

AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS SURVEY

Introduction

Your help is needed to create a Farm and Forest Preservation Plan for XXX County. The survey you have selected has been formulated to evaluate the role of agriculture and forestry in XXX County. North Carolina's Eastern Region, in conjunction with the Lois G. Britt Agribusiness Center at Mount Olive College, the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources and numerous XXXX County agencies, are working to develop this tool for XXXX County.

Many challenges face agriculture including a heightened awareness of the relationships between farm uses and other land uses. Farms and forests, when located adjacent to industries, military installations and communities, are recognized as "compatible use partners" providing numerous benefits to the county and its residents.

A need exists to develop a comprehensive strategy that will serve as the foundation for XXX County's agriculture and land policies and programs. The Farm and Forest Preservation Plan for XXX County will define strategies to protect these compatible partnerships as well as guide policies and programs. Many of XXXX County's agribusinesses are individual, independent operations with unique interests, needs and concerns. If the comprehensive strategies are going to be meaningful, they need to be shaped by the input of agribusiness owners.

The intent of this plan is neither to limit nor restrict landowners' rights and uses. The plan is intended to serve as a guide to increase awareness of farmland preservation opportunities and agricultural appreciation. Agriculture is important to the county and its economy as well as to the well being of family farms. However, the ultimate decision of farmland preservation rests in the hands of the landowners of farms and forests.

Your responses will help us to better understand the needs of the industry and will also be used to evaluate existing and potential economic incentives which may benefit farmers and agribusinesses.

Please note that all information will be strictly confidential. Responses provided on individual surveys remain anonymous. Survey results will be aggregated and summarized such that responses on individual surveys are not identifiable.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Thank you for your interest and participation. If you have additional concerns or questions please contact glawrence@moc.edu or 919-518-6463.

AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS SURVEY

Please complete this survey ONLY if you own a business that is tied to the agricultural/forestry industry through services, trainings, products, manufacturing, processing, etc.

All information is STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL (as referenced on introduction page) and will only be used in a total form.

1. What type of agribusiness do you operate? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feed dealer | <input type="checkbox"/> Processor/distributor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment dealer | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterinarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment repair | <input type="checkbox"/> Logger or forester |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ag consultant | <input type="checkbox"/> Dairy or other ag processor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farm supply store | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape/horticulture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seed/fertilizer/lime/agri-chemical | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial/insurance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nursery/greenhouse | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |
-

2. How many people do you employ in xxxx County? (Please provide number of employees)

Full-time _____
Part-time _____

3. How long has this business been in operation?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 0-4 years | <input type="radio"/> 10-20 years |
| <input type="radio"/> 5-9 years | <input type="radio"/> 20+ years |

4. Please tell us what percentage of your business comes from the farm community.

- 0 to 24%
- 25 to 49%
- 50 to 74%
- 75 to 100%

5. Do you currently sell, market, or contract your products or services to state and federal organizations, the military, hospitals, schools, etc?

- Yes
- No

OVERVIEW OF LAST FIVE YEARS

Please help us understand what has occurred in your business in the LAST five years.

1. Have you increased your operation size in the last five years?

- Yes
- No

2. Have you added service area to hold or expand your market share in the last five years?

- Yes
- No

3. Have you increased agricultural inventories and sales in the last five years?

- Yes
- No

**4. If you have NOT expanded in the last 5 years what are the primary reasons?
(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied with current size | <input type="checkbox"/> Low profit margins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of market share | <input type="checkbox"/> Declining agricultural sales |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of labor supply | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of room to expand |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Age of owner | <input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory obstacles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of financial capital | <input type="checkbox"/> Receivables collection problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)_____ | |
-
-

OVERVIEW OF NEXT FIVE YEARS

Please help us understand what you foresee for your business in the NEXT five years

1. Do you expect to increase your operation size in the next five years?

- Yes
- No

2. In the next five years, do you expect to increase the number of employees at your place of business?

- Yes
- No

3. Do you expect to add new product lines or services for farm/forestry operators in the next five years?

- Yes
- No

4. In the next five years, do you expect to add new product lines or services for non farmers?

- Yes
- No

TRENDS IN AGRICULTURE

**1. What agricultural trends have you observed in xxxx County?
(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A change to new types of farms | <input type="checkbox"/> A shift to more sophisticated farm operations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> An increase in the number of small farms | <input type="checkbox"/> More part-time farms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A decrease in the number of small farms | <input type="checkbox"/> More specialty and direct market operations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> An increase in the number of large farms | <input type="checkbox"/> More diversification |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A decrease in the number of large farms | <input type="checkbox"/> No significant changes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ | |

2. Based on the trends that you have observed, will you modify your business to adapt to these trends?

- Yes
- No

THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

1. Please answer the following:

	Yes	No
Are you aware of the Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you aware of the Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District (EVAD) program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you aware of xxx County's agricultural present use value assessment & taxation program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you aware of NC's conservation easement tax credit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Do you see biofuels as an economic engine for agriculture/agribusinesses in XXX County?

- Yes
- No

3. Do you see transition/estate planning as an issue facing farmers/landowners and agribusinesses in XXX County?

- Yes
- No

4. Do you believe farmers/forestry landowners and agribusiness owners need assistance with transition/estate planning?

- Yes
- No

5. Is it important that agriculture and agribusinesses be seen as viable career opportunities?

- Yes
- No

6. Is it important to have neighbor and/or community education about the importance of agriculture/agribusiness in XXX County?

- Yes
- No

7. Do you feel supported by XXX County's Economic Development Commission?

- Yes
- No

8. Do you have labor issues at your business?

- Yes
- No

9. If you answered yes to the above question, what issues do you face? (Check all that apply)

- Lack of qualified staff
- Lack of training opportunities for staff
- Lack of capital to hire staff
- Unable to provide required benefits
- Other (please specify) _____

10. Is there a need for consumer education on the economic impact of buying "local" in XXX County?

- Yes
- No

11. Is there a need for youth agriculture education to be taught in the schools in XXX County?

- Yes
- No

12. Do you see agritourism as an expansion/diversification opportunity for agriculture/agribusiness in XXX County?

- Yes
- No

13. For your business to succeed, what topics are most important to you? (Check all that apply)

- Ability to receive adequate financing to maintain/expand business
 - Succession/transition of the business to interested parties
 - Training and education on new technologies that are being developed for agriculture/forestry
 - Other (please specify) _____
-

14. Would you support local government funding of Farm and Forest Preservation?

- Yes
- No

15. Please share your ideas to retain and improve agriculture and forestry in xxxx County.

THANK YOU!

Your time and effort on this survey will help create a Farm and Forest Protection Plan for xxxx County. This plan will help the county maintain family farms and the businesses associated with it as it plans for growth.

Non Farm Resident Survey

Introduction

Your help is needed to create a Farm and Forest Protection Plan for xxxx County. The survey you have selected has been formulated to evaluate the role of agriculture and forestry in xxx County. North Carolina's Eastern Region, in conjunction with the Lois G. Britt Agribusiness Center at Mount Olive College, the North Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and numerous xxx County agencies, are working to develop this tool for xxx County.

The word "agriculture" in this survey refers to farms (row crops, livestock, fruits/vegetables, and flowers/plants) and forests. Many challenges face agriculture including a heightened awareness of the relationships between farm uses and other land uses. A need exists to develop a comprehensive strategy that will serve as the foundation for xxxx County's agriculture and land policies and programs.

Farms and forests, when located adjacent to industries, military installations and communities, are recognized as "compatible use partners" providing numerous benefits to the county and its residents. The Farm and Forest Preservation Plan for XXX County will define strategies to protect these compatible partnerships as well as guide policies and programs.

Your responses will help us to better understand the needs of agriculture and will also be used to evaluate existing and potential economic incentives which may benefit farmers and agri-businesses. Non-farm resident participation is also essential to ensure that issues such as green space and planned development are part of the plan.

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Non-Farm Resident Survey

Please DO NOT complete this survey if you are a farmer/timberland owner OR if you receive income from renting land for farming OR if you own a business primarily dependent on farm and timber customers. These individuals will be surveyed separately.

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1. Please tell us, by town and/or community, where you live in XXX County:

2. How long have you lived in XXX County?

- <5 years 5 to 9 years 10 to 14 years 15 to 19 years 20+ years

3. If you lived elsewhere before coming to xxxx County, where was it?

- Another rural area of NC An urban area of NC
 Another southeastern state Outside the southeast

4. Please answer each question as represented below:

	Yes	No
Have you ever lived near a farm or timber operation?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have you ever owned or operated a farm or timber operation?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you live near (within 1/4 mile) of a farm or timber operation?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If yes, is that farmer or land owner a good neighbor?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. When was the last time that you visited a farm or timber operation?

- Within the last year
- Within last 2 to 9 years
- More than 10 years ago
- Never

6. Which statement best represents your view of xxxx County agriculture over the last 5 years?

- Agriculture is a declining industry with no future growth potential
- Agriculture is holding its own as an industry and may have some future growth potential
- Agriculture is an expanding industry with significant future growth potential

7. Can you estimate the size of xxxx County's agricultural industry?

- Less than \$10 million
- \$10 million to \$99 million
- \$100 million to \$300 million
- Over \$300 million

8. Do you feel that xxxx County should take steps to help preserve farms and forests?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

9. Should agricultural businesses (those businesses that provide goods and services to agriculture and/or forestry) be encouraged to expand in xxx County?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

10. Should farms and forests be encouraged to expand their operations in XXX County?

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

11. How do you support the agricultural economy of XXXX County? (Please select all that apply)

- Buying local produce at Farmers Markets, Pick-Your-Own farms, roadside stands, etc.
- Buying plants from local nurseries and greenhouses.
- Participating in agritourism activities such as corn mazes, pumpkin patches, hay rides, etc.
- Lease farmland and forest land for hunting and fishing
- Other (please specify) _____

12. How do you verify that the produce you purchase comes from local farmers? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- I look for the "Got to Be NC" labels
- I search on line at the "NC Farm Fresh" website
- I ask the vendor
- I know my farmer/producer and see where the products come from
- I don't know

13. Have you ever experienced problems with a farm or forest neighbor regarding any of the following? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No problem | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow-moving vehicles | <input type="checkbox"/> Boundary/trespass issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Drainage issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Fencing/cattle loose |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Odors | <input type="checkbox"/> Pesticide use | <input type="checkbox"/> Other problems such as dogs, personal, etc. (Please specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smoke/Dust | <input type="checkbox"/> Timber Harvest | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manure application | <input type="checkbox"/> Irrigation | _____ |

14. Based on the above issues, how did you resolve them?

- Called authorities
- Contacted the producer/landowner
- Mediation
- Nothing

15. When you dealt with the above issues, how did you feel about the resolution?

- I gained a better understanding of why the landowner/producer did the activities that upset me initially.
- The issue was not resolved
- Litigation was pursued
- I still do not understand why that activity is necessary

16. Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following statements: (PLEASE SELECT A RESPONSE FOR EACH ITEM PRESENTED).

	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure
Farms and forests enhances the scenic beauty and open space of xxxx County	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Farmers are good neighbors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local farmers deliver generally high-quality products	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Farming is positive for the environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tax breaks for farmers are important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Agriculture and farming are high-technology industries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The price of most farm food commodities is relatively low	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Farming presents a good career for enterprising persons	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Farmers get too many tax breaks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Farmers need to act like other businesses and compete	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This isn't a farm area anymore; encouraging farm and forest operation is pointless	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Loans and grants are important to develop local farm enterprises	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. Would you support farm and forest preservation efforts in XXX County?

- Yes
- No

18. Would you support the use of local government funds for farm and forest preservation?

- Yes
- No

19. Please share your ideas to retain and improve agriculture and forestry in Xxxx County.

Thank You!

Your participation in this survey will help create a unique Farm and Forest Protection Plan for your county. Thank you for your time.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCER SURVEY

Introduction

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A need also exists to develop a comprehensive strategy that will serve as the foundation for XXXX County's agriculture and land policies and programs. The xxx County Farm and Forest Protection Plan will define strategies to protect these compatible partnerships as well as guide policies and programs. XXXX County's farms and forests are individual, independent operations with unique interests, needs and concerns. If the comprehensive strategies are going to be meaningful, they need to be shaped by the input of the farm and forest producers.

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AGRICULTURAL PRODUCER SURVEY

You should complete this survey ONLY IF you have income in excess of \$1000 from the production of crops, livestock, or aquaculture OR if you own timberland OR if you receive income from renting farm acreage.

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CURRENT STATE OF AGRICULTURE

Please tell us the type and the size of your farm/forest enterprise(s) in the following categories.

1. Please answer each item as appropriate for your operation :

How many total acres of land do you farm within xxxx County? _____

Of this total acreage farmed, how many acres do you rent? _____

If you are a landowner who rents your land to farmers,
how many acres do you rent? _____

How many total acres of timberland do you own within xxxx County? _____

Of this total, how many acres are managed for timber production? _____

How many acres of farm and/or forestland do you manage outside
of xxxx County? _____

2. Help us understand more about your operations. Please select the statement that best describes your operation:

- Timber production only
- Farm production only
- Primarily timber production with some farm production
- Primarily farm production with some timber production

IF YOU DO NOT ACTIVELY FARM BUT RECEIVE INCOME FROM RENTING FARM ACREAGE, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 6 AND CONTINUE WITH THE SURVEY.

3. CURRENT CROP ACREAGE IN: (Fill in appropriate acreage for each)

Row Crops _____
Horticultural Crops _____
Hay _____
Pasture _____
Timber _____
Other _____

**4. CURRENT NUMBER OF ANIMALS:
(Fill in appropriate number for each)**

Swine _____
Chickens _____
Turkeys _____
Beef Cattle _____
Dairy Cattle _____
Horses _____
Goats _____
Sheep _____
Other _____

5. AQUACULTURE (pounds produced)

Prawns _____
Oysters _____
Clams _____
Fish _____
Catfish _____
Other _____

6. How long has your farm/forest been in operation?

- 0 to 9 years
- 10 to 20 years
- 20+ years

7. What is your age?

8. Is farming/forestry your primary occupation?

- Yes
- No

9. What percentage of your household income comes from your farm or forest operation?

- 0-24%
- 25-49%
- 50-74%
- 75-100%

10. Have you, in the past 5 years, expanded your farm or forest operations?

- Yes
- No

11. If you did not expand, what were the primary reasons?

(Check ALL that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied with current size | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of available land to rent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Age of owner/operator | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of available labor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High cost of additional labor | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal or others reasons |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low profit margin | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental or other governmental restrictions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of available land to be purchased | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ | |

12. Do you currently own sufficient property to expand or diversify your farm/forest operation?

- Yes
- No

13. How much longer do you plan to operate your farm/forest?

- Less than 5 years
- 5 to 9 years
- 10 to 19 years
- More than 20 years

14. Do you think in the next 5 to 10 years your production will:

- Increase
- Decrease
- Stay the same

15. Of the issues listed below which do you anticipate to most influence your operation in the future: (Check all that apply)

- Production costs
- Marketing costs
- Regulatory costs
- Product prices
- Available labor
- Competition
- Export demand
- Local demand
- Land rental rates

16. How many generations of your family have farmed at least some of the land that you own?

17. When you retire, what do you expect to do with your farm/forestland?

- Sell to other farmers
- Transfer to family for farming
- Sell to non-farmers
- Transfer to family for non-farm use

18. Do you currently have a farm transition plan/estate plan?

- Yes
- No

19. Have you shared your thoughts of farm transition with your family members?

- Yes
- No

20. If you have timberland, do you have a forestry management plan?

- Yes
- No

21. Is your farm or forest enrolled in XXX County's present use value tax program?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

22. Do you currently sell/market/contract your farm/forest products to state and federal organizations, the military, hospitals, schools, etc?

- Yes
- No

23. Have you obtained Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification for your farm?

- Yes
- No

**24. If you own land do you currently lease any of your property for:
(Check ALL that apply)**

- Military Training Operations
- Cell Towers
- Mining/Quarry
- Hunting/Fishing
- Do Not Lease
- Other (please specify): _____

25. If you have leased your land for any of the above activities, have you had any problems?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please specify: _____

26. Have you had neighbor problems concerning your farming or forestry operation?

- Yes
- No

27. If you answered yes to the previous question, what was the nature of the complaint? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manure application complaint | <input type="checkbox"/> Smoke or dust |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boundary or trespassing conflict | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise complaint |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drainage issue | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow-moving vehicle complaint |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dumping/littering issue | <input type="checkbox"/> Chemical use or other issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____ | |

28. What are the biggest challenges for you to remain in business in farming/forestry?

29. Please answer each question presented below:

	Yes	No
Are you aware of the Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you aware of the Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District (EVAD) program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you aware of xxx County's agricultural present use value assessment & taxation program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you aware of NC's conservation easement tax credit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

30. Please list farmer/forester associations of which you are a member.

FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

Please answer the following questions about the future of agriculture and opportunities for agriculture.

1. Would you support local government funding for Farm and Forest Preservation?

- Yes
- No

2. Would you enroll your farm/forest into military compatible use incentive programs?

- Yes
- No

3. If incentives were offered, would you consider participating in a program to provide the military with biofuels feedstocks and/or other agricultural products?

- Yes
- No

If not, please state why:

4. Do you think educating non-farming citizens about the economic and social contributions of farming/forestry will increase community support for farms/forests and improve your operating conditions?

- Yes
- No

5. Is it important to have tax incentives for agribusiness ventures?

- Yes
- No

6. Of the taxes listed below, please select the top three that you feel impose an unreasonable burden to agriculture/agribusiness. (Please check your top three)

- Local property tax on land
- Local property tax on buildings and equipment
- Federal income tax
- State income tax
- Federal self employment tax
- Federal social security and Medicaid taxes for employees (payroll taxes)
- State unemployment tax
- Estate tax

7. Is it important to have county economic development support for agriculture and agribusinesses in XXX County?

- Yes
- No

8. Is it important to develop outlets and support for local products created/grown in XXX County such as farmers' markets, food festivals, agricultural fairs, community supported agriculture (CSA), etc?

- Yes
- No

9. If such outlets and events were developed in XXXX County, would you consider changing (replacing or diversifying) the products you currently produce so that you could take advantage of such marketing opportunities?

- Yes
- No

10. Do you see agritourism as an expansion/diversification opportunity for agriculture/agribusiness in XXX County?

- Yes
- No

11. Is it important to promote agriculture and forestry as career opportunities?

- Yes
- No

**12. Agriculture, horticulture, forestry and agribusiness should be taught in:
(Check all that apply)**

- Elementary school
- Middle school
- High school
- Community college
- Colleges and Universities

13. Is there a need for processing services in XXX County? (Check ALL that apply)

- USDA inspected, large animal slaughter facility
- USDA inspected, small animal slaughter facility
- Animal processing and packing facility
- Commodity Processing/Distribution Center
- Do it yourself food processing facility
- Grain mill
- Cotton gin
- Saw mill
- No

TRAINING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Please answer the following questions about training and business development opportunities to maintain the viability of your farm or forest.

1. What farmer and/or forester organizations need to be formed in XXXX county?

2. Would you like technical training on the production of biofuel feedstock or woody biomass?

- Yes
- No

3. Would you like training in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certification?

- Yes
- No

4. Would you like assistance on timber management, pine straw sales, development of a forestry management plan, selection of a consulting forester, etc?

- Yes
- No

5. Would you want assistance in business planning?

- Yes
- No

6. Would you be interested in assistance with farm/forest transfer/estate planning?

- Yes
- No

7. Would you like to explore agri-tourism opportunities for your farm/forest?

- Yes
- No

8. Would you like to receive training on sales and marketing options for your farm/forest products?

- Yes
- No

9. Would you like to receive training in the development of regionally branded products?

- Yes
- No

10. Would you like training on how to apply for federal and state contracts for your products?

- Yes
- No

11. Please provide any additional ideas to retain and improve agriculture and forestry in XXXX County

THANK YOU!

Thank you for your time with this survey!