



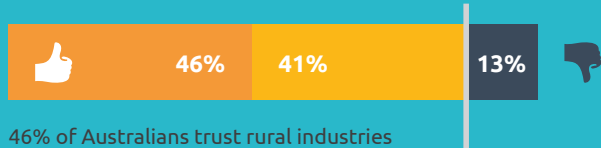
# Rural industries on track with trust - key drivers, risks and opportunities revealed

YEAR ONE FINDINGS - MAY 2020

Rural industries (fishers, farmers and foresters) have collaborated to develop a pathway to proactive, transparent, long term engagement with the community via a three-year research program into the drivers of community trust.

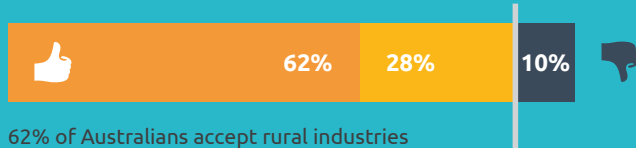
## Trust and acceptance are high

Trust is high and distrust is low



46% of Australians trust rural industries  
41% moderately trust and 13% distrust

Acceptance is high and rejection is low



62% of Australians accept rural industries  
28% moderately accept and only 10% reject

## What drives trust in rural industries?

The three strongest drivers of the community's trust in rural industries are:



**ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Sustainability, responsibility, minimal impact on the natural environment



**RESPONSIVENESS**

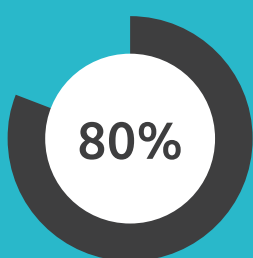
Listening to, respecting and responding to community concerns



**PRODUCTS OF RURAL INDUSTRIES**

The community highly values the sector's outputs, with its products seen to play an important role in the lives of Australians

## Fishers, farmers and foresters are important



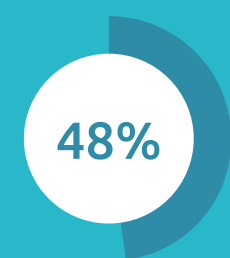
80% of Australians agree fishers, farmers and foresters play an important role in Australian society



86% of Australians agree rural industries contribute significantly to the Australian economy



86% of Australians agree rural industries are important to our way of life in Australia



48% of Australians agreed that if they hear about a rural industry acting irresponsibly, it negatively affects their opinion of all rural industries

## Some important risks and opportunities

The research uncovered a number of issues that large sections of the community were uncertain about, meaning they do not have strong views one way or another or have gaps in their knowledge around Australian rural industries.

Some of these areas of uncertainty included the extent to which rural industries listen to and engage with community concerns; use water responsibly; and impact coastal areas through waste products/run-off.

Top areas of uncertainty



Whether rural industries listen to and respect community concerns



Responsible water use



Waste products/run-off causing environmental damage

Drivers of trust



Responsiveness



Environmental responsibility



Products of rural industries

Notably, most of the issues the community expressed uncertainty about relate to the two key drivers of trust - environmental responsibility and sector responsiveness.

## Managing impacts and sharing environmental responsibility



86%

86% of Australians strongly believe that environmental management is a shared responsibility across all Australian rural industries



49%

49% of respondents say Australia's farmers, fishers and foresters manage their environmental impacts effectively (15% disagree)



65%

65% of participants agreed that farmers play an important role in addressing climate change

## Driving export revenue, regional jobs and farm safety

Australians strongly believe that:

Australia's rural industries play an important economic role through the export of products to overseas markets 74% agree

Australia's rural industries play an important economic role through creating significant employment in regional areas 82% agree

It is important that health and safety of farm workers is prioritised 89% agree

## Prioritising animal welfare and excellence in food safety



80%

80% of community members indicated agreement that the welfare of animals is not just about the absence of harm to them



84%

84% of participants agreed that rural industries have an obligation to ensure a high level of welfare for animals in their care



84%

84% of Australians feel strongly that food produced in Australia adheres to strict food safety standards

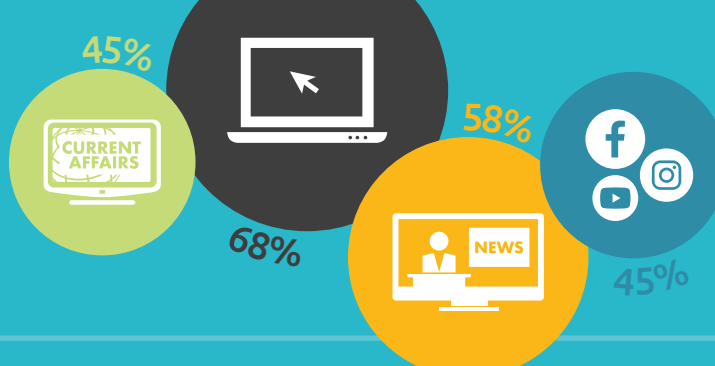


52%

52% of Australians were concerned about the use of technologies such as genetic modification to increase the productivity of rural industries

## Information sources

The community's top three information sources are the internet, television news, television current affairs and social media.



## Priorities for industry



Be responsive to community attitudes and communicate any changes



Proactively engage on areas of community concern, and in turn respond to breaking issues quickly and openly



Demonstrate responsiveness through action



Respond productively and consistently



Use popular channels to communicate action and engage directly with the community, particularly on issues of uncertainty

## How can industry do this? ?



Map industry practices and critically review them against the key drivers of trust



Understand your industry's environmental impact and identify strategies and plans to mitigate those impacts



Build a regular process for listening to community concerns around environmental impacts and other issues, acknowledging these concerns, and responding to them proactively rather than defensively



Become more proactive in the areas the community identified they are uncertain about

### About the program

The Community Trust in Rural Industries Program is a cross-sector initiative involving ten Rural Research and Development Corporations, the National Farmers' Federation and the NSW Department of Primary Industries to build the capacity of food and fibre industries to productively engage with the community.

The Program is examining the issues impacting on food and fibre industries and how these industries relate to each other in the minds of community members. It involves community research by Voconiq amongst a sample of more than 6,000 Australians over a three-year period to provide insights on cross-sector issues and best practice approaches. This fact sheet outlines the results from Year One research.

Data collection for the community survey was completed between the 2nd of December 2019 and the 30th of January 2020. Of the 7,329 surveys that were completed, 6,461 were included for analysis after data cleaning.

Voconiq is an Australian data science company built on a platform of research developed by Australia's national science agency, CSIRO.

For further information please contact Virginia Johnstone, Project Manager, on 0430 793 875.