



# ***Defining Agritourism in Virginia***

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# What is agritourism?

**FARM**



**TOURISM**

**BUSINESS**



**EDUCATION**

**DIRECT MARKETING**

# Agritourism activity . . .

Code of Virginia § 3.2-6400. (Effective October 1, 2008) Definitions.

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In Virginia there is a specific definition of an “agritourism activity,” and for the purpose of law, an agritourism activity is defined as:

*“any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, wineries, ranching, historical, cultural, harvest-your-own activities, or natural activities and attractions. An activity is an agritourism activity whether or not the participant paid to participate in the activity.*”



# Why Agritourism?

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**Agritourism is a value-added strategy that:**

- Generates additional income from the land
- Introduces farm product/brand to customers
- Helps farmers to cope with bad crops, rising input costs

# Why Agritourism?

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Research among many different states finds that most operations are most influenced or motivated by the generation of additional income or some form of monetary incentive.



# Why Agritourism?

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McGehee and Kim (2004) identified the motivations and demographics of agritourism operators in Virginia.

## **Top two motivations for starting an agritourism operation:**

- 1) Additional income
- 2) Utilization of resources

## **Top three agritourism events:**

- 1) Working farms
- 2) Christmas tree farms
- 3) Pick-your-own operations





# Virginia Agritourism Survey

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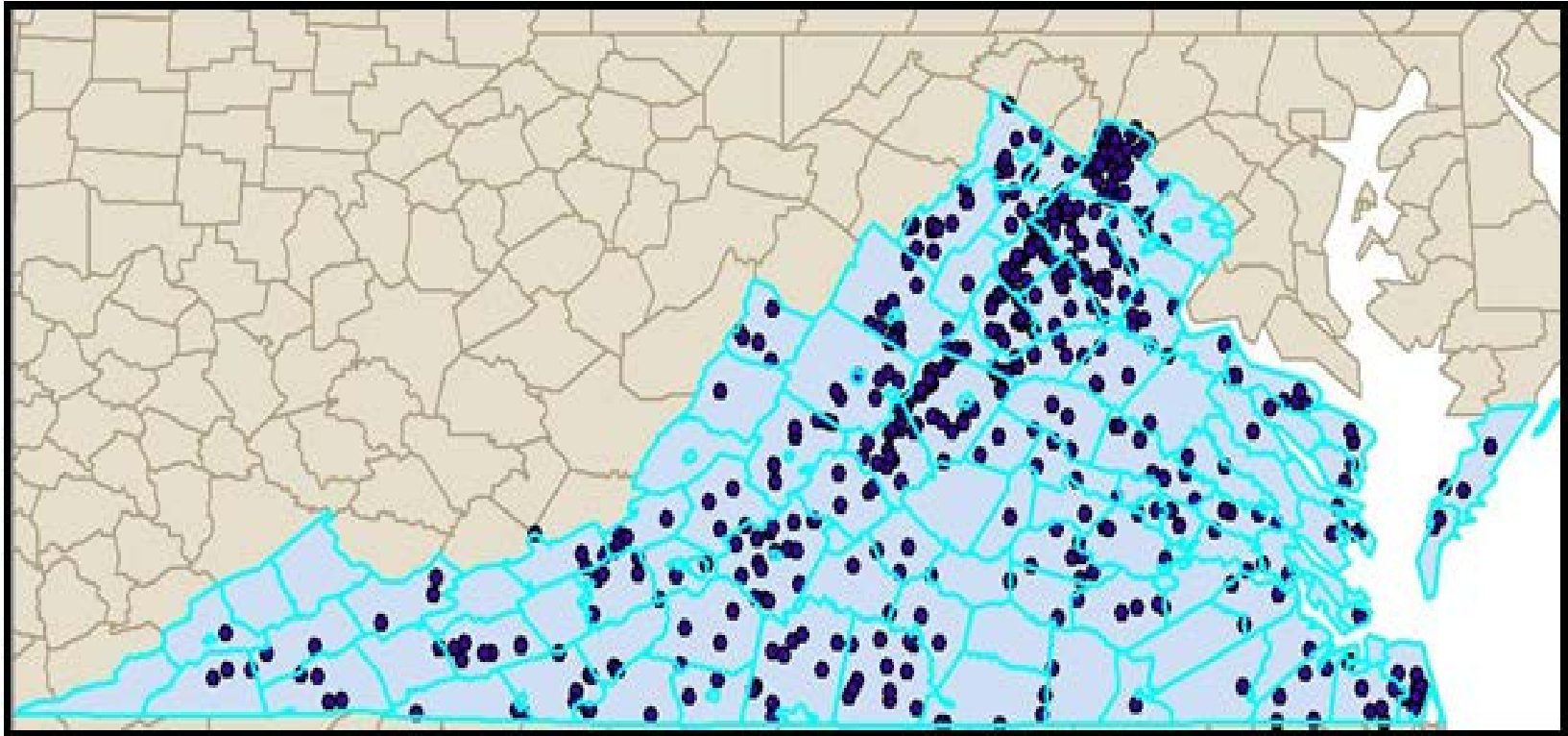
## Survey characteristics:

- The initial database consisted of 511 enterprises
- The final database included 471 enterprises
- There were a total of 243 responses (52 percent response rate)
- Wineries make up 44 percent of Virginia agritourism operations surveyed

# Virginia Agritourism Survey

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Figure 1: Agritourism Operations in Virginia in 2014

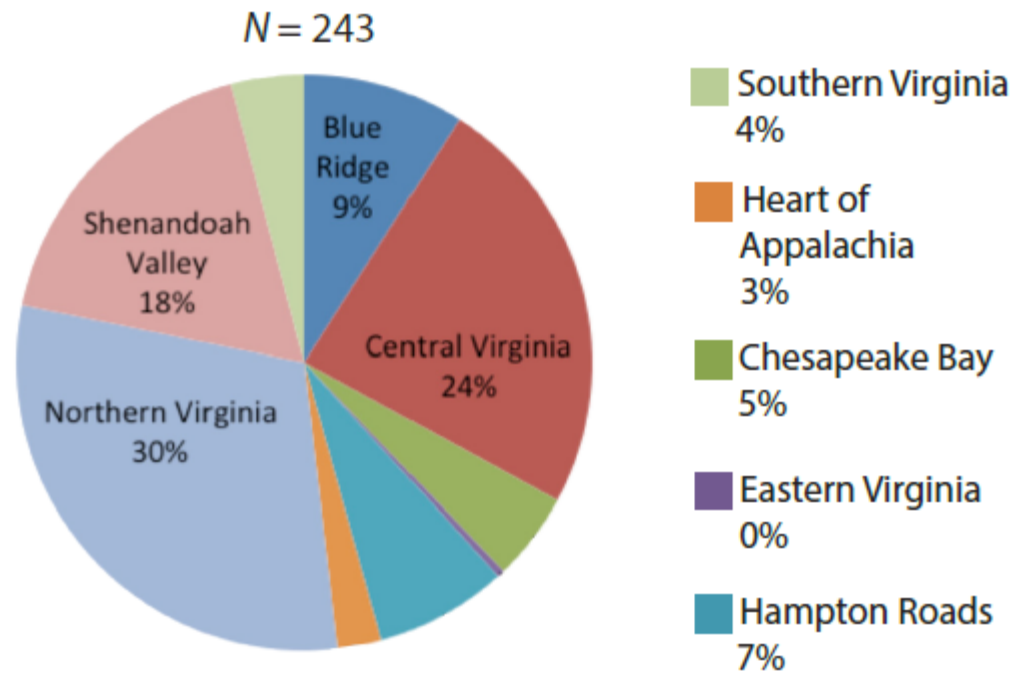


Source: VDACS Virginia-Grown 2013; Virginia Wine 2013; Pickyourrown.org; extension agent correspondence (ArcMap 10.1)



# Virginia Agritourism Survey

Figure 2: Breakdown of respondents by region





# Virginia Agritourism Survey

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## Who are Virginia agritourism operators?

- Male (71%)
- Married (87%)
- Caucasian (96%)
- Age: 51 and older (88%)
- Fairly educated – College degree (31%) & Graduate degree (25%)
- Educational background – Agricultural (14%), business (28%), agricultural & business (25%), other (33%)

# Statistical Analysis

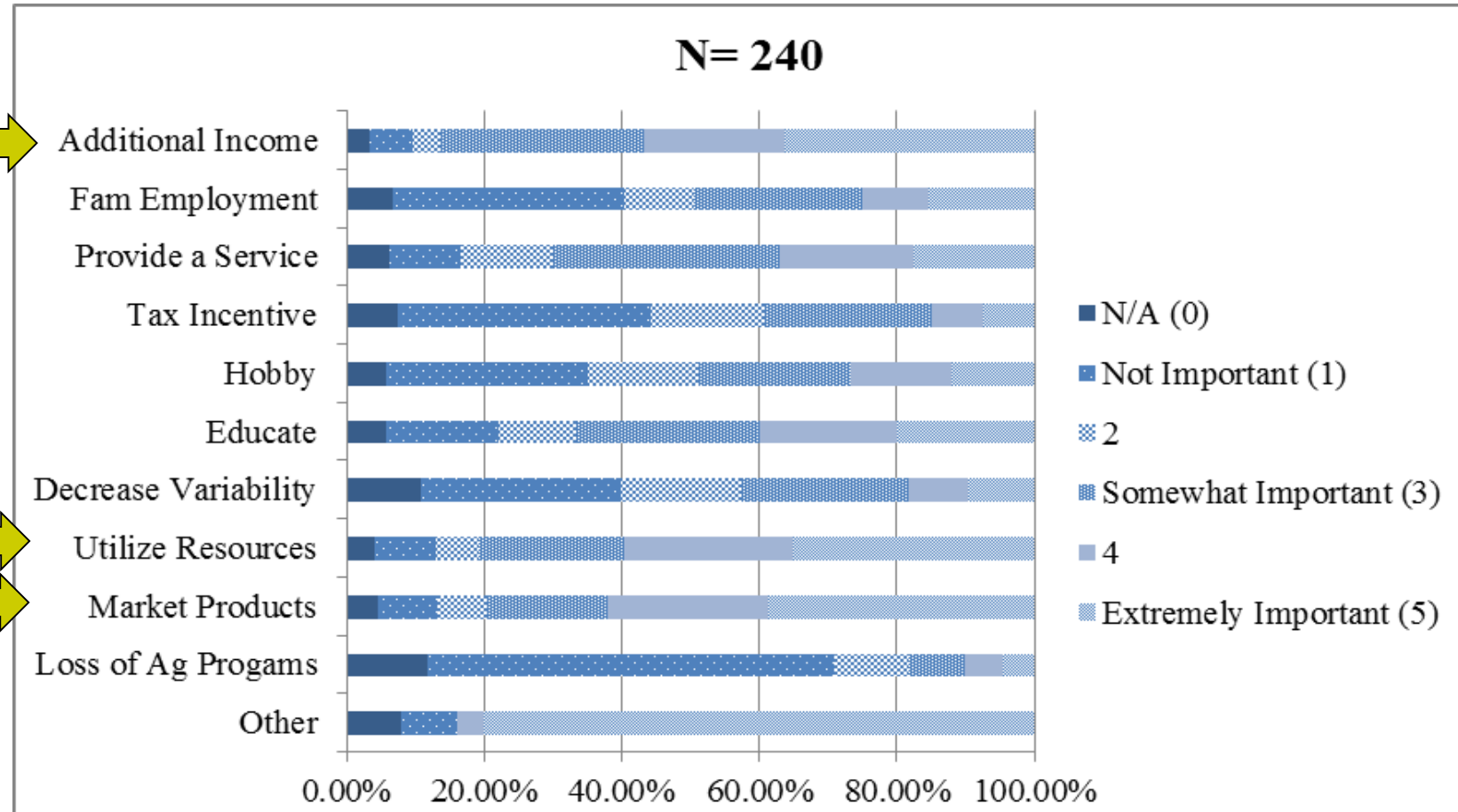
**Table 1: Virginia Agritourism Enterprises Months of Operation  
(n=213)**

Month	# of farms	%
January	129	53.3%
February	131	54.1%
March	144	59.5%
April	179	74.0%
May	195	80.6%
June	199	82.2%
July	205	84.7%
August	201	83.1%
September	204	84.3%
October	204	84.3%
November	184	76.0%
December	165	68.2%

**Busiest months for  
VA agritourism**

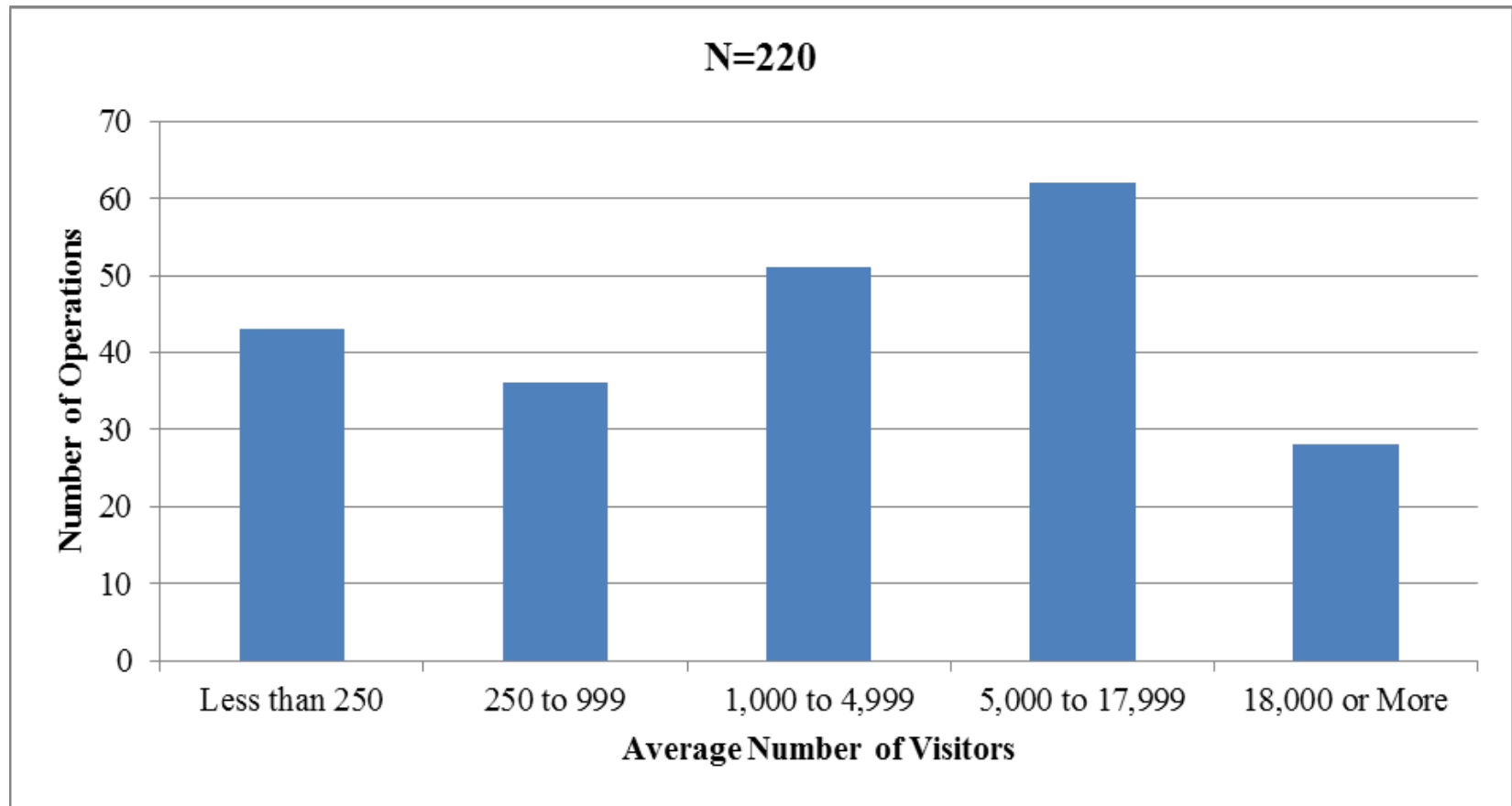
# Statistical Analysis

Figure 3: Motivations to Start an Agritourism Operation in Virginia



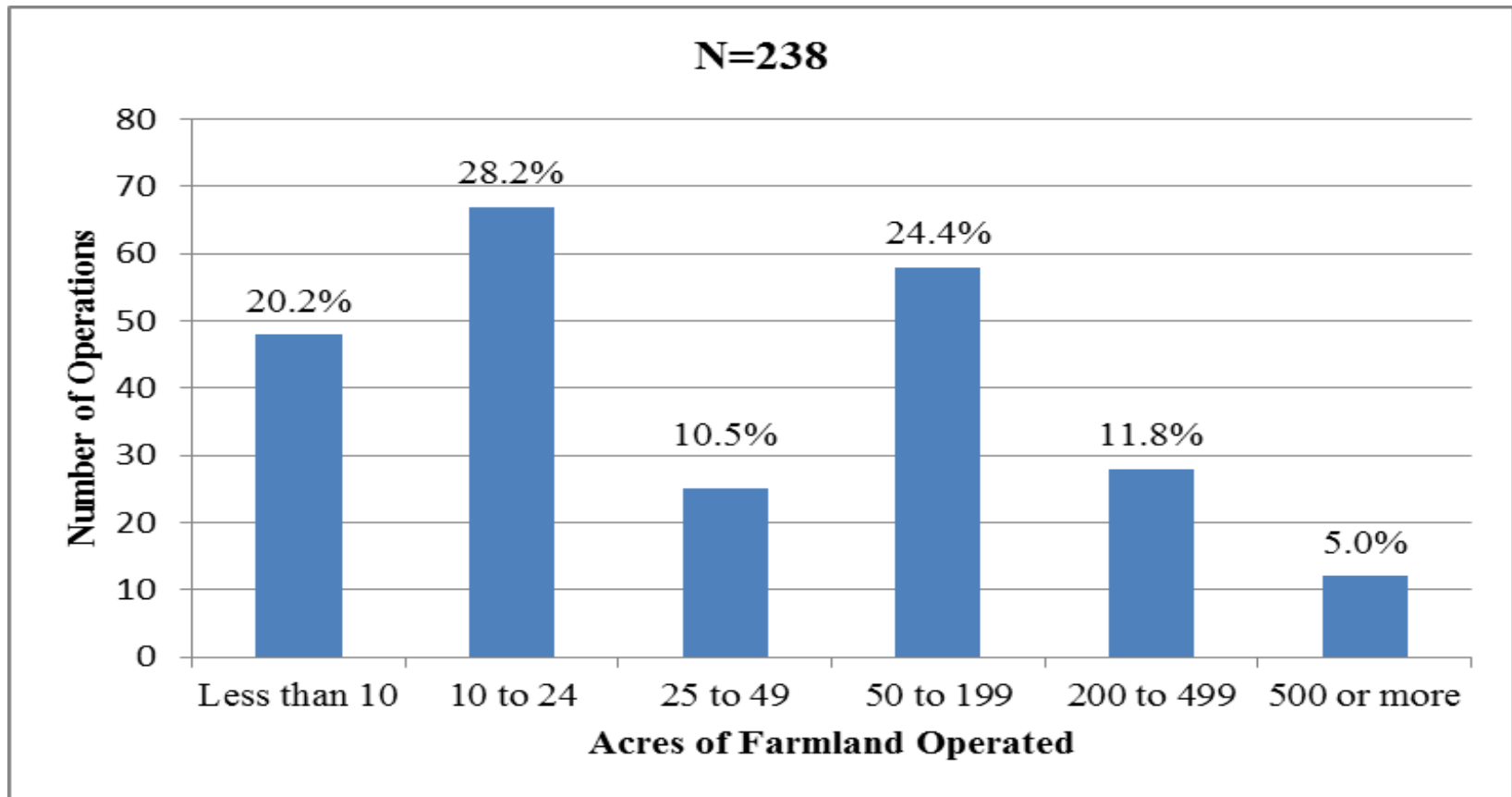
# Statistical Analysis

Figure 4: Number of Operations in Virginia by Estimated Average Number of Visitors



# Statistical Analysis

Figure 5: Number of Operations in Virginia by Acres of Farmland





# Statistical Analysis

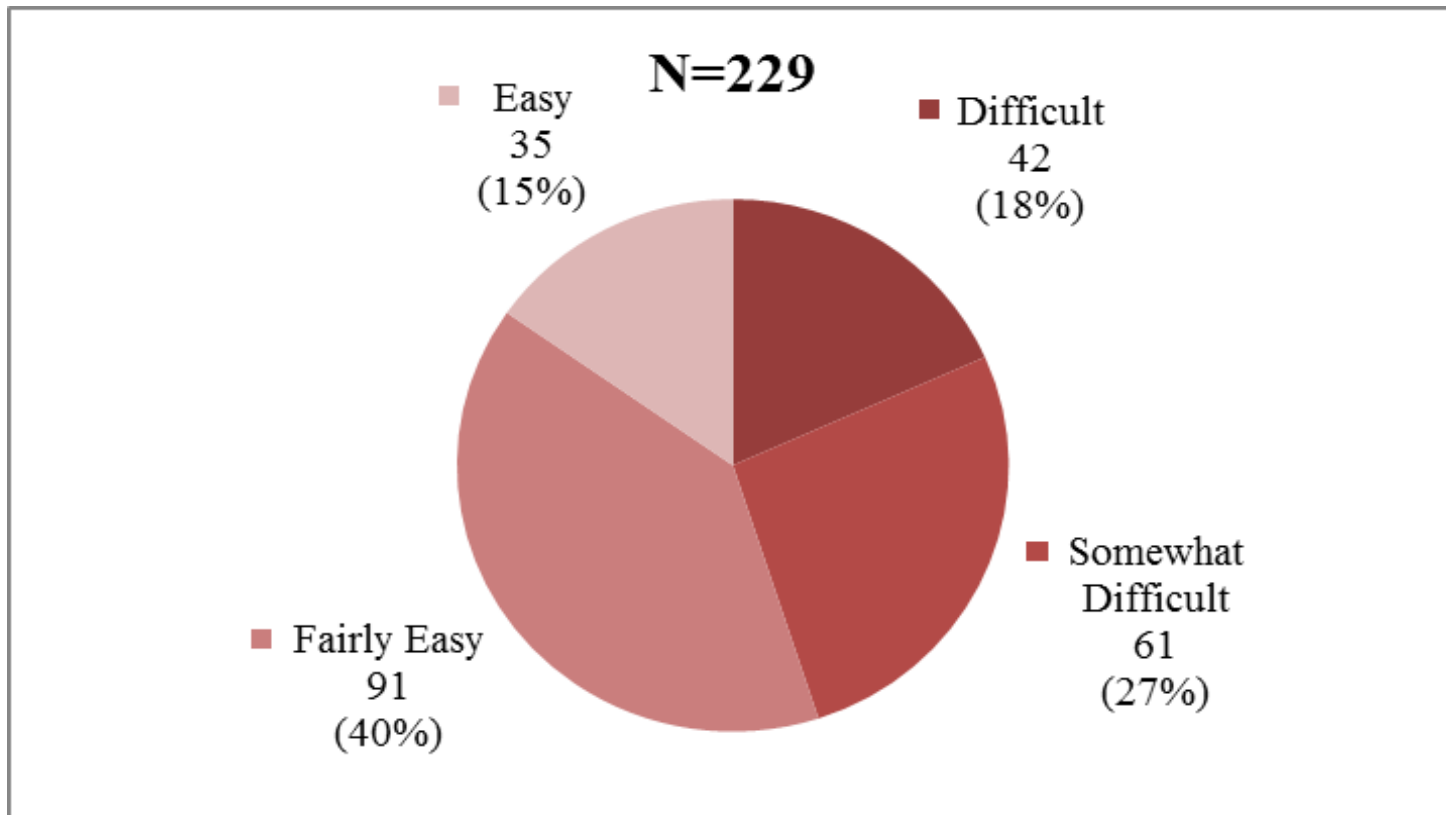
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Most commonly offered agritourism events:

- (1) Tours
- (2) Tastings
- (3) Picnics
- (4) Pick-your-own
- (5) Special events
- (6) On farm stands

# Statistical Analysis

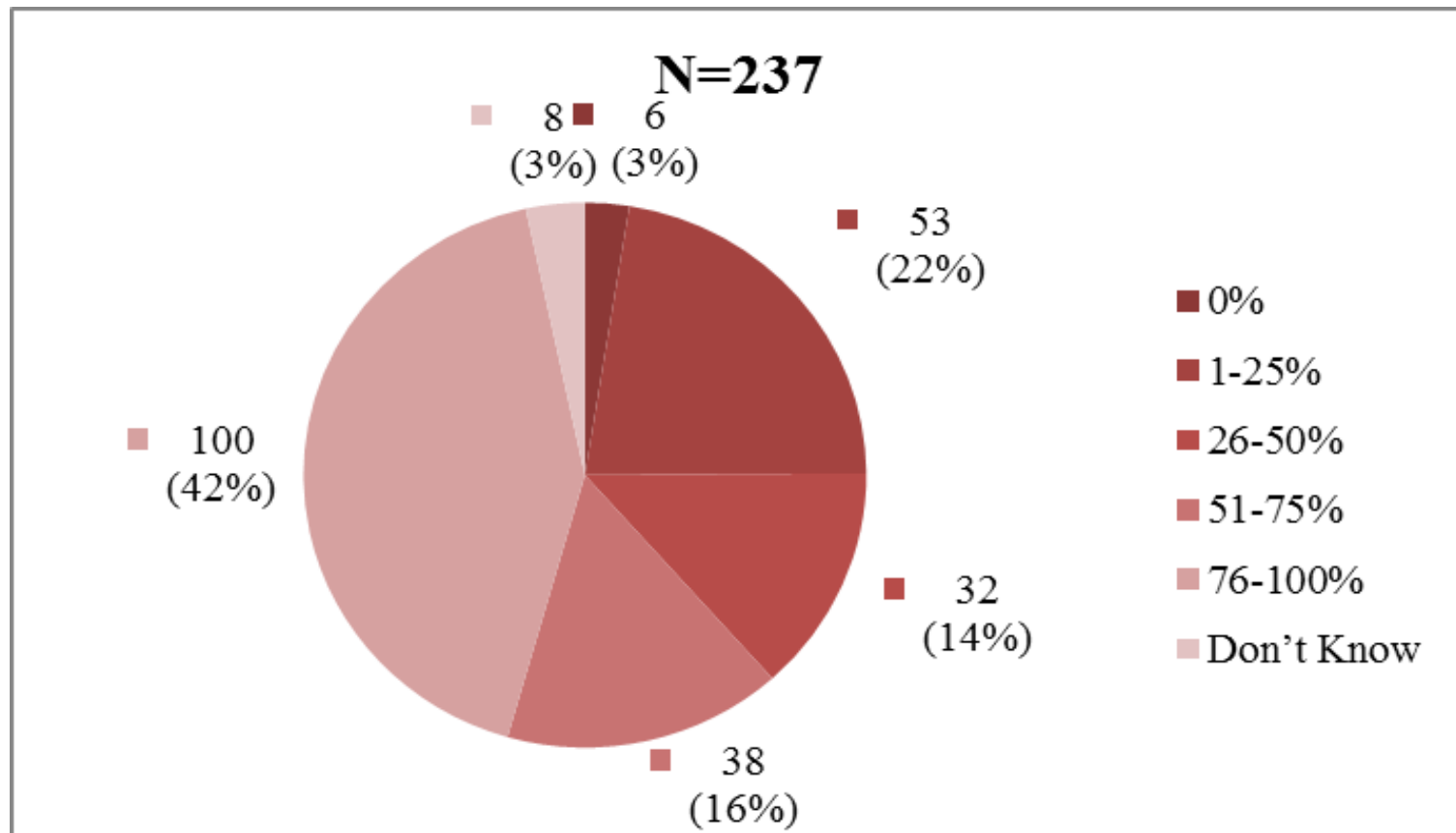
Figure 6: Access to Finances by Virginia Agritourism Operators





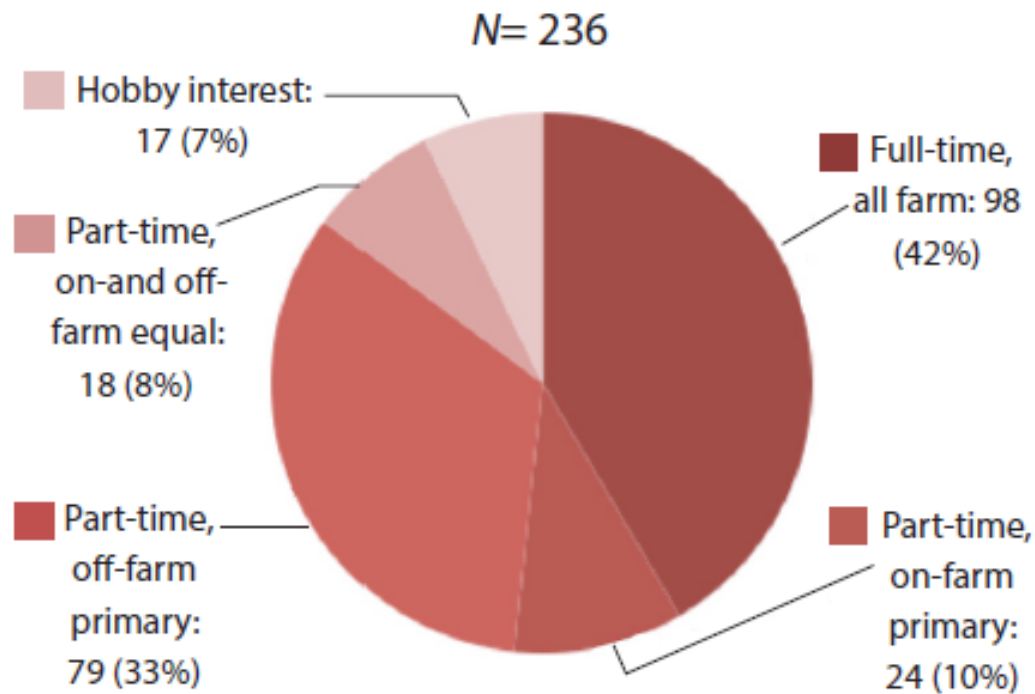
# Statistical Analysis

Figure 7: Percentage of Gross Farm Income Attributed to Agritourism in Virginia



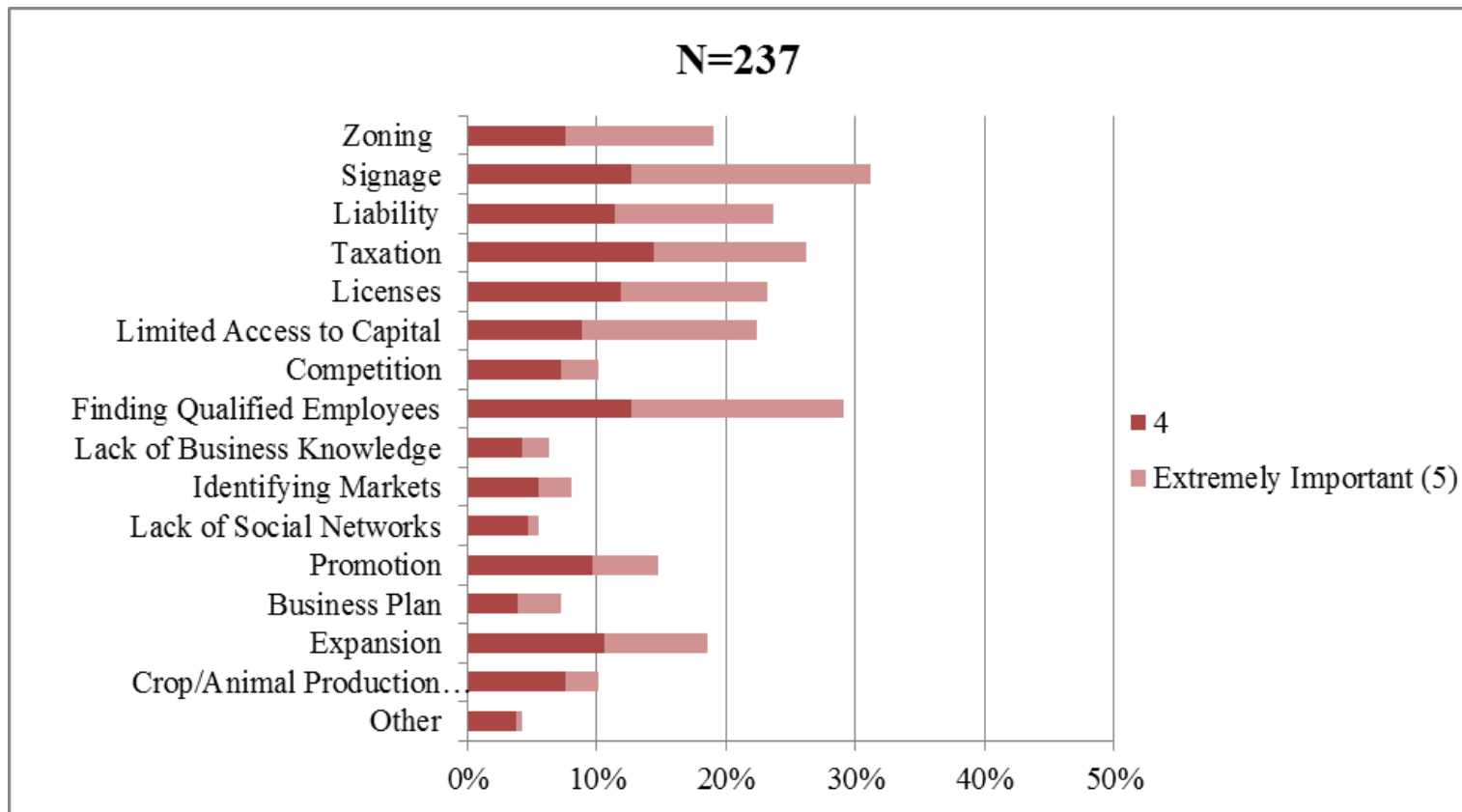
# Statistical Analysis

Figure 8: Financial Importance of Overall Farming Operations



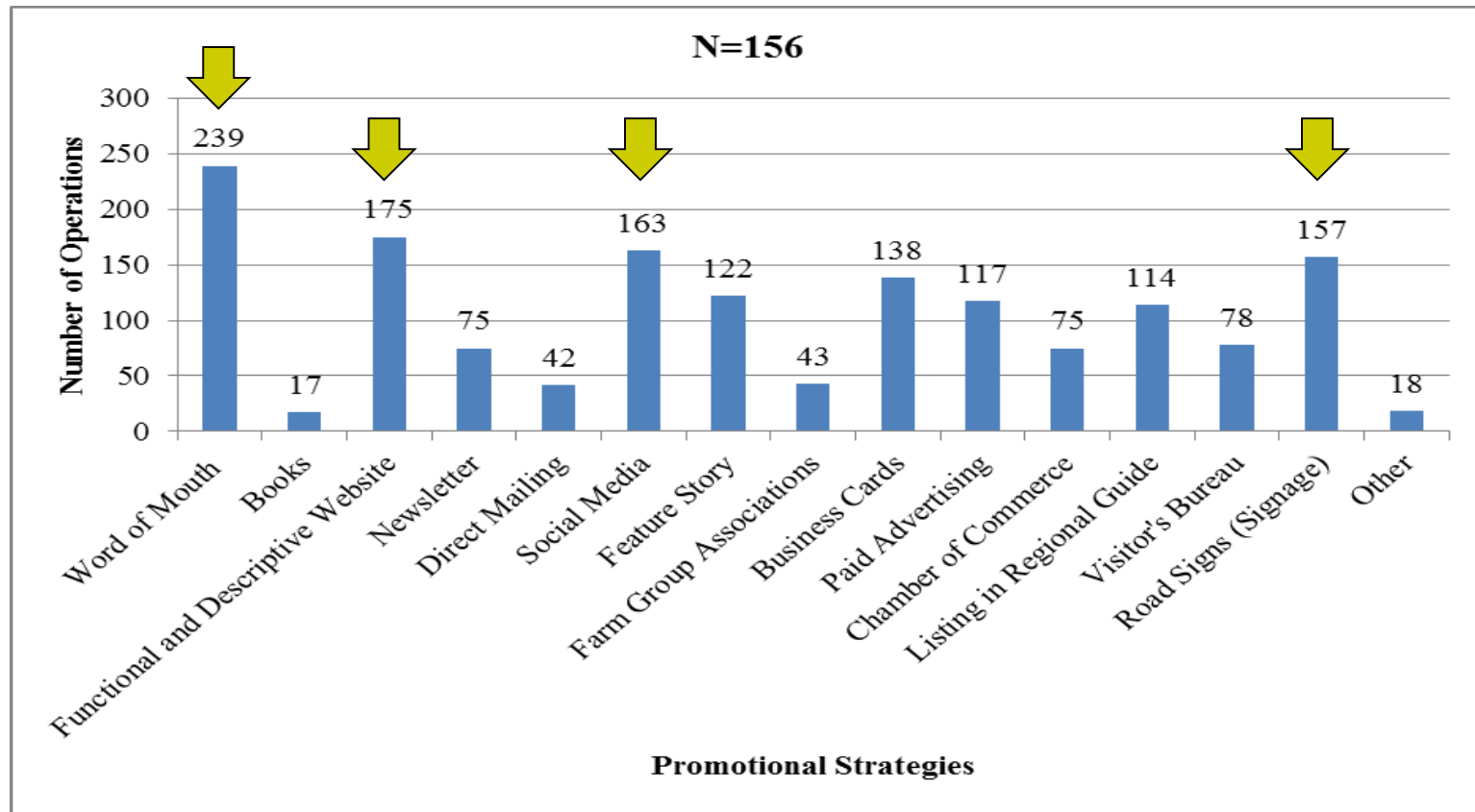
# Statistical Analysis

Figure 9: Obstacles to the Success of an Agritourism Operation in Virginia



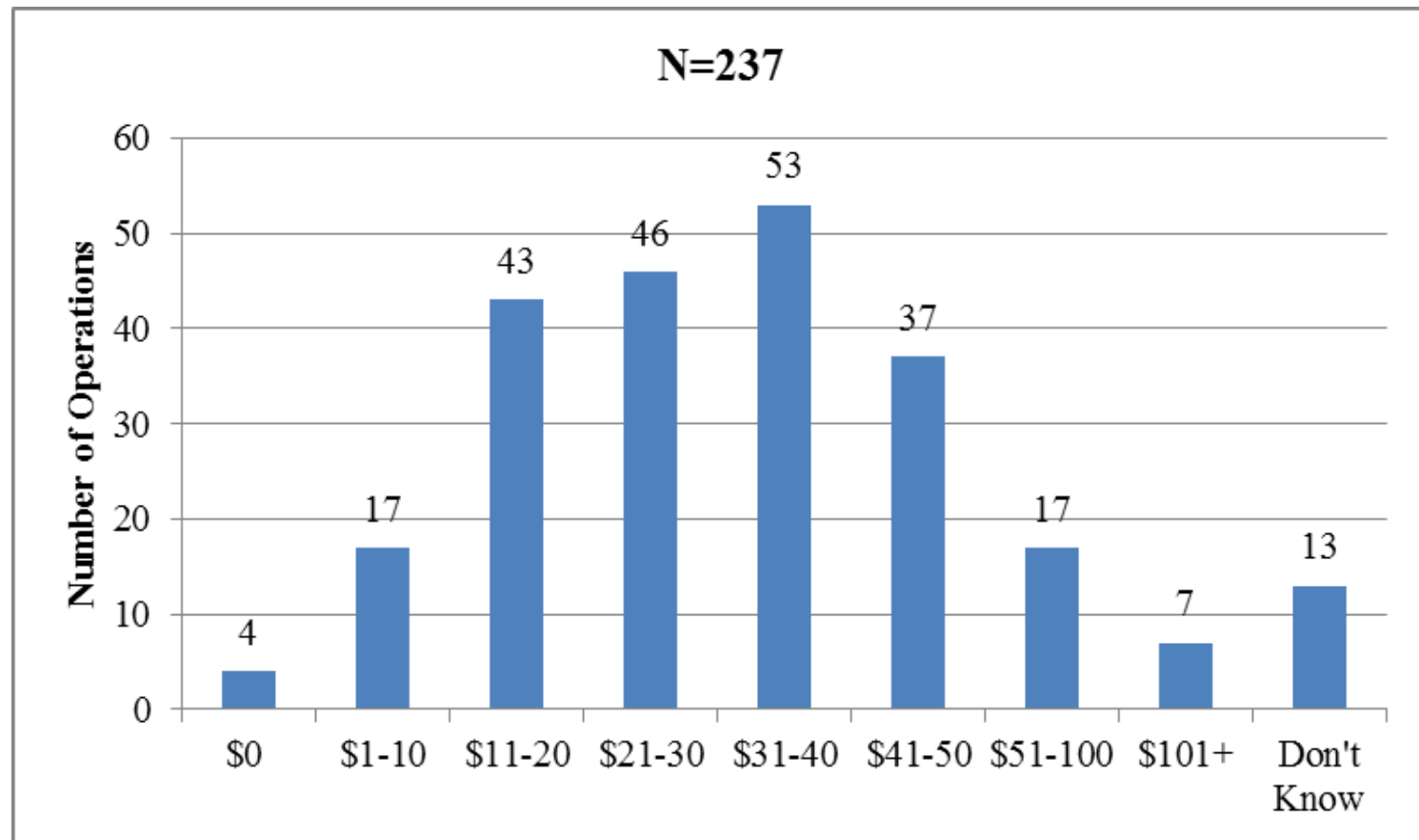
# Statistical Analysis

Figure 10: Number of Agritourism Operations Using Specific Promotion Strategies in Virginia



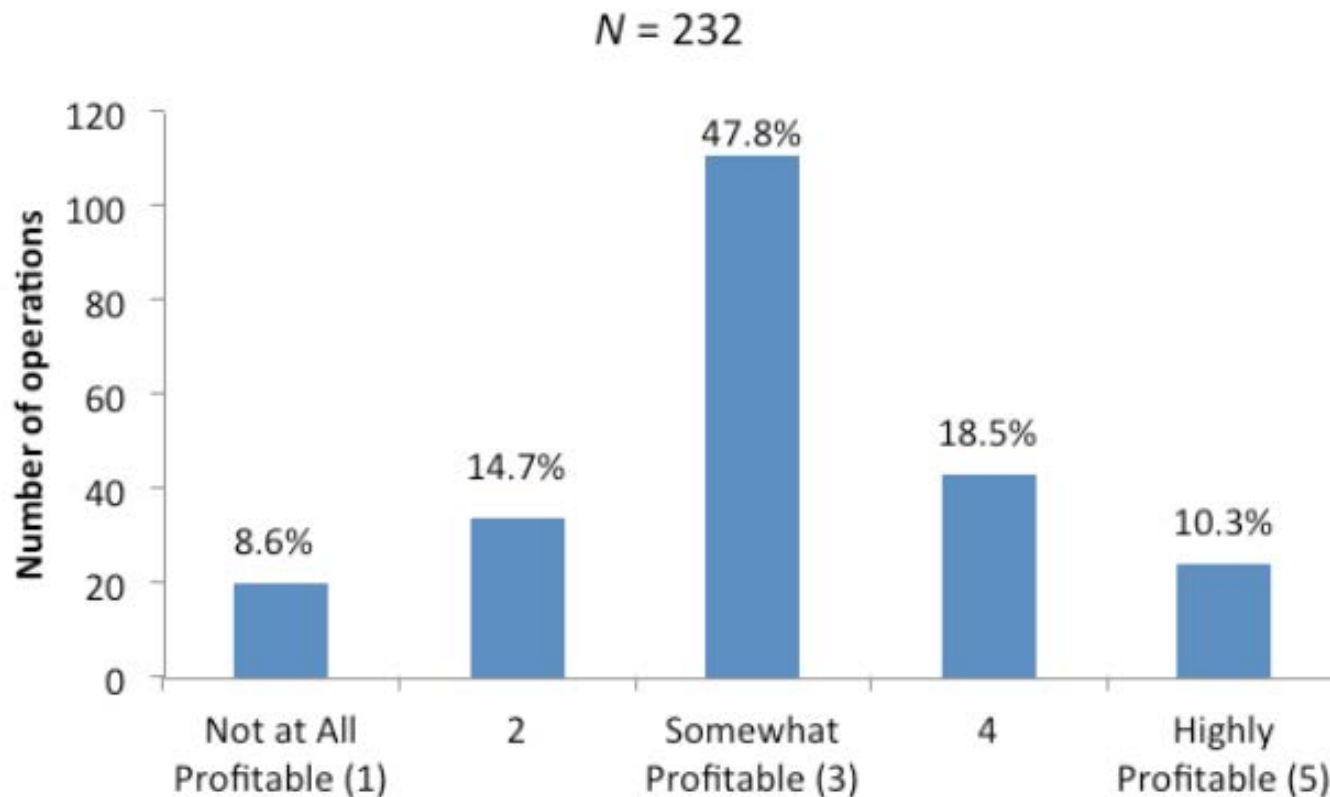
# Statistical Analysis

Figure 11: Average Dollars Spent by Each Visitor to Agritourism Operations in Virginia



# Statistical Analysis

Figure 12: Perceived Profitability of Agritourism in Virginia





# Statistical Analysis

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## Variables that increase the probability of agritourism operations:

- Higher education levels
- The motivation of additional income
- Number of acres
- Percentage of gross income generated from agritourism
- The average money spent per visitor

## Variables that decrease the probability of agritourism operations:

- Being a winery
- The distance from the operation to the nearest interstate
- More difficult access to capital