

we will begin in a few minutes

FARMER HOUSING WORKING GROUP

Advancing Farmer Housing: A Report-Back on Needs and Possibilities



FACILITATED BY CHRIS NICKELL AND FAITH GILBERT

HOSTED BY GLYNWOOD

FUNDED BY NORTHEAST SARE



TODAY'S AGENDA



12:15p Welcome & Working Group Report-Back, Chris & Faith

1p Lunch

2–3:15p Presentations from Colleagues & Partners

- Dennis Wedlick: Scattered Site Development Case Study
- Lucinda Poindexter, Chester Agricultural Center
- Steve Rosenberg & Rebecca Gillman Crimmins
- Emily Hamilton: RUPCO

3:15–4:15p Facilitated Discussion

- Development Pathways — Faith facilitating
- Advocacy, Organizing, and Policy — Chris, facilitating

4:15–5p Social Hour

WORKING GROUP REPORT-BACK



Project background, activities, goals
Housing needs survey results

Key development pathway questions with answers:

- Where is it located?
- What type of housing is it?
- Who funds it?

Key development pathway questions that still need answers:

- Who manages it?
- Who leads?

Next steps

- Finding an organizational home
- Policy, advocacy, and organizing



ABOUT THE WORKING GROUP



The Farmer Housing Working Group is a cohort of farm owners, managers, workers, and service providers, supported by a seed grant from Northeast SARE.

CURRENT EFFORTS

- collecting housing needs data
- developing leadership
- outreach about housing needs
- building an informed network
- seeking support and partnership

OUTSIDE OF SCOPE

- Not a re-granter or funder
- Not a research institution: grassroots and farmer-led
- No permanent funding/positions at present

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS



FAITH GILBERT

Project Co-Lead



LESLIE LEWIS

Titusville Farm



CHRIS NICKELL

Project Co-lead



MEGAN LARMER

Glynwood Center



BEN CROCKETT

Berkshire Ag Ventures



KATIE SPEICHER

Common Ground Farm



JOJO ATTAL

Rise and Root Farm

Chester Ag Center



SARAH ELISABETH

Wise Woman Spiral

Ulster Ag Center

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS



KYLE ELLIS

Rocksteady Farm



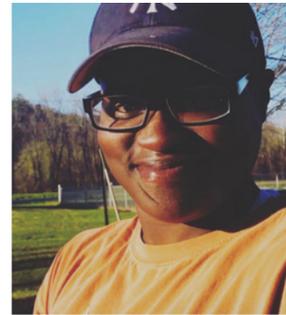
RICA BRYAN

Rocksteady Farm



BRYN ROSHONG

Solid Ground Farm



INNOCENCE

POWELL

Abundance Farms



**NICHKI
CARANGELO**

Letterbox Farm



JODY BOLLUYT

Roxbury Farm



KIMBERLY LICURSE

Wally Farms



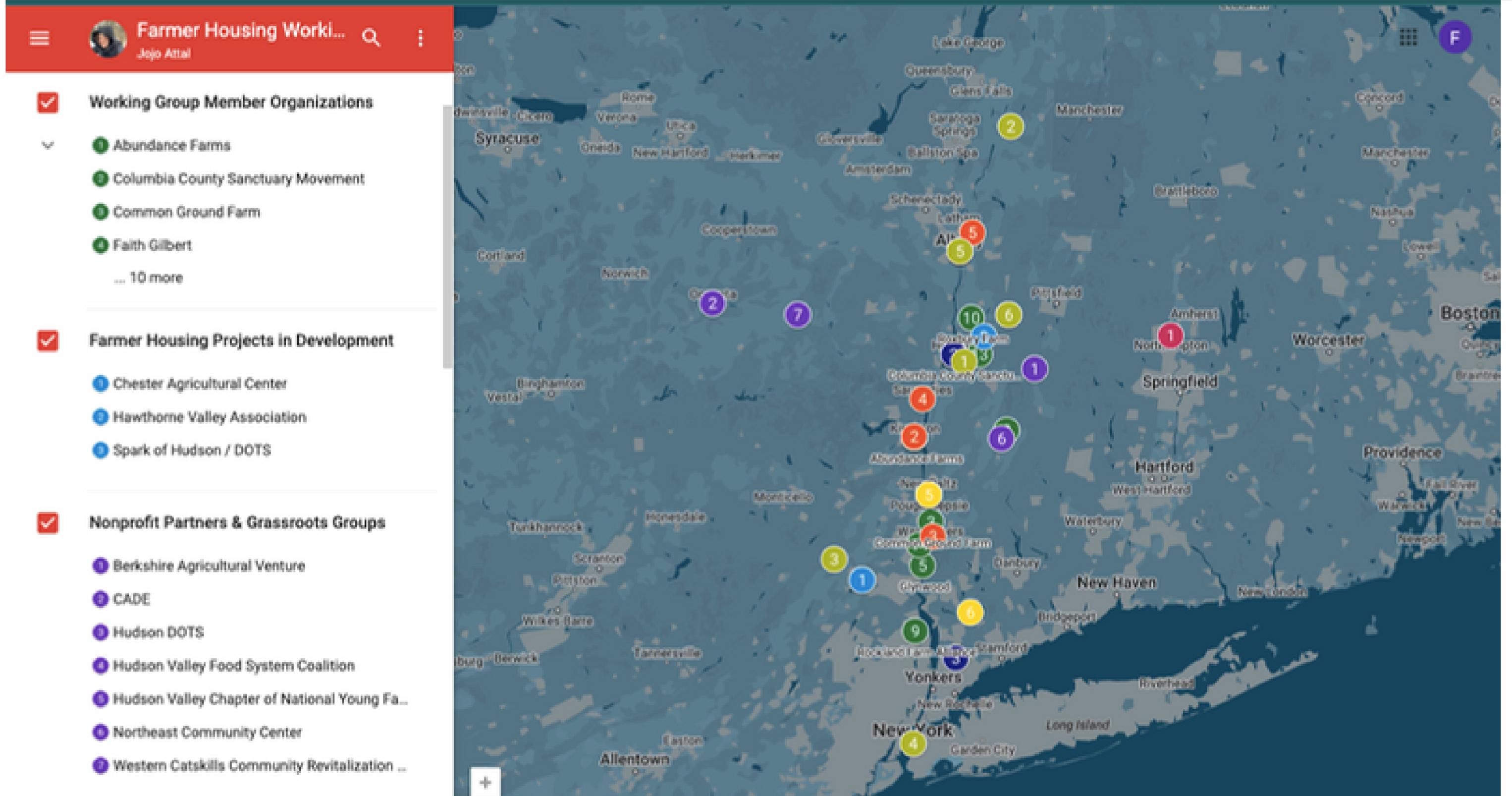
DIANA CRUZ

Columbia County Sanctuary
Movement

PROJECT TIMELINE & GOALS

2023			2024		
HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY	WORKING GROUP DEVELOPMENT	BACKGROUND RESEARCH AND NETWORKING	COMMUNITY LEARNING SERIES	CASE STUDY MODELS	CONVENING
80 responses	16 active members	100+ hours, 60+ contacts	4 two-hour online sessions	architect-prepared design and cost model for worker housing	for working group, advisors and partners

MAPPING THE NETWORK





FARMER HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY RESULTS

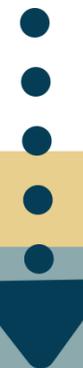


WHOSE VOICES WE'VE HEARD

CSA COALITION
ROUNDTABLE
ATTENDEES

FARMER STORIES:
HVVFC LISTSERV

FARMER HOUSING
NEEDS SURVEY

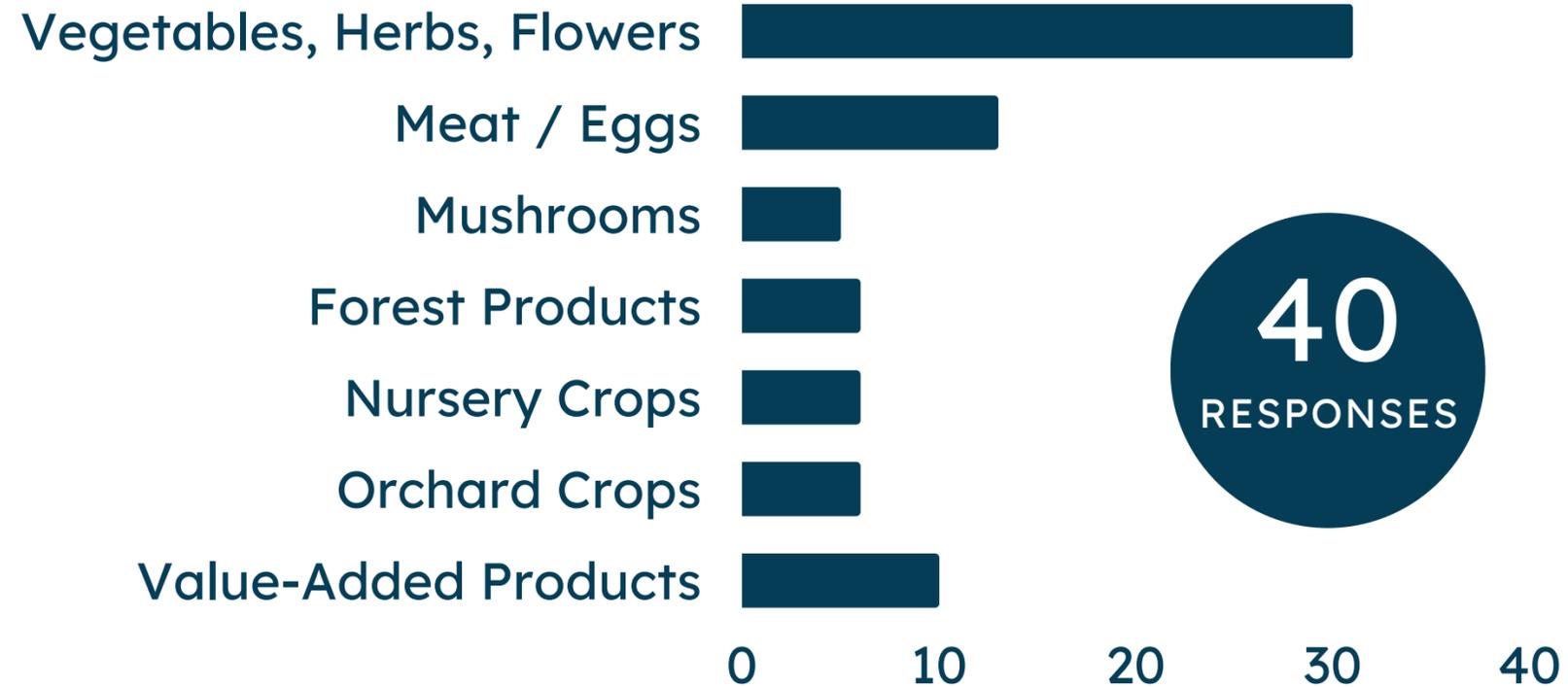


OUTREACH VIA:

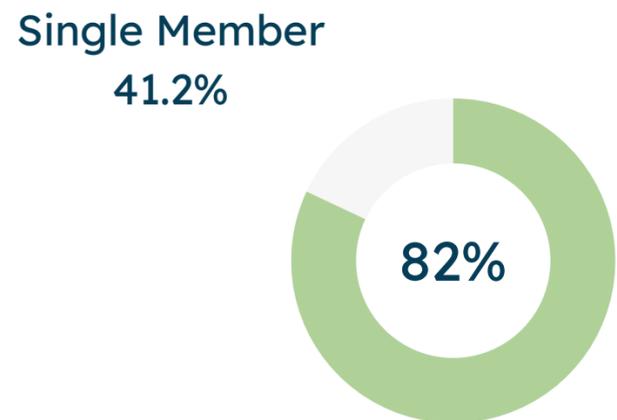
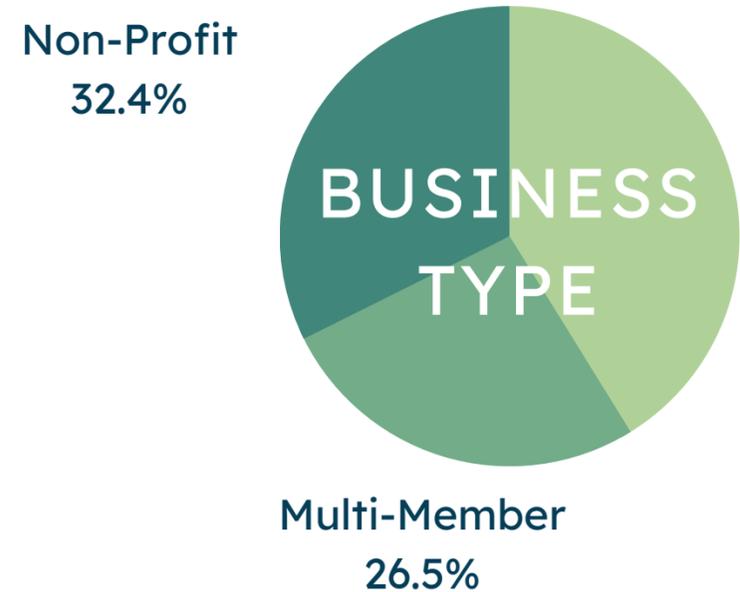
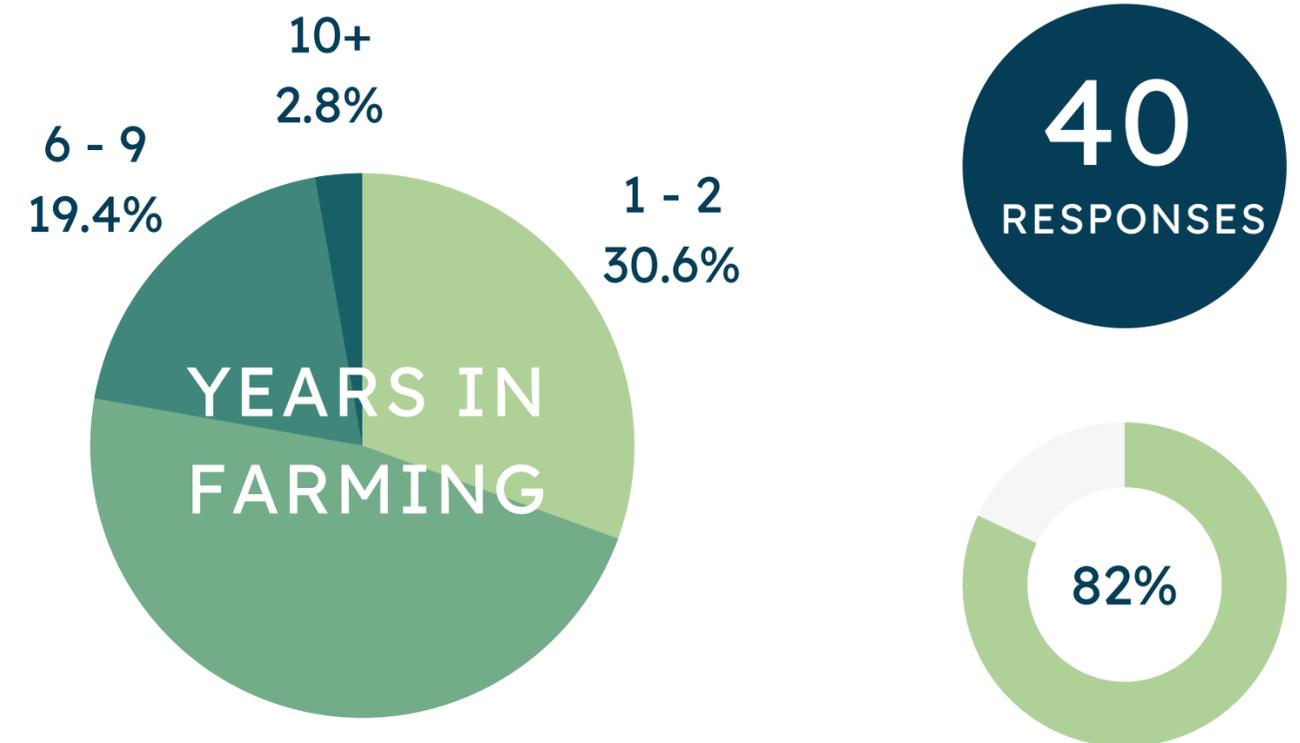
- PEER OUTREACH BY WORKING GROUP MEMBERS
- HUDSON VALLEY YOUNG FARMERS COALITION (HVVFC)
- HUDSON VALLEY FOOD SYSTEM COALITION
- HUDSON VALLEY CSA COALITION
- BLACK WOMEN FARMERS FACEBOOK GROUP
- NORTHEAST FARMERS OF COLOR (NEFOC)
- BERKSHIRE AGRICULTURAL VENTURES
- GLYNWOOD
- AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST

RESPONSES & DEMOGRAPHICS

WHO ARE THE FARMS?



AND WHO ARE THE WORKERS?



HAVE HIRED STAFF



RESPONSES & DEMOGRAPHICS



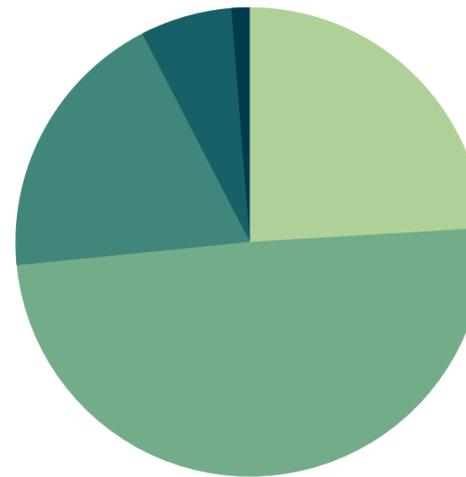
High School Degree

6.3%

Graduate degree

24.1%

Some college
19%



Undergraduate degree
49.4%

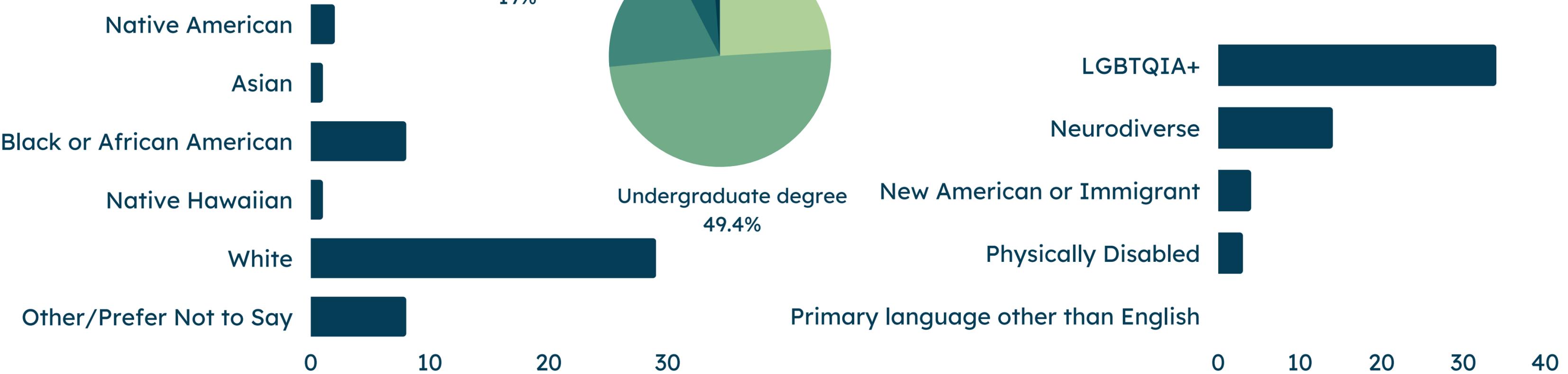
New American or Immigrant

LGBTQIA+

Neurodiverse

Physically Disabled

Primary language other than English



CURRENT HOUSING SNAPSHOT

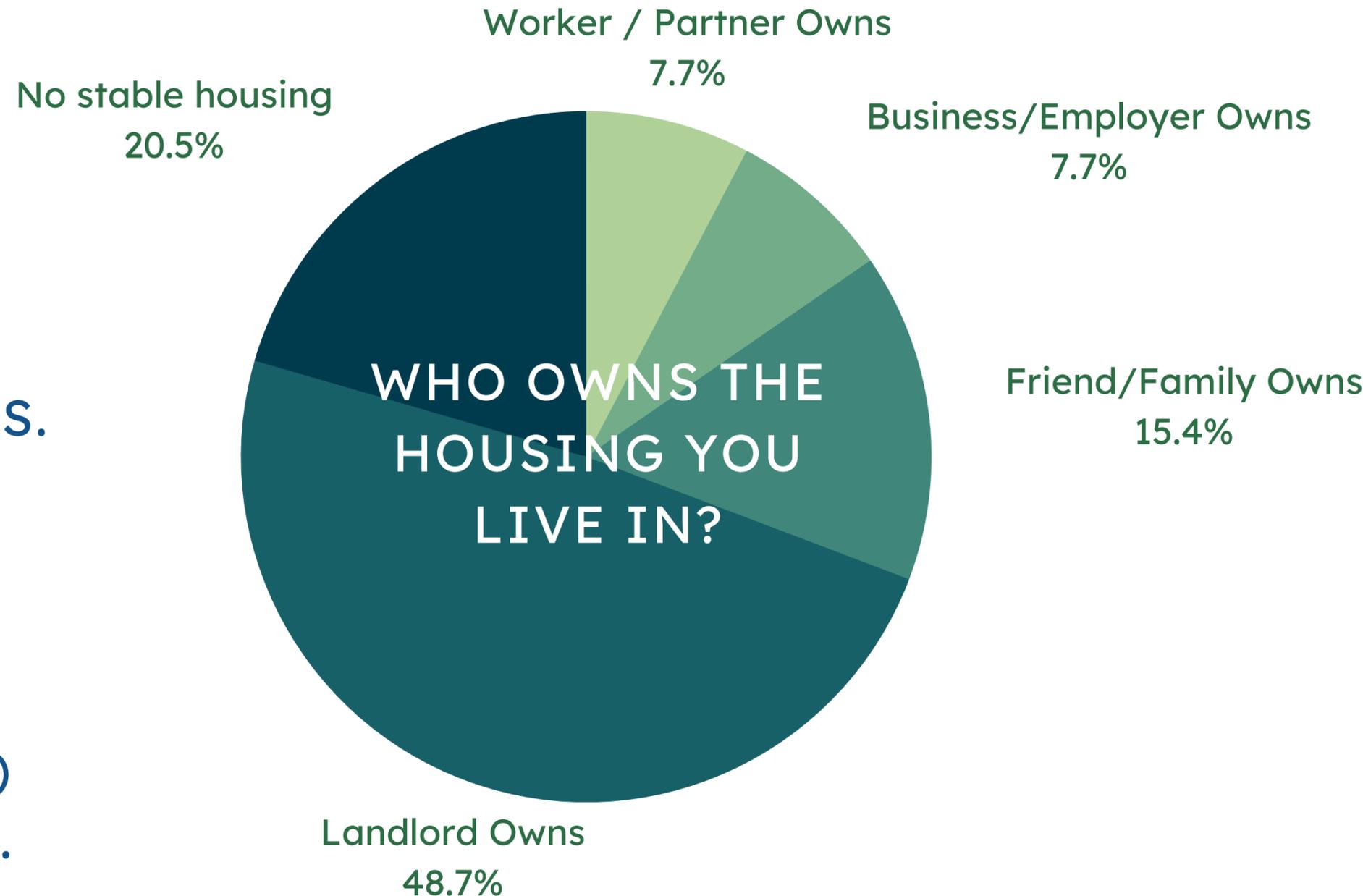
RESPONSES FROM FARM WORKERS

A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF FARM WORKERS LACK STABLE HOUSING (PLACE TO STAY FOR 3 OR MORE MONTHS).

MOST ARE LIVING IN RENTAL APARTMENTS, OR IN FAMILY HOUSES.

OWNERSHIP AND EMPLOYER-PROVIDED HOUSING ARE RARE.

FEW (6%) LIVE ON SITE. MOST (70%) LIVE WITHIN 30 MINUTES OF WORK.



CURRENT HOUSING SNAPSHOT

RESPONSES FROM FARM WORKERS

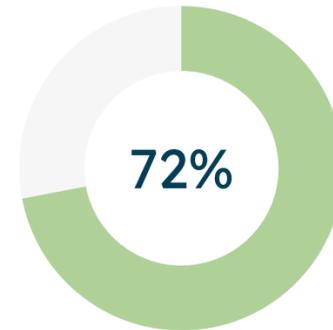
STABILITY AND COST
ARE BOTH BIG ISSUES.



Lack a stable place
to live for 3 or more
months

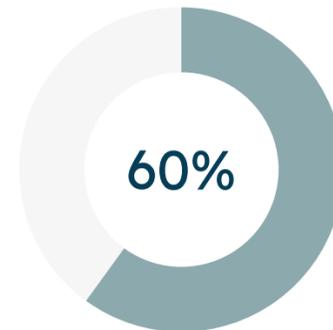


Another 35% will
need to move in 3-
11 months.



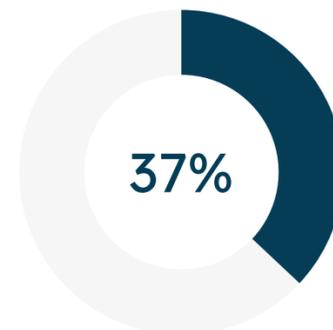
**MOST FEEL THEIR HOUSING
IS SAFE & HEALTHY**

While 25% felt their housing should be improved,
only 3% had significant health/safety concerns.



**BUT MOST ARE COST-
BURDENED**

housing costs are more than 30% of their
household income.

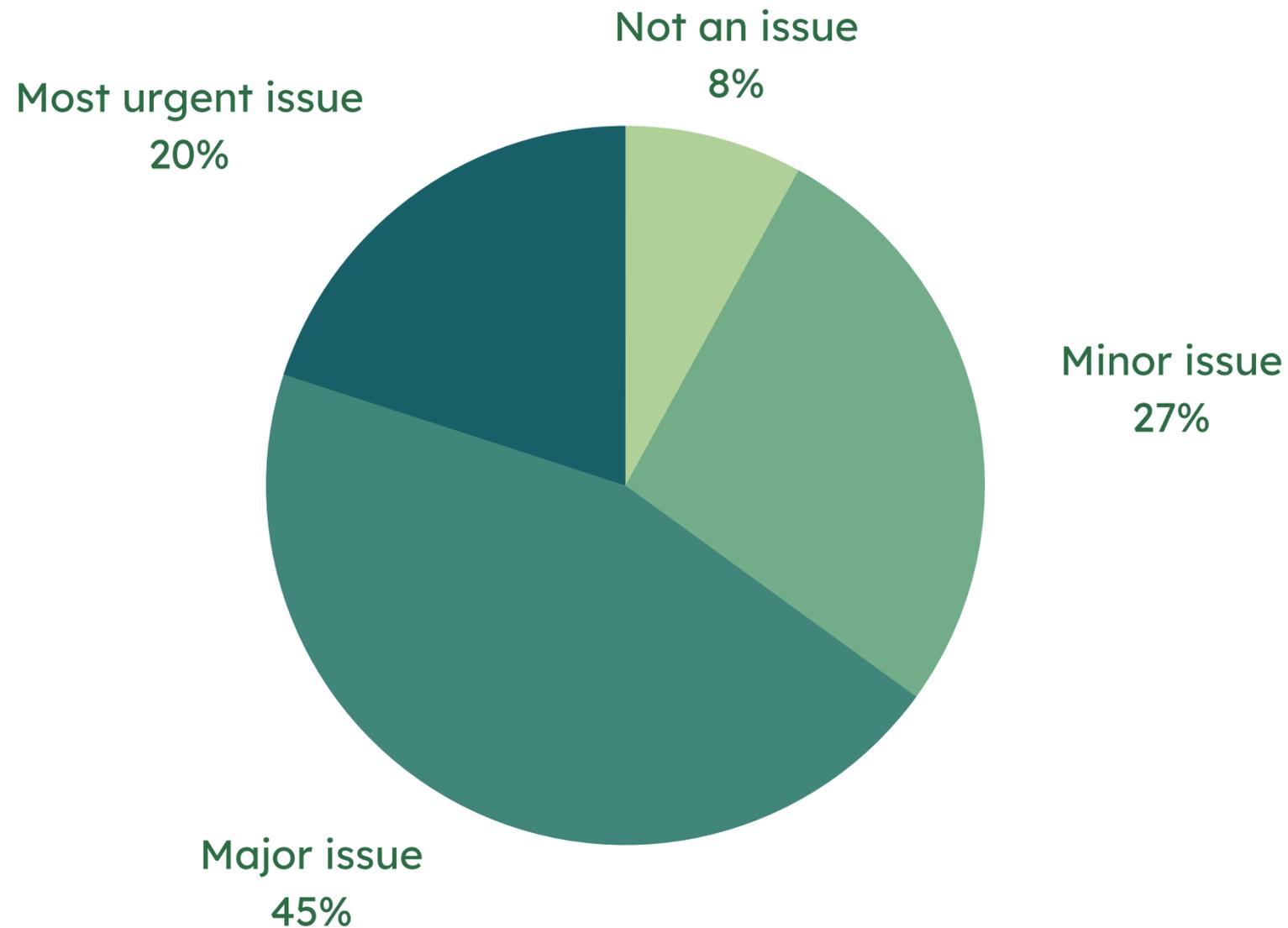


**AND MORE THAN 1/3 ARE
SEVERELY COST-BURDENED.**

Housing costs are more than 50% of household
income.

IMPACT ON FARM WORKERS

SUBSTANTIAL IMPACT ON MAJORITY OF WORKERS



MAJOR INFLUENCE TO DEPART FROM AGRICULTURE OR REGION



5 out of 10 say housing is a moderate concern for their future in agriculture.

4 out of 10 say they are considering leaving the field because of housing difficulties.



Of those who told us they were definitively leaving the region, 5 out of 7 cited housing cost as a significant factor.

CURRENT HOUSING SNAPSHOT

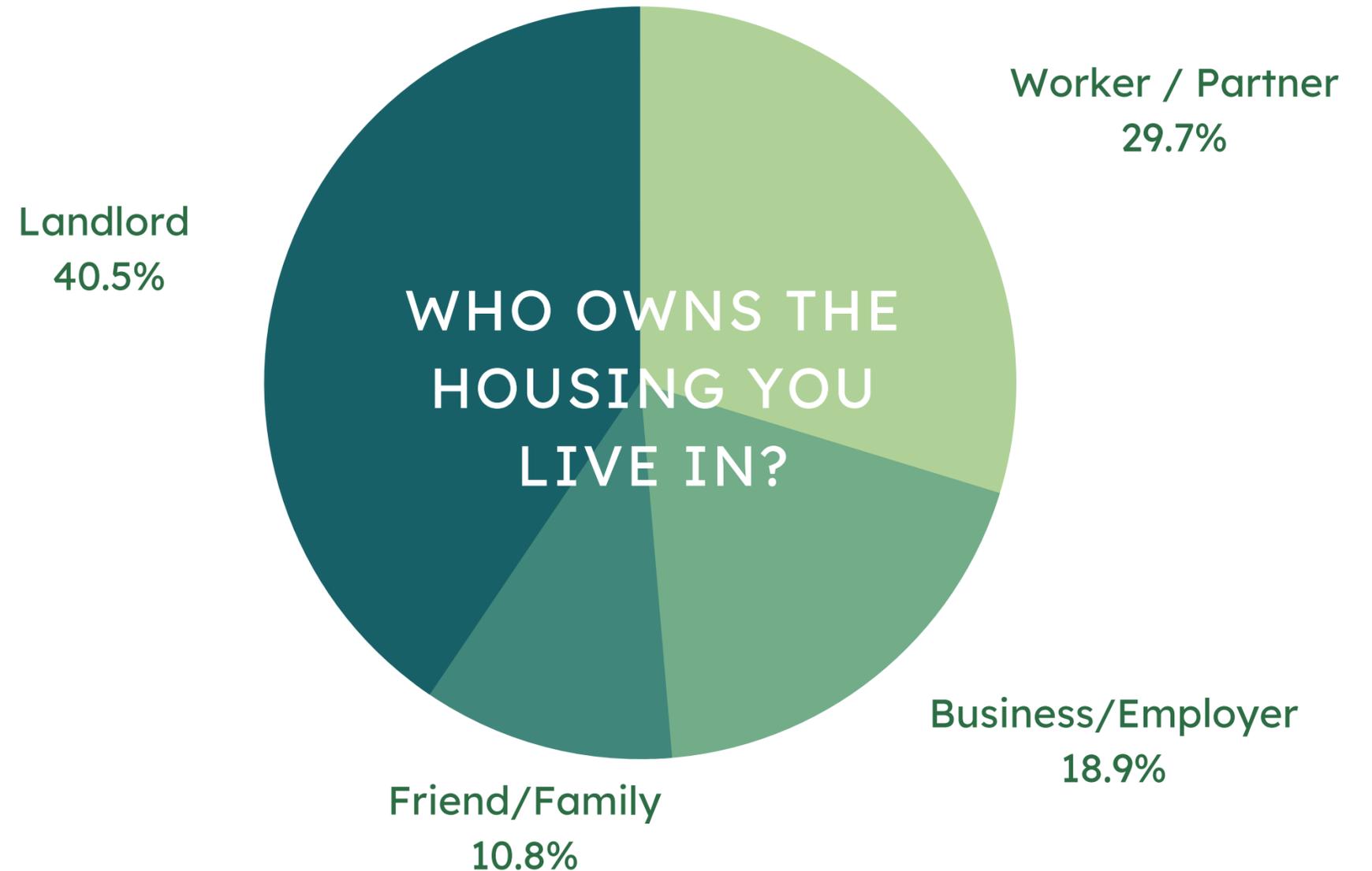
RESPONSES FROM FARM OWNERS & MANAGERS

30% OF FARM OWNERS & MANAGERS OWN HOMES.

MORE LIVE IN DIVERSE RENTAL HOUSING -- APARTMENTS, HOUSES, MOBILE OR TINY HOMES.

FARM-PROVIDED HOUSING IS A BIT MORE COMMON.

ABOUT 40% LIVE ON SITE.
ANOTHER 40% LIVE WITHIN 30 MINUTES OF WORK.



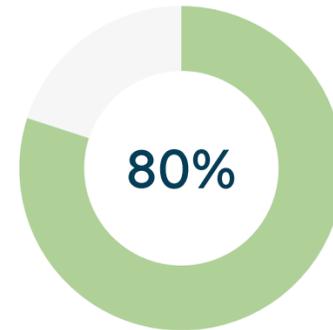
CURRENT HOUSING SNAPSHOT

RESPONSES FROM FARM OWNERS & MANAGERS

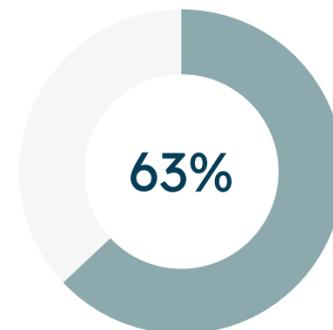
A SMALL PORTION OF FARM OWNERS & MANAGERS STRUGGLE WITH HOUSING COSTS OR STABILITY.



Less than 20% will need to move in 3-11 months.

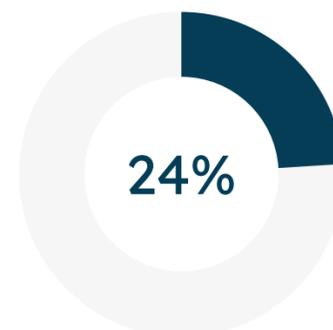


MOST FEEL THEIR HOUSING IS SAFE & HEALTHY



MOST ARE COST-BURDENED

housing costs are more than 30% of their household income.

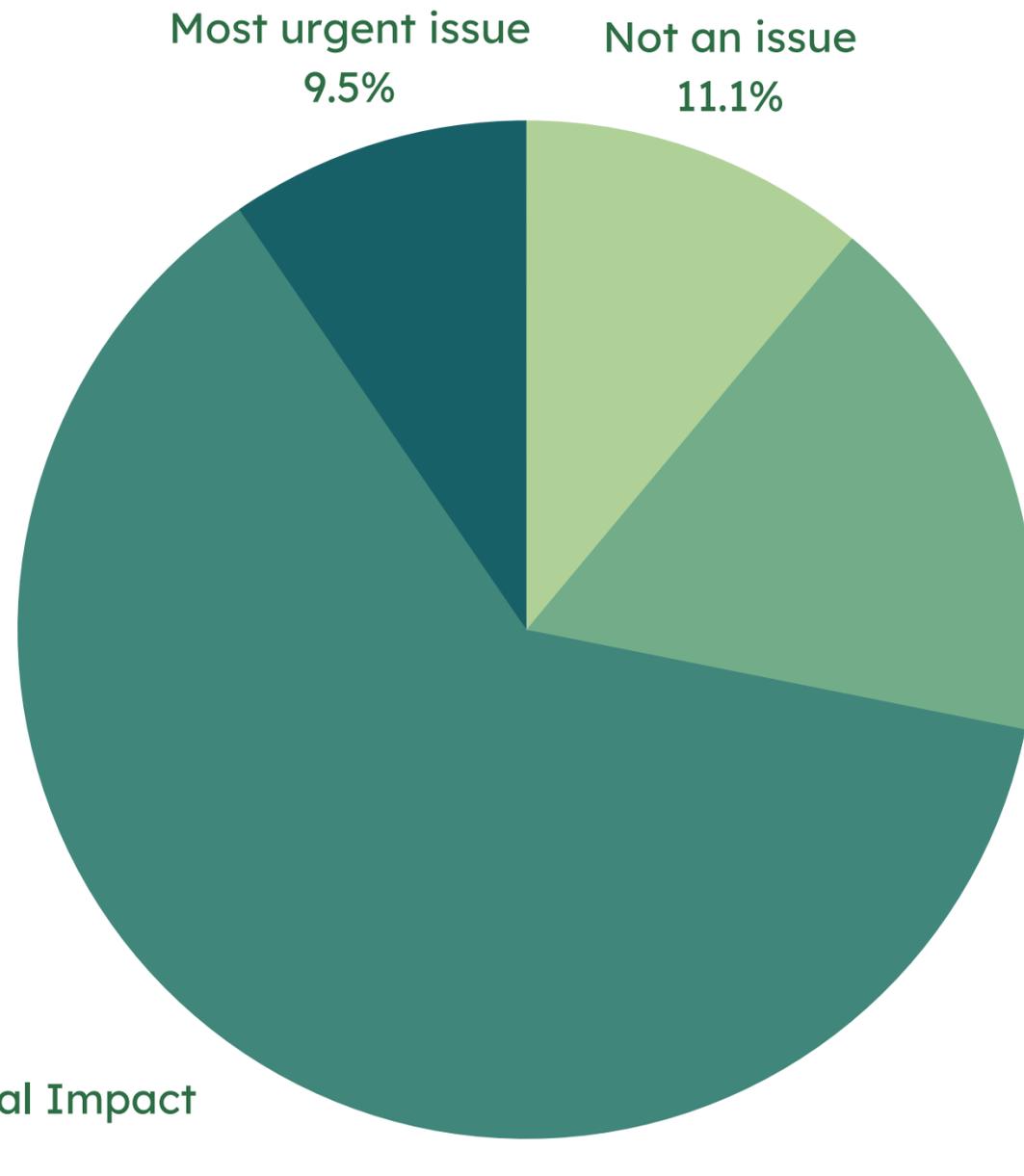


AND ABOUT 1/4 ARE SEVERELY COST-BURDENED.

Housing costs are more than 50% of household income.

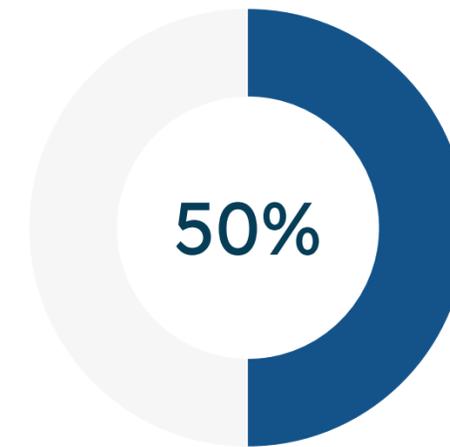
IMPACT ON FARM BUSINESSES

WORKER HOUSING STRUGGLES ARE HAVING A SUBSTANTIAL IMPACT ON THE MAJORITY OF FARMS



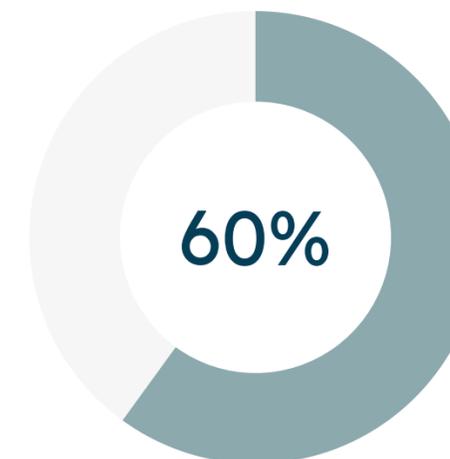
Major Issue -- Substantial Impact
62.3%

MAJOR DISRUPTIONS



Had a crew member leave after starting work due to housing changes or pressures.

INABILITY TO HIRE



Have had applicants turn down a position due to inability to find housing.

IMPACT ON FARM BUSINESSES

DOWNSIZING

"Lack of affordable housing and our inability to pay wages high enough for market rents was a major factor in our decision to take a hiatus from hiring staff next season."

CLOSURES

"I was the primary worker at the farm, and had to take another job due to lack of affordable, nearby housing."

BARRIER TO NEW BUSINESSES

"I am trying to find farmers to lease land on my property but housing is a major obstacle."

LIMIT TO GROWTH

"When we think about growing the farm and the people that will take, we have to find housing for them first, which seems like the harder task to do than growing the business to support more people."

MANAGEMENT & COST BURDENS

"We currently hold 2 leases for 2 properties for our team members, but the amount of time, labor (management), and financial burden it takes to hold these leases is unsustainable."

VALUE CHAIN DISRUPTIONS

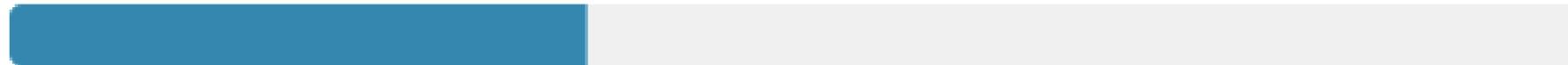
"There are shortages of housing for workers at other businesses my farm depends on for supplies and services."

SUMMARY OF HOUSING NEEDS

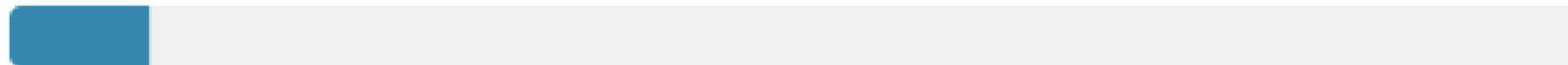
Yes - I am looking, or will be looking for housing in this region 43 resp. 54.4%



No - I have stable housing that suits my needs 29 resp. 36.7%



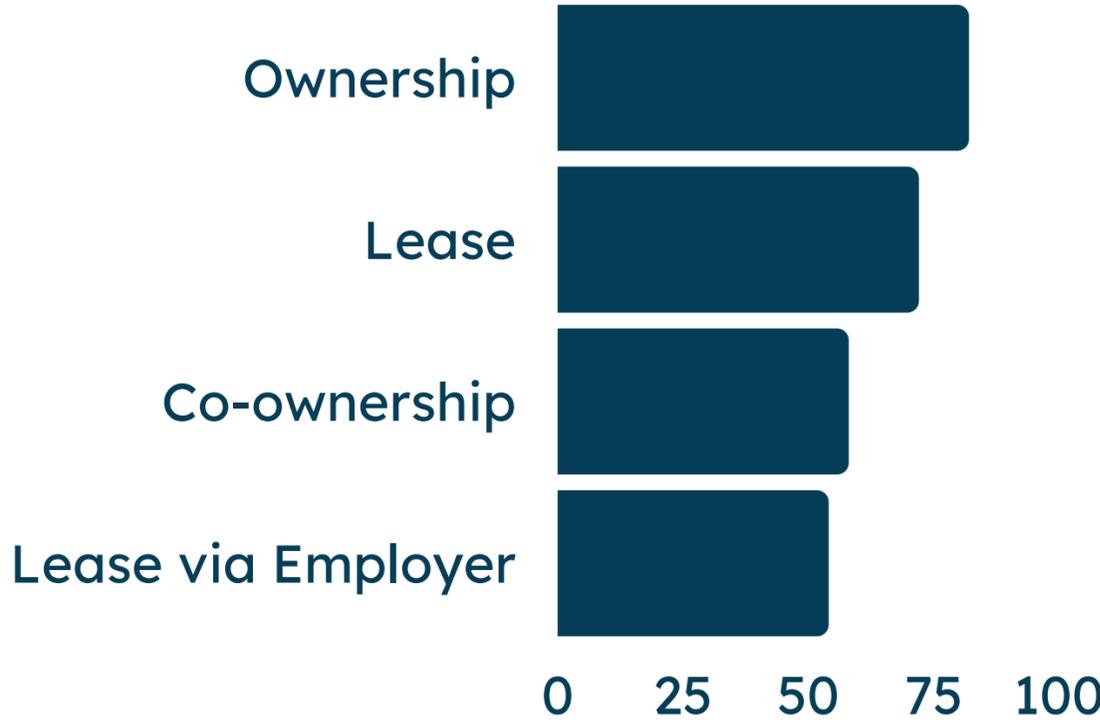
No - I am likely to move out of the region soon. 7 resp. 8.9%



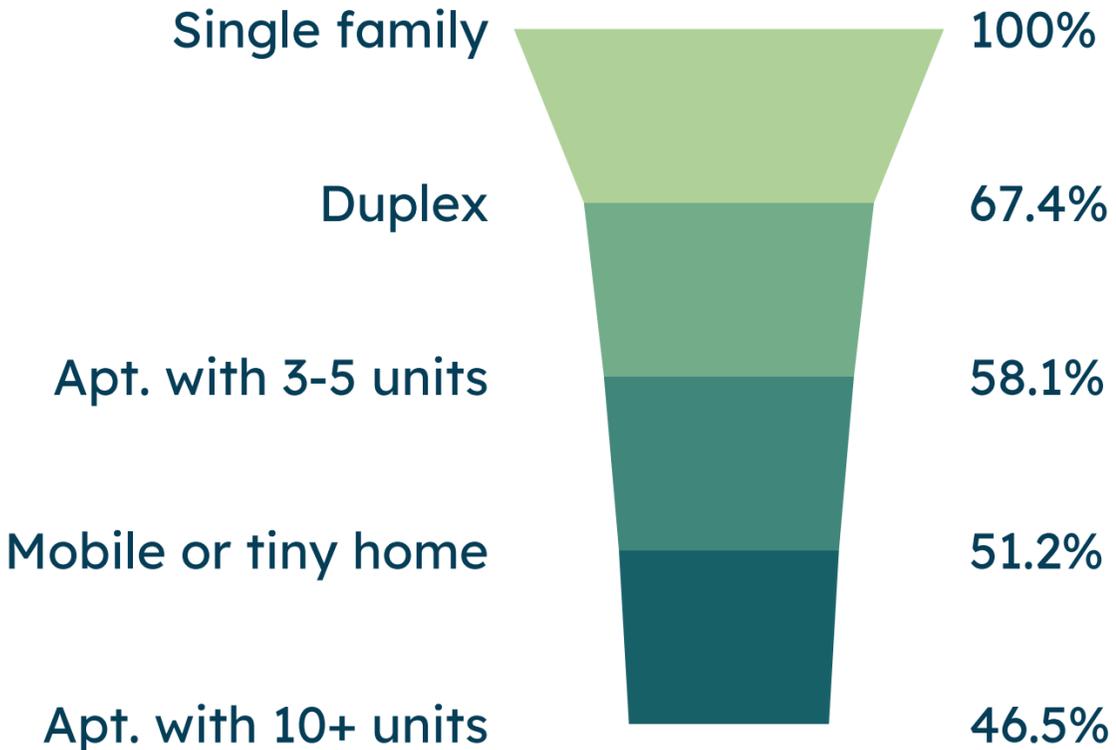
HOUSING TYPE

RENTING AND OWNING ARE BOTH OK. PREFERENCE FOR LOW DENSITY HOUSING. SMALL HOUSEHOLD SIZES.

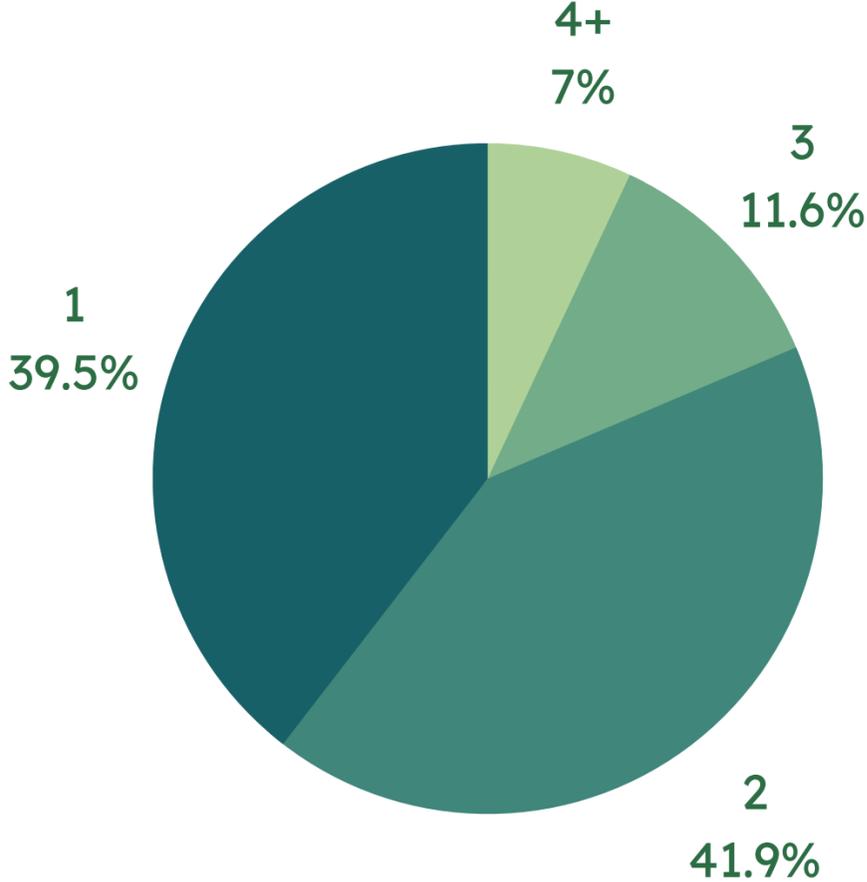
ACCEPTABLE TENURE



ACCEPTABLE TYPE



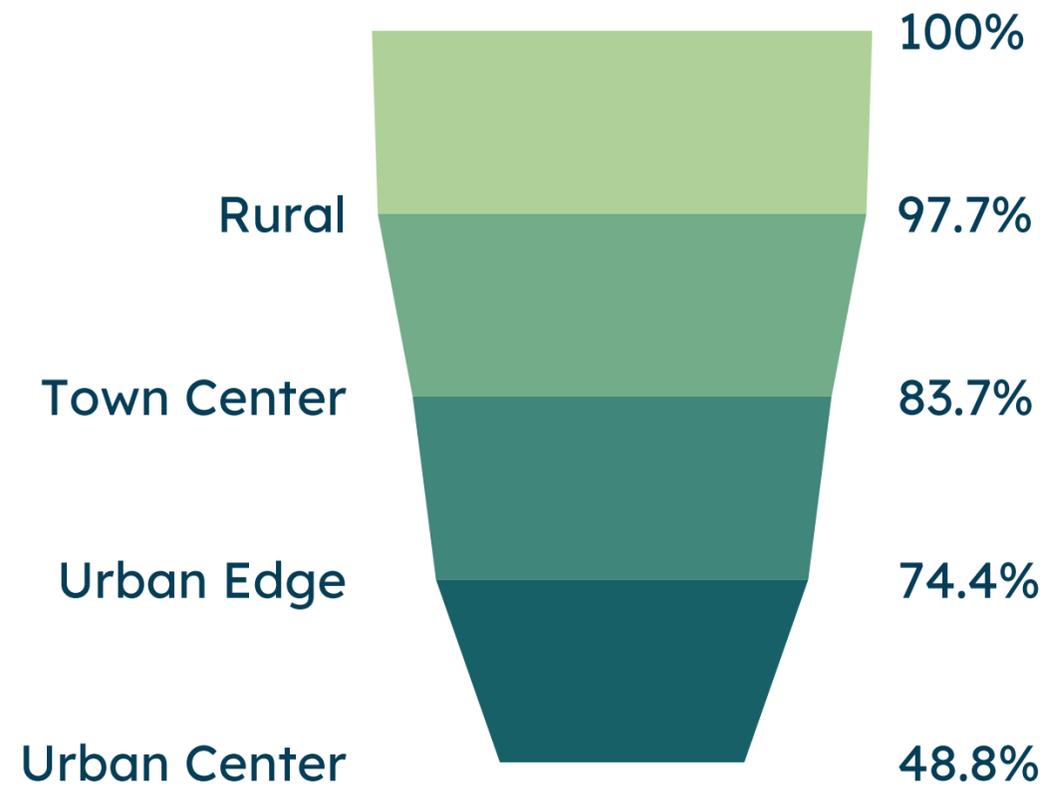
HOUSEHOLD SIZE



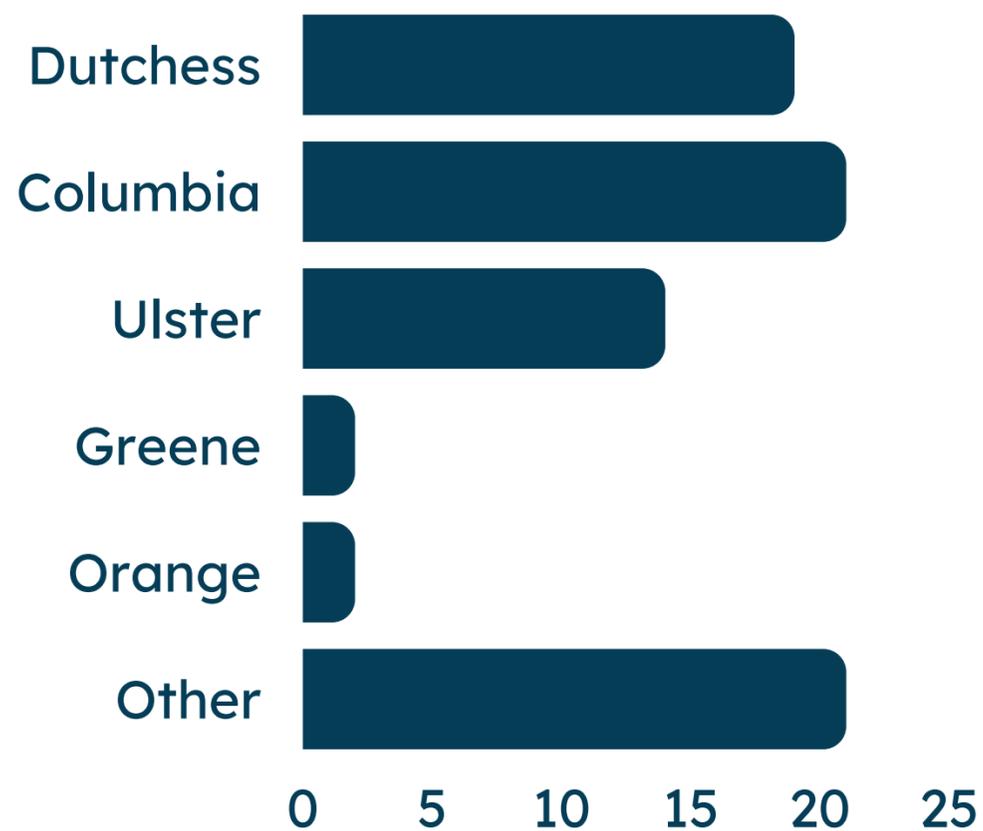
LOCATION & SETTING

UNANIMOUS PREFERENCE FOR RURAL SETTING! PREFERRED COUNTIES ALIGN WITH DENSITY OF SMALL FARMS.

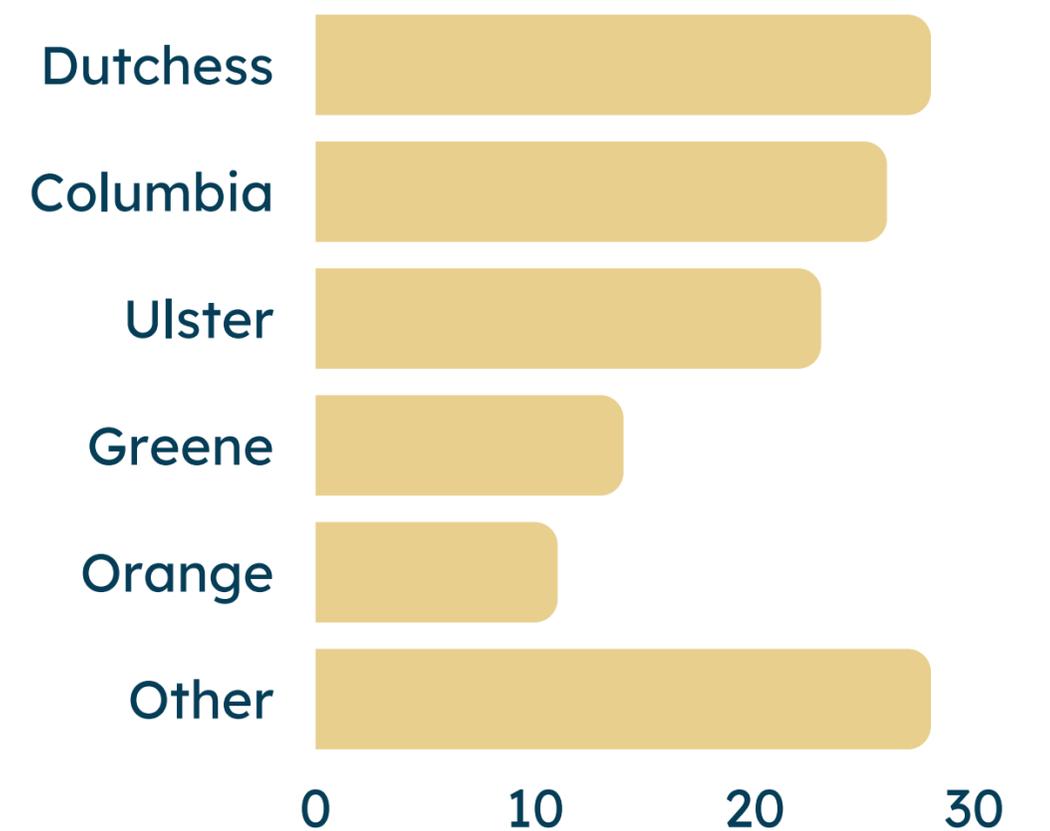
ACCEPTABLE SETTING?



WHERE DO YOU FARM NOW?



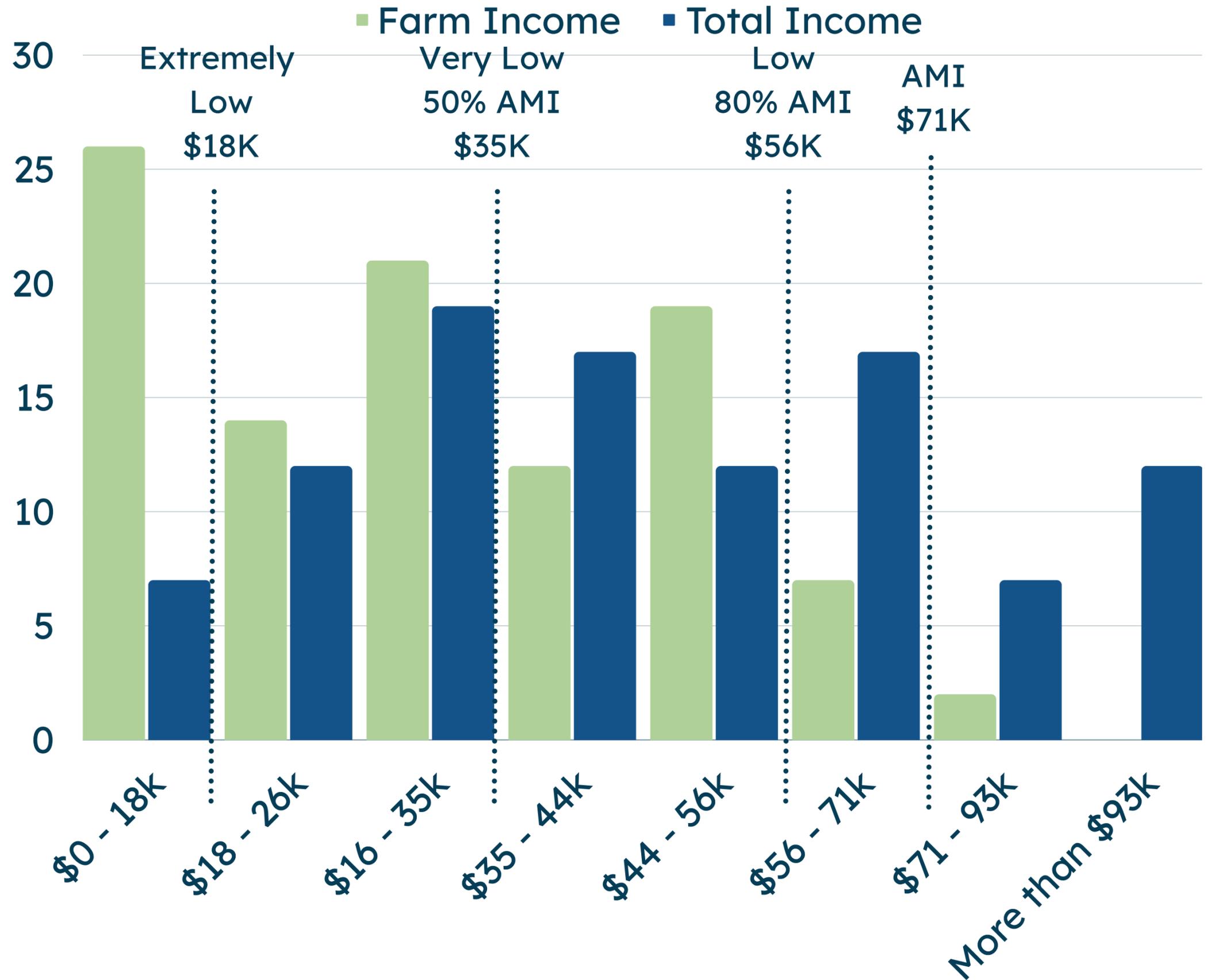
WHERE WOULD YOU LIVE?



HOUSEHOLD INCOME

NUMBERS ARE SIMPLIFIED FOR SUMMARY PURPOSES. HERE THEY ARE COMPARED TO THE AREA MEDIAN INCOME NUMBERS FOR A 2 MEMBER HOUSEHOLD IN COLUMBIA COUNTY, AS DETERMINED BY HUD.

85% ARE BELOW AMI IN THIS SCENARIO.



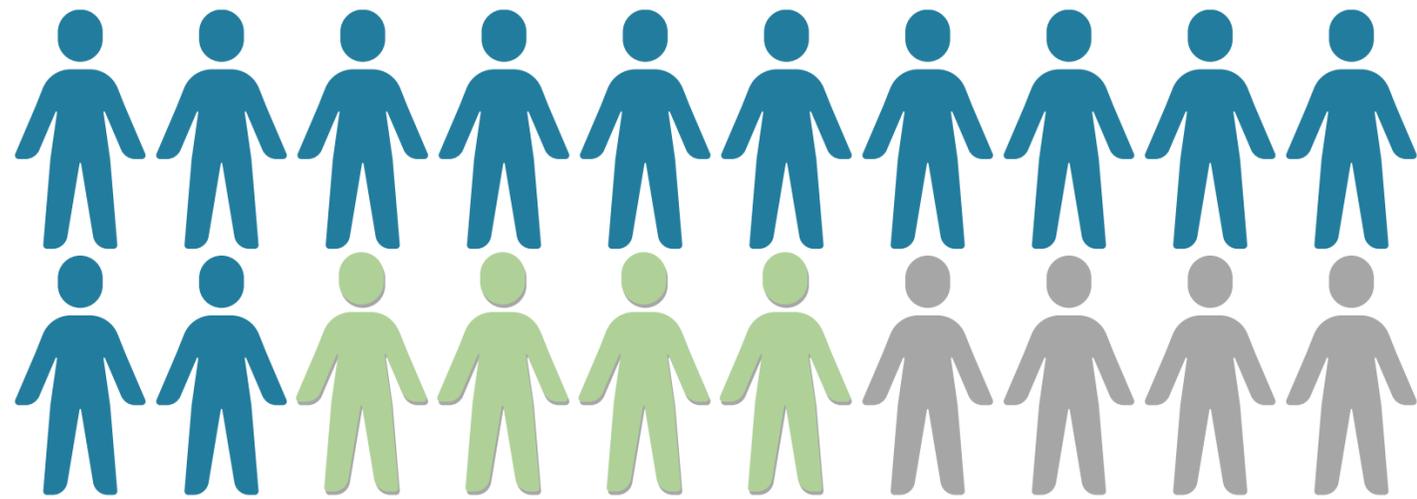
AFFORDABILITY

Affordability by HUD thresholds for 2-person household	
30% of income at 50% AMI	30% of income at 80% AMI
\$885	\$1420

Type	Popularity	Max. Monthly Budget	
		Average	Range
Room in shared home	30%	\$900	\$600 - \$1200
1 bedroom/studio	51%	\$1250	\$1200 - \$1500
2 bedroom	70%	\$1675	\$1000 - \$2750
3 bedroom	48%	\$2250	\$2000 - \$2500

SEASONALITY

4-SEASON HOUSING IS NECESSARY, BUT SEASONAL WORK MEANS A HIGHER VACANCY RATE AND/OR MANAGEMENT COST.



60% WORK YEAR ROUND. ANOTHER 20% FARM SEASONALLY BUT STAY THROUGH THE WINTER. 20% MOVE ON.



8 MONTHS IS TYPICAL FOR SEASONAL WORKERS, MAR-NOV.



NET 20% VACANCY? 7% STANDARD + 13% FOR SEASONALITY

THESE ARE APPROXIMATIONS WITH MANY VARYING FACTORS.

WHAT KIND OF HOUSING IS NEEDED?

MOSTLY 1-2 BEDROOM QUALITY RENTAL HOUSING, PLUS A SMALLER AMOUNT OF 3 BEDROOM OWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES, IN RURAL SETTINGS IN MID-HUDSON VALLEY COUNTIES. RENTAL HOUSING SHOULD COST \$850-1450 PER UNIT AND ACCOUNT FOR A ~20% VACANCY RATE. AND OF COURSE, PET-FRIENDLY, AND "LAUNDRY IS A MUST."

HOW CAN WE SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS?



Two-pronged strategy:

- Support the development of a regional network of dedicated farmer housing.
- Advocacy and organizing to raise awareness and create favorable policy for development of this regional network



MAKING THE CASE FOR A REGIONAL NETWORK OF FARMER HOUSING



POTENTIAL FOR ON-FARM HOUSING

20%

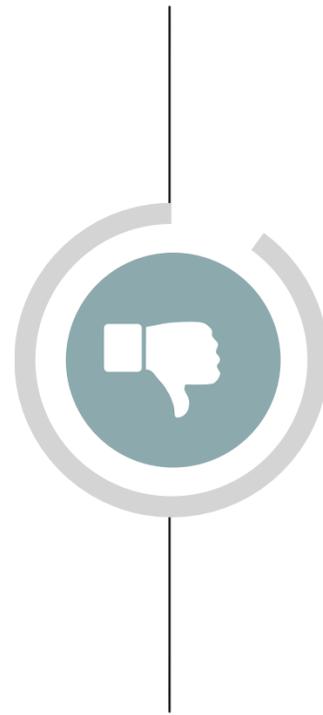
- ARE MOTIVATED,
- HAVE LONG-TERM LAND ACCESS,
- HAVE ADEQUATE LAND BASE
- NO KNOWN LEGAL RESTRICTIONS
- AND HAVE SUPPORT OF KEY DECISION-MAKERS TO DEVELOP HOUSING

50%



Have short-term land access -- leases of 0-10 years.

10%



Are not interested in on-site housing. 30% are on the fence.

23%



Lack an adequate land base for additional housing.

30%



Have legal restrictions (such as easements) that prohibit additional housing

12%



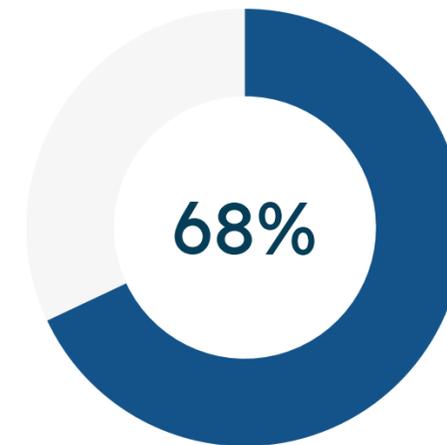
Lack support from other decision-makers to develop housing.

INTEREST IN CENTRALIZED HOUSING

OFF-FARM, CENTRALIZED HOUSING
DRAWS SIGNIFICANT INTEREST FROM
FARMERS AND FARMWORKERS.

AS OUR SURVEY QUESTION DESCRIBED
THIS CONCEPT, “THIS COULD TAKE MANY
FORMS, BUT COULD INCLUDE
DEVELOPING APARTMENT-STYLE, DORM-
STYLE, TOWNHOUSE, OR TINY/MOBILE
HOME SITE(S) CENTRALLY LOCATED TO A
NUMBER OF FARMS THAT NEED
HOUSING.”

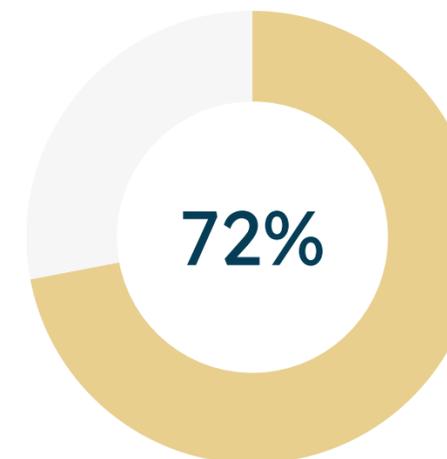
ANTICIPATED BENEFIT



Believed centralized
farmer housing would
benefit their farm.

85
Viewers

INTEREST IN LEARNING MORE



were "interested" or
"very interested" and
planned to attend the
online learning series
session.

MAKING THE CASE FOR CENTRALIZED FARMER HOUSING

WORKING TOWARD PERMANENT FARM VIABILITY

- 1 potential for lower construction costs per unit
- 2 ability to hire professional management
- 3 reduced strain on employer/employee relationship
- 4 potential for amenities and services
- 5 more security for employee
more flexibility for farm
- 6 admin efficiency; access to much larger pools of funding



OAHU, HAWAII



FOREST GROVE, OREGON

WHAT TYPE OF HOUSING?
WHO FUNDS IT?
WHO LEADS ITS DEVELOPMENT?
WHERE IS IT LOCATED?
HOW IS IT MANAGED?



LEBANON, OREGON



BUTTE, CALIFORNIA



2-4 BEDROOM SINGLE FAMILY HOUSES



2-4 BEDROOM TOWNHOUSES

WHAT TYPE OF HOUSING?



1-2 BEDROOM APARTMENTS



2 BEDROOM CABINS

2. Existing Conditions

Example of an existing mother/daughter, two-family historic rural house with new ADU in surrounding area.



ADU (3rd Unit)

Twin Two-Family Units

Rural Build Hypothetical Case Study
Farmer and Farmworker Housing
Town of Greenport, New York

Dennis Wedlick
BarlisWedlick Architects
December 5, 2023

Historic Two and Three Family Farmstead Typology & Layout

Extant or no longer existing vintage farmsteads and historic rural houses in surrounding area.



Rural Build Hypothetical Case Study

*Farmer and Farmworker Housing
Town of Greenport, New York*

*Dennis Wedlick
BarlisWedlick Architects
December 5, 2023*

Potential Costs for Three Family Farmsteads

Costs Per Unit

Initial Investment

Engineered Survey/Site Plan: 10 to 15k/site

Financed Investments

Farmstead Site & Infrastructure: \$75k to \$100k/unit

3bd/2bth Vertical Construction: \$340k to \$440k/unit

1bd/1bth Vertical Construction: \$180k to \$230k/unit

\$775k to \$1m for 3 units
(3 br + 1br + 1br)

4. Prototype for Three-Family Passive Houses

Phase One: One 3bd/2bth Unit for Farm Manger (family)

Two 1bd/1bth Units for Farm Staff (single/couple)



Rural Build Hypothetical Case Study

Farmer and Farmworker Housing

Town of Greenport, New York

Draft Presentation

November 7, 2023

BarlisWedlick Architects

Rural Build Hypothetical Case Study

Farmer and Farmworker Housing

Town of Greenport, New York

Dennis Wedlick

BarlisWedlick Architects

December 5, 2023

WHAT TYPE OF HOUSING?

LOW DENSITY, SCATTERED, RURAL, OFF-FARM FARMER HOUSING:
WHAT FARMERS & FARM WORKERS WANT.

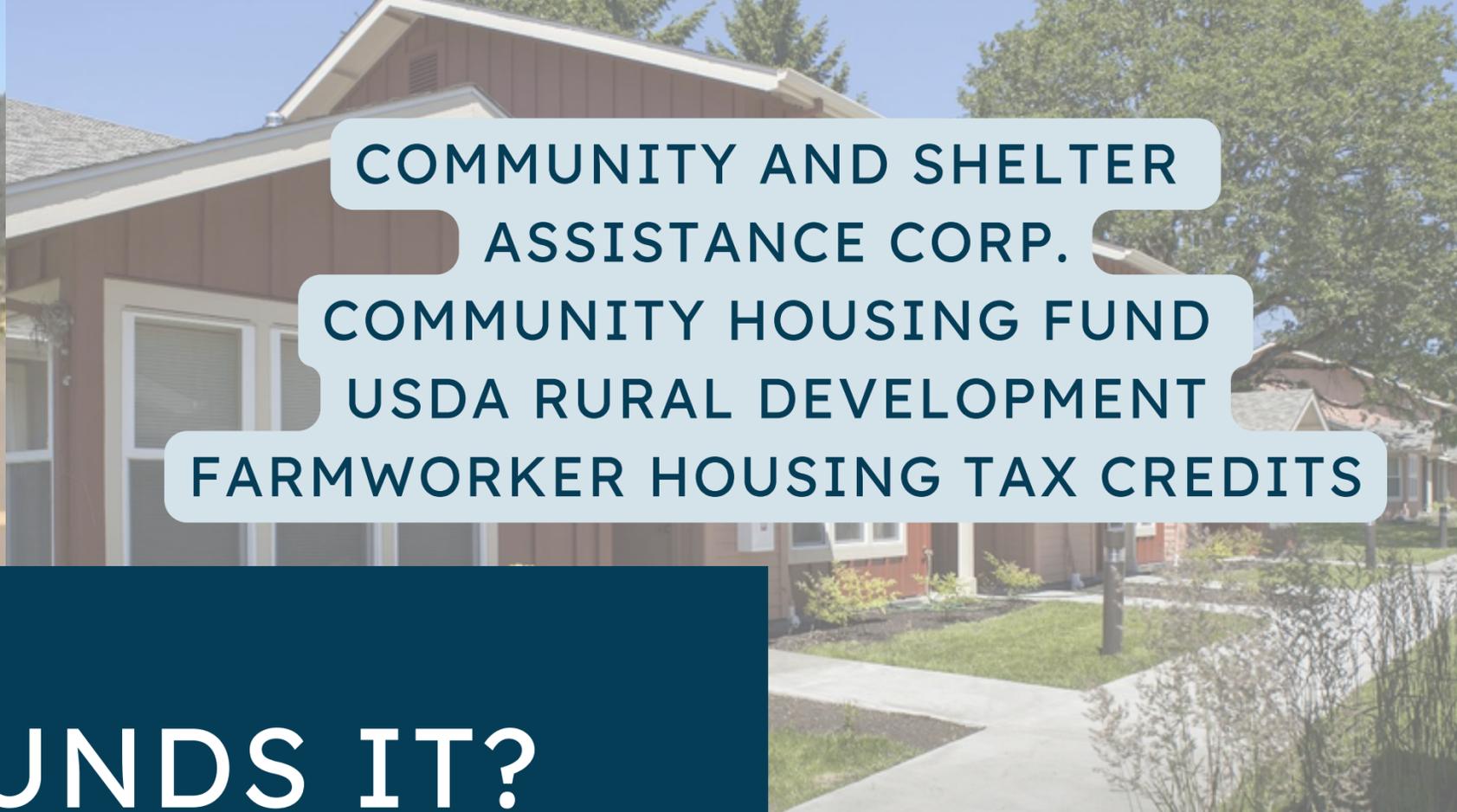
RELIES ON SEPTIC SYSTEMS & WELLS, NOT MUNICIPAL
WATER/SEWER: CAN BE RURALLY LOCATED.

SIMPLE 2-STORY DWELLINGS DIVIDED INTO 2-3 UNITS: FITS WITH
ZONING IN MOST TOWNS AND HAS LOW ENGINEERING COSTS.

BUILDABLE BY AVERAGE BUILDER: LOWER DEVELOPMENT COSTS.



ORIGINAL DEVELOPMENT: DEL MONTE
RESTORATION: RURAL COMMUNITY
ASSISTANCE CORPORATION
USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT
WELLS FARGO LOAN



COMMUNITY AND SHELTER
ASSISTANCE CORP.
COMMUNITY HOUSING FUND
USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT
FARMWORKER HOUSING TAX CREDITS

WHO FUNDS IT?



OREGON HOUSING AND
COMMUNITY SERVICES (OHCS)



USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT

WHO FUNDS IT?

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT OFF-FARM LABOR HOUSING PROGRAM

- Combination loan & grant program up to \$5 million per application, no unit # requirement
- Low density, scattered site is acceptable
- Loans are 1% for 33 years
- Funds construction but does not fund land or site development
- Working Group has identified technical assistance partner, Community Resources & Housing Development Corp. (CRHDC)



COSTS	
CONSTRUCTION COSTS	
Estimated Construction Cost	\$775,000
<i>Square Feet</i>	2500
<i>Cost Per Sq Ft</i>	\$310
FINANCING COSTS	
Grants & In-Kind	\$275,000
USDA RD Loan	\$500,000
Loan Type	Rural Development On-Farm Housing Loan ▼
Interest Rate	1%
Term	33
Mortgage Payment (Annual Cost)	\$17,863.72
<i>Monthly</i>	<i>\$1,488.64</i>
OPERATING COSTS	
<i>No taxes should be assessed on qualified farm worker housing</i>	
Maintenance	\$3,875
Insurance	\$3,875
Utilities - Electricity/Hot Water	\$1,800
Utilities - Heat	\$3,000
Other Costs	
Total Annual Costs	\$30,413.72
Average Monthly Costs	\$2,534.48

OCCUPANCY & INCOME	
Enter the expected rent contribution from as many occupants or housing units are expected. Enter as annual figure to account for seasonality, if applicable.	
Unit 1	\$885
Unit 2	\$885
Unit 3	\$1,420
Monthly Income	\$3,190
Vacancy rate	20%
Adjusted Annual Rental Income	\$30,624
Average Monthly Income	\$2,552

NET	
Annual Surplus or (Deficit)	210.28
Monthly Average Surplus or (Deficit)	17.52

Conservatively, 30 affordable farmer housing units could be developed with one RD loan and \$2.7 mil in other fundraising.

WHO FUNDS IT?

DISCRETIONARY STATE FUNDING FOR HV HOUSING



\$3M in state grants supporting affordable housing in Dutchess, Columbia counties

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**3RD PARTY MANAGEMENT CO:
EAH HOUSING**



**3RD PARTY MANAGEMENT CO:
CASCADE MANAGEMENT INC**

WHO MANAGES IT?



**SISTER NONPROFIT:
EVOLVE MANAGEMENT**

LEBANON, OREGON



**3RD PARTY MANAGEMENT CO:
AWI MANAGEMENT INC.**

BUTTE, CA



KUNIA VILLAGE HOUSING

PARTNERS:

A DEDICATED NONPROFIT SET UP

FOR THIS PURPOSE



BIENESTAR

(NONPROFIT DEVELOPER)

WHO LEADS ITS DEVELOPMENT?



FARMWORKER HOUSING

DEVELOPMENT

CORPORATION



HOUSING AUTHORITY OF

THE COUNTY OF BUTTE

NEXT STEPS: FINDING AN ORGANIZATIONAL HOME

- It will take an ecosystem as well as a lead organization.
- Although farmer housing does not directly fit into the mission of any existing organization in our region...
- all organizations concerned with food system resilience, farm viability, and preserving open space should consider what they can contribute.
- Do any of our existing organizations have the capacity to incubate the kind of entity needed to shepherd development pathways?

NEXT STEPS: POLICY, ADVOCACY, AND ORGANIZING

We are seeking funding to build on the work we've done during this 2022–23 SARE grant so that in 2024 we can:

- Build a more robust pipeline to fund new farmer housing projects
- Develop farmer leaders through advocacy campaigns at local, state, and federal levels
- Continue raising awareness of farmer housing needs among key stakeholders in the Hudson Valley and beyond

NEXT STEPS: POLICY, ADVOCACY, AND ORGANIZING

Local idea: Build on Community Preservation Funds

- Amend CPF use regulations to allow these funds to finance workforce-based housing for land stewards on municipally-owned or -preserved land
- Similar to Community Housing Funds formed on East End of Long Island
- Would develop farmers' hyper-local advocacy skills

NEXT STEPS: POLICY, ADVOCACY, AND ORGANIZING

State idea: good old-fashioned budget ask

- Create a grant-based program for farmer housing development that parallels USDA RD section 514
- Increase HCR's Farmworker Housing Program, revolving loan fund administered by Farm Credit East, so it's more viable for new construction
- Build farmers' ability to navigate Albany's arcana and organize around concrete budget demands

NEXT STEPS: POLICY, ADVOCACY, AND ORGANIZING

Federal idea: change definitions in Consolidated Plan (Hamilton 2010)

- Include farmworkers as a “special needs category” in state submissions to the federal government to allow preference for farmer housing development through statewide programs
- HCR submits their next Consolidated Plan in 2026, other districts sooner
- Low-lift, technocratic fix done in other states with important ag sectors

NEXT STEPS: POLICY, ADVOCACY, AND ORGANIZING

Funding

- Applying to several grants to fund organizer + farmer stipends on the order of \$16k+
- Housing next year's work within Hudson Valley Young Farmers Coalition
- If you know of potential sources of funding, please find us at lunch!

WORKING GROUP REPORT-BACK



Project background, activities, goals
Housing needs survey results

Key development pathway questions with answers:

- Where is it located?
- What type of housing is it?
- Who funds it?

Key development pathway questions that still need answers:

- Who manages it?
- Who leads?

Next steps

- Finding an organizational home
- Policy, advocacy, and organizing

QUESTIONS?



LUNCHTIME!

