



# Summary Report

*Livestock Welfare Engagement Project*

December 30, 2018

Alberta 

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# Executive Summary

Livestock welfare is one of the most important areas of focus that will shape the future of livestock industries in Alberta and worldwide.

The Livestock Welfare Engagement Project (LWEP) brought together input from a broad cross-section of livestock industry participants in Alberta, to provide an accurate understanding of the livestock welfare landscape in the province from the industry's perspective.

The project was conducted primarily over the course of 2018. Information and insights were collected from stakeholders across the sector. The process, as well as the input collected, are documented in this Summary Report, which provides a resource to inform Alberta's ongoing understanding, activity, and progress in livestock welfare.

The LWEP was requested and funded by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (AAF). The project was facilitated by Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC).

## **The big picture**

In recent years, the awareness of livestock welfare issues and concerns by stakeholders and consumers has increased at a remarkable rate.

Within the industry, it has become an increasing focal point for transparency, communication, and continuous improvement in alignment with the needs and expectations of its stakeholders. It is considered critical to sustainability and competitiveness.

At the retail level, major food retailers have indicated a need to demonstrate to consumers that the animals raised for meat, egg and milk products are receiving appropriate care.

At the consumer level, numerous studies and trends have indicated consumers are increasingly interested in where their food comes from and are placing a higher importance on livestock welfare as a factor in their purchasing decisions.

Society as a whole has placed added emphasis on expectations for transparency in showing that animals are treated humanely and respectfully in accordance with appropriate best practices. Overall, livestock welfare is considered an integral factor impacting social license and the sustainability of livestock industries, and its importance continues to grow.

## **The Alberta landscape**

In Alberta, all of these factors are playing a major role in the evolution of Alberta's livestock industry, and in determining the future of the sector.

Alberta's livestock industry is a broad and dynamic sector that provides a significant anchor to the provincial and national economies. It is also a sector undergoing substantial evolution, in the process of navigating many challenges and opportunities.

Livestock welfare is commonly cited as a key priority to maintain a vital and healthy industry. Funds, resources, and programs are regularly focused on livestock care initiatives. The primary goal is to achieve a sustainable and competitive industry for the short-, mid- and long-term, delivering substantial value to all Albertans both within and outside the industry.

## **Livestock welfare approaches**

Livestock welfare is viewed and managed as a top priority by the commodity and producer associations that represents the industry, the attitudes, and the approaches of the majority of their members and stakeholders.

The National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) has made significant strides in bringing together the whole value chain as well as facilitating the development of the Codes of Practice for the Care and Handling of farm animals and the Animal Care Assessment Framework. The NFACC's Animal Care Assessment programs, AFAC's Humane Handling Guidelines, and additional resources that vary somewhat between the sectors, all have clear and substantial approaches in place and are based on the Codes of Practice.

All major animal care programs followed by Alberta livestock organizations are reviewed and updated as necessary, to ensure program requirements are in line with the most current science and on-farm production practices.

## **Building a clear understanding**

The purpose of the LWEP was, through a process of livestock industry engagement, to collect information and input from individuals and organizations across the sector that would help to build a clear understanding of livestock welfare in Alberta from the industry's perspective.

This collected knowledge and viewpoints would then be shared with the Government of Alberta, in the form of this Summary Report, to support its understanding of the animal welfare landscape in the province. By offering a current synopsis of industry information and perspectives, the

knowledge gathered through this project provides a resource to inform Alberta's ongoing understanding, activity and progress in this critical area.

The approach undertaken in this project included several components:

- Preliminary Engagement Consultation Session (March 2018)
- Online Project Survey (July to October 2018)
- Regional Focus Groups (September and October 2018)
- Summary Report Development (Completed for submission December 31, 2018)

**Preliminary Engagement Consultation Session.** This session was an opportunity to gather initial input at a time when many industry representatives would be together for AFAC's Livestock Care Conference (LCC) in March 2018. Other participants came solely for the session.

**Online Project Survey.** One of the most important parts of the project was the Project Survey. This survey was made available online and was open to anyone in Alberta who was involved in animal agriculture in the province. Individuals and organizations of all kinds across the industry were invited and encouraged to participate.

The survey was designed to incorporate the four major components of Alberta's livestock industry:

1. Organizations
2. Abattoir & Auction Markets
3. Individuals (e.g. producers)
4. Students

**Regional Focus Groups.** The next phase of the project centred on conducting Regional Focus Groups. The Online Survey included a question asking respondents if they wished to participate in these groups, and if so, they were sent an invitation directly. Also, news releases and media interviews promoted the focus groups and encouraged participation by anyone in the industry.

Locations and dates for the focus groups:

- Grande Prairie Regional College – Fairview, Alberta, Sept. 20
- Lethbridge College – Lethbridge, Alberta, Sept. 25
- Olds College – Olds, Alberta, Oct. 2
- University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Oct. 10
- Lakeland College, Vermilion, Alberta, Oct. 25

## **Key topic areas**

The project focused on collecting information and insights on a number of significant topic areas related to livestock welfare. It allowed for general discussion, including input on livestock welfare activities undertaken by industry. It also gathered responses related to four main topic categories. This produced a wealth of information in these areas:

- General Discussion (views on the evolution of animal welfare in Alberta)
- Standards and Policies
- Research
- Communication, Education, and Extension
- Assurance Programs
- Closing Discussion (time permitting there was an opportunity to raise additional points)

## **Results analysis**

The Preliminary Engagement Consultation Session provided a foundation of initial feedback that introduced many topic areas and themes that would be further reinforced and elaborated on during additional components of the project. Analysis of the feedback collected revealed a state of animal welfare in Alberta's livestock industry that from the viewpoint of session participants was an area that has been the focus of substantial and ongoing evolution. It has featured dynamic progress and has increasingly become a leading topic shaping many aspects of how the industry is portrayed and perceived.

Overall participants cited an Alberta livestock industry that has made steady progress in awareness, improvement in practices, communication and leadership on this issue over the years. Based on the feedback collected, the industry participants at the session felt that Alberta's livestock industry is well advanced in livestock welfare and is well-positioned to maintain a leadership role moving forward into the future.

The Online Project Survey built upon these findings by serving as the significant information gathering component of the project, generating a large body of detailed feedback in various forms. When analyzed and interpreted, the feedback gathered served to indicate: strong consensus on the growing importance of welfare to Alberta's livestock industry; strong consensus that welfare is critical to competitiveness and market acceptance; and there is a highly engaged, proactive industry on livestock welfare.

Among all groups, communications, education and extension was a standout priority for future activity, and continued progress on assurance programs was seen as a key emphasis moving forward. Assurance programs were cited as a timely area of advancement with lots of developments in recent years that was expected to remain a strong focus for the near future

(analysis of the survey responses among all groups indicated this as a priority useful to producers and others across the industry).

The Regional Focus Groups conducted across Alberta allowed for an enhanced level of discussion that complemented the approach undertaken via the online survey. Analysis of the feedback collected revealed a prevailing view that animal welfare in Alberta's livestock industry has evolved and advanced substantially and has become a top focus currently and for the future. Standout areas of progress have included the widespread acknowledgement of the Codes of Practice and more recently taking this foundation a step further via additional emphasis on animal care assessment programs.

The Regional Focus Groups emphasized that Alberta has a proud history as a pioneer and leader in industry-driven progress on livestock welfare. It has a strong track record of advancing Alberta's approach to this issue both within and outside the industry. Particularly in the past decade, the pace of progress has spiked as the profile of this issue both within and outside the industry has hit an all-time high.

## **Overall conclusions**

Based on the information collected and analyzed as part of LWEP, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Alberta's livestock industry views animal welfare as a top priority.
2. Alberta's livestock industry is highly engaged in supporting animal welfare.
3. The landscape of animal welfare in Alberta has substantially advanced.
4. Continuous improvement in managing animal welfare issues remains a central priority with major implications for the current and future success of the industry.
5. Alberta's livestock industry favours industry-driven approaches to all forms of solutions, innovations, and improvements.
6. The current pathway including a strong focus on the Codes of Practice, assurance programs, and related opportunities is on track.
7. Support for communication, education, and extension is a top "game-changing" factor in the success of the industry on the animal welfare file.
8. Ongoing research is a critical support for the industry that requires better alignment with industry needs and stronger resources for extension to ensure results are used.
9. Alberta's livestock industry is well-positioned to continue as a leader in animal welfare.
10. Understanding the landscape of animal welfare from the industry's perspective is critical to progress and decision-making.

### ***Role of the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project***

*The LWEP was requested and funded by AAF. The insights and information gathered through this project are collected in this Summary Report, which is shared with the Government of Alberta to support its understanding of the animal welfare landscape in the province from the livestock industry's perspective.*



# Abbreviations

Abbreviations used in this report:

AAF – Alberta Agriculture and Forestry  
AAM – Abattoirs and Auction Markets  
AAFC – Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
ABP – Alberta Beef Producers  
ABVMA – Alberta Veterinary Medical Association  
ACA – Animal Care Assessment  
ACFA – Alberta Cattle Feeder’s Association  
ACP – Animal Care Program  
AFAC – Alberta Farm Animal Care  
AKA – Animal Keepers Act  
Alberta SPCA – Alberta Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals  
APA – Animal Protection Act  
CCA – Canadian Cattlemen’s Association  
CCC – Criminal Code of Canada  
CFC – Chicken Farmers of Canada  
CHEP – Canadian Hatching Egg Producers  
CQA – Canadian Quality Assurance  
DFC – Dairy Farmers of Canada  
EC – Equestrian Canada  
FCP – Flock Care Program  
HAA – Health of Animals Act  
HWAC – Horse Welfare Alliance of Canada  
LICA – Livestock Identification and Commerce Act  
LWEP – Livestock Welfare Engagement Project  
MIA – Meat Inspection Act  
NCFA – National Cattle Feeder’s Association  
NFACC – National Farm Animal Care Council Codes of Practice  
NFAHWC Strategy – National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy  
NFAHWC System – National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada  
PAACO – Professional Animal Auditor Certification Organization  
TFC – Turkey Farmers of Canada  
VBP+ – Verified Beef Production Plus  
VPA – Veterinary Profession Act

# 1.0 Introduction

## **Understanding livestock welfare**

Animal welfare is a complex and multifaceted issue. It involves scientific, ethical, economic, social, cultural, religious, political, and other dimensions. This reality holds true for animal welfare as it pertains to livestock which, for this project, is defined as farmed animals raised and cared for as part of the production of meat, eggs, milk, and other products.

“Animal welfare means how an animal is coping with the conditions in which it lives. An animal is in a good state of welfare if (as indicated by scientific evidence) it is healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express innate behaviour, and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear, and distress. Good animal welfare requires disease prevention and veterinary treatment, appropriate shelter, management, nutrition, humane handling, and humane slaughter/killing. Animal welfare refers to the state of the animal; the treatment that an animal receives is covered by other terms such as animal care, animal husbandry, and humane treatment” (World Organization for Animal Health, 2012).

Those involved in raising and handling livestock, producing livestock products, consuming livestock products, and society as a whole, all share an interest in ensuring that livestock are well cared for throughout their lifetimes. This involves supporting ongoing adherence to appropriate standards and best practices for livestock care, and building understanding, awareness and continuous improvement based on new knowledge and opportunities.

Worldwide animal welfare, including livestock welfare, has experienced a growing focus over recent years from all stakeholders. The success and sustainability of livestock industries and the many stakeholders and jurisdictions who benefit from this sector will require continuously improving practices and understanding and managing the issues.

In Canada, including Alberta, animal welfare has become a top focus of the livestock industry. In recent years there has been growing attention on this issue both within and outside the industry among everyone from primary producers to consumers and society at large.

As the industry continually updates its approaches with new science-based information, guidelines, standards and expectations, there is also rising consumer interest in where food comes from. Albertans, whether they work in the livestock sector or not, have an opinion about and a stake in the issues facing animal agriculture. There is significant value in having current information and viewpoints on the present and future of livestock welfare based on the collective input of individuals and organizations across the sector.

That is the purpose of LWEP which was requested and funded by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry. Alberta Farm Animal Care was asked to facilitate the research and supply the final report. The primary purpose of the project was to help build a clear understanding of livestock welfare in Alberta – where the sector has come from, where it is today and where it is heading.

This collected knowledge and viewpoints would then be shared with the Government of Alberta, in the form of a Summary Report, to support its understanding of the animal welfare landscape in the province. By offering a current synopsis of industry information and perspectives, the knowledge gathered through this project provides a resource to inform Alberta's ongoing understanding, activity and progress in this important area.

### ***The Livestock Welfare Engagement Project***

*Broad industry feedback collected by the project was critical to accurately represent the extensive work being done related to livestock care in Alberta today, and to help shape future priorities and direction around this increasingly high-profile component of livestock production.*

### **About Alberta Farm Animal Care**

Alberta Farm Animal Care was started in 1993 by Alberta livestock producers. Throughout the past 25 years AFAC has developed into the collective voice of the Alberta livestock industry on matters of livestock welfare. It has provided a coordinated approach for all areas of livestock production to work together to advance and promote responsible livestock care. Among numerous activities, it offers resources to producers, organizes an annual Livestock Care Conference and operates an ALERT line that anyone can call if they believe livestock are not being cared for properly.

### **About Alberta Agriculture and Forestry**

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry is a department of the Government of Alberta. The ministry is responsible for the policies, legislation, regulations and services necessary for Alberta's agriculture, food and forest sectors to grow, prosper and diversify. It also inspires public confidence in wildfire and forest management and the quality and safety of food; supports environmentally sustainable resource management practices; and leads collaboration that enables safe and resilient rural communities.

## **Perspectives on Progress**

“Livestock welfare is important to all industry stakeholders, as well as the bodies that regulate the sector, and practices continue to change and evolve. This project was designed to provide every stakeholder – from individual farmers and ranchers to producer association groups, veterinarians and all others – the opportunity to share their insight into what is happening in their sector today. These diverse insights are critical to providing a clear picture of the extensive work being done related to animal welfare in Alberta today, and in providing direction for the future.”

– Annemarie Pedersen, Executive Director, Alberta Farm Animal Care

“We were very encouraged by the strong industry participation in the project, which was open to anyone involved in animal agriculture in Alberta. We encouraged all livestock sectors and industry partners to participate in key components, such as the online survey and regional focus groups. The online survey helped to make the project broadly accessible to participants in all areas of the province. The focus groups were planned to be accessible to the majority of the province and to support the collecting of feedback from a diverse cross section of the industry.”

– Dr. Melissa Moggy, Project Lead, Livestock Welfare Engagement Project

“Farm animal care is a top priority for producers and livestock industries. Sharing knowledge and working together are key to our commitment to continuous improvement. The LWEP provided an opportunity to get input from across the industry and help build a clear understanding for the industry.”

– Greg Bowie, Past Chair, Alberta Farm Animal Care

“Alberta Farm Animal Care is proud to work on LWEP with Alberta Agriculture and Forestry to build this comprehensive look inside the livestock sector in Alberta. We have been pleased with the number of participants throughout and the diversity of ideas and discussions. We look forward to working with the industry and government to advance the goals identified through the project.”

– Cora Scheele, Chair, Alberta Farm Animal Care

## 2.0 Situational Analysis

The complete picture of livestock welfare in Alberta today is one that spans numerous facets of the industry, covering many different livestock sectors each with unique and tailored approaches to managing this issue both at the farm level and along the value chain and marketplace.

In recent years, the awareness of livestock welfare issues and concerns by stakeholders and consumers has increased at a remarkable rate. Within the industry, it has become an increasing focal point for transparency, communication, and continuous improvement in alignment with the needs and expectations of its stakeholders. It is considered critical to sustainability and competitiveness. At the retail level, major food retailers are indicating a need to demonstrate to consumers that the animals raised for meat, egg and milk products are receiving appropriate care.

At the consumer level, numerous studies and trends indicate consumers are increasingly interested in where their food comes from and are placing a higher importance on livestock welfare as a factor in their purchasing decisions. The latest Canadian Centre for Food Integrity research results reinforces this.

Society as a whole is placing added emphasis on expectations for transparency in showing that animals are treated humanely and respectfully in accordance with appropriate best practices. Overall, livestock welfare is considered an integral factor impacting social license and the sustainability of livestock industries, and its importance continues to grow.

### **Alberta's livestock industry**

Alberta's livestock industry is a broad and dynamic sector that contributes a significant amount to the provincial and national economies. It is also a sector undergoing substantial evolution, including navigating many challenges and opportunities.

The Canadian Census of Agriculture is conducted every five years by Statistics Canada, as part of the national census, for the purpose of gathering Canadian agricultural industry, farm operator and farm data. The most recent census was conducted in 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2017).

According to this census, Alberta is home to a substantial, diversified livestock sector serving markets both domestically and internationally, including extensive and abundant activity in the following livestock areas:

**Beef cattle.** Alberta had the most cattle in Canada, at 3.34 million head, accounting for 41.6% of the national herd. Alberta's feeder cattle (steers and heifers for feeding or slaughter) accounted

for 59.6% of the national total, while its beef breeding stock (beef cows and heifers for beef herd replacement) accounted for 42.3% (Alberta Cattle Feeders Association, n.d.).

Canada fed 2.5 million cattle with 75% finished in Western Canada. Cattle and calf cash receipts totaled over \$10.51 billion and beef production contributed \$15 billion to Canada's gross domestic product (GDP; 2011-2015 average; Alberta Beef Producers, n.d.).

**Dairy cows.** Alberta has a 115,000-head dairy herd that produces about 725 million litres of milk annually via 512 dairy farms. This accounts for a \$588 million value output. Nearly half of the milk is used to make cheese, yogurt and, increasingly, butter (Statistics Canada, 2017 and Government of Canada, 2018a).

The dairy industry is part of a national supply management system, offering advantages in quality, consistency and food security, which according to proponents keeps dairy aisles stocked, costs controlled, and Canadians fed with local milk.

**Pigs.** The number of pigs on farms in Alberta was 1.5 million head. However, the industry is a focal point of a large amount of animal movement and handles a higher number of animals on an annual basis (Statistics Canada, 2017). Over 2.5 million pigs are processed in Alberta and over 1.3 million are exported to other provinces and the U.S. (Statistics Canada, 2017). There are about 200 hog farms in Alberta, down from about 2,000 a decade ago. It is the fourth largest pork producing province in the country (Statistics Canada, 2017).

The industry is currently in a time of uncertainty with producers facing major challenges due to pricing issues. However, typically Canada is the 7<sup>th</sup> largest pork producer in the world, representing approximately 2% of global production, and the third largest pork exporter in the world, contributing \$3.5 billion to Canada's GDP (Statistics Canada, 2017).

**Poultry.** Alberta's hatching egg industry supplies the poultry industry value chain with quality hatching eggs. There are an estimated 16 laying egg hatcheries, 11 turkey hatcheries and 40 broiler hatcheries across Canada's territories and provinces (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2018). Hatching egg production for 2016 was just over 735 million eggs. Domestic production levels are established by quota allocations (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2018).

Alberta's chicken industry operates under supply management, with 240 registered chicken producers with quota in Alberta producing 128 million kg live weight of chicken annually (Statistics Canada, 2017). Canada's chicken sector contributes \$6.8 billion to Canada's GDP, including \$623 million from Alberta (Statistics Canada, 2017).

Alberta's egg industry includes more than 270 registered producers, producing over 61 million dozen eggs annually, contributing \$120 million to Canada's GDP (Statistics Canada, 2017). The

Canadian egg industry as a whole contributes \$1.37 billion to Canada's GDP (Statistics Canada, 2017).

Alberta's turkey industry consists of 46 turkey farms, producing more than 19 million kilograms of turkey meat annually (Alberta Turkey Producers).

**Sheep.** In Canada, sheep production is a relatively small industry with just over 1 million sheep and lambs raised across the country annually on approximately 11,000 farms, 200 of which are in Alberta (Statistics Canada, 2017 and Alberta Lamb Producers, n.d.).

**Horses.** According to the 2016 census, there are 108,702 horses in Alberta compared to 291,561 in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2017). Horses in Alberta are used for farm and ranch work, sport, meat, law enforcement and search and rescue, recreation, and breeding. From a legislative perspective, horses are considered livestock and companion or recreational animals.

**Bison.** The Alberta bison industry is deemed to be the cornerstone of the diversified livestock industry in Alberta. The province has nearly half of the national bison herd, which translates to about 55,000 head on 440 farms (Statistics Canada, 2017 and Bison Producers of Alberta, 2018).

**Goats.** Roughly 6,000 goat farms are raising 225,000 goats across Canada, with 963 farms and 27,955 animals in Alberta (Statistics Canada, 2017).

**Farmed elk and deer.** There are approximately 172 farmed elk and deer farms in Alberta with 13,382 domesticated animals including 12,008 elks, 1,349 whitetail deer, and 1,255 other deer (fallow, mule, reindeer; Statistics Canada, 2017).

**Rabbits.** Rabbits are produced for both human consumption and pet food. According to the 2016 census, there were 2,863 rabbit farms nationally producing 172,489 head, including 470 producing 4917 head in Alberta (Statistics Canada, 2017).

**Bees.** Honey bees are food producing animals. There are approximately 1,000 commercial beekeepers in Alberta comprising about 18% of Alberta's beekeepers beekeeping (Government of Alberta, n.d.). They have at least 300 hives each and derive all or most of their income from beekeeping (Government of Alberta, n.d.). Alberta is the third largest beekeeping jurisdiction in North America, producing over 40% of Canada's honey (Alberta Beekeepers Commission, 2018).

The balance of Alberta's beekeepers are hobbyists. In total there are approximately 1540 beekeepers in Alberta. Beekeepers are required to register annually with Alberta Agriculture and Forestry (Government of Alberta, n.d.).

**Other.** Additional animal agriculture species exist in Alberta, such as farmed mink and farmed fox, however at very low numbers (Statistics Canada, 2017).

\* The numbers included above are sourced from the 2016 census as well as, in some cases, information from the relevant industry sector organizations, based on information available at the time this report was prepared. Visit the referenced links for the most current or more detailed information.

## **Livestock welfare programs**

All commercial livestock production in Alberta is conducted with standards and guidelines for animal care as part of livestock management plans.

Typically, livestock welfare standards and guidelines involve national approaches that are coordinated on a provincial basis with support from provincial commodity or producer associations.

All major livestock sectors have adopted guidelines and standards for farm animal welfare. Most prominently, this includes the National Farm Animal Care Council's (NFACC) Codes of Practice, which are nationally developed guidelines for the care and handling of farm animals (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2018a). All major livestock production species in Canada are covered by these national Codes of Practice, with custom Codes developed for each species category. Canada's Code development process is led by the NFACC and involves a consensus-based approach comprising industry and other major stakeholder groups (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2018b).

Key elements of the Code development process are: the inclusion of scientific committees to review research on priority welfare issues; ownership of the individual Codes by the relevant stakeholders through their active participation in developing the Code; measurable components to facilitate the development of assessment programs; and a transparent process (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2018b). Stakeholder groups involved in the process typically include farmers, animal welfare organizations, the veterinary community, animal welfare researchers, government, processors, food companies, and others concerned about farm animal care and welfare (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2018b).

In addition to the Codes of Practice, Alberta's major livestock sectors are also involved in Animal Care Assessment programs, which are in various stages of development and implementation depending on the livestock sector. Many of these programs have been developed utilizing the Animal Care Assessment Framework, a process developed by NFACC, which is designed to provide a credible process to follow when developing an Animal Care Assessment program (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2018c).



The combination of Codes along with assessment programs is based on the broad recognition across livestock sectors that Codes of Practice are essential but alone are not enough. The addition of assessment programs is needed to demonstrate that Codes are being followed to build confidence and trust throughout the value chain and also with industry stakeholders including consumers and society in general.

A number of commodity/producer organizations and industry sectors have added further upon these building blocks by developing or participating in sector-specific verified production programs involving partners and stakeholders.

The major programs all feature mechanisms to review and update the programs as needed to keep pace with evolving industry needs and expectations.

**Beef cattle.** Beef cattle producers in Alberta may participate in animal care programs nationally coordinated by organizations such as the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) and National Cattle Feeders Association (NCFA) and provincially via organizations such as Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) and Alberta Cattle Feeders Association (ACFA).

The Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Beef Cattle was developed to augment existing laws and regulations, and to reflect the industry's commitment to the humane treatment and care of beef cattle (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2013a). The Code was established in 1991, was most recently updated in 2013 and is involved in a five-year review at the time of this report (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2013a). Industry organizations have stated these regulations and standards can stand up to, and perhaps even exceed, any worldwide certifications or standards.

The industry has also recognized that animal health is a critical part of animal care. The industry has a Canadian Beef Cattle On-Farm Biosecurity Standard that is designed to provide on-farm biosecurity practices that can reduce the risk of impact of endemic diseases and reduce or prevent the risk of a foreign animal disease in the Canadian herd.

The NCFA has introduced their Feedlot Animal Care Assessment Program, which has resulted in a code of practice specific to the handling and care of beef cattle on Canadian confined feeding operations (CFOs; Government of Canada, 2016). The program is not intended to replace or supplant the national Beef Code of Practice, but to serve as a companion code focusing on animal care issues unique to beef feedlots (Government of Canada, 2016).

The program provides feedlot operators and beef processors with a single and widely accepted animal care protocol, dispensing with the need for multiple animal care agreements between

cattle feeders and beef processors (Government of Canada, 2016). Participation in the program includes the use of Common Audit Tools that follow a Professional Animal Auditor Certification Organization (PAACO) process (Government of Canada, 2016).

Another prominent program relevant to livestock welfare for Alberta's beef industry is the Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) program, which includes an Animal Care Module (Verified Beef Production Plus, 2018). The VBP+ program is designed to enable certified beef cattle operations to prove to consumers and retailers that the operation adheres to the highest standards for food safety, animal care, biosecurity, and environmental stewardship (Verified Beef Production Plus, 2018).

For over a decade the original VBP program helped producers meet industry standards for food safety. The new VBP+ program builds on this with the addition of animal care, biosecurity, and environmental stewardship components (Verified Beef Production Plus, 2018). The program provides education, resource materials, and validation audit services (Verified Beef Production Plus, 2018). The program includes the option for beef operations to achieve certified VBP+ status. When an operation is considered a certified VBP+ operation this means it has gone through a third party on-farm validation audit by a qualified auditor (Verified Beef Production Plus, 2018).

The VBP+ program has provided a foundation for the Certified Sustainable Beef Framework and the Canadian Beef Sustainability Acceleration Pilot. These initiatives represent an effort to create a certified sustainable Canadian beef supply chain, helping Canada become the first country to deliver beef from certified sustainable sources, establishing Canadian beef as synonymous with sustainability in the global market.

**Dairy cows.** Dairy producers in Alberta participate in animal care programs directed and coordinated nationally via Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) and provincially via Alberta Milk. The major on-farm excellence initiative championing animal care and coordinated by these organizations is the proAction initiative. The purpose of this program is to enable dairy farmers to show how they responsibly produce milk, ensure milk quality and safety, and work to continuously improve animal health and welfare, among other targets (Dairy Farmers of Canada, (n.d.)).

The proAction initiative operates with six key modules, including an Animal Care module (Dairy Farmers of Canada, (n.d.)). This program recognizes that treating animals well and providing excellent care comes naturally in the dairy industry and that farmers know that healthy and well-cared for cows are the most productive, require less work, and are the most profitable animals on farms (Dairy Farmers of Canada, (n.d.)).

Under proAction, all Canadian farms, participate in an ongoing animal welfare assessment program, based on requirements of the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle. The assessment program is based on the Code and its soundness has been tested on farms (Dairy Farmers of Canada, (n.d.)). Official roll-out on Canadian farms started with training for farmers in 2015 and farm validations in 2017 following the Food Safety (Canadian Quality Milk) validation schedule (Dairy Farmers of Canada, (n.d.)).

The animal health module of proAction reflects the industry values that animal health and well-being are a high priority on Canadian dairy farms. Also, farmers invest in technology and equipment and work with experts such as veterinarians and nutritionists to continually improve cow comfort (Dairy Farmers of Canada, (n.d.)).

**Pigs.** Pork producers in Alberta participate in the Canadian Quality Assurance Program (CQA), which is an on-farm program that applies to all federal plants (Canadian Pork Council, 2018a). The program was created to assure customers that Canadian pork producers are following standards of production that promote a safe and wholesome product (Canadian Pork Council, 2018a). The Canadian Pork Council owns and is responsible for the development of the program. Provincial organizations, including Alberta Pork, are responsible for program delivery and administration, while producers are responsible for the implementation of the program for their farm.

Validation, which includes auditing and inspection, is applied for through the CQA program. Qualified professionals, including veterinarians or animal scientists, visit producers' farms to determine whether they are meeting the requirements of the program (Canadian Pork Council, 2018a). The process is designed to ensure the program is implemented as documented and is effective in controlling or minimizing specific hazards.

The CQA is complimented by an Animal Care Assessment (ACA) guide. While CQA outlines standards for food safety, the ACA guide focuses on animal care practices. This guide was introduced by the Canadian Pork Council to help producers evaluate and improve animal care practices on their farms (Canadian Pork Council, 2018a). The council has stated its belief that because of the combination of ACA and CQA Canadian pork producers are considered among the best handlers of livestock internationally (Canadian Pork Council, 2018a).

Recently, Canadian producers and stakeholders have been updating the CQA and ACA programs with the support of provincial member associations and Canadian Pork Council staff. The updated CQA program will be called PigSAFE and the ACA program will be called PigCARE, with both integrated under the Canadian Pork Excellence umbrella (Canadian Pork Council, 2018b; 2018c). The NFACC Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pigs was released in 2014 (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2014).

**Poultry.** Poultry farming is the process of raising domesticated birds such as chickens and turkeys for meat or eggs. In Alberta, poultry are farmed in substantial numbers with chickens being the most numerous. Standards of care are outlined in the NFACC Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Hatching Eggs, Breeders, Chickens and Turkeys (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2016). This Code represents nationally developed guidelines for the care and handling of farm animals and serves as the industry model for animal care requirements and recommended practices.

Chickens – Industry approaches to animal care for meat chickens in Alberta are directed and coordinated nationally by Chicken Farmers of Canada (CFC) and provincially by Alberta Chicken Producers (ACP). The sector has stated that it is dedicated to ensuring that the stringent regulations related to the care and handling of chickens are met and followed.

As part of this, CFC has implemented an auditable Animal Care Program (ACP) to uphold the Canadian chicken industry's on-farm animal care standards (Chicken Farmers of Canada, 2018). Certification under the ACP is a mandatory condition of a producer's license to market chicken in Alberta (Chicken Farmers of Canada, 2018). All registered chicken farmers in Alberta have been certified under the ACP since 2012 (Chicken Farmers of Canada, 2018). Producers that operate with quota must be audited/verified under the ACP.

Hatching eggs – Industry approaches to animal care for chickens in Alberta are directed and coordinated nationally via Canadian Hatching Egg Producers (CHEP) and provincially by Alberta Hatching Egg Producers (AHEP). These organizations have stated that the producers it represents are deeply committed to the humane and respectful treatment of all animals in their care.

Canadian Hatching Egg Producers is in the process of implementing the CHEP Animal Care Program (ACP), an on-farm animal care assessment program for Canadian broiler hatching egg producers, which is designed to demonstrate current industry practices while also providing a framework for supporting continuous improvement of animal care for the industry (Canadian Hatching Egg Producers, 2018). The ACP is a mandatory, auditable program for Canadian hatching egg producers, based on the Code of Practice, including both internal audits and third-party audits (Canadian Hatching Egg Producers, 2018). CHEP expects this program will be fully implemented on-farm across Canada by the end of 2019 (Canadian Hatching Egg Producers, 2018). Producers that operate with quota must be audited/verified under the ACP.

Layers – Industry approaches to animal care for egg laying hens in Alberta are directed and coordinated nationally via Egg Farmers of Canada and provincially by Egg Farmers of Alberta. The care and well-being of egg laying hens are supported by the revised Code of Practice for the

Care and Handling of Pullets and Laying Hens, released in 2017 (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2017a). The Codes are part of a broader national Animal Care Program for the industry that also includes verification, auditing, continuous improvement and farmer commitment (Egg Farmers of Canada, 2016).

**Turkeys** – Industry approaches to animal care for turkeys in Alberta are directed and coordinated nationally via Turkey Farmers of Canada (TFC) and provincially by Alberta Turkey Producers. The sector has stated that it is committed to ensuring the humane care and respectful treatment of their birds while providing wholesome and safe food to consumers. All farmers who raise turkey in Canada must meet or exceed the national standards outlined in the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Hatching Eggs, Breeders, Chickens and Turkeys (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2016).

Turkey Farmers of Canada has also developed and implemented an auditable national Flock Care Program (FCP) to complement and augment the Code. The FCP applies the Code and requires detailed on-farm record-keeping and documentation to verify that farmers are meeting all requirements to properly handle and care for their birds (Turkey Farmers of Canada, 2018). This program includes both internal audits and third-party audits.

**Sheep.** Sheep producers in Alberta may participate in the Canadian Verified Sheep Program coordinated nationally by the Canadian Sheep Federation (CSF; Canadian Sheep Federation, 2018). Alberta Lamb has a strong focus on promoting the importance of animal welfare, recognizing that sheep that are well-treated are more productive and profitable.

Animal care resources adopted by the industry include the national NFACC Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Sheep (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2013b) and the Guide to Humane Care, Handling and Transportation of Sheep.

**Horses.** Alberta Equestrian Federation (AEF) is a significant group in Alberta and provides membership benefits such as insurance options for horses. There are many equine organizations and associations in Alberta, and many are part of national alliances, with organizations such as the Horse Welfare Alliance of Canada (HWAC) and Equestrian Canada (EC).

Animal care resources adopted by the equine industry in Alberta include the NFACC Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Equines (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2013c) and Humane Handling Guidelines for Horses, which is a resource providing standards for the care of compromised and unfit animals for Alberta's equine industry.

**Bison.** Alberta Bison producers follow livestock welfare standards provided in the newly updated Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Bison, developed through the NFACC facilitated the process as requested by the Canadian Bison Association (National Farm Animal

Care Council, 2017b). The Bison code contains requirements and recommendations on how bison should be fed, managed and handled throughout their following high standards of livestock welfare (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2017b).

**Goats.** Alberta Goat producers follow livestock welfare standards including those provided in the NFACC Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Goats (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2018d). This Code of Practice is currently under revision as of December 2018 with an aim to release a new revised Code in 2021.

**Farmed elk and deer.** Alberta farmed elk and deer producers follow livestock welfare standards including those provided in the Recommended Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farmed Deer (Canadian Agri-Food Research Council, 1996).

**Rabbits.** Rabbit producers follow livestock welfare standards including the NFACC Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Rabbits, which was released in 2018 (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2018e).

**Bees.** The honey bee industry is equipped with producer organizations in all provinces, including Alberta Beekeepers Commission. Bee care is supported by Apiary Acts and Regulations in most provinces, including Alberta, and federal regulation under Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). The primary resource for Canadian beekeepers, Canadian Bee Industry Safety Quality Traceability: Producer Manual is available through the Canadian Honey Council (Canadian Honey Council, 2014).

**Other.** Farmed mink and farmed fox operations follow livestock welfare standards, including respectively the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farmed Mink and the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farmed Fox (National Farm Animal Care Council, 2013d; 2013e). These NFACC Codes of Practice are both undergoing their five-year review at the time of this report.

**Overall.** Under the Criminal Code of Canada, it is illegal to willfully neglect, maim, wound or injure an animal (Government of Canada, 2018b). Provinces and territories also have laws regarding the care and treatment of farm animals.

Alberta livestock producers are subject to legislation which governs the treatment of animals, including Alberta's Animal Protection Act (Province of Alberta, 2010). In addition, livestock commodity and organizations, producer associations, and related sectors in Alberta adhere to science-based national and provincial standards and guidelines including national Codes of Practice.

All provincial livestock associations and organizations should be aware of the NFACC Codes of practice pertaining to their species. AFAC is a member of the executive council of NFACC and remains a committed partner in furthering the use and awareness of these Codes.

### **Important animal welfare organizations relevant to Alberta livestock industries**

The major organizations include:

**Alberta Farm Animal Care.** Alberta Farm Animal Care was started in 1993 by Alberta livestock producers. Throughout the past 25 years AFAC has developed into the collective voice of the Alberta livestock industry on matters of livestock welfare. It has provided a coordinated approach for all areas of livestock production to work together to advance and promote responsible livestock care.

Alberta Farm Animal Care's vision is that all farm animals in Alberta are respected, well-cared for and experience a high state of welfare. Its mission is to promote best practices in farm animal care and handling and provide a forum for connecting organizations and individuals with a stake in animal agriculture. Alberta Farm Animal Care works towards continuous improvement in responsible, humane animal care. It transparently engages with consumers to enhance public confidence in farm animal care.

**Alberta Agriculture and Forestry.** As a department of the Government of Alberta, part of AAF's mandate is to support a sustainable animal agriculture sector in the province. Alberta Agriculture and Forestry is active in numerous areas relevant to livestock production including animal welfare. The ministry is responsible for the policies, legislation, regulations, and services necessary for Alberta's agriculture, food and forest sectors to grow, prosper and diversify. This includes aspects that focus on animal welfare in animal agriculture.

**National Farm Animal Care Council.** The NFACC brings together diverse stakeholders to develop credible, science-informed Codes of Practice for the care and handling of farm animals. NFACC also creates a process for the development of animal care assessment programs, provides a forum for open dialogue on farm animal welfare, promotes Canada's approach internationally, and provides a link between government and other partners regarding farm animal care and welfare developments domestically and internationally.

**National Farm Animal Health and Welfare Council.** The National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council (NFAHW Council) was first envisioned in the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy which was completed in 2009 by a working group comprised of federal and provincial government and industry representatives with an interest in animal agriculture in Canada. The NFAHW Council was then formed as an advisory council by the Federal-

Provincial-Territorial regulatory assistant deputy ministers of the agriculture committee but reports to all stakeholders.

**Alberta Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.** The Alberta Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Alberta SPCA) is a registered charity dedicated to the welfare of animals. It encourages the humane treatment of animals through enforcement of animal protection legislation and education programs throughout Alberta. The vision of Alberta SPCA is that every animal in Alberta is treated humanely.

**Alberta Veterinary Medical Association.** The Alberta Veterinary Medical Association (ABVMA) is responsible for ensuring all veterinarians and veterinary technologists in the province are qualified to practice veterinary medicine. It has a primary mandate to ensure that the public is receiving quality veterinary service. Its jurisdiction covers veterinary activity across Alberta's livestock industries and the association has a leadership role in helping to direct industry approaches on matters of livestock health and welfare.

## 3.0 Preliminary Engagement

This session was conducted as an opportunity to gather preliminary input at a time when many industry representatives would be together for AFAC's Livestock Care Conference.

The Preliminary Engagement Session provided a chance to meet with industry representatives to help direct the consultation process. It offered an opportunity to start answering key questions about the state of livestock welfare in Alberta, including:

- In what areas is Alberta's livestock industry thriving?
- In what areas does Alberta's livestock industry need support?
- What areas can Alberta's livestock stakeholders work together to better the industry?

The session was attended by over 20 people representing a cross-section of the livestock industry. The information gathered was documented for the purposes of the project.

In addition, an LWEP information hub was set up at the conference in the exhibitor hall. It provided a place for people attending the Livestock Care Conference to learn more about the project.



### *Summary of discussion themes*

**Strong positive evolution for livestock welfare in Alberta.** Participants cited an Alberta livestock industry that has made steady progress in awareness, improvement in practices, communication and leadership on this issue over the years. Today the industry is well advanced in livestock welfare and is well positioned to maintain a leadership position moving forward into the future.

**Strong foundation of standards in place with additional steps coming, moving increasingly toward verified approaches.** Standout areas of progress have included the widespread adoption of Codes of Practice and more recently taking this foundation a step further via additional emphasis on animal care assessment programs. A key area of advancement has been leveraging earlier progress in on-farm food safety and quality programs and branching these into additional areas including animal welfare. Improved handling and standards for the welfare of animals during transport has been another key area of progress. Producers and others across the industry have far more and better knowledge, tools and resources than in past decades.

**Strong cooperation and teamwork across the industry is a significant asset.** Sharing knowledge and ideas, and looking for opportunities to collaborate, has been a signature of Alberta's evolving approach that should continue as it is a key advantage in moving ahead.

**Consumer values and perceptions are a major driver of action on livestock welfare.** There was strong consensus Alberta's livestock industry must be positive and proactive in managing these expectations.

**Marketing programs put forward by some retailers are a barrier to honest, science-based conversation.** Participants expressed frustration with the rise of misinformation in some instances but at the same time cautioned about defensive approaches. A somewhat negative climate of 'uncivil discourse' is a related challenge.

**Key supports for the industry include livestock welfare organizations assisting with industry awareness and progress.** Such as the NFACC nationally and AFAC provincially.

**The rise of more coordinated industry approaches overall is a major positive development.** Participants discussed seeing more focus among commodity groups in working together on areas of shared interest and benefit. Livestock welfare was viewed as a topic that should ideally be approached as a non-competitive issue – everyone in livestock production is essentially in it together on this issue.

**Inclusion of livestock welfare as a component of broad industry sustainability initiatives is also viewed positively.** Engagement through initiatives/projects such as the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef, Farm Animal Welfare Steering Committee, the VBP+ and proAction programs are top examples.

**Consensus that lots of progress has been made and anything new must be careful to support and not detract from or duplicate this.** The overall feeling of “let’s be careful not to re-invent the wheel.’

**Key priorities for the future include support at the producer level for best practices and investment in positive consumer engagement.** Communication, education and extension at many levels was viewed as one of the best areas of opportunity for high-value returns on the effort and resources invested.

**Working together is the foundation of Alberta’s vision for the future.** Participants indicated strong consensus that stakeholders across the industry should work together as much as possible in areas of shared interest. This is the best way forward for efficient progress.

**Mindset of moving ahead proactively and maintaining a steady pace of improvement.** Several participants spoke about the importance of the LWEP project and other welfare-related industry initiatives helping to power real action rather than just strategy.

## 4.0 Online Survey

The online survey was launched July 3, 2018, and closed October 31, 2018. It was open to anyone in Alberta who is involved in animal agriculture in the province. Individuals and organizations of all kinds across the industry were invited and encouraged to participate. Organizations that may have headquarters outside of Alberta but have an impact on Alberta’s livestock industry were invited to participate as well.

Sharing and redistribution of the survey was requested. Industry associations such as producer and commodity organizations were encouraged to circulate this information to their members and stakeholders. The survey was promoted via Industry Notice announcements distributed broadly to industry organizations and media. These announcements received strong media pickup further encouraging awareness and participation.

## **General information**

At the end of the survey period, a total of 588 completed survey responses had been received. Twenty-five were removed due to an incorrect role selected or a province other than Alberta selected where there was not strong relevance for Alberta. As a result, a total of 563 responses were accepted and analyzed.

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the survey respondents' reported role in Alberta's livestock industry. The majority of respondents (76%) completed the individual survey, followed by organizations (18%), students (4%), and abattoirs and auctions markets (2%). Roles of each respondent in Alberta's livestock industry was separated by survey type (organizational (Table 2), individual (Table 14), and abattoir and auction market (AAM; Table 50)).

Age ranges were reported by individual and student survey respondents (Figures 40 and 48, respectively). The majority of individual survey respondents were older than 30 years old (91%) and the majority of student respondent were between 18 and 29 years old (85%).

All respondents were asked with which sectors of the livestock industry they interact. Respondents were able to select more than one option, as organizations, businesses and individuals can focus or raise more than one species. The organizational respondents were asked under which sectors of the livestock industry their organization operated (Figure 3). The most commonly selected sectors included beef (52%), equine (40%), sheep (36%), swine (36%), dairy (34%), and chicken (31%). The individual respondents were asked with which sectors of the livestock industry they operated or worked (Figure 41). The most commonly selected sectors included beef (66%) and equine (23%). The AAM respondents were asked what type of livestock their businesses received (Figure 55). The most commonly selected types of livestock received by these businesses included beef (71%), dairy (57%), sheep (43%), and swine (43%). The student respondents were asked what sectors of the livestock industry they study (Figure 49). The most commonly selected sectors included veterinary (46%), beef (38%), equine (38%), goat (38%), dairy (31%), sheep (31%), and swine (31%). Overall, the sectors selected by the respondents were consistent with the species commonly raised in Alberta.

## **Perceptions of respondents on animal welfare's influence on Alberta's livestock industry**

Survey respondents were asked to rate their degree of agreement with the statement "animal welfare is growing in importance to Alberta's livestock industry." Of the organization (n=65), AAM (n=7), individual (n=319), and student (n=13) respondents, the majority agreed, to some extent with the statement (87%, 100%, 78%, 61%, respectively; Figure 1).

When asked to explain their ranking of the statement "animal welfare is growing in importance to Alberta's livestock industry" many organizational, AAM, and individual respondents expressed that animal welfare has always been a priority in the industry. A small proportion of those respondents elaborated that animal welfare is positively correlated to animal productivity and ease of handling, therefore, it's a logical part of an agricultural business model's success. There was an acknowledgement by AAM respondents that prior business methods needed to change and by all respondents that improvements have been made in the livestock industry and that more needed to be done.

Specifically, organizational and AAM respondents acknowledged assurance programs, NFACC Codes of Practices, and commodity group efforts as contributors to these changes. It should be noted, that a small proportion of individual and student respondents noted an inconsistency in the implementation of these changes in the livestock industry. For example, some producers have adopted new practices to improve their animals' welfare, while others have not. Some respondents commented that those that do not implement these practices may not be aware of the change, and encourage further producer education, or that they do not wish to perform the changes. In that case, respondents felt that those producers gave their industry a poor image that may be applied to the entire sector. Some individual respondents expressed a desire to see stricter enforcement of applicable legislation (e.g. Alberta Animal Protection Act) to those that abuse animals, for the overall improvement of animal welfare and the betterment of the industry.

The majority of respondents highlighted that there had been an increase in public/consumer awareness and concern for animal welfare and a rise in public demand to know where their food comes from. An issue raised with this demand was that the public is disconnected from agriculture as a whole. Some individual respondents also noted pressure from governments and marketing agencies to report on their practices.

All respondents mentioned the increase in social media and general media attention to animal welfare in the livestock industry. They related this increase both to the rise in public awareness and to the enhanced ways in which the industry can communicate with the public. However, organization and individual respondents noted that not all information shared on these forums is accurate. Specifically, organizational and individual respondents mentioned that the livestock industry competes with extremist groups, such as animal rights groups, when sharing information with the public. Some respondents noted a lack of transparency in the livestock industry and expressed a desire to see this increased to improve the industry's social license.

## **Perceptions of respondents on animal welfare's influence on Alberta's agricultural competitiveness and market acceptance**

Survey respondents were also asked to rate their degree of agreement with the statement “animal welfare is a critical component of Alberta's agricultural competitiveness and market acceptance.” Of the organization (n=65), AAM (n=7), individual (n=315), and student (n=12) respondents, the majority, once again, agreed, to some extent, with the statement (84%, 86%, 78%, 50%, respectively, Figure 2).

Individual and organizational respondents often commented that animal welfare has always been important and common sense to the industry. Again, they acknowledge that animal welfare was linked to the success of an operation's productivity and profitability, and, by association, Canada's livestock industry.

Individual respondents acknowledged that there is economic stress to the industry with the demand to change their practices. Such as the cost of barn remodeling and veterinary expenses.

Individuals also commented that there was a lack of, or an inconsistency in, the enforcement of regulations across the industry. However, others mentioned that over-regulation of the sector would restrict the industry in moving forward.

All respondents acknowledged that consumer interest and demand for ‘humane’ practices impact the marketability of Alberta's livestock industry's products. However, many individual respondents stated that producers already meet their animals’ needs.

Furthermore, respondents expressed concern that the public is disconnected from agriculture. To bridge this gap in knowledge, respondents expressed the importance of educating the public, increasing the industry's transparency, and improving consumer understanding.

Social media and media, in general, were viewed as a significant influence on public perceptions. However, respondents often mentioned that the quality of the information was not consistent. Some respondents felt that animal rights groups spread a negative message about the livestock industry that impacted its marketability.

On the other hand, organizational and individual respondents were unclear if animal welfare was a legitimate consumer driver, as they did not have evidence that consumers were changing their buying habits for what would be viewed as more ‘humane methods.’ Individual and student respondents expressed the opinion that consumers were more interested in the cost of food than other factors. Respondents acknowledged that market competitiveness is driven by many factors, including animal welfare, sustainability, and food safety.

In addition to public demand, respondents recognized that retailers and marketers have a growing interest in animal care and are demonstrating this through their advertising. Organizational and

individual respondents acknowledged that market demand for improved animal welfare was connected to market acceptance, global trade and the national image of Canada's industry. Individuals commented that Alberta is responding to this demand and leading the way on standards, food quality and animal care.

Organizational and AAM respondents were asked to rank their organization's or business's activities, against each other, regarding animal welfare (Figures 4 and 56, respectively). Overall, the rankings of the organization and AAM respondents was similar. Both groups ranked communications, education and extension, and standards and procedures higher than research and assurance programs. Research was also ranked lowest for both groups. Similarly, individual and student respondents were asked to rank activities in order of what they believe to be most important to animal welfare (Figures 42 and 50, respectively). Individual and student respondents ranked activities similar to organizational and AAM respondents.

Organizational and AAM respondents were asked to rank their organizations' or businesses' role in improving animal welfare in Alberta, on a scale of one to ten (one being the worst and ten being the best; Figures 5 and 57, respectively). The majority of organizational and AAM respondents ranked their organization or business as a seven or higher (71% and 85%, respectively).

### ***STANDARDS AND POLICIES***

Organizational and AAM respondents were asked what standards of care and policies they refer to in their activities (Figures 6 and 58, respectively). Organizational respondents most commonly reported referencing the Health of Animals Act (HAA; 54%), NFACC's Codes of Practice (51%), federal transportation of animals regulations (i.e. Compromised Animal Policy, Health of Animals Regulations Part XII; 46%), and the Animal Protection Act (APA; 44%). Abattoir and auction market respondents most commonly reported referencing the Meat Inspection Act (MIA; 57%) and federal transportation of animals regulations (43%).

Overall, 46% of organizational respondents (n=29/63) and 43% of AAM respondents (n=3/7) reported that their organization or business had its own written procedures. Of those organizational respondents that did not report to have written procedures, 9% (n=3/35) were currently preparing procedures and 14% (n=5/35) were planning to do so in the future. Of those AAM respondents that did not report to have written procedures, 25% (n=1/4) were currently preparing procedures.

Organizational and AAM respondents were also asked to rate standards of care and policies, that they were familiar with, in relation to their helpfulness to their organization and business (Figures 7 and 59, respectively).

Overall, when taking comments of ‘extremely helpful’ and ‘very helpful’ together, the most helpful standards of care and policies reported by organizational respondents included the National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada (67%), NFACC’s Codes of Practice (65%), the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy (57%), the Livestock Identification and Commerce Act (LICA; 50%), and the HAA (50%). Similarly, the most helpful standards of care and policies reported by AAM respondents included the MIA (83%), the LICA (75%), the Criminal Code of Canada (CCC; 75%), the National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada (67%), NFACC’s Codes of Practice (67%), the APA (67%), and federal transportation of animals regulations (60%).

The individual and student respondents were asked how familiar they were with standards of care and policies and, if familiar, to rate the helpfulness of those documents to Alberta’s livestock industry (Tables 15 to 26 and Tables 32 to 43, respectively). Of the standards of care and policies, those that were most commonly reported by individual and student respondents as being ‘not at all familiar’ with included the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy (41% and 64%, respectively), the National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada (39% and 82%, respectively), the Animal Keepers Act (AKA; 37% and 64%, respectively), NFACC’s Codes of Practice (32% and 64%, respectively), and MIA (55%, student respondents only). Of the standards of care and policies, those that were most commonly reported by individual respondents as being ‘very familiar’ or ‘extremely familiar’ with, included the LICA (48%), the CCC (43%), the federal transportation of animals regulations (42%), and the HAA (35%). Of the standards of care and policies, those that were most commonly reported by student respondents as being ‘very familiar’ or ‘extremely familiar’ with, included the Veterinary Profession Act (VPA; 36%), the Traffic Safety Act (TSA; 36%), the HAA (27%), and the CCC (27%).

Overall, when taking comments of ‘extremely helpful’ and ‘very helpful’ together, the most helpful standards of care and policies reported by individual respondents included the MIA (61%), the LICA (49%), federal transportation of animals regulations (49%), and the VPA (49%). Similarly, the most helpful standards of care and policies reported by student respondents included the VPA (85%), the CCC (66%), the APA (63%), the LICA (63%), and the MIA (57%).

## ***RESEARCH***

Organizational and AAM respondents were asked if their organization or business participates in animal welfare research. Of those that responded, 47% of the organizational respondents (n=27/57) and 29% of the AAM respondents (n=2/7).

The individual and student respondents were asked to rank on a scale of one to five (one being not at all important and five being very important), how important they believed animal welfare research is to Alberta's livestock industry (Figures 43 and 51, respectively). The majority of individual and student respondents reported that they believed that animal welfare research is important (32% and 45%, respectively) and very important (31% and 18%, respectively).

Organizational and AAM respondents were asked in which areas of research, related to animal welfare, their organization or business was currently participating (Figure 8 and Table 51). The most common areas of research in which organizational respondents reported to be presently participating included animal management practices (73%), antimicrobial use (62%), biosecurity (54%), and research supporting standards and policies (50%). Organizational respondents that participated in research, most commonly reported academic institutions (80%), producers (76%), governments (68%), livestock commodity groups (56%), and research groups (52%) as their collaborators in research (Figure 9).

Of the 49 organizational respondents that reported the animal welfare research areas in which they were planning to participate (Figure 10), the most common were animal management practices (49%), biosecurity (37%), and research supporting standards and policies (37%). Additionally, 29% of respondents indicated that they were not planning to participate in research.

Organizational respondents were asked what they viewed as motivators and barriers towards participating in research (Figures 11 and 12, respectively). The most common motivators reported included consumer demand (51%), producer demand (51%), and regulations and guidelines (51%). The most common barriers reported included lack of resources (57%) and funding (54%).

Only two out of seven AAM respondents reported to be currently participating in research. Topics of research included animal management practices, assurance program activities, emergency management, extension materials, transportation, and research supporting standards and policies. Collaborators in the research reported by abattoirs and auction markets included academic institutions, animal welfare groups, and governments (Table 52).

Of the seven AAM respondents that reported what animal welfare research areas they were planning to participate in (Table 53), the most common were slaughter (43%), animal management practices (29%), and research to support standards and policies (29%). Additionally, 43% of respondents indicated that they were not planning to participate in research. Abattoir and auction market respondents were asked what they viewed as motivators and barriers towards participating in research (Figures 54 and 55, respectively). The most common motivators reported included regulations and guidelines (57%), producer demand (29%), and processor demand (29%). The most common barriers reported included misalignment of



priorities between stakeholders (43%), lack of industry direction (43%), lack of communication (43%), and funding (43%).

Individual and student respondents were also asked which areas of research, related to animal welfare, they believe should be the focus in Alberta's livestock industry (Tables 27 and 44, respectively). The most common areas of research selected by individual respondents included animal management practices (77%), transportation (57%), biosecurity (54%), and communication materials (50%). The most common areas of research selected by student respondents included animal management practices (82%), slaughter (73%), producer mental health (55%), and transportation (55%).

## ***COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION AND EXTENSION***

### ***Communication***

Of the organizational respondents, 51% (n=20/39) reported that they offered training to its staff on speaking to the public on animal welfare. Conversely, 17% (n=1/6) of AAM respondents reported that they provided similar training to its staff. Organizational and AAM respondents reported what they believed to be the most important animal welfare-related topics to communicate to the public, producers and industry stakeholders (Figures 13 and 60, respectively). Both respondent types had similar selections on topics for specific audiences. For example, both believed that animal welfare in general and 'telling your story' (i.e. public trust related) should be greatly focused towards the public.

Additionally, both respondents reported the channels that their organization or business used to communicate with the public, producers and industry stakeholder (Figures 14 to 26 and Figures 61 to 73, respectively). The most common channels reported by organizational respondents included one-on-one, organizational events, print materials, social media, website, and word of mouth. The most common channels reported by AAM respondents included AAM events, school events, one-on-one, and word of mouth.

The majority (72%; n=31/43) of organizational respondents indicated that their organization collaborated with other groups in their communication activities. The most common collaborators that organizational respondents reported (Table 3) included producers (71%), governments (68%), livestock commodity groups (68%), animal welfare groups (61%), and academic institutions (54%). Conversely, only 33% (n=2/6) of the AAM respondents indicated that their business collaborated in their communication activities (collaborators are described in Table 56).

The most common communication topics that individual respondents selected (Table 28) on which they would like to receive information related to animal welfare, included low-stress handling (61%), changes to policies and regulations (54%), production practices (53%), and best practices (51%). The most common channels selected by individual respondents to receive communications from industry organizations (Table 29) included websites (61%), social media (50%), print media (49%), print materials (46%), and industry organizational events (42%).

Similarly, the most common communication topics that student respondents selected (Table 45) on which they would like to receive information related to animal welfare, included best practices (82%), low-stress handling (82%), slaughter practices (82%), euthanasia (73%), production practices (73%), emergency management and preparation (55%), traceability practices (55%), and transportation practices (55%). The most common channels selected by student respondents on which to receive communications from industry organizations (Table 46) included social media (82%), public events (64%), school events (64%), and broadcast media (55%).

### ***Education***

Forty-nine percent (n=20/41) of organization respondents and 33% (n=2/6) of AAM respondents reported that their organization or business offered animal welfare-focused educational resources and activities to students. Organizational and AAM respondents were asked to report which grades they offered these resources and activities, how they provide these resources and activities, and who delivered these resources to students (Tables 4 to 6 and 57 to 59, respectively).

The most common grades in which organizational respondents reported to offer resources and activities was grades one through six (67%) and post-secondary (56%). Organizations most commonly reported using paid staff, without a designation for education, to deliver resources and activities to students (65%). Organizational and AAM respondents reported who they collaborated with when creating these resources and activities (Tables 7 and 60, respectively). Organizational respondents commonly reported collaborating with academic institutions (59%), animal welfare groups (59%), teachers or teacher associations (53%), and livestock commodity groups (41%).

Both organizational and AAM respondents were asked what they viewed as motivators and barriers towards the creation and distribution of educational resources and activities for students (Tables 8 and 9 and Tables 61 and 62, respectively). The most common motivators selected by organizational respondents included it being the right thing to do (73%), to educate youth in agriculture (70%), to dispel misinformation (70%), and to recruit youth into agriculture (51%). The most common barriers selected by organizational respondents included funding (58%),

resources (56%), and time (56%). Similarly, the most common motivators selected by AAM respondents was to educate youth in agriculture (100%) and to dispel misinformation (60%), and barriers included funding (100%), resources (50%), time (50%), and travel restraints (50%).

The majority of student respondents (62%, n=8/13) indicated that they did participate in educational activities for students, while 38% (n=90/235) of individual respondents indicated that they did the same.

The individual and student respondents were asked to rank on a scale of one to five (one being not at all important and five being very important), the importance of animal welfare-focused educational resources and activities for students (Figures 44 and 52, respectively). The majority of individual and student respondents reported that they believed that animal welfare-focused educational resources and activities is important (26% and 18%, respectively) and very important (49% and 64%, respectively).

Both individual and student respondents were asked what animal welfare topics they believed should be of focus for student educational activities, by grade ranges (Figures 45 and 53, respectively). Both respondent types had similar trends in focus, they both believed that more emphasis should be given to topics at older grades. Except for the ‘telling your story’ topic, which received equal focus across the grades.

Student respondents, as well as individual respondents that may also have been students, were asked what methods of delivery they found to be most effective for educational resources and activities (Tables 47 and 30, respectively). Both respondent types reported most commonly that the most effective methods of delivery were hands-on activities (91% and 74%, respectively) and in-person activities (82% and 71%, respectively).

### ***Extension***

Over half of organizational respondents (55%; n=22/40) and one AAM respondent (20%; n=1/5) reported to offer animal welfare-focused activities, initiatives, and other extension-related resources to its producers. The most commonly reported topics by organizational respondents for their extension-related resources (Table 10) included best practices (86%), low-stress handling (76%), changes to policies and regulations (71%), responsible antimicrobial use (71%), transportation practices (67%), and updates on current research (67%).

Organizational respondents were asked to report on how they delivered extension resources that they offered to producers (Figures 27 to 38). The most common methods of delivery were print materials, print media, seminars and conferences, and websites. When asked to report who they collaborate with in any of their extension activities, organizational respondents (Table 11) most

commonly reported governments (84%), academic institutions (74%), producers (74%), livestock commodity groups (63%), and animal welfare groups (53%).

Abattoir and auction market respondents were also asked to select what topics their extension resources covered (Table 63). The one respondent that offered these resources indicated that their business offered a specific program that provides education and training to producers, veterinary students, and practitioners. Methods of delivery included seminars, conferences and workshops. The single business that delivered education and extension activities to their producers collaborated with academic institutions.

Both organizational and AAM respondents were asked what they viewed as motivators and barriers towards the creation and distribution of education and extension activities to producers (Tables 12 and 13 and Tables 64 and 65, respectively). The most common motivators selected by organizational respondents included producer demand (73%) and consumer demand (63%). The most common barriers selected by organizational respondents included funding (67%), lack of resources (50%), and lack of producer participation (47%). Similarly, the most common motivators selected by AAM respondents was processor demand (100%), producer demand (100%), and consumer demand (67%) and barriers included lack of industry direction (100%) and lack of producer participation (67%).

The majority of individual and student respondents indicated that they participated in animal welfare-focused extension activities (78%; n=193/247 and 69%; n=9/13, respectively). Individual and student respondents were asked to select what topics they would like to receive from industry organizations related to animal welfare extension and what the best channels were to receive that information (Table 31 and Figure 46 and Tables 48 and 49, respectively). The most common topics selected by individuals was changes to policies and regulations (69%), updates on current research (68%), low-stress handling (67%), and responsible antimicrobial use (57%). The most preferred channels selected by individuals was seminars and conferences (52%), websites (50%), print media (49%), and workshops (49%).

Furthermore, the most common topics selected by students was low-stress handling (73%), emergency management and preparation (64%), euthanasia practices (55%), producer mental health (55%), and updates on current research (55%). The most preferred channels selected by students were social media (73%) and websites (64%).

### ***ASSURANCE PROGRAMS***

Of the organizational respondents, 21% (n=8/38) indicated that their organization had an assurance program. Of those eight organizations that reported to have an assurance program, three identified as livestock commodity groups, two as animal welfare groups, one as a feed and

nutritional company, one as a government agency, and one as a research organization. None of the abattoirs or auction market respondents indicated that they have in-house animal care measures, such as surveillance of stunning and slaughter areas.

Of the individual respondents, 32% (n=79/244) indicated that they participated in an assurance program. Of those 79 individuals that reported that they participate in an assurance program, 73% identified as a producer, 9% as an animal owner, 9% as a veterinarian, 2% as an abattoir employee, and 1% as a farm employee.

All respondent types (organizational, AAM, individual, and student) were asked to rank, on a scale of one to five (one being not at all useful and five being very useful), how useful they believed assurance programs were to Alberta's livestock industry (Figures 39, 74, 47, and 54, respectively). That majority of all respondents ranked assurance programs 'fairly' to 'very' useful to Alberta's livestock industry.

## 5.0 Regional Focus Groups

The next phase of the project centred on conducting Regional Focus Groups across Alberta. The purpose of this component was to allow for an enhanced level of discussion that would complement the approach undertaken via the Online Survey.

### **Approach**

While the survey allowed for strong data collection, the Regional Focus Groups were designed to provide a format that would allow for a greater depth of elaboration and sharing of viewpoints. The Regional Focus Groups would yield insights into the reasoning behind survey responses. They would also allow for views to be captured that may not have been covered by the specific survey questions.

In all, five Regional Focus Group sessions were conducted in five different regions that served collectively to cover all parts of the province. This approach allowed for a relatively balanced representation of the different regions. It also allowed for similarities and differences among the viewpoints expressed by different areas to be easily observed.

## **Locations**

Sites selected to host the focus groups were Alberta agricultural colleges in each region, with sessions conducted from late September through late October.

The five sessions included:

- Grande Prairie Regional College – Fairview, Alberta, Sept. 20
- Lethbridge College – Lethbridge, Alberta, Sept. 25
- Olds College – Olds, Alberta, Oct. 2
- University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Oct. 10
- Lakeland College, Vermilion, Alberta, Oct. 25

## **Participants**

Participants for the sessions were arranged in one of two ways. First, the online survey had included a question asking respondents if they wished to participate in and receive an invitation to these groups. In addition, information on the focus groups was announced and others interested in participating were invited to register for the session in their region.

The overall aim was to keep the focus group participation at a modest and easy-to-manage level. This would allow for the type of in-depth group discussion and back-and-forth exchange of views that would be hard to achieve in larger groups.

## **Format**

Each session was conducted as a one-day format, typically running from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. with a lunch break. This varied slightly by group.

The format began with introductions followed by an opening presentation. The opening presentation, delivered by the project lead/lead facilitator, provided background information on the project as a whole, described the role of the Regional Focus Groups and introduced the agenda and objectives for the day.

The opening presentation then led into the main part of the agenda by introducing information from a preliminary analysis of the online survey results. (This information was based on survey participation and results received up to Aug. 31).

This began the structure that would be followed for the remainder of the day:

- Preliminary analysis of online survey results would be presented (one by one for each main topic area).
- This was followed by the presentation of a related question(s) on this topic for discussion in small groups (typically several groups of five to six people each plus a facilitator/scribe).
- Small groups then reported discussion summaries to the full group, followed by time for additional full group discussion.

This process was repeated for each agenda topic, with typically 20-30 minutes of small group discussion followed by five to ten minutes of reporting for each small group to the full group, followed by ten to 15 minutes of additional full group discussion.

## **Topics**

Each facilitated discussion session was organized around a question(s) covering each of the major topic areas that had been included in the survey:

- General Discussion (views on evolution of animal welfare in Alberta)
- Standards and Policies
- Research
- Communication, Education and Extension
- Assurance Programs
- Closing Discussion (time permitting . . . open opportunity to raise additional points)

## **Anonymity**

Participants were advised that individuals would not be identified in the project summary report and that responses provided during the session would remain anonymous.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

### **Topic #1: General discussion on the evolution of animal welfare in Alberta**

**Livestock welfare in Alberta has always been a core value of the industry.** Animal care and welfare is what producers and the industry do every day. It is the core of raising livestock. In the past, the term “welfare” was not commonly used. However, for the vast majority of those involved in caring for and raising livestock what is identified today as welfare has always been a top focus. If animals are not well cared for and their welfare is not supported, the result is not good for anyone involved. That has always been the case. Today there is a far deeper

understanding of welfare and how it can be optimized to benefit the animals as well as production.

**Today the term ‘livestock welfare’ has a much higher profile.** This language is now clearly identified as a significant part of the discussion about raising livestock ethically, sustainably and profitably. This makes it easier to rally awareness, resources and innovation to make continuous improvement in managing this aspect of the industry.

**Livestock welfare in Alberta has come a long way.** Alberta has a proud history as a pioneer and leader in industry-driven progress on livestock welfare. It has a strong track record of advancing Alberta’s approach to this issue both within and outside the industry. Looking back over 30, 20, ten years there has been strong consistent progress on all major fronts. Particularly in the past decade the pace of progress has spiked as the profile of this issue both within and outside the industry has hit an all-time high.

**Expectations surrounding animal welfare have evolved considerably.** A gap has persisted and, in some ways, grown between industry and the public. A large portion of the industry has made considerable progress in improving animal welfare practices, but a small portion has remained difficult to reach. Animal rights groups and misinformation have created a greater challenge for the industry in how it is perceived. Overall, the industry has made steady progress. With a younger generation becoming more involved in agriculture there is more openness to change and greater recognition of how important animal welfare is to the industry brand.

**Alberta is headed in the right direction.** Alberta’s long-standing mindset of being proactive on livestock welfare has continued and the future looks bright as a result. There is a strong overall feeling that the industry has done a good job of continually getting better in managing this issue and the momentum that has been built continues to be aimed in the right direction. Alberta is seen as very well-positioned in its mindset and focused on this issue moving forward.

**The industry has made great progress in addressing livestock welfare at the production level.** The industry’s approach to livestock welfare has steadily become more advanced and sophisticated, with continuous improvement stemming from growing knowledge, innovations, standards and best practices. As a result, the welfare of animals involved in animal agriculture in Alberta today is “leaps and bounds” ahead of where it was in previous generations.

**There is room for improvement in expanding reach and listening to those outside the industry.** There has been a dramatic change in animal care practices. Industry initiatives have driven a lot of what has been accomplished, but rising questions and expectations from outside the industry have played an influential role overall.



**Need to keep finding better ways to deal with bad actors, even though they are a small minority.** Within the industry, the mainstream has come a long way, but there is a fringe that still needs to be addressed.

**The industry has made significant progress in addressing livestock welfare at the consumer level.** This remains an ongoing challenge, but the industry has shown major advancements in a number of areas that can be communicated to the public and showcase how the industry is delivering science-based, transparent, high-quality animal welfare approaches. This will likely always be one of the toughest aspects to address as the public is less connected to agriculture, but it is nonetheless an area where the industry is far more engaged and now better positioned than it was in the past.

**The rise of social license and consumer value considerations has been a major factor.** Several factors have led to much higher scrutiny of agricultural practices. In addition, consumers have shown a growing interest in how their food is produced. Today the livestock industry is coming to accept the idea that animal agriculture in Alberta must continually build trust and not just show but prove responsible practices in order to maintain a “social license to operate.” As a result, all aspects of animal agriculture have become more sensitive and attuned to consumer perceptions and those in the sector are conscious of what they can say, do and prove to help the industry address the consumer values and expectations.

**Sharing knowledge and ideas across sectors is critical to the future.** Alberta’s diverse livestock sectors have collectively come to a much greater understanding and appreciation that they are in it together when meeting the challenge of addressing rising expectations around animal welfare. There is much greater momentum for learning from one another and helping one another on this issue. A growing consensus was that where possible, industry should speak with a united voice and benefit from opportunities to align approaches. With challenges such as limited resources the more industry can share knowledge and ideas, and work together, the more successful animal agriculture in Alberta will be.

**A mindset of continuous improvement is critical to the future.** Aligned with the previous point, there is growing broad acceptance that animal welfare must evolve into a framework of continuous improvement. The job is never done. Just like other aspects of animal agriculture, healthy and sustainable industries must always be looking to innovate and get better on animal welfare. There has been a noted improvement in overall mindset on this issue with far less defensive and responsive approaches and far more proactive approaches.

**Generational change is a key factor moving forward.** The next generation is broadly viewed as a positive for livestock welfare in Alberta as the understanding, progressive mindset and openness to change and innovation tends to become greater. A challenge the industry has faced is

a small segment of producers and others set in their ways and not interested in making changes. This issue will in no small extent solve itself as natural generation shifts occur.

**Connection in all forms – communication, education, extension, cooperation is essential to Alberta’s success.** There is a broad and growing acceptance that engagement breeds understanding and progress. There is more willingness to not operate in isolation or in silos but to reach, learn from one another, and help each other advance. Today Alberta’s animal agriculture sector is far more inter-connected and engaged and inclined to engage in and be active in discussing and driving the latest developments than it has been in past generations.

**National and international alignment is essential.** Animal welfare understanding has evolved to the point where there is a much greater appreciation that Alberta’s approach to this issue benefits from alignment with what broader jurisdictions are doing. There is greater understanding that going it alone is often counterproductive. Animal welfare is an issue greater than any one jurisdiction or sector. The more stakeholders are on the same page and aligned in approaches the better in terms of efficiency, managing consumer expectations and many other advantages.

**Alberta has the opportunity to lead and should embrace this opportunity.** Alberta has been a pioneer and leader in industry-driven animal welfare approaches not only in Canada but more broadly internationally. Today it continues to have a strong leadership opportunity, and there are many potential rewards based on the extent to which it can capture this opportunity. There was strong feeling expressed that Alberta should endeavour to be among the leaders on industry-driven livestock welfare advancement continuously into the future.

## **Topic #2: Standards and Policies**

**Standards and policies are very important to the industry.** Within the industry, they provide a foundation for making sure everyone is keeping up with the best practices. Outside the industry, they show that proper practices are being followed. The most recognized, helpful and valuable have been the Codes of Practice. While many producers embrace and take pride in following standards, a challenge is how to address the minority who don’t.

**Alberta has a strong foundation of standards and policies which are essential moving forward.** This is a major asset and foundation to build upon. The list of specific policies and standards relevant to Alberta is long. There is a need for improved clarity on roles and how to use these. However, by and large producers and industry know what they need to know and are aware of the standards and policies that are most relevant to them regarding practical application. Alberta does not lack for standards and policies, and those referenced for practical use are

relatively up-to-date and in a framework that allows for regular review and updating to keep them current and relevant into the future.

**Codes and assessment programs are top areas of progress.** The most recognized, helpful and valuable standards for day-to-day use have been the Codes of Practice. More recently industry is taking this foundation a step further and progressing to animal care assessment programs.

**Standards and policies work best when they are developed with input from the industry.** There was a strong consensus that it is far better when the industry is proactive and works cooperatively with other stakeholders rather than having standards and policies imposed from outside. The industry is in the best position to identify approaches that not only support optimal welfare but are also practical to implement while upholding productivity.

**It's important to communicate to the public that responsible standards and policies are in place.** One of the most important aspects of standards and policies is their use as a resource to show the public what industry is doing in relation to animal welfare. Communication on this is a priority to support the social license of animal agriculture in Alberta.

**Communication is key within the industry to help make standards and policies easy to understand and follow.** The industry is doing well overall but has room to improve related to building a greater depth of knowledge about standards and policies and their adoption by producers and others working with animals. Improvements in communication, including everything from better translation to making the information interesting and more accessible, can go a long way to help. The industry is getting better at this, and it remains a top priority moving forward.

**Producers/industry people don't need to know all in detail – they need to know what is relevant to them and where to get the information when they need it.** There is an argument that there is more of a need to help people navigate how to get what they need than there is in having them achieve a high depth of knowledge on everything, which is not realistic.

**National and international alignment is important.** As with other areas of animal welfare in livestock production, there are advantages when Alberta's approaches are aligned with national and international approaches. This is particularly important regarding standards and policies since livestock industries cross over into multiple jurisdictions and having significant differences in the rules and expectations may lead to inefficiencies and problems.

**It's critical that standards and policies are based on science and industry input.** There is greater recognition that industry needs to connect with consumers and the public on values, but there is a strong belief it should not sacrifice a focus on science as the basis of all standards and

policies. This is the best way to ensure welfare approaches are “real” and not just a ‘public relations’ exercise. It’s the only approach that can create true long-term sustainability. Standards and policies that impact on-the-ground production are best when they are science-based and industry-driven. Top examples such as the Codes of Practice, VBP+, and proAction have all achieved this. Beyond these mainstream programs, there is room for better clarity and streamlining about the roles of other standards and policies.

**Alberta has achieved a balance of standards and policies.** There is a good mix between those that address potential problems and those that are positive and proactive in helping the industry with continuous improvement and leadership.

### **Topic #3: Research**

**Research related to livestock welfare is important to the industry.** Producers have a range of priorities where research can help with improved understanding and solutions. As the industry evolves, it needs a strong base of continual research to support that evolution.

**Improved clarity is needed regarding what research is being conducted and how research direction and priorities are tied to industry needs.** While numerous examples of research success stand out to different individuals and sectors, there’s an overall lack of awareness from a more comprehensive perspective about the research taking place and how that ties to the needs of animal agriculture.

**There is a gap in getting research translated and transferred for industry use.** Extension was raised as a large gap in the industry. Research is great but goes nowhere on its own. Resources are needed to get research translated and implemented. Too often the research is done but is not having the impact it could in reaching producers and resulting in changes in practices.

**Research that has practical, usable outcomes for the industry is favoured.** There is a need for research to be more industry driven. There is a feeling that more research focused on practical solutions is needed. However, this is the type of research that sometimes struggles to get funding. An important role for research is helping industry manage change (i.e. helping it transition to new approaches and requirements).

**Benchmarking needs research – you can’t manage what you don’t measure.** An important role of research is providing science-based data and information to back industry practices.

#### **Topic #4: Communication, Education and Extension**

**Communication, education and extension taken together represent an area that has a significant influence on Alberta's success in managing animal welfare.** This was cited actively as an area of need and priority that has an impact on all areas of animal welfare progress.

**Extension stood out as an area that has fallen behind and needs more support.** Within the industry, there is a need for more face-to-face connection. Funding was viewed as the greatest limiting factor. Often the material is there, but there is a gap in the support needed to get this information in front of producers.

**Strategic use of resources is a priority.** It is challenging to reach everyone, and it may be better to have more focused strategies in areas that that can make a real difference.

**Metrics that matter are needed to help evaluate approaches.** A lot is being done, but the question is how to measure what is useful.

**Need to support new programs that are making gains.** There are a number of good education and training-oriented programs and events that have been introduced or strengthened in recent years. We need to support and build on these with a priority on expanding the reach.

**A proactive mindset is gaining widespread traction across the industry.** Agriculture has a better understanding of its messages and the need for everyone to play a role in “telling our story.”

**Speaking with a united voice has never been more critical.** Part of communication, education and extension is making sure we are as clear and consistent as we can be in the language we use and how we talk about this across each area. The industry has made a lot of progress in speaking clearly and with a more consistent united voice.

**A challenge is a gap between people in agriculture and those who are not connected to agriculture.** Animal agriculture has come a long way and made lots of improvement in its messages and engagement with the public. However, this is a huge task and will always likely be an area that needs as much support as possible. Leveraging relationships with partners can help agriculture have a stronger voice despite limitations on resources.

**Modernization needs a closer look.** It's a new era as far as the different ways communication, education and extension can happen. We need to look at the full toolbox of options and have ways to measure what is effective.

## **Topic #5: Assurance Programs**

**Assurance programs are becoming essential.** There are different views on value versus investment for the industry, and the pros and cons of different types of programs, but the consensus was that participation in assurance programs is quickly becoming a must. It's not enough today for the industry to say it is doing the right thing. It must also "prove it," and that is why assurance is needed. Assurance programs bring consistency and standardization that is so valuable to both the management and brand of the industry.

**Critical to addressing social license, meeting consumer and public expectations.** This is the "prove it" piece critical to showing consumers and the public that we are doing the right things with animal welfare.

**The major sector-specific programs have made great progress and are a huge asset.** The big industry-driven programs are generally excellent and on the right track as they continue to develop. Every livestock species sector is different though and needs to design programs that work best for their specific industry. While it has been an asset to have the primary sectors' programs well-aligned in both how they are designed and communicated, there is still work to do among some of the diverse species. Because of the progress with the major assurance programs agriculture in Alberta is in a much better position today to speak with a united voice on how it is addressing animal welfare.

**The question of cost needs a closer look – need to make sure cost is balanced and not too much on producers' shoulders.** Assurance programs are a must and can have a lot of value for helping the industry both internally and externally. However, these programs come with a cost and the question of who should pay is a big one.

**A challenge is getting smaller producers on board who see cost and time as barriers.** There is still a substantial challenge getting all producers on board in some sectors, but this will be solved eventually with the major generational change underway.

**The major industry-driven programs are on the right track and need to continue to develop and increase in adoption.** Everyone involved in Alberta's livestock industries needs to see these programs as positive and essential. The payback comes in numerous ways starting with improved social license and sustainability for animal agriculture. Producers need to understand this in large part is about the consumer. These programs allow the consumer to "know" the food is safe, high quality and produced in alignment with their values.

**Voluntary programs are fine as the market will ultimately drive participation.** It is important to move forward at the right pace. In some sectors making assurance programs mandatory is counter-productive. The market will sort things out eventually, and for now, it's important producers see these as positive programs they can adopt at a pace that fits their business.

**Auction markets are a weak area where more assurance/enforcement is needed.** We need better monitoring and addressing of problems at that level.

**Ultimately “It’s about trust.”** Regarding future direction, the over-arching goal should be to be to maintain and grow public trust in the industry.

**Alberta is on the right track.** Feeling that we don't pat ourselves on the back enough in Alberta. We have done a lot of good things. We have been proactive and we are a leader on livestock welfare. Part of what assurance programs do is communicate that message. The gains with these programs should be promoted and celebrated more than they have been.

**We have the right recipe for success.** The pathway of consensus-based, science-based, industry coordinated approaches has worked well. Top examples such as VBP+ and proAction have been excellent and serve as models for the right approach. These type of “One shop” approaches that address many sustainability-related issues are preferred rather than having to deal with multiple programs. As much as possible it's better to have coordinated, streamlined approaches. This is an important ongoing focus moving ahead.

### **Overall Findings:**

**Strong positive evolution for livestock welfare in Alberta.** Participants cited that the Alberta livestock industry has made steady progress in awareness, practice improvement, and communication and leadership on this issue over the years. Today the industry is well advanced in livestock welfare and is well positioned to maintain a leadership position moving forward into the future.

**Strong foundation of standards in place with additional steps coming, moving increasingly toward verified approaches.** Standout areas of progress have included the widespread adoption of Codes of Practice and more recently taking this foundation a step further via additional emphasis on animal care assessment programs. A key area of advancement has been leveraging earlier progress in on-farm food safety and quality programs and branching these into additional areas including animal welfare. Improved handling and standards for the welfare of animals during transport has been another key area of progress. Producers and others across the industry have far more and better knowledge, tools and resources than in past decades.

**Strong cooperation and teamwork across the industry is a major asset.** Sharing knowledge and ideas, and looking for opportunities to collaborate, has been a signature of Alberta's evolving approach that should continue as a key advantage in moving ahead.

**Consumer values and perceptions are a major driver of action on livestock welfare.** There was strong consensus Alberta's livestock industry must be positive and proactive in managing these expectations.

**Marketing programs put forward by some retailers are a barrier to honest, science-based conversation.** Participants expressed frustration with the rise of misinformation in some instances but at the same time cautioned about defensive approaches. A somewhat negative climate of 'uncivil discourse' is a related challenge.

**Key supports for the industry include livestock welfare organizations assisting with industry awareness and progress.** Such as the NFACC nationally and AFAC provincially.

**The rise of more coordinated industry approaches overall is a major positive development.** Participants discussed seeing more focus among commodity groups in working together on areas of shared interest and benefit. Livestock welfare was viewed as a topic that should ideally be approached as a non-competitive issue – everyone in the industry has a part to play on this issue.

**The inclusion of livestock welfare as a component of broad industry sustainability initiatives is also viewed positively.** Engagement through initiatives/projects such as the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef, Farm Animal Welfare Steering Committee, the VBP+, and proAction programs are top examples.

**Consensus that lots of progress has been made and anything new must be careful to support and not detract from or duplicate this.** An overall feeling of "let's be careful not to re-invent the wheel."

**Key priorities for the future include support at the producer level for best practices and investment in positive consumer engagement.** Communication, education and extension at many levels was viewed as one of the best areas of opportunity for high-value returns on the effort and resources invested.

**Working together is the foundation of Alberta's vision for the future.** Participants indicated a strong consensus that a positive vision can be based on the industry continuing to improve together on shared interests, including getting more producers engaged at the grassroots level and consumers on the basis of shared values.

**Mindset of moving ahead proactivity and maintaining a steady pace of improvement.** Many participants spoke about the importance of the LWEP project and other welfare-related industry initiatives helping to power real action rather than just strategy. How we talk about animal



welfare has changed. It has become its own topic now, as opposed to just part of talking about farming in general.

## 6.0 Discussion

The LWEPP produced a substantial body of results that help to provide an accurate understanding of the livestock welfare landscape in the province from the industry's perspective.

**The Preliminary Engagement Consultation Session** provided a foundation of initial feedback that introduced many topic areas and themes that would be further reinforced and elaborated on during additional components of the project. Participants were engaged, thoughtful and articulate. They indicated a desire to contribute feedback of value that would help to accurately portray the current landscape, including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges.

While this session was more condensed than other components of the project, the insights delivered provided a highly valuable window into the state of animal welfare in the livestock industry and the mindset of different types of industry stakeholders. The size of the group was targeted to be relatively contained in order to be efficient to manage and to allow for a deep level of quality discussion. The group assembled was relatively diverse within the contained size.

Analysis of the feedback collected revealed a state of animal welfare in Alberta's livestock industry that from the viewpoint of session participants was an area that has been the focus of substantial and ongoing evolution. It has featured dynamic progress and has increasingly become a leading topic shaping many aspects of how the industry is portrayed and perceived.

The feedback underscored prevailing viewpoints: there has been a strong positive evolution for livestock welfare in Alberta; there is a strong foundation of standards in place with plans to grow, moving toward verified approaches; strong teamwork and collaboration across the industry is a major asset; consumer values and perceptions are a major driver of action on livestock welfare; marketing programs put forward by some retailers are a barrier, science-based conversation; key supports for industry include livestock welfare organizations assisting with industry awareness and progress; and the rise of more coordinated industry approaches overall is a major positive development.

In addition, inclusion of livestock welfare as a component of broad industry sustainability initiatives was also viewed positively; consensus that a lot of progress has been made and anything new must be careful to support and not detract from or duplicate this; key priorities for

the future included support at the producer level for best practices and investment in positive consumer engagement; working together should be the foundation of Alberta's vision for the future; and there is a strong mindset of moving ahead proactively and maintaining a steady pace of improvement.

Overall participants cited an Alberta livestock industry that has made steady progress in awareness, improvement in practices, communication and leadership on this issue over the years. Based on the feedback collected, the industry participants at the session felt that Alberta's livestock industry is well advanced in livestock welfare and is well positioned to maintain a leadership position moving forward into the future.

**The Online Project Survey** built upon these early findings by serving as the major information gathering component of the project, generating a large body of detailed feedback in various forms, overall designed to lend itself to strong opportunities for analysis including comparisons among different types of participants.

The total of 563 completed responses accepted and analyzed included major participation by individuals (76%), followed by organizations (18%), students (4%), and abattoirs and auctions markets (2%). The majority of individual survey respondents were older than 30 years old (91%) and the majority of student respondent were between 18 and 29 years old (85%) – provided a balance reflective of what was anticipated. These breakdowns allowed for the prevailing answer/views expressed to be interpreted as relatively indicative of the industry as a whole, with some expected limitations. Overall, the sectors represented by the respondents were consistent with the sectors/species commonly raised in Alberta.

When analyzed and interpreted, the feedback gathered served overall to indicate: strong consensus on the growing importance of welfare to Alberta's livestock industry; strong consensus that welfare is critical to competitiveness and market acceptance; and there is a highly engaged, proactive industry on livestock welfare.

Organizational and abattoir and auction market respondents ranked their activities, and individual and student respondents ranked activities in order of what they believe to be most important to animal welfare. Consistently, research was ranked lowest when compared to assurance programs, standards and procedures, and communications, education, and extension. The low ranking of research was not surprising, as the majority of organizational respondents were not research organizations or academic institutions. Additionally, the majority of abattoir and auction market respondents did not participate in research. Moreover, individuals and students may not have experience with research. From the focus groups discussion, individuals and students raised the importance of applying research to on-farm through extension.

Organizations showed a high level of activity in diverse areas related to livestock welfare and viewed themselves as having a strong role in improving animal welfare in Alberta. It was revealed standards of care and policies play a substantial role in the industry, with standout examples referenced and used by many organizations including national Codes of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals, the Health of Animals Act, the Animal Protection Act and Humane Transport Guidelines. Overall, among all groups, the Codes of Practice were cited as by far the most helpful standards used by industry. However, almost a third of individuals and two-thirds of students were ‘not at all familiar’ with the Codes of Practice. This may indicate a communication gap between organizations and those that they are trying to reach.

The respondent’s role in the industry may have influenced their familiarity with specific standards and policies. The high prevalence of the HAA, NFACC’s Codes of Practice, federal transportation of animals regulations, and the APA being reported by the organizational respondents may be due to organizations being an informational resource for producers to reference. Abattoir and auction market respondents may frequently reference the MIA and federal transportation of animals regulations due to the nature of their businesses.

Individual respondents may have been familiar with LICA, the CCC, the federal transportation of animals regulations, and the HAA, as they are more applicable to on-farm operations. The students’ interests most likely had an influence on their familiarity and students that were studying the veterinary field may have been more familiar with the Veterinary Profession Act.

About half of the organizations indicated involvement in research, including a strong emphasis on research related to animal management practices and current industry hot topics such as antimicrobial use and biosecurity. The focus on antimicrobial use may been impacted by upcoming regulatory changes and the rising concern of antimicrobial resistance. This activity also included a strong emphasis on collaboration with academic institutions, government and industry colleagues in supporting research. Overall among all groups, supporting industry evolution and managing consumer expectations stood as main motivators of engaging in research activities, while key barriers were funding and a lack of resources.

Comparatively, individual respondents highlighted animal management practice, transportation, biosecurity, and communication materials as research topics of focus. Student respondents highlighted animal management practices, slaughter, producer mental health, and transportation. While there was an overlap of research topics being focused on by organizational respondents and those being requested by individuals and student, there was a lack of research being offered by organizations in comparison to those requested. It should be noted that the online survey surveyed Alberta organizations and research that impacted Alberta’s livestock industry stakeholders may have been conducted outside of Alberta.

In addition, among all groups, it may be interpreted that communications, education and extension was a standout priority for future activity, and continued progress on assurance programs was seen a key emphasis moving forward. Topics and channels of communication, education, and extension being offered by organizations and AAM were considerably in-line with those being requested by individuals and students. Organizational respondents indicated that they offered the majority of their educational resources to students in grades one through six, which coincides with the Classroom Agriculture Program. The majority of students indicated that they did participate in educational activities for students and it should be noted that student respondents were of post-secondary age.

Analysis of the responses further indicated that assurance programs are a timely area of advancement with lots of developments in recent years that is expected to remain a strong focus for the near future. Analysis of the survey responses among all groups indicated this as an important priority useful to producers and others across the industry.

**The Regional Focus Groups** conducted across Alberta allowed for an enhanced level of discussion that complemented the approach undertaken via the online survey. It provided a format that allowed for a greater depth of elaboration and sharing of viewpoints, often yielding valuable insights into the reasoning behind survey responses. It also allowed views to be captured that were not covered by the specific survey questions. The approach of conducting sessions in five different regions served collectively to include all parts of the province and allowed for a relatively balanced representation of the different areas. This approach also allowed for similarities and differences between different regions to be observed.

Analysis of the feedback collected revealed a prevailing view that animal welfare in Alberta's livestock industry has evolved and advanced substantially and has become a top focus currently and for the future. Standout areas of progress have included the widespread acknowledgement of Codes of Practice and more recently taking this foundation a step further via additional emphasis on animal care assessment programs. A key area of advancement has been leveraging earlier progress in on-farm food safety and quality programs and branching these into additional areas including animal welfare. Improved handling and standards for the welfare of animals during transport has been another key area of progress. Participants highlighted that industry stakeholders have more and better knowledge, tools, and resources than in past decades.

The feedback underscored prevailing viewpoints that livestock welfare in Alberta has always been a core value of the industry; awareness of the term 'livestock welfare' is much higher; expectations surrounding animal welfare have considerably evolved; and there has been progress at the production level. In that same breath, participants acknowledged that there is room for

improvement in expanding reach and listening to those outside the industry; and there is a need to keep finding better ways to deal with bad actors, even though they are a minority.

In addition, participants recognized that the industry had made strong progress in addressing livestock welfare at the consumer level, though this remains an ongoing challenge. The rise of social license and consumer value considerations has been a major influencer raised. Participants emphasized that sharing knowledge and ideas across sectors and having a mindset of continual improvement is critical to the future. Participants acknowledged that generational change is a key factor moving forward and Alberta has the opportunity to lead and should embrace this opportunity.

Overall based on analysis of the Regional Focus Groups it may be surmised that Alberta has a proud history as a pioneer and leader in industry-driven progress on livestock welfare. It has a strong track record of advancing Alberta's approach to this issue both within and outside the industry. Particularly in the past decade the pace of progress has spiked as the profile of this issue both within and outside the industry has hit an all-time high.

Interpretation of the results indicates a gap has persisted and, in some ways, gotten larger between the industry and the public. A large portion of the industry has made substantial progress on improving animal welfare practices, but a small portion has remained difficult to reach. Animal rights groups and the spread of misinformation has become a greater challenge to how the industry is perceived. Overall industry has made steady progress. With a younger generation becoming more involved in agriculture there is more openness to change and greater recognition of how important animal welfare is to the industry brand.

The feedback may be interpreted as indicating a strong majority viewpoint that Alberta has been a pioneer and leader in industry-driven animal welfare approaches and endeavour to continue to be among the leaders on industry-driven livestock welfare advancement into the future.

## **Limitations**

As with all projects with voluntary participation, selection bias is a challenge. Those that participated in the survey and focus groups may have been more progressive than those that did not. As a result, the results may reflect those of a more progressive population. Furthermore, as survey participants may have misunderstood survey questions, there may have been a misinterpretation bias. To minimize this, the survey was developed with industry stakeholder feedback.

As with most sensitive topics, there is the risk of social desirability bias. Where participants may feel inclined to answer a question in a way that they think is socially acceptable. Project leaders

aimed to minimize the risk of this possibility by informing participants that the survey and focus group results would be confidential and anonymous.

There was the inherent limitation of connecting with agricultural stakeholders during a busy time of the year. The online survey may not have reached those that do not use or are not comfortable using the internet. However, those facilitating the project were limited by time and resources for alternative options such as managing a process for paper surveys.

## 7.0 Conclusions

Based on the information collected and analyzed as part of LWEP, the following conclusions may be drawn (effort has been made to summarize/limit conclusions to an overall top 10).

- 1. Alberta's livestock industry views animal welfare as a top priority.** Overall results indicate consistently that animal welfare is a core component and focus of livestock production in the province. Animal welfare is consistently viewed as integral to responsible, sustainable and successful livestock production. It is also consistently viewed as a focus of continuous improvement.
- 2. Alberta's livestock industry is highly engaged in supporting animal welfare.** Results indicate the industry is overall highly engaged in all major aspects of animal welfare relevant to sustainable animal agricultural production, including focus on best practices, standards and policies, assurance programs, and diverse forms of communication and education.
- 3. The landscape of animal welfare in Alberta has substantially advanced.** Results indicate a pace of progress on all major fronts related to animal welfare in agriculture that has steadily advanced over the past 20 years and accelerated at an even faster pace over the past ten years. Substantial advancements have been made related to best practices, standards and policies, assurance programs, and diverse forms of communication and education.
- 4. Continuous improvement in managing animal welfare issues remains a central priority with major implications for the current and future success of the industry.** While significant progress has been made and Alberta's livestock industry is generally viewed as managing this issue very well, results indicated that the vast majority of industry participants believe the focus on this issue must be continuous. There is always

room to improve and doing so will be essential for the current and future success of the industry.

5. **Alberta's livestock industry favours industry-driven approaches to all forms of solutions, innovations and improvements.** Results showed an overall consistency in the belief that the industry must continue to be proactive in evolving on all aspects of the animal welfare issue to not only ensure responsible welfare but also to ensure that approaches are made in a manner that aligns with a productive and successful industry. Results indicated that industry participants do not favour approaches where outside forces are dictating how the industry operates without having industry views and voices represented.
6. **The current pathway including a strong focus on the Codes of Practice, assurance programs, and related opportunities is on track.** Results indicated overall positive views of the current direction of Alberta's livestock industry in addressing animal welfare, which particularly in recent years has been characterized in large part by an over-arching focus on progress related to the implementation of Codes of Practice, assurance programs and related opportunities.
7. **Support for communication, education and extension is a top "game-changing" factor in the success of the industry and on the animal welfare file.** Results showed discussion of this topic area was a dominant recurring theme that crossed over into discussion on many different subjects covered by this project. It can be surmised based on the sheer volume and of opinions expressed in this regard that communication, education and extension is not only a top ongoing priority but arguably the top area where more support – funding and otherwise – can make the biggest difference in helping Alberta's livestock industry succeed in all of its approaches addressing animal welfare. Communication and education directed both within and outside the industry were cited as a top priority. Extension within the industry was consistently identified as a gap and an area that has 'gone backwards' in some ways with less resources and emphasis for face-to-face, on-the-ground interaction with producers.
8. **Ongoing research is a critical support for the industry that requires better alignment with industry needs and stronger resources for extension to ensure results are used.** Results indicated overall positive views on the value and quality of research relevant to animal welfare in Alberta. However, they also indicated a clear gap in understanding what research is underway, and how that ties to industry priorities. Also,

there is a major concern that research results are not adopted at an optimized level because of a gap in extension.

9. **Alberta's livestock industry is well-positioned to continue as a leader in animal welfare.** This view and sentiment was a recurring theme throughout the project however it was paired with a cautionary note that to maintain and grow this position the industry and its stakeholders must keep a 'foot on the gas' in pursuing continuous improvement. A large part of the leadership opportunity is not just in terms of production practices but in managing this issue in all areas both within and outside the industry.
10. **Understanding the landscape of animal welfare from the industry's perspective is critical to progress and decision-making.** Results reflected a strong theme of consensus that initiatives such as this project that sought to build an understanding of the landscape of animal welfare from the Alberta livestock industry's perspective are valuable and should be recurring. They can be a valuable exercise and tool to support ongoing progress. They can also have a strong value for benchmarking industry progress when done on a repeated basis.

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# Appendix A

## Online Survey Detailed Results

### I. ONLINE SURVEY - ORGANIZATIONS

#### What is your role in Alberta's livestock industry?

Table 1. Role of survey respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey in Alberta's livestock industry (n=563)

Survey Type	n	Percentage
Organization	104	18%
Abattoirs & Auction Markets	11	2%
Individuals	428	76%
Students	20	4%

#### Animal welfare is growing in importance to Alberta's livestock industry.

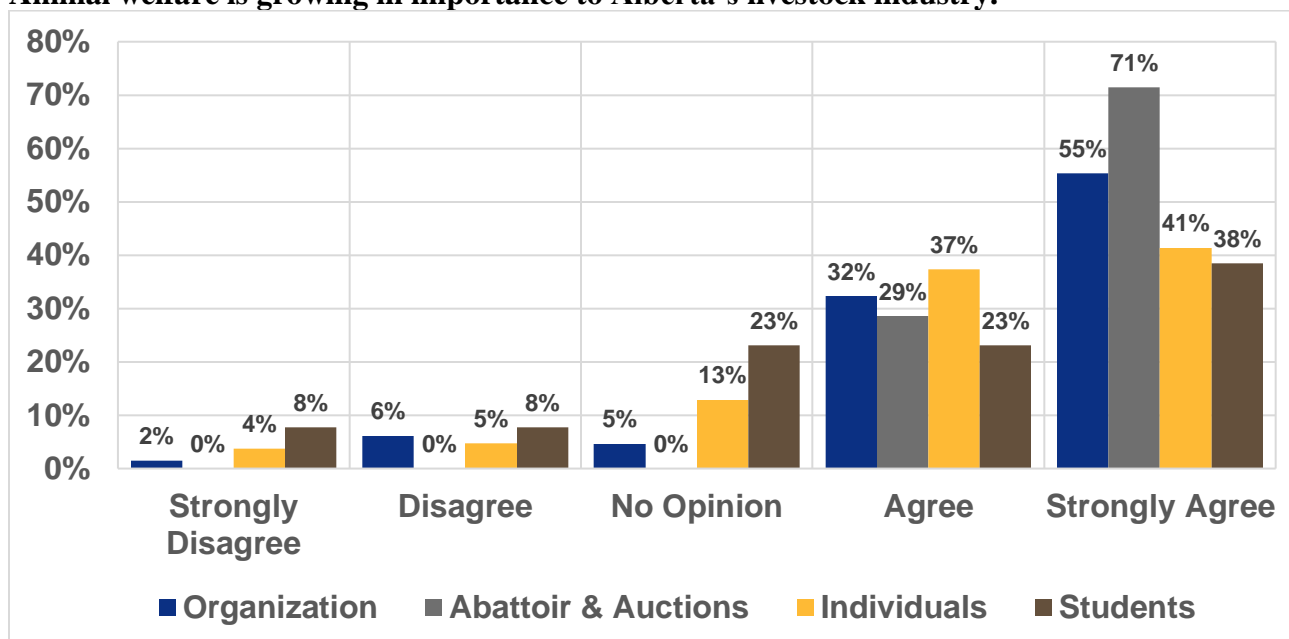


Figure 1. Degree of agreement by survey respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey in Alberta that animal welfare is growing in importance to Alberta's livestock industry (organizations (n=65), abattoirs and auctions (n=7), individuals (n=319), and students (n=13))

**Animal welfare is a critical component of Alberta’s agricultural competitiveness and market acceptance.**

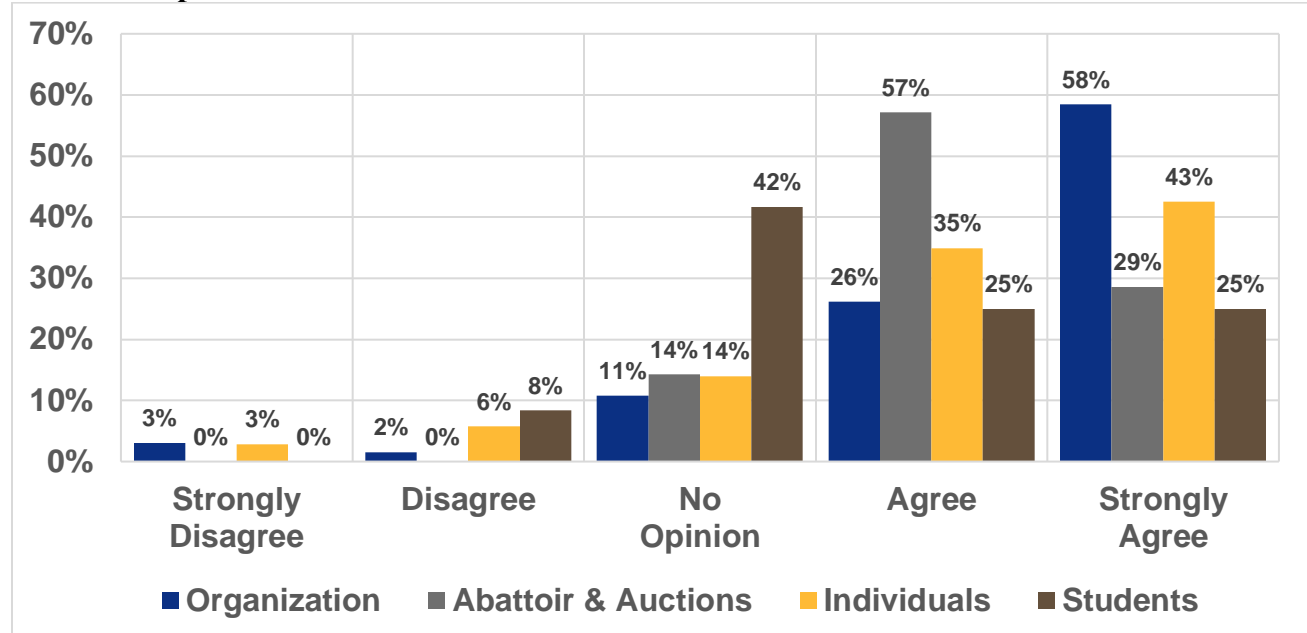
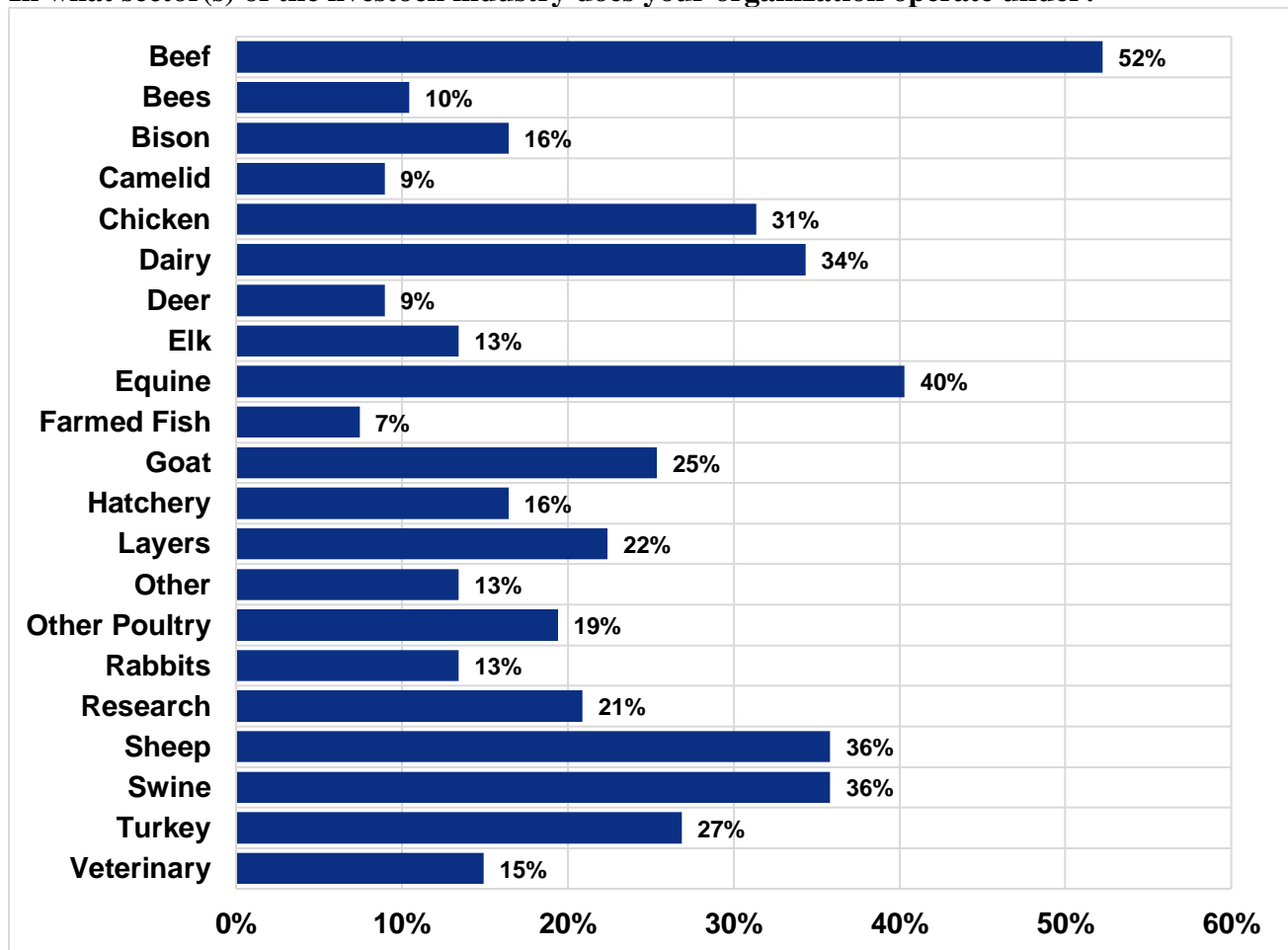


Figure 2. Degree of agreement by survey respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey in Alberta that animal welfare is a critical component of Alberta's agricultural competitiveness and market acceptance (organizations (n=65), abattoirs and auctions (n=7), individuals (n=315), and students (n=12))

Table 2. Roles of organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey in Alberta's livestock industry n=104

Organization's Role	n	Percentage
Academic Institution	8	8%
Ag Society/Exhibition	8	8%
Animal Health Group	10	10%
Animal Welfare Group	23	22%
County/Municipal District	5	5%
Enforcement Body	3	3%
Feed & Nutritional Company	5	5%
Government Agency	13	13%
Livestock Breed & Genetics Company	3	3%
Livestock Commodity Group	15	14%
Research Organization	11	11%

**In what sector(s) of the livestock industry does your organization operate under?**



*Figure 3. Sectors of the livestock industry that the organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey operate under (n = 67)*

Other included animal welfare organization, animal science, education organization, regulations and policies, multiple species, and livestock equipment.

Rank your organization's activities, against each other, in the following regarding animal welfare in terms of time spent (1 being most active):

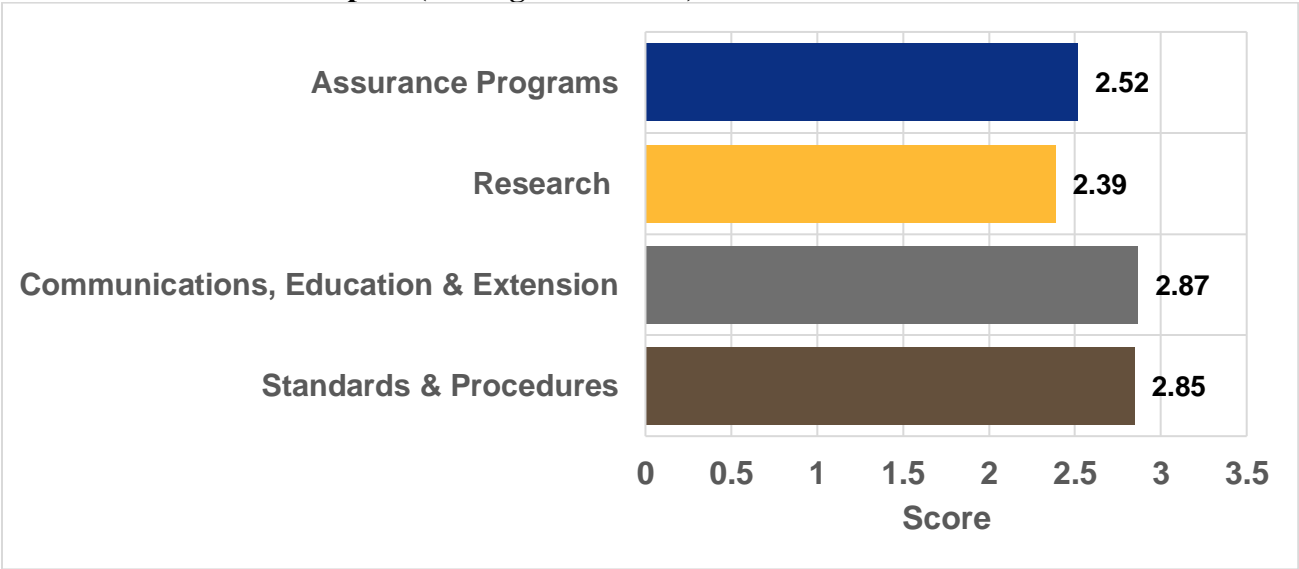


Figure 4. Ranking of organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of their organization's activities, against each other, regarding animal welfare in terms of time spent (n=67)

On a scale of 1 to 10 (one being the worst and ten being the best), how would you rank your organization in its role in improving animal welfare in Alberta?

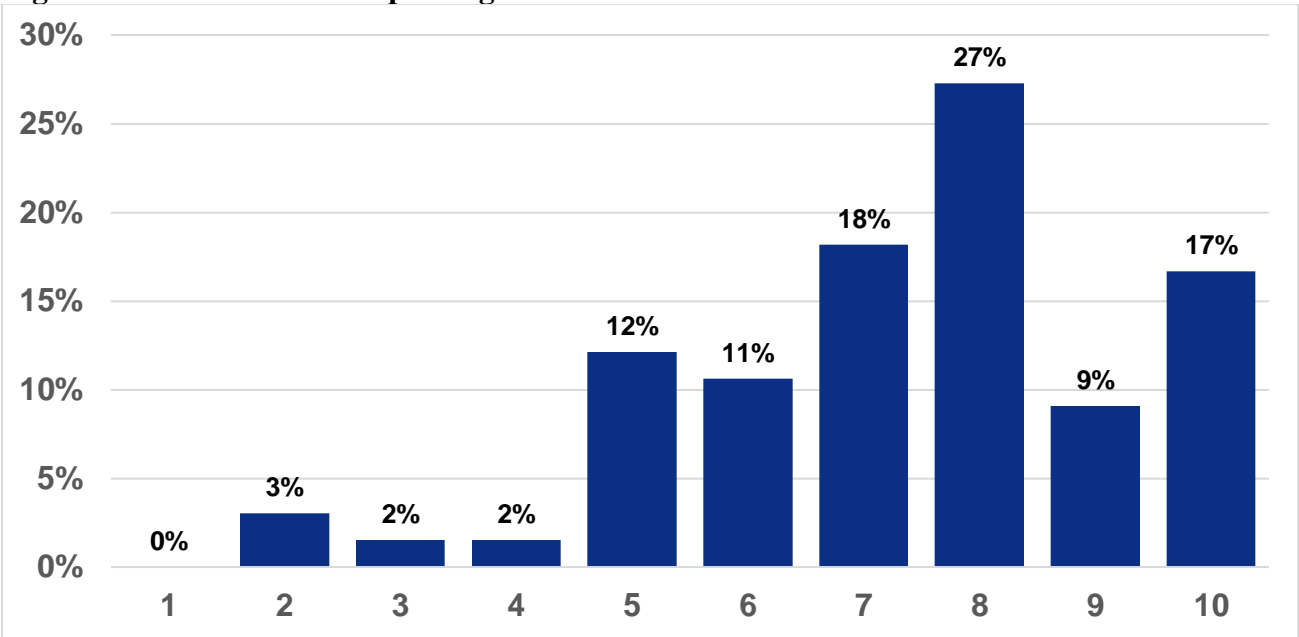


Figure 5. Ranking of organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of their organization's role in improving animal welfare in Alberta on a scale of 1 to 10 (one being the worst and ten being the best) (n=66)

**In terms of animal welfare, what standards of care and policies does your organization refer to in its activities? Select all that apply.**

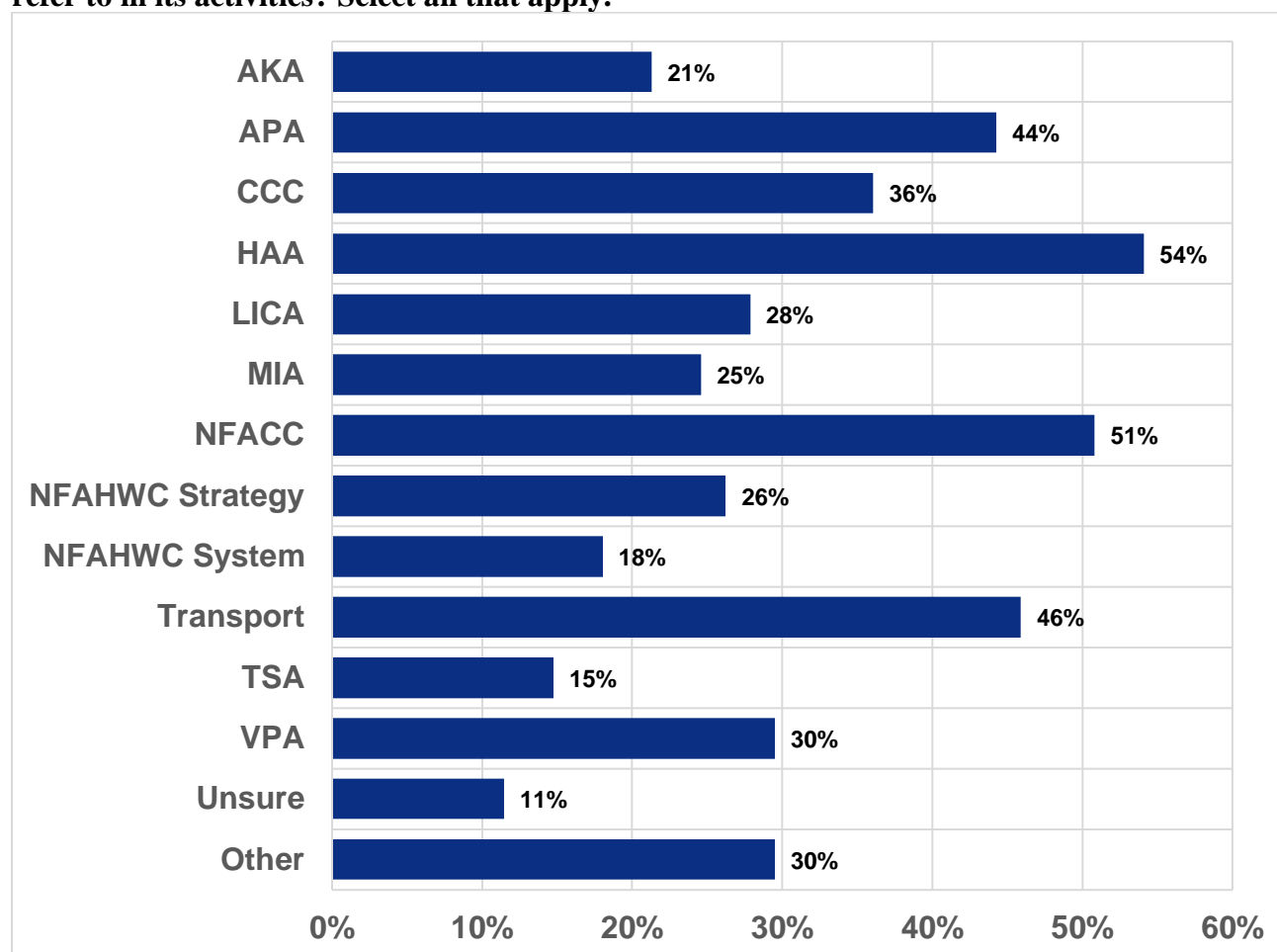


Figure 6. Standards of care and policies\* that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey reported that their organization referred to in its activities, in terms of animal welfare (n=61)

\*Standards of care and policy abbreviations used above:

- AKA – Animal Keepers Act
- APA – Animal Protection Act
- CCC – Criminal Code of Canada
- HAA – Health of Animals Act
- LICA – Livestock Identification and Commerce Act
- MIA – Meat Inspection Act
- NFACC – National Farm Animal Care Council Codes of Practice
- NFAHWC Strategy – National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy
- NFAHWC System – National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada
- Transport – Federal Transportation of Animals Regulations (i.e. Compromised Animal Policy, Health of Animals Regulations Part XII, etc.)
- VPA – Veterinary Profession Act

Other included non-Canadian standards and policies, the Canadian Council on Animal Care, commodity-specific animal care programs, provincial animal care guidelines, the Alberta Animal Health Act, and AFAC humane handling guidelines.



**Rate the following standards of care and policies in relation to their helpfulness to your organization.**

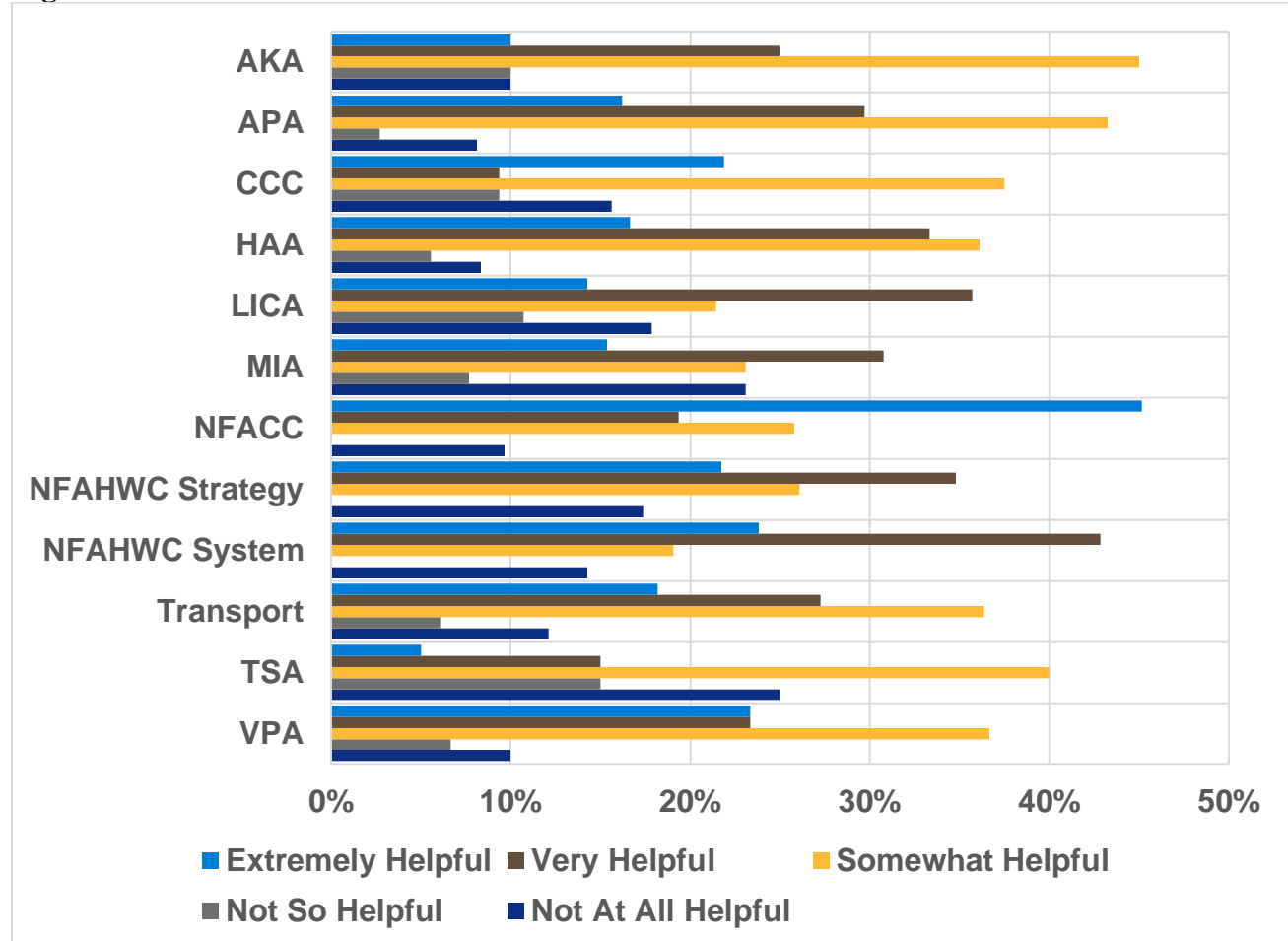


Figure 7. Ratings of standards of care and policies that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey in relation to their helpfulness to their organization (n=45)

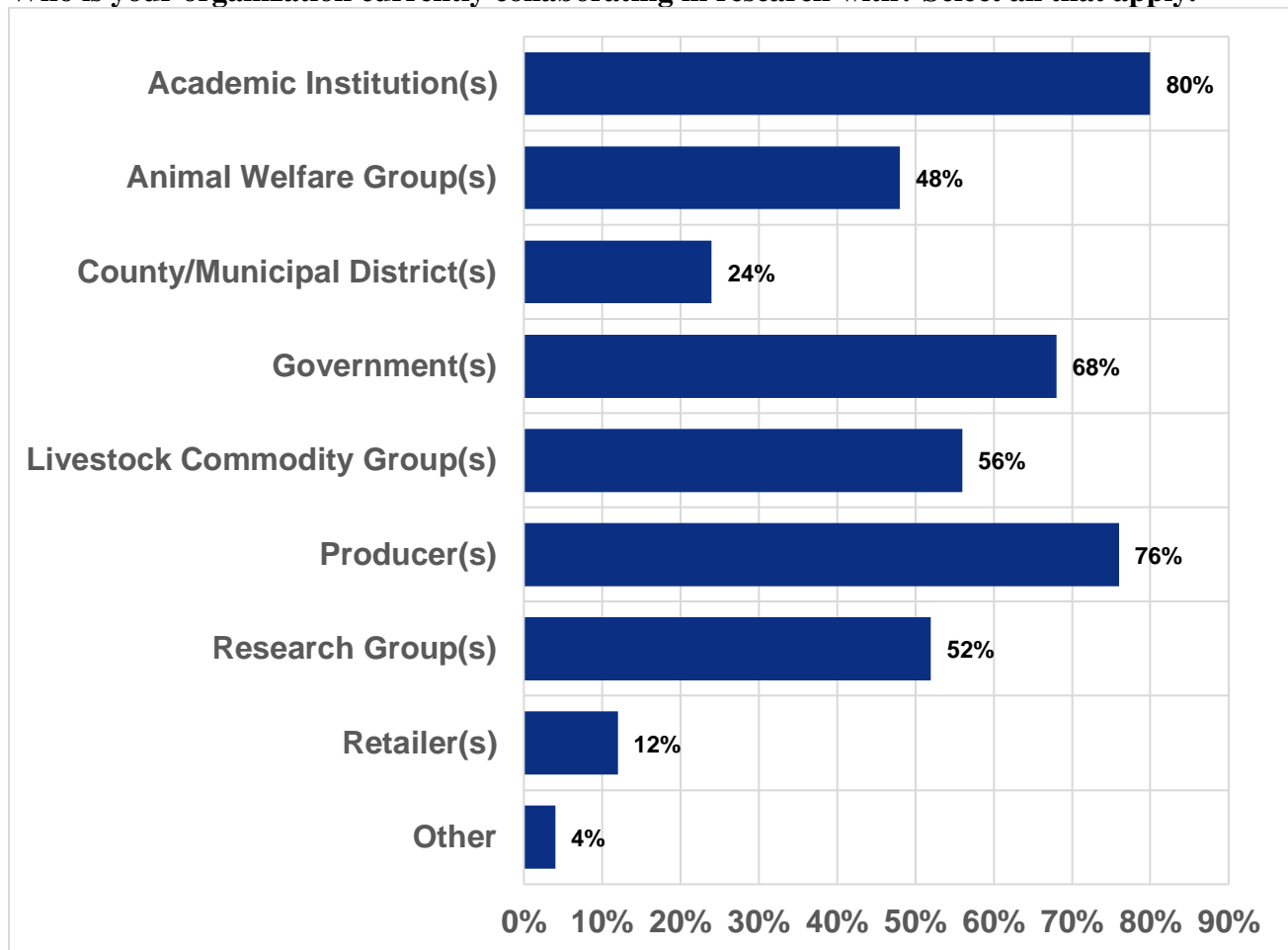
**Select areas of animal welfare research your organization is currently participating in.**



*Figure 8. Areas of animal welfare research that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey is currently participating in (n=26)*

Other research topics included benchmarking current practices, feed trials, genetics, and pharmaceutical safety.

**Who is your organization currently collaborating in research with? Select all that apply.**



*Figure 9. Collaborators that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey is currently collaborating with in animal welfare research (n=25)*

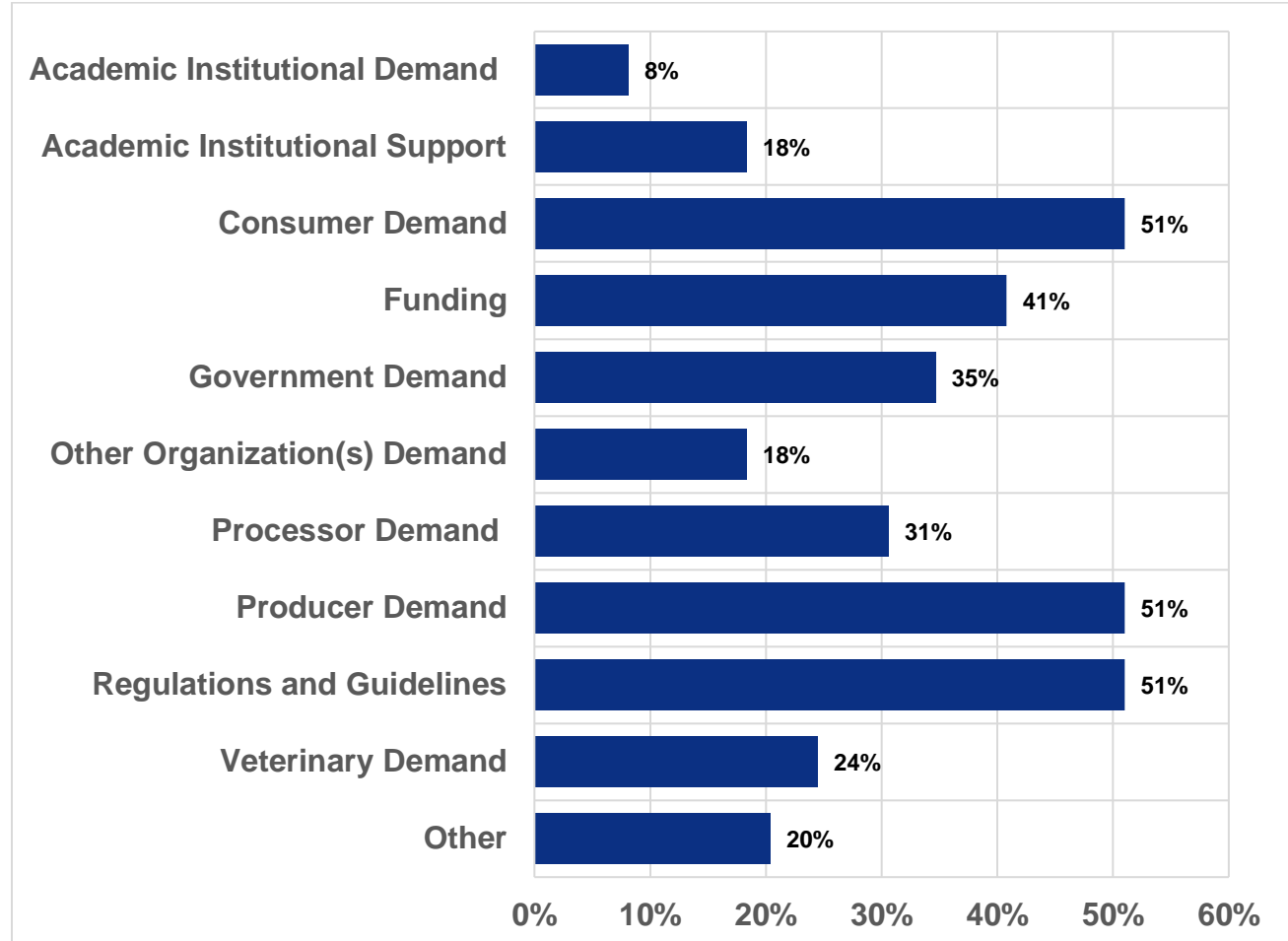
**Select areas of animal welfare research your organization is planning to participate in.**



*Figure 10. Areas of animal welfare research that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey is planning to participate in (n=49)*

Other research topics included feed trials, genetics and nutrition, and traceability.

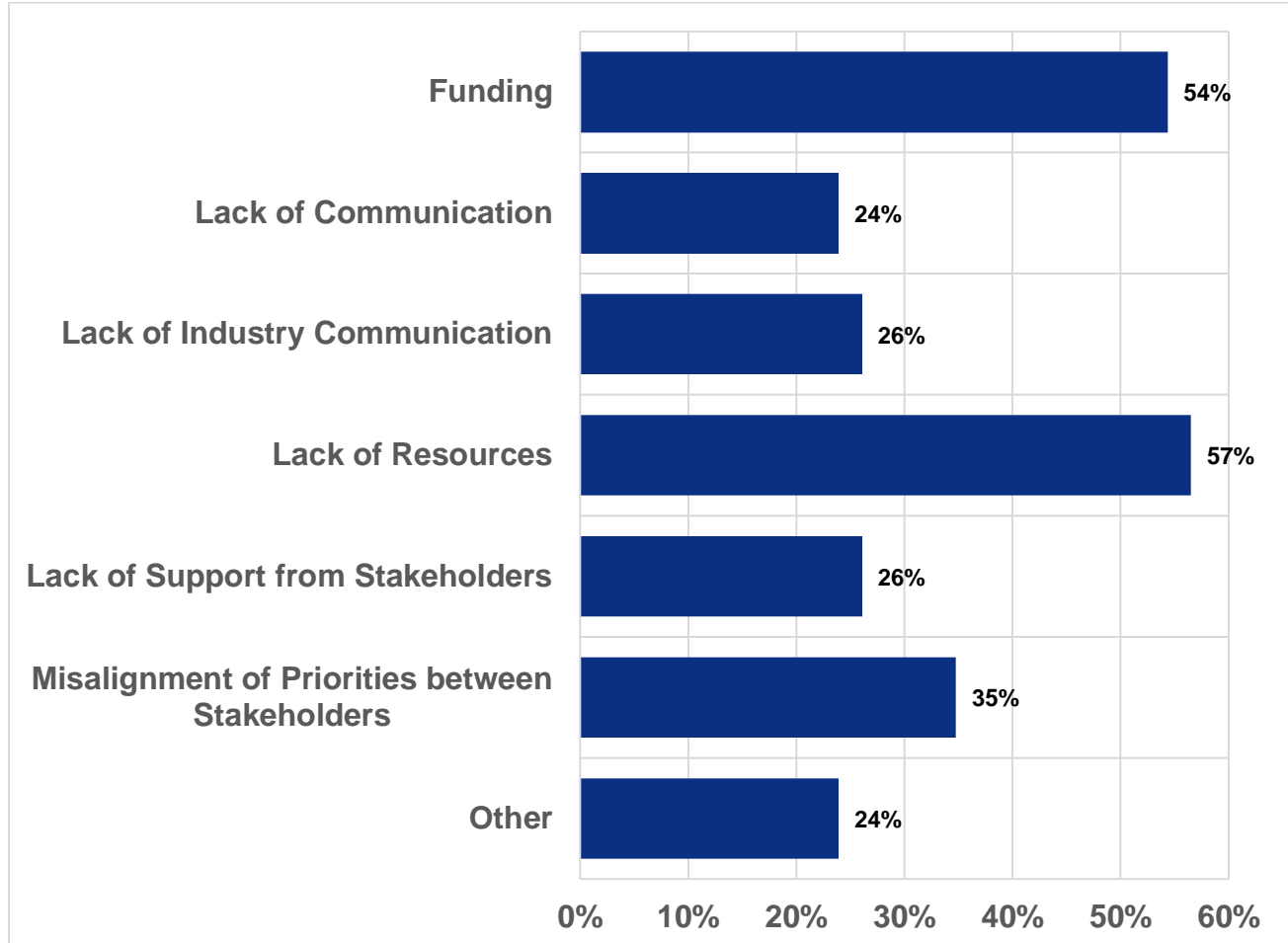
**Overall, please select what your organization views as motivators towards participating in research.**



*Figure 11. Motivators viewed by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey towards participating in research (n=49)*

Other included the demands of the marketplace, the well-being of the animal, applied research, and bee health.

**Overall, please select what your organization views as barriers towards participating in research.**



*Figure 12. Barriers viewed by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey towards participating in research (n=46)*

Other included lack of cooperation and transparency from industry, lack of need to get involved in research, and lack of research being done in the region.

Select what your organization believes are the most important animal welfare-related topics to communicate with the public, producers, and industry stakeholders. Select all that apply.

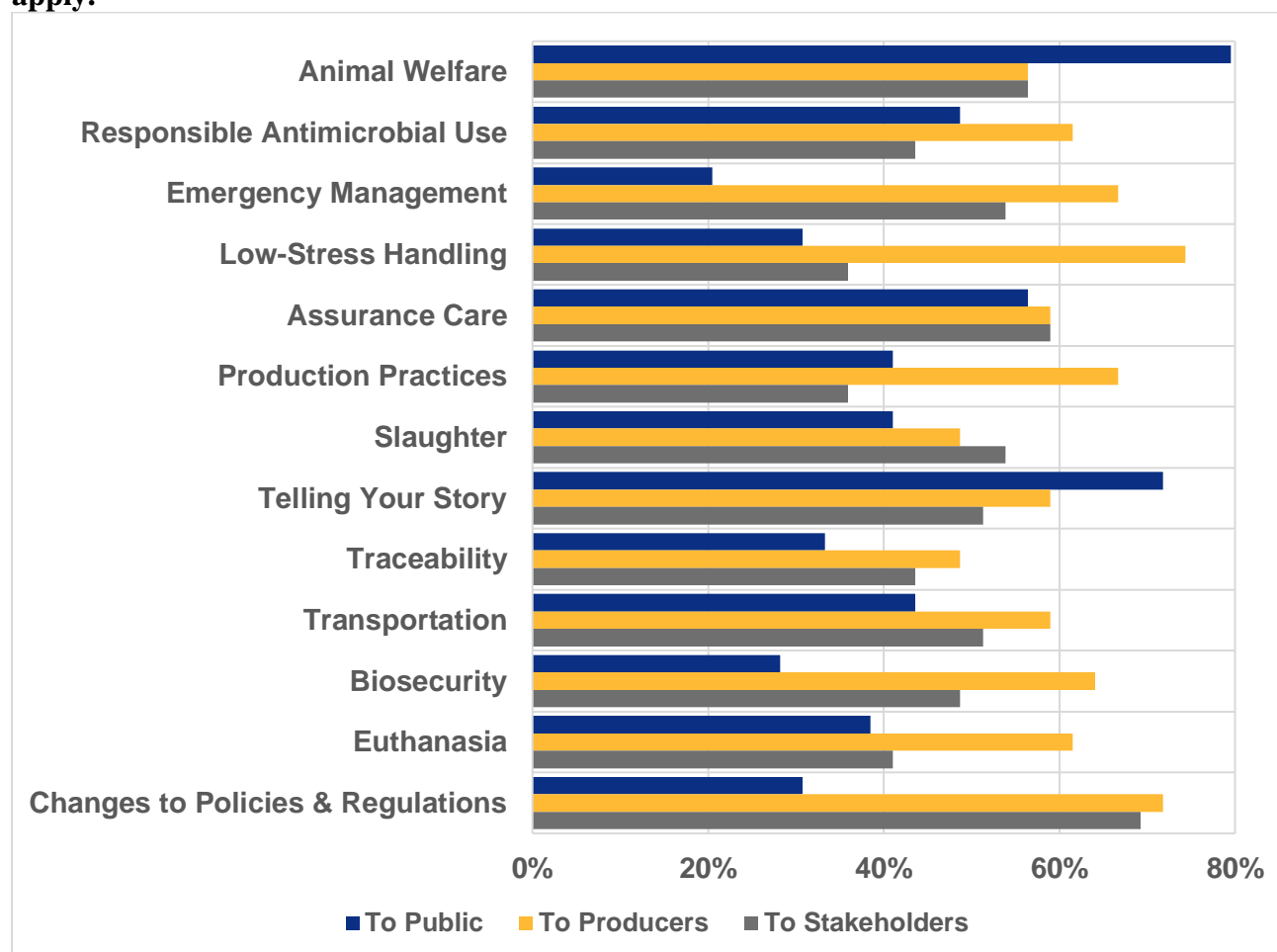


Figure 13. Animal welfare-related topics selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that were identified as the most important to communicate with the public, producers, and industry stakeholders (n=39)

**If not listed above, what animal welfare-related topics is your organization communicating with the public, producers, and industry stakeholders?**

Topics to communicate to the public included feed and nutrition, animal health, air quality, general public trust, hen housing, and bees and wild pollinators.

Topics to communicate to producers included feed and nutrition, animal health products, air quality, outcome-based measures of animal welfare, stressful conditions, hen housing, and live export transportation.

Topics to communicate to industry stakeholders included feed and nutrition, animal health products, and hen housing.

For each animal welfare topic, please select the channel that your organization uses to communicate with the public, producers and industry stakeholders? Select all that apply.

*Animal Welfare in General*

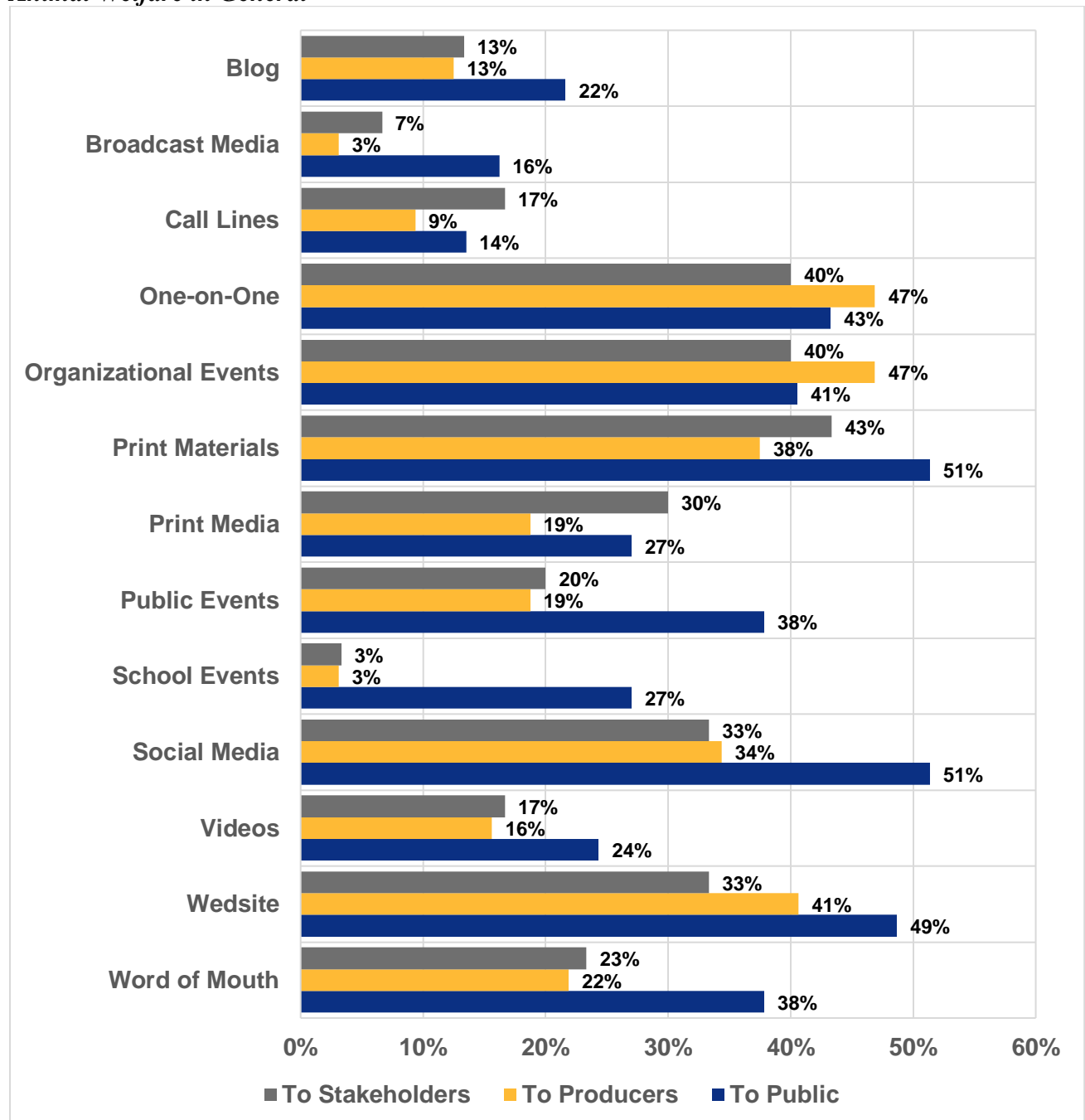


Figure 14. Channels selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate animal welfare in general with the public (n=37), producers (n=32), and industry stakeholders (n=30)



## Responsible Antimicrobial Use

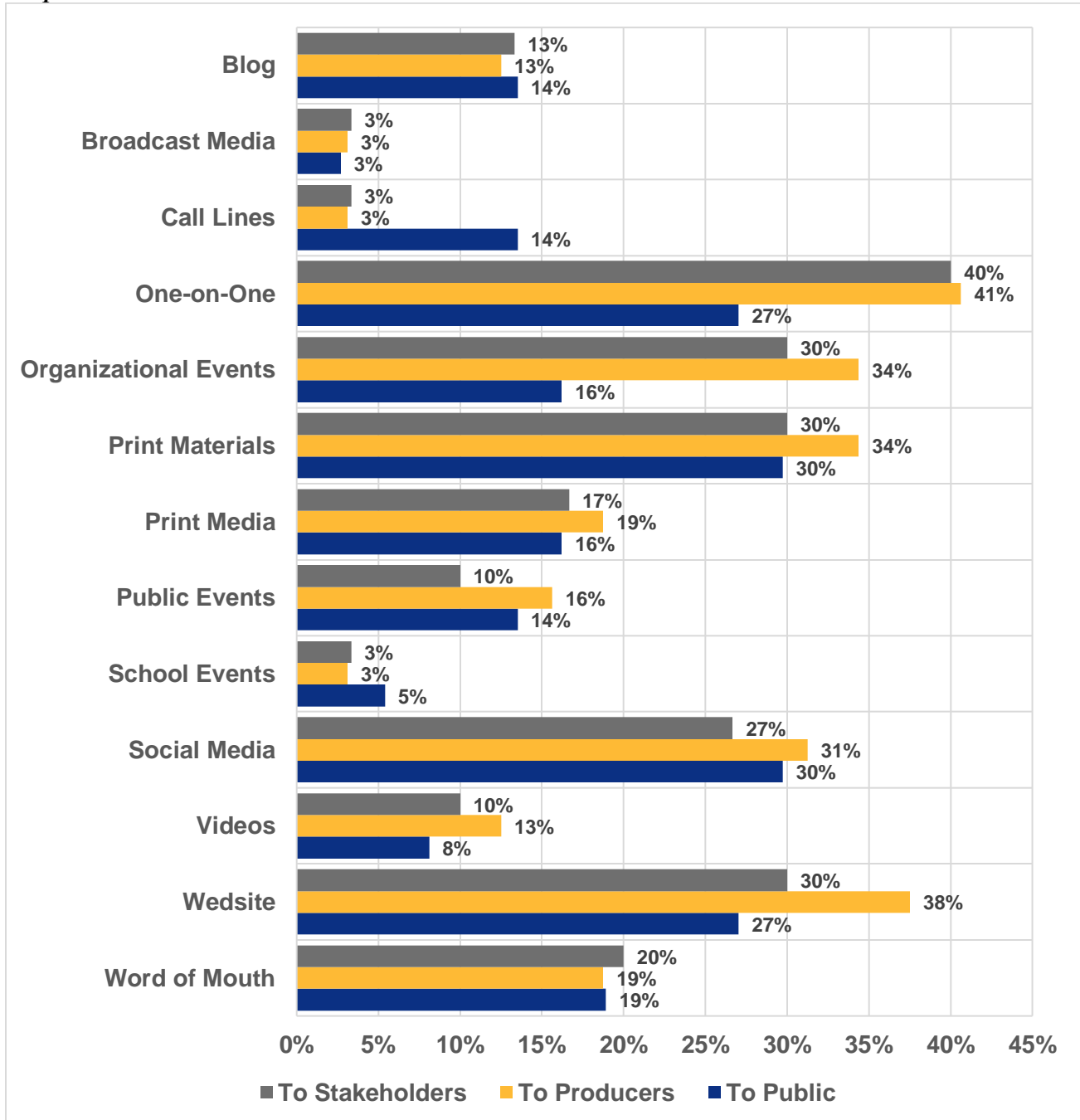


Figure 15. Channels selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate responsible antimicrobial use with the public (n=37), producers (n=32), and industry stakeholders (n=30)

## Emergency Management & Preparation

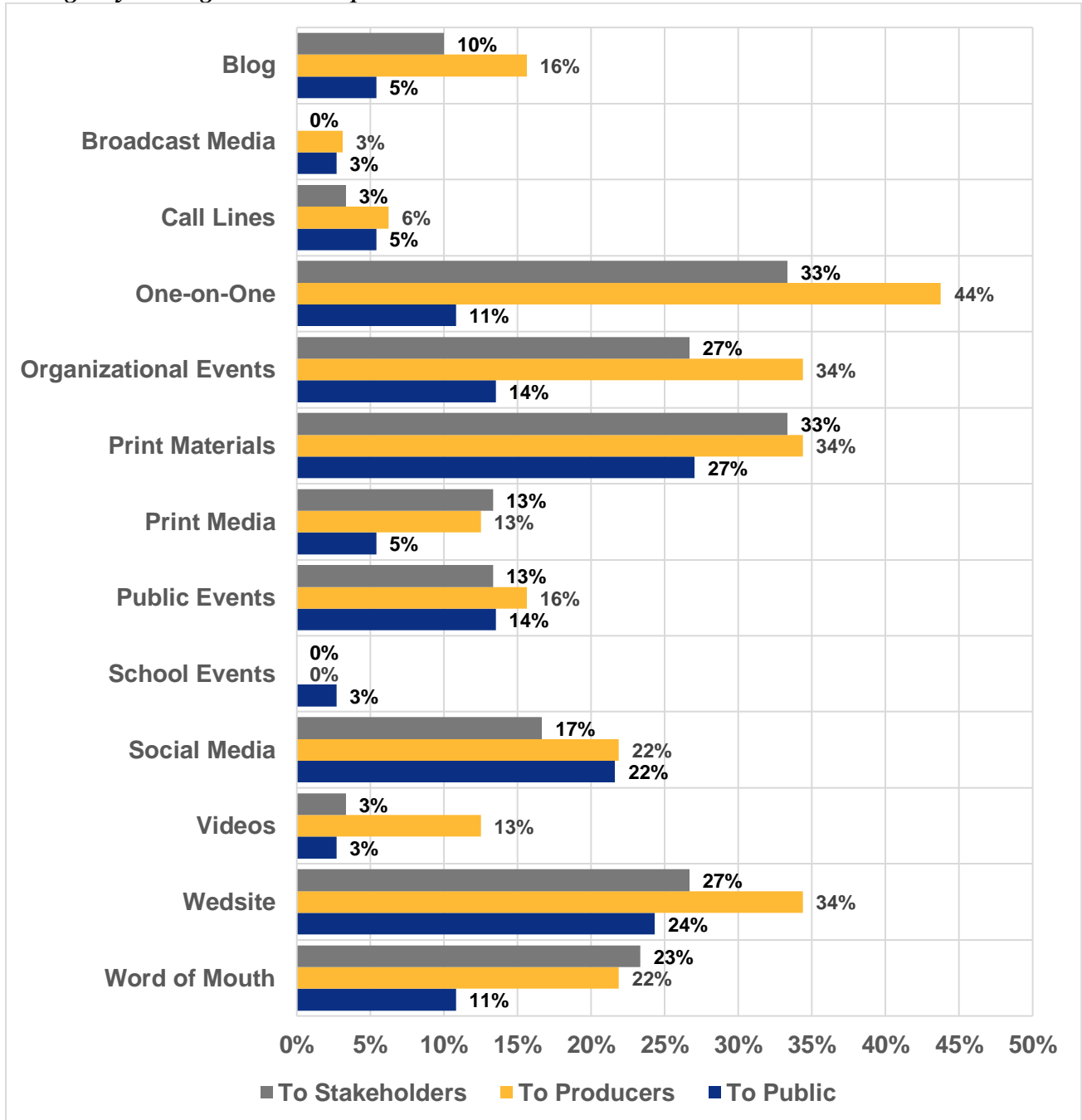


Figure 16. Channels selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate emergency management and preparation with the public (n=37), producers (n=32), and industry stakeholders (n=30)

## Low-Stress Handling

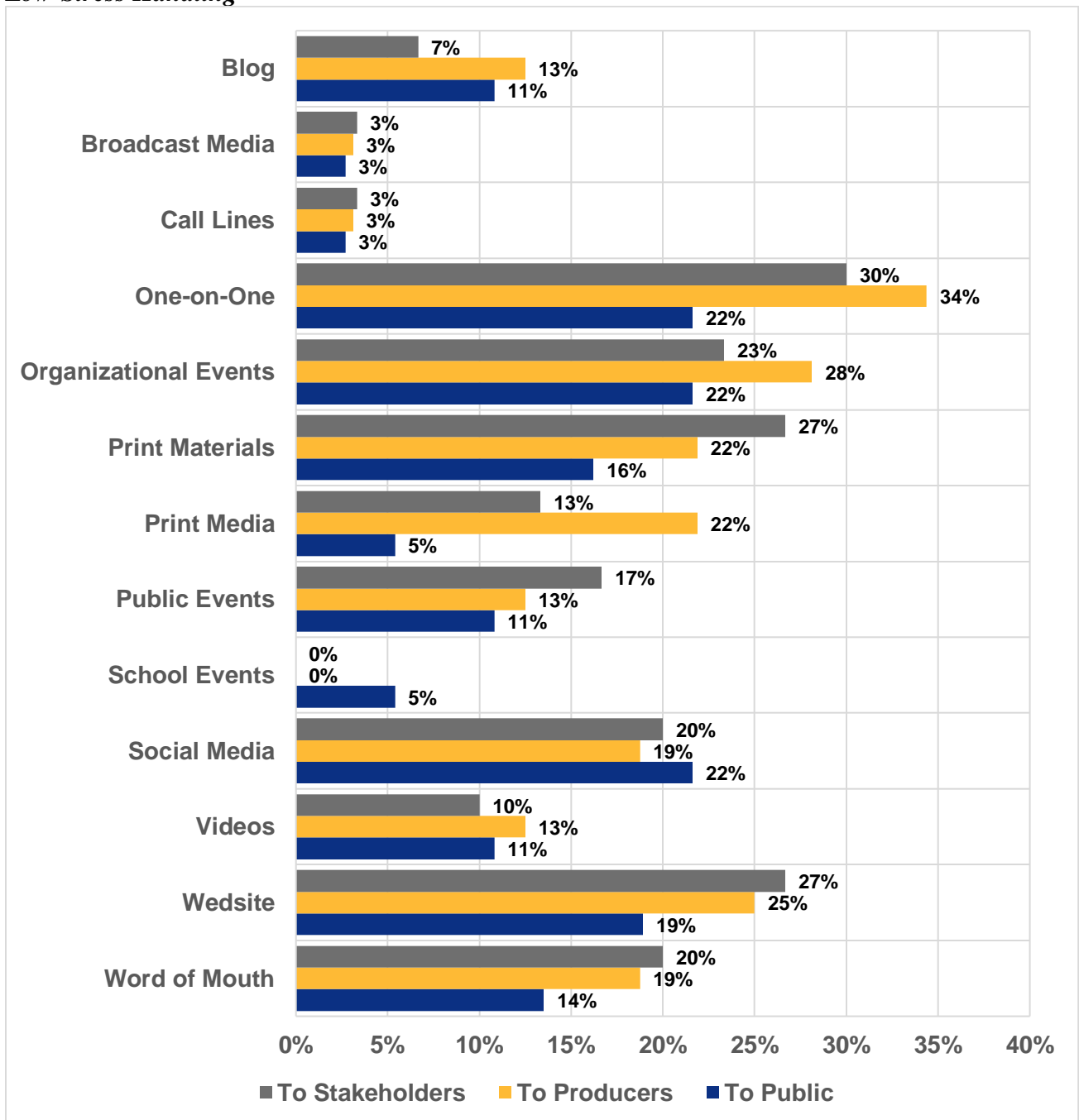


Figure 17. Channels selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate low-stress handling with the public (n=37), producers (n=32), and industry stakeholders (n=30)

## Industry Animal Care Assurance Programs

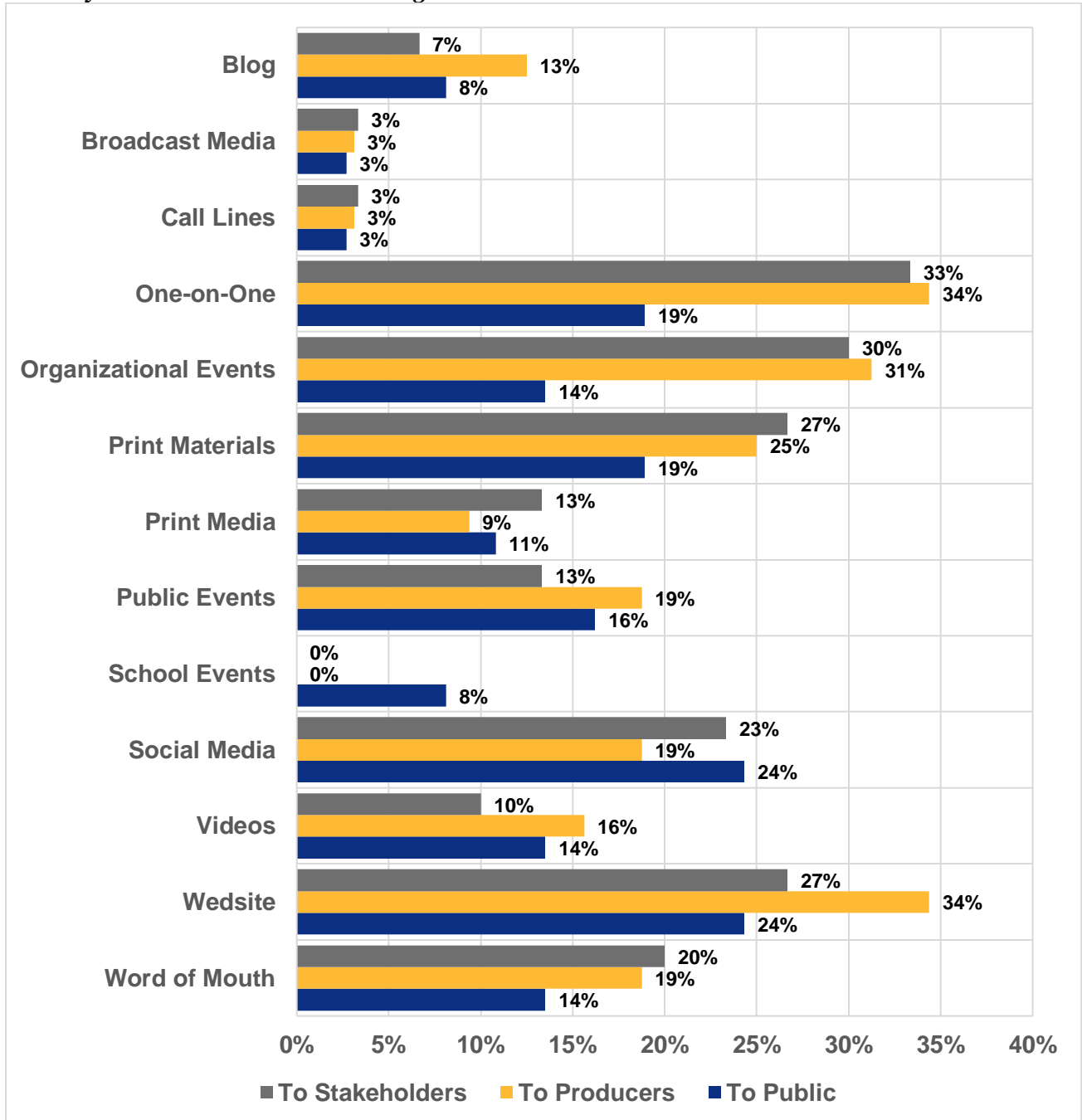


Figure 18. Channels selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate industry animal care assurance programs with the public (n=37), producers (n=32), and industry stakeholders (n=30)

## Production Practices

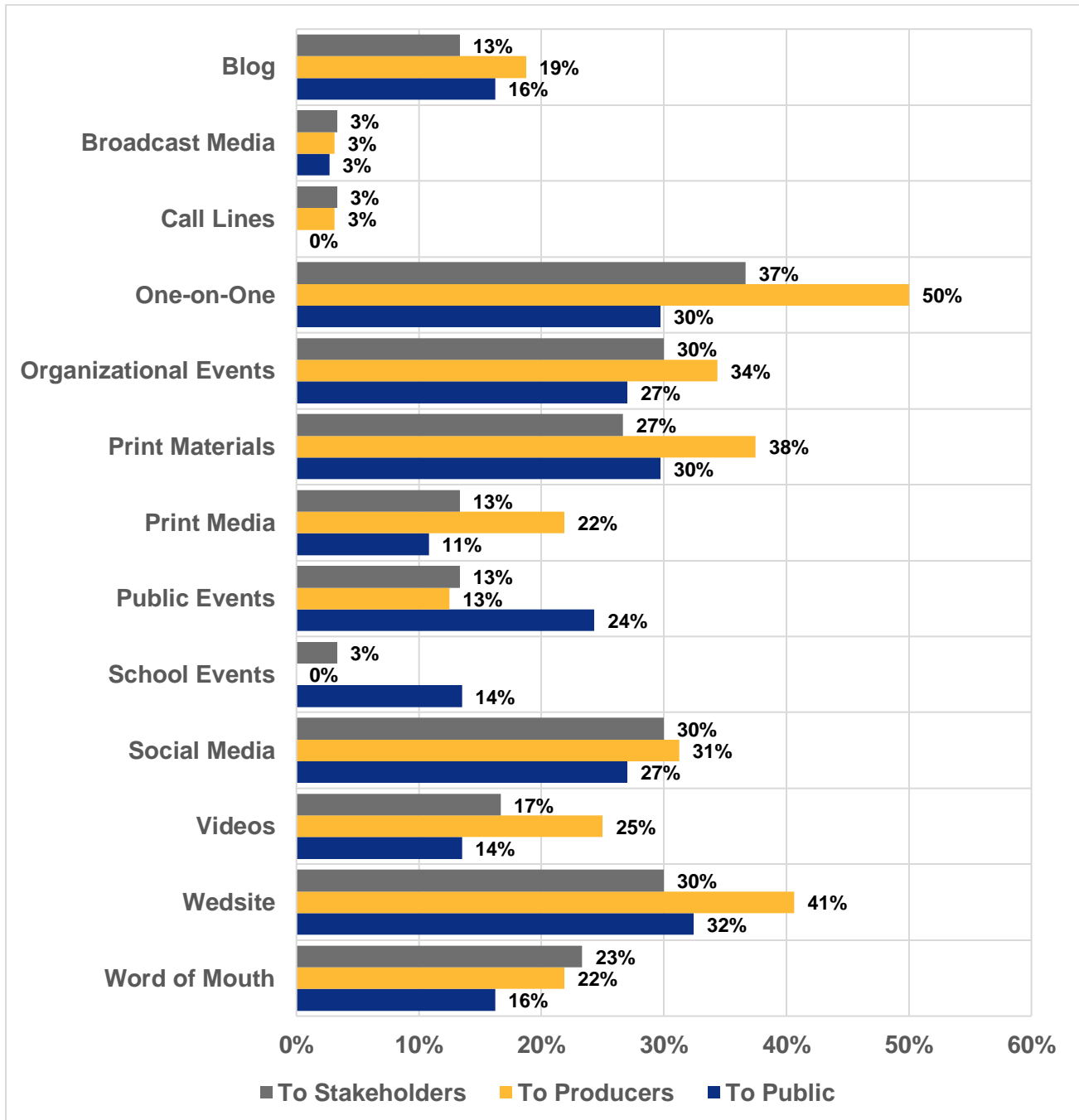


Figure 19. Channels selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate production practices with the public (n=37), producers (n=32), and industry stakeholders (n=30)

## Slaughter Practices

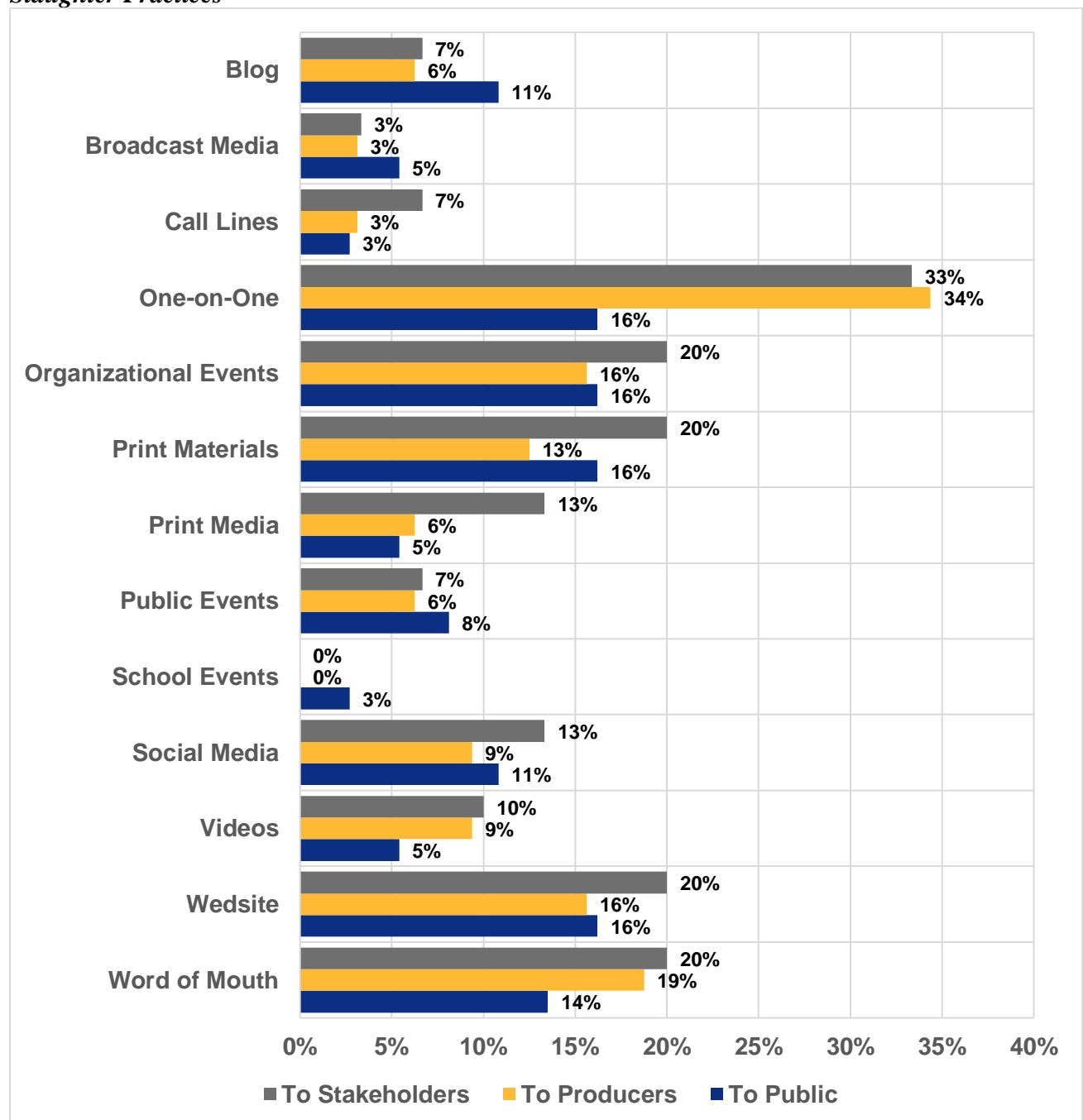


Figure 20. Channels selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate slaughter practices with the public (n=37), producers (n=32), and industry stakeholders (n=30)

***Telling your story (i.e. Public trust related)***

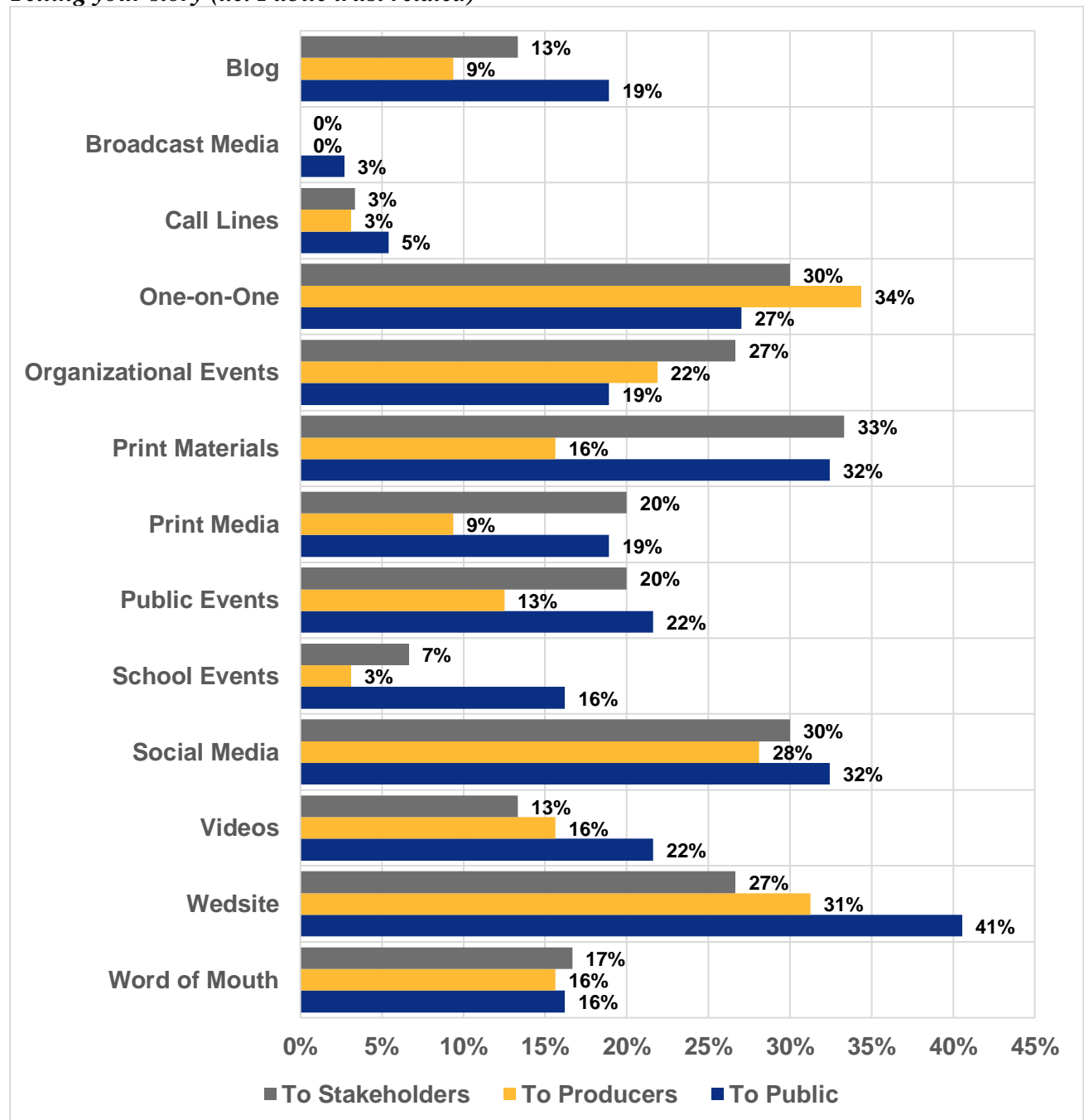


Figure 21. Channels selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate “telling your story” with the public (n=37), producers (n=32), and industry stakeholders (n=30)

## Traceability Practices

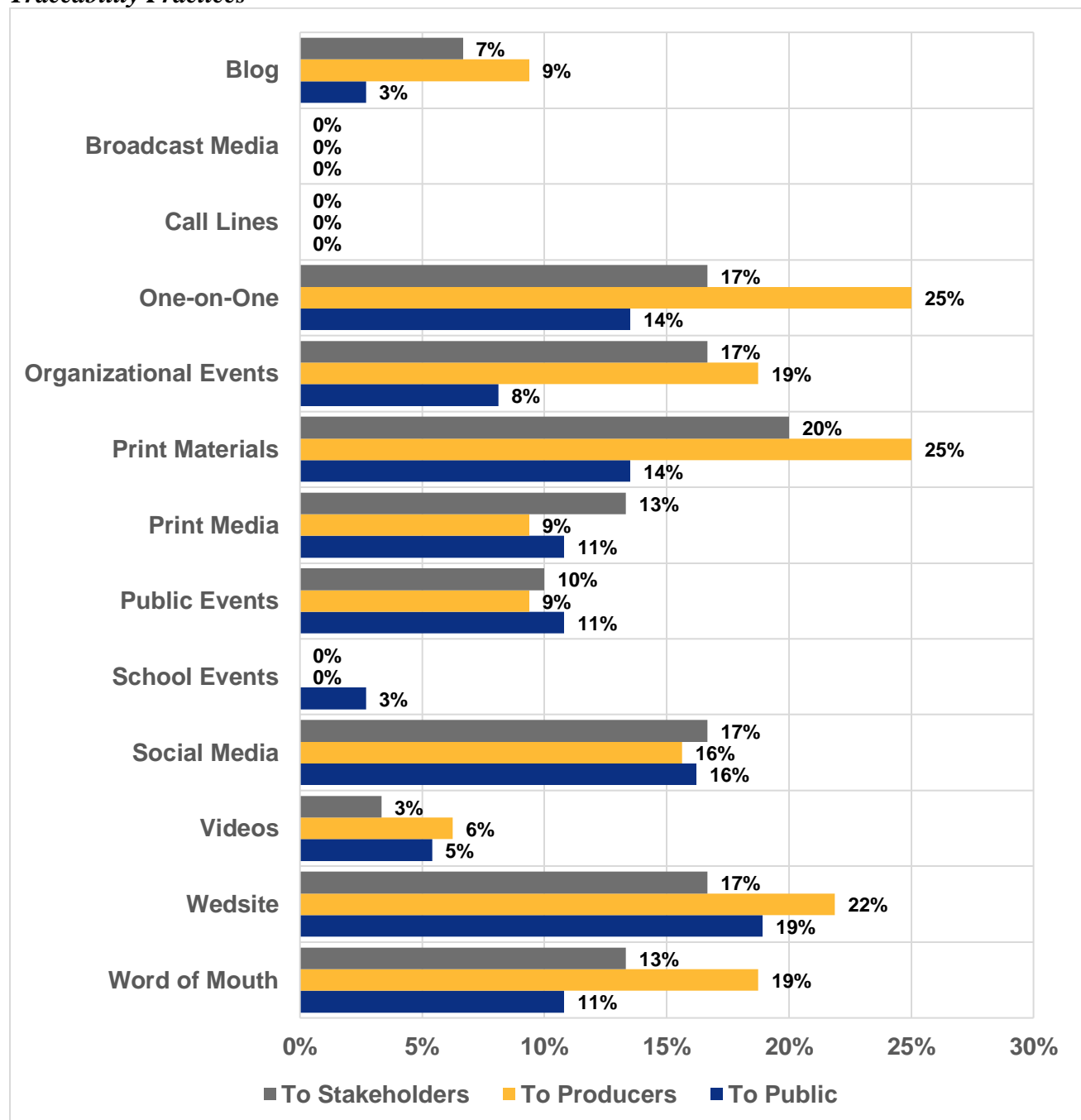


Figure 22. Channels selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate traceability practices with the public (n=37), producers (n=32), and industry stakeholders (n=30)



## Transportation Practices

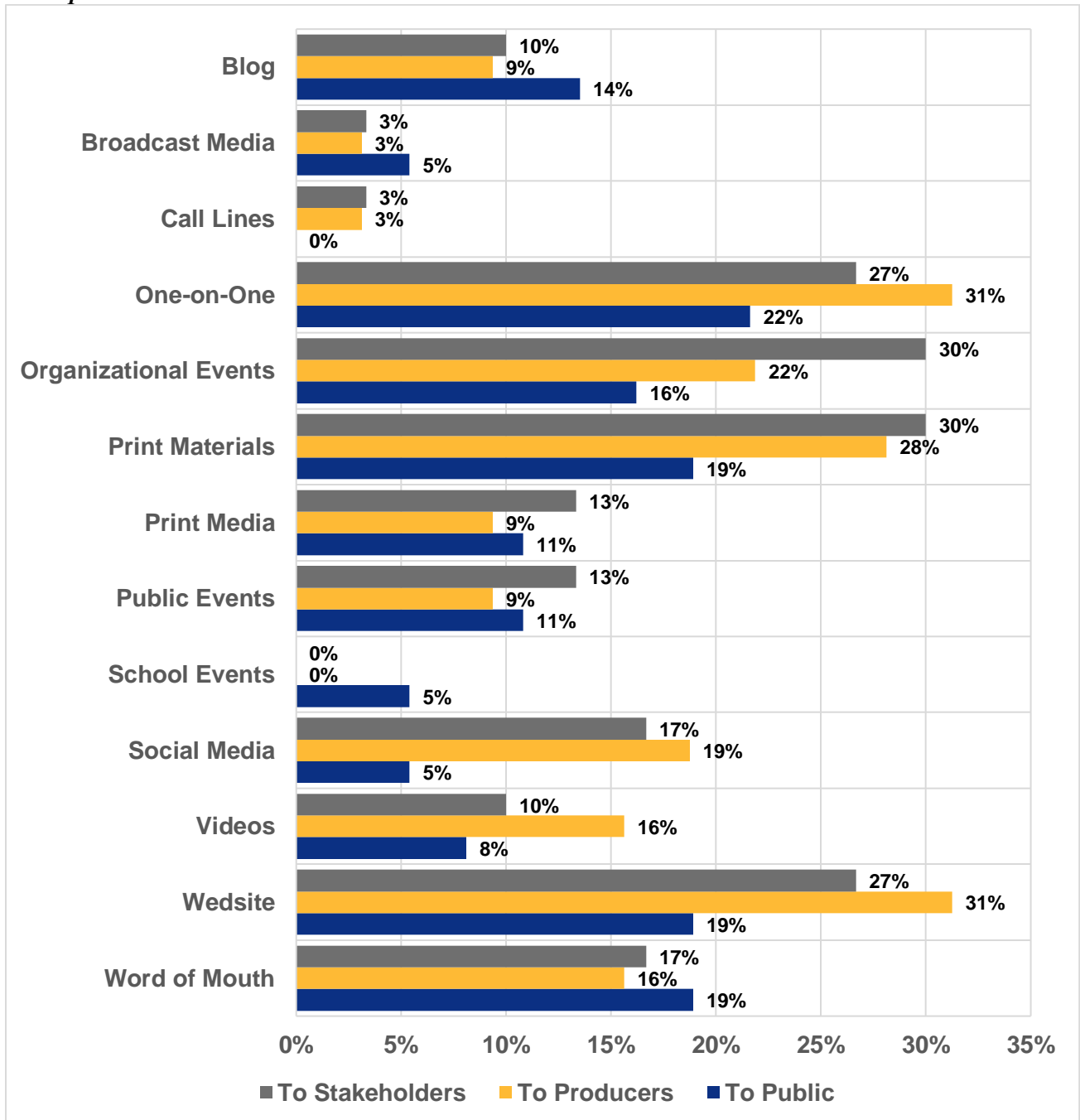


Figure 23. Channels selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate transportation practices with the public (n=37), producers (n=32), and industry stakeholders (n=30)

## Biosecurity Practices

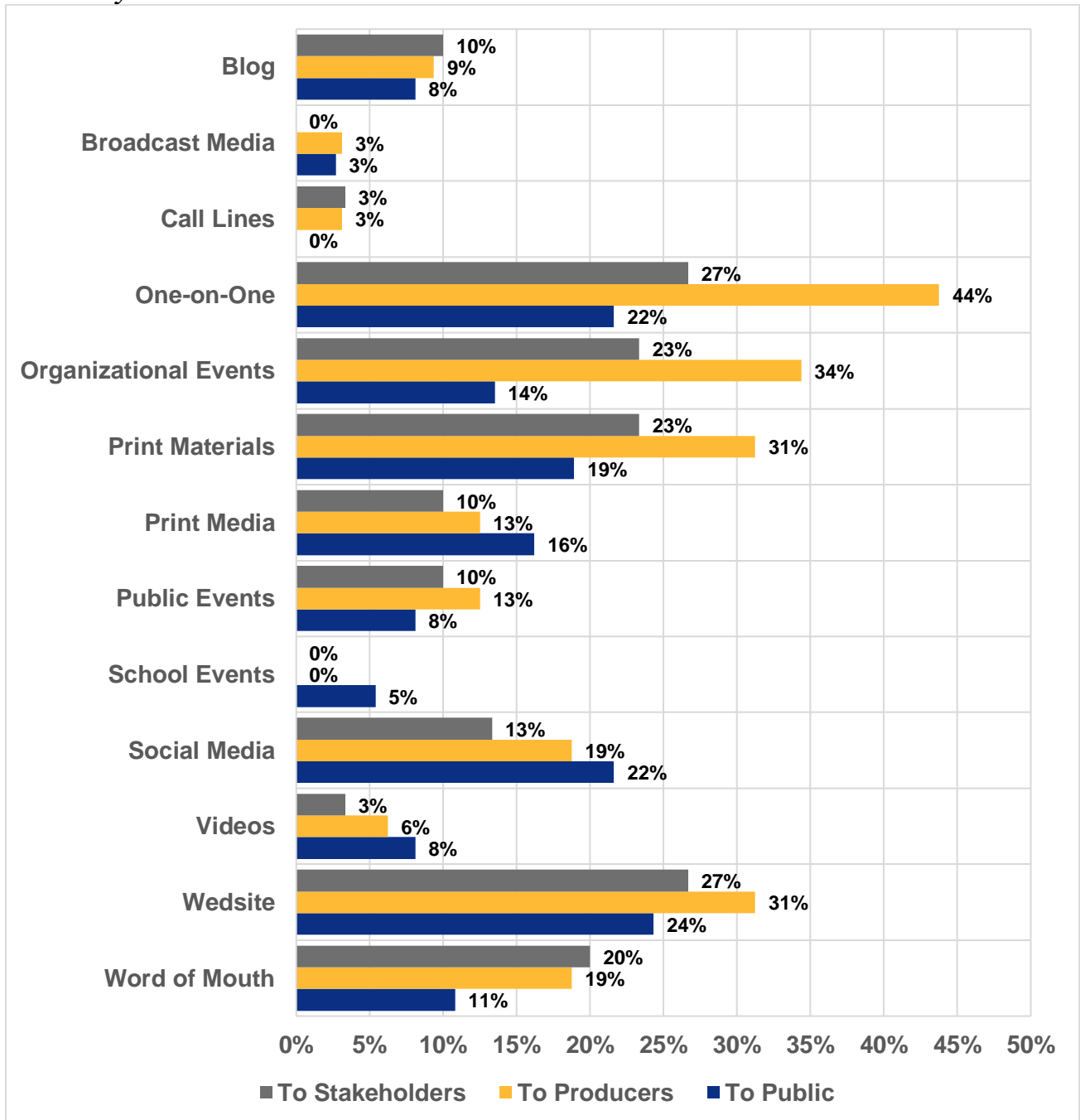


Figure 24. Channels selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate biosecurity practices with the public (n=37), producers (n=32), and industry stakeholders (n=30)

## Euthanasia

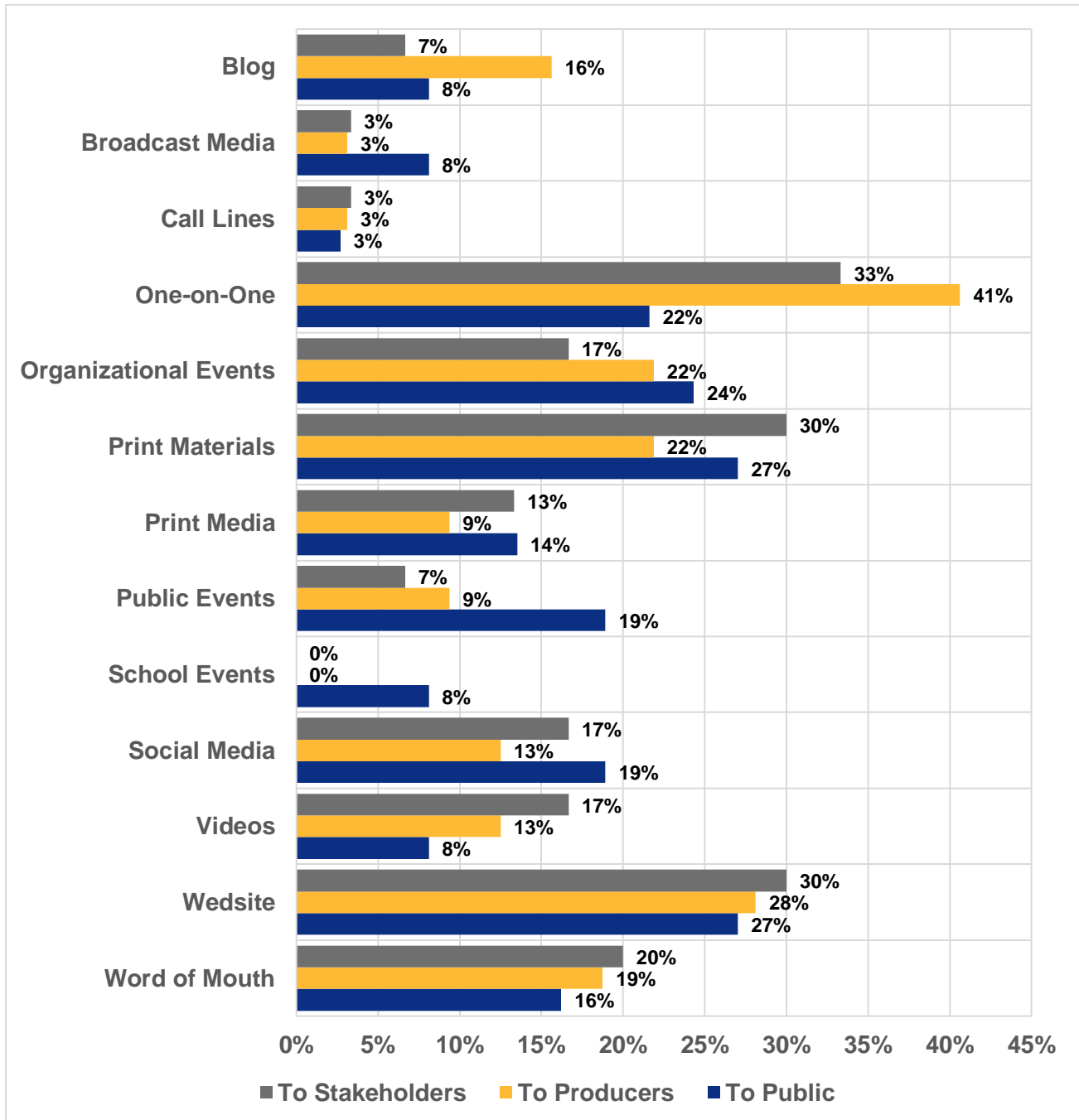


Figure 25. Channels selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate euthanasia practices with the public (n=37), producers (n=32), and industry stakeholders (n=30)

## Changes to Policies & Regulations

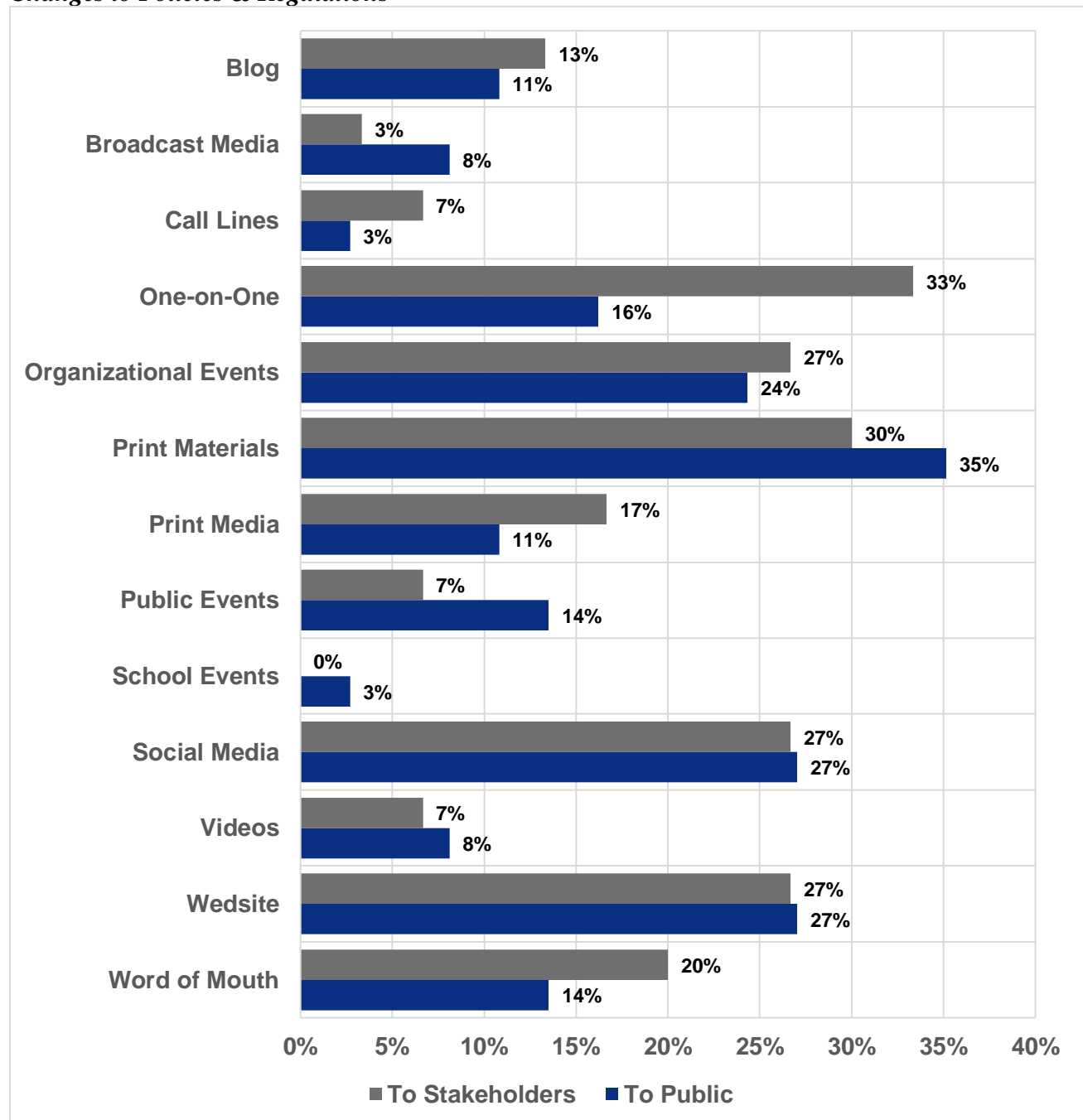


Figure 26. Channels selected by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate changes to policies and regulations with the public (n=37), producers (n=32), and industry stakeholders (n=30)

**Who does your organization currently collaborate with in its communication activities? Select all that apply.**

*Table 3. Collaborator that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey reported that their organization currently collaborate with in its communication activities (n=28)*

<b>Collaborator</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Academic Institution(s)	15	54%
Animal Welfare Group(s)	17	61%
County/Municipal District(s)	10	36%
Government(s)	19	68%
Livestock Commodity Group(s)	19	68%
Processor(s)	12	43%
Producer(s)	20	71%
Other	4	14%

Other included organization/industry partners, customers, veterinarians, veterinary associations, and forage associations.

**What grades does your organization offer resources or activities to students? Select all that apply.**

*Table 4. Grades that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey reported that their organization offers educational resources or activities to students (n=18)*

<b>Grades</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Grades 1-6	12	67%
Grades 7-9	4	22%
Grades 10-12	7	39%
Post-Secondary	10	56%
Other	1	6%

Other included 4-H and equestrian groups.

**How do you provide these resources or activities to students? Select all that apply.**

*Table 5. Methods by which organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey reported that their organization offers educational resources or activities to students (n=17)*

<b>Resources/Activities</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Coordinate Ag School Events	5	29%
Curriculum-Based Resources	7	41%
Hands-On Activities	10	59%
In-Person Presentations	12	71%
Online Resources & Activities	9	53%
Print Resources	12	71%
Video-Conferencing Presentations	2	12%
Other	2	12%

Other included volunteering with Ag in the Classroom and tours and field trips.

**Who delivers these resources to students? Select all that apply.**

*Table 6. Individuals who the organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey reported that delivers their organization's resources to students (n=17)*

<b>Who delivers resources to students</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Contractor	4	24%
Designated Staff for Education	7	41%
Only Online Sources Available	0	0%
Paid Staff Without Designation for Education	11	65%
Volunteers	6	35%
Other	0	0%

**Does your organization collaborate with any of the following in the creation or distribution of these resources and activities for students? Select all that apply.**

*Table 7. Collaborators that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey is collaborating with in the creation or distribution of educational resources and activities to students (n=17)*

<b>Collaborators</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Academic Institution(s)	10	59%
Animal Welfare Group(s)	10	59%
County/Municipal District(s)	5	29%
Government(s)	6	35%
Livestock Commodity Group(s)	7	41%
Processor(s)	3	18%
Producer(s)	6	35%
Research Group(s)	6	35%
Teachers and/or Teacher Associations	9	53%
Do Not Collaborate	0	0%
Other	1	6%

Other included curriculum development agency.

**Overall, please select what your organization views as motivators towards providing resources or activities to students.**

*Table 8. Motivators viewed by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey towards providing resources or activities to students (n=37)*

<b>Motivators</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Educate Youth in Agriculture	26	70%
Funding	9	24%
Industry Demand	14	38%
Industry Support	15	41%
Recruitment of Youth into Agriculture	19	51%
Right Thing to Do	27	73%
To Dispel Misinformation	26	70%
Other	3	8%

Other included public demand and teacher demand.

**Overall, please select what your organization views as barriers towards providing resources or activities to students.**

*Table 9. Barriers viewed by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey towards providing resources or activities to students (n=36)*

<b>Barriers</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Funding	21	58%
Resources	20	56%
Time	20	56%
Travel Restraint	4	11%
Willingness of Groups to Allow Us to Speak to Students	5	14%
Other	8	22%

Other included not being viewed as a trusted source of information, bias and lack of awareness, and lack of staff.

**Please select the topics covered in the animal welfare-focused extension activities that your organization currently offer its producers.**

*Table 10. Topics covered in animal-welfare focused extension activities that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers (n=21)*

<b>Topics</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Best Practices	18	86%
Biosecurity Practices	12	57%
Changes to Policies & Regulations	15	71%
Emergency Management & Preparation	13	62%
Euthanasia Practices	12	57%
Industry Animal Care Assurance Programs	12	57%
Low-Stress Handling	16	76%
Producer Mental Health	6	29%
Responsible Antimicrobial Use	15	71%
Traceability Practices	9	43%
Transportation Practices	14	67%
Updates on Current Research	14	67%
Other	3	14%

Other included providing information on science-based requests and recommendations, managing parasite resistance, insect control, financial and risk management, and livestock nutrition.



**What animal welfare-focused education and extension-related activities and resources does your organization currently offer its producers? Select those that apply.**

***Responsible Antimicrobial Use***

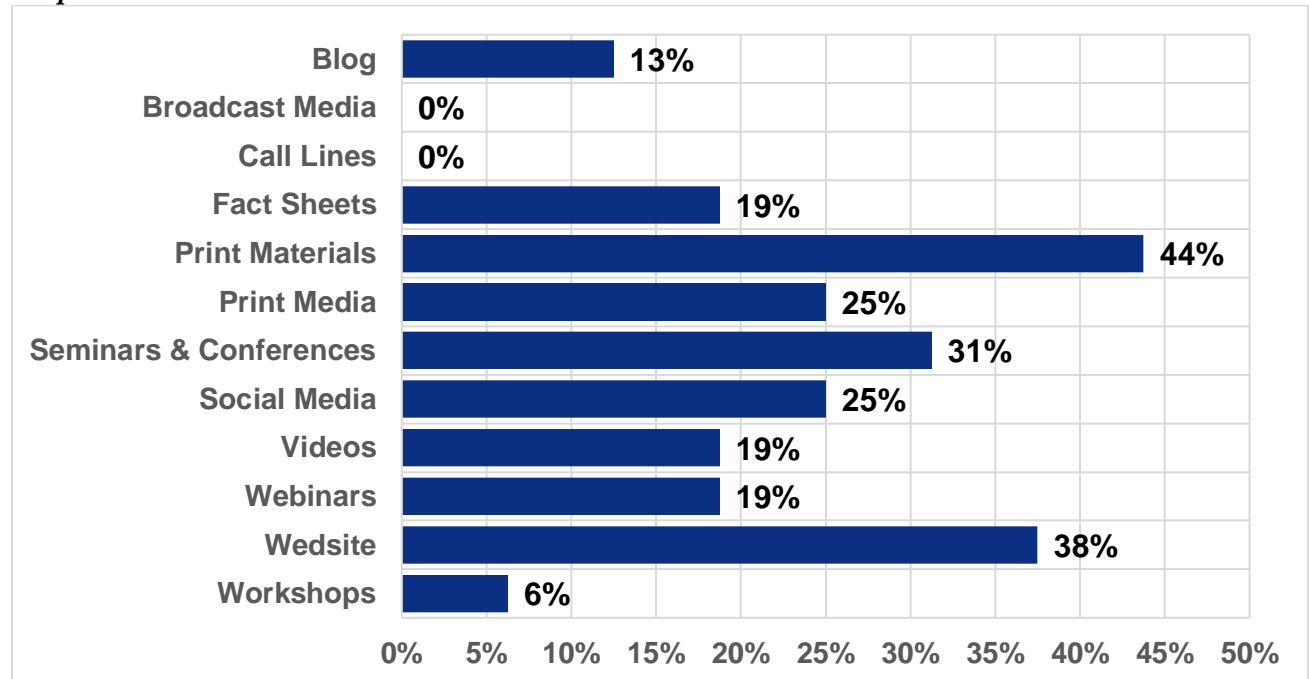


Figure 27. Activities and resources that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers in relation to responsible antimicrobial use (n=16)

***Best Practices (e.g. Body Condition Scoring)***

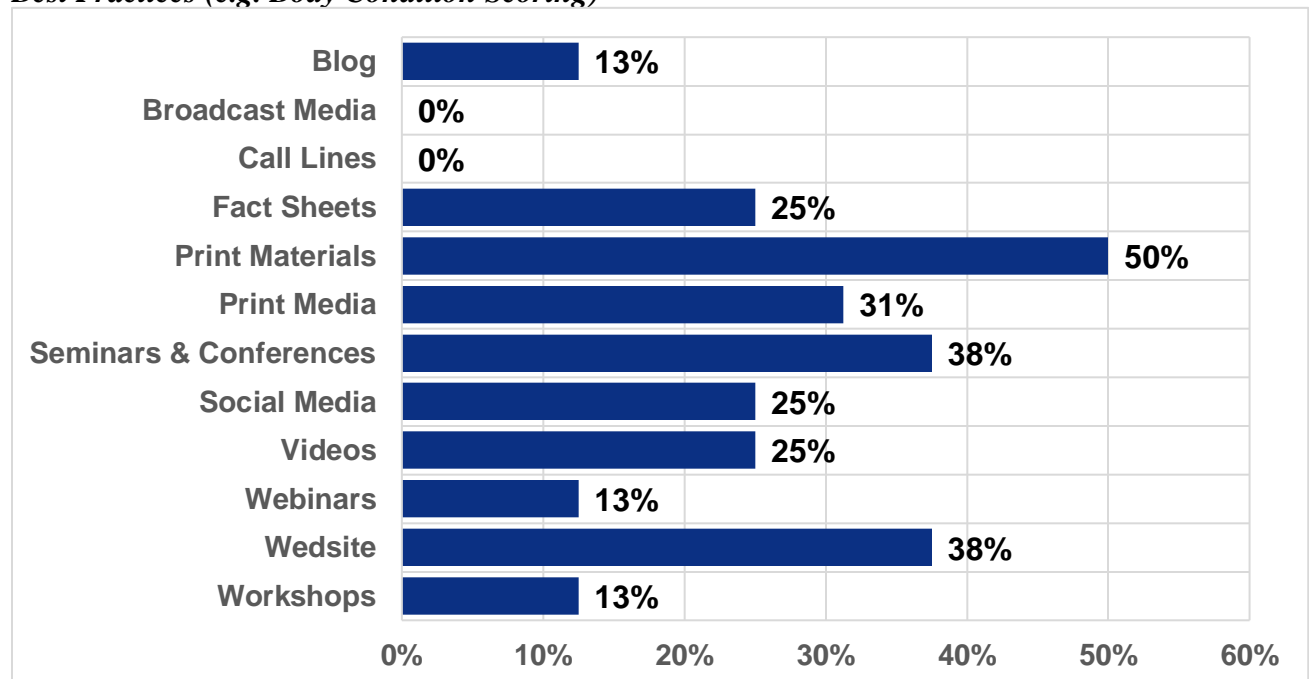


Figure 28. Activities and resources that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers in relation to best practices (n=16)

### ***Emergency Management & Preparation***

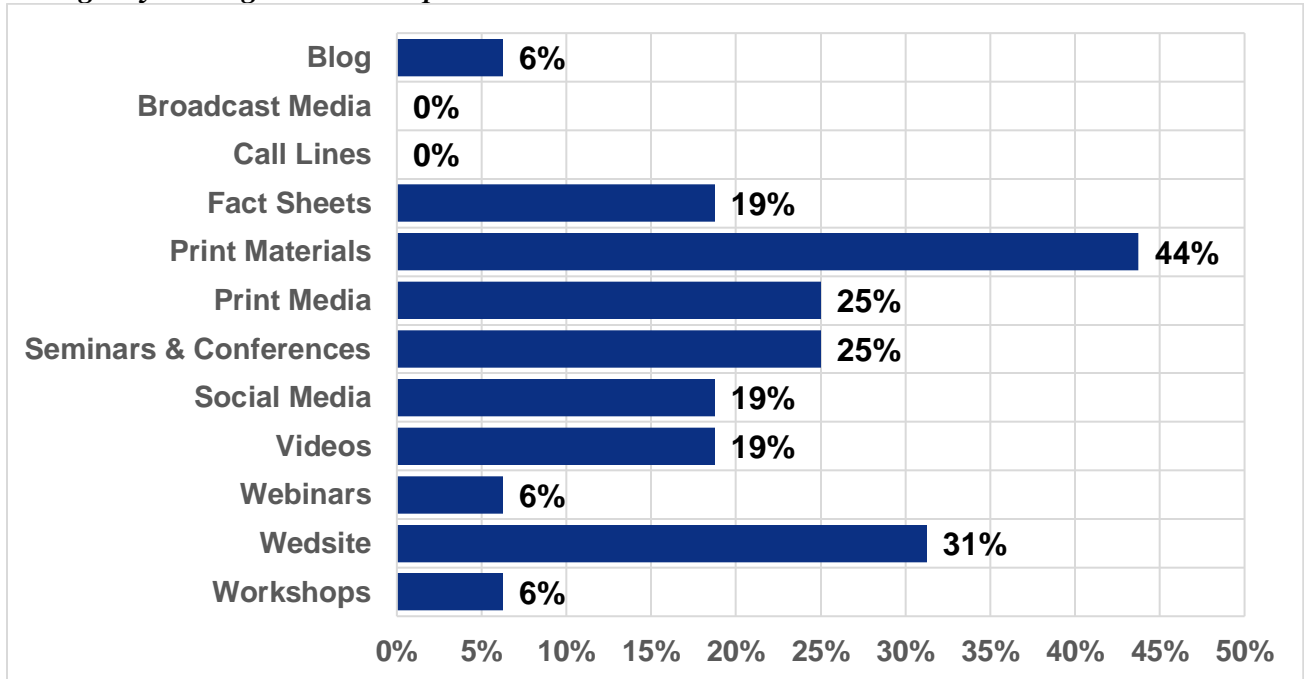


Figure 29. Activities and resources that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers in relation to emergency management and preparation (n=16)

### ***Euthanasia***

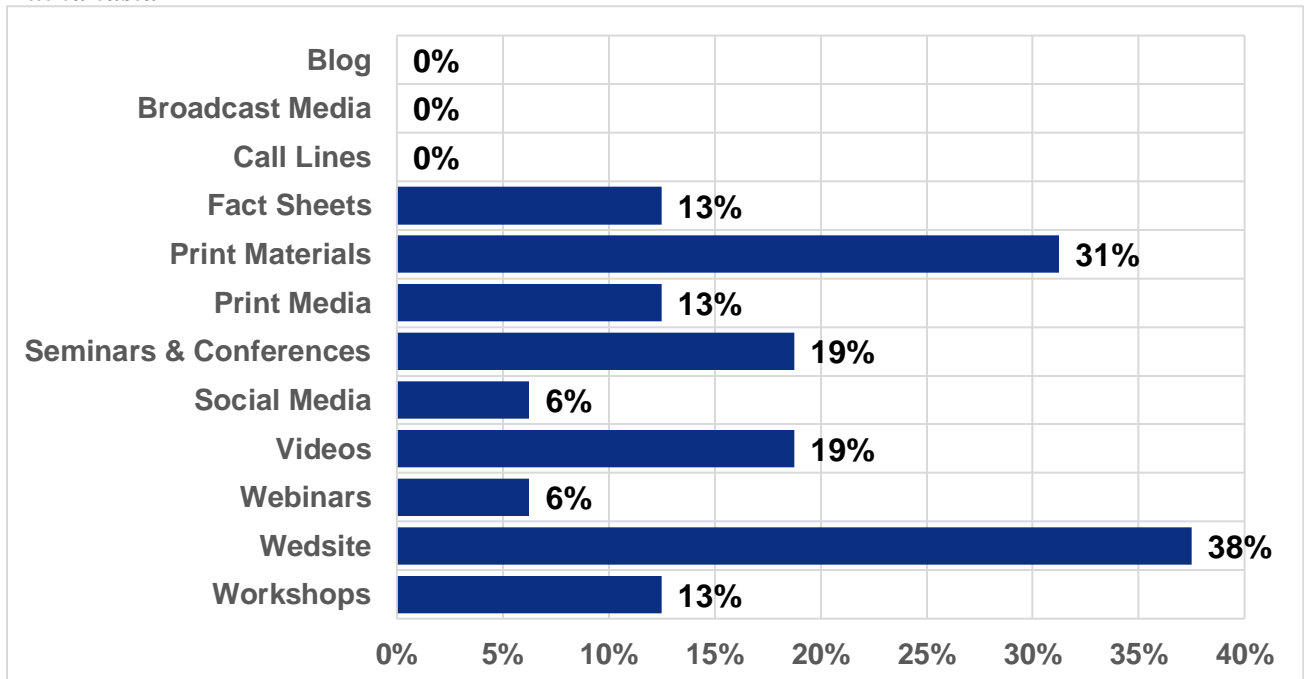


Figure 30. Activities and resources that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers in relation to euthanasia practices (n=16)

### *Low-Stress Handling*

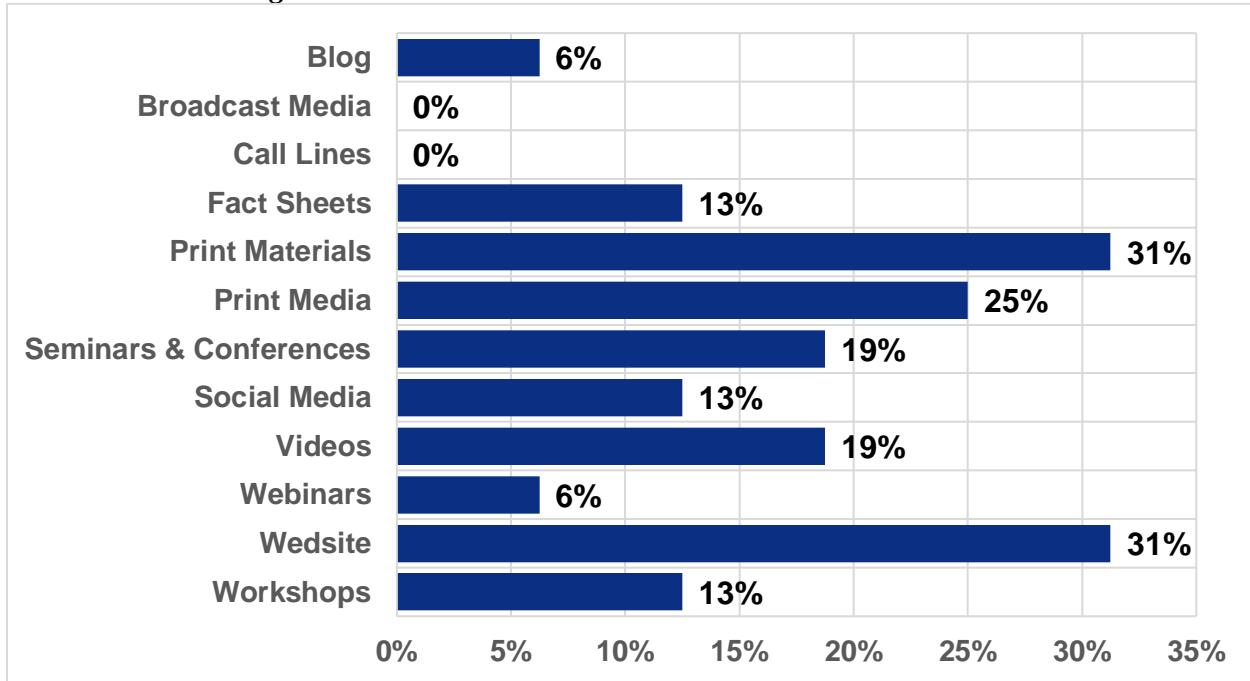


Figure 31. Activities and resources that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers in relation to low-stress handling (n=16)

### *Animal Care Assurance Programs*

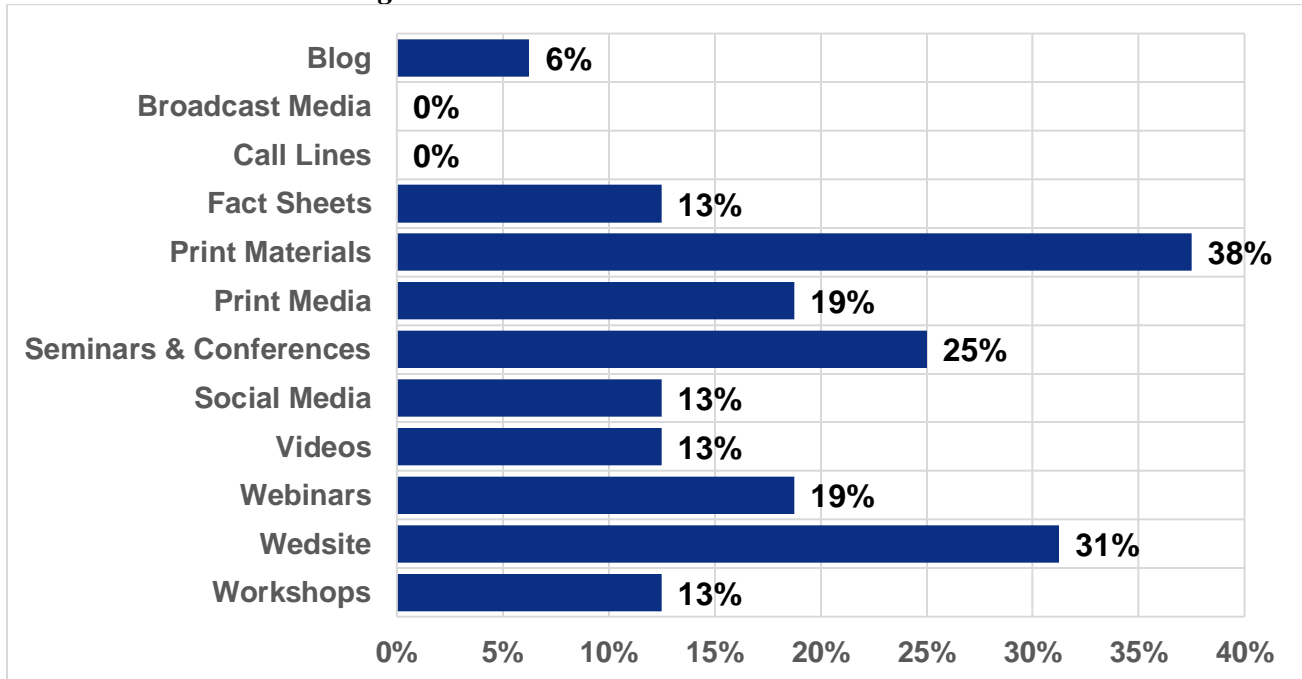


Figure 32. Activities and resources that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers in relation to animal care assurance programs (n=16)

### Producer Mental Health

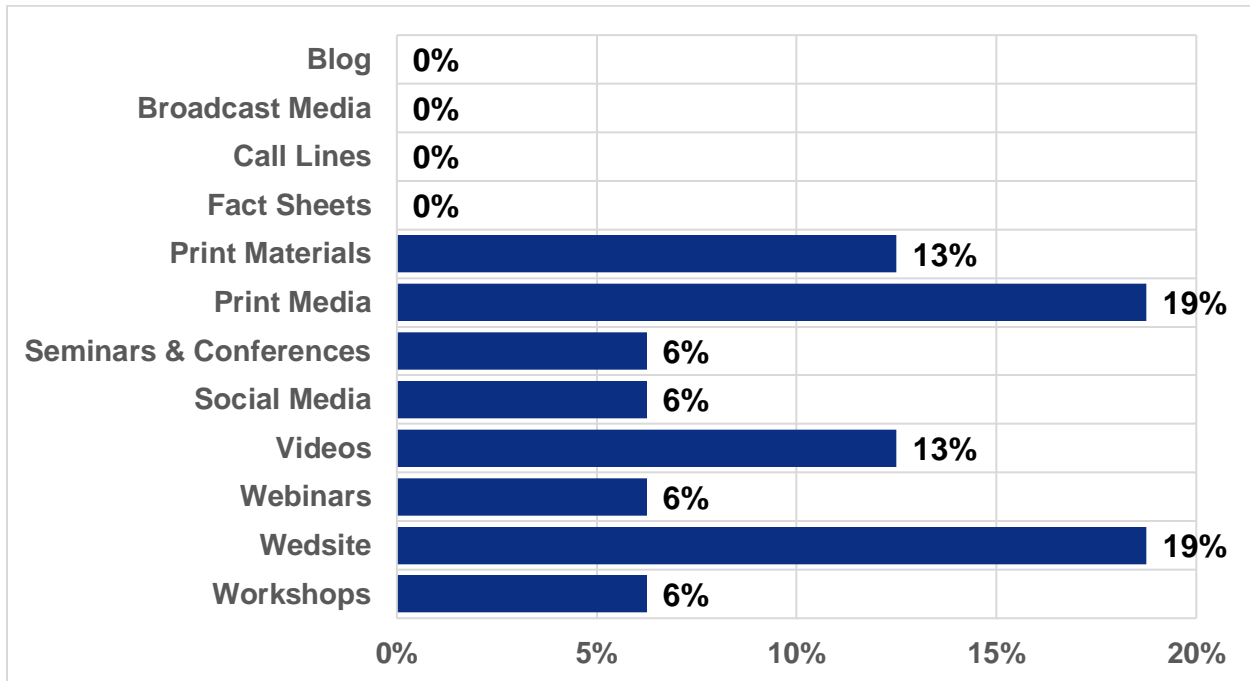


Figure 33. Activities and resources that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers in relation to producer mental health (n=16)

### Traceability Practices

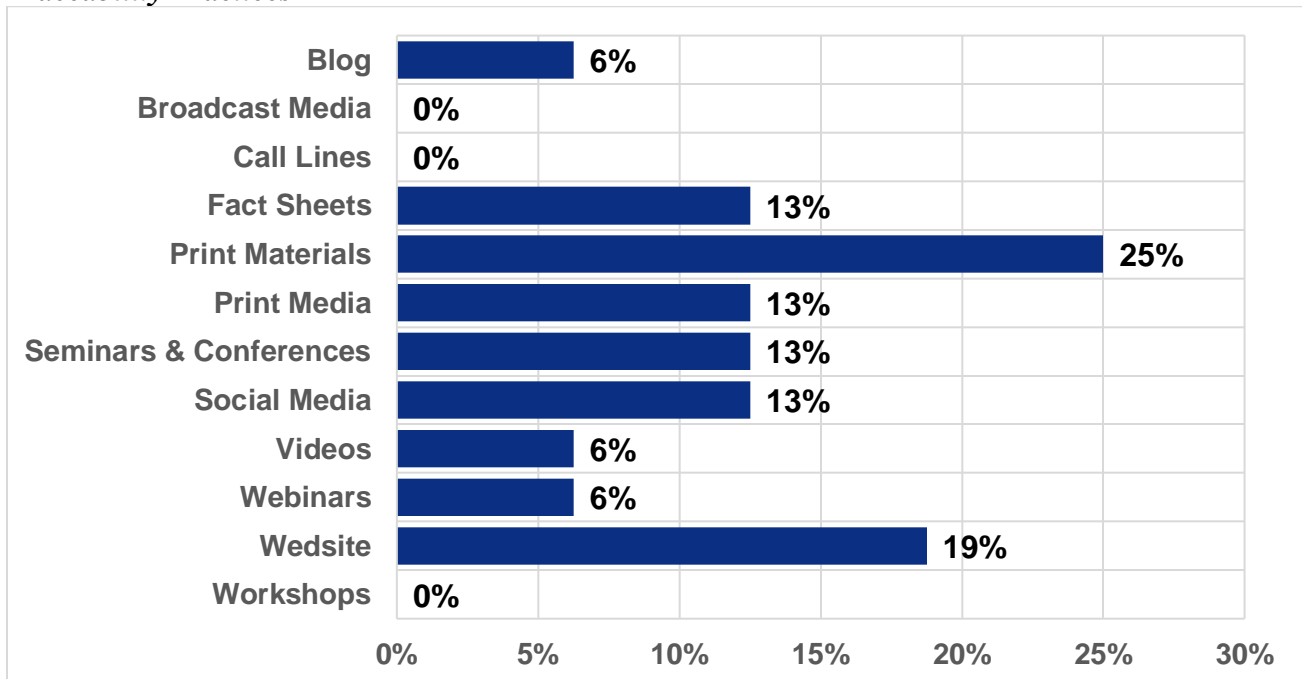


Figure 34. Activities and resources that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers in relation to traceability practices (n=16)

### Transportation Practices

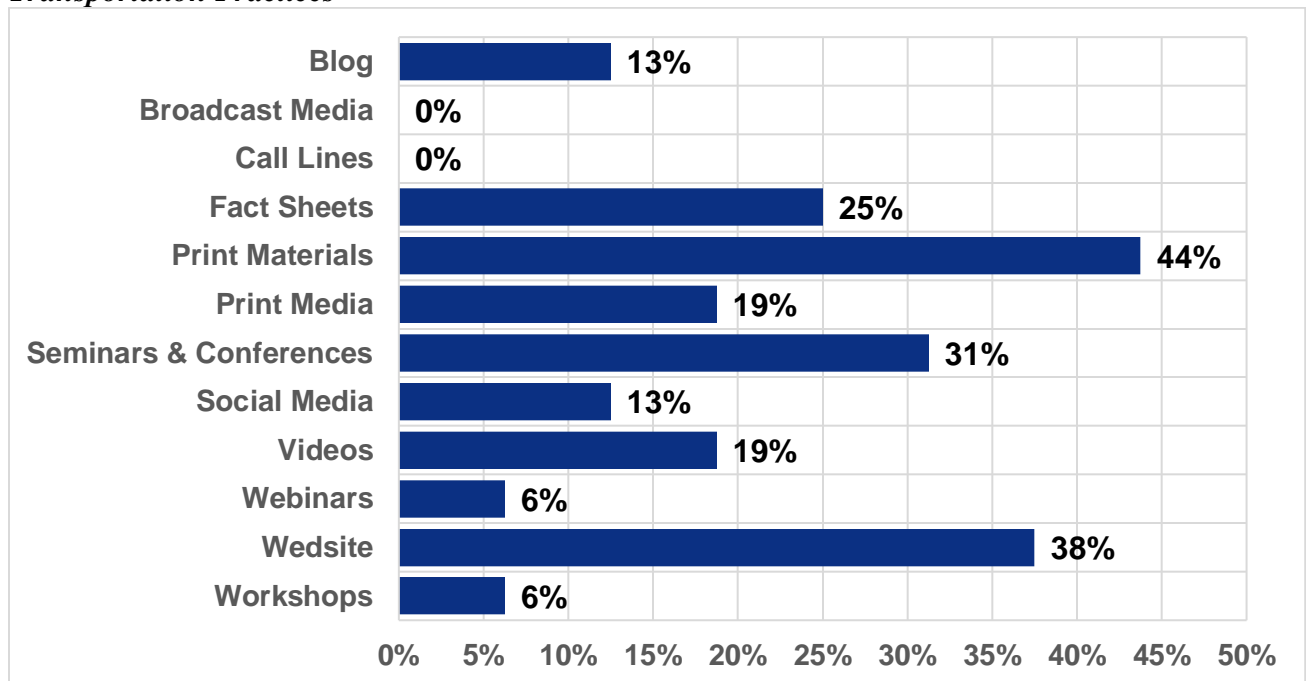


Figure 35. Activities and resources that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers in relation to transportation practices (n=16)

### Updates on Current Research

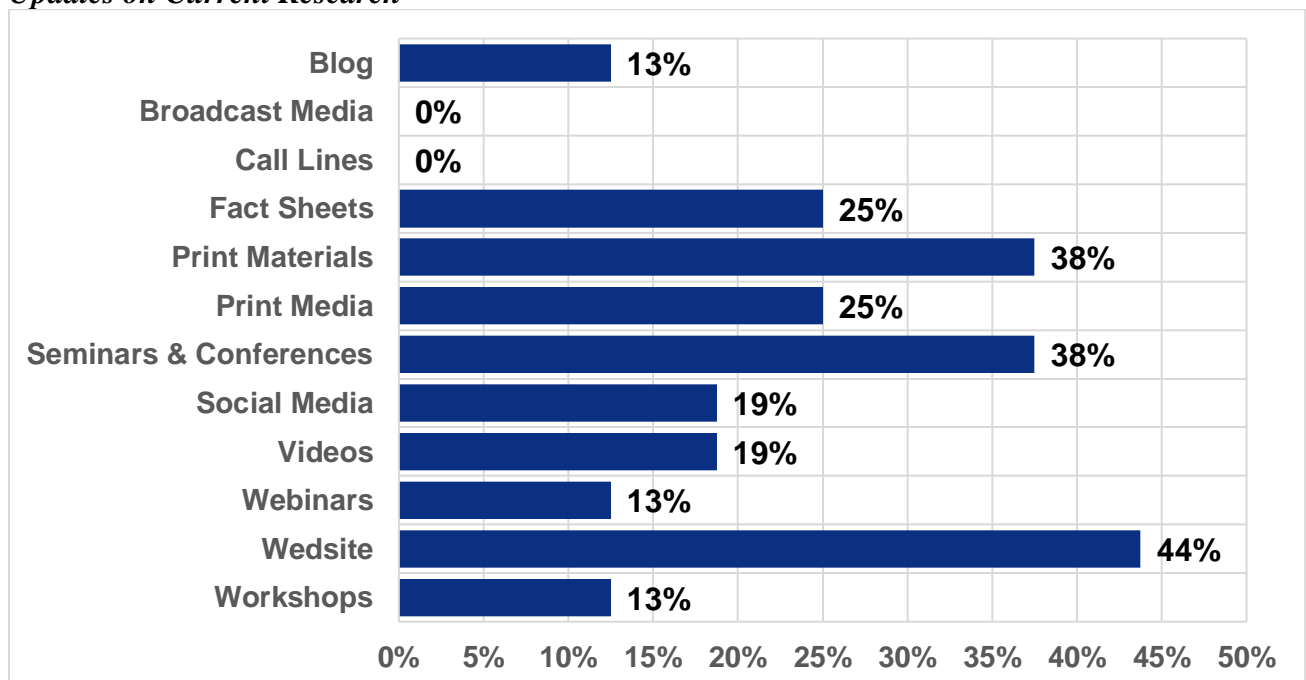


Figure 36. Activities and resources that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers in relation to updates on current research (n=16)

### Changes to Policies & Regulations

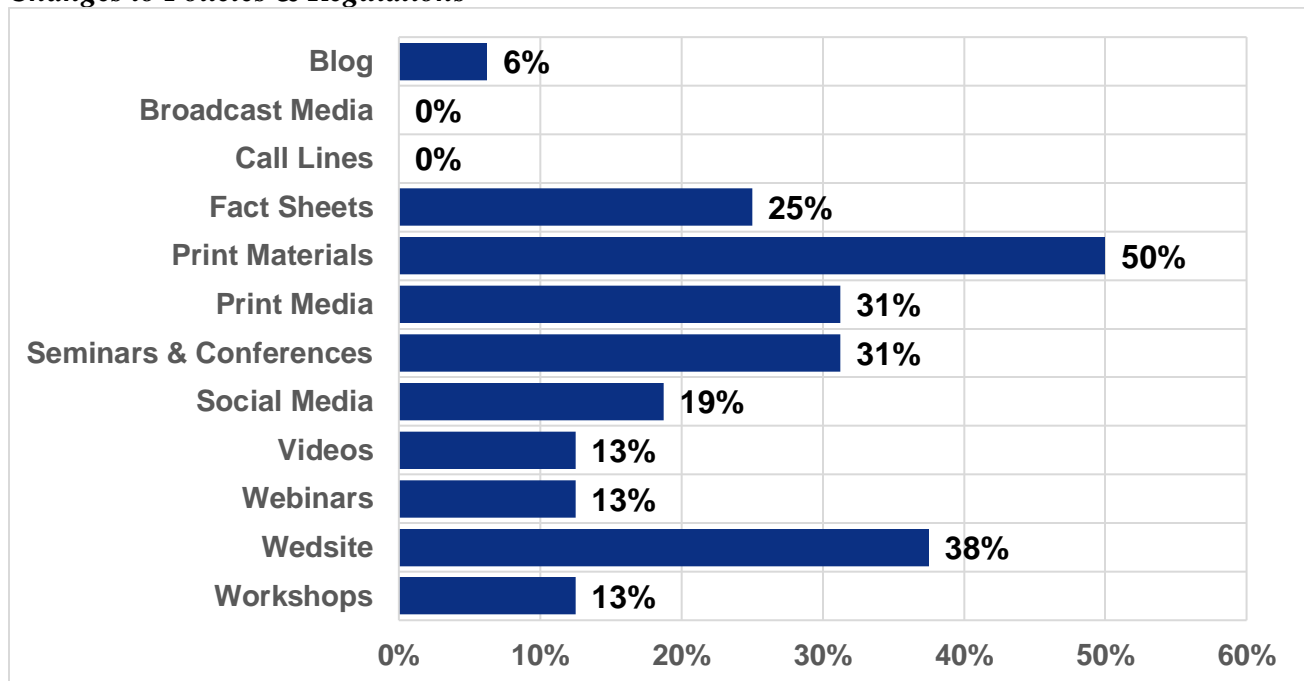


Figure 37. Activities and resources that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers in relation to changes to policies and regulations (n=16)

### Biosecurity Practices

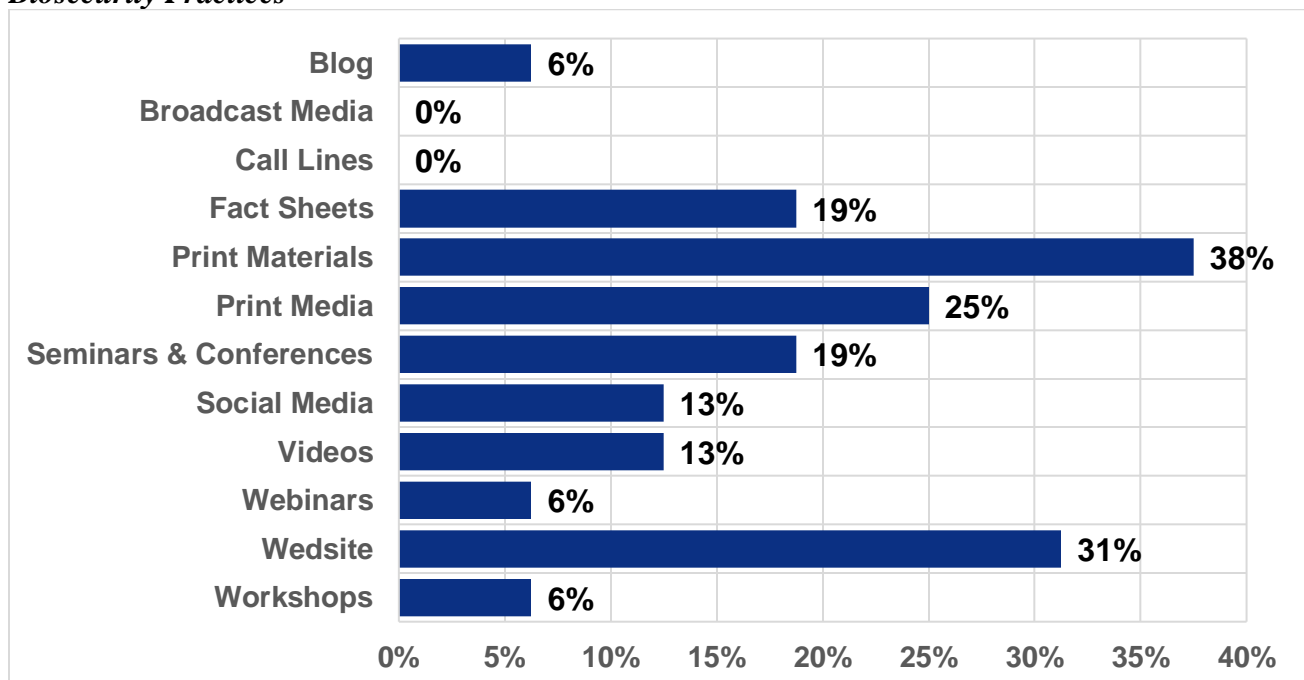


Figure 38. Activities and resources that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers in relation to biosecurity practices (n=16)

**Who does your organization currently collaborate with in any of its education and extension activities? Select all that apply.**

*Table 11. Collaborators that organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey is collaborating with in any of their education and extension activities (n=19)*

<b>Collaborators</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Academic Institution(s)	14	74%
Animal Welfare Group(s)	10	53%
County/Municipal District(s)	6	32%
Government(s)	16	84%
Livestock Commodity Group(s)	12	63%
Processor(s)	7	37%
Producer(s)	14	74%
Research Group(s)	9	47%
Retailer(s)	4	21%
Does Not Collaborate	2	11%
Other	1	5%

Other included value chain partners, such as nutritionists and veterinarians.

**Overall, please select what your organization views as motivators towards extending education and extension activities to your producers.**

*Table 12. Motivators viewed by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey towards extending education and extension activities to producers (n=30)*

<b>Motivators</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Academic Institutional Demand	5	17%
Academic Institutional Support	11	37%
Consumer Demand	19	63%
Funding	10	33%
Government Demand	12	40%
Other Organization(s) Demand	7	23%
Processor Demand	8	27%
Producer Demand	22	73%
Regulations and Guidelines	13	43%
Research Findings	9	30%
Veterinary Demand	9	30%
Other	4	13%

Other included supporting producers working with organizations that focus on extension or with their veterinarian/specialist.

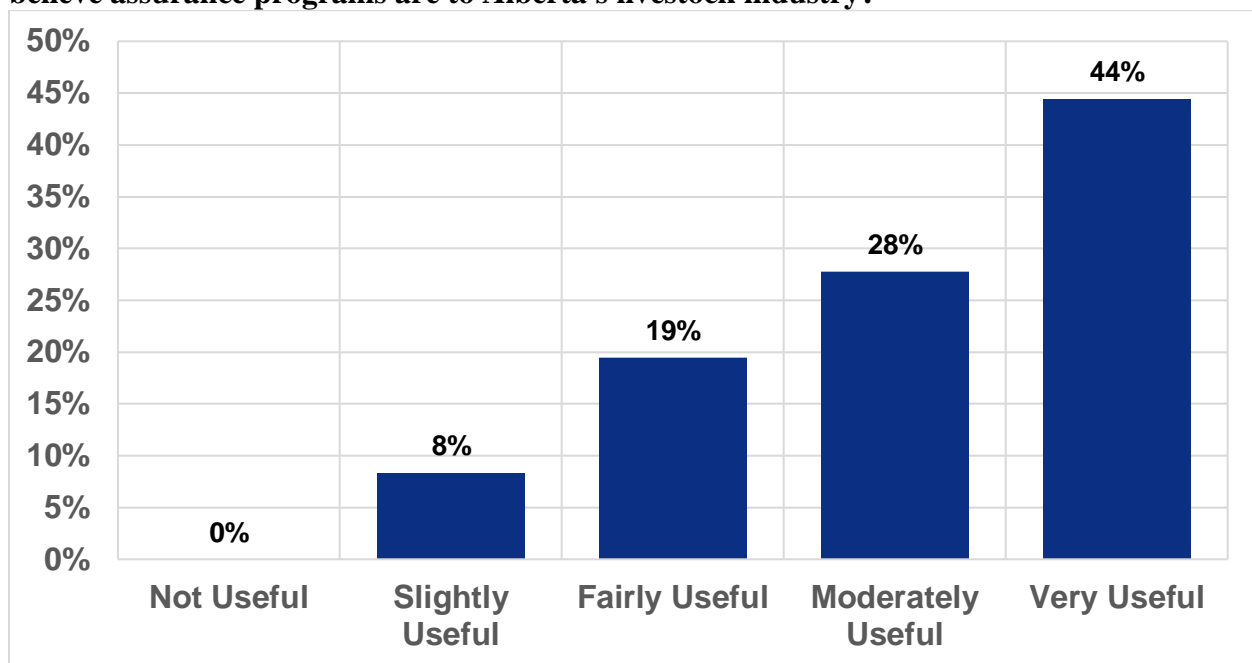
**Overall, please select what your organization views as barriers towards extending education and extension activities to your producers.**

*Table 13. Barriers viewed by organizational respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey towards extending education and extension activities to producers (n=30)*

Barriers	n	Percentage
Funding	20	67%
Lack of Communication	7	23%
Lack of Industry Direction	8	27%
Lack of Producer Participation	14	47%
Lack of Resources	15	50%
Other	9	30%

Other included lack of time, lack of information, lack of expertise, not a priority for the organization, and lack of government acknowledgment and transparency.

**On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all useful and 5 being very useful), how useful do you believe assurance programs are to Alberta's livestock industry?**



*Figure 39. Degree of usefulness by survey respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey in Alberta that assurance programs are Alberta's livestock industry (n=36)*



## II. ONLINE SURVEY - INDIVIDUALS

Table 14. Roles of individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey in Alberta's livestock industry (n=428)

Individual's Role	n	Percentage
Abattoir Employee	5	1%
Animal Owner	105	25%
Auction Market Employee	2	0.5%
Enforcement Officer	1	0.2%
Farm Employee	23	5%
Producer	258	60%
Transporter	6	1%
Veterinarian	28	7%

### What is your age?

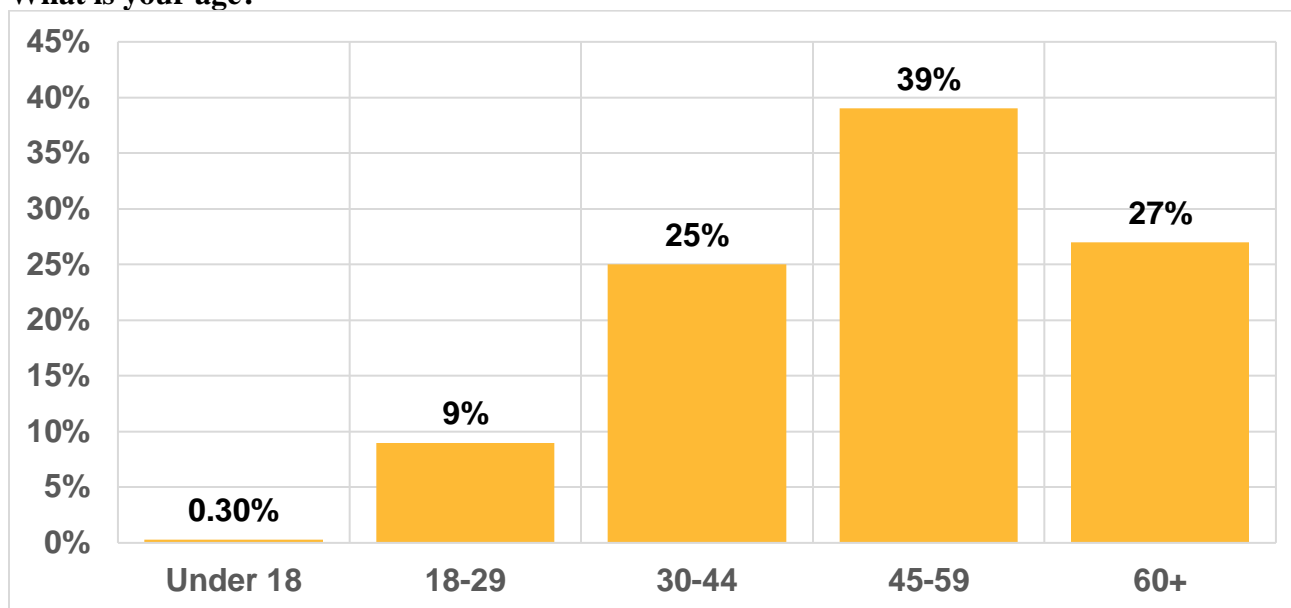


Figure 40. Age ranges of the individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey (n = 329)

**In what sector(s) of the livestock industry do you operate or work?**

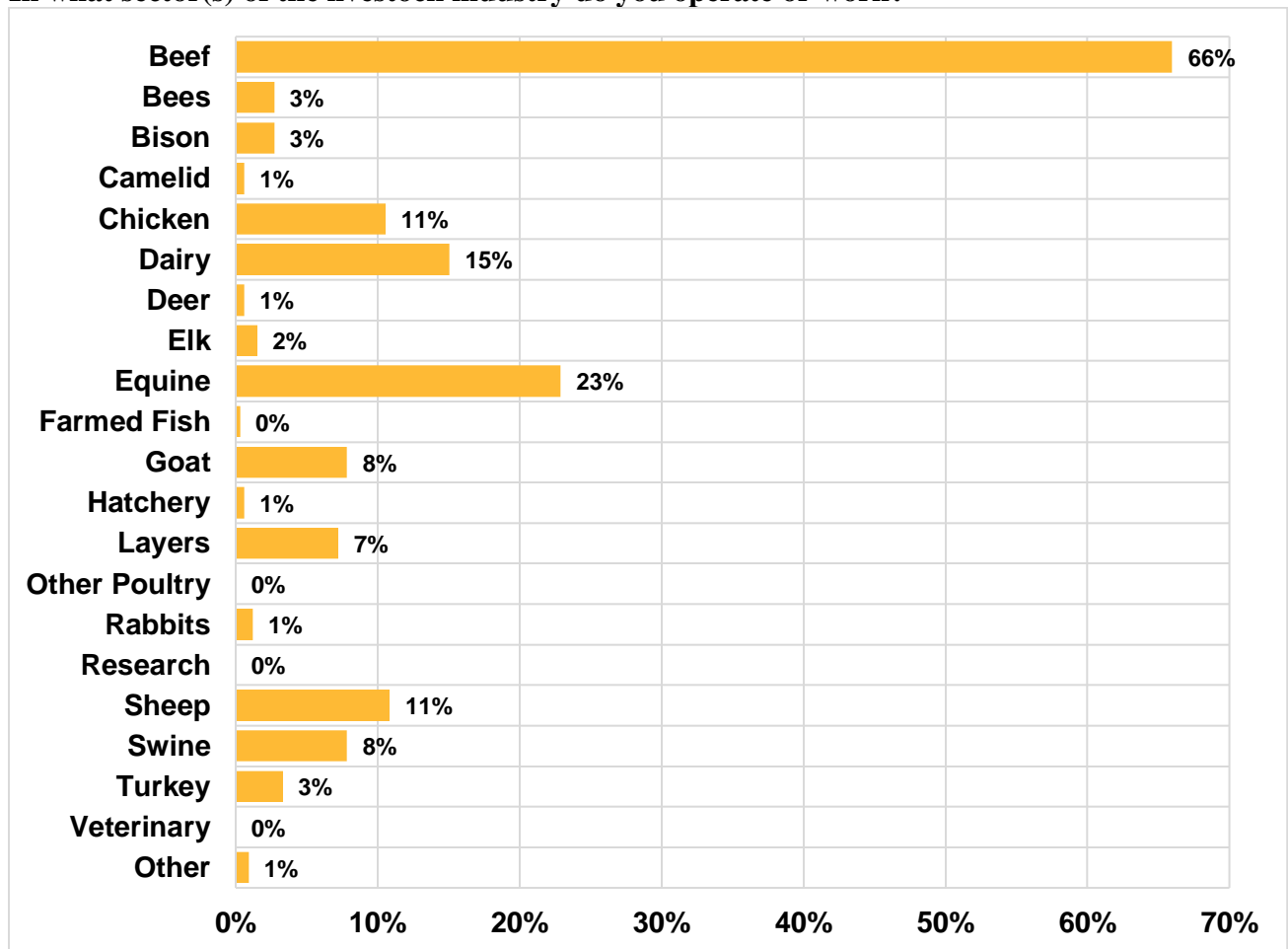
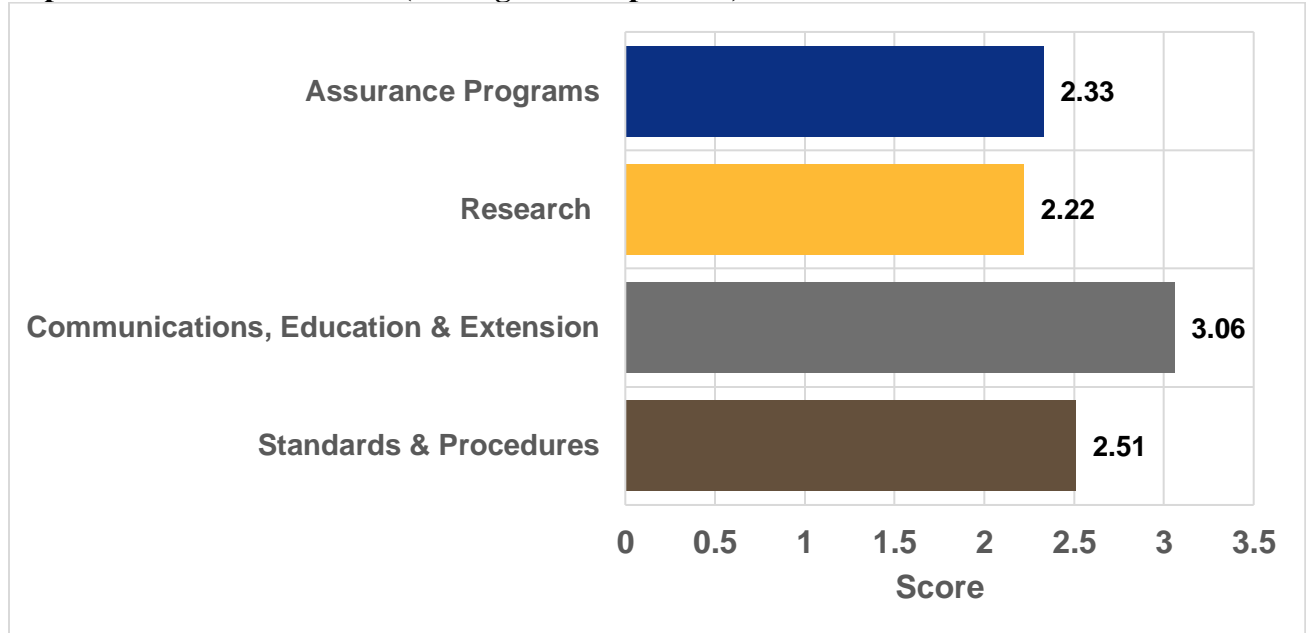


Figure 41. Sectors of the livestock industry that the individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey operate under (n = 332)

Other included retail animal health, breeder, trainer, and judge.

**Rank the following activities, against each other, in order of what you believe to be most important to animal welfare (1 being most important):**



*Figure 42. Ranking of activities that individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project believe to be most important to animal welfare (n=308)*

In terms of animal welfare, how familiar are you with the following standards of care and policies?

Rate the following standards of care and policies in relation to what you believe is their helpfulness to Alberta's livestock industry. If you are not familiar with a standard of care or policy, you can select N/A.

#### ***Animal Protection Act (APA)***

*Table 15. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Animal Protection Act*

<b>Familiarity (n=279)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	51	18%
Slightly Familiar	69	25%
Moderately Familiar	91	33%
Very Familiar	48	17%
Extremely Familiar	20	7%
<b>Helpfulness (n=216)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	10	5%
Not so Helpful	18	8%
Somewhat Helpful	101	47%
Very Helpful	70	32%
Extremely Helpful	17	8%

#### ***NFACC Codes of Practice***

*Table 16. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the NFACC Codes of Practice*

<b>Familiarity (n=276)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	87	32%
Slightly Familiar	63	23%
Moderately Familiar	51	18%
Very Familiar	47	17%
Extremely Familiar	28	10%
<b>Helpfulness (n=180)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	10	6%
Not so Helpful	13	7%
Somewhat Helpful	83	46%
Very Helpful	52	29%
Extremely Helpful	22	12%

### ***The Criminal Code of Canada***

*Table 17. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Criminal Code of Canada*

<b>Familiarity (n=278)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	38	14%
Slightly Familiar	47	17%
Moderately Familiar	96	35%
Very Familiar	85	31%
Extremely Familiar	34	12%
<b>Helpfulness (n=221)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	30	14%
Not so Helpful	38	17%
Somewhat Helpful	91	41%
Very Helpful	38	17%
Extremely Helpful	24	11%

### ***Federal Transportation of Animals Regulations***

*Table 18. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Federal Transportation of Animals Regulations*

<b>Familiarity (n=281)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	19	7%
Slightly Familiar	47	17%
Moderately Familiar	96	34%
Very Familiar	85	30%
Extremely Familiar	34	12%
<b>Helpfulness (n=244)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	7	3%
Not so Helpful	11	5%
Somewhat Helpful	105	43%
Very Helpful	91	37%
Extremely Helpful	30	12%

### ***Health of Animals Act***

*Table 19. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Health of Animals Act*

<b>Familiarity (n=281)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	42	15%
Slightly Familiar	51	18%
Moderately Familiar	89	32%
Very Familiar	66	23%
Extremely Familiar	33	12%
<b>Helpfulness (n=216)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	8	4%
Not so Helpful	11	5%
Somewhat Helpful	101	47%
Very Helpful	72	33%
Extremely Helpful	24	11%

### ***Livestock Identification and Commerce Act***

*Table 20. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Livestock Identification and Commerce Act*

<b>Familiarity (n=281)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	32	11%
Slightly Familiar	37	13%
Moderately Familiar	75	27%
Very Familiar	94	33%
Extremely Familiar	43	15%
<b>Helpfulness (n=226)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	14	6%
Not so Helpful	20	9%
Somewhat Helpful	80	35%
Very Helpful	75	33%
Extremely Helpful	37	16%

### ***Meat Inspection Act***

*Table 21. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Meat Inspection Act*

<b>Familiarity (n=279)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	55	20%
Slightly Familiar	64	23%
Moderately Familiar	74	27%
Very Familiar	67	24%
Extremely Familiar	19	7%
<b>Helpfulness (n=217)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	10	5%
Not so Helpful	13	6%
Somewhat Helpful	62	29%
Very Helpful	94	43%
Extremely Helpful	38	18%

### ***NFAHW Council - National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy***

*Table 22. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council's National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy*

<b>Familiarity (n=279)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	115	41%
Slightly Familiar	78	28%
Moderately Familiar	52	19%
Very Familiar	25	9%
Extremely Familiar	9	3%
<b>Helpfulness (n=160)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	18	11%
Not so Helpful	29	18%
Somewhat Helpful	72	45%
Very Helpful	31	19%
Extremely Helpful	10	6%

### ***NFAHW Council - National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada***

*Table 23. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council's National Farmed Animal Welfare System for Canada*

<b>Familiarity (n=280)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	108	39%
Slightly Familiar	73	26%
Moderately Familiar	57	20%
Very Familiar	29	10%
Extremely Familiar	13	5%
<b>Helpfulness (n=169)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	18	11%
Not so Helpful	28	17%
Somewhat Helpful	73	43%
Very Helpful	34	20%
Extremely Helpful	16	9%

### ***Traffic Safety Act***

*Table 24. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Traffic Safety Act*

<b>Familiarity (n=278)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	30	11%
Slightly Familiar	72	26%
Moderately Familiar	98	35%
Very Familiar	55	20%
Extremely Familiar	23	8%
<b>Helpfulness (n=209)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	32	15%
Not so Helpful	29	14%
Somewhat Helpful	94	45%
Very Helpful	34	16%
Extremely Helpful	20	10%



### ***Veterinary Profession Act***

*Table 25. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Veterinary Profession Act*

<b>Familiarity (n=280)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	62	22%
Slightly Familiar	78	28%
Moderately Familiar	73	26%
Very Familiar	42	15%
Extremely Familiar	25	9%
<b>Helpfulness (n=209)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	12	6%
Not so Helpful	16	8%
Somewhat Helpful	78	37%
Very Helpful	73	35%
Extremely Helpful	30	14%

### ***Animal Keepers Act***

*Table 26. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Animal Keepers Act*

<b>Familiarity (n=280)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	103	37%
Slightly Familiar	42	15%
Moderately Familiar	80	29%
Very Familiar	40	14%
Extremely Familiar	16	6%
<b>Helpfulness (n=177)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	9	5%
Not so Helpful	25	14%
Somewhat Helpful	86	49%
Very Helpful	47	27%
Extremely Helpful	10	6%

**On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all important and 5 being very important), how important do you believe animal welfare research is to Alberta's livestock industry?**

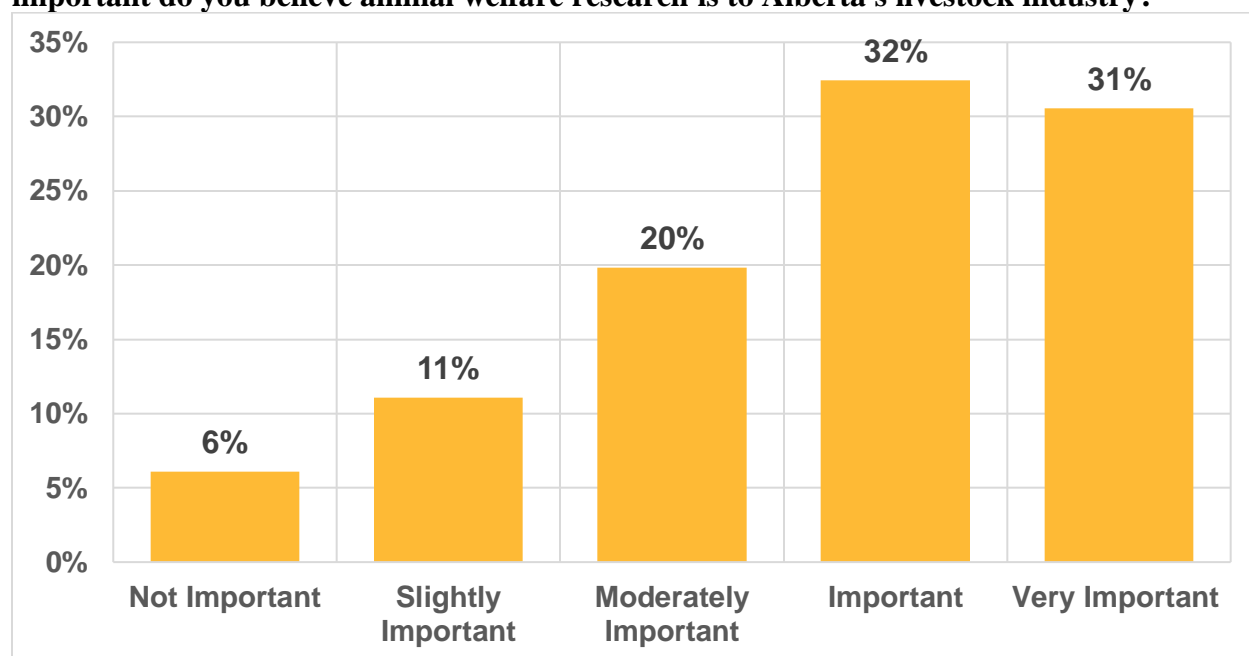


Figure 43. Perceived importance of animal welfare research to Alberta's livestock industry by individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey (n=262)

**What areas of research, related to animal welfare, do you believe should be focused on in Alberta's livestock industry? Select all that apply.**

Table 27. Areas of research, related to animal welfare research, selected by individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that they believe should be focused on in Alberta's livestock industry (n=265)

Areas of Research	n	Percentage
Animal Management Practices	203	77%
Assurance Program Activities	79	30%
Biosecurity	143	54%
Communication Materials	132	50%
Emergency Management	128	48%
Extension Materials	64	24%
Producer Mental Health	108	41%
Slaughter	124	47%
Social Sciences	39	15%
Support of Standards and Policies	99	37%
Transportation	150	57%
Other	24	9%

Other included research into the practical applications of research findings on farm, and changing policies to improve animal welfare, such as allowing on-farm slaughter and stricter enforcement of best management practices and increasing inspectors. Some comments on the funds being placed into research and that money should be allocated to better sources and the cost of veterinary care.

**Related to communication, select the topics you would like to receive information on from industry organizations related to animal welfare. Select all that apply.**

*Table 28. Areas of communication selected by individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that they would like to receive information on from industry organization related to animal welfare (n=251)*

<b>Topics of Communication</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Best Practices	129	51%
Biosecurity Practices	108	43%
Changes to Policies & Regulations	135	54%
Emergency Management & Preparation	113	45%
Euthanasia	73	29%
Industry Animal Care Assurance Programs	89	35%
Low-Stress Handling	152	61%
Production Practices	133	53%
Responsible Antimicrobial Use	122	49%
Slaughter Practices	73	29%
Telling Your Story	115	46%
Traceability Practices	88	35%
Transportation Practices	99	39%
Other	48	19%

Other included a process to evaluate the monetary benefit associate with practices, housing, market pricing, regional diseases, auction markets, producer mental health, consumer perceptions and how to improve consumer knowledge and trust, a contact for livestock concerns, and nutritional information and feed options during different seasons.

**Please the best channels to receive this information. Select all that apply.**

*Table 29. Channels of communication selected by individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that they would like to receive information on from industry organization related to animal welfare (n=252)*

<b>Channels of Communication</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Blogs	32	13%
Broadcast Media	80	32%
Industry Organizational Events	107	42%
One-on-one	47	19%
Print Materials	117	46%
Print Media	124	49%
Public Events	102	40%
School Events	61	24%
Social Media	127	50%
Videos	75	30%
Websites	154	61%
Word of Mouth	52	21%
Other	27	11%

Other included workshops and seminars, webinars, continuing education meetings, veterinarian and producer associations, auction posters, commodity organizations, information mailed to producers, conferences, Ag Service Boards, equestrian events, email directly, community meetings, phone calls, 4-H, and some comments mentioned that they did not want communications directed towards them.

**On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all important and 5 being very important), how important do you believe animal welfare-focused educational resources and activities are for students?**

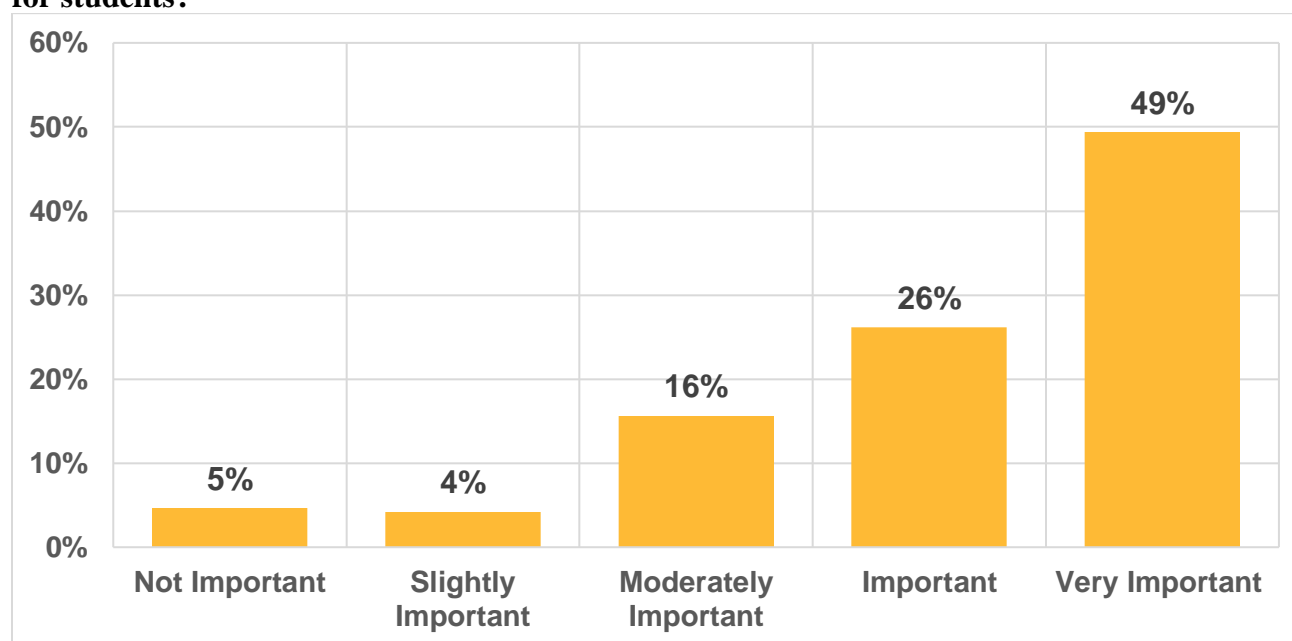


Figure 44. Perceived importance of animal welfare-focused educational resources and activities are for students to Alberta's livestock industry by individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey (n=237)

**If you are a student, what method(s) of delivery do you find is most effective for educational resources and activities?**

Table 30. Methods of delivery of animal welfare-focused educational resources and activities that were found to be most effective by individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that also identified as students (n=73)

Method of Delivery	n	Percentage
Coordinate Ag School Events	32	44%
Curriculum-Based Resources	29	40%
Hands-On Activities	54	74%
In-Person Presentations	52	71%
Online Resources & Activities	18	25%
Print Resources	27	37%
Video-Conferencing Presentations	18	25%
Other	1	1%

Other included in-person presentations by producers on on-farm practices.

**What animal welfare topics do you believe should be of focus for student educational resources and activities?**

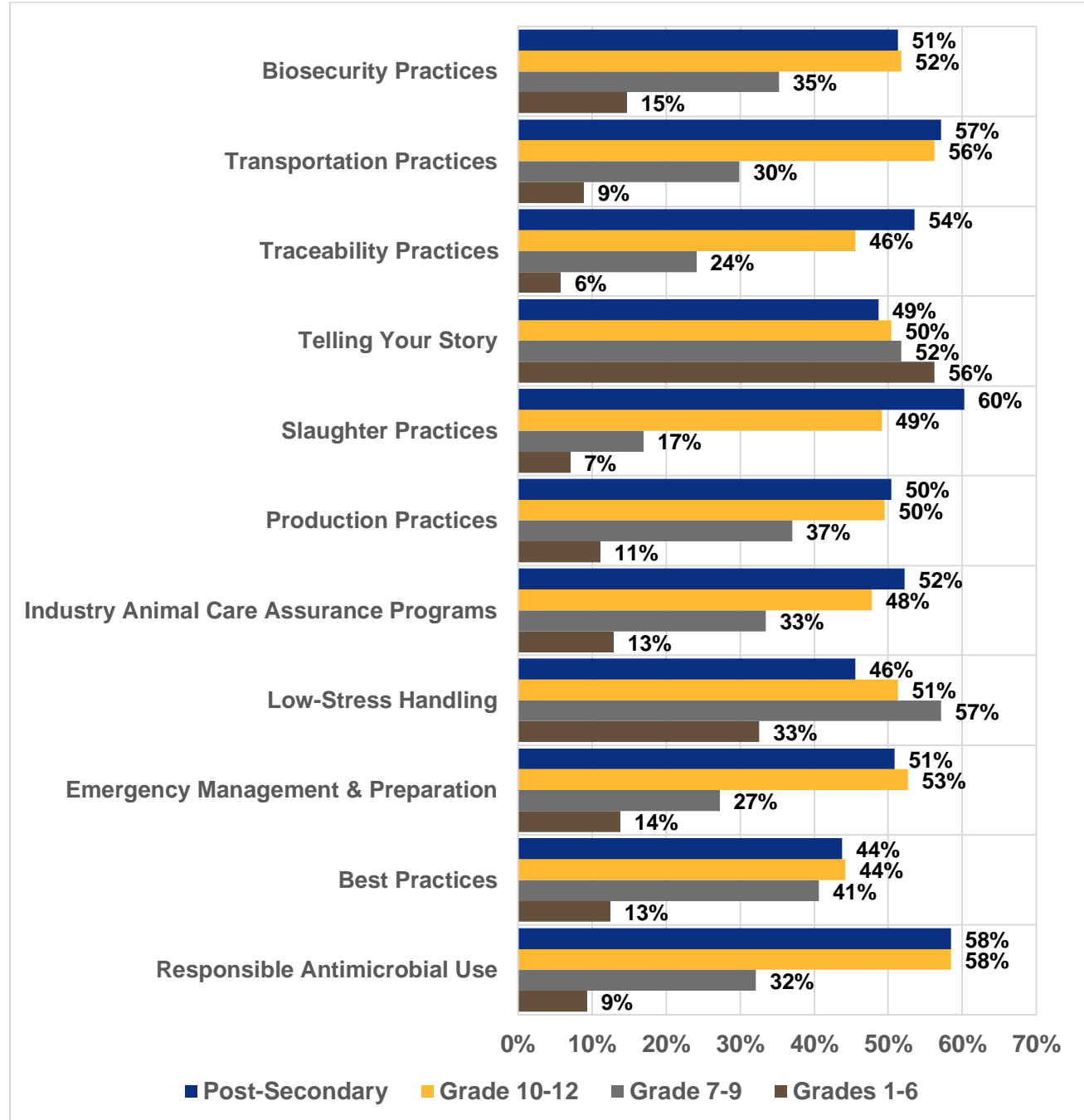


Figure 45. Animal welfare topics selected by individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that they believed should be of focus for student educational resources and activities (n=224)

**If not listed above, what information would you find most helpful that you are not currently receiving?**

Where to find resources or one site with links to all resources by species, farm tours to share practical on-farm practices, history of agricultural events, other countries practices, importance of veterinary care, animal behaviour, principles of farm or service operations and influences on the practices of the business, regulations, traceability, and antimicrobial and antiparasitic resistance.

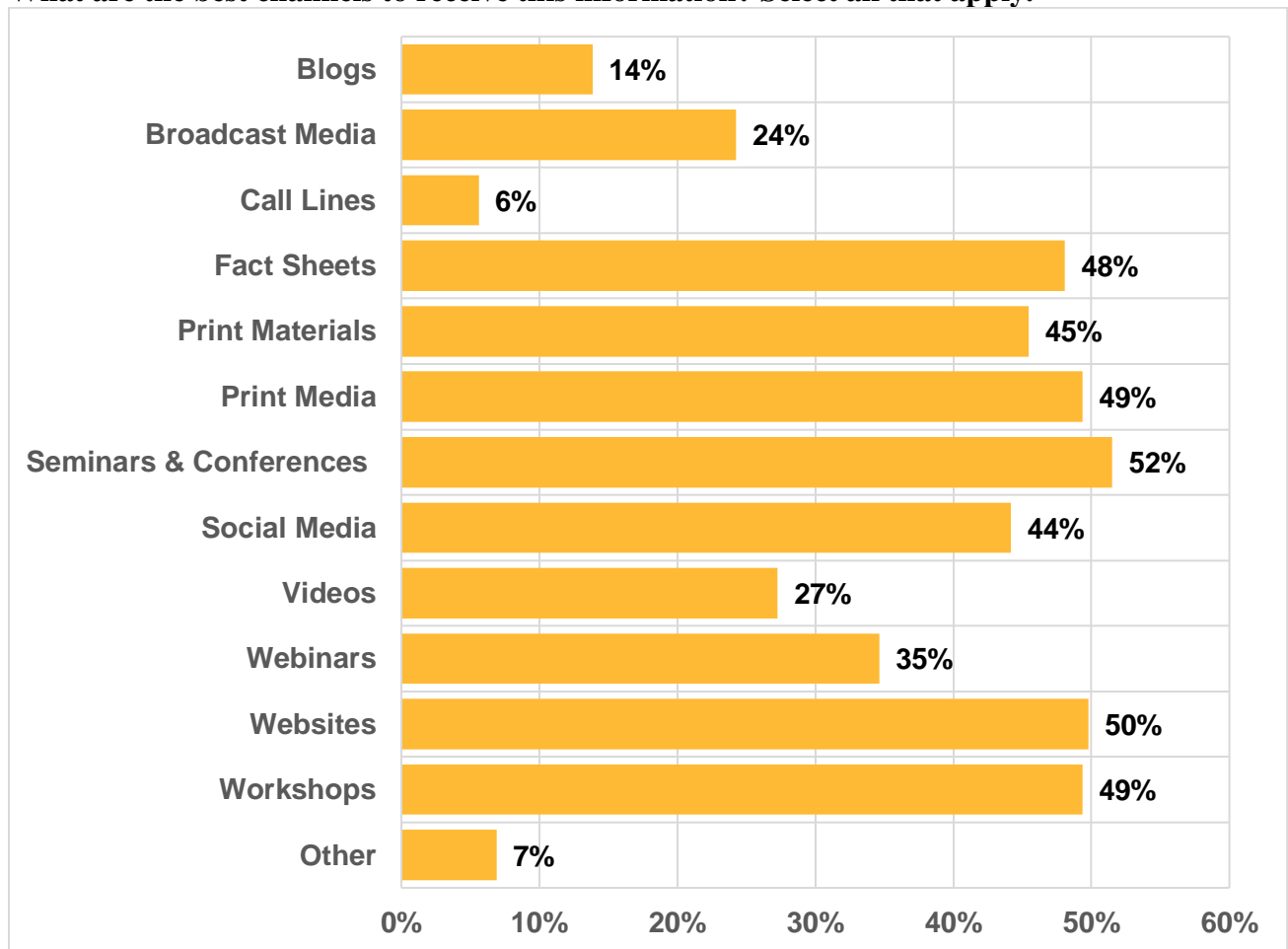
**In relation to extension, please select the topics you would like to receive from industry organizations related to animal welfare. Select all that apply.**

*Table 31. Animal welfare topics selected by individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that they would like to receive from industry organizations (n=226)*

Topics	n	Percentage
Animal Care Assurance Programs	108	48%
Best Practices	120	53%
Biosecurity Practices	119	53%
Changes to Policies & Regulations	156	69%
Emergency Management & Preparation	118	52%
Euthanasia Practices	82	36%
Low-Stress Handling	152	67%
Producer Mental Health	93	41%
Responsible Antimicrobial Use	128	57%
Traceability Practices	106	47%
Transportation Practices	117	52%
Updates on Current Research	154	68%
Other	11	5%

Other included readily available updates on all new developments in the industry, property rights, and how to find veterinary support. Comments were also made to no longer extend extension services, while some acknowledged great access to valuable information, and others expressed the need to streamline the accessibility of this information for producers.

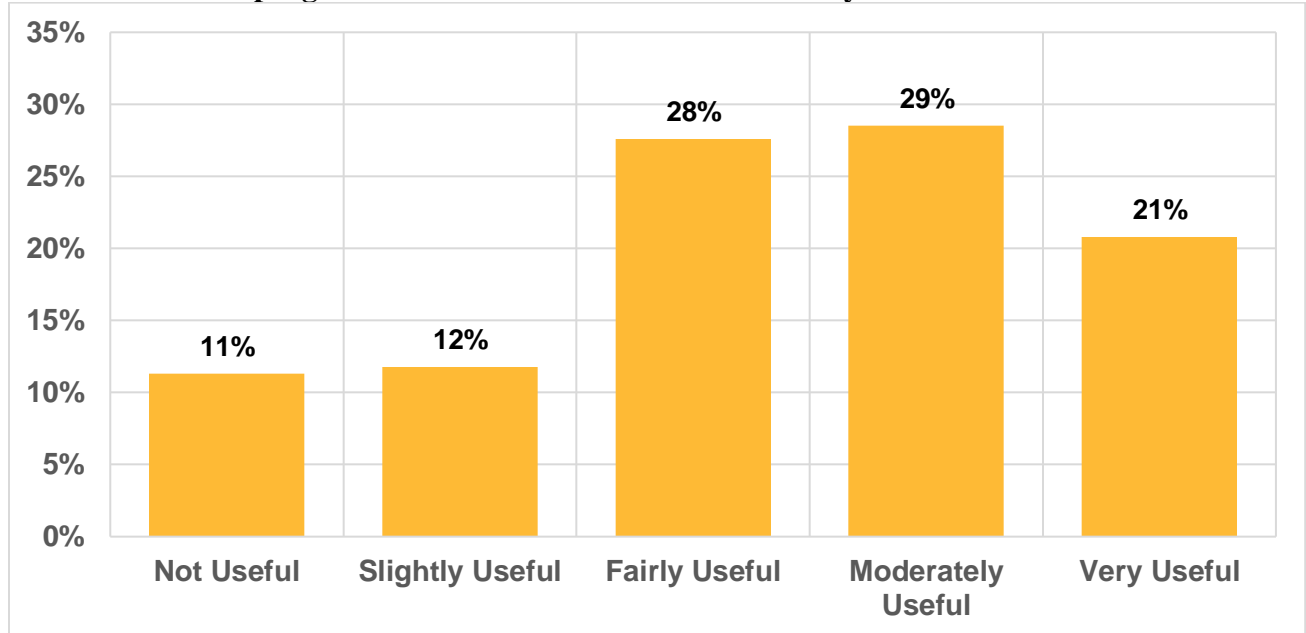
**What are the best channels to receive this information? Select all that apply.**



*Figure 46. Channels by individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that they would like to receive extension information from industry organization related to animal welfare (n=231)*

Other included veterinarians, producer organizations, mail, email, and one-on-one.

**On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all useful and 5 being very useful), how useful do you believe assurance programs are to Alberta's livestock industry?**



*Figure 47. Degree of usefulness by individual respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey in Alberta that assurance programs are Alberta's livestock industry (n=221)*



### III. ONLINE SURVEY – STUDENTS

What is your age?

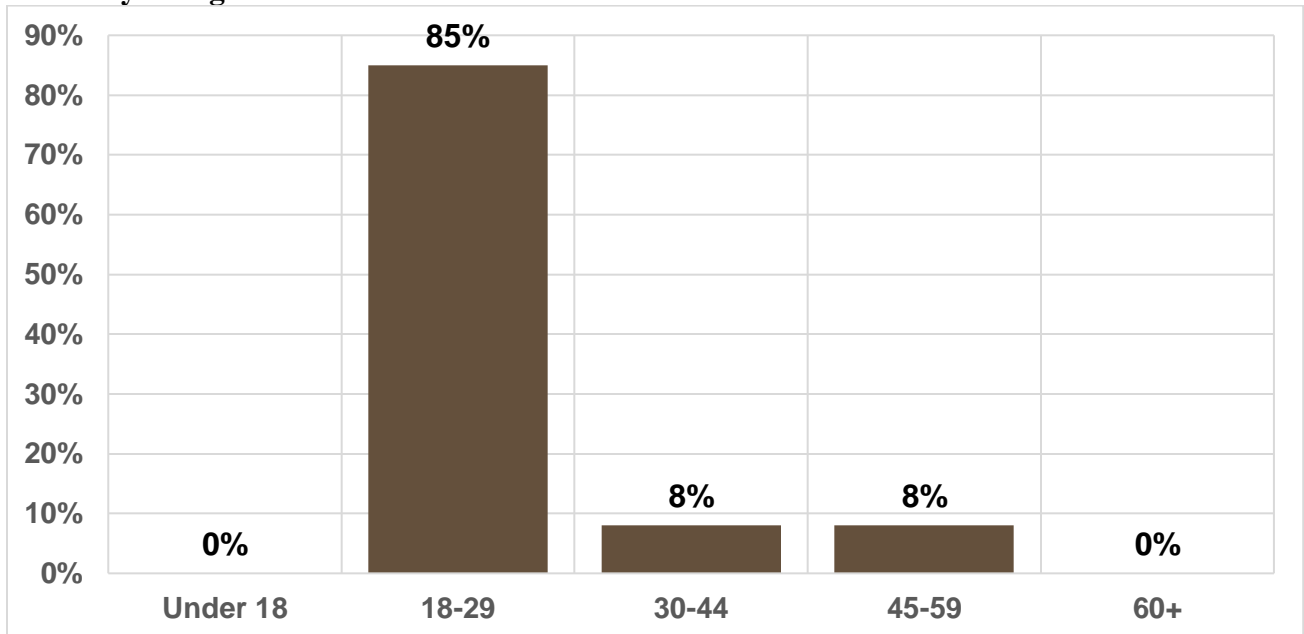


Figure 48. Age ranges of the student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey (n = 13)

**In what sector(s) of the livestock industry do you study?**

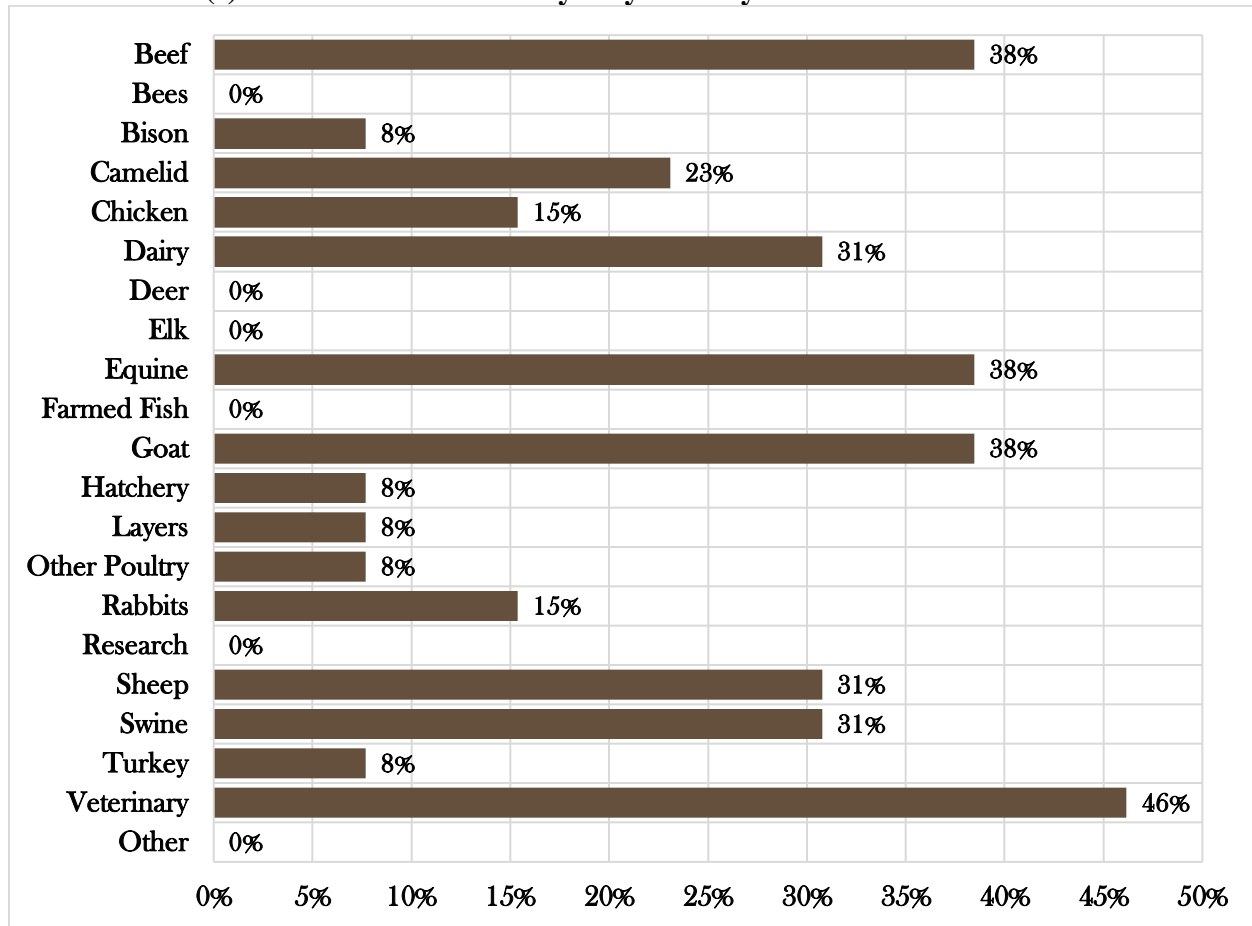


Figure 49. Sectors of the livestock industry that the student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey study (n = 13)

Rank the following activities, against each other, in order of what you believe to be most important to animal welfare (1 being most important).

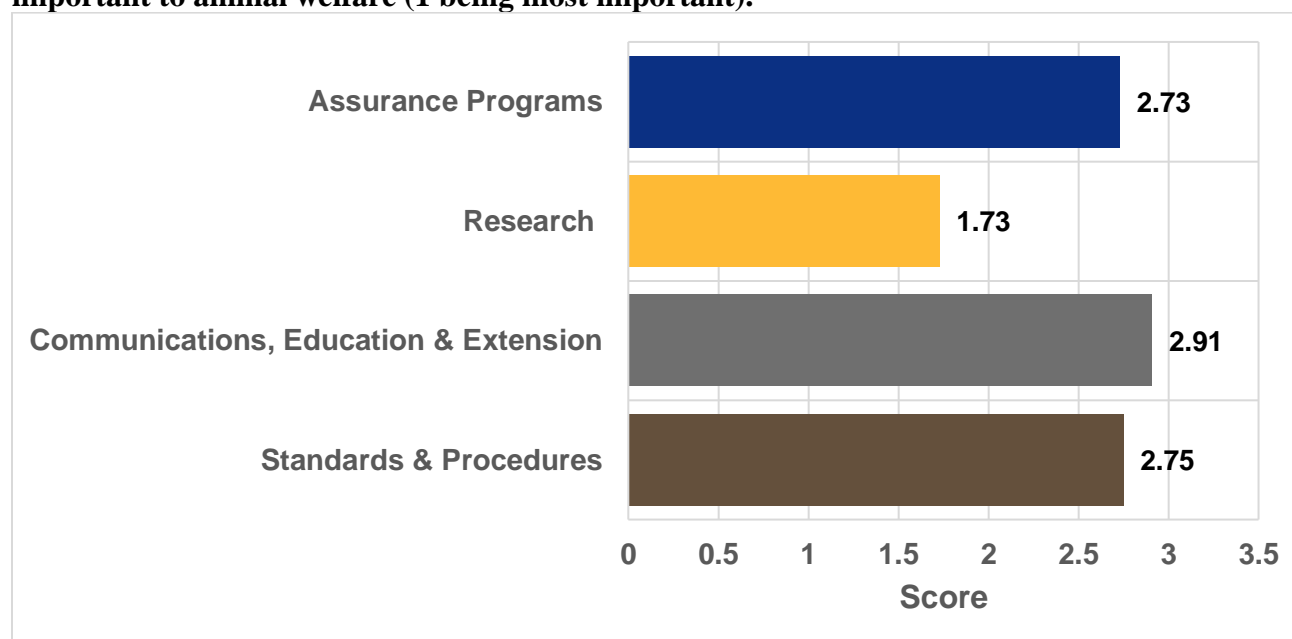


Figure 50. Ranking of activities that student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project believe to be most important to animal welfare (n=12)

In terms of animal welfare, how familiar are you with the following standards of care and policies?

Rate the following standards of care and policies in relation to what you believe is their helpfulness to Alberta's livestock industry.

#### **Animal Protection Act (APA)**

Table 32. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Animal Protection Act

<b>Familiarity (n=11)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	3	27%
Slightly Familiar	2	18%
Moderately Familiar	5	45%
Very Familiar	1	9%
Extremely Familiar	0	0%
<b>Helpfulness (n=8)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	0	0%
Not so Helpful	0	0%
Somewhat Helpful	3	38%
Very Helpful	5	63%
Extremely Helpful	0	0%

### ***NFACC Codes of Practice***

*Table 33. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the NFACC Codes of Practice*

<b>Familiarity (n=11)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	7	64%
Slightly Familiar	4	36%
Moderately Familiar	0	0%
Very Familiar	0	0%
Extremely Familiar	0	0%
<b>Helpfulness (n=5)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	0	0%
Not so Helpful	1	20%
Somewhat Helpful	3	60%
Very Helpful	1	20%
Extremely Helpful	0	0%

### ***The Criminal Code of Canada***

*Table 34. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Criminal Code of Canada*

<b>Familiarity (n=11)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	2	18%
Slightly Familiar	1	9%
Moderately Familiar	5	45%
Very Familiar	3	27%
Extremely Familiar	0	0%
<b>Helpfulness (n=9)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	1	11%
Not so Helpful	1	11%
Somewhat Helpful	1	11%
Very Helpful	2	22%
Extremely Helpful	4	44%

### ***Federal Transportation of Animals Regulations***

*Table 35. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Federal Transportation of Animals Regulations*

<b>Familiarity (n=11)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	1	9%
Slightly Familiar	6	55%
Moderately Familiar	3	27%
Very Familiar	1	9%
Extremely Familiar	0	0%
<b>Helpfulness (n=8)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	0	0%
Not so Helpful	2	25%
Somewhat Helpful	2	25%
Very Helpful	3	38%
Extremely Helpful	1	13%

### ***Health of Animals Act***

*Table 36. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Health of Animals Act*

<b>Familiarity (n=11)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	4	36%
Slightly Familiar	3	27%
Moderately Familiar	1	9%
Very Familiar	3	27%
Extremely Familiar	0	0%
<b>Helpfulness (n=8)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	0	0%
Not so Helpful	0	0%
Somewhat Helpful	4	50%
Very Helpful	3	38%
Extremely Helpful	1	13%

### ***Livestock Identification and Commerce Act***

*Table 37. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Livestock Identification and Commerce Act*

<b>Familiarity (n=11)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	5	45%
Slightly Familiar	3	27%
Moderately Familiar	3	27%
Very Familiar	0	0%
Extremely Familiar	0	0%
<b>Helpfulness (n=8)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	0	0%
Not so Helpful	1	13%
Somewhat Helpful	2	25%
Very Helpful	4	50%
Extremely Helpful	1	13%

### ***Meat Inspection Act***

*Table 38. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Meat Inspection Act*

<b>Familiarity (n=11)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	6	55%
Slightly Familiar	4	36%
Moderately Familiar	0	0%
Very Familiar	1	9%
Extremely Familiar	0	0%
<b>Helpfulness (n=7)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	1	14%
Not so Helpful	1	14%
Somewhat Helpful	1	14%
Very Helpful	4	57%
Extremely Helpful	0	0%

**NFAHW Council - National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy**

Table 39. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council's National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy

<b>Familiarity (n=11)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	7	64%
Slightly Familiar	4	36%
Moderately Familiar	0	0%
Very Familiar	0	0%
Extremely Familiar	0	0%
<b>Helpfulness (n=6)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	0	0%
Not so Helpful	2	33%
Somewhat Helpful	3	50%
Very Helpful	1	17%
Extremely Helpful	0	0%

**NFAHW Council - National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada**

Table 40. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council's National Farmed Animal Welfare System for Canada

<b>Familiarity (n=11)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	9	82%
Slightly Familiar	2	18%
Moderately Familiar	0	0%
Very Familiar	0	0%
Extremely Familiar	0	0%
<b>Helpfulness (n=5)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	0	0%
Not so Helpful	2	40%
Somewhat Helpful	3	60%
Very Helpful	0	0%
Extremely Helpful	0	0%

### ***Traffic Safety Act***

*Table 41. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Traffic Safety Act*

<b>Familiarity (n=11)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	2	18%
Slightly Familiar	2	18%
Moderately Familiar	3	27%
Very Familiar	3	27%
Extremely Familiar	1	9%
<b>Helpfulness (n=8)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	2	25%
Not so Helpful	2	25%
Somewhat Helpful	1	13%
Very Helpful	3	38%
Extremely Helpful	0	0%

### ***Veterinary Profession Act***

*Table 42. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Veterinary Profession Act*

<b>Familiarity (n=11)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Not at all Familiar</b>	4	36%
<b>Slightly Familiar</b>	2	18%
<b>Moderately Familiar</b>	1	9%
<b>Very Familiar</b>	3	27%
<b>Extremely Familiar</b>	1	9%
<b>Helpfulness (n=7)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Not at all Helpful</b>	0	0%
<b>Not so Helpful</b>	0	0%
<b>Somewhat Helpful</b>	1	14%
<b>Very Helpful</b>	5	71%
<b>Extremely Helpful</b>	1	14%

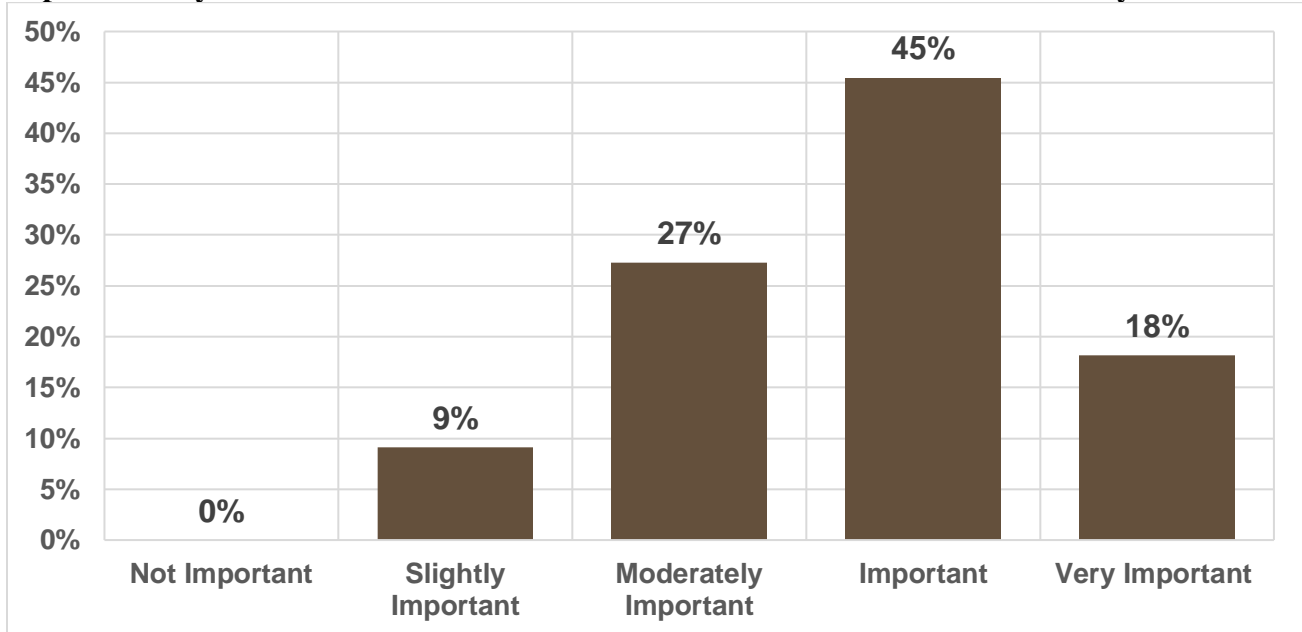


### ***Animal Keepers Act (AKA)***

*Table 43. Perceived familiarity and helpfulness of student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of the Animal Keepers Act*

<b>Familiarity (n=11)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Familiar	7	64%
Slightly Familiar	1	9%
Moderately Familiar	2	18%
Very Familiar	1	9%
Extremely Familiar	0	0%
<b>Helpfulness (n=6)</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Not at all Helpful	0	0%
Not so Helpful	1	17%
Somewhat Helpful	3	50%
Very Helpful	2	33%
Extremely Helpful	0	0%

**On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all important and 5 being very important), how important do you believe animal welfare research is to Alberta's livestock industry?**



*Figure 51. Perceived importance of animal welfare research to Alberta's livestock industry by student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey (n=11)*

**What areas of research, related to animal welfare, do you believe should be focused on in Alberta's livestock industry? Please select all that apply.**

*Table 44. Areas of research, related to animal welfare research, selected by student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that they believe should be focused on in Alberta's livestock industry (n=11)*

<b>Areas of Research</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Animal Management Practices	9	82%
Assurance Program Activities	2	18%
Biosecurity	4	36%
Communication Materials	4	36%
Emergency Management	4	36%
Extension Materials	1	9%
Producer Mental Health	6	55%
Slaughter	8	73%
Social Sciences	4	36%
Support of Standards and Policies	4	36%
Transportation	6	55%
Other	0	0%

**Related to communication, select what topics you would like to receive information on from industry organizations related to animal welfare. Select all that apply.**

*Table 45. Areas of communication selected by student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that they would like to receive information on from industry organization related to animal welfare (n=11)*

<b>Topics of Communication</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Best Practices	9	82%
Biosecurity Practices	5	45%
Changes to Policies & Regulations	5	45%
Emergency Management & Preparation	6	55%
Euthanasia	8	73%
Industry Animal Care Assurance Programs	5	45%
Low-Stress Handling	9	82%
Production Practices	8	73%
Responsible Antimicrobial Use	5	45%
Slaughter Practices	9	82%
Telling Your Story	5	45%
Traceability Practices	6	55%
Transportation Practices	6	55%
Other	2	18%

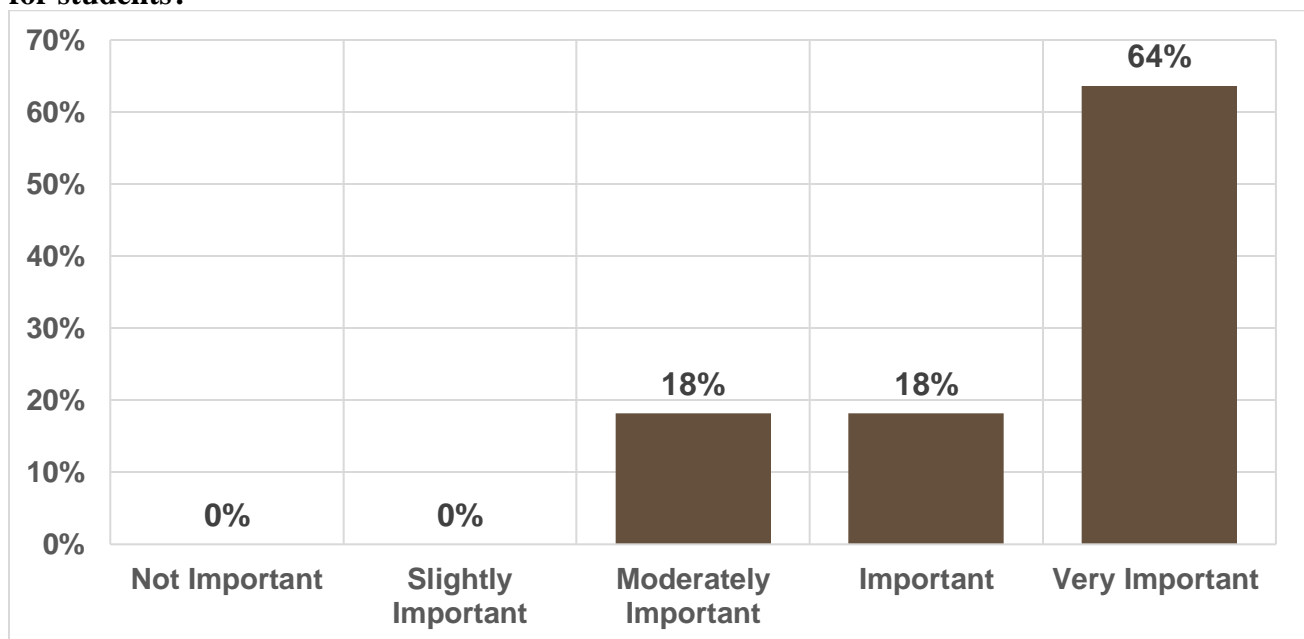
Other included elimination of practices that may no longer be necessary and what to do in the event of an emergency during transport.

**Please select the best channels to receive this information. Select all that apply.**

*Table 46. Channels of communication selected by student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that they would like to receive information on from industry organization related to animal welfare (n=11)*

<b>Channels of Communication</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Blogs	0	0%
Broadcast Media	6	55%
Industry Organizational Events	4	36%
One-on-one	2	18%
Print Materials	5	45%
Print Media	5	45%
Public Events	7	64%
School Events	7	64%
Social Media	9	82%
Videos	4	36%
Websites	5	45%
Word of Mouth	3	27%
Other	0	0%

**On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all important and 5 being very important), how important do you believe animal welfare-focused educational resources and activities are for students?**



*Figure 52. Perceived importance of animal welfare-focused educational resources and activities are for students to Alberta's livestock industry by student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey (n=11)*

**What animal welfare topics do you believe should be of focus for student educational resources and activities?**

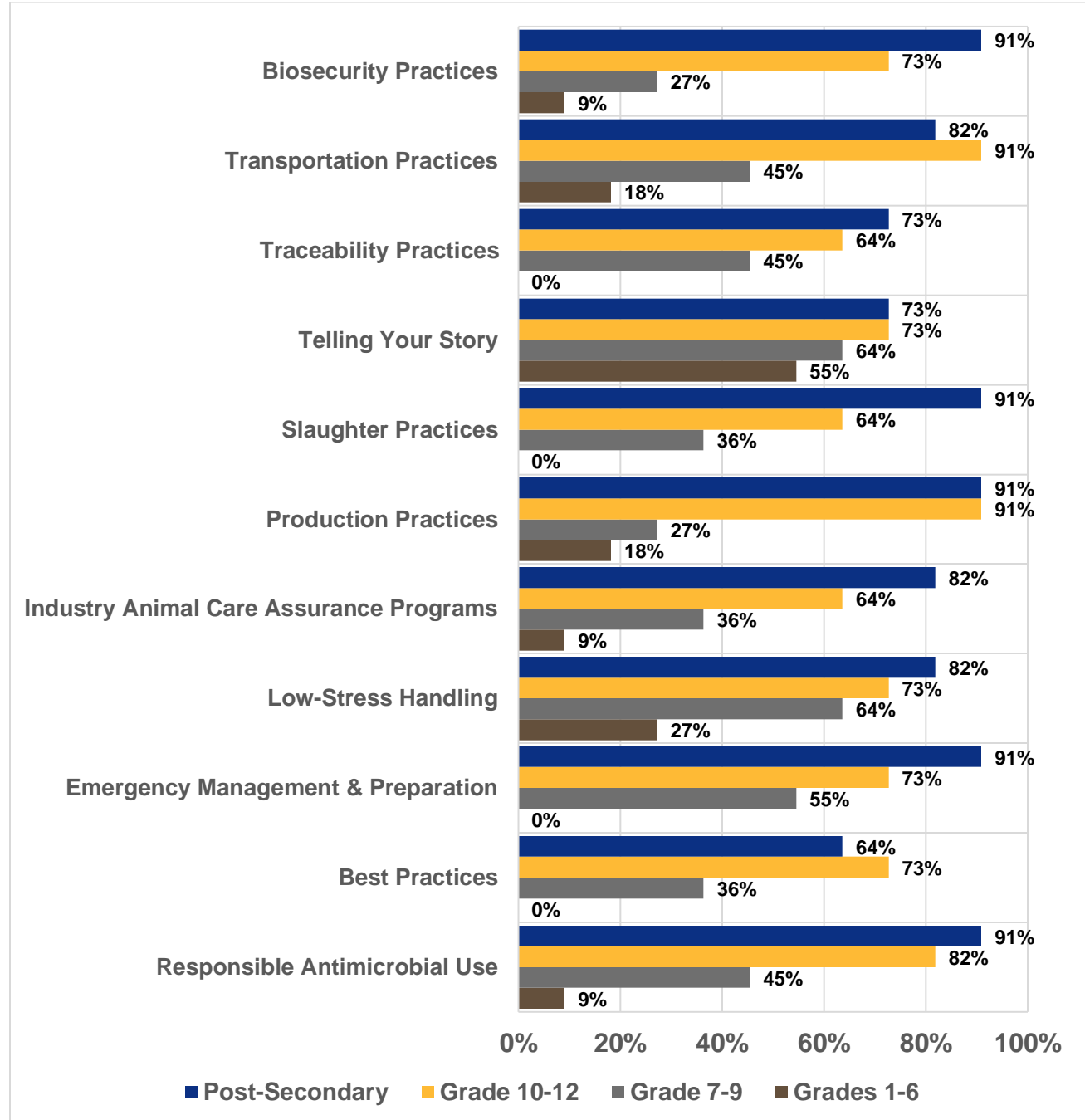


Figure 53. Animal welfare topics selected by student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that they believed should be of focus for student educational resources and activities (n=11)

**What method(s) of delivery do you find is most effective for educational resources and activities?**

*Table 47. Methods of delivery of animal welfare-focused educational resources and activities that were found to be most effective by student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey (n=11)*

<b>Method of Delivery</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Curriculum-Based Resources	5	45%
Hands-On Activities	10	91%
In-Person Presentations	9	82%
Online Resources & Activities	5	45%
Print Resources	3	27%
Video-Conferencing Presentations	2	18%
Other	0	0%

**In relation to education and extension, please select the topics you would like to receive from industry organizations related to animal welfare.**

*Table 48. Animal welfare topics selected by student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that they would like to receive from industry organizations (n=11)*

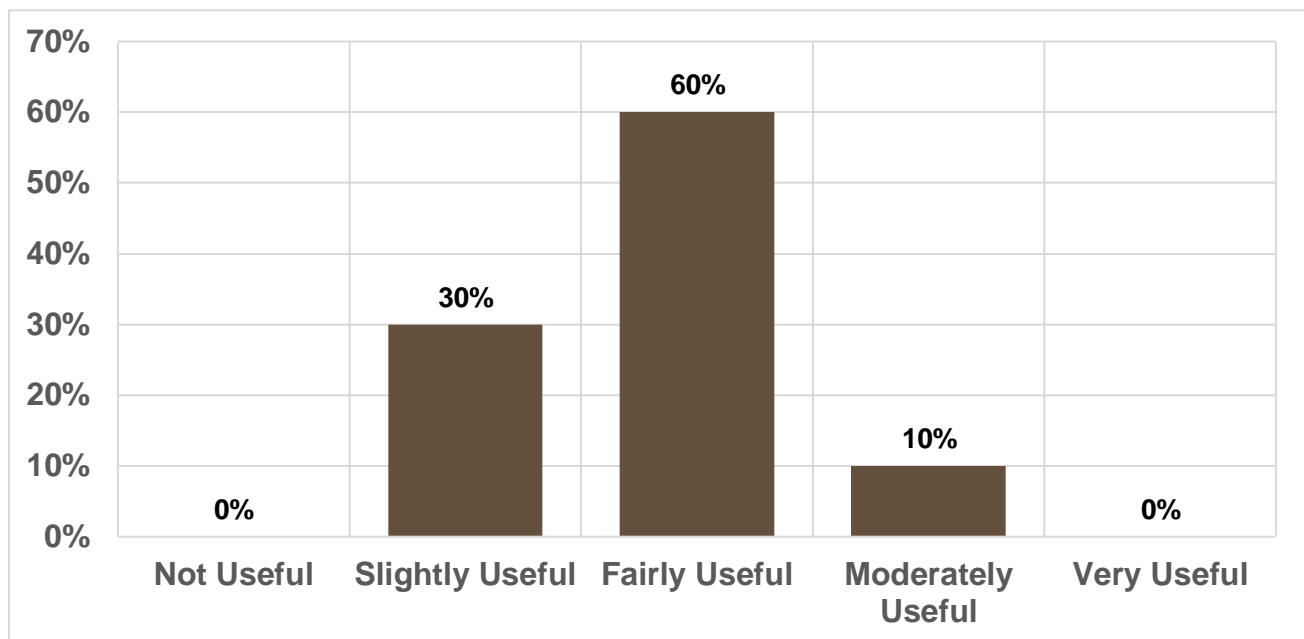
<b>Topics</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Animal Care Assurance Programs	3	27%
Best Practices	5	45%
Biosecurity Practices	5	45%
Changes to Policies & Regulations	5	45%
Emergency Management & Preparation	7	64%
Euthanasia Practices	6	55%
Low-Stress Handling	8	73%
Producer Mental Health	6	55%
Responsible Antimicrobial Use	4	36%
Traceability Practices	3	27%
Transportation Practices	4	36%
Updates on Current Research	6	55%
Other	0	0%

**What are the best channels to receive this information? Select all that apply.**

*Table 49. Channels by student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that they would like to receive extension information from industry organization related to animal welfare (n=11)*

<b>Channels of Extension</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Blogs	0	0%
Broadcast Media	5	45%
Call Lines	0	0%
Fact Sheets	5	45%
Print Materials	4	36%
Print Media	5	45%
Seminars & Conferences	5	45%
Social Media	8	73%
Videos	4	36%
Webinars	3	27%
Websites	7	64%
Workshops	4	36%
Other	0	0%

**On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all useful and 5 being very useful), how useful do you believe assurance programs are to Alberta's livestock industry?**



*Figure 54. Degree of usefulness by student respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey in Alberta that assurance programs are Alberta's livestock industry (n=10)*

## IV. ONLINE SURVEY – ABATTOIR AND AUCTION MARKET

Table 50. Roles of abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey in Alberta's livestock industry (n=11)

Survey Type	n	Percentage
Abattoir Owner	3	27%
Processor	6	55%
Auction Market Owner	2	18%

### What type of livestock does your business receive?

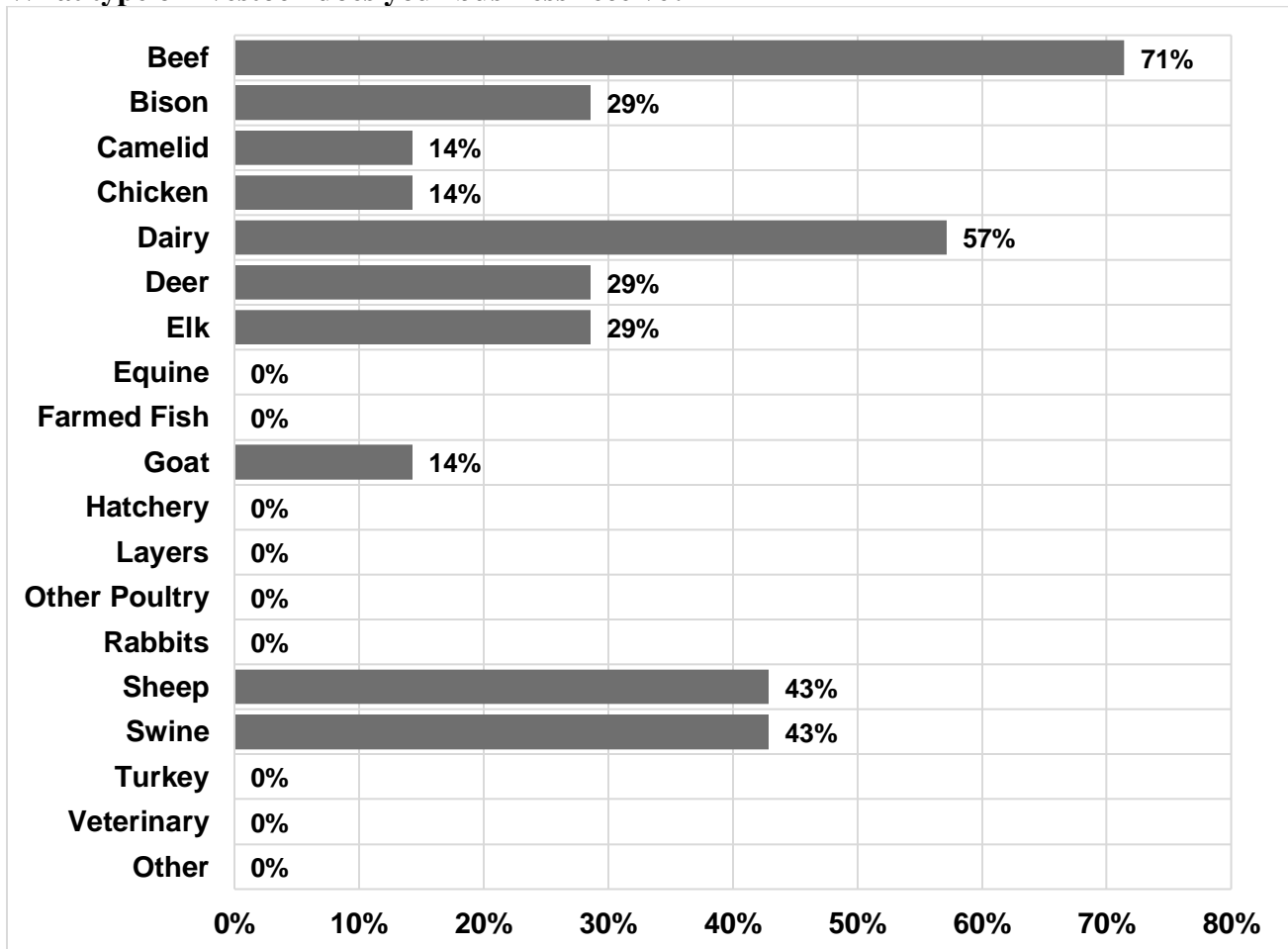


Figure 55. Livestock species that the abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey receive (n = 7)

Rank your business's activities, against each other, in the following regarding animal welfare in terms of time spent (1 being most active):

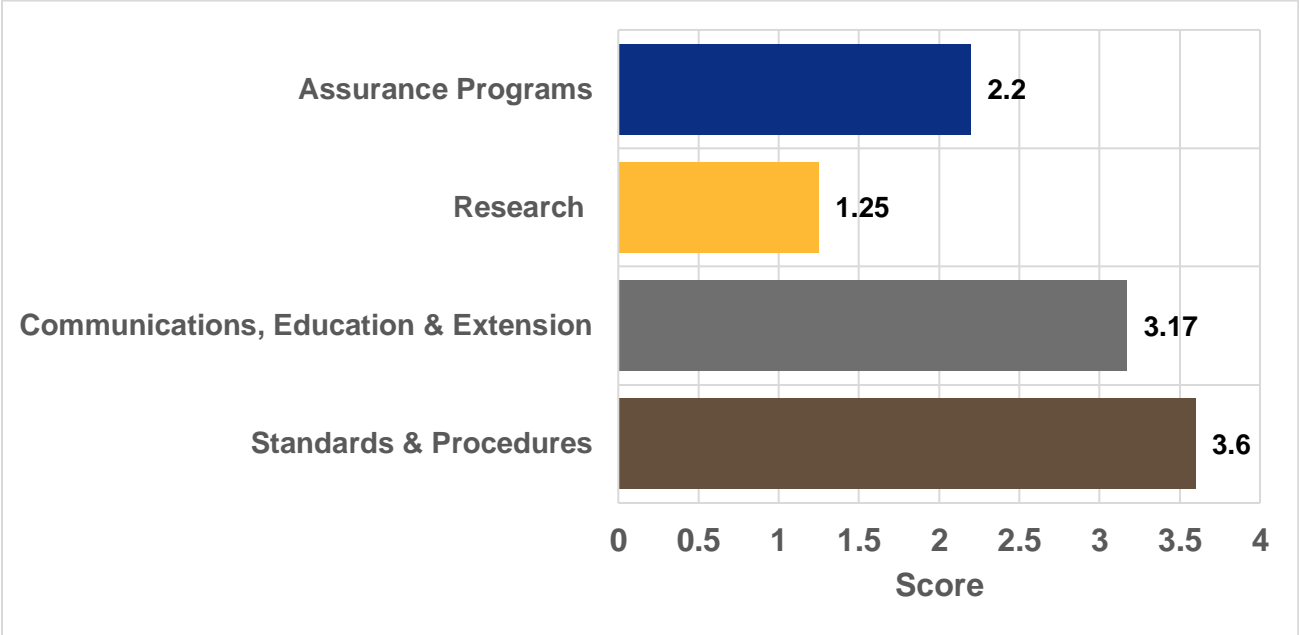


Figure 56. Ranking of abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of their business’s activities, against each other, regarding animal welfare in terms of time spent (n=7)

On a scale of 1 to 10 (one being the worst and ten being the best), how would you rank your business in its role in improving animal welfare in Alberta?

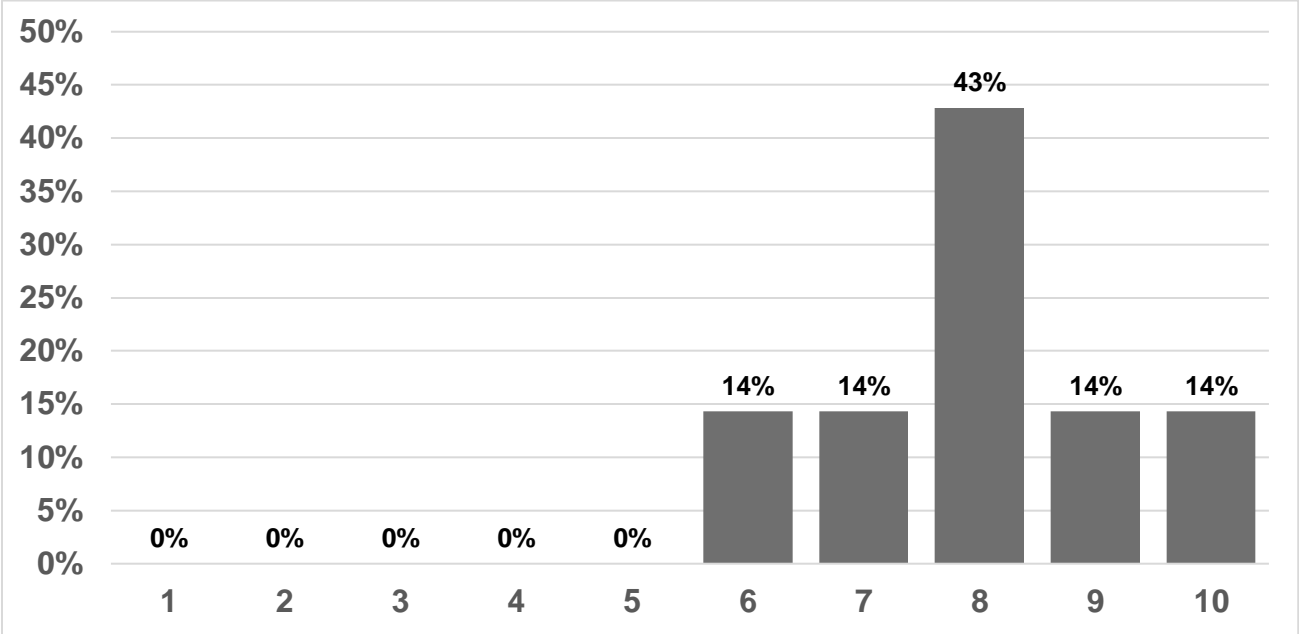


Figure 57. Ranking of abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey of their business's role in improving animal welfare in Alberta on a scale of 1 to 10 (one being the worst and ten being the best; n=7)



**In terms of animal welfare, what standards of care and policies does your business refer to in its activities? Select all that apply.**

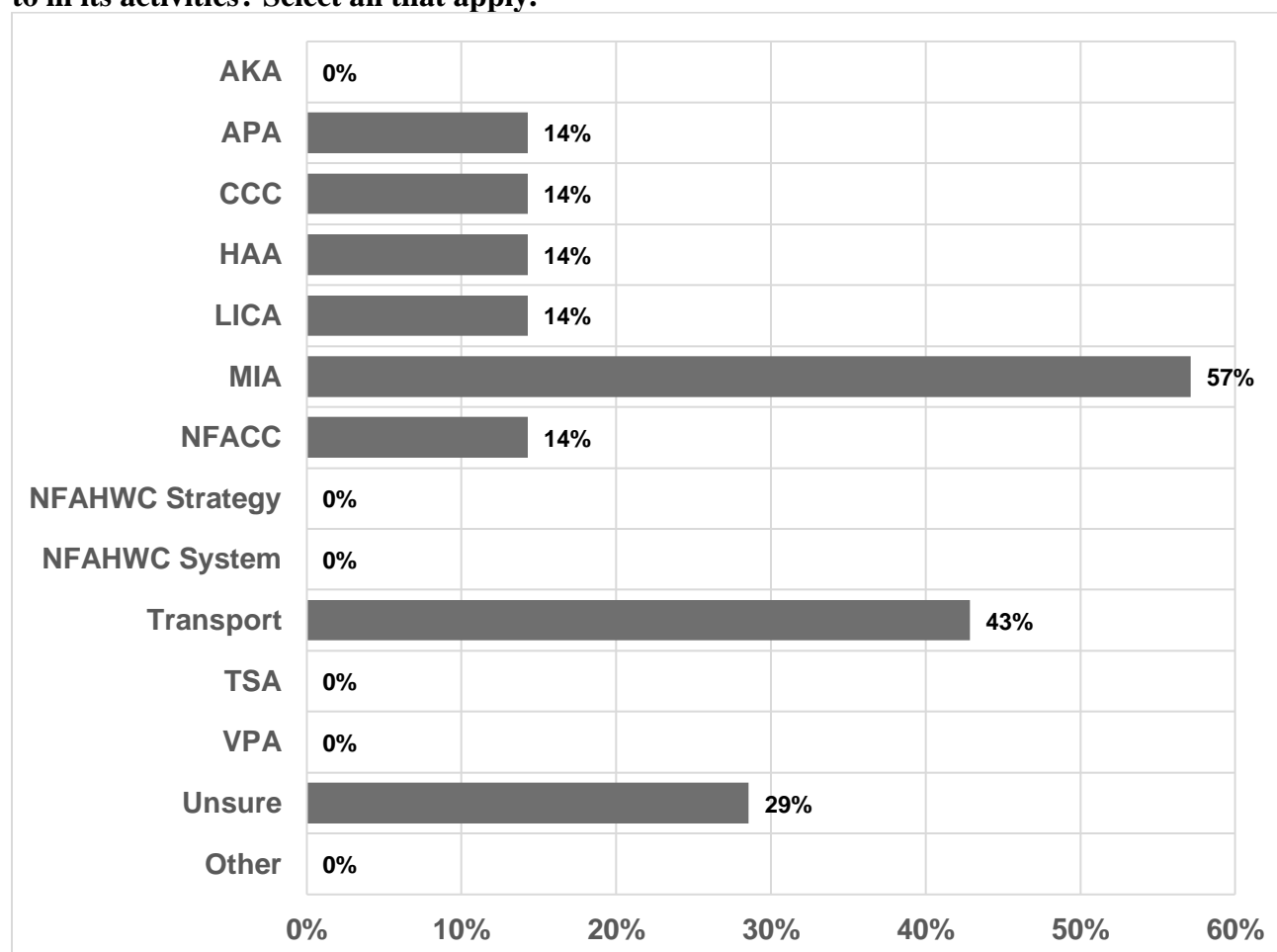


Figure 58. Standards of care and policies\* that abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey reported that their business referred to in its activities, in terms of animal welfare (n=7)

\*Standards of care and policy abbreviations used above:

- AKA – Animal Keepers Act
- APA – Animal Protection Act
- CCC – Criminal Code of Canada
- HAA – Health of Animals Act
- LICA – Livestock Identification and Commerce Act
- MIA – Meat Inspection Act
- NFACC – National Farm Animal Care Council Codes of Practice
- NFAHWC Strategy – National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy
- NFAHWC System – National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada
- Transport – Federal Transportation of Animals Regulations (i.e. Compromised Animal Policy, Health of Animals Regulations Part XII, etc.)
- VPA – Veterinary Profession Act

**Rate the following standards of care and policies in relation to their helpfulness to your business.**

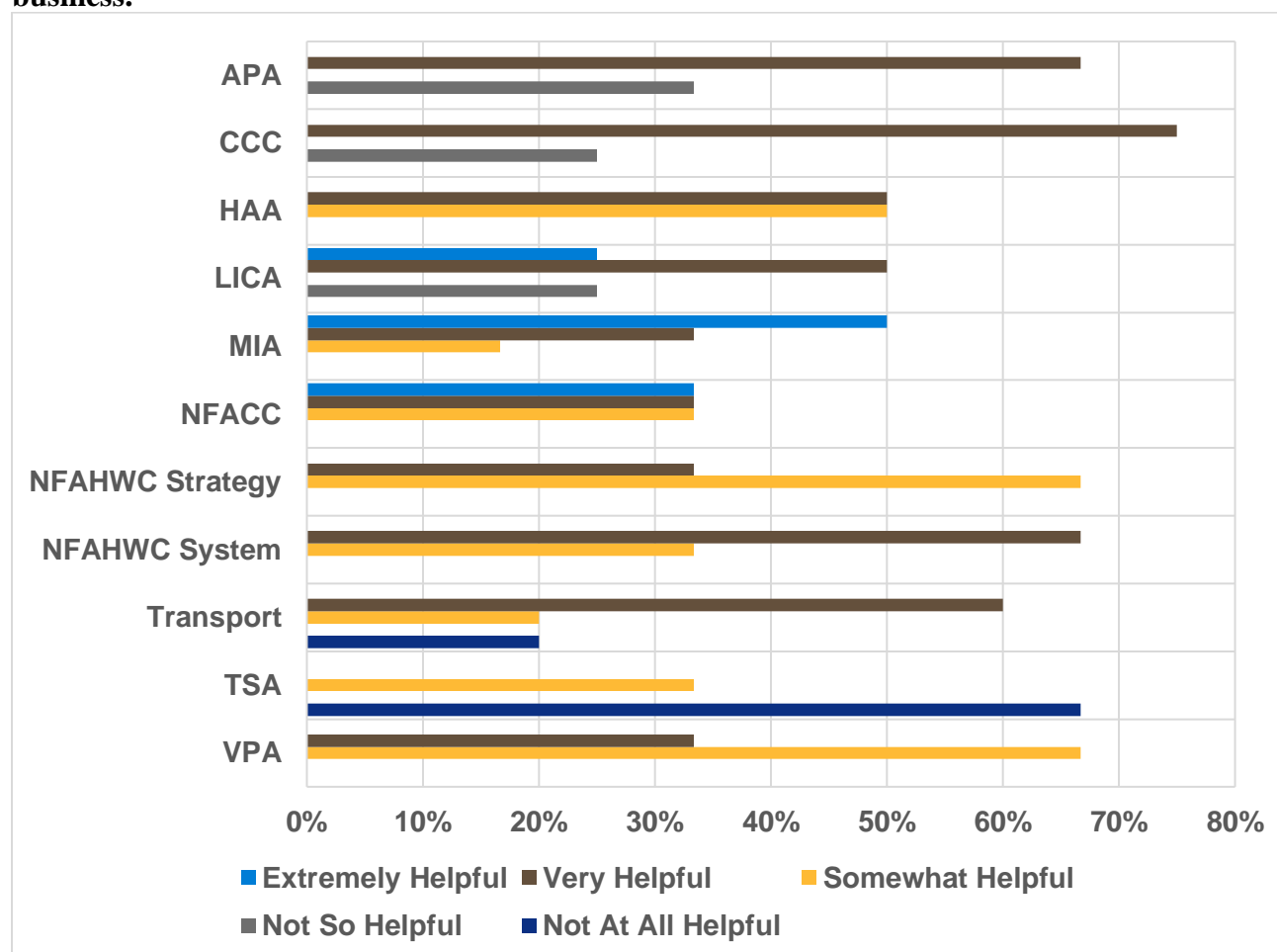


Figure 59. Ratings of standards of care and policies\* that abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey in relation to their helpfulness to their businesses (n=7)

\*Standards of care and policy abbreviations used above:

- APA – Animal Protection Act
- CCC – Criminal Code of Canada
- HAA – Health of Animals Act
- LICA – Livestock Identification and Commerce Act
- MIA – Meat Inspection Act
- NFACC – National Farm Animal Care Council Codes of Practice
- NFAHWC Strategy – National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy
- NFAHWC System – National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada
- Transport – Federal Transportation of Animals Regulations (i.e. Compromised Animal Policy, Health of Animals Regulations Part XII, etc.)
- VPA – Veterinary Profession Act

**Select areas of animal welfare research your business is currently participating in.**

*Table 51. Areas of animal welfare research that abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey is currently participating in (n=2)*

<b>Areas of Research</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Animal Management Practices	1	50%
Antimicrobial Use	0	0%
Assurance Program Activities	1	50%
Biosecurity	0	0%
Changes to Policies & Regulations	0	0%
Communication Materials	0	0%
Emergency Management	1	50%
Extension Materials	1	50%
Facilities, Environment, or Housing	0	0%
Producer Mental Health	0	0%
Slaughter	0	0%
Social Sciences	0	0%
Support of Standards and Policies	1	50%
Transportation	1	50%
Other	0	0%

**Who is your business currently collaborating in research with? Select all that apply.**

*Table 52. Collaborators that abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey is currently collaborating with in animal welfare research (n=2)*

<b>Collaborators</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Academic Institution(s)	1	50%
Animal Welfare Group(s)	1	50%
County/Municipal District(s)	0	0%
Government(s)	1	50%
Livestock Commodity Group(s)	0	0%
Producer(s)	0	0%
Research Group(s)	0	0%
Retailer(s)	0	0%
Other	0	0%

**Select areas of animal welfare research your business is planning to participate in.**

*Table 53. Areas of animal welfare research that abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey is planning to participate in (n=7)*

<b>Areas of Research</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Animal Management Practices	2	29%
Antimicrobial Use	1	14%
Assurance Program Activities	1	14%
Biosecurity	0	0%
Changes to Policies & Regulations	0	0%
Communication Materials	0	0%
Emergency Management	1	14%
Extension Materials	0	0%
Facilities, Environment, or Housing	1	14%
Producer Mental Health	0	0%
Slaughter	3	43%
Social Sciences	0	0%
Support of Standards and Policies	1	29%
Transportation	1	14%
Other	1	14%

Other included a pilot project on mobile slaughter.

**Overall, please select what your business views as motivators towards participating in research.**

*Table 54. Motivators viewed by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey towards participating in research (n=7)*

<b>Motivators</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Academic Institutional Demand	0	0%
Academic Institutional Support	1	14%
Consumer Demand	5	71%
Funding	1	14%
Government Demand	0	0%
Other Abattoir & Auction Market Demand	1	14%
Processor Demand	2	29%
Producer Demand	2	29%
Regulations and Guidelines	4	57%
Veterinary Demand	0	0%
Other	2	29%

Others included providing research where there are gaps in education and training, and a lack of processing facilities and the changes in transportation regulations.

**Overall, please select what your business views as barriers towards participating in research.**

*Table 55. Barriers viewed by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey towards participating in research (n=7)*

<b>Motivators</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Funding	3	43%
Lack of Communication	3	43%
Lack of Industry Direction	3	43%
Lack of Resources	1	14%
Lack of Support from Stakeholders	2	29%
Misalignment of Priorities between Stakeholders	3	43%
Other	2	29%

Other included time and that business priorities do not always match those of other industries or academic institutional partners.

Select what your business believes is the most important animal welfare-related topics to communicate with the public, producers, and industry stakeholders.

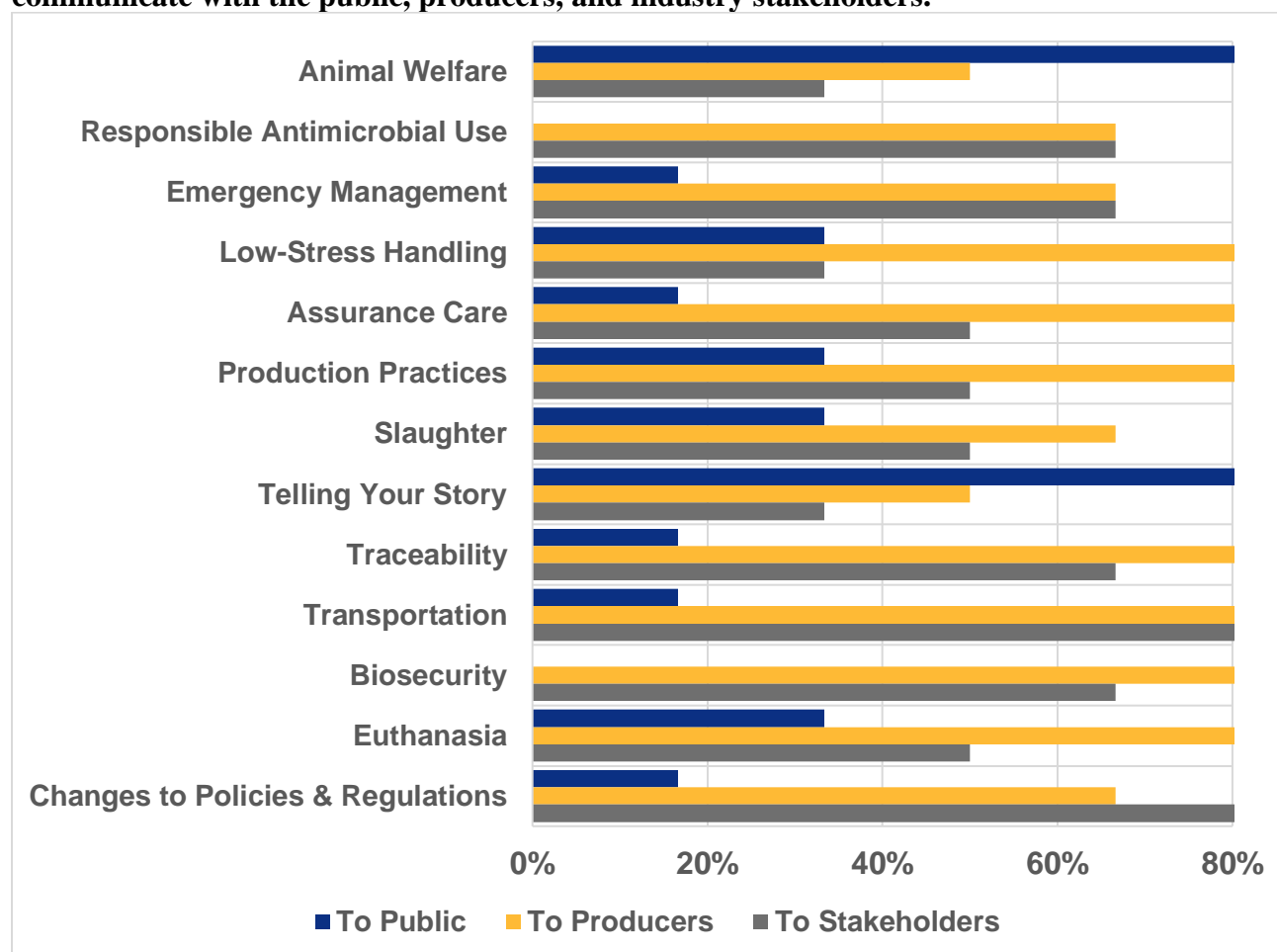


Figure 60. Animal welfare-related topics selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey that were identified as the most important to communicate with the public, producers, and industry stakeholders (n=6)

**If not listed above, what animal welfare-related topics is your business communicating with the public, producers, and industry stakeholders?**

Topics to communicate to the public included halal slaughter and feedlot procedures. Topics to communicate to producers included marketing options, identifying and transporting subject animals, consumer concerns around animal welfare, and emerging animal welfare issues. Topics to communicate to industry stakeholders included improving animal standards through regulations and industry protocol to manage loss of market for milk during an animal welfare incident, animal welfare audits, consumer concerns around animal welfare, and emerging animal welfare issues.

For each animal welfare topic, please select the channel that your business uses to communicate with the public?

### *Animal Welfare in General*

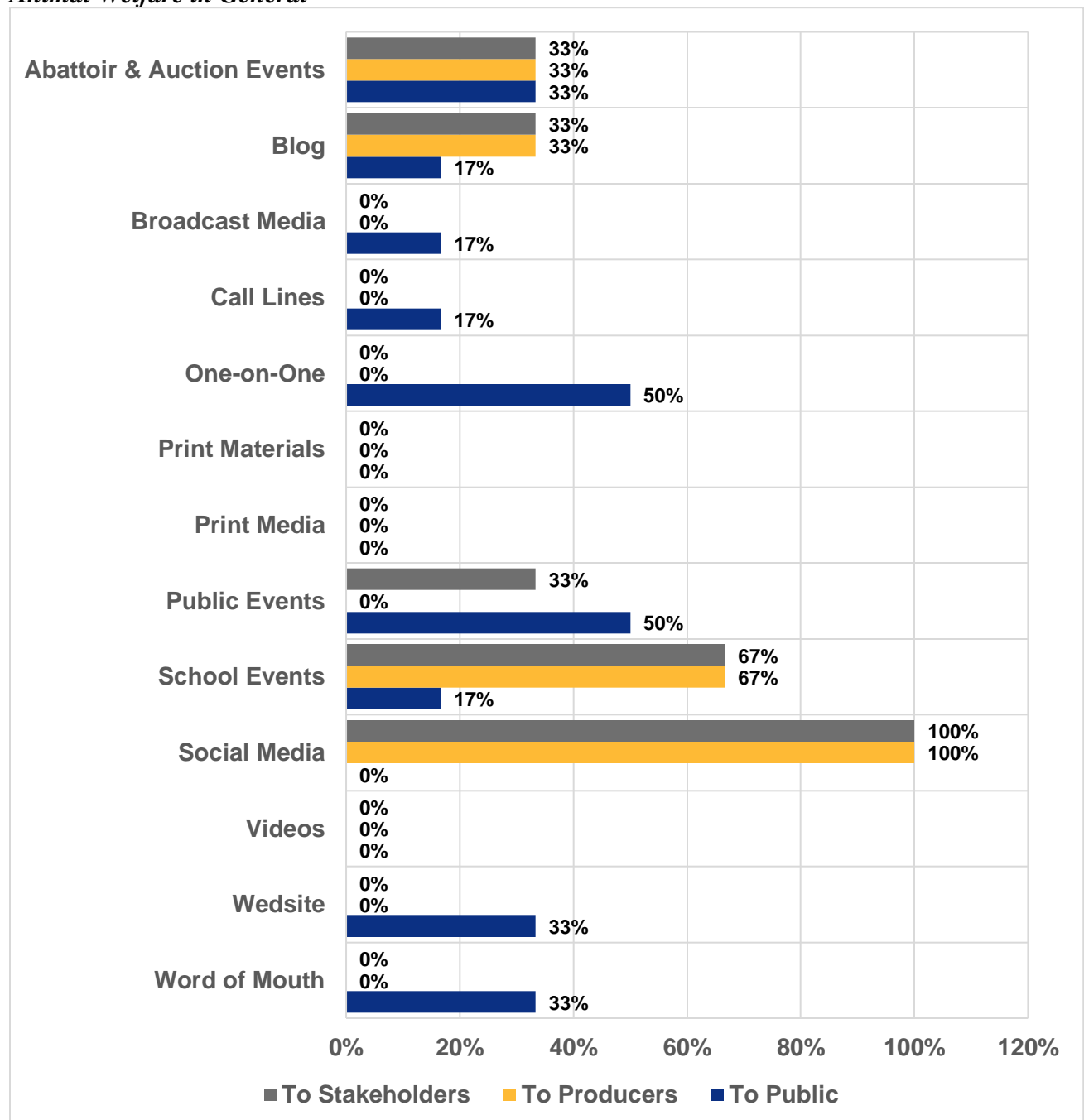


Figure 61. Channels selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate animal welfare in general with the public (n=6), producers (n=3), and industry stakeholders (n=3)

## Responsible Antimicrobial Use

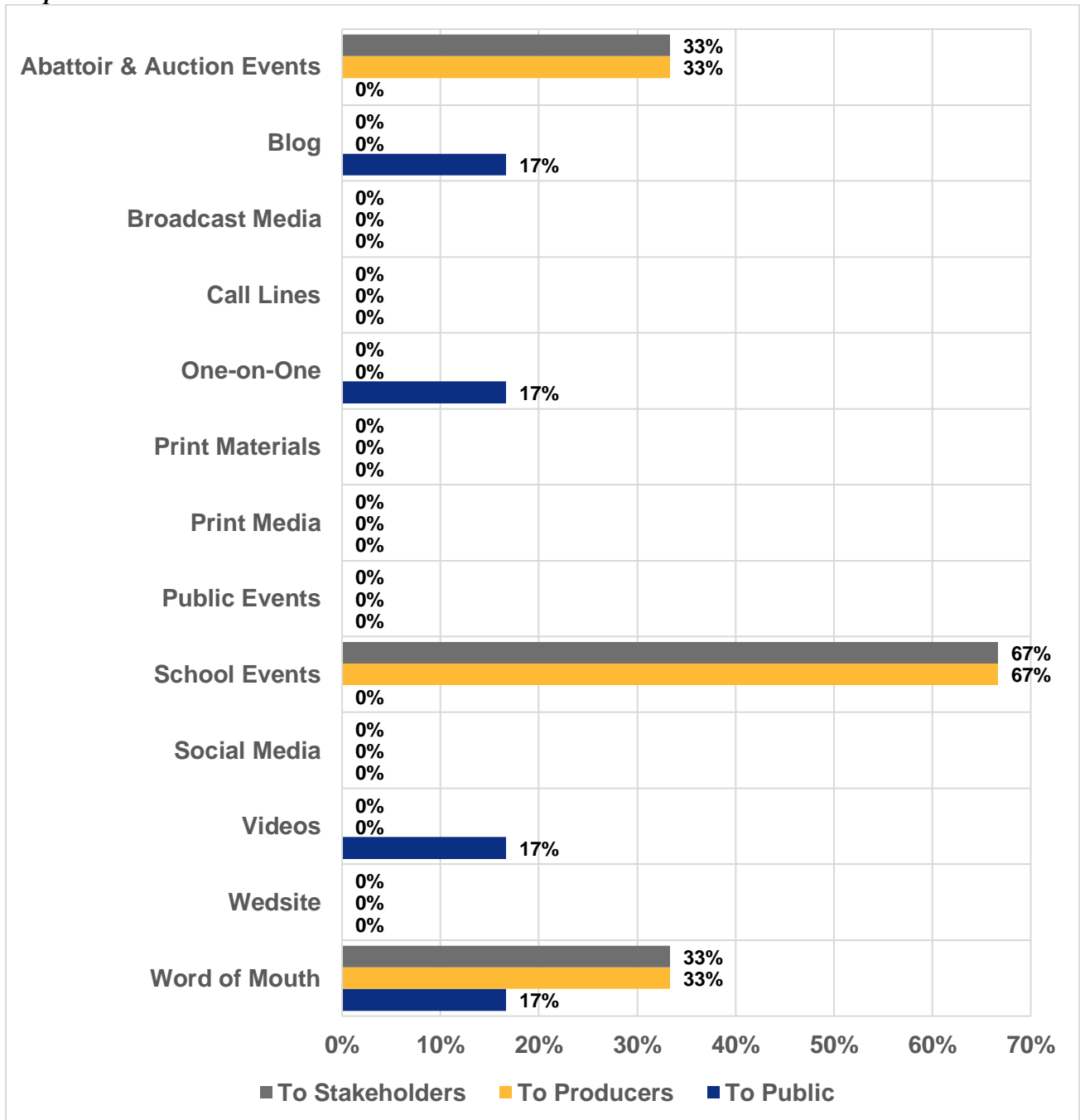


Figure 62. Channels selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate responsible antimicrobial use with the public (n=6), producers (n=3), and industry stakeholders (n=3)



## Emergency Management & Preparation

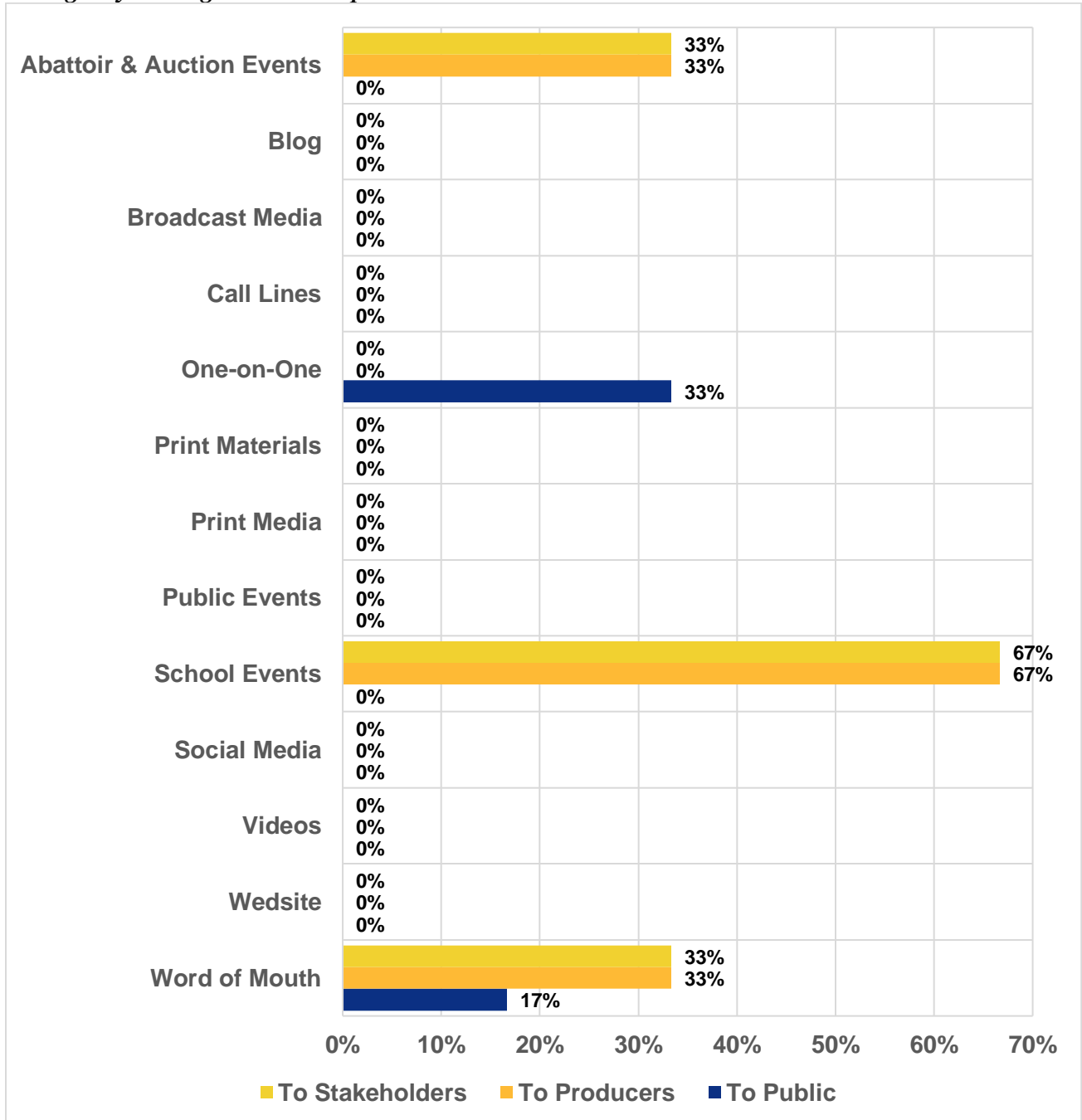


Figure 63. Channels selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate emergency management and preparation with the public (n=6), producers (n=3), and industry stakeholders (n=3)

## Low-Stress Handling

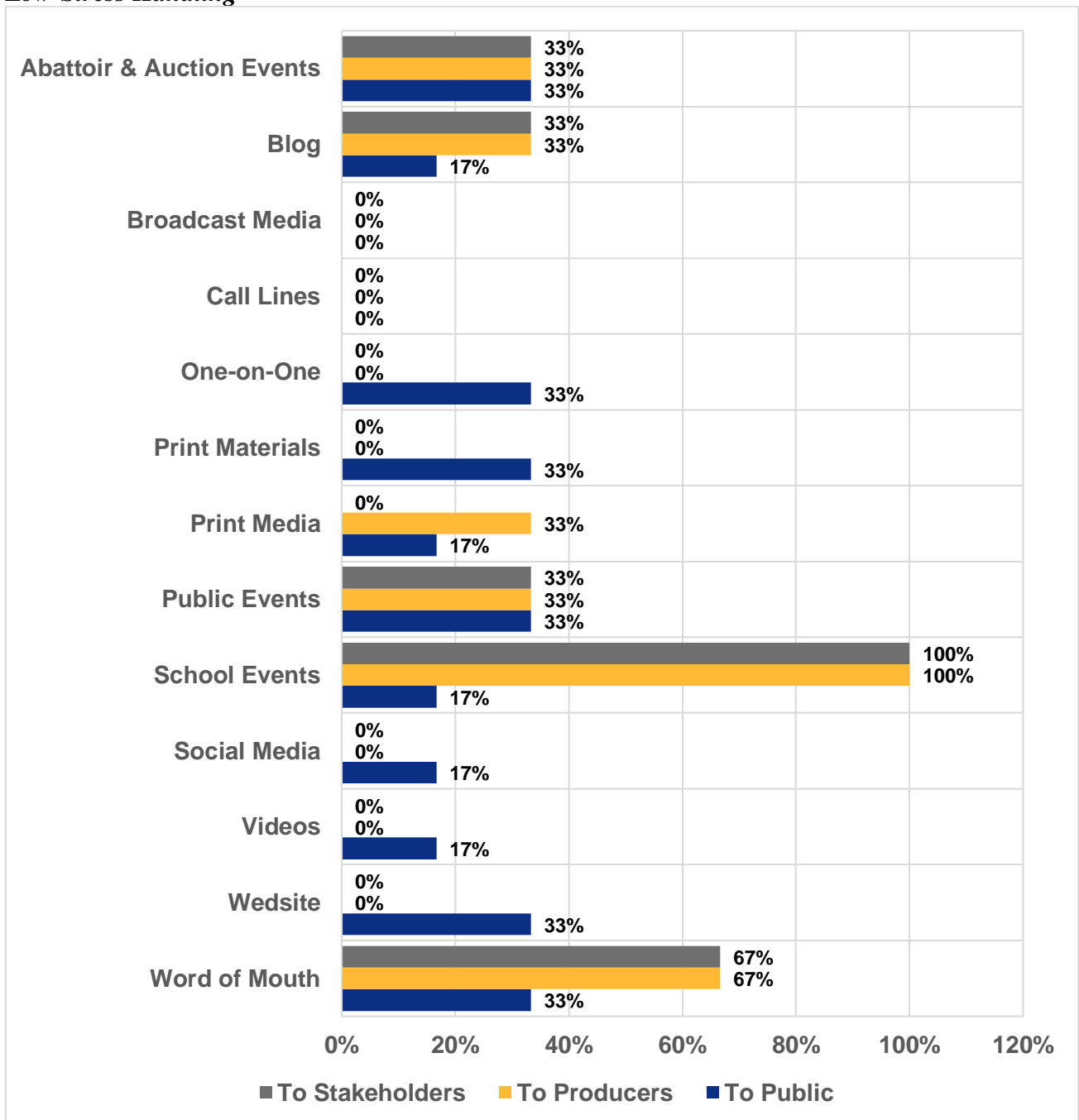


Figure 64. Channels selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate low-stress handling with the public (n=6), producers (n=3), and industry stakeholders (n=3)

### Industry Animal Care Assurance Programs

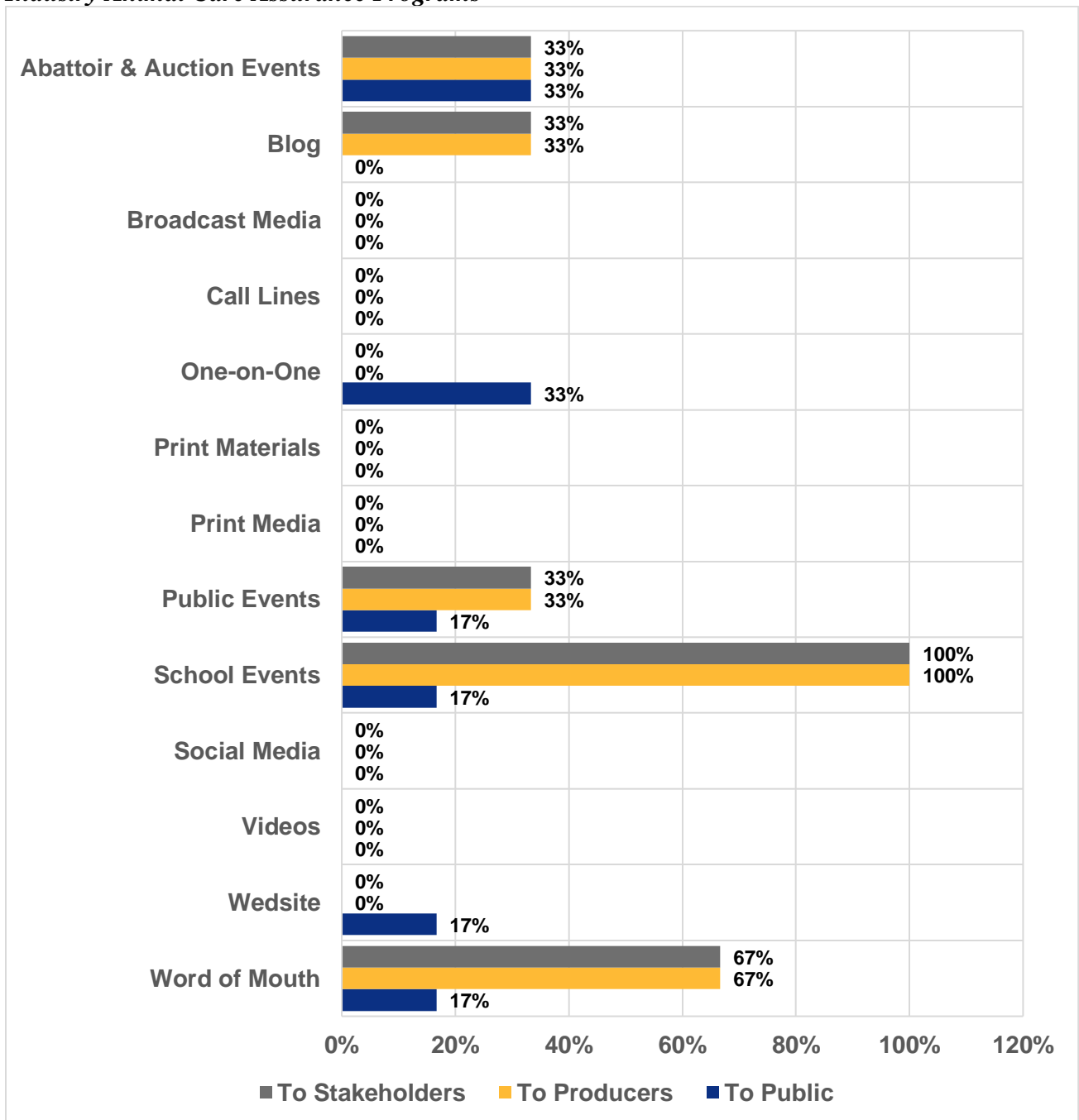


Figure 65. Channels selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate industry animal care assurance programs with the public (n=6), producers (n=3), and industry stakeholders (n=3)

## Production Practices

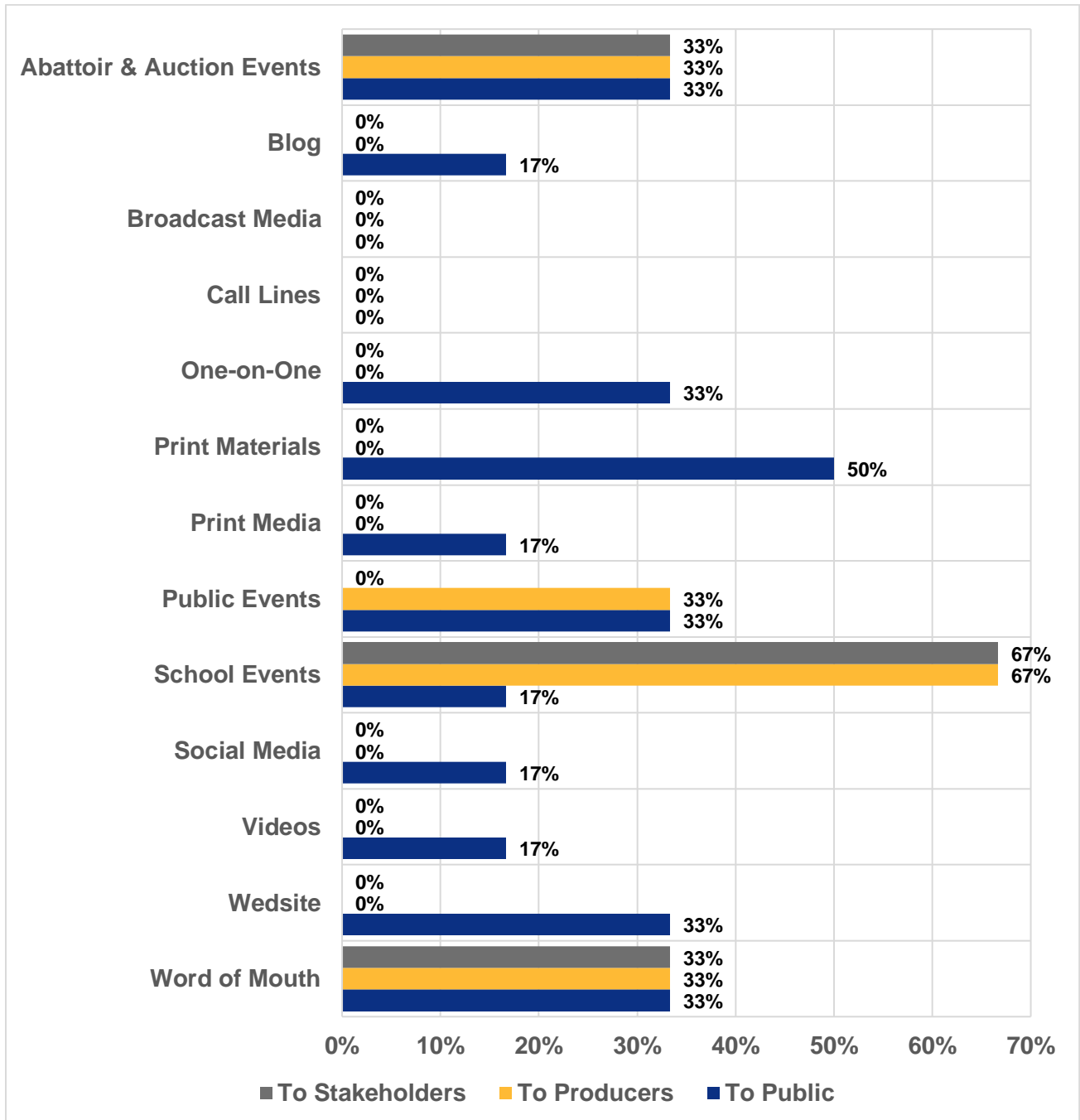


Figure 66. Channels selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate production practices with the public (n=6), producers (n=3), and industry stakeholders (n=3)

## Slaughter Practices

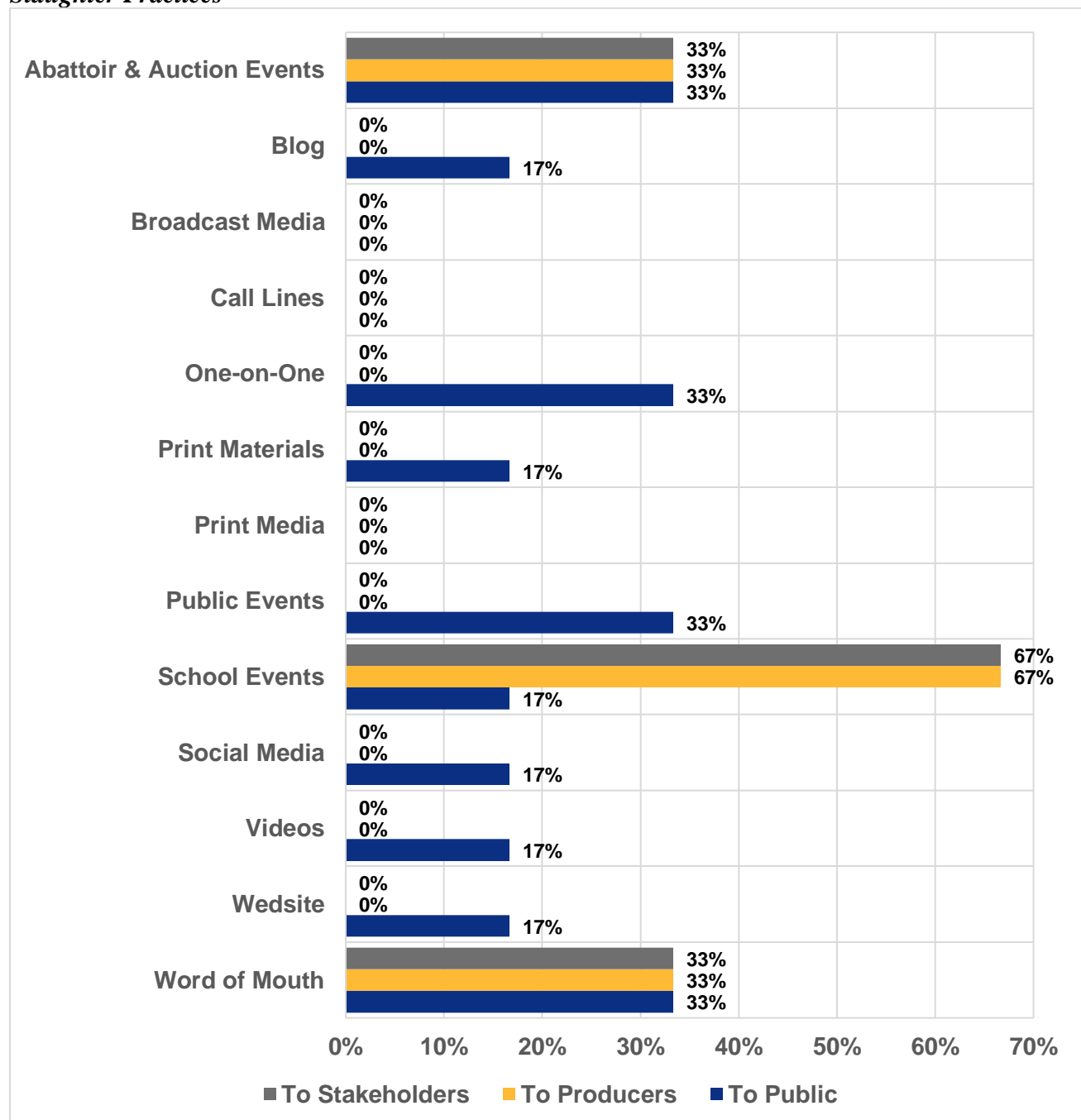


Figure 67. Channels selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate slaughter practices with the public (n=6), producers (n=3), and industry stakeholders (n=3)

***Telling your story (i.e. Public trust related)***

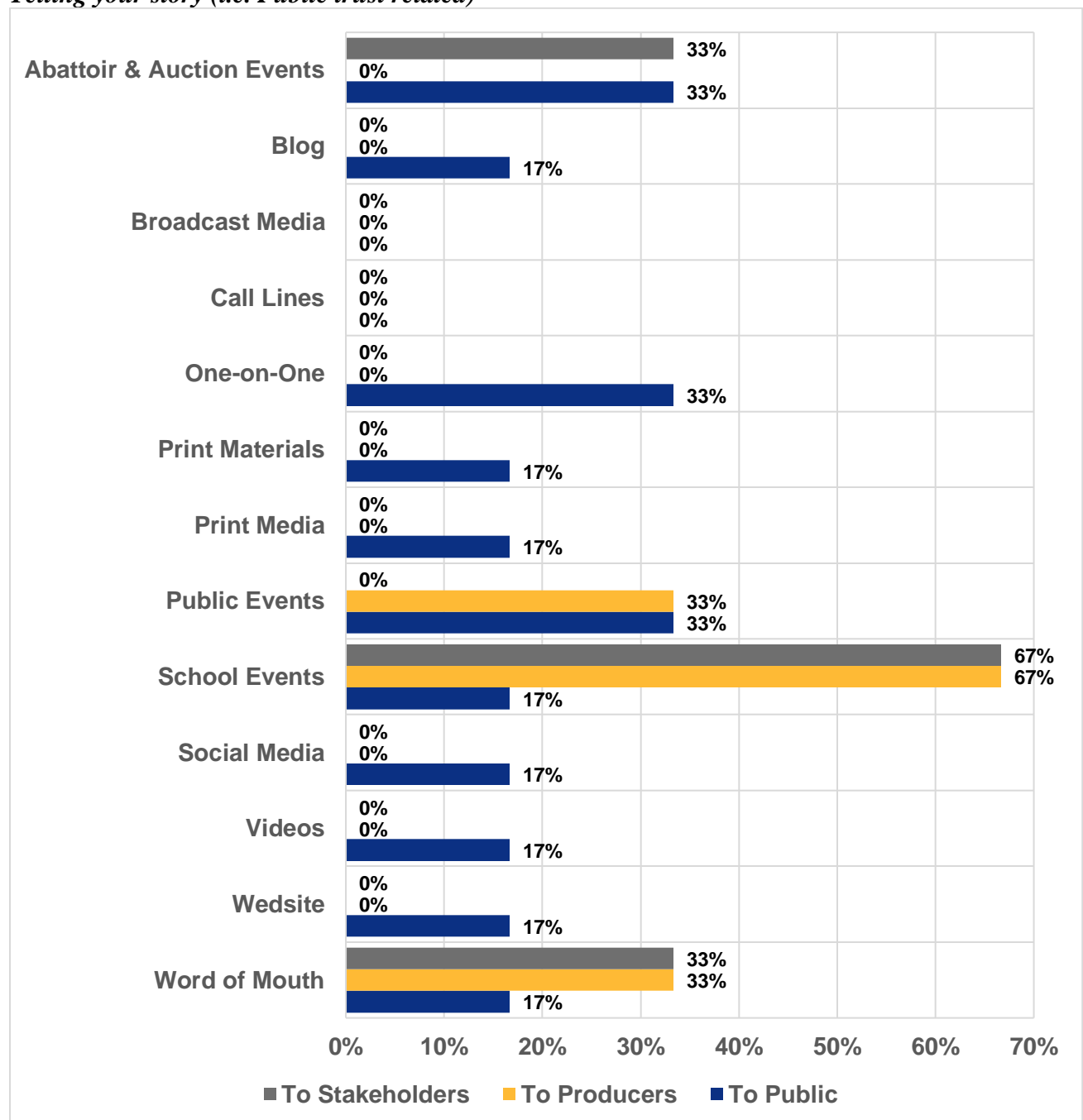


Figure 68. Channels selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate “telling your story” with the public (n=6), producers (n=3), and industry stakeholders (n=3)

## Traceability Practices

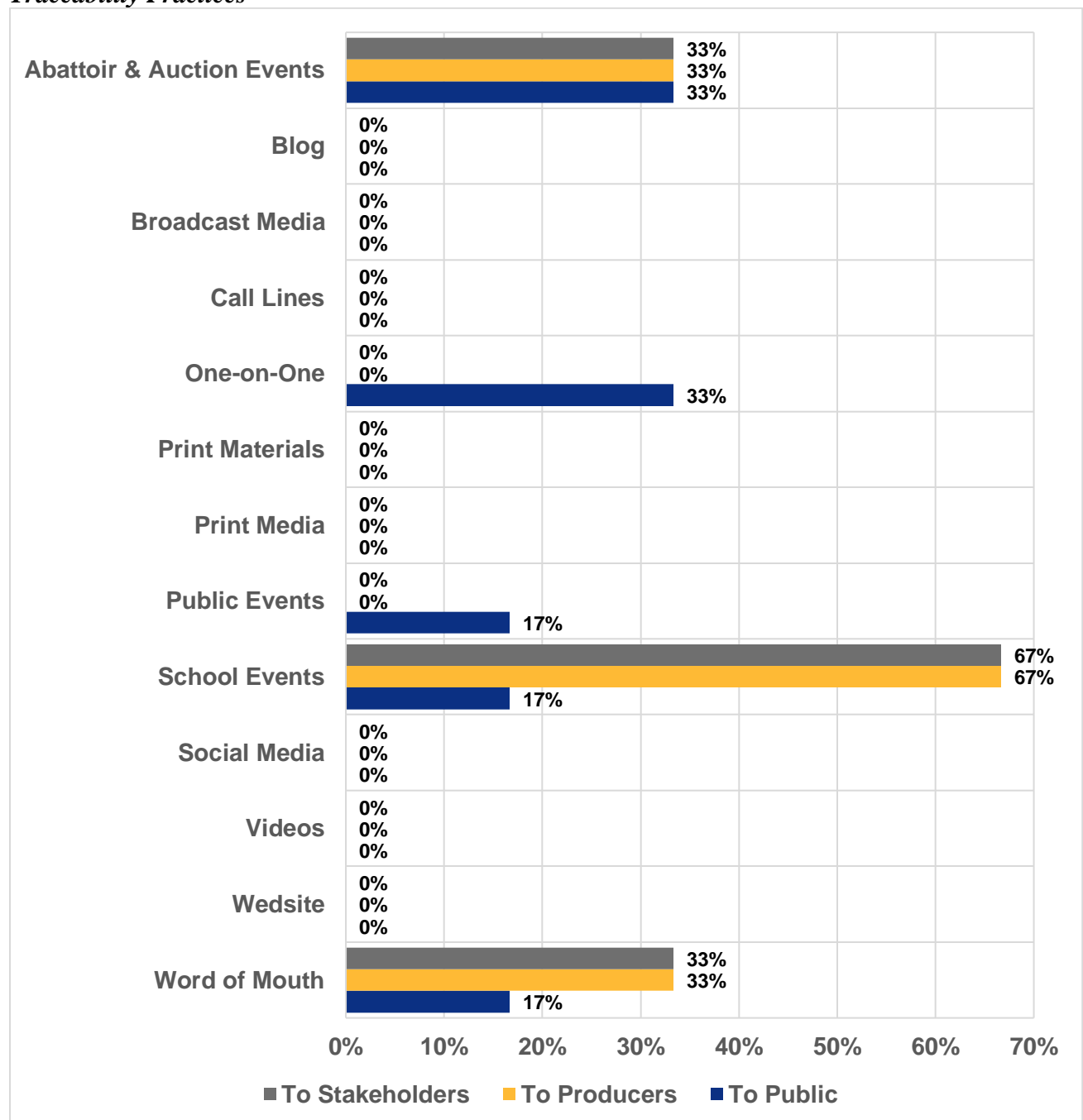


Figure 69. Channels selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate traceability practices with the public (n=6), producers (n=3), and industry stakeholders (n=3)

## Transportation Practices

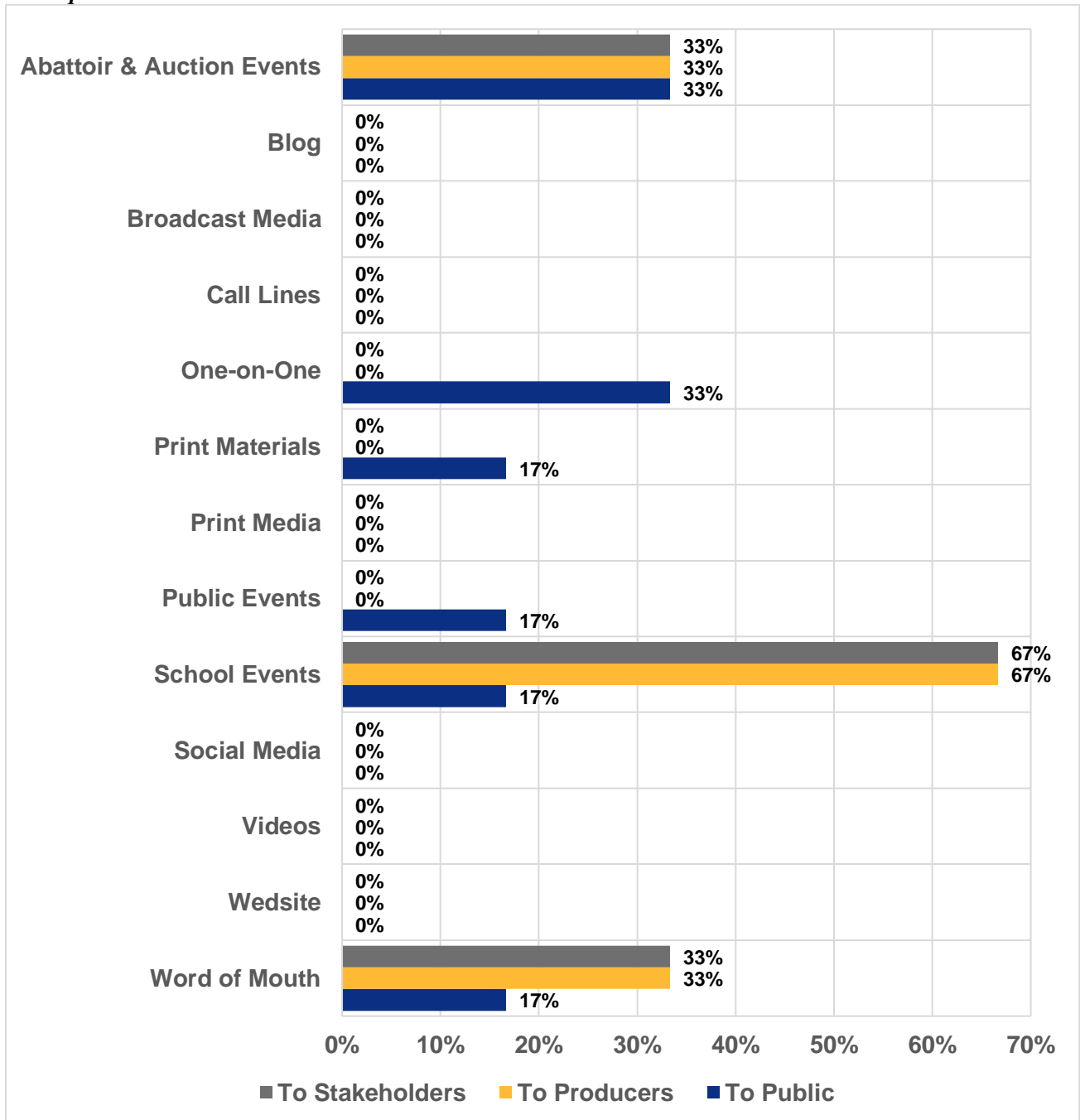


Figure 70. Channels selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate transportation practices with the public (n=6), producers (n=3), and industry stakeholders (n=3)



## Biosecurity Practices

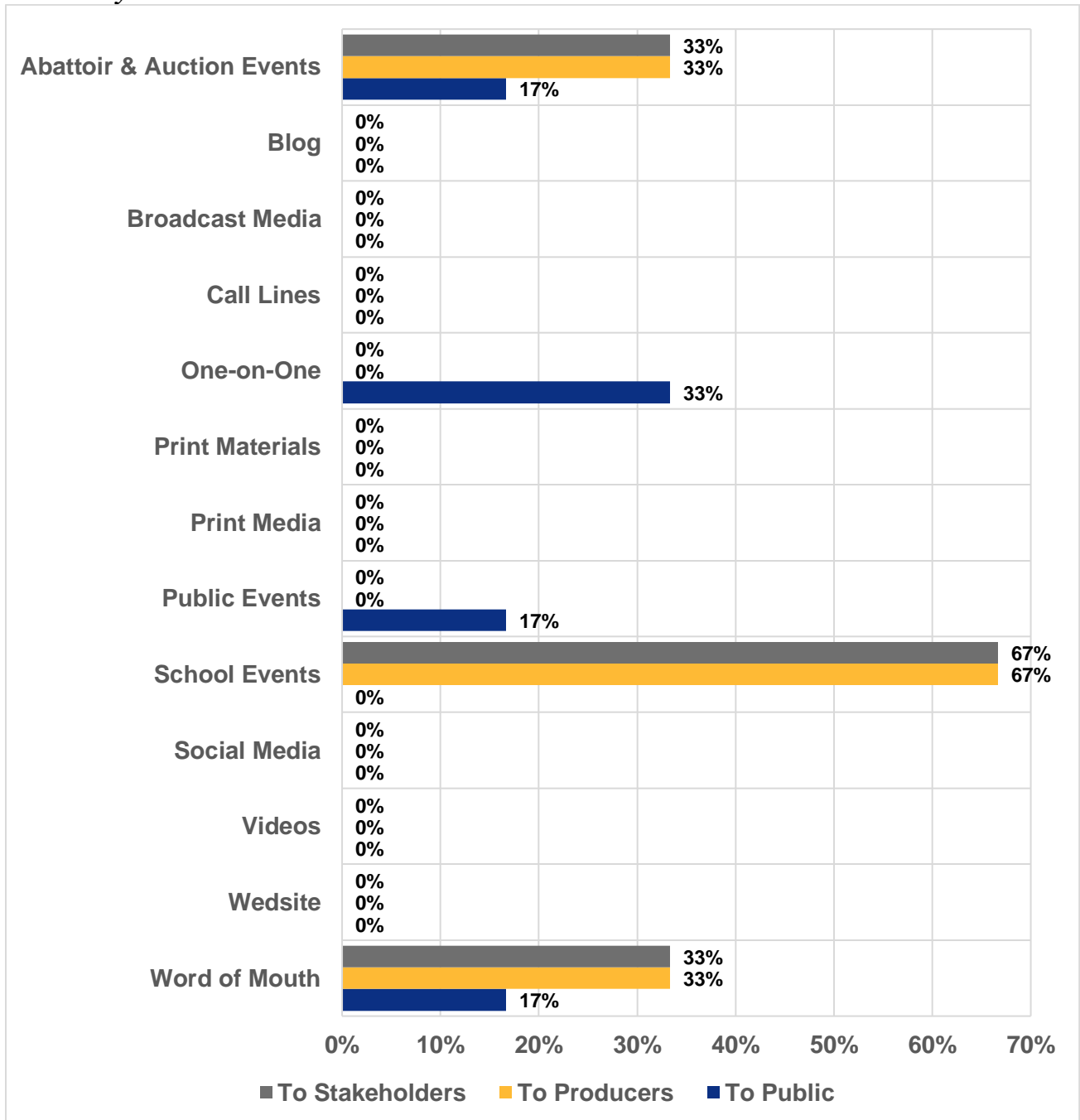


Figure 71. Channels selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate biosecurity practices with the public (n=6), producers (n=3), and industry stakeholders (n=3)

## Euthanasia

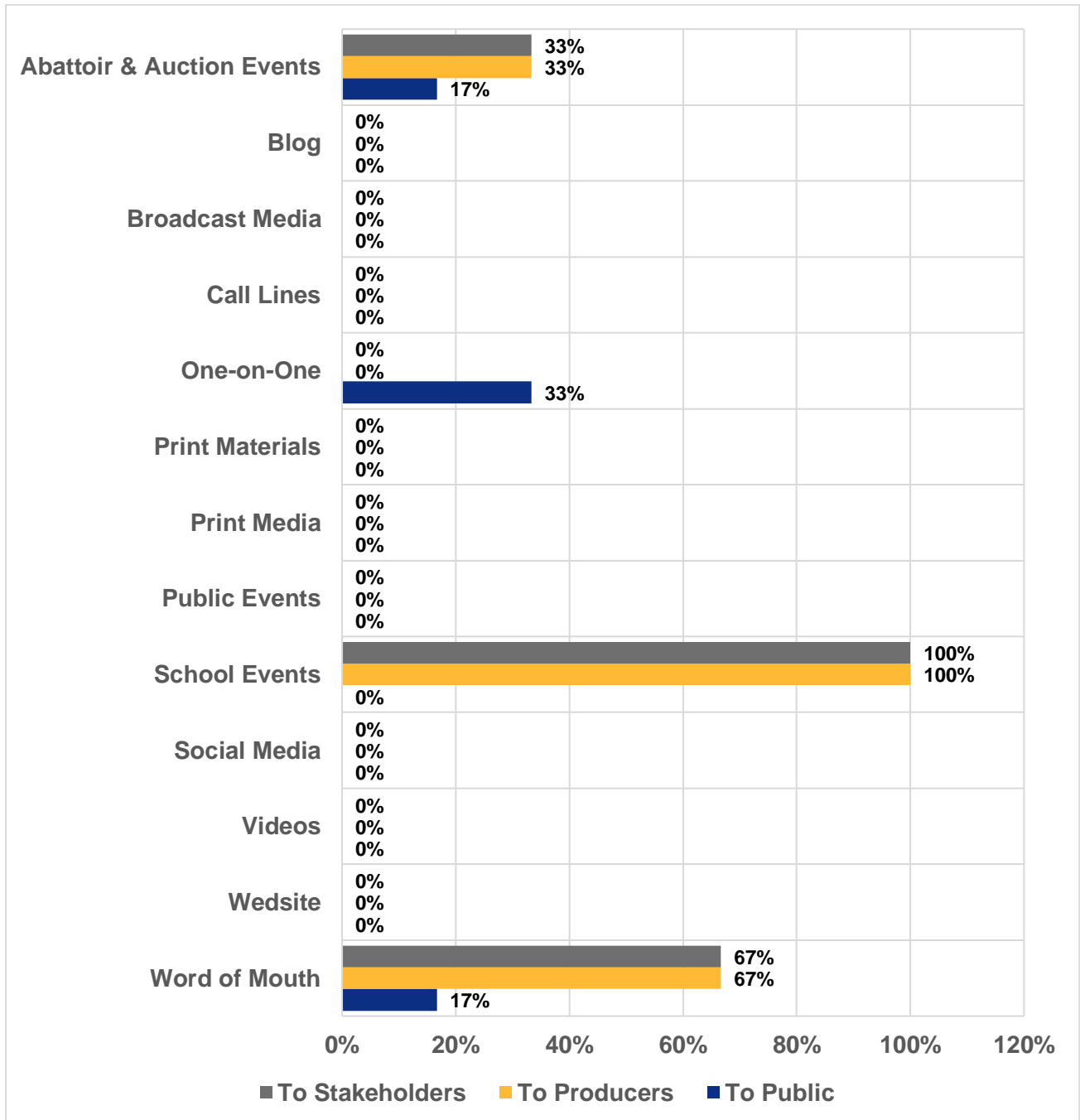


Figure 72. Channels selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate euthanasia practices with the public (n=6), producers (n=3), and industry stakeholders (n=3)

### Changes to Policies & Regulations

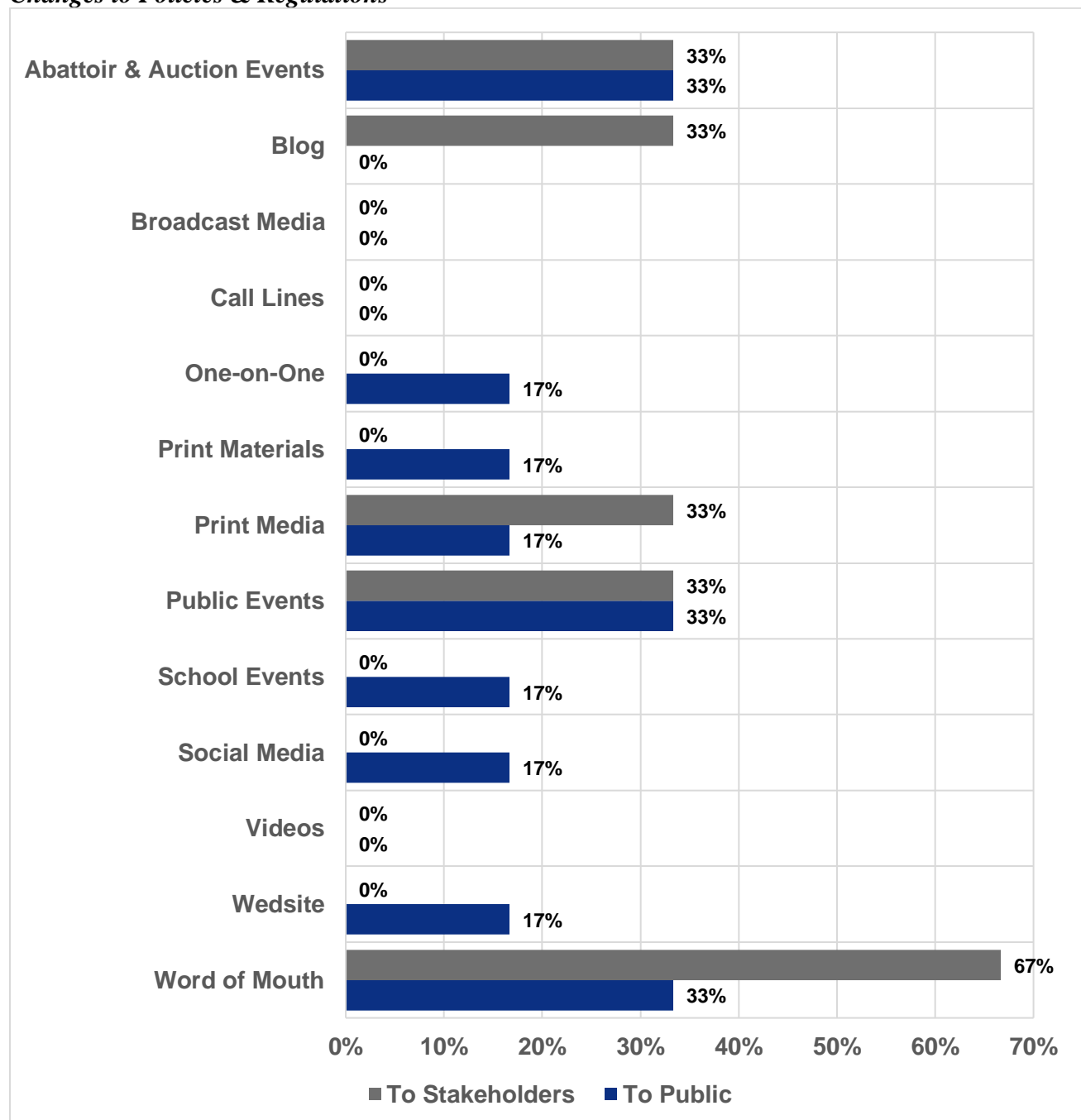


Figure 73. Channels selected by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey to communicate changes to policies and regulations with the public (n=6), producers (n=3), and industry stakeholders (n=3)

**Who does your business currently collaborate with in its communication activities? Select all that apply.**

Table 56. Collaborators that abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey reported that their business currently collaborate with in its communication activities (n=2)

Collaborator	n	Percentage
Academic Institution(s)	1	50%
Animal Welfare Group(s)	1	50%
County/Municipal District(s)	0	0%
Government(s)	1	50%
Livestock Commodity Group(s)	1	50%
Processor(s)	1	50%
Producer(s)	1	50%
Other	1	50%

Other included provincial and national processor associations.

**What grades does your business offer resources or activities to students? Select all that apply.**

Table 57. Grades that abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey reported that their business offers educational resources or activities to students (n=2)

Grades	n	Percentage
Grades 1-6	1	50%
Grades 7-9	2	100%
Grades 10-12	2	100%
Post-Secondary	2	100%
Other	2	100%

**How do you provide these resources or activities to students? Select all that apply.**

Table 58. Methods by which abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey reported that their business offers educational resources or activities to students (n=2)

Resources/Activities	n	Percentage
Coordinate Ag School Events	0	0%
Curriculum-Based Resources	1	50%
Hands-On Activities	1	50%
In-Person Presentations	1	50%
Online Resources & Activities	0	0%
Print Resources	0	0%
Video-Conferencing Presentations	0	0%
Other	1	50%

Other included 4-H programming for younger students.

**Who delivers these resources to students? Select all that apply.**

Table 59. Individuals who the abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey reported that delivers their business's resources to students (n=2)

Who delivers resources to students	n	Percentage
Contractor	1	50%
Designated Staff for Education	1	50%
Only Online Sources Available	0	0%
Paid Staff Without Designation for Education	1	50%
Volunteers	1	50%
Other	1	50%

**Does your business collaborate with any of the following in the creation or distribution of these resources and activities for students? Select all that apply.**

Table 60. Collaborators that abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey is collaborating with in the creation or distribution of educational resources and activities to students (n=2)

Collaborators	n	Percentage
Academic Institution(s)	1	50%
Animal Welfare Group(s)	0	0%
County/Municipal District(s)	0	0%
Government(s)	0	0%
Livestock Commodity Group(s)	0	0%
Processor(s)	0	0%
Producer(s)	0	0%
Research Group(s)	0	0%
Teachers and/or Teacher Associations	0	0%
Other	1	50%
Do Not Collaborate	1	50%

**Overall, please select what your business views as motivators towards providing resources or activities to students.**

Table 61. Motivators viewed by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey towards providing resources or activities to students (n=5)

Motivators	n	Percentage
Educate Youth in Agriculture	5	100%
Funding	0	0%
Industry Demand	2	40%
Industry Support	2	40%
Recruitment of Youth into Agriculture	2	40%
Right Thing to Do	2	40%
To Dispel Misinformation	3	60%
Other	1	20%

Other included the need to embed animal welfare into critical thinking of agriculture and veterinary students.

**Overall, please select what your business views as barriers towards providing resources or activities to students.**

*Table 62. Barriers viewed by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey towards providing resources or activities to students (n=4)*

<b>Barriers</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Funding	4	100%
Resources	2	50%
Time	2	50%
Travel Restraint	2	50%
Willingness of Groups to Allow Us to Speak	1	25%
Other	1	25%

Other included that animal welfare is a sensitive topic and some group have shown reluctance to engage in this topic.

**Please select the topics covered in the animal welfare-focused extension activities that your business currently offers its producers.**

*Table 63. Topics covered in animal-welfare focused extension activities that abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project offer to producers (n=1)*

<b>Topics</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Best Practices	0	0%
Biosecurity Practices	0	0%
Changes to Policies & Regulations	0	0%
Emergency Management & Preparation	0	0%
Euthanasia Practices	0	0%
Industry Animal Care Assurance Programs	0	0%
Low-Stress Handling	0	0%
Producer Mental Health	0	0%
Responsible Antimicrobial Use	0	0%
Traceability Practices	0	0%
Transportation Practices	0	0%
Updates on Current Research	0	0%
Other	1	100%

Other included a specific program that provides education and training to producers, veterinary students, and practitioners. Methods of delivery included seminars, conferences and workshops. The single business that delivered education and extension activities to their producers collaborated with academic institutions.

**Overall, please select what your business views as motivators towards extending education and extension activities to your producers.**

*Table 64. Motivators viewed by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey towards extending education and extension activities to producers (n=3)*

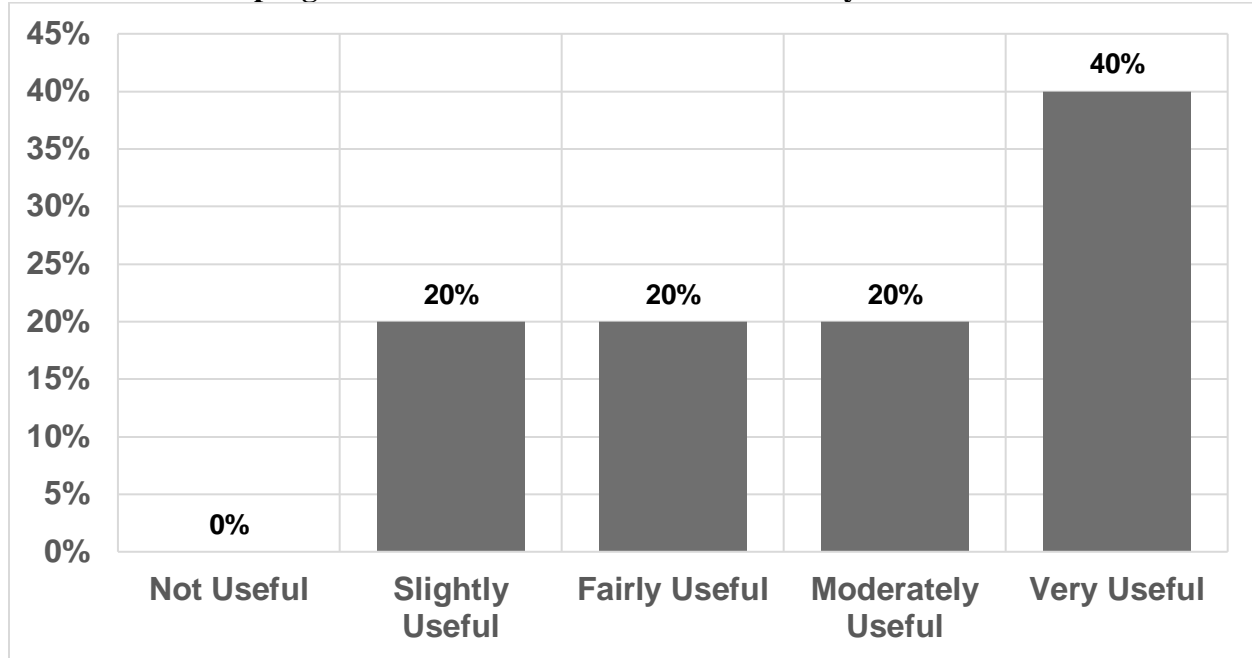
<b>Motivators</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Academic Institutional Demand	1	33%
Academic Institutional Support	1	33%
Consumer Demand	2	67%
Funding	0	0%
Government Demand	1	33%
Other Organization(s) Demand	1	33%
Processor Demand	3	100%
Producer Demand	3	100%
Regulations and Guidelines	0	0%
Research Findings	0	0%
Veterinary Demand	1	33%
Other	0	0%

**Overall, please select what your business views as barriers towards extending education and extension activities to your producers.**

*Table 65. Barriers viewed by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey towards extending education and extension activities to producers (n=3)*

<b>Barriers</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Funding	1	33%
Lack of Communication	1	33%
Lack of Industry Direction	3	100%
Lack of Producer Participation	2	67%
Lack of Resources	0	0%
Other	0	0%

**On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all useful and 5 being very useful), how useful do you believe assurance programs are to Alberta's livestock industry?**



*Figure 74. Degree of usefulness by abattoir and auction market respondents from the Livestock Welfare Engagement Project survey in Alberta that assurance programs are Alberta's livestock industry (n=5)*



# Appendix B

## REGIONAL FOCUS GROUPS – SUMMARY NOTES

A comprehensive document capturing all of the input collected in the Regional Focus Groups sessions is available on request. What follows here is a summary of those findings, with an emphasis on high level major points of consensus:

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS – FAIRVIEW

#### **General Discussion** (views on the evolution of animal welfare in Alberta)

- Practices have evolved
- Understanding has evolved
- Alberta has come a long way
- The profile of livestock welfare is much higher today
- The level of attention and expectations industry faces on this issue has dramatically increased

#### **Standards and Policies**

- Standards and policies are important to the industry
- Many are in place though awareness of these is varied
- Industry-driven approaches are generally favoured
- Standards and policies are important to building/maintaining public trust and the social license of the industry
- A key priority is to improve awareness of standards and policies, both to audiences within the industry and outside the industry
- Codes of Practice stand out as a top priority for producers to know about

#### **Research**

- Research related to livestock welfare is important to the industry
- Improved clarity is needed on what is being done and how research direction and priorities are tied to industry needs
- There is a gap in getting research translated and transferred for industry use
- Research that has practical, usable outcomes for industry is favoured

## **Communication, Education and Extension**

- Communication, education and extension taken together represent an area that has a major influence on Alberta's success in managing animal welfare
- Extension stands out as an area that has fallen behind and needs more support
- For the northern region, extension groups such as the Peace Country Beef and Forage Association are a great asset that needs support
- For the northern region, a major challenge is reaching the industry as producers are spread out over a wide area and there are not as many resources to connect with them

## **Assurance Programs**

- Assurance programs are becoming more important
- VBP+ is cited as a top example that is on the right track
- There are different views on value versus investment for industry, and the pros and cons of different types of programs, but general consensus that participation in assurance programs is needed
- It's not enough today for industry to say it is doing the right thing. It must also "prove it" and that is why assurance is needed

## **Closing Discussion** (opportunity to raise points not already discussed)

- Management is the key to success
- The northern region is unique and this needs to be recognized in discussion of needs. An example of one challenge is a lack of access to veterinary clinics/veterinarians in this region
- An important question is how to meet the needs of smaller livestock sectors that don't have the resources and influence of larger ones

## **Overall**

### What is working well

- Industry-driven standards and assurance programs (on the right track, need to continue moving forward)

### Key challenges they are facing

- Extension
- Veterinary support

### Unique aspects for this region

- Remote compared to other regions
- Producer base widely spread over a large area
- Unique challenges related to reaching producers, having veterinary support, accessing resources and opportunities that are more plentiful in more populated regions

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS – LETHBRIDGE**

### **General Discussion** (views on evolution of animal welfare in Alberta)

- Expectations surrounding animal welfare have greatly evolved
- A gap has persisted and, in some ways, gotten larger between industry and the public
- A large portion of the industry has made strong progress on improving animal welfare practices, but a small portion has remained difficult to reach
- Animal rights groups and misinformation have become a greater challenge to how the industry is perceived
- Overall industry has made steady progress
- With a younger generation become more involved in agriculture there is more openness to change and greater recognition of how important animal welfare is to the industry brand

### **Standards and Policies**

- Standards and policies are very important to the industry
- Within the industry they provide a foundation for making sure everyone is keeping up with the best practices
- Outside the industry they show that proper practices are being followed
- The most recognized, helpful and valuable ones for practical purposes have been Codes of Practice
- While many producers embrace and take pride in following standards a challenge is how to address the minority who don't

### **Research**

- Research related to livestock welfare is important to the industry
- There has been a lot of good research but it needs to be better communicated
- An important role for research is helping industry manage change (i.e. transition to new approaches and requirements)
- Research that has practical, usable outcomes for industry is favoured

- Too often the research is getting done but is not having the impact it could in reaching producers and resulting in practice improvement

### **Communication, Education and Extension**

- Communication, education and extension are closely inter-related and are a very important factor in how much progress is made
- It is challenging to reach everyone and it may be better to have more focused strategies on areas that that can make a real difference
- Funding for these activities is a major factor because strong support is needed to make a strong impact
- Within the industry there is a need for more face-to-face connection
- Post-secondary education for agriculture students is a strength for Alberta that needs continued support (there was strong student representation at this session)

### **Assurance Programs**

- Assurance programs are a must for today and for the future
- A challenge is getting smaller producers on board who see cost and time as barriers
- The major industry-driven programs are on the right track and need to continue to develop and increase in adoption
- Voluntary programs are fine as the market will ultimately drive participation
- Auction markets are weak area where more assurance/enforcement is needed

### **Closing Discussion** (opportunity to raise points not already discussed)

- Industry has good organizations guiding it forward
- Something like the A&W campaign is a big challenge. Industry doesn't have the resources to compete in getting its message across at that level

### **Overall**

#### What is working well

- Industry-driven standards and assurance programs (on the right track, need to continue to develop)
- Education activities

#### Key challenges they are facing

- Participation from smaller producers and older generation
- Communication and extension

### Unique aspects for this region

- Diverse industry sometimes hard to get everyone on same page and participating in discussions like this one

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS – OLDS**

### **General Discussion** (views on evolution of animal welfare in Alberta)

- Animal welfare in agriculture has evolved steadily in a positive direction
- There has been a lot of improvements toward “win-wins” that are better for the animals and also better for producers/industry
- Consumers have become more disconnected from agriculture but in recent years also more active in their opinions of agriculture and how food should be produced
- Progress with standards such as Codes of Practice and with assurance programs has been very important and is leading the way to the future

### **Standards and Policies**

- Alberta has achieved a good balance of standards and policies
- There is a good mix between those that address potential problems and those that are positive and proactive in helping the industry with continual improvement and leadership
- Standards and policies that impact on the ground production are best when they are science-based and industry-driven. Top examples such as Codes of Practice, VBP+ and proAction have all achieved this
- Beyond these mainstream programs there is room for better clarity and streamlining on the roles of other standards and policies

### **Research**

- An important role of research is providing science-based data and information to back industry practices
- There is a need to do a better job of carrying research results forward to product development and practice change
- More alignment is needed between research activities and industry priorities (not clear how this works now)
- Research that has practical, usable outcomes and helps industry address pressure points is favoured

## **Communication, Education and Extension**

- There is a lot of crossover between communication, education and extension
- A lot is being done but the question is how to measure what is effective
- There are a number of good education and training-oriented programs and events that have been introduced or strengthened in recent years. We need to support and build on these with a priority on expanding the reach
- Agriculture is getting better with understanding its messages and the need for everyone to play a role in “telling our story”

## **Assurance Programs**

- Assurance programs are becoming essential and agriculture has made a lot of progress
- This is the “prove it” piece critical to showing consumers and the public that we are doing the right things with animal welfare
- The big industry-driven programs are by and large excellent and on the right track as they further develop, though there are some gaps beyond these
- Every livestock species sector is different and needs to design programs that work best for them but at the same time it has been great that the main ones are well aligned in both how they are designed and communicated
- Because of the progress with the major assurance programs agriculture in Alberta is in a much better position today to speak with a united voice on how it is addressing animal welfare

## **Closing Discussion** (opportunity to raise points not already discussed)

- A big question is whether or not producers and industry will see greater payback from the progress they have made. Will consumers pay more for welfare friendly products, and if so, will that trickle back to producers?
- The trust factor is huge to the future of livestock industries . . . this is why progress with assurance programs and communicating what we are doing is so important

## **Overall**

### What is working well

- Industry-driven animal welfare progress across the board has seen a lot of positive evolution.
- Standout examples include Codes of Practice, assurance programs and education programs.
- Consensus-based, science-based industry coordinated approaches.
- Industry organizations’ efforts in communications, extension and education

### Key challenges they are facing

- Resources (e.g. funding support) for training programs that are working well (including need to build further upon these programs)
- Small yet significant portion of producers not as engaged with the major recent industry-led progress, however generational shift and market influence will help alleviate this.
- Communicating complex issues in simple terms (making progress but an area of high priority) to support clearer understanding both within and, in particular, outside the industry.

### Unique aspects for this region

- Central Alberta a key area balancing agriculture / urban in Edmonton-Red Deer-Calgary corridor.
- Influential region to shape public perceptions, set example for broader industry.
- Education a major focus with assets such as Olds College. Presents a leadership opportunity to innovate / support progress in education, training, extension, etc.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS – EDMONTON**

### **General Discussion** (views on evolution of animal welfare in Alberta)

- There has been a major industry evolution and also societal evolution on this issue
- There has been a transformation in all aspects from on the ground practices to the way animal welfare is discussed and perceived at both industry and consumer levels
- Alberta's livestock industry has come a long way and in fact has been a leader in many respects
- Today animal welfare is a mainstream topic and value that is viewed as central to livestock production and the future success and sustainability of this industry

### **Standards and Policies**

- Standards and policies are absolutely vital. We want to have standards and policies that are enforceable, visible, understandable and meaningful
- The livestock industry in Alberta is in a good position with Codes of Practice and assurance programs
- The industry is much better positioned today to be clear and transparent on how it approaches animal welfare by talking about the standards in place
- Both within and outside the industry communication that is simple and clear on the role of different standards and policies is important. Everyone does not need to know

everything, but they need to know these resources exist and how to use the ones that are relevant to them

- Industry-driven approaches are favoured but they are best accepted when there is also a balance in working together with stakeholders and listening to voices outside the industry

## **Research**

- There has been a lot of good research and having strong research activity will always be important as the industry evolves
- There is a sense that research activities are not part of a cohesive strategy linked to industry needs and priorities – is there a way we can improve this?
- Research can play a major role in driving innovation and progress. We are doing okay but can do better – this is a leadership opportunity
- There are a lot of needs and questions that can be addressed by research right now – it's a time of major change and evolution for the industry and we need research to help us transition to the future

## **Communication, Education and Extension**

- Part of communication, education and extension is making sure we are as clear and consistent as we can be in the language we use and how we talk about this across each area
- The industry has made a lot of progress in speaking clearly and with a more consistent united voice
- Funding support is always needed for activities in these areas and right now is an important time to make sure we are doing as much as possible
- Animal welfare has never been more in the spotlight and we need to make sure we have a strong voice
- It's a new era as far as the different ways communication, education and extension can happen. We need to look at the full toolbox of options and have ways to measure what is effective

## **Assurance Programs**

- Assurance programs are a must and can have a lot of value for helping the industry both internally and externally
- But these programs come with a cost and the question of who pays and who should pay is a big one
- Assurance programs provide something we can hold up in front of the public that they can see and trust
- One danger is having too many programs



- Regarding future direction, the over-arching goal should be to maintain and grow public trust in the industry

## **Overall**

- What is working well
- Industry is by and large managing this issue very well today and has good organizations and programs in place that are major assets
- Codes of Practice and assurance programs
- Key challenges they are facing
- Building stronger relationships and understanding with the public
- Communicating in simple terms on a complex issue (There has been great progress, but this remains a top priority for continually getting better. Communication has a huge influence and doing a good job here helps address many other challenges.)

## **Unique aspects for this region**

- Strong sense that working together among a variety of stakeholders is important
- Emphasis on having clear strategy and as much as possible aligning with broader national and international efforts on areas of mutual interest

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS – VERMILION**

### **General Discussion** (views on evolution of animal welfare in Alberta)

- Awareness has grown dramatically
- Practice change has advanced dramatically
- A lot of what has been accomplished has been driven by industry initiatives, but rising questions and expectations from outside the industry have played a strong role overall
- Within the industry the mainstream has come a long way but there is a fringe that still needs to be addressed

### **Standards and Policies**

- Overall the impact of standards and policies has been very positive
- The standout is the Codes of Practice. Not great awareness of some of the others, but that's not necessarily a bad thing . . . people know what they need to know
- Standards are good if they industry driven. The standards we have now are good but we need better communication on them
- Standards also help industry show what it's doing to people outside the industry. It's just a good message to know that industry has good standards and practices in place

- We need to make the idea of standards and policies less intimidating. When producers are comfortable this helps with adoption

## **Research**

- Research is a very important support for improving industry practices
- A lot of the opportunity for improvement looking ahead is not so much dramatic changes but more fine-tuning what we're doing now
- Extension is a big gap. We always need research on what is effective. But the research results need to be translated and transferred to industry where it can be applied

## **Communication, Education and Extension**

- Communication, education and extension are all inter-related and all very important. We can never have enough
- Face to face connection is still important yet this is an area where arguably we have fallen behind. It is particularly important for extension
- A challenge is the gap between people in agriculture and those who are not connected to agriculture

## **Assurance Programs**

- Assurance programs are important to maintaining consumer trust and market access.
- We have made a lot of progress and have a good foundation in place
- Now the focus is taking the next steps in further developing these programs and further growing the adoption
- Assurance programs bring consistency and standardization that is so valuable to both the management and brand of our industry

## **Closing Discussion** (opportunity to raise points not already discussed)

- Auction markets are an area that is a weakness for the industry. We need better monitoring and addressing of problems at that level
- We don't pat ourselves on the back enough in Alberta. We have done a lot of good things. We have been proactive and we are a leader on livestock welfare

## **Overall**

### What is working well

- Industry-driven standards and assurance programs (but need to get more reach and participation)

### Key challenges they are facing

- Resources for extension, face-to-face interaction
- Adjusting to new rules and expectations (for example antimicrobial use)

### Unique aspects for this region

- North east part of province has remote areas and more challenges related to engaging directly with producers

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS – ALL REGIONAL FOCUS GROUPS COMBINED**

### **General Discussion** (views on evolution of animal welfare in Alberta)

- Livestock welfare has always been a core value of the industry
- Today the awareness and identity of this term is much higher profile
- Alberta has come a long way
- Alberta is headed in the right direction
- Alberta has the potential to be among world leaders
- Industry has made strong progress in addressing livestock welfare at the production level
- Industry has made strong progress in addressing livestock welfare at the consumer level
- The rise of social license and consumer value considerations has been a major factor
- Sharing knowledge and ideas across sectors is critical to the future
- A mindset of continual improvement is critical to the future
- Generational change is a key factor moving forward
- Connection in all forms – communication, education, extension, cooperation is essential to Alberta's success
- National and international alignment is important
- Alberta also has the opportunity to lead and should embrace this opportunity to lead

### **Standards and Policies**

- Standards and policies on livestock welfare are essential for the industry
- They work best when they are developed with input from the industry
- The industry already has a strong foundation of standards and policies in place
- It's important to communicate this to the public
- Communication is key within the industry to help make standards and policies easy to understand and follow
- A mindset of continual improvement is important
- Producers/industry people don't need to know all in detail – they just need to know what is relevant to them and where to get info when they need it

- National and international alignment is important
- It's critical that standards and policies are based on science

## **Research**

- Research has played an important role in Alberta's progress
- Research will continue to be important to Alberta's future
- Knowledge transfer out of research is a major gap and priority to address. It's critical that research gets into the hands of industry
- Research direction can benefit from stronger direction from industry. Industry must speak as much as possible with a united and clear voice on what the priorities are
- Research can play a stronger role in supporting benchmarking
- Research can play a stronger role in ensuring industry practices are tested and refined based on sound science

## **Communication, Education, Extension**

- There is strong consensus this is a top area of priority critical to Alberta's success in managing the livestock welfare issue
- The sooner people are engaged in awareness of industry progress and best practices on livestock welfare, the better
- Education efforts in particular are best implemented early in educational curriculum, and ideally reinforced at regular intervals over the full course of the education system
- The future of communication is increasingly digital and multi-platform, but traditional approaches and one-on-one engagement continue to be highly relevant
- The more that livestock industries can "tell their story" proactively and positively and speak with a united voice and message, the better
- An ongoing issue is that the most vocal critics of animal agriculture tend to have far greater resources for winning the media battle compare to those within the industry
- The McDonald's example was cited as a top example of how industry can leverage positive relationships with major retailers that do have the resources to make a huge impact with their message
- A challenge for extension is lack of resources. This is a major needed emphasized strongly by all focus groups

## **Assurance Programs**

- Assurance programs are vitally important for today and for the future
- The pathway of consensus-based, science-based, industry coordinated approaches has worked well

- Top examples such as VBP+ and proAction have been excellent and serve as models for the right approach
- There is still a substantial challenge getting all producers on board in some sectors, but this will be solved eventually with the major generational change underway
- Everyone involved in Alberta's livestock industries needs to see these programs as positive and essential. The payback comes in numerous ways starting with improved social license and sustainability for animal agriculture
- Producers to understand this in large part is about the consumer. These programs allow the consumer to "know" the food is safe, high quality and produced in alignment with their values
- Important to move forward at the right pace. In some sectors making assurance programs mandatory is counter-productive. The market will sort things out eventually and for now it's important producers see these as positive programs they can adopt at a pace that fits their situation
- Strong consensus that it's critical to continue the approach that assurance programs have the best interests of industry are not imposed from outside the industry
- "One shop" approaches are preferred rather than having to deal with multiple programs. As much as possible it's better to have coordinated, streamlined approaches. This is an important ongoing focus moving ahead
- Maintaining the right language on assurance programs is essential. Don't want to imply production outside the program is sub-standard and don't want to make livestock welfare a competitive issue



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