

APPLE ORCHARD
CUSTOMER RESEARCH
REPORT

2017



Funding provided through the USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant

Project Background

This research project was conducted by the Minnesota Grown program at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture in 2016. Customers were surveyed about their experiences and opinions after visiting **31 apple orchards** across Minnesota. A total of **650** customers returned surveys.

Included in this report is some apple customer data from 2012 - the last time Minnesota Grown conducted a survey of customers similar to this survey. The 2012 results provide interesting insights into trends in around variety preferences, credit card usage, and the importance of social media tools like Facebook and Pinterest.

This customer research is funded through a USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant.

The Basics

31 farms participated (Approximately **34%** of all apple orchards in Minnesota Grown)

In total, we received **650 completed surveys** from farm customers. The surveys took place in September, October and early November 2016. Customers received cards like the one below at checkout. They then went online and answered a series of survey questions. This report is a summary of their feedback across all farms survey.



please,
TELL US
how we're doing

Visit: <http://tiny.cc/AftonAppleOrchard>
or scan this QR code to quickly send us
feedback and help us serve you better.

One lucky customer will win a
\$25.00 gift certificate to Afton Apple Orchard
after completing the short survey.

Help us serve you better!
Enter to win a \$25.00 gift certificate!

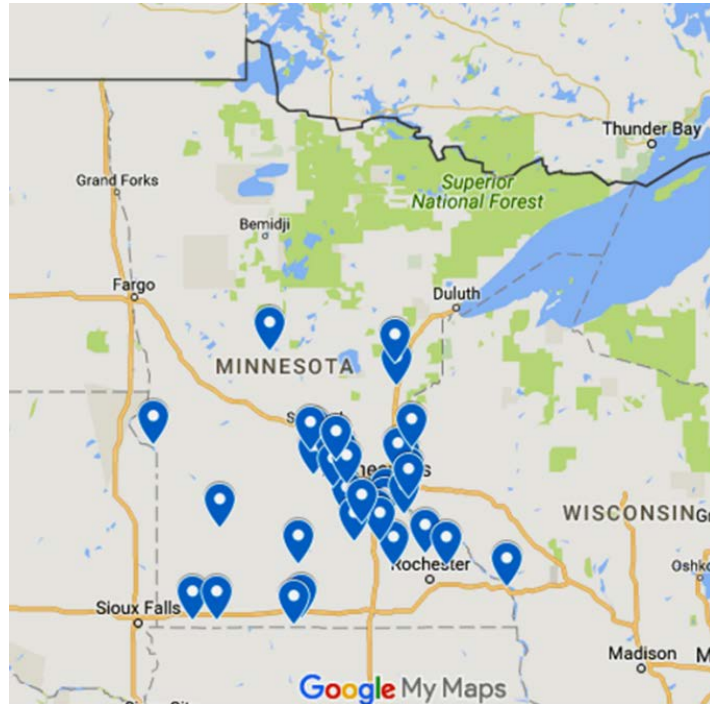
This was one of a handful of farms selected to participate in a survey being conducted by the MN Department of Agriculture.

For more information on this survey, visit:
<http://tiny.cc/MNGrownConsumerResearch>

At the end of the online questionnaire you can enter to win a drawing for a \$25 gift certificate. Your answers will remain anonymous and your contact information will not be shared.


MINNESOTA
GROWN

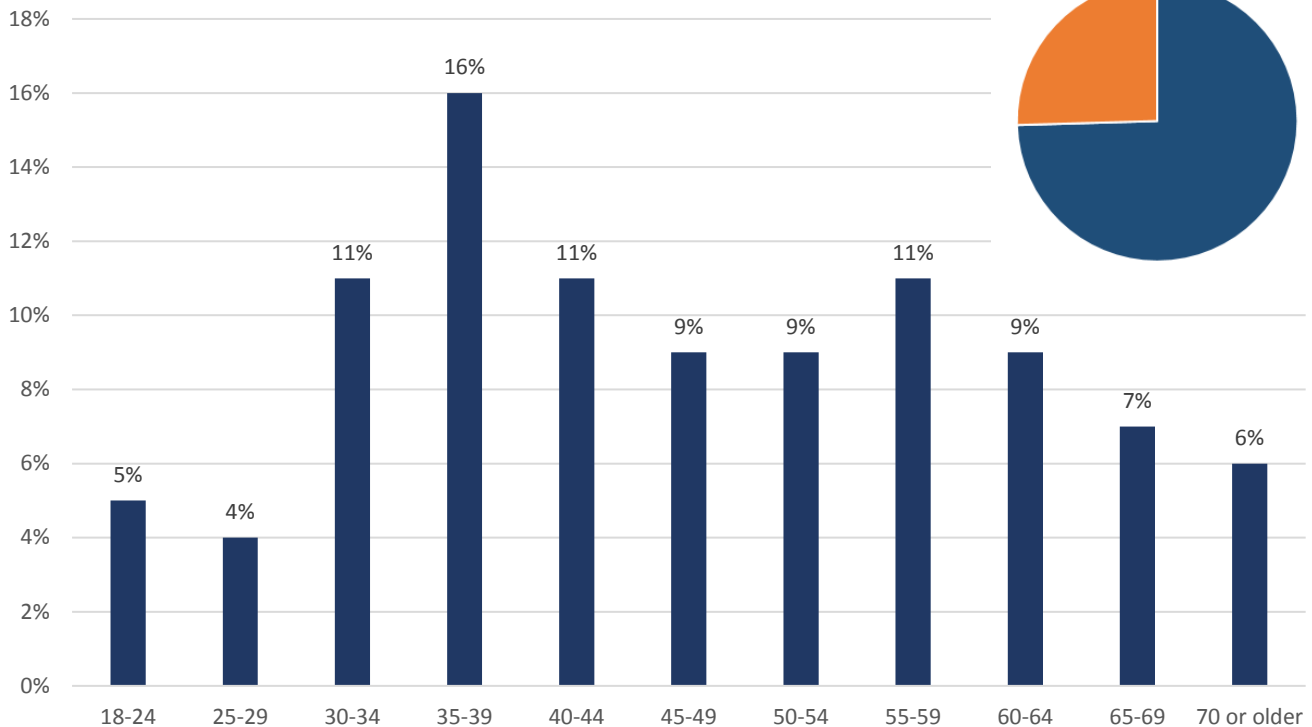
Spread of Participating Farms



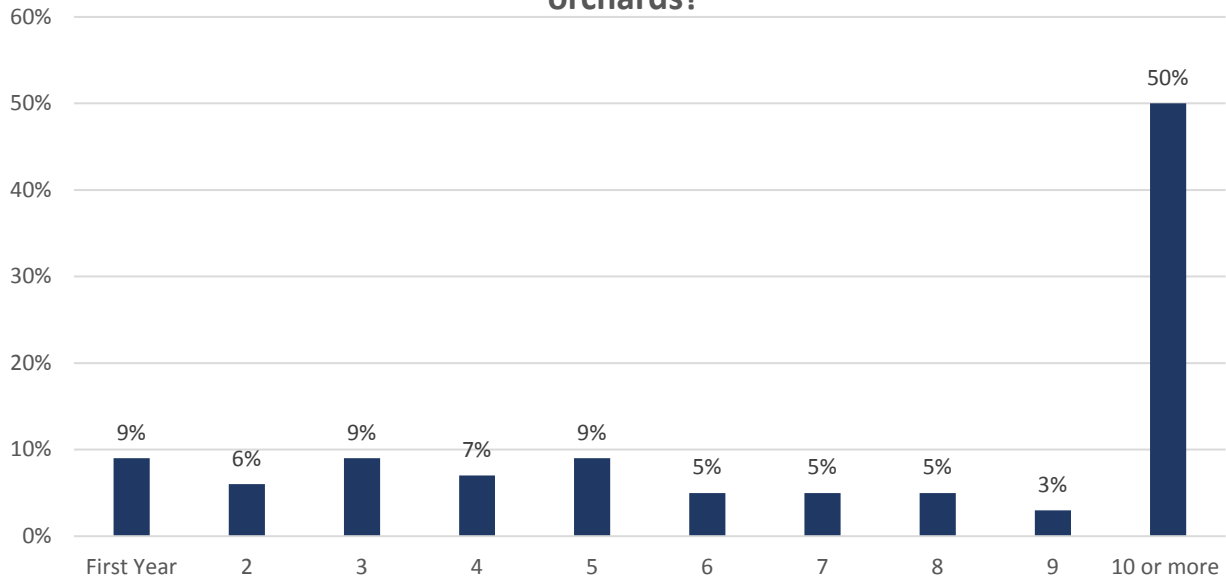
Customer Demographic Overview

31 Orchards Age and Gender Distribution

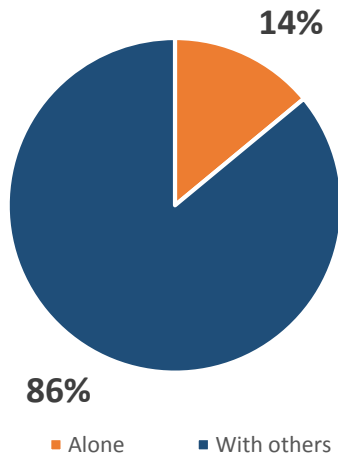
82% Female / 28% Male



How many years have you been picking apples from PYO orchards?



Who came with you on this visit to the orchard?



People who came with others:

Children: 47%

Spouse: 51%

Other relative: 17%

Friend: 14%

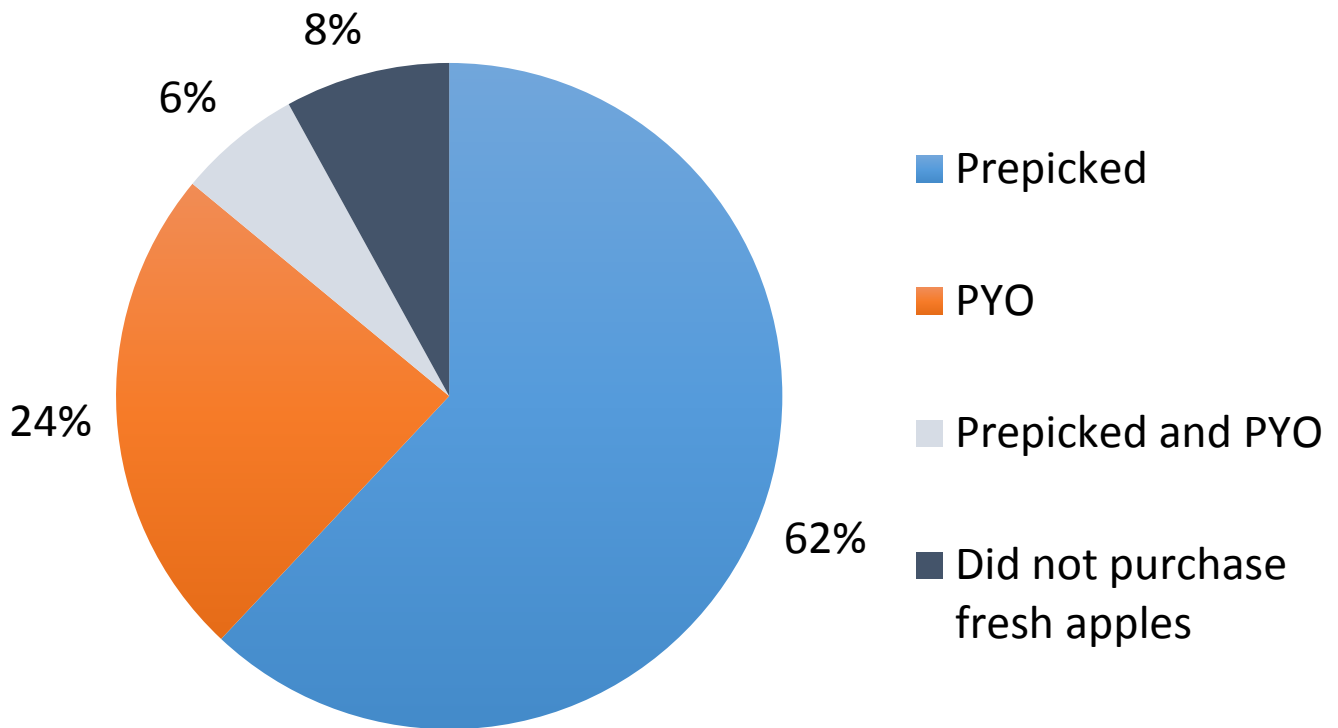
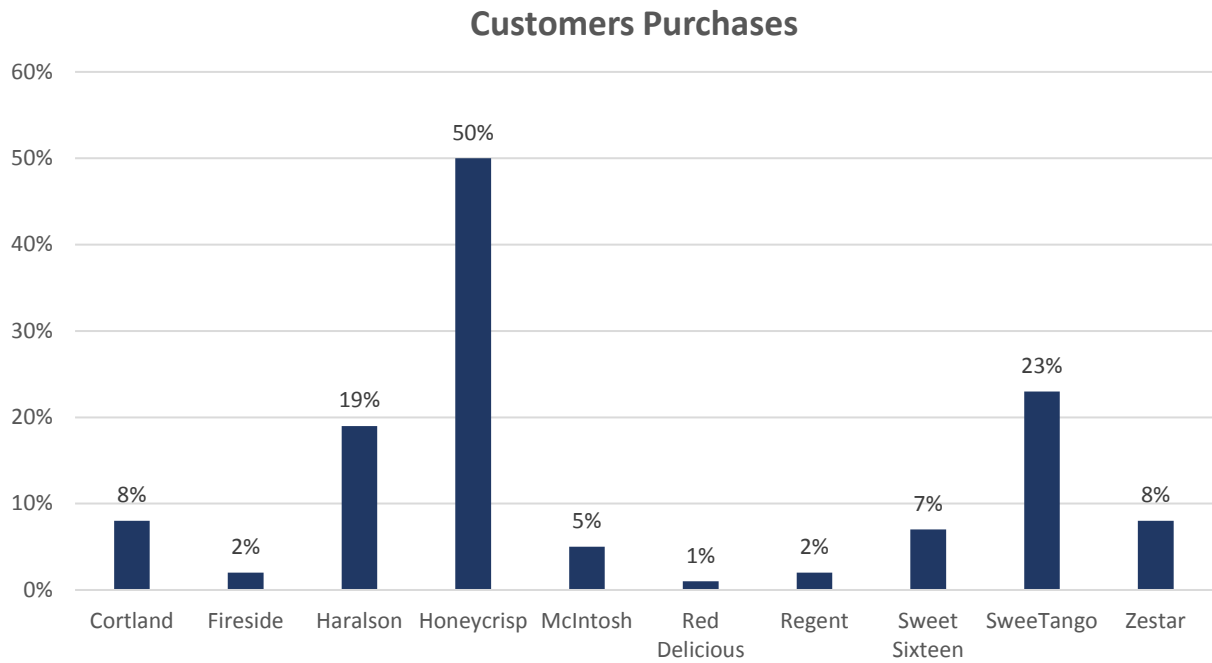
Average Distance: 17 miles

(18% of people traveled over 30 miles)

“We love coming to the orchard every year. We have brought our children and grandchildren for years and now our boys are bringing their kids.”

– Dawn

Customer Purchasing Preferences



Why have you chosen to buy Minnesota Apples?

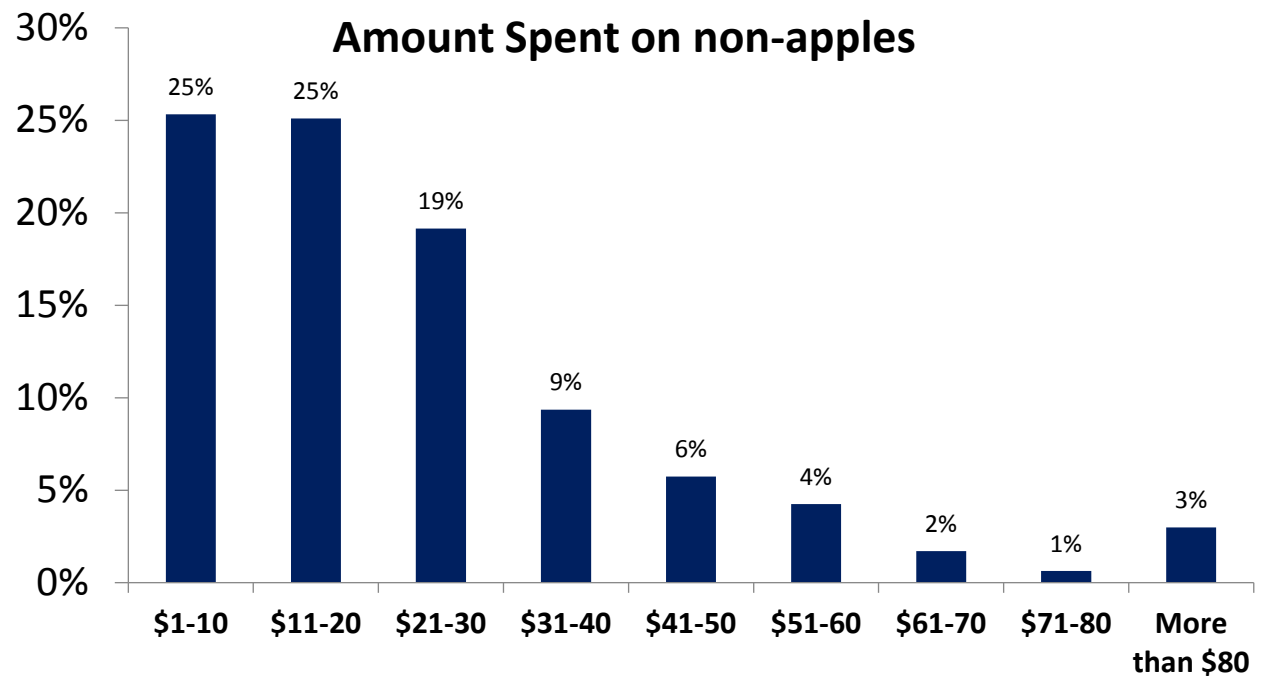
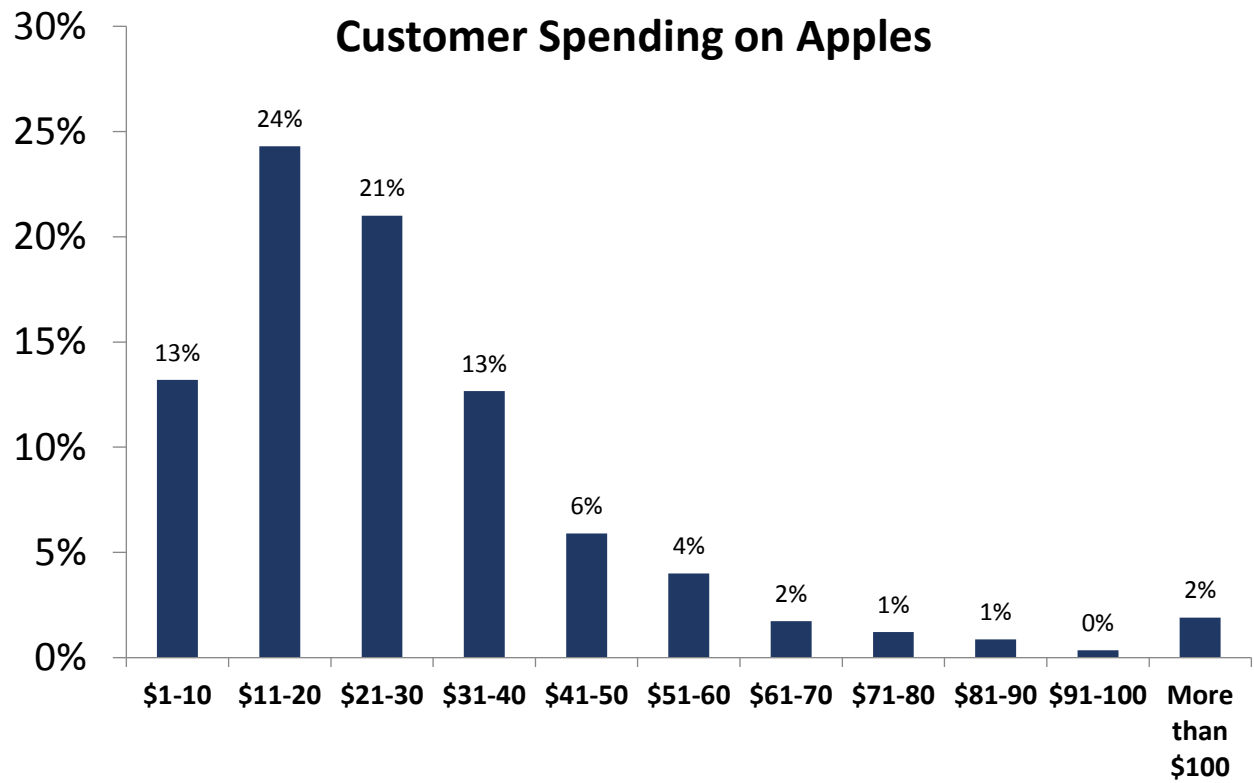
1. Experience
2. To Support Local Businesses
3. Flavor
4. Quality
5. Price

How important are the following to your satisfaction with an apple orchard?

1. Quality of fruit (97%)
2. Friendliness of farm staff (97%)
3. Variety of apples (95%)
4. Convenient parking (91%)



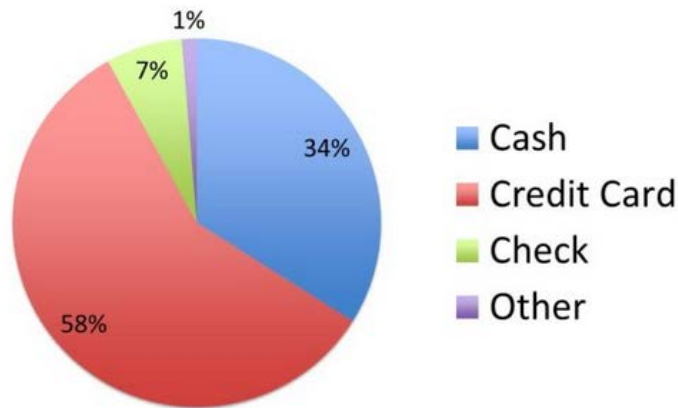
Customer Spending



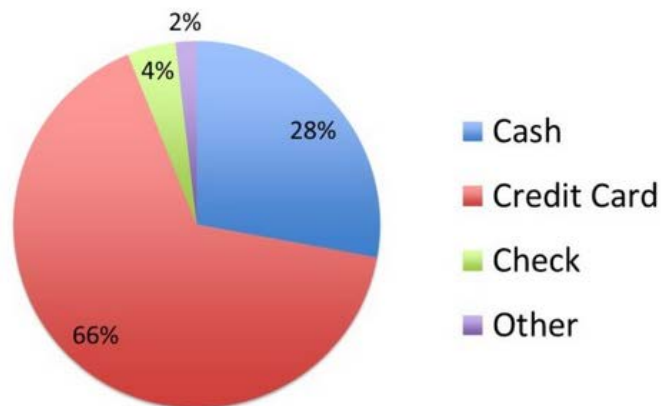
82% of customers bought other items in addition to apples. Top purchased additional items were:

1. Baked Goods
2. Caramel Apples
3. Cider
4. Pumpkins
5. Squash/Gourds

How Customers Paid



Payment Preference



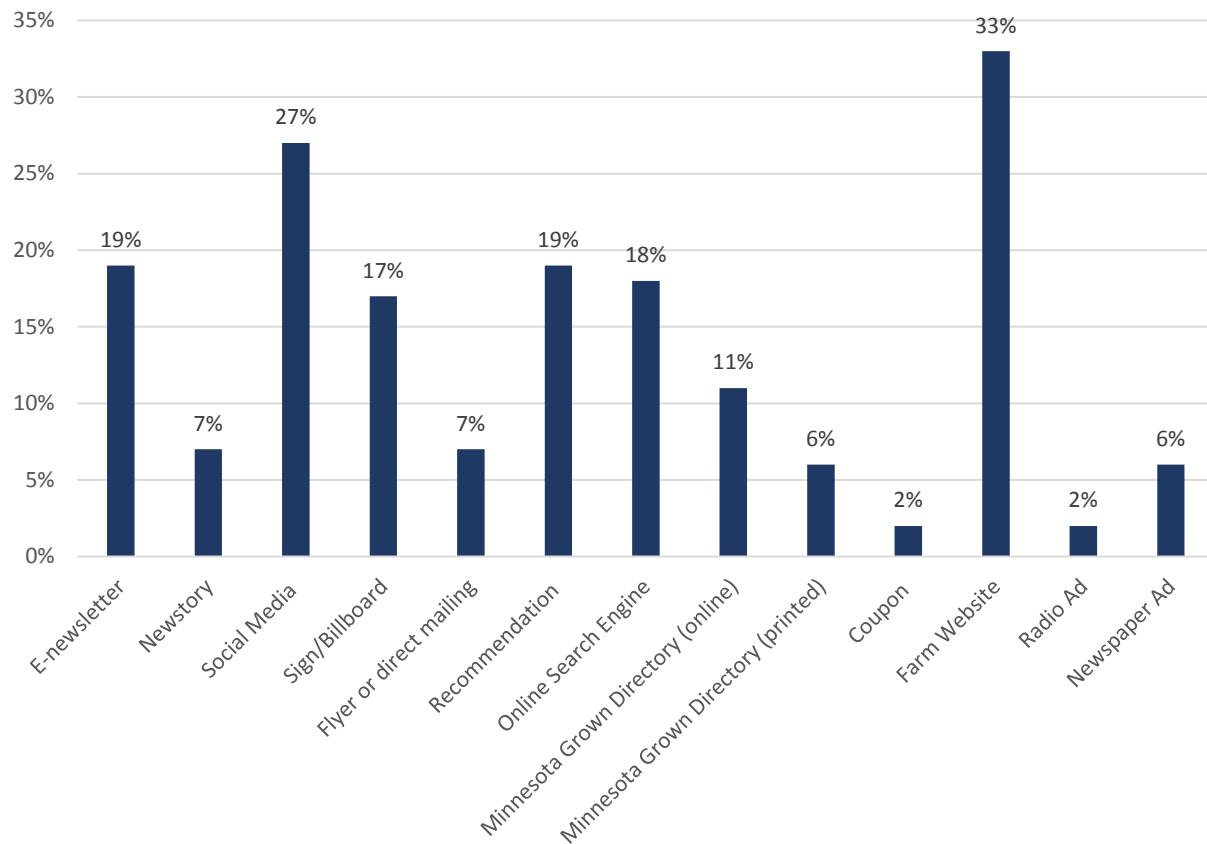
New Customers

25% of customers were first time visitors to the **specific farm** they commented on while **38%** of customers surveyed were first time visitors to **any** apple orchard.

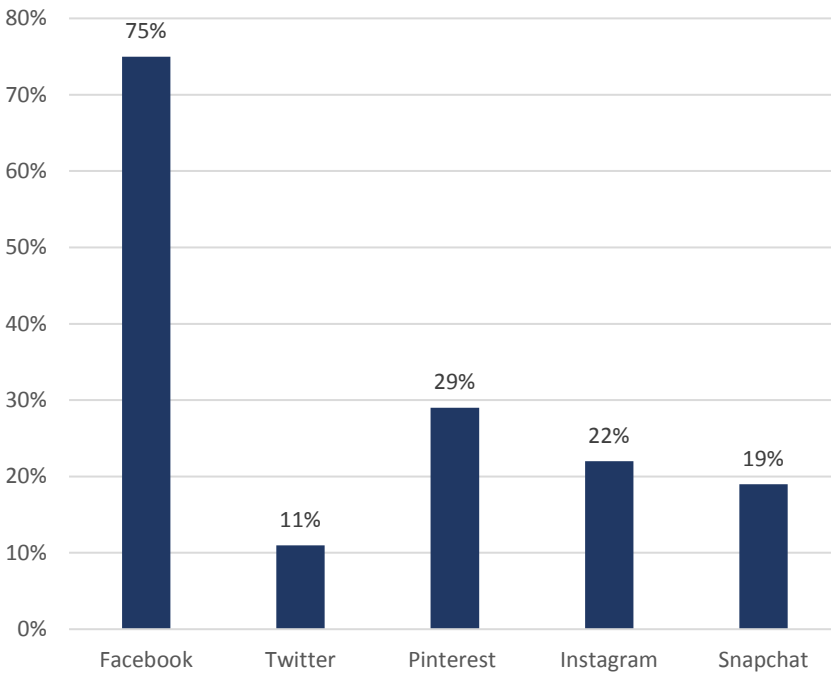
“This was my husband's first visit to an apple orchard, and he had a great time and wants to continue visiting every year!”



How did your customer learn about you?



What social media channels do you routinely use?



Do you own a smart phone?

2016: **90%**

2012: **54%**

Presentation of Results

These results were presented at the 2016 Minnesota Apple Growers Association conference. Participating growers will also received confidential farm reports built from their farm-specific customer data.

Please contact us with any questions about this report!

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