

# RI Food Policy Council Network Survey 2022

## Results and Priorities

Prepared by Sharp Insight, LLC  
February 2023



# Report Purpose

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The purpose of this summary report is to provide the results of the **Rhode Island Food Policy Council's** 2022 survey of its members.

The report provides high-level feedback on the survey results, as well as a focus on “engaged” participants and participants with specific food system roles (e.g., commercial fisheries, farmers).



# Report Structure

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# Network Survey Background



# Objectives of RIFPC Network Survey

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1. Characterize network membership
2. Identify network priorities
3. Understand what the network members value most about RIFPC



# Survey Methods

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- Open May 1 – May 31, 2022
- Sent to newsletter list and available online at social media
- Incentive to complete survey (\$100 gift certificate lottery)
- Survey content covers: primary roles of respondent in food system; level of engagement, issue driving engagement, ranking of priority program areas, importance of RIFPC activities



# Survey Limitations / Challenges

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- Open links to the survey and incentive drove some invalid surveys completed. Care was taken to clean the data but caution is still suggested when interpreting findings.
- Question about engagement with RIFPC activities and level were complicated to answer for respondents.
- Race and ethnicity (and other demographic questions) were open-ended and difficult to analyze.



# Characteristics of Survey Respondents

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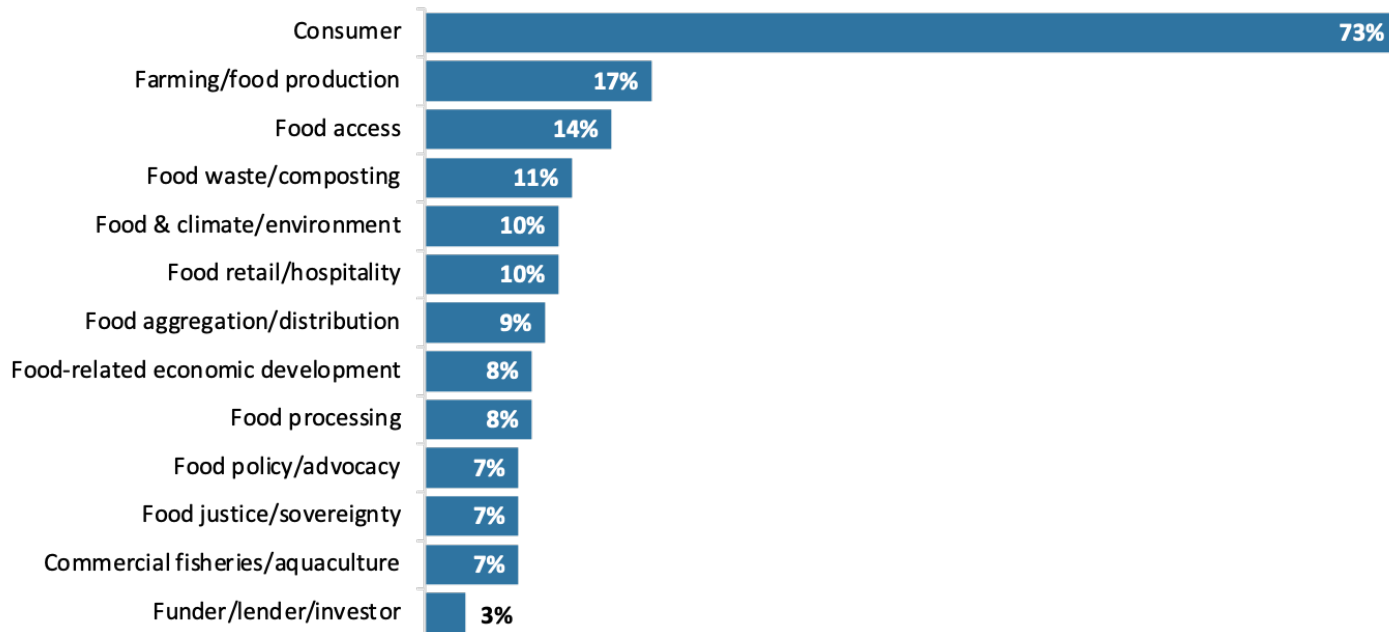
- **437** survey respondents
- Gender (open-ended): **77% identified as female**, 20% as male, and 2% as other categories (e.g., nonbinary, cisgender female) (n=314)
- Average age: **47 years** (range 21-81 years of age) (n=313)
- Race: **90% identified as Caucasian/White**, 4% African American / Black; 2% Asian; 2% mixed race (n=254)





# Survey Respondent Role

Respondents reported an average of **two primary roles** in the food system, with 73% reporting a **consumer** role (n=437).



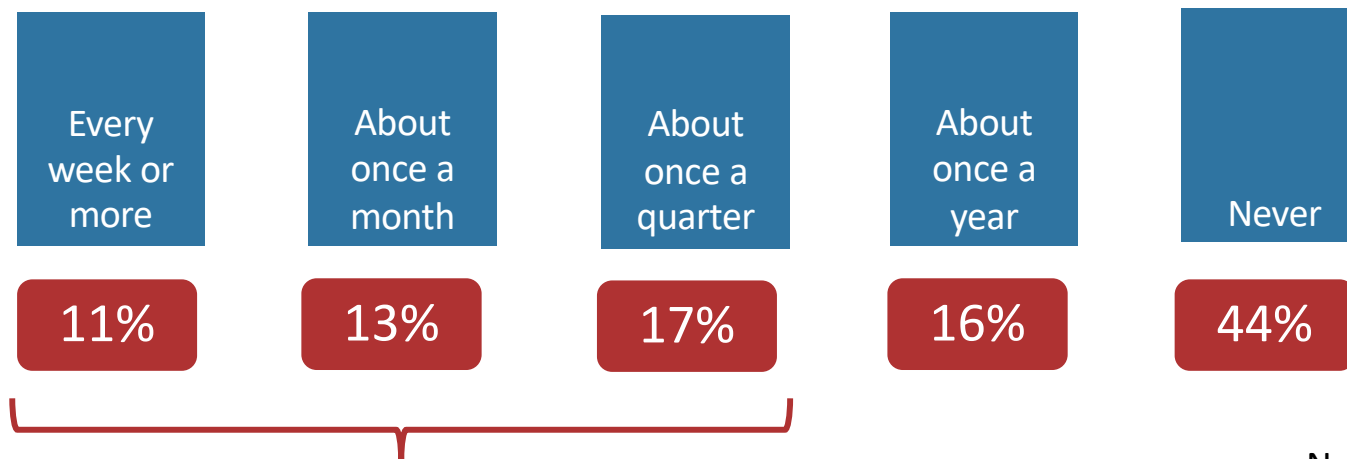


# Engagement with RIFPC



# Level of Participation

40% of survey respondents reported participating in RIFPC activities about once a quarter or more. We define these as “**engaged**” participants.



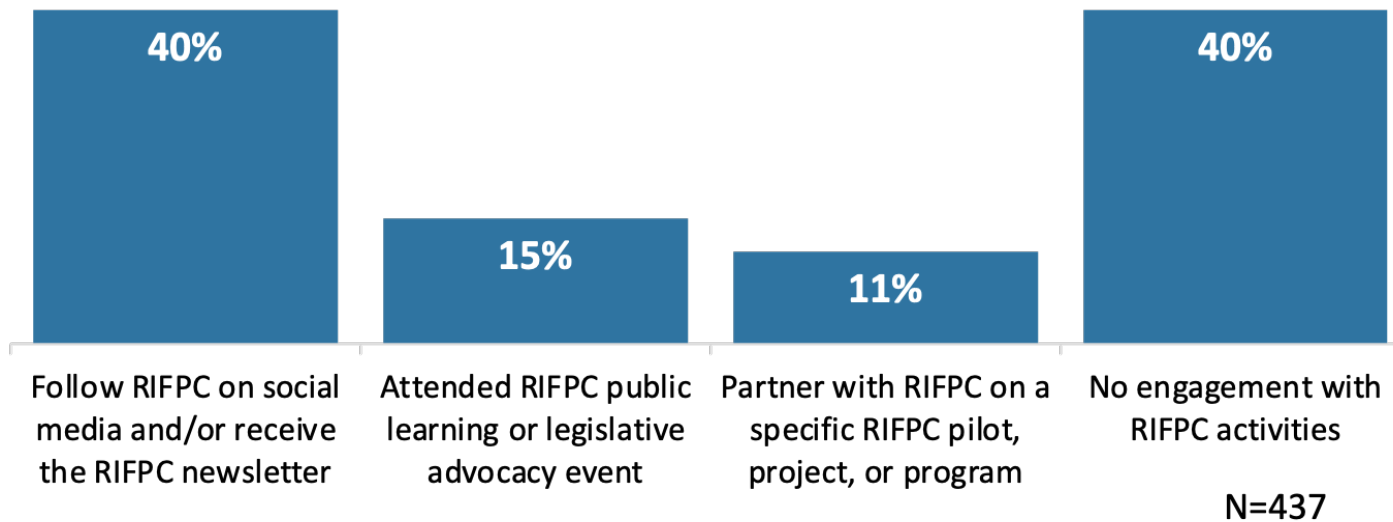
“Engaged” with RIFPC: 40%

N=437



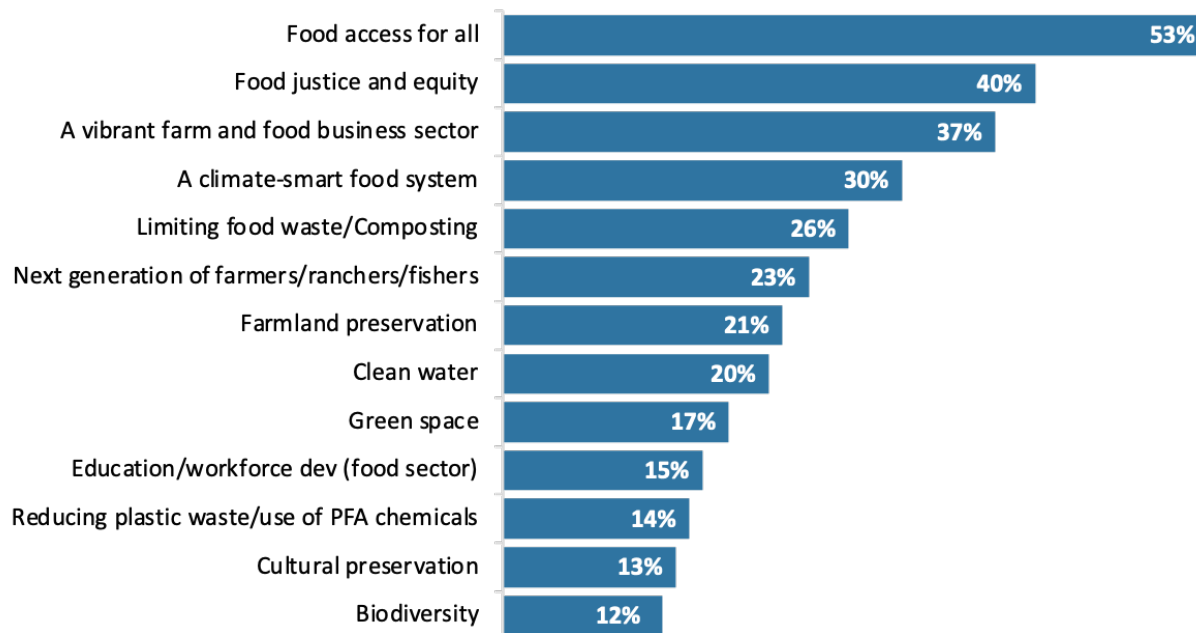
# Engagement Activities

40% of respondents follow RIFPC social media/newsletter, 40% reported no engagement activity with RIFPC, 15% attending RIFPC event, and 11% reported partnering on project.



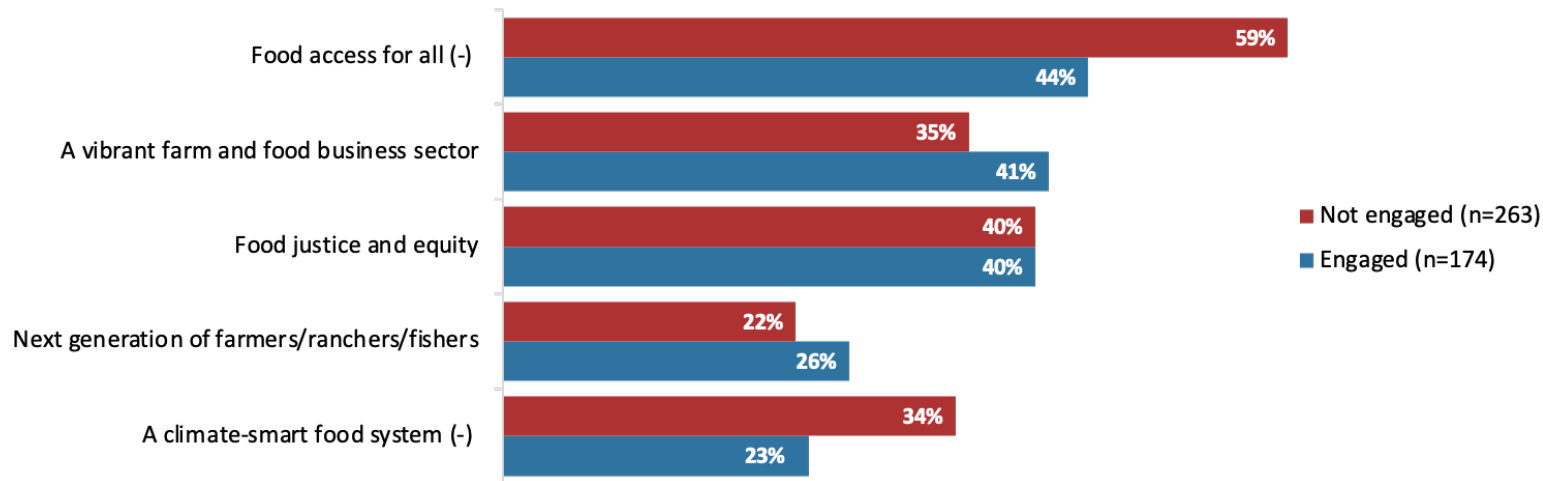
# Motivators for Engagement with RIFPC

Respondents (n=437) chose their top three reasons that drive engagement with RIFPC. Many chose more than three (mean = 3.3). “Food access for all” topped the list.



# Top Five Motivators for Engagement with RIFPC

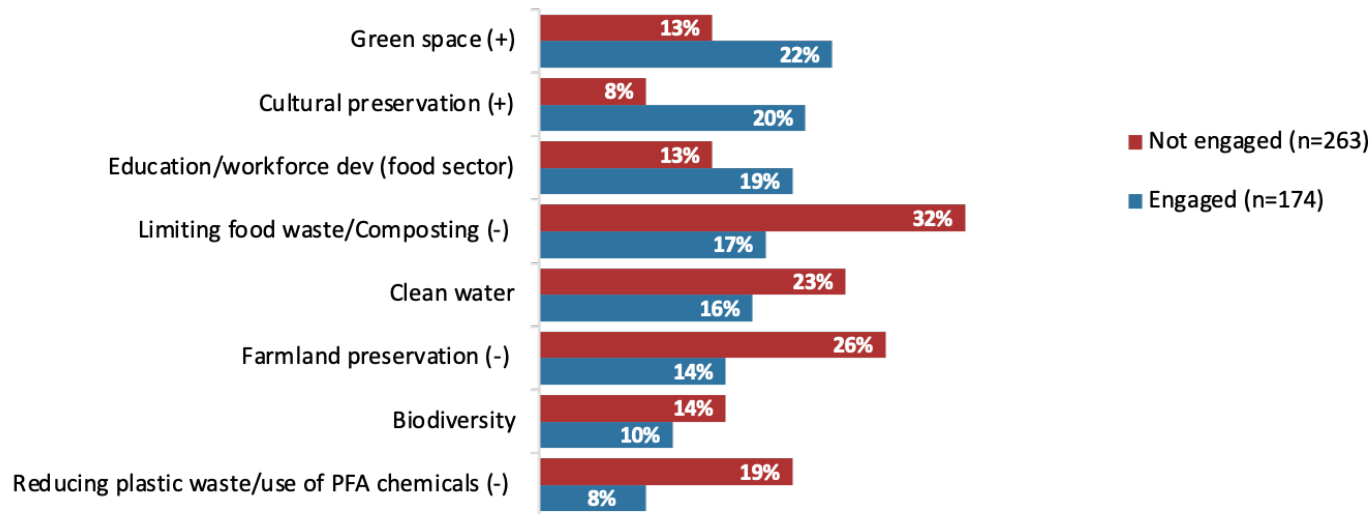
The top three motivations reported were the same for engaged and non-engaged members, but there were proportionate differences in the motivators between the two groups.



(+) Engaged respondents more likely to mark as motivator than non-engaged responders. (-) Engaged respondents less likely to mark as a motivator.

# Other Motivators for Engagement with RIFPC

Less than a quarter of “engaged” respondents marked these motivators as a priority.



(+) Engaged respondents more likely to mark as motivator than non-engaged responders. (-) Engaged respondents less likely to mark as a motivator.





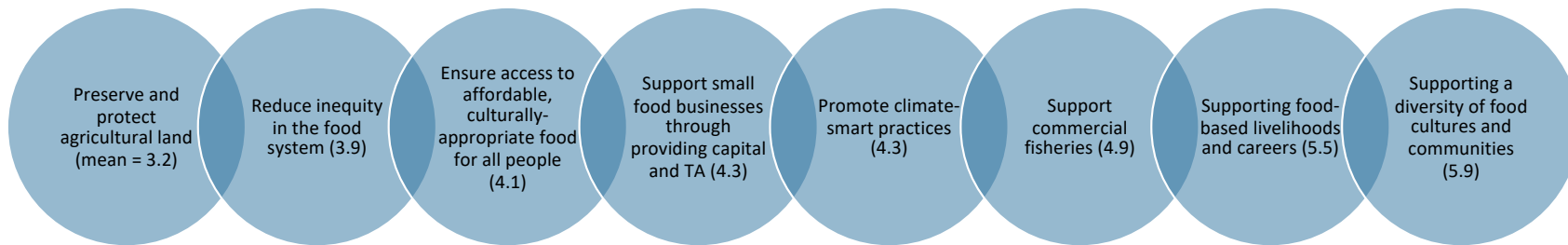
## Priority Activities for RIFPC





# Priority Activities to Improve Food System by 2030

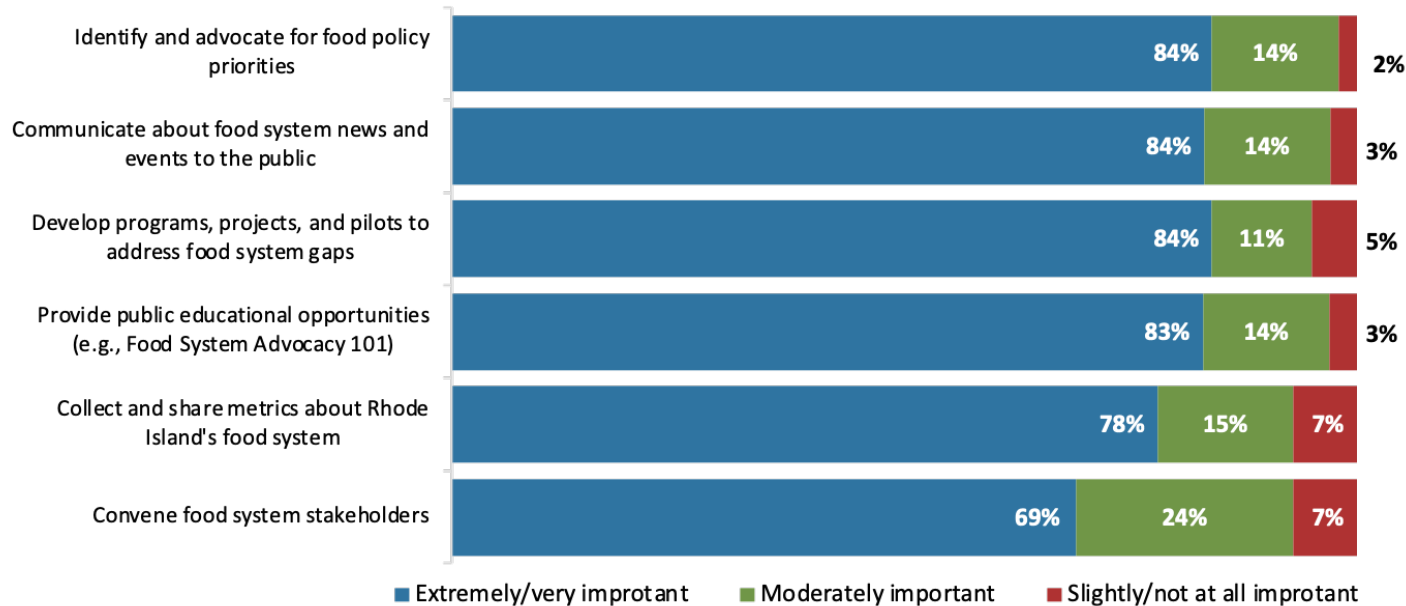
Respondents (n=437) ranked eight activities for improving RI's food system by 2030. Preserving and protecting agricultural land was ranked the top priority.



Ranked Highest to Lowest Priority from Left to Right  
(ranked on survey as 1 = most important and 8 = least important)

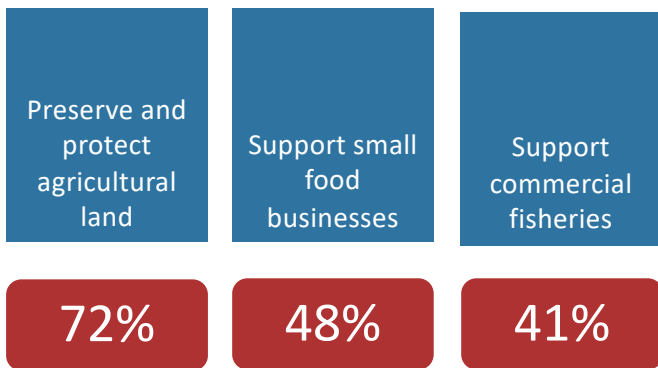
# Priority Activities for RIFPC

All survey respondents (n=437) rated the importance of RIFPC activities. Over three-quarters felt five of the six activities were extremely or very important.



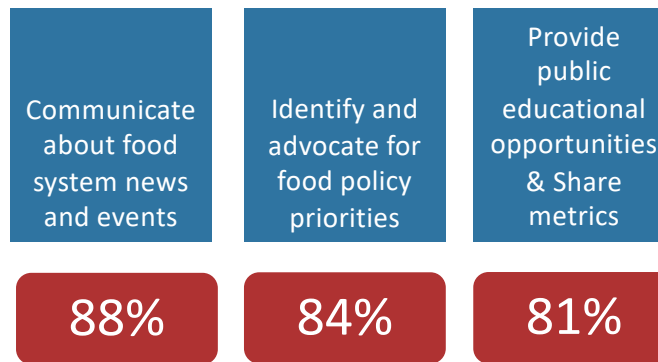
# Top Three Priorities for Engaged Respondents

## Priority Program Areas for Food System



Percent of respondents (n=174) ranking in top 3 priorities

## Priority Areas for RIFPC

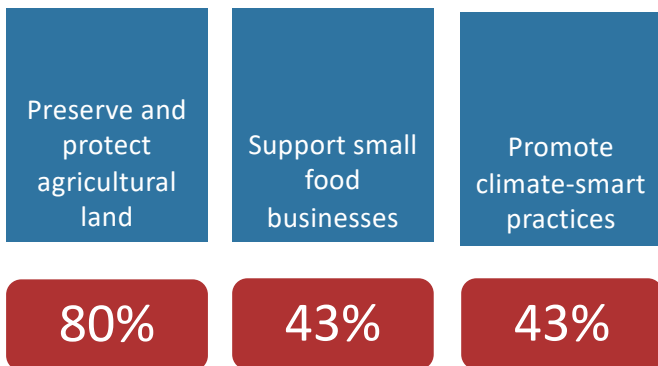


Percent of respondents (n=174) rating extremely /very important.



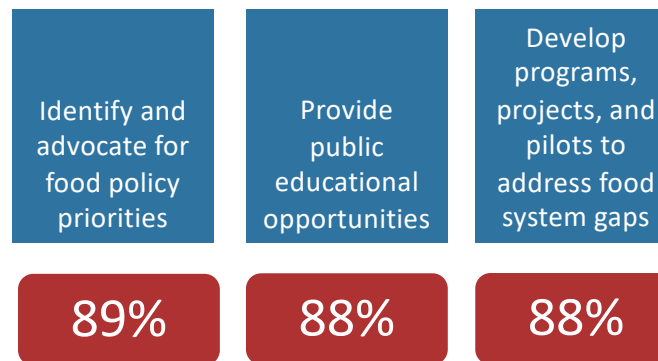
# Top Three Priorities for Farm and Food Production

## Priority Program Areas for Food System



Percent of respondents (n=76) ranking in top 3 priorities

## Priority Areas for RIFPC

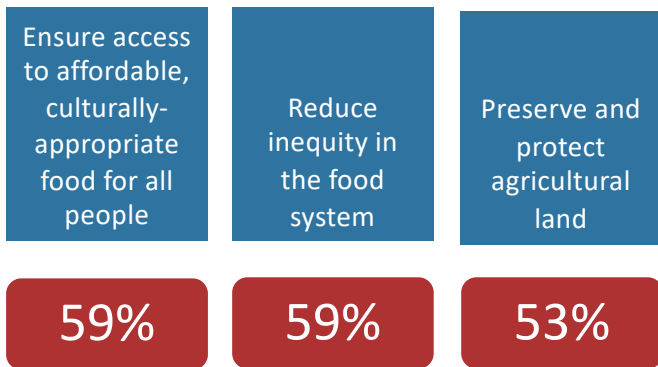


Percent of respondents (n=76) rating extremely/very important.



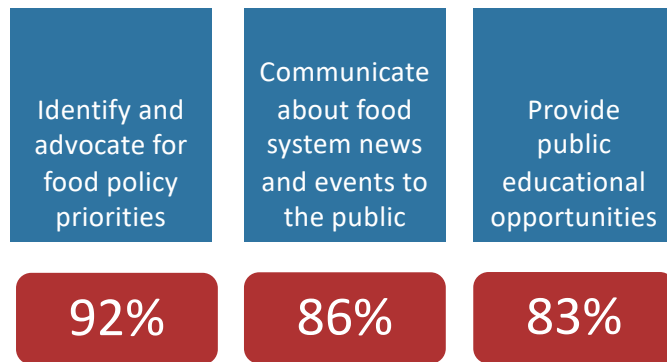
# Top Three Priorities for Food Access Respondents

## Priority Program Areas for Food System



Percent of respondents (n=63) ranking in top 3 priorities

## Priority Areas for RIFPC

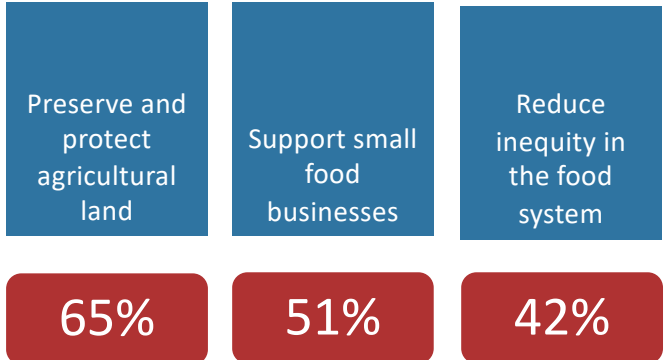


Percent of respondents (n=63) rating extremely/very important.



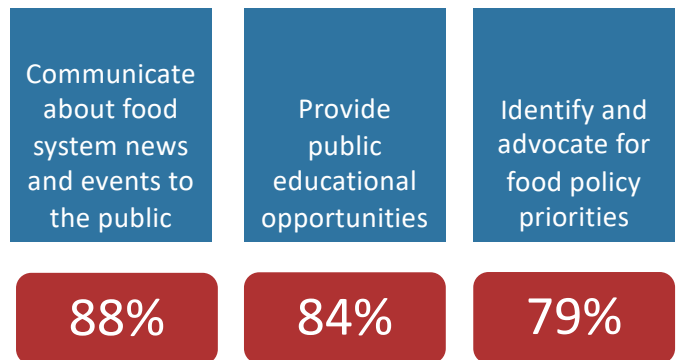
# Top Three Priorities for Food Retail/Hospitality

## Priority Program Areas for Food System



Percent of respondents (n=43) ranking in top 3 priorities

## Priority Areas for RIFPC

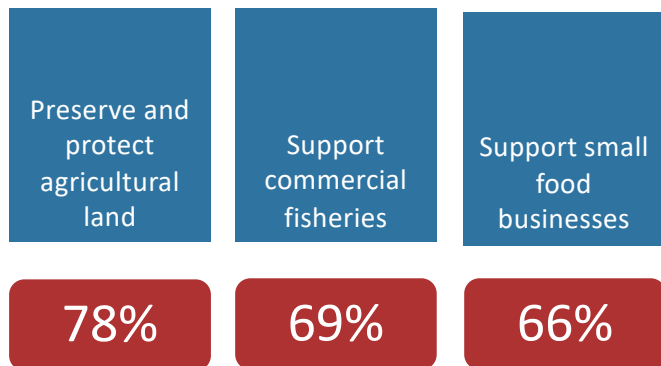


Percent of respondents (n=43) rating extremely/very important.



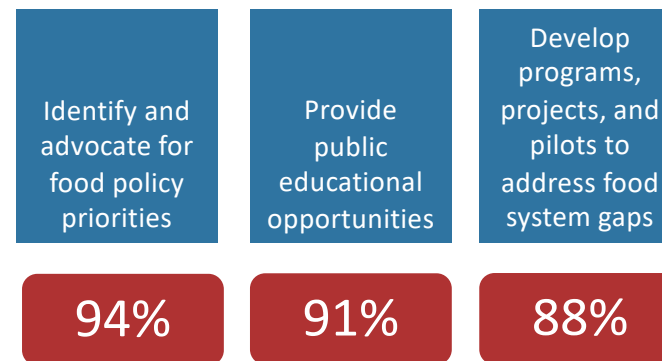
# Top Three Priorities for Commercial Fisheries/ Aquaculture

## Priority Program Areas for Food System



Percent of respondents (n=32) ranking in top 3 priorities

## Priority Areas for RIFPC



Percent of respondents (n=32) rating extremely/very important.



# Priority Program Areas by 2030 Summary

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- **Preserving and protecting agricultural land** was in the top three ranked priorities for **all 5 sub-groups**, and usually ranked first.
- **Supporting small food businesses** was in the top three priorities for **4 of the 5 sub-groups** and ranked second in 3 out of those 4.
- Priorities ranked in 2 out of the 5 groups include supporting commercial fisheries and reducing inequity in the food system.
- Priorities ranked in the top three by one group include food access for all and promoting climate smart practices.
- Those marking “food access” as a primary role had the most divergent top three list.





# Priorities for RIFPC

- Identifying and advocating for **food policy priorities** and providing **public education** were in top 3 for **all 5 sub-groups**.
- **Communicating** about food system news and events was in the top for **3 out of the 5 sub-groups**.
- Ranked as a top priority in 2 out of the 5 sub-groups was developing programs, projects, and pilots to address food system gaps.
- Ranked in the top three by 1 sub-group was sharing metrics.





## Recommendations for Future Evaluation



# Recommendations for Future Evaluation

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- Develop ways to **reduce** survey response by **survey bots** or those seeking to answer the survey only for the incentive.
- Reduce **ambiguity in questions** regarding demographics, primary roles in the food system, role in RIFPC (engaged activities), and levels of engagement. Develop additional questions around roles (e.g., farmer or fisherperson, representative of Extension etc.) to further define audience and priorities.
- Simplify language around **motivations** to reduce ambiguity.
- Given the importance of the survey, **consider other objectives** that RIFPC may want to examine in the survey to maximize impact.

