

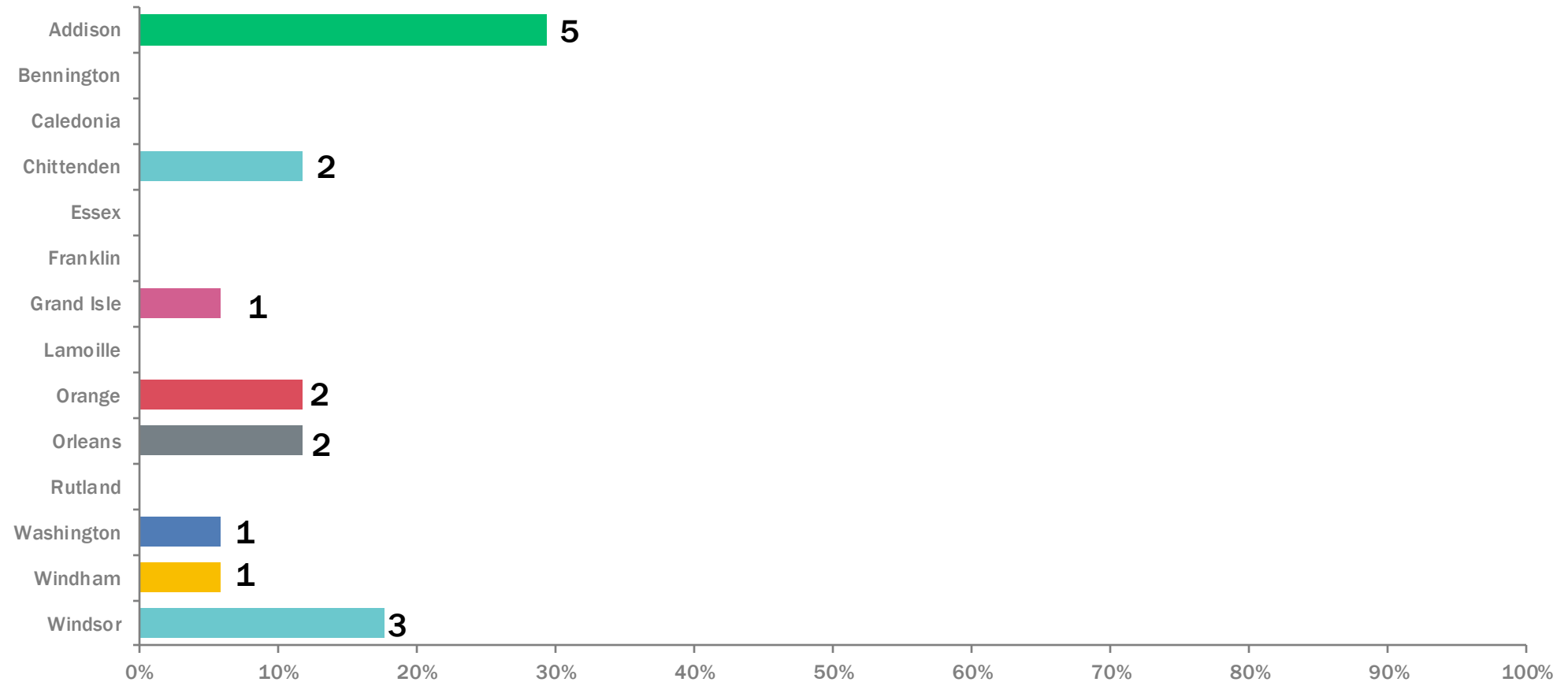
Meat Slaughter & Processing Capacity Survey

SPRING 2024

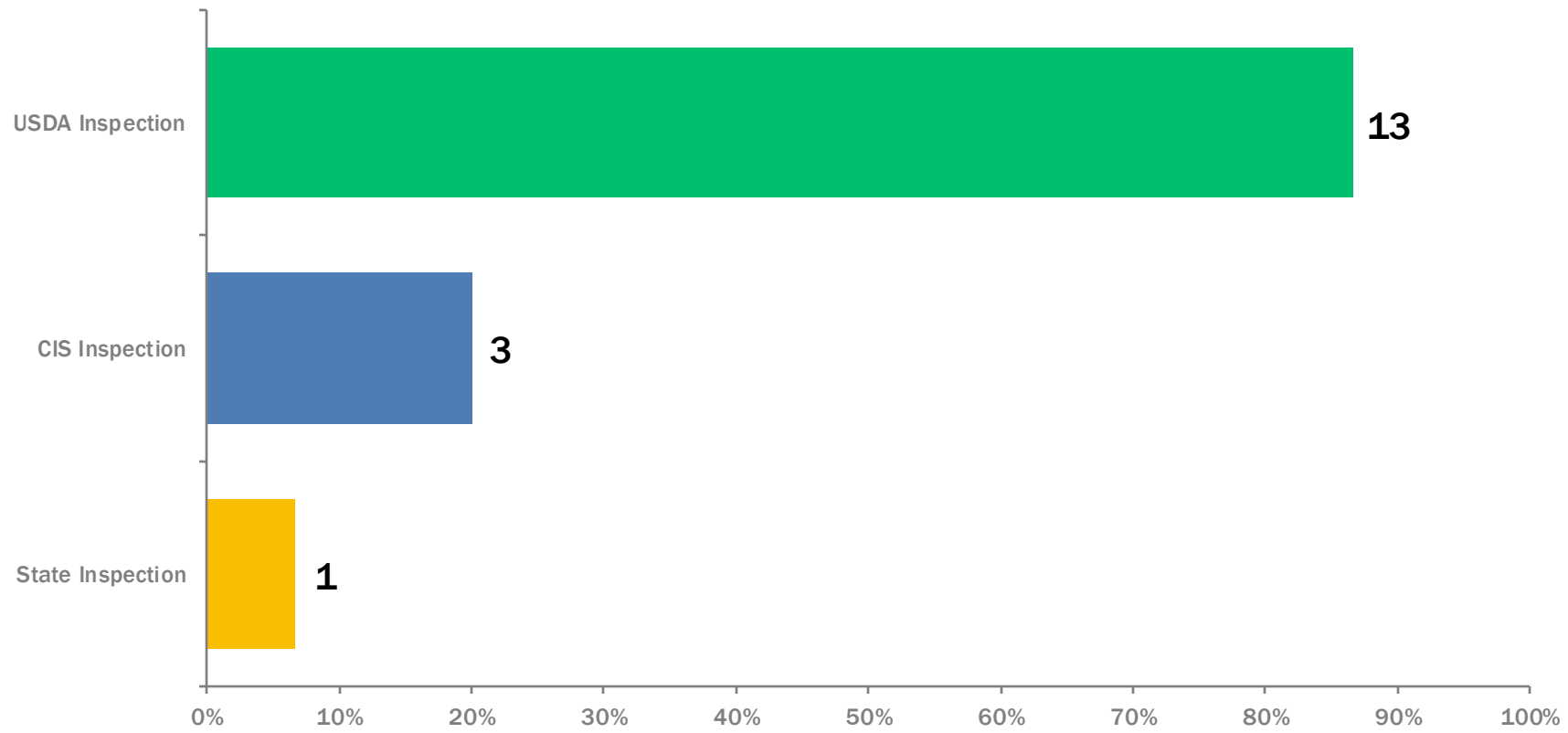
17 RESPONSES



In which Vermont county is your meat slaughter and/or processing facility located?



What kind of inspection do you hold?

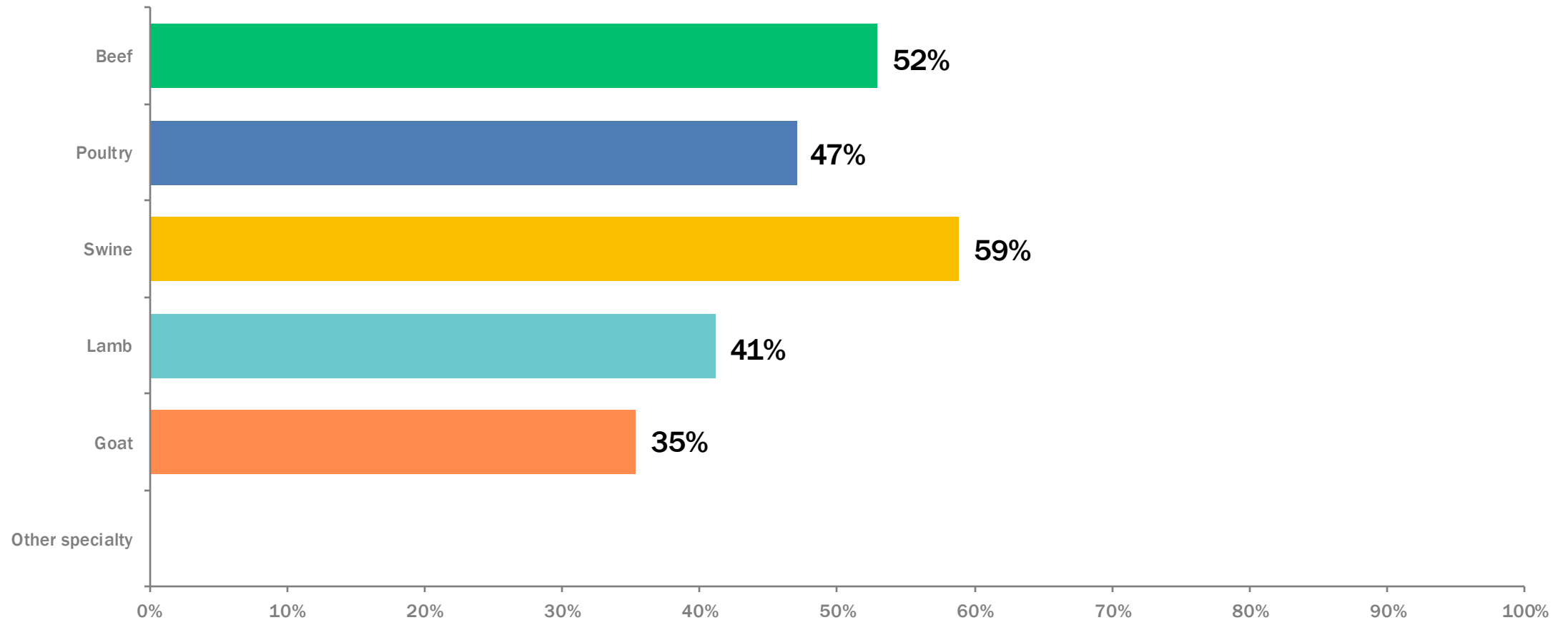


If State inspected, are you planning to expand into CIS inspection? Why or why not?

Responses include:

- We were, but we had to close due to overhead costs.

What type(s) of animals do you slaughter and/or process at your facility? (Check all that apply)



What is your slaughter facility's current throughput capacity per week for beef and/or pigs?

Responses include:

- 14 beef/pork Could have been more if we had the staff available.
- Beef 10 to 15 per week Hogs 10 to 25 per week
- 5 pigs per week (average) or 15 lambs per week
- 50 beef per week or 100 hogs per week
- We work with primals and subprimals no whole carcass. Very small quantities, about 400lbs a week.
- 1-2 -beef/week or 4-6 swine/week
- Beef: 65 / day (325/wk)
- 1-3 beef 1-3 pigs

What is your slaughter facility's current throughput capacity per week for small ruminants (i.e. sheep, goat)?

Responses include:

- 20, if needed
- Lamb: 2 to 25 per week, depends on time of year
- Sheep: 15 per week
- 250 small ruminants
- 6-8/week assuming no beef
- 1 a week

What is your slaughter facility's current throughput capacity per week for chicken and/or turkeys?

Responses include:

- If we could buy enough chicks to grow we could do 700 or more per week, with the crew that we have.
- 7,000 in the Oct and Nov only. Turkeys only
- 450/week
- 200 lbs/week
- Up to 400 chickens/week, 50 turkeys/week, 250 ducks/week

What is your current processing throughput capacity per week for beef and/or pigs?

Responses include:

- Beef 120 lb Pork 120 lb
- 8-10 beef 20 pigs
- 14 beef/pigs. It was a man power issue, not a capacity issue, we could have taken more.
- 3 to 6 beef per day, 3 days/week. 3 to 15 hogs per day, 1 day/week.
- 5 per week (we process 10 every 2 weeks)
- Matched to slaughter (50 beef per week or 100 hogs per week)
- 10 beef or 20 pigs. Processing time is based on pounds per hour.
- Around 5000 lbs. We are operating below capacity at this time due to lower sales (about 4000 lbs.)
- 1-2 beef/week or 4-6 swine/week
- Pigs: 142/day (710/week)
- 1-3 beef

What is your current processing throughput capacity per week for small ruminants (i.e. sheep, goat)?

Responses include:

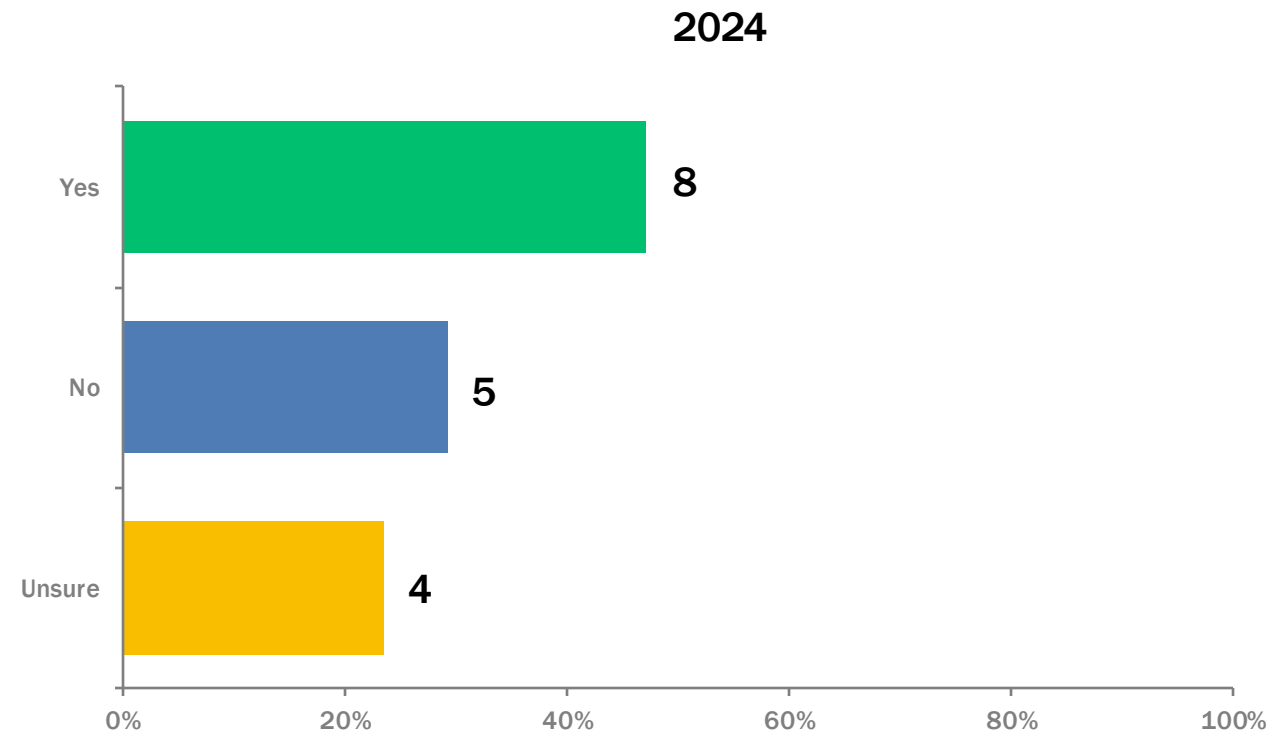
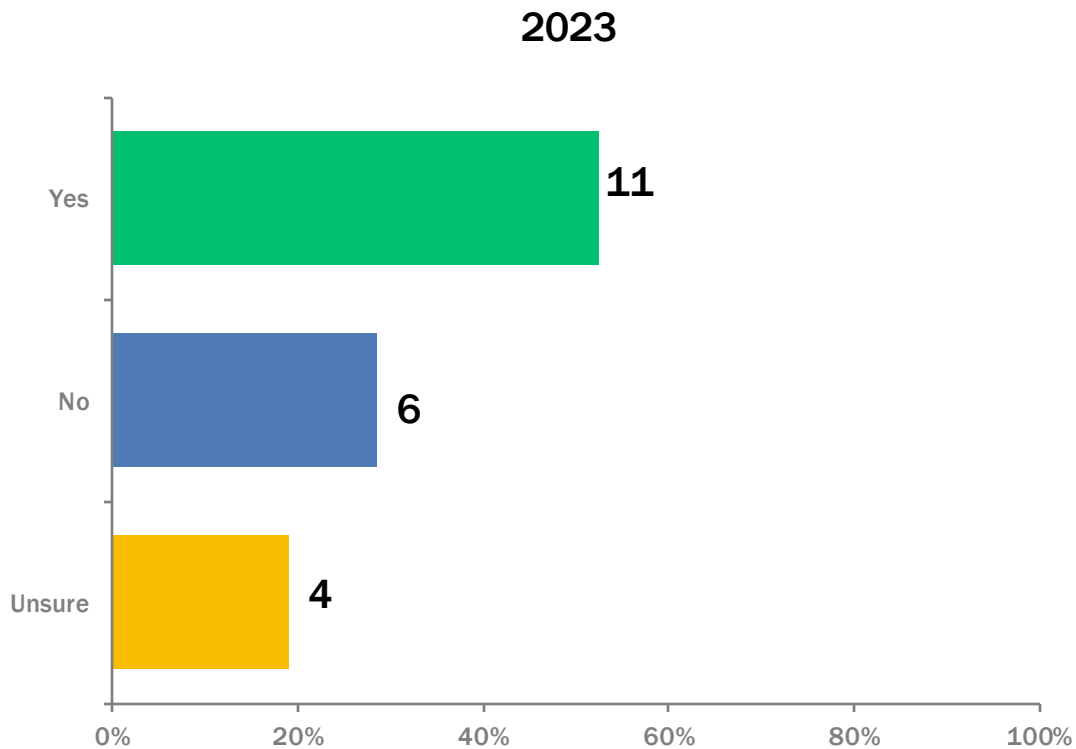
- 20
- 15 lambs per week; we process lamb 4 times per year
- Matched to slaughter (250 small ruminants)
- We have not had more than one days production of sheep or goat.
- 6-8/week, assuming no beef
- 1-3 a week

What is your current processing throughput capacity per week for chicken and/or turkeys?

Responses include:

- Poultry 120 lb
- We currently process 75-200 per week
- Same a slaughter -- 7,000 in Oct and Nov only. Turkeys only.
- 450
- Up to 400 chicken/week, 50 turkeys/week, 250 ducks/week

Are you interested in expanding your facility's capacity?

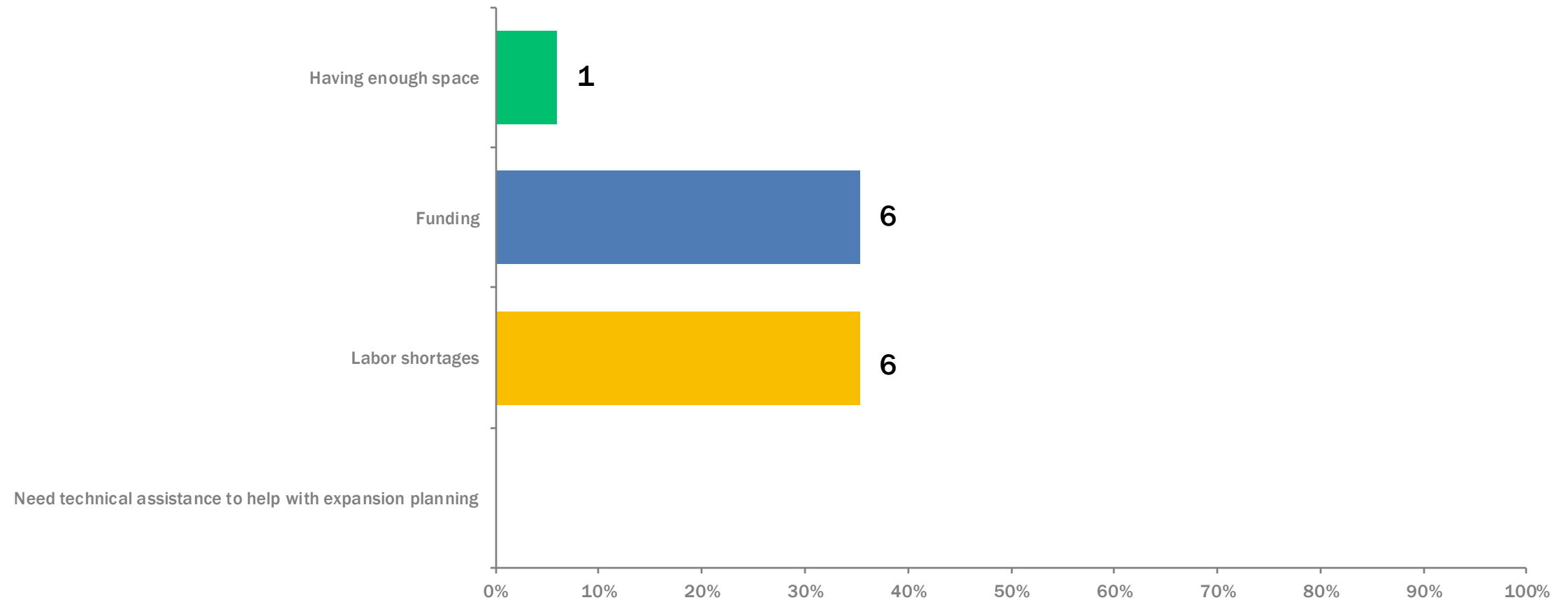


If you answered yes, please share more about your capacity expansion efforts...

Responses include:

- There are adequate demand for our products. We are currently looking for funding support. We can expand our processing to 800 - 1000 lbs of Beef, Pork, and Poultry per week (from 120/120/120).
- We are actually waiting to hear this month, if we were awarded a grant to add a beef and pork CIS slaughterhouse to our current chicken only plant. Once we hear if we are awarded the grant or not we will begin research on other funding options to add the grant or if we are awarded the grant we will begin searching for staff. Demand for just our chicken is beyond our wildest expectations and suspect that if/when we also offer our own beef and pork the demand will be there for it as well.
- We closed.
- We are in the last stage of a complete rebuild to be finished by July 1, 2024. We intend to at least double our present production.
- Currently securing funding. Planning to go to 10 pigs per week (from 5/week).
- Expansion of processing facilities.
- We have demand for more specialty items but lack equipment.
- There is demand for the products we produce. But we really need additional labor to increase capacity much more. This is an ongoing challenge.
- We have trouble finding staff.
- Interested in expanding our value-added processing capacity. The goals for this expansion would be 1) increasing volume through the plant 2) improving whole-carcass utilization and 3) providing more revenue generating opportunities for the farmers and programs we serve.

What is your largest barrier to facility expansion?



Other barriers to facility expansion?

Responses include:

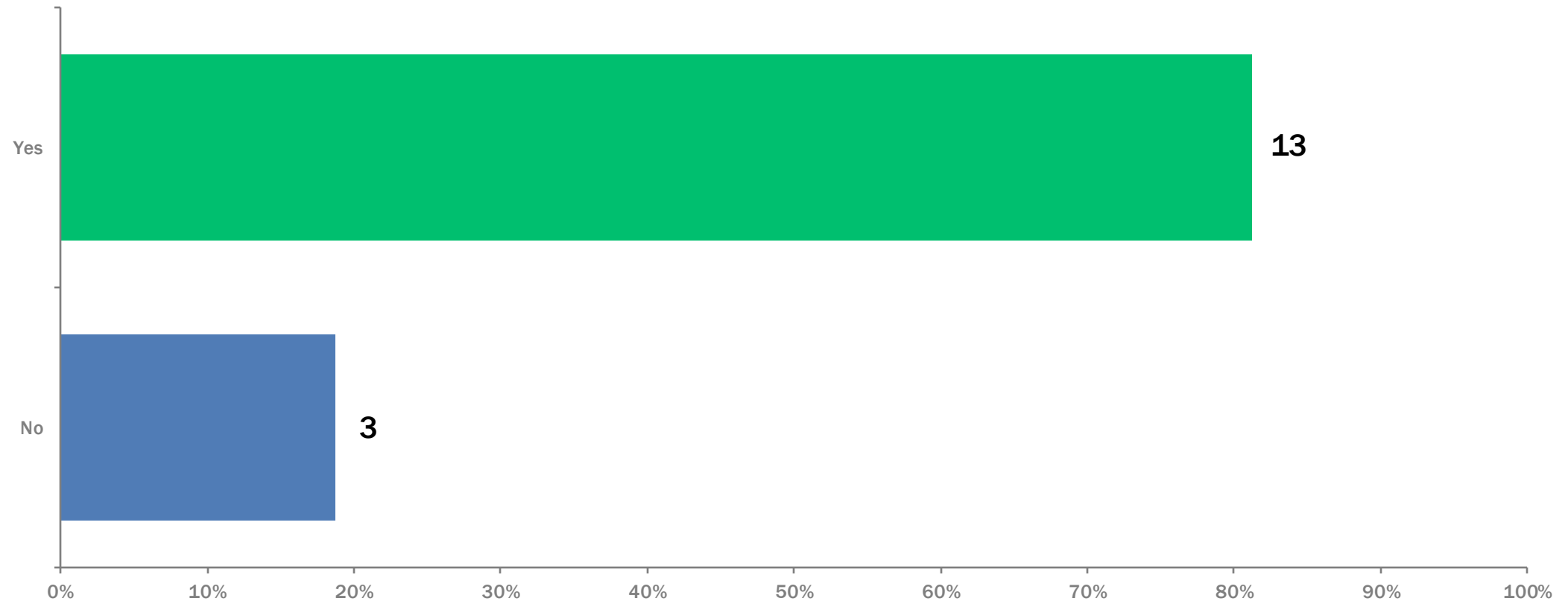
- All of the above are definitely obstacles so I have listed them in order of biggest to smallest:
Funding > Labor > Technical support > Having enough space

If you need funding, what is the anticipated amount needed for successful expansion?

Responses include:

- \$2.5 to \$3 million
- IF we get the CIS grant, an additional \$200,000 for equipment, packaging, labels and various "smalls" that are bound to come and a portion of that \$200,000 that could be used to help cover the first few months of staffing wages, until production picks up, as I would anticipate it would with experience of the crew and word spreading that there's a new facility.
- We needed funding and support. We needed the state to help us, and stop putting barriers in our way.
- \$261,000
- \$225,000
- \$100,000
- \$300,000 to \$500,000
- \$1 to \$3 million

Have you applied for a state or federal grant to support your business?



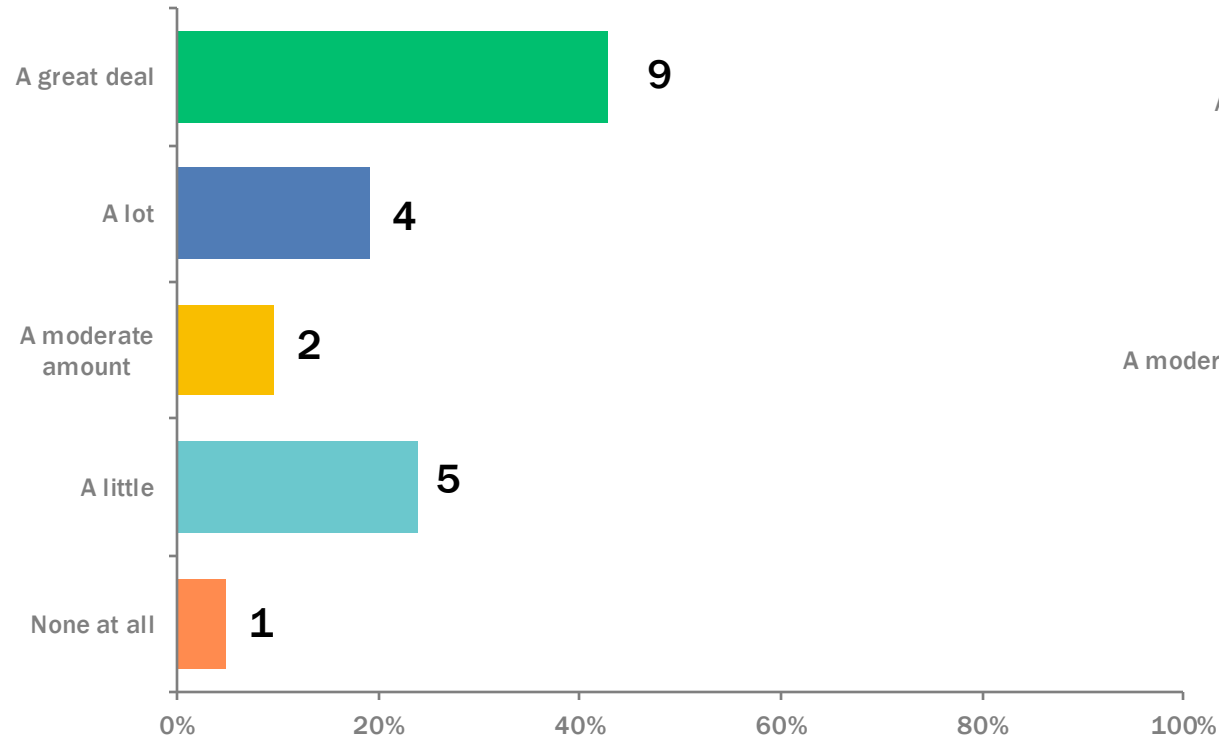
If yes, what was the need and were you successful in receiving a grant? Did you encounter any difficulties?

Responses include:

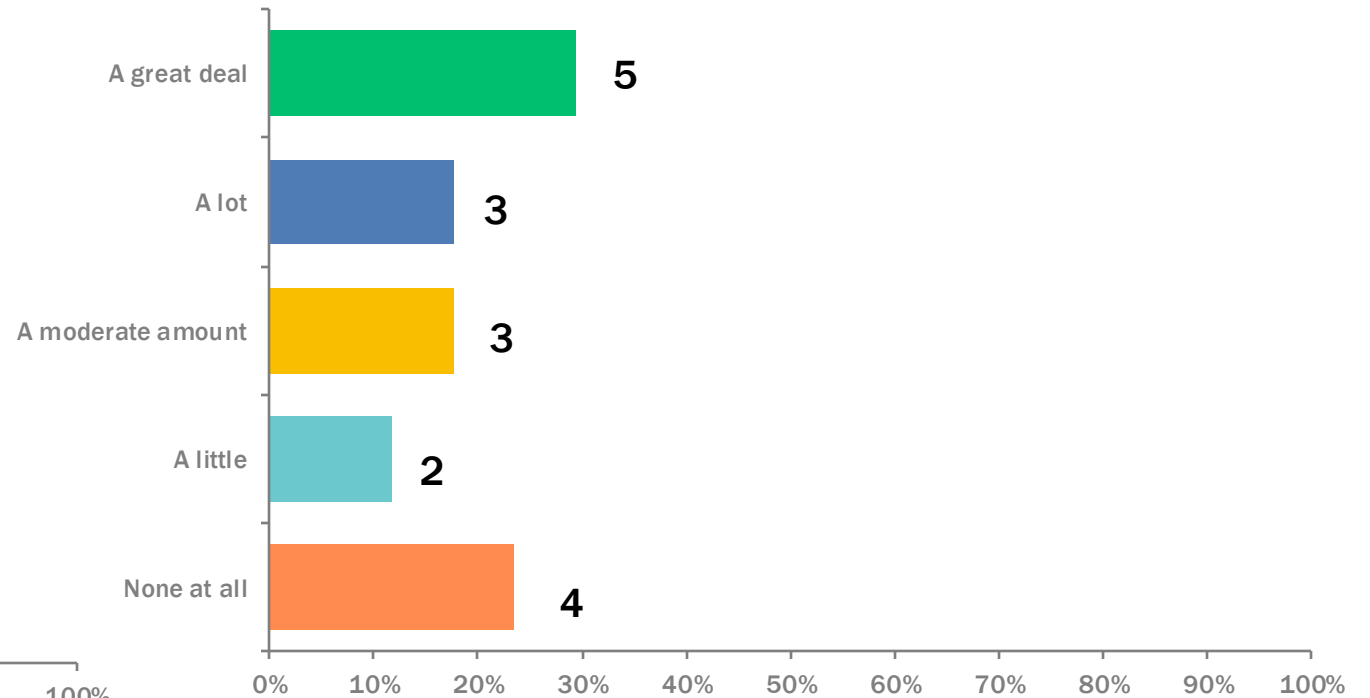
- No we were not successful in receiving grant.
- We have applied for several grants and received some and not some. The biggest difficulty was getting all the paperwork needed, then getting all that uploaded to the application. PART of this is my knowledge of how to do this. PART is the amount of repeat info needing to be typed in multiple times in multiple places on the application. For example if just the farm name and address could be autofilled after the first input that would be a BIG help.
- we received a grant to bring our plant up to standards.
- We were looking to increase types of production. It was made clear that our facility was too small for many grants/funding opportunities to apply. We were denied grants that would have significantly helped our collaboration.
- Plant improvement. No difficulties.
- Need was for construction and new modern equipment
- Equipment, cashflow to offset costs. Waiting to hear on 3 grants.
- Additional cooler and freezer space.
- Equipment to expand and diversify. Still waiting -- grant decisions have been delayed almost 6 months now with no idea of when funding will happen.
- We got a grant to build our current facility. Normal difficulty I suppose. Time and money.
- expanding smoke house facilities which was successfully accomplished but still limited by qualified labor
- Awaiting decision on VT MPADG application (anticipated April 2024)
- smokehouse renovations

Are you having trouble attracting talent (workforce) to various roles at your facility?

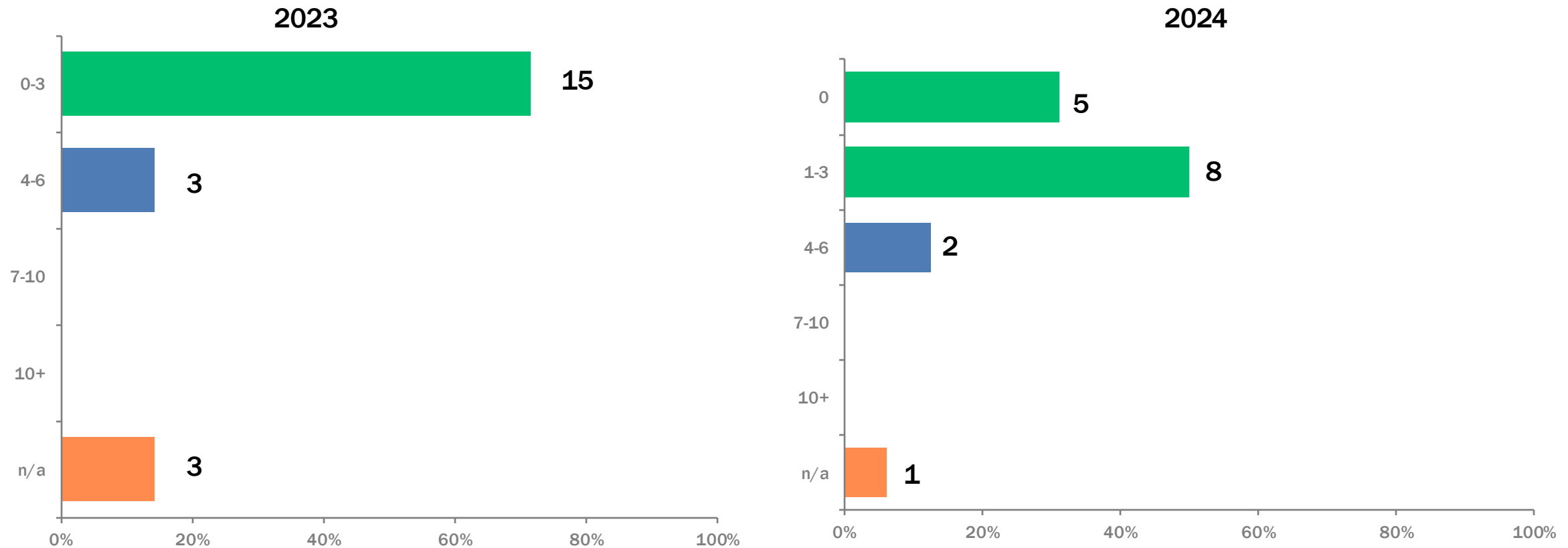
2023



2024



How many vacancies do you currently have at your facility?



What workforce training opportunities would benefit your current and prospective employees?

Responses include:

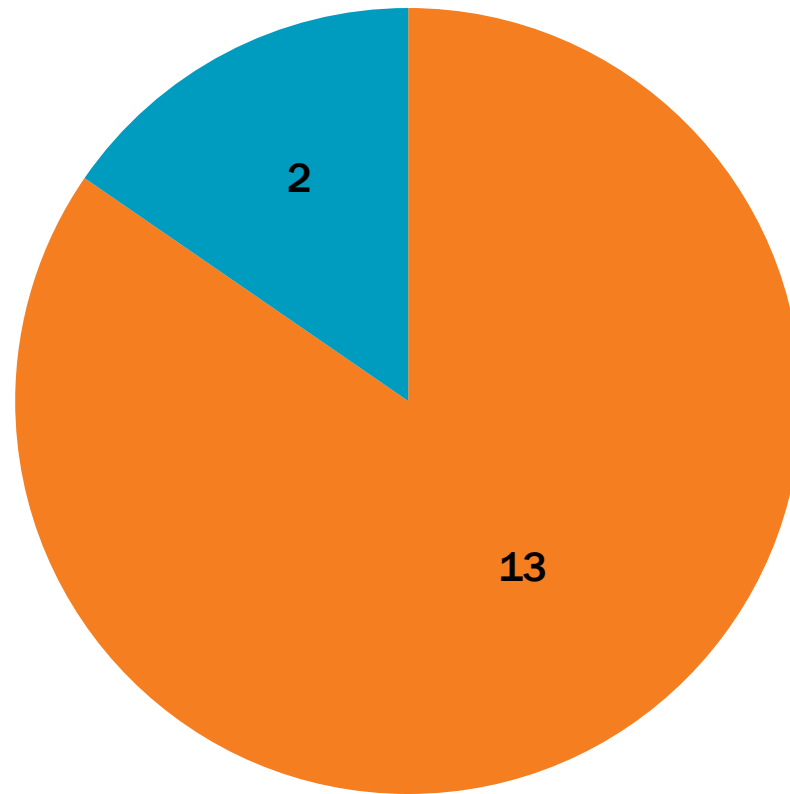
- Lean manufacturing, general leadership training, hard skills (butchery), maintenance and equipment upkeep. N.B. we are not currently hiring, but finding and retaining talent is a challenge when we are in expansion mode.
- We do our own training
- Drug and alcohol counseling and rehab.
- Very specialized. We train.
- Not a workforce training issue but a housing issue as we don't have any available housing in our rural area.
- We just need people that want to work. We will train on our own.
- HACCP training, processing work flow.
- On the job.

What are your largest challenges or most common issues in your business?

Responses include:

- Labor.
- 1) maintaining consistent volume throughout the year 2) managing costs 3) securing capital
- Cash flow
- State permits
- Labor! Never enough money to make improvements it seems.
- Sales. The market in Vermont is small, we need to go outside. Labor costs is high and animal feed costs are very high
- Growing capacity, need more space to provide products for the market
- A huge challenge for us the past couple of years has been not having a poultry veterinarian in VT.
- Delivery.
- labor, cost of goods, transportation.
- We struggled with the inconsistency/interpretation of rules that varied between inspectors...between the slaughter and processing, and the folks at the dept of health.
- Attracting qualified staff

Do you currently or would you be interested in offering halal slaughter?



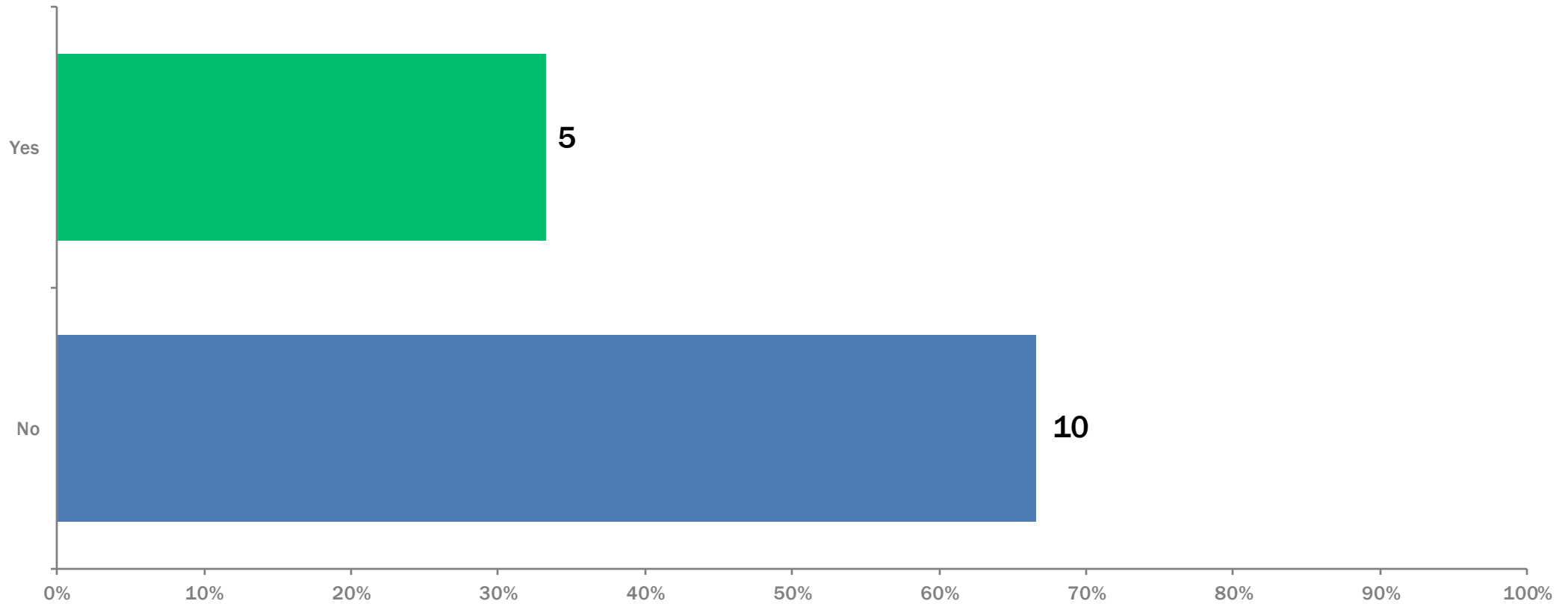
- No, we do not currently offer halal slaughter and are NOT interested in offering.
- No, we do not currently offer halal slaughter and ARE interested in offering it.

How far out are your next available slaughter/processing dates?

Responses include:

- 1 month
- Dates available immediately
- 3 weeks
- We do not do any custom slaughter, and definitely will not offer any custom slaughter in the future
- Open now but October thru December is fully booked.
- 1 month
- We only process animals from our farm
- Booked through 2024
- Short on work
- 1 week
- 2-3 weeks

Do you ship carcasses to other official USDA/State/CIS establishments for further processing?



If yes, where do you ship your carcasses?

Responses include:

- New Hampshire
- 5th Quarter LLC
- A small amount of our chicken go out as whole birds to restaurants and an even fewer amount go out to butcher shops.
- We ship hog carcasses for further processing to a facility in Vermont, and one in MA
- Vermont

If no, what is the reason you do not ship to other establishments?

Responses include:

- I am the end processor
- We have our pigs slaughtered at another facility and we do the final processing for specialty food (curing/aging)
- We process what we kill until we meet our processing capacity. Kill has little to no profit. Processing is the profitable part of what we do
- We are a value added processor.
- No longer open

Any other comments to share or support that the State of Vermont can offer?

Responses include:

- Support from the state of Vermont is much appreciated. Federal funding can be challenging for small facilities like ours to secure, as it comes with more restrictions, reporting requirements, and costs to apply. State level support will be critical going forward for our business to keep its doors open for the programs and farmers we serve.
- Wastewater, Act 250 exemption for food manufacturers; grants are too time consuming. I'm too busy running a business to draft a 100 page proposal.
- More funding, and make it easier to obtain
- I have received a TON of support from the state meat and ag sector from day one! As mentioned above, the BIG help to us would be to have access to an in-person veterinarian with hands on experience in growing broilers.
- It would be nice for state, usda, and dept of health to all get on the same page. This seems like a simple task, because rules should be rules.... However, we found each inspector to have different interpretations of those rules, which was a stumbling block. I think our biggest downfall was that we had overlap between two types of processing and food distribution. Too many moving pieces. I would be happy to discuss this more, as I feel it's important that these pitfalls be heard.
- Reduce the cost of living in Vermont