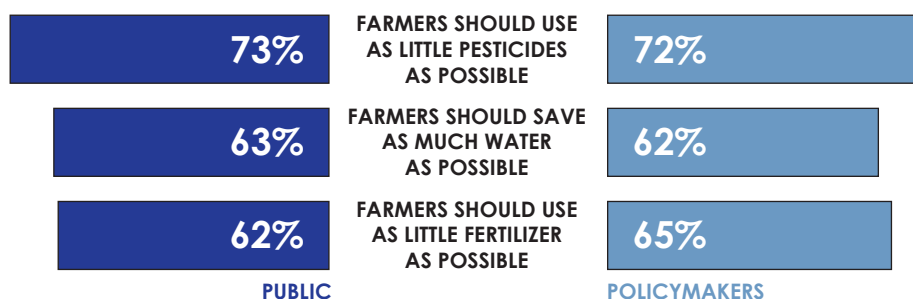


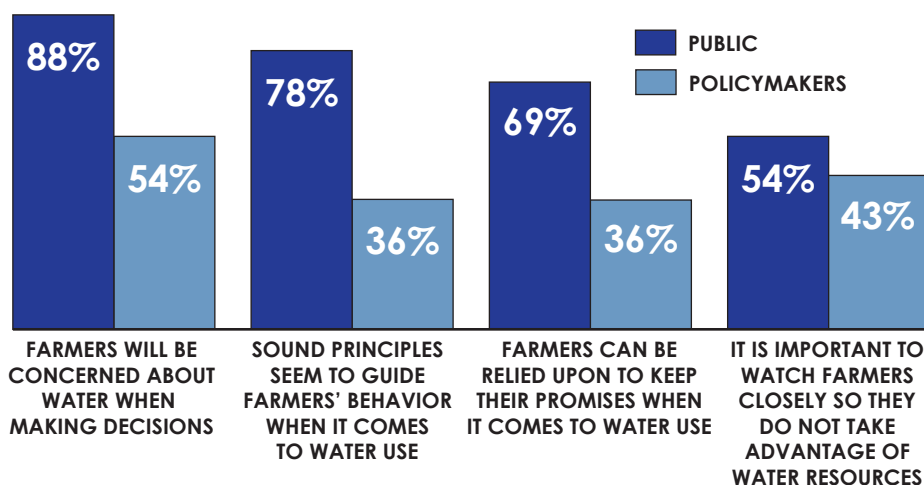
PUBLIC VS. POLICYMAKER BELIEFS ABOUT AGRICULTURAL WATER USE

Floridians strongly believe that farmers protect the state's environment and water resources, according to research from the UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education that compared public perceptions to those of local government officials. The public and policymakers agreed that farmers should save water as much as possible and limit their use of fertilizers and pesticides to only what is necessary.

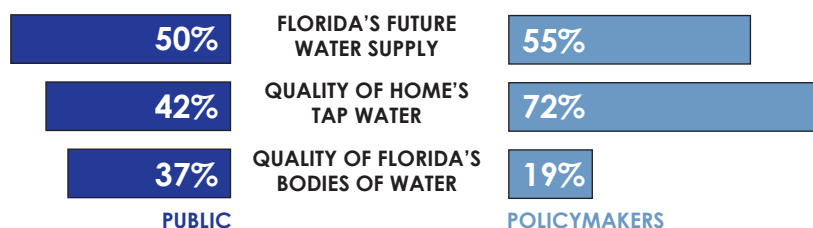
PUBLIC & POLICYMAKERS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE THAT...



PUBLIC & POLICYMAKERS DIFFER THAT...



PUBLIC & POLICYMAKERS HIGHLY OR EXTREMELY CONFIDENT IN...



FLORIDIANS FAVORABLE OF FARMERS

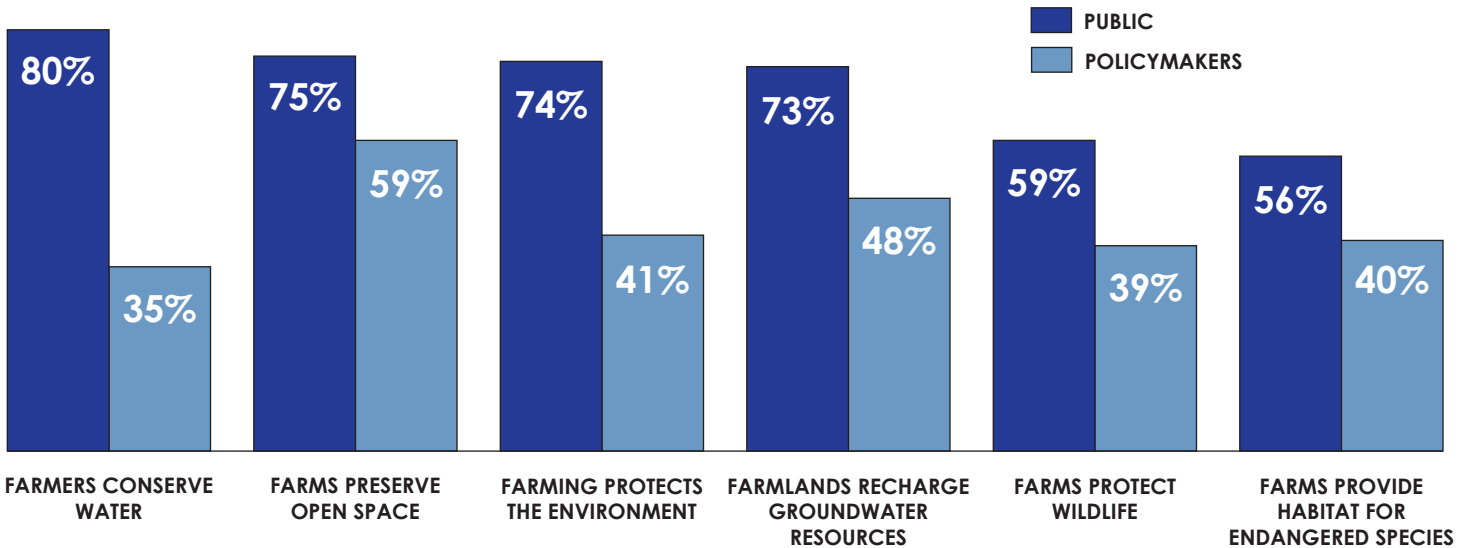
Nearly 90 percent of state residents agreed or strongly agreed that farmers are concerned about water when making decisions, and almost 80 percent thought farmers used sound reasoning when making decisions about water.

Local government officials, however, weren't quite as trustful. Only 36 percent of policymakers said valid principles guided farmers' behaviors with water use, and 54 percent agreed or strongly agreed that farmers felt concerned about water when making decisions.

Overall, local government officials were more confident in the quantity and quality of Florida's water supplies. More than 70 percent of policymakers were highly or extremely confident in the quality of tap water in their home, compared to 42 percent of the public. The public, however, felt stronger about the quality of Florida's lakes, rivers and wetlands.

Even though 69 percent of residents agreed that farmers can be relied upon to keep their promises when it comes to water, more than half said that farmers should be watched closely so they don't take advantage of water resources.

PUBLIC & POLICYMAKER DISAGREE ABOUT IMPACTS OF FARMING



PUBLIC POSITIVELY PERCEIVES IMPACTS OF AGRICULTURE

The public felt strongly about the environmental benefits of farming but were unsure about how agriculture affects water runoff and soil erosion.

At least 70 percent of Florida residents agreed or strongly agreed that farms conserved water, protected the environment and preserve open spaces.

Policymakers were more uncertain about the impacts of farming, with only 35 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing that farmers conserve water.

Only 19 percent of Floridians were aware of best management practices, or processes that protect water sources, compared to 40 percent of policymakers.

Once residents learned about best management practices, however, 93 percent said they would be more likely to buy products that were created with best management practices.

Almost three-quarters of the public said they would even be willing to pay more for products grown or raised under the encouraged processes.

ABOUT OUR RESEARCH

The PIE Center partnered with the Florida Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services, Florida Farm Bureau and Florida Dairy Farmers to explore residents' perceptions of agricultural water use and how the organizations could best communicate with the public. PIE Center researchers distributed an online survey to Floridians at least 18 years old and older, as well as local government officials such as city and county commissioners and managers, mayors and city clerks.



IMPACTS OF AGRICULTURE

