



2015 Confined Feeding Operations Survey

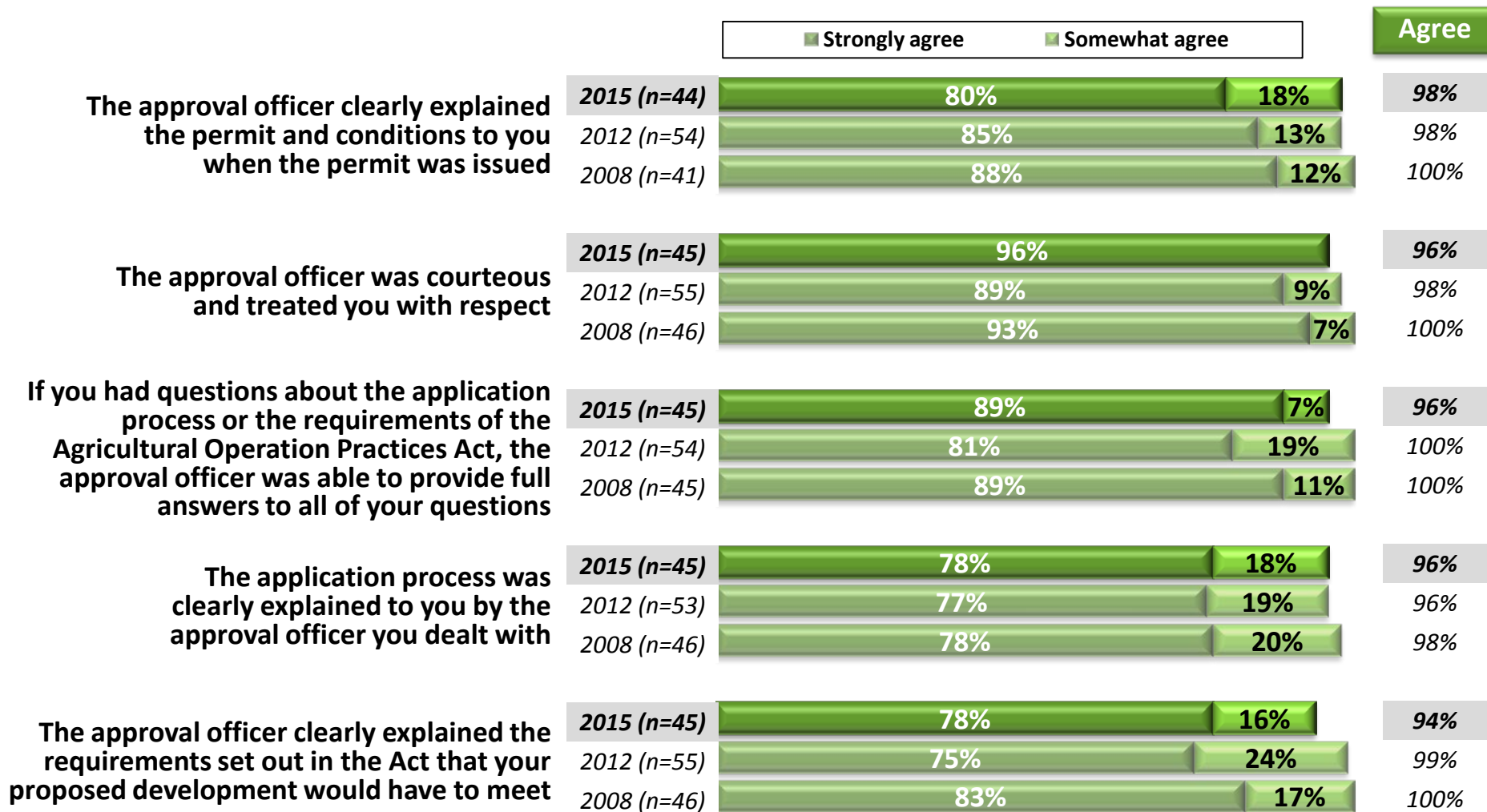
Final Report



- ❖ In 2008 and 2012, the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) commissioned Ipsos Reid to conduct research to help determine how well it is dealing with its clients under the Agricultural Operation Practices Act.
- ❖ NRCB wished to replicate the research in 2015 in order to gain feedback from recent clients and track changes from the past surveys.
 - Ipsos Reid conducted telephone interviews with applicants, operators with a compliance issue and complainants involved with the NRCB in 2014, using lists provided by the NRCB.
- ❖ A total of 158 interviews were conducted between January 23rd and February 7th, 2015.
 - The average interview was five minutes in length.
- ❖ The sample size per segment and associated margins of error (taking into account the finite populations) are as follows:
 - Applicants: n=45, ± 9.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.
 - Operators complained about: n=51, ± 10.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.
 - Complainants: n=62, ± 8.3 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

NRCB Approval Process

There is near unanimous consensus among applicants that NRCB approval officers provide a high level of service



Base: Applicants (excluding Don't Know and Not Applicable)

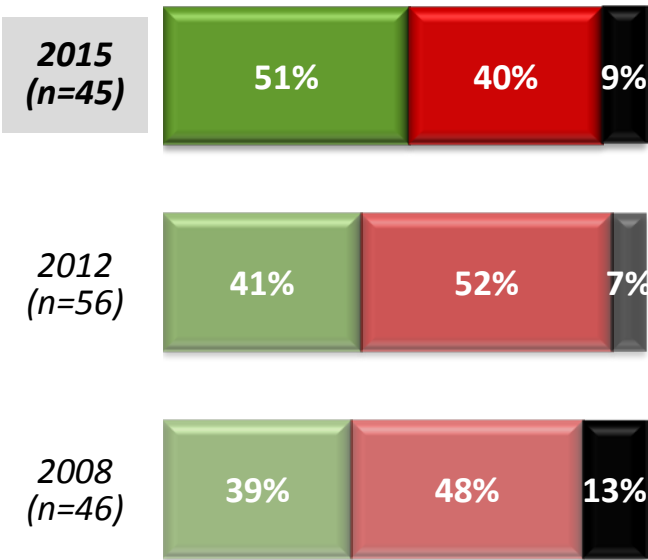
Q1. Thinking about your most recent application for a permit, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements. Would you say you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree?

Approval officers also receive strong marks for their assistance when statements of concern were received

Handling of Statements of Concern

Received Statements of Concern

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know



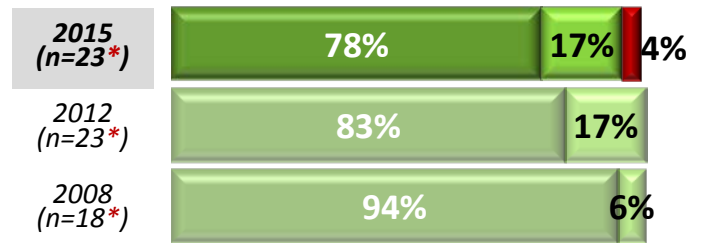
Base: Applicants

Q2. Were statements of concern – that is, letters of opposition – received when notice of your application was published?

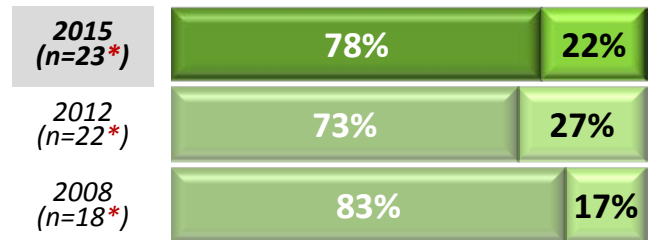
One should note that a disagree response appears for the first time in 2015. This represents one (1) respondent who “somewhat disagreed.” That being said, fewer respondents “strongly agreed” that approval officers brought their attention to issues in the statements of concern that the respondent should be aware of.

■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Disagree

The approval officer brought to your attention issues in the statements of concern that he or she felt you should be aware of



The approval officer clearly explained that you had the option of responding or not responding to the statements of concern

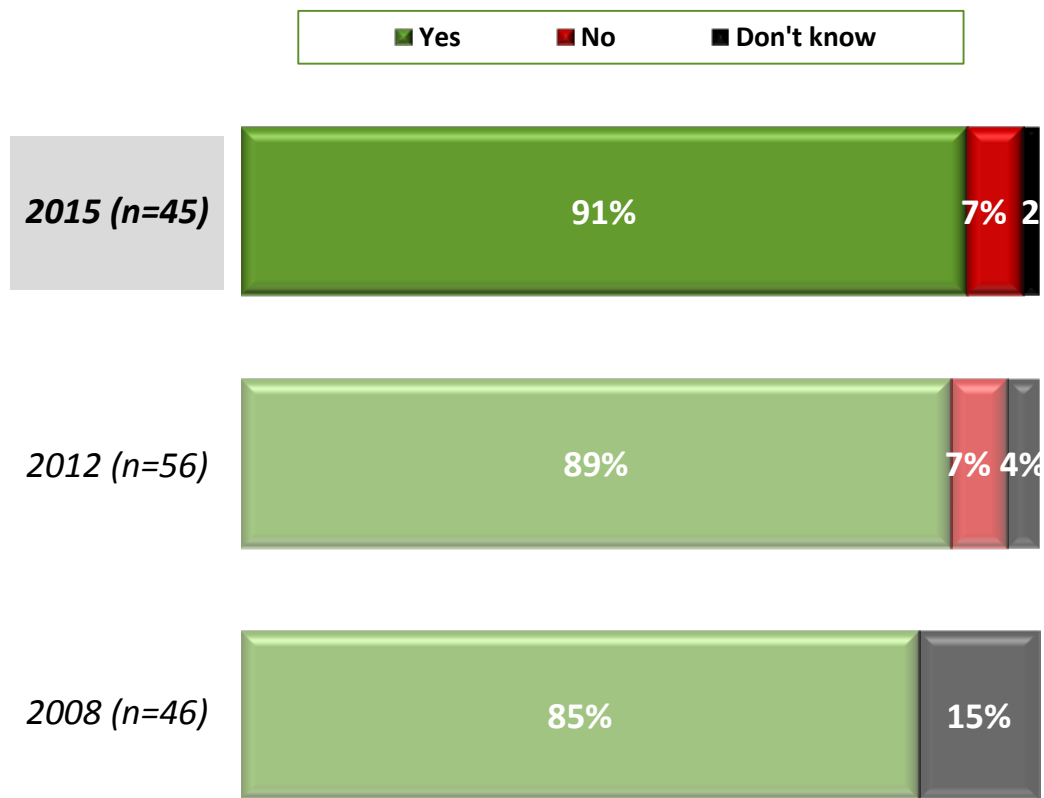


Base: Applicants who received a statement of concern (excluding Don't Know)

***Caution: Very small base size**

Q3. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements. Would you say you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree?

There is strong agreement that it was helpful to have all information related to their application in one binder



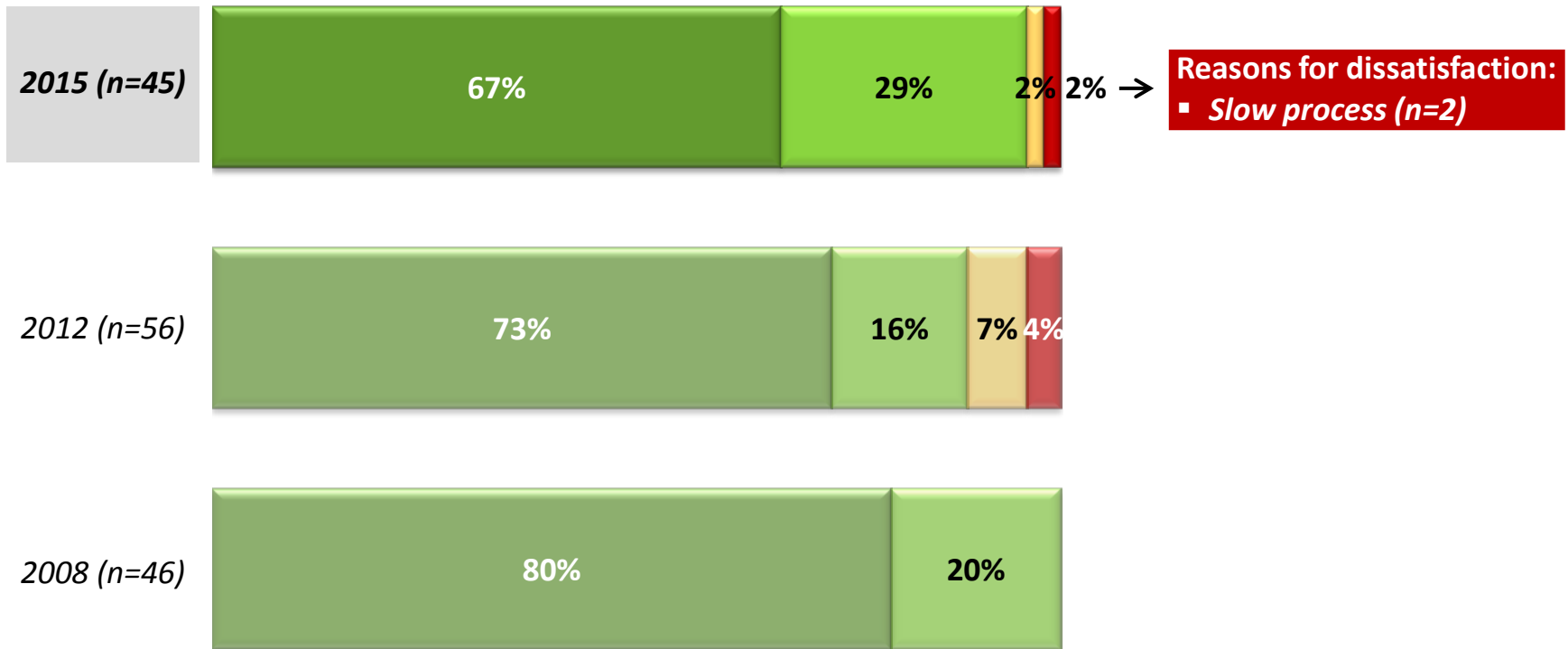
Base: Applicants

Q4. At the end of the process, you were provided with a binder that contained your permit, copies of your application, and other information. Did you find it helpful to have all of the information in one binder?

The majority of applicants continue to be satisfied with their overall experience

Dissatisfaction has decreased significantly from 11% in 2012 to 4% in 2015. However, while not statistically significant, "very satisfied" ratings are trending downwards.

■ Very satisfied
 ■ Somewhat satisfied
 ■ Somewhat dissatisfied
 ■ Very dissatisfied



Base: Applicants

Q5. Thinking about your overall experience with the NRCB during the approval process for your application, how satisfied were you, overall, with the service you received from the NRCB? Would you say very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?

The primary barrier to applying for a permit is the perception that the process is too slow.

Q6A. Based on what you have experienced or heard from others, are there any barriers for operators to apply for a permit, or any particular challenges with the application process?

Base: Applicants (n=45)

Slow process/takes too long (n=5)

Staff experience/knowledge (n=2)

MDS protocol – need pre-prepared waiver forms (n=1)

Making sure everything is in place/done right (n=1)

Manure storage restrictions (n=1)

Other (n=1)

No response (n=35)

A number of applicants offered suggestions for improving the application process, with speeding it up being the most frequent request

Q7. Do you have any suggestions for improving the application process itself – not legislated requirements – for a permit under the Agricultural Operation Practices Act?

Base: Applicants (n=45)

Speed up the permitting process (n=5)

Be more flexible (n=3)

One-window approach for all provincial permits (n=2)

Staff experience/ability to communicate (n=1)

More communication for neighbours (n=1)

Simpler, less complex process (n=1)

No suggestions (n=32)



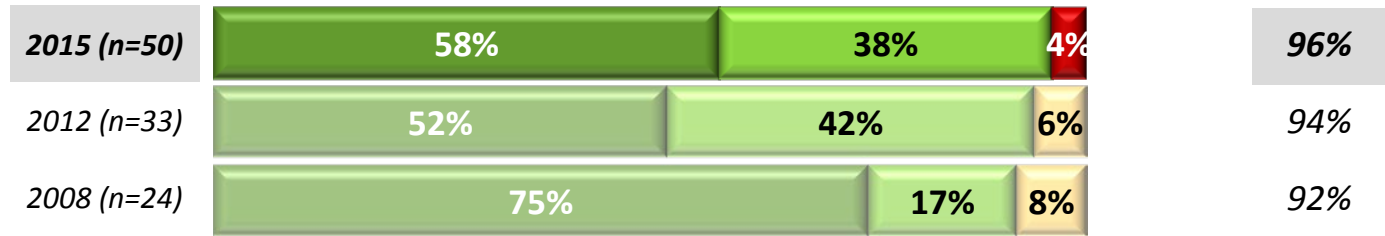
NRCB Compliance Process

More than nine-in-ten operators agree that the steps required to come into compliance and the reasons for the visit were clearly explained, and that the NRCB inspector was courteous

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

Agree

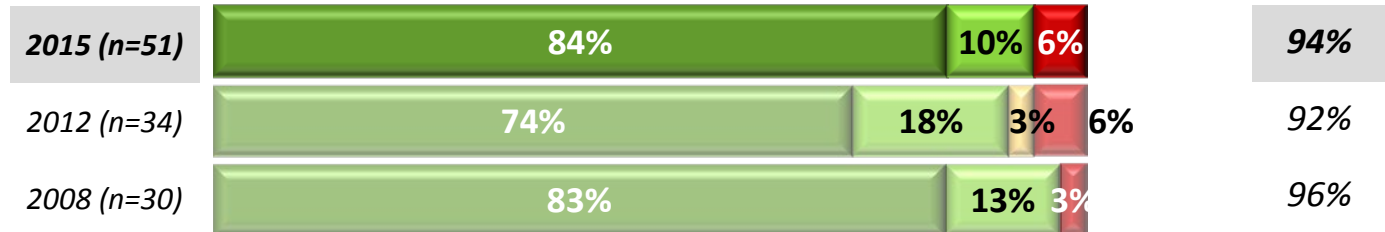
The steps required to come into compliance were clearly explained to you



The reasons for the inspector's visit were clearly explained to you



The inspector was courteous and treated you with respect



Base: Operators with compliance issues (excluding Don't Know and Not Applicable)

Q10. Thinking about your most recent dealings with an inspector from the NRCB, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements. Would you say you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree?

Operators provided a variety of suggestions for improving communications or the compliance process

Q11. Keeping in mind the NRCB cannot change the regulations or legislation, do you have any suggestions for improving communications or the process when dealing with a compliance issue?

Base: Operators with compliance issues (n=46)

Improve use of resources/don't waste time on unfounded complaints (n=5)

Improve rules/regulations; more supportive for producers (n=4)

Identify complainant (n=3)

More transparency/education for public (n=2)

Improve consistency of complaint response/timeliness (n=1)

Need reasonable response to the issue (n=1)

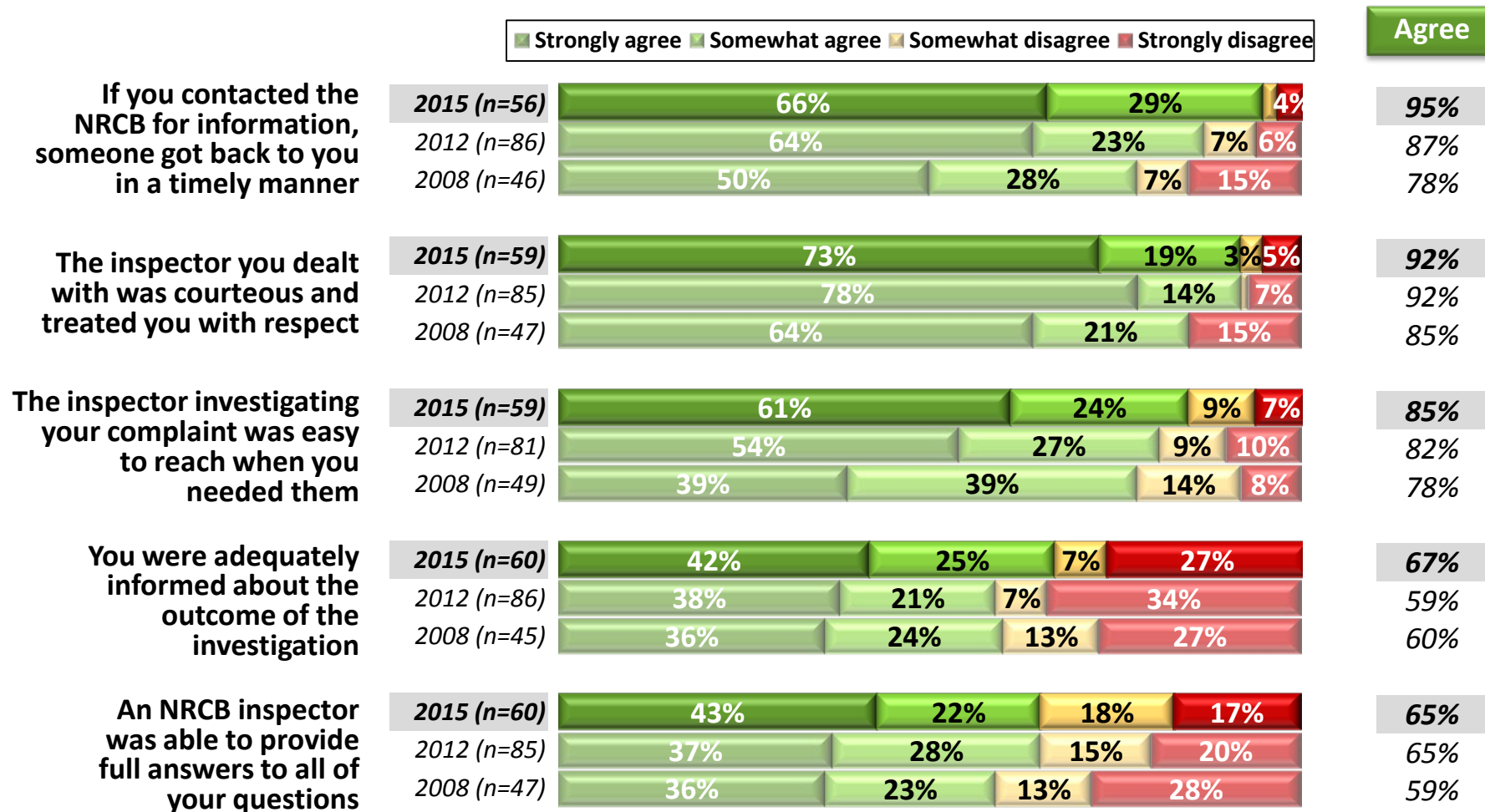
More considerate of farm bio-security (n=1)

No suggestions/no issues (n=31)

NRCB Complaint Process

Timeliness of response and being treated with courtesy and respect receive high marks, while ease of reaching inspectors sees positive gains

Agreement that NRCB 'got back to you in a timely manner' is up a significant 17 percentage points from 2008 (95% in 2015 vs. 78% in 2008), while 'strongly agree' ratings regarding the ease of reaching inspectors are up 22 percentage points (39% in 2008 vs. 61% in 2015)



Base: Complainants (excluding Don't Know and Not Applicable)

Q12. Thinking about the most recent time you registered a complaint, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements. If the statement does not apply to you, please say so. Would you say you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree?

A wide array of suggestions were given for improving communications or processes, though roughly half of complainants offered no comments

Q13. Keeping in mind the NRCB cannot change the regulations or legislation, do you have any suggestions for improving communications or processes when dealing with a complaint?

Base: Complainants (n=62)

Take complaints seriously (n=5)

Improve follow up communication with complainant (n=5)

Improve how to contact the NRCB/how to file a complaint (n=4)

Improve available information/public communication (n=4)

Strengthen enforcement options/fines (n=3)

Educate operators (n=3)

Improve enforcement (n=2)

Improve timeliness of response (n=2)

Improve transparency (n=1)

Tougher rules for grandfathered operations (n=1)

Communicate with Ag Fieldmen (n=1)

Ability to fine (n=1)

No suggestions (n=29)

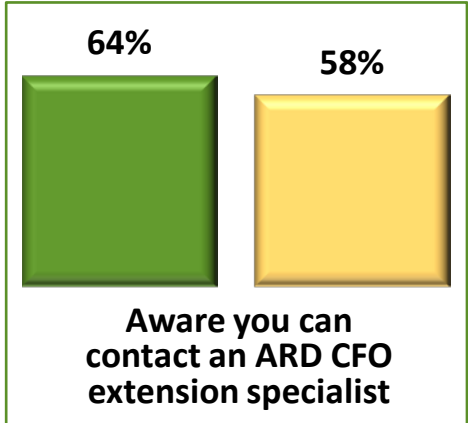
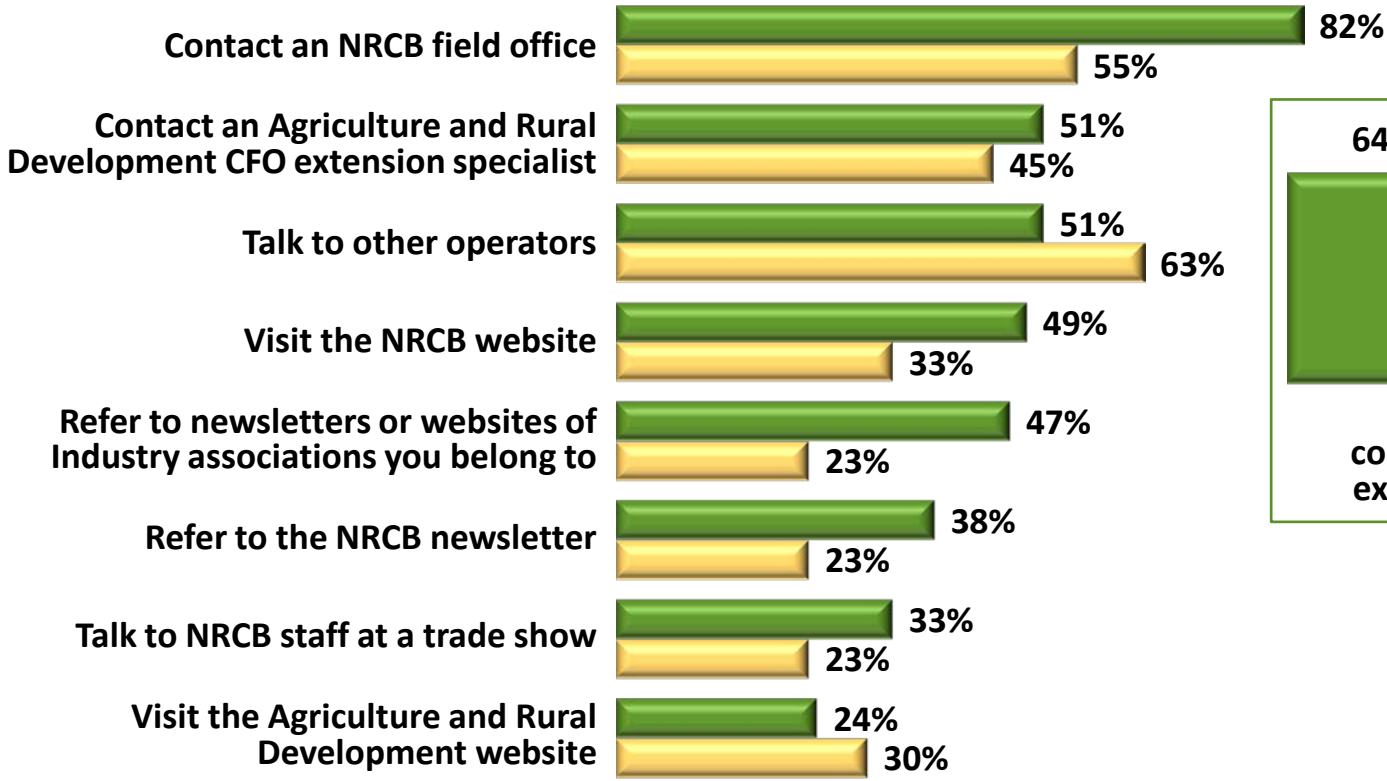


Information Sources

Contacting an NRCB field office is the most frequently used source of information among applicants, while talking to other operators is common among operators with a compliance issue

% Yes

■ Applicants (n=45)
 ■ Operators with a compliance issue (n=40)



Other

- Consult the local county office/staff (n=5)
- Consult the agriculture specialists (n=3)
- Consult the engineers (n=2)

Q8A/11A. Thinking about the last time you needed information about the act or regulations, or how to apply for a permit, did you...?
 Q8B/11B. If you need assistance understanding the act or completing an application, are you aware that in addition to contacting the NRCB, you can contact an Agriculture and Rural Development CFO extension specialist for help?

Ability to find helpful information on the NRCB website and knowledge of an after hours number are areas for improvement

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Somewhat agree
 ■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

Agree

I knew how to get hold of an NRCB field office to register a complaint
(n=57, 9% DK/NA)



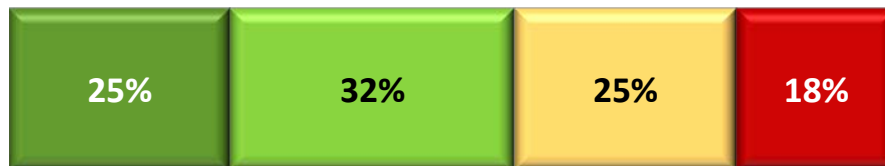
84%

I knew that the NRCB was the appropriate agency to contact
(n=56, 10% DK/NA)



77%

I was able to find helpful information on the NRCB website
(n=28, 55% DK/NA)*



57%

I knew what number to call after hours
(n=52, 16% DK/NA)



46%

**Caution: Very small base size*

Base: Complainants (excluding Don't Know and Not Applicable)

Q12. Thinking about the most recent time you registered a complaint, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements. If the statement does not apply to you, please say so. Would you say you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree?



CONTACT INFORMATION

Sheela Das

Director

Ipsos Reid Public Affairs

700 6th Avenue SW, Suite 1950
Calgary, AB, Canada T2P 0T8

Phone: 587.952.4874

email: sheela.das@ipsos.com