

# BALANCING AGRICULTURE AND WILDLIFE: AN INVESTIGATION ON THE IMPACT OF ELK AND DEER GRAZING ON FARMING AND RANCHING LANDS



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## RESEARCH NEED/HYPOTHESIS

Incidences of wildlife grazing on private ground meant for livestock, or used for other agricultural production is an issue that occurs nationwide. However, the purpose of this research was to gather the opinions that these ag-landowners had of wildlife inside and outside of their operations. We also evaluated the relationships that ag-landowners had with wildlife officials. We believe that this topic has economic and social importance.

## METHODS

USU Extension developed a five-question survey in preparation for the American Farm Bureau Federation National Convention. The survey was administered during trade show hours on the 20th, 21st, and 22nd of January, 2024 at the USU Extension booth. Participants represented a national spectrum of agricultural producers and livestock owners. The survey was open to any willing participants.



## SURVEY QUESTIONS AND RESULTS n = 140

### Question 1

Do you experience issues with elk/deer grazing your crops/private ground?

	Yes	No
Count	90	50
%	64.29	35.71

### Question 2

Have you participated in some kind of mediation for elk/deer grazing?

	Yes	No
Count	32	108
%	22.86	77.14

### Question 3

Do you have a positive or negative opinion of the elk/deer around your operation?

	Positive	Negative	No Opinion
Count	38	51	51
%	27.14	36.43	36.43

### Question 4

Do you have a positive or negative opinion of the elk/deer outside of your operation?

	Positive	Negative	No Opinion
Count	60	33	47
%	42.86	23.57	33.57

### Question 5

Do you have a positive or negative relationship with wildlife officials?

	Positive	Negative	No Opinion
Count	97	7	36
%	69.29	5.00	25.71

## PUBLIC VALUE/NEXT STEPS

This study highlights that many producers who may or may not be sportsmen or wildlife enthusiasts, still have a positive opinion of elk/deer. Relationships between sportsmen, wildlife officials, and producers must be functional. As the majority of producers have experience with these grazing issues, there is a need to keep open communication in these relationships for improvement and effective management.