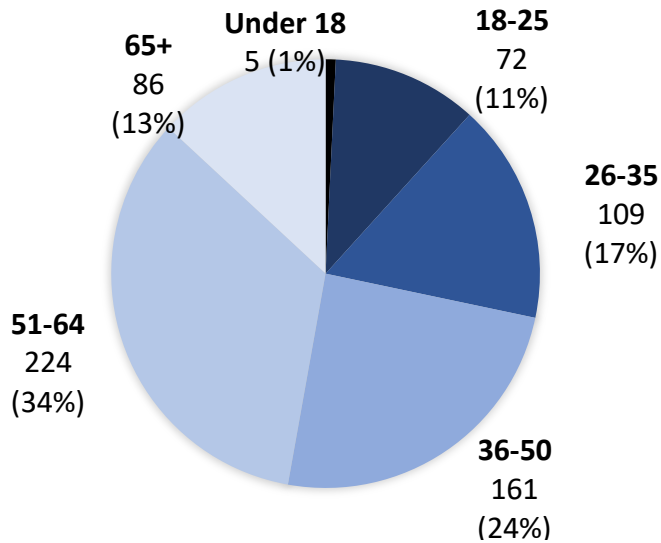




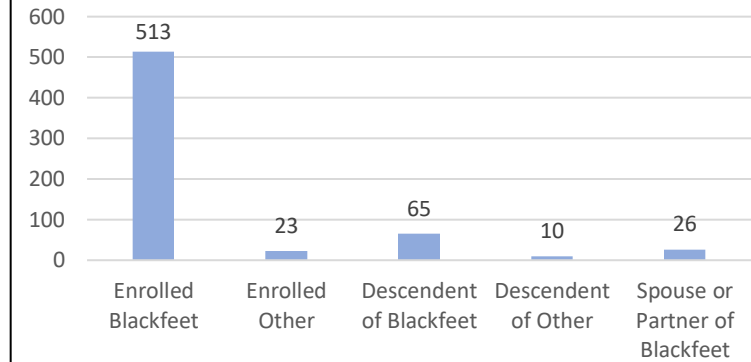
INTRODUCTION & DEMOGRAPHICS

AGE DISTRIBUTION

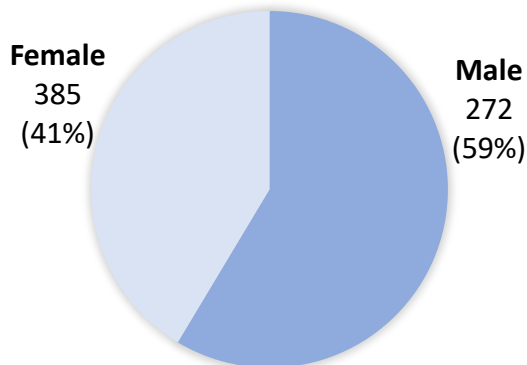


In 2018, The O'Komi Survey interviewed 657 individuals, posing a total of up to 126 questions related to land use, conservation, policy and leadership, and food. What follows are some key takeaways from the survey results, organized by theme.

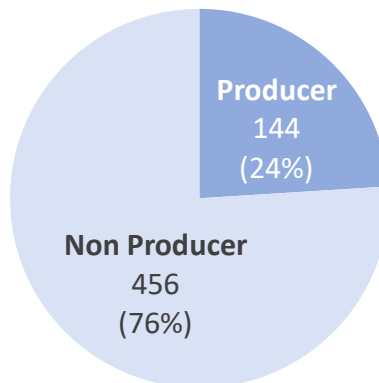
TRIBAL STATUS



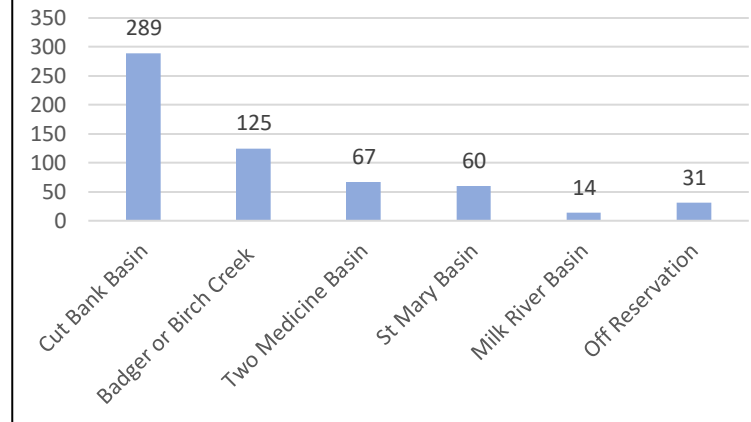
GENDER



OCCUPATION



WATERSHED RESIDENCE



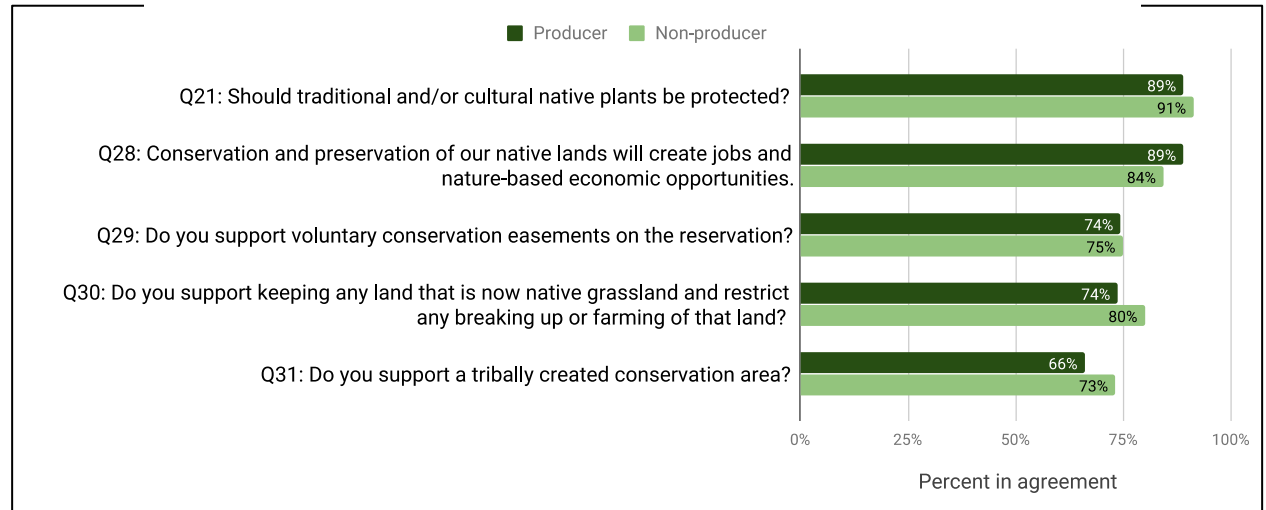
LAND USE & CONSERVATION

Land use and conservation is a major area of discussion in Blackfeet Nation. The O’Komi Survey sought to identify areas of agreement as well as points of contention around land use. While recognizing that there exist competing values for land, the O’Komi Survey results suggest that Blackfeet community is generally interested in land use and eager to participate in discussions and decision-making processes.

Overall, 70% of respondents self-describe as knowledgeable about conservation (88% of producers versus 64% of non-producers), but voice a desire for more robust conservation education programming on the reservation. 93% believe education programming is important to conservation efforts and 90% would like to learn more about conservation efforts on Blackfeet Nation.

Appreciation for the land as a source of traditional knowledge and cultural significance: 80% use the land for traditional subsistence purposes or cultural purposes. 90% believe areas should be valued and protected through tribal policy for traditional land uses.

Conservation attitudes among producers and non-producers



- **95%** believe traditional and/or cultural native plants (especially berries (*Miinnii*), sweetgrass (*supatsimo*), sage (*kak sii mii*), peppermint (*ka’ ki tsi mo*), and sweet pine (*katoyis*) should be protected.
- **87%** believe conservation and preservation of native lands will create jobs and nature-based economic opportunities.
- **81%** support keeping any land that is now native grassland and restricting any breaking up or farming of that land.
- **77%** support voluntary conservation easements of the reservation.
- **77%** support a tribally created conservation area.
- **65%** of respondents believe the Open Range Ordinance should be changed
- Top three problems facing Blackfeet Nation land management:



1. Tribal policy (32%)



2. Overgrazing (29%)

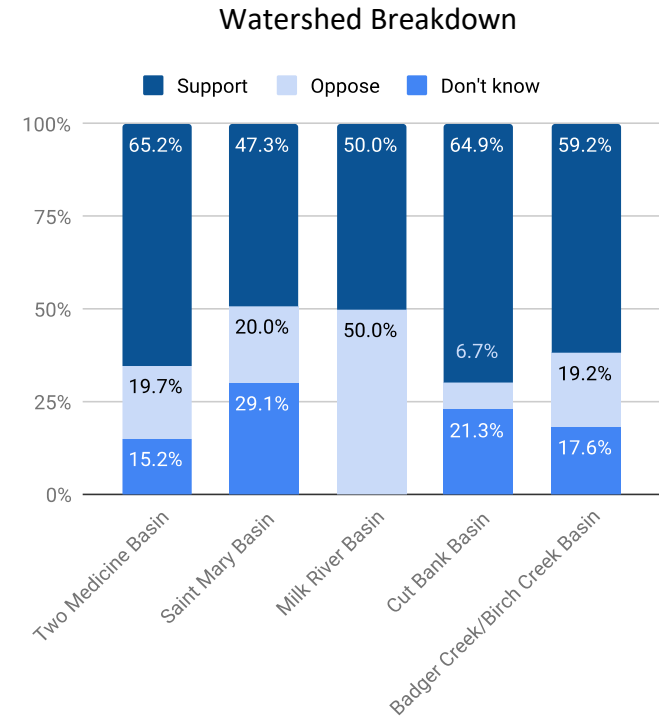
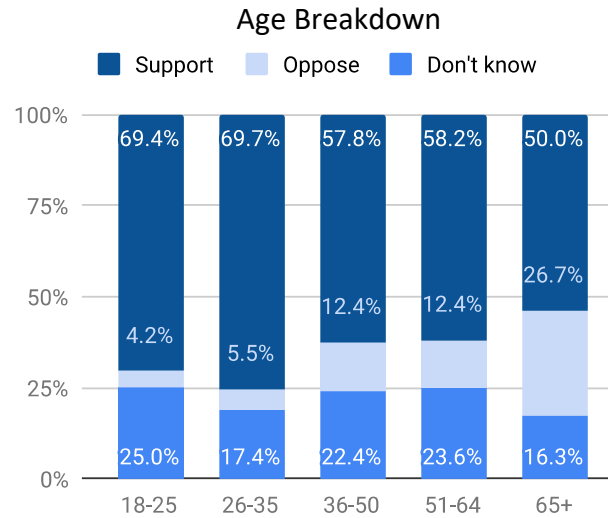


3. Off-reservation cattle (15%)

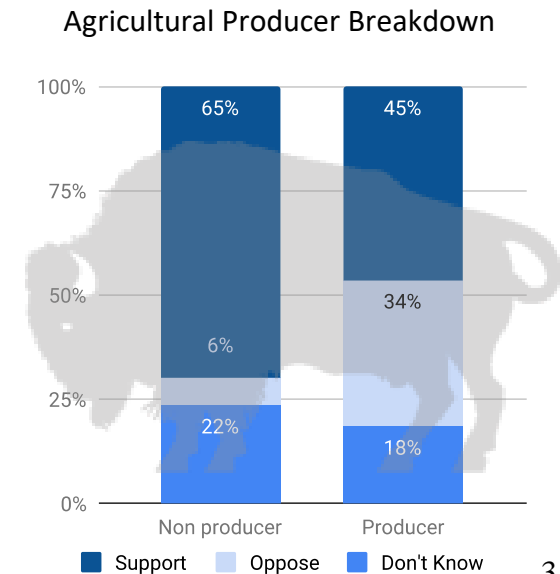
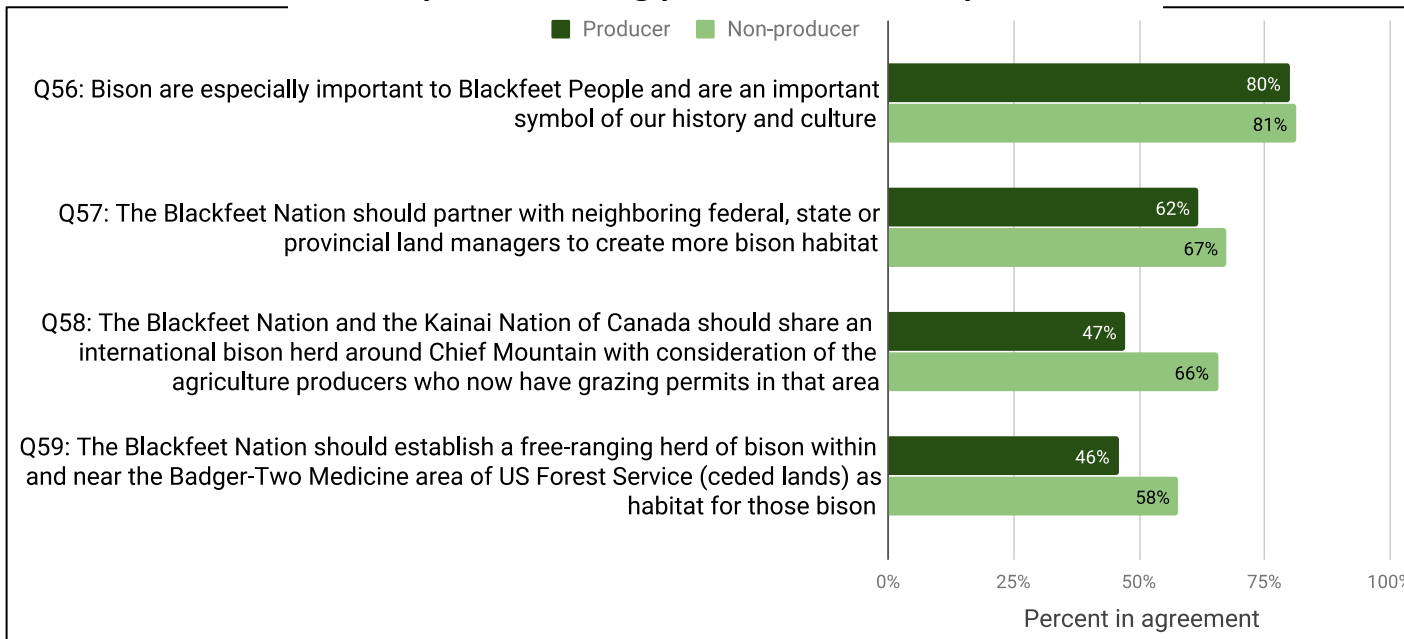
BISON

Bison emerged as a particularly important topic, as the vast majority of respondents agreed that bison are especially important to Blackfeet People and are an important symbol of Blackfeet history and culture. With regards to specific bison-related policy proposals, attitudes varied. Individuals with more direct experience with buffalo, through their livelihood activities or based on where they live, were more critical of current buffalo management on the reservation. Individuals whose livelihood relies more on access to land were less likely to agree that more trust land should be designated as bison habitat, while those individuals who have more connection to tradition were more likely to support habitat designation.

Should trust land be designated as bison habitat?



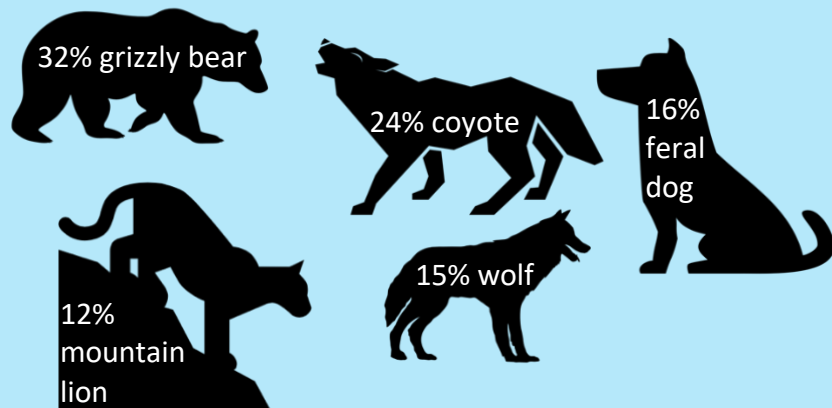
Bison opinions among producers and non-producers



AGRICULTURE & PRODUCTION

The O’Komi Survey identified slightly under half (48%) of all respondents as producers (farmers and ranchers having annual sales of at least \$1000). Most of these producers own small-scale family operations and supplement their farm/ranch income from other sources. Of note, the majority of producers (85%) voiced support for the creation of a Blackfeet Agriculture Department as well as management plans for agricultural emergencies and drought management (73% and 71% of respondents, respectively).

- **79%** are small family ranches with less than \$100,000 gross annual income.
- **69%** of farms or ranches have been in operation greater than 30 years.
- **36%** of producers are in the NRCS program or have used NRCS technical services in the past.
- **65%** of producers believe there is a predator problem on their operation.
 - The majority of respondents report a domestic animal killed by a wild animal in the past 10 years.



- However, only **23%** of surveyed producers signed up for the predator control that was offered.
- **82%** say that they would apply for resources to mitigate livestock loss, provide assistance for hay and other resources that follow an emergency, if identified by the ARMP.

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Access to affordable, nutritious food is a fundamental human right. In Blackfeet Nation, there exists a need for greater access to high-quality food. In the O’Komi Survey, **68% of all respondents did not believe that sufficient healthy fresh food options are readily available on the reservation.** This number was higher among individuals whose day-to-day lives are based in the reservation, and lower among those individuals who might have access to resources outside of the reservation. Furthermore, those who have access to fewer resources (non-producers, women, those who live further from population centers) are more likely to experience hunger than those with access to more resources. Although subsidized food programs exist, the amount to which individuals take advantage of the programs varies: individuals with less stable livelihoods or households are more likely to access food programs than those with more stability. Despite these areas of concern, **82% voiced a strong interest in creating a more food sovereign nation and creating new sources of local, fresh food.**

- **87%** would like to see the Blackfeet Nation develop its own Blackfeet Agricultural Co-op.
- **83%** would like to see the Blackfeet Nation develop its own beef packing plant or bison/buffalo farm & packing plant.
- **80%** would consider growing their own garden if they had the education and help in establishing one.
- **63%** would purchase Blackfeet-produced food products even if they were a little more expensive.
- **52%** would be interested in using a community kitchen (26% don’t know but want to learn).

Acknowledgements:

**Blackfeet Nation, Agriculture Resource Management Plan team
Montana State University, Native American Studies**

**Analyzed, designed and produced by:
Center for Large Landscape Conservation**

