

*Results from a survey on a*  
**New Food System and  
Agriculture  
Development Journal**

Duncan Hilchey  
duncan@newleafsite.com  
607.342.0259  
August 2009



Copyright © 2009 by New Leaf Associates, Inc. All rights reserved.

# Methodology

- We assembled a database of organizational and agency reps, scholars, students, farmers, and others from around the world.
- We sent them links to two on-line surveys (one long and one short) and asked them to participate.\*
- We have received about 1,200 responses as of August 2009.
- The results which follow include only the responses to the long survey.



\* The survey links are [www.surveymonkey.com/journalsurvey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/journalsurvey) and [www.surveymonkey.com/journalsurveysshort](http://www.surveymonkey.com/journalsurveysshort).

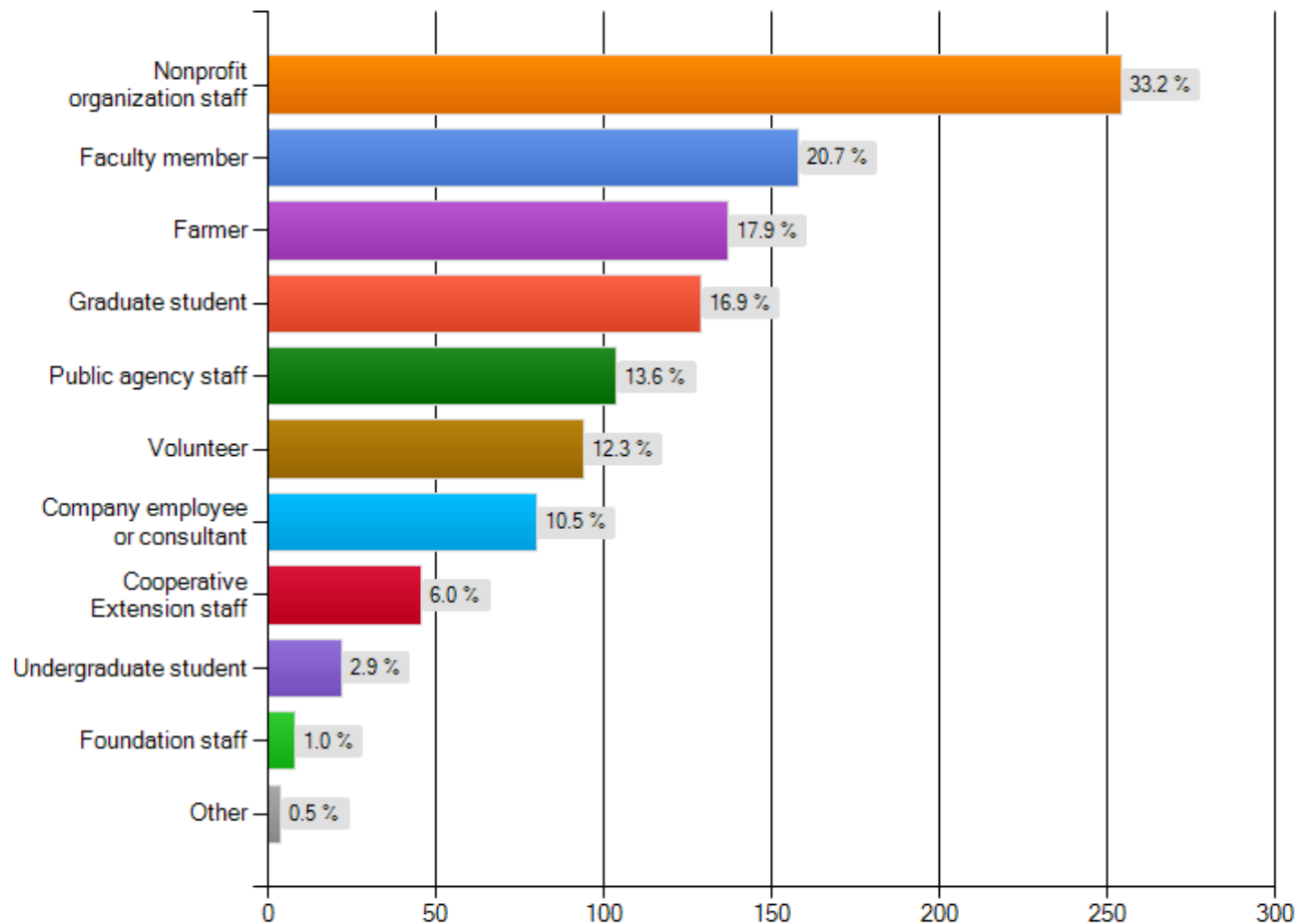
# Key Results



# Survey Respondents

The survey attracted a wide variety of respondents. One third reported being nonprofit organization staff. The next four largest respondent groups included college faculty, farmers, graduate students, and public agency staff.

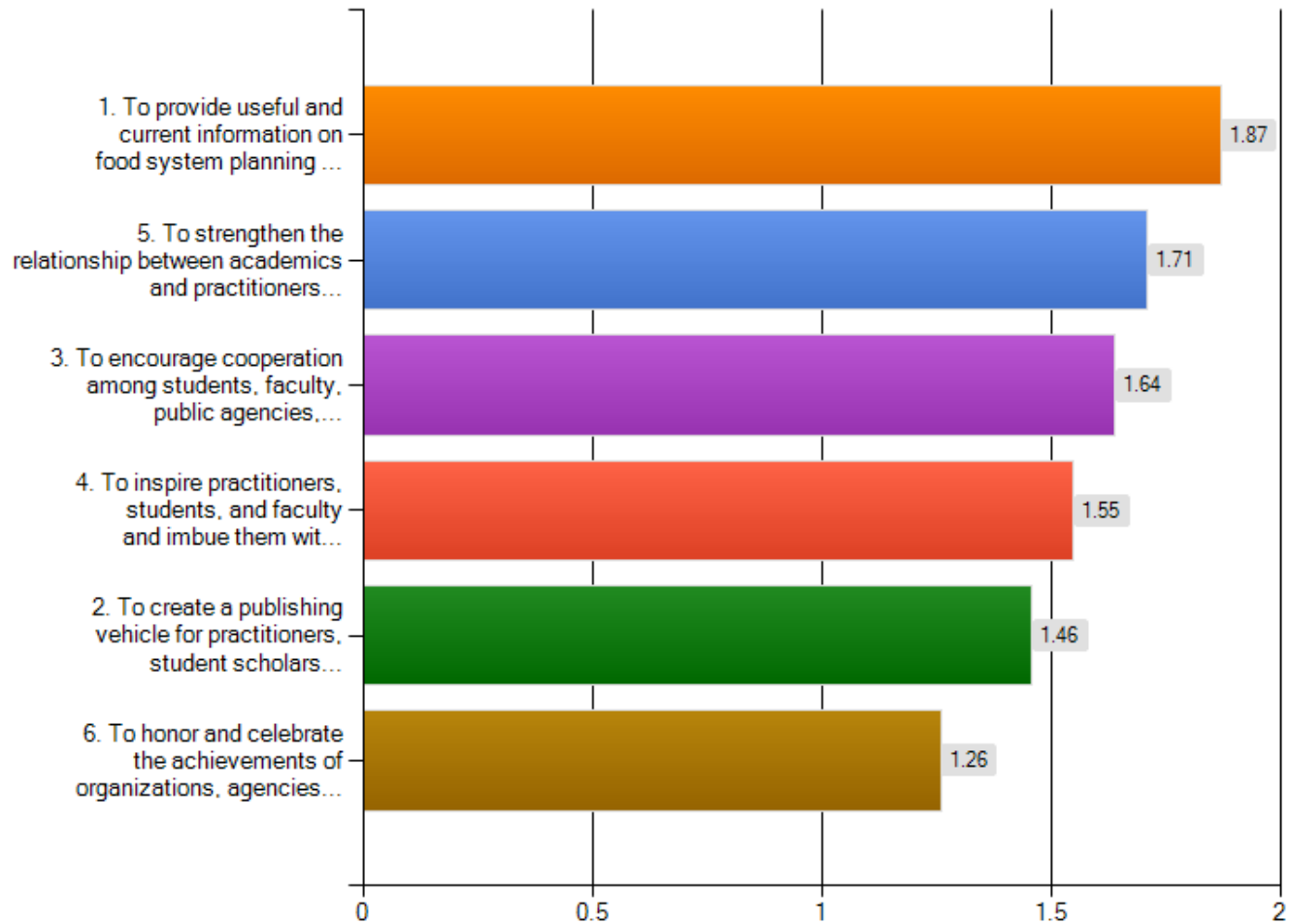
Which best describes your position or affiliation?



# Mission

All the statements related to the proposed mission of the journal received strong rating.

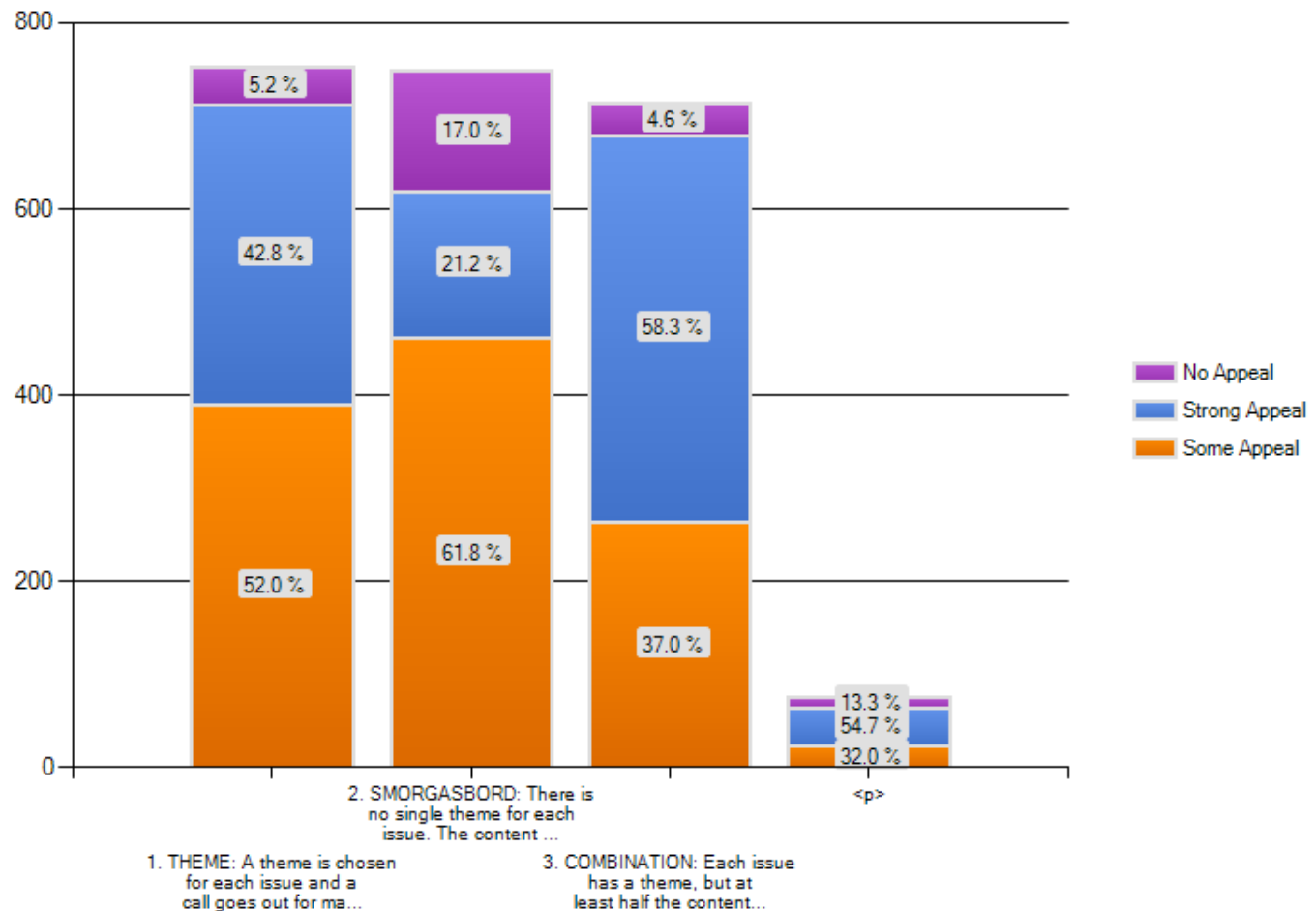
Please rate the importance of each of these objectives of a new journal.



# Publishing Approaches

The great diversity of respondents was reflected in their attraction to three proposed approaches to the journal. Over 58% found a journal with half theme content and half a variety strongly appealing.

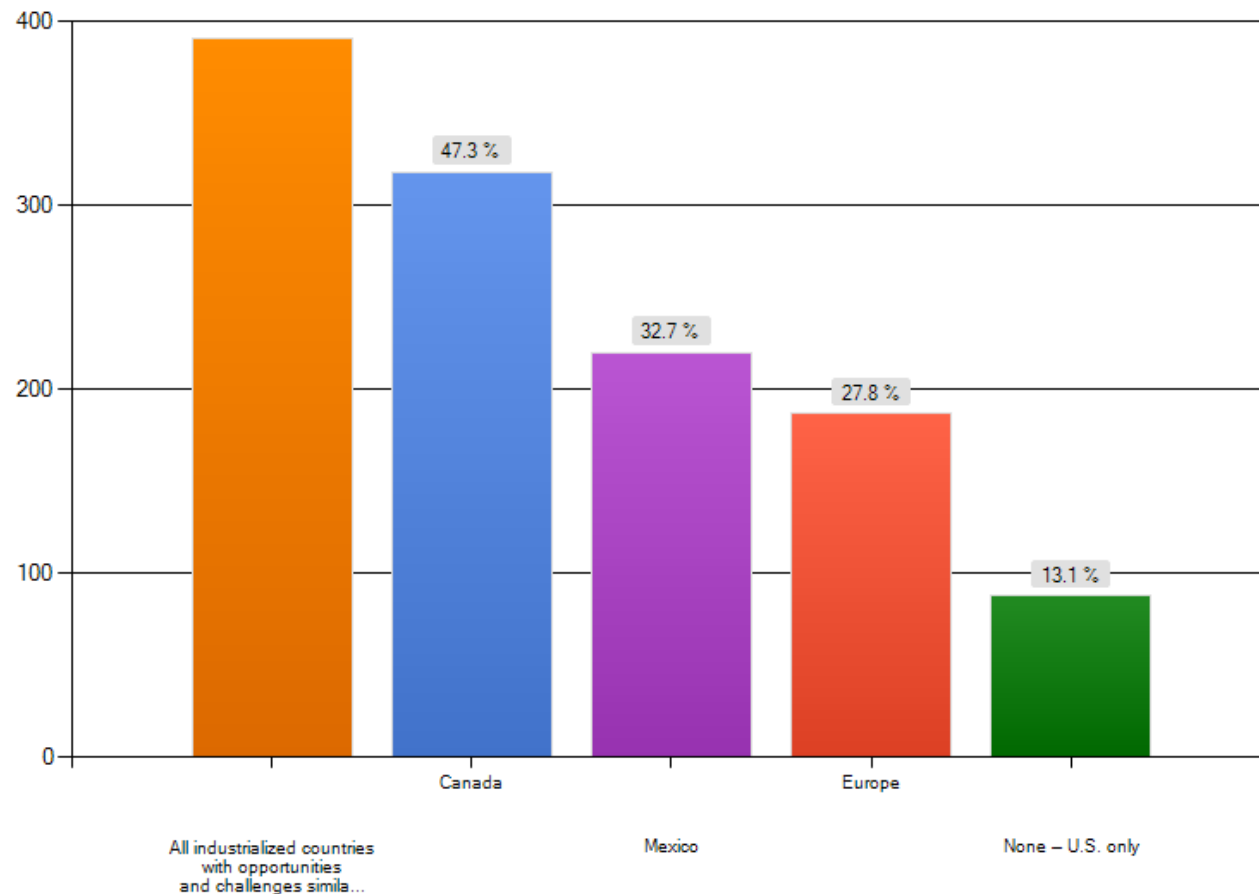
Given the above parameters, please rate the appeal of each of the following approaches



# Geography

The majority of respondents reported an interest in having the journal cover all industrial countries with similar opportunities and challenges as the United States. However, there was a significant number who suggested that “nonindustrial” countries be included, since they are on the forefront of dealing with challenging food and agricultural issues.

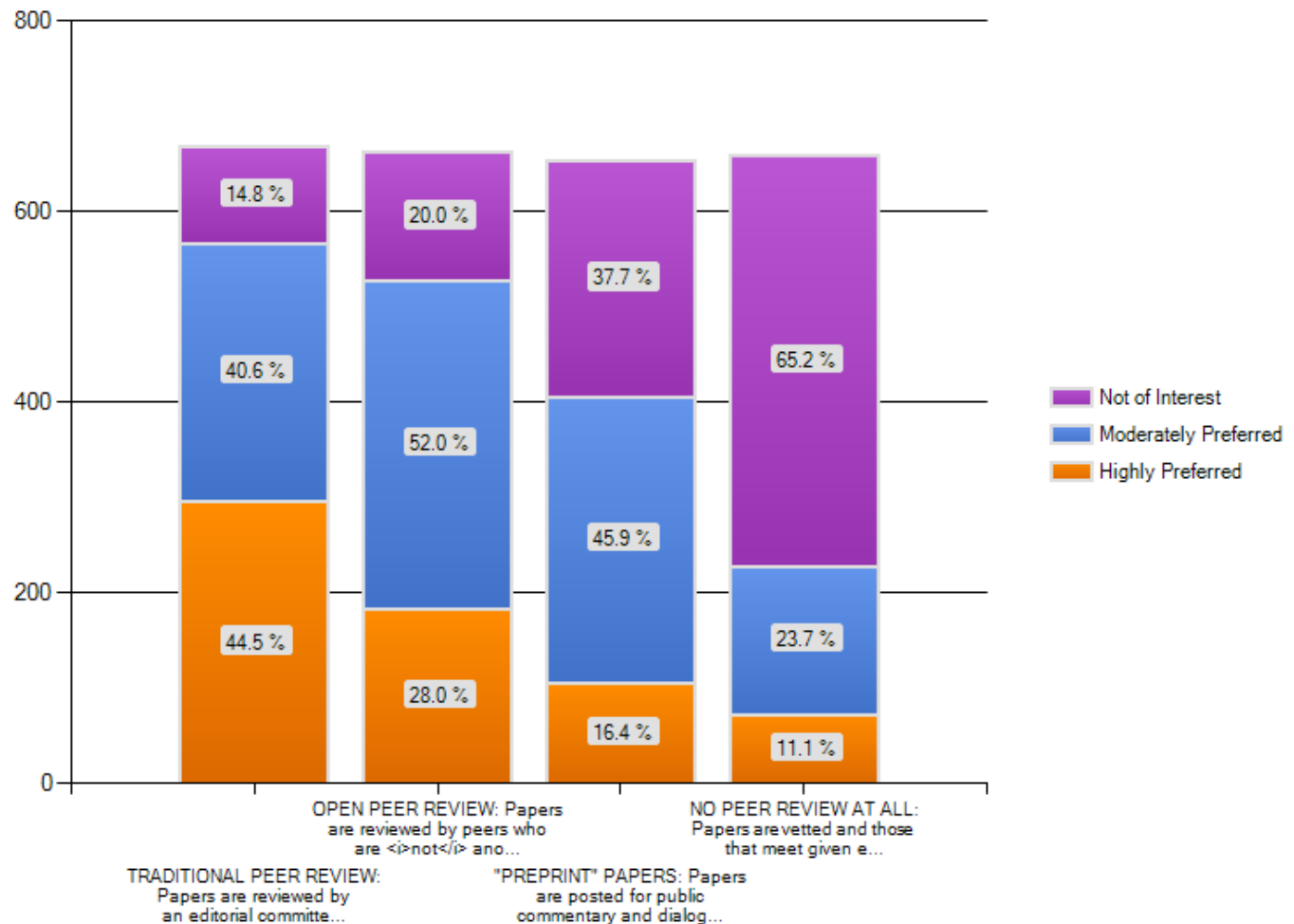
In addition to the United States, what other regions would you like the journal to cover?



# Peer Review

Traditional peer review was significantly preferred over other peer review models, and significantly preferred over no peer review at all.

Indicate your level of interest in each type of peer review process

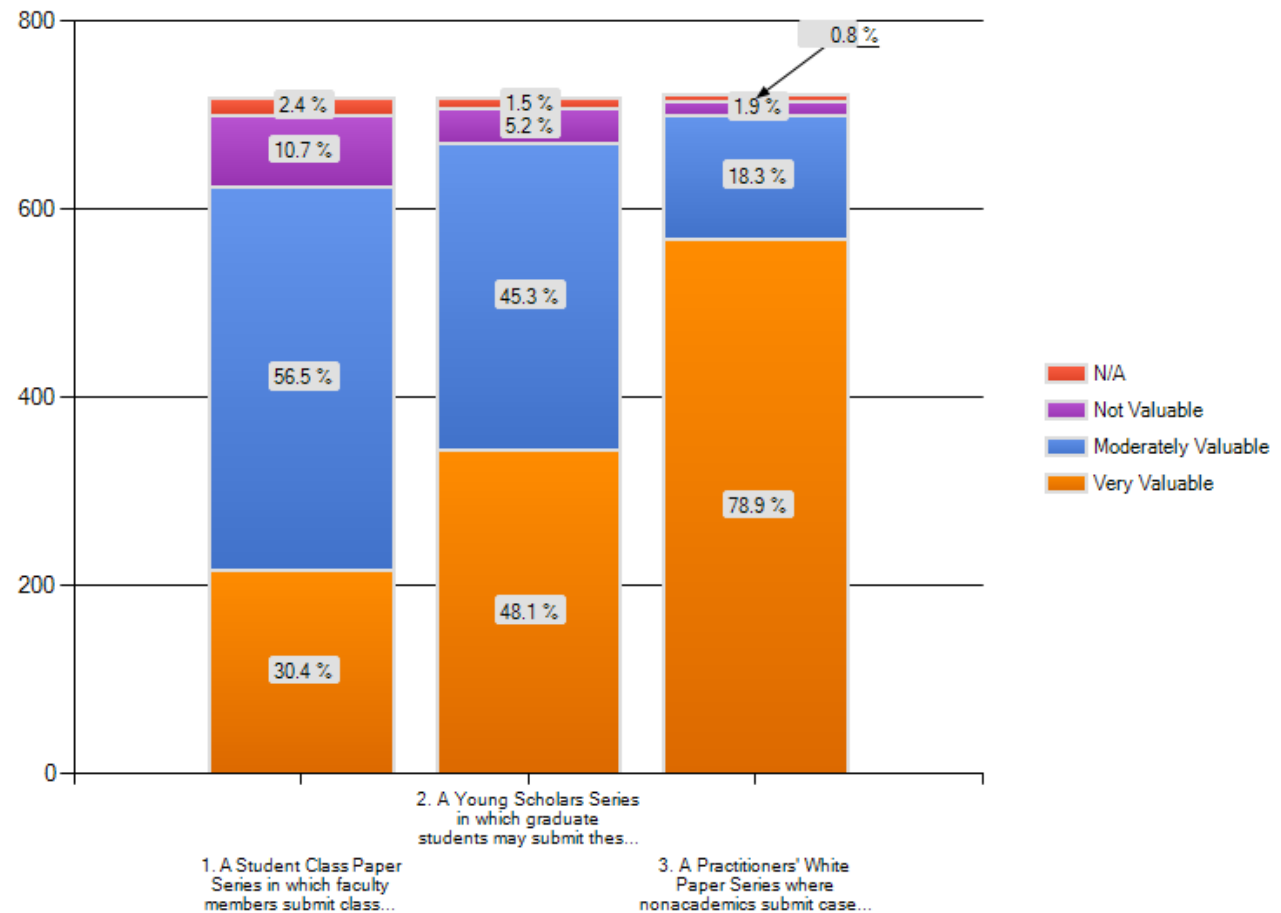




# Other Publications

Respondents find a practitioners white paper series more valuable than either a young scholars series, or a student class papers series. Still, nearly half chose the young scholars series as being very valuable, and over 85% even thought student class papers were at least moderately valuable.

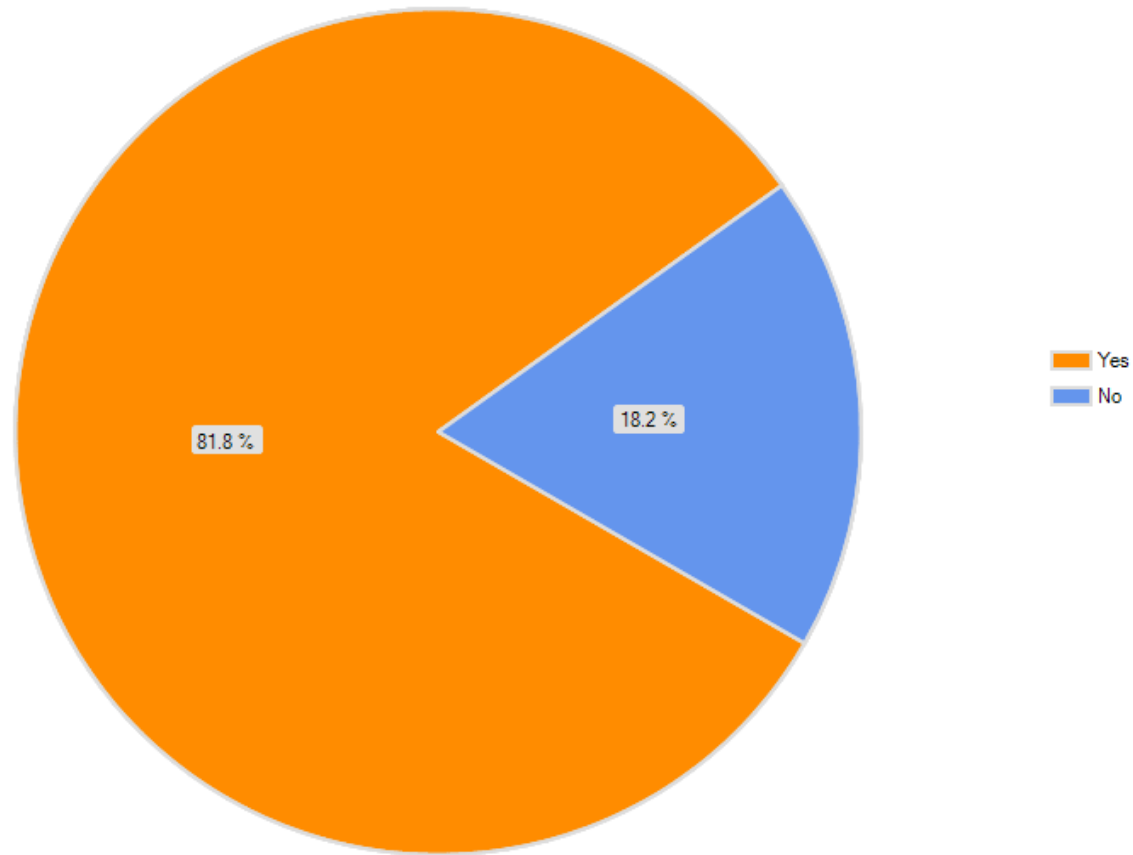
How valuable would you find each of the following?



# Commercial Advertising

More than three-quarters reported that they would accept commercial advertising. However a number offered suggestions on what businesses to allow to advertise and how prominently the ads could be displayed.

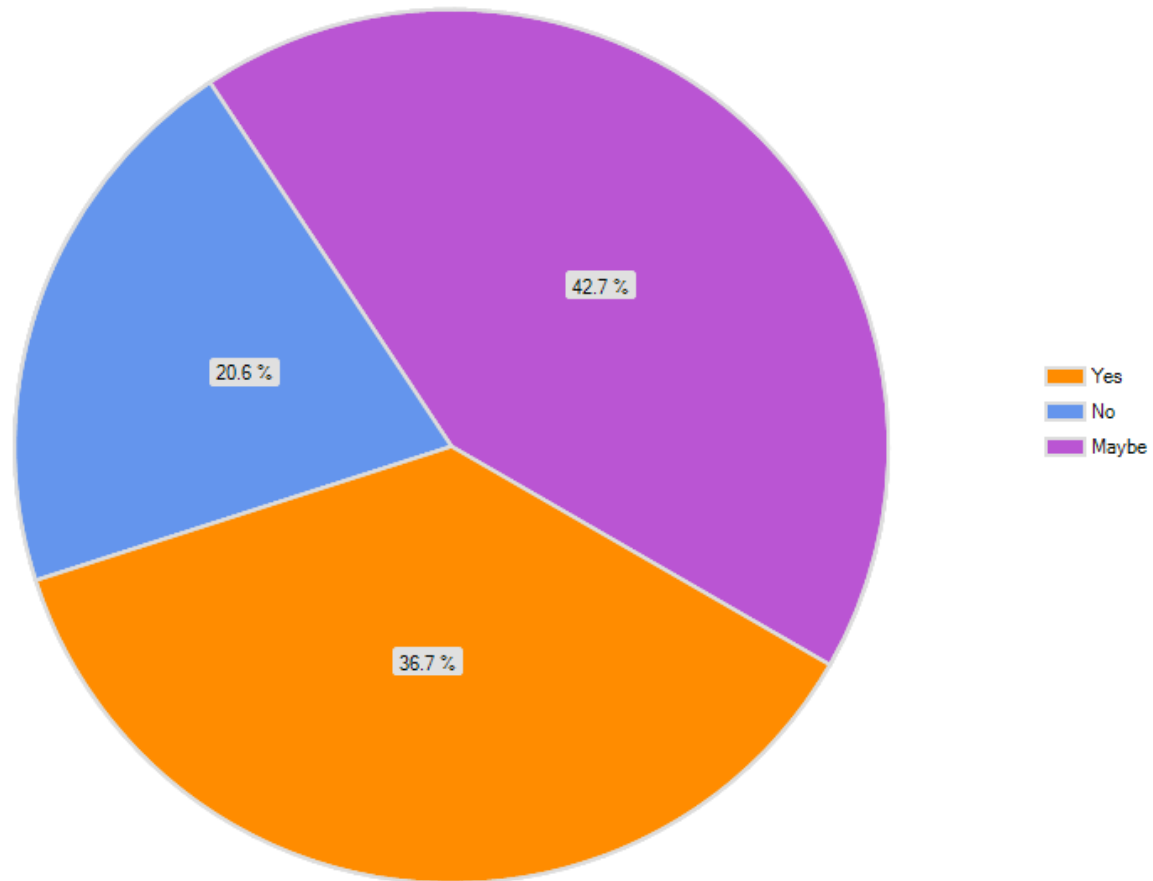
To make the journal more affordable, would you accept commercial advertising on its website?



# Social Networking

The respondents seem to be split on the question of whether the journal's website should offer social networking. Academics generally do not see the value, and many food and agriculture organization respondents feel that social networks already exist or are in the works.

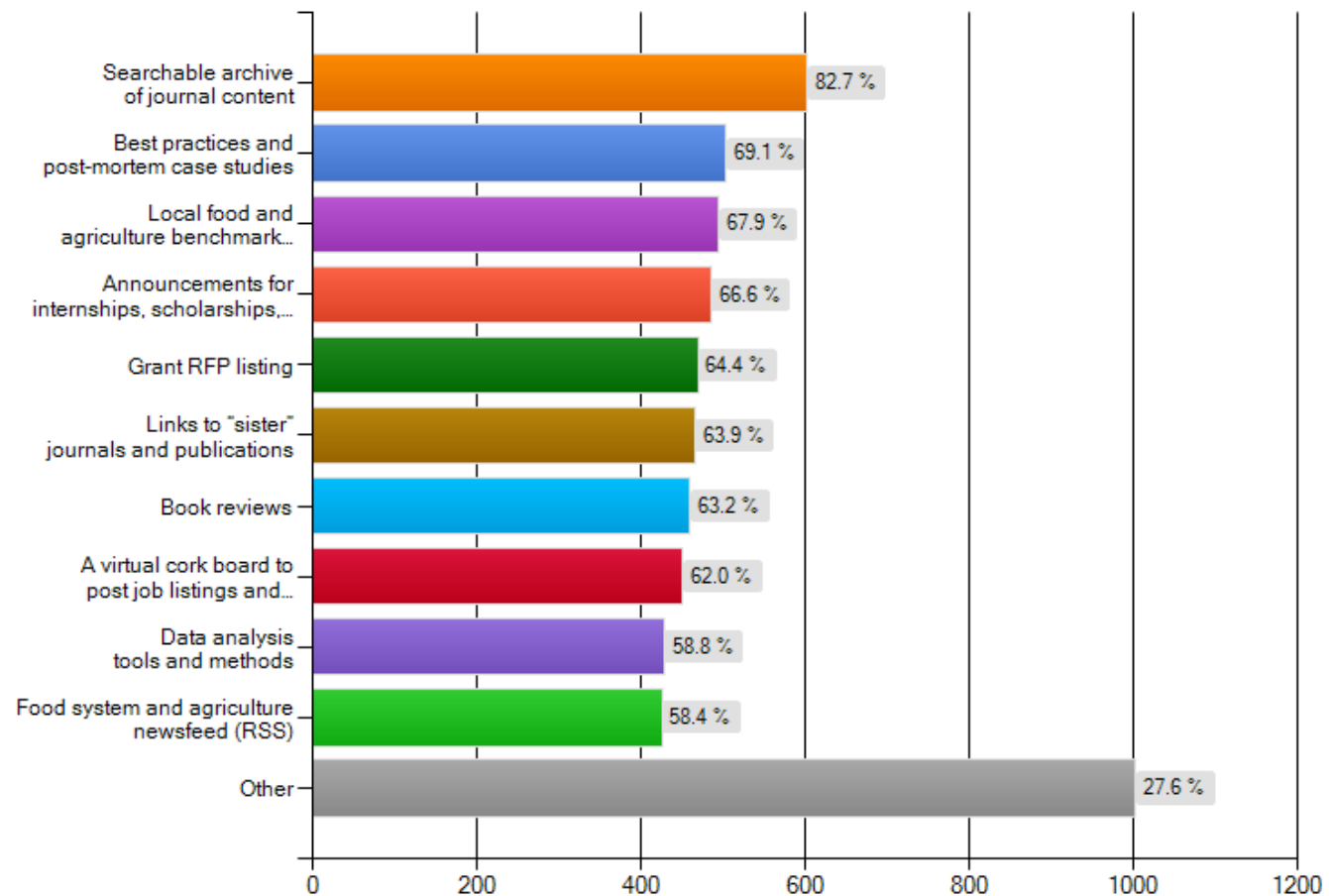
Interest in Social Networking



# Website Features

Naturally, most respondents would like a searchable archive of content. Other features desired by more than 50% of respondents included are shown below.

**A growing number of electronic publications have full-featured websites. Check the boxes of the tools and content you would find most valuable at a journal website.**



# Findings

- Respondents are supportive of a journal that will provide information and foster collaboration between scholars, students and practitioners.
- The respondents lean toward traditional peer review for the journal.
- Other proposed products receive strong support, including a young scholars series and practitioners white papers. There was less support for a student papers series.
- Respondents lean toward a “combination journal” that issues theme calls but also offers articles on a variety of topics in each issue.
- The respondents on the whole indicate an interest in the journal having a western focus. Many of the 193 people who commented on the journal being aimed beyond the U.S. made compelling arguments for including “nonindustrialized” countries.
- Site features most requested were traditional journal value-added features, but also some features which permitted the sharing of information.
- There is some interest in social networking. However, we are most likely to fulfill this need by collaborating with other organizations that support social networking.
- A majority would accept advertising to offset the cost of subscriptions.
- About one quarter would receive their subscription through a library license. One third would pay between \$25–\$49; one third are not sure what they would pay.
- Nearly 100 people are interested in serving on an editorial committee and roughly the same number have content for an upcoming issue.



# Conclusions

- The journal concept has broad support across a very diverse base. This is both a challenge and an opportunity.
- Entertaining the interests of this diverse audience will be challenging, but we are being encouraged to proceed.
- The journal and related publications will need to complement, not compete with, other journals.
- Having multiple products, each targeting a different audience, may be the best approach.

# Crosstab Results



3. Please rate the importance of each of these objectives of a new journal.

		Which best describes your position or affiliation? Check all that apply.					
		Nonprofit organization staff	Public agency staff	Graduate student	Faculty member	Farmer	Response Totals
1. To provide <b>useful and current information</b> on food system planning and ag development.	<i>Not Important</i>	1.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.9% (1)	0.8% (1)	1.8% (2)	
	<i>Somewhat Important</i>	11.9% (25)	10.1% (9)	6.3% (7)	10.2% (13)	14.9% (17)	
	<i>Very Important</i>	<b>87.1%</b> <b>(183)</b>	<b>89.9%</b> <b>(80)</b>	<b>92.9%</b> <b>(104)</b>	<b>89.1%</b> <b>(114)</b>	<b>83.3%</b> <b>(95)</b>	
<i>rating average</i>		1.86 (210)	1.90 (89)	1.92 (112)	1.88 (128)	1.82 (114)	1.87 (547)
2. To create a <b>publishing vehicle</b> for practitioners, student scholars, and other academics.	<i>Not Important</i>	6.2% (13)	3.4% (3)	2.7% (3)	7.9% (10)	8.0% (9)	
	<i>Somewhat Important</i>	<b>47.4%</b> <b>(99)</b>	<b>64.0%</b> <b>(57)</b>	30.4% (34)	29.1% (37)	<b>46.9%</b> <b>(53)</b>	
	<i>Very Important</i>	46.4% (97)	32.6% (29)	<b>67.0%</b> <b>(75)</b>	<b>63.0%</b> <b>(80)</b>	45.1% (51)	
<i>rating average</i>		1.40 (209)	1.29 (89)	1.64 (112)	1.55 (127)	1.37 (113)	1.45 (545)

*continued*



		Nonprofit organization staff	Public agency staff	Graduate student	Faculty member	Farmer	Response Totals
3. To encourage <b>cooperation</b> among students, faculty, public agencies, and community groups.	<b>Not Important</b>	2.9% (6)	3.4% (3)	0.0% (0)	3.9% (5)	5.3% (6)	
	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	26.3% (55)	34.8% (31)	23.2% (26)	39.4% (50)	29.2% (33)	
	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>70.8%</b> <b>(148)</b>	<b>61.8%</b> <b>(55)</b>	<b>76.8%</b> <b>(86)</b>	<b>56.7%</b> <b>(72)</b>	<b>65.5%</b> <b>(74)</b>	
<b>rating average</b>		1.68 (209)	1.58 (89)	1.77 (112)	1.53 (127)	1.60 (113)	1.64 (544)
4. To <b>inspire practitioners, students, and faculty</b> and imbue them with a sense of creative problem-solving.	<b>Not Important</b>	3.4% (7)	7.9% (7)	0.9% (1)	7.1% (9)	6.2% (7)	
	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	38.6% (80)	42.7% (38)	34.8% (39)	35.4% (45)	34.5% (39)	
	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>58.0%</b> <b>(120)</b>	<b>49.4%</b> <b>(44)</b>	<b>64.3%</b> <b>(72)</b>	<b>57.5%</b> <b>(73)</b>	<b>59.3%</b> <b>(67)</b>	
<b>rating average</b>		1.55 (207)	1.42 (89)	1.63 (112)	1.50 (127)	1.53 (113)	1.53 (543)
5. To <b>strengthen the relationship</b> between academics and practitioners, and to promote best practices and professional development.	<b>Not Important</b>	3.8% (8)	3.4% (3)	1.8% (2)	1.6% (2)	6.2% (7)	
	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	28.8% (60)	29.5% (26)	14.4% (16)	18.8% (24)	23.9% (27)	
	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>67.3%</b> <b>(140)</b>	<b>67.0%</b> <b>(59)</b>	<b>83.8%</b> <b>(93)</b>	<b>79.7%</b> <b>(102)</b>	<b>69.9%</b> <b>(79)</b>	






*continued*

		Nonprofit organization staff	Public agency staff	Graduate student	Faculty member	Farmer	Response Totals
6. To honor and celebrate the achievements of organizations, agencies, and young scholars in this field.	<i>Not Important</i>	10.0% (21)	18.0% (16)	6.3% (7)	16.4% (21)	13.2% (15)	
	<i>Somewhat Important</i>	<b>47.8%</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>51.7%</b> <b>(46)</b>	<b>57.1%</b> <b>(64)</b>	<b>53.1%</b> <b>(68)</b>	<b>53.5%</b> <b>(61)</b>	
	<i>Very Important</i>	42.1% (88)	30.3% (27)	36.6% (41)	30.5% (39)	33.3% (38)	






4. Given the above parameters, please rate the appeal of each of the following approaches.

		Nonprofit organization staff	Public agency staff	Graduate student	Faculty member	Farmer	Response Totals
<p>1. <b>Theme:</b> A theme is chosen for each issue and a call goes out for material. Examples include: "alternative supply chain development for small regions"; "linking emergency food assistance programs to farmers"; "innovations in farmland protection"; "the state of the art in urban farming;" or "school-based gardens and nutrition education programs: are they making a difference?"</p>	<b>No Appeal</b>	5.5% (11)	4.6% (4)	2.8% (3)	6.5% (8)	4.6% (5)	
	<b>Some Appeal</b>	<b>51.7%</b> <b>(104)</b>	<b>52.9%</b> <b>(46)</b>	<b>56.1%</b> <b>(60)</b>	44.4% (55)	<b>50.9%</b> <b>(55)</b>	
	<b>Strong Appeal</b>	42.8% (86)	42.5% (37)	41.1% (44)	<b>49.2%</b> <b>(61)</b>	44.4% (48)	
<b>rating average</b>		1.37 (201)	1.38 (87)	1.38 (107)	1.43 (124)	1.40 (108)	1.39 (524)
<p>2. <b>Smorgasbord:</b> There is no single theme for each issue. The content is broad but is organized by general topics (e.g., regional food systems, food security, agriculture economic development, etc.).</p>	<b>No Appeal</b>	15.0% (30)	24.7% (21)	13.1% (14)	11.4% (14)	18.9% (20)	
	<b>Some Appeal</b>	<b>67.0%</b> <b>(134)</b>	<b>51.8%</b> <b>(44)</b>	<b>57.9%</b> <b>(62)</b>	<b>66.7%</b> <b>(82)</b>	<b>60.4%</b> <b>(64)</b>	
	<b>Strong Appeal</b>	18.0% (36)	23.5% (20)	29.0% (31)	22.0% (27)	20.8% (22)	
<b>rating average</b>		1.03 (200)	0.99 (85)	1.16 (107)	1.11 (123)	1.02 (106)	1.06 (520)

continued

		Nonprofit organization staff	Public agency staff	Graduate student	Faculty member	Farmer	Response Totals
3. <b>Combination:</b> Each issue has a theme, but at least half the content is on diverse topics organized by topic.	<b>No Appeal</b>	5.1% (10)	6.0% (5)	5.0% (5)	3.4% (4)	7.6% (8)	
	<b>Some Appeal</b>	29.7% (58)	46.4% (39)	36.6% (37)	40.3% (48)	32.4% (34)	
	<b>Strong Appeal</b>	<b>65.1%</b> <b>(127)</b>	<b>47.6%</b> <b>(40)</b>	<b>58.4%</b> <b>(59)</b>	<b>56.3%</b> <b>(67)</b>	<b>60.0%</b> <b>(63)</b>	
<b>rating average</b>		1.60 (195)	1.42 (84)	1.53 (101)	1.53 (119)	1.52 (105)	1.54 (505)
	<b>No Appeal</b>	23.1% (3)	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	23.1% (3)	12.5% (1)	
	<b>Some Appeal</b>	30.8% (4)	28.6% (2)	<b>45.5%</b> <b>(5)</b>	15.4% (2)	25.0% (2)	
	<b>Strong Appeal</b>	<b>46.2%</b> <b>(6)</b>	<b>71.4%</b> <b>(5)</b>	<b>45.5%</b> <b>(5)</b>	<b>61.5%</b> <b>(8)</b>	<b>62.5%</b> <b>(5)</b>	
<b>rating average</b>		1.23 (13)	1.71 (7)	1.36 (11)	1.38 (13)	1.50 (8)	1.40 (45)
<b>If you have an idea for another approach, please share it.</b>		19 	5 	7 	11 	16 	48
<b>answered question</b>		207	88	109	128	111	536
<b>skipped question</b>							47

7. In addition to the United States, what other regions would you like the journal to cover?






	Which best describes your position or affiliation? Check all that apply.					
	Nonprofit organization staff	Public agency staff	Graduate student	Faculty member	Farmer	Response Totals
Canada	43.6% (79)	44.4% (36)	54.5% (54)	54.5% (61)	45.8% (44)	47.4% (225)
Mexico	30.4% (55)	27.2% (22)	40.4% (40)	39.3% (44)	29.2% (28)	32.0% (152)
Europe	20.4% (37)	25.9% (21)	28.3% (28)	35.7% (40)	24.0% (23)	26.9% (128)
All industrialized countries with opportunities and challenges similar to the U.S.	<b>52.5%</b> <b>(95)</b>	<b>54.3%</b> <b>(44)</b>	<b>61.6%</b> <b>(61)</b>	<b>62.5%</b> <b>(70)</b>	<b>51.0%</b> <b>(49)</b>	<b>56.4%</b> <b>(268)</b>
None — U.S. only	18.2% (33)	14.8% (12)	11.1% (11)	5.4% (6)	17.7% (17)	13.9% (66)
<b>Please share other suggestions or thoughts.</b>	61 	20 	33 	42 	27 	183
<b>answered question</b>	181	81	99	112	96	<b>475</b>

## 8. Indicate your level of interest in each type of peer review process.

		Which best describes your position or affiliation? Check all that apply.					
		Nonprofit organization staff	Public agency staff	Graduate student	Faculty member	Farmer	Response Totals
<b>Traditional peer review:</b> Papers are reviewed by an editorial committee and a pool of <i>anonymous</i> ad hoc reviewers.	<i>Highly Preferred</i>	34.9% (60)	36.7% (29)	<b>50.5%</b> <b>(51)</b>	<b>62.3%</b> <b>(76)</b>	23.6% (21)	
	<i>Moderately Preferred</i>	<b>46.5%</b> <b>(80)</b>	<b>49.4%</b> <b>(39)</b>	44.6% (45)	31.1% (38)	<b>49.4%</b> <b>(44)</b>	
	<i>Not of Interest</i>	18.6% (32)	13.9% (11)	5.0% (5)	6.6% (8)	27.0% (24)	
		172	79	101	122	89	468
<b>Open peer review:</b> Papers are reviewed by peers who are <i>not</i> anonymous and are credited with their contribution to the paper.	<i>Highly Preferred</i>	29.0% (49)	27.2% (22)	31.6% (31)	16.8% (20)	40.0% (34)	
	<i>Moderately Preferred</i>	<b>50.9%</b> <b>(86)</b>	<b>45.7%</b> <b>(37)</b>	<b>51.0%</b> <b>(50)</b>	<b>57.1%</b> <b>(68)</b>	<b>41.2%</b> <b>(35)</b>	
	<i>Not of Interest</i>	20.1% (34)	27.2% (22)	17.3% (17)	26.1% (31)	18.8% (16)	
		169	81	98	119	85	461



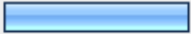

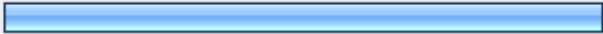
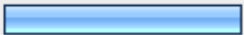
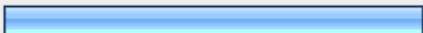
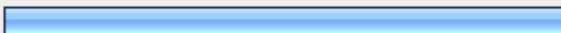
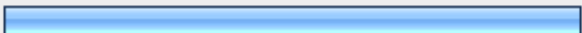
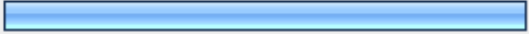
9. How valuable would you find each of the following?							
		Which best describes your position or affiliation? Check all that apply.					
		Nonprofit organization staff	Public agency staff	Graduate student	Faculty member	Farmer	Response Totals
1. <b>A Student Class Paper Series</b> in which faculty members submit class papers with exceptional quality and relevance.	<b>Very Valuable</b>	29.4% (57)	20.2% (17)	40.2% (43)	30.1% (37)	24.2% (24)	
	<b>Moderately Valuable</b>	<b>54.6%</b> <b>(106)</b>	<b>70.2%</b> <b>(59)</b>	<b>49.5%</b> <b>(53)</b>	<b>56.1%</b> <b>(69)</b>	<b>65.7%</b> <b>(65)</b>	
	<b>Not Valuable</b>	12.9% (25)	6.0% (5)	10.3% (11)	11.4% (14)	7.1% (7)	
	<b>N/A</b>	3.1% (6)	3.6% (3)	0.0% (0)	2.4% (3)	3.0% (3)	
		194	84	107	123	99	504
2. <b>A Young Scholars Series</b> in which graduate students may submit theses and dissertations to be shared and open peer reviewed.	<b>Very Valuable</b>	45.4% (88)	32.5% (27)	<b>72.0%</b> <b>(77)</b>	<b>51.6%</b> <b>(64)</b>	42.0% (42)	
	<b>Moderately Valuable</b>	<b>48.5%</b> <b>(94)</b>	<b>60.2%</b> <b>(50)</b>	26.2% (28)	37.9% (47)	<b>48.0%</b> <b>(48)</b>	
	<b>Not Valuable</b>	4.1% (8)	4.8% (4)	1.9% (2)	8.9% (11)	7.0% (7)	
	<b>N/A</b>	2.1% (4)	2.4% (3)	0.0% (0)	1.6% (2)	3.0% (3)	

*continued*


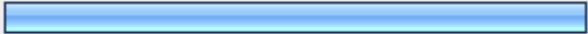




		Nonprofit organization staff	Public agency staff	Graduate student	Faculty member	Farmer	Response Totals
<b>3. A Practitioners' White Paper Series</b> where nonacademics submit case studies, tools, concept pieces, etc., for sharing with colleagues.	<b>Very Valuable</b>	87.1% (169)	64.7% (55)	77.6% (83)	71.2% (89)	85.9% (85)	
	<b>Moderately Valuable</b>	11.3% (22)	30.6% (26)	21.5% (23)	23.2% (29)	12.1% (12)	
	<b>Not Valuable</b>	0.5% (1)	3.5% (3)	0.9% (1)	4.8% (6)	1.0% (1)	
	<b>N/A</b>	1.0% (2)	1.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.8% (1)	1.0% (1)	
		194	85	107	125	99	506
<b>Other feedback:</b>		21 	6 	6 	7 	11 	43
<b>answered question</b>		195	85	107	126	100	509
<b>skipped question</b>							75




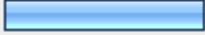

**10. A growing number of electronic publications have full-featured websites. Check the boxes of the tools and content you would find most valuable at a journal website.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Searchable archive of journal content		83.5%	525
Food system and agriculture newsfeed (RSS)		58.3%	367
Subscriber polls with current results		20.7%	130
A virtual cork board to post job listings and consulting opportunities		63.1%	397
Local food and agriculture benchmark data and techniques		67.9%	427
Blogging room (where subscribers can read blogs or blog themselves)		26.7%	168
Downloadable bibliographies and directories		47.4%	298
Links to "sister" journals and publications		63.4%	399
Grant RFP listing		65.3%	411
Data analysis tools and methods		59.0%	371

*continued*

Best practices and post-mortem case studies		69.8%	439
Book reviews		63.1%	397
Searchable fugitive literature archive		35.0%	220
Announcements for internships, scholarships, and fellowships		67.6%	425
 view Other (please specify):		7.8%	49
		<i>answered question</i>	<b>629</b>
		<i>skipped question</i>	<b>169</b>

**11. In addition to a journal and supporting website, New Leaf is considering hosting a FREE social networking site for food system and agriculture development practitioners, students, and academics. It might be similar to LinkedIn, Ning, and others, but with a focus on food system and ag development. The purpose would be to encourage information and idea sharing across the continent or even around the world. Would you be interested in joining such a social network?**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		36.6%	231
No		21.5%	136
<b>Maybe</b>		<b>41.9%</b>	<b>265</b>





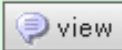
**12. To make the journal more affordable, would you accept commercial advertising on its website?**

		Which best describes your position or affiliation? Check all that apply.					
		Nonprofit organization staff	Public agency staff	Graduate student	Faculty member	Farmer	Response Totals
Yes	81.9% (158)	81.9% (68)	77.4% (82)	78.7% (100)	80.8% (80)	80.1% (407)	
No	18.1% (35)	18.1% (15)	22.6% (24)	21.3% (27)	19.2% (19)	19.9% (101)	
<i>answered question</i>		193	83	106	127	99	508
						<i>skipped question</i>	76

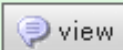
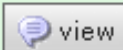
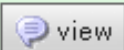
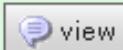
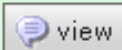
13. We would like to know how valuable the journal and companion website would be to you. Which of the following annual subscription price categories best represents what you or your organization can afford in 2010? Keep in mind the journal would be contributing to your work and professional development.

	Which best describes your position or affiliation? Check all that apply.					
	Nonprofit organization staff	Public agency staff	Graduate student	Faculty member	Farmer	Response Totals
I would receive it free if my college library subscribes	9.6% (19)	23.5% (20)	35.2% (37)	40.3% (52)	11.9% (12)	22.9% (118)
\$25 to \$49	36.0% (71)	24.7% (21)	26.7% (28)	19.4% (25)	43.6% (44)	29.3% (151)
\$50 to \$75	18.3% (36)	7.1% (6)	13.3% (14)	12.4% (16)	6.9% (7)	13.0% (67)
\$76 to \$125	2.5% (5)	4.7% (4)	3.8% (4)	7.0% (9)	2.0% (2)	3.7% (19)
Not sure at this time	33.5% (66)	40.0% (34)	21.0% (22)	20.9% (27)	35.6% (36)	31.1% (160)
<i>answered question</i>	197	85	105	129	101	515
<i>skipped question</i>						69

**18. EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:** We are exploring different peer review models. One is where members of the Editorial Committee scout out and vet material in their region and topical specialty. If you'd like to be considered for the committee, what are your areas of expertise?

	Which best describes your position or affiliation? Check all that apply.					
	Nonprofit organization staff	Public agency staff	Graduate student	Faculty member	Farmer	Response Count
	36 	12 	11 	30 	23 	92
<i>answered question</i>	36	12	11	30	23	92
<i>skipped question</i>						492

**19. CONTENT CONTRIBUTION:** Do you have a paper, article, or other content you'd like considered for inclusion in the journal? Please provide a title or brief description here.

	Which best describes your position or affiliation? Check all that apply.					
	Nonprofit organization staff	Public agency staff	Graduate student	Faculty member	Farmer	Response Count
	37 	10 	16 	33 	24 	98
<i>answered question</i>	37	10	16	33	24	98