

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Executive Summary 2
- II. Demographics 3
- III. Equality 6
- IV. Compensation 7
- V. Advancement 9
- VI. Benefits & Work/Life Balance 12
- VII. Advocacy & Mentorship 15
- VIII. Production Agriculture 17

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gender roles and equality continue to be important topics of discussion in the working world. As a follow-up to AgCareers.com's 2015 *Gender Roles & Equality in Agribusiness* survey, we partnered with Women in Agribusiness to conduct a refreshed survey in the fall of 2019. AgCareers.com wrote and developed the survey with distribution and marketing assistance from Women in Agribusiness.

The survey collected information about the roles men and women play in the agricultural industry as well as examining issues in equality. Questions examined topics such as compensation, benefits, advancement, work/life balance, and advocacy. Analysis of results identifies similarities and discrepancies between genders. Significant differences from the 2015 survey are noted within this report. Responses were collected in an online poll format with 624 people responding. Respondents were entered into a prize drawing as an incentive.

KEY FINDINGS:

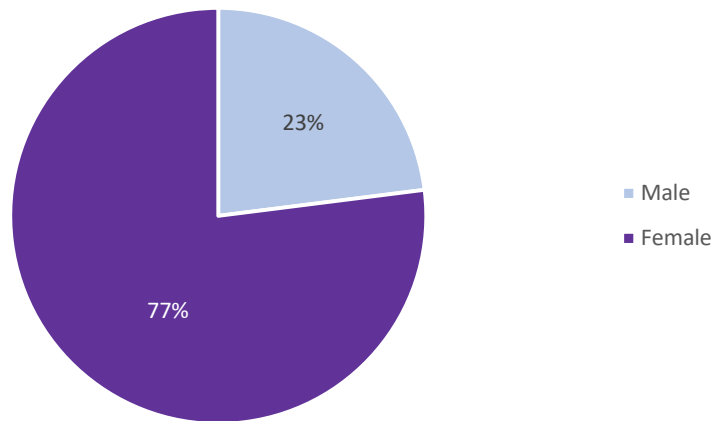
- Both men and women thought there was more gender equality in agribusiness than in the overall business world.
- Male participants responded that they felt more respected in the agricultural workplace than females.
- More than half of women (61%) said they had experienced blunt sexism or discrimination based on their gender in the workplace. Furthermore, 38% reported experiencing sexual harassment or unwanted sexual advances while at work in agribusiness.
- Men are likely to earn slightly more pay than women in agribusiness.
- More women than men hoped to advance to a higher-level position in the future.
- The top barriers women reported to achieving success in the agricultural workplace included: doubt in ability, knowledge and/or skills; being taken seriously; and a lack of support and/or validation from leadership.
- More than 80% of women felt optimistic about their opportunity for advancement in ag, while only 51% felt optimistic about their opportunities for advancement outside of agriculture.
- Women of color felt more confident about advancing their careers outside of the agricultural industry (70%).
- Health insurance was the most valued benefit for both genders.
- Seventy-seven percent of women with children felt that being a working parent had sometimes made it difficult to advance or commit to their career, while only 51% of men agreed with that statement.
- Nearly 90% of respondents agreed that they frequently advocate for the agricultural industry, with no significant difference between genders.
- Just 31% of women feel they are sufficiently represented in agriculture. Only 11% of women of color felt sufficiently represented.
- 90% or greater of both genders felt that the attitude toward women working in agribusiness has changed for the better.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The survey began with the qualification question: “Do you currently work in the agricultural industry?” If participants responded “no” they were taken directly to the end of the survey. The full survey was only presented to respondents that indicated they were currently working in the agricultural industry (86%; 580 respondents) or were pursuing a career in the ag industry (7%; 44 respondents).

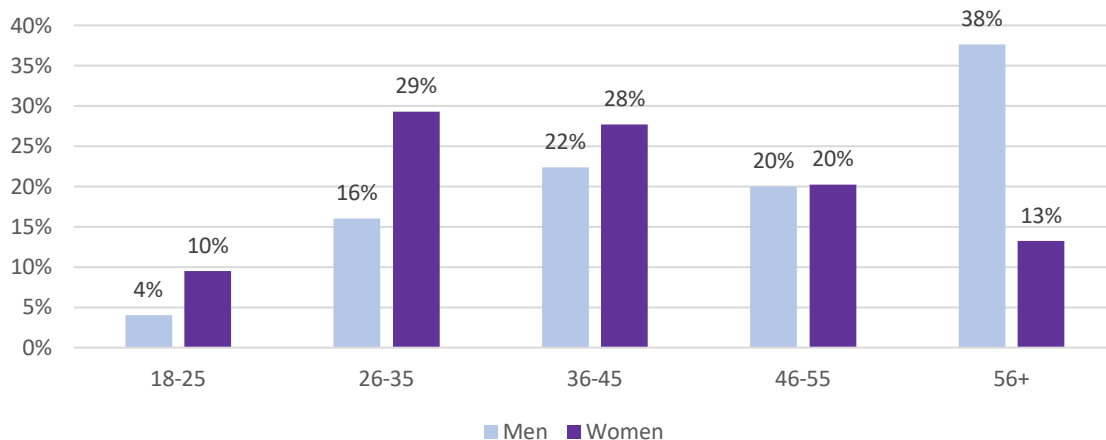
Seventy-seven percent of respondents were female and 23% were male. Men and women were asked several different questions which will be outlined throughout this report.

Figure 1: Gender



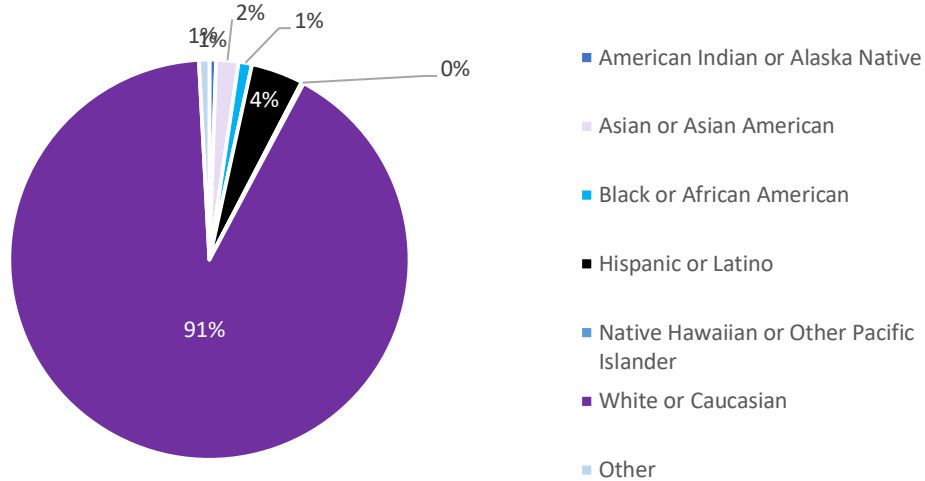
Most respondents fell in the 26-35 and 36-45 age range (52%). Figure 2 breaks down the age of respondents. There was a higher percentage of women 35 and under, and a greater percentage of men over 45.

Age Range



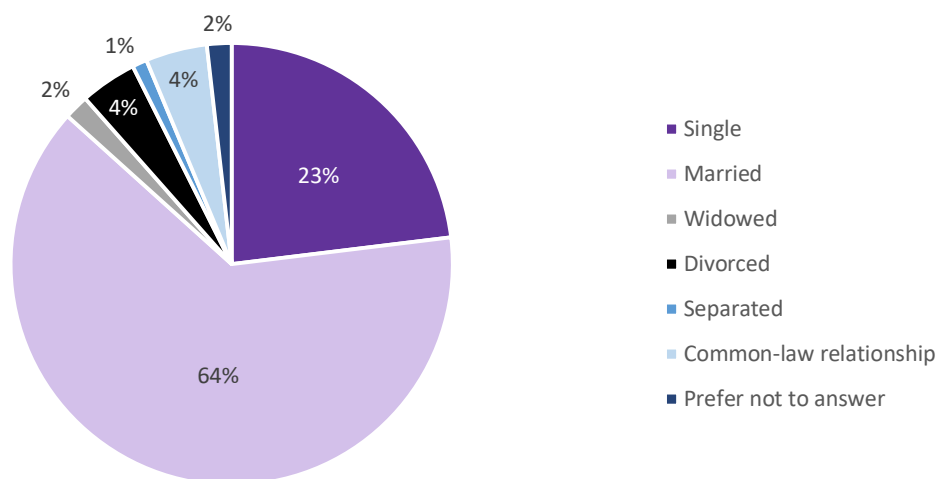
Differently from our 2015 survey, we asked respondents to share their race and ethnicity. This question did not require an answer, however, and participants could choose not to answer. Respondents were overwhelmingly white or Caucasian at 91%, as shown in Figure 3. The next highest ethnicity represented was “Hispanic or Latino” with 4%.

Figure 3: Race and Ethnicity



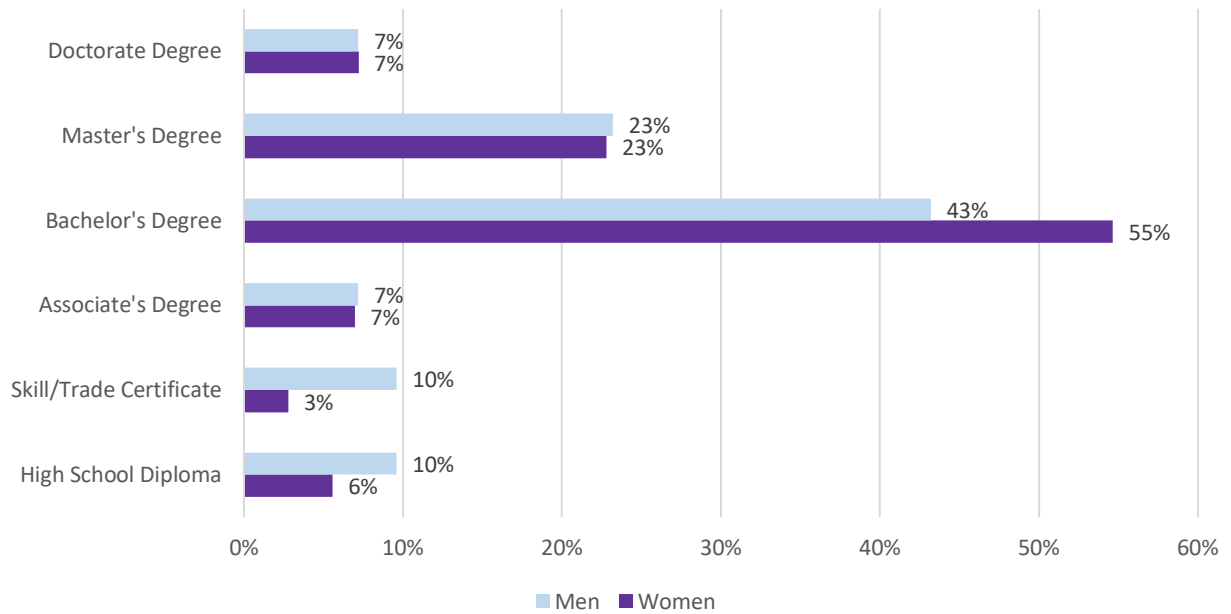
Another new question added to the 2019 survey asked respondents to describe their current relationship status. Most respondents were married (64%) while 23% reported they were single. Other answers are recorded in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Current Relationship Status



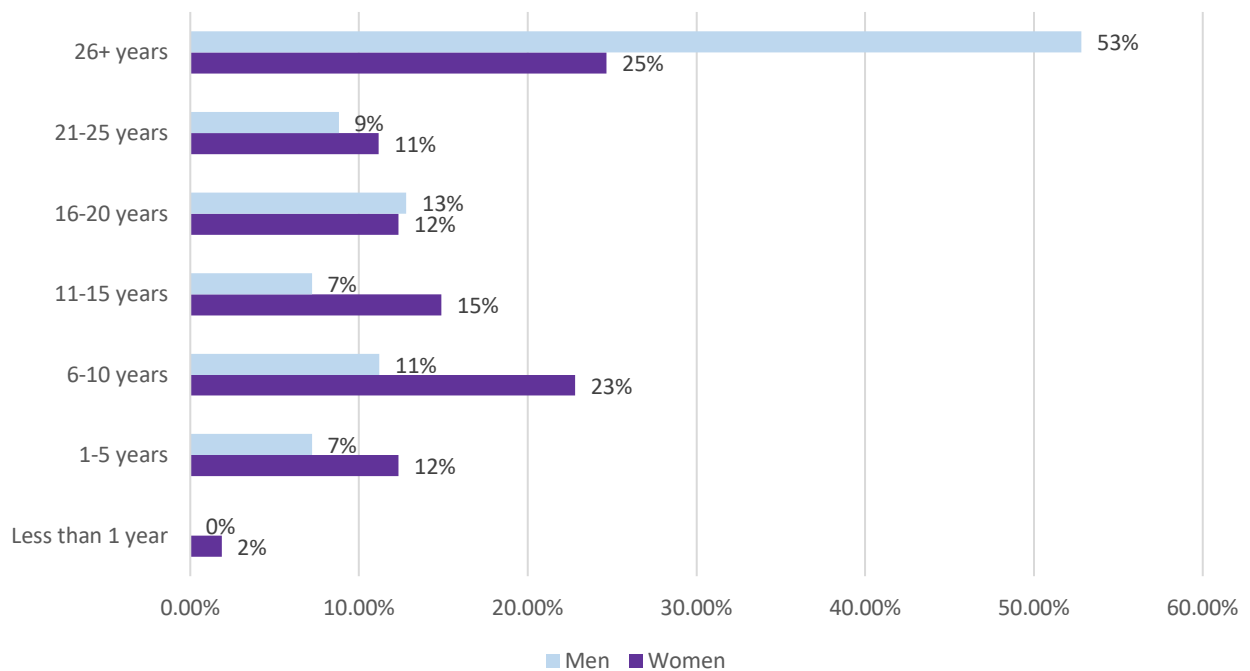
Participants were asked for their highest level of education attained. As shown in Figure 5, 82% of respondents had a Bachelor’s degree or higher. There was a higher percentage of women than men with a Bachelor’s degree. Otherwise, advanced degrees proved to be held equally by men and women.

Figure 5: Education Level



The majority of respondents had 10-plus years of experience, and 31% had greater than 25 years of experience. There was a higher percentage of female than male respondents with 10 years or less of experience, while there was a higher percentage of male respondents with more than 20 years of experience. The breakdown of years of experience among participants is shown in Figure 6.

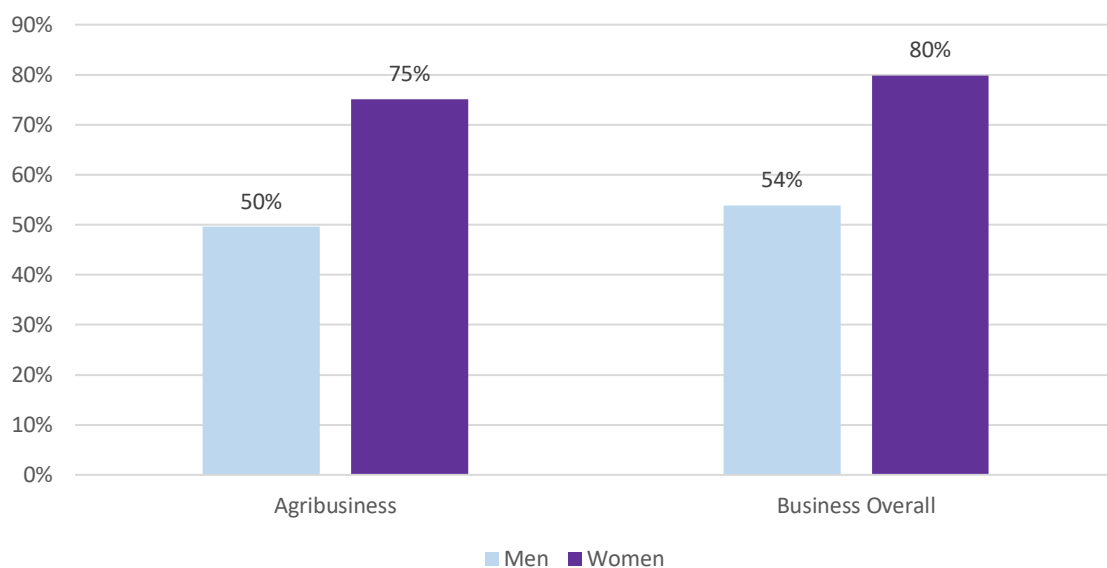
Figure 6: Years of Experience



EQUALITY

The survey asked participants if they felt there was gender inequality in agribusiness, and then inquired if there was gender inequality in the overall professional world. The majority of women felt that there was gender inequality in the agribusiness industry (75%), while only 50% of men felt there was gender inequality in agribusiness. In an encouraging note for agribusiness, both men and women felt that there was less gender inequality in agribusiness than in the overall professional world (see Figure 7). Interestingly, these figures have improved slightly since our 2015 survey was conducted.

Figure 7: Do you feel there is gender inequality in...



In general, male respondents felt more respected in the agricultural workplace than females. Fifty percent of women felt they were respected and treated equally to their male coworkers. However, 21% of women felt they were perceived negatively and not as respected as their male coworkers. Whereas 78% of men felt they were respected and treated equally to their female coworkers, and only 3% of men felt they were perceived negatively by their female counterparts.

Unfortunately, more than half of women (61%) said they had experienced blunt sexism or discrimination based on their gender in the workplace. This figure has jumped more than 10% from the 2015 survey. Furthermore, 38% reported experiencing sexual harassment or unwanted sexual advances while at work in agribusiness.

COMPENSATION

Our survey posed the question, “Do you consider yourself the ‘breadwinner’ of your household?” More than 50% of women responded “yes” to this question, up from 42% in our 2015 survey. Likewise, the number of men that responded “yes” was down to 61% as opposed to 72% in our 2015 survey.

More than half (54%) of women, however, felt they would be better compensated if they were male. Whereas 82% of men alluded that their gender did not influence their compensation and therefore felt they would be paid the same. These figures are disproportionate to the 2015 survey which reported 49% of women felt they would be better compensated if they were male and 73% of men felt gender did not matter.

So how do these perceptions compare to reality?

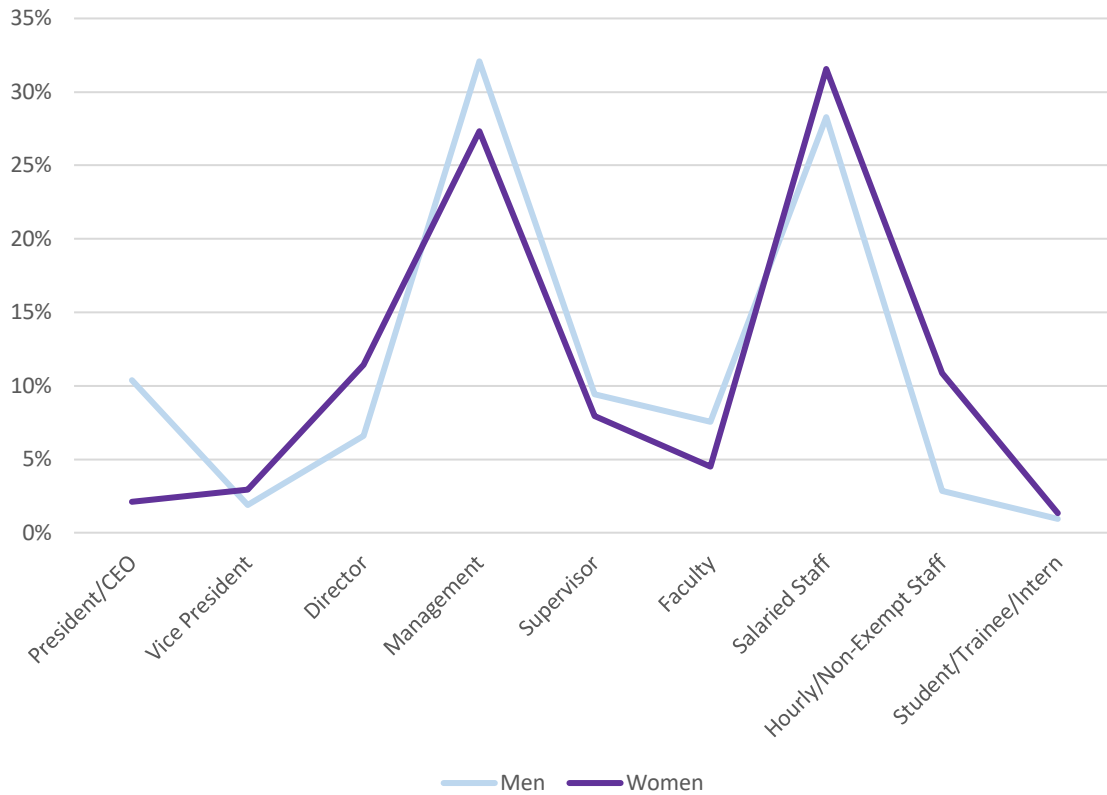
When we look at actual salary figures in Figure 8, responses indicate a slight disparity in pay between genders, with men typically earning more than women in agribusiness. At the \$70,000+ levels, we begin to see women’s pay rates decline. Men’s pay rates, on the other hand, spike at the \$70,000-\$90,000 level, decline, and then spike again at the \$150,000+ level. In contrast, there was a consistently lower percentage of men than women earning below \$50,000. We must also consider the fact that there was a greater percentage of men in higher level roles (as seen on the next page) and with more than 20 years of experience among the respondents.

Figure 8: Current Base Salary



Data also shows a difference between genders in terms of management and higher-level roles in agricultural organizations. There was a significantly higher percentage of men in a President/CEO role and Management positions. There were significantly less men than women in hourly staff (see Figure 9). However, this does correlate to findings that there were a higher percentage of men with more years of experience and higher salaries among survey respondents.

Figure 9: Current Role



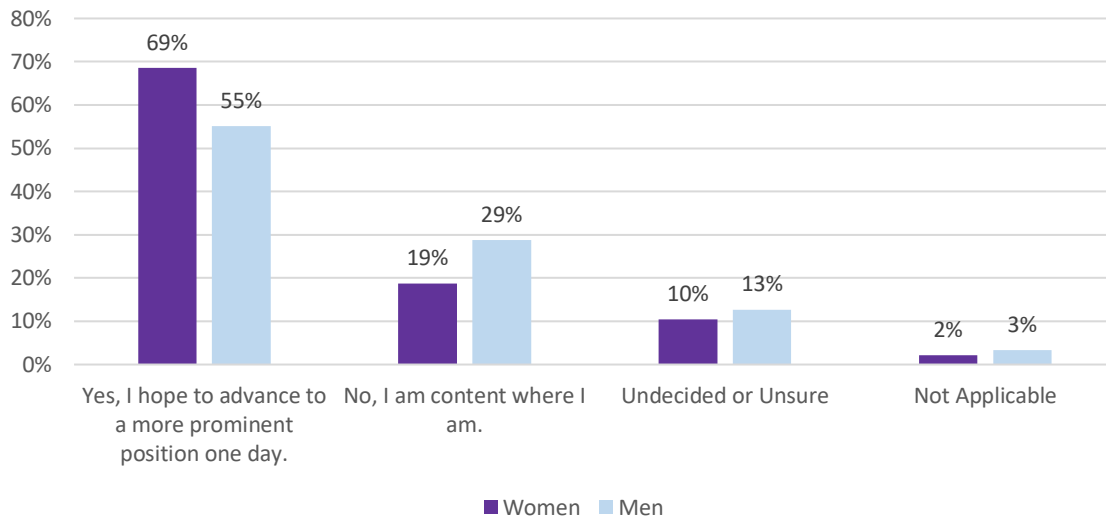
ADVANCEMENT

Both men and women felt that the other gender had some edge in the opportunity for advancement. Most women (70%) felt they would be given more advancement opportunities if they were male (48% yes and 22% maybe). Just 29% of men felt they would be given more advancement opportunities if they were female (16% yes and 13% maybe).

Despite these sentiments, women are looking for advancement opportunities and aspire to move up within the ranks. A significantly higher percentage of women than men hoped to advance to a higher-level position one day. In contrast, a higher percentage of men were content in their current position (Figure 10).

Interestingly, a higher number of women of diverse races and ethnicities reported a desire to advance in their careers (79%) than white or Caucasian women (68%).

Figure 10: Do you aspire to work in a higher-level role within the next 5-10 years?



There was little to no discrepancy between genders when we examined their willingness to relocate for career advancement; approximately 65% of both men and women were willing to consider relocation. Women of diverse races and ethnicities expressed more willingness to relocate for career advancement (89% as opposed to 64% of white or Caucasian women).

Participants were also asked about how they felt they were critiqued or reviewed based on their performance. Most men (78%) felt that their gender did not matter and that they would be reviewed the same if they were the opposite gender. However, women gave more conflicting responses with 63% saying “yes” or “maybe” their gender played a role in the level of criticism they received and only 37% saying “no.”

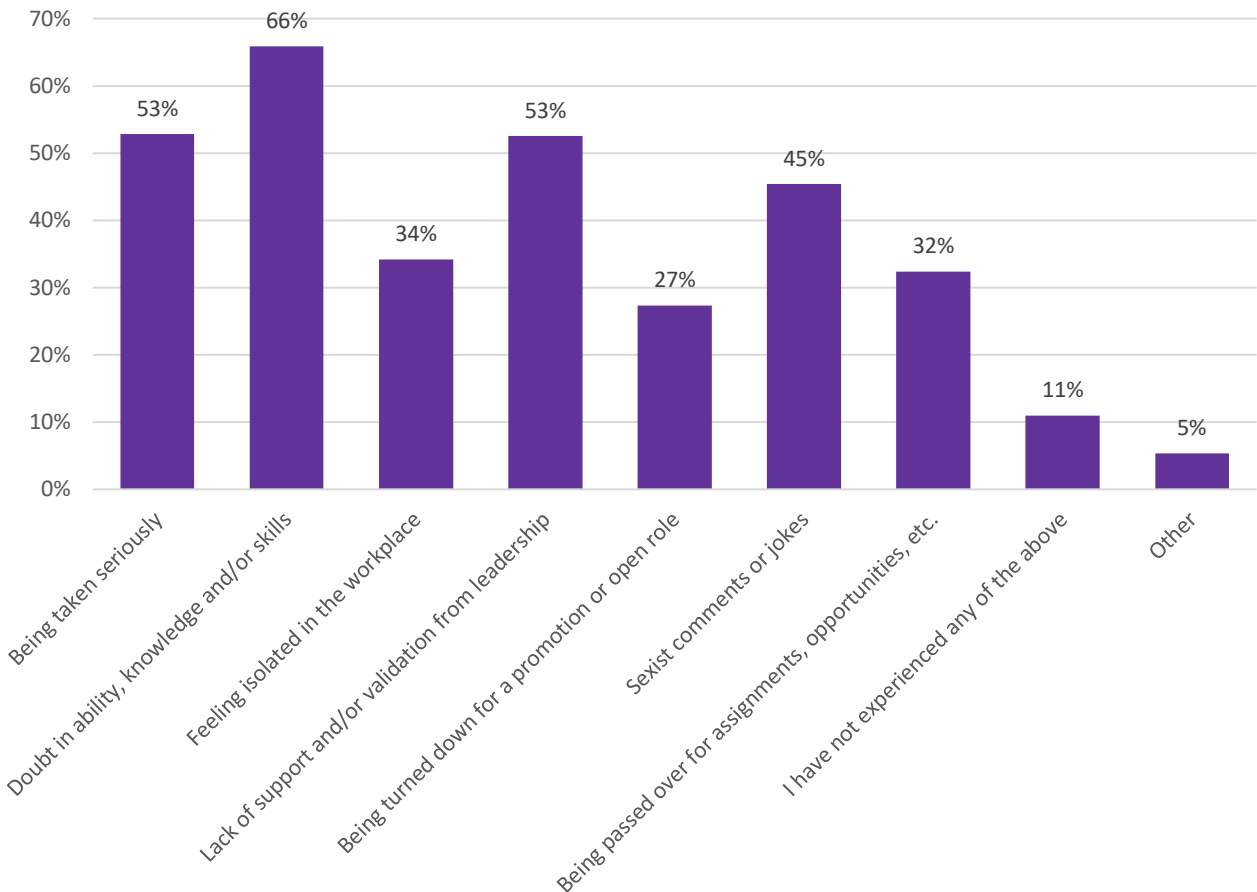
Interestingly, more women (62%) reported that their employers had offered them special training opportunities or tuition reimbursement to advance and grow in their career and/or role. Just 47% of men reported receiving these same opportunities or benefits.

Female respondents were given a special section of questions examining barriers they have encountered while working in agribusiness. The most popular responses included:

- Doubt in ability, knowledge and/or skills
- Being taken seriously
- Lack of support and/or validation from leadership

When cross-examined with responses from women of color, responses were largely similar except for “feeling isolated in the workplace.” Women of color reported a 15% increase in their response to this barrier.

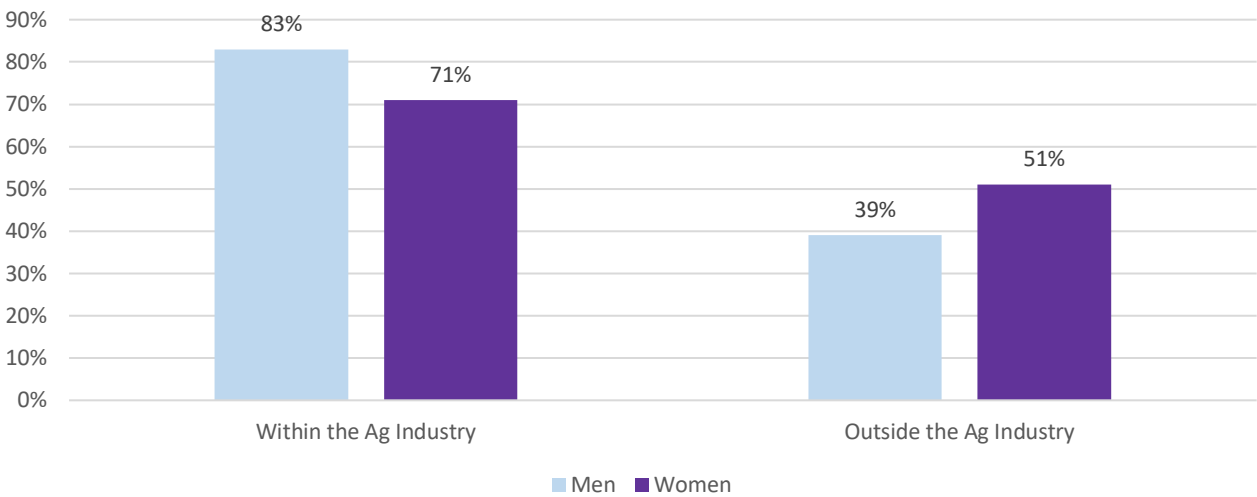
Figure 11: Have you experienced any of the following barriers while working in agribusiness? Check all that apply.*



**Percentages do not equal 100%; respondents were allowed to select multiple responses. Results are calculated by dividing the number of responses by respondents.*

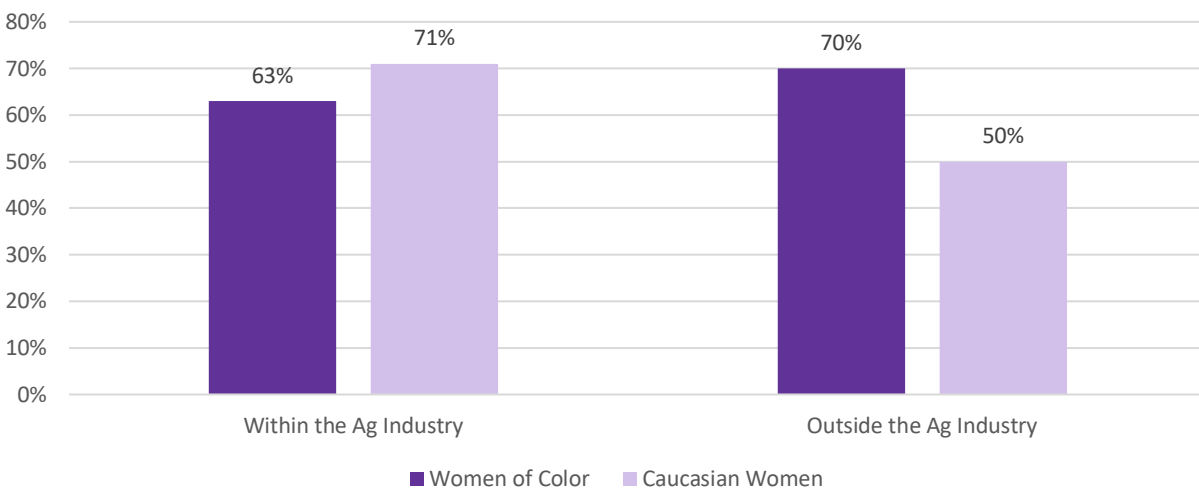
A concerning change from the 2015 survey shows that women feel less confident about their ability to advance in the agricultural industry. Seventy-one percent of women felt confident about opportunities for advancement in agriculture in 2019. This is a 17% drop from the number of women that responded in agreement in 2015 (88%). However, women still felt more confident about their ability to advance in agriculture versus an outside industry (56% in 2015; 51% in 2019). Figure 12 displays their male counterparts' responses in contrast to women's.

Figure 12: Rate your level of agreement with the following: "I feel confident about the ability to advance..."



Sadly, women of color felt less confident about their ability to advance in agriculture (63%) and more confident about advancing in an industry outside of agriculture (70%). Responses shown in contrast to white or Caucasian women in Figure 13 display significant differences in confidence levels.

Figure 13: Rate your level of agreement with the following: "I feel confident about the ability to advance..."



BENEFITS AND WORK/LIFE BALANCE

The survey asked which benefits were most valuable in the workplace. Respondents were asked to select five from the list of thirteen benefits. The most valued benefit overall was health insurance. Women gave more value than men to flexible working hours. A vehicle and regular recognition were also held in high favor with male respondents. Maternity leave was in the top five for women. This data was almost identical to the 2015 survey. Figure 14 shows the other top benefits selected.

Figure 14: Most Valued Benefits

Men		Women	
1. Health Insurance	80%	1. Health Insurance	85%
2. 401 K Retirement/RRSP	73%	2. Flexible Working Hours	75%
3. Flexible Working Hours	51%	3. 401 K Retirement/RRSP	69%
4. Vehicle	25%	4. Bonus	26%
5. Regular Recognition	15%	5. Maternity Leave	18%

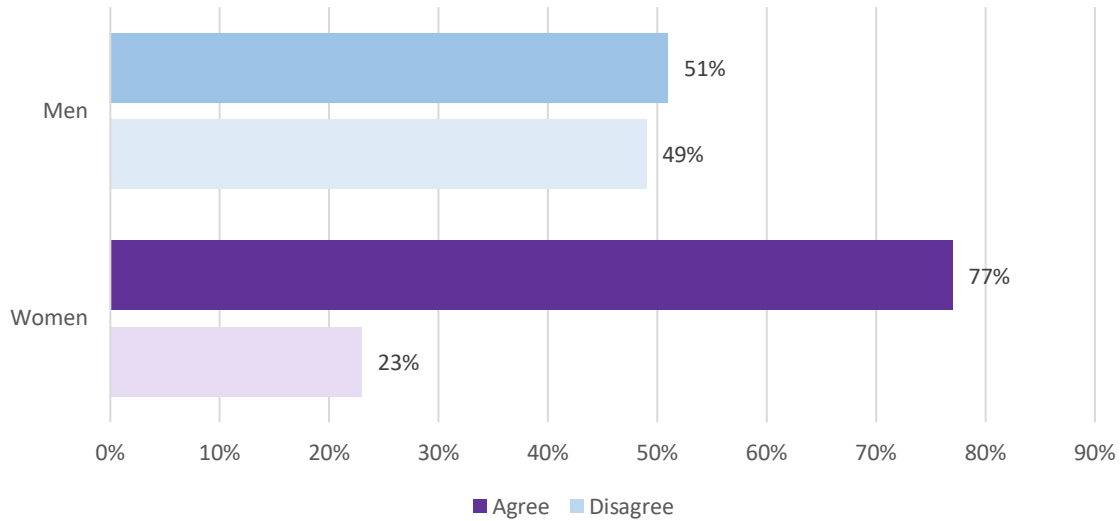
**Percentages do not equal 100%; respondents were allowed to select multiple responses. Results are calculated by dividing the number of responses by respondents.*

When asked if their employer provides a maternity/paternity leave policy outside of their government-regulated program, 33% indicated yes. Twenty percent were “unsure,” indicating that better benefit communication policies might be warranted from human resources. For those having a policy outside of their government-regulated program, short-term disability (company paid, fully or partially) was the most selected category for women. Full company-paid leave was the most frequently selected category for men.

Most respondents had a spouse that worked outside the home (57% of men and 64% of women). Most also reported having children or planning/hoping to have children someday (81% of men and 75% of women). Forty percent of female respondents and 30% of male respondents were working parents.

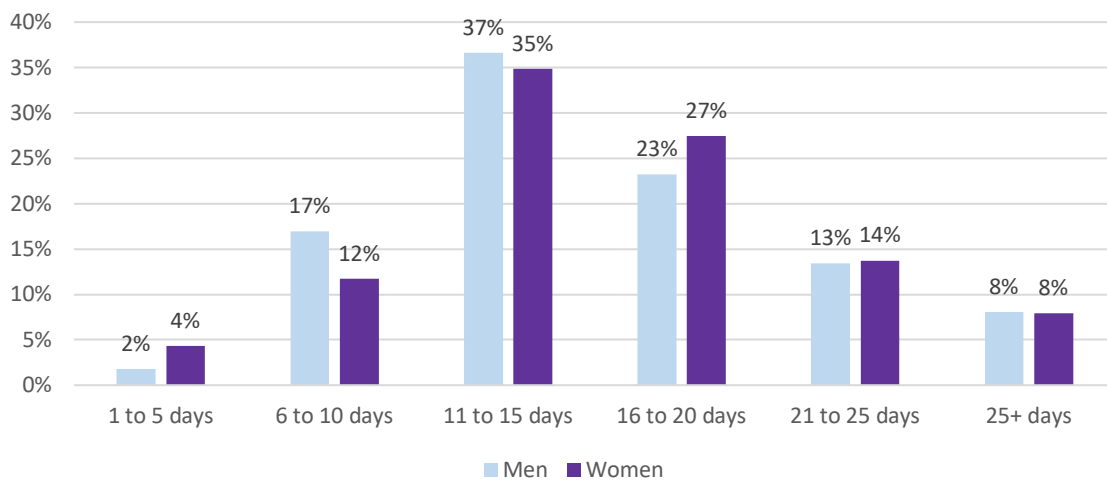
Female respondents reported feeling the stressors of being a working parent more than men. Seventy-seven percent of women with children felt that being a working parent had sometimes made it difficult to advance or commit to their career, while only 51% of men agreed with that statement (see Figure 15). These results were very similar to those of the 2015 survey. When we look at female respondents by employment level, women at the faculty, salaried, and non-exempt/hourly levels (88%) felt more strongly that being a working parent had made it difficult to advance, than other employment levels.

Figure 15: "I feel that being a working parent has sometimes made it difficult to advance or commit to my career."



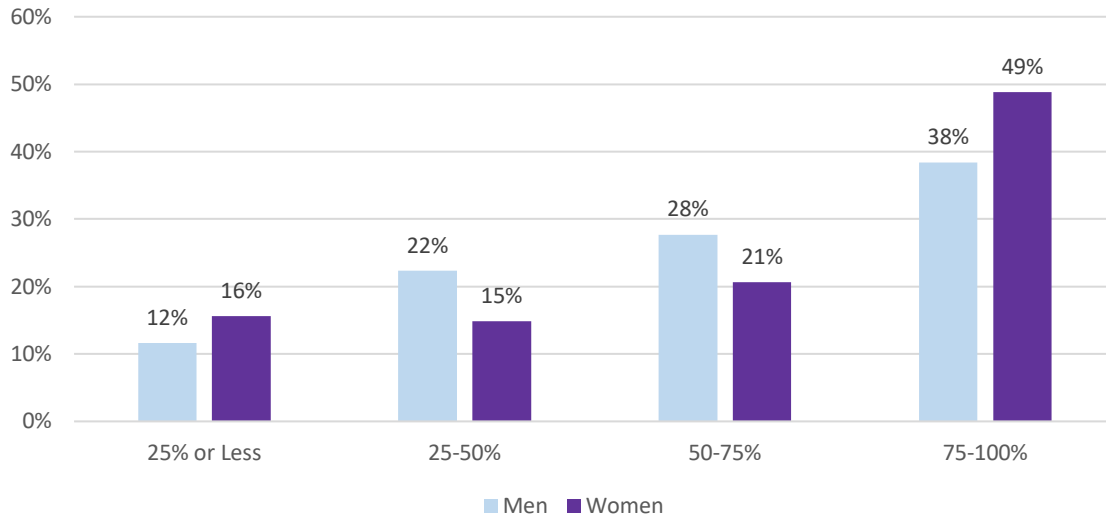
New to the 2019 survey, we asked respondents about their allotted vacation/personal days. This question specified that both the overall number of days in a traditional vacation/sick leave/personal days plan and overall days in a PTO model would apply. As seen in Figure 16, the days allotted to both men and women across agribusiness is fairly equal.

Figure 16: How many personal/vacation days does the average employee (regardless of gender) at your organization receive per year at 5 years of service?



Participants were then asked how much vacation they likely actually used. Overall, it appeared that men had more difficulty using their allotted vacation time. Notably, nearly 50% of women reported using 75-100% of their vacation time while just 38% of men reported the same. Figure 17 shows these findings.

Figure 17: What percentage most accurately describes how much of your vacation time you actually use per year?



Work/life balance can be considered an unwritten benefit in many work environments. Participants were asked how they would rate their employer's accommodations for work/life/family balance. More than half of respondents rated their employers as above average or excellent (55% male; 51% female). These findings are quite similar to the 2015 survey results. Nine percent of women said work/life balance accommodations were below average and 2% indicated they were poor, whereas 14% of men said they were below average and 2% also rated them as poor.

ADVOCACY & MENTORSHIP

Respondents were asked, in their opinion, for the top three skills or characteristics they brought to the agricultural industry. Men and women were similar with their responses: leadership, dependability, and a moral compass were in the top three selections of both genders (see Figure 18). Notably, coordination of teamwork came in a close fourth for women with 30%.

Figure 18: What are the top 3 skills or characteristics you bring to the industry?

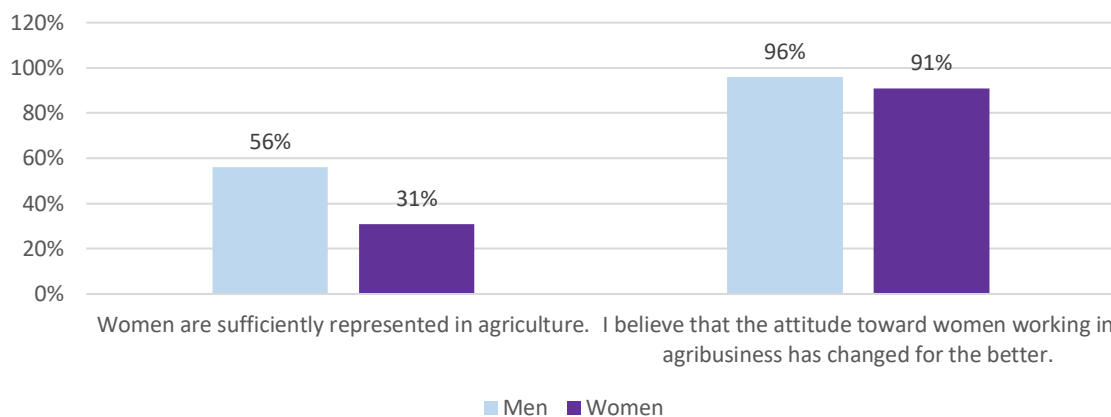
Men		Women	
1. Leadership	66%	1. Dependability	55%
2. Dependability	57%	2. Leadership	47%
3. A Moral Compass	42%	3. A Moral Compass	31%

**Percentages do not equal 100%; respondents were allowed to select multiple responses. Results are calculated by dividing the number of responses by respondents.*

Nearly 90% of respondents agreed that they frequently advocate for the agricultural industry; there was no significant difference between genders.

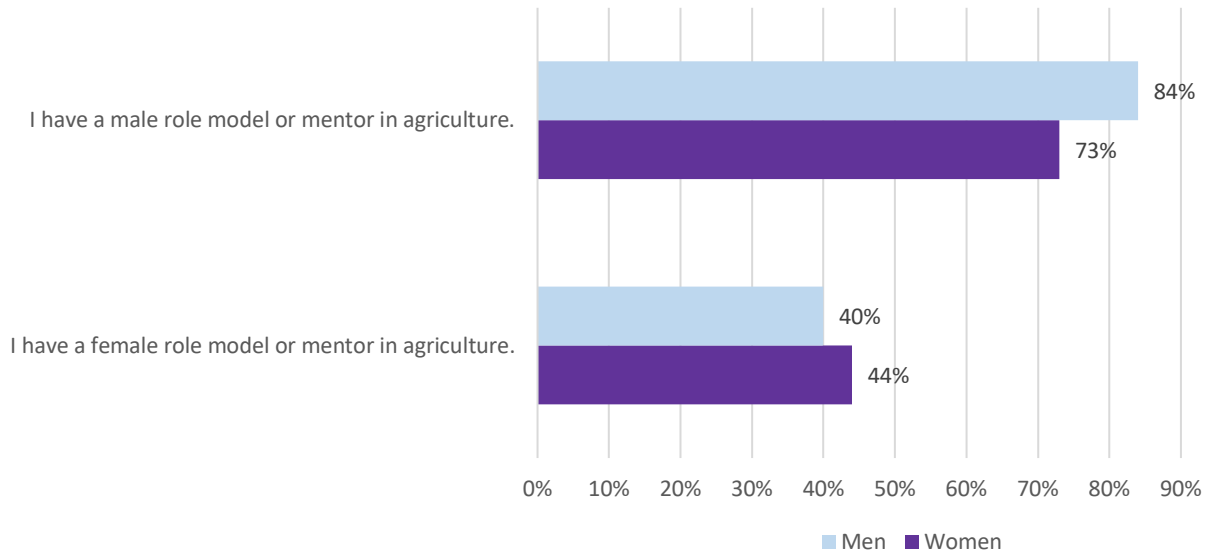
Participants were asked to specify their level of agreement with a series of statements regarding women in agriculture. Figure 19 shows the percent of men and women that agreed at some level (either agreed or strongly agreed) with each statement. From these results we can infer that women felt they weren't sufficiently represented in the agricultural industry. This result plummeted even further amongst women of color with only 11% expressing agreement toward being sufficiently represented in agriculture. On a positive note, 90% or greater of both genders felt that the attitude toward women working in agribusiness has changed for the better.

Figure 19: Respondents' agreement with the following statements:



Both male and female participants were asked if they had role models or mentors in agriculture that they may look to for advice, guidance, etc. Mentorship can play an important part of career development, advancement, and retention in agriculture. More men and women had male mentors or role models in agriculture than female mentors, as shown in Figure 20.

Figure 20: Rate your level of agreement with the following:



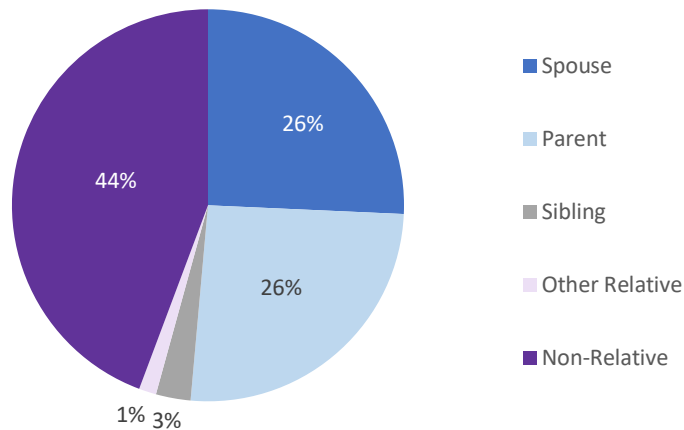
PRODUCTION AGRICULTURE

This section is new to the 2019 survey. In 2015, we received feedback from women who were solely producers or producers in addition to their roles in agribusiness and felt that the core questions did not apply to their professional experience. The “Production Agriculture” section sheds light on the experience of the female agricultural producer.

Approximately 27% of our respondents to this survey noted that they were either solely agricultural producers or worked as a producer in addition to working in agribusiness.

Of that number, 27% of women stated that they were the sole owner and/or primary stakeholder of the farming/ranching/production operation they work for. For those who were not, a non-relative was the most common answer for the owner/primary stakeholder of the operation they worked for (44%). Other responses are shown in Figure 21 (note that only female participants’ responses are recorded in this chart).

Figure 21: Who is the sole owner and/or primary stakeholder of the farming/ranching/production operation you work for?



Approximately 42% of female producers participating in this survey stated that they are landowners. When asked how much, most answered that they own less than 250 acres of land (74%). More than half (57%) had at least a stake or partial ownership in the farming/ranching/production operations where they work. Of those who answered that they did have a stake or share in the farming/ranching/production operations where they were employed, most owned between 25-75% (71%).

Most women that did not own land hoped to one day or own a stake or share in a production operation. Just 23% stated that they have no aspirations to own land or a stake in a production operation at any point in the future.

In Conclusion

This report shares details on the current state of gender equality in the agricultural industry and notes significant differences from 2015 data. Human resource professionals and leaders can use this content to determine how their organization addresses gender equality and develop a culture that fosters growth for all staff. Contact agcareers@agcareers.com for additional details.

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