

Responsive Management



BEHAVIORAL, ATTITUDINAL, AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW YORK SPRING TURKEY HUNTERS

**Conducted for the National Wild Turkey Federation and the New York
Department of Environmental Conservation**

by Responsive Management

2003

BEHAVIORAL, ATTITUDINAL, AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW YORK SPRING TURKEY HUNTERS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted for the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) and the New York Department of Environmental Conservation to determine the behavioral, attitudinal, and demographic characteristics of spring turkey hunters, as well as to assess the impacts of spring turkey hunting on the U.S. economy and the state's economy. The study entailed a telephone survey of licensed hunters in several states, including New York, who had hunted spring turkey in the previous year, hereinafter referred to as "spring turkey hunters." This report contains the behavioral, attitudinal, and demographic results of the study in New York. A separate report contains the economic impact analyses.

The survey questionnaire was developed cooperatively by Responsive Management and the NWTF. A pre-test of the questionnaire was conducted, and revisions were made to the questionnaire based on the pre-test. The survey was administered in New York from April to May 2003. The total number of completed interviews in New York is 151.

For the survey, telephones were selected as the preferred sampling medium because of the universality of telephone ownership. The data were collected using Questionnaire Programming Language 4.1, which is computer software specifically designed for survey data collection. The software used for the analysis was the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 11.5. SPSS is software specifically designed for statistical analyses of quantitative data.

HUNTING PARTICIPATION

- The mean of responses regarding the number of days that New York spring turkey hunters spent hunting spring turkey last season was 5.7 days. The mean of responses regarding the number of days that New York spring turkey hunters spent hunting fall turkey last season was 3.0 days.

- The mean of responses regarding the number of years that New York spring turkey hunters had hunted spring turkey was 7.8 years.

- Respondents were quite active in their spring turkey hunting: a majority (52%) had hunted each of the last 5 years, while only 7% had hunted only 1 of the past 5 years.
- On the whole, New York spring turkey hunters' level of avidity has remained the same (53%) or increased (30%) over the past 5 years.
- Other species most commonly hunted by New York spring turkey hunters were big game (89%) and small game (44%).

MOTIVATIONS FOR SPRING TURKEY HUNTING

- A strong plurality of New York spring turkey hunters (44%) hunted spring turkey for the sport and recreation. Indeed, those giving that answer outnumbered the next most common answer (to be with friends and family—16%) by more than two times.
- The most common reasons given for liking to hunt spring turkey were for the challenge (41%), that the respondent feels close to nature (37%), or for the turkey calls (21%).

SEASON PREFERENCE FOR TURKEY HUNTING

- A plurality of New York spring turkey hunters (45%) said that they prefer spring turkey hunting over fall turkey hunting.

INITIATION INTO HUNTING

- A strong plurality of New York spring turkey hunters (42%) had been initiated into hunting by their father.
 - The next most common answer was no one had initiated them (i.e., they were self-taught) (18%).
 - The next most common individual after the father was a friend (17%), followed by a grandfather (7%), uncle (6%), and brother (5%).
- The results were quite different regarding the person who first showed the respondent how to hunt, in general, versus the person who first showed the respondent how to specifically

turkey hunt. Most commonly, New York spring turkey hunters indicated that no one had showed them how to turkey hunt (34%). Otherwise, a friend most commonly showed the respondent how to turkey hunt (27%), followed by his/her father (21%).

- For nearly all New York spring turkey hunters (91%), turkey was *not* the first species they had hunted.
- Nearly half of New York spring turkey hunters (49%) had hunted spring turkey before they hunted fall turkey (if they had hunted fall turkey at all), while 28% had hunted fall turkey first.

SPRING TURKEY HUNTING SATISFACTION/ DISSATISFACTION AND INTERFERENCE

- Half of New York spring turkey hunters (50%) rated their enjoyment of spring turkey hunting the same as their enjoyment of other hunting activities. Otherwise, a higher percentage of respondents rated spring turkey hunting more enjoyable (33%) than rated spring turkey hunting less enjoyable (14%) than other hunting activities.
- Satisfaction with spring turkey hunting was high: 77% of New York spring turkey hunters were very or somewhat satisfied with their spring turkey hunting in the last year.
- A plurality (38%) of those who were dissatisfied with their spring turkey hunting said that not enough turkey in general was their main reason for their dissatisfaction.
- A large majority (85%) of New York spring turkey hunters did not experience any interference from other recreationists. Otherwise, they most commonly had conflicts with other spring turkey hunters (5%) or people four-wheeling or using off-road vehicles (5%).

SPRING TURKEY HUNTING METHODS AND LOCATIONS

- An overwhelming majority of New York spring turkey hunters (88%) use a shotgun when hunting spring turkey.

- A strong majority of New York spring turkey hunters (71%) hunted spring turkey mostly on private land.

RATING OF IMPORTANCE AND PERFORMANCE OF VARIOUS AGENCY PROGRAMS AND EFFORTS

- New York spring turkey hunters were asked to rate the importance of various state fish and wildlife agency programs/efforts. Those programs/efforts for which the highest percentage of respondents gave a rating of *very* important were firearm use and safety (89%) and providing wild turkey hunting opportunities for youth (77%).
- In looking at those giving a rating of *very or somewhat* important in their rating of various state fish and wildlife agency programs/efforts, the top programs/efforts are firearm use and safety (94%), providing wild turkey hunting opportunities for youth (94%), education regarding conservation and outdoor skills (93%), conservation projects, such as protecting or enhancing habitat for wild turkey (91%), conservation projects, such as protecting or enhancing habitat for other wildlife besides wild turkey (91%), and providing wild turkey hunting opportunities for disabled hunters (91%).
- The analysis also examined those giving a rating of very or somewhat *unimportant* for their rating of various state fish and wildlife agency programs/efforts. The programs/efforts that had the highest percentage of respondents who said they were very or somewhat *unimportant* were special events, such as calling contests (23%), and providing additional fall turkey hunting opportunities (21%).
- A strong majority of New York spring turkey hunters (81%) rated the job that their state fish and wildlife agency does at providing hunting opportunities in their state as excellent or good, and 17% rated it fair or poor.
- A strong majority of New York spring turkey hunters (87%) rated the job that their state fish and wildlife agency does in providing spring turkey hunting opportunities as excellent or good, and 11% rated it as fair or poor.

WAYS TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT SPRING TURKEY HUNTING

- The ways that New York spring turkey hunters said would be best to inform them about spring turkey hunting were magazines (32%), direct mail (31%), the Internet (15%), newspapers (13%), the regulations handbook (11%), and television (10%).

MEMBERSHIP IN CONSERVATION/SPORTSMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

- The National Rifle Association was the most common conservation/sportsmen's organization to which New York spring turkey hunters were members (22%), followed by the NWTF (7%).

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INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted for the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) and the New York Department of Environmental Conservation to determine the behavioral, attitudinal, and demographic characteristics of spring turkey hunters, as well as to assess the impacts of spring turkey hunting on the U.S. economy and the state's economy. The study entailed a telephone survey of licensed hunters in several states, including New York, who had hunted spring turkey in the previous year, hereinafter referred to as "spring turkey hunters." This report contains the behavioral, attitudinal, and demographic results of the study in New York. A separate report contains the economic impact analyses.

The survey questionnaire was developed cooperatively by Responsive Management and the NWTF. The sample was obtained from New York hunting license holders (spring turkey licenses and/or other licenses that allowed turkey hunting). A pre-test of the questionnaire was conducted, and revisions were made to the questionnaire based on the pre-test. The survey was administered in New York from April to May 2003. The total number of completed interviews in New York is 151.

For the survey, telephones were selected as the preferred sampling medium because of the universality of telephone ownership. In addition, a central polling site at the Responsive Management office allowed for rigorous quality control over the interviews and data collection. Responsive Management maintains its own in-house telephone interviewing facilities, which are staffed by interviewers with experience conducting computer-assisted telephone interviews on the subject of natural resources. The data were collected using Questionnaire Programming Language 4.1 (QPL), which is computer software specifically designed for survey data collection.

Responsive Management has designed a telephone interviewing facility that stresses the importance of highly trained professional telephone interviewers who work under the close supervision of Responsive Management senior staff. To ensure that the data collected are of the highest quality, Responsive Management's interviewers have been trained according to the standards established by the Council of American Survey Research Organizations. Methods of

instruction included lecture and role-playing. The Survey Center Managers conducted project briefings with the interviewers prior to the administration of this survey. Interviewers were instructed on the type of study, study goals and objectives, handling of survey questions, interview length, termination points and qualifiers for participation, interviewer instructions within the survey instrument, reading of the survey instrument, skip patterns, and probing and clarifying techniques necessary for specific questions on the survey instrument. The Survey Center Managers randomly monitored telephone workstations without the interviewers' knowledge to evaluate the performance of each interviewer. After the surveys were obtained by the interviewers, the Survey Center Managers and statisticians edited each completed survey to check for clarity and completeness.

Interviews were conducted Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and on Sunday from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., all local time. A five-callback design was used to maintain the representativeness of the sample, to avoid bias toward people easy to reach by telephone, and to provide an equal opportunity for all to participate. When a respondent could not be reached on the first call, subsequent calls were placed on different days of the week and at different times.

The software used for data collection was QPL. The survey data were entered into the computer as the interview was being conducted, eliminating manual data entry after the completion of the survey and the concomitant data entry errors that may occur with manual data entry. The survey instrument was programmed so that QPL branched, coded, and substituted phrases in the survey based on previous responses to ensure the integrity and consistency of the data collection.

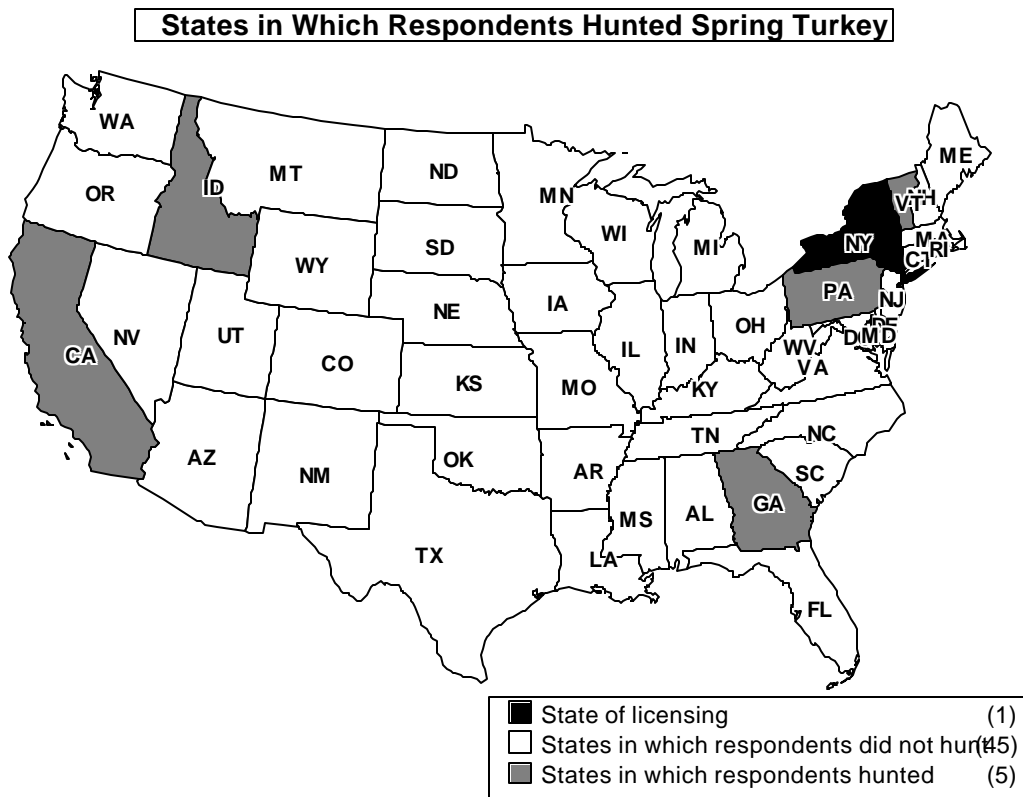
The software used for the analysis was the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 11.5. SPSS is software specifically designed for statistical analyses of quantitative data.

HUNTING PARTICIPATION

STATES IN WHICH SPRING TURKEY WAS HUNTED

➤ New York spring turkey hunters also hunted spring turkey in the states shown in the following tabulation:

States	No. of Respondents	States	No. of Respondents
Pennsylvania	3	Georgia	1
Idaho	2	Vermont	1
California	1		



DAYS SPRING AND FALL TURKEY HUNTING

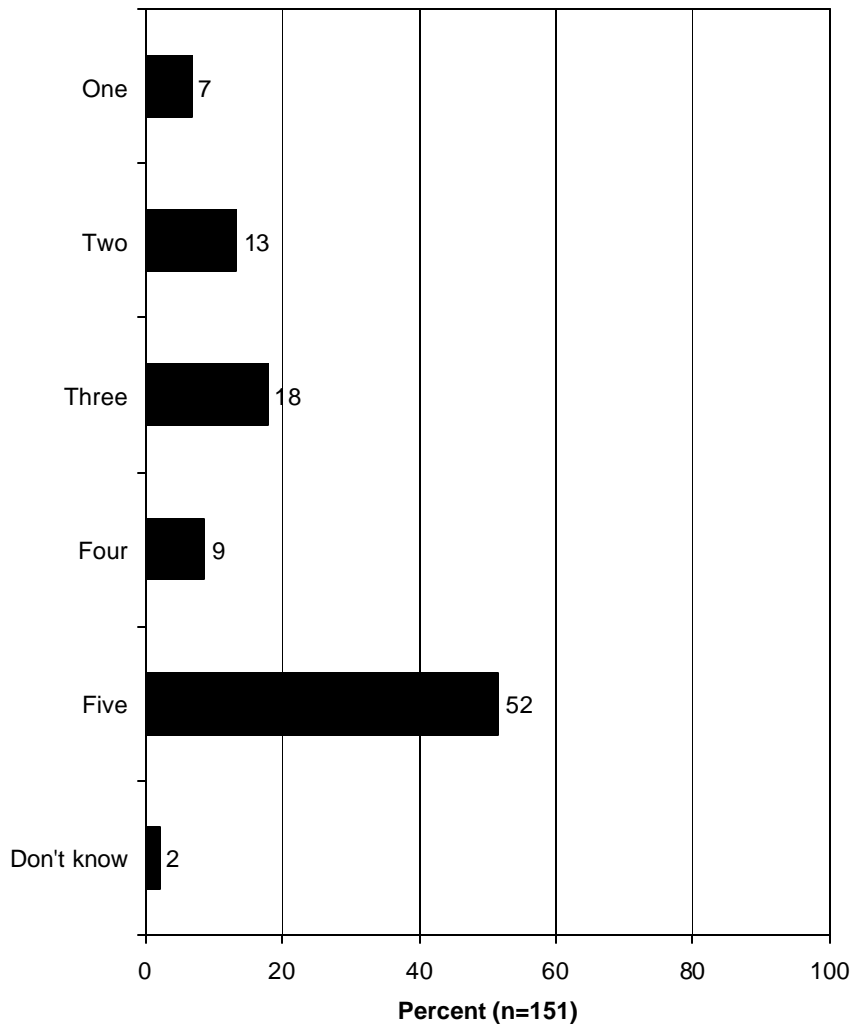
- The mean of responses regarding the number of days that New York spring turkey hunters spent hunting spring turkey last season was 5.7 days. Note that any portion of a day is considered 1 day, and multiple trips during the same day are considered 1 day.

- The mean of responses regarding the number of days that New York spring turkey hunters spent hunting fall turkey last season was 3.0 days.

YEARS SPRING TURKEY HUNTING

- The mean of responses regarding the number of years that New York spring turkey hunters had hunted spring turkey was 7.8 years.
- Respondents were quite active in their spring turkey hunting: a majority (52%) had hunted each of the last 5 years, while only 7% had hunted only 1 of the past 5 years.

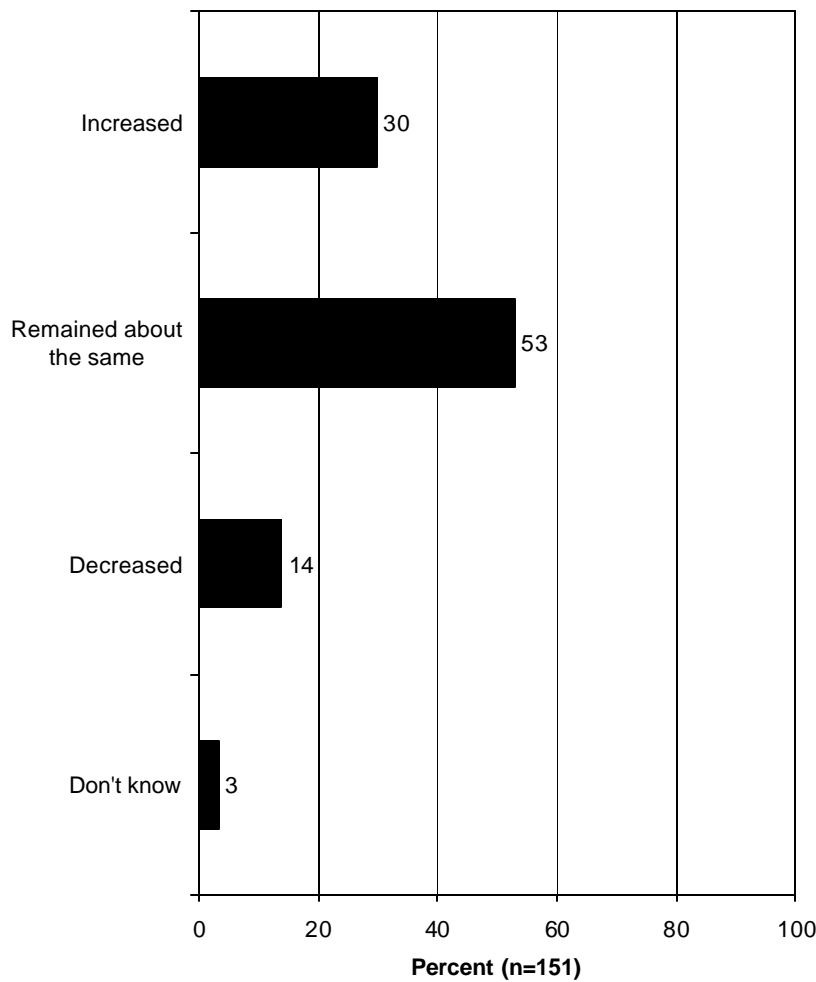
Q14. How many of the past 5 years did you go spring turkey hunting?



AVIDITY FOR SPRING TURKEY HUNTING

- On the whole, New York spring turkey hunters’ level of avidity has remained the same or increased over the past 5 years.
 - A majority of New York spring turkey hunters (53%) said their level of spring turkey hunting has remained about the same over the past 5 years, and 30% said it has increased. Indeed, those saying their spring turkey hunting has increased outnumber those who said it has decreased by a ratio of slightly more than 2 to 1.

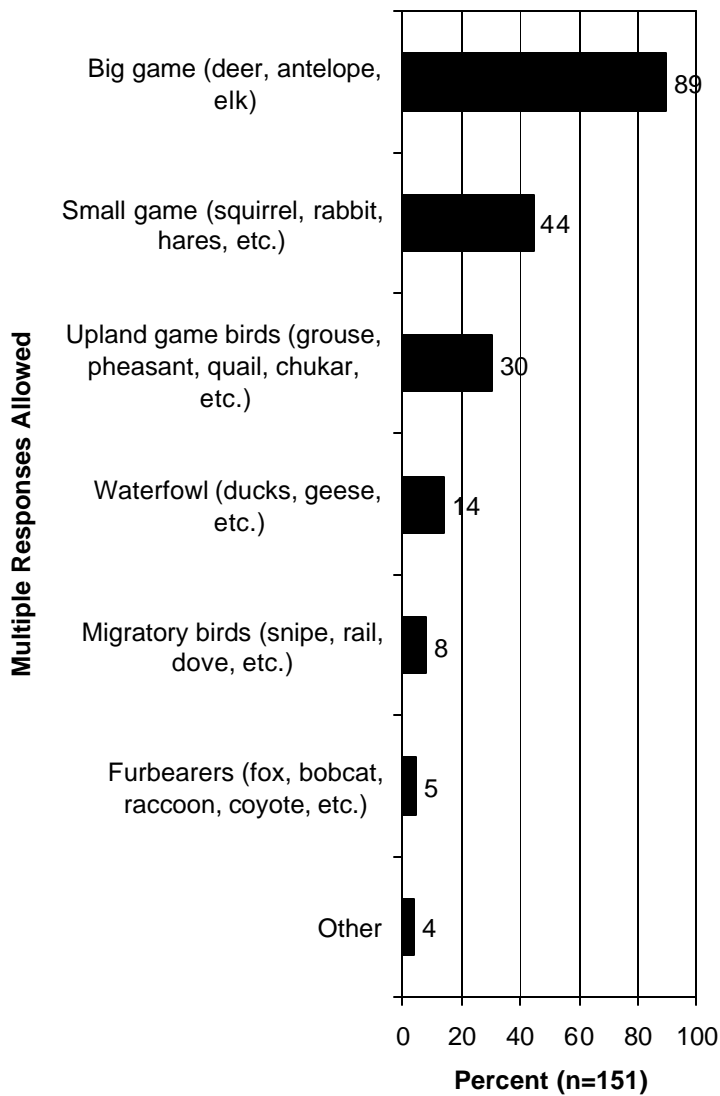
Q15. Over the past 5 years, would you say your level of spring turkey hunting has increased, decreased, or remained about the same?



OTHER SPECIES HUNTED

- Other species most commonly hunted by New York spring turkey hunters were big game, which includes deer, antelope, and elk (89%), and small game, which includes squirrel, rabbit, hares, etc. (44%).

Q37. For what other species do you usually hunt besides turkey?

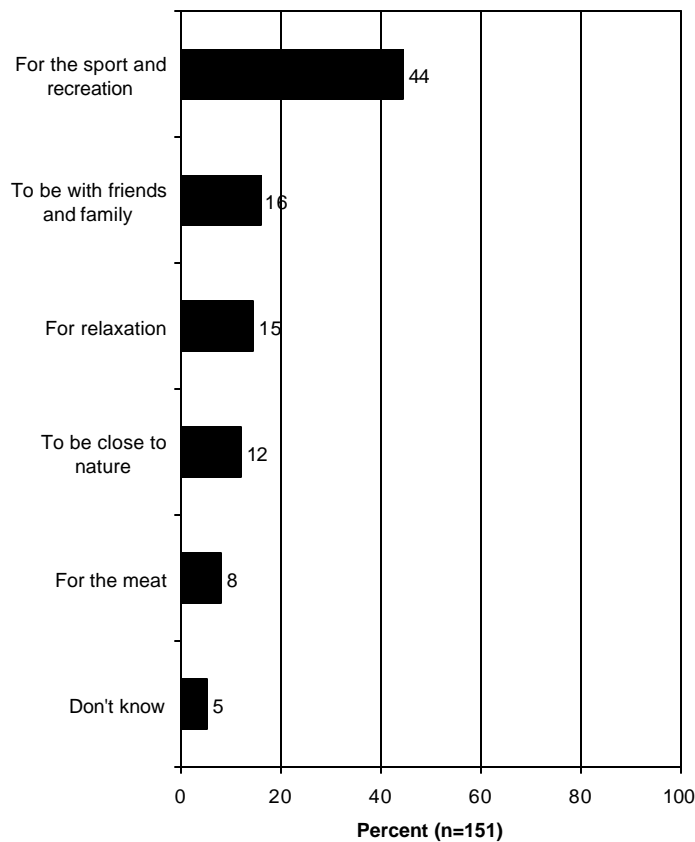


MOTIVATIONS FOR SPRING TURKEY HUNTING

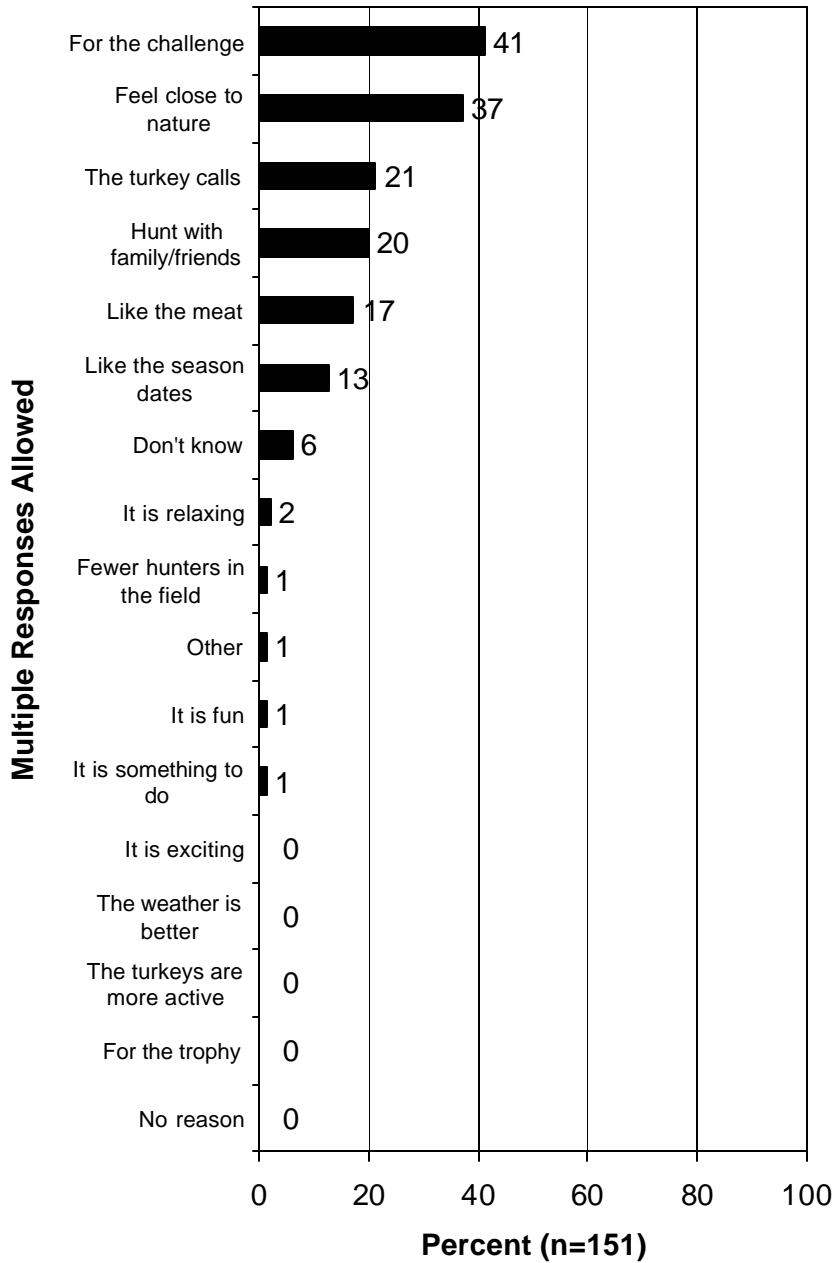
- A strong plurality of New York spring turkey hunters (44%) hunted spring turkey for the sport and recreation. Indeed, those giving that answer outnumbered the next most common answer (to be with friends and family—16%) by more than two times.
 - Only 8% of respondents said that the most important reason that they hunted spring turkey was for the meat.

- The most common reasons given for liking to hunt spring turkey were for the challenge (41%), that the respondent feels close to nature (37%), or for the turkey calls (21%).
 - 20% said they like to hunt spring turkey because they hunt with family and/or friends.

Q16. What was your most important reason for hunting spring turkey in the past 5 years?



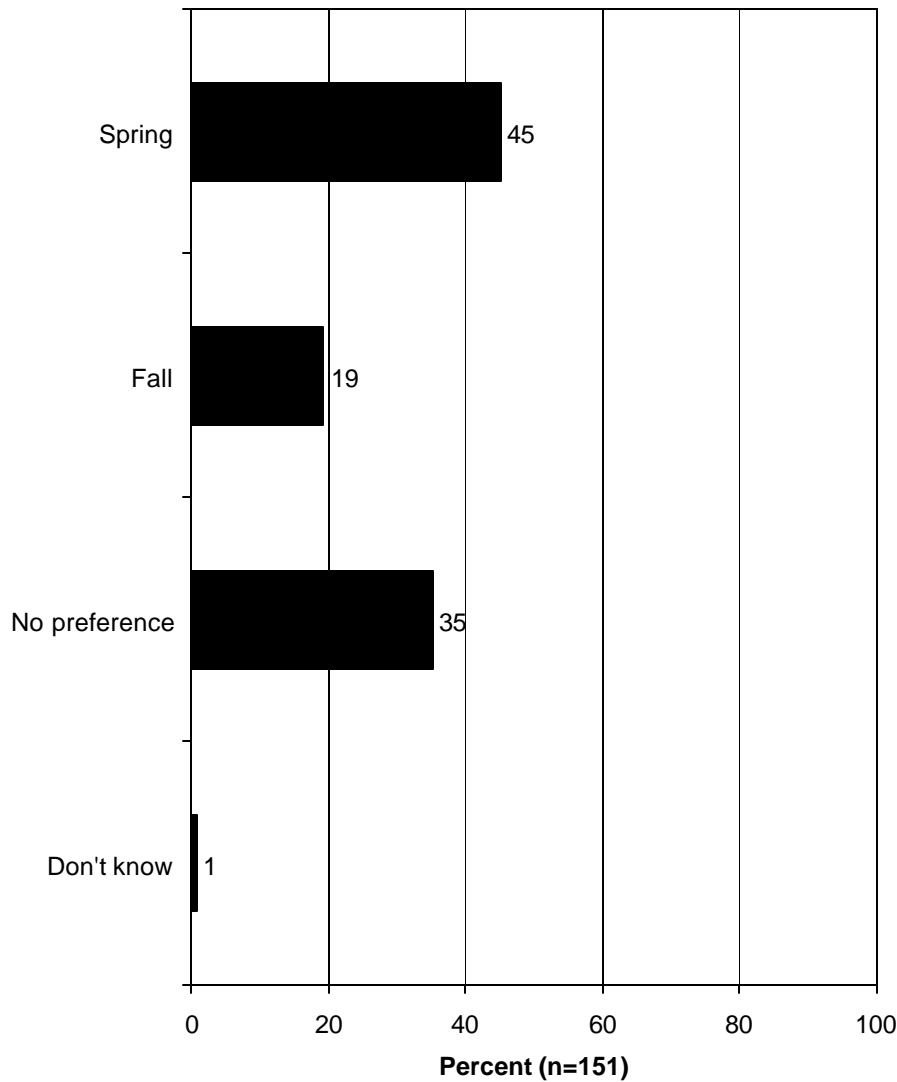
Q18. What would you say are the reasons you like to hunt spring turkey?



SEASON PREFERENCE FOR TURKEY HUNTING

- A plurality of New York spring turkey hunters (45%) said that they prefer spring turkey hunting over fall turkey hunting.
 - 19% of spring turkey hunters prefer fall turkey hunting.

Q12. Do you prefer to hunt turkey in the spring or in the fall, or do you have no preference?



INITIATION INTO HUNTING

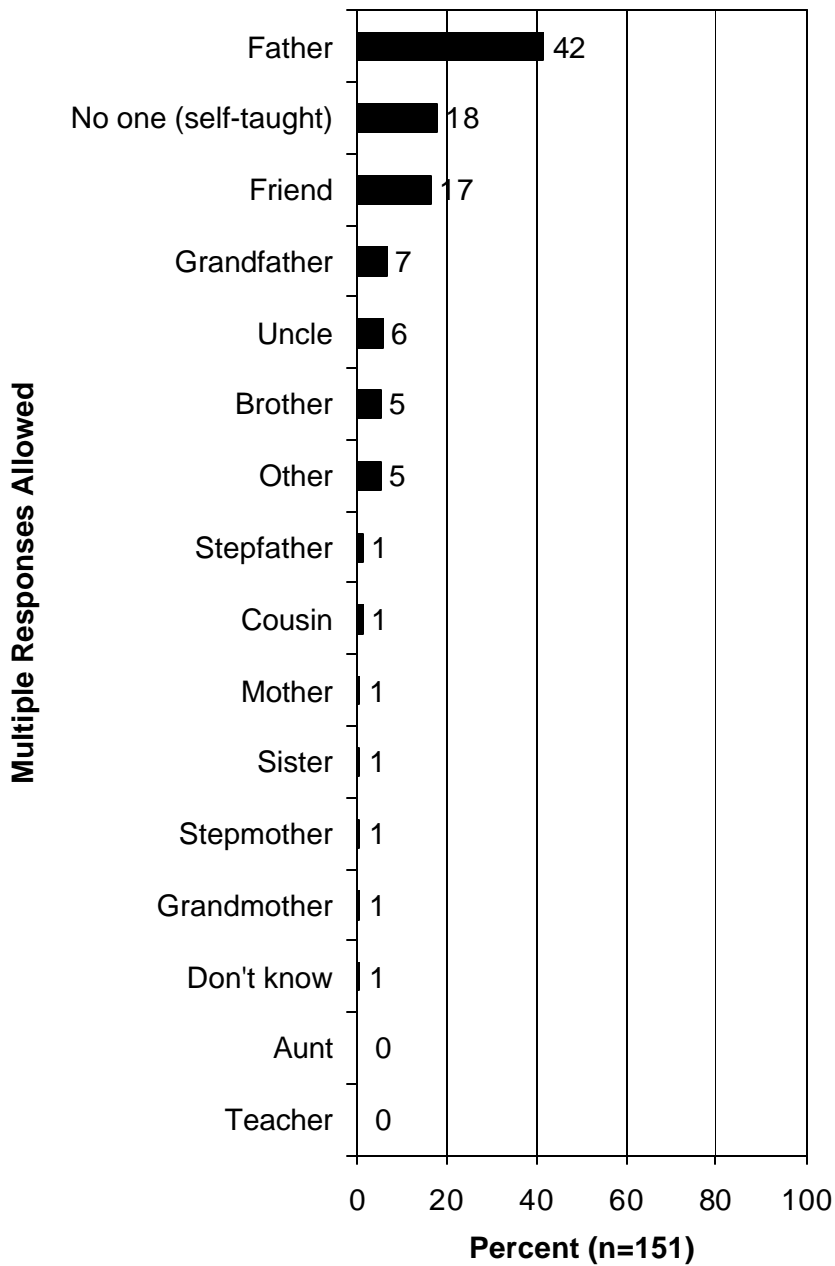
- A strong plurality of New York spring turkey hunters (42%) had been initiated into hunting by their father.
 - The next most common answer was no one had initiated them (i.e., they were self-taught) (18%).
 - The next most common individual after the father was a friend (17%), followed by a grandfather (7%), uncle (6%), and brother (5%).
 - The most common *female* individual (other than friend, for which the gender is not specified) was mother (1%).

- The results were quite different regarding the person who first showed the respondent how to hunt, in general, versus the person who first showed the respondent how to specifically *turkey* hunt. Most commonly, New York spring turkey hunters indicated that no one had showed them how to turkey hunt (34%). Otherwise, a friend most commonly showed the respondent how to turkey hunt (27%), followed by his/her father (21%).

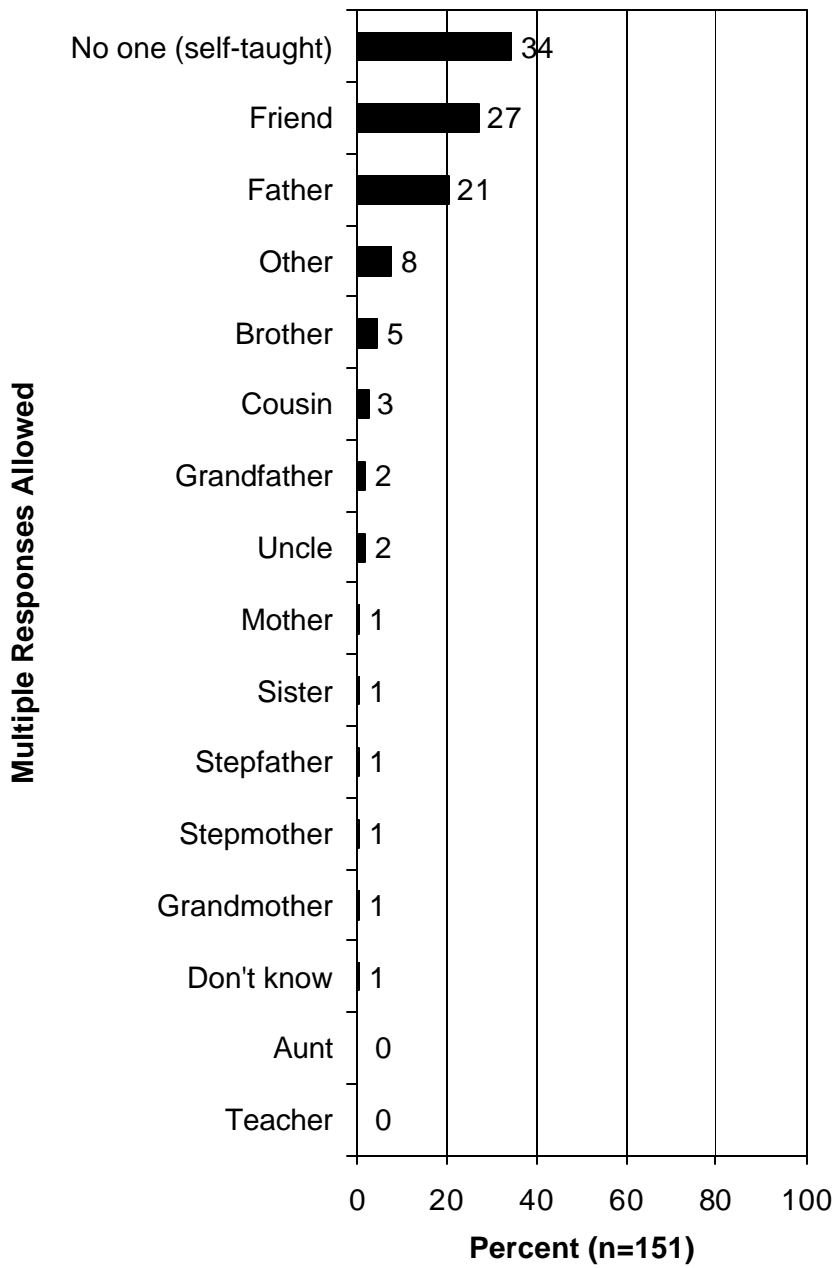
- For nearly all New York spring turkey hunters (91%), turkey was *not* the first species they had hunted.

- Nearly half of New York spring turkey hunters (49%) had hunted spring turkey before they hunted fall turkey (if they had hunted fall turkey at all), while 28% had hunted fall turkey first.

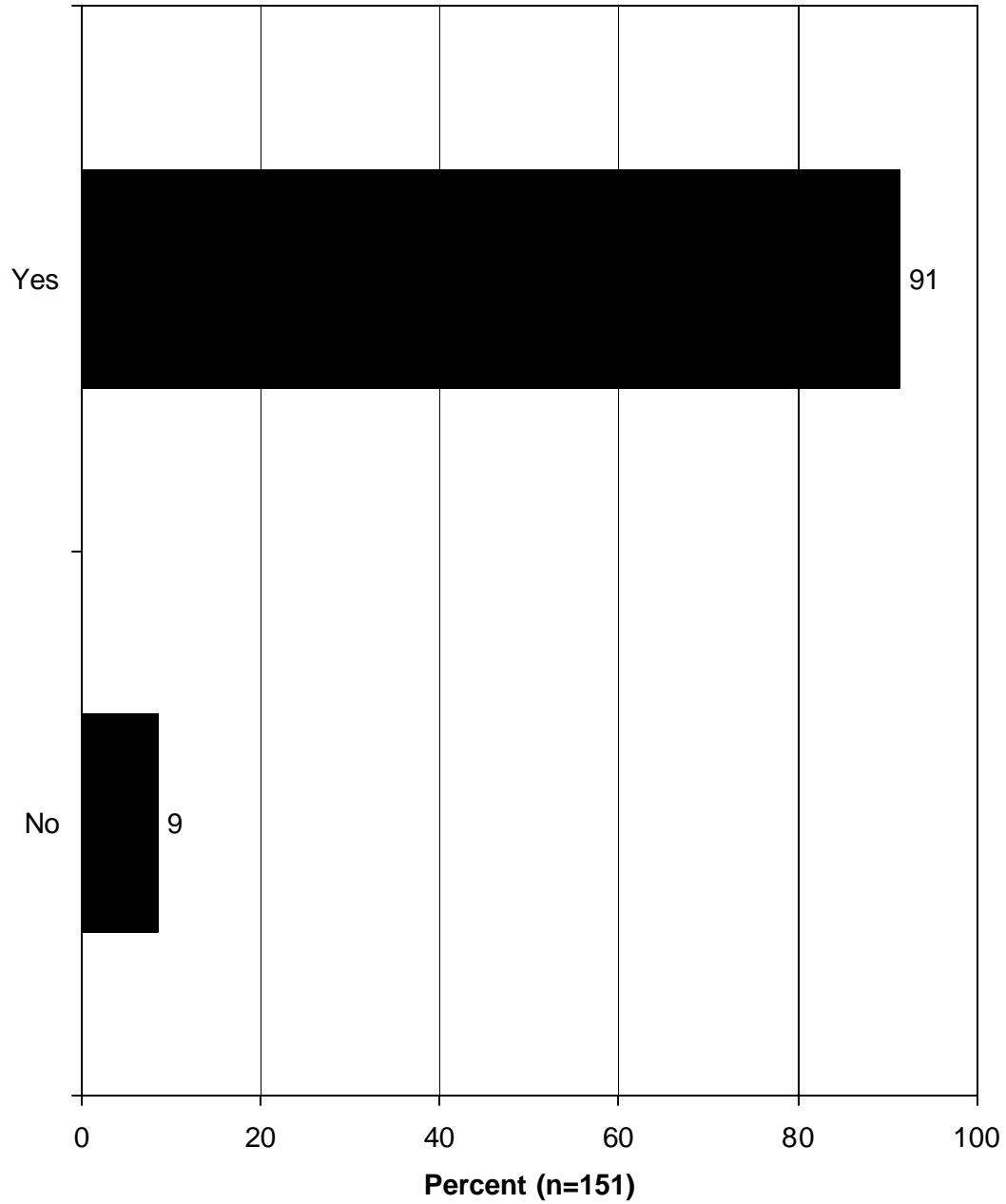
Q21. Who first showed you how to hunt?



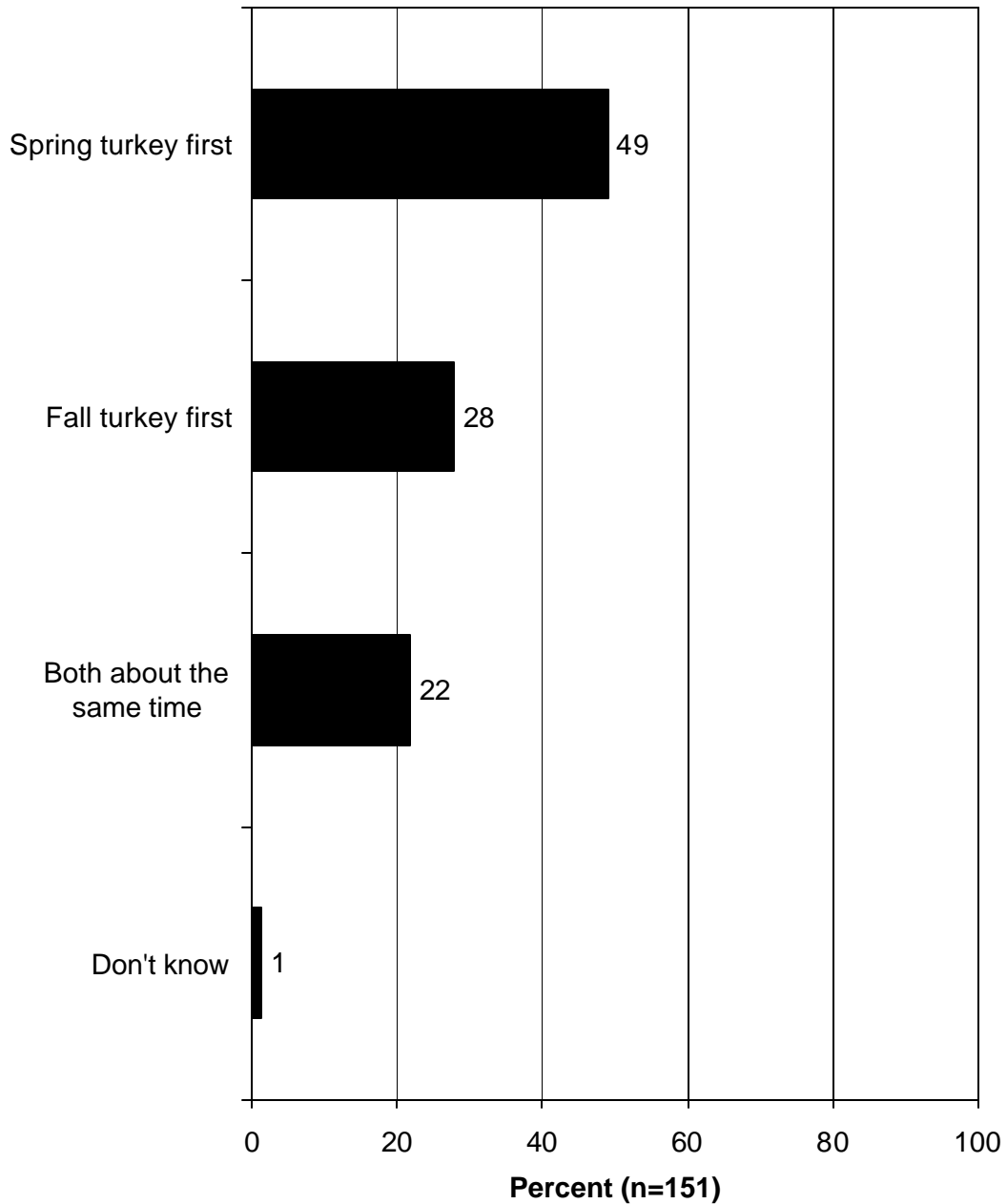
Q24. Who first showed you how to turkey hunt?



Q26. Before hunting turkey, did you hunt other species?



Q27. Which did you hunt first: spring turkey or fall turkey, or did you start hunting both about the same time?



SPRING TURKEY HUNTING SATISFACTION/ DISSATISFACTION AND INTERFERENCE

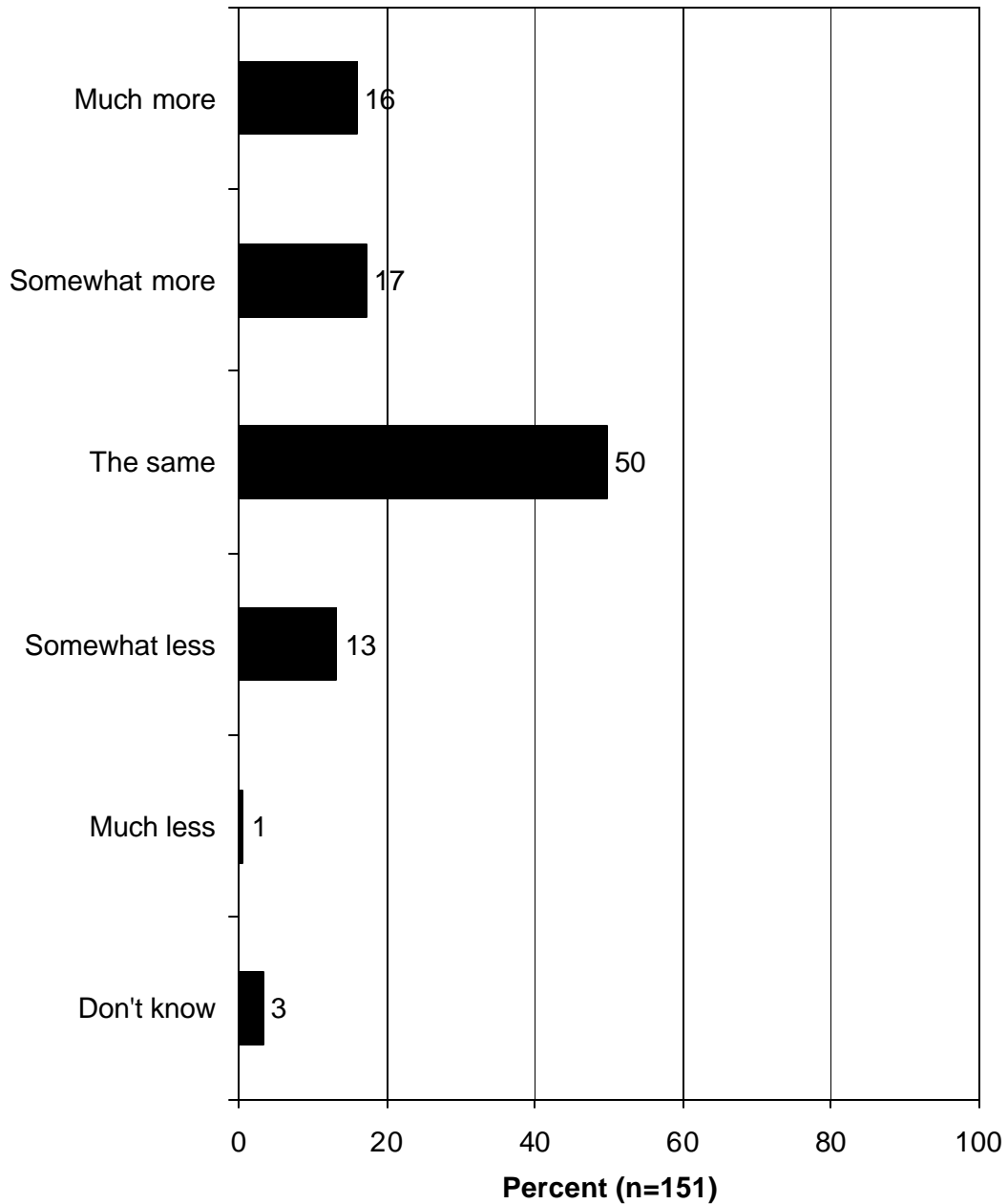
- Half of New York spring turkey hunters (50%) rated their enjoyment of spring turkey hunting the same as their enjoyment of other hunting activities. Otherwise, a higher percentage of respondents rated spring turkey hunting more enjoyable than rated spring turkey hunting less enjoyable than other hunting activities.
 - 33% of New York spring turkey hunters rated spring turkey hunting much or somewhat more enjoyable than other hunting activities, while 14% rated it somewhat or much less enjoyable.

- Satisfaction with spring turkey hunting was high: 77% of New York spring turkey hunters were very or somewhat satisfied with their spring turkey hunting in the last year.
 - 17% were somewhat or very dissatisfied.

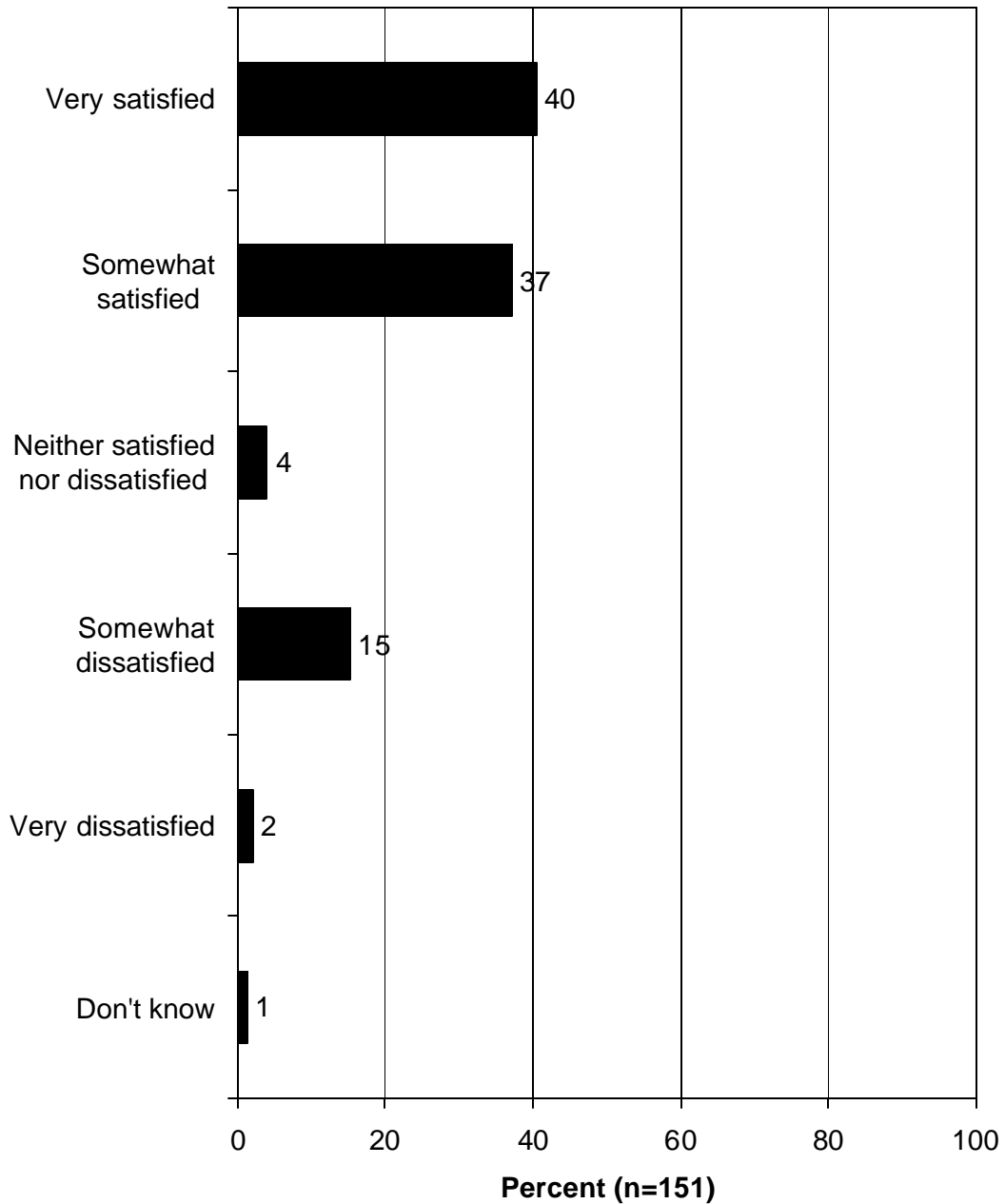
- A plurality (38%) of those who were dissatisfied with their spring turkey hunting said that not enough turkey in general was their main reason for their dissatisfaction.
 - Not harvesting a turkey was another important reason (23%).

- A large majority (85%) of New York spring turkey hunters did not experience any interference from other recreationists. Otherwise, they most commonly had conflicts with other spring turkey hunters (5%) or people four-wheeling or using off-road vehicles (5%).

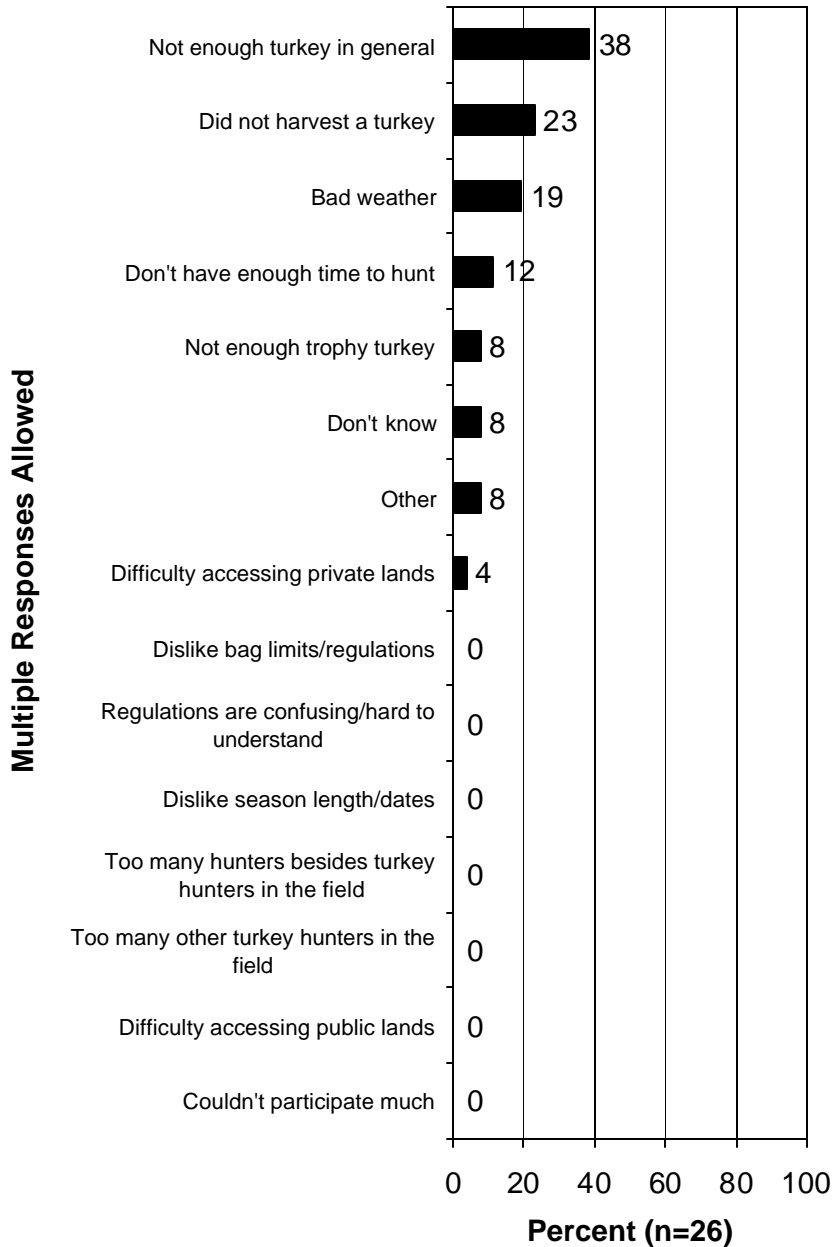
Q28. Overall, how would you rate your enjoyment of spring turkey hunting compared to other hunting activities?



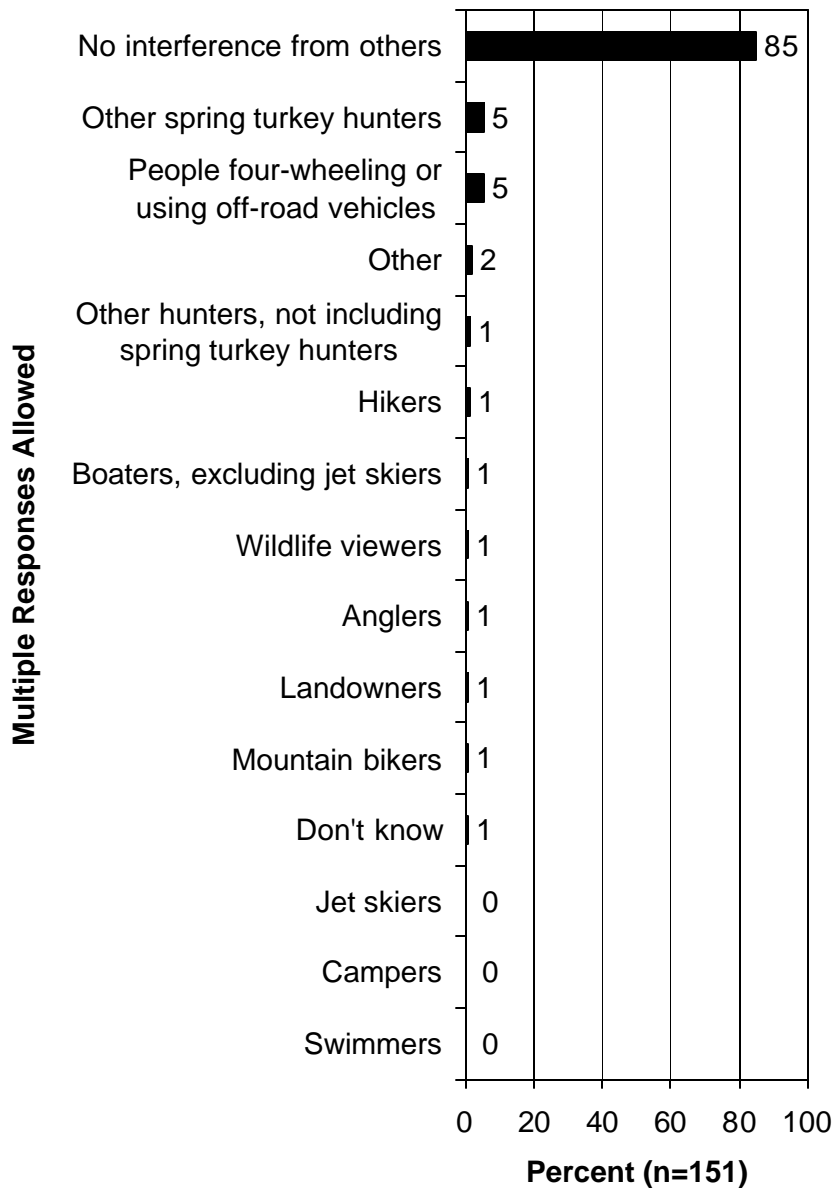
Q29. Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your spring turkey hunting in the last year?



**Q31. What are your main reasons for being dissatisfied with your spring turkey hunting?
(Asked of those who are dissatisfied with their spring turkey hunting in the last year.)**



Q40. While you were spring turkey hunting during the past license year, did you experience any interference from other recreationists that took away from your enjoyment? (If yes: What types of recreationists were they?)

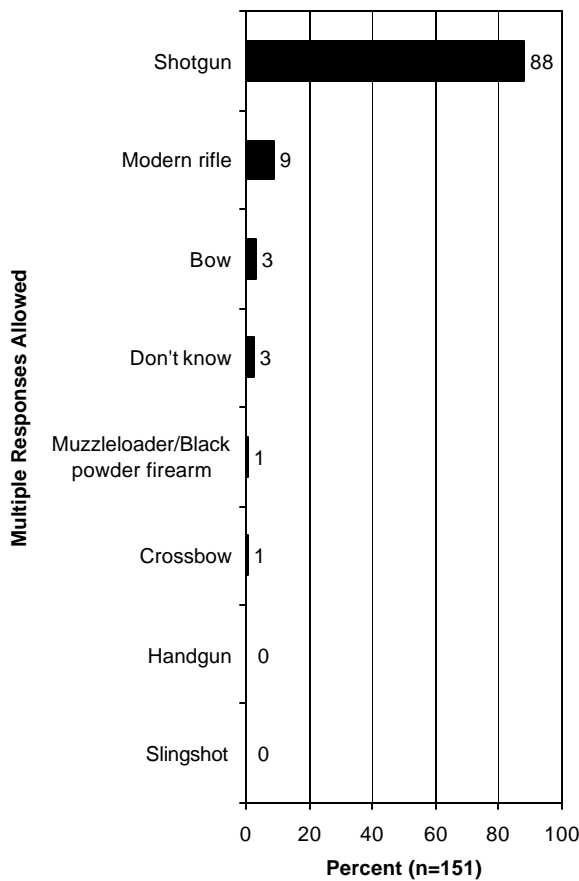


SPRING TURKEY HUNTING METHODS AND LOCATIONS

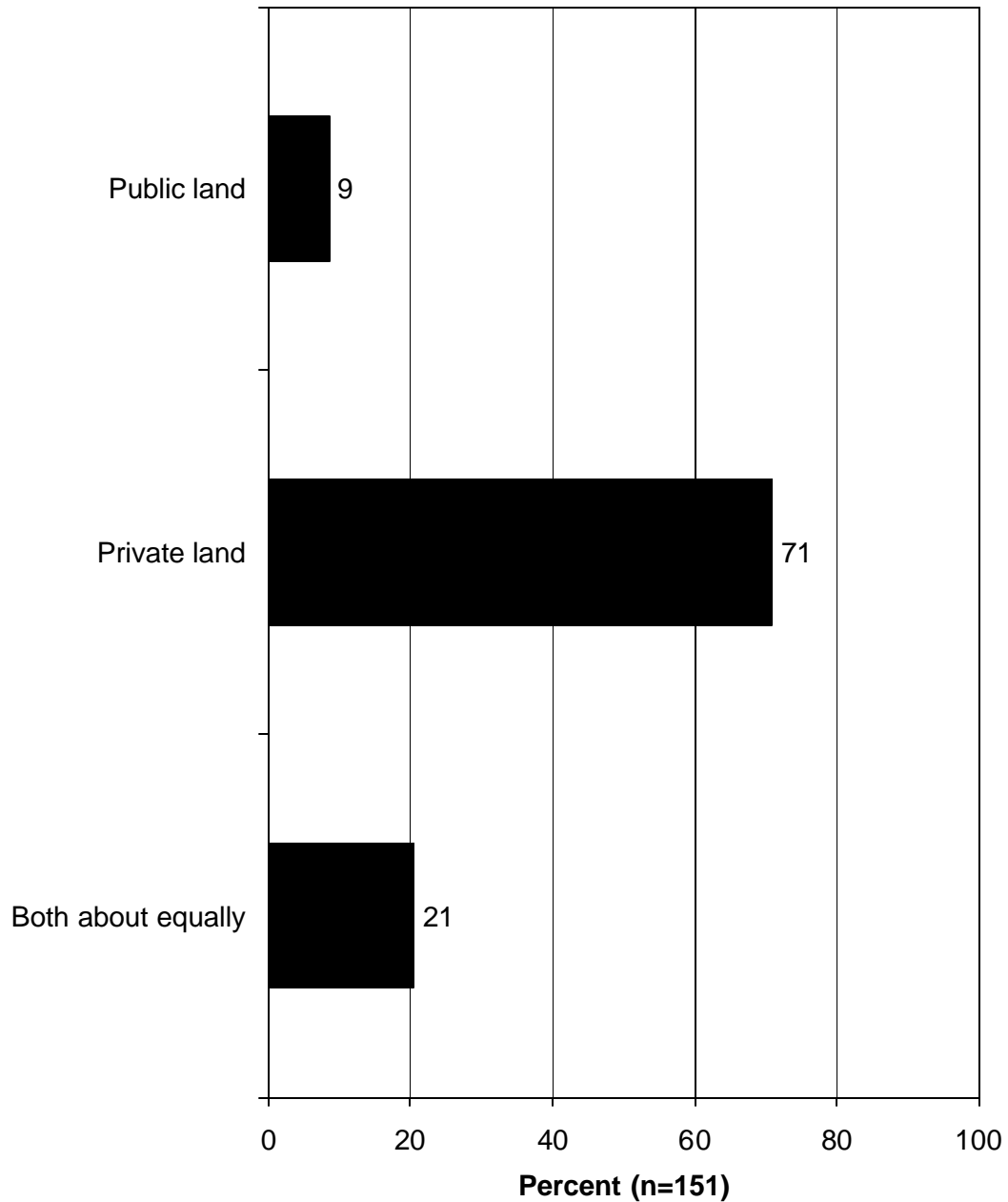
- An overwhelming majority of New York spring turkey hunters (88%) use a shotgun when hunting spring turkey.
 - 9% use a modern rifle.
 - 3% use a bow.

- A strong majority of New York spring turkey hunters (71%) hunted spring turkey mostly on private land.
 - 9% hunted spring turkey mostly on public land.

Q34. What hunting methods do you use to hunt spring turkey?



Q35. When hunting spring turkey, would you say you hunt mostly on public land, mostly on private land, or both about equally?



RATING OF IMPORTANCE AND PERFORMANCE OF VARIOUS AGENCY PROGRAMS AND EFFORTS

- New York spring turkey hunters were asked to rate the importance of various state fish and wildlife agency programs/efforts. Those programs/efforts for which the highest percentage of respondents gave a rating of *very* important were firearm use and safety (89%) and providing wild turkey hunting opportunities for youth (77%).
 - The program/effort with the lowest percentage rating it *very* important was special events, such as calling contests (25%).

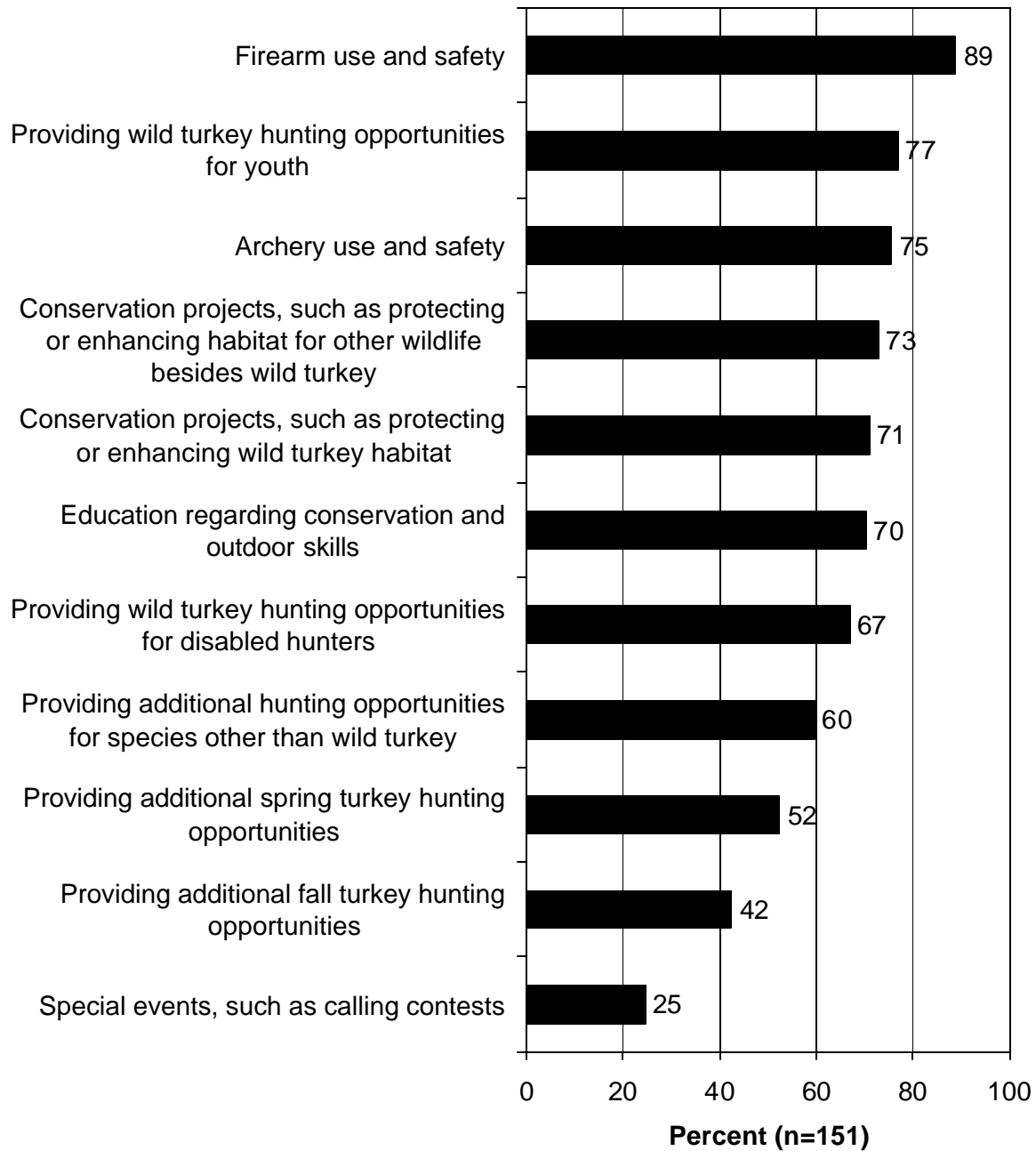
- In looking at those giving a rating of *very* or *somewhat* important in their rating of various state fish and wildlife agency programs/efforts, the top programs/efforts are firearm use and safety (94%), providing wild turkey hunting opportunities for youth (94%), education regarding conservation and outdoor skills (93%), conservation projects, such as protecting or enhancing habitat for wild turkey (91%), conservation projects, such as protecting or enhancing habitat for other wildlife besides wild turkey (91%), and providing wild turkey hunting opportunities for disabled hunters (91%).
 - The program/effort with the lowest percentage rating it *very* or *somewhat* important was special events, such as calling contests (67%).

- The analysis also examined those giving a rating of *very* or *somewhat* *unimportant* for their rating of various state fish and wildlife agency programs/efforts. The programs/efforts that had the highest percentage of respondents who said they were *very* or *somewhat* *unimportant* were special events, such as calling contests (23%), and providing additional fall turkey hunting opportunities (21%).

- A strong majority of New York spring turkey hunters (81%) rated the job that their state fish and wildlife agency does at providing hunting opportunities in their state as excellent or good, and 17% rated it fair or poor.
 - 21% rated it excellent.
 - Only 2% rated it poor.

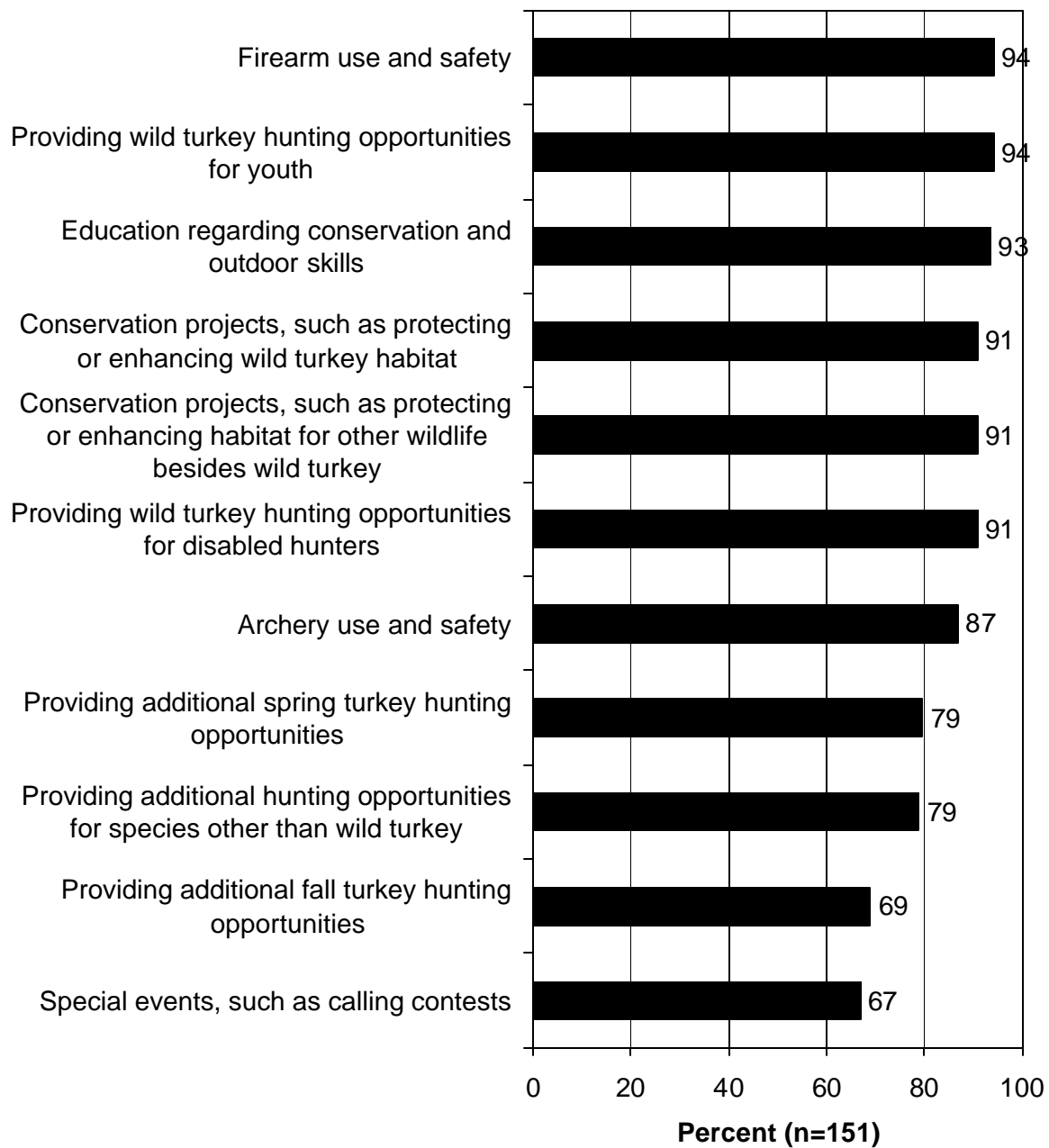
- A strong majority of New York spring turkey hunters (87%) rated the job that their state fish and wildlife agency does in providing spring turkey hunting opportunities as excellent or good, and 11% rated it as fair or poor.
 - 23% rated it excellent.
 - Only 1% rated it poor.

Q153-Q163. Programs considered very important for the state fish and wildlife agency.



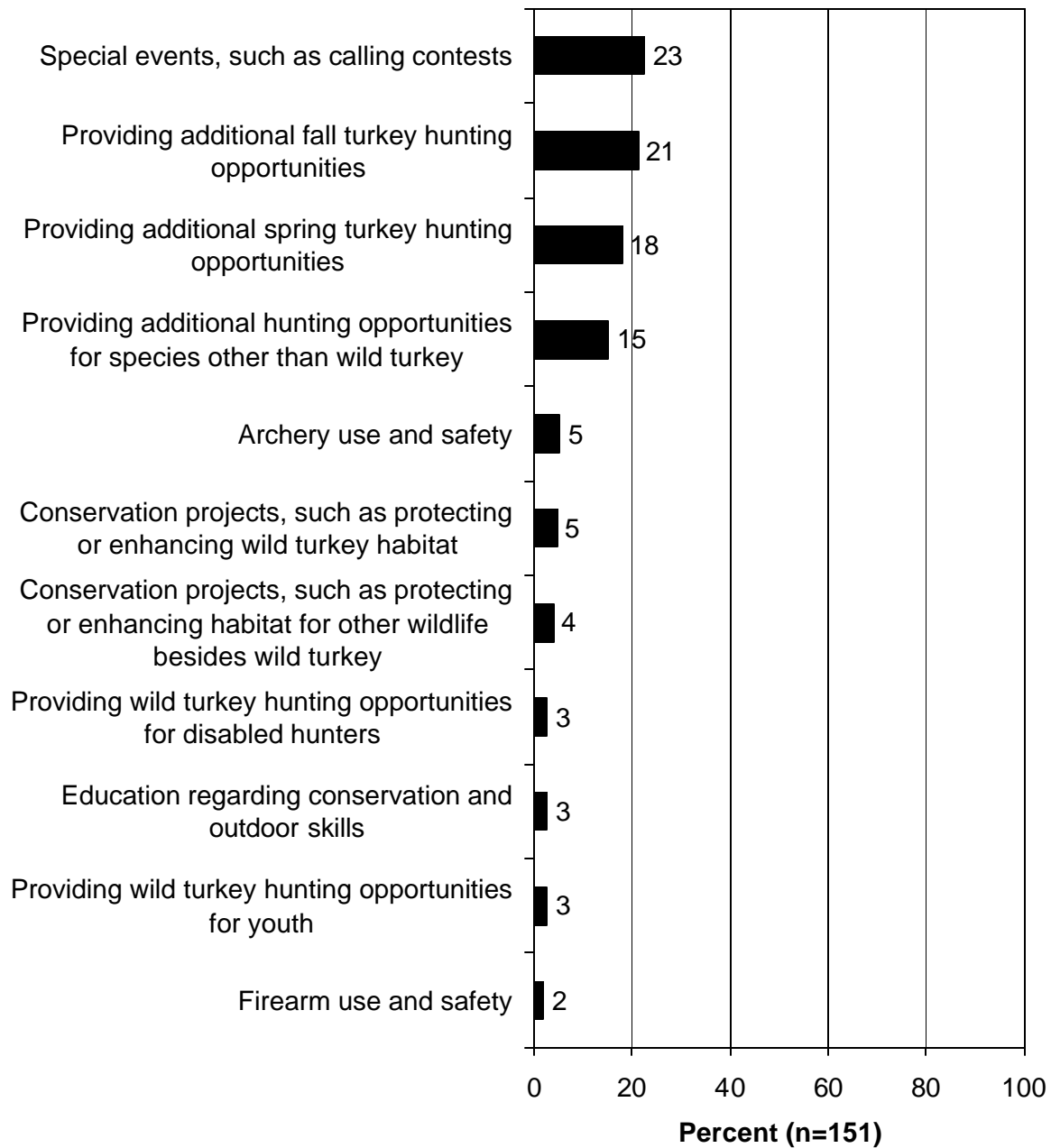
Individual graphs for Questions 153 to 163 appear in Appendix A.

Q153-Q163. Programs considered very or somewhat important for the state fish and wildlife agency.



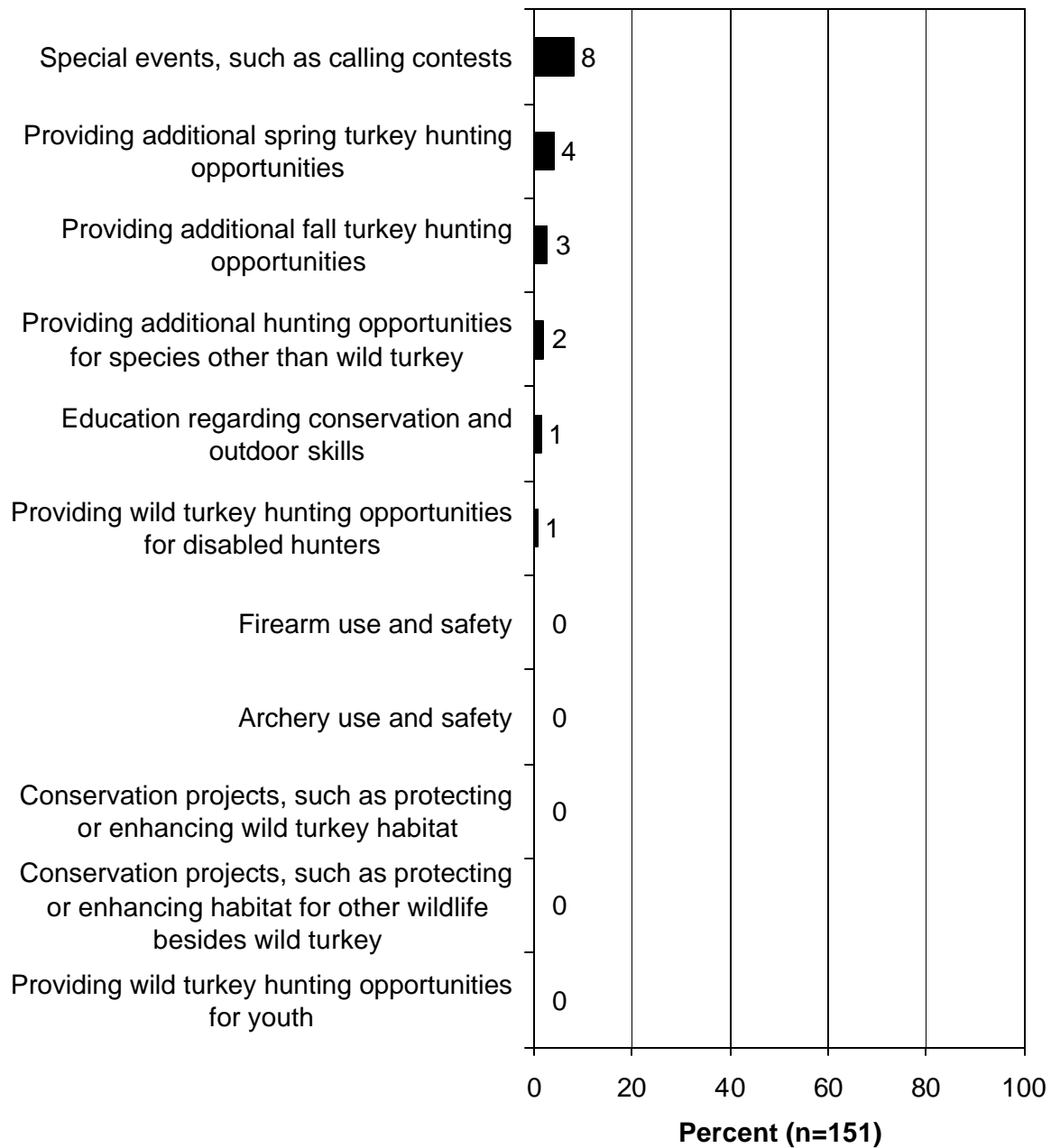
Individual graphs for Questions 153 to 163 appear in Appendix A.

Q153-Q163. Programs considered very or somewhat unimportant for the state fish and wildlife agency.



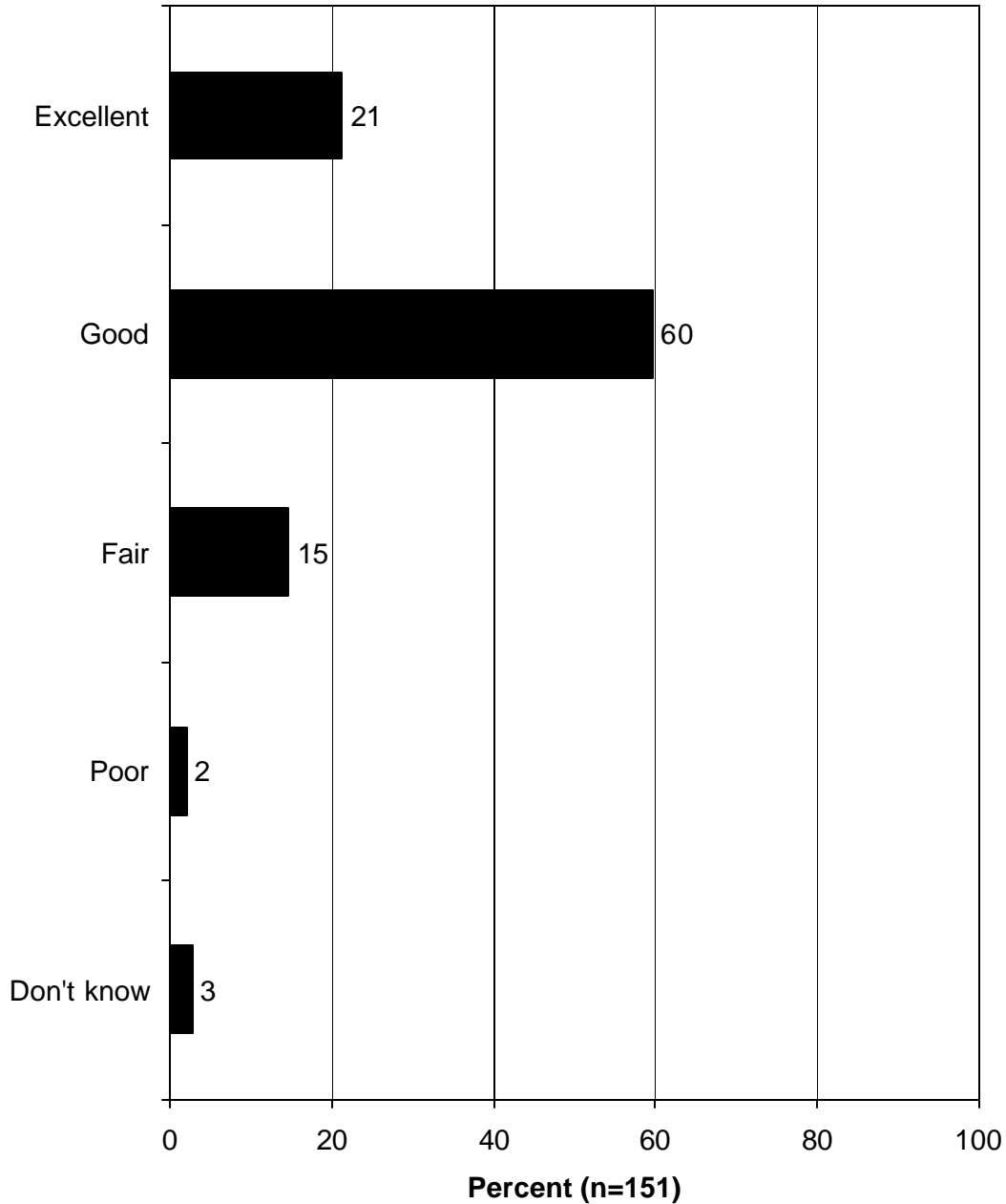
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Q153-Q163. Programs considered very unimportant for the state fish and wildlife agency.

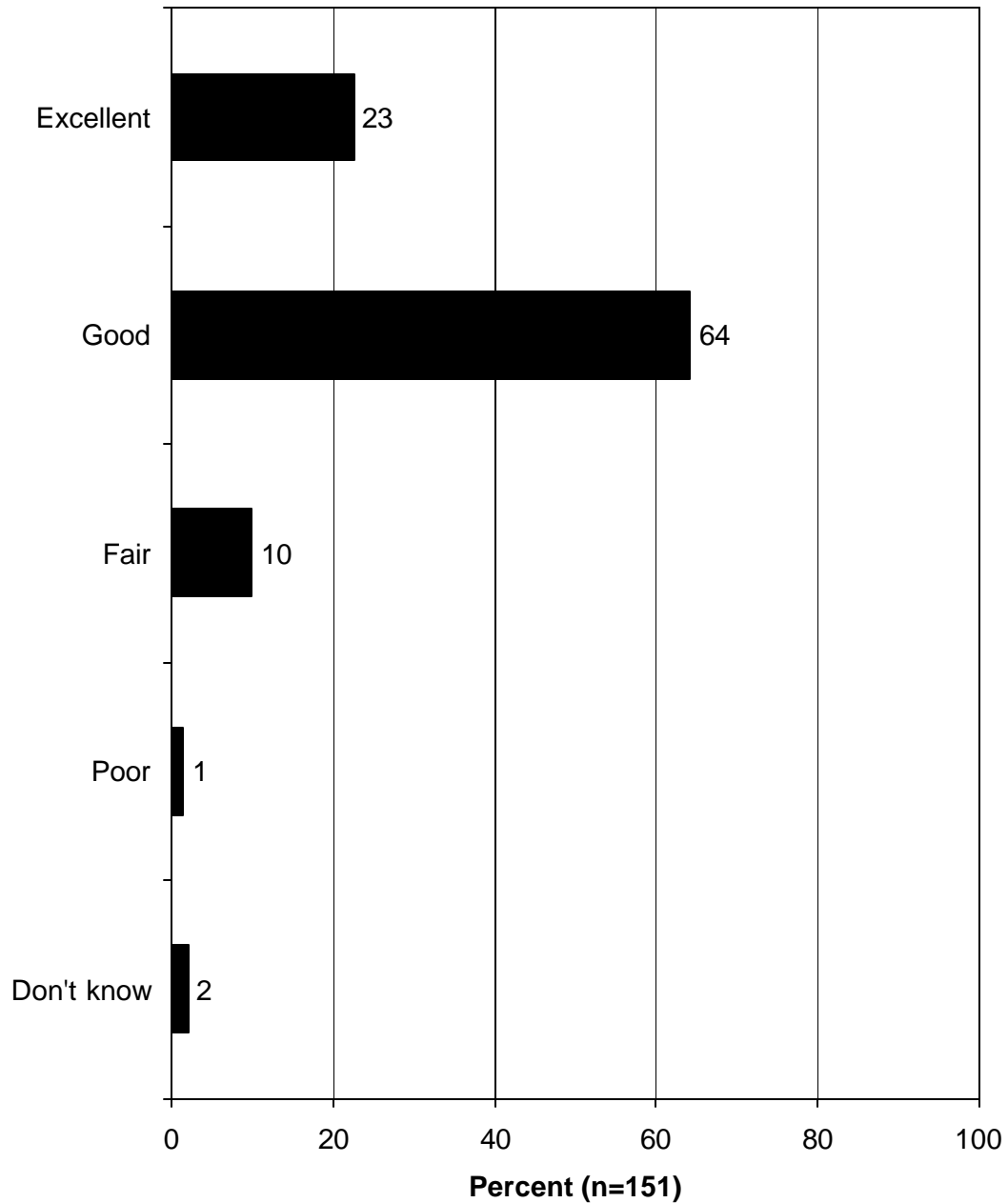


Individual graphs for Questions 153 to 163 appear in Appendix A.

Q164. Overall, would you say your state fish and wildlife agency does an excellent, good, fair, or poor job of providing hunting opportunities in your state?



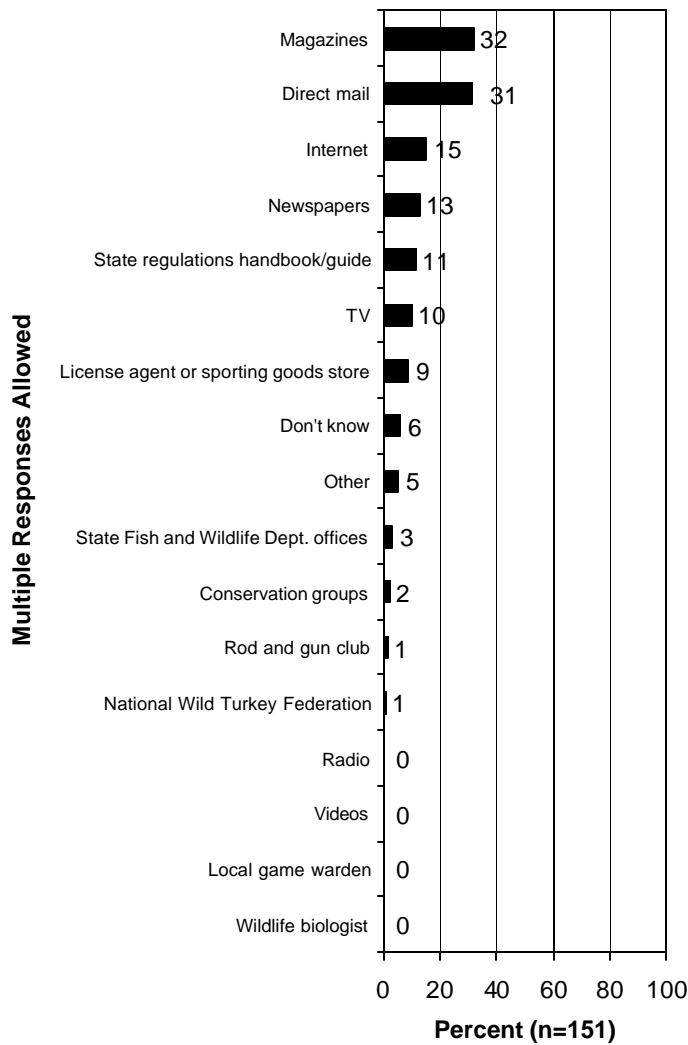
Q165. Overall, would you say your state fish and wildlife agency does an excellent, good, fair, or poor job of providing spring turkey hunting opportunities in your state?



WAYS TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT SPRING TURKEY HUNTING

- The ways that New York spring turkey hunters said would be best to inform them about spring turkey hunting were magazines (32%), direct mail (31%), the Internet (15%), newspapers (13%), the regulations handbook (11%), and television (10%).

Q170. What are the best ways to provide you with information on spring turkey hunting?



MEMBERSHIP IN CONSERVATION/SPORTSMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

- The National Rifle Association was the most common conservation/sportsmen's organization to which New York spring turkey hunters were members (22%), followed by the NWTFF (7%).

- The leading types of residential area in which spring turkey hunters lived were a rural area (40%) and small city or town (28%).
 - 30% were from a large city/urban area or suburban area.

- The most common occupations of New York spring turkey hunters were construction (19%) and manufacturing (11%).

- New York spring turkey hunters were overwhelmingly white (94%).
 - 1% were African-American.

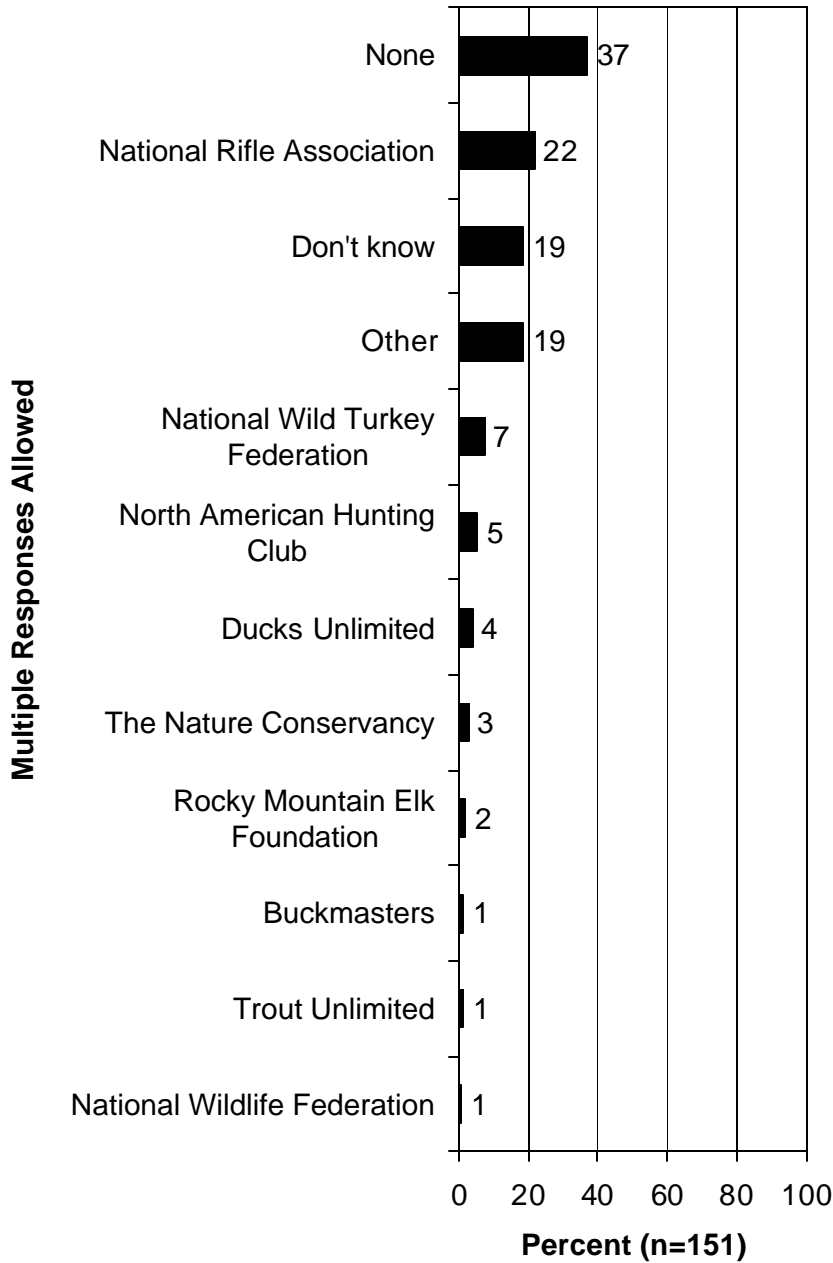
- A plurality of New York spring turkey hunters (34%) indicated that their highest grade level was a high school diploma or equivalent with no college or trade school experience.
 - 45% of New York spring turkey hunters indicated that they had no college/trade school experience.
 - 52% had attended college or trade school, with or without obtaining a degree.

- The most common household income categories of New York spring turkey hunters were \$40,000 to \$59,999 (26%) and \$20,000 to \$39,999 (19%). Overall, the results follow a bell curve, skewed to the low end.

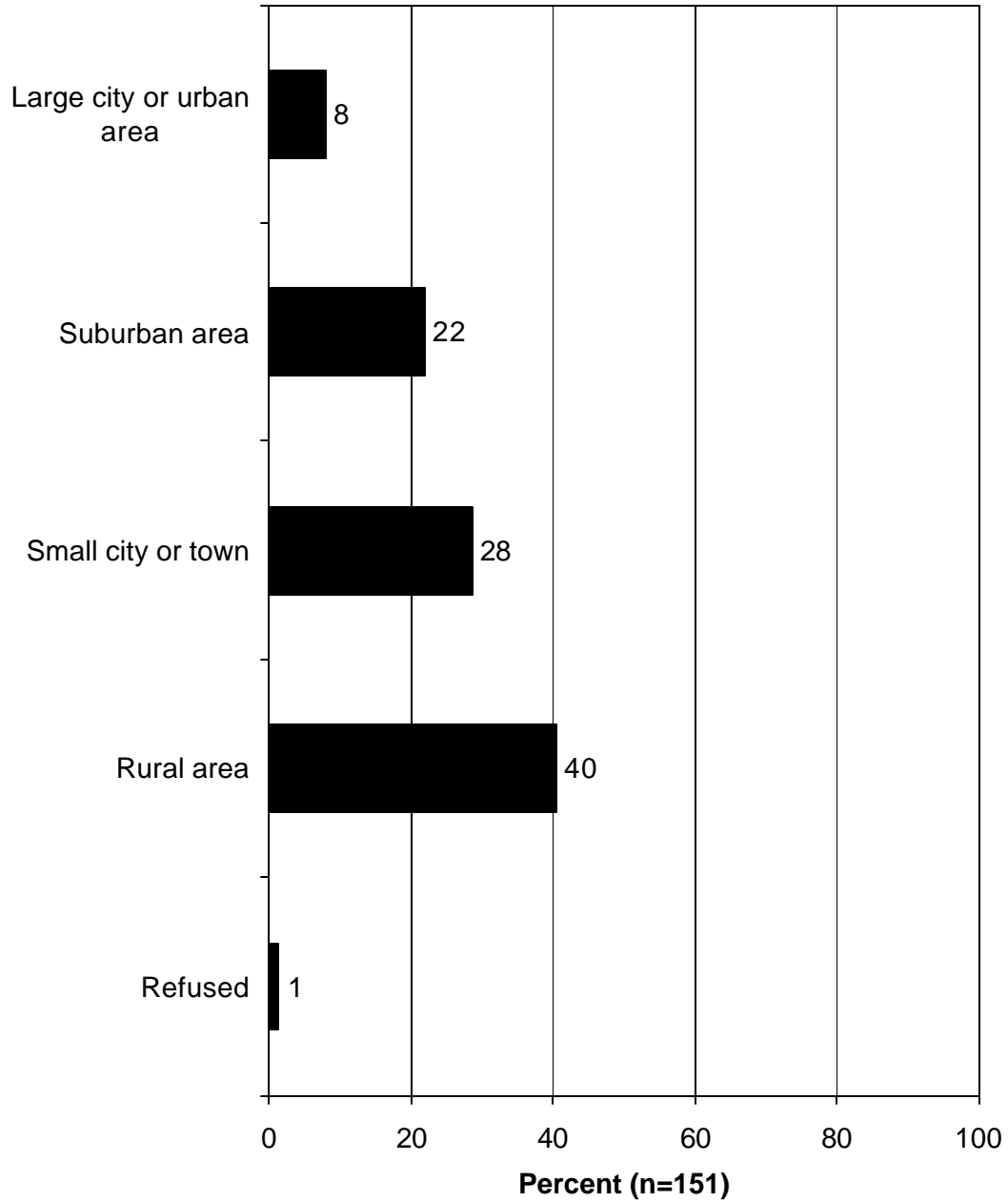
- The mean of New York spring turkey hunters' ages was 45 years.

- New York spring turkey hunters were overwhelmingly male: 97%.

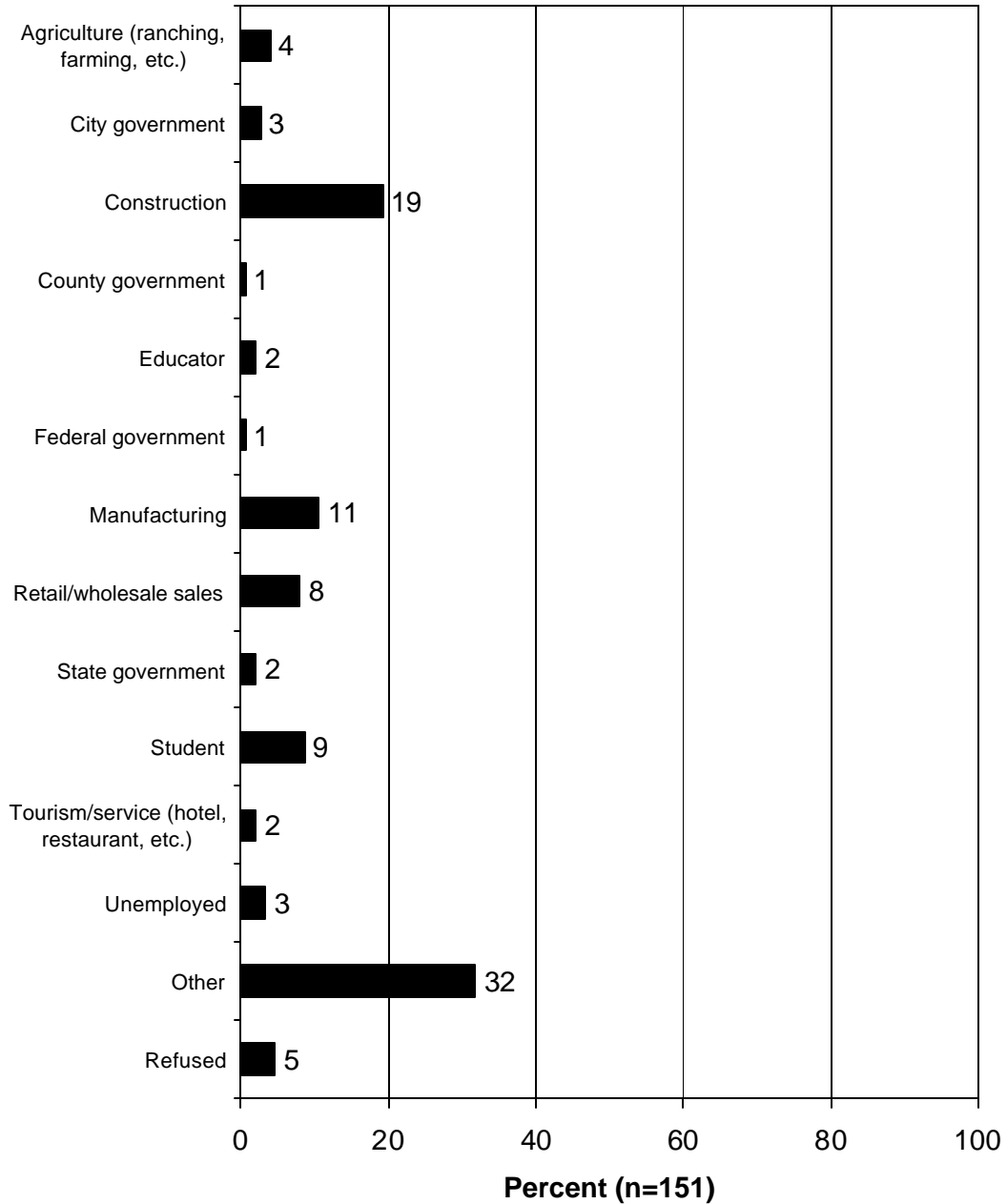
Q174. Are you a member of any conservation or sportsman's organizations? If yes: Which ones?



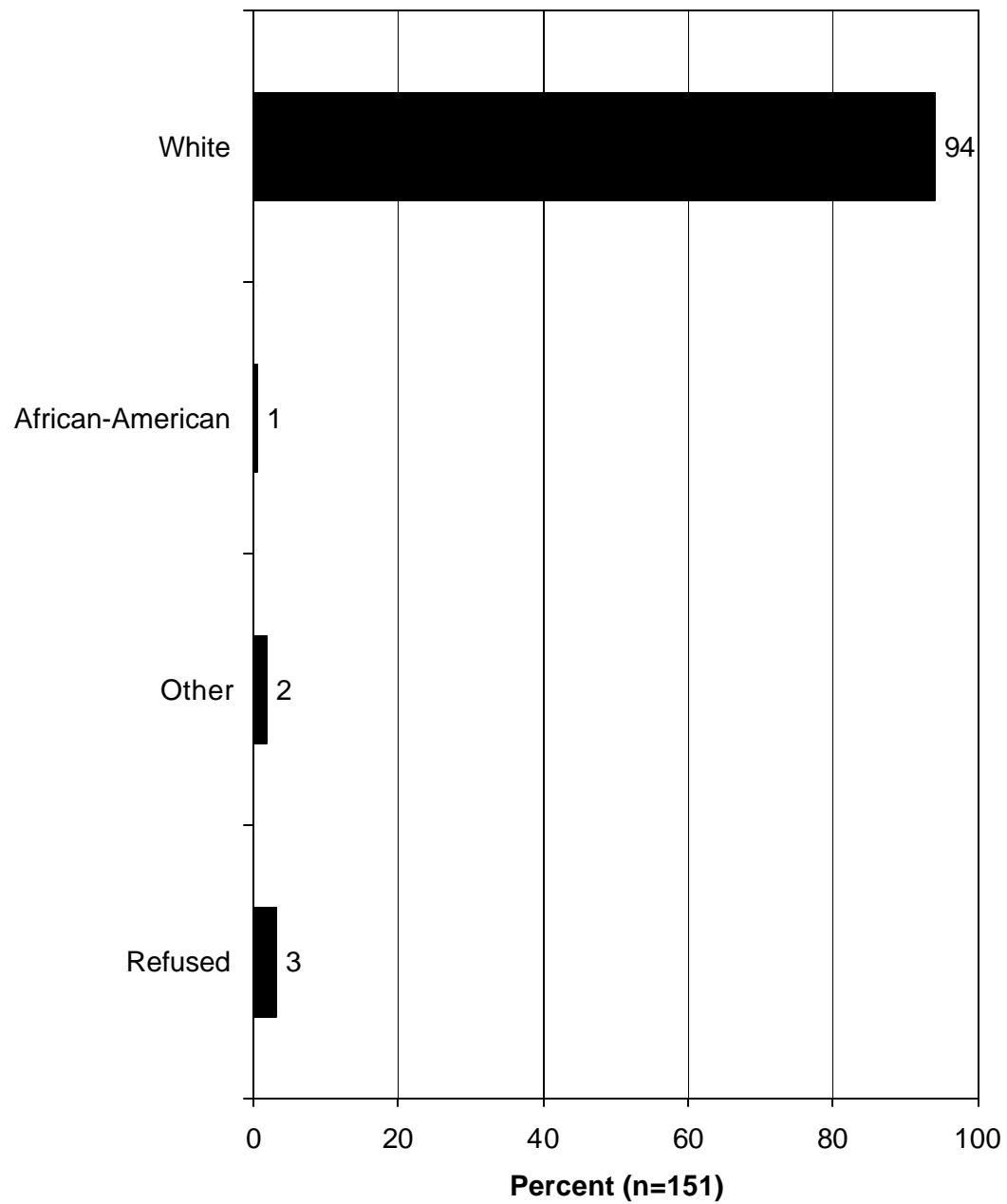
Q176. Do you consider your place of residence to be in a large city, a suburban area, a small city/town, or a rural area?



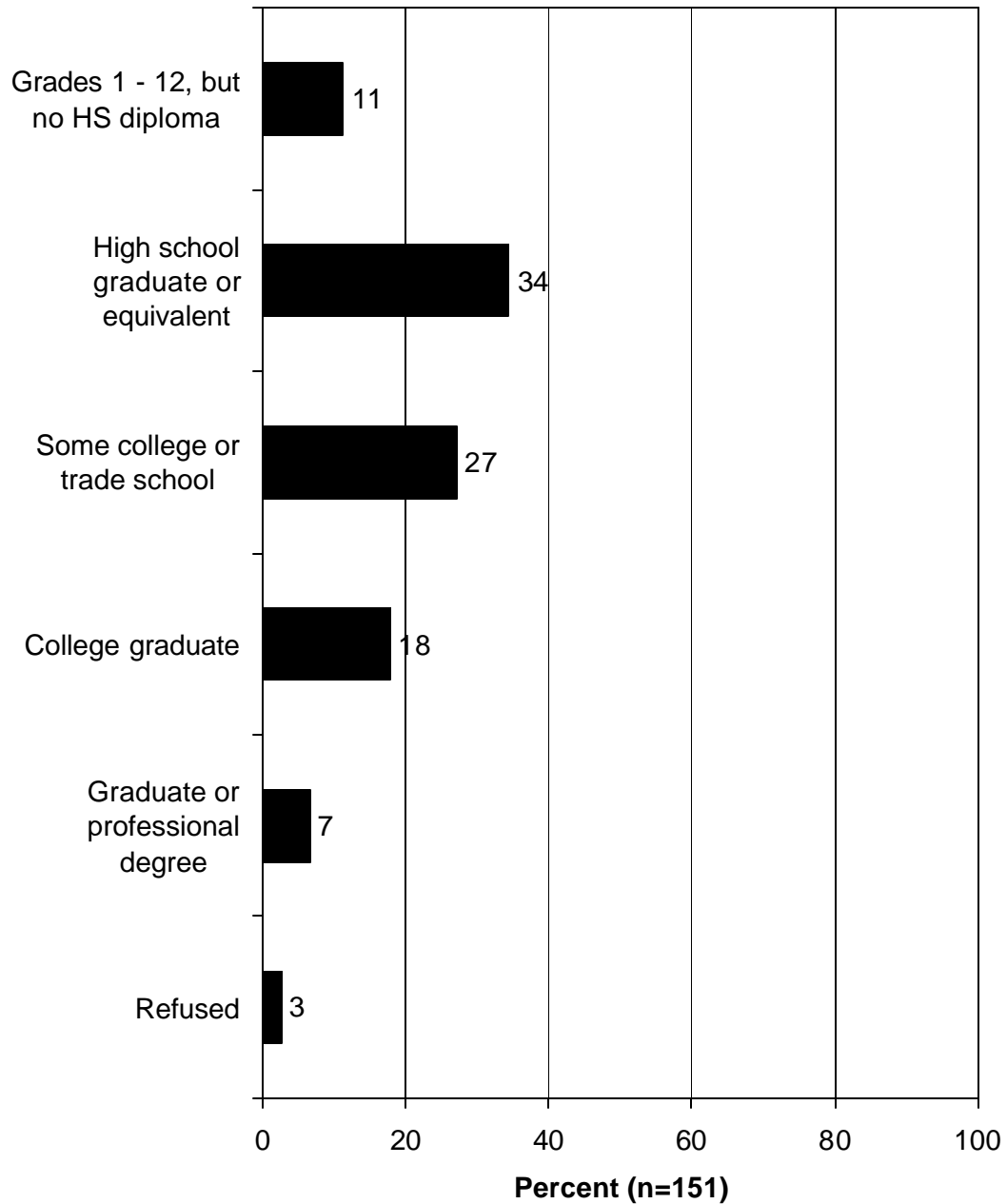
Q177. Which of the following best describes your occupation?



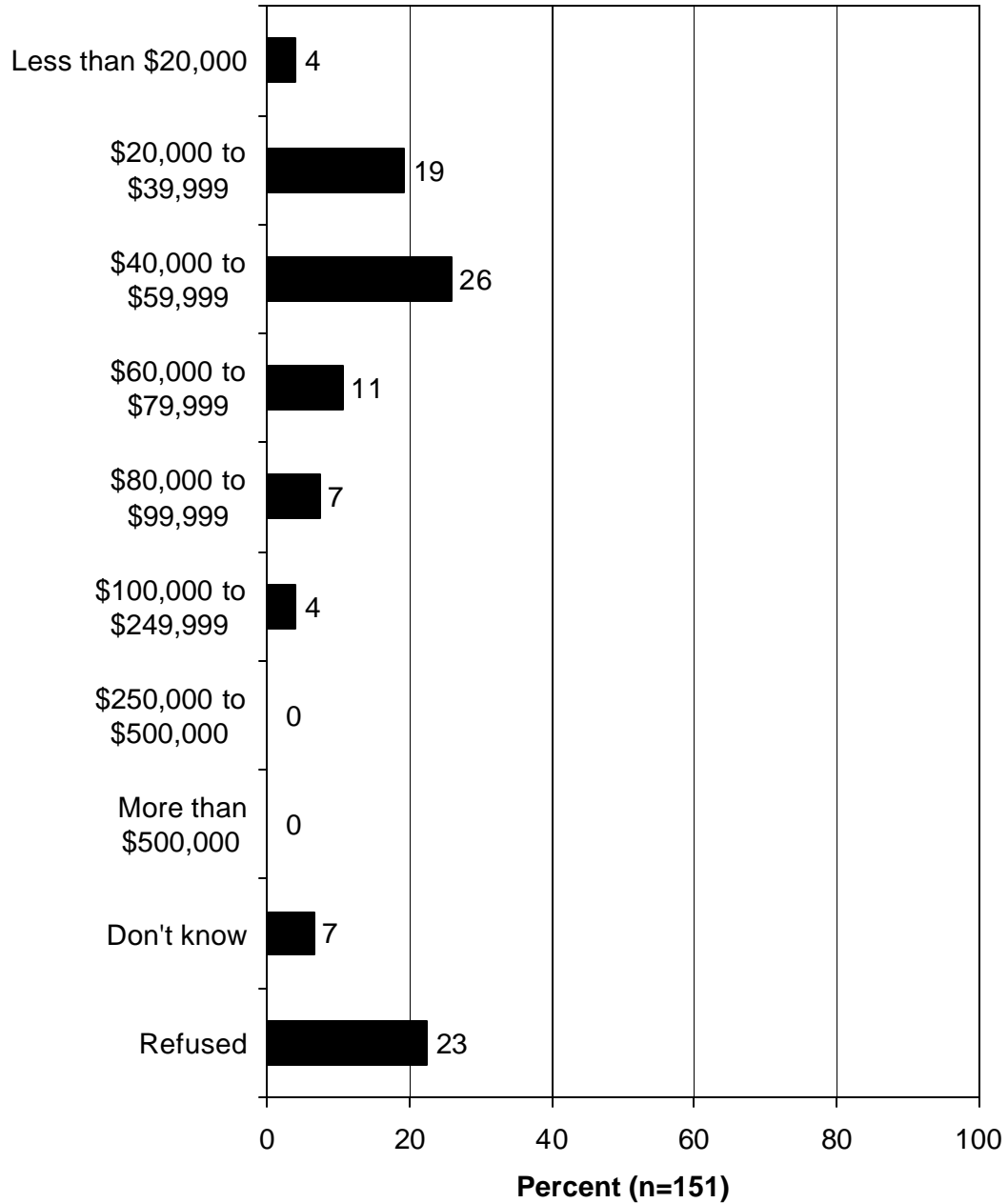
Q179. What is your race or ethnic background?



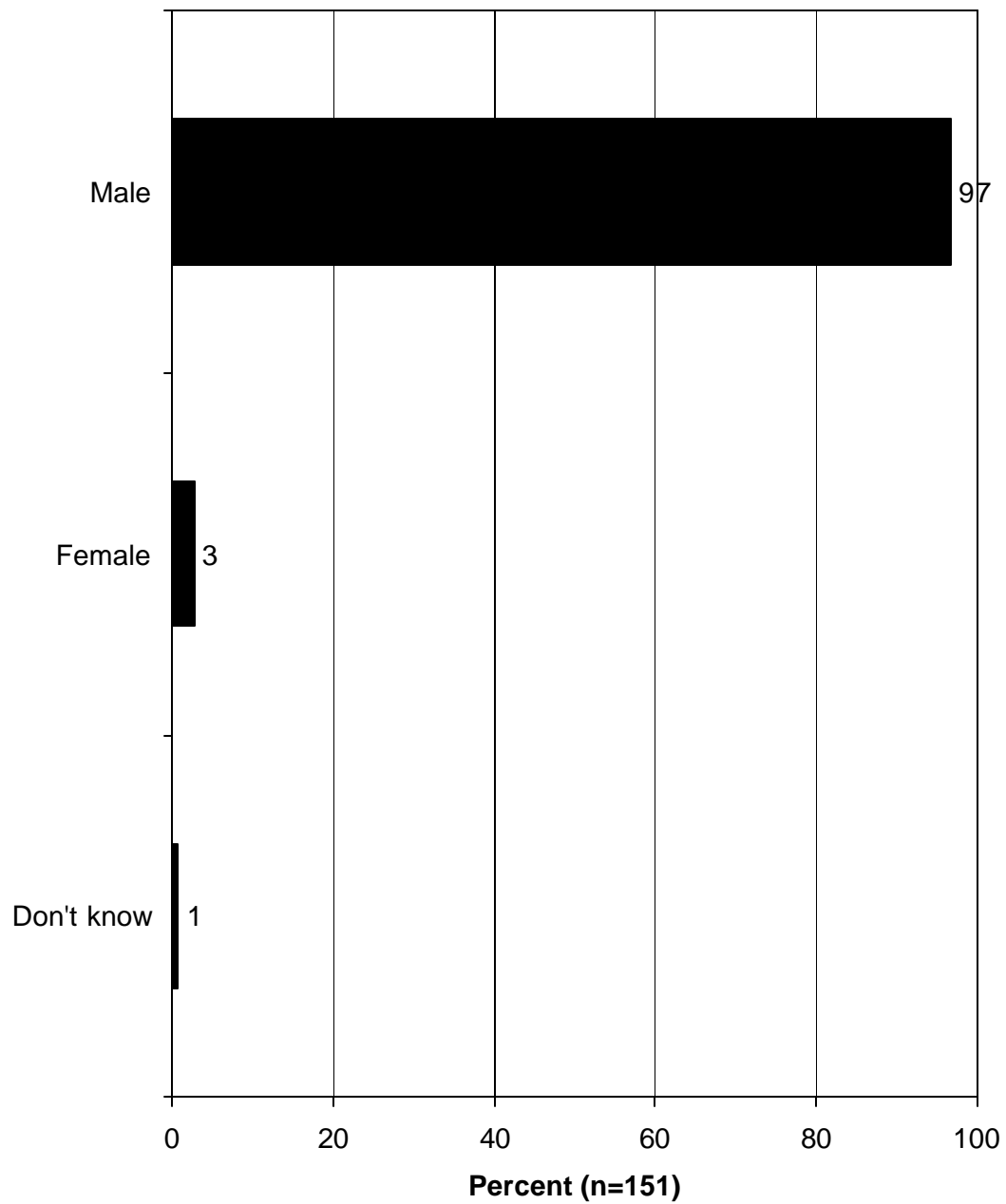
Q181. What is the highest grade level you have completed in school?



Q182. Which of these categories best describes your total household income before taxes last year?



Q185. Respondent's gender (not asked, but observed by interviewer).



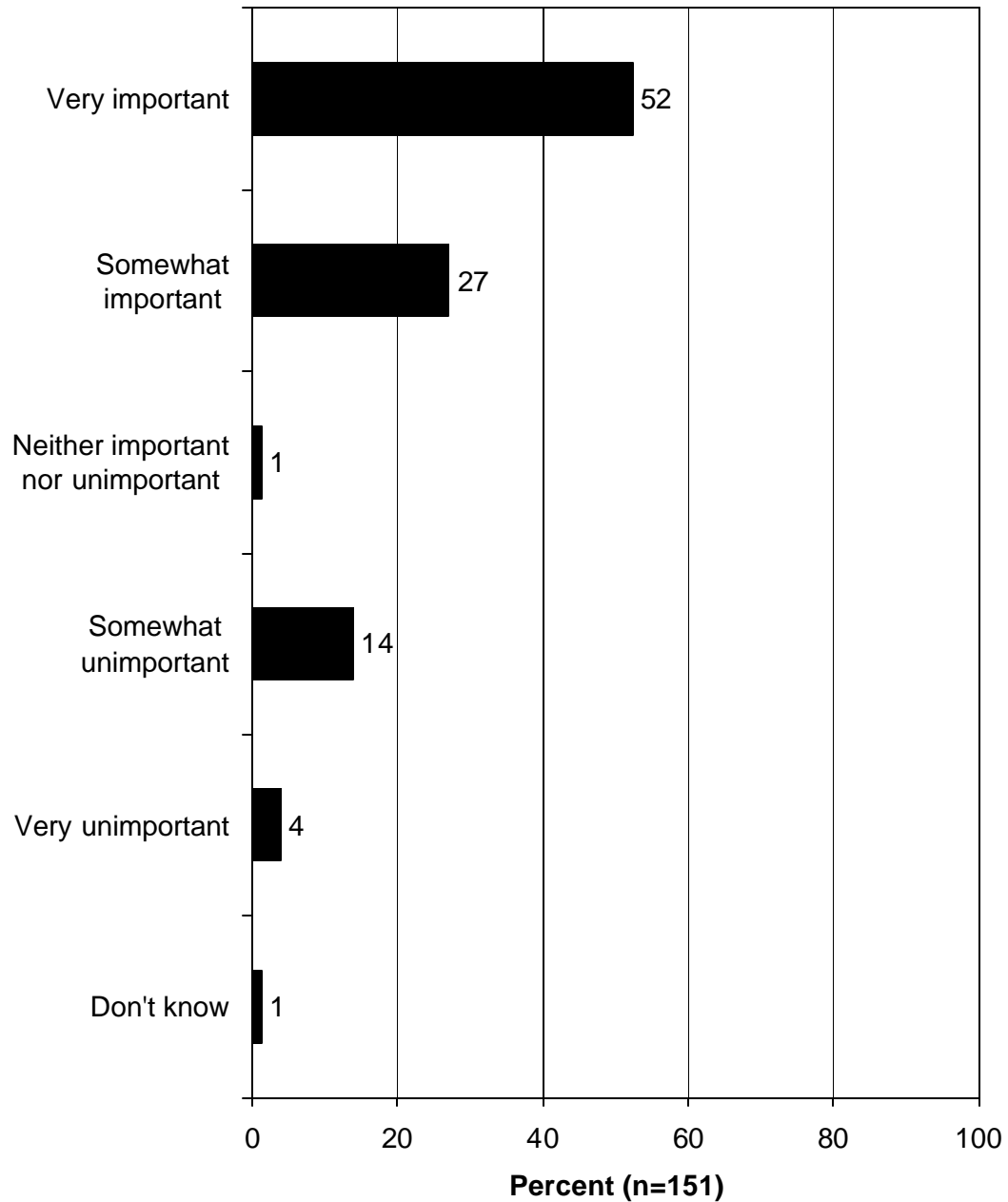
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Q184. That is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you very much for your time and input! (Additional comments.)

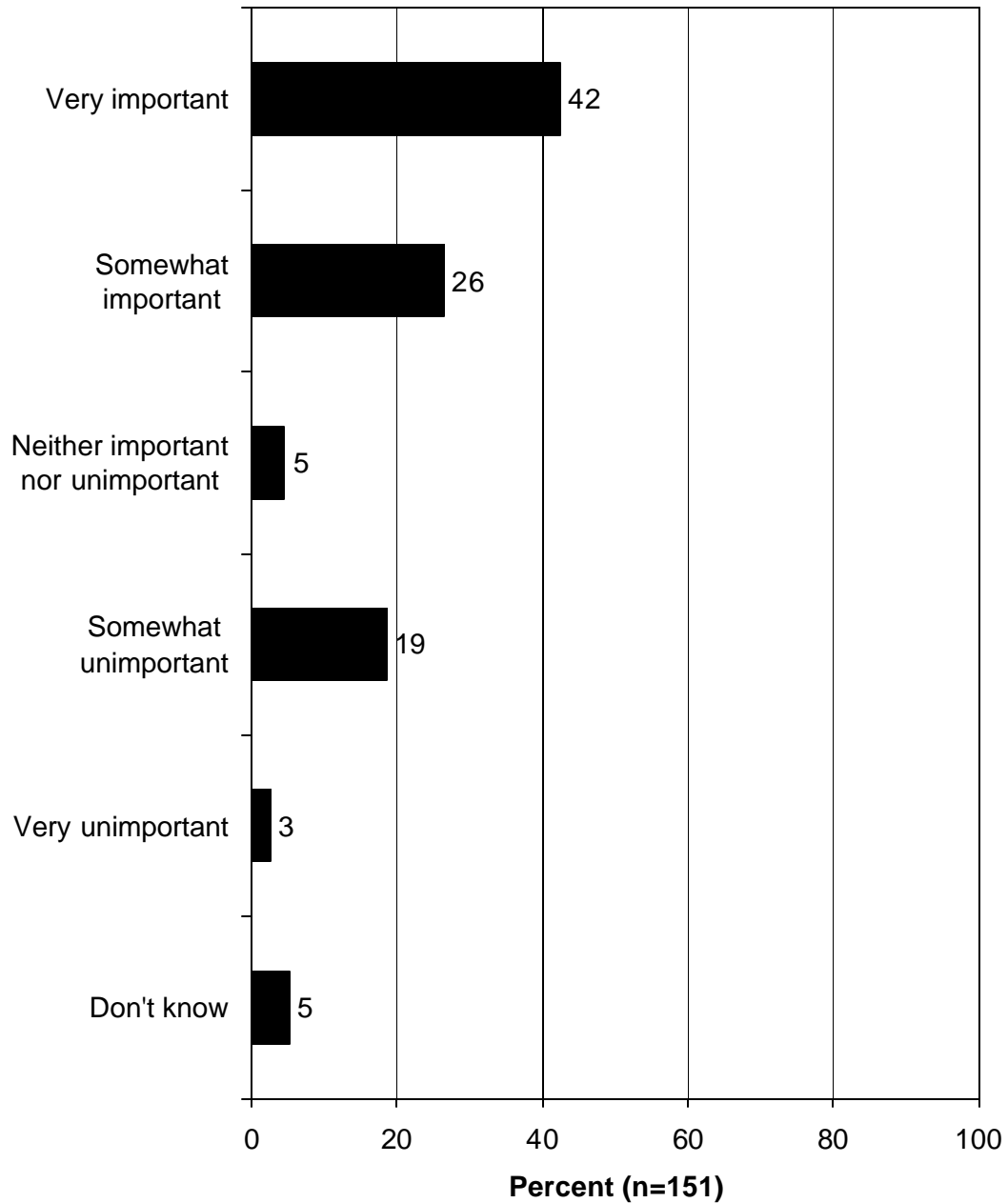
As far as gun laws, I am in favor of giving hunters access to gun purchases.
I notice a decline in the amount of turkey; I notice an increase in predators in hunting areas.
I'd like to see county maps of state lands made more readable and easy to use.
I hold the NWTf in high esteem because they have really promoted the return of turkeys to NY; although I don't actually see them doing this, I am aware of them.
I hope you keep doing what you do.
I think hunters should be more respectful of landowners. Suburban deer hunting should be liberalized.
I am noticing a serious increase in the coyote population; I am noticing a serious decrease in turkey, pheasant, and deer.
Open up more areas for hunting; extend fall turkey season.
Open your seasons on Saturdays, instead of Mondays, so we can have two days to hunt right away.
You should choose a hunter or angler from a sportsman club to head the agency. You should revive the CCC. Do something to ensure all hunters clean up their mess. Definitely change the management of DNR to include a real hunter.

APPENDIX A. ADDITIONAL GRAPHS

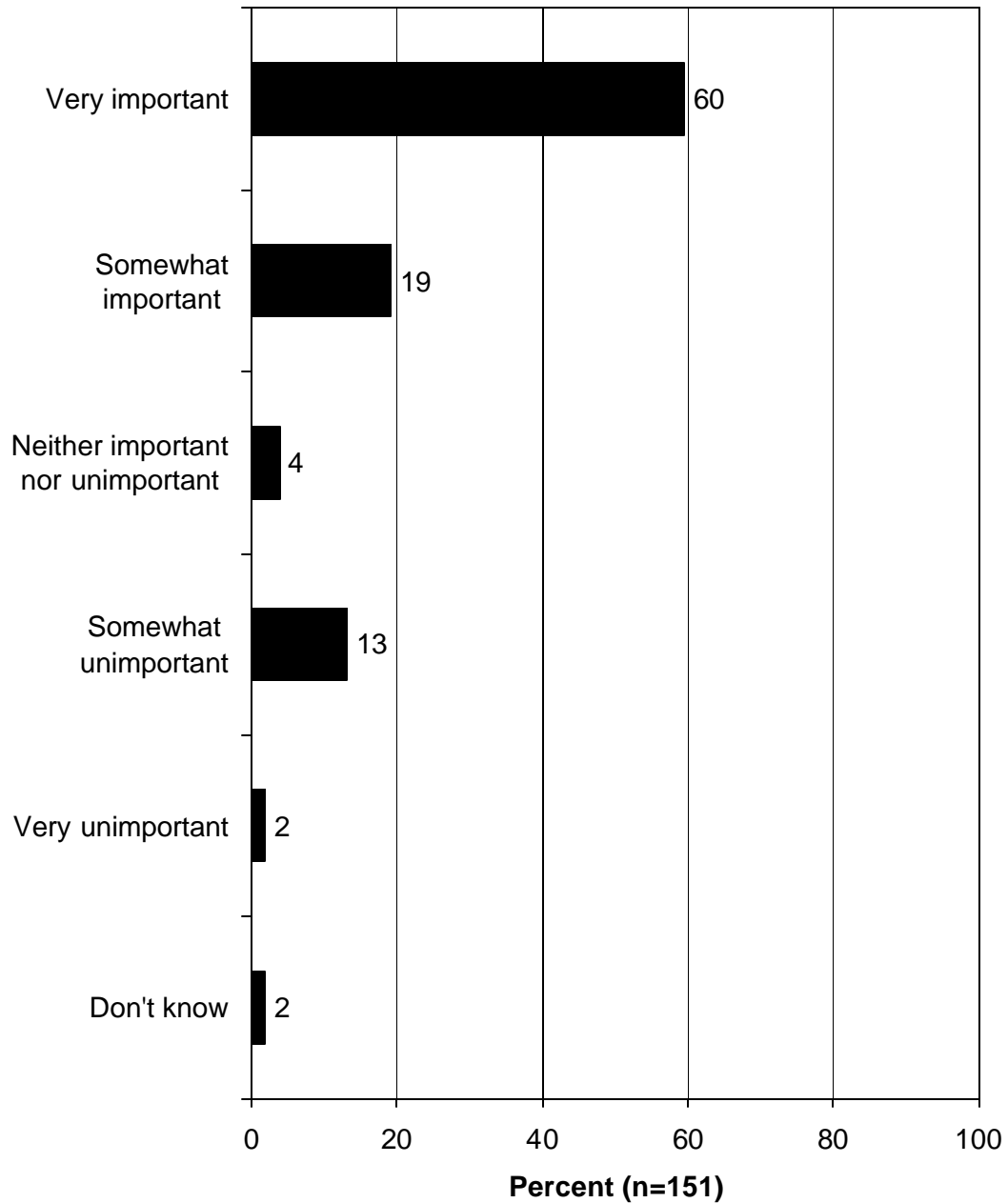
Q153. Do you think that providing additional spring turkey hunting opportunities is an important or unimportant program for your state fish and wildlife agency?



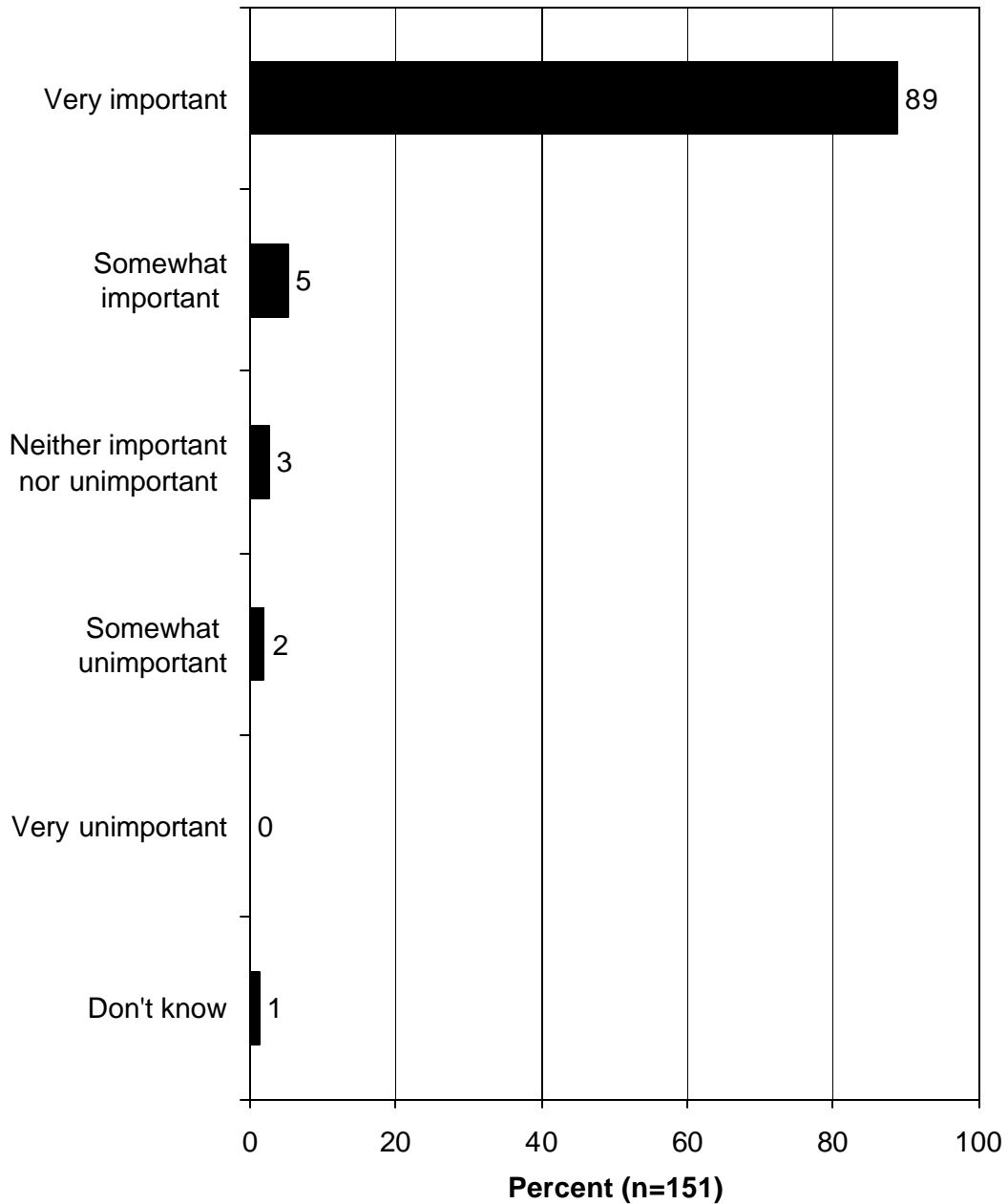
Q154. Do you think that providing additional fall turkey hunting opportunities is an important or unimportant program for your state fish and wildlife agency?



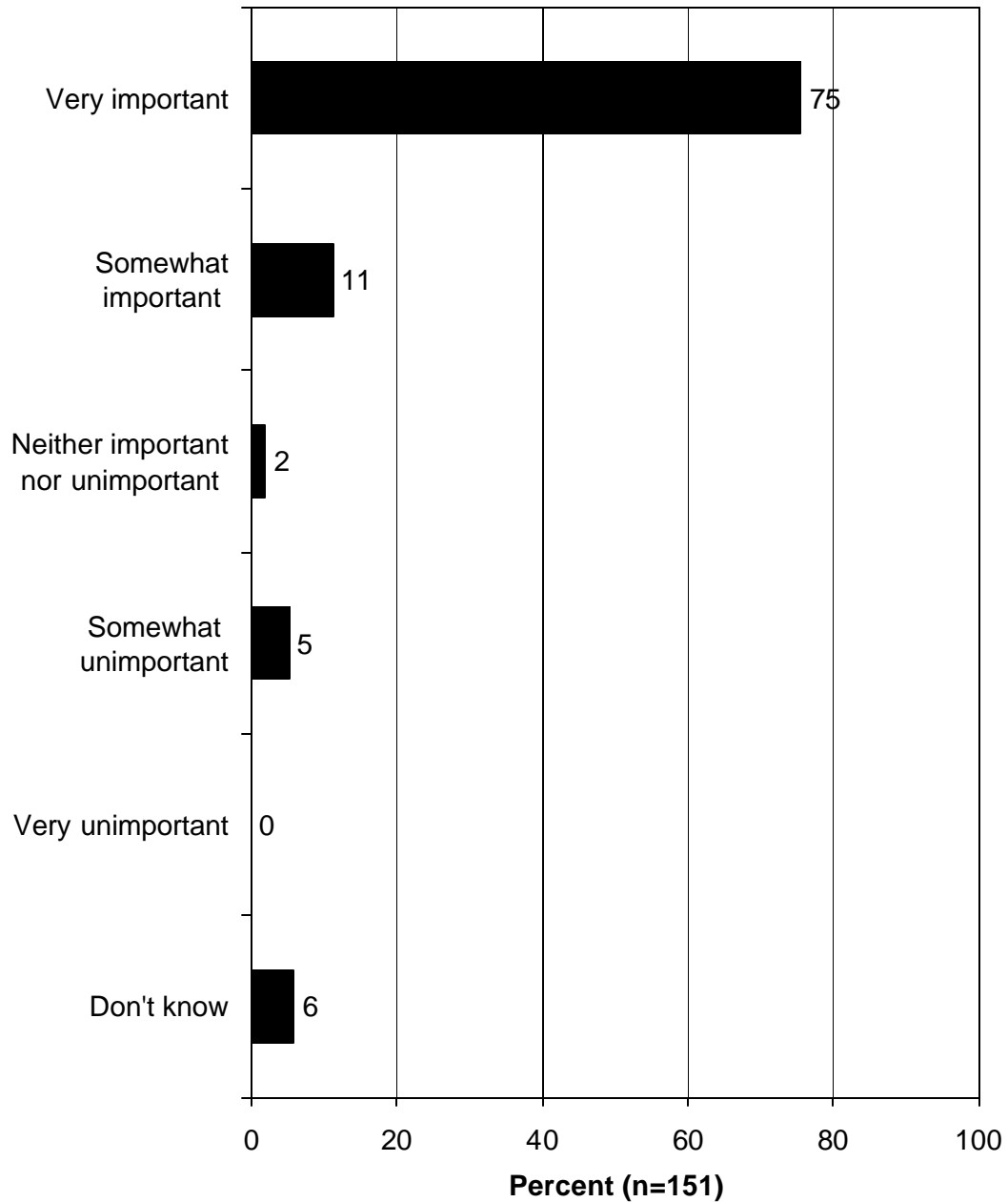
Q155. Do you think that providing additional hunting opportunities for species other than wild turkey is an important or unimportant program for your state fish and wildlife agency?



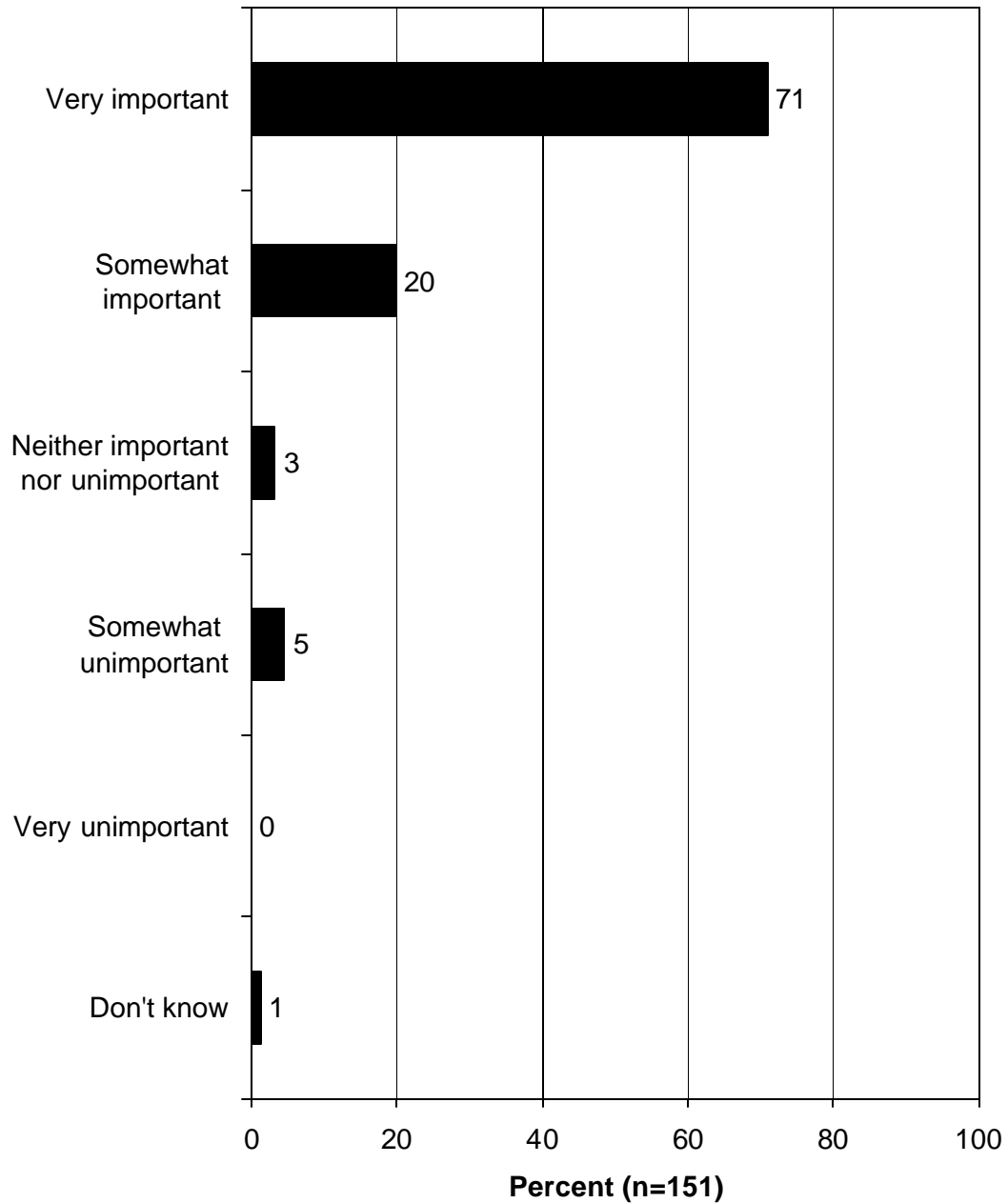
Q156. Do you think firearm use and safety is an important or unimportant program for your state fish and wildlife agency?



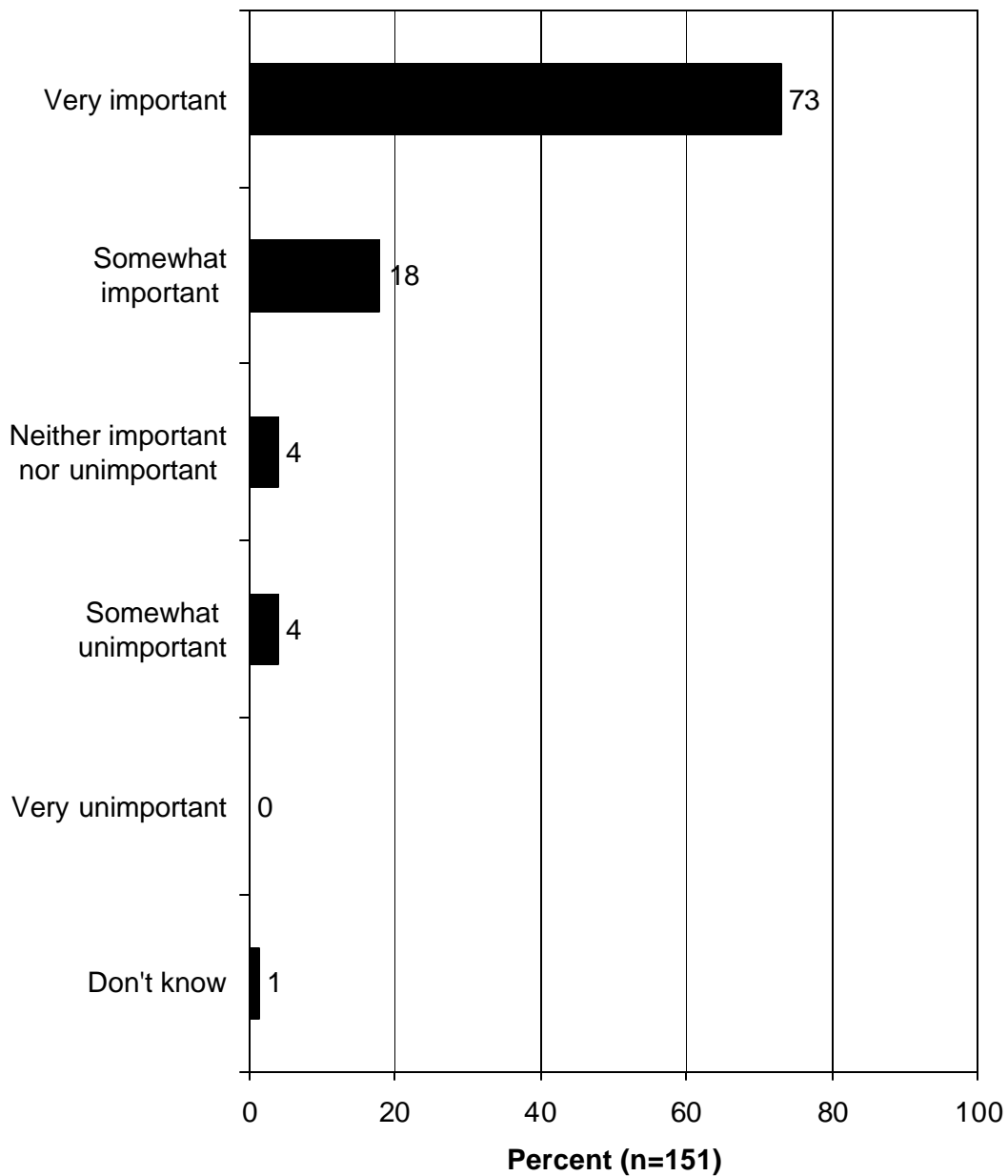
Q157. Do you think archery use and safety is an important or unimportant program for your state fish and wildlife agency?



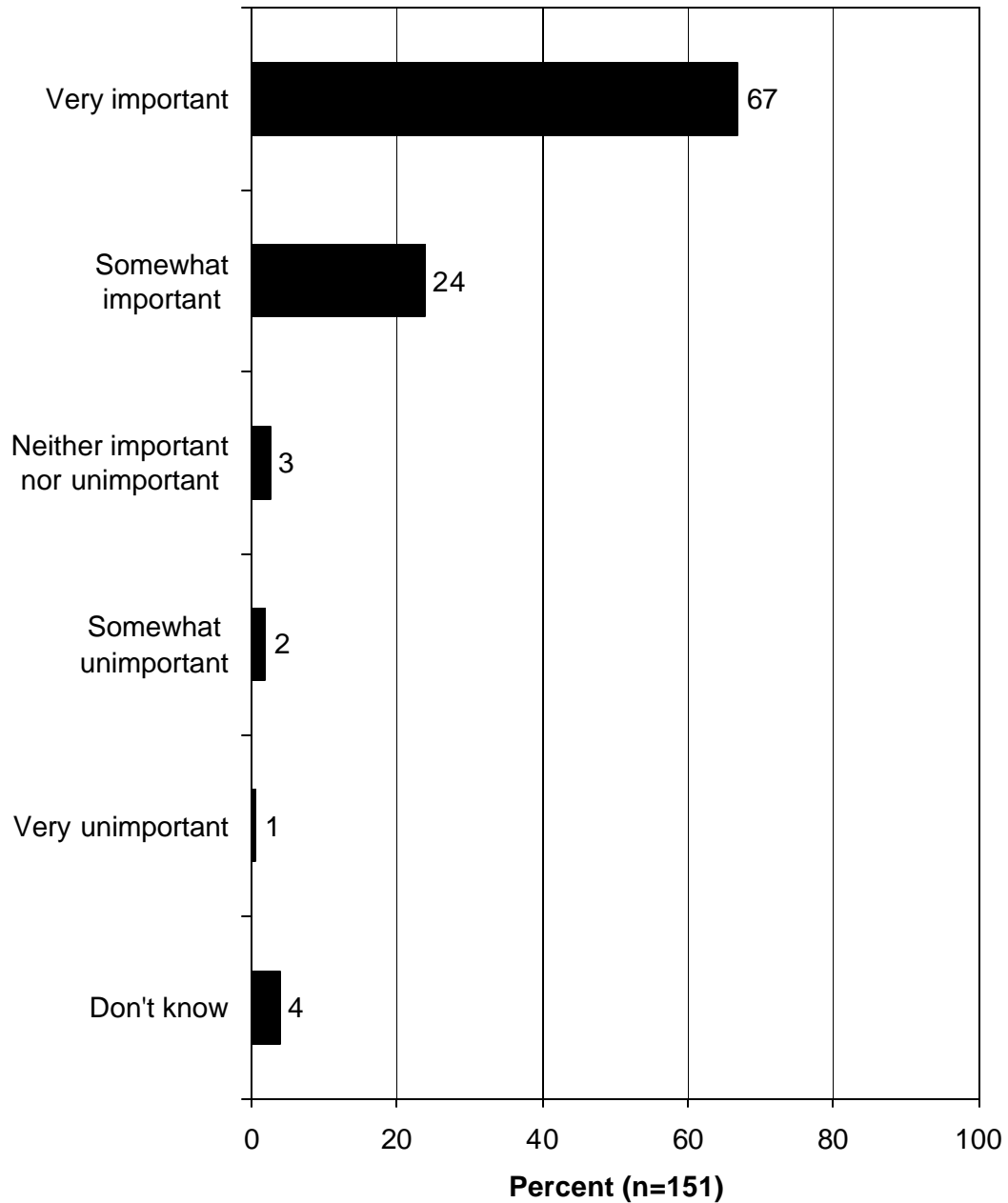
Q158. Do you think conservation projects, such as protecting or enhancing wild turkey habitat, are important or unimportant for your state fish and wildlife agency?



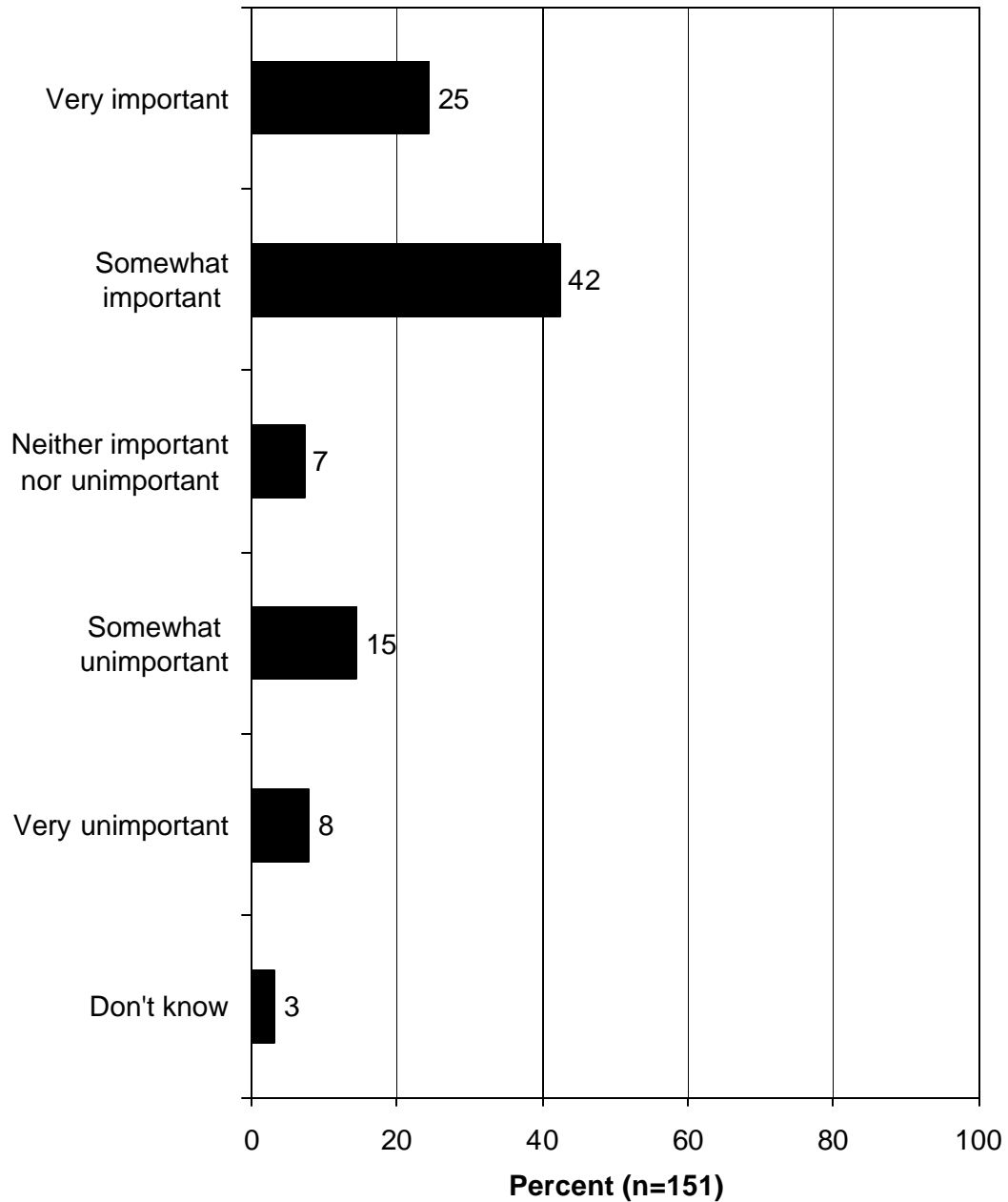
Q159. Do you think conservation projects, such as protecting or enhancing habitat for other wildlife besides wild turkey, are important or unimportant for your state fish and wildlife agency?



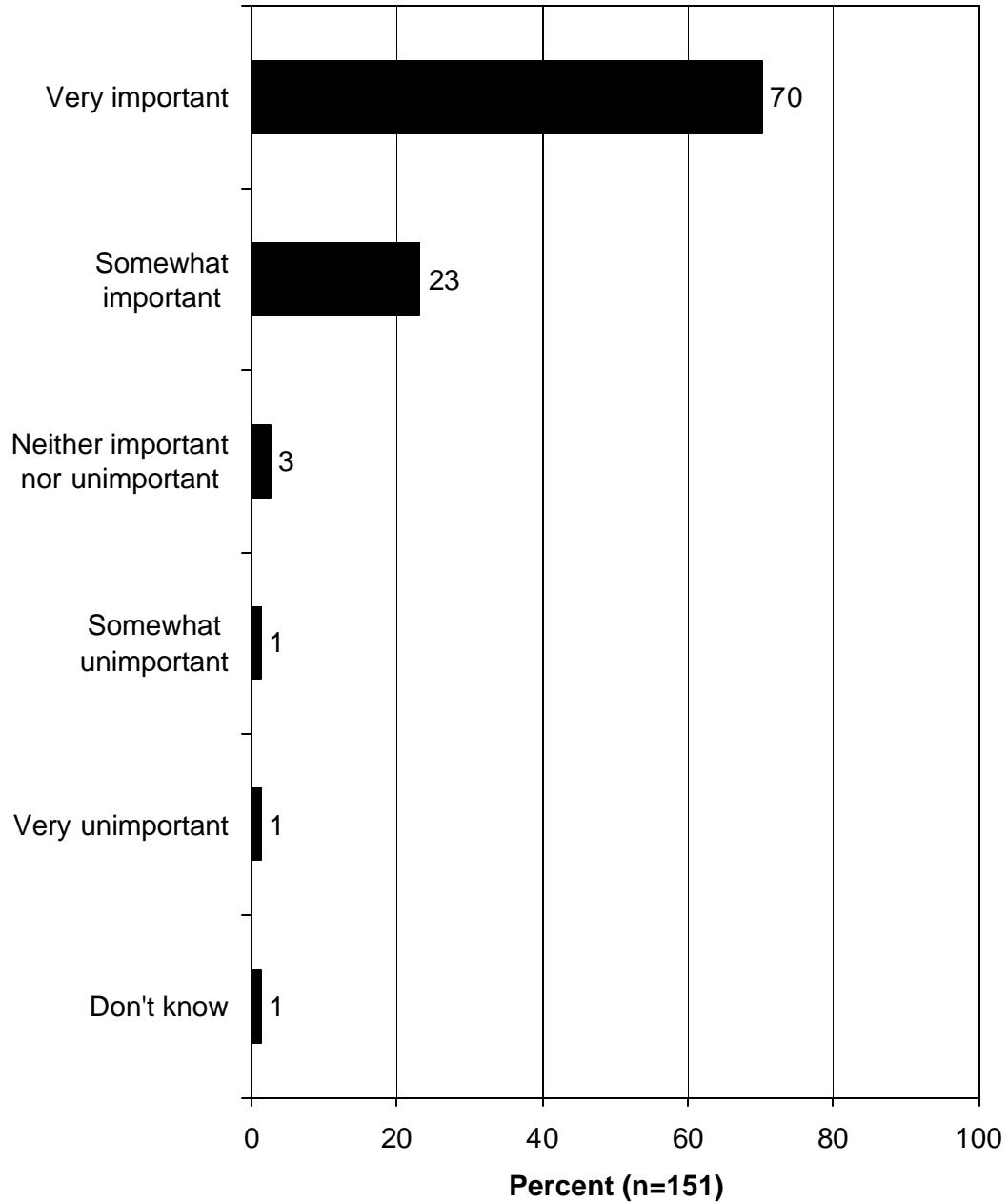
Q160. Do you think providing wild turkey hunting opportunities for disabled hunters is an important or unimportant program for your state fish and wildlife agency?



Q161. Do you think special events, such as calling contests, are important or unimportant for your state fish and wildlife agency?



Q162. Do you think education regarding conservation and outdoor skills is an important or unimportant program for your state fish and wildlife agency?



Q163. Do you think providing wild turkey hunting opportunities for youth is an important or unimportant program for your state fish and wildlife agency?

