



## Taking the Pulse of Ohio Farmers: The Health Status of Ohio Farmers

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Douglas Jackson-Smith, Shoshanah Inwood, Andrea Rissing, Tiffany Woods.

### What were farms' biggest stressors?

Bringing rains and flooded fields, 2019 had the wettest twelve-month period on record for Ohio. Unsurprisingly, **farmers reported weather as their biggest source of stress (Fig 1)**. After weather, farmers reported a "second tier" of stressors, including farmland costs, health care costs, and market prices.

- The stresses facing the farming population don't stop at the farmhouse door. **Health care costs were the third most reported stressor. Affording health care was more stressful for farmers than either market prices or farm input costs.**
- Most farm risk management tools focus on weather, yield, and price shocks, but these can miss the risks to farmer and farm household well being that can threaten long-term farm viability.

### Supporting farms means supporting farm households

In addition to the market and weather stressors of 2019, farm families' health and access to health insurance were also quite stressful (Fig 2).

- Almost 60% of Ohio farms have a family member with preexisting or chronic health condition.
- **Nearly 30% have a health condition that makes it difficult to farm.**
- 10% of farm households have no health insurance, and 25% only have catastrophic coverage.

#### Ohio Farmers Speak

*"I lost my job at the end of 2009. Because I was over 50 and living in a rural area, I can only find low paying, part-time jobs without insurance, unless I want to drive an hour plus one-way. The worst is the health insurance cost – nothing left."*

*–Ohio dairy farmer, 61 years old*

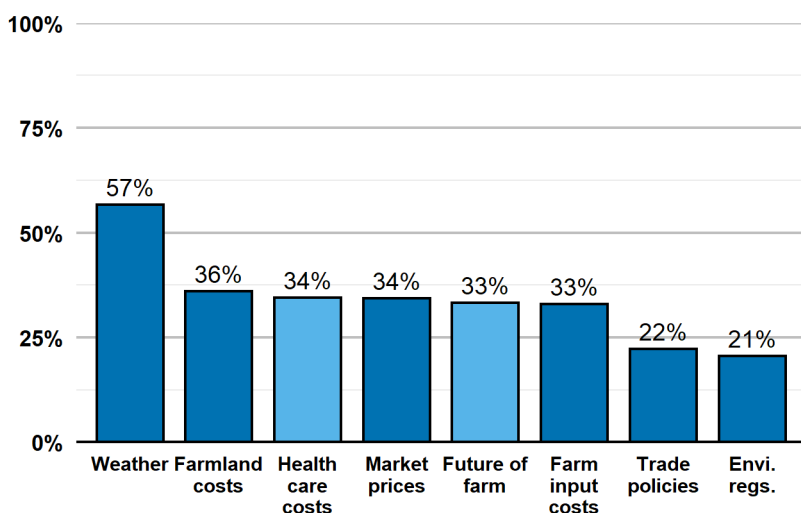


Fig 1: Percent of respondents reporting a stressor as "stressful" or "very stressful". Farm household stressors are presented in light blue.

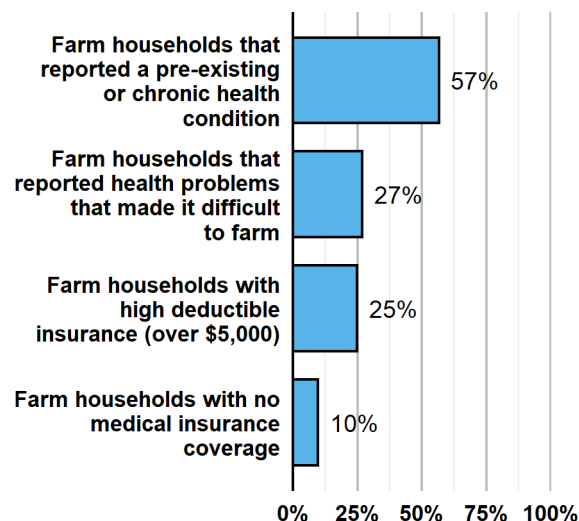


Fig 2: Ohio farm household health and insurance status.