Trust In Food™
Deploying Farm Journal’s TRUST, DATA, and REACH to make regenerative ag dollars work smarter

Actionable Human Dimensions Insights
- Mixed methods research; data collection and analysis
- Readiness segmentation using rich 1st party data
- Intervention program design assessment and strategy
- Barrier, Pathway, & Trigger identification

Mainstreaming Sustainability
- Demystifying sustainable ag for producers
- Influencing producer culture & social norms
- Producer- trusted custom content, education, outreach

Last Mile Activation
- Producer sign-up, show-up, & enrollment programs
- Behavior change programming
- Peer groups, expert panels
- Helpdesk, resource hub
America’s Conservation Ag Movement

The largest public-private partnership dedicated to sustainable ag at the national, regional and local levels.
“We are reaching the stage where the problems that we must solve are going to become insoluble without computers. I do not fear computers. I fear the lack of them.”

Isaac Asimov, “The Age of Miracle Chips”, TIME, February 1978
farmers are human
to change farming, we must change humans

but humans are complex

Photo: Lance Cheung, USDA
Farmer Perspectives on Data Report

Survey Background

• Research collaboration between Trust In Food and The Sustainability Consortium, designed to generate insights into producer perspectives on data collection, sharing, management, and digital ag

• TSC research shows almost half of food companies and retailers could not determine the farm-level management practices for their agricultural inputs

Last year’s report cover
Survey Sample

• **610** total completed surveys from **42** states
• Age breakdown
  • 18-34 = **2%**  |  35-64 = **59%**  |  65+ = **40%**

Network Manager in front of broadband infrastructure supported by USDA grants in rural Kansas. Photo Credit: USDA / Preston Keres
Survey Sample

Geographic Breakdown of Respondents

- Midwest Region - 48%
- Plains Region - 26%
- Atlantic Region - 12%
- West Region - 11%
- South Region - 4%
Key Findings

• There is a significant digital gap.
  • 62% don't rely on Farm Management Information Systems (FMIS) exclusively
  • 28% said primary data storage method is paper/analog
  • 50% of those who don’t use digital have ever considered transitioning

• With cost barriers addressed, precision technology use could increase significantly.
  • 79% would start or increase use of precision farm tech if they could acquire the equipment needed (software, sensors, etc.) at no charge or discount

• Satisfaction with FMIS outputs is mediocre.
  • 47% of FMIS users report being entirely satisfied with its outputs; 6% entirely dissatisfied.
Key Findings

- **Trusted advisors play a critical role, but those supporting the digital transition are sparse.**
  - Only 52% said they have a trusted advisor who could answer questions related to FMIS and digital ag.
  - But those who do are 24% more likely to use FMIS.

- **Farmers have transparency concerns.**
  - 65% said their customers do not have a right to know how the crop was produced; this sentiment is shared equally among FMIS users and non-users.

- **Trust issues are significant, but lenders are the most trusted data holders.**
  - 73% of respondents don’t trust private companies with their data.
  - 58% don’t trust the government.
  - 71% do trust their financial institutions with their data.

- **Significant differences in FMIS usage exist across crop marketing outlets.**
  - Those who primarily market to a food or fuel company are 10-28% more likely to
Barriers / Challenges

Barriers farmers face in collecting data (N=610)

- Cost = 59%
- Lack of training or understanding = 53%
- Lack of equipment / technology needed = 50%
- Lack of time needed = 45%
- Poor data network connectivity = 44%
- There is no demand for my data = 37%
- There is no benefit in collecting more than I am = 23%
Barriers / Challenges Cont.

Barriers farmers face sharing data (N=610)

- Fear of additional regulation = 69%
- Privacy concerns = 69%
- Lack of training or understanding = 52%
- Lack of time needed = 48%
- Collection is a problem, making sharing difficult = 45%
- There is no benefit in sharing more than I am = 41%
- There is no demand for my data = 40%
- Poor data network connectivity = 40%
- I fear being penalized because of my data by a bank, landowner or other group = 35%
Future Research Opportunities

• How we can meet the needs of emerging carbon markets through data and FMIS adoption
• How to better empower trusted advisors and their networks to promote adoption
• What is the role of crop buyers (all types) in FMIS adoption and data collection
• How to best empower the next generation of farm management before/during generational transition