

# EMERGING ISSUES IN AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Wedgworth Leadership Institute alumni identified water quality, water supply and food safety as the top issues facing Florida's agriculture and natural resources over the next five years, according to a survey conducted by the UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education in July 2015. The PIE Center previously conducted the survey in 2008.

## WEDGWORTH: WATER, FOOD CRITICAL ISSUES TO FLORIDA

UF/IFAS Wedgworth Leadership Institute alumni ranked food and water issues as four of the five most important issues facing agriculture and natural resources.

Water supply and quality topped the list, followed by food safety, immigration and food security.

Given a list of 15 issues, Wedgworth alumni were less concerned with issues dealing with the environment. They ranked habitat and ecosystem preservation, renewable energy, climate change and endangered species as four of the five least important issues confronting Florida's agriculture and natural resources.

When asked to prioritize the issues based on different geographic areas, Wedgworth included both water supply and quality in the top three issues at the local, state and regional levels.

Environmental issues such as invasive species, habitat and ecosystem preparedness, and urban and rural interface fared better in these local regions.

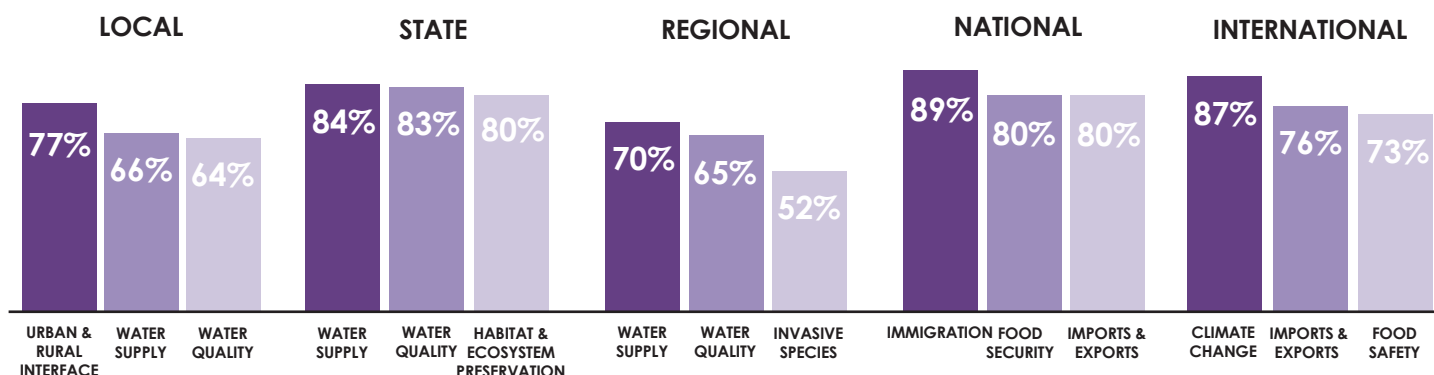
Wedgworth identified food safety and food security as top issues at the national and international levels, respectively.

Other issues prioritized at the national and international level include immigration, climate change and imports and exports.

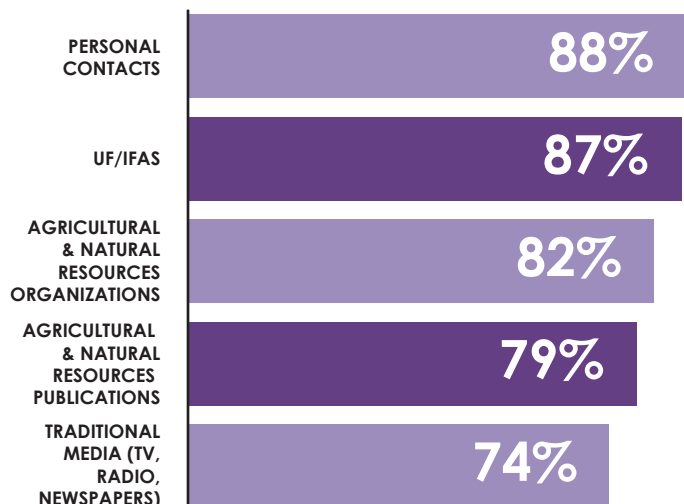
### MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES

1. WATER SUPPLY
2. WATER QUALITY
3. FOOD SAFETY
4. IMMIGRATION
5. FOOD SECURITY
6. PEST & DISEASE CONTROL
7. INVASIVE SPECIES
8. IMPORTS & EXPORTS
9. WORKFORCE PREPAREDNESS
10. URBAN & RURAL INTERFACE
11. HABITAT & ECOSYSTEM PRESERVATION
12. RENEWABLE ENERGY
13. CLIMATE CHANGE
14. ANIMAL WELFARE
15. ENDANGERED SPECIES

## MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES BY AREA



## WHERE DO YOU GET INFORMATION ABOUT THESE ISSUES?



## MEMBERS CONTEMPLATE INTERACTIONS WITH ISSUES

Even though they are frequently impacted by pest and disease control, most Wedgworth alumni said that's an issue few Floridians are aware about.

Immigration and climate change, two issues frequently appearing in media and politics, were perceived to have the most public awareness.

In addition to pegging water quality as an important issues, Wedgworth alumni believed the public is aware of the growing concern.

Personal contacts and UF/IFAS were seen as top sources of information about agricultural and natural resources issues, followed by organizations, publications and traditional media.

About two-thirds of Wedgworth alumni said they had attended a public meeting about an issue, compared to 57 percent who worked with a local organization and half who worked with a state organization.

## ACTION TAKEN ABOUT THESE ISSUES



ATTENDED A PUBLIC MEETING: 67%

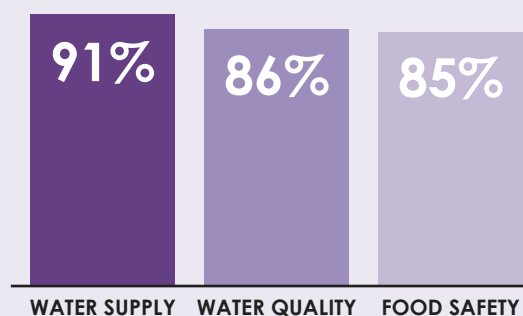


WORKED WITH A LOCAL ORGANIZATION: 57%

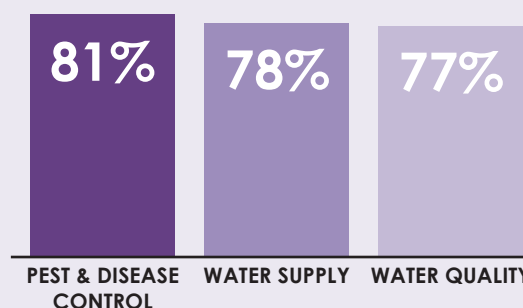


WORKED WITH A STATE ORGANIZATION: 50%

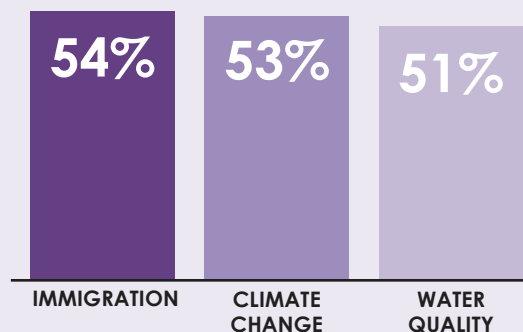
## MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS



## FREQUENTLY IMPACTED BY



## I THINK THE AVERAGE FLORIDA RESIDENT IS THE MOST AWARE ABOUT:



## I THINK THE AVERAGE FLORIDA RESIDENT IS THE LEAST AWARE ABOUT:

