



Final Report
2024 Intro to Organic Ag
Advising
Fargo, North Dakota

August 29, 2024

Date: March 19, 2024
Location: Fargo, ND
Format: In Person Workshop

Planning Committee:

- Sam Oswald Tilton
- Mallory Krieger
- Amanda Gullett
- Stephen Riggins
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Attendance:

- Registrants + Sponsors: 7
- Planning Committee + 6 Speakers: 10

Total Number of Attendees:

- n = 7

Total Number of Registrants:

- n = 13

Evaluation Response Rate out of 7 evaluations:

- Pre-Evaluation, n = 7 : 100%
- Post-Evaluation, n = 7 : 100%

Summary

The 2024 Intro to Organic Ag Advising was held at the Ramada in Fargo, ND, and organized by OATS. A pre and post evaluation was utilized to measure the impact and success of this training. A summary of the data is presented below.

- Most attendees were from NRCS or FSA
- One organic farmer attended
- Morning pastries were a good time for attendees to meet each other
- The morning presentation on organic certification were slides from another presentation, and could have been better tailored to the event.
- Lunch lasted 1 hour, and was a bit too long. With less than 10 attendees, people got their food quickly and conversation around the table was good, but after a while lagged - lunch could be 45 minutes long.

- Lunch was a helpful time for people to meet and network with each other.
- The afternoon panel discussion went well generally. The attendees generally had little experience with organic and were quieter people - they did not ask many questions. So to pivot, the moderator (Sam Oschwald Tilton) asked questions and had a discussion with the panelists, based on what he had learned about the interests of the attendees in the morning. A lesson is for the moderator/host to be ready to keep the panel conversation going if audience questions are lacking.
- The event host had asked the morning speakers to prepare activities, to enhance their powerpoint slides. Although the presenters prepared activities with the hosts help, they did not make the time to do them or seem to feel comfortable doing them. A lesson is for the moderator to coordinate activities with the speakers, and for the moderator to run the activities.

What Went Well

- Farmer/marketing panel was engaging
- Great conversations around lunch

What Didn't Go Well

- Low attendance
- Lunch lasted a little long

Ideas for the Future

- NRCS staff were most of attendance, and enjoyed the event - market heavily to them in future

Evaluations Report

Background

The Organic Agronomy Training Service (OATS) conducted a one day, in-person training workshop on the topic of Intro to Organic Agriculture Advising on March 19, 2024. The event aimed to increase the confidence and ability of agronomists, crop consultants, extension agents, and technical service providers to serve the technical production needs of transitioning and certified organic grain farmers.

The training format consisted of two 45 to 60 minute presentations on various topics, each delivered by different content area experts. After lunch, the training continued with a panel discussion. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) were available for certified crop advisors.

Methods

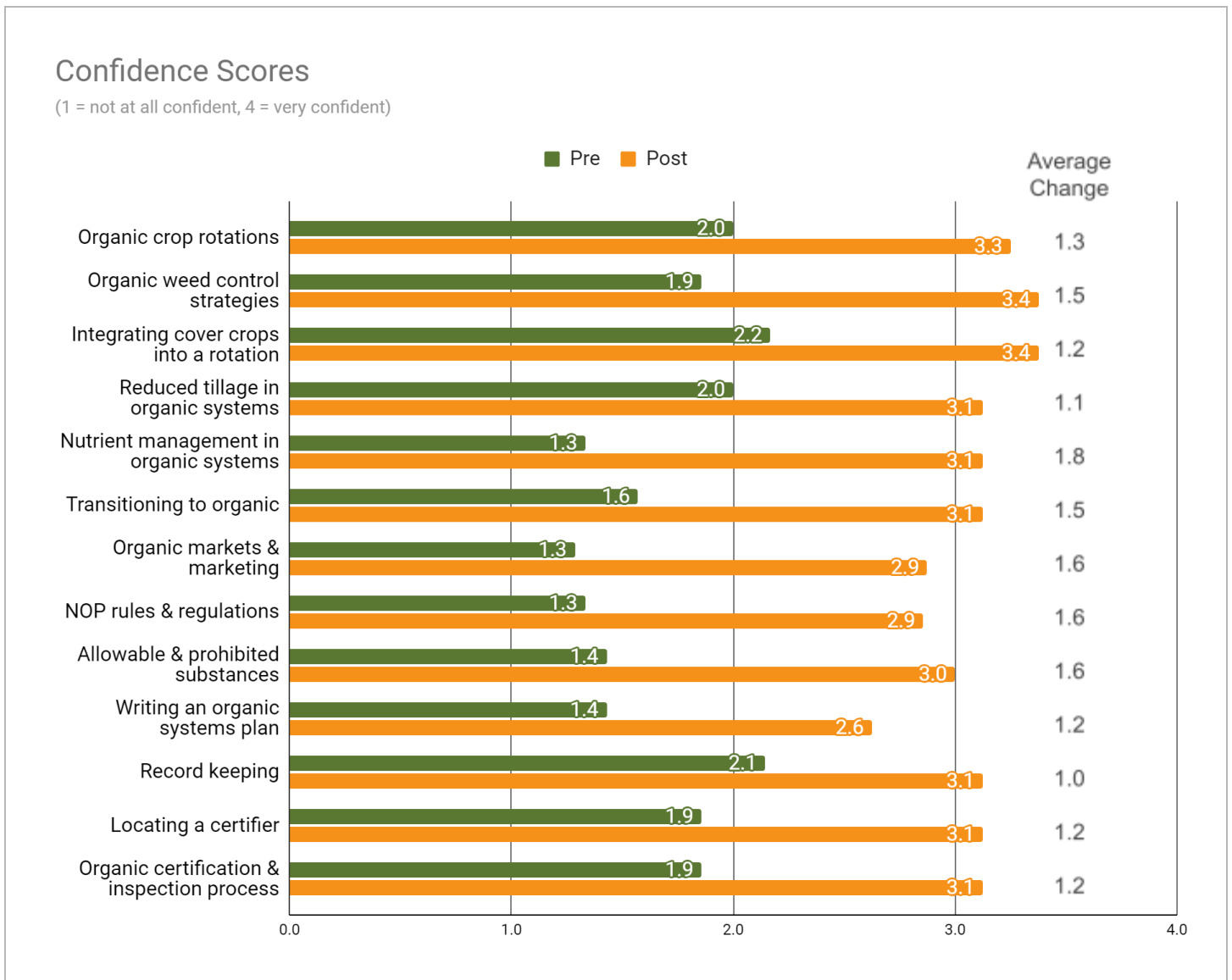
At this event, all training participants were invited to complete a paper evaluation at the start of the training. They rated their confidence in providing advice on a list of topics to a paying client and finding reliable information on organic production methods. They also answered a series of demographic questions.

At the close of the training, each participant was asked to complete a paper evaluation asking them to rate their confidence on the same topics after completing the training. The post evaluation also asked participants to rate the quality of each presentation and a set of questions about their interest in future training and other topics.

Change

“How confident are you with providing advice on the topic of this session to a client?”: Pre-workshop/post-workshop evaluation (4-point scale; 1 = not at all confident and 4 = very confident)

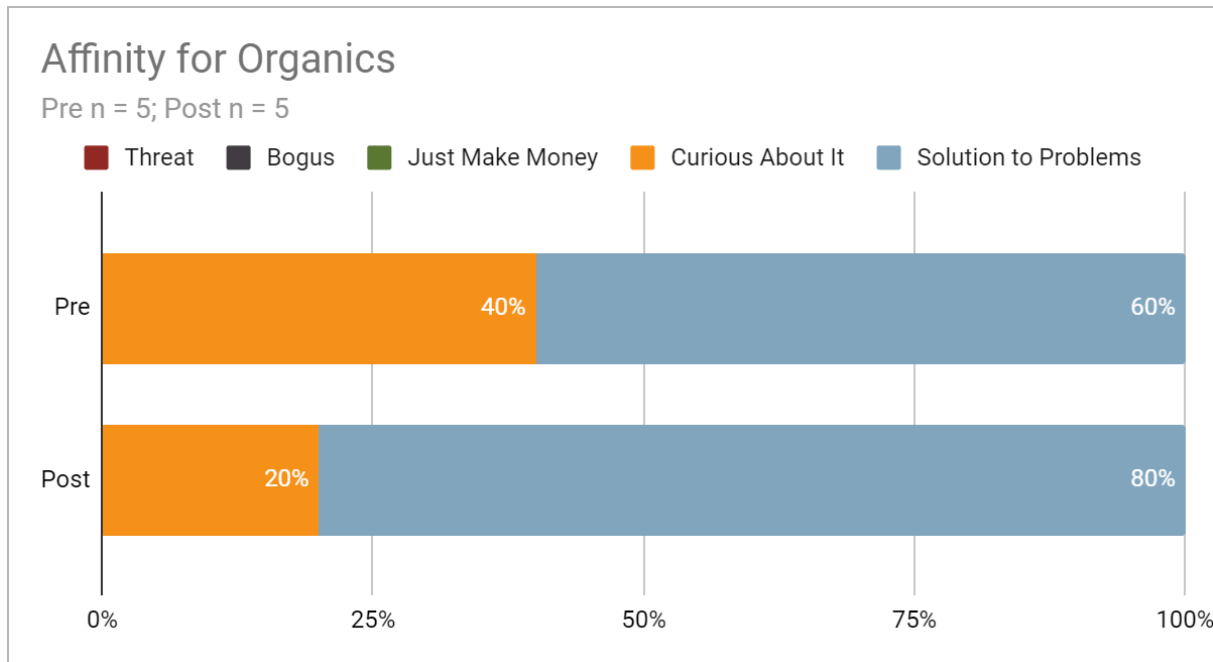
Pre: n = 7; Post: n = 6



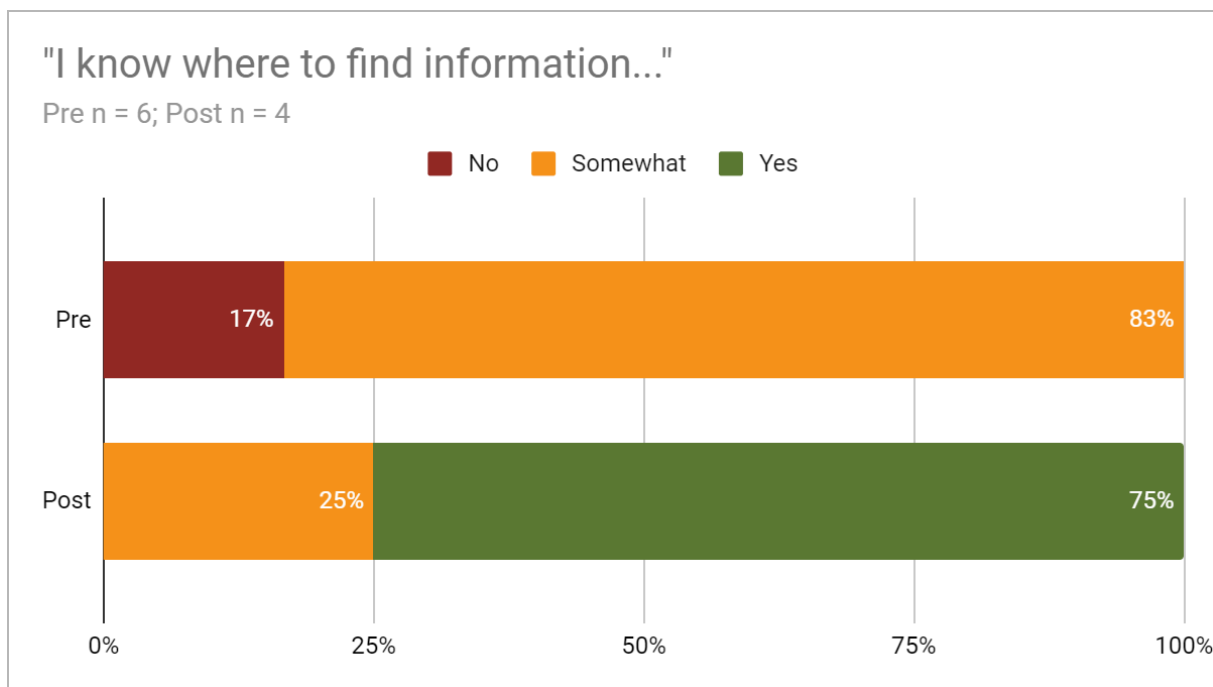
“Mark the phrase that most closely fits your opinion of organics.”:

pre-workshop/post-workshop evaluation

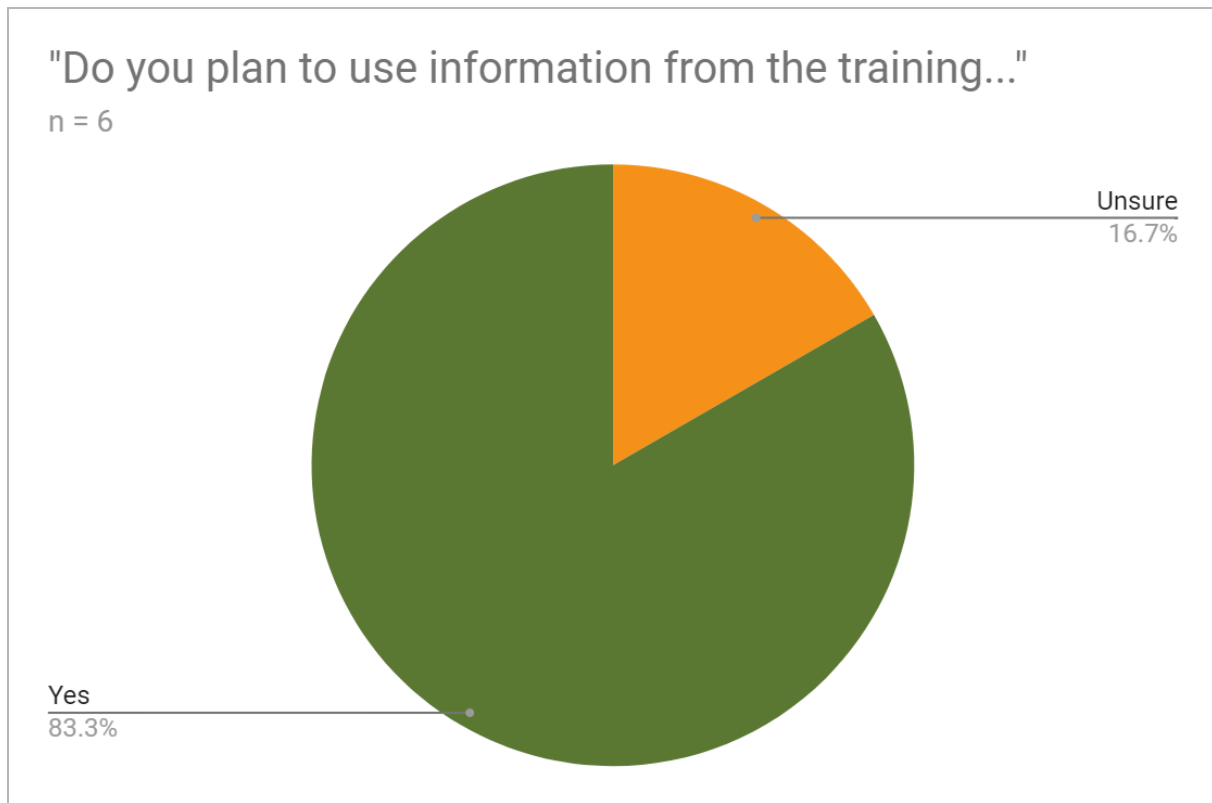
- *Organic is a solution to many of the problems facing agriculture*
- *Organic is bogus, but I feel pressured to learn about it*
- *Organic is a means to make money*
- *Organic is gaining momentum and I am curious about it*
- *Organic is a threat to my livelihood*



“I know where to find the information that I need about a given question or topic in organics.”: Pre-workshop/post-workshop evaluation (3-point scale; 0 = no, 1 = somewhat, and 2 = yes)



Plans to apply information from the training in farm operation or ag business/organization?. Post-workshop evaluation (Options: No, Unsure, and Yes)

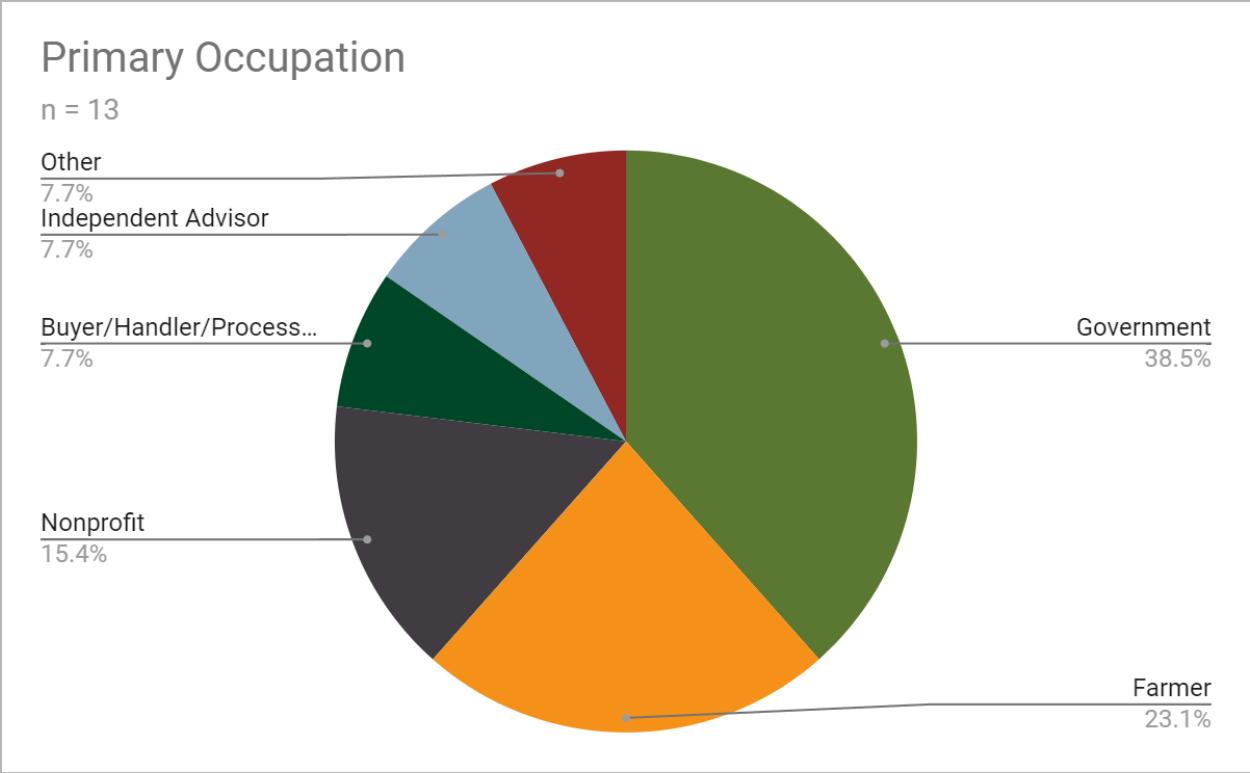


If yes, what?

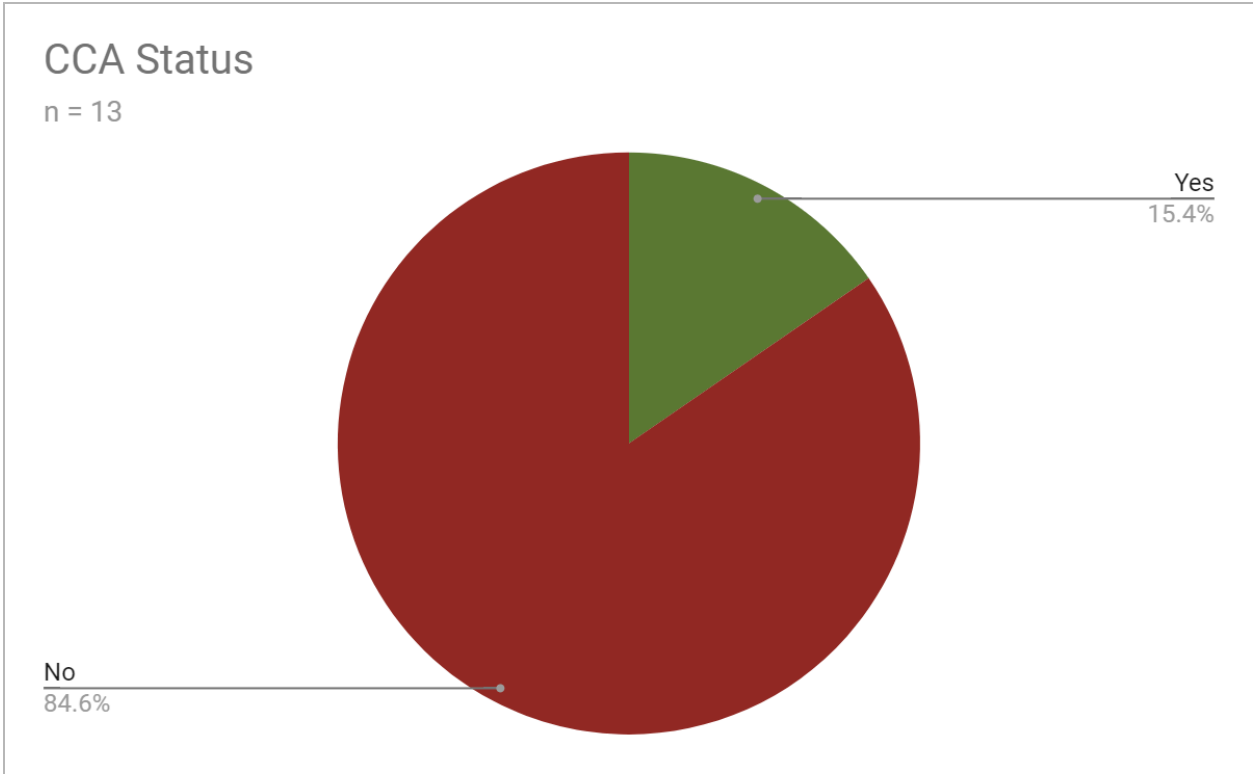
- Crop rotations and marketing
- Help sell and promote organic to producers
- Knowledge of what organic farming all entails
- NRCS info
- Rotation, transition, resources

Professional Experience

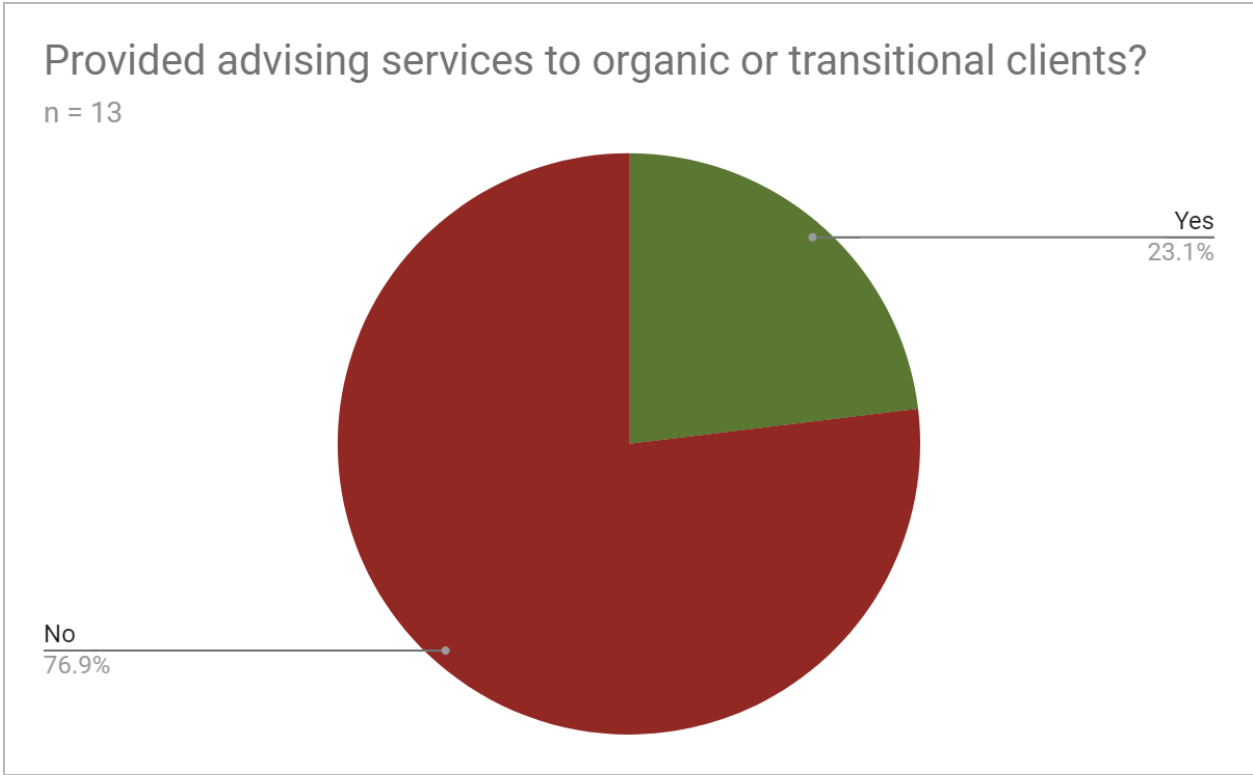
Primary occupation: pre-workshop evaluation



Certified Crop Advisors (CCA): pre-workshop evaluation (Yes, No)

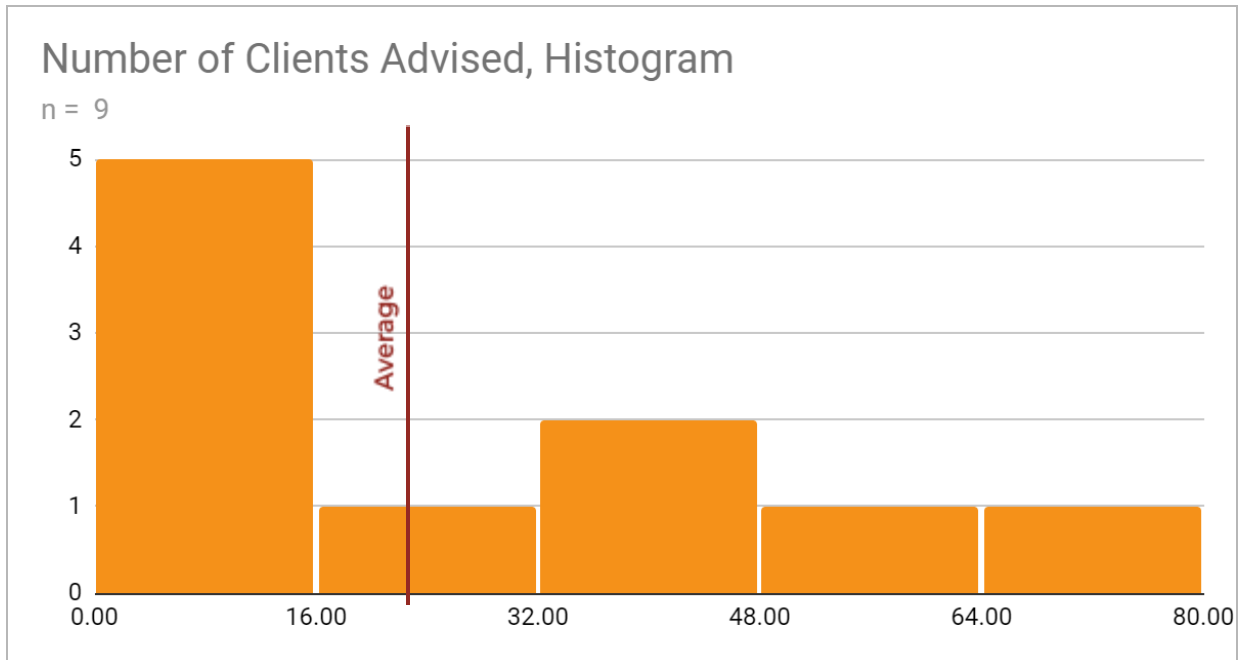


Experience working with organic or transitioning clients: pre-workshop evaluation (Yes, No)



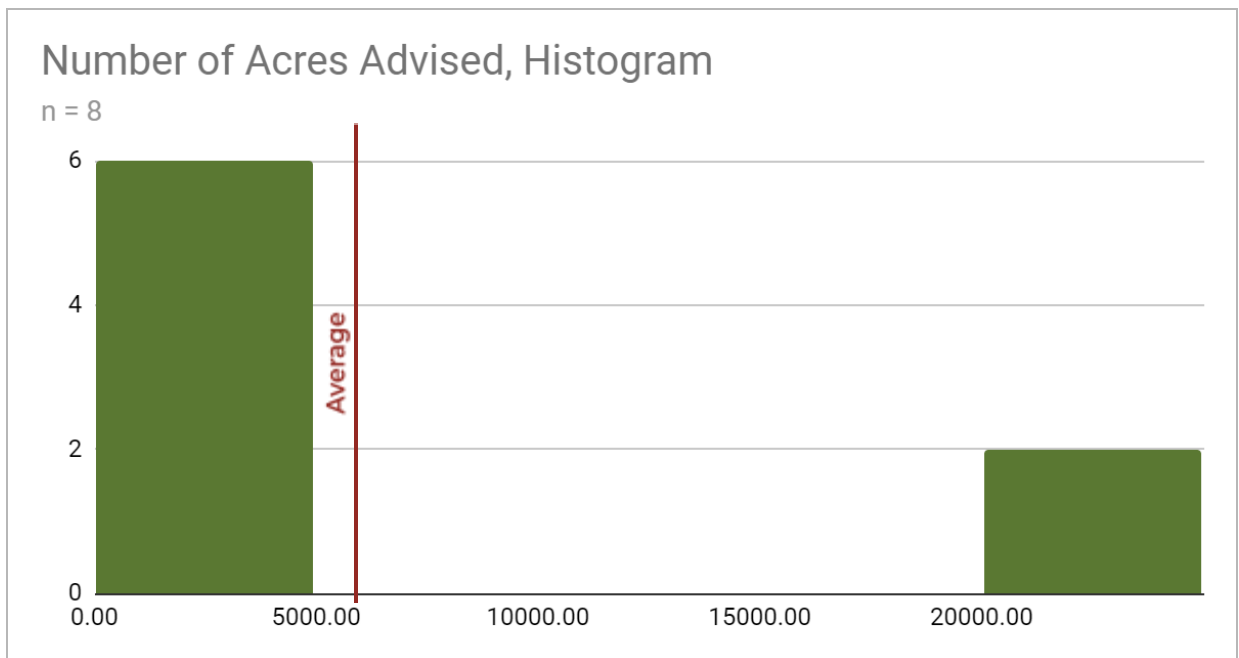
Number of organic/transitional clients currently advising: pre-workshop evaluation

- Mean: 23.3
- Median: 0
- Range: 1 - 75



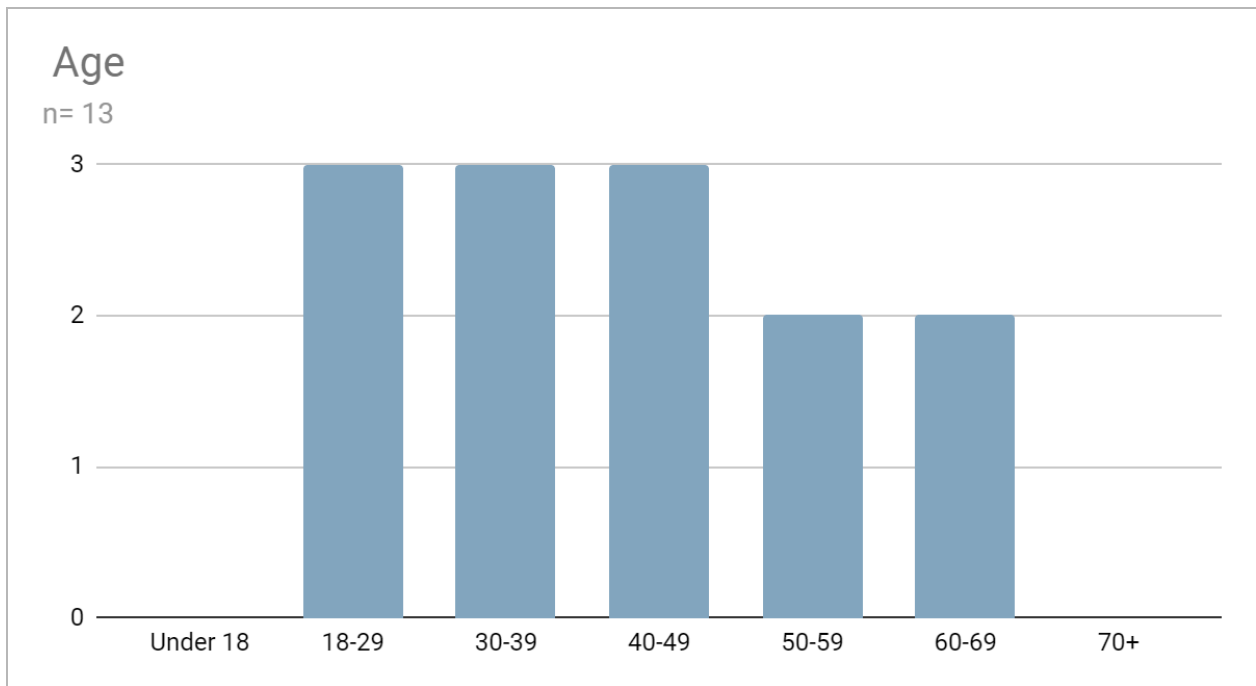
Number of organic/transitional acres currently advising: pre-workshop evaluation

- Mean: 5,563
- Median: 0
- Range: 0 - 20,000

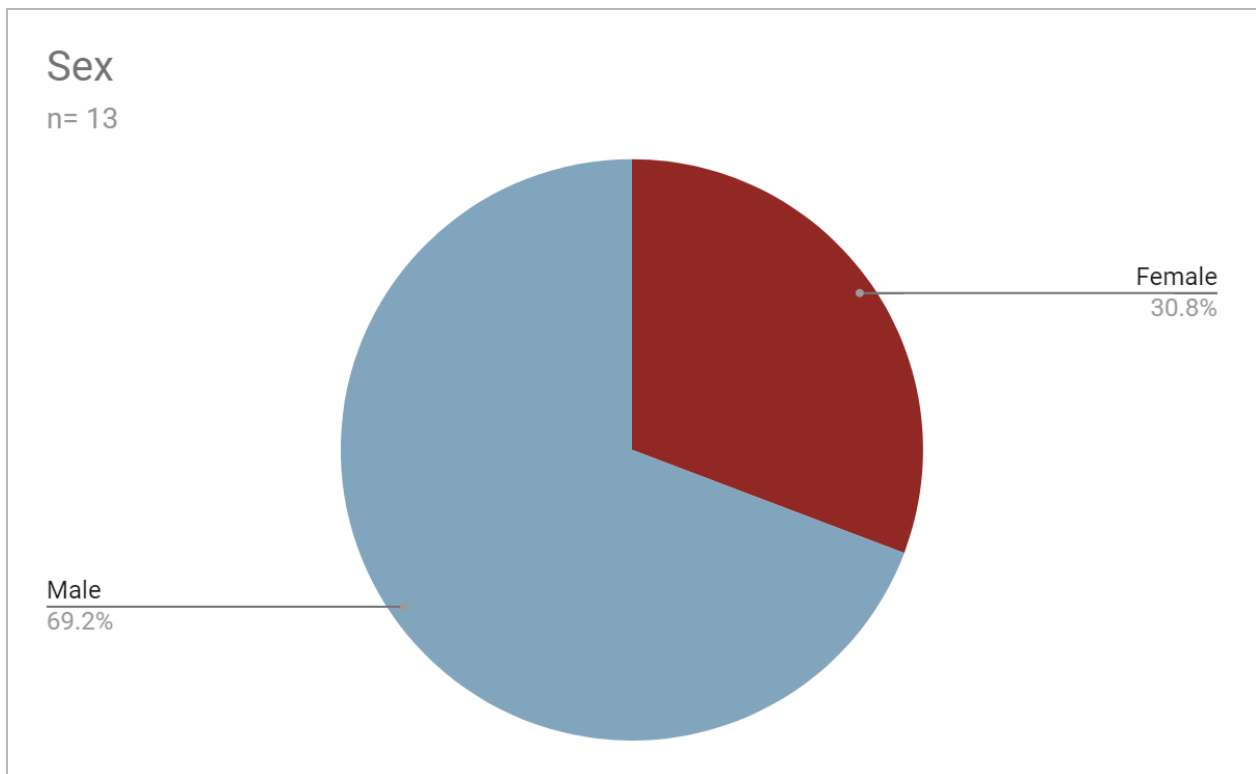


Demographics

Age: pre-workshop evaluation



Sex: pre-workshop evaluation



Race: pre-workshop evaluation (n=13)

- 100% White

Ethnicity: pre-workshop evaluation (n=13)

- 100% Non-Hispanic

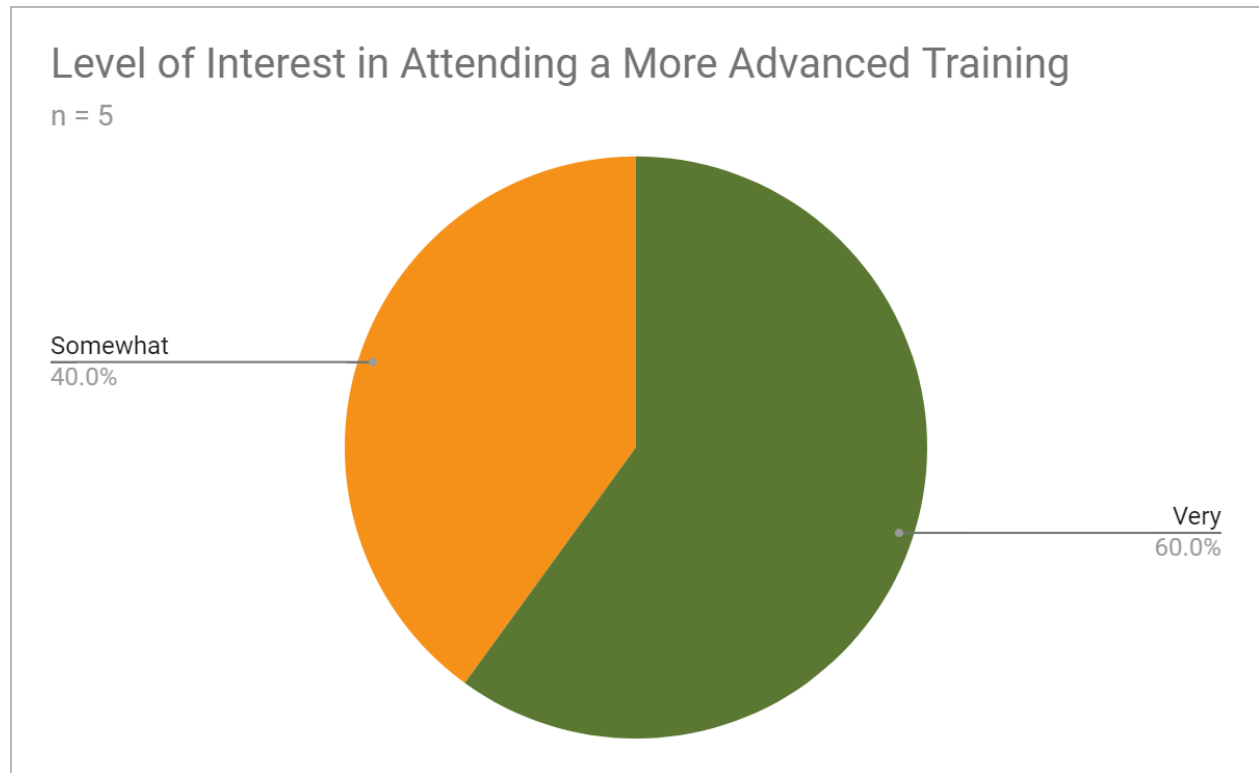
Experience at the Training

Quality of the following: Post-workshop evaluation (4-point scale; 1 = poor and 4 = excellent)



Level of interest in attending a similar workshop that is more advanced:

Post-workshop evaluation



List of topic desired for future training (as written): post-workshop evaluation

- organic marketing and crop options
- organic rules and regulations

Anything other comments (as written): post-workshop evaluation

- organic marketing and crop options
- organic rules and regulations

Stories

- Hearing from a local organic inspector and former local organic farmer connected with the audience.

Testimonials

Photos



