

Appendix B: Mail-survey Instruments

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS FROM AGRICULTURE: THE MINNESOTA SURVEY

RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY:

The Department of Economics and the Center for
Environmental, Earth, and Space Studies
Bemidji State University
Bemidji, MN 56601

SUPPORTING AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS LISTED ON BACK COVER

This booklet should be completed by an adult member of your household. Please complete the survey as soon as possible and return it in the stamped, preaddressed envelope provided. It is very important that you answer every question. The best answer is the one that most closely reflects the attitudes or values of your household. Your answers will be confidential and your name will never be associated with the information you provide. (If you are a single person living with roommates, please consider yourself as the household.)

If you have any questions, please write or call Dr. Patrick Welle, Bemidji State University, Bemidji, MN 56601. The phone number is (218) 755-4103. The e-mail address is: pwelle@bemidjistate.edu.

First, we would like to make sure we are getting the opinions of Minnesotans from all parts of the state.

Q-1 In what county do you live? _____ **COUNTY**

Q-2 In what size community do you presently live? (Circle the number.)

- 1 FARM OR RURAL AREA (UNDER 2,500 PEOPLE)**
- 2 SMALL TOWN (2,500 TO UNDER 10,000 PEOPLE)**
- 3 SMALL CITY (10,000 TO UNDER 50,000 PEOPLE)**
- 4 MEDIUM CITY (50,000 TO UNDER 100,000 PEOPLE)**
- 5 LARGE CITY (100,000 PEOPLE OR MORE)**

Q-3 What is the total number of years you have lived in Minnesota?
_____ **YEARS**

Q-4 Are you eligible to vote in Minnesota? (Circle the number.)

- 1 YES**
- 2 NO**

The next eight statements are about programs that the State of Minnesota spends money on. Households like yours pay for policies to fund these programs through taxes or higher prices for products. Keeping in mind that there is a limit to what we can afford to spend, please indicate whether you think we should spend a **great deal less money, somewhat less money, the same amount of money, somewhat more money or a great deal more money** than we currently spend. (Circle the number.)

In the future, we should spend:	great deal less money	somewhat less money	same amount of money	somewhat more money	great deal more money	not sure
---------------------------------	------------------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------------	----------------------------	------------------------------	-----------------

Q-5 Making highways safer	1	2	3	4	5	NS
Q-6 Reducing water pollution	1	2	3	4	5	NS
Q-7 Providing low-income housing	1	2	3	4	5	NS
Q-8 Building new state prisons	1	2	3	4	5	NS
Q-9 Improving K-12 education	1	2	3	4	5	NS
Q-10 Assisting the elderly	1	2	3	4	5	NS
Q-11 Maintaining state parks	1	2	3	4	5	NS
Q-12 Reducing air pollution	1	2	3	4	5	NS

These are just a few of the Minnesota programs that cost households like yours money. Many people support these programs and may also support lower taxes. Sometimes we have to make tough choices among them. Government officials who have to make these decisions often have little or no information about how people like you view these tradeoffs. This study is an opportunity for Minnesota citizens to state their views.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAM

In this study, the program involves the effects of different farming methods on:

- the soil
- water for drinking, fishing, and swimming
- flooding
- habitat for birds and wildlife, and
- potential climate change.

Policymakers are considering programs that will provide financial incentives for farmers to use methods that increase the environmental benefits from agriculture.

Any farmer with land where it is possible to adopt certain conservation practices would be eligible. Participation by farmers would be strictly voluntary. The financial incentives to farmers could take the form of direct payments or tax reductions. The payments (or tax reductions) would increase for greater conservation results achieved, depending upon the financial limitations of the program.

Next please read the colored sheet inserted in this booklet. It contains descriptions of the environmental effects of various agricultural practices. Please consider this information in determining whether or not you would favor a proposal to pay farmers to use farming practices that benefit the environment. After reading the insert you will be asked to vote on the proposal in Q-13.

Please check this space ____ after you have read the information on the colored insert and before voting in Q-13.

Q-13 If this farming program would cost households like yours \$_____ every year for the foreseeable future, would you vote “For” or “Against” it?

- 1 ***FOR, I would vote yes on the proposal.***
 - 2 ***AGAINST, I would vote no on the proposal.***
- IF FOR** _____ **IF AGAINST, go to Q-14B on next page** _____

Q14A We would like to know why you would be for the proposal. Please use the space below to describe reasons you would vote for the proposal.

Q-14A1 Given the reasons you stated above for favoring the proposal, please list the reason that is most important to you. _____

Q15A What if the cost per year to your household was higher than the dollar amount shown in Q-13? Is there a higher annual cost your household would be willing to pay and still favor the proposal?

- 1 ***YES, the highest cost my household would be willing to pay is \$_____ per year.*** (Please write in the highest cost your household would be willing to pay per year, for the foreseeable future.)
- 2 ***NO, the amount shown in Q-13 is the highest amount my household would be willing to pay.***

SKIP TWO PAGES AND CONTINUE WITH Q-16.

THIS PAGE IS ONLY FOR THOSE WHO ANSWERED NO TO Q-13. (IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO Q-13, CONTINUE WITH Q-16.)

Q-14B What if the cost per year to your household was lower than the dollar amount shown in Q-13? Is there a lower cost your household would be willing to pay each year at which you would favor the proposal?

- 1 ***YES, there is a lower cost to my household at which I would favor the proposal.*** (Please write in the highest cost your household would be willing to pay per year, for the foreseeable future: \$ _____.)

 - 2 ***NO, I would oppose the proposal even if it had no cost to my household.***
- If NO, turn the page and continue with Q-15N on next page. _____

IF YES

Q-15B We would like to know why you would be for the proposal. Please use the space below to describe reasons you would vote for the proposal.

Q-15B1 Given the reasons you stated above for favoring the proposal, please list the reason that is most important to you. _____

SKIP ONE PAGE AND CONTINUE WITH Q-16.

THIS PAGE IS ONLY FOR THOSE PEOPLE WHO WOULD OPPOSE THE PROPOSAL EVEN IF IT HAD NO COST TO THEIR HOUSEHOLDS.

Q-15N We would like to know why you would oppose the proposal. Please use the space below to describe reasons you would oppose the proposal.

Q-15N1 Given the reasons you stated above for opposing the proposal, please list the reason that is most important to you. _____

PLEASE CONTINUE ON THE NEXT PAGE WITH Q-16.

The colored insert described expected results of the proposal in:

- * reduced soil erosion,
- * improved quality of drinking water and quality of lakes and streams,
- * reduced flooding,
- * increased habitat for birds and wildlife, and
- * reduced releases of greenhouse gases.

We understand that people have different levels of knowledge about these effects. The following questions are intended to identify different views on these effects and how these views may affect people's decisions in voting.

Q-16 How effective do you think the proposal to reward environmentally beneficial farming practices would be?

- 1 ***MOSTLY EFFECTIVE***
- 2 ***SOMEWHAT EFFECTIVE***
- 3 ***NOT VERY EFFECTIVE***
- 4 ***NOT EFFECTIVE AT ALL***

Q-17 Do you feel the program would be much **MORE** effective in any of these areas than the expected results stated on the colored insert?

- 1 ***NO***
- 2 ***YES*** IF YES, please list below the areas where you think the program would be much more effective than stated.

Q-18 Do you feel the program would be much **LESS** effective in any of these areas than the expected results stated on the colored insert?

- 1 ***NO***
- 2 ***YES*** IF YES, please list below the areas where you think the program would be much less effective than stated.

Q-19 Do you believe your household would have to pay higher prices for some foods if this policy is enacted?

- 1 ***YES***
- 2 ***NO***

Q-20 Do you believe your household would have to pay higher taxes or receive lower rebates if this policy is enacted?

- 1 YES**
- 2 NO**

Q-21 Do you believe your household would have to pay roughly the dollar amount shown in Q-13 in higher prices for products and higher taxes every year for the foreseeable future if this proposal is enacted?

- 1 YES**
- 2 NO**

Q-22 How much of the time do you think the Minnesota state government can be trusted to do what is right in terms of environmental policy?

- 1 ALWAYS**
- 2 MOST OF THE TIME**
- 3 SOME OF THE TIME**
- 4 ALMOST NEVER**
- 5 NEVER**

Q-23 How often do people in your household go fishing?

- 1 ONCE A YEAR OR LESS**
- 2 A FEW TIMES A YEAR**
- 3 ABOUT ONCE A MONTH, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**
- 4 TWO OR THREE TIMES A MONTH, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**
- 5 ABOUT ONCE A WEEK, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**
- 6 MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE YEAR**

Q-24 How often do people in your household go fishing for trout in Minnesota rivers and streams?

- 1 ONCE A YEAR OR LESS**
- 2 A FEW TIMES A YEAR**
- 3 ABOUT ONCE A MONTH, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE SEASON**
- 4 TWO OR THREE TIMES A MONTH, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE SEASON**
- 5 ABOUT ONCE A WEEK, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE SEASON**
- 6 MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK, ON AVERAGE THROUGHOUT THE SEASON**

Q-25 How often do people in your household go bird watching or wildlife watching?

- 1 ***ONCE A YEAR OR LESS***
- 2 ***A FEW TIMES A YEAR***
- 3 ***ABOUT ONCE A MONTH, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE YEAR***
- 4 ***TWO OR THREE TIMES A MONTH, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE YEAR***
- 5 ***ABOUT ONCE A WEEK, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE YEAR***
- 6 ***MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE YEAR***

Q-26 How often do people in your household go hunting for game birds?

- 1 ***LESS THAN ONCE A YEAR***
- 2 ***ONCE DURING THE SEASON***
- 2 ***A FEW TIMES DURING THE SEASON***
- 3 ***ABOUT ONCE A WEEK THROUGHOUT THE SEASON***
- 4 ***MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK THROUGHOUT THE SEASON***

Q-27 How often do people in your household swim in lakes or rivers?

- 1 ***ONCE A YEAR OR LESS***
- 2 ***A FEW TIMES A YEAR***
- 3 ***TWO OR THREE TIMES A MONTH, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER***
- 4 ***ABOUT ONCE A WEEK, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER***
- 5 ***MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK, ON AVERAGE, THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER***

Q-28 How difficult would it be for your household to pay \$_____ per year for the foreseeable future if this proposal passes.

- 1 ***VERY DIFFICULT***
- 2 ***SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT***
- 3 ***NOT TOO DIFFICULT***
- 4 ***NOT DIFFICULT AT ALL***
- 5 ***NOT SURE***

Now that you have had a chance to think more about this proposal to reward various farming practices, we would like you to consider how definite your vote would be.

Q-29 How definite would you be in voting “For” or “Against” the proposal if it would cost your household \$_____ every year for the foreseeable future?

- 1 ***DEFINITELY FOR***
- 2 ***PROBABLY FOR***
- 3 ***NOT SURE***
- 4 ***PROBABLY AGAINST***
- 5 ***DEFINITELY AGAINST***

For each statement in the following series, please state whether you agree or disagree with the statements about various aspects of farming. Please state your opinion by circling the number of the appropriate response option:

STRONGLY AGREE = 1, AGREE = 2, NEUTRAL = 3, DISAGREE = 4, STRONGLY DISAGREE = 5 and NOT SURE = NS.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NOT SURE
Q-30						
a. I would like to see more family farms in Minnesota.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
b. I would like to see more people on the land to maintain the viability of small rural communities.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
c. I would like to see small farm-related businesses survive such as hardware stores, repair shops, and seed dealers in rural communities.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
d. I would like to see affordable health care plans provided to farmers and their families.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
e. I would like to see retirement plan options provided to farmers and their families.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
f. I would like to see reduced sedimentation and pollution in the Minnesota River.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
g. I would like to see reduced sedimentation and pollution in the Mississippi River.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
h. I would like to see farmland returned to its native condition, such as prairie, wetland, woodland, or savanna.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
i. I would like to see rural communities characterized by strong relationships between neighbors.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
j. I would like to see vibrant schools in rural communities.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
k. I would like to see vibrant churches in rural communities.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
l. I would like to see fewer feedlots in Minnesota.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
m. I would like to see better management of existing feedlots.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
n. I would like to see increased employment options for rural residents.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
o. I would like to see average farm size decrease in the state.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
p. I would like to see decreased use of fossil fuel on farms.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
q. I would like to see more landowners live in the community where they own land.	1	2	3	4	5	NS
r. I would like to see reduced barriers for young people to begin farming.	1	2	3	4	5	NS

Background Information

The following questions about your background will also help us to compare your answers with those of other people. All of your responses are strictly confidential and anonymous.

Q-31 Including yourself, what is the total number of people living in your household?

_____ **PEOPLE**

Q-32 How many people who live in this household are younger than 18?

_____ **PEOPLE UNDER 18**

Q-33 What is the highest year of school you completed or the highest degree you received?

Grade School High School

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

- 12 **HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENT (GED)**
- 13 **SOME COLLEGE OR TECHNICAL SCHOOL (NO DEGREE)**
- 14 **TECHNICAL SCHOOL DEGREE**
- 15 **ASSOCIATES DEGREE**
- 16 **COLLEGE BACHELORS DEGREE**
- 17 **SOME GRADUATE WORK**
- 18 **GRADUATE DEGREE (MASTERS, DOCTORATE. ETC.)**

Q-34 How old are you? _____ **YEARS OLD**

Q-35 What is your sex?

- 1 **MALE**
- 2 **FEMALE**

Q-36 How do you identify yourself by race?

- 1 **WHITE**
- 2 **BLACK**
- 3 **HISPANIC**
- 4 **AMERICAN INDIAN**
- 5 **ASIAN**
- 6 **OTHER**

Q-37 What was your approximate household income before taxes in 1999?
(Include all sources of income received by your household.)

- | | | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| <i>1</i> | <i>UNDER \$5,000</i> | <i>12</i> | <i>\$55,000 to \$59,999</i> |
| <i>2</i> | <i>\$5,000 to \$9,999</i> | <i>13</i> | <i>\$60,000 to \$64,999</i> |
| <i>3</i> | <i>\$10,000 to \$14,999</i> | <i>14</i> | <i>\$65,000 to \$69,999</i> |
| <i>4</i> | <i>\$15,000 to \$19,999</i> | <i>15</i> | <i>\$70,000 to \$74,999</i> |
| <i>5</i> | <i>\$20,000 to \$24,999</i> | <i>16</i> | <i>\$75,000 to \$79,999</i> |
| <i>6</i> | <i>\$25,000 to \$29,999</i> | <i>17</i> | <i>\$80,000 to \$84,999</i> |
| <i>7</i> | <i>\$30,000 to \$34,999</i> | <i>18</i> | <i>\$85,000 to \$89,999</i> |
| <i>8</i> | <i>\$35,000 to \$39,999</i> | <i>19</i> | <i>\$90,000 to \$94,999</i> |
| <i>9</i> | <i>\$40,000 to \$44,999</i> | <i>20</i> | <i>\$95,000 to \$99,999</i> |
| <i>10</i> | <i>\$45,000 to \$49,999</i> | <i>21</i> | <i>\$100,000 OR MORE</i> |
| <i>11</i> | <i>\$50,000 to \$54,999</i> | | |

The next two questions deal with your involvement with farming.

Q-38 How dependent is your household's livelihood or income on farming?

- 1* *VERY DEPENDENT ON FARMING*
- 2* *SOMEWHAT DEPENDENT*
- 3* *NOT VERY DEPENDENT*
- 4* *NOT DEPENDENT ON FARMING AT ALL*

Q-39 How dependent is your community on farming?

- 1* *VERY DEPENDENT ON FARMING*
- 2* *SOMEWHAT DEPENDENT*
- 3* *NOT VERY DEPENDENT*
- 4* *NOT DEPENDENT ON FARMING AT ALL*

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO TELL US ABOUT YOUR VIEWS ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF AGRICULTURE? IF SO, PLEASE USE THE SPACE ON THESE TWO PAGES FOR THAT PURPOSE.

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS STUDY!

Thank you for your time and effort in answering these questions. We hope the experience has been a pleasant one for you. Your answers will help us gain a better understanding of the economic trade-offs involved in proposals to address the multiple benefits from agriculture.

*Please return the completed booklet at your earliest convenience in the enclosed, stamped, return envelope. Please return the answer booklet only. Please **DO NOT** enclose the colored insert as this will add weight to the return mailing and cause it to exceed the postage provided on the stamped, return envelope.*

Funding for this project approved by the Minnesota Legislature, 1999 Minnesota Laws, Ch. 231, Sec. 15, Subd. 7(n) as recommended by the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources from the future resources fund.

Additional funding provided by the Joyce Foundation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program. This material is based upon work supported by the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Nebraska – Lincoln, under Cooperative Agreement number 99-COOP-1-7686. Any opinions, findings, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

“Economic Analysis of Agriculture for Multiple Benefits” is a cooperative project between the Land Stewardship Project, the Institute for Agricultural and Trade Policy, the University of Minnesota, and Bemidji State University.