

DEC's Be Green in the Great Lakes Survey Questions and Results Summary March 2014

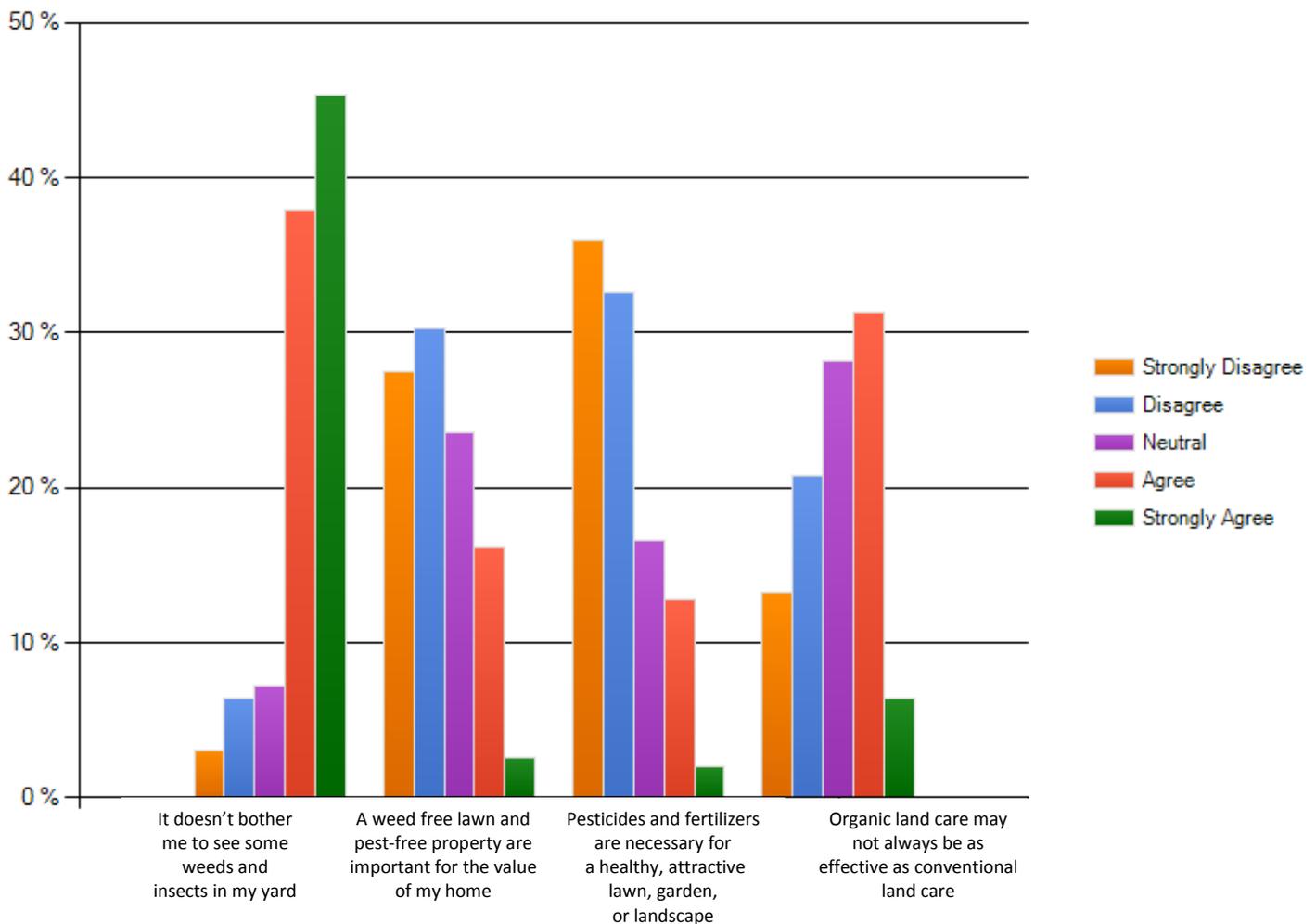
Overview

The Department conducted a public survey regarding current lawn care practices, general impacts on water quality, and interest in utilizing organic land care practices. The survey was part of a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant. Under the project description, one of the purposes of the survey was to determine whether education about environmental and water quality benefits will encourage homeowners to seek organic land care. The survey was open from June 22, 2012 to October 31, 2013 and 399 people completed the survey. Many of the 399 respondents indicated that they currently use organic methods or would be interested in trying practices such as pulling weeds by hand, leaving grass clippings on the lawn, planting native species, and/or consuming less water.

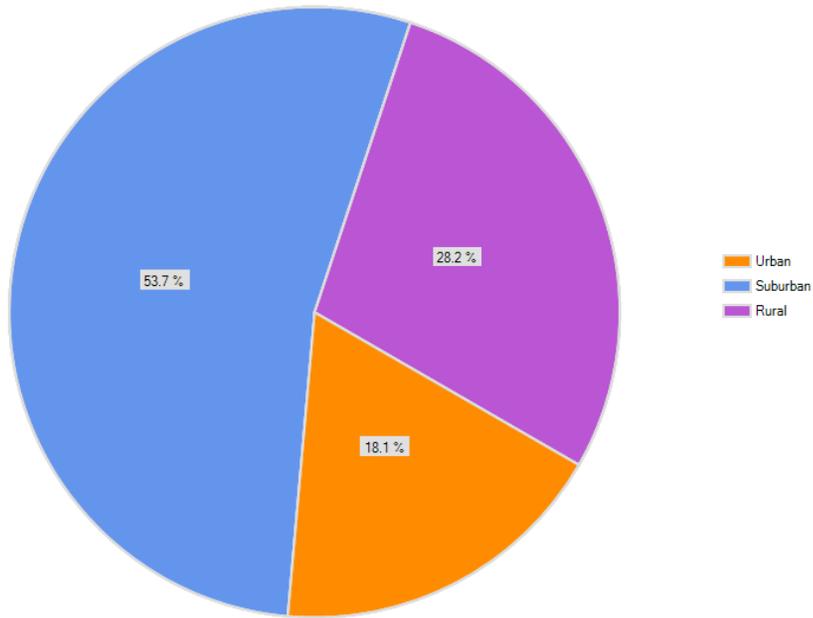
Summary of Survey Results

DEC developed several graphs and correlations to summarize key survey results (see proceeding pages). The heading on each graphic relates to specific question(s) in and response(s) to the survey.

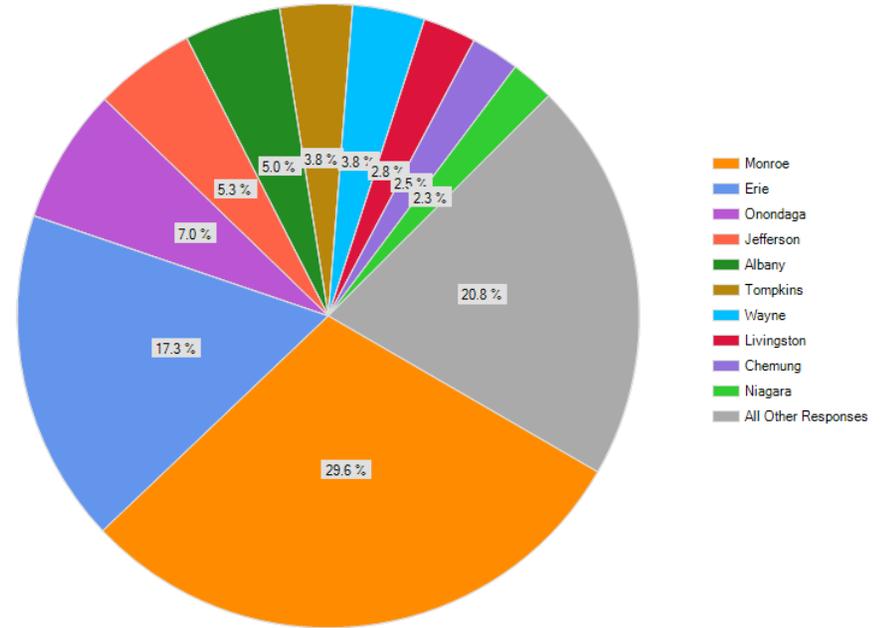
I agree or disagree with the following statements



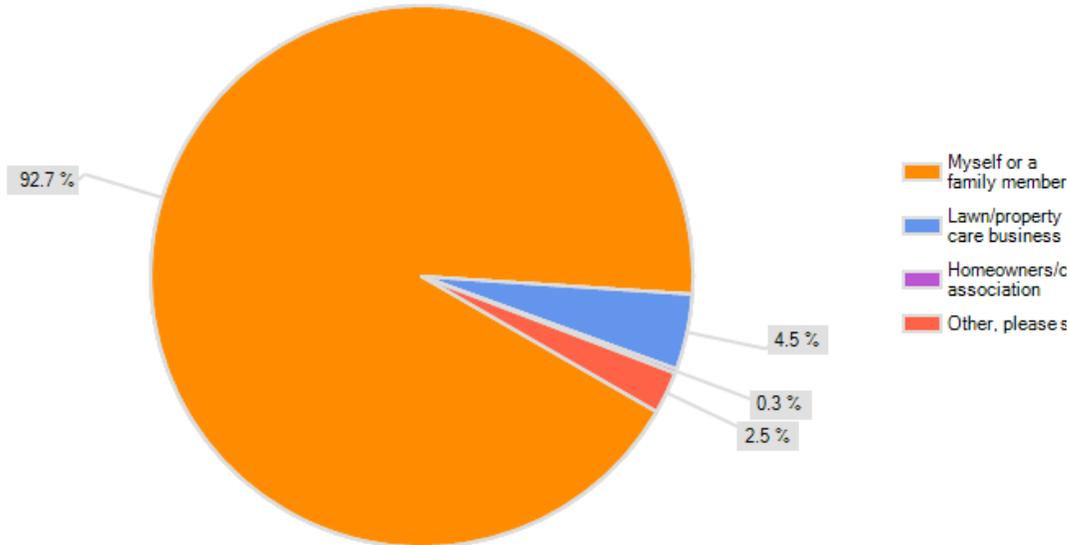
My neighborhood is:



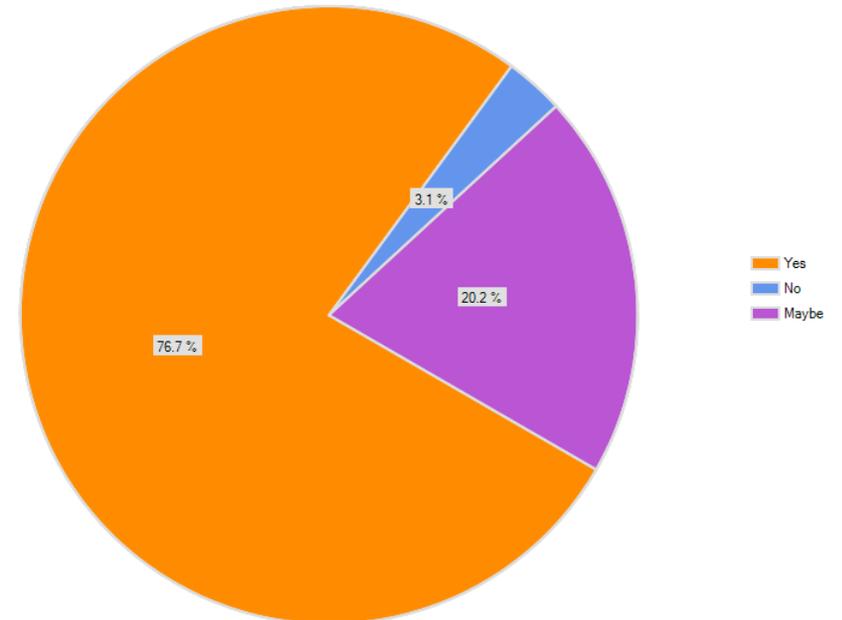
I live in the following county:



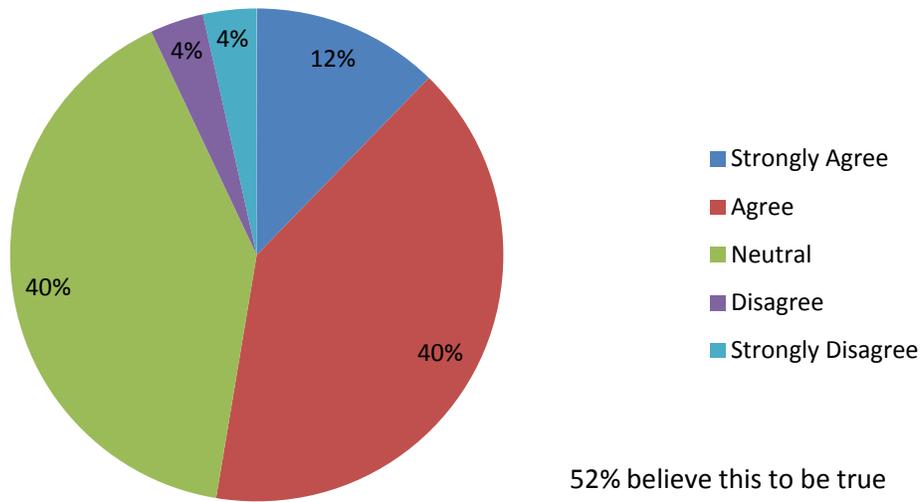
My outdoor property is maintained by the following:



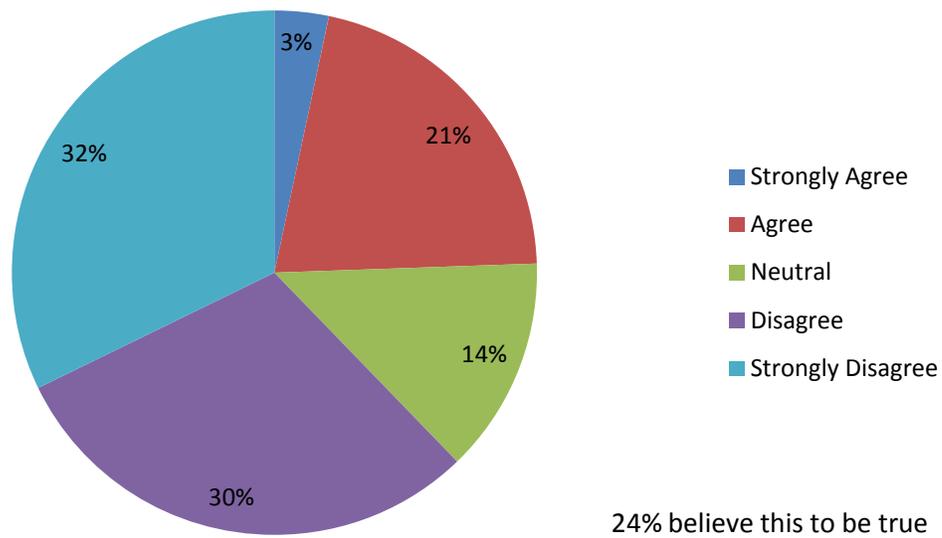
I would use organic land care if it were shown to improve water quality



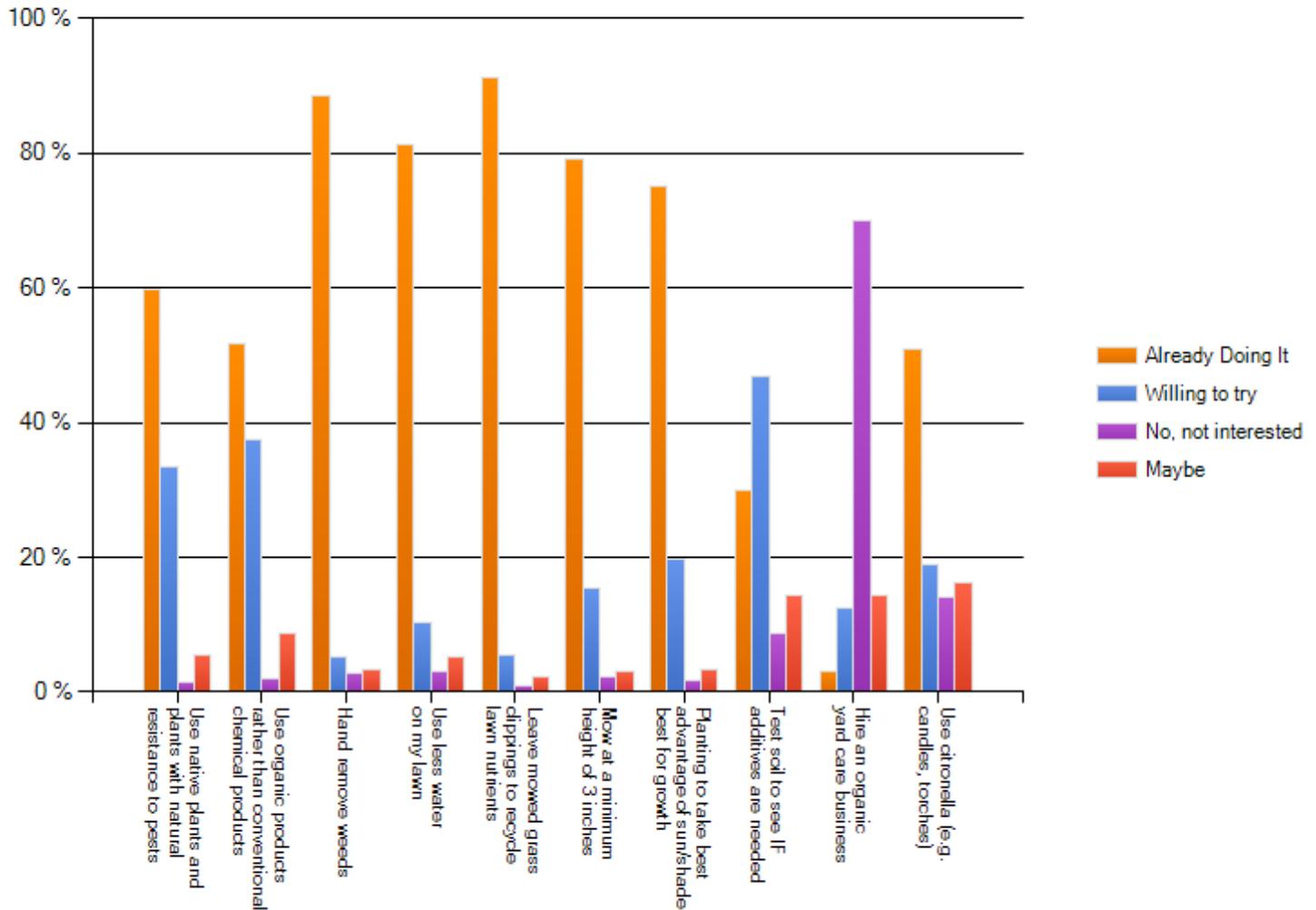
"Organic land care may not always be as effective as conventional care": responses from those who never use organic methods



"Organic land care may not be as effective as conventional methods": responses from those who use only organic methods



I would try options, such as organic land care, to reduce the use of conventional pesticides and fertilizers on my outdoor property



For those who answered that product claims such as "safe", "green", or "organic" listed on the label are at least somewhat important when deciding which yard pest management products to purchase, all but 1 individual said they would try at least one of the above organic land care options, if they were not already doing them. Across all the responses to each part of this question "no, not interested" was only selected 4% of the time. 70% of these respondents showed no interest in hiring an organic lawn care business.

For those who answered that product claims such as "safe", "green", or "organic" listed on the label are not important when deciding which yard pest management products to purchase, there were a surprising number of people already performing different organic land care options: 94% were already leaving grass clippings on the lawn and 87% were already pulling weeds by hand. Across all the responses to each part of this question "no, not interested" was selected 14% of the time. 87% of these respondents showed no interest in hiring an organic lawn care business.

Survey Questions

1. I live in New York State and have outdoor property to maintain (e.g lawn, garden): yes/no
2. I live in the following county:
3. My neighborhood is: urban/suburban/rural
4. I am a: homeowner/renter
5. I live near a stream: 0-5 miles away/more than 5 miles away
6. I live near a lake: 0-5 miles away/more than 5 miles away
7. My outdoor property is maintained by the following: Myself or a family member/Lawn or property care business/Homeowners, condo, townhouse association/other, please specify
8. I or those who maintain my yard use the following to control pests (any insect, weed, fungus, or rodent you consider undesirable) on my lawn, garden, trees/shrubs, or associated structures (e.g. decks):
(list frequency of use)
 - a. Pesticide
 - b. Fertilizer
 - c. Non-chemical methods e.g.:
 - 1) planting to take advantage of sun/shade best for growth,
 - 2) pulling weeds by hand,
 - 3) using pest resistant plants
9. I use methods I consider "organic": (list frequency of use)
10. I dispose of pest management products by: (yes/no)
 - a. placing in household trash
 - b. emptying leftover product on problem area on property (e.g. lawn)
 - c. pouring down drain, toilet, or storm sewer
 - d. I do not use pest management products
 - e. Other: household hazardous waste day/dispose by label instructions- both frequent responses
11. I agree or disagree with the following statements:
 - a. The more pesticides or other materials used, the more effective
 - b. Pesticides or other materials on my lawn, garden, trees or shrubs may potentially impact: surface water, groundwater, or drinking water/ wildlife e.g. butterflies, birds, or chipmunks/ people
 - c. Pesticides or other materials on my lawn may eventually end up in the Great Lakes
 - d. Pesticides are harmless to people and wildlife a few days after application
12. I get information about outdoor pest management practices and products (pesticides, organics, and other materials from) [rank your top 3 choices]: Relative/Friend or neighbor/Hardware or garden store/Books, magazines, or catalogs/Cornell Cooperative Extension/NYS Department of Environmental Conservation website/Product label/Landscape or lawn care company/Internet sites
13. If educational materials were available about the benefits of organic land care, I would try organic land care practices at home: yes/no
14. When I purchase yard pest management products I would rate the importance of the following:
 - a. Cost
 - b. Ease of application, disposal, and storage
 - c. Product claims such as "safe", "green", or "organic" listed on the label
 - d. Familiarity with product
 - e. Friend or neighbor says it works

- f. Quantity of product in container vs. amount I think I need
 - g. Seeing an Environmental Protection Agency product registration number
15. I would use organic land care if it were shown to improve water quality: yes/no
16. I would try options, such as organic land care, to reduce the use of conventional pesticides and fertilizers on my outdoor property:
- a. Use organic products rather than conventional chemical products
 - b. Use less water on my lawn
 - c. Planting to take best advantage of sun/shade best for growth
 - d. Use native plants and plants with natural resistance to pests
 - e. Test soil to see IF additives are needed
 - f. Leave mowed grass clippings to recycle lawn nutrients
 - g. Mow at a minimum height of 3 inches
 - h. Hand-remove weeds
 - i. Use citronella (e.g. candles, torches)
 - j. Hire an organic yard care business
17. I agree or disagree with the following statements
- a. It doesn't bother me to see some weeds and insects in my yard
 - b. A weed-free lawn and pest-free property are important for the value of my home
 - c. Pesticides and fertilizers are necessary for a healthy, attractive lawn, garden, or landscape
 - d. Organic land care may not always be as effective as conventional land care
18. I would adopt reduced pesticide/fertilizer pest management methods and organic practices for my outdoor property if: (fill in response)