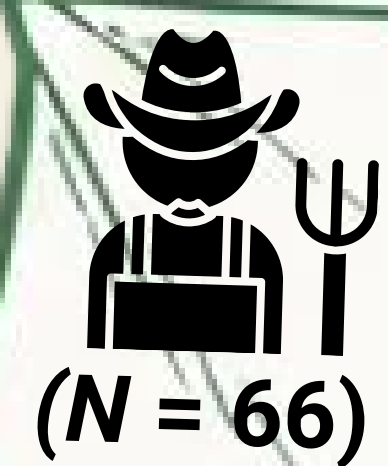
Introduction

Rising input costs strain farm viability (Farm Credit, East, 2023), making producers more **attentive** to farm bill provisions that **affect profitability** (Shields, 2010).

Producers **policy preferences vary by priority** (profitability vs. conservation) (Reimer & Propkey, 2014; Schaub et al., 2023), but **program complexity and administrative burden** are **key barriers** to actual **participation** (Propkey et al., 2019; Sweikert & Gigliotti, 2019)

Producers rely on **credible, personally relevant sources** such as **personal networks to institutions**, when **navigating policy decisions** (High et al., 2026; Maul et al., 2021).

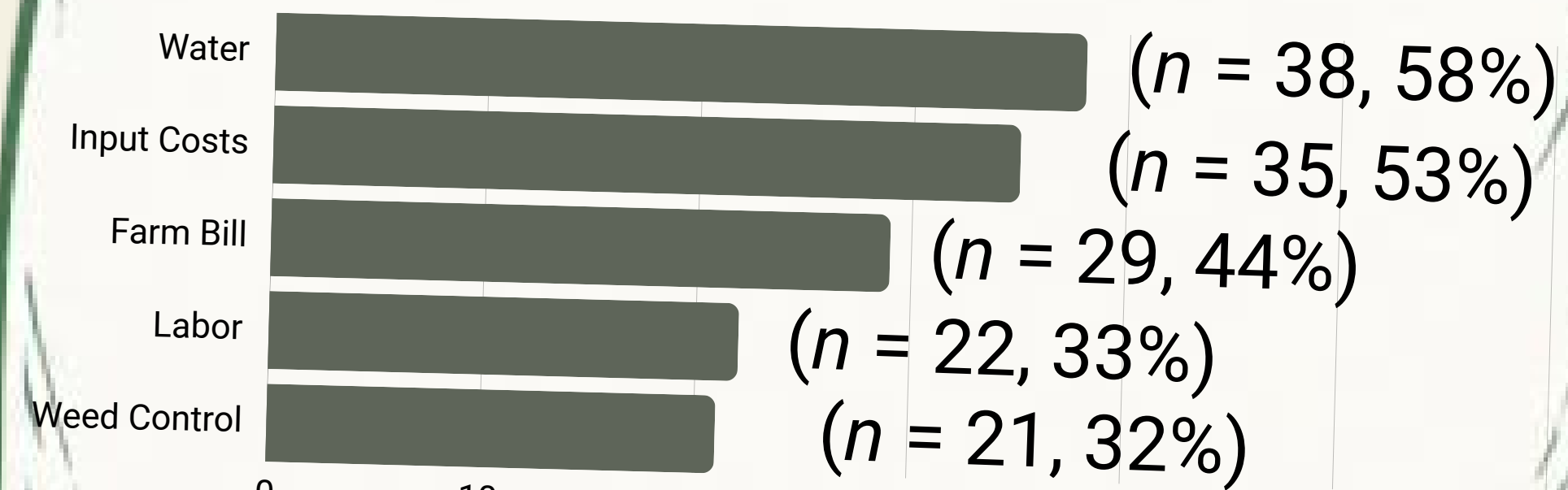
Results



reported mean increase of 58.7% in operating expenses ($n = 38$, $SD = 26.3$)



Future Operational Concerns



Existing Farm Bill Policies

71% Research and Education | 62% Conservation
62% Farm Income | 58% Rural Development
60% Ag Trade Promotion and Development

Supported Most by Respondents

52% Animal/Plant Health Protection
42% Specialty Crop Programs
42% Targeted Producer Programs (Veterans, etc.)
36% Domestic Food Assistance
23% International Food Assistance

Least Supported by Respondents

Most Reported Sources of Information
Extension ($n = 18$, 35%), ag supplier ($n = 13$, 26%), RFD-TV ($n = 8$, 16%)

Conceptual Framework

Community Capitals Framework (CCF) (Flora, 2018) to **examine how producer perceptions** are shaped through interaction of **financial, social, human, natural, and political capitals** rather than just economic factors alone



Captures how economic pressures, policy environments, resource sustainability, and information networks intersect to shape perceptions and decision-making (Pigg et al., 2013).

Conclusions

59% Reported increase in operating expenses over past decade.

Water availability, input costs, and farm bill policies identified as primary concerns.

This reflects **pressures** across **financial, political, and natural capital**.

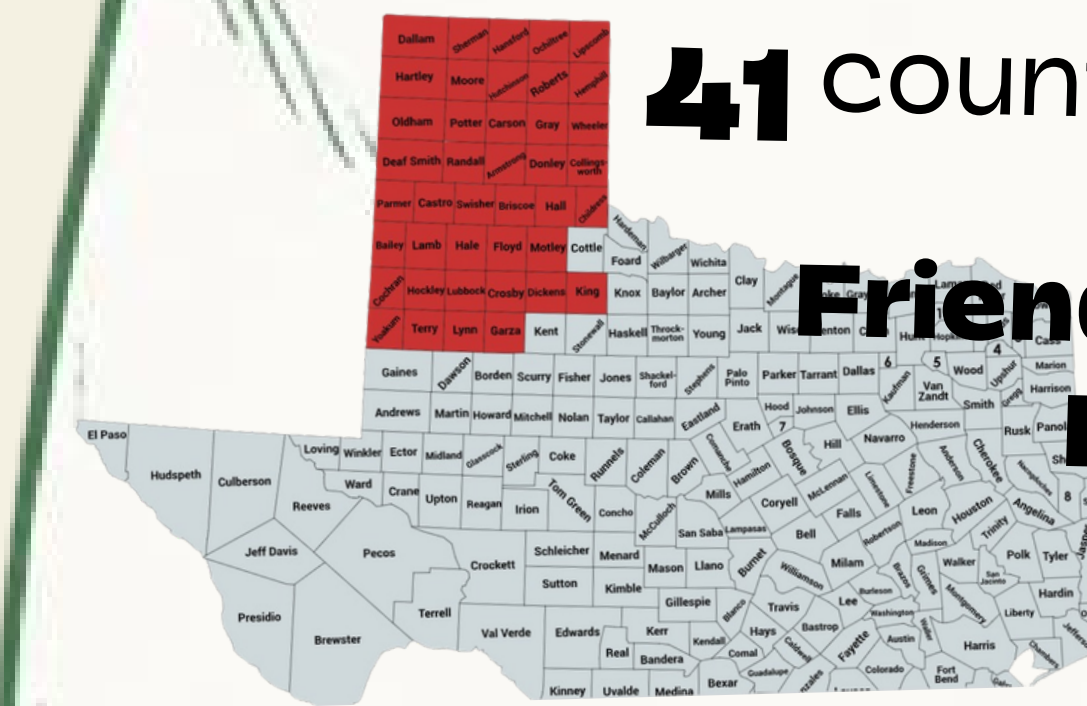
Despite these pressures, producers broadly support farm bill programs and rely on trusted relationships, showing how social and human capital shape policy navigation.

Producer concerns and policy support can't be understood in isolation. The findings show that these **five capitals interact**, pointing to the **need for systems-based leadership and policies that align education, communication, and producers' needs.**

Methodology

Survey Administered to

41 counties



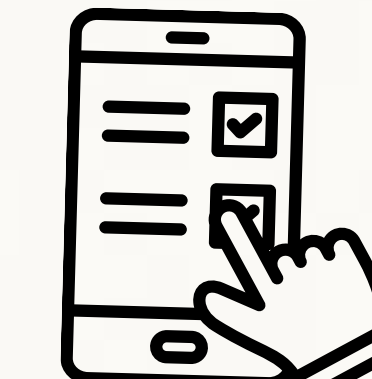
Friends of Agriculture Farmers Ranchers

over a two-year timeframe.

Participants



Self Identify Role



Answered Agricultural, Policy, and Network Questions Throughout Survey



Participants who **completed a survey** were able to **choose a WLWTX Hat, T-shirt, Notebook, or Luggage Tag**

Analyzed Responses with Descriptive Statistics through

SPSS



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