

Researchers at South Dakota State University (SDSU) conducted producer surveys in the eastern part of South Dakota in both 2018 and 2021. Producers could take the survey online or via mail and were asked questions about their farm, farming practices including usage of soil and water conservation practices, and their values.

Using publicly available addresses from the Farm Service Agency, a random sample of 3,000 producers were sent the survey in 2018. 650 were ineligible, and 708 responded to the survey for a response rate of 30%. In 2021, the same producers who took the survey in 2018 were asked to take a follow up survey. 94 were ineligible, and 350 responded for a 59% response rate. This factsheet shows results based on the 2018 data. Responses were very stable over time, but given the larger number of respondents in 2018 this data is used. Our focus here is only on the environment and community questions.

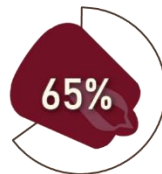
Farmers were asked 15 items regarding their *sense of place*, or their multifaceted connections to the land they farm, including the dimensions of attachment (emotional connection to a place), identity (see themselves in a place), and dependence (instrumental indispensability of a place). Farmers were also asked about their *conservation ethic*, or the responsibility they feel to conserve the soil and water resources on the land they farm to various social groups (e.g., myself, neighbors, future generations) and at various spatial scales (e.g., locally, watershed, country, etc.). The purpose of asking these questions was to be able to examine the role of sense of place and conservation ethic in farmers' usage of conservation behaviors.

## South Dakota producers expressed high levels of farm attachment and identity



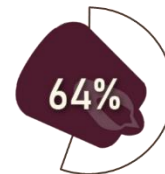
### PLACE ATTACHMENT

Most (67%) farmers ***strongly agreed*** with the statement "I am ***happiest*** when I am on the land I farm".



### PLACE IDENTITY

Most (65%) farmers ***strongly agreed*** with the statement "The land I farm is an important part of who I am".



### SOCIAL IDENTITY

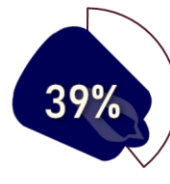
Over half (64%) of farmers ***strongly agreed*** that they want their farmland to stay in their family.

## Farmers expressed lower levels of place and economic dependence.



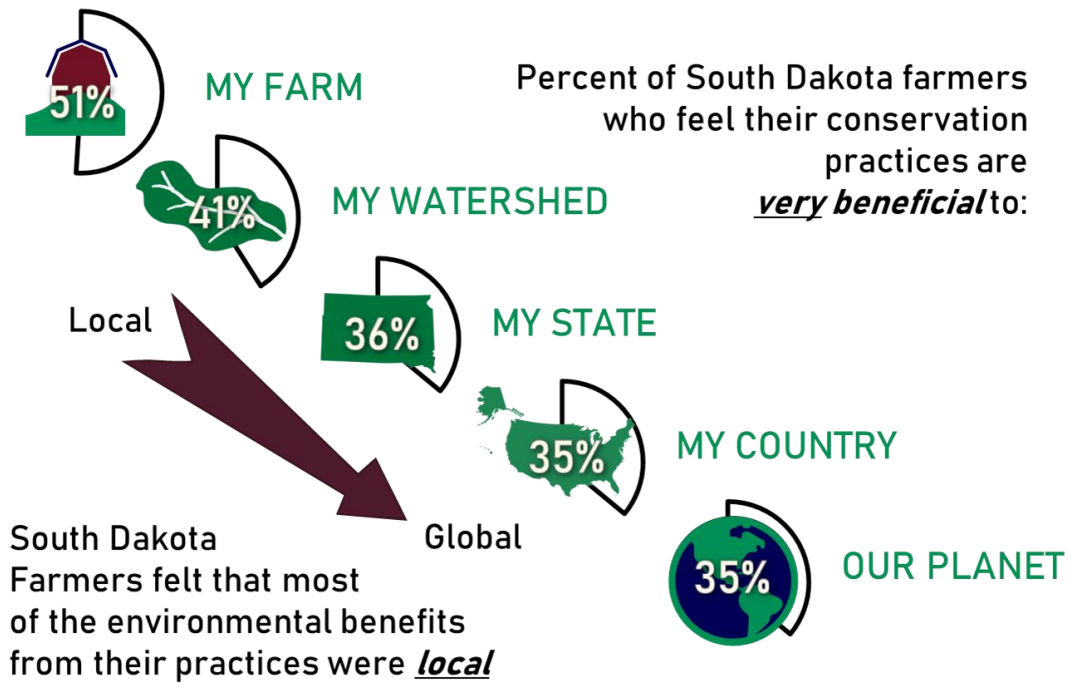
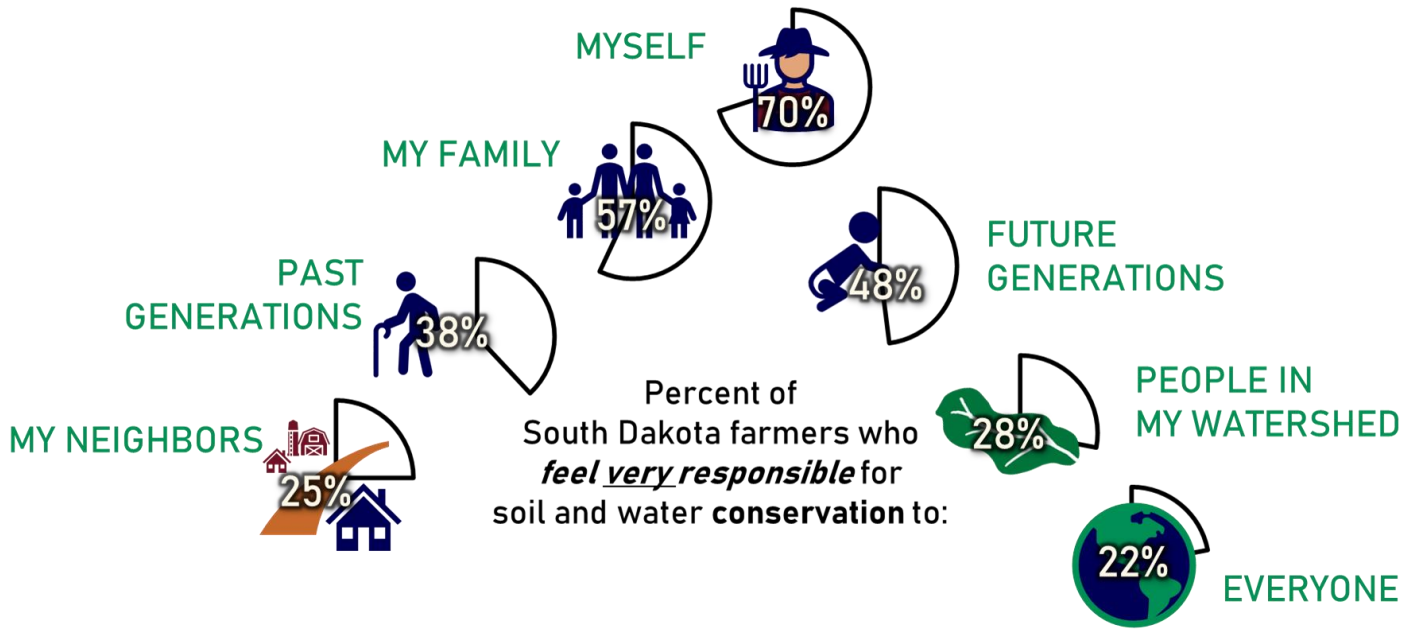
### ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

About half (55%) of farmers ***strongly agreed*** that "The land I farm is important to my economic well-being".



### PLACE DEPENDENCE

Fewer (39%) farmers ***strongly agreed*** that "Even though there might be better places to farm, I would rather farm in the area where I farm than anywhere else".



For more information about this survey conducted with South Dakota farmers, please visit SDSU Open Prairie (<https://openprairie.sdstate.edu/sdfarmsurvey>).

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