

LIVESTOCK WELFARE ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

Assurance Programs Results

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

The project was conducted primarily throughout 2018. Data was collected through an online survey and a series of in-person focus groups across Alberta. The majority of respondents were individuals, such as producers and farm employees.



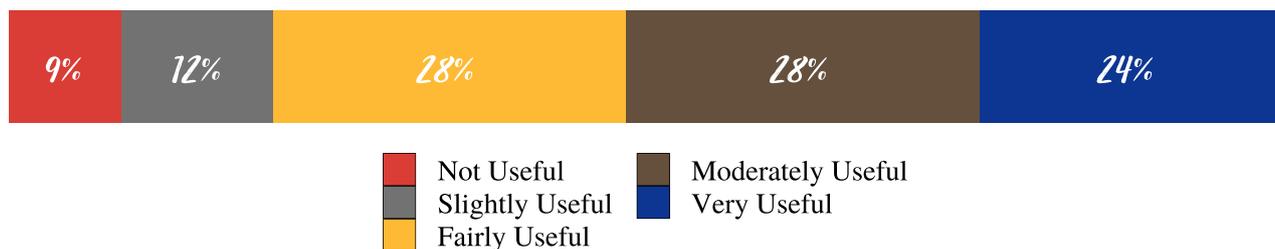
This is a summary of industry information and perspectives on assurance programs collected for the LWEP. The knowledge gathered through this project provides a resource to inform Alberta's ongoing understanding, activity and progress in this critical area.



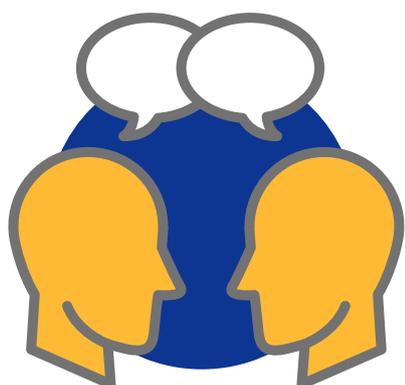
Assurance programs were referred to as tools and activities to promote cooperation with standards such as Animal Care Assessment Programs.

Approximately a third of individual respondents indicated that they participated in an assurance program.

Most survey respondents ranked assurance programs as being useful to Alberta's livestock industry.



Focus group participants felt that industry-driven programs are well designed and on the right track as they continue to develop. They acknowledged that every livestock species sector is different and needs to design programs that work best for their specific industry.



It was felt that it is not enough for the industry to say it is doing the right thing. It must also “prove it,” and that is why assurance programs are needed. Assurance programs bring consistency and standardization that is so valuable to both the management and brand of the industry. They stressed that assurance programs put the sectors into a better position to speak with a united voice.

However, these programs come with a cost, and they wondered who should pay. Some participants felt that payback comes in many ways starting with improving social license and sustainability in animal agriculture.

Participants stressed that getting all producers on board in some sectors is a challenge but felt that as a new generation comes in, adoption will improve. Some felt that sectors making assurance programs mandatory were counterproductive. They believed that it is more important for producers to see the value of these programs and to adopt them voluntarily.

