

# Cover Crop Training Materials to Facilitate Extension Agent and NRCS Agent's Outreach Efforts

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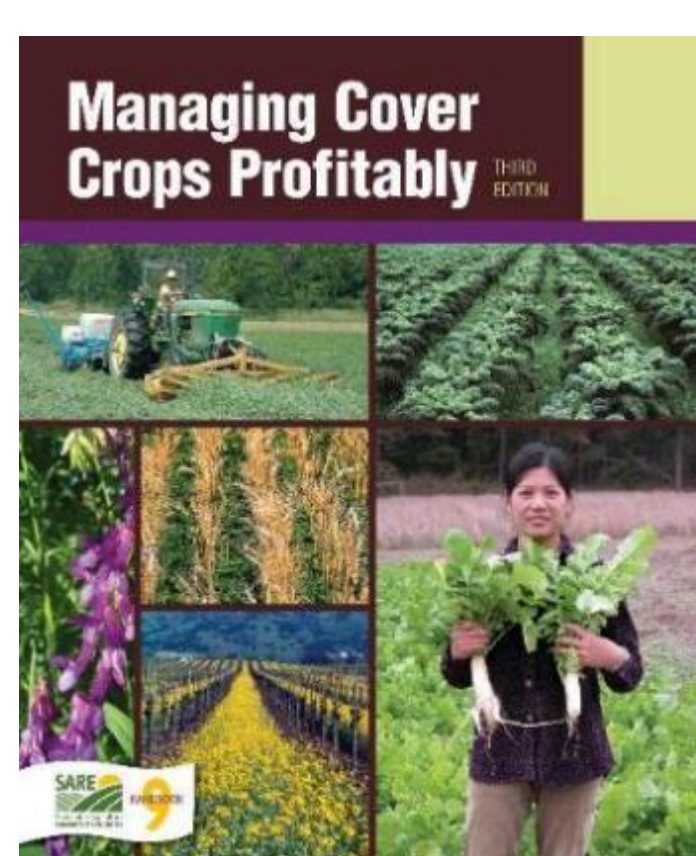
## Background:

- Increasing grower interest in cover crops requires that Cooperative Extension Service (CES) county agents and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) agents to be able to readily provide information to their stakeholders regarding cover crop management.
- Many agents lack training in cover crops.
  - 30.2% of CES agents said they do not feel confident answering questions about cover crops.
- Our project goal was to develop a suite of materials that agents can use to conduct outreach and education on cover crops in the Southeastern United States with a focus on vegetable systems.
- A total of 66 CES and NRCS agents were trained using the **developed** suite of **materials** (PowerPoint training modules, videos and factsheets) and instructed on how to use these resources.
- The agents were given a pre- training and post-training test to assess how their basic knowledge of cover crop management across a range of areas was impacted by attending the training.

## Resources Provided to Participants:



Binder containing PowerPoints presented during training and informational handouts



A copy of the "Managing Cover Crops Profitably" book produced by SARE



8 "How-to" and grower interview videos.



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# Cover crop in-service training INCREASED basic KNOWLEDGE and INTEREST of participating agents in conducting THEIR OWN cover crop trainings.

The final PowerPoint slides, factsheets, and videos for use by agents will be uploaded at:

[www.uaex.edu/sarecovercrop](http://www.uaex.edu/sarecovercrop)



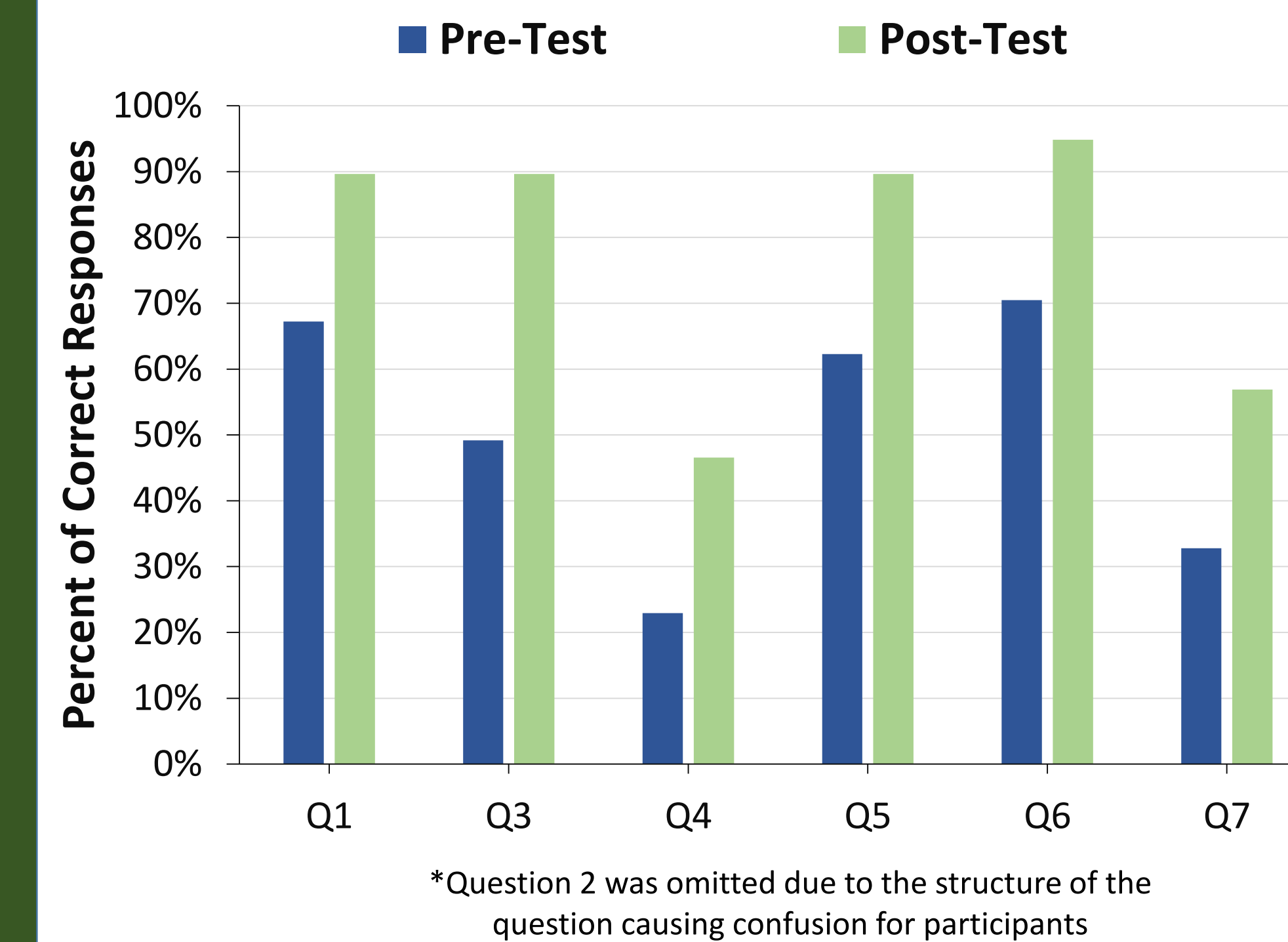
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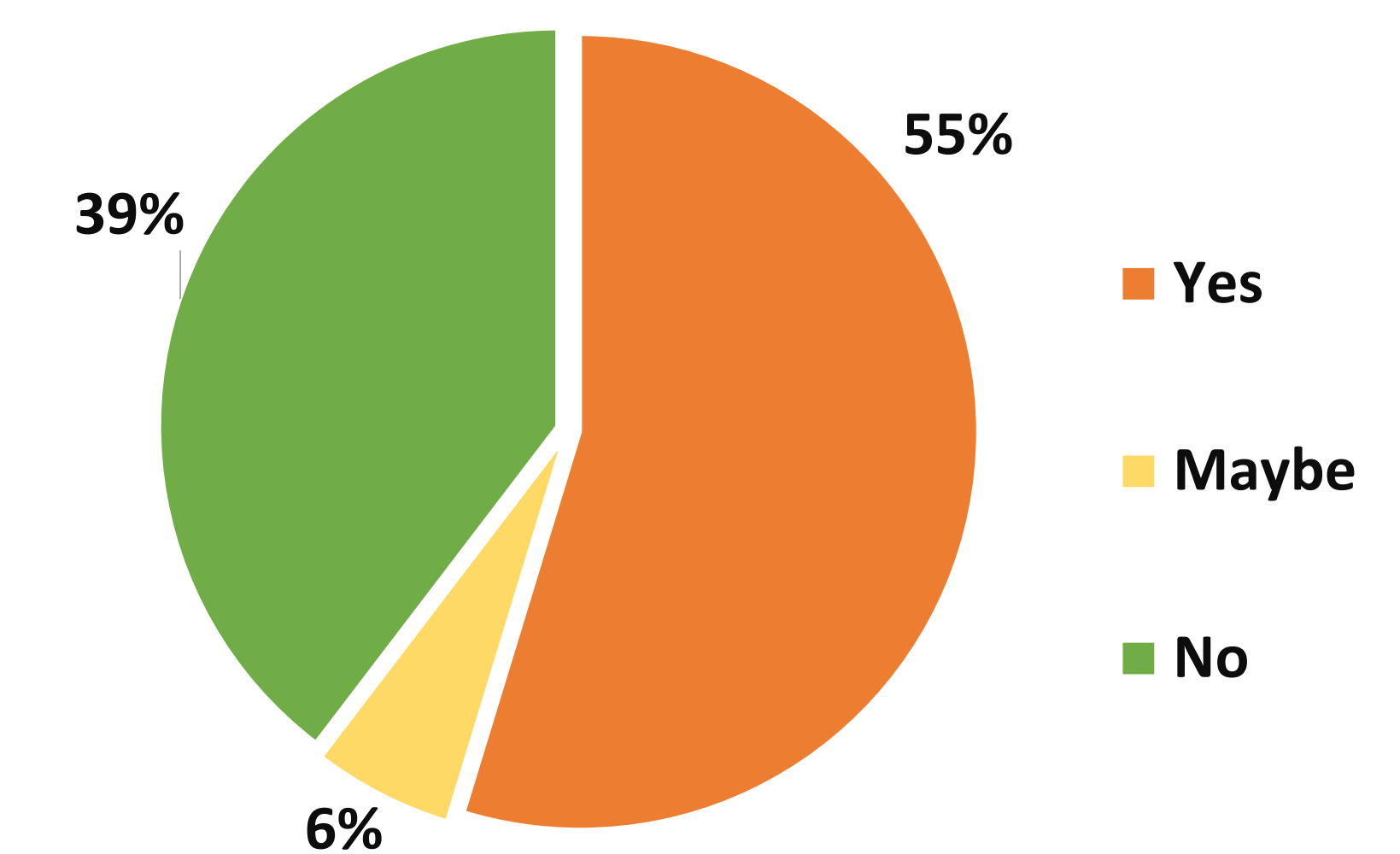


## RESULTS

- Comparisons of pre- and post tests of knowledge showed that, following the training, on average participants demonstrated strong increases in their ability to answer basic questions across a range of cover crop management topics.
- Topic areas requiring further training and development were also identified.



- 98% of participants said the training increased their "confidence in answering questions related to cover crops"
- At the end of the training a majority of the agents trained said they planned to conduct their own cover crop training in the upcoming year using the developed training materials



## Quotes from Participant Evaluations:

"I liked the different views on cover crops used in horticulture, most trainings are geared toward row crops"

[Participant liked] "how the presenters made complex topics simple."

"Information is readily available for use by anyone."