

Wyandot County, OH Business Retention & Expansion Program

2013 Final Report



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



Wyandot County

Building a Stronger Community

Economic Development



Wyandot County, OH Business Retention & Expansion Program Final Report December 2013

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Introduction

The retention of local business and an ongoing effort to help them grow is a common priority for local public officials and community leaders. The implementation of a Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) program has become a staple for municipal-, county-, and regional-based economic development organizations. As stated in the 2006 Wyandot County BR&E Final Report, the best “barometers” of how well the community functions as a place to do business and a place to live and work are existing businesses and the existing workforce. Research shows that in Ohio, an average net job growth of 70% comes from existing businesses, and that number increases to as high as 86% in rural areas.¹

Existing businesses also play a major role in the attraction of new business to an area. Satisfied existing businesses can serve as a community’s best ambassadors when recruiting new firms as well as being a source of leads when seeking new firms to recruit.²

Due to these proven facts, BR&E programs were conducted in Wyandot County in 1996, 2006, and annually since 2008. Starting in 2008 the local BR&E program was established as a result of the partnership between the Wyandot County Office of Economic Development and Ohio State University Extension. The Wyandot County Commissioners and the Regional Growth Partnership also provided assistance to the 2013 BR&E effort.

¹ Kraybill, D. 1995. Retention and Expansion First. *Ohio's Challenge* 8(2):4-7 [Department of Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH].

² Morse, G. 2004. *The Retention and Expansion of Existing Businesses*. CARDI-Cornell, Ithaca, NY.
http://www.cdtoolbox.net/economic_development/000195.html.

Program Goals

Long term goals of the Wyandot County BR&E program remain the same as the initial program offering in 1996:

- **To implement a plan for action for the retention and expansion of existing businesses and the workforce**
- **To increase the competitiveness of local businesses**
- **To create a narration of the local economy**

Implementation

The Wyandot County Business Retention and Expansion program used a combination of methods to collect data in 2013. As in recent years, the Wyandot County Office of Economic Development Executive Director (WCOED) / Wyandot County Community Development Educator served as the local BR&E practitioner. The BR&E survey was made available on the WCOED website and could be emailed or mailed to participating employers.

Initially, a notification letter was sent to 25 local businesses, which explained the program, that the establishment had been selected to participate, and how the BR&E survey could be completed online prior to a follow-up visit. Less than 10% of the businesses mailed initial letters completed the online survey. The low response rate led to follow up calls with these businesses

that then completed the online questionnaire. After the first round of 25 selected businesses were visited, pre-notification letters were also sent to the remaining selected businesses to participate thereafter. The remainder of BR&E participants was contacted directly by phone to take part in the program.

The Wyandot County Commissioners also joined the BR&E practitioner on a visit roughly once a month. The inclusion of the commissioners enhanced one of the primary facets of the BR&E program, which is to open direct lines of communication to local policy and community leaders.

Program Benefits and Outcomes

The 2013 Wyandot County BR&E program was completed through the efforts of many organizations other than the before mentioned partnership between the Wyandot County Office of Economic Development and Ohio State University Extension. The Northwest Ohio region JobsOhio partner, the Regional Growth Partnership, also provided funding to the local program in exchange for the collection of specific information for the state-level BR&E effort.

Data from the BR&E effort will be used to assess the local economy and provide a detailed understanding to community leaders, public leaders, and economic developers of the concerns faced by their local employers. This data provides evidence-based information that these individuals and organizations can develop efforts around to address identified areas that

need improvement.

The 2013 Wyandot County BR&E program led to the identification of two different employers who were facing restraints to potential expansion projects created by a lack of needed infrastructure. This led to an effort by the WCOED to work with its regional- and state-levels partners in identifying available assistance to put the needed infrastructure into place. As of November 2013, grant funds totaling \$695,000 were approved for the two projects with the anticipation that the third and final funding source would be approved before year-end.

This effort resulted in sources of funding that had not previously been used in their respective municipalities, and the combination of funding sources will result in no financial burden to the respective municipalities. These two projects, slated to be done in 2014, will not only result in updated infrastructure for the immediate area, but will lead to new job creation and investment in the county. The new infrastructure will also serve as an attraction tool for prospective businesses to relocate in the project's immediate area.

Other Wyandot County organizations also benefited from the 2013 BR&E program effort. The Wyandot County Health Alliance is using baseline data gathered through BR&E surveys to identify the local workplace wellness programs in place. This data will then be used to assess how those businesses lacking wellness programs could implement an effort already being successfully used by another local business.

Wyandot County, OH Demographic Overview³

- In 2012, Wyandot County had a population of [22,607](#). Since the year 2000, the population growth of Wyandot County was -1.3 percent ([22,908](#) in 2000).
- The median value of a home in Wyandot County in 2012 was [\\$105,200](#). [95.1%](#) of the total [9,892](#) housing units were occupied, and [71%](#) of those households were owner-occupied.
- Wyandot County’s median age was [41.7](#). The U.S. median age was [37.3](#).
- The average county household size was [2.37 people](#). [55.2%](#) of residents are married with children. [12.8%](#) have children, but are single.
- The unemployment rate in Wyandot County was [6.1%](#) and the U.S. average was [7.0%](#) (October 2013).
- Of the population aged 25 and older, 89.1% had a high school diploma or higher degree (85.9% across the U.S.), and 12.4% had a bachelor’s degree or higher (28.6% across the U.S.).
- The average commute time for those living in Wyandot County was [23.7 minutes](#). The national average was [25.5 minutes](#).

	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Total population	22,615	11,541,175	311,609,369
Male population	49.4%	48.9%	49.2%
Female population	50.6%	51.1%	50.8%
Median age (years)	41.7	39.0	37.3
Total households	9,408	4,542,141	115,241,776
Average household size	2.37	2.47	2.63
Percent high school graduate or higher	89.1%	88.5%	85.9%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	12.4%	24.9%	28.6%

³ Information obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2012 American Community Survey <http://factfinder2.census.gov> and Ohio Labor Market Information, Civilian Labor Force Estimates <http://ohiolmi.com/asp/laus/vbLAUS.htm>, which reflect the most current information on Wyandot County, OH.

Economy in Wyandot County, OH⁴

ECONOMY	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Civilian labor force	12,103	5,832,091	156,811,681
Unemployment Rate	6.1%	7.0%	7.0%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	23.7	23.0	25.5
Per capita income (dollars)	22,545	25,395	27,385

POPULATION BY OCCUPATION	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	25.3%	34.1%	36.0%
Service occupations	17.7%	18.0%	18.2%
Sales and office occupations	16.5%	24.6%	24.7%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	11.7%	7.7%	9.1%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	28.8%	15.5%	12.0%

ESTIMATED HOUSEHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Less than \$10,000	5.7%	8.3%	7.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	6.6%	6.1%	5.6%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	13.1%	12.1%	11.0%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	11.3%	11.3%	10.5%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	17.5%	14.7%	13.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	20.8%	18.7%	18.1%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	14.7%	11.7%	11.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	7.6%	10.8%	12.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.3%	3.4%	4.6%
\$200,000 or more	1.2%	2.9%	4.5%
Median household income (dollars)	45,483	47,030	51,771

⁴ Information obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2012 American Community Survey <http://factfinder2.census.gov> and Ohio Labor Market Information, Civilian Labor Force Estimates <http://ohiolmi.com/asp/laus/vbLAUS.htm>, which reflect the most current information on Wyandot County, OH.

Cost of Living in Wyandot County, OH⁵

COST OF LIVING	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Overall	89	91	100
Food	101	99	100
Utilities	101	101	100
Miscellaneous	101	99	100

- Cost of living indices are based on a U.S. average of 100. If Wyandot County scored above the cost of living index in any category it would indicate that local residents experience a cost of living above that of the U.S. average. Likewise, a cost of living index less than 100 in a category would indicate a cost of living below the U.S. average.
- Overall, the cost of living index for Wyandot County is 89.10.
- The total of all the cost of living categories were weighted subjectively for 2012, and were as follows: Housing (30%), food and groceries (15%), transportation (10%), utilities (6%), health care (7%), and miscellaneous expenses such as clothing, services, and entertainment (32%). State and local taxes are not included in any category.
- Although Wyandot County has a higher cost of living than the national average in the Food, Utilities, and Miscellaneous categories, the overall cost of living in Wyandot County is 10.9% below that of the U.S. average and 1.4% below that of the State of Ohio average.

⁵ Information obtained from Sperling's Best Places <http://www.bestplaces.net/>, which reflects the most relevant data for Wyandot County, OH.

BR&E Survey Results

Participant Information

The Wyandot County Business Retention and Expansion program was carried out from January through October. In January and March a total of 77 survey notification letters were mailed to potential program participants. Over that period of time, survey data was gathered from 31 local businesses. This resulted in a 40% response rate. The 31 responding businesses were also visited by the BR&E practitioner to further discuss their survey responses.

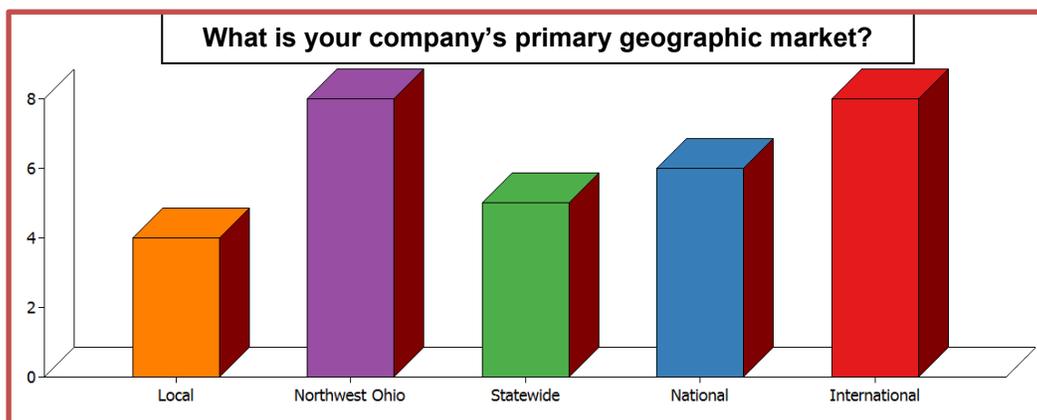
Of the 31 survey respondents, a vast majority (over 83%) had operated in Wyandot County for over 10 years. Out of the respondents, 45% were manufacturing businesses, 16% were retail operations, 13% were agricultural related businesses, 6% were construction related companies, 3% were utility / transportation related, 3% were service businesses, and 13% indicated they fell into an 'Other' industry category not provided on the survey.

Survey participants provided a good sampling of the various types of businesses located in

Wyandot County, as well as a good mix of other various aspects. Geographically, 74% of respondents were located in or around the City of Upper Sandusky, almost 13% were located in the vicinity of the Village of Carey, about 6.5% were not located in an incorporated city or village, and another 6.5% were located in an area unlisted on the survey.

In terms of the primary space occupied by survey respondents, almost 57% were located in an industrial/manufacturing facility, followed by 23% in a retail space, 13% in an office space, and 7% in warehouse space. 30 of the 31 respondents indicated they owned the space where their business was located.

Another area where respondents had varying basic characteristics was in their primary geographic markets. 25% of responding businesses had an international primary market, another 25% did business primarily in Northwest Ohio, 19% indicated a national market, 16% state-wide, and only 13% had a local primary geographic market. This varying degree of consumer base locations indicates a diverse range of customers for local Wyandot County businesses, and potentially makes for a stronger local economy when there are fluctuations in certain business sectors.



Growth Plans & Employment

The 2013 Business Retention & Expansion program identified a prospering local economy in many different ways. 75% of program participants reported their businesses were moving through a period of growth, while the remaining respondents reported their businesses were stable. Of the respondents who reported their company was growing; 80% reported growth in their number customers, 55% reported growth in their employment levels, and all reported growth in sales and revenues. This was a primary indicator that not only are local businesses seeing increased demand from their customers but their market share is increasing as well.

Many of these growing businesses also reported a recent expansion, renovation, or improvement within the last 5 years was completed and/or plans were devised for the future with no specific time frame in place. Only 25% reported having no recent or future plans for improvements.

Labor Force & Training

Employment level among respondents varied widely with the majority (48%) having fewer than 10 employees working at their business location. 16% of respondents had 11-20

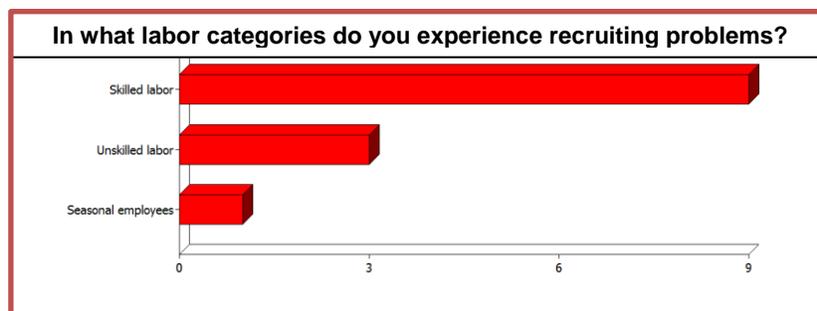
employees, 16% had 21 – 50 employees, 10% had 51 – 100 employees, and 10% had over 100 employees.

Most respondents noted a low employee turnover rate. 43% of respondents indicated the average length of employment at their location was 5-10 years, and 30% reported their average length as 10 years or more.

One of the top concerns noted in the 2013 business visits was the lack of available qualified talent in the area. Of the respondents who indicated difficulty in recruiting employees, 70% are having difficulty recruiting skilled labor positions. Of these positions, the primary job requirement (77%) was to have experience performing a similar job, while 22% required a technical certification.

The primary skills lacking in potential employees interviewed by all BR&E program respondents were (in order) mechanical skills, general skills (basic math, reading, writing, problem solving), and technical skills. Over 50% of respondents reported that their current employees were not in need of training; although technical skills and equipment operation training were seen as the two most needed types of training among current employees.

Only 28% of respondents indicated a current relationship with a college, university, or vocational school to help find and train talent.



View of Wyandot County

The 2013 BR&E program also identified characteristics of Wyandot County that lead to aiding and hindering business growth as well potential business attraction efforts in the immediate area. Local business owners and operators play a key role in dispersing information to peers regarding performing business in the area, which makes a positive view of the county by business leaders critical to economic growth.

80% of survey participants indicated a quality of life in Wyandot County that was good or excellent, while only 7% rated the quality of life as poor. When asked what their general opinion was of Wyandot County as a place to do business 56% responded it was good or excellent, while 13% reported poor or very poor. The remaining 30% ranked Wyandot County as average.

Respondents also indicated their top 3 reasons for locating or keeping their business in Wyandot County, which were (in order): location, access to customers, and access to suppliers. The access that Wyandot County's location provides to local businesses made it no surprise that when participants were asked what the top local services and amenities they were satisfied with their top response was the transportation infrastructure. The 2, 4-lane freeways, 9 state routes, and 3 rail lines intersecting Wyandot County are heavily relied upon and make it attractive to area businesses.

BR&E participants were also asked for the services and amenities with which they were most dissatisfied. High speed internet access far outranked all of the other responses to this question. In 2012, high speed internet access was the third top response to this question,

which indicates the availability of reliable, affordable, and high speed internet connectivity is becoming increasingly important to many types of businesses.

Action Plan

A primary objective of any Business Retention & Expansion program, outside of creating a narrative of the strengths and weaknesses in a local economy, is to identify a course of action for local community, public, and business leaders as well as economic development professionals. This action plan should work to address identified concerns from the collected BR&E data. Changes in the local economy will not take place in the short-term and therefore the action plan must also lay the groundwork for sustaining local economic prosperity.

The BR&E assessments done for Wyandot County in 1996, 2006, 2012, and 2013 have tended to yield data with many similarities. This data has maintained the importance of a few action plan objectives, which were derived after the initial implementation of the Wyandot County BR&E program. The differentiating trends between data from year-to-year also highlight new areas that should be targeted moving into the future. The changes in data derived in 2012 and 2013 have led to the creation of new objective for the 2013 action plan as well.

Objective One: Enhance and encourage cooperation between business leaders, government leaders, and education leaders to further the goals and purposes of the BR&E initiative.

Collaboration and cooperation among local leaders remains the number one factor that can produce and limit the success and

effectiveness of the BR&E program. This aspect becomes even more prevalent in a rural community such as Wyandot County. A gathering of resources and efforts from many individuals are necessary to disseminate and collect survey information as well as make company visits.

This cooperation also extends outside of actual data collection into carrying out the objectives defined by the BR&E program. Local policy and decision changes are made by a number of individuals. The more closely these individuals are exposed to the BR&E program and collected data, the more informed their decision making can become and ultimately the better they can serve their local businesses and residents.

Objective Two: Improve the quality and quantity of the local workforce to satisfy the current and anticipated future needs of local businesses.

This objective was stated in the original Wyandot County BR&E study conducted in 1996, and today maintains its relevance more than ever. Workforce remains to be one of the largest issues facing local employers, and Wyandot County is not alone on this issue. Organizations in many areas of Ohio and the nation face problems finding skilled and trained talent. Many labor market experts through examining available government data estimate as many as 25 million, or 47%, of all new job openings from 2010 to 2020 will fall into the 'middle-skills' range, which the U.S. is already seeing a shortage of qualified workers in.⁶

⁶ Kochan, T., Finegold, D., & Osterman, P. (2012). WHO CAN FIX THE "MIDDLE-SKILLS" GAP?. Harvard Business Review, 90(12), 81-90.

As the skills gap becomes more prevalent, the need to address the issue starting at the local level also becomes clearer. As stated earlier in this report, local business have difficulty recruiting skilled talent, but the majority also lack any relationship with local educational institutions that train the type of talent they seek. The garnering of new relationships between local industry and education as a direct means to convey the need for certain types of skilled talent, or exposing local students and school administrators to the types of positions in high demand by local employers are just a few instances of how the local skills gap can begin to be addressed.

Objective Three: Improve the current infrastructure necessary for local businesses to conduct their operations; including high speed internet access.

One of the most visible and differentiating concerns recognized by the 2013 BR&E program was the unsatisfactory view of high speed internet access availability in Wyandot County. This sentiment was resonated by many types of local businesses. 33% of the respondents who indicated they were dissatisfied with the local high speed internet were retail operations, and manufacturing, construction, and 'Other' industry sectors each comprised 22% of these respondents.

While there are areas of the county where the fastest bandwidth speeds available today can be had, many local businesses are unaware of the potential service that could be available to them. Increasing the awareness of this service, which is now a vital resource to local businesses will begin to address the concern raised in the 2013 BR&E responses. Asking future probing questions to better identify the reasons behind the concern over high speed

internet access will also enable local leaders to better address this issue.

Objective Four: Connect local business leaders to programs, services, and other resources available through local, State, and Federal agencies.

Another underlying reason for conducting a Business Retention & Expansion program in Wyandot County is to identify needed resources that can be brought to local businesses to help them prosper and grow. Local community leaders and economic development professionals have knowledge of these resources and programs from which local businesses can benefit. The direct line of communication that the BR&E program creates between business leaders and local leadership allows for the identification of programs to satisfy the local needs.

In 2013, the BR&E program identified two businesses whose expansion plans were hindered by a lack of needed infrastructure. Once this was communicated to local development and community leaders, an effort was made that brought in the needed outside resources to have these roadblocks to local business expansion addressed in the near future, which will lead to company growth, job growth, and increased investment in the Wyandot County community.

A strong BR&E program functions as an outlet of communication to community and policy leaders, which results in a more business- and growth-friendly environment for local industry.

Summary

The 2013 Business Retention & Expansion program in Wyandot County identified many positive attributes to the area that contribute to the longevity of its local businesses. More importantly, the data collected also identified concerns that provided local leadership with trending issues to address.

Local infrastructure plays a large part in local industry's decision to both locate and remain in Wyandot County. While the transportation infrastructure is viewed as a large positive, the increasing need for robust high speed internet connectivity has also come to the forefront as another piece of essential local infrastructure.

This year the BR&E program also displayed the increasing difficulty for local employers to find trained and skilled talent. This has been a reoccurring issue in past installments of the BR&E program, but local employers have begun to rank the quantity of needed employees in the 'very poor' category, which has not been previously seen.

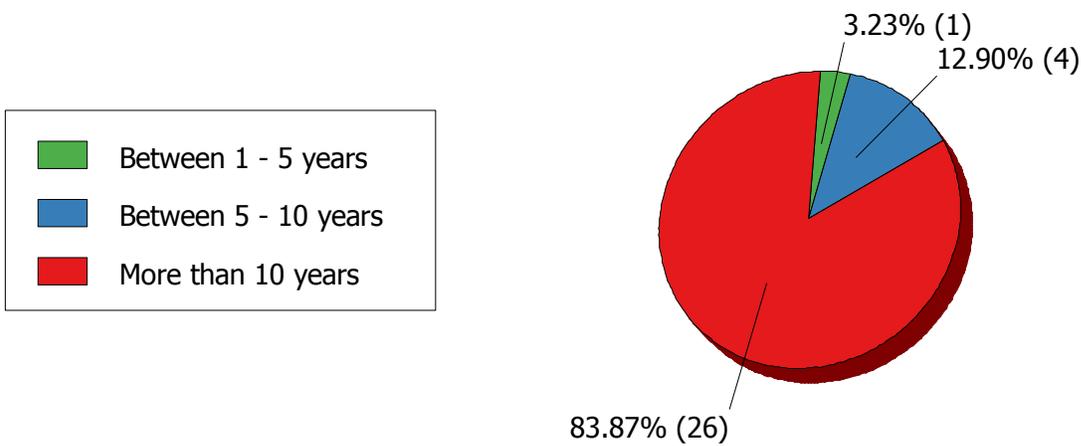
Appendix A: 2013 BR&E Sample Survey Results

Survey Results

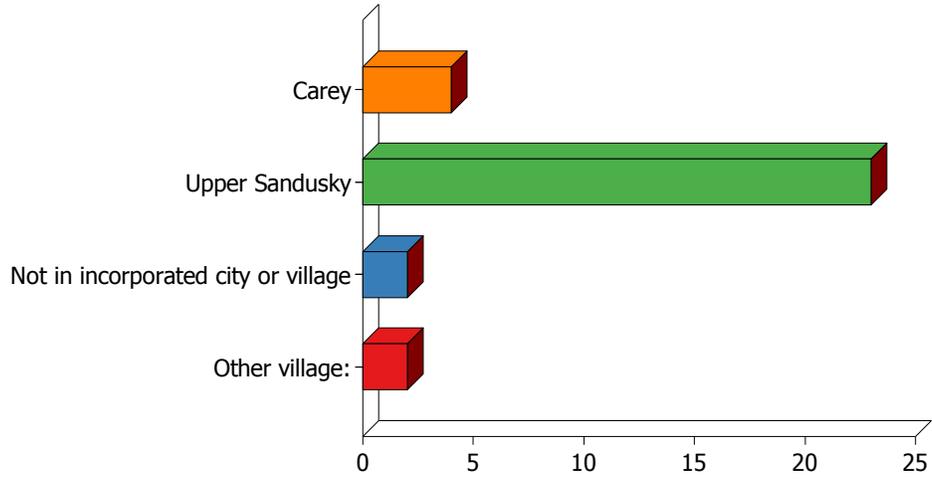
The following is a graphical depiction of the responses to each survey question. Additional comments provided by respondents, if any, are included after each graph.

Section - GENERAL INFORMATION

1. How long has your business been operating in Wyandot County?

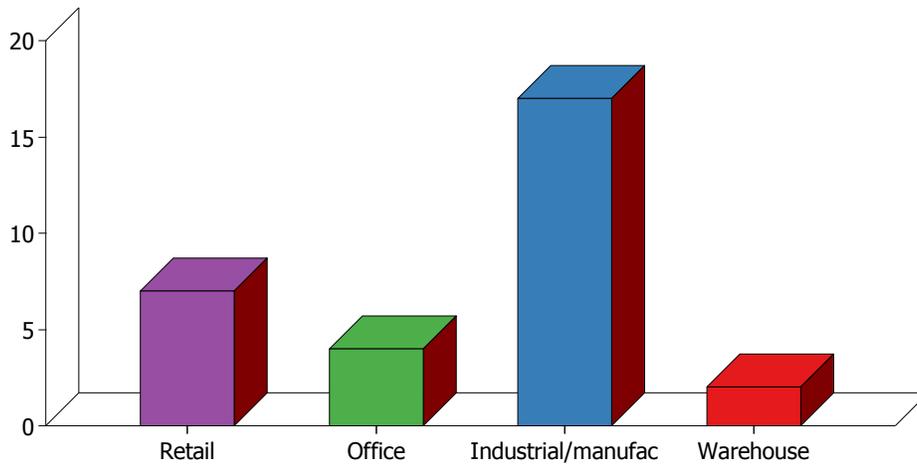


2. In which of the following areas is your business located?



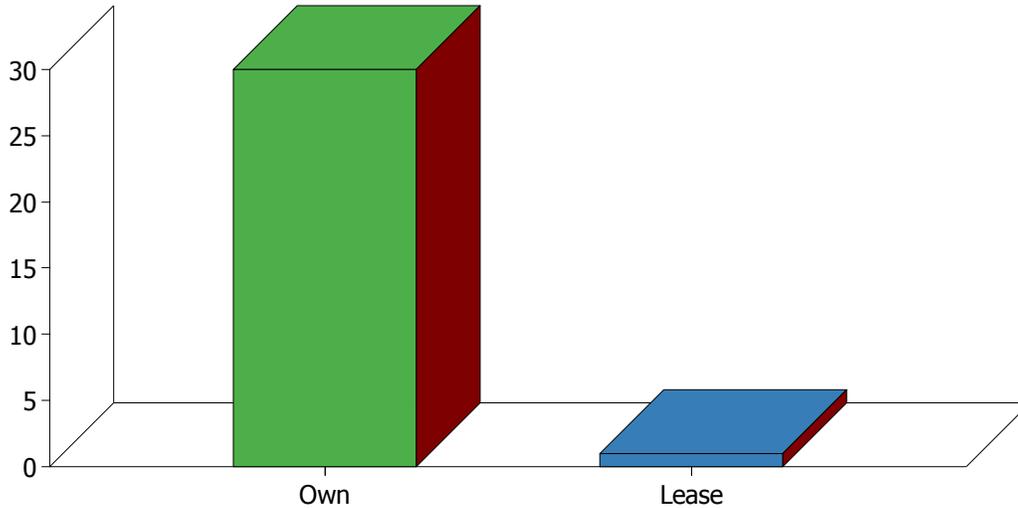
3. What is the primary type of space your business occupies?

Min: 1.00 Max: 4.00 Mean: 2.47 Mode: 3.00 Median: 3.00 Std Dev: 0.92

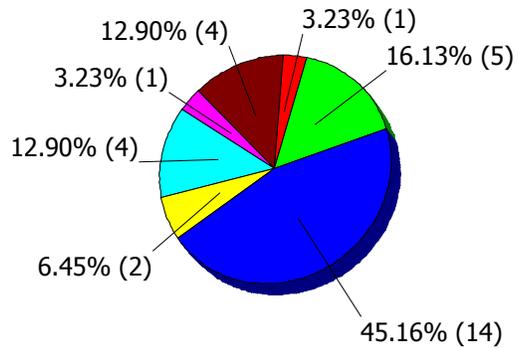
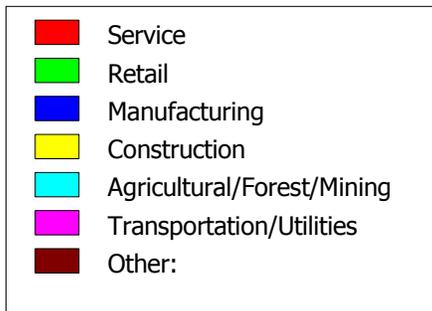


4. Do you own or lease your space?

Min: 1.00 Max: 2.00 Mean: 1.03 Mode: 1.00 Median: 1.00 Std Dev: 0.18

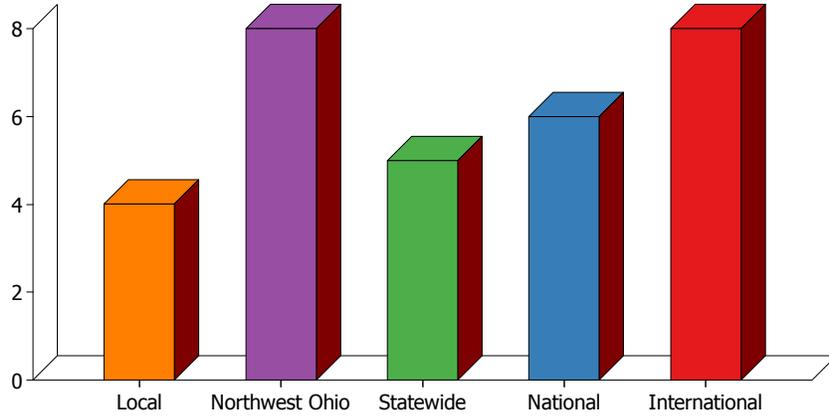


5. Please check the primary industry sector that best describes your business:



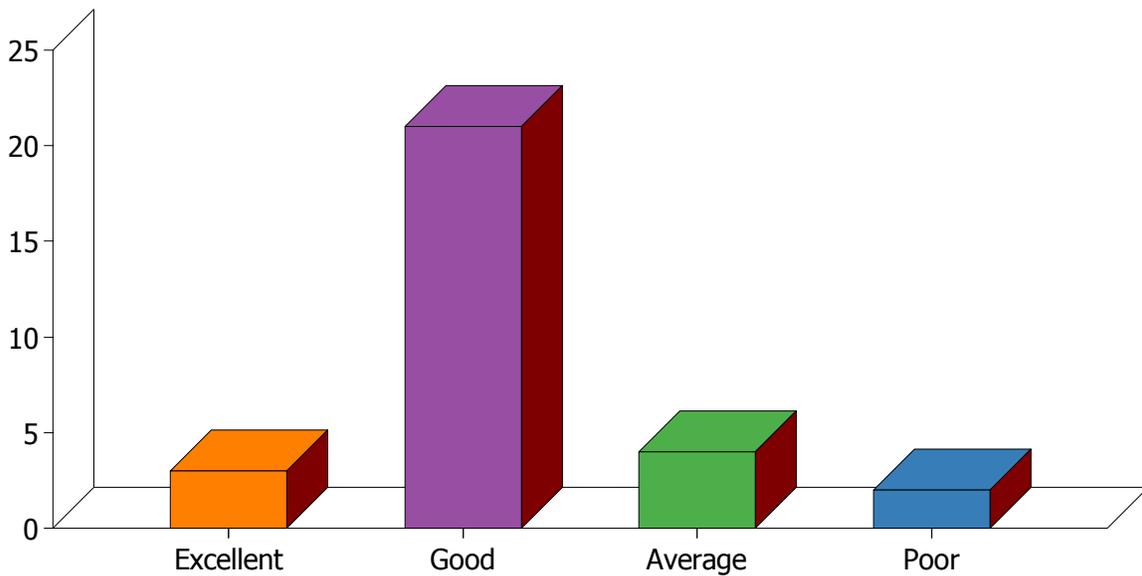
6. What is your company's primary geographic market?

Min: 1.00 Max: 5.00 Mean: 3.19 Mode: 2.00 Median: 3.00 Std Dev: 1.40



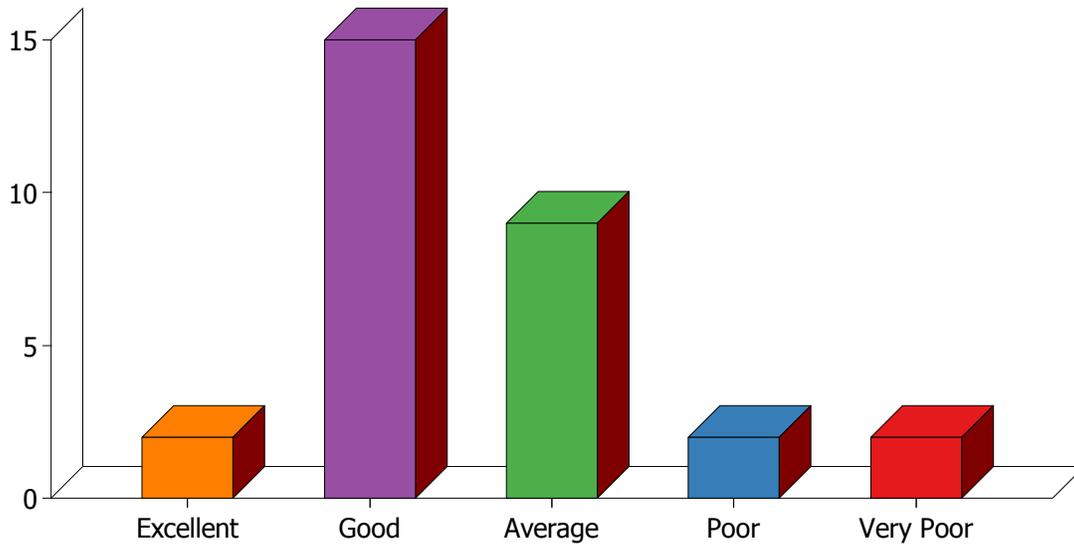
Section - LOCAL BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

7. From your perspective as a businessperson, please rate the overall quality of life in Wyandot County.



8. What is your overall opinion of Wyandot County as a place to do business?

Min: 1.00 Max: 5.00 Mean: 2.57 Mode: 2.00 Median: 2.00 Std Dev: 0.96



9. What are your top three (3) reasons for locating or keeping your business in Wyandot County?

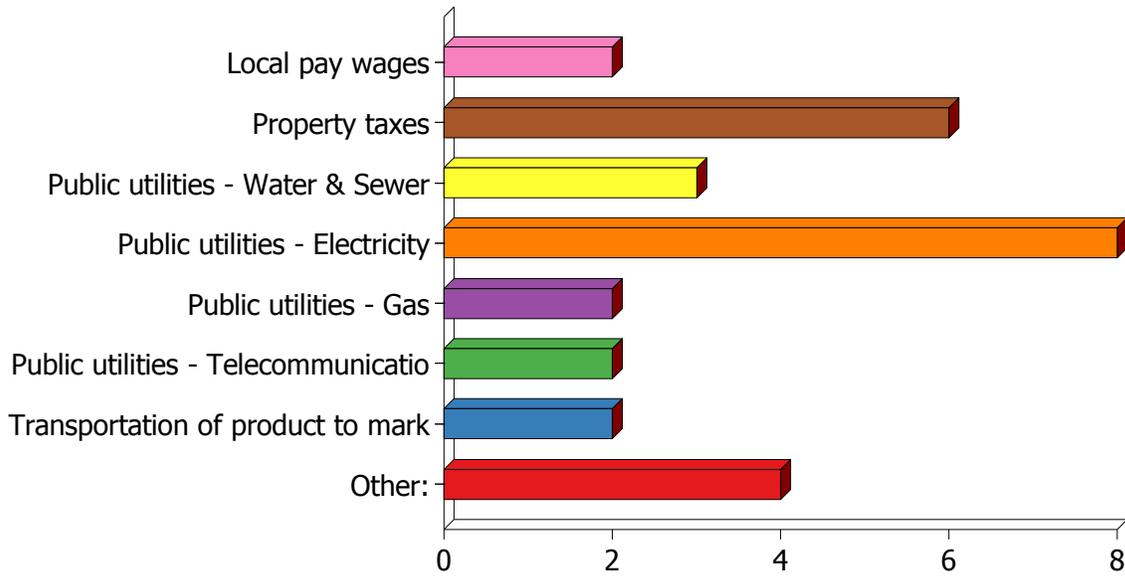


10. Please describe any IMMEDIATE or LONG TERM business needs or concerns that could be addressed by local government or local private entities.

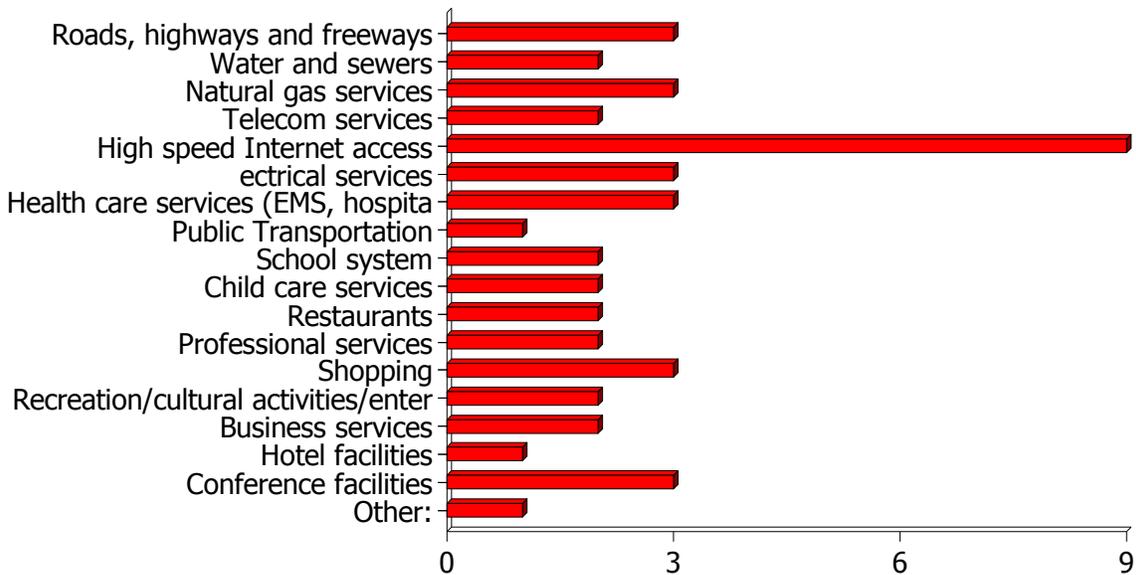
- Access to technology and IT personnel
- Anyone who needs warehousing or manufacturing space.
- Attracting more business in general.
- Clarify the impact of the health care bill. Keeping up with new regulations, examples might be trucking, OSHA, etc.
- Excessive government regulation - excessive taxes
- Grants as cost of business is very high, lower taxes and better utility rates. Ohio is not a business friendly state.
- Have the City look at revising its zoning fees that hinder business expansion.
- Help getting government out of the way.
- Infrastructure to support growth
- Many of our needs are addressed by local entities. When we have tooling needs we will go to others in the county that have the same capabilities we do, and likewise they will come to us with their needs.
- N/A
- Need something to draw people to the area instead of them going to Findlay, Tiffin, Bucyrus, etc.
- Quality of the workforce, lack of a higher educated workforce wanting to come back to Wyandot County, both degreed and technical
- Recycling pickup for cardboard boxes.
- Reduce government red tape and rules which do not fit the community or encourage growth of local businesses.
- There are too many large empty buildings. Need to fill them up with new business (more jobs)
- We do not get any local business by being in Upper Sandusky, but employ 50-100 people, have brought other businesses and jobs into Upper Sandusky and support a lot of local businesses. Minor issues are with the Water Department, their termination notices and late fees if you pay even a day late.
- We have a need for heavy waste water capacity. Due to where the plant sits, in a low lying area, we have experienced backups. That is not something easy to deal with when working in a food grade facility.

11. Please indicate the business costs in Wyandot County that you believe are unnecessarily high.

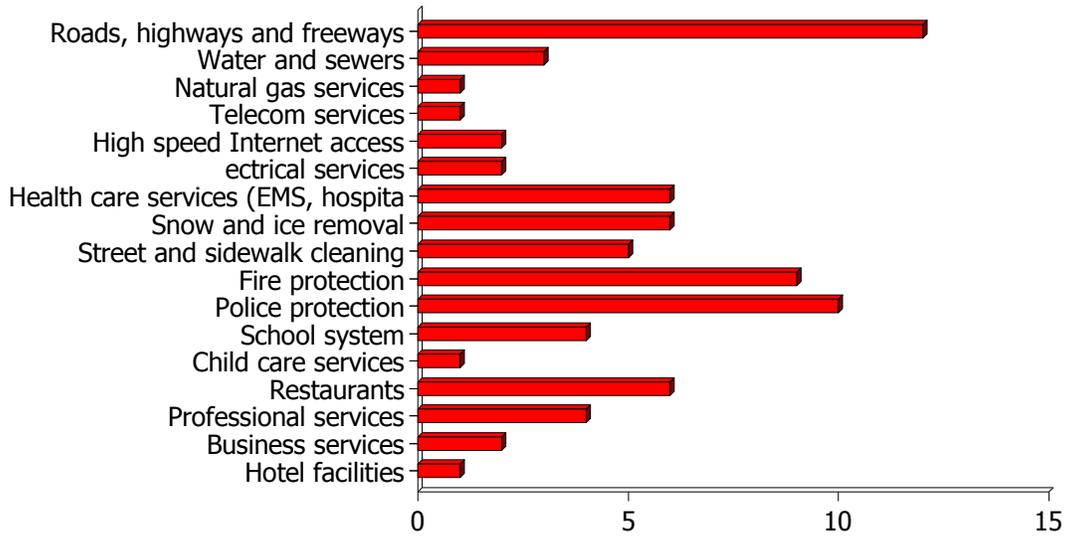
Min: 2.00 Max: 9.00 Mean: 5.24 Mode: 5.00 Median: 5.00 Std Dev: 2.16



12. From your perspective as a businessperson, please select the SERVICES and AMENITIES in Wyandot County with which you are most DISSATISFIED.



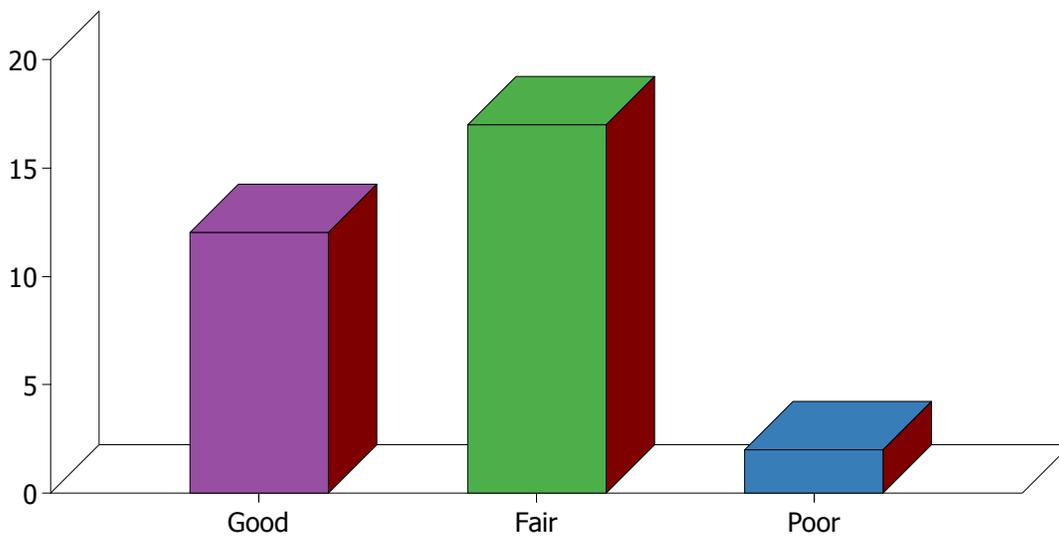
13. Please select the SERVICES and AMENITIES with which you are most SATISFIED.



Section - STATE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

14. Please rate the overall State Business Climate:

Min: 2.00 Max: 4.00 Mean: 2.68 Mode: 3.00 Median: 3.00 Std Dev: 0.59

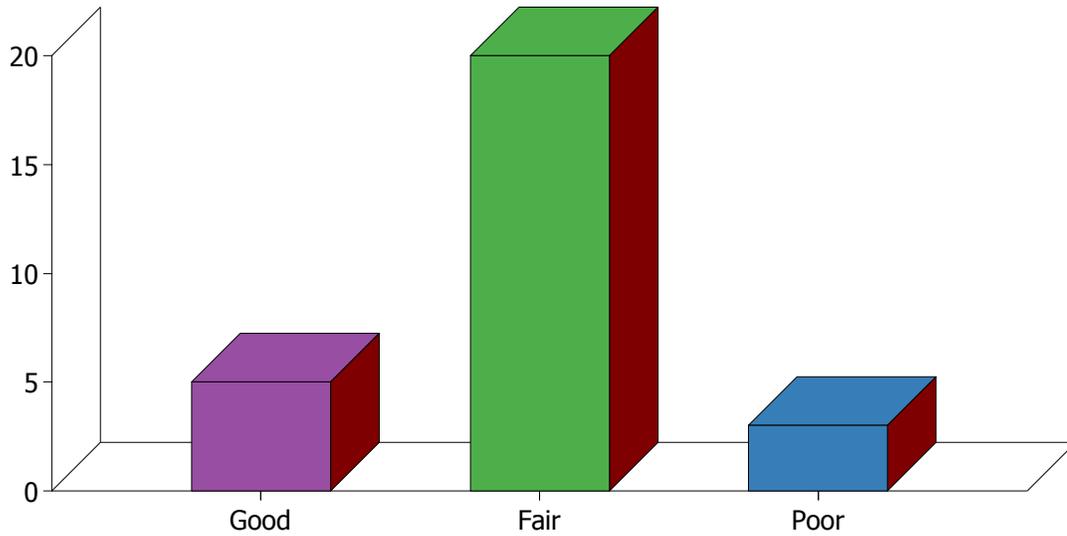


15. What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages to doing business in Ohio.

- A lot of nice places to travel to. State taxes could be lower
- Advantage for us is location to our customers - disadvantage is the pro-union environment that keeps government from changing old regulations
- Advantage is that Ohio is on an even keel now, but a disadvantage is the heavy reliance on the automotive industry.
- Advantages: Geography. Ohio is located in a region conducive to our business about halfway between our suppliers and our customer base. Disadvantages: At last glance, Ohio was rank 47th in business friendliness, right behind the messes that are New York and California (and Delaware).
- CAT tax now affects all business, not just corporations [as opposed to the now phased out franchise tax]
- Central location for our business.
- Close to markets. Rust belt reputation.
- Disadvantage is Ohio has some of the highest taxes. Advantage great farm community in our location.
- Disadvantage is the winter weather, plus Ohio is divided between union and non-union areas which limits my range of location unless i want to have issues with labor unions.
- high transportation costs, costly road permits
- I don't have enough experience in inter-state commerce to say, seems to much government, but I don't have any comparison. I do think all of the State's computer systems are antiquated and cumbersome.
- Load limits imposed on containers can hinder business.
- ODOT made their testing requirements more strict, but we can still work with the county.
- Ohio is a very unfriendly state towards businesses. Taxes, utilities, and labor are all high. Compared to other states, there are no incentives to do business in Ohio. All state and local government are invasive and counter productive.
- State is okay for businesses, but no real advantages over other states.
- Taxes are a disadvantage.

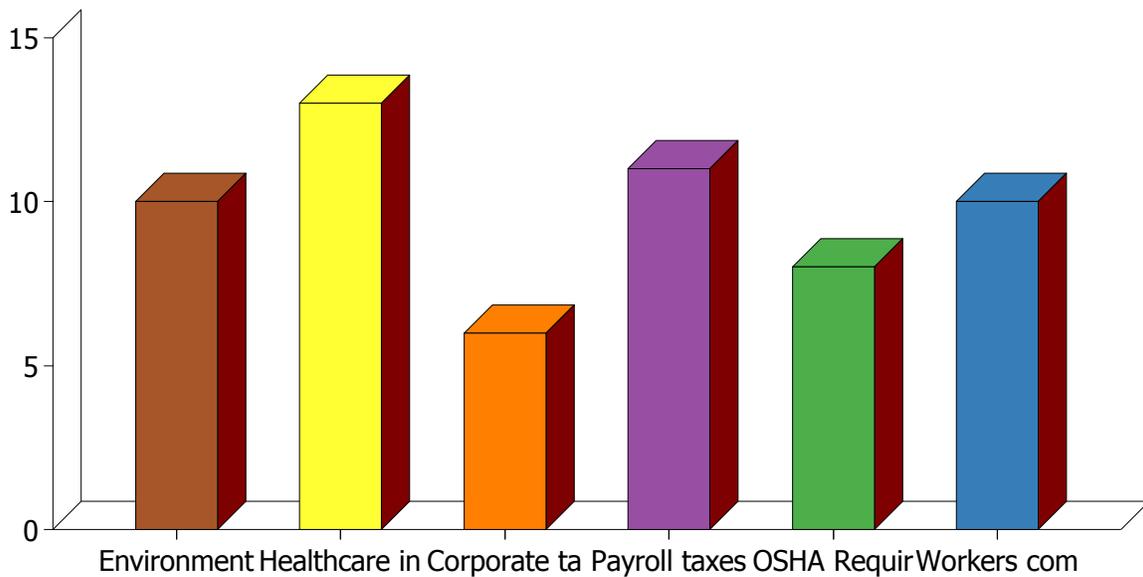
16. Please rate the cost of doing business in Ohio:

Min: 2.00 Max: 4.00 Mean: 2.93 Mode: 3.00 Median: 3.00 Std Dev: 0.53



17. Please select the areas where you believe the cost of doing business in the State of Ohio is high.

Min: 1.00 Max: 6.00 Mean: 3.41 Mode: 2.00 Median: 3.50 Std Dev: 1.74

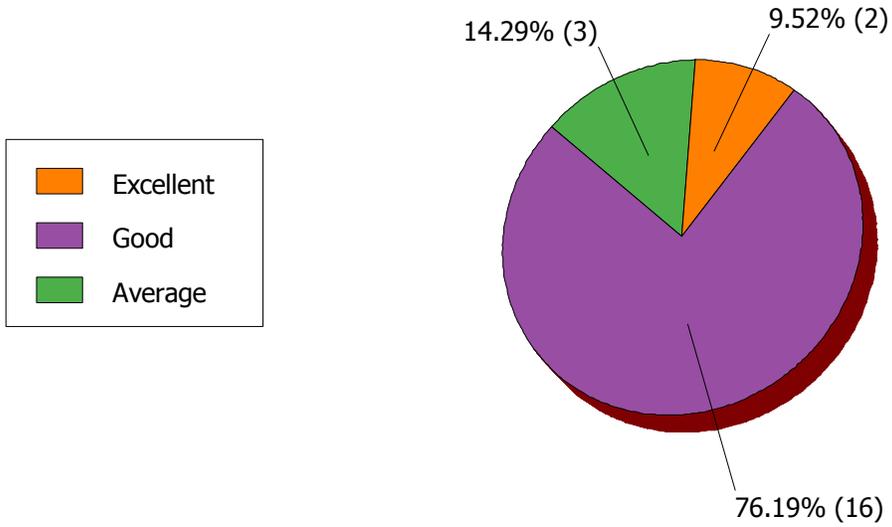


18. What are the key policy issues (legislative and/or regulatory) that have the potential to adversely impact your business?

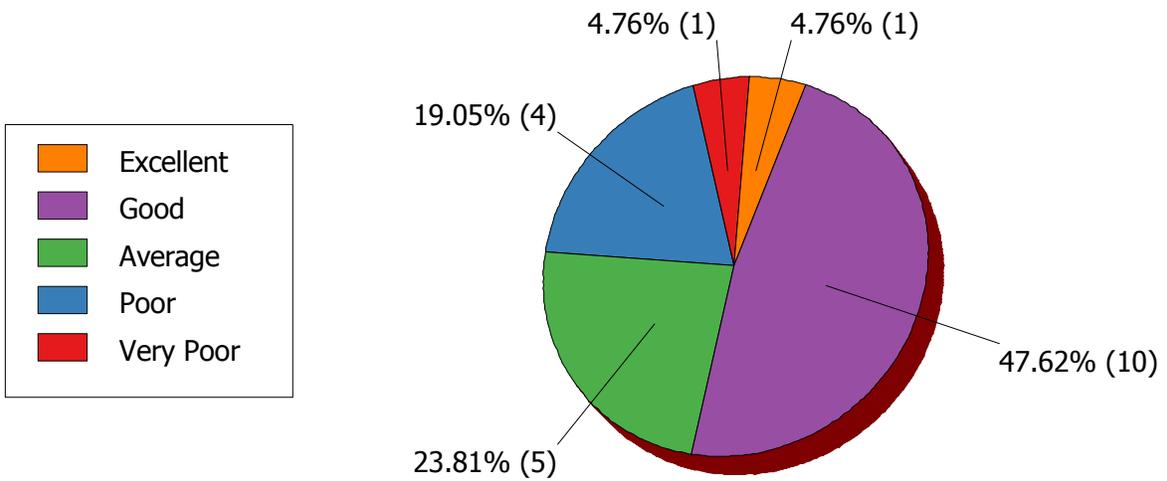
- CAT tax hits us but not the coop's.
- Environmental regulations keep increasing the paperwork load, but the safety requirements are what is starting to make it hard to conduct normal business.
- Environmental regulations.
- Health insurance seems to be an issue and different regulations that we have to keep up with (ex. OSHA) but not necessarily going to adversely impact our business. There is just more paperwork than ever and quite a number of more hours involved.
- Healthcare and the felony system as employers are not supposed to discriminate based on felonies.
- Healthcare will increase costs for us and everyone else increasing operating costs in general.
- Higher utility costs, workman's comp, raw material costs
- INSURANCE, OSHA, WORKERS COMP, ODJFS
- National Healthcare, excessive cost of alternative energy, excessive government regulations, more government than needed, entitlement programs, litigation.
- OSHA fines are up 400% in our area.
- Sales tax on services
- self employment tax; healthcare
- State building codes are becoming more and more strict which create extra cost for our customers.
- Taxes
- The new healthcare reform, The length of unemployment benefits, the increase in OSHA fines by 400% in our area, and unfavorable earnings tax structure all impact our business.

Section - How would you rate the local management and staff (salaried) workforce?

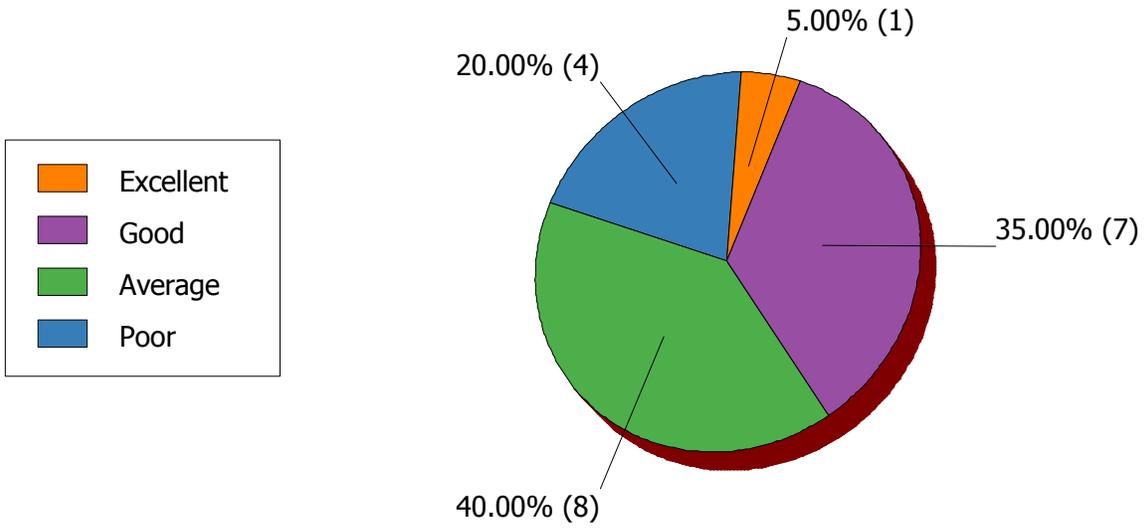
19. Quality



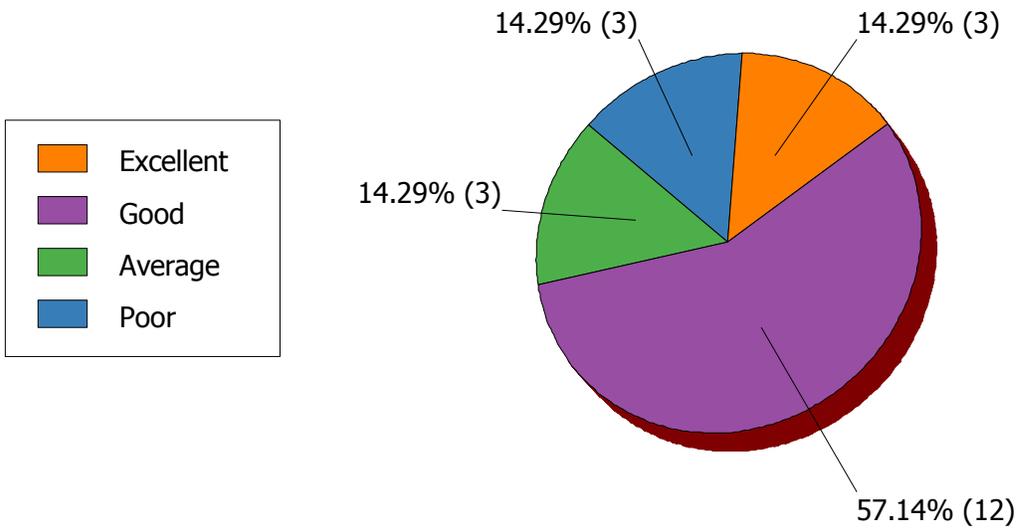
20. Quantity



21. Availability

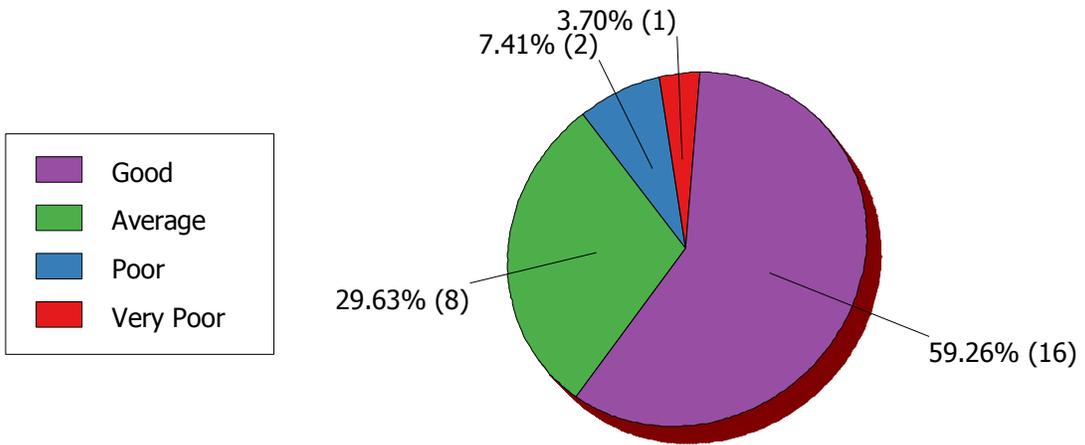


22. Stability

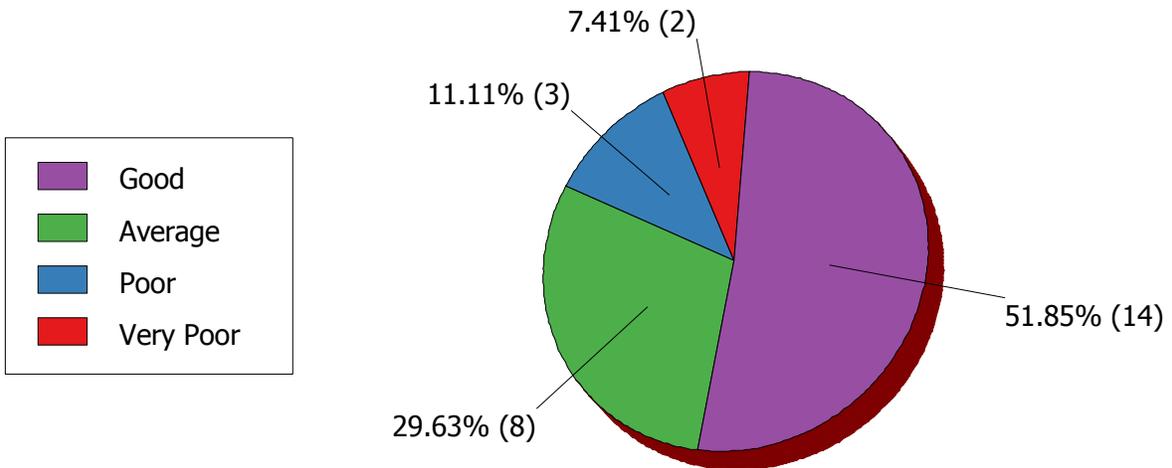


Section - How would you rate the local hourly labor force?

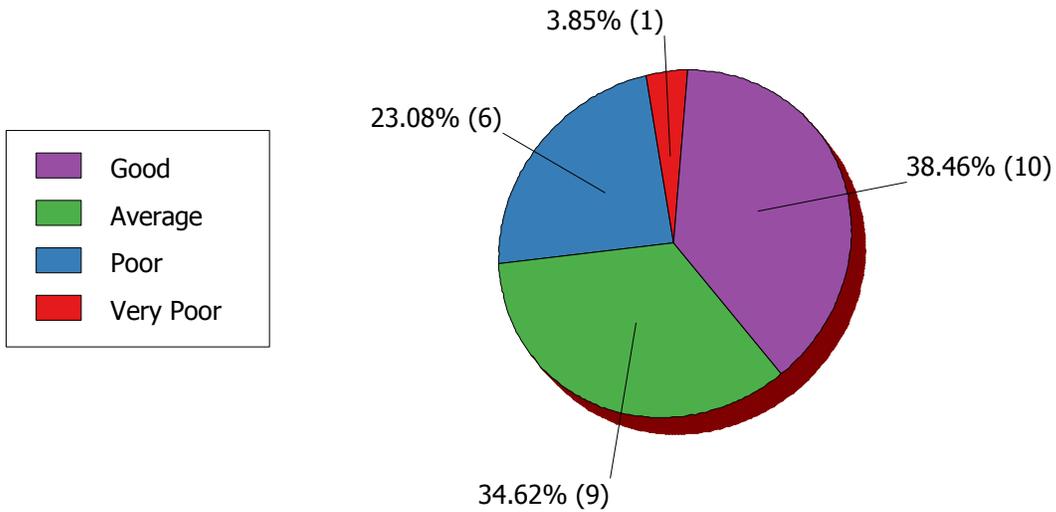
23. Quality



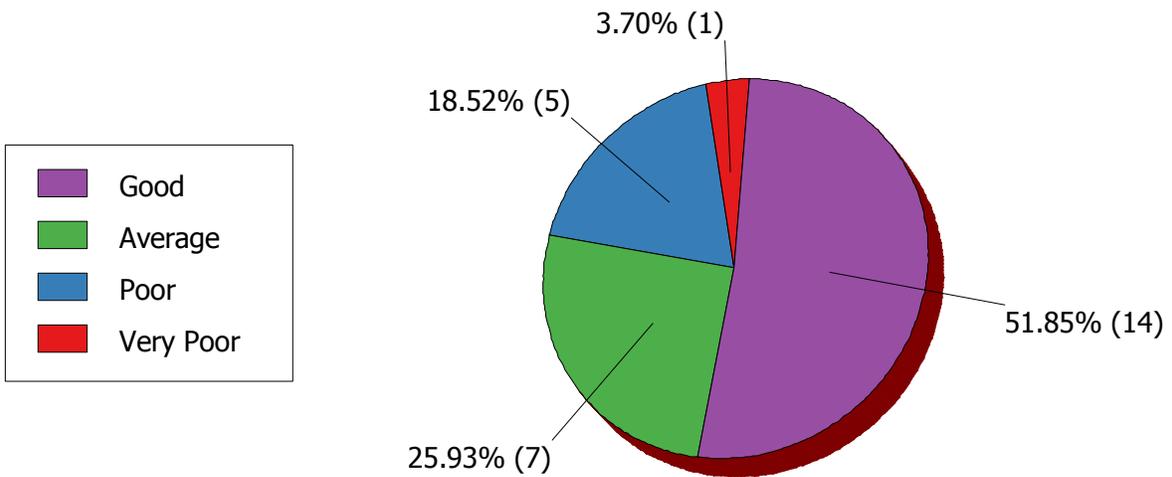
24. Quantity



25. Availability



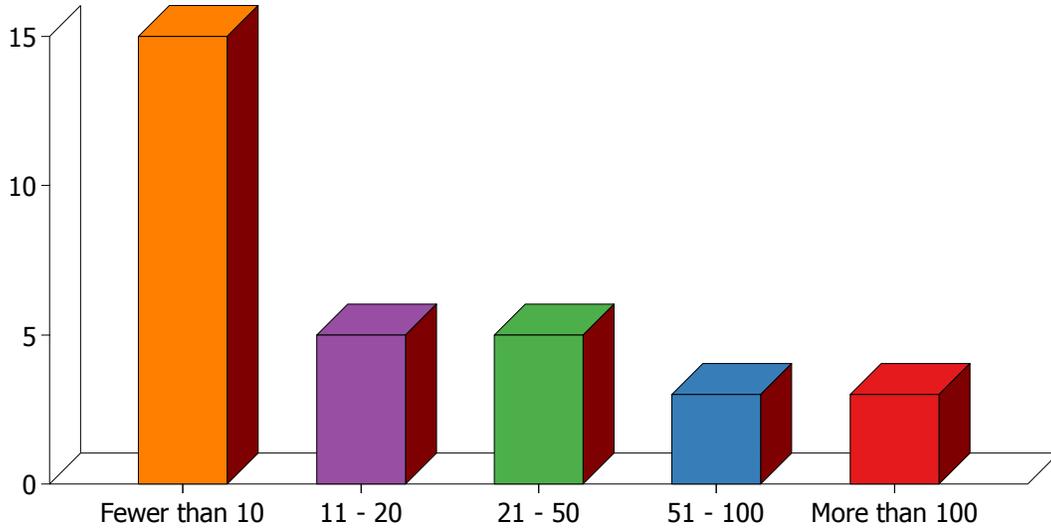
26. Stability



Section - LOCAL WORKFORCE

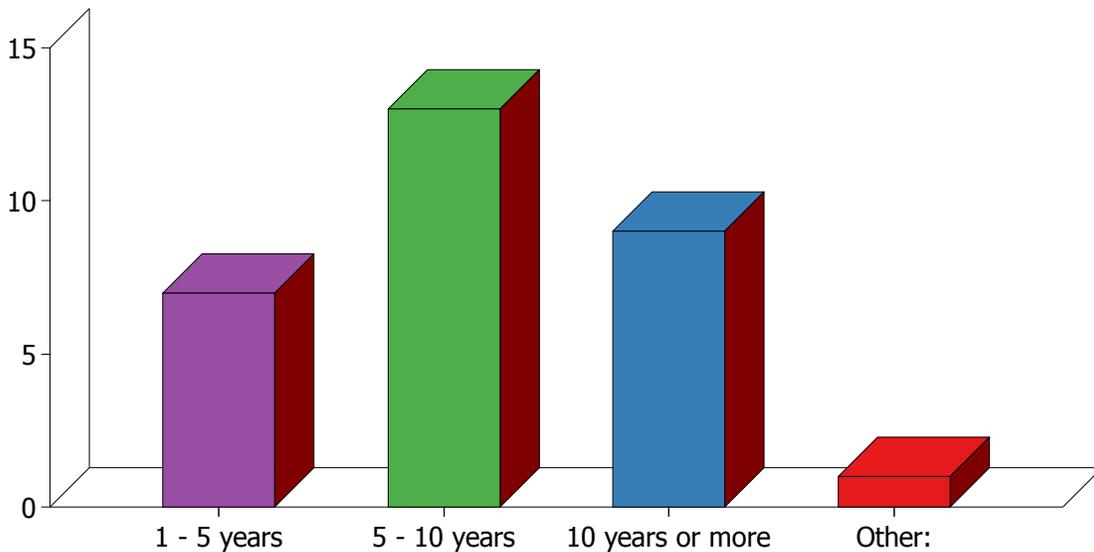
27. How many employees work at your Wyandot County business location?

Min: 1.00 Max: 5.00 Mean: 2.16 Mode: 1.00 Median: 2.00 Std Dev: 1.37



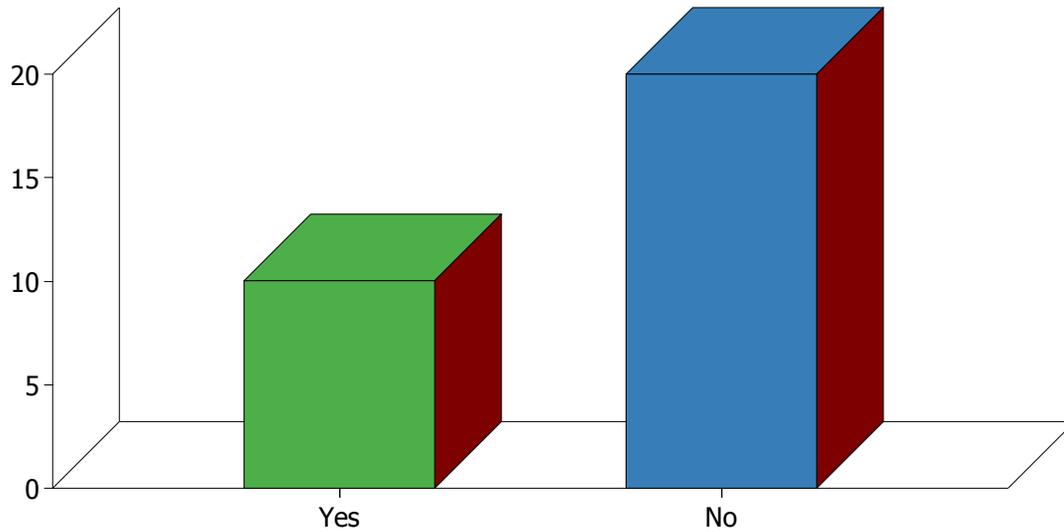
28. What is the average length of employment?

Min: 3.00 Max: 6.00 Mean: 4.13 Mode: 4.00 Median: 4.00 Std Dev: 0.81

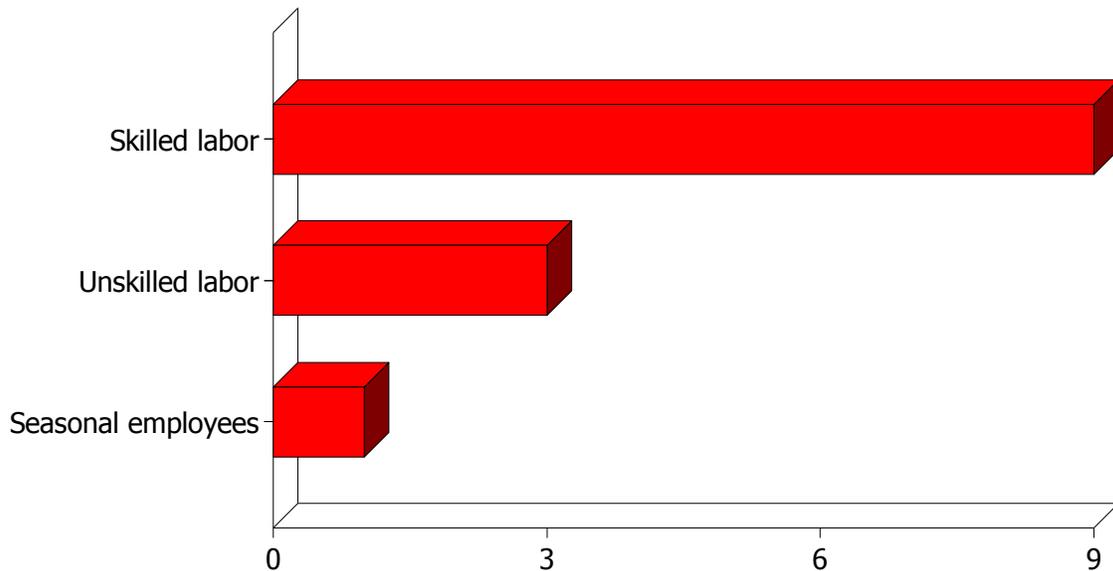


29. Does your business have difficulty recruiting employees?

Min: 1.00 Max: 2.00 Mean: 1.67 Mode: 2.00 Median: 2.00 Std Dev: 0.47

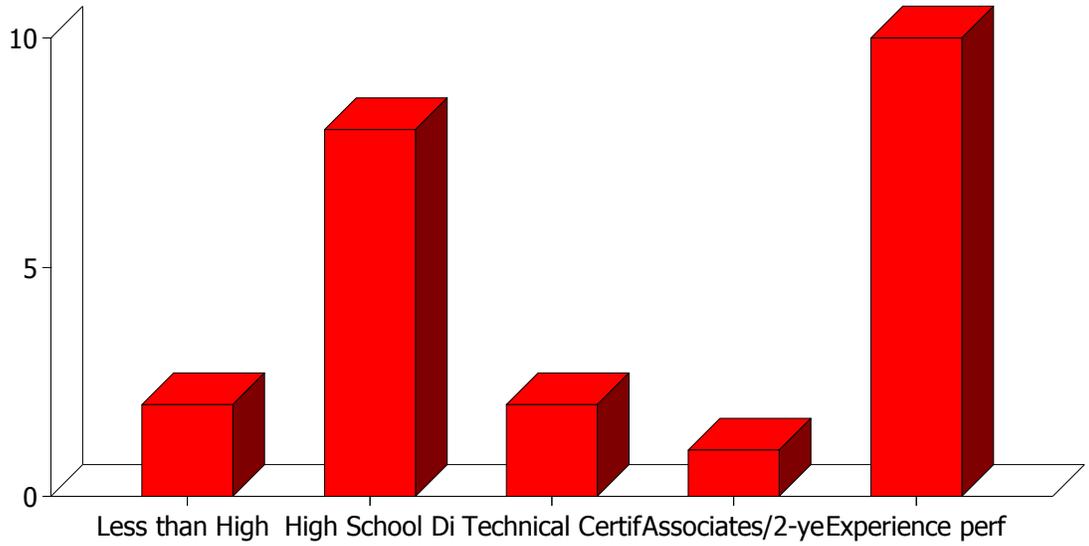


30. If so, with which types of labor categories are you experiencing recruiting problems?

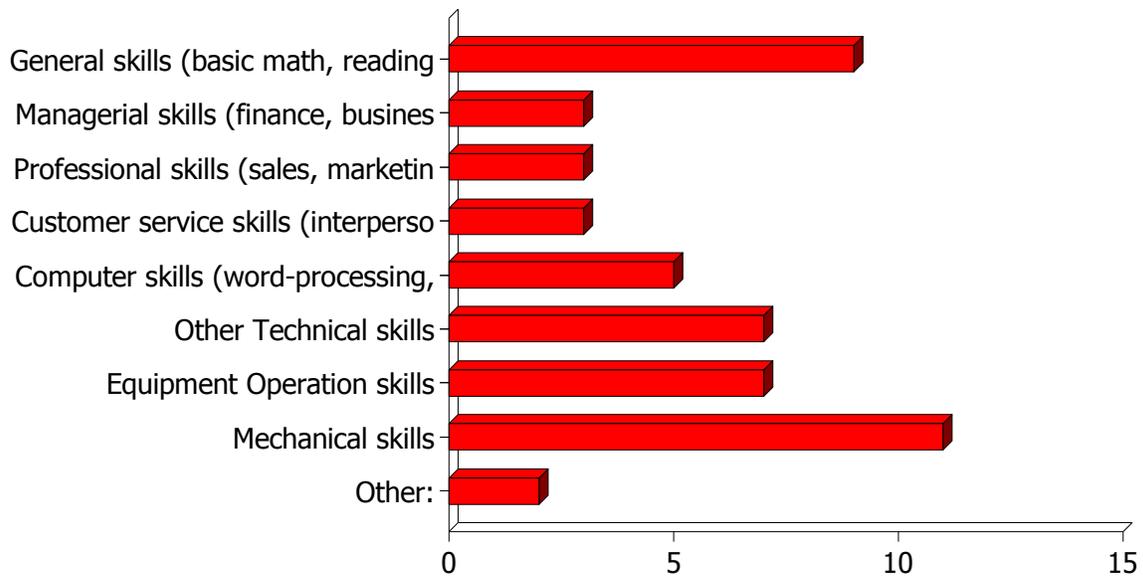


31. What are the minimum requirements needed for these positions (select all that apply)?

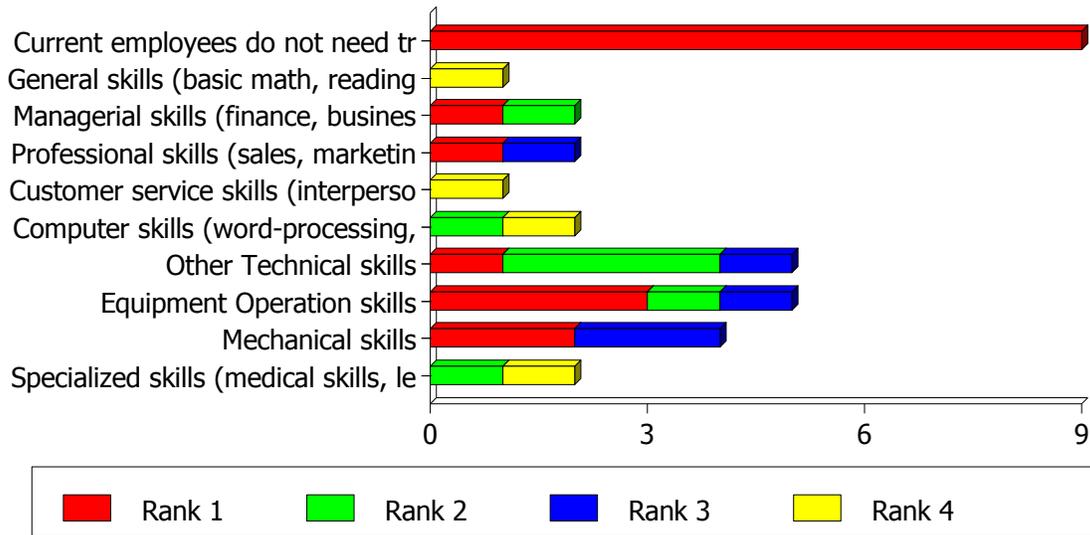
Min: 1.00 Max: 9.00 Mean: 5.13 Mode: 9.00 Median: 3.00 Std Dev: 3.44



32. Please select the skills your find are lacking in potential employees you have interviewed (select all that apply):



33. Please rank in order the top four (4) areas in which your current employees need training (most needed area first).

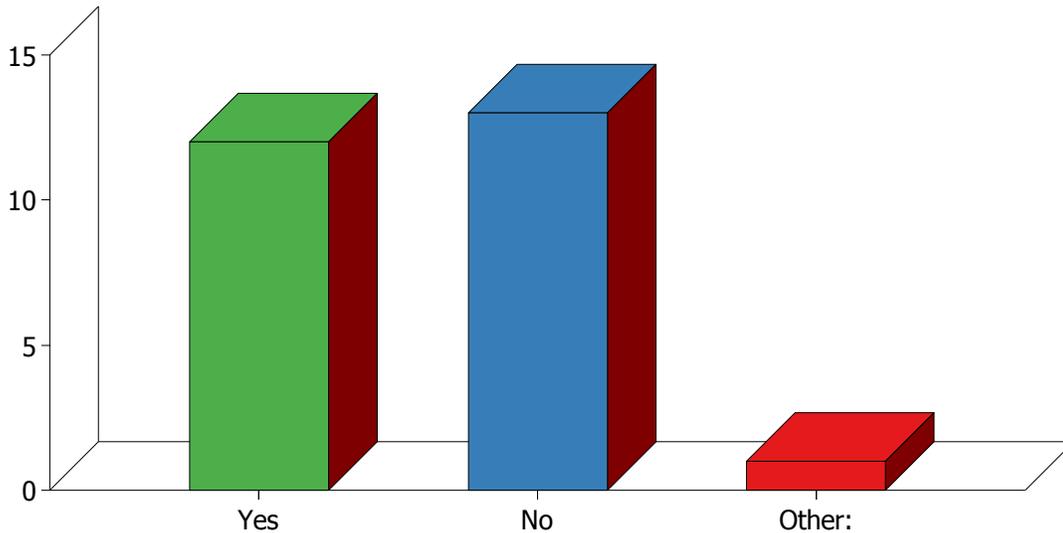


34. Does your company currently have any relationships with area colleges/universities/vocational schools, and if so, who?

- No (2 responses tallied)
- no (3 responses tallied)
- NO
- No, but we are open to opportunities.
- No. (5 responses tallied)
- There has been some relationship with ONU in the past for an internship program.
- University of Findlay - apprenticeship program (computer needs)
- We have an internship program through Owens for the heavy equipment side.
- We have hired employees from UNOH
- Yes; Vanguard-Sentinel Career Center
- Yes. Vanguard-Sentinel Tech.

35. Does your organization currently utilize a workplace wellness program and/or safety program that offers direct incentives to your employees or business?

Min: 1.00 Max: 3.00 Mean: 1.58 Mode: 2.00 Median: 2.00 Std Dev: 0.57



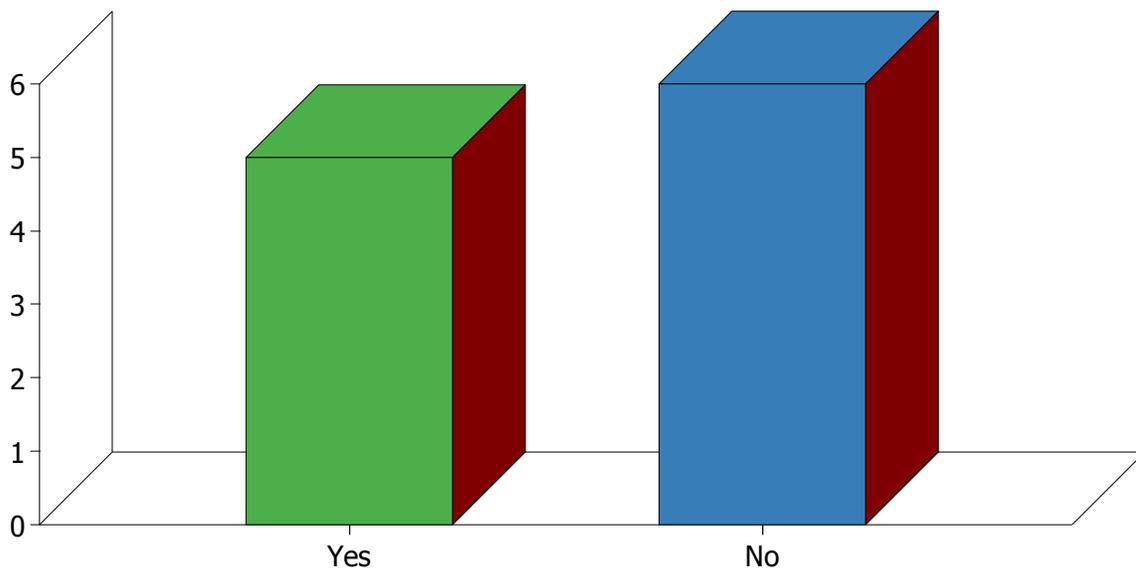
36. If so, please give a brief explanation of the program and its benefits.

- DOT compliance courses, and a drug free workplace
- gym membership
- Only the required safety training.
- We are currently in the process of restructuring our safety program. The family of companies also has its own programs that we will be implementing.
- We do OSHA training and other voluntary training that helps decrease premiums for the workers. We also use the drug-free workplace program.
- We have a company-wide administered program through HR. We have annual physicals to help decrease insurance premiums, and the company also runs an annual wellness challenge for employees.
- We have a corporate run wellness program that changes every year to keep employees interested. We also have some safety training for employees who use machinery.
- We have quarterly safety meetings and watch videos. We have speakers come in as well. We follow the current MSDS program. We also have a drug and alcohol program with random drug testing.
- We have very basic/required safety programs.
- We have yearly health assessments, and a monthly wellness newsletter. We also have monthly safety seminars.
- We offer wellness fairs for associates, including BP screenings, flu shots etc. We also offer safety training and recognition

- Workplace wellness program through Corp One - it provides savings on insurance premiums. Also use various safety programs: lock in, tag out; training for new employees (videos) - there is someone in-house who performs the audits in each area.

37. If your business does not have a similar program; are you interested in learning about wellness or safety programs that may provide benefits or incentives to your employees?

Min: 1.00 Max: 2.00 Mean: 1.55 Mode: 2.00 Median: 2.00 Std Dev: 0.50



Section - FUTURE PLANS

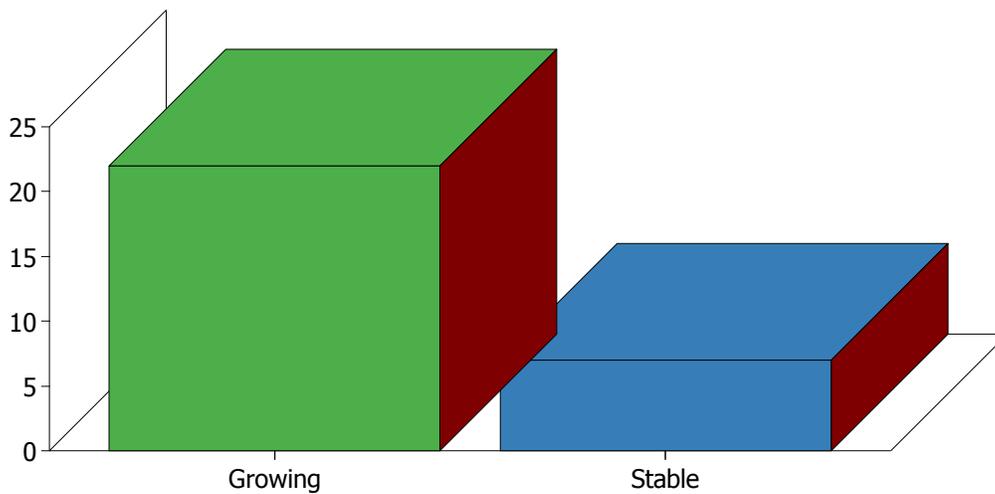
38. If you have any plans to modernize, renovate, or expand your present building(s) or equipment in the near future; please describe the type of plans, time frame, and any constraints faced:

- A recent expansion was done in 2007. Only plans include updating machinery and those types of upkeep items. If we did any more physical expansion it would probably be at a different location to better serve our market.
- Currently building a new building at our main facility to size material to customer specifications. Should be completed within 60 days
- I did set up my building to be expanded, but no expansion plans are currently in place.
- In 2006 we purchased land to the north of our facility, and have since created a new pit on that property where we will continue to move north.
- New buildings were purchased and operation moved in about 2 years ago. No further expansion planned.
- No physical expansion plans at this time.
- No. (2 responses tallied)
- None
- None.
- Renovate the office this Summer
- Some plans for further expansion. Time frame is currently undecided.
- There are no current plans, but we are at our limit in terms of space so something will probably need to happen in the future. The company is currently planning to build a new facility, which will serve as the company's headquarters in Delaware.
- There are plans to add a new steel bin and a new receiving pit. This will help to satisfy the needs of our producers during peak season (harvest).
- There have been tentative plans to expand for many years, but after the downturn in 2009 we have been hesitant to move forward. If sales continue to increase these plans may be implemented after a few years.
- We are considering putting up a new facility for our ag line of equipment that we sell. Within the next year.
- We are continually making improvements in the facility to comply with increasing food safety standards. We are also planning for increased handling capacity in the future that will require extra machinery and manpower.
- We are currently expanding at this time 5280 sf
- We are currently investing in more machines, and contemplating relocation.
- We are in the process of expanding capacity at one of our locations, and there is a potential for further future expansion at that location as well.
- We are slated for some building improvements next year. Most likely exterior upkeep, and possibly some interior items, but it has not yet been decided.
- We do have some minor plans for renovations: a new bin, belt, and roof over the bins.
- We expect to add production equipment as well as research equipment in the coming year
- Yes. Planning to build a facility on adjacent lot for the retail portion of the business. Probably next year.

39. If you are considering moving, closing, or selling this business; please describe where and when this would happen:

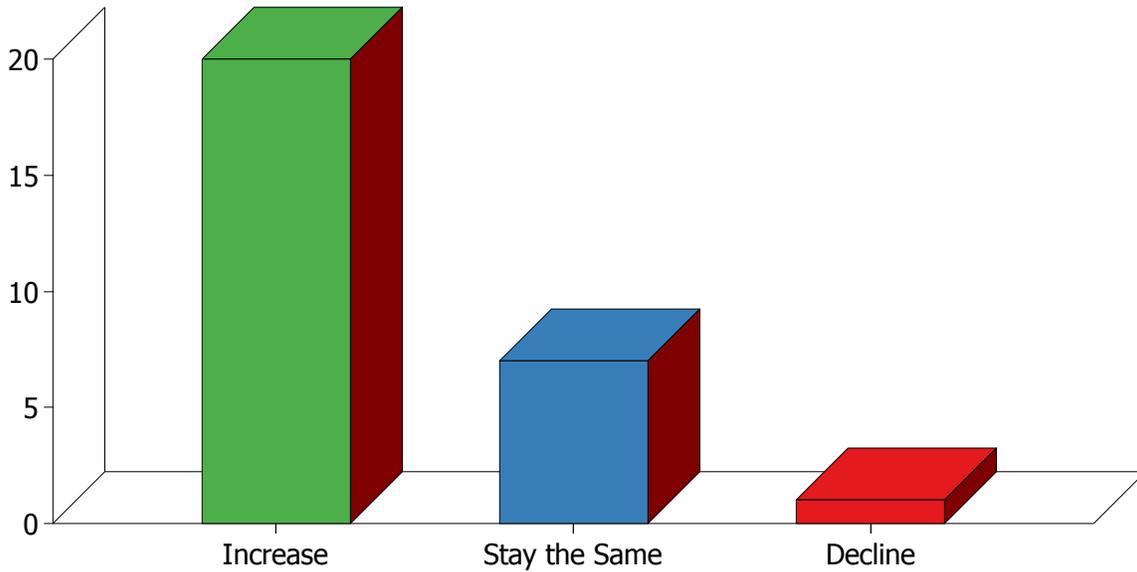
- Exploring options in other states that are more friendly to businesses, offer grants, incentives, have more skilled labor, etc... Possible move within the next year
- Not considering.
- Within the next year or two to a more tax friendly state.

40. Does your company have plans for growth over the next 3 years?



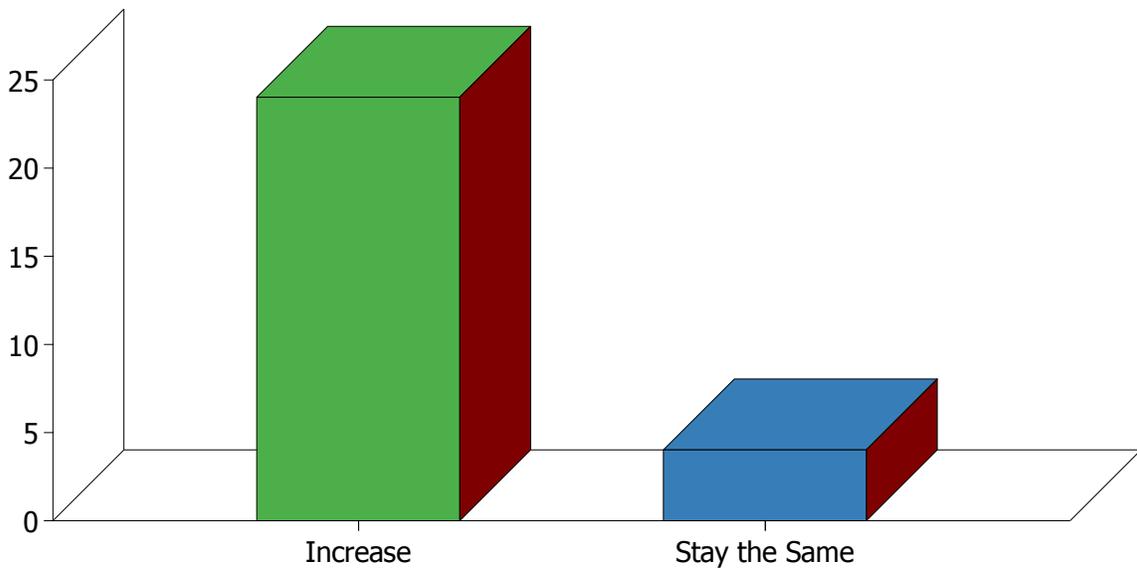
41. Will your number of customers be changing?

Min: 1.00 Max: 3.00 Mean: 1.32 Mode: 1.00 Median: 1.00 Std Dev: 0.54



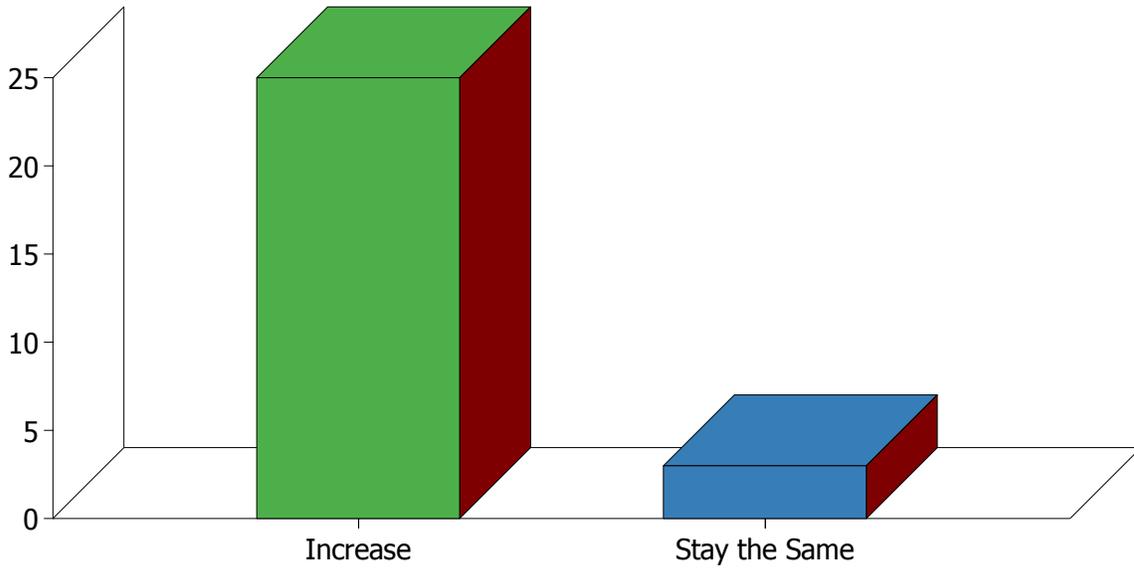
42. Will your Sales - Total revenue change?

Min: 1.00 Max: 2.00 Mean: 1.14 Mode: 1.00 Median: 1.00 Std Dev: 0.35



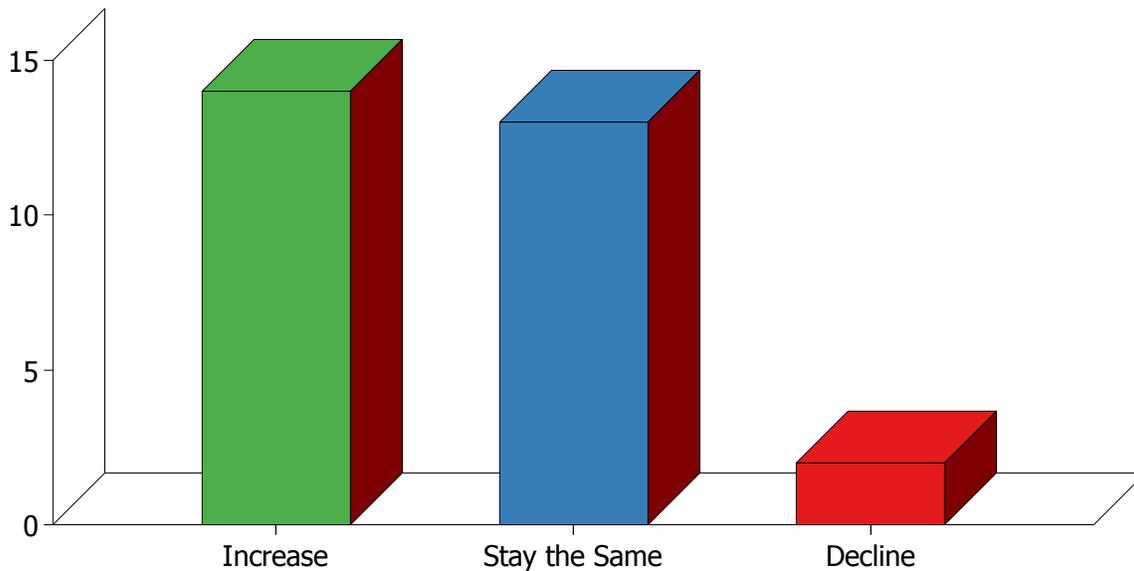
43. Will your Profits change?

Min: 1.00 Max: 2.00 Mean: 1.11 Mode: 1.00 Median: 1.00 Std Dev: 0.31



44. Will the company's employment level be changing at this location?

Min: 1.00 Max: 3.00 Mean: 1.59 Mode: 1.00 Median: 2.00 Std Dev: 0.62



45. If you expect any of these business factors to change over the next 3 years, what are the principal reasons for the changes?

- Business has been growing the last couple years, and right now it is very busy.
- CONTINUED GROWTH AND SALES OUTSIDE THE STATE OF OHIO AND THE US.
- Demand is getting stronger in certain areas including the shale development in Ohio and Pennsylvania.
- I will be retiring in 3 years, and will turn the wholesale and retail portions of the business over to two different individuals. Both of these separate operations will continue to grow. We also gain customers from surrounding counties where our services are not offered.
- Increased demand from customers.
- Increased sales force. Getting back into GSA contracts.
- It is an uncertain landscape with health care regulations and certain legislative measures that we are awaiting the results of
- Moving our ag equipment to a more efficient building and then would be able to expand our market.
- National and world economic conditions
- No real growth unless the economy is doing well. We have a large customer base and that will probably not change.
- Our customer base will probably stay the same, but business with those customers would be increasing.
- Sales continue to increase each year.
- The number of transactions at the store have not grown, but sales have. People are making fewer trips to the store but are buying more while they are here. As sales grow, our number of associates will likely need to grow as well.
- There are many opportunities right now in the spray dring industry, and our plans are to capitalize on those by possibly increasing our operation 2- or 3-fold.
- To meet or exceed our goal we want to grow 5% per year
- Total number of customers will decrease as current farmers retire and other operations farm their ground. Plus technology and equipment is making farming much more efficient. For the same reason, the amount of yields are increasing and that will lead to more product coming in and going out.
- We are highly considering relocation to a more tax and government friendly state.
- We get new and repeat customers all the time. We recently hired an individual and will probably need more at this location in the coming years.
- We have experienced an increase in sales each year, and our number of customers continues to grow as we diversify that base.
- We have seen recent increases in our agricultural products, and steady sales growth in other product lines.
- We plan to have growth in all of our business areas: parts, sales, and service, as part of our business model.
- We will be going outside of our normal territory to gain new customers.

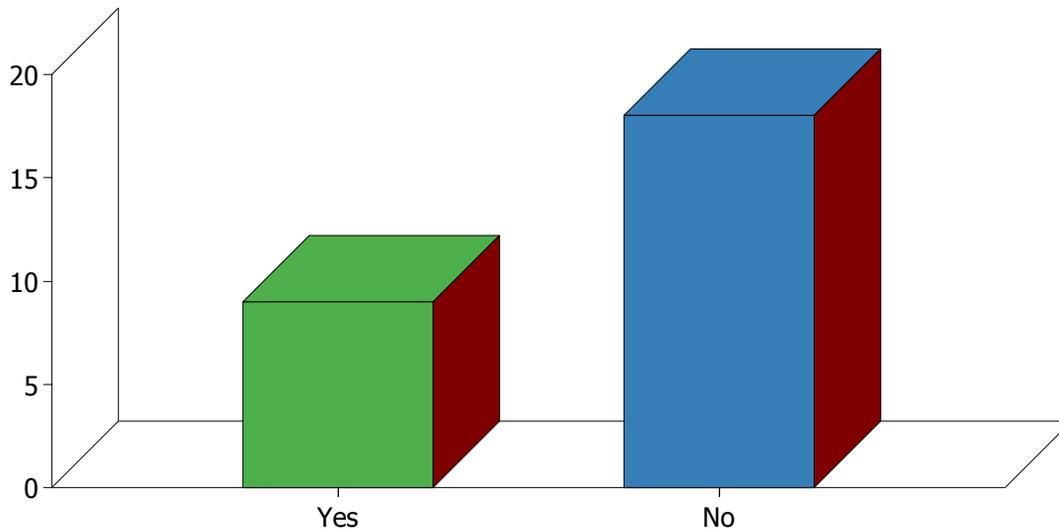
46. Is there anything the Wyandot County Office of Economic Development could do to help your business remain profitable and continue growing in the Wyandot County community?

- Aid and assist in future expansion.
- Assist in finding others in GSA contracts, or others who may be able to provide services.
- Create good environment for small businesses that live local and sell world wide.
- Find people who need manufacturing or warehousing space.
- Help to identify programs that can aid with the construction of a new facility, and help to gain access to fiber.
- Keep us informed on any incentive programs available for hiring employees and bring more business to the county.
- NO
- Possible help with future expansions and fees that impede expansion efforts.
- Possibly help to locate potential customers in the area.
- Possibly networking opportunities, and anything to assist local customers.
- Provide assistance or contact with the correct people when help is needed.
- Provide support to prospective companies, attraction, and referrals.
- So far they have been helpful in keeping us up on the current programs that are available to us (which isn't really very much)
- This business relies on people moving into the community. Everything that promotes growth in Upper Sandusky aids legal services.
- We are trying to start an apprenticeship program if there are any resources available.
- We are unfamiliar with the resources available to the Wyandot Economic Development board, but would be interested in any assistance that can be given.
- We are unfamiliar with the resources that the Wyandot County Economic Development has at its disposal, but are open to any help they offer.
- We do have a need for local contractors. There is a short process that they need to go through to be made eligible by the corporate office, but we could utilize local service for our fryers and food equipment as well as with our electrical and lighting needs.
- Wyandot County as do other counties struggle with entitlement programs that make unemployment more attractive than employment. Drugs are also a huge problem for employers

Section - SUPPLY CHAIN

47. Your business likely buys some materials, supplies, and services from suppliers outside this area. In your opinion, could some of these items be produced profitably in this locality?

Min: 1.00 Max: 2.00 Mean: 1.67 Mode: 2.00 Median: 2.00 Std Dev: 0.47



48. If yes, please help us identify materials, supplies, or services that could be produced profitably here rather than shipped into the area.

- A number of services or additional capacity services could be accomplished in Wyandot County, we currently hire services from Franklin County and beyond. Significant raw materials come from overseas
- Buy most supplies from OH. Aluminum from Minster, Boxes from Cleveland, etc. We do buy rivets from Illinois.
- Contracting services would be the big area where we could use local resources.
- In our business we deal with a lot of lumber yards and none in wyandot county visit our business and offer to do take off from plans. Several out of county lumber yards visit our office weekly and take material list off from our plans and supply us with a list of material and price.
- Most materials are steel, ball bearings, etc. which come from distributors in large cities. We do use some local shops, New Haven Supply and Romich's, for certain items.
- Our materials we receive are already owned by our customers. Once we process them, they are shipped directly back to them and not much warehousing happens here. Other supplies and services we use come from vendors that the Wannemacher company already has relationships with.
- Some of the services and materials we use already come from local entities. All of our other raw material comes from our sister plant. A local location where we and other organizations may be able to transload products would be a large help with our transportation costs.

- Some of the services used are local, but the materials are shipped into the area.
- Some of the supplies and materials we buy come from outside the area, but there are companies in close proximity that produce the same items. Unfortunately their business structure does not match that of ours and thus far no agreement has been reached among these entities.
- Telecommunications Services; office supplies
- The services we can get from local businesses, we do.
- There are already many items we buy locally that are incorporated in our product. The other materials come from out of state and overseas.
- We are using local services for what we can.
- We do business with electricians out of Bowling Green and our HVAC needs come from Bucyrus. When we were looking for local contractors to help us with these things, none offered their services.
- We purchase what we can from local machining shops and hardware stores. Some items such as motors, gearboxes, and computers are not made here.

49. What products or services is your company producing for which you would like to find a local buyer?

- Agricultural equipment and servicing.
- Basement steps, septic tanks, fuel containment, feed bunks, wall and pen dividers, slats, etc.
- Laser cut parts (we do some local business)
- See above
- Steel supplier, tooling for machines, local machinists
- There are not any food-related facilities in the area.
- Those in need of labor in any scenario.
- We are a construction company which does service and new construction any commercial or industrial company can use our service.
- We are a custom automated machining provider, and can provide equipment for various needs.
- We are a tooling shop and will do business with anyone that can use our services whether it be a large customer contract, or a farmer that walks in with a single part. If we cannot fill their need ourselves, we will point them in the direction of someone who can.
- We do not advertise much because our product is shipped to distributors before they are sold to the retail stores.
- We have a number of products for trucks as well as services such as spray-on bedliners.
- We have many types of aggregate that can be used by a wide range of customers.
- We produce various types of coated seeds as well as lawn fertilizer and ice melt.
- We sell agricultural and home lawn equipment as well as service and sell parts for these items.

50. Please provide any additional comments, thoughts or suggestions.

- Nothing that I can think of currently
- We do our best to use local suppliers for hardware, materials, parts, and contracting



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



Wyandot County

Building a Stronger Community

Economic Development

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