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We surveyed 500 residents of Eugene, Oregon, on their perspective on a policy that would require local government to purchase more plant-based foods as a way of reducing environmental and public health harms, as well as aligning with Eugene's Community Climate and Energy Action Plan.

**Takeaways:**

- Residents of Eugene overwhelmingly support (71.7%) legislation to encourage plant-based food purchasing with taxpayer dollars or by city governments and believe that Eugene in particular should be taking such actions (76.1%).
- Only 17.7% of residents said that their representatives were doing enough to encourage food sustainability. 44.8% believe that their representatives were “definitely not” or “probably not” doing enough in this area.
- 62.2% of residents said they were more likely to vote for candidates who pursue this kind of legislation.

**Background**

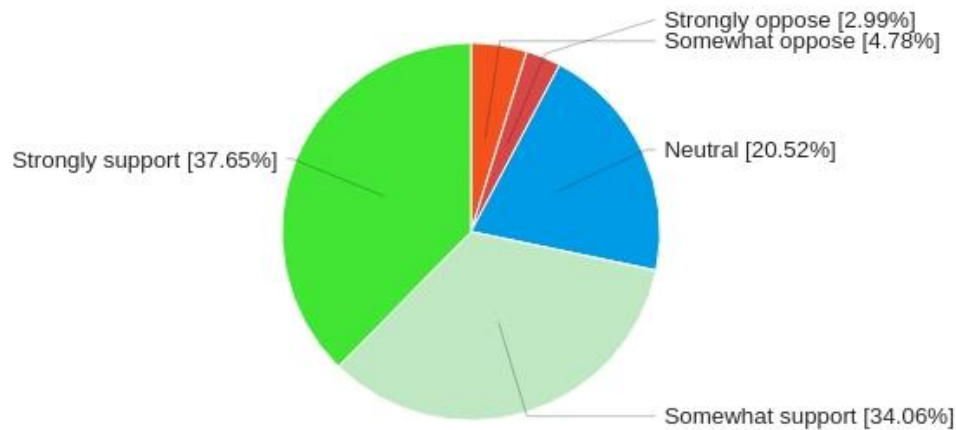
Industrial animal agriculture is the leading cause of biodiversity loss, creates harmful air and water pollution, and emits a significant amount of greenhouse gas emissions. Recent scientific [evidence](#) indicates that even if all other sectors become carbon-neutral, emissions from meat and dairy products alone will push us past 2°C of warming. The EAT-Lancet [Report](#) found that meeting the Paris Agreement goals would require substantial shifts towards plant-based diets. The consensus among scientists is that shifting away from meat and dairy towards a more plant-based diet is essential to meet widely adopted climate commitments, like the 2°C benchmark laid out in the Paris Agreement, and unlock a series of health benefits, such as lowered risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and overall mortality from a variety of causes.

Eugene has an ambitious [climate plan](#) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 7.6% per year, including recommendations like replacing meat and dairy products with plant-based foods. Although the plan encourages actions like offering meat alternatives at schools, it notes uncertainty about community response to such measures.

How *do* residents of Eugene feel about actions to encourage city government to procure more sustainable, plant-based foods? We surveyed 500 residents of Eugene, Oregon and asked them to review hypothetical legislation where their local government:

- Would calculate the city's food-related greenhouse gas emissions for one year.
- Increase and prioritize the amount of plant-based foods in government facilities, hospitals, higher learning institutions and other food settings.
- Prioritize purchasing those foods from local Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) farmers, where feasible.

When asked how they felt about this policy being implemented in Eugene, 71.7% of respondents said that they supported it (either strongly or somewhat).

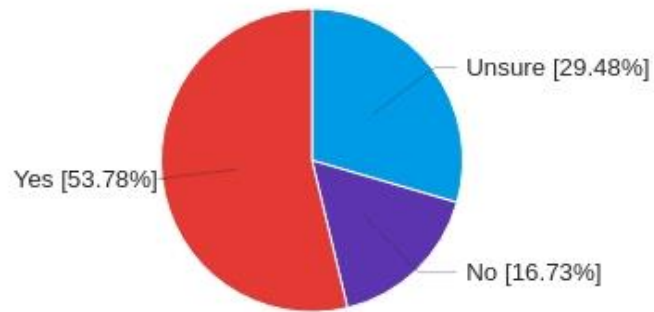


- “Diets high in plants help to mitigate climate change by lowering greenhouse gas emissions linked to cattle production.”
- “Increasing the amount of plant-based foods encourages a diet linked to a decreased risk of chronic illnesses, leading to a healthier populace.”
- “Healthier lifestyle, bring awareness to the city of Eugene.”
- “I support the local government taking the first step with their own policies.”

*A word cloud of written responses about what residents liked most about the legislation.*

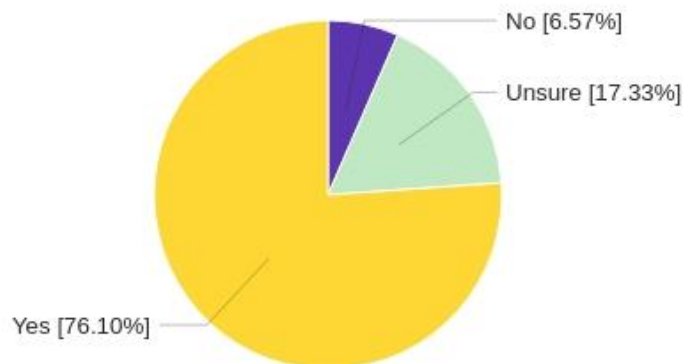
When asked if the government has a responsibility to buy climate-friendly food with taxpayer money, 53.8% answered “Yes.”

Do you believe that the government has a responsibility to use taxpayer money to purchase food that doesn't contribute to climate change?



Respondents were then asked more specifically whether Eugene should reduce food-related emissions in their area. 76.1% responded yes.

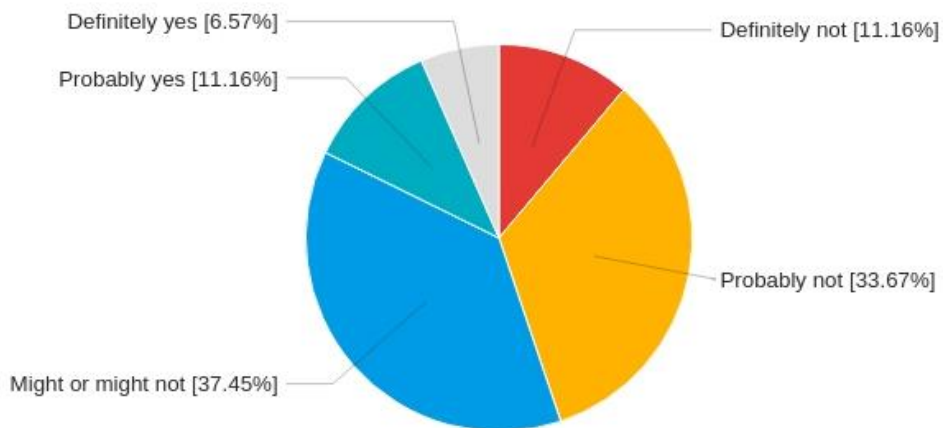
Should your local government take action to reduce food-related greenhouse gas emissions?



Residents of Eugene were also asked if they felt that their representatives were doing enough on food-related emissions. Only 17.7% responded with either “definitely” or “probably” yes.

44.8% responded that their representatives were “definitely not” or “probably not” doing enough in this area.

Do you believe that your representatives are currently doing enough on this issue?



Finally, Eugene residents were asked if they would be more likely to vote for representatives who pursue this kind of climate-friendly food plan.

62.2% answered “definitely” or “probably yes” and only 5.8% answered that they would not vote for representatives who pursue this plan.

Are you more likely to vote for someone who pursues this kind of climate-friendly food plan?

