



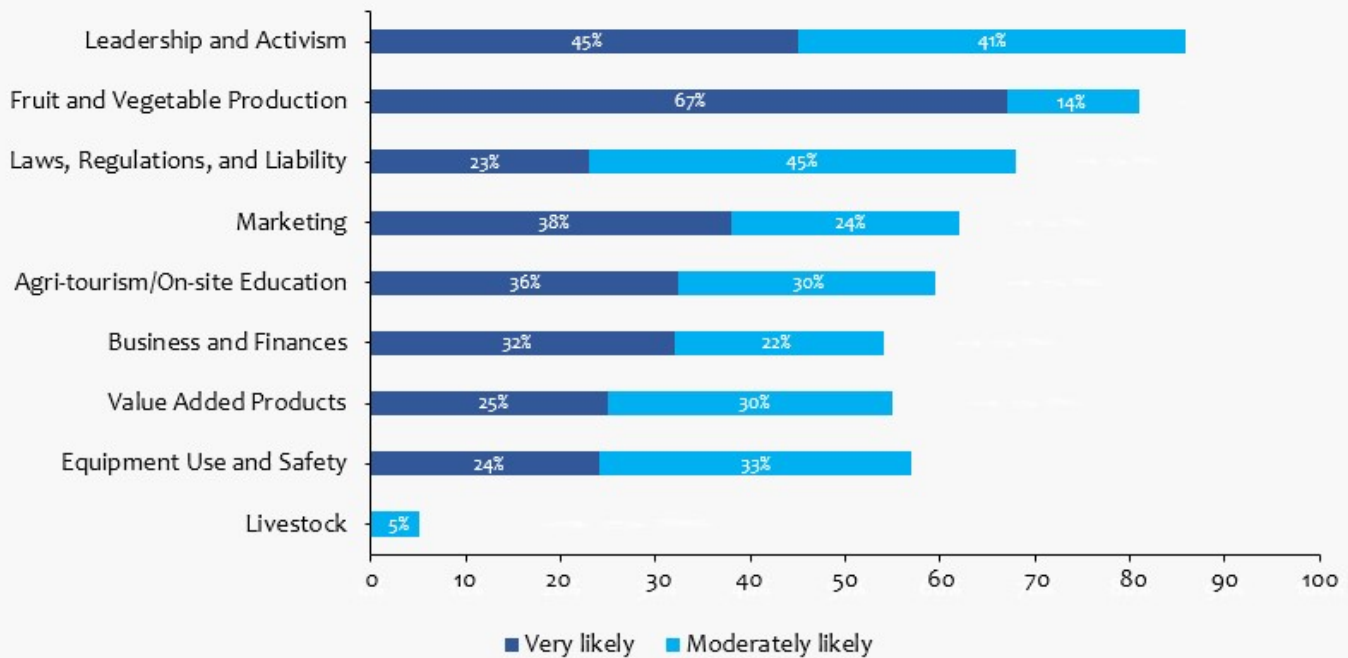
# Urban Agriculture in Pennsylvania: Assessing Best Practices for Historically Marginalized Farmers

## Farmer and Grower Survey Report

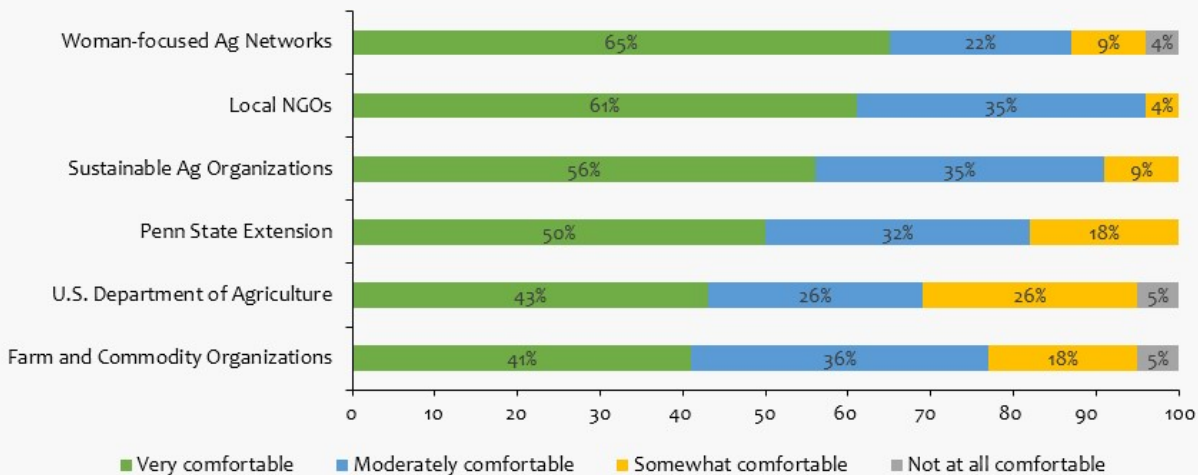


Initiatives and policy have encouraged sustainable agriculture in cities across the U.S., yet farmers and growers still experience multiple environmental, economic, and social challenges unique to their urban context. To better support urban agriculture, we need to know: *What information* growers are most in need of? And, *how* should this information be distributed? With funds from NE SARE and the Pennsylvania Women’s Agricultural Network, this targeted online survey of women farmers, gardeners, and agricultural educators in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, assessed respondent’s production strategies, education needs, and networking preferences. A total of 23 women participated in the survey. The study findings will provide evidence-based recommendations for practices and procedures that promote sustainable urban agriculture, improved agricultural productivity, and determine how NGOs, Extension, federal programs, and researchers can best support historically underserved farmers and growers.

### How likely are women agriculturalists to attend an educational event based on the following topics?

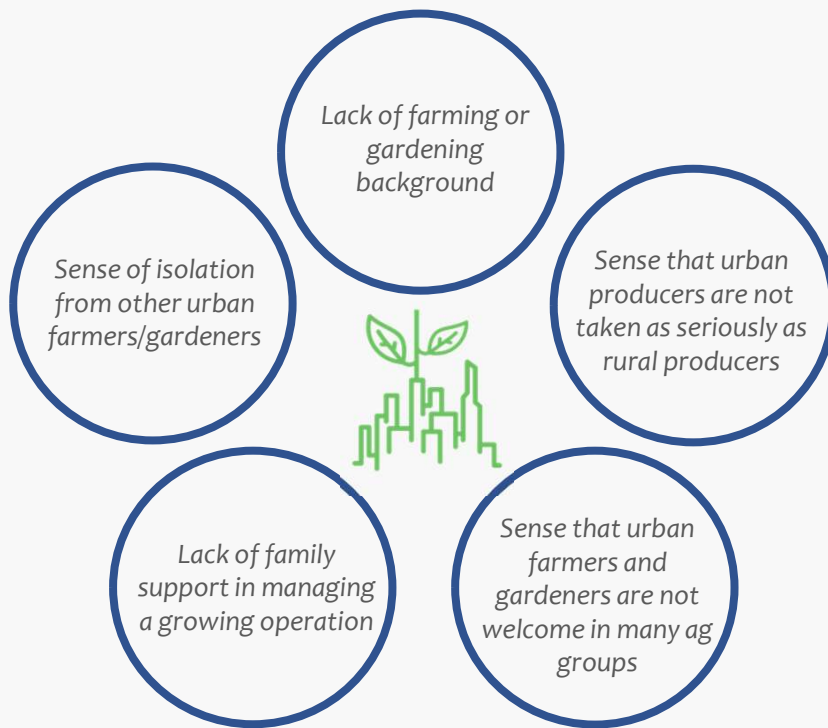


### How comfortable are women learning from the following programs/organizations?



**56%**  
of women surveyed ran operations that were either Certified Organic or they practiced organic methods, but were not certified. Half of women surveyed were new or beginning growers, with experience ranging from five years to less than one year. More than half were ages 18-34. 52% identified as Black, African American, or representing more than one race or ethnicity.

## What factors motivate female urban agriculturalists to attend education events?



 **83%**

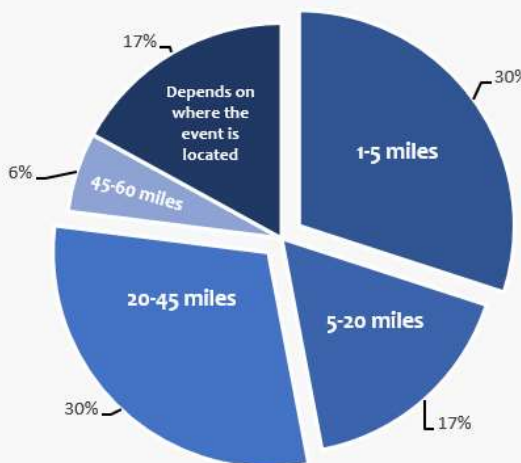
of women surveyed believe they are lacking agricultural education.

Information needs for survey respondents vary by years of experience and type of production. Topics of interest include land and water access and conservation; law, regulations, and liability; community building strategies; best practices for youth and family engagement; financial resources, especially for new and beginning growers; small- to large-scale garden transitioning; soil health and remediation; marketing and distribution strategies for small-scale farms; most effective way to store and distribute produce; best cover crops for raised beds; zoning laws, livestock allowances, and current land- and agriculture-related policies; and the efficacy of farmers markets versus distributing to grocery stores.

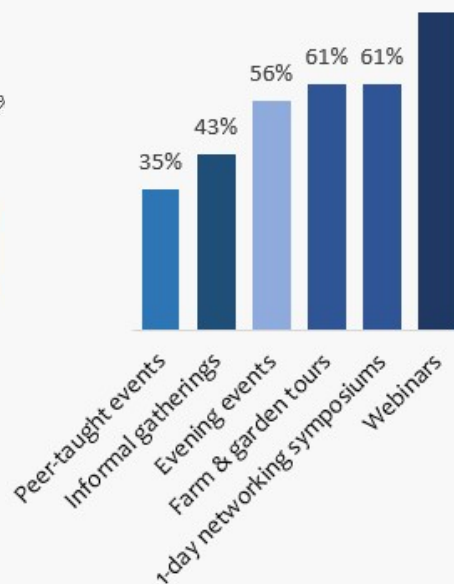
74% of women surveyed feel isolated from other urban farmers and gardeners. Additional research found that women ages 18-34, regardless of race, struggle the most with navigating bureaucracy, finding agricultural mentors, accessing relevant information, and experiencing feelings of isolation. Most respondents sense that urban producers are not taken as seriously as rural producers and are not as welcome in many agriculture groups.

## Educational/networking event preferences

How far would you travel?



What format is best?



### Full Grant Report and Other Resources

- ❖ NE SARE Final Project Report  
[www.projects.sare.org/sare\\_project/gne18-190/](http://www.projects.sare.org/sare_project/gne18-190/)
- ❖ Photovoice digital gallery  
[www.thefemalefarmerphotovoiceproject.org](http://www.thefemalefarmerphotovoiceproject.org)

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