

Agricultural Estate & Succession Planning Survey Report

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Introduction

Agricultural Estate & Succession Planning is the passing of ownership of a farm to the next generation to ensure the estate is continued from one generation to another. This voluntary online survey asks a series of questions related to succession and estate planning.

Purpose: To gather information on the estate planning needs of Maryland agricultural producers and identify gaps of knowledge, in order to develop and improve workshops and educational resources in the future

Procedure

- Time:** 30-45 minutes to complete
Participants: 129 participants total
Guidelines: ≥ 18 years of age to participate in study
- We developed survey questions that were separated into **5** categories:
 - Section 1 ~ Respondent Demographics** ■ 10 questions
 - Section 2 ~ Operation Demographics** ■ 11 questions
 - Section 3 ~ Financial Demographics** ■ 9 questions
 - Section 4 ~ Succession Planning** ■ 9 questions
 - Section 5 ~ Estate Planning** ■ 14 questions
 - We developed the survey through Qualtrics and distributed it to participants in early March
 - We collected data from participants and provided gift cards to select participants in a raffle.

Results & Data

Age: A majority of participants who were surveyed (34.5%; n=41) were 30-35 years old.
Sex: A majority of participants who were surveyed (59.3%; n=70) were male.
Race: A majority of participants who were surveyed (85.7%; n=102) were white.
Children: A majority of participants (36%; n=41) have two children, with an almost equal number of participants having all their children directly engaged in farm operations (36.8%; n=35) or employed off-farm (37.9%; n=36).
Succession planning: A majority of participants (68.8% ; n=53) have a farm successor and succession plan (64.9%; n=50). 73.3% (n=55) chose a blood relative, with 57.9% (n=44) actively involved. Obstacles for those without a plan: lack of clear successor (29.4%; n=32), feeling young and healthy, and uncertainty about starting the process.

Discussion

The survey highlighted farm owners' concerns about estate and succession planning and identified knowledge gaps. Owners expressed a need for more information to overcome obstacles.

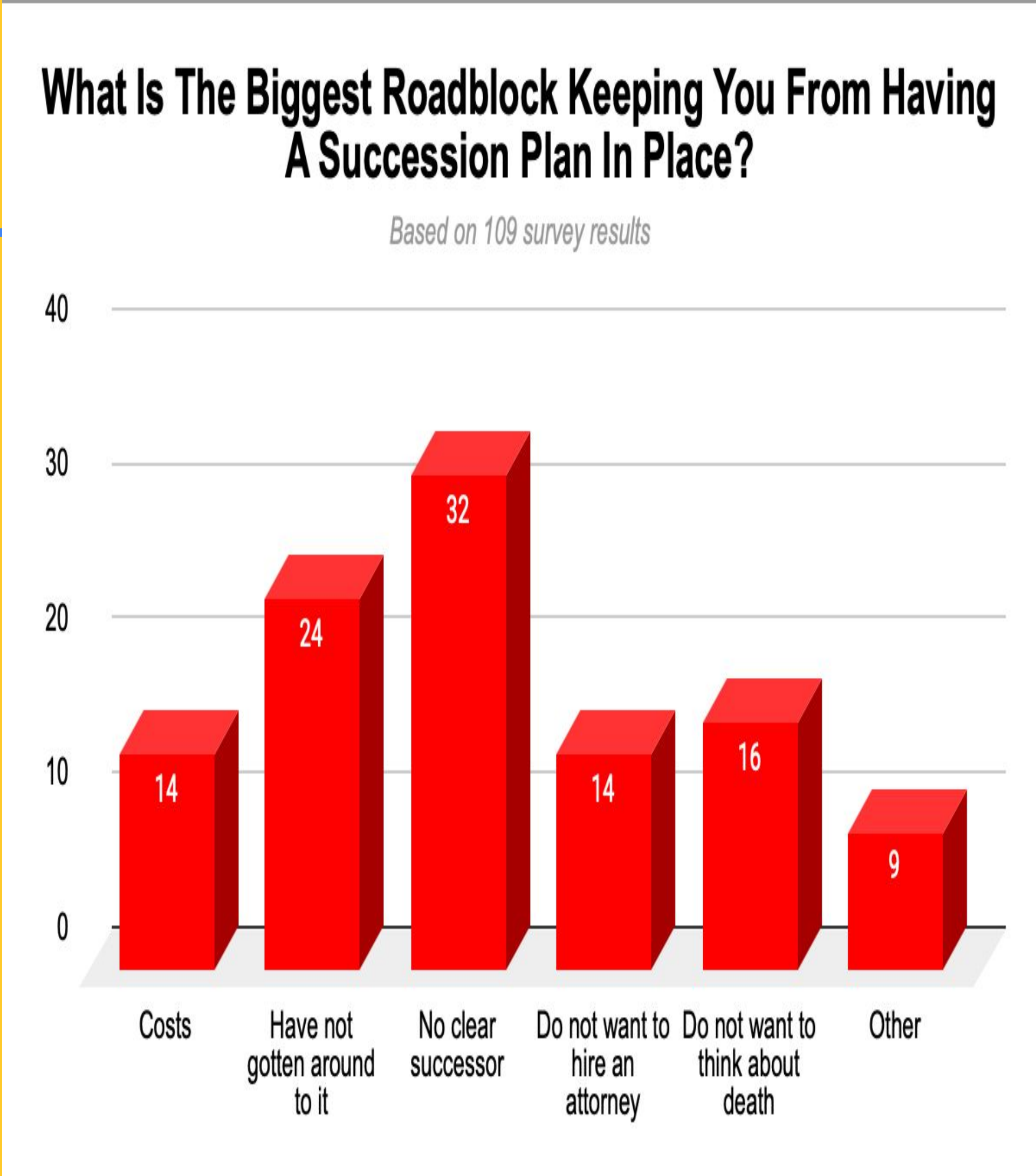
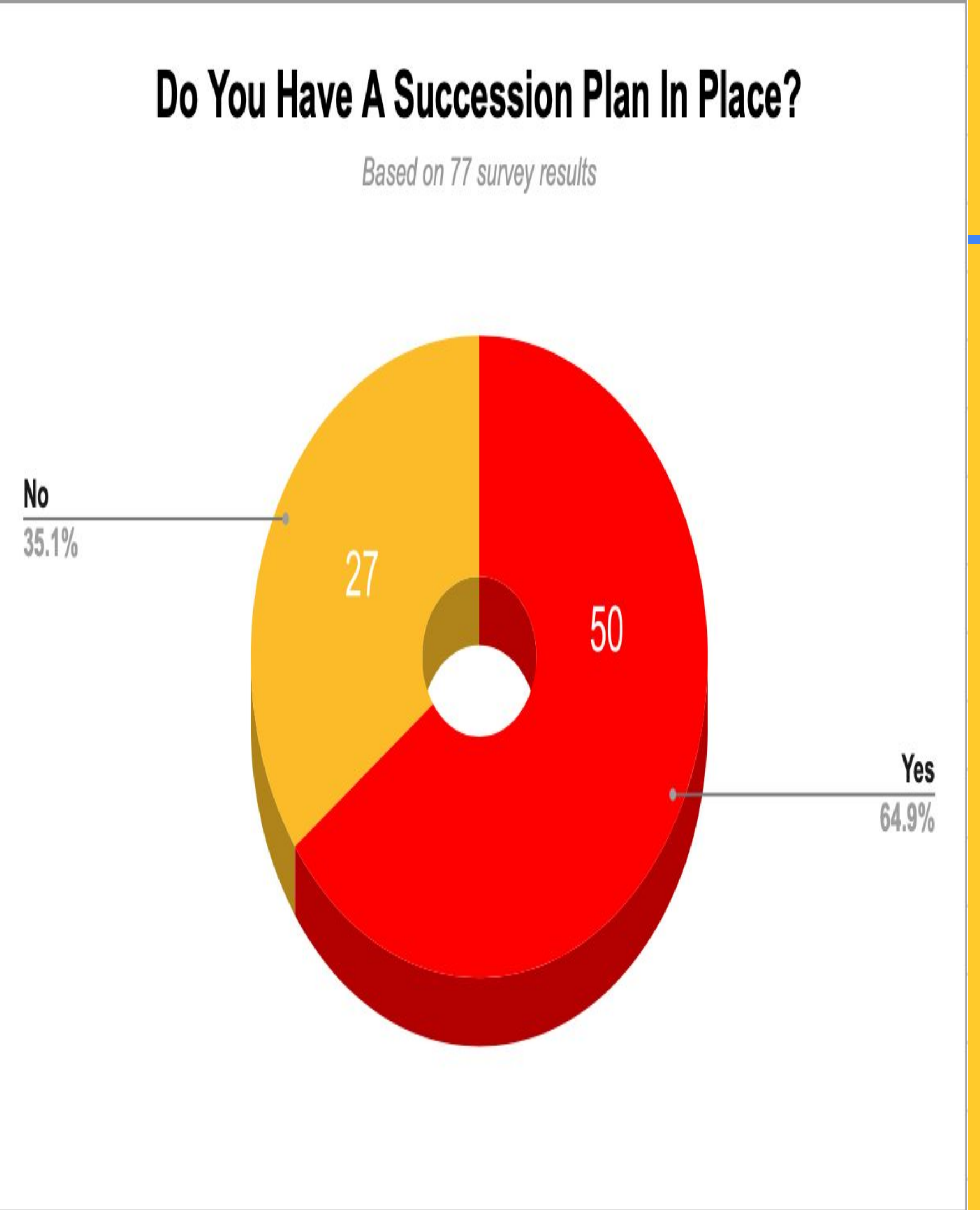
Our Determination: Tools like fact sheets, seminars, or programs should be developed to enhance their chances of success.



Conclusion

While participants acknowledged the importance of estate and succession planning, there is room for improvement. Many farmers delay planning until older or when an heir is chosen, assuming their health will suffice. However, challenges and concerns emerge during plan development and future farm management.

Therefore, educating owners about early succession planning methods is crucial to ensure a smooth transition of the estate to the next generation.



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