



Survey of Tarping Practices by Fresh Produce Growers

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We need to better understand farmer tarping practices.

- Where, when and how are they being used on the farm?
- What are the primary benefits and challenges?
- What are priorities for research?



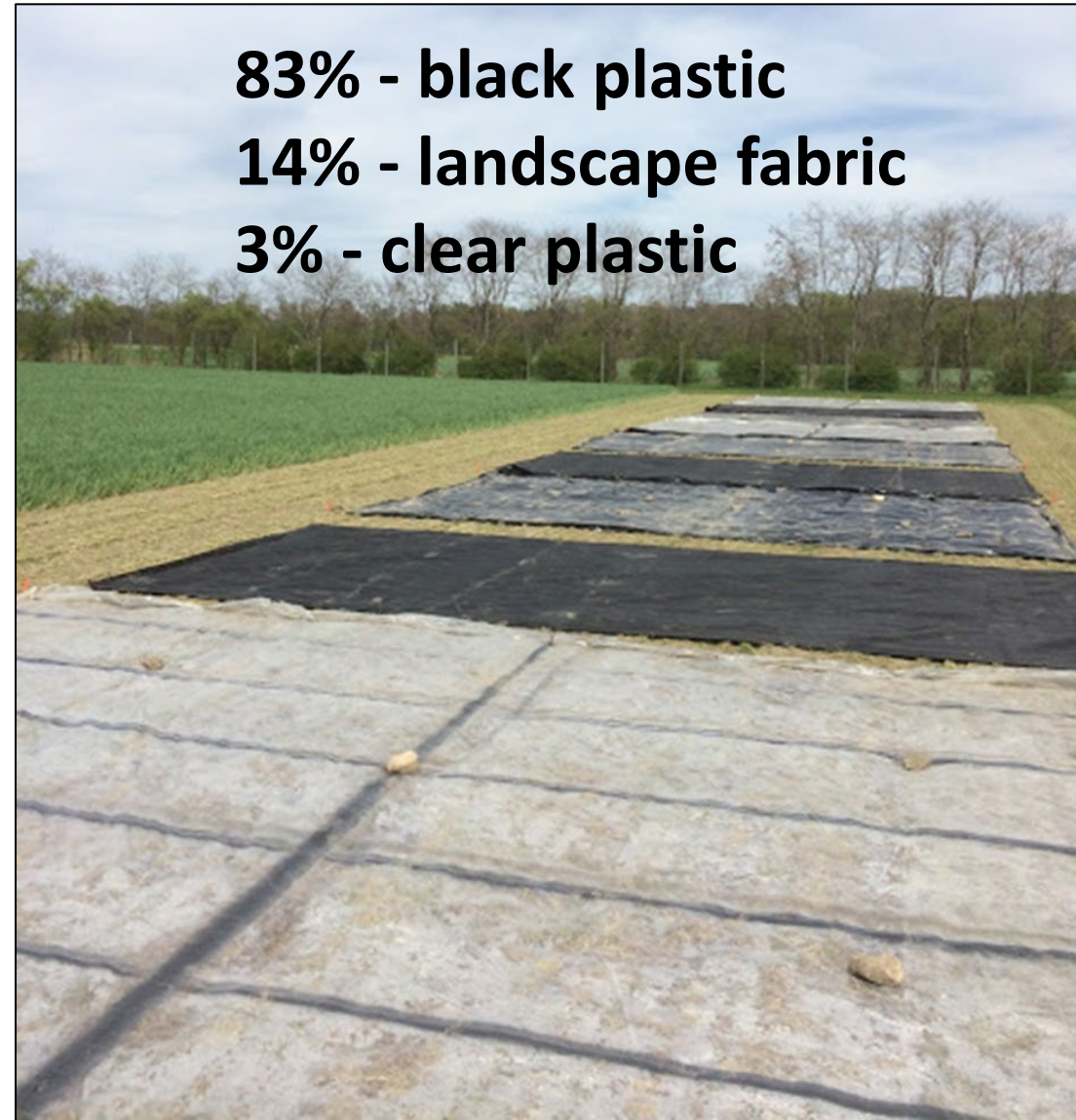
Distribution and Demographics

- Sent electronically through extension listservs in fall 2019, primarily through Cornell Small Farms Program and University of Maine
- 158 survey responses
 - 75% of respondents from NY in ME
- Majority beginners but broad range of farming experience
 - Less than 5 yrs (41%)
 - 5 to 9 yrs (20%)
 - 10 to 14 yrs (14%)
 - 15+ years (26%)
- Over 90% farming less than 5 acres
- Almost all using organic practices (98%)



What is your experience level tarping?

- 94 currently using tarps
 - Just started and still learning (36%)
 - I have found a couple uses (37%)
 - Tarps are a big part of my farm management (27%)
- 64 not using tarps
 - Thinking about using them (52%)
 - Concerned with cost (25%)
 - Not sure where they fit in my rotation (16%)



Where are you using tarps?

% of Respondents

100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0

On soil that was not
cover cropped

Over sod

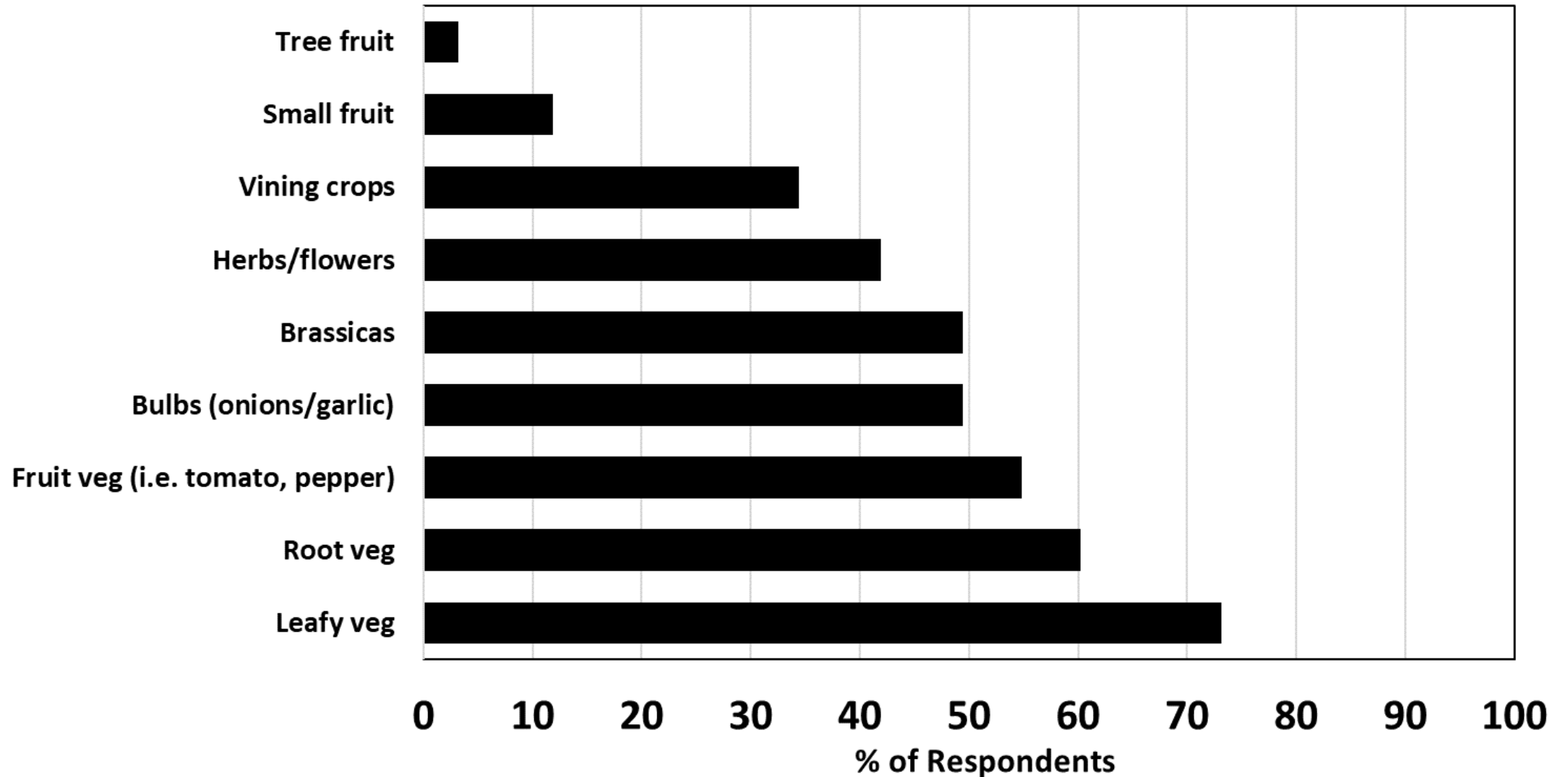
After harvest, over
crop residue

Over cover crops

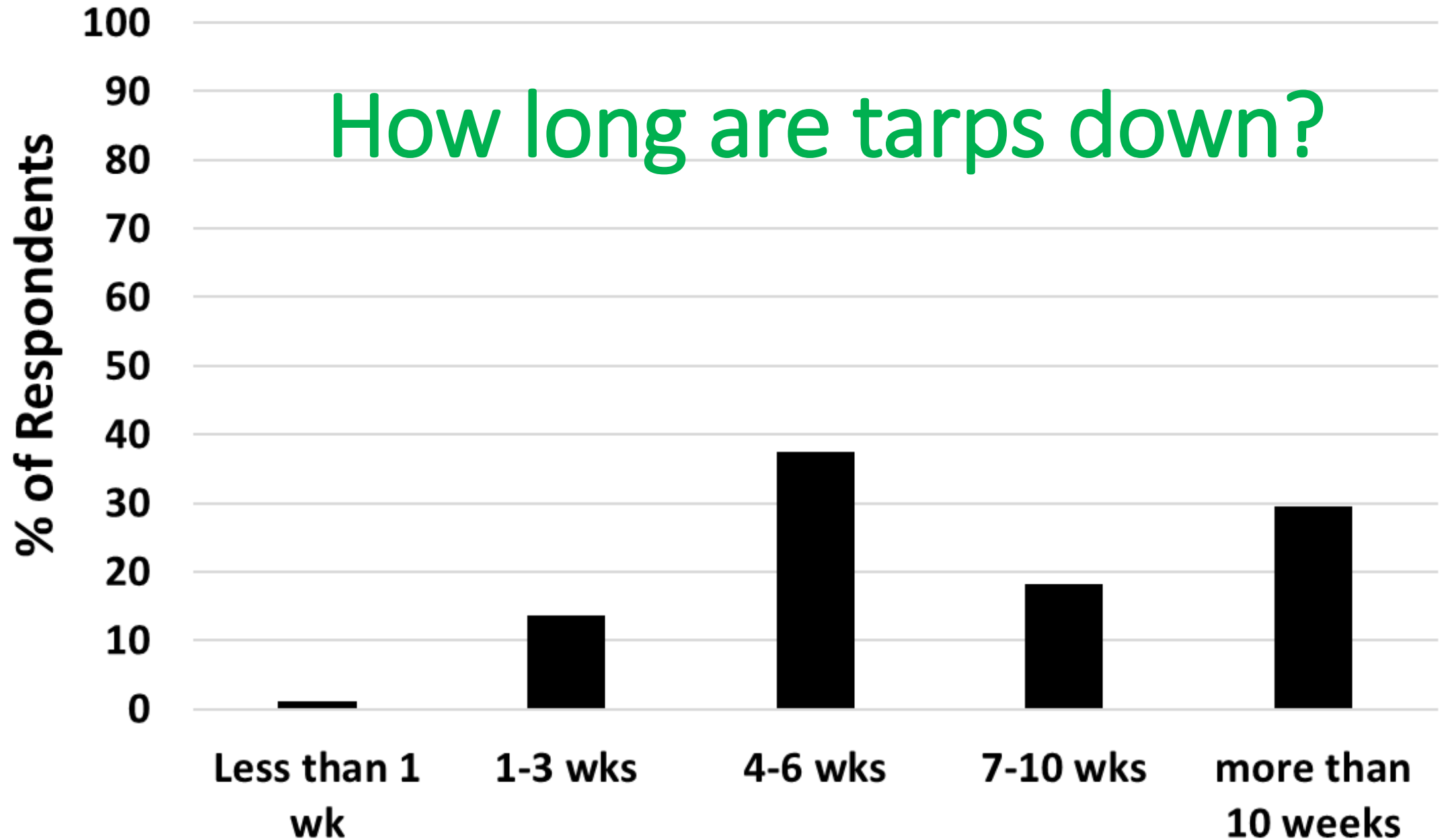


Location	% of Respondents
On soil that was not cover cropped	50
Over sod	44
After harvest, over crop residue	39
Over cover crops	21

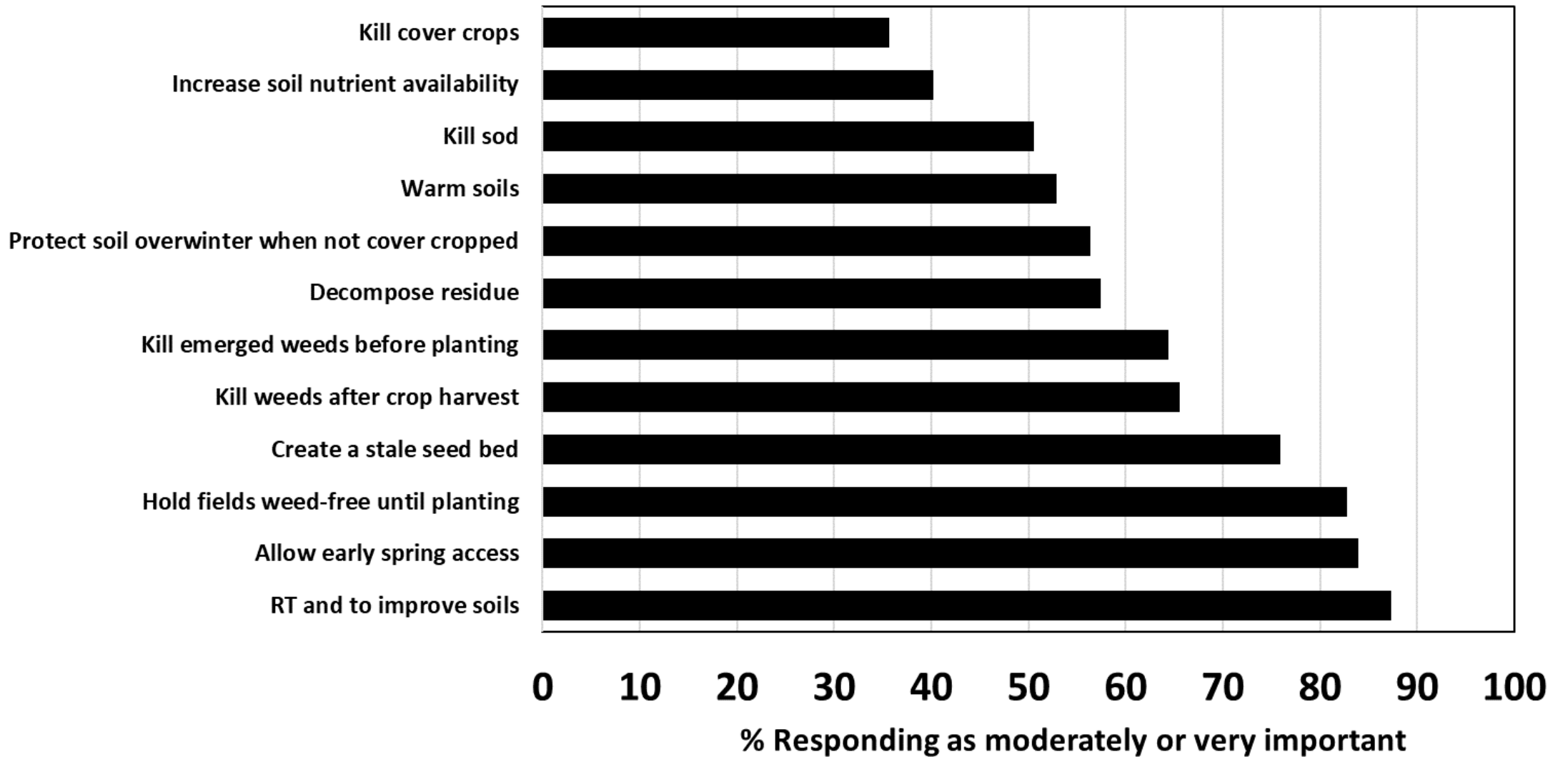
What crops are you targeting?



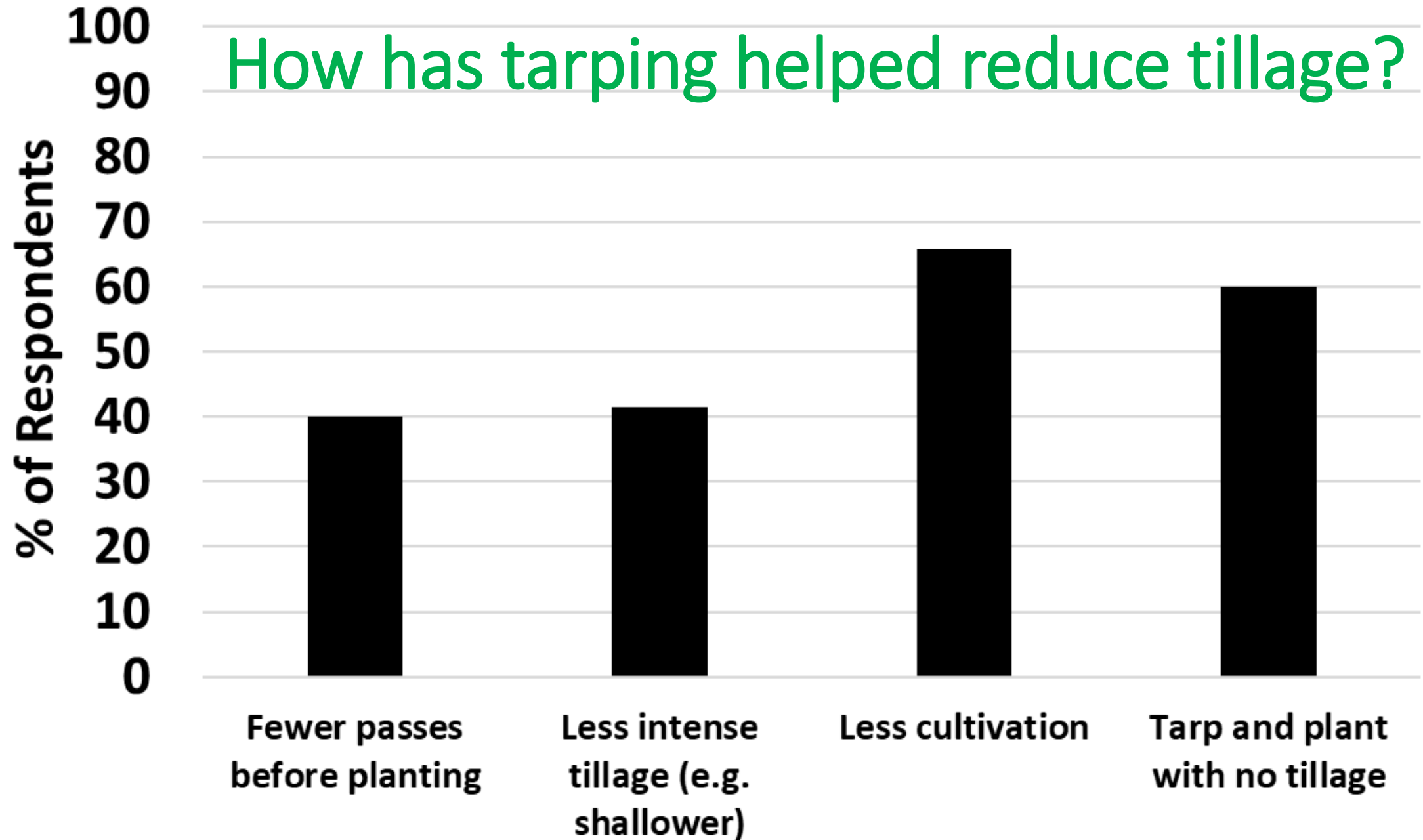
How long are tarps down?



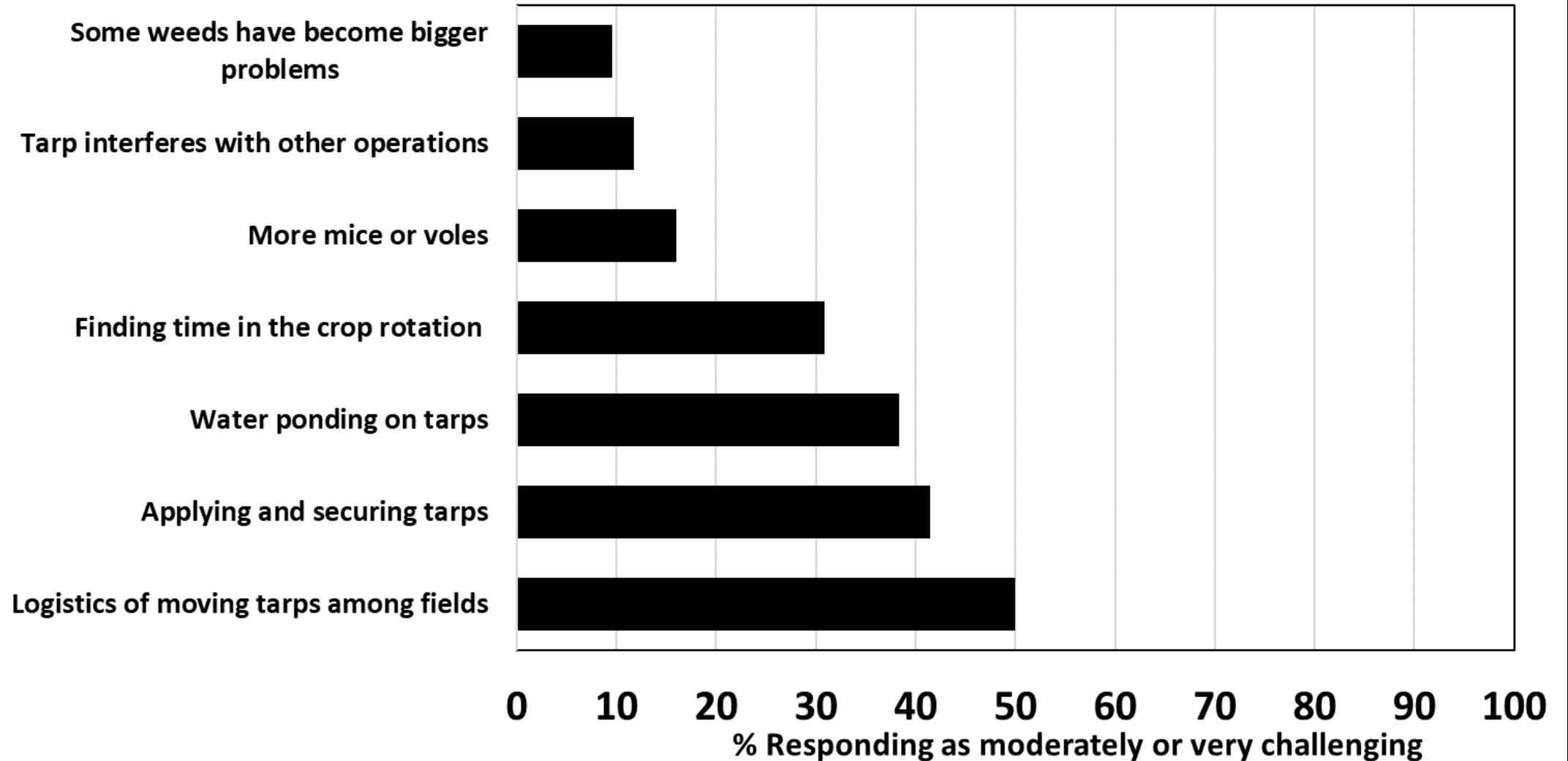
What are your goals?



How has tarping helped reduce tillage?

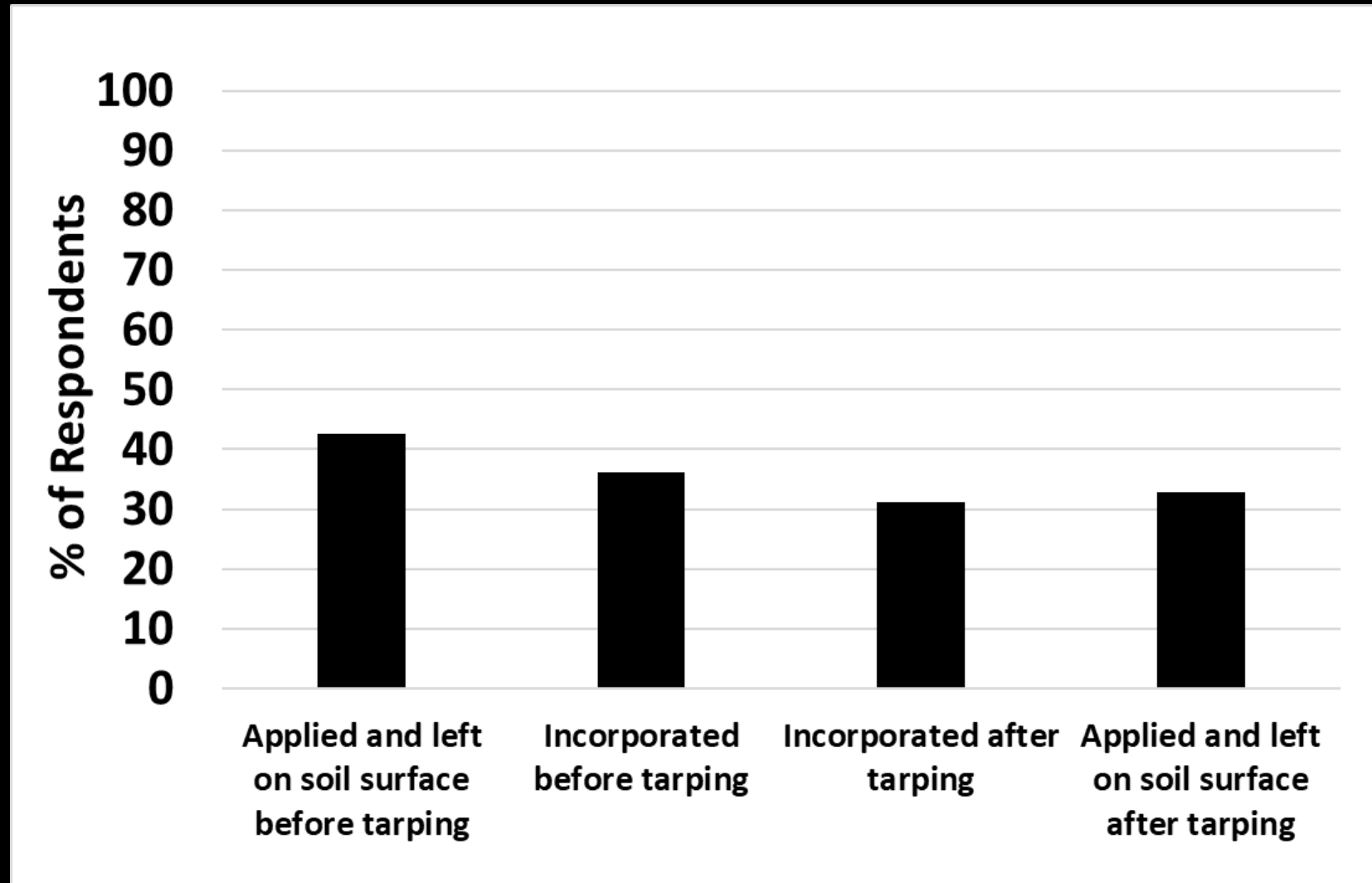


What are your challenges?



How are you managing compost with tarps?

- 72% using compost; mostly manure-based
- 44% applying >1in



What are priorities for research?

