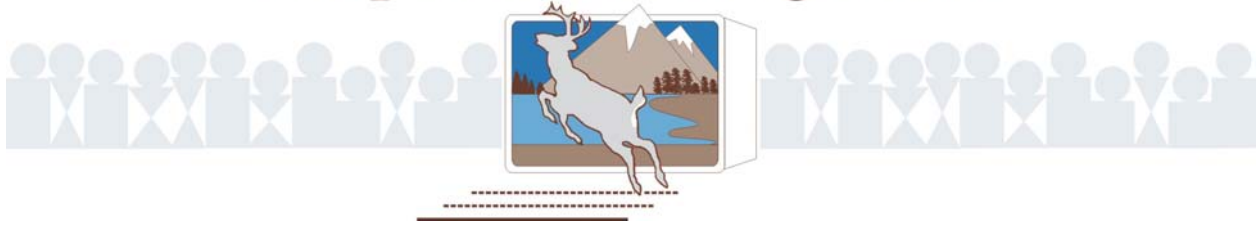


Responsive Management



ATTITUDES TOWARD AND PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH HUNTING WEEKENDS IN VERMONT

Conducted for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department

by Responsive Management



Access for today. Opportunities for tomorrow.

This project is supported by the Hunting Heritage Partnership,
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2007

ATTITUDES TOWARD AND PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH HUNTING WEEKENDS IN VERMONT

2007

Responsive Management National Office

Mark Damian Duda, Executive Director
Brad Hepler, Ph.D., Director of Research
Martin Jones, Research Associate
Andrea Criscione, Research Associate
Tom Beppler, Research Associate
Hollie Lee, Research Associate
Carol Schilli, Research Associate
Tim Winegord, Survey Center Manager
Alison Lanier, Business Manager
Steven J. Bissell, Ph.D., Qualitative Research Associate
James B. Herrick, Ph.D., Research Associate

130 Franklin Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
Phone: 540/432-1888 Fax: 540/432-1892
E-mail: mark@responsivemanagement.com
www.responsivemanagement.com

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study was conducted for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department (VFWD) to determine hunters' opinions on Vermont's Youth Weekend Hunts (the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend, Youth Waterfowl Weekend, and Youth Deer Weekend) and to assess the effectiveness of the Youth Hunts in recruiting and retaining hunters. The study entailed three telephone surveys that included active hunters, active youth hunters, youth mentors, and inactive hunters. Another smaller survey of vendors was also conducted.

For the hunter surveys, telephones were selected as the preferred sampling medium because of the universality of telephone ownership. Interviews were conducted Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Saturday noon to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., local time. The surveys were conducted in May-June 2007. Responsive Management obtained a total of 1,206 completed interviews of adult hunting license holders, 408 interviews of 2006 youth license holders (referred to as "current youth license holders"), and 111 interviews in a supplementary survey of 2001 youth hunting license holders (referred to as "2001 youth license holders").

The software used for data collection was Questionnaire Programming Language 4.1. The analysis of data was performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software as well as proprietary software developed by Responsive Management.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH WEEKEND HUNTS

- **The results of the research suggest that the Youth Weekend Hunts (the Youth Deer Weekend, the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend, and the Youth Waterfowl Weekend) are well attended. From information obtained from vendor records, the researchers estimate that 8,768 free youth deer and turkey tags were issued in Vermont in 2006 (6,348 deer tags and 2,420 turkey tags).**

- **Overwhelmingly, the Youth Deer Weekends are the most popular Youth Weekend Hunts. As youth gain experience, their likelihood to participate in the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend appears to increase.**

- Typically, youth participate for no more than 3 years in Youth Weekend Hunts.
- The large majority of those who had not participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt were, nonetheless, aware of them.

EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUTH WEEKEND HUNTS FOR HUNTER RECRUITMENT

- The results suggest that hunters think that recruitment is an important goal of the Youth Weekend Hunts.
- Satisfaction with the Youth Weekend Hunts is high.
- Along with high satisfaction rates, the Youth Weekend Hunts appear to increase youth's desires to continue hunting.
- Although many youth go hunting prior to their first Youth Weekend Hunt, for a substantial percentage, the Youth Weekend Hunt is their introduction to hunting.
- The Youth Weekend Hunts reinforce the route of initiation that other research has suggested is critical in recruitment: through the family. That the Youth Weekend Hunts provide this opportunity for intimate, family initiation is important.

SUPPORT FOR YOUTH WEEKEND HUNTS AMONG HUNTERS AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTS OF YOUTH WEEKEND HUNTS ON SUBSEQUENT HARVEST OF GAME

- Support is high for the Youth Weekend Hunts, even among those who think that the Youth Weekend Hunts may cause a decrease in subsequent harvest.
- Reasons for supporting Youth Weekend Hunts include the opportunity to teach youth the proper way to hunt/teach ethics, recruitment, and providing youth a better chance to see and harvest game. In light of some of the dissatisfactions that hunters have expressed, which include poor behavior of other hunters, the Youth Weekend Hunts certainly serve an educational purpose.

- **While some hunters believe that harvests in other seasons after Youth Weekend Hunts are decreased, most hunters do not think Youth Weekend Hunts have a marked effect on subsequent harvest, and even many who do think harvest is reduced support the Youth Weekend Hunts anyway.**
- **One criticism among some hunters toward the Youth Weekend Hunts is that sometimes mentors shoot the game instead of the youth. The survey results suggest that this may be occasionally happening, although not enough of a problem that hunters are calling for the elimination of the Youth Weekend Hunts.**
- **It appears that the Youth Weekend Hunts may have a societal benefit by providing opportunities for interaction between parents and children.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Vermont's Youth Weekend Hunts should be continued.**
 - The Youth Weekend Hunts have high levels of support, even among those who think that the Youth Weekend Hunts may cause a decrease in subsequent harvest: 87% of adult hunting license holders who did not participate in a Youth Weekend Hunt support the hunts, with 62% who strongly support, and 79% of adult hunting license holders who think the hunts may cause a decrease in subsequent harvest still support the Youth Weekend Hunts.
 - In addition to having high levels of support among adult hunters, the Youth Weekend Hunts also appear to be recruiting new hunters: 69% of current youth license holders indicated that their first Youth Weekend Hunt was the first time they had ever been hunting. Furthermore, 79% of adult hunting license holders who had participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt indicated that the experience made them want to keep hunting “a lot,” and 95% indicated that it made them want to continue hunting “a lot” or “a little.”

-
- **The VFWD should directly address the concern that mentors may be occasionally shooting game instead of the youth shooting the game during the Youth Weekend Hunts.**
- Although the survey results suggest that mentors may be occasionally harvesting game rather than the youth harvesting game during Youth Weekend Hunts, the majority of adult hunting license holders still support the Youth Weekend Hunts. Survey results suggest that outreach to directly address this concern may be effective in reducing concern, reducing the problem behavior, and further increasing support for Youth Weekend Hunts.
 - In addition to communicating to all licensed hunters (adult and youth) that mentors are not permitted to harvest game during the Youth Weekend Hunts as part of the outreach for the hunts, the penalty for doing so should be increased. Increasing the penalty and increasing communication about the penalty will demonstrate that the VFWD is addressing the problem.
 - Criticism among those who oppose the program may lessen if those people feel that Vermont is making a serious attempt to stop the unfairness of mentors shooting game, particularly in light of the fact that some hunters think that subsequent harvest is affected.
- **Communication efforts should also focus on the importance of showing the youth ethical hunting behavior.**
- Increasing efforts to prevent mentors from harvesting game during Youth Weekend Hunts should also include positive communications about the enjoyment of other aspects of hunting, should emphasize ethical hunting behavior, and should focus on the importance of showing the youth ethical hunting behavior. Note that harvest success during the Youth Weekend Hunt is not a primary motivation for hunting among youth and that harvest failure does not translate into dissatisfaction, nor does it appear to markedly decrease subsequent desires youth have for hunting. (Note that this refers to harvest failure *during the one weekend of the Youth Weekend Hunt*; obviously, constant failure to harvest would decrease youth interest in hunting.) Furthermore, many hunters feel that the importance of the Youth Weekend Hunts is to teach ethical behavior and respect for the heritage of hunting.

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INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department (VFWD) to determine hunters' opinions on Vermont's Youth Weekend Hunts (the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend, Youth Waterfowl Weekend, and Youth Deer Weekend) and to assess the effectiveness of the Youth Hunts in recruiting and retaining hunters. The study entailed three telephone surveys that included active hunters, active youth hunters, youth mentors, and inactive hunters. (Another smaller survey of vendors was also conducted, and its results and methodology are discussed within its section of the report titled, "Survey Results of Vendors.") Specific aspects of the research methodology of the hunter surveys are discussed below.

For the hunter surveys, 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. These facilities are staffed by interviewers with experience conducting computer-assisted telephone interviews on the subjects of natural resources and outdoor recreation. The telephone survey questionnaire was developed cooperatively by Responsive Management and the VFWD. Responsive Management conducted a pre-test of the questionnaire, and revisions were made to the questionnaire based on the pre-test.

To ensure the integrity of the telephone survey data, Responsive Management has interviewers who 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 and other professional staff conducted project briefings with the interviewers prior to the administration of these surveys. Interviewers were instructed on 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 and statisticians monitored the data collection, including monitoring of the actual telephone interviews without the interviewers' knowledge, to evaluate the performance of each interviewer and ensure the integrity of the data.

After the surveys were obtained by the interviewers, the Survey Center Managers and/or statisticians edited each completed survey to ensure clarity and completeness.

Interviews were conducted Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Saturday noon to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., 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 of the day.

The surveys were conducted in May-June 2007. Responsive Management obtained a total of 1,206 completed interviews of adult hunting license holders, 408 interviews of 2006 youth license holders (referred to as “current youth license holders”), and 111 interviews in a supplementary survey of 2001 youth hunting license holders (referred to as “2001 youth license holders”). Note that this latter sample included 3 respondents who indicated that they had not had a youth license in 2001; their first years of having a youth license were indicated as being 1995, 2002, and 2004. For these three respondents, QPL would have automatically substituted their first license year in any question that included a reference to the year. For instance, the question that asks “Have you hunted since 2001?” would have been adjusted to read, “Have you hunted since 2002?” For ease of readability, throughout the report, the text uses “2001” as the base year when reporting findings, although the results would actually pertain to “2001/year of first youth hunting license.” Also be aware that in interviewing the sample of 2001 youth license holders, only those whose current telephone numbers matched the 2001 data (or those for whom a forwarding number was obtained when the old number was called) could be contacted, thereby eliminating any from that sample who had moved, which could have an effect on data for this sample. Nonetheless, the data provided by this sample has utility.

The software used for data collection was Questionnaire Programming Language 4.1 (QPL). The survey data were entered into the computer as each 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 instruments were 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 analysis of data was performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software as well as proprietary software developed by Responsive Management.

Throughout this report, findings of the telephone surveys are reported at a 95% confidence interval. Sampling errors were calculated using the formula described below and are shown in the tabulation that follows.

Sampling error equation:

$$B = \left(\sqrt{\frac{N_p(.25) - .25}{N_s}} \right) (1.96)$$

Where: B = maximum sampling error (as decimal)
 N_p = population size (i.e., total number who could be surveyed)
 N_s = sample size (i.e., total number of respondents surveyed)

Derived from formula: p. 206 in Dillman, D. A. 2000. *Mail and Internet Surveys*. John Wiley & Sons, NY.

Note: This is a simplified version of the formula that calculates the maximum sampling error using a 50:50 split (the most conservative calculation because a 50:50 split would give maximum variation).

Survey	Number of Completed Interviews	Number in Sample	Sampling Error
Vermont adult hunting licenses (2006)	1,206	61,179	2.794%
Vermont youth hunting licenses (2006)	408	9,044	4.741%
Old sample of Vermont youth hunting licenses (2001)	111	9,284	9.246%

Note that some results may not sum to exactly 100% because of rounding. Additionally, rounding on the graphs may cause apparent discrepancies of 1 percentage point between the graphs and the reported results of combined responses (e.g., when “strongly support” and “moderately support” are summed to determine the total percentage in support).

YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH WEEKEND HUNTS

Note that all graphs of results discussed in this section are shown in the section of this report titled, “Survey Results” and “Survey Results of Vendors.”

- **The results of the research suggest that the Youth Weekend Hunts (the Youth Deer Weekend, the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend, and the Youth Waterfowl Weekend) are well attended. From information obtained from vendor records, the researchers estimate that 8,768 free youth deer and turkey tags were issued in Vermont in 2006 (6,348 deer tags and 2,420 turkey tags). Furthermore, the three hunter groups surveyed had the following participation rates in Youth Weekend Hunts:**
 - More than a third of adult hunting license holders (37%) had participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt at some time. Of those who had gone on a Youth Weekend Hunt, 21% had done so as a youth, and 83% had done so as a mentor (the percentages sum to more than 100% because 4% had participated first as a youth and later as a mentor). Overall, of the entire sample of adult hunting license holders, 31% had mentored a youth during a Youth Weekend Hunt.
 - Among current youth license holders, participation is very high in Youth Weekend Hunts: 93% indicated having participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt at some time.
 - The overwhelming majority of 2001 youth license holders (88%) hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt in 2001.

- **Overwhelmingly, the Youth Deer Weekends are the most popular Youth Weekend Hunts. As youth gain experience, their likelihood to participate in the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend appears to increase.**
 - When asked which was their *first* Youth Weekend Hunt, 87% indicated the Youth Deer Weekend, while 10% indicated the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend. Those who had been on more than one Youth Weekend Hunt were asked which was their *most recent* Youth Weekend Hunt, and 32% indicated the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend, suggesting that more experienced youth increase their participation in the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend. Note, however, that the survey was administered in late May through early

June, not soon after the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend on April 28th and 29th, which could inflate the apparent participation rate in the data.

- **Typically, youth participate for no more than 3 years in Youth Weekend Hunts.**
 - Among current youth license holders, the majority (61%) hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt only 1 or 2 years; meanwhile, 21% hunted more than 3 years. Of those from among the adult hunter sample who had gone on a Youth Weekend Hunt *as a youth* and *not as a mentor*, the majority (63%) had gone only 1 or 2 years of the past 5 years.
 - A crosstabulation of years of participation by age among current youth license holders shows that older youth (i.e., those who are old enough to have hunted for several years) have participated for slightly more years, but typically not more than 3 years.

- **The large majority of those who had not participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt were, nonetheless, aware of them.**
 - More than 90% of each group in the survey (current adult hunting license holders, current youth license holders, and 2001 youth license holders) who had not participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt were aware of them.

EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUTH WEEKEND HUNTS FOR HUNTER RECRUITMENT

Note that all graphs of results discussed in this section are shown in the section of this report titled, “Survey Results.”

- **The results suggest that hunters think that recruitment is an important goal of the Youth Weekend Hunts.**
 - Adult hunting license holders who have not been on a Youth Weekend Hunt think that hunting recruitment efforts by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife are important: 80% say that such efforts are important, with 48% saying that they are *very* important. Also, when adult hunting license holders were asked about the importance of the goal to recruit new hunters into the sport for the health of the sport itself, an overwhelming majority (88%) say this goal is very or somewhat important (with 64% saying it is *very* important). Finally, most 2001 youth license holders indicate that the goal of recruiting new participants into hunting is important: 91% said it is very or somewhat important.
 - A question asked about reasons that adult hunting license holders support Youth Weekend Hunts (those who support but who did not participate in a Youth Weekend Hunt). Recruitment was mentioned by 35% of them.
 - A question asked about reasons that 2001 youth license holders support Youth Weekend Hunts. The second most common answer was for recruitment (29%).
 - When asked if they knew why Vermont has Youth Weekend Hunts, 65% of adult hunting license holders who did not participate in a Youth Weekend Hunt mentioned recruitment—the top answer.
 - When asked if they knew why Vermont has Youth Weekend Hunts, 2001 youth license holders most commonly mentioned recruitment (47%).

- **Satisfaction with the Youth Weekend Hunts is high.**
 - Satisfaction with the first year of Youth Weekend Hunts was high among the adult hunting license holders who had hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth: 70% were *very* satisfied, and 88% were very or somewhat satisfied. Satisfaction was also high for

the most recent year of Youth Weekend Hunts, among those adult hunting license holders who had participated in more than one year of the Youth Weekend Hunts.

- Satisfaction was high with their first Youth Weekend Hunt among current youth license holders: 89% said that they were very or somewhat satisfied. Satisfaction was also high for the most recent Youth Weekend Hunt for those who had been on more than one.
- Satisfaction with their first Youth Weekend Hunt was high among 2001 youth license holders who had been on one (note that 2001 was not necessarily their first Youth Weekend Hunt; the question asked specifically about “your first Youth Weekend Hunt”): 92% were very or somewhat satisfied, with 63% being *very* satisfied.
- Note that harvest of game (or lack of doing so) does not appear to have a great effect on satisfaction. Crosstabulations of harvest and satisfaction within the various groups found that satisfaction was also very high among those who did not harvest.

➤ **Along with high satisfaction rates, the Youth Weekend Hunts appear to increase youth’s desires to continue hunting.**

- For instance, 79% of adult hunting license holders who had hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt indicated that the Youth Weekend Hunt made them want to keep hunting “a lot,” and 95% indicated that the Youth Weekend Hunt made them want to continue hunting “a lot” or “a little.”
- The large majority (87%) of current youth license holders said their first Youth Weekend Hunt made them want to keep hunting “a lot,” while another 11% said it made them want to keep hunting “a little.”
- Also, 2001 youth license holders who had been on a Youth Weekend Hunt overwhelmingly (96%) said that their first Youth Weekend Hunt made them want to continue hunting.
- When mentors were asked about the subsequent hunting avidity of their protégés, 77% said the youth(s) continued to hunt, with another 13% who said that at least some of the youths continued to hunt. Only 7% said that the youth(s) did not continue to hunt.
- As with satisfaction, harvest of game (or lack of doing so) does not appear to markedly affect future desires to continue hunting. A crosstabulation found little difference in future desires among those who harvested versus those who did not harvest game.

-
- **Although many youth go hunting prior to their first Youth Weekend Hunt, for a substantial percentage, the Youth Weekend Hunt is their introduction to hunting.**
 - Current youth license holders most often (69%) indicated that their first Youth Weekend Hunt was the first time they had ever been hunting; 30% had been hunting previously. The 2001 youth license holders sample was fairly evenly split between those for whom the Youth Weekend Hunt was their first time hunting (43%) and those who had been hunting previously (55%).

 - **The Youth Weekend Hunts reinforce the route of initiation that other research has suggested is critical in recruitment: through the family. That the Youth Weekend Hunts provide this opportunity for intimate, family initiation is important.**
 - The majority of current youth license holders who had hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt were taken by their father or stepfather (76%) on their first Youth Weekend Hunt; another 9% indicated grandfather or step. Uncle was another prominent answer. Answers are similar regarding who took the respondent on his/her most recent Youth Weekend Hunt (of those who had been on more than one).
 - Among the 2001 youth license holders who hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt, 84% were taken on the Youth Weekend Hunt by their father (or stepfather); uncle and grandfather (or step) were also prominent answers.
 - Most of the adult hunting license holders who had mentored a youth during a Youth Weekend Hunt had mentored only 1 youth (56% mentored only 1) or 2 youths (25%), suggesting that mentoring is an intimate, family experience. This familial intimacy is also demonstrated in the results regarding whom the mentor took hunting: the most common answer is son (or stepson), with daughter (or stepdaughter), nephew, and grandson also being common answers.
 - Family bonding and father-son (and occasionally either parent and daughter) time together were commonly mentioned among the three survey groups, when asked what they liked about Youth Weekend Hunts or why they support Youth Weekend Hunts.

SUPPORT FOR YOUTH WEEKEND HUNTS AMONG HUNTERS AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECTS OF YOUTH WEEKEND HUNTS ON SUBSEQUENT HARVEST OF GAME

Note that all graphs of results discussed in this section are shown in the section of this report titled, “Survey Results.”

➤ **Support is high for the Youth Weekend Hunts, even among those who think that the Youth Weekend Hunts may cause a decrease in subsequent harvest.**

- Support is overwhelming for Youth Weekend Hunts among adult hunting license holders who did not participate in a Youth Weekend Hunt: 87% support, with 62% who strongly support; only 8% oppose. Another question asked about support or opposition in a hypothetical situation where “Vermont determines that the Youth Weekend Hunt program is *not* an effective recruitment tool” (this question was asked of nearly all adult hunting license holders), and support is overwhelming: 85% support, with 61% *strongly* supporting; only 10% oppose.
- Among the 2001 youth license holders sample, support for Youth Weekend Hunts was overwhelming: 97% supported the Youth Weekend Hunts, and none said that they opposed. The 2001 youth license holders sample was also asked about their support/opposition in the hypothetical situation where the Youth Weekend Hunt program was determined to be *not* an effective recruitment tool: support was high, with 94% supporting, and 75% *strongly* supporting.
- A separate study to the one reported on in this report (*Public Opinion on Wildlife Species Management in Vermont*, Responsive Management, 2007) found that the majority of deer hunters agree (69% agree, with 53% who *strongly* agree) that youth deer hunting season should be open to all qualified youth under the age of 16, regardless of whether they have harvested a deer in a previous year. Nonetheless, 25% disagree, mostly *strong* disagreement. And this same study found that women are much more likely than are men to agree that youth deer hunting season should be open to all qualified youth under the

age of 16, regardless of whether they have harvested a deer in a previous year. This report can be accessed at the following:

http://responsivemanagement.com/download/reports/VT_Game_Mgmt_Report.pdf.

- **Reasons for supporting Youth Weekend Hunts include the opportunity to teach youth the proper way to hunt/teach ethics, recruitment, and providing youth a better chance to see and harvest game. In light of some of the dissatisfactions that hunters have expressed, which include poor behavior of other hunters, the Youth Weekend Hunts certainly serve an educational purpose.**
 - A question asked adult hunting license holders about reasons why they support Youth Weekend Hunts (those who support but who did not participate in a Youth Weekend Hunt). Recruitment was mentioned by 35% of them, while 30% gave a response related to teaching youth, and 13% specifically mentioned the better chance of harvest for youth.
 - A question asked about reasons that 2001 youth license holders support Youth Weekend Hunts (those who support). The top answers were the better chance of harvest success during the Youth Weekend Hunt (34%), recruitment (29%), spending time with family (16%), and that youth can learn to hunt (13%).

- **While some hunters believe that harvests in other seasons after Youth Weekend Hunts are decreased, most hunters do not think Youth Weekend Hunts have a marked effect on subsequent harvest, and even many who do think harvest is reduced support the Youth Weekend Hunts anyway.**
 - The survey directly asked adult hunting license holders who had not been on a Youth Weekend Hunt about subsequent harvest in the season that follows the Youth Weekend Hunt. Most commonly, they think the Youth Weekend Hunt has no effect on subsequent harvest (46%), while 19% think that subsequent harvest is reduced “a whole lot” or “a moderate amount.”
 - In a follow-up question among those who said that the Youth Weekend Hunts reduce subsequent harvest success, support is, nonetheless, overwhelming for the Youth Weekend Hunts: 79% of these respondents support.

- Also note that a question asked about reasons why adult hunting license holders oppose Youth Weekend Hunts (those who oppose and who did not participate in a Youth Weekend Hunt). Just less than a quarter (23%) indicated that the Youth Weekend Hunts negatively affect the subsequent regular hunting seasons.
- **One criticism among some hunters toward the Youth Weekend Hunts is that sometimes mentors shoot the game instead of the youth. The survey results suggest that this may be occasionally happening, although not enough of a problem that hunters are calling for the elimination of the Youth Weekend Hunts. Rather, the surveys suggest that outreach may be effective if focused on the importance of showing the youth ethical hunting behavior and enjoying other aspects of hunting. Note that harvest success during the Youth Weekend Hunt is not a primary motivation for hunting among youth and that harvest failure does not translate into dissatisfaction, nor does it appear to markedly decrease subsequent desires youth have for hunting. (Note that this refers to harvest failure *during the one weekend of the Youth Weekend Hunt*; obviously, constant failure to harvest would decrease youth interest in hunting.) Furthermore, many hunters feel that the importance of the Youth Weekend Hunts is to teach ethical behavior and respect for the heritage of hunting. Finally, criticism among those who oppose the program may lessen if those people feel that Vermont is making a serious attempt to stop the unfairness of mentors shooting game, particularly in light of the fact that some hunters think that subsequent harvest is affected.**
- A very small percentage (4%) of participants in a Youth Weekend Hunt among adult hunting license holders personally observed a wildlife violation. Likewise, only 4% of 2001 youth license holders who participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt personally observed a wildlife violation. However, of those who report observing a wildlife violation, the mentor shooting the game is the most common: among the adult hunting license holders who observed a violation, nearly half (47%) indicated that the violation was that the mentor was carrying the firearm and/or shooting game; of the 4 respondents among the 2001 youth license holders who observed a wildlife violation, 2 of them indicated that the violation was that the mentor shot the game.

- About a third of participants in Youth Weekend Hunts (33%) from among adult hunting license holders say that adult mentors frequently or occasionally illegally shoot the game instead of having the youth shoot the game; meanwhile, 43% say rarely or never. Among 2001 youth license holders, 27% say that adult mentors frequently or occasionally illegally shoot the game instead of having the youth shoot the game; meanwhile, 48% say rarely or never.
 - Only 11% of adult hunting license holders who participated in Youth Weekend Hunts say that unethical hunting behavior during Youth Weekend Hunts is a big problem. Among 2001 youth license holders who went on a Youth Weekend Hunt, 17% say that unethical hunting behavior during Youth Weekend Hunts is a big problem.
 - When current youth license holders were asked what they liked about the Youth Weekend Hunts, the top two answers were being outside/in nature (46%) and being with father/family (22%).
 - Mentors most often say that their motivations in mentoring include the following: carrying on the tradition (28%), teaching youth the proper way to hunt (26%), being with family/children (18%), and having fun (13%).
 - Mentors most often say that the youth get the following out of Youth Weekend Hunts: learning about hunting/gaining experience (54%), learning about nature and the outdoors and being outside (31%), being with family/bonding with parent (18%), and simply having fun/having a good experience (9%).
 - Much opposition to the program is from people who believe that subsequent harvest is affected by the Youth Weekend Hunts and that mentors are shooting game—the top reasons among adult hunting license holders who did not participate in a Youth Weekend Hunt.
- **It appears that the Youth Weekend Hunts may have a societal benefit by providing opportunities for interaction between parents and children.**
- As the results above showed, many youth indicate that being with their fathers and/or family members is something they liked about the Youth Weekend Hunts. Mentors also enjoy the familial aspects of the Youth Weekend Hunts.

SURVEY RESULTS

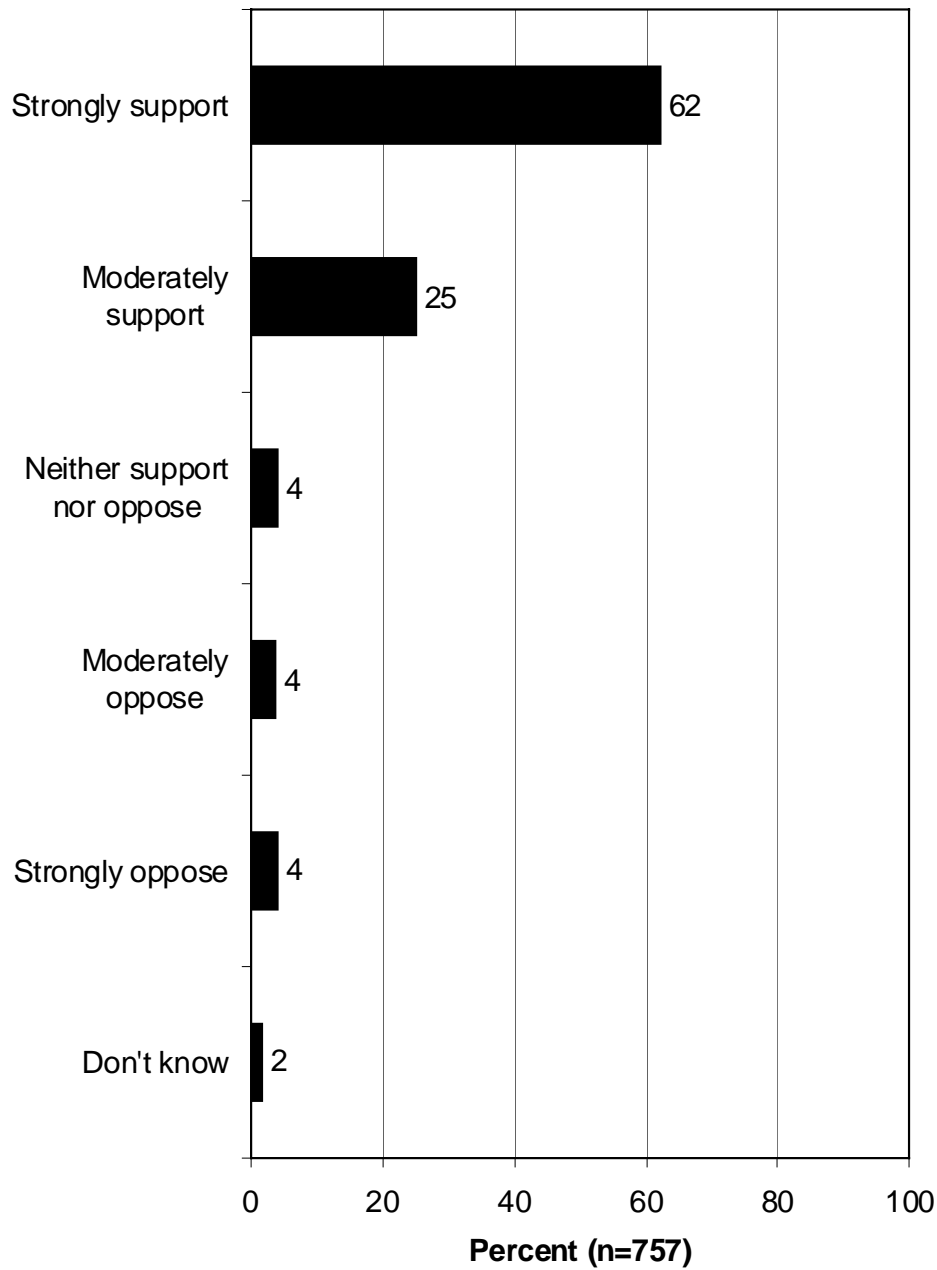
SUPPORT OR OPPOSITION TO YOUTH WEEKEND HUNTS

- Support is overwhelming for Youth Weekend Hunts among adult hunting license holders who did not participate in a Youth Weekend Hunt: 87% support, with 62% who strongly support; only 8% oppose. (Because of a time limitation on each individual survey, those who had participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt—who had been asked additional questions not asked of non-participants—were not asked this question about support or opposition to Youth Weekend Hunts.) Another question asked about support or opposition in a hypothetical situation where “Vermont determines that the Youth Weekend Hunt program is *not* an effective recruitment tool” (this question was asked of nearly all adult hunting license holders), and support is overwhelming: 85% support, with 61% *strongly* supporting; only 10% oppose. Among the 2001 youth license holders sample, support for Youth Weekend Hunts was overwhelming: 97% supported the Youth Weekend Hunts, and none said that they opposed. The 2001 youth license holders sample was also asked about their support/opposition in the hypothetical situation where the Youth Weekend Hunt program was determined to be *not* an effective recruitment tool: support was high, with 94% supporting, and 75% *strongly* supporting.
- A separate study to the one reported on in this report (*Public Opinion on Wildlife Species Management in Vermont*, Responsive Management, 2007) found that the majority of deer hunters agree (69% agree, with 53% who *strongly* agree) that youth deer hunting season should be open to all qualified youth under the age of 16, regardless of whether they have harvested a deer in a previous year. Nonetheless, 25% disagree, mostly *strong* disagreement. This same study found that women are much more likely than are men to agree that youth deer hunting season should be open to all qualified youth under the age of 16, regardless of whether they have harvested a deer in a previous year. Graphs from this report are shown, as well. This report can be accessed at the following:
http://responsivemanagement.com/download/reports/VT_Game_Mgmt_Report.pdf.
 - A follow-up question asked about reasons that adult hunting license holders support Youth Weekend Hunts (those who support but who did not participate in a Youth Weekend Hunt). Recruitment was mentioned by 35% of them, while 30% gave a

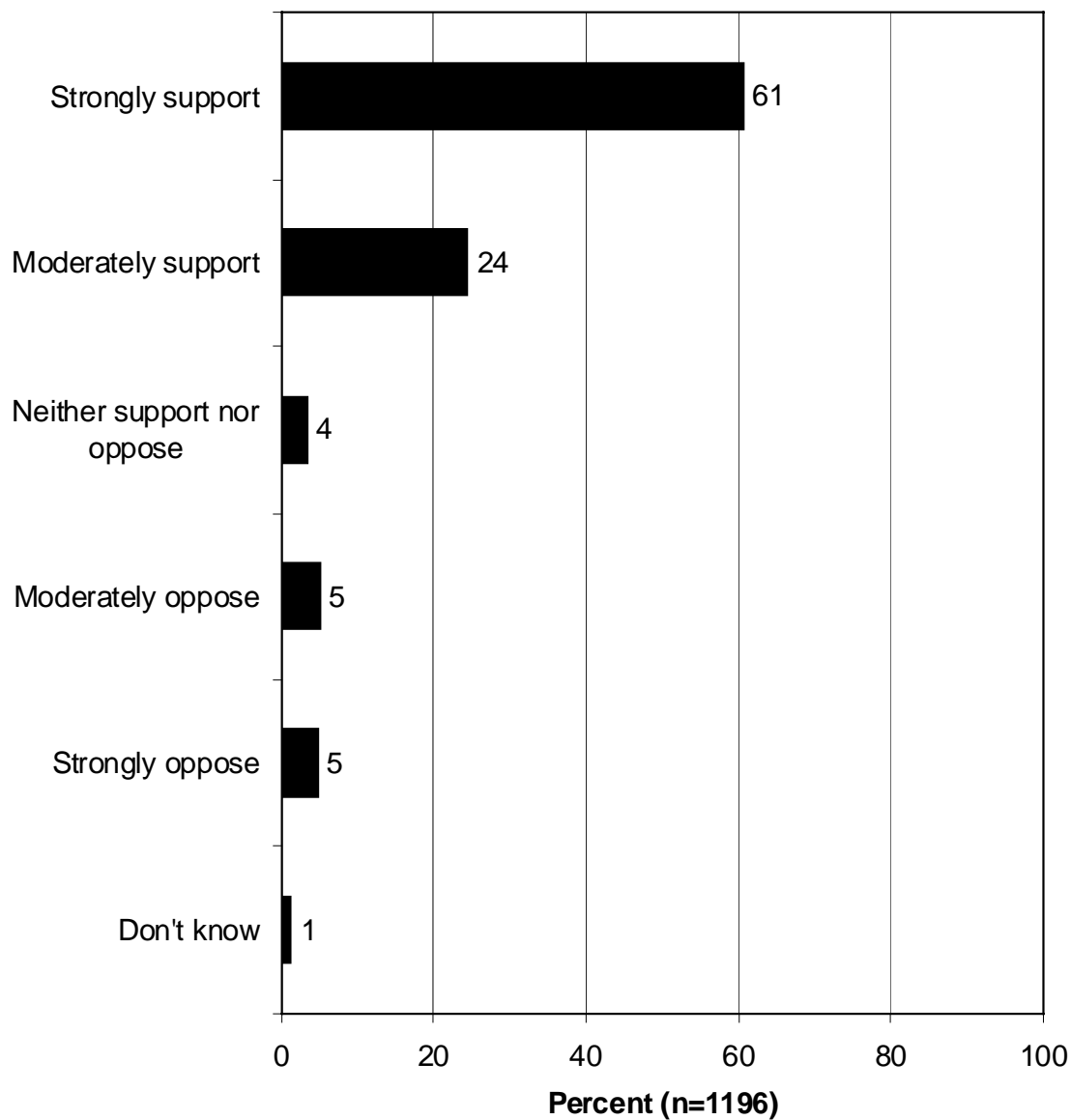
response related to teaching youth, and 13% specifically mentioned the better chance of harvest for youth.

- A follow-up question asked about reasons that 2001 youth license holders support Youth Weekend Hunts. The top answers were the better chance of harvest success during the Youth Weekend Hunt (34%), recruitment (29%), spending time with family (16%), and that youth can learn to hunt (13%).
 - A follow-up question asked about reasons that adult hunting license holders oppose Youth Weekend Hunts (those who oppose but who did not participate in a Youth Weekend Hunt). Just less than a quarter (23%) indicated that the Youth Weekend Hunts negatively affect the subsequent regular hunting seasons; the same percentage mentioned that mentors are doing the shooting too much of the time, and the same percentage indicated that the Youth Weekend Hunts are simply not properly teaching youth how to hunt.
 - When asked if they knew why Vermont has Youth Weekend Hunts, 65% of adult hunting license holders who did not participate in a Youth Weekend Hunt mentioned recruitment. Other common answers are so that the youth can learn about hunting (20%), so that the youth has a better chance of harvest (7%), or so that the youth can be outdoors (6%).
 - When asked if they knew why Vermont has Youth Weekend Hunts, 2001 youth license holders most commonly mentioned recruitment (47%), that youth have a better chance of harvest during a Youth Weekend Hunt (20%), or so that youth can learn (19%).
- Because some detractors of Vermont's Youth Weekend Hunts have indicated their belief that subsequent chance of harvest in the season that follows the Youth Weekend Hunt is diminished (because the game is being taken during the Youth Weekend Hunt), the survey directly asked adult hunting license holders who had not been on a Youth Weekend Hunt about subsequent harvest. Most commonly, they think the Youth Weekend Hunt has no effect on subsequent harvest (46%); nonetheless, 19% think that subsequent harvest is reduced "a whole lot" or "a moderate amount."
- In a follow-up question among those who said that the Youth Weekend Hunts reduce subsequent harvest success, support is, nonetheless, overwhelming for the Youth Weekend Hunts: 79% of these respondents support.

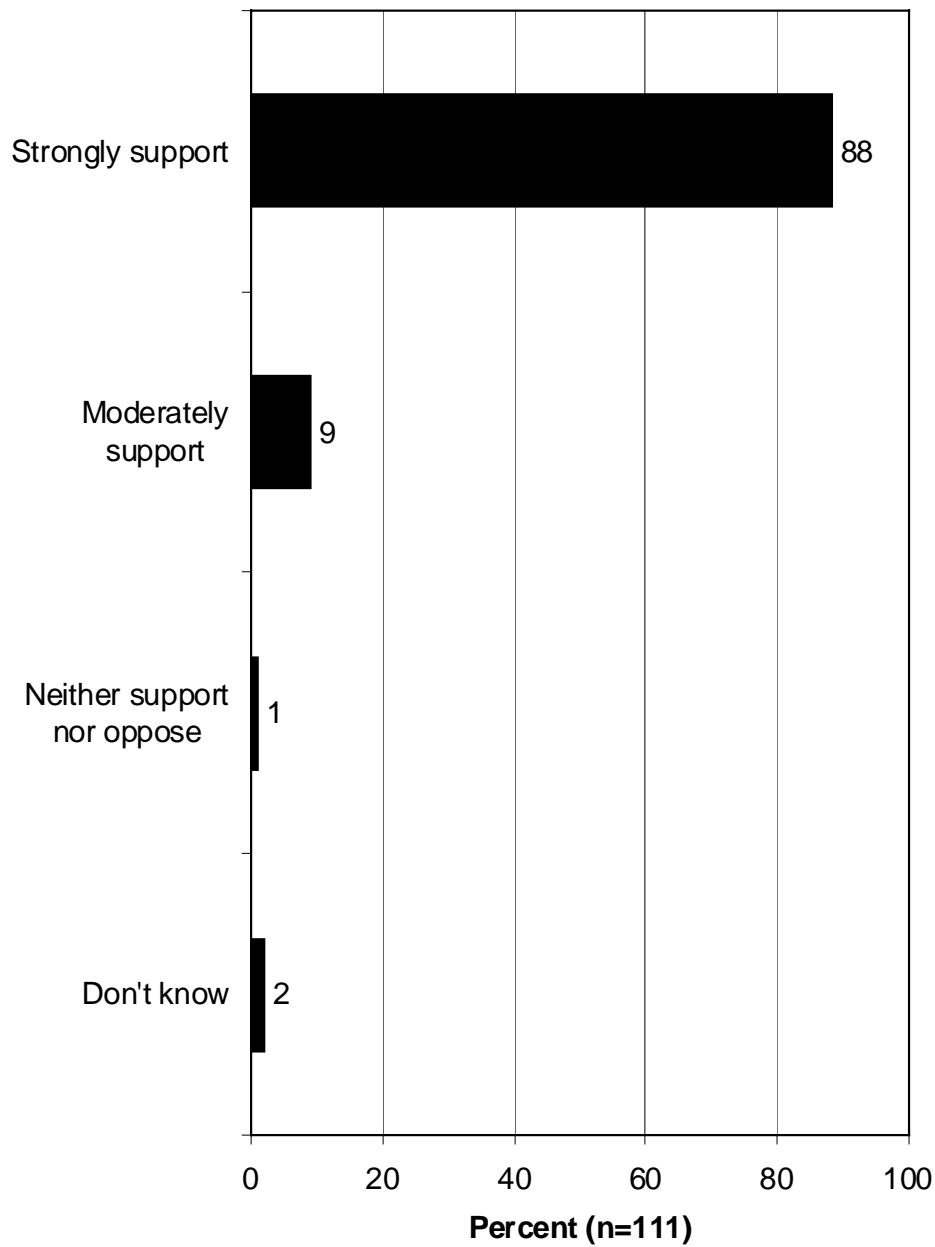
Q104. Do you support or oppose the Youth Weekend Hunts that Vermont has? (Asked of those who have not been on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



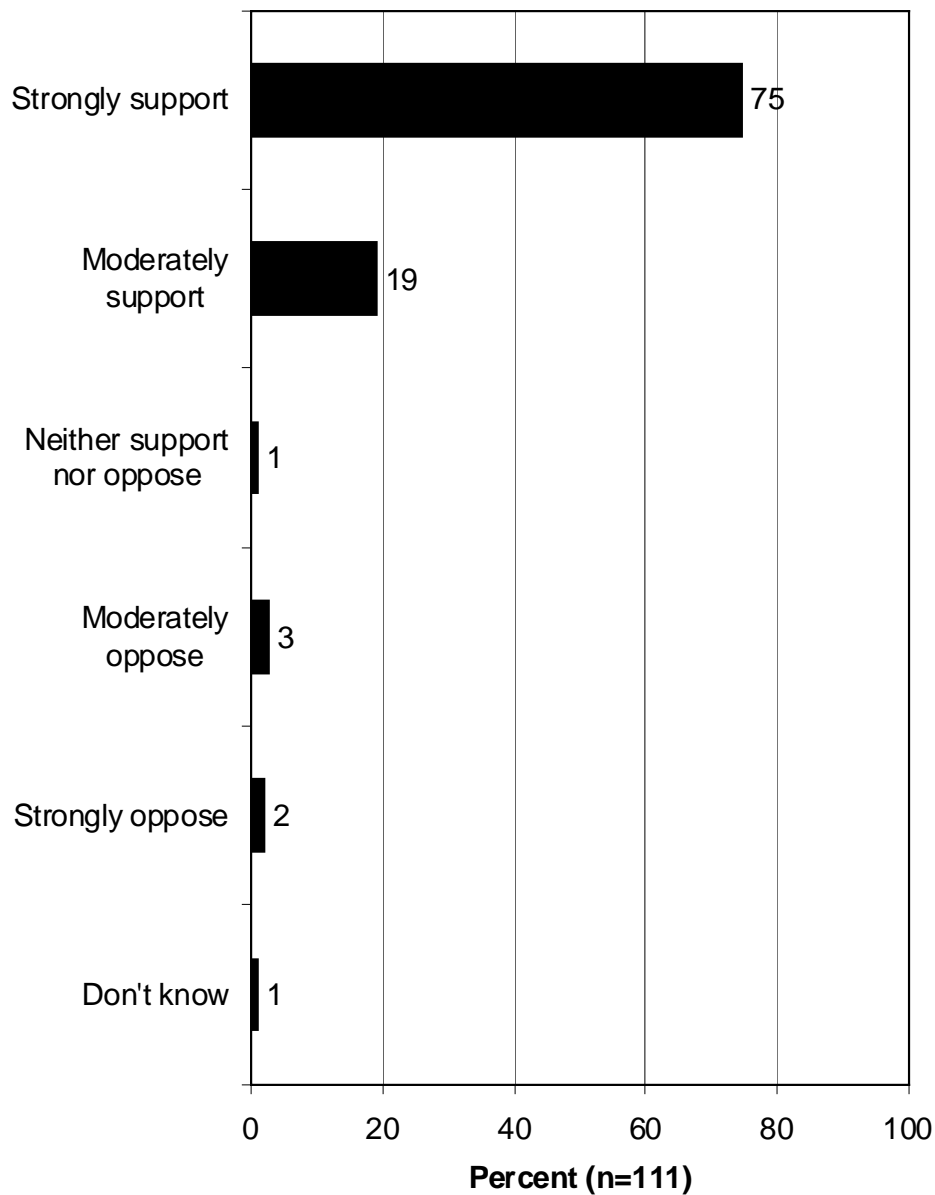
Q116. If Vermont determines that the Youth Weekend Hunt program is not an effective recruitment tool, would you support or oppose continuing the Youth Weekend Hunts to provide hunting opportunities for youth? (Asked of those who hunted during any time other than a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



Q91. Do you support or oppose the Youth Hunt Weekends that Vermont has? (2001 Youth License sample.)

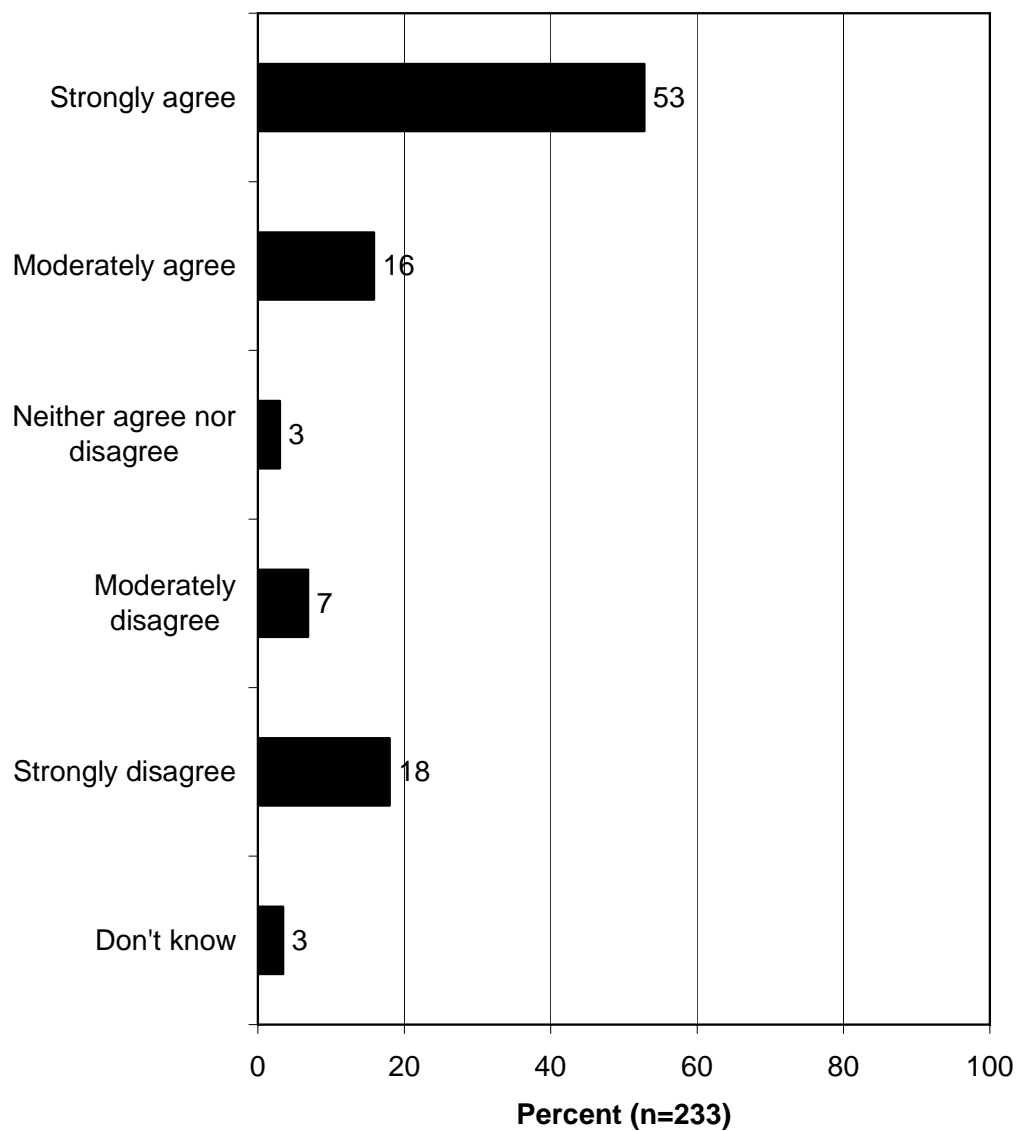


Q95. If Vermont determines that the Youth Weekend Hunt program is not an effective recruitment tool, would you support or oppose continuing the Youth Weekend Hunts to provide hunting opportunities for youth? (2001 Youth License sample.)



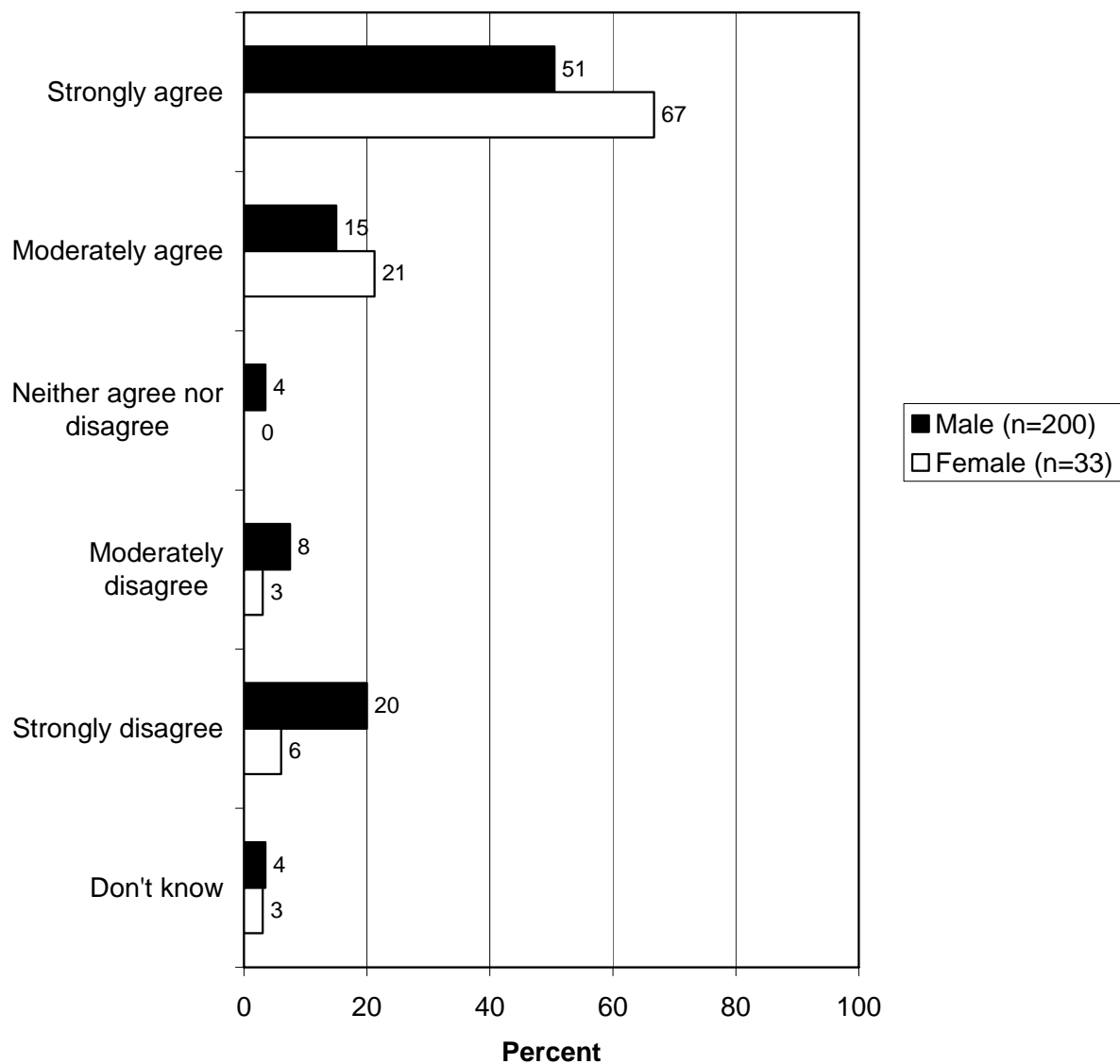
[Note that this graph is from a separate study, *Public Opinion on Wildlife Species Management in Vermont*, by Responsive Management in 2007.]

Q112. Do you agree or disagree that youth deer hunting season should be open to all qualified youth under the age of 16 years, whether or not they have harvested a deer in a previous year? (Asked of those who have hunted white-tailed deer in Vermont.)

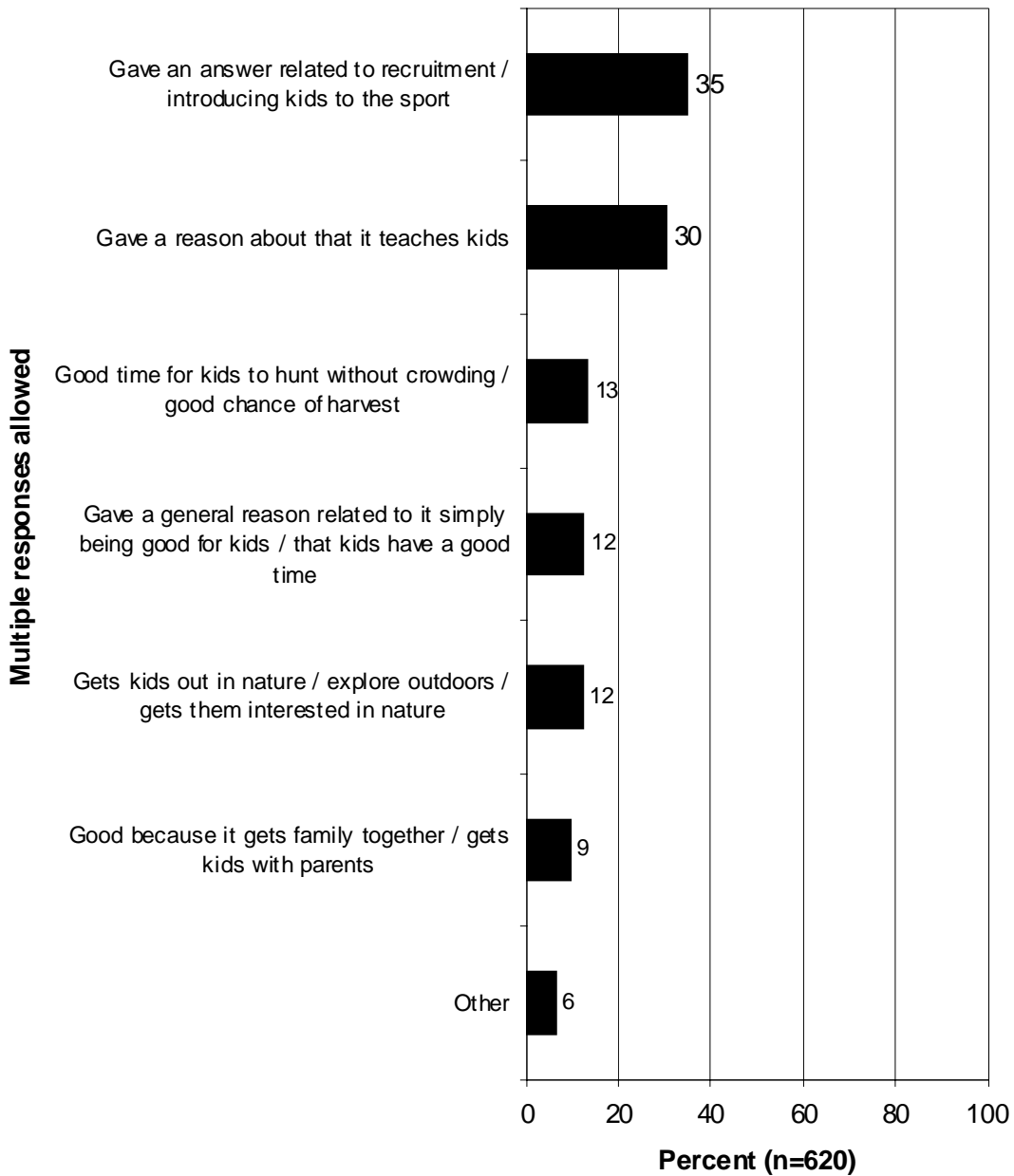


[Note that this graph is from a separate study, *Public Opinion on Wildlife Species Management in Vermont*, by Responsive Management in 2007.]

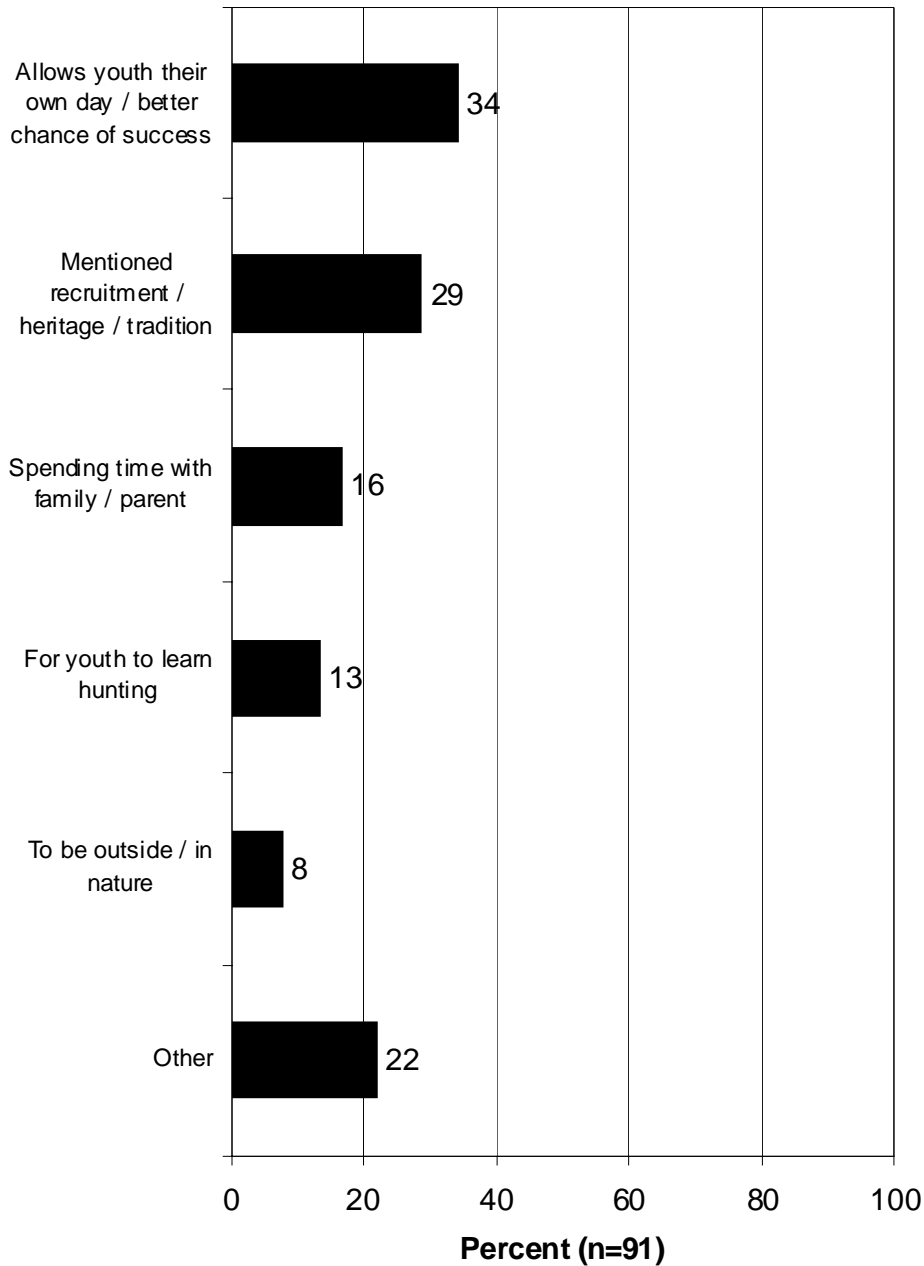
Q112. Do you agree or disagree that youth deer hunting season should be open to all qualified youth under the age of 16 years, whether or not they have harvested a deer in a previous year? (Asked of those who have hunted white-tailed deer in Vermont.)



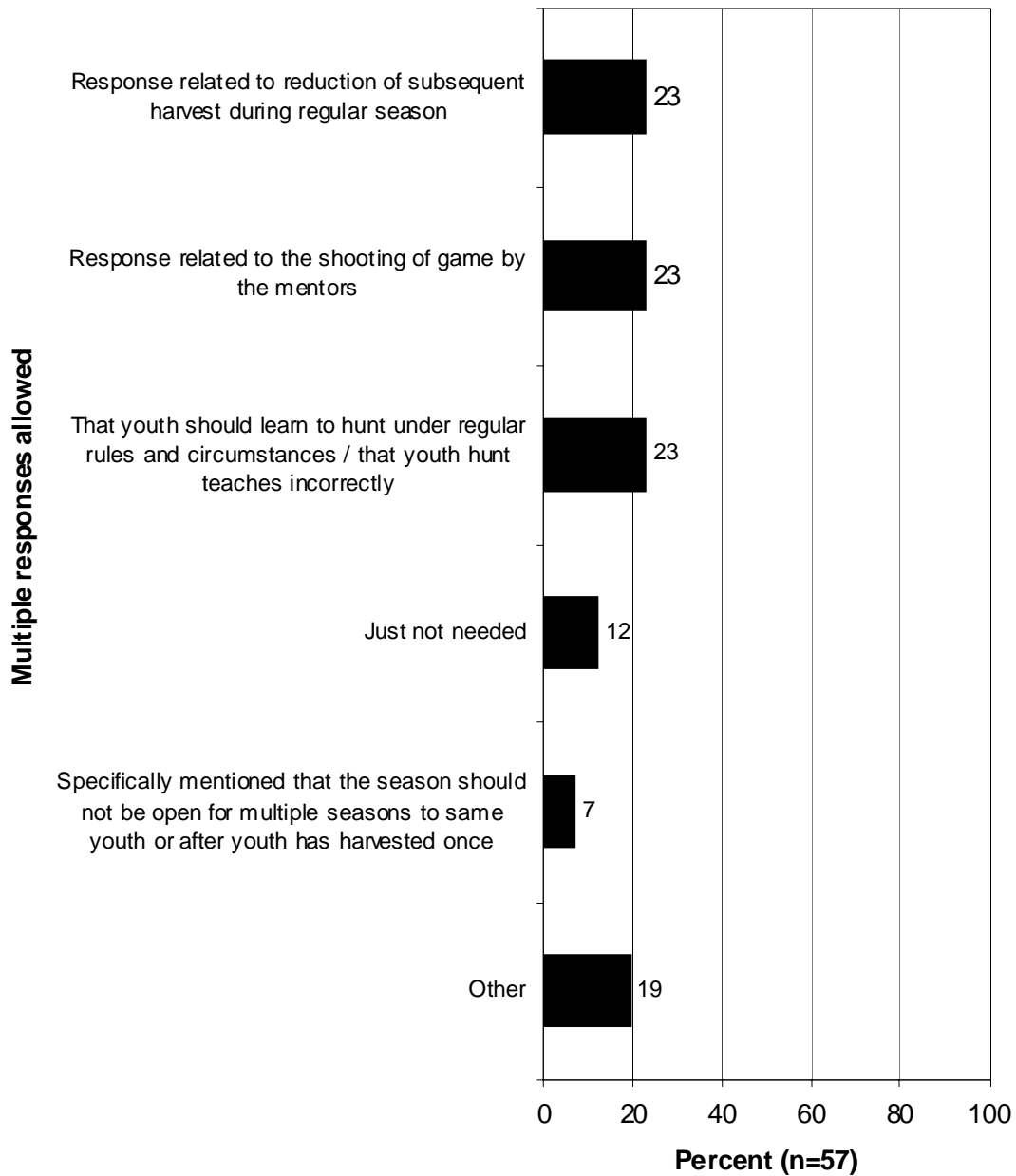
**Q105. Why do you support Youth Weekend Hunts?
 (Asked of those who haven't gone on a Youth
 Weekend Hunt as a hunter or mentor and who
 support Youth Weekend Hunts.) (Adult hunting
 license holders.)**



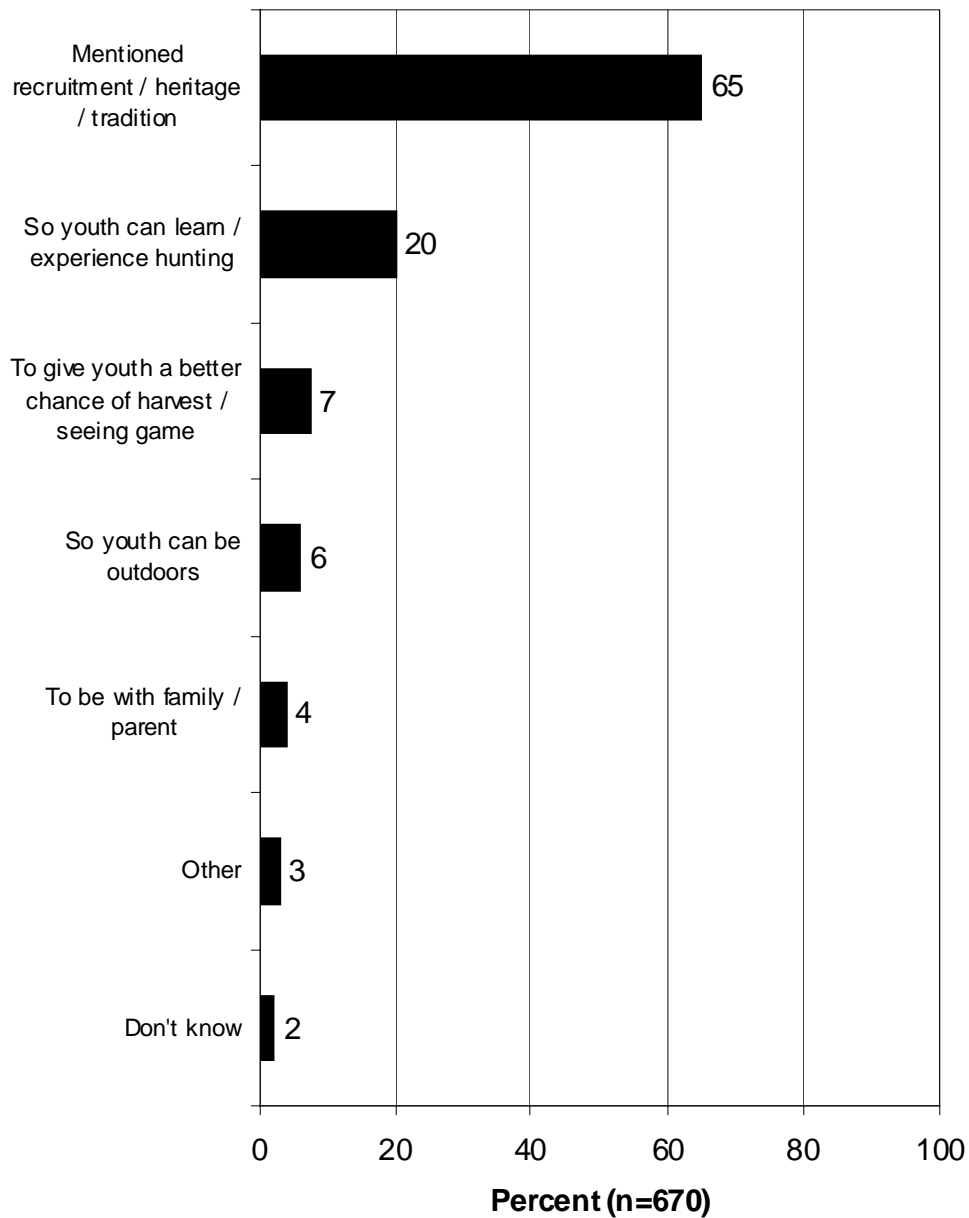
**Q92. Why do you support Youth Weekend Hunts?
(Asked of those who support Youth Weekend
Hunts.) (2001 Youth License sample.)**



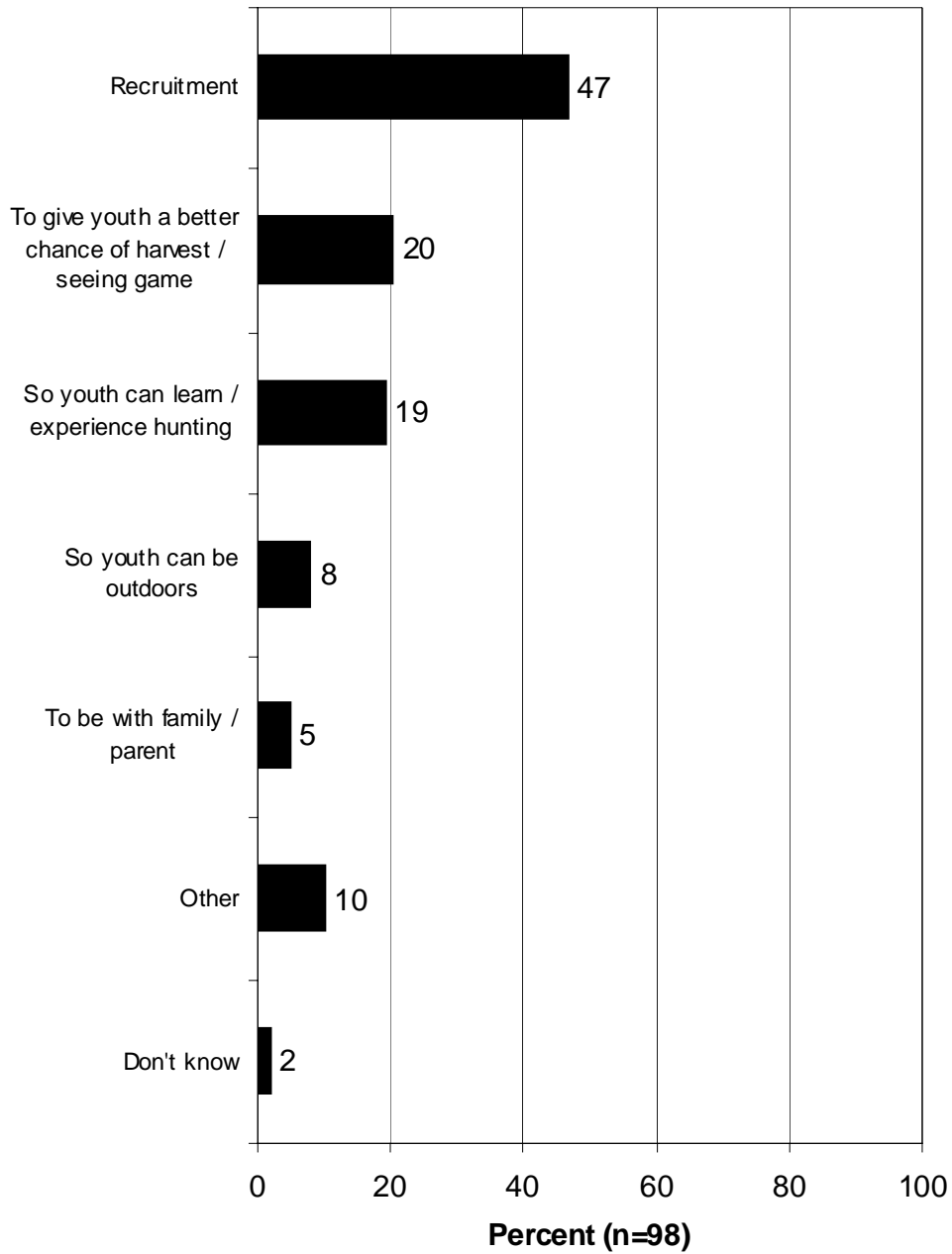
**Q106. Why do you oppose Youth Weekend Hunts?
 (Asked of those who haven't gone on a Youth
 Weekend Hunt as a hunter or mentor and who
 oppose Youth Weekend Hunts.) (Adult hunting
 license holders.)**



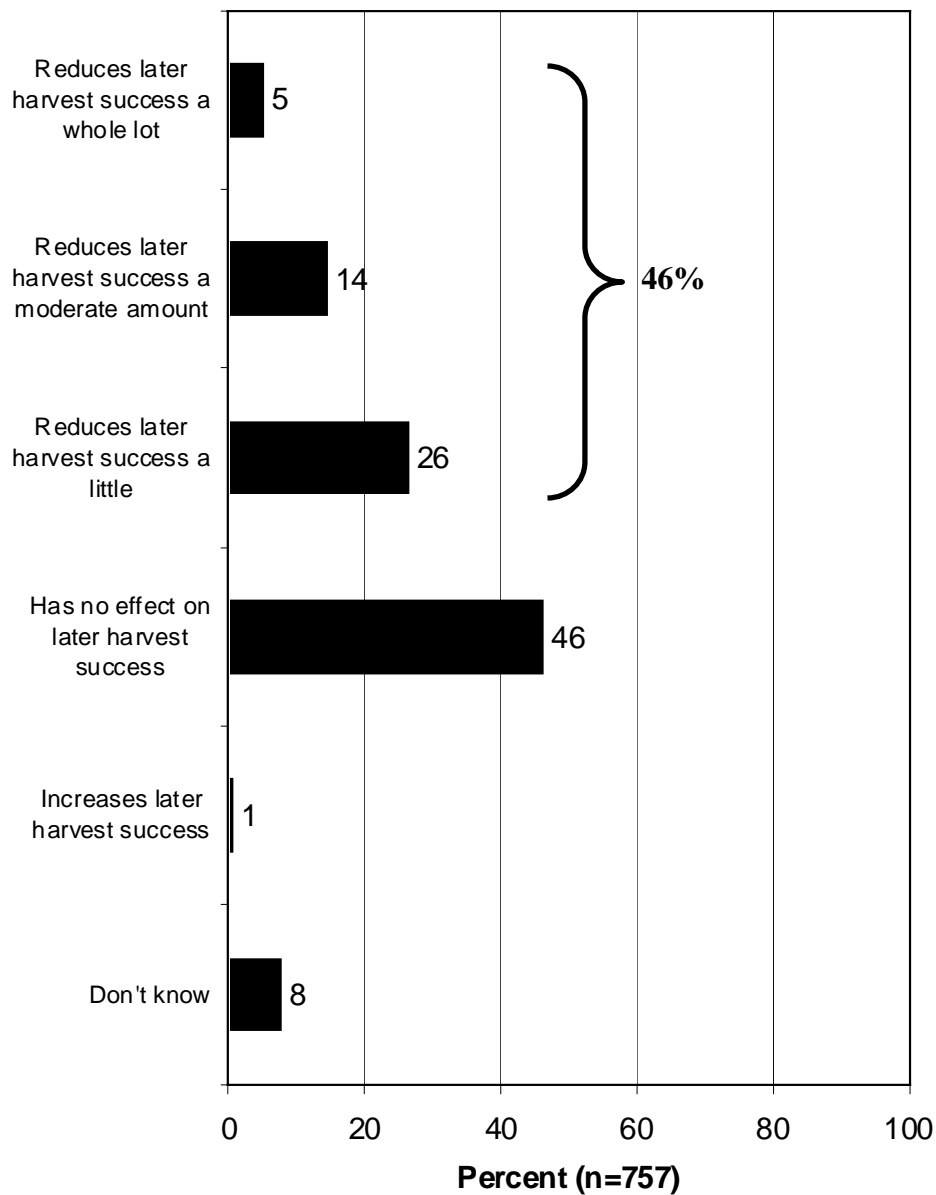
Q109. What do you think are the reasons that Vermont holds Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who haven't gone on a Youth Weekend Hunt as a hunter or mentor.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



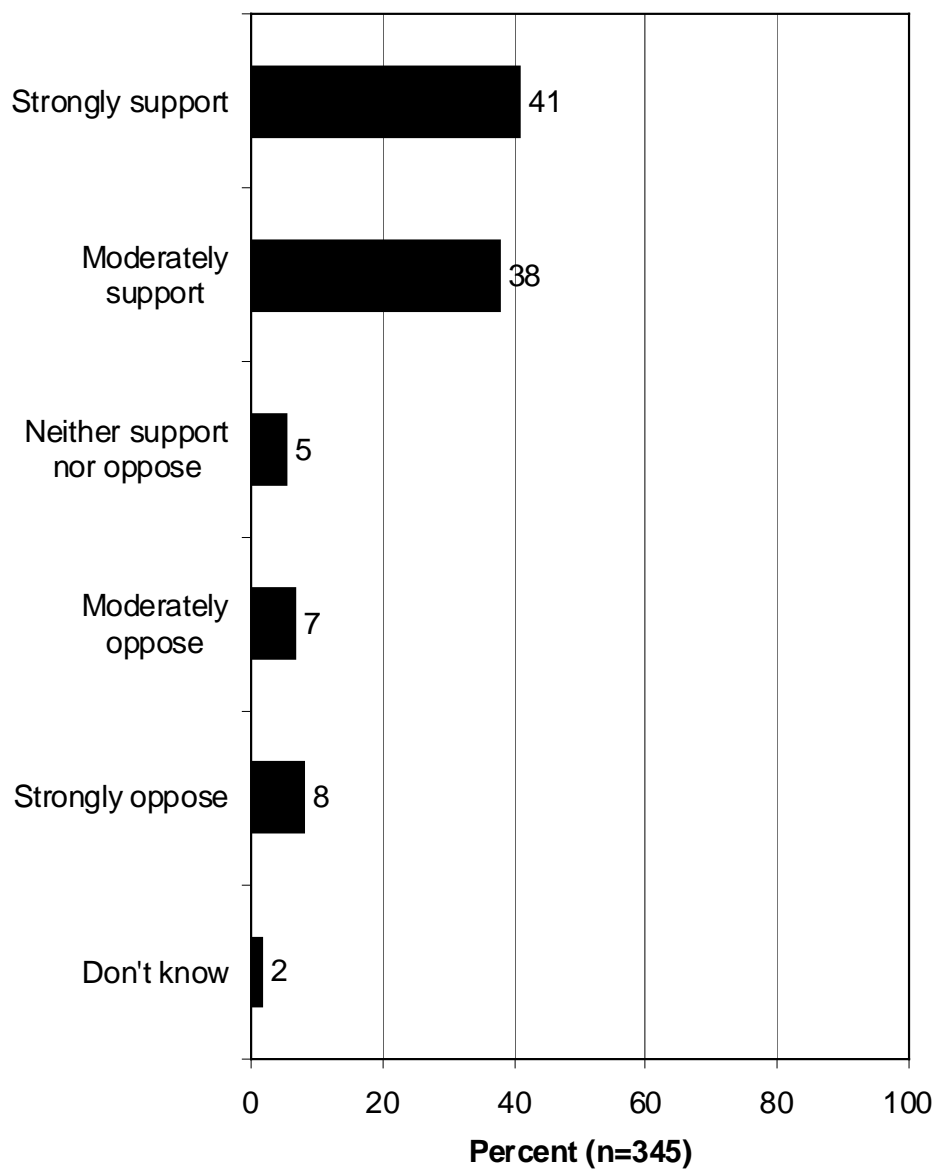
Q94. What do you think are the reasons that Vermont holds Youth Weekend Hunts? (2001 Youth License sample.)



Q107. Do you think the Youth Weekend Hunts have an effect on harvest success in the regular seasons that follow, and if so, how much of an effect? (Asked of those who have not been on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



Q108. You said the Youth Weekend Hunts tend to reduce later harvest success in the regular seasons. Despite this, do you support or oppose Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who have not been on a Youth Weekend Hunt and who think the Youth Weekend Hunts reduce subsequent harvest success.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH WEEKEND HUNTS

Overall Participation in Youth Weekend Hunts and Awareness

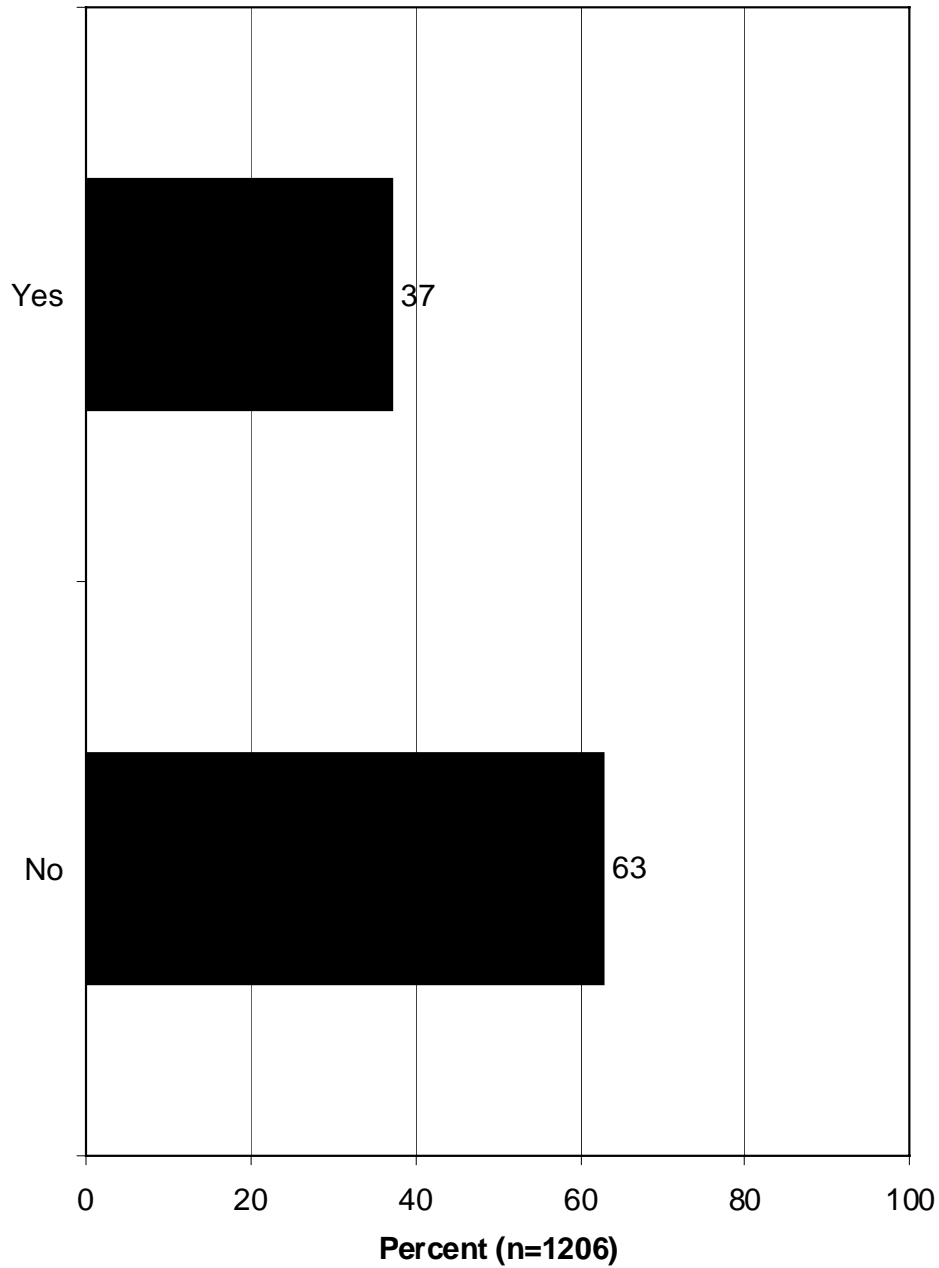
- More than a third of adult hunting license holders (37%) had participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt. Of those who had gone on a Youth Weekend Hunt, 21% had done so as a youth, and 83% had done so as a mentor (the percentages sum to more than 100% because 4% had participated first as a youth and later as a mentor—note that this graph is shown in the section of this report titled, “Mentoring During Youth Weekend Hunts”). The most popular Youth Weekend Hunt, by far, is the Youth Deer Weekend.
 - Nearly all of those adult hunting license holders who had not participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt were, nonetheless, aware of them. Those who were aware but had not participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt were asked why they had not participated: they most commonly said that they were too old (24%), that they had no time (24%), or that they had nobody to take them or nobody to go with (19%).

- Among current youth license holders, participation is very high in Youth Weekend Hunts: 93% indicated having participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt. When asked which was their *first* Youth Weekend Hunt, 87% indicated the Youth Deer Weekend, while 10% indicated the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend. Those who had been on more than one Youth Weekend Hunt were asked which was their *most recent* Youth Weekend Hunt, and 32% indicated the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend—note that the survey was administered in late May through early June, not soon after the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend on April 28th and 29th.
 - Most of those who had not participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt had heard of them.

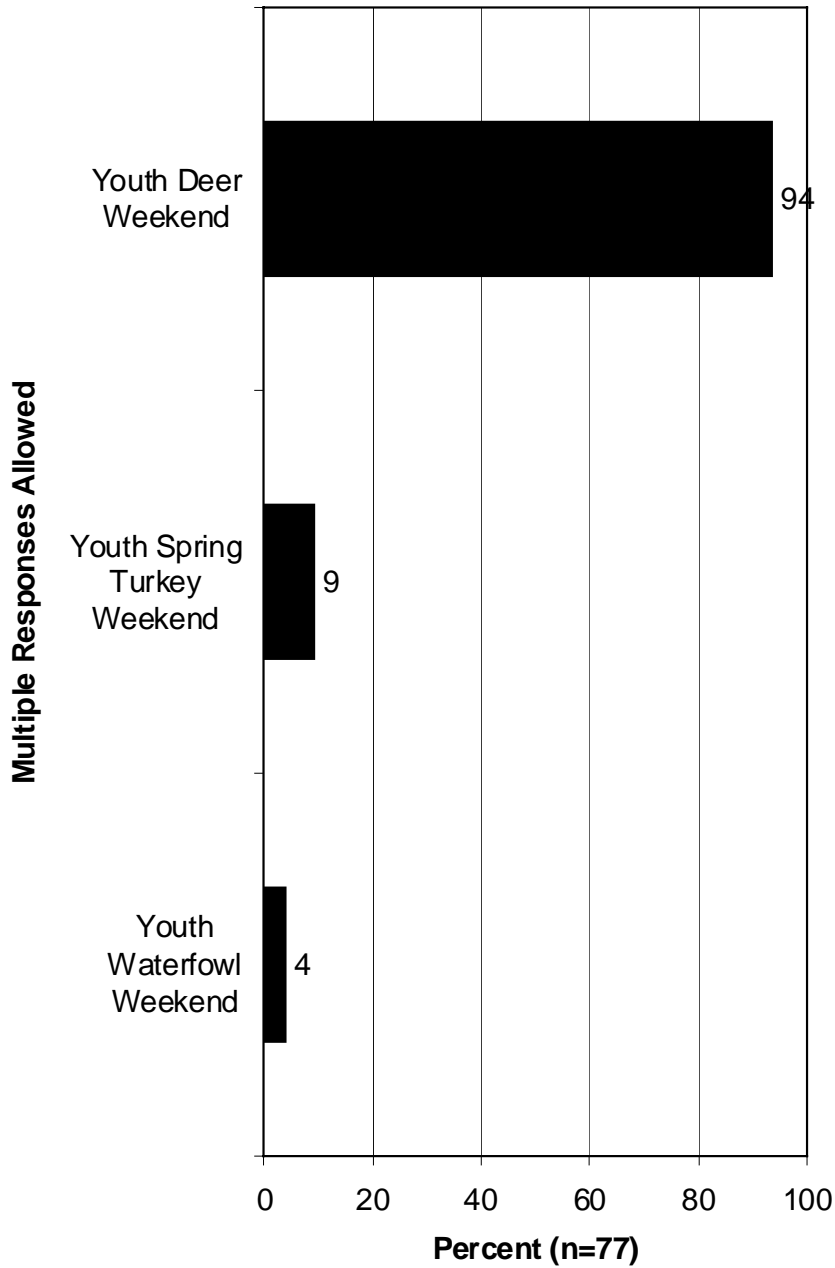
- The overwhelming majority of 2001 youth license holders (88%) hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt in 2001. The most common first Youth Weekend Hunt among 2001 youth license holders was the Youth Deer Weekend. (All of those 2001 youth license holders who did not hunt a Youth Weekend Hunt in 2001 did hunt in a season other than a Youth Weekend Hunt in 2001.)
 - Nearly all of those 2001 youth license holders who had not participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt were, nonetheless, aware of them.

- Those current youth license holders who had not hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt were asked if any of their friends had participated, and 71% said, “Yes.” They were also asked if any of the other members of their family had participated, and 57% said, “Yes.”

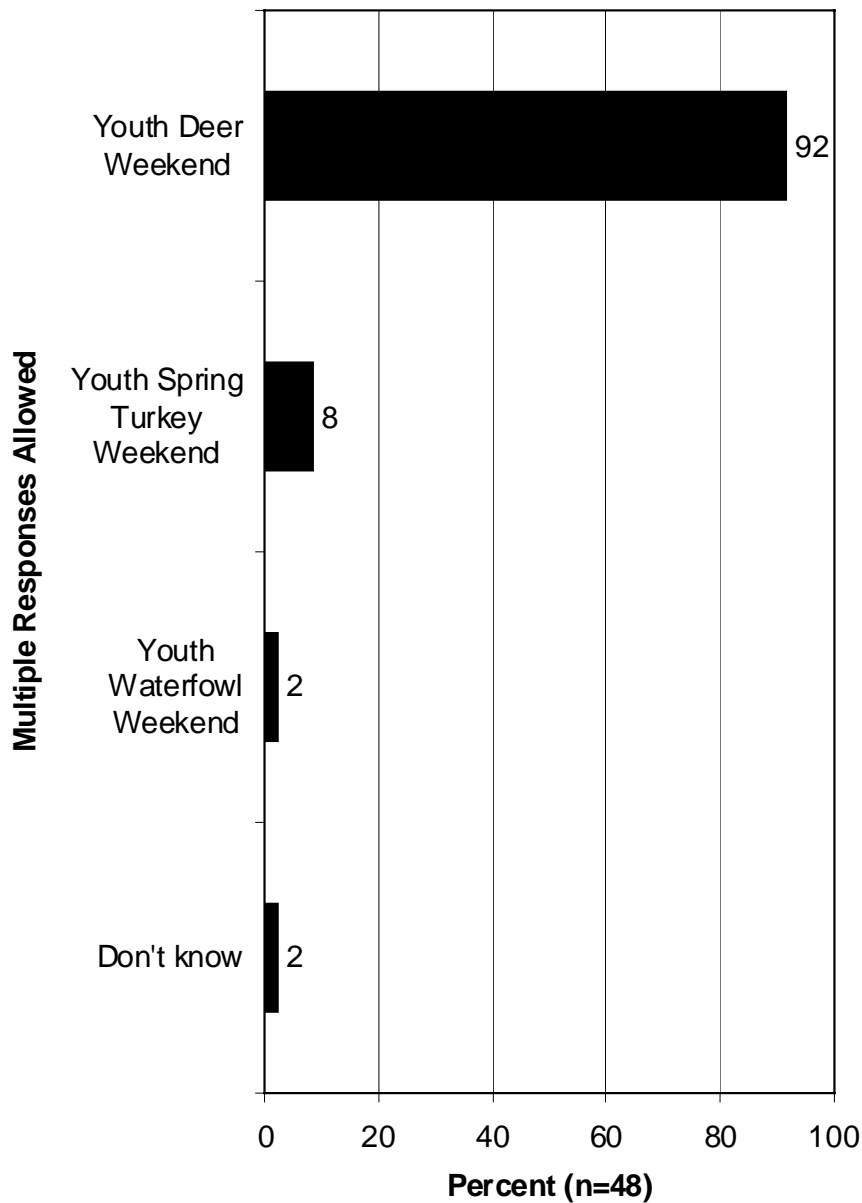
Q10. Did you ever go on a Youth Spring Turkey Weekend, a Youth Waterfowl Weekend, or a Youth Deer Weekend in Vermont, as either a hunter or mentor? (Adult hunting license holders.)



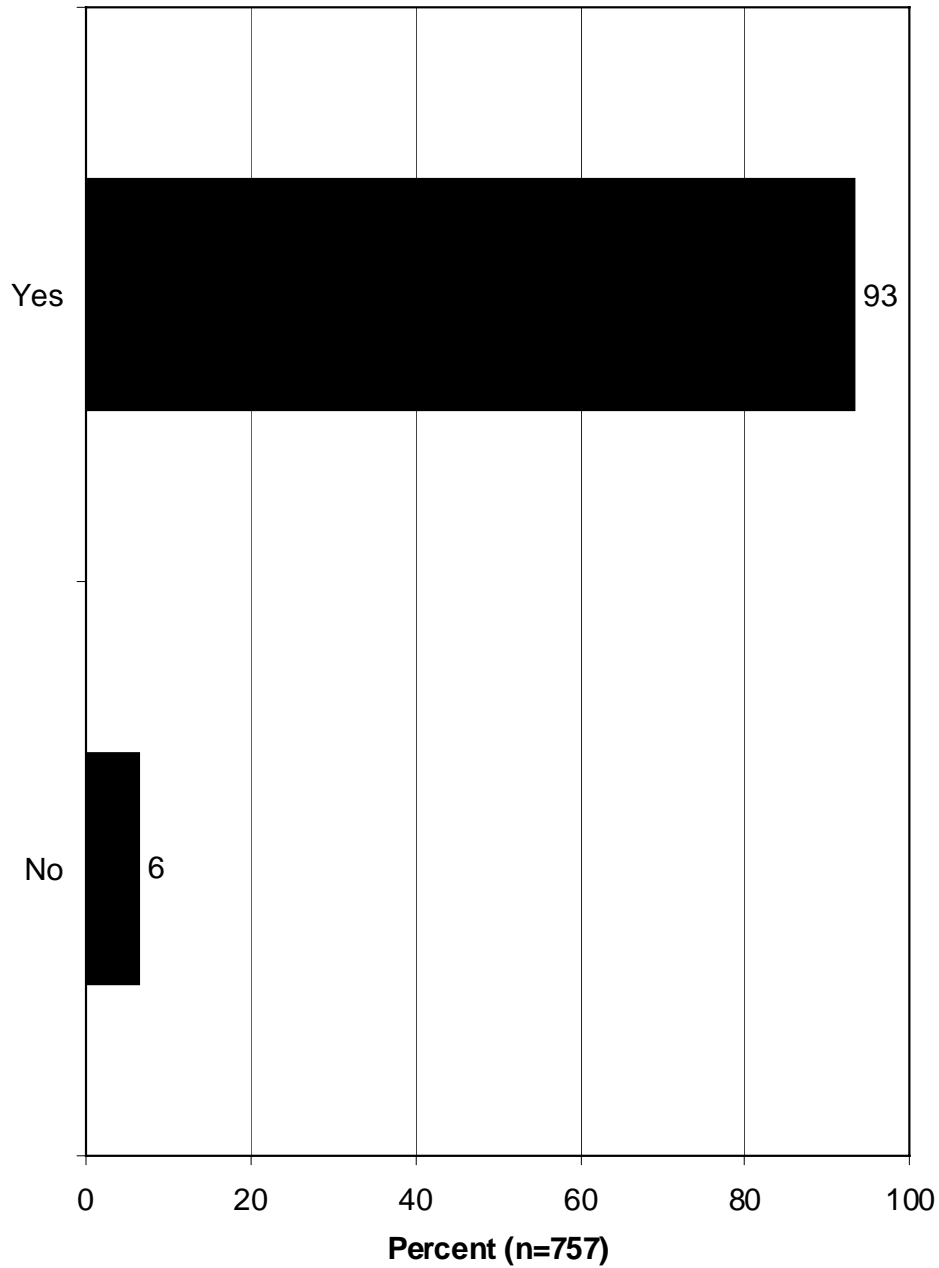
Q17. Which hunts did you go on during your first year of Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



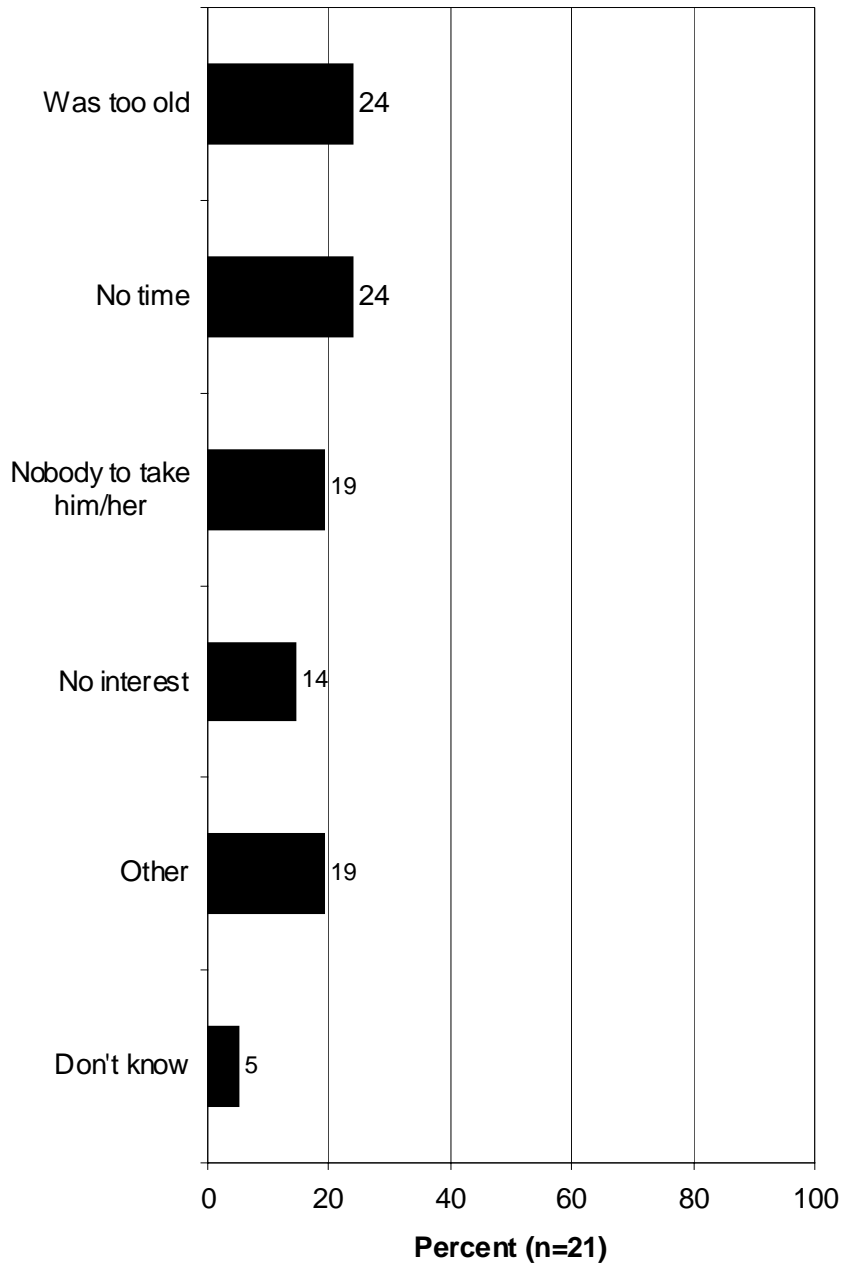
Q32. Which Youth Weekend Hunts did you go on during your most recent year of going on them? (Asked of those youths who went on a Youth Weekend Hunt more than one year.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



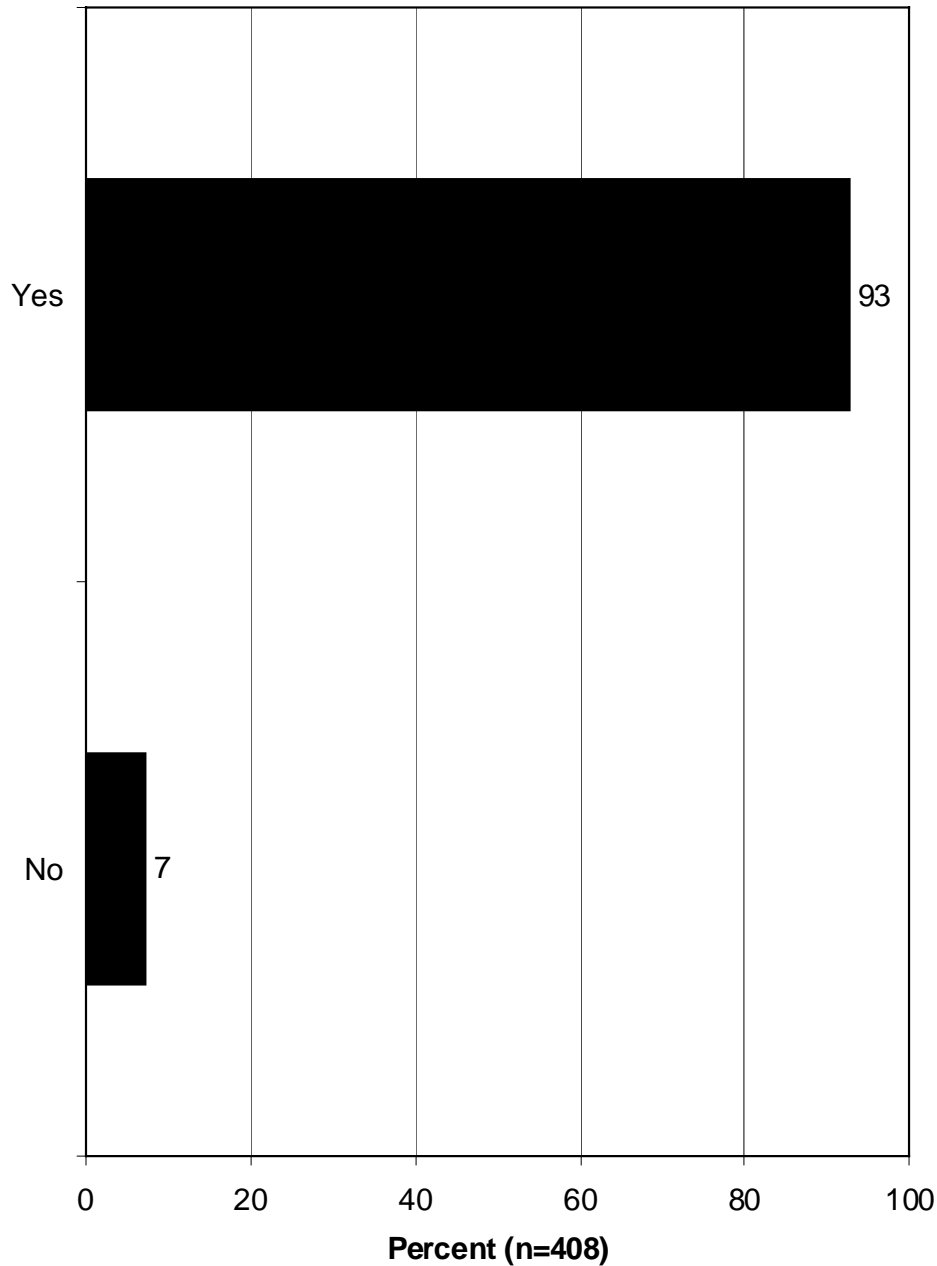
Q11. Prior to this survey, were you aware that Vermont has those Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who did not participate in a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



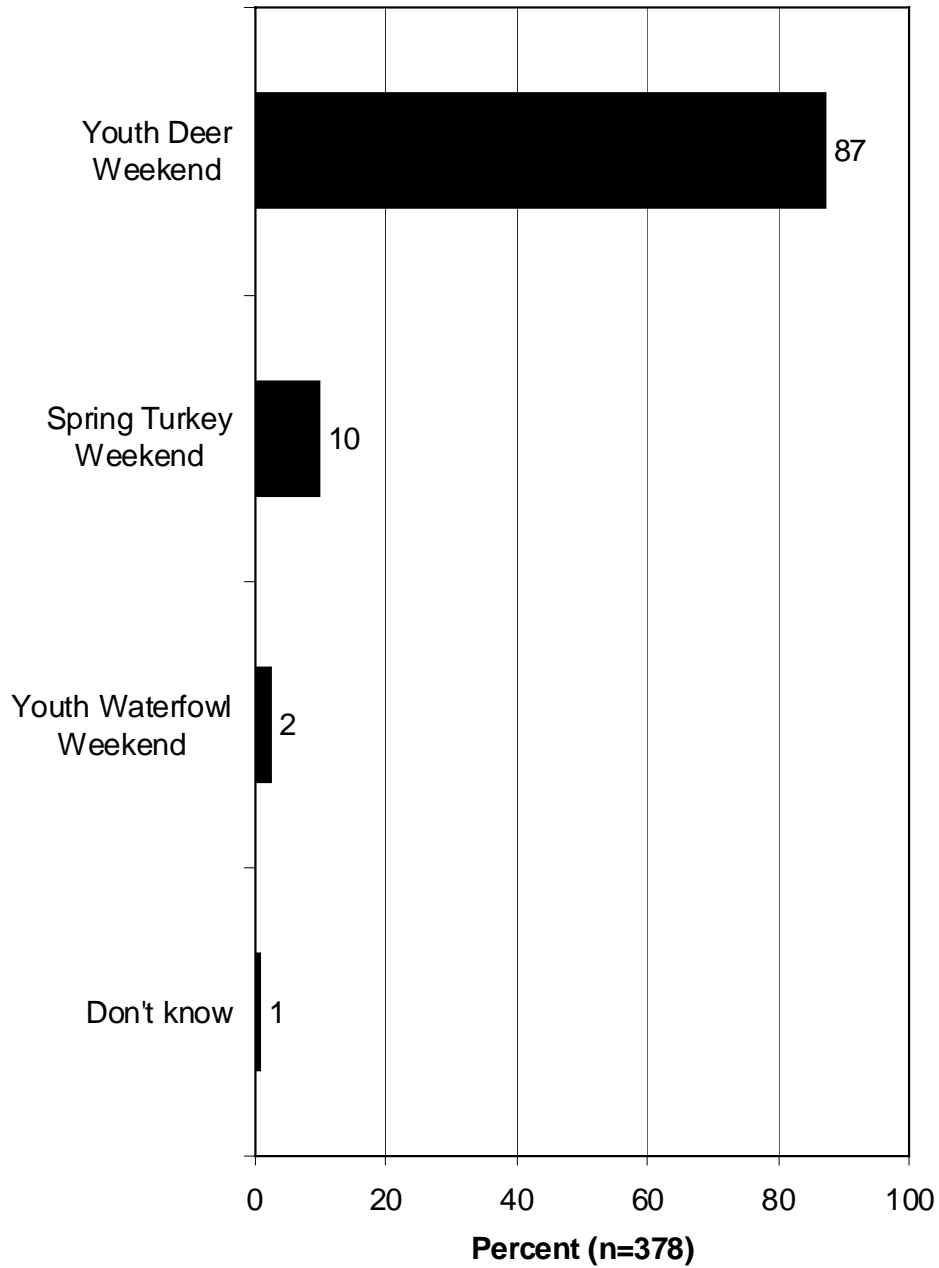
**Q49. Why didn't you hunt a Youth Weekend Hunt?
(Asked of those who did not hunt in a Youth
Weekend Hunt but were aware of them.) (Current
youth license holders.)**



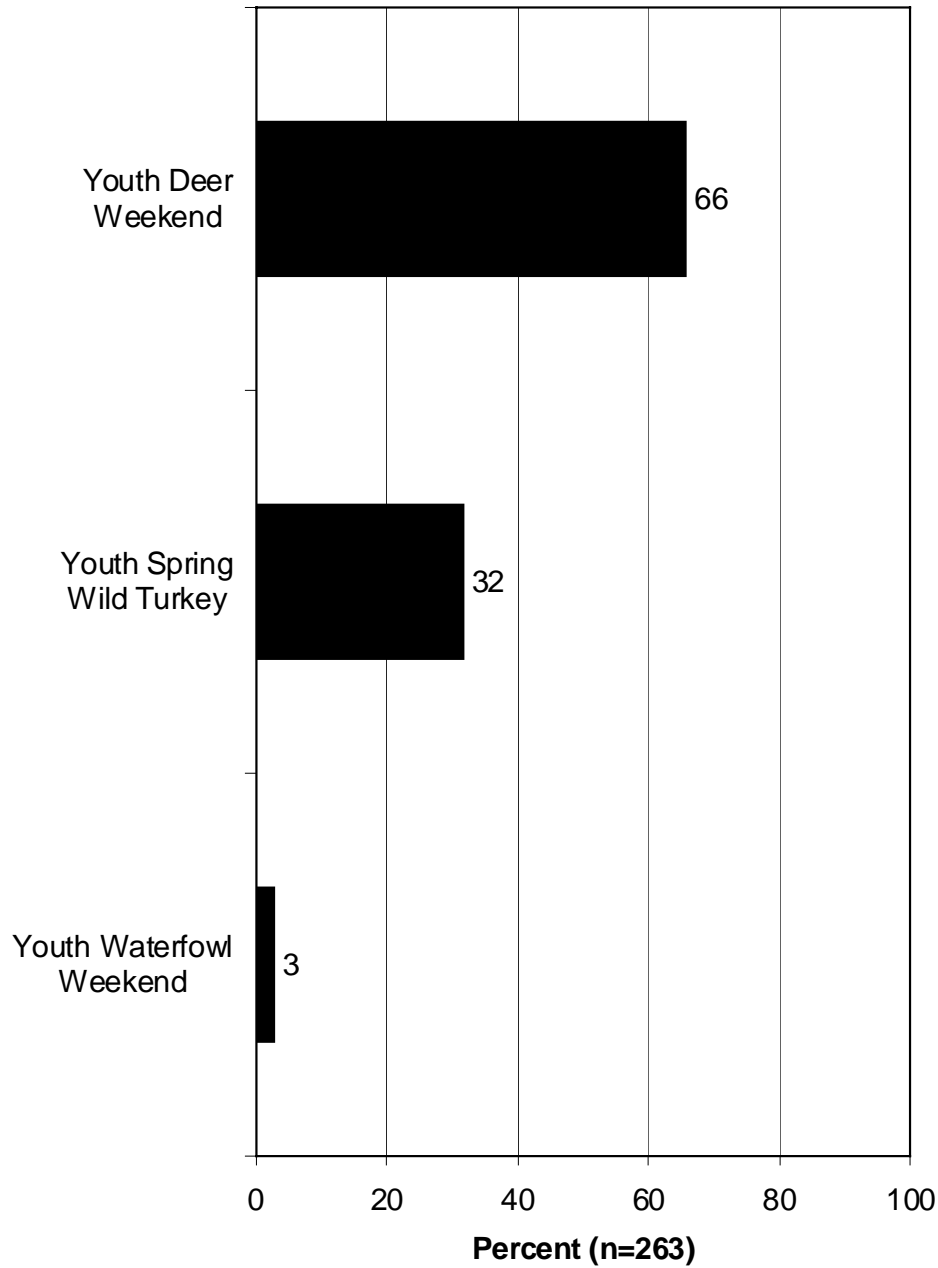
Q9. Have you ever hunted in Vermont during a Youth Spring Turkey Weekend, a Youth Waterfowl Weekend, or a Youth Deer Weekend? (Asked of those who have hunted in Vermont.) (Current youth license holders.)



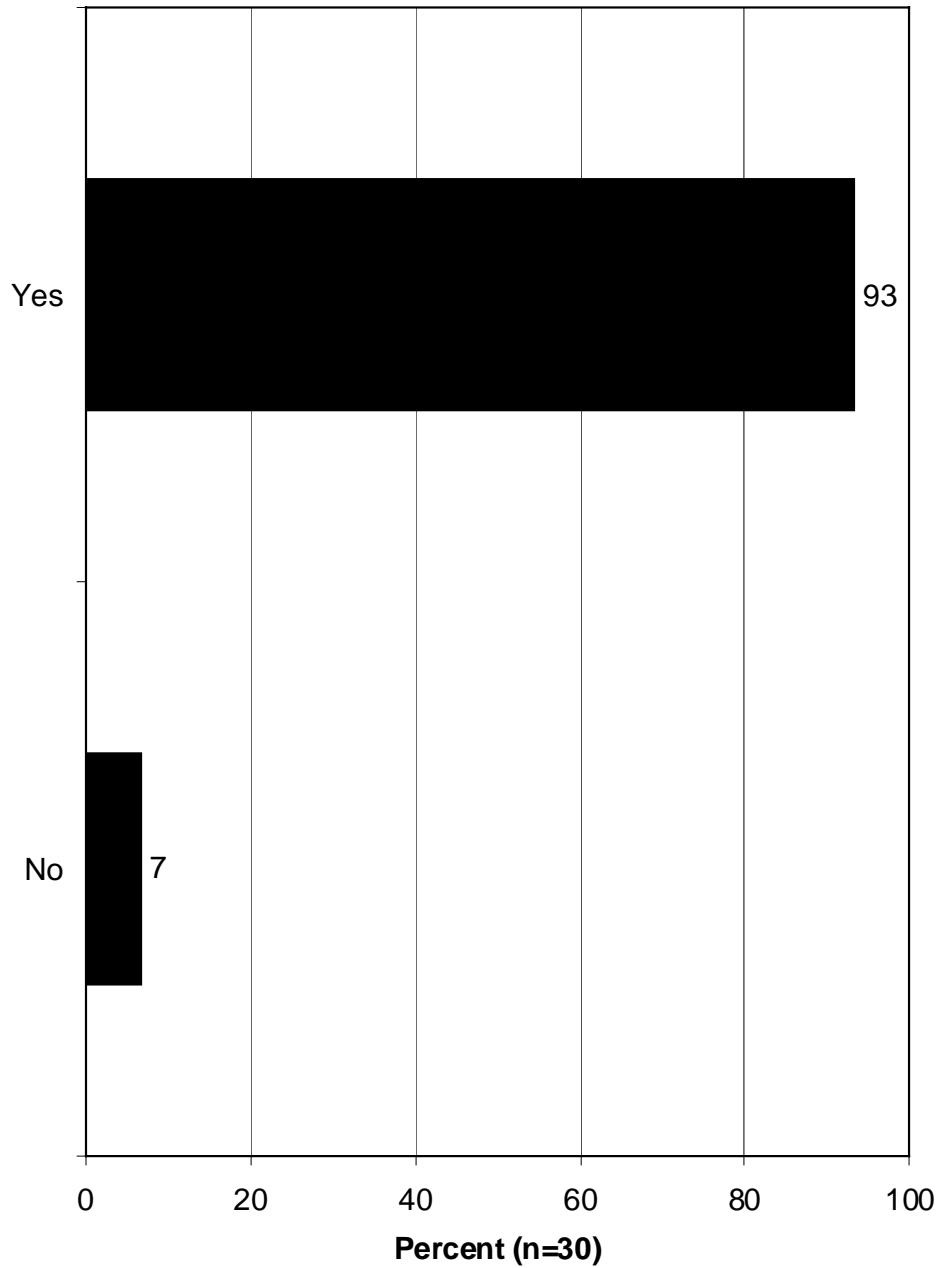
**Q15. Which was your first Youth Weekend Hunt?
(Asked of those who have been on a Youth
Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)**



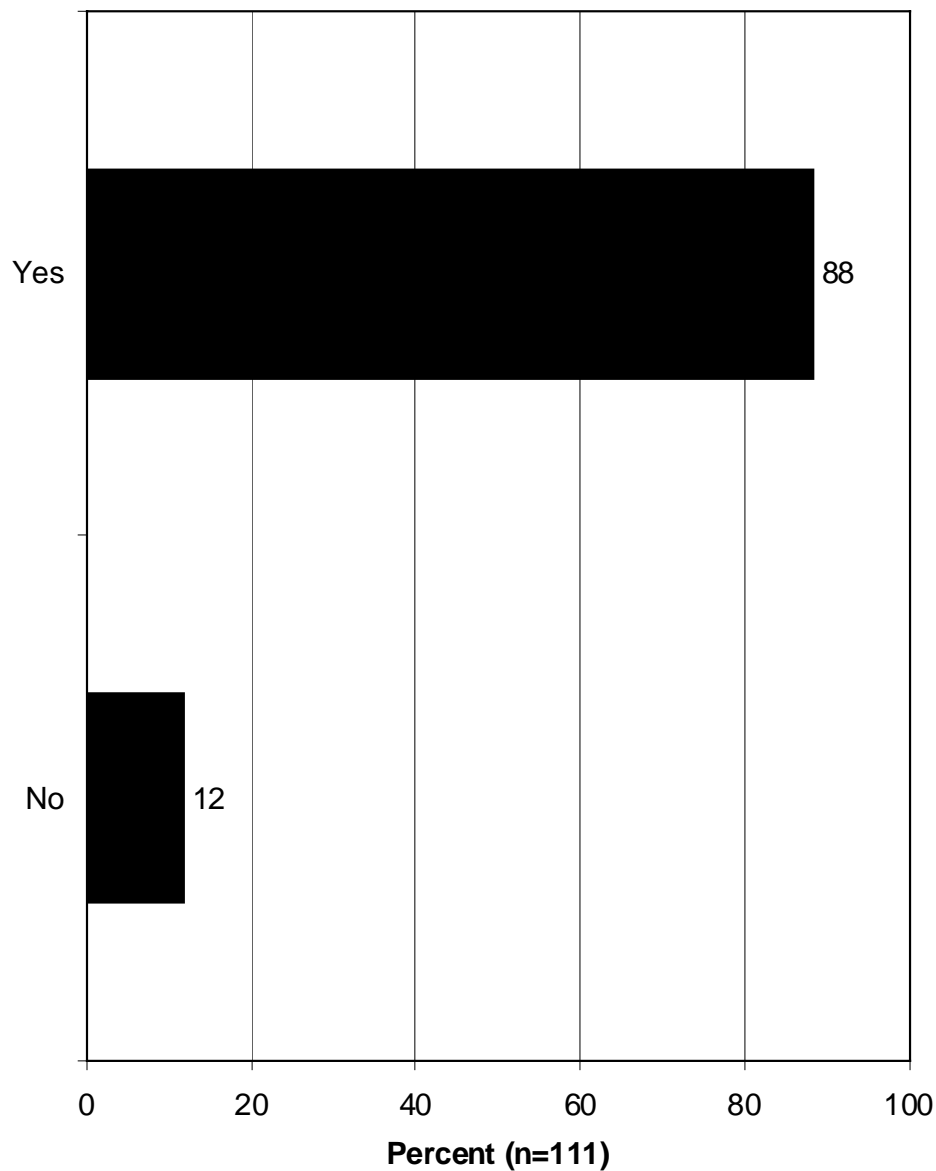
Q33. Which was your most recent Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who hunted more than one year on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)



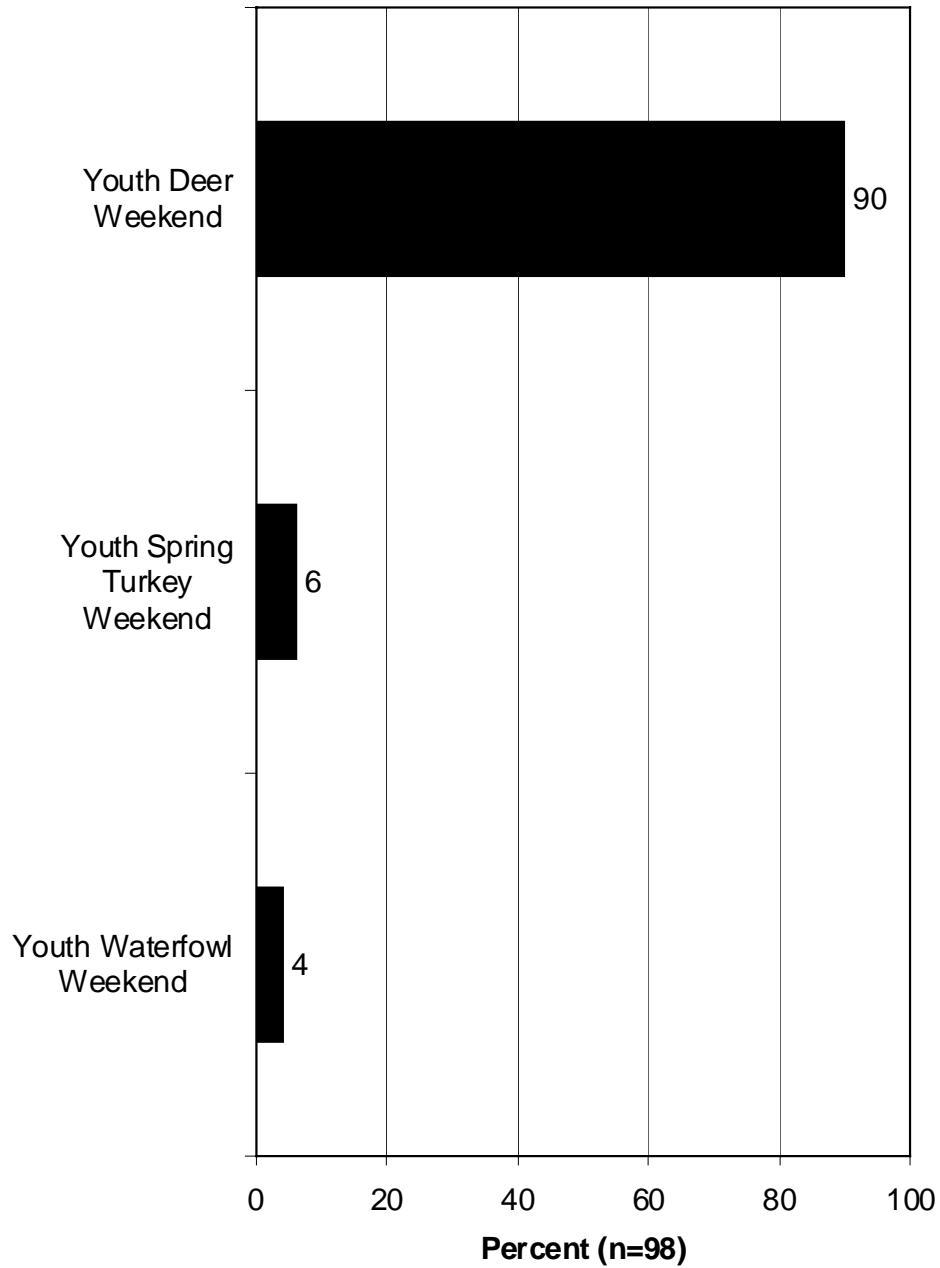
Q10. Prior to this survey, were you aware that Vermont has those Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who did not hunt in a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)



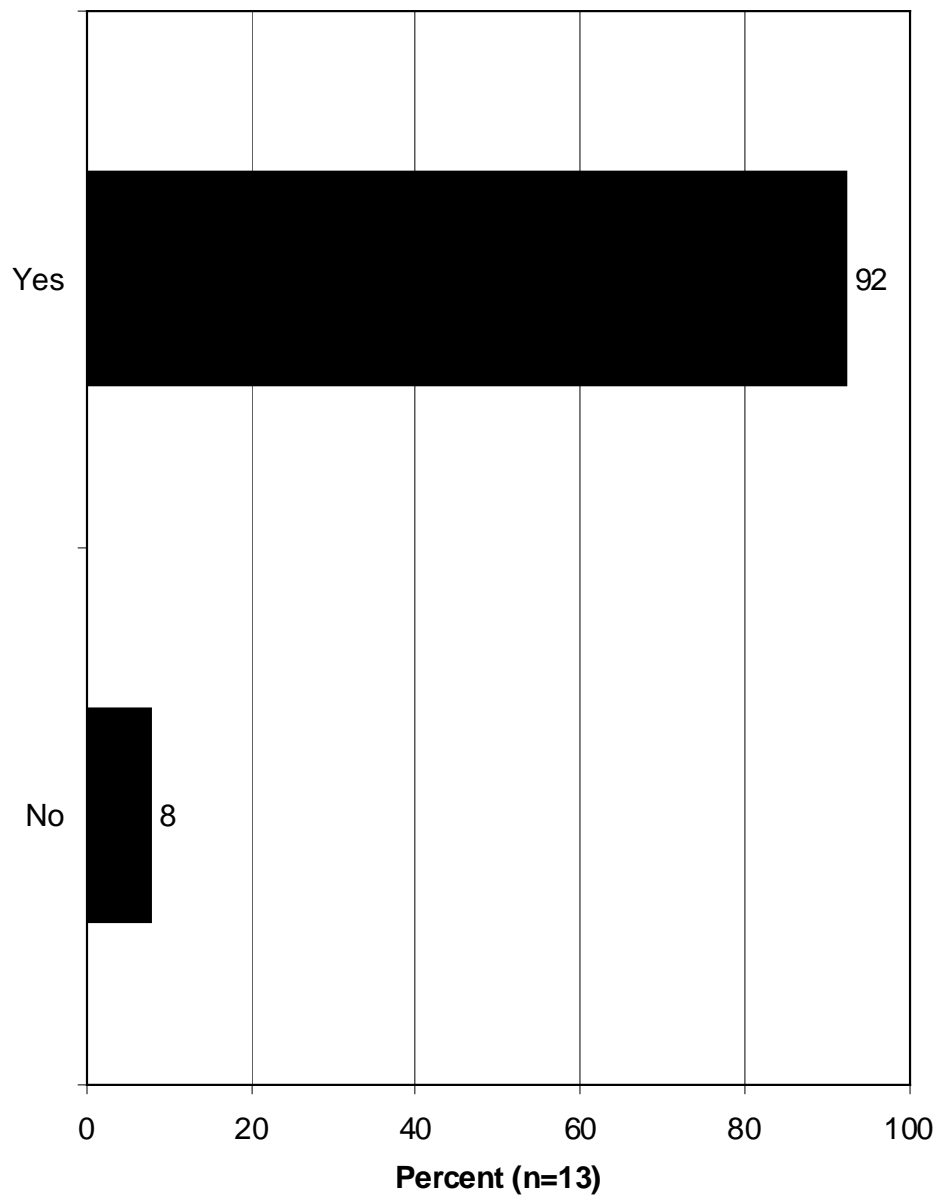
Q12. Did you in [2001/ year of first Youth hunting license] personally hunt or take someone hunting on the Youth Spring Turkey Weekend, the Youth Waterfowl Weekend, or the Youth Deer Weekend in Vermont? (2001 Youth License sample.)



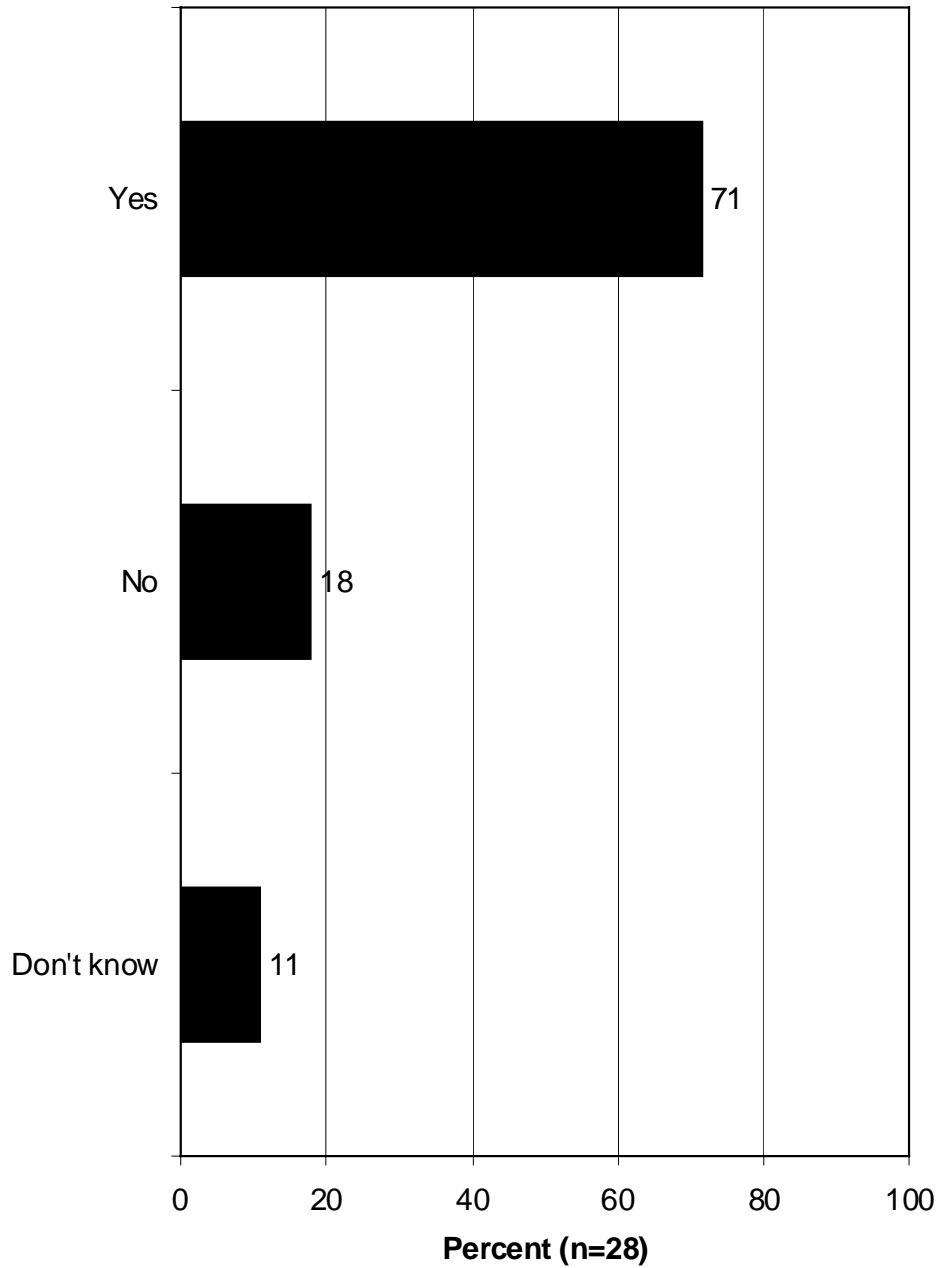
**Q24. Which Youth Weekend Hunt was your first?
(Asked of those who hunted a Youth Weekend
Hunt.) (2001 Youth License sample.)**



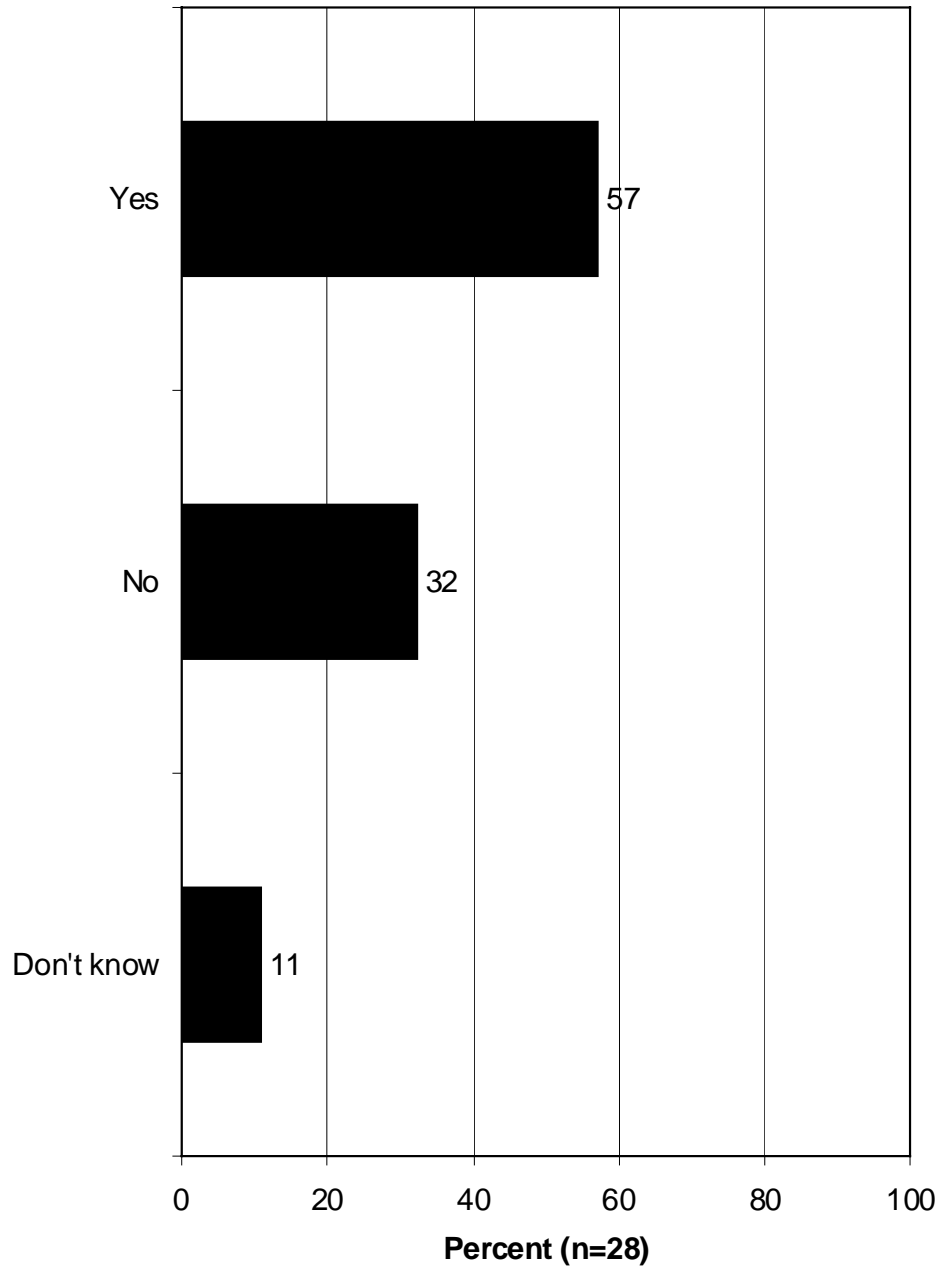
Q33. Prior to this survey, were you aware that Vermont has a Youth Spring Turkey Weekend, a Youth Waterfowl Weekend, or a Youth Deer Weekend? (Asked of those who did not hunt a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



Q50. Have any of your friends ever gone on a Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who did not hunt in a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)



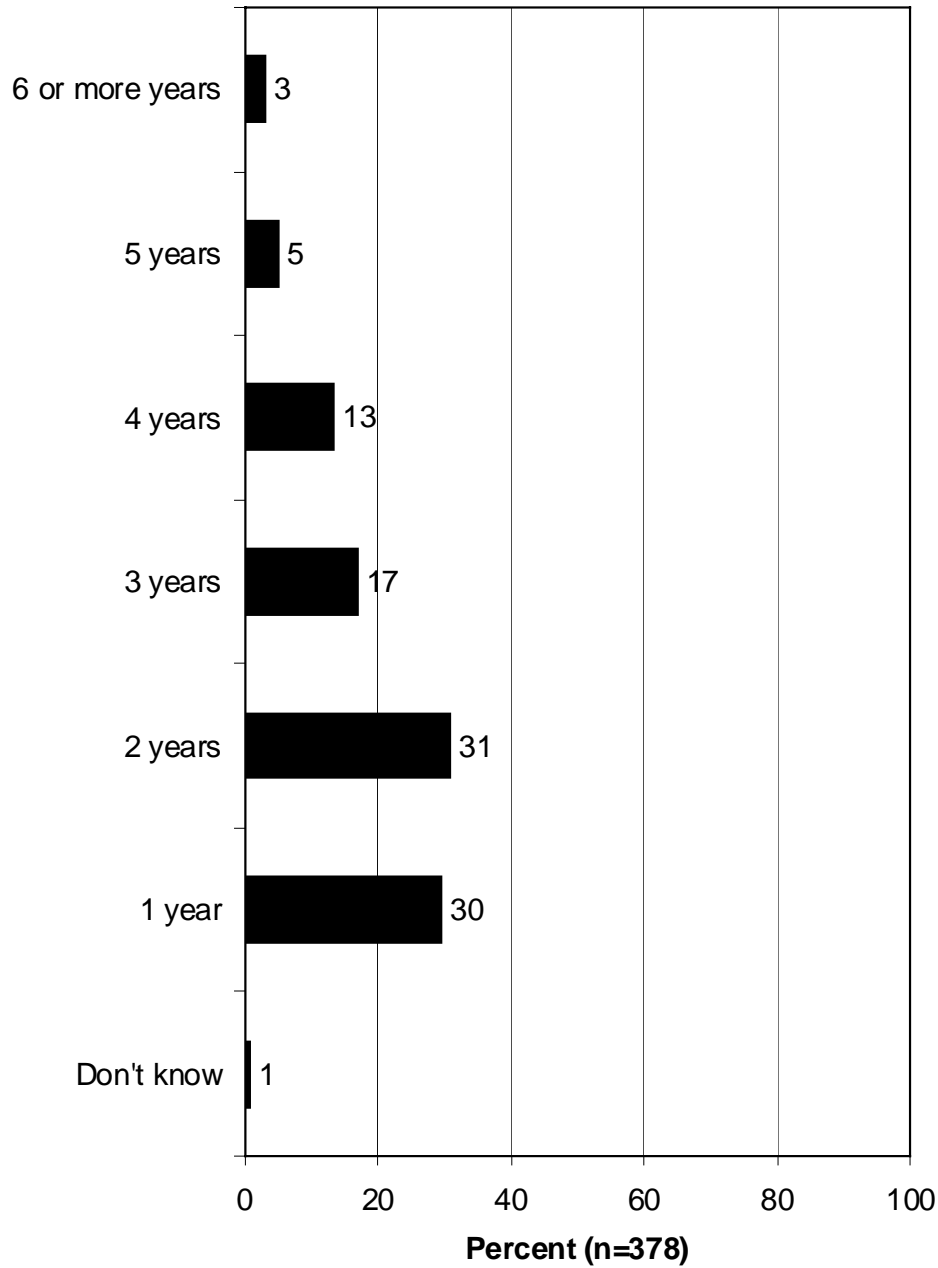
Q51. Have any family members ever gone on a Youth Weekend Hunt, either as the youth or as a mentor? (Asked of those who did not hunt in a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)



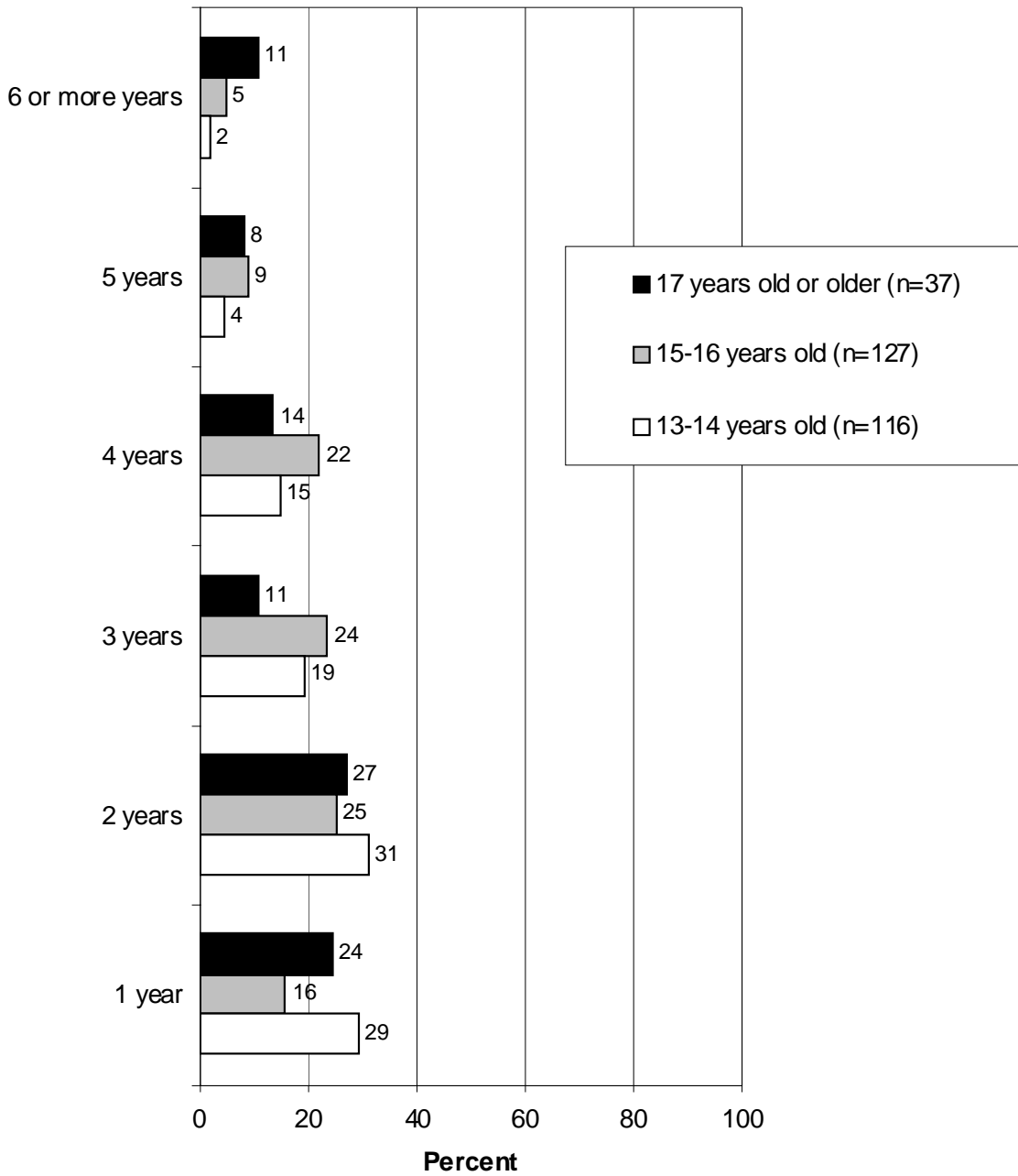
Hunting Avidity During Youth Weekend Hunts

- Among current youth license holders, the majority (61%) hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt only 1 or 2 years; meanwhile, 21% hunted more than 3 years. Of those from among the adult hunter sample who had gone on a Youth Weekend Hunt *as a youth* and *not as a mentor*, the majority (63%) had gone only 1 or 2 years of the past 5 years.
 - A crosstabulation of years of participation by age among current youth license holders shows that older youth (i.e., those who are old enough to have hunted for several years) have participated for slightly more years, but typically not more than 3 years.

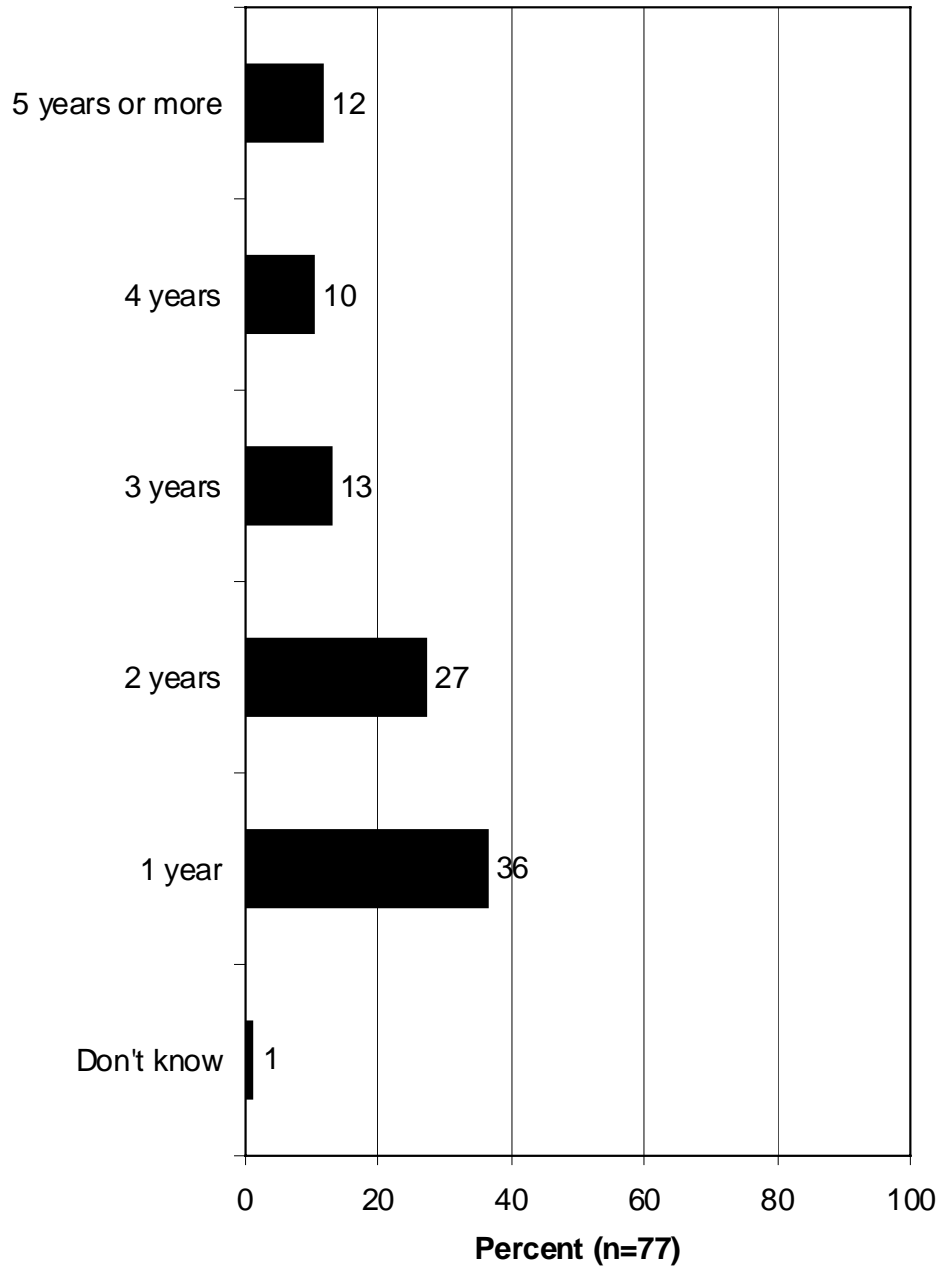
Q12. How many years have you been on a Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who have been on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)



**Years of participation in Youth Weekend Hunts
crosstabulated by age. (Current youth license
holders.)**



Q13. How many years have you gone on a Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who went on a Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



Species Sought and Harvested, Hunting Equipment, and License Types on Youth Weekend Hunts

- As discussed previously, the most popular first Youth Weekend Hunt is the Youth Deer Weekend. (These graphs are shown in the section of this report titled, “Overall Participation in Youth Weekend Hunts and Awareness.”) Furthermore, mentors most commonly reported that white-tailed deer were hunted on the Youth Weekend Hunts that they mentored (93% of mentors took youth on deer hunts). Note that nearly a third of mentors (31%) took youth on wild turkey hunts. (This graph is shown in the section of this report titled, “Mentoring During Youth Weekend Hunts.”)

- A crosstabulation shows that harvest success among current youth license holders is similar for both deer (25% of deer hunters harvested deer) and wild turkey (27% of wild turkey hunters harvested wild turkey) on the first Youth Weekend Hunt. (Note that only 9 respondents reported participating in a Youth Waterfowl Weekend as their first Youth Weekend Hunt; 6 harvested and 3 did not. Because of the low sample size, however, the harvest success rate could not be determined with accuracy.) Harvest success increases just slightly on the most recent Youth Weekend Hunt among current youth license holders who participated in more than one, but is still well less than a majority: 30% harvest rate for deer, and 33% harvest rate for wild turkey.

- The majority of mentors (56%) indicate that game was at least sometimes harvested on the Youth Weekend Hunts in which the hunter had mentored a youth, while 35% report that no game was harvested (this graph is shown in the section of this report titled, “Mentoring During Youth Weekend Hunts”). While the rate of harvest success appears higher when mentors are asked relative to when youth are asked, it may be because the youth participants were asked about *one specific year* of Youth Weekend Hunts, while mentors were asked about *any* of the Youth Weekend Hunts in which they had participated, so mentors are considering more hunts in the question.

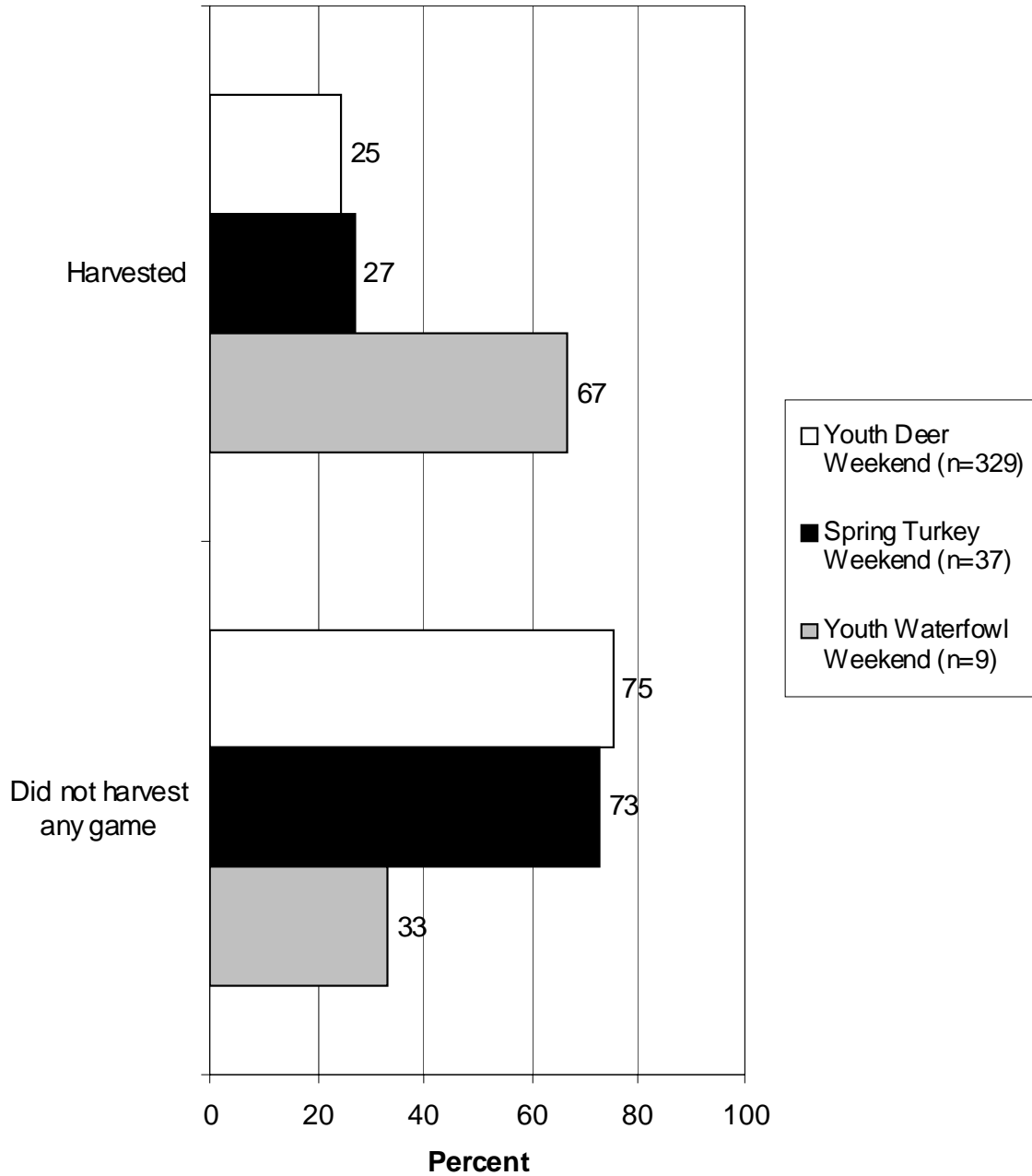
- Although not specific to Youth Weekend Hunts, 2001 youth license holders were asked about their harvest of game at any time: three-quarters (75%) have harvested game in

Vermont. White-tailed deer is the most common harvested game (65% had harvested them), followed by wild turkey (25%) and ruffed grouse (20%).

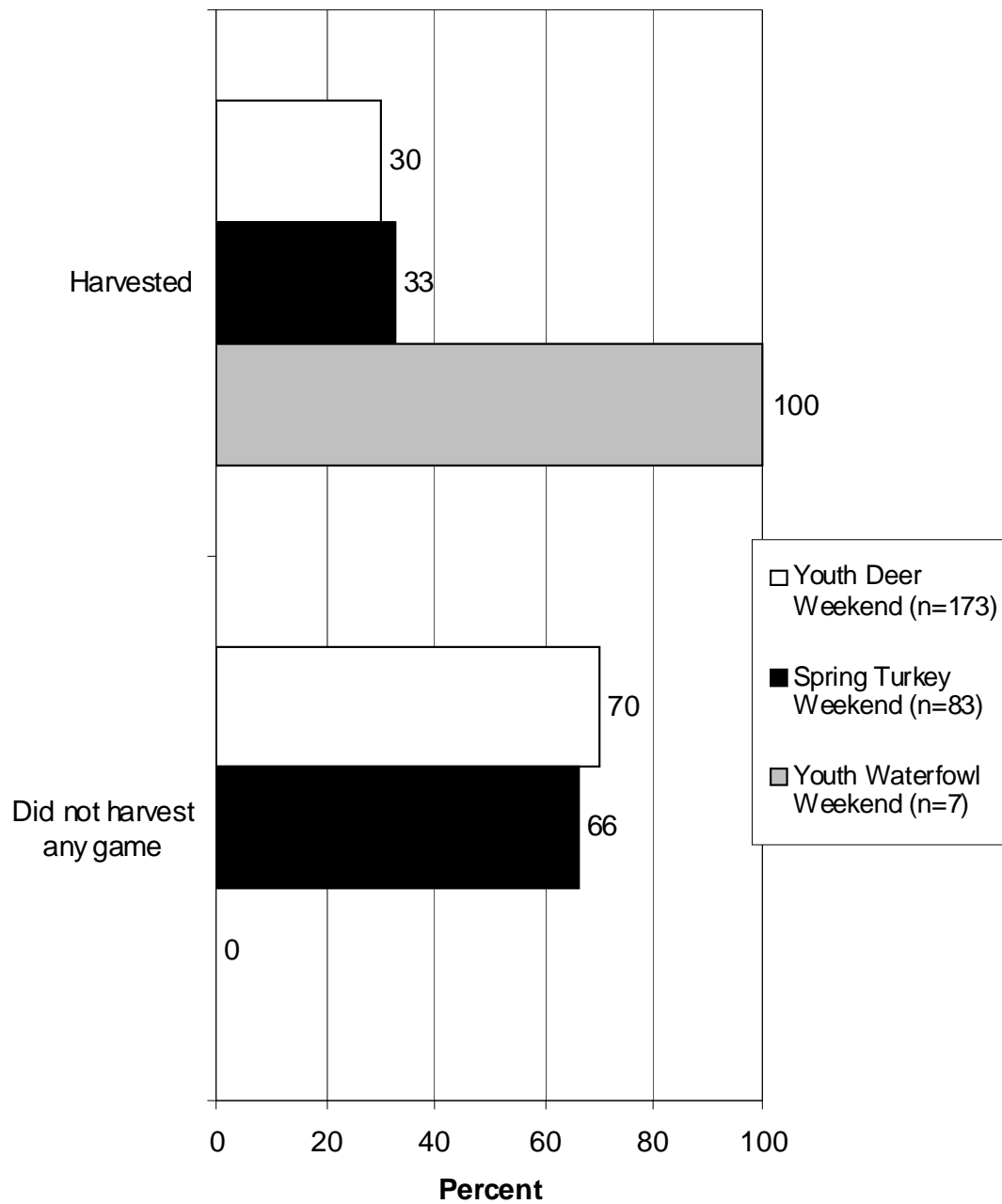
- Rifles (83%) were the most common type of equipment used on Youth Weekend Hunts among adult hunting license holders who had hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth, with shotgun (19%) a distant second. In a question of those adult hunting license holders who had participated in more than one year of Youth Weekend Hunts, the results are similar for their most recent year of Youth Weekend Hunts. Finally, rifles were the most common type of equipment used by 2001 youth license holders on their first Youth Weekend Hunt (84%).

- License types of adult hunting license holders who had participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt (the license they held at the time of their first Youth Weekend Hunt) are shown, with Youth Hunting and Youth Combination being the most common. In a question of those who had participated in more than one year of Youth Weekend Hunts, the results are similar for their most recent year of Youth Weekend Hunts. Among current youth license holders, Youth Combination, “regular” Hunting, and Youth Weekend Hunting licenses are the most common for their most recent year of hunting (note that “current” refers to the 2006 season; respondents may have obtained a new license for the 2007 season). Finally, among 2001 youth license holders, the licenses they held *the last time they hunted* (which may be subsequent to 2001 and subsequent to their eligibility for a youth license) are shown, with Hunting and Combination being the most common.

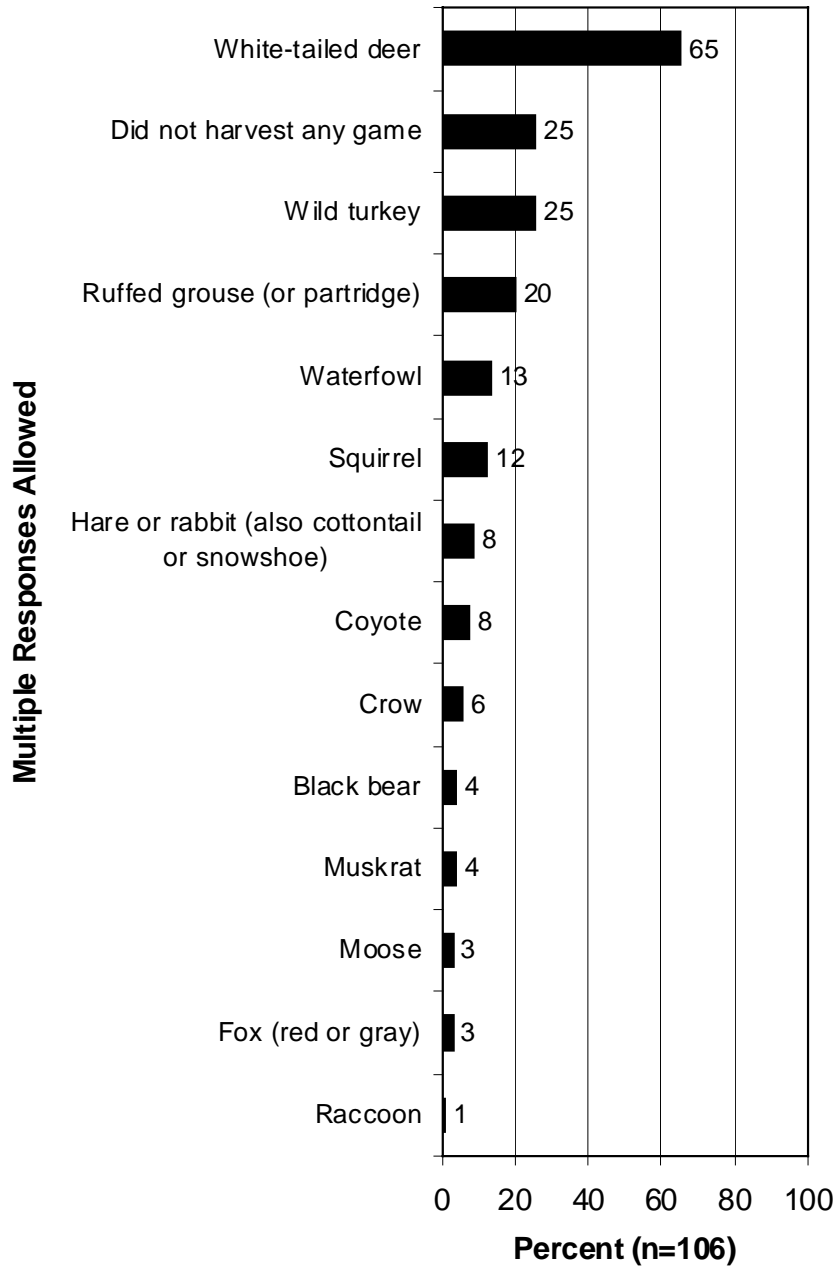
Harvest rate on first Youth Weekend Hunt by type of game hunted. (Current youth license holders.)



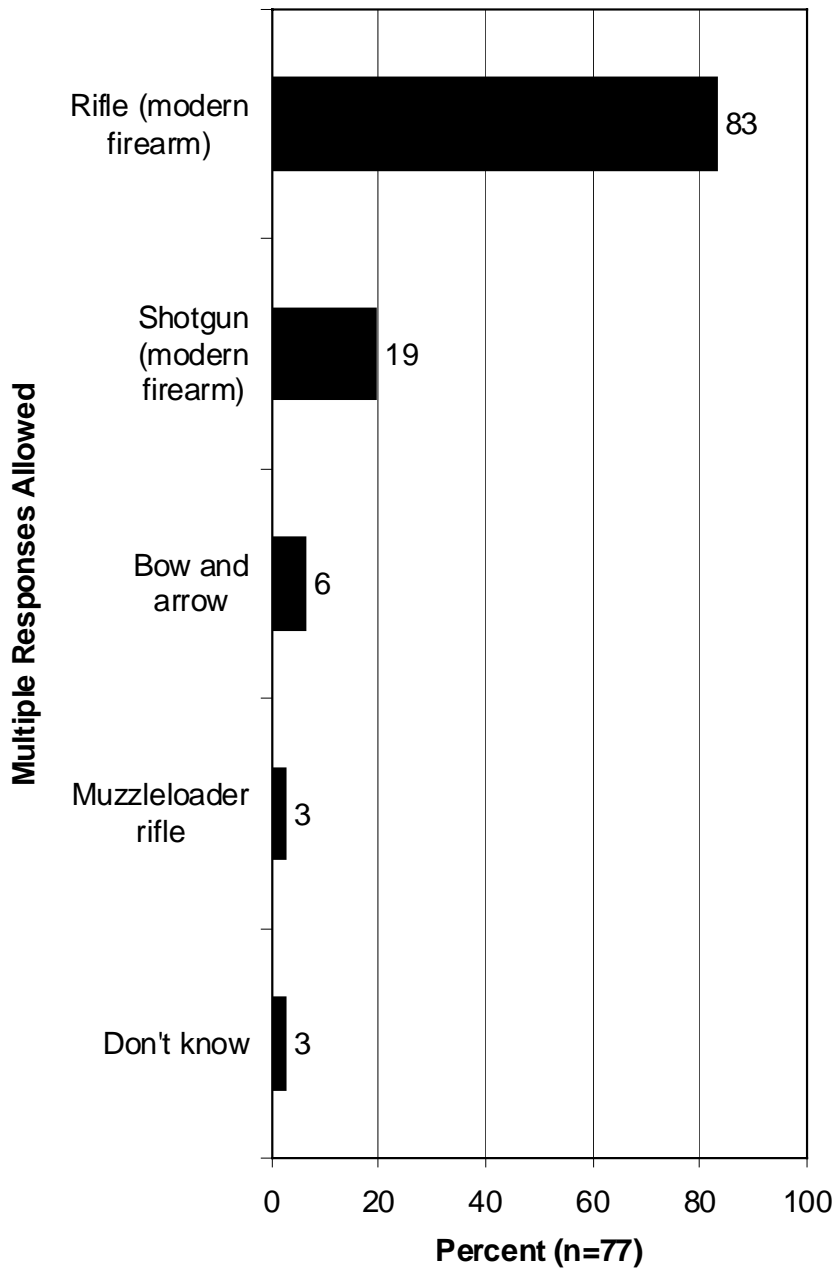
Harvest rate on most recent Youth Weekend Hunt by type of game hunted. (Current youth license holders.)



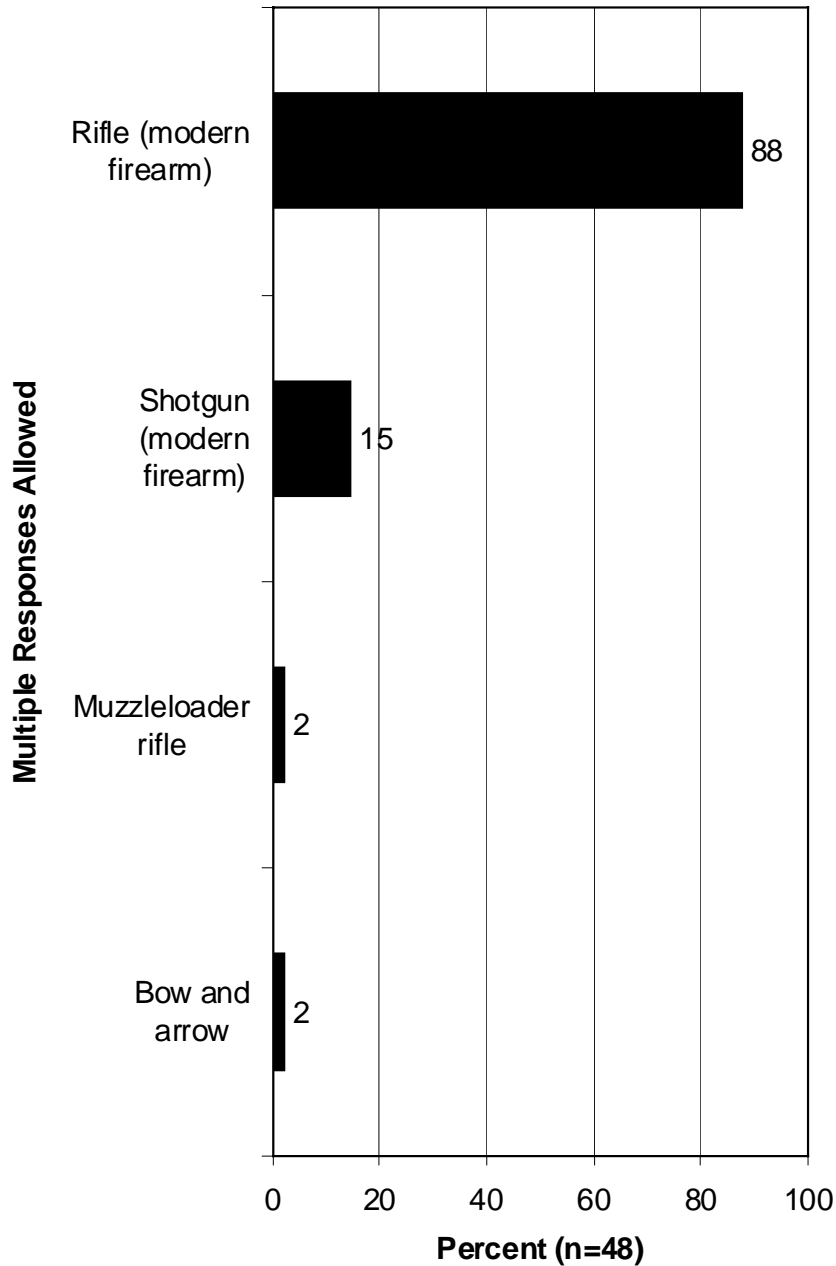
Q40. Have you harvested game in Vermont? (Asked of those who hunted since the year of their Youth Hunt license.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



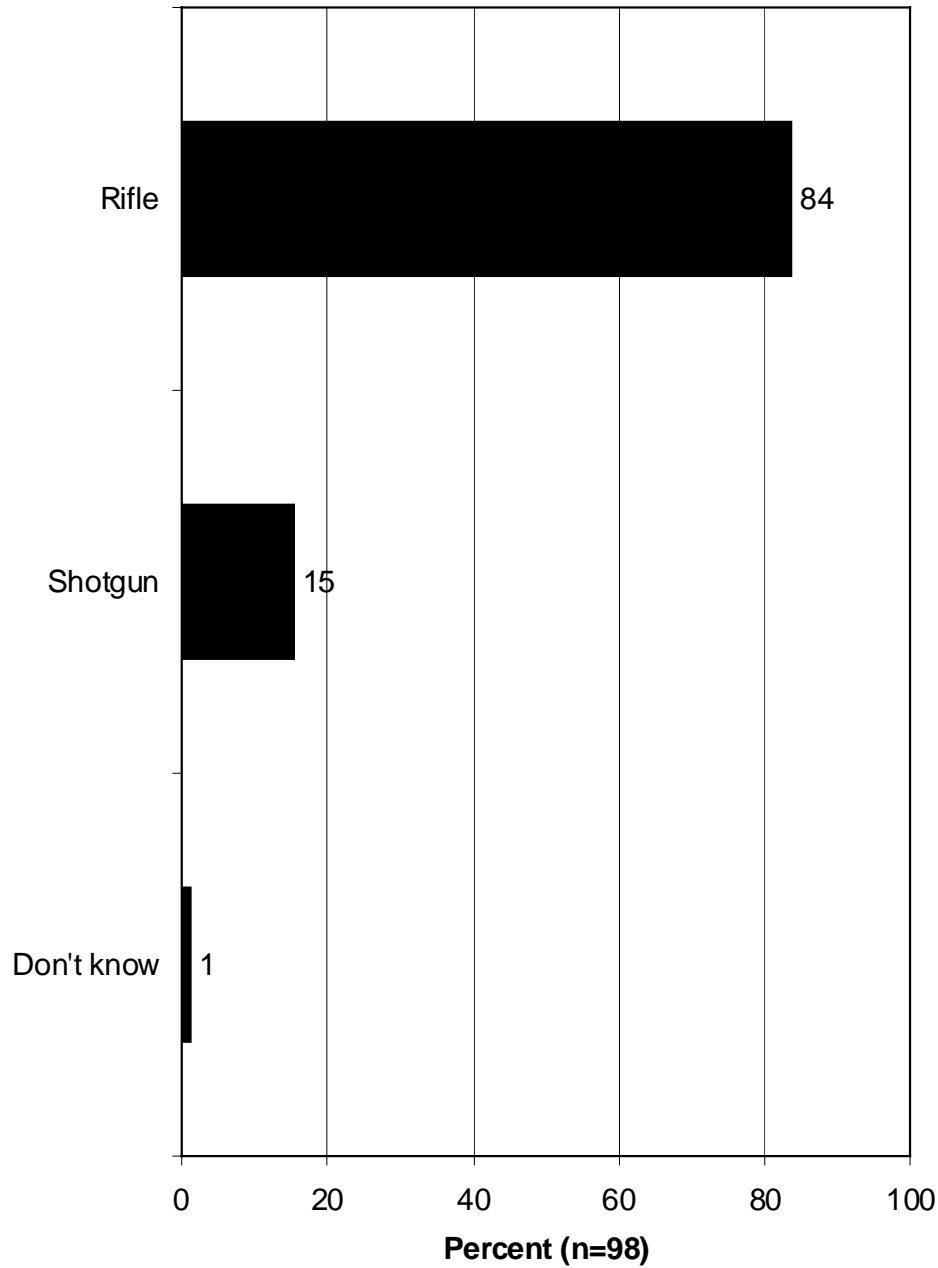
**Q23. What type of hunting equipment did you hunt with in your first year of Youth Weekend Hunts?
(Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth.) (Adult hunting license holders.)**



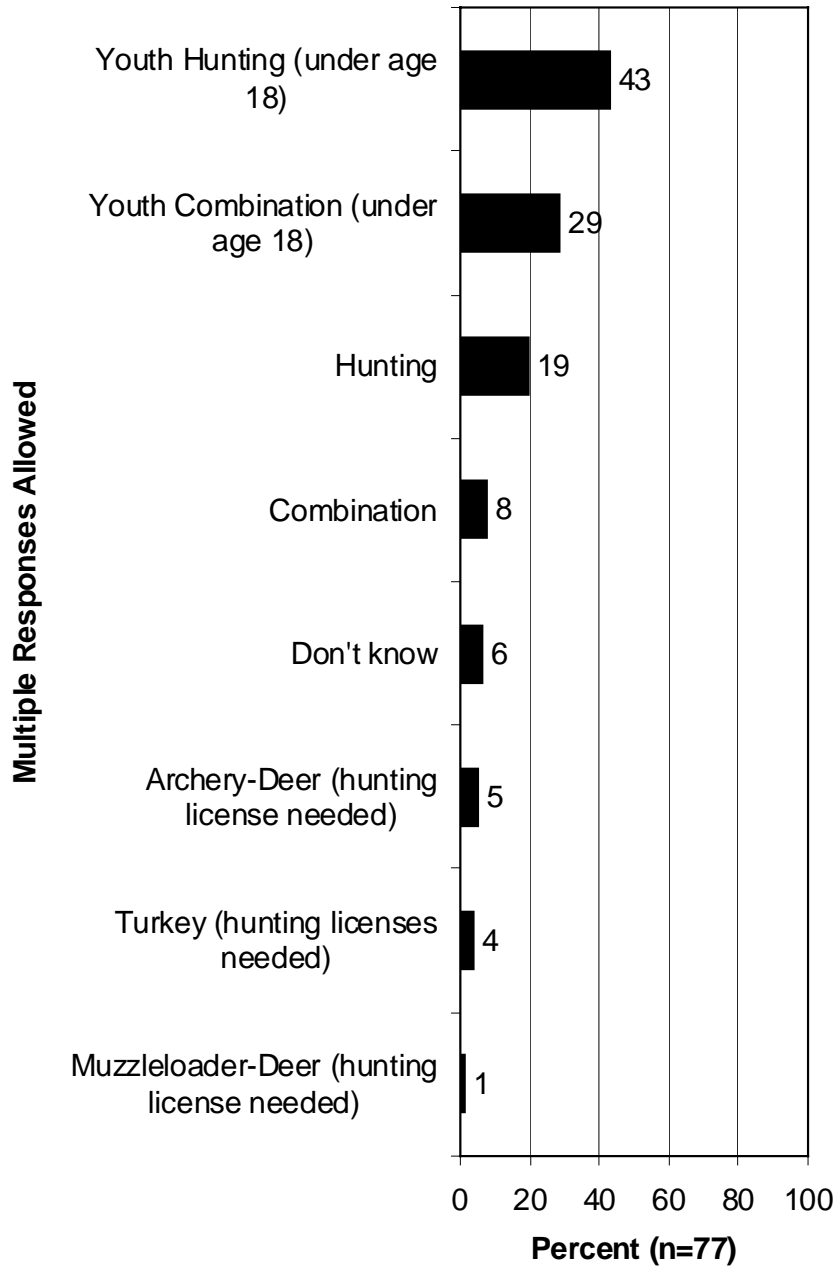
Q38. What type of hunting equipment did you hunt with during your most recent year of Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



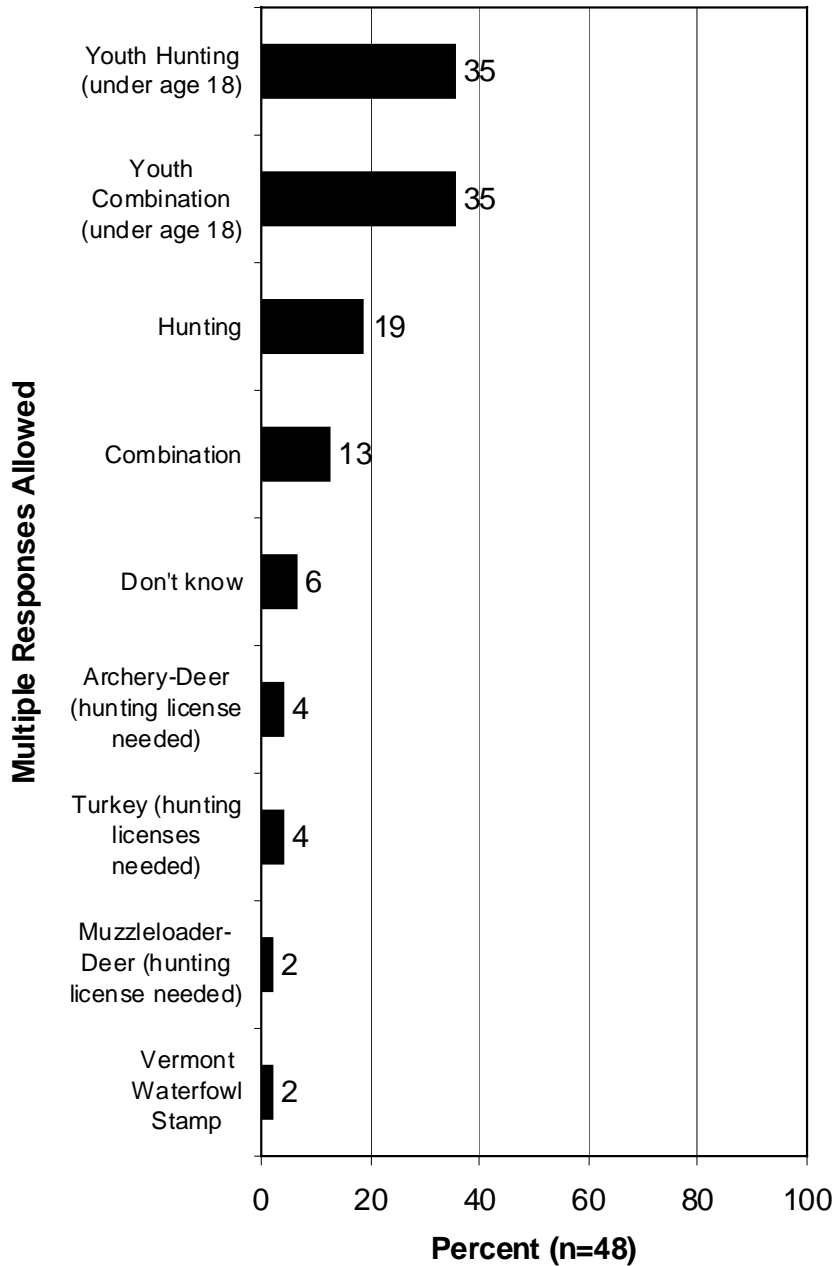
Q26. What type of hunting equipment did you use on your first Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



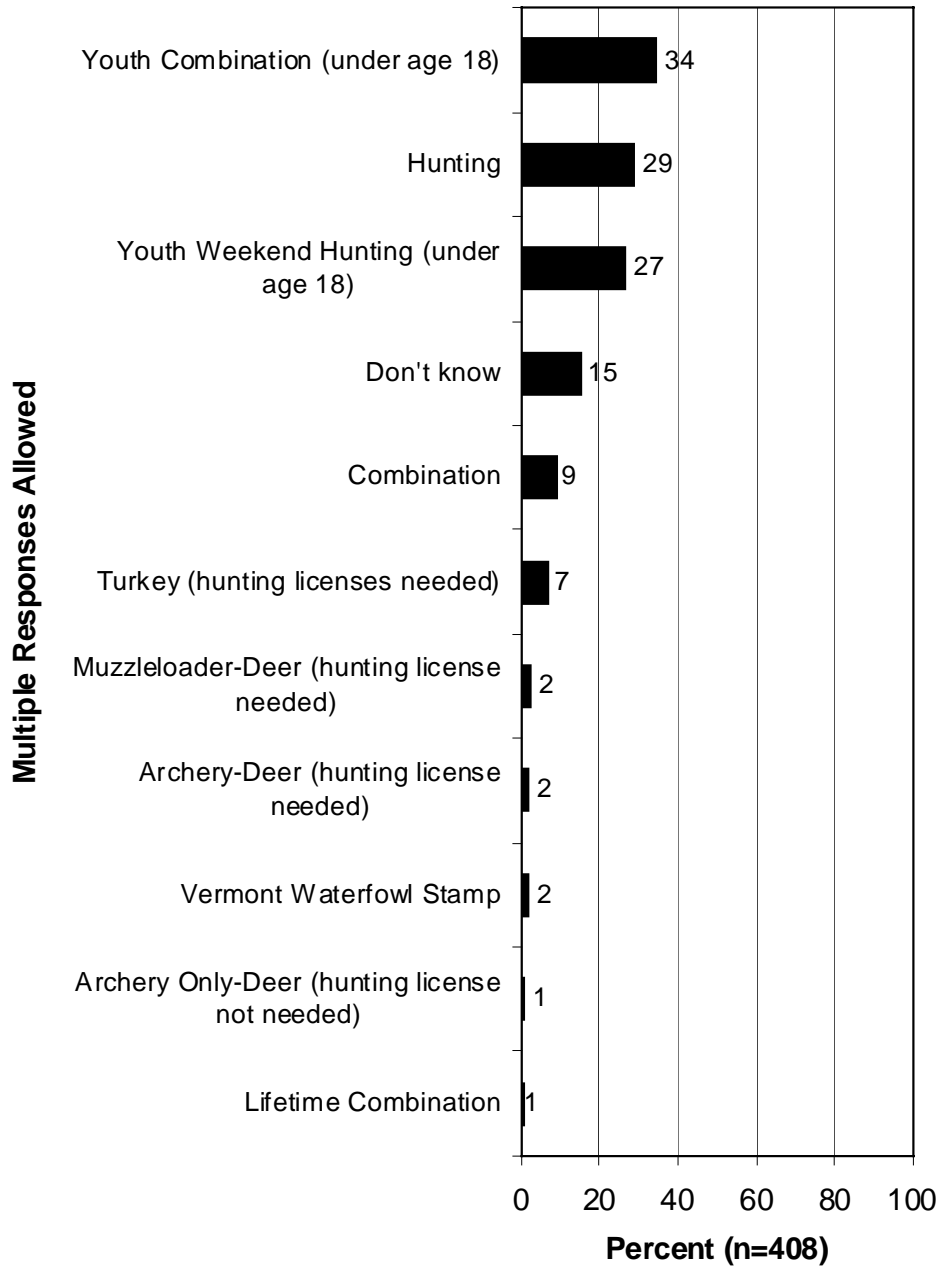
Q26. What types of Vermont hunting licenses did you have in your first year of Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



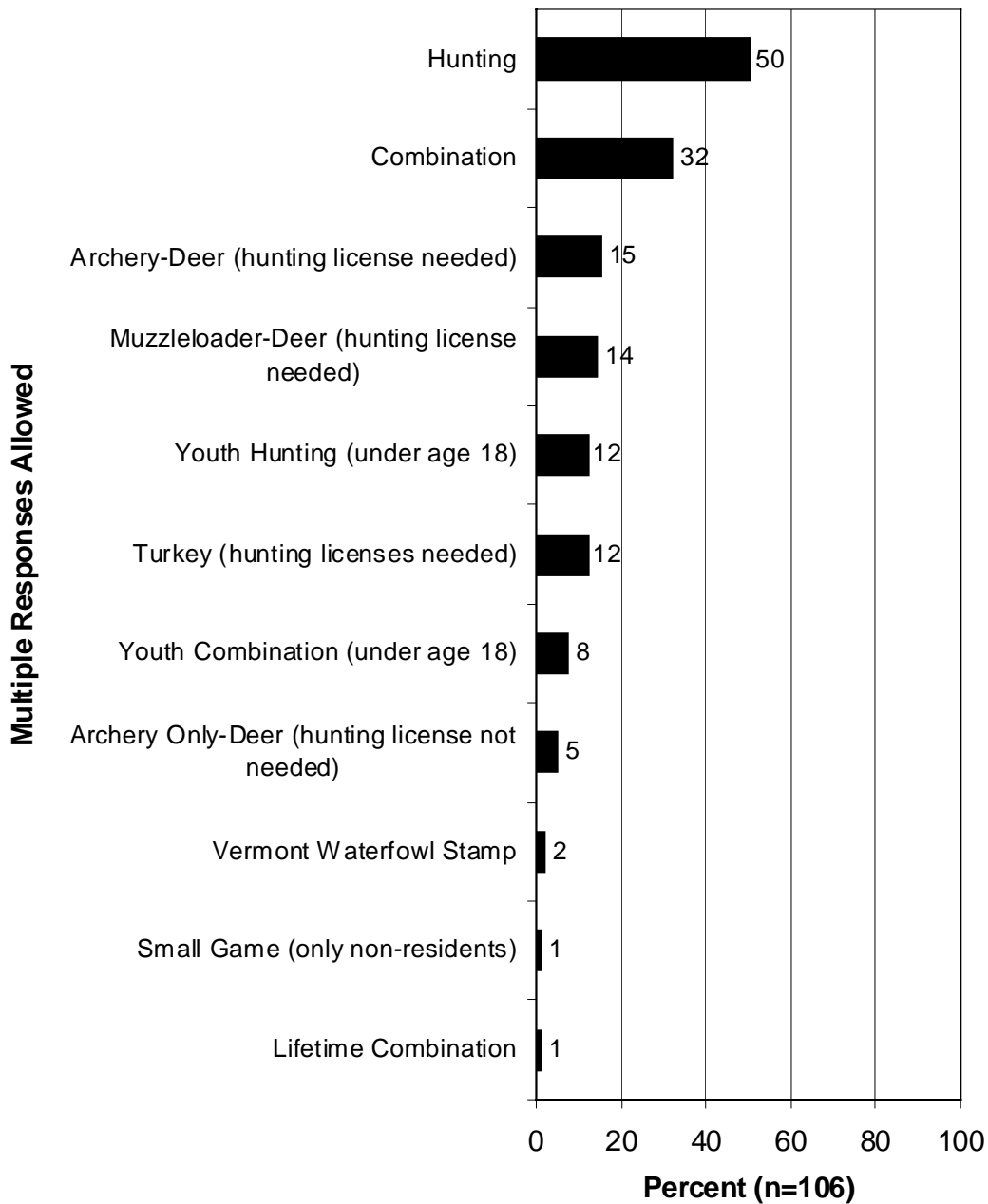
Q41. What types of Vermont hunting licenses did you have during your most recent year of Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



**Q79. In the most recent year you hunted, what types of Vermont hunting licenses did you have?
(Current youth license holders.)**



Q46. What types of Vermont hunting licenses did you have the last year you hunted in Vermont? (Asked of those who hunted since the year of their Youth Hunt license.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



Satisfactions and Dissatisfaction with and Constraints to Youth Weekend Hunting

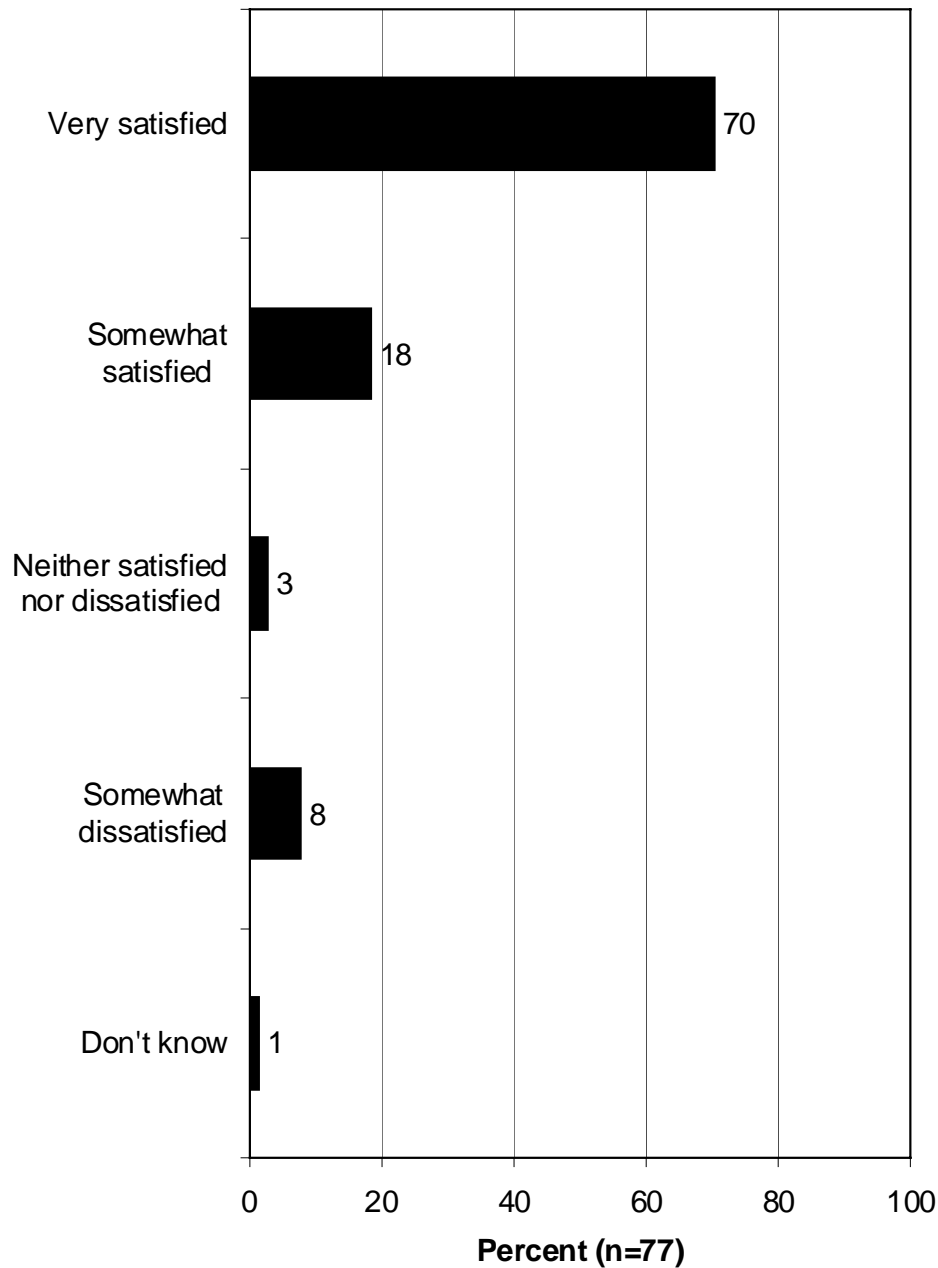
- Satisfaction with the first year of Youth Weekend Hunts was high among the adult hunting license holders who had hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth: 70% were *very* satisfied, and 88% were very or somewhat satisfied. A crosstabulation found that satisfaction was also high among those who did not harvest game (it was conjectured that satisfaction might be related to harvest—and there was a slight correlation between satisfaction and harvest success, but not a strong correlation). Satisfaction was also high for the most recent year of Youth Weekend Hunts, among those adult hunting license holders who had participated in more than one year of the Youth Weekend Hunts. Furthermore, 79% indicated that the Youth Weekend Hunt made them want to keep hunting “a lot,” and 95% indicated that the Youth Weekend Hunt made them want to continue hunting “a lot” or “a little.” A crosstabulation found little difference in future desires among those who harvested versus those who did not harvest game.

- Satisfaction was high with their first Youth Weekend Hunt among current youth license holders: 89% said that they were very or somewhat satisfied. Satisfaction was also high for the most recent Youth Weekend Hunt for those who had been on more than one. The large majority (87%) said their first Youth Weekend Hunt made them want to keep hunting “a lot,” while another 11% said it made them want to keep hunting “a little.”
 - When asked what they liked about the Youth Weekend Hunt that they hunted, current youth license holders most often said being out in nature or being outdoors (46%), followed by being with their father and/or other family (22%). A general liking of hunting was expressed by 17%, and 13% said they liked harvesting game. Respondents gave similar answers regarding their most recent Youth Weekend Hunt.
 - Among 2001 youth license holders who had hunted a youth hunt, being outdoors or in nature and/or seeing game and wildlife (45%) was the top answer regarding what they liked about the Youth Weekend Hunt, followed by having a better chances of harvest/that the hunt areas are not crowded (32%), harvesting game (24%), and being with family (19%).

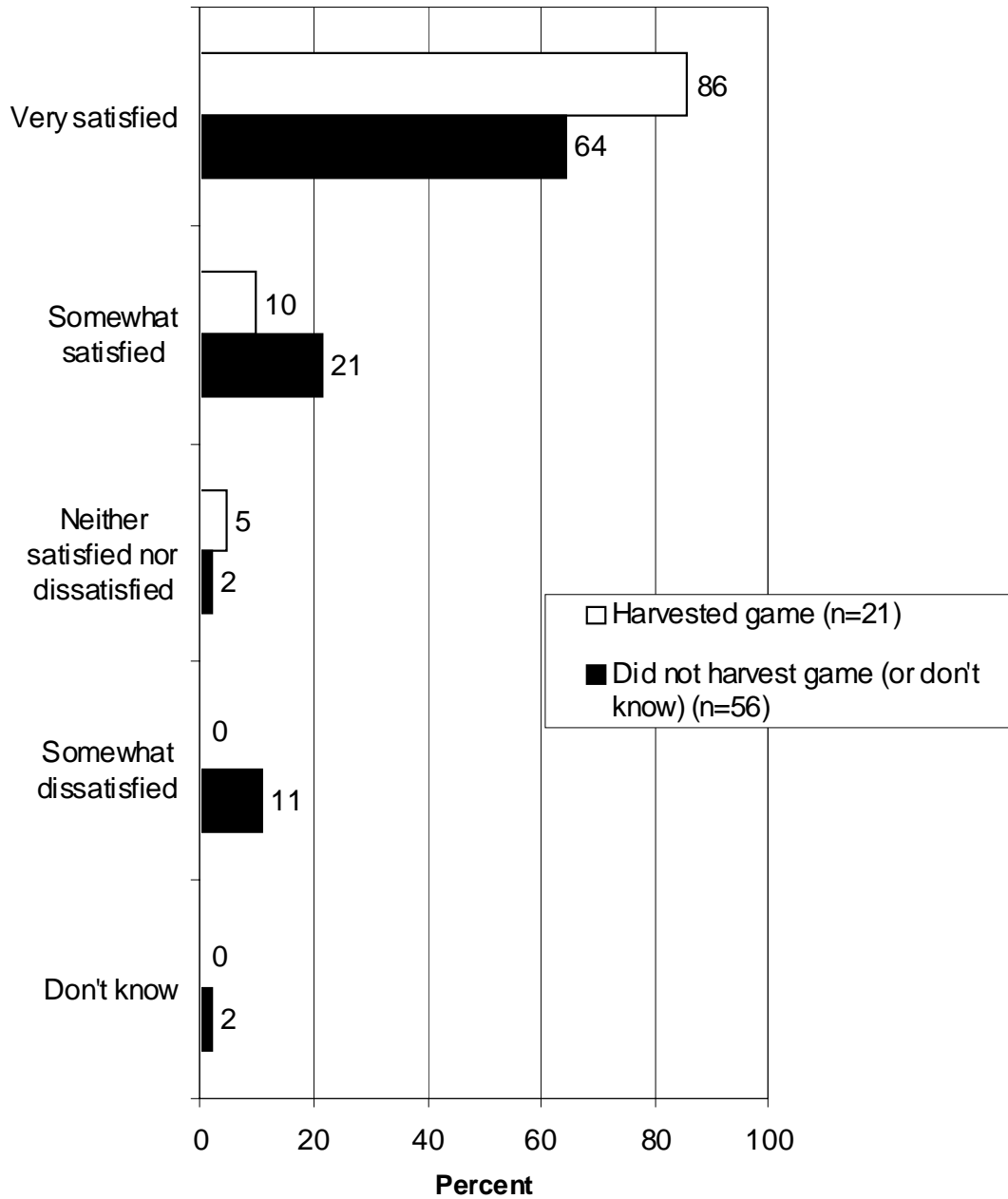
- Satisfaction with their first Youth Weekend Hunt was high among 2001 youth license holders who had been on one (note that 2001 was not necessarily their first Youth Weekend Hunt; the question asked specifically about “your first Youth Weekend Hunt”): 92% were very or somewhat satisfied, with 63% being *very* satisfied. Furthermore, 2001 youth license holders who had been on a Youth Weekend Hunt overwhelmingly (96%) said that their first Youth Weekend Hunt made them want to continue hunting.
- Another indication of the high satisfaction rate is that mentors most often said that the youth whom they mentored continued to hunt after the Youth Weekend Hunt: 77% said the youth(s) continued to hunt, with another 13% who said that at least some of the youths continued to hunt. Only 7% said that the youth(s) did not continue to hunt. (This graph is shown in the section of this report titled, “Mentoring During Youth Weekend Hunts.”)
- The survey asked mentors from among the adult hunting license holders about whether anything had prevented them from taking youth on a Youth Weekend Hunt. The majority (58%) indicated that nothing had prevented them; otherwise, the most common answers were time constraints because of work (including two respondents who had military duties) (18%), not having youth to take (6%), time constraints because of family (6%), and youth not being ready or old enough (4%). Note that “not having youth to take” were distinct in the analysis from “youth not being ready or old enough”—the latter group representing a short-term constraint; together, 10% did not have a youth to take hunting.
- The survey also asked them whether anything had taken away from their enjoyment of Youth Weekend Hunts on which they have taken youth, even if it didn’t prevent them from going. The majority (66%) answered that nothing had taken away enjoyment. Otherwise, the top answers were access (9%), poor behavior of other hunters (6%), and lack of game (5%)—typical factors brought up when hunters are hunting outside of mentoring situations.
- The survey of current youth license holders asked those who had participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt about the difficulty in finding land on which to hunt: the overwhelming majority (80%) said it was not difficult at all. Those who had been on more than one Youth

Weekend Hunt were asked about the difficulty of finding land on their most recent Youth Weekend Hunt, and again 80% said it was not difficult at all. Difficulty finding land for Youth Weekend Hunts does not appear to be a great dissatisfaction.

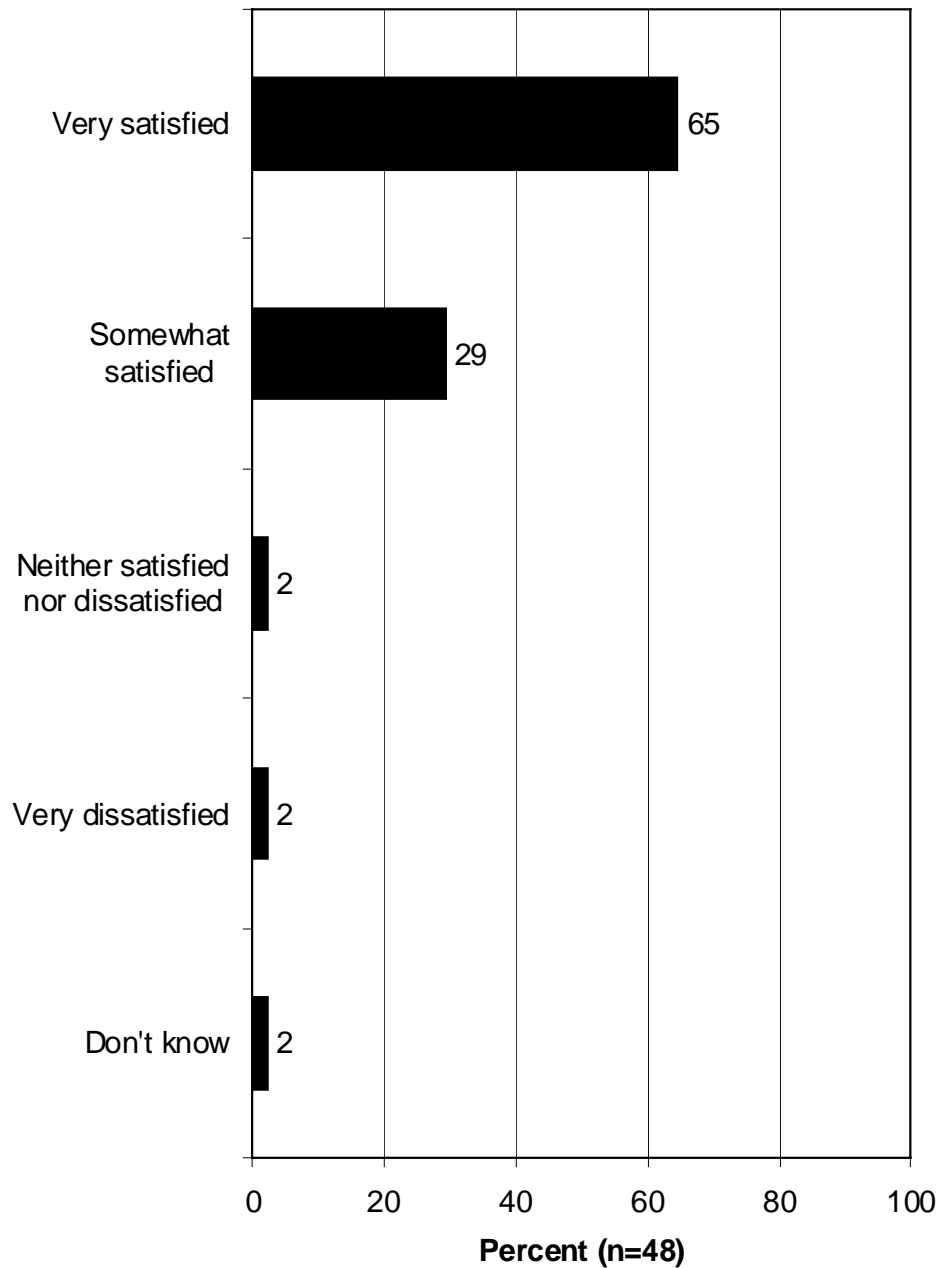
Q27. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your hunting in your first year of Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



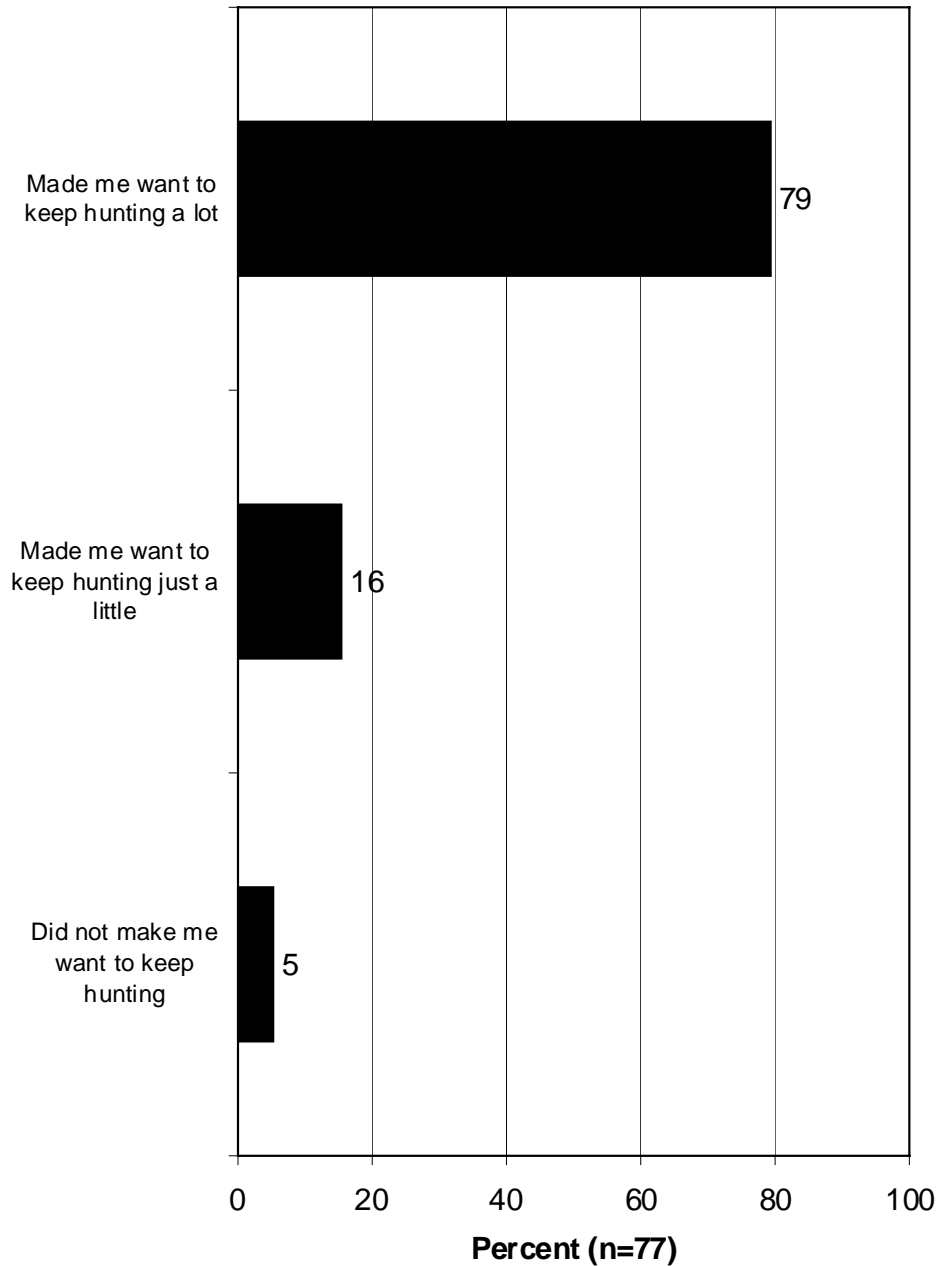
Satisfaction as it relates to harvest of game on first year of Youth Weekend Hunts. (Those who had participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



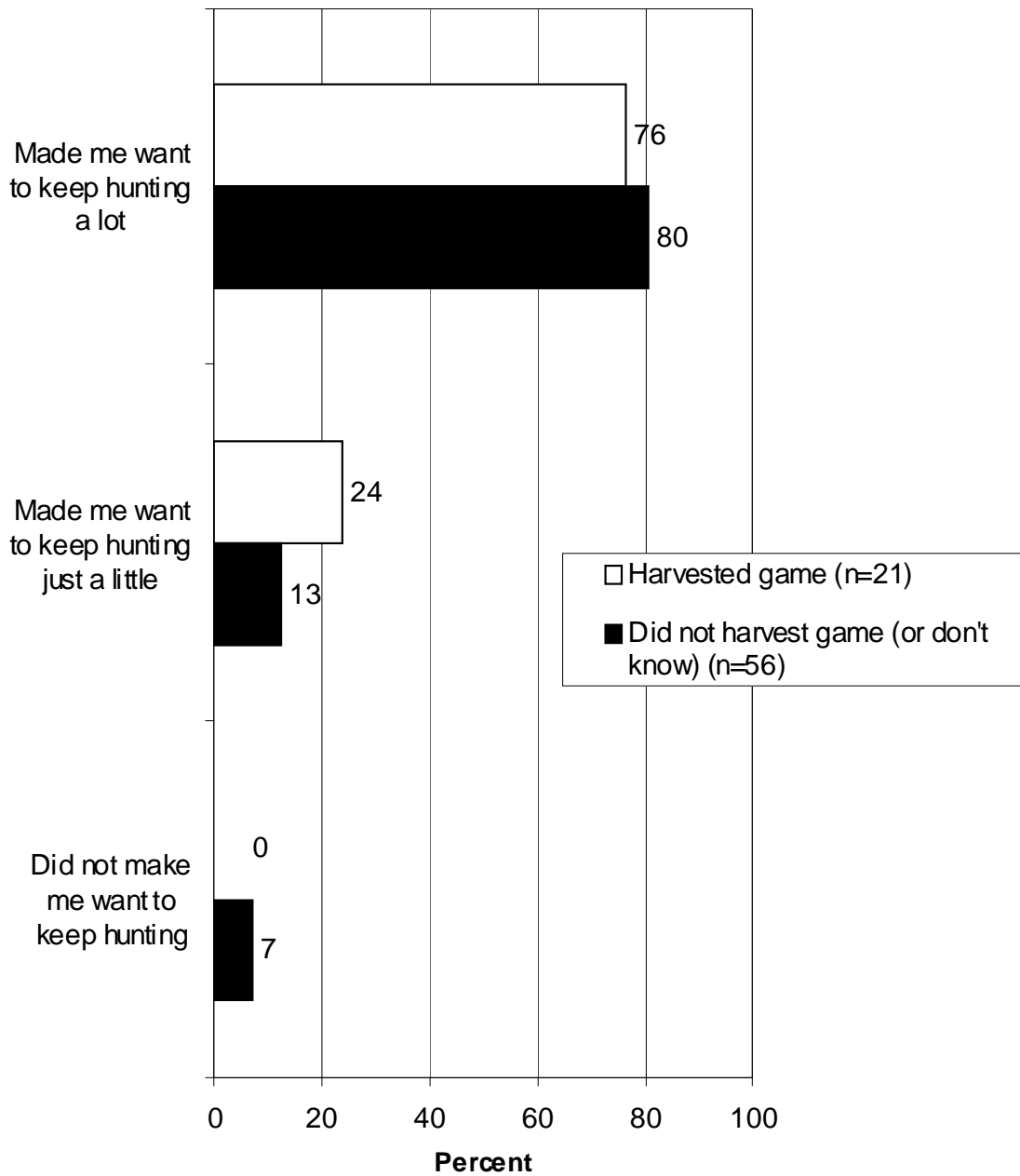
Q42. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your hunting during your most recent year of Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who participated in more than one Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



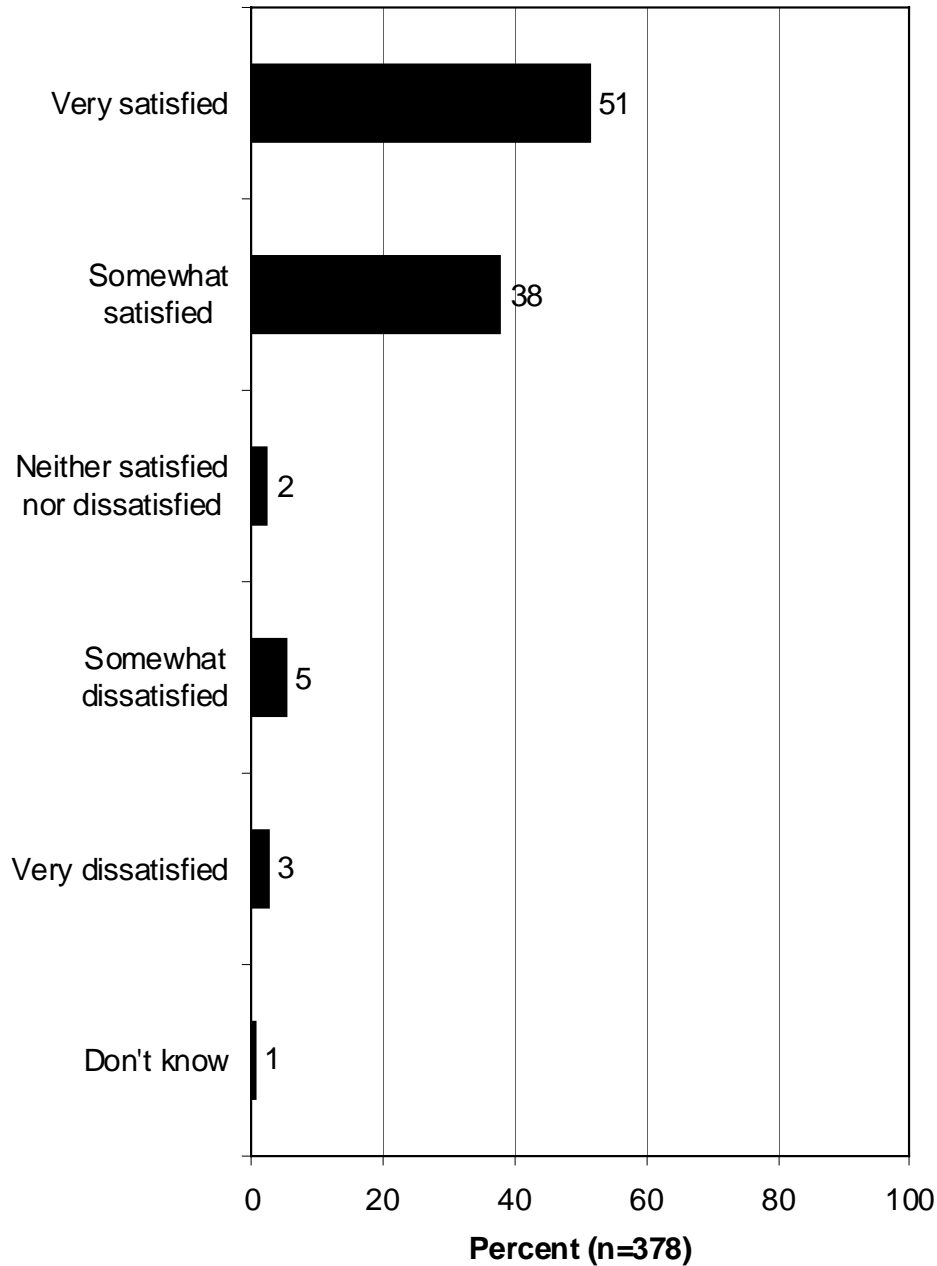
Q28. Did the Youth Weekend Hunts you first went on make you want to keep hunting or not? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



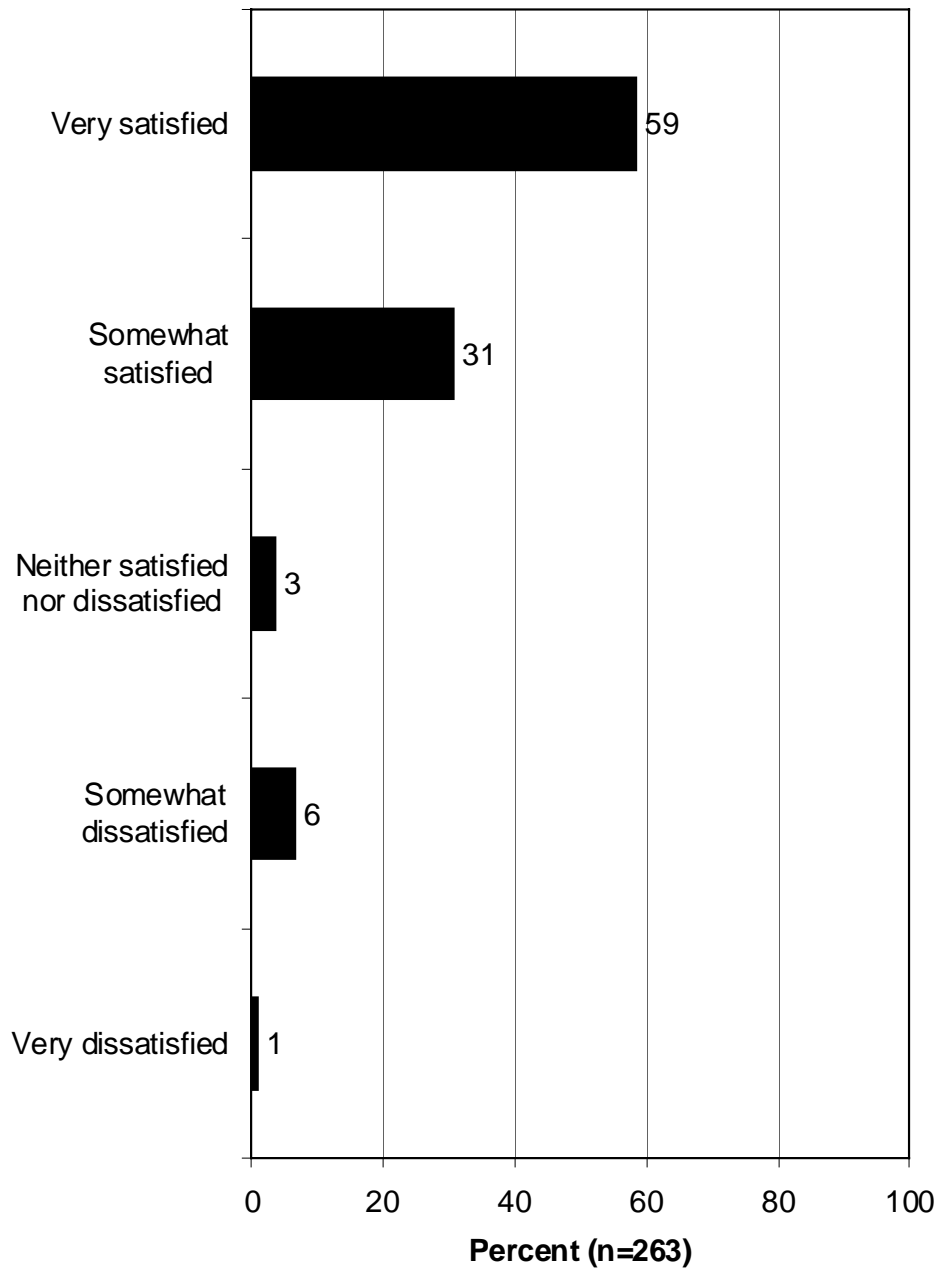
Desire to keep hunting as it relates to harvest of game on first year of Youth Weekend Hunts. (Those who had participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt as a youth.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



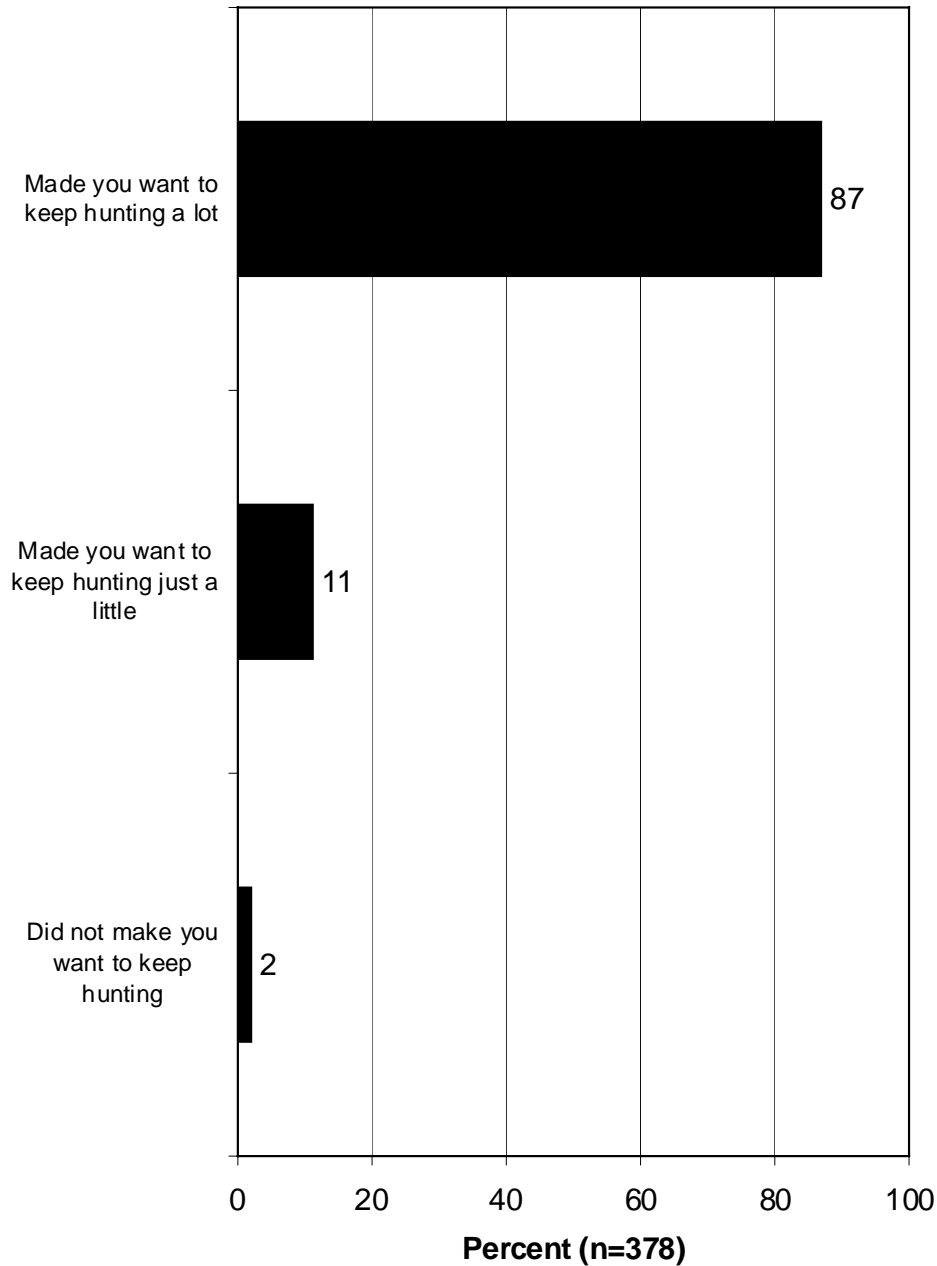
**Q24. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your first Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who have been on a Youth Weekend Hunt.)
(Current youth license holders.)**



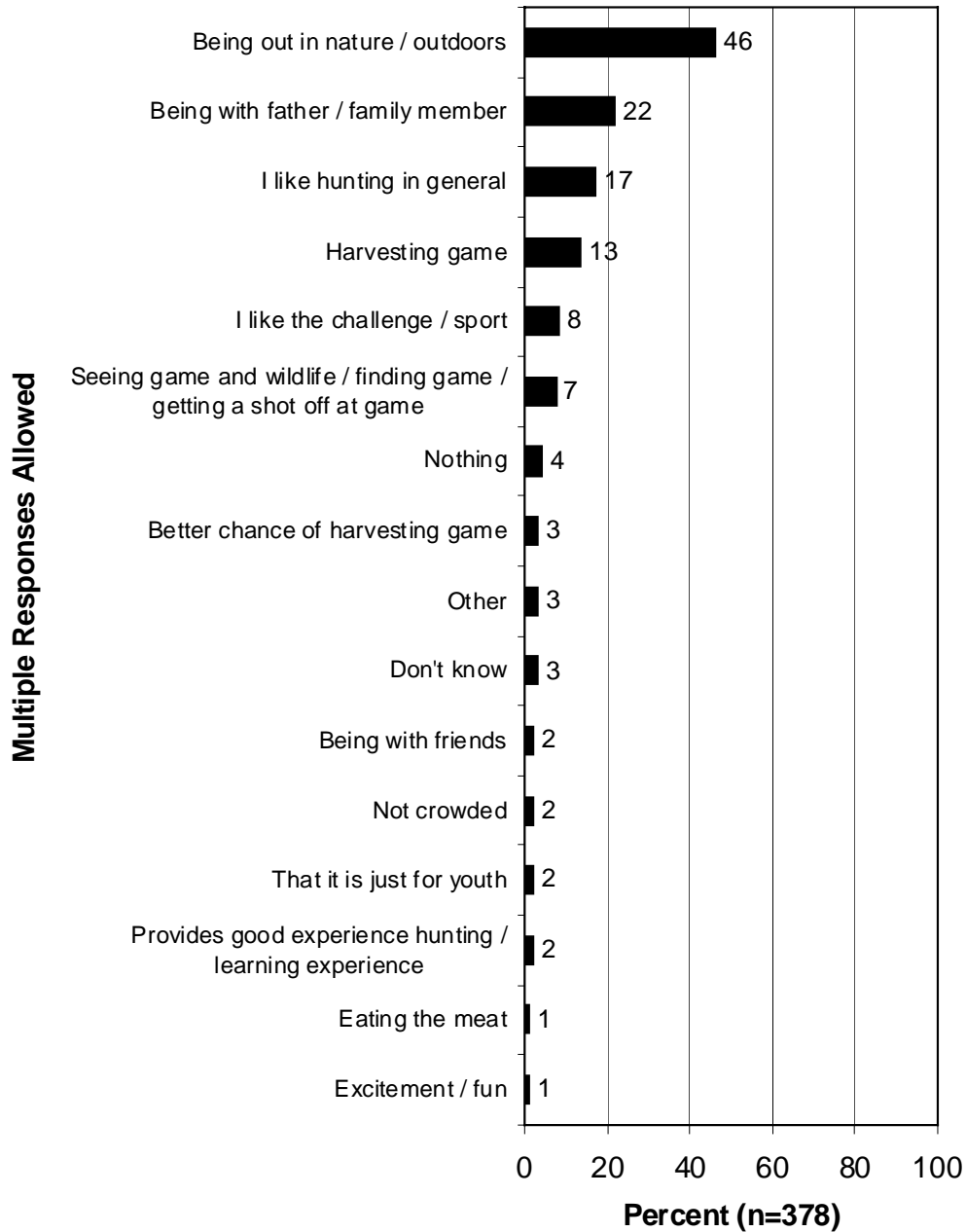
Q41. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your most recent Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who hunted more than one year on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)



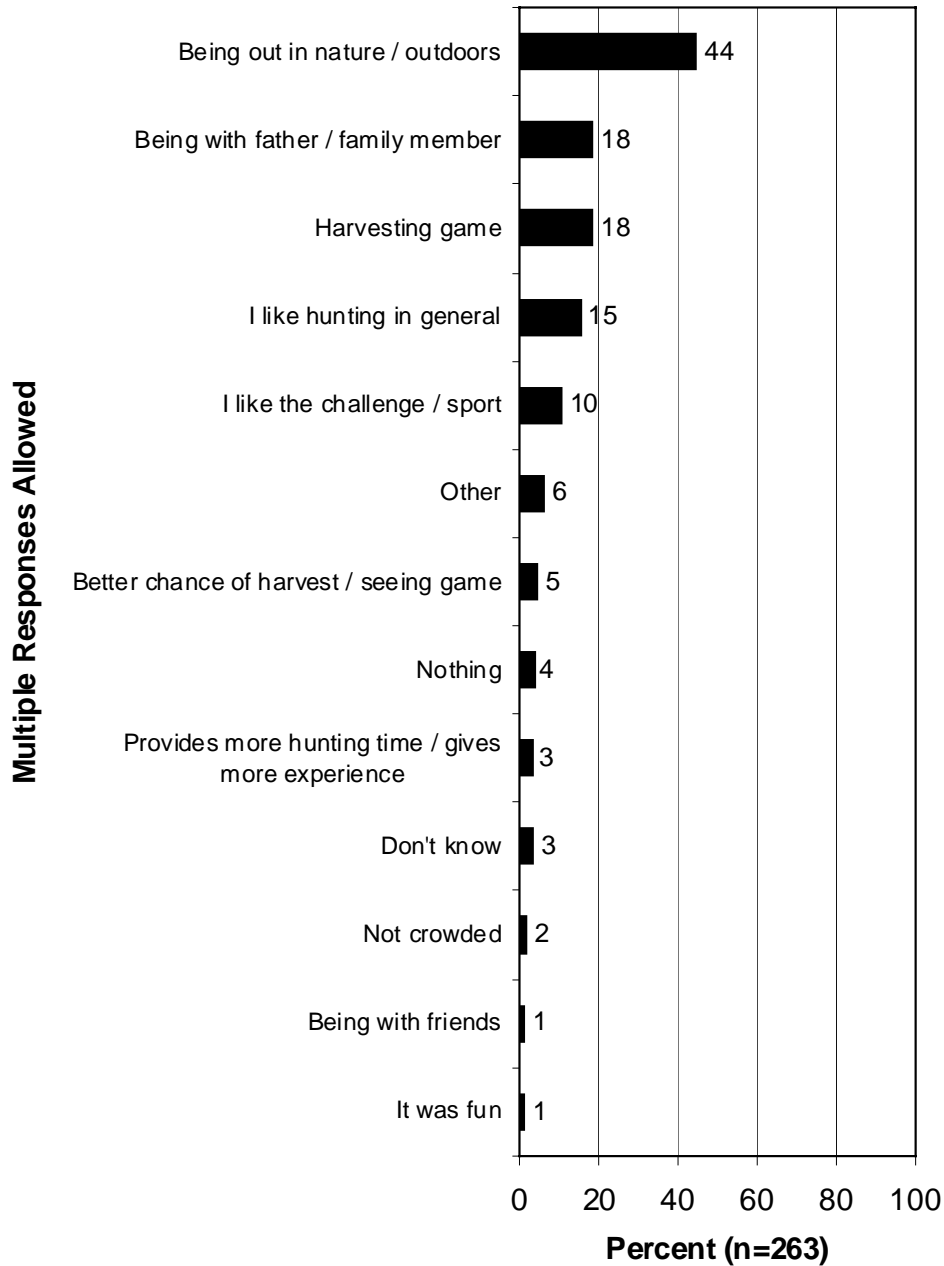
**Q29. Did the Youth Weekend Hunt you first went on make you want to keep hunting or not? (Asked of those who have been on a Youth Weekend Hunt.)
(Current youth license holders.)**



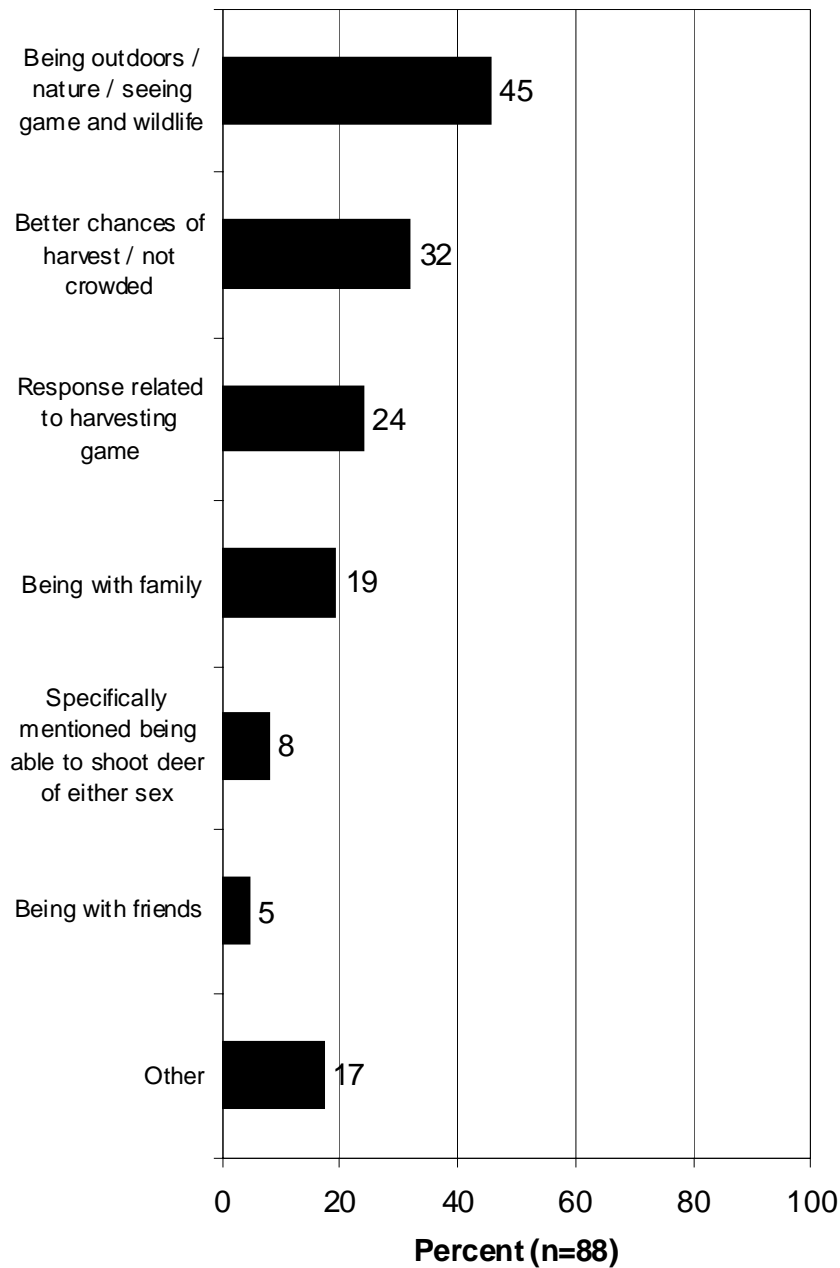
**Q27. What things did you like about the Youth Weekend Hunt that you hunted? (Asked of those who have been on a Youth Weekend Hunt.)
(Current youth license holders.)**



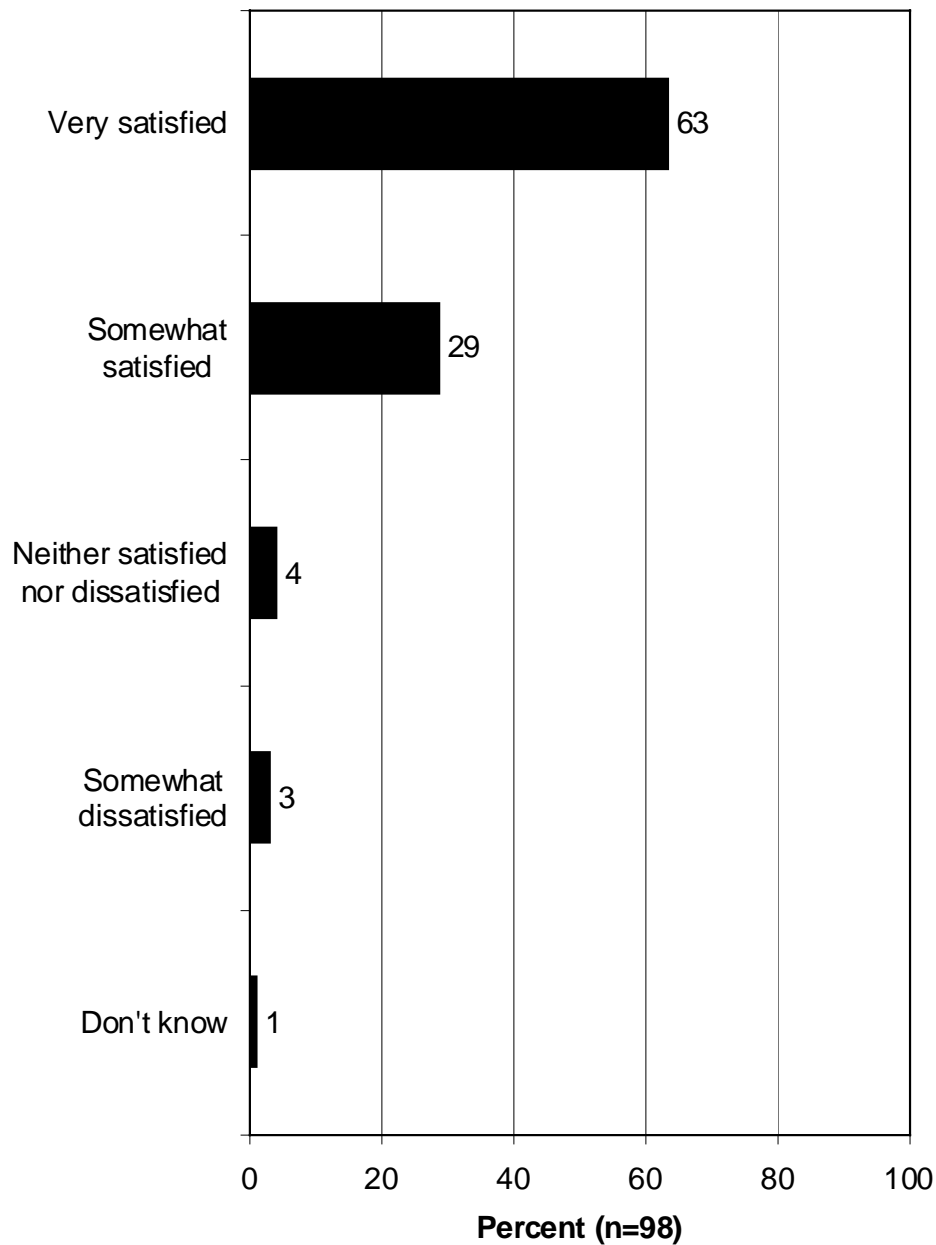
Q44. What things did you like about the Youth Weekend Hunt that you hunted? (Asked of those who hunted more than one year on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)



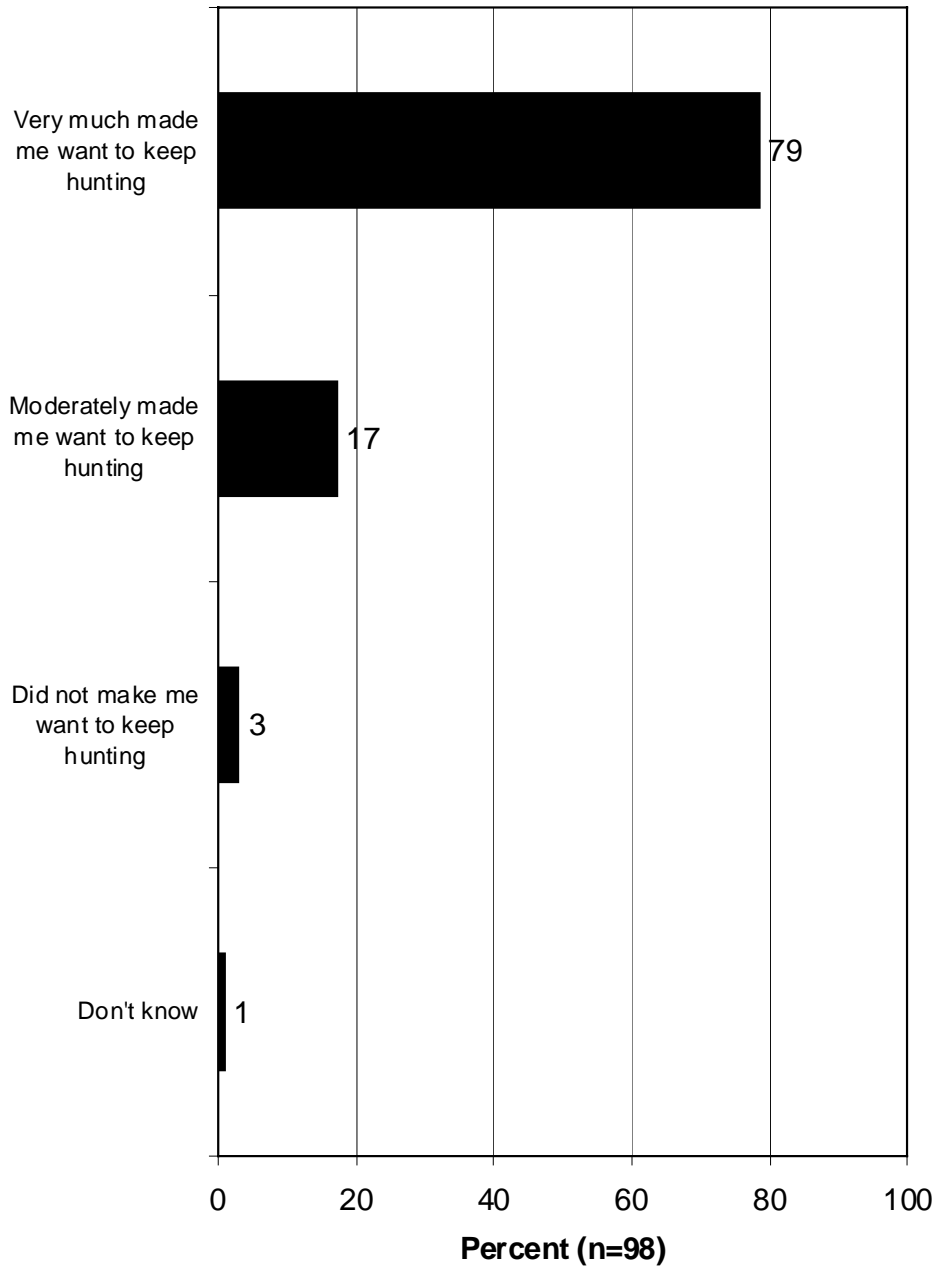
Q27. What things did you like about the Youth Weekend Hunts that you hunted? (Asked of those who hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



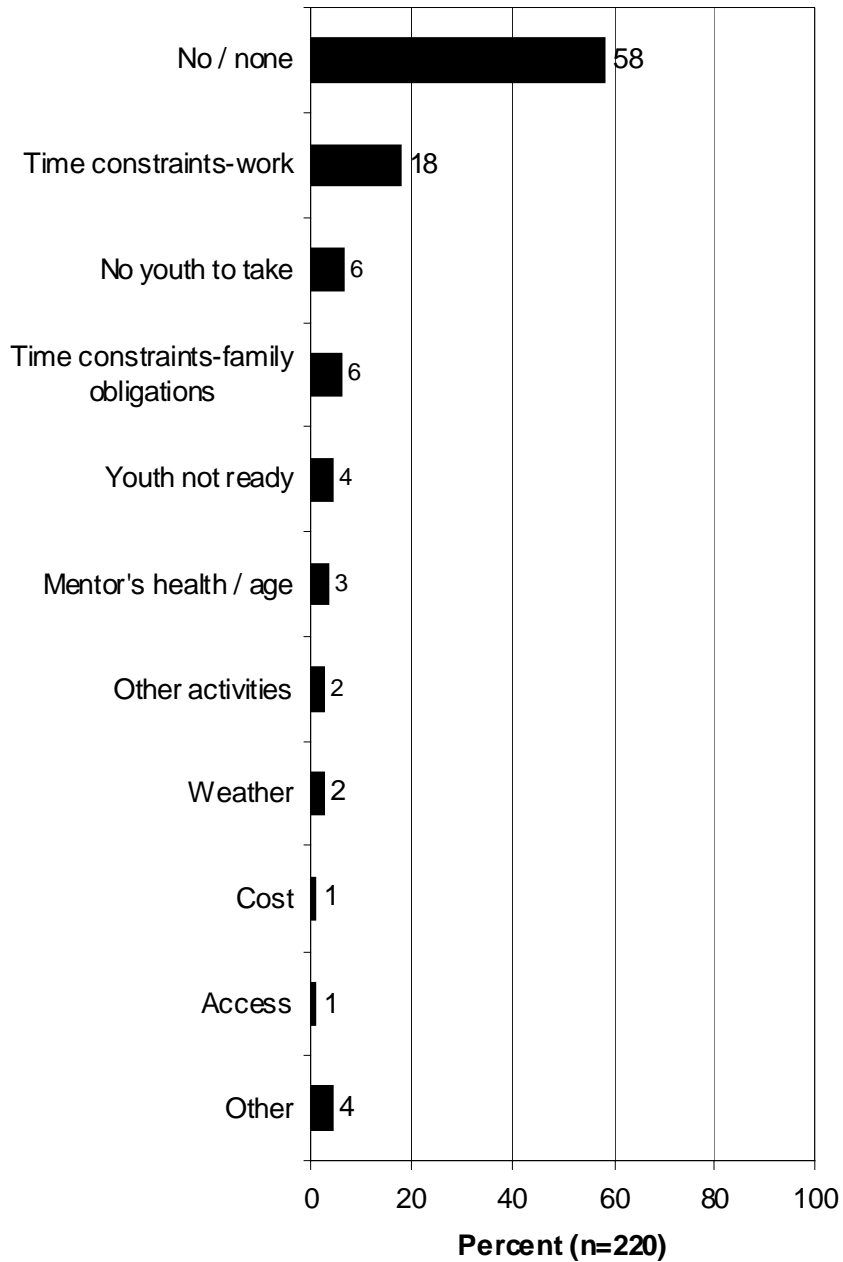
Q22. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your first Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



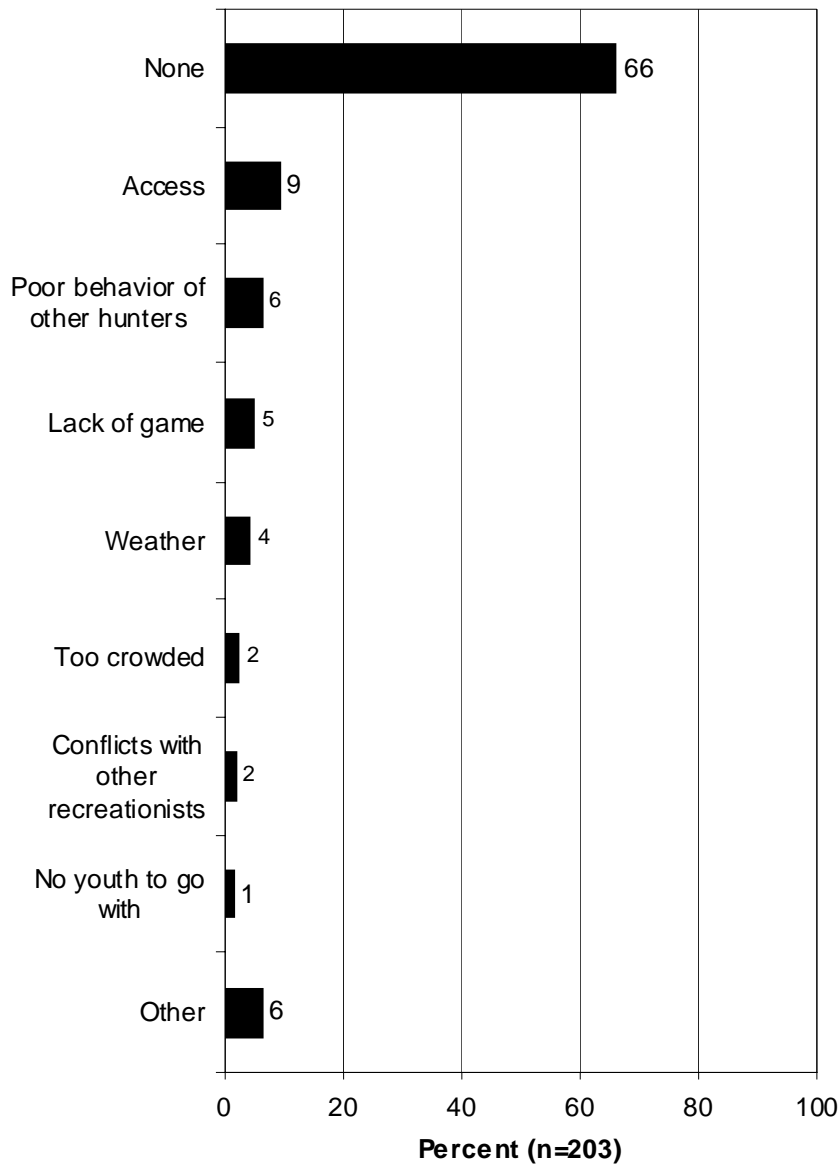
Q23. Did the Youth Weekend Hunt you first went on make you want to keep hunting or not? (Asked of those who hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



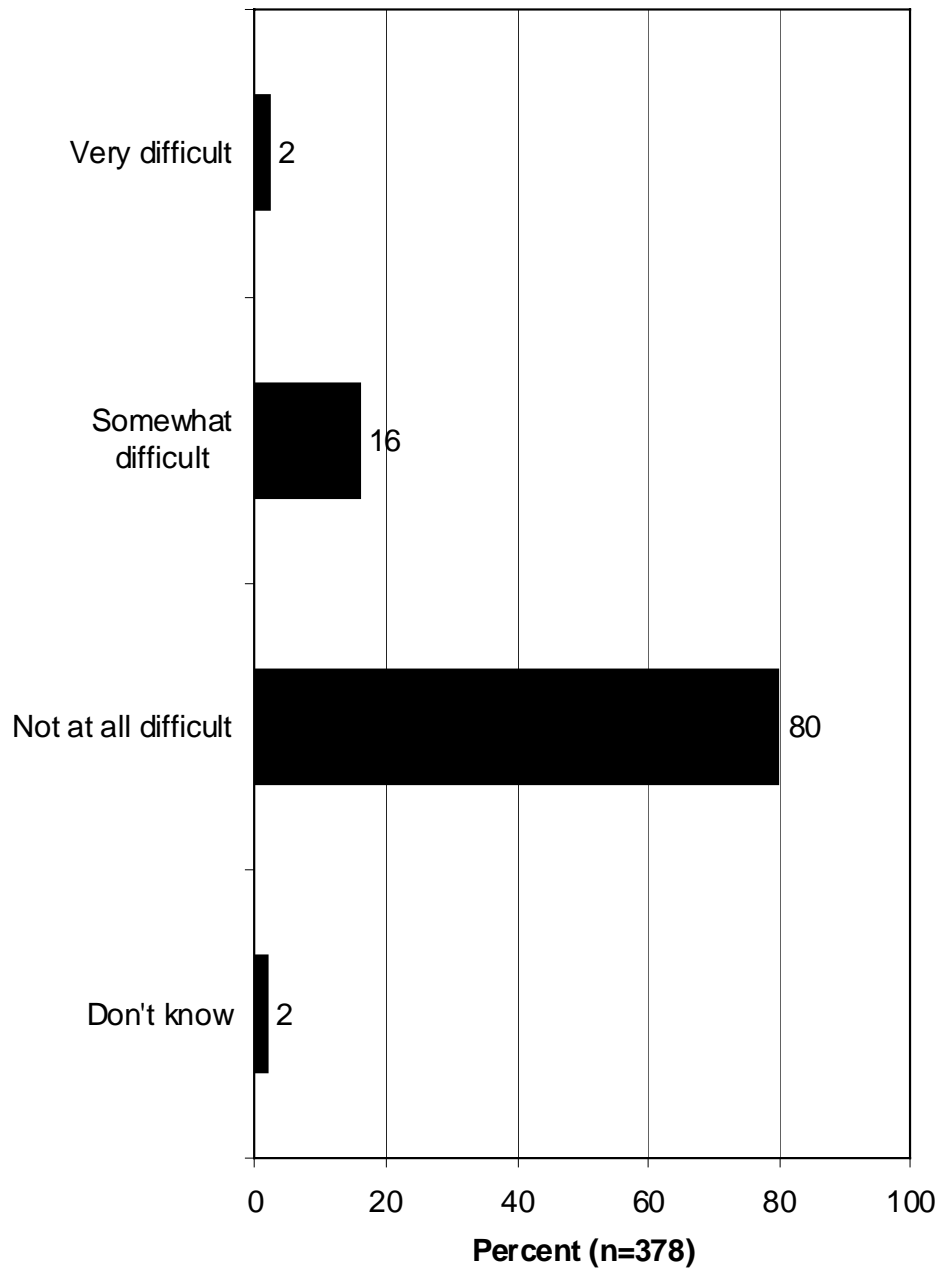
Q56. Are there any things that have prevented you from taking youth on a Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a mentor.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



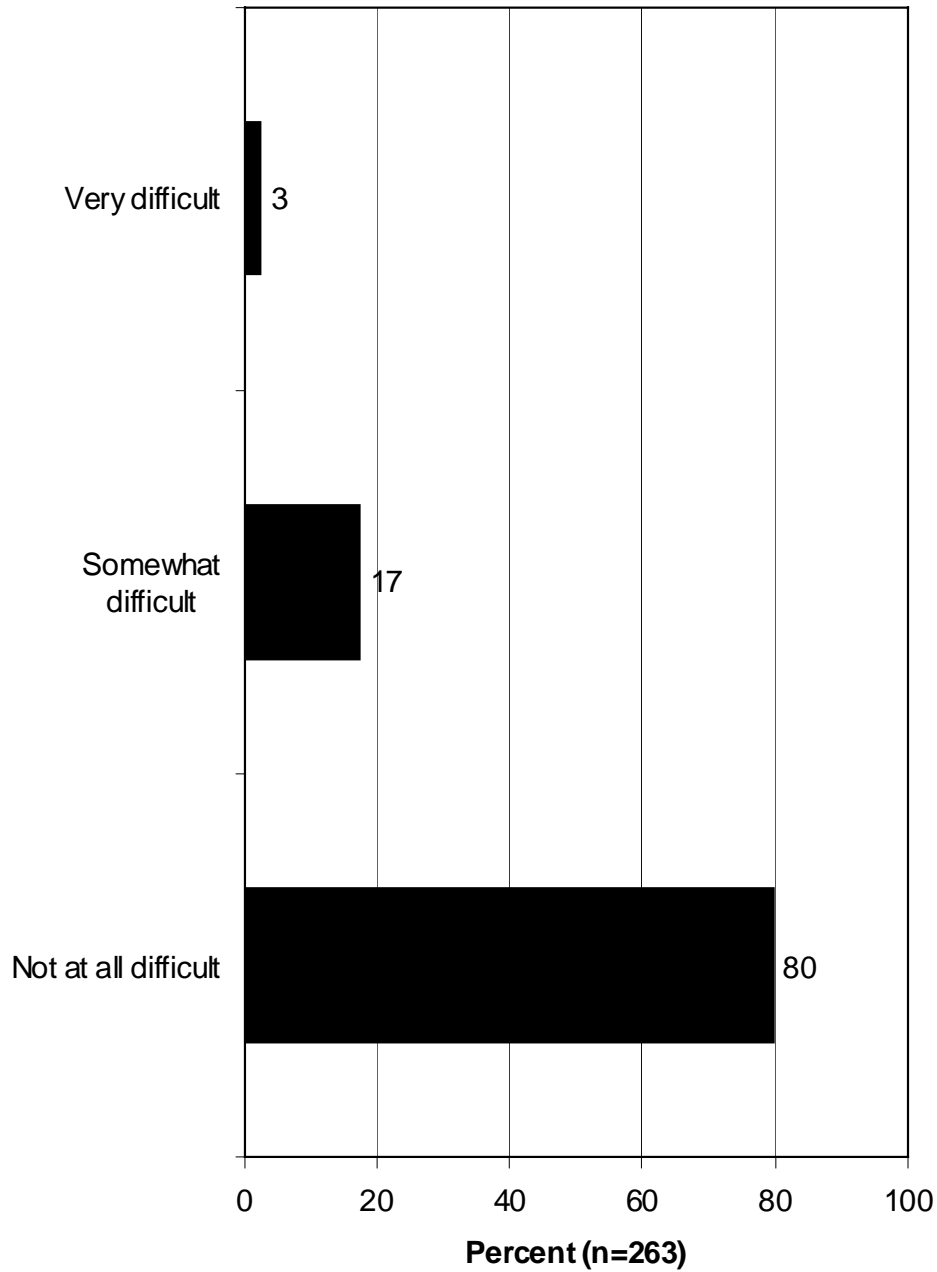
Q57. Are there any things that have taken away from your enjoyment of Youth Weekend Hunts on which you've taken youth, even if they did not prevent you from actually going? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a mentor.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



**Q23. How difficult was it to find land to hunt on during that first Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who have been on a Youth Weekend Hunt.)
(Current youth license holders.)**



Q36. How difficult was it to find land to hunt on during that most recent Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who hunted more than one year on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)



Mentoring During Youth Weekend Hunts

- Of the entire sample of adult hunting license holders, 31% had mentored a youth during a Youth Weekend Hunt (among Youth Weekend Hunt participants, 83% had mentored a youth). Nearly half (48%) of adult hunting license holders (those who had hunted any season other than a Youth Weekend Hunt) had taken a youth hunting during any season other than a Youth Weekend Hunt.

- Current youth license holders most often (69%) indicated that their first Youth Weekend Hunt was the first time they had ever been hunting; 30% had been hunting previously. The 2001 youth license holders sample was fairly evenly split between those for whom the Youth Weekend Hunt was their first time hunting (43%) and those who had been hunting previously (55%). (These graphs are shown in the section of this report titled, “Hunting Initiation and Hunting Recruitment and Retention.”)

- The majority of current youth license holders who had hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt were taken by their father or stepfather (76%) on their first Youth Weekend Hunt; another 9% indicated grandfather or step. Uncle was another prominent answer. Answers are similar regarding who took the respondent on his/her most recent Youth Weekend Hunt (of those who had been on more than one).

- Among the 2001 youth license holders who hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt, 84% were taken on the Youth Weekend Hunt by their father (or stepfather); uncle and grandfather (or step) were also prominent answers.

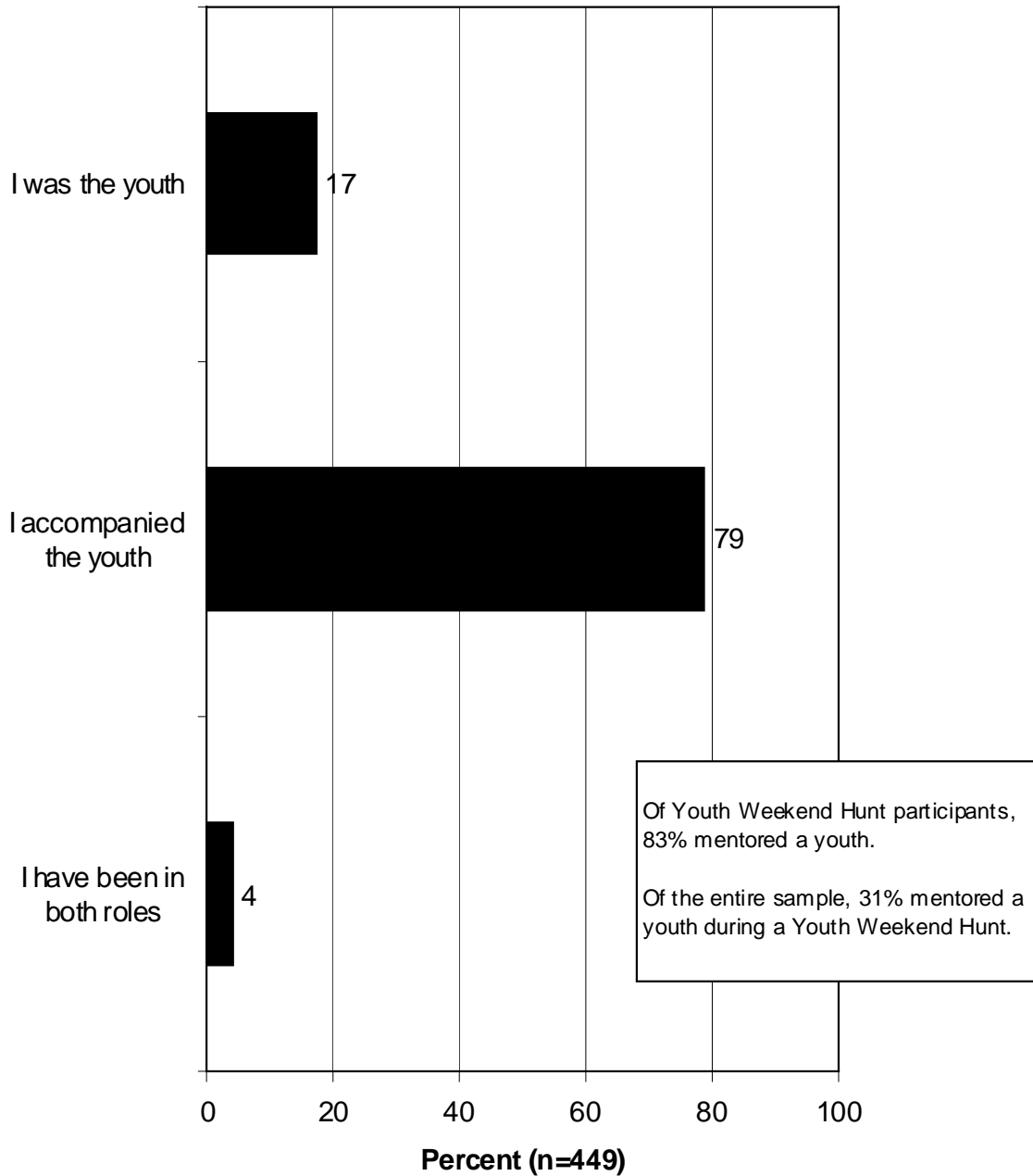
- Most of the adult hunting license holders who had mentored a youth during a Youth Weekend Hunt had mentored only 1 youth (56% mentored only 1) or 2 youths (25%), suggesting that mentoring is an intimate, family experience. This familial intimacy is also demonstrated in the results regarding whom the mentor took hunting: the most common answer is son (or stepson), with daughter (or stepdaughter), nephew, and grandson also being common answers.

- Mentors most commonly reported that white-tailed deer were hunted on Youth Weekend Hunts (93% of mentors took youth on deer hunts), and nearly a third of mentors (31%) took youth on wild turkey hunts.
- The majority of mentors (56%) indicate that game was at least *sometimes* harvested on the Youth Weekend Hunts in which the hunter had mentored a youth, and a third (34%) report a higher success rate (game harvested “most of the time” or “always”). Nonetheless, 35% report that game was never harvested on a Youth Weekend Hunt in which they had mentored a youth.
- Mentors most often said that the youth whom they mentored continued to hunt after the Youth Weekend Hunt: 77% said the youth(s) continued to hunt; another 13% said that at least some of the youths continued to hunt. Only 7% said that the youth(s) did not continue to hunt.
- Mentors most often say that their motivations in mentoring include the following: carrying on the tradition (28%), teaching youth the proper way to hunt (26%), being with family/children (18%), and having fun (13%).
- Mentors most often say that the youth get the following out of Youth Weekend Hunts: learning about hunting/gaining experience (54%), learning about nature and the outdoors and being outside (31%), being with family/bonding with parent (18%), and simply having fun/having a good experience (9%).
- The survey asked mentors from among the adult hunting license holders about whether anything had prevented them from taking youth on a Youth Weekend Hunt. The majority (58%) indicated that nothing had prevented them; otherwise, the most common answers were time constraints because of work (including two respondents who had military duties) (18%), not having youth to take (6%), time constraints because of family (6%), and youth not being ready or old enough (4%). Note that “not having youth to take” were distinct in the analysis from “youth not being ready or old enough”—the latter group representing a short-term

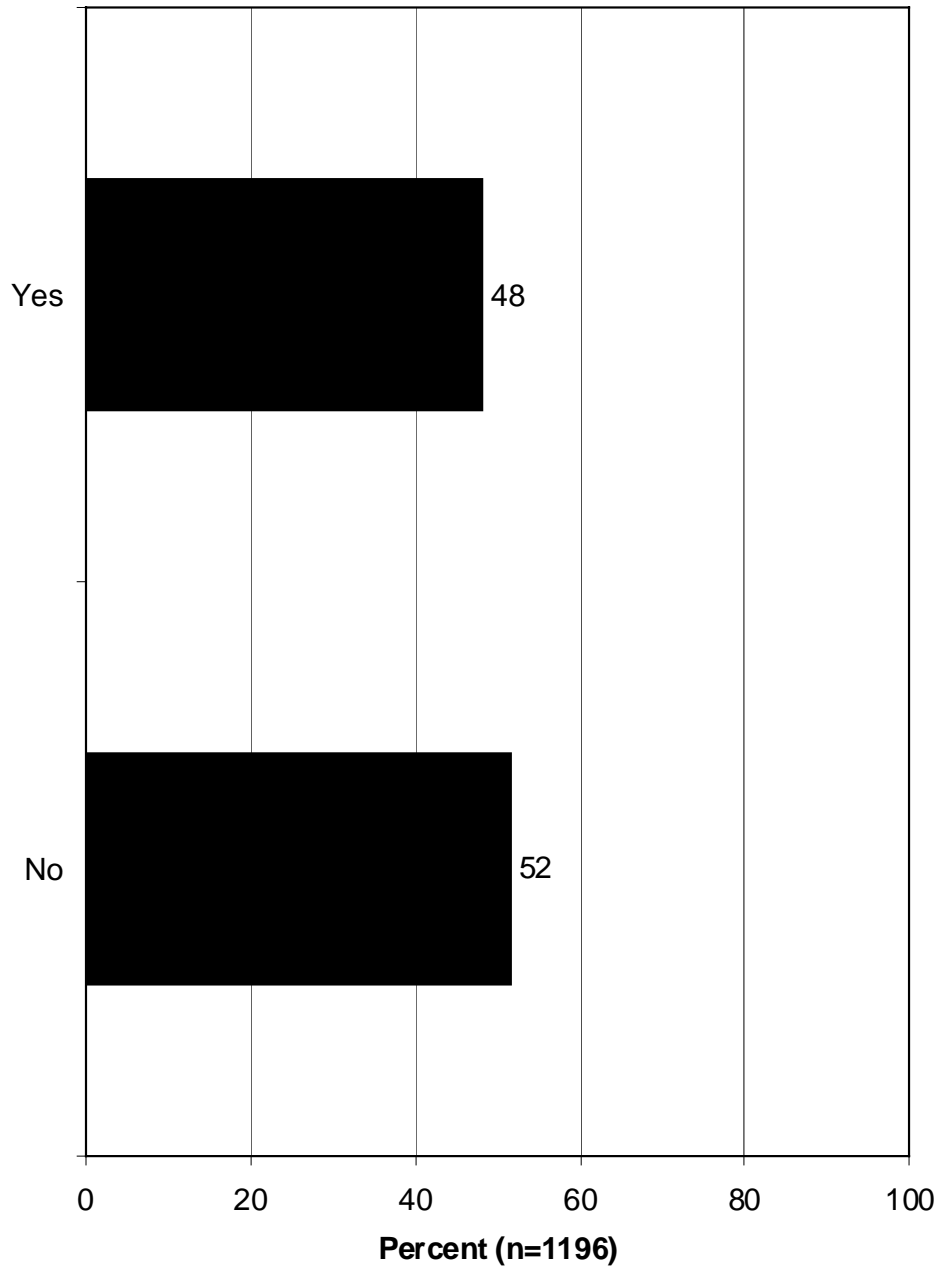
constraint; together, 10% did not have a youth to take hunting. (This graph is shown in the section of this report titled, “Satisfactions and Dissatisfaction with and Constraints to Youth Weekend Hunting.”)

- The survey also asked them whether anything had taken away from their enjoyment of Youth Weekend Hunts on which they have taken youth, even if it didn’t prevent them from going. The majority (66%) answered that nothing had taken away enjoyment. Otherwise, the top answers were access (9%), poor behavior of other hunters (6%), and lack of game (5%)—typical factors brought up when hunters are hunting outside of mentoring situations. (This graph is shown in the section of this report titled, “Satisfactions and Dissatisfaction with and Constraints to Youth Weekend Hunting.”)

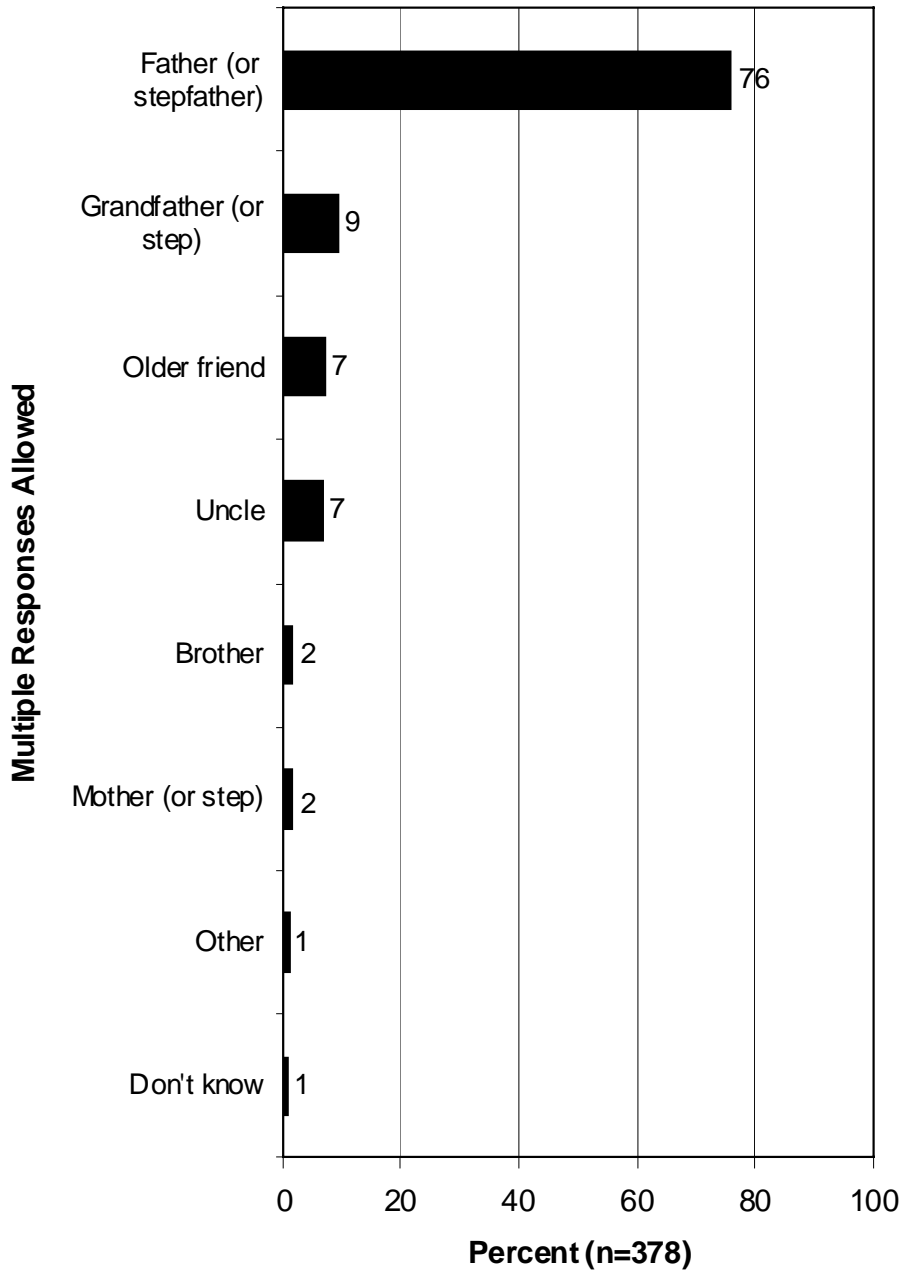
Q12. When you went on the Youth Weekend Hunt, were you the youth, or were you the adult accompanying the youth? (Asked of those who went on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



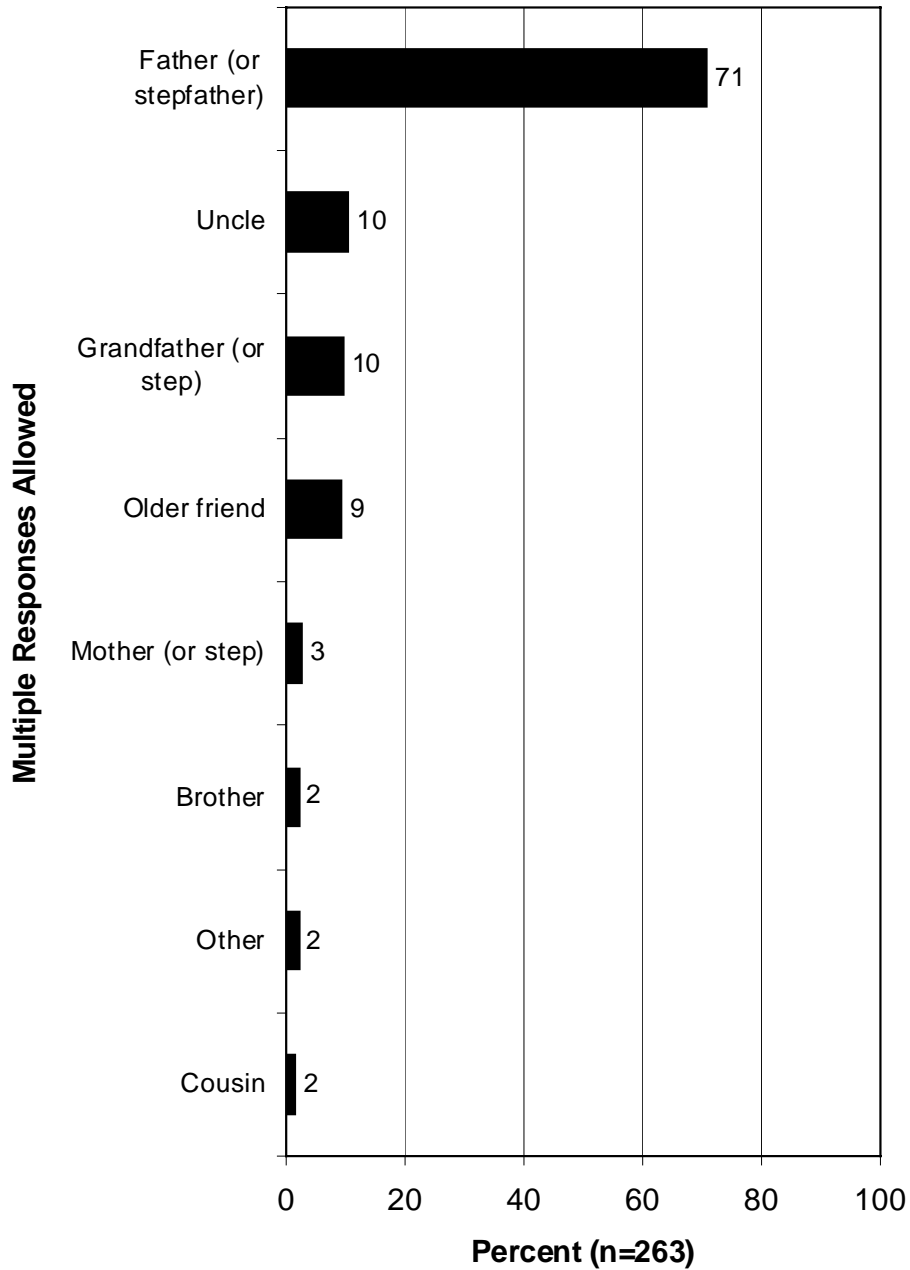
Q115. Have you ever taken a youth hunting during any hunting season that was not a Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who hunted during any time other than a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



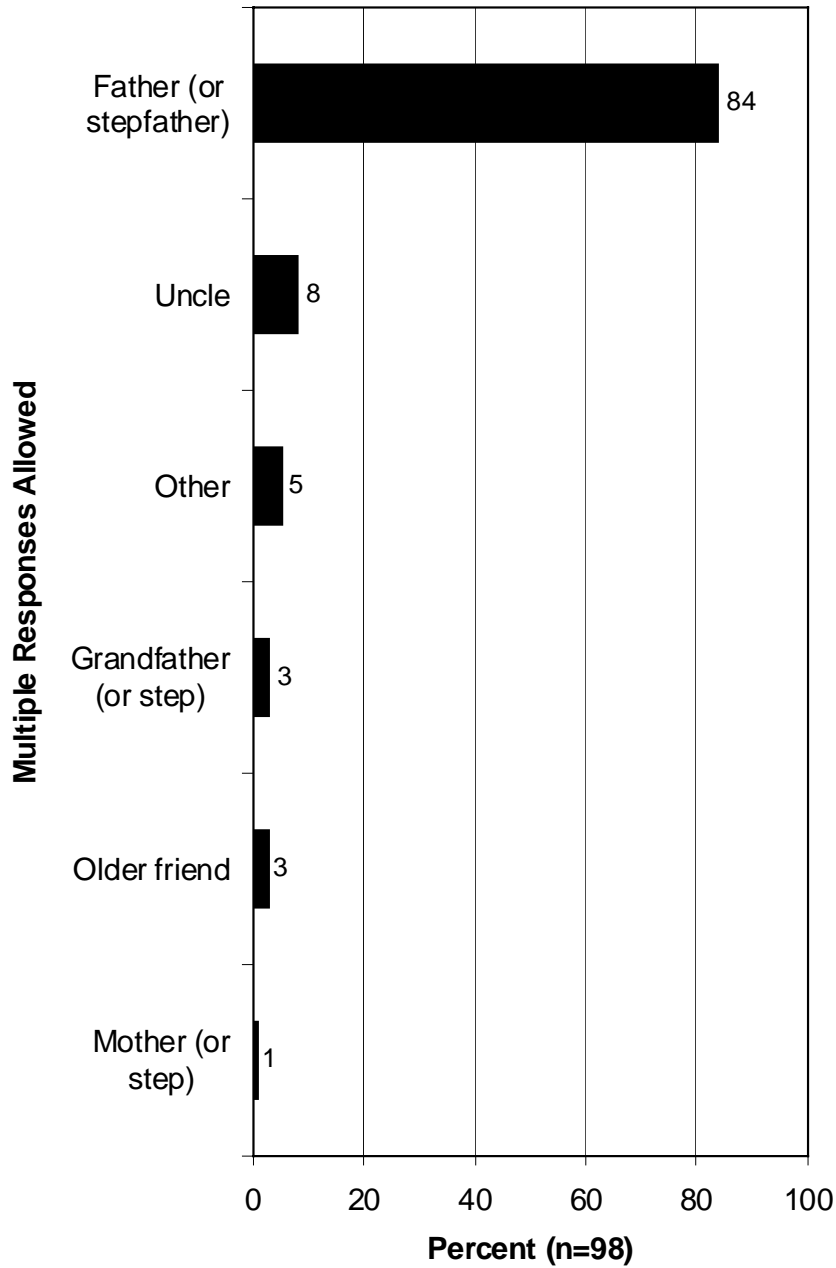
Q20. Who took you on your first Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who have been on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)



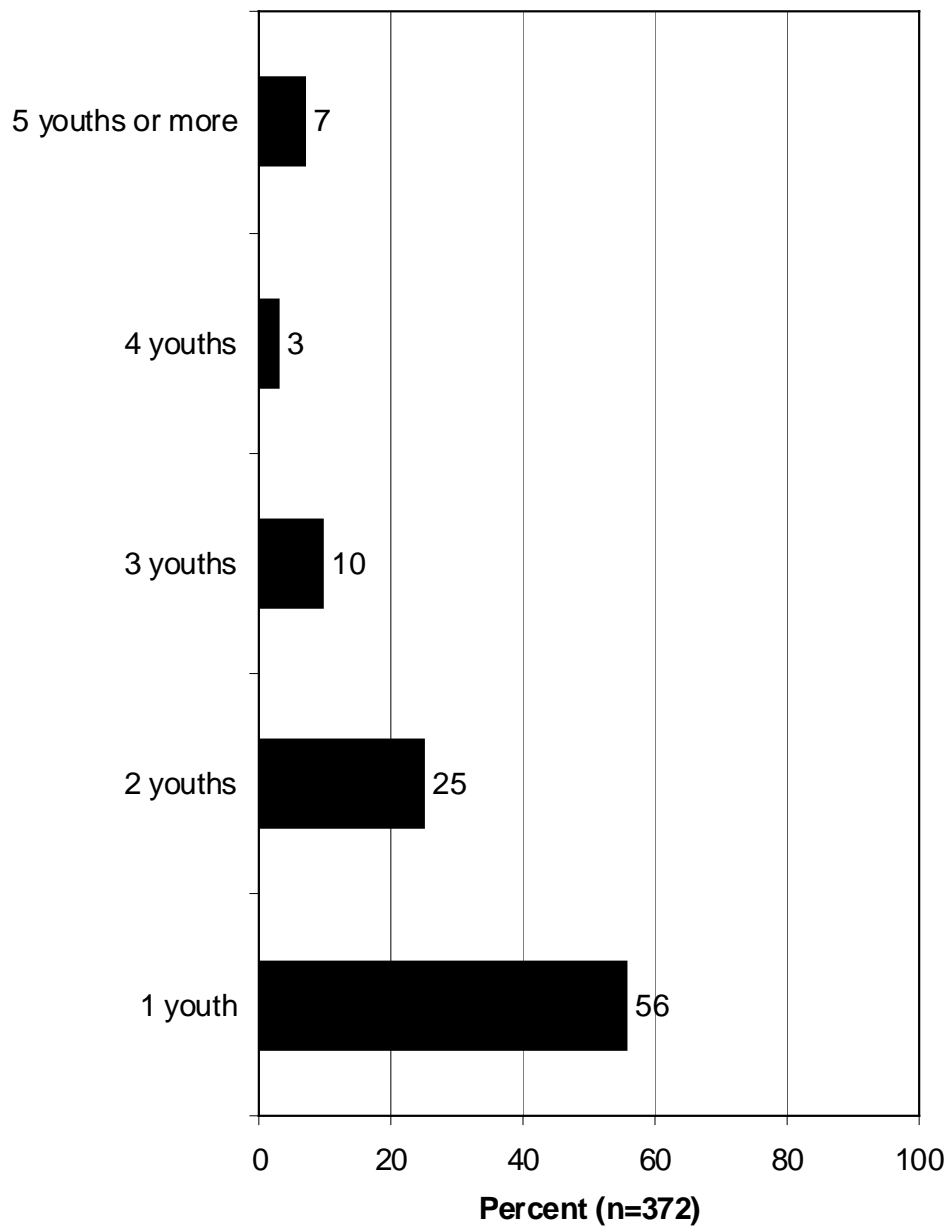
Q39. Who took you on your most recent Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who hunted more than one year on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)



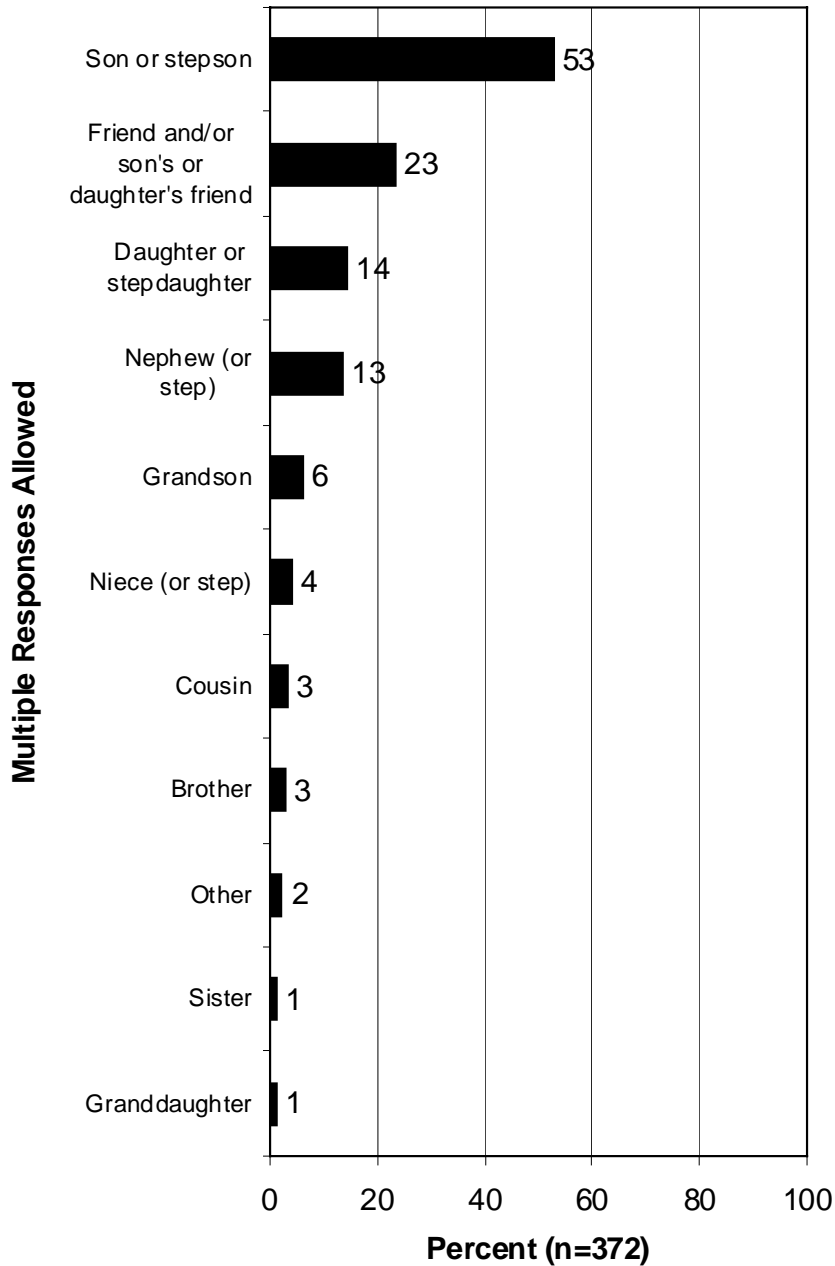
Q19. Who took you on your first Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



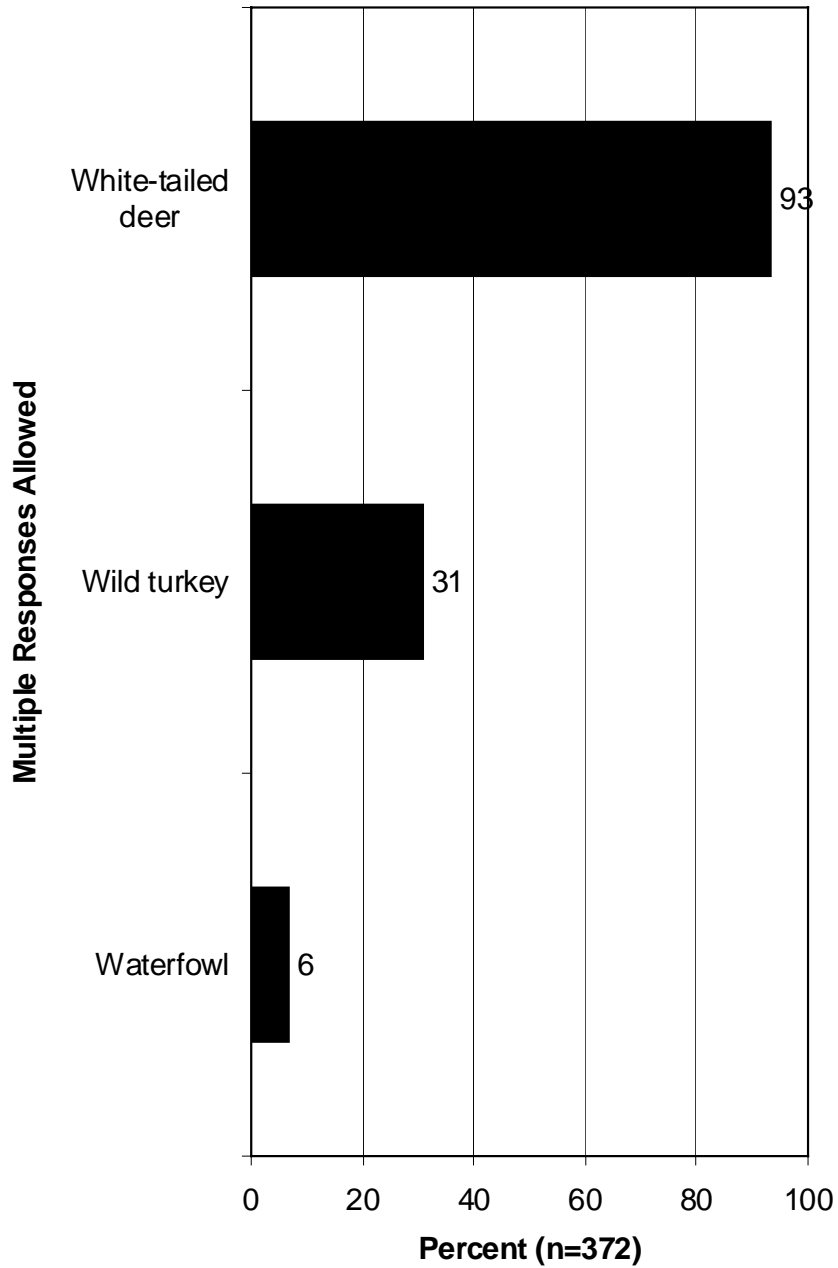
Q44. How many youths have you taken on Youth Weekend Hunts over the years? (Asked of those who participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt as a mentor.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



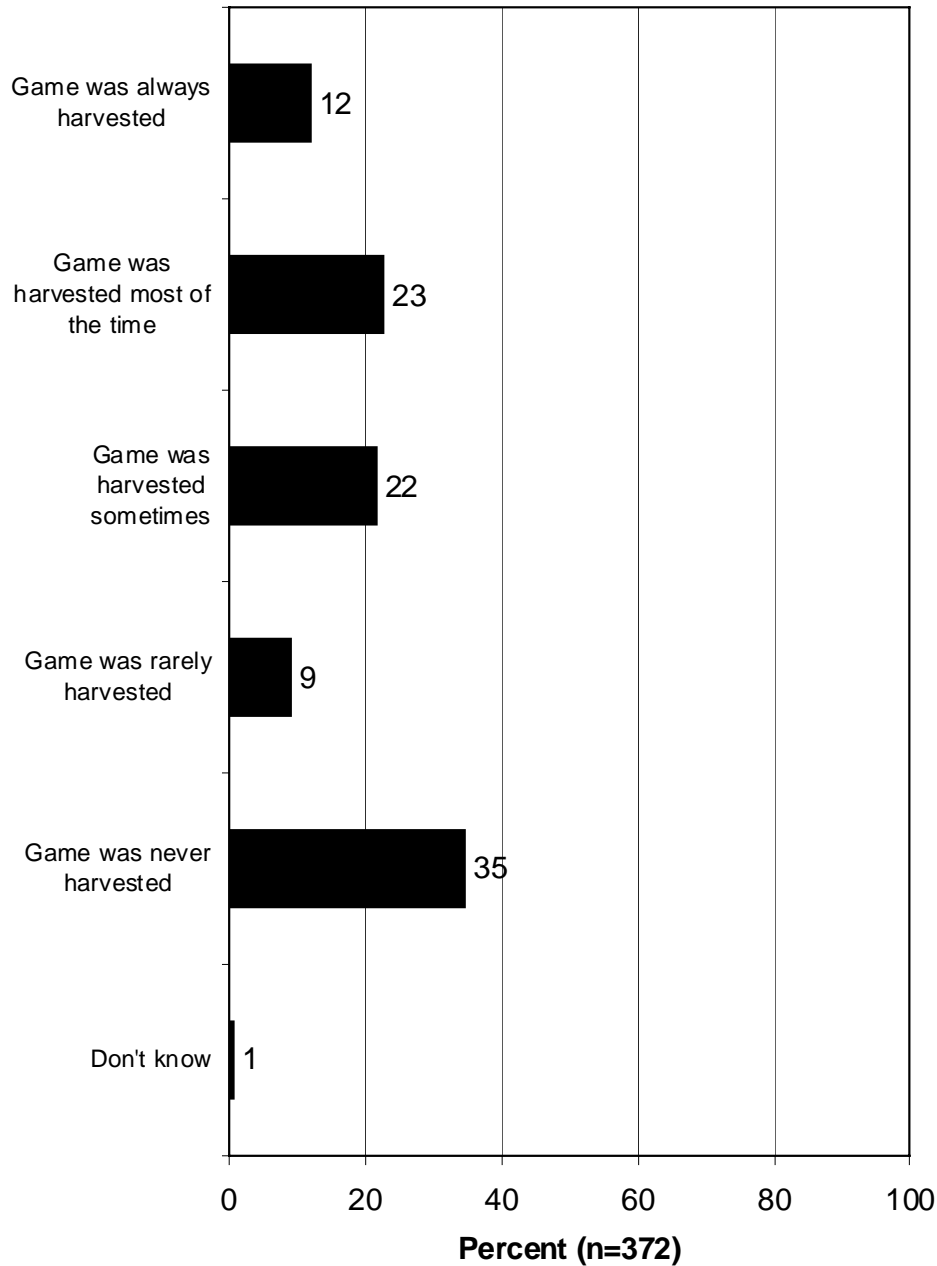
Q47. Who have you taken on a Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a mentor.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



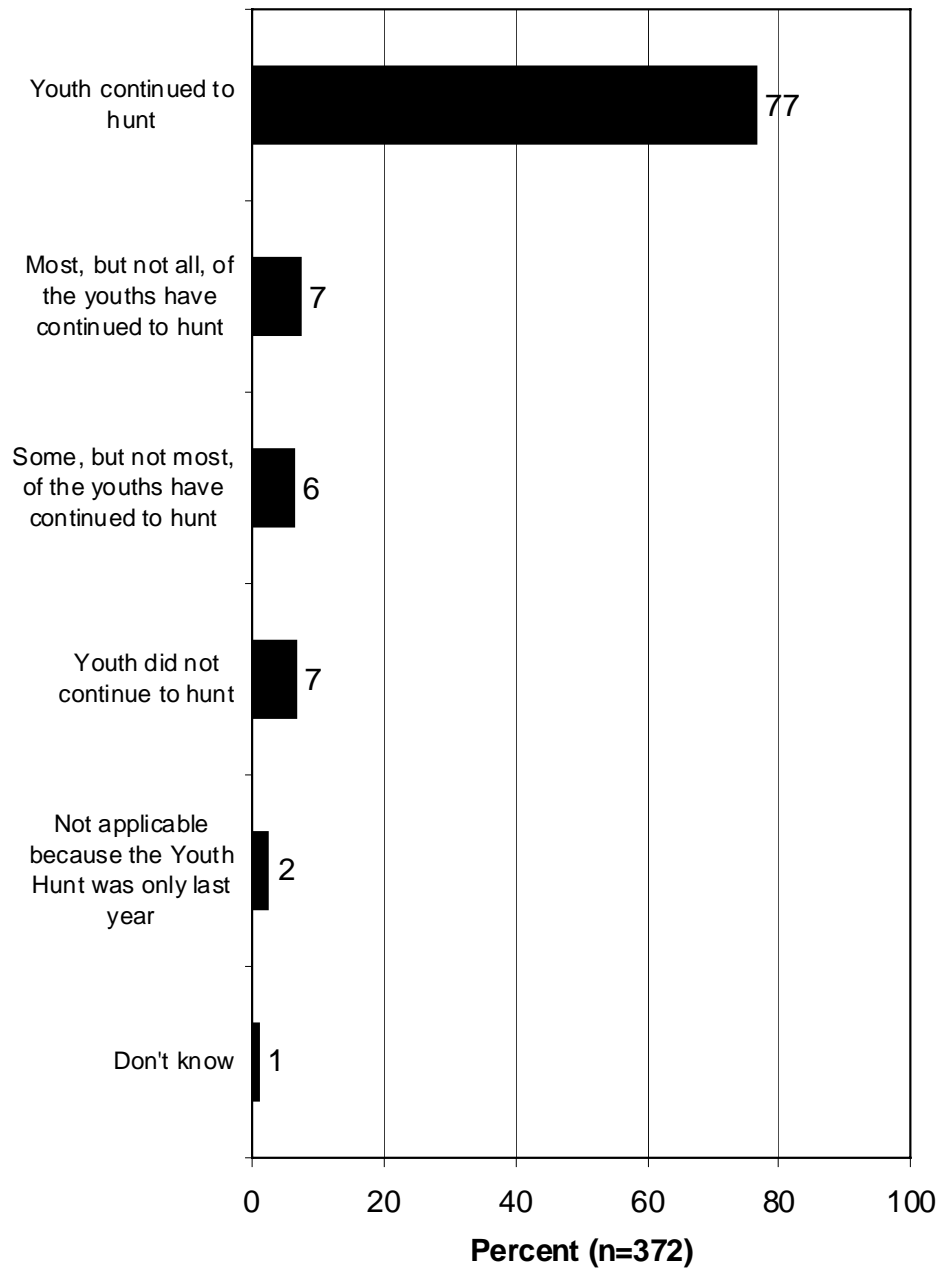
Q52. What types of game were hunted on these Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a mentor.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



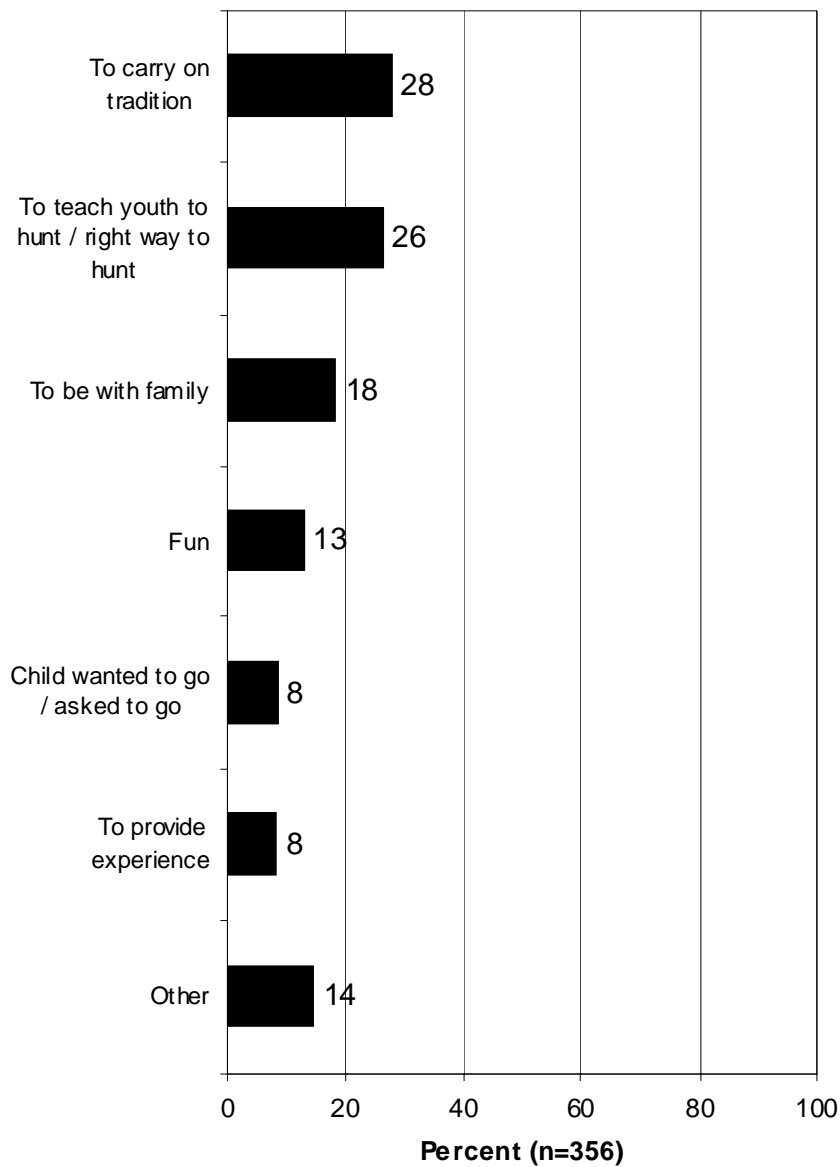
Q53. Which best describes the harvest success of these Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a mentor.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



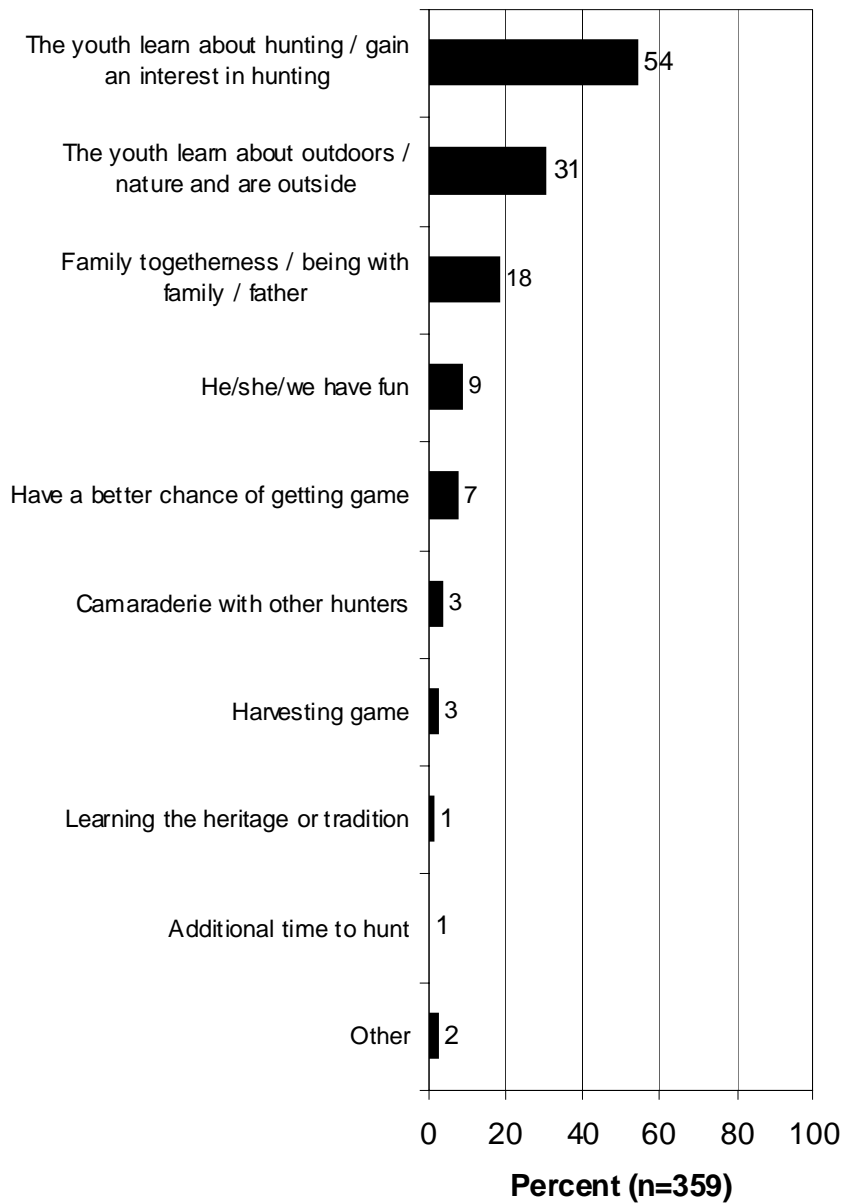
Q49. Has the youth or have the youths you have taken on these Youth Weekend Hunts continued to hunt since then? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a mentor.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



Q54. We realize that mentoring takes time and patience and can be difficult. What are your motivations for mentoring youth on a Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a mentor.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



**Q55. What do you think is the most important thing that youth get out of Youth Weekend Hunts?
(Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt as a mentor.) (Adult hunting license holders.)**



Hunting Initiation and Hunting Recruitment and Retention

- The large majority of adult hunting license holders (70%) were first taught to hunt by their father (or stepfather), and 7% said a grandfather (or step) first taught them. With similar results are current youth license holders: 77% answered father or stepfather, and 12% answered grandfather (or step). Not surprisingly, male family members predominate as hunting teachers.

- Nearly half (48%) of adult hunting license holders (those who had hunted any season other than a Youth Weekend Hunt) had taken a youth hunting during any season other than a Youth Weekend Hunt. (This graph is shown in the section of this report titled, “Mentoring During Youth Weekend Hunts.”)

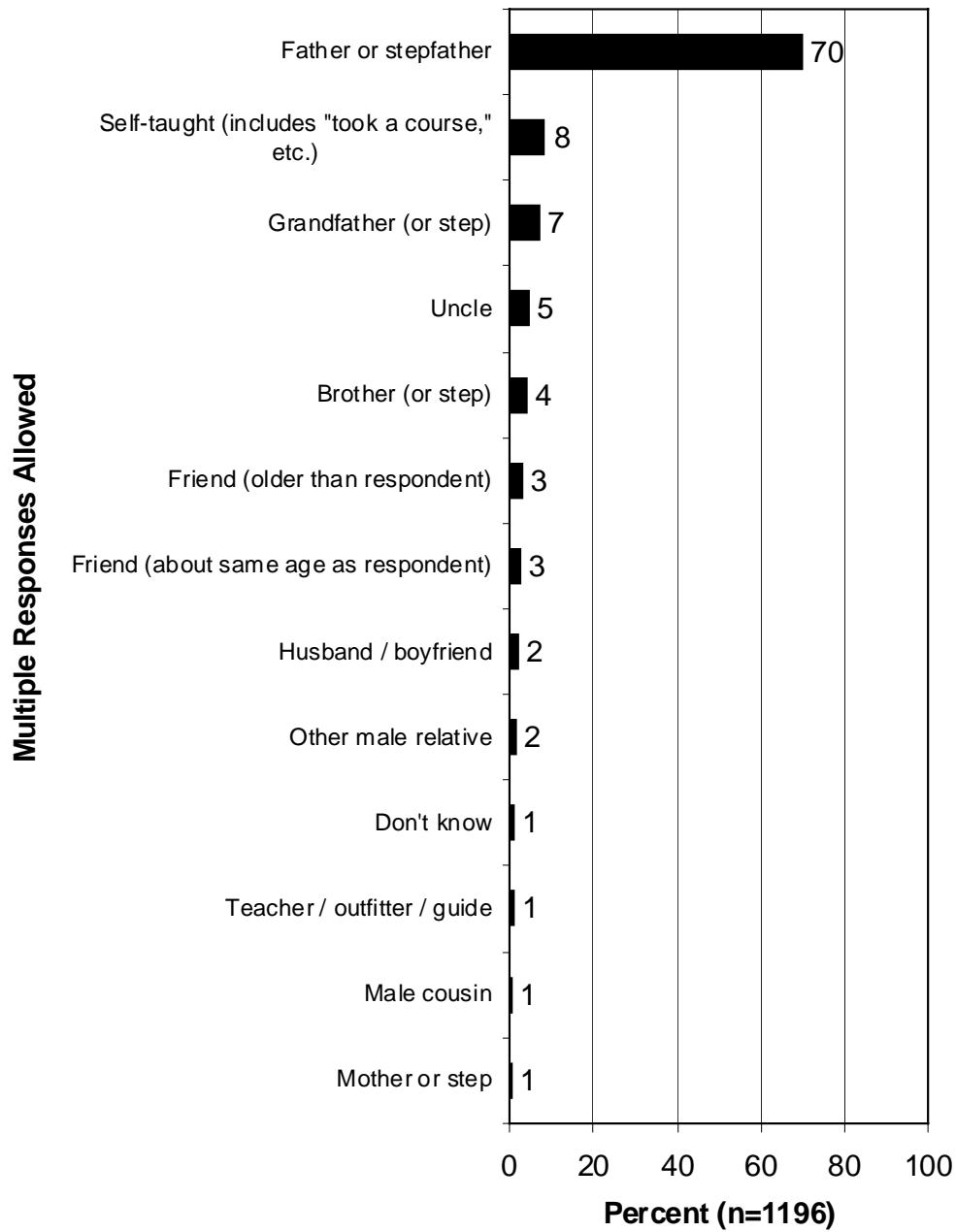
- Current youth license holders most often (69%) indicated that their first Youth Weekend Hunt was the first time they had ever been hunting; nonetheless, 30% had been hunting previously. The 2001 youth license holders sample was fairly evenly split between those for whom the Youth Weekend Hunt was their first time hunting (43%) and those who had been hunting previously (55%).

- Four questions were asked of adult hunting license holders regarding concerns about hunting that they may have. The intent of the series of questions was to assess their concern about hunting initiation—specifically about the declining number of hunters. In this series of questions, concern about the declining number of hunters was low relative to other concerns (the other concerns asked about were loss of habitat, lack of access, and anti-hunting sentiment). The mean rating of concern about the declining number of hunters was just barely above the midpoint, at 5.43, and only 18% rated their concern about the declining number of hunters at a 9 or 10 (10 being the highest concern). In summary, this series of questions suggests that adult hunters are more concerned about particular factors that would affect individual hunts (loss of habitat, lack of access) rather than factors that would affect the sport of hunting as a whole (anti-hunting sentiment, declining number of hunters).

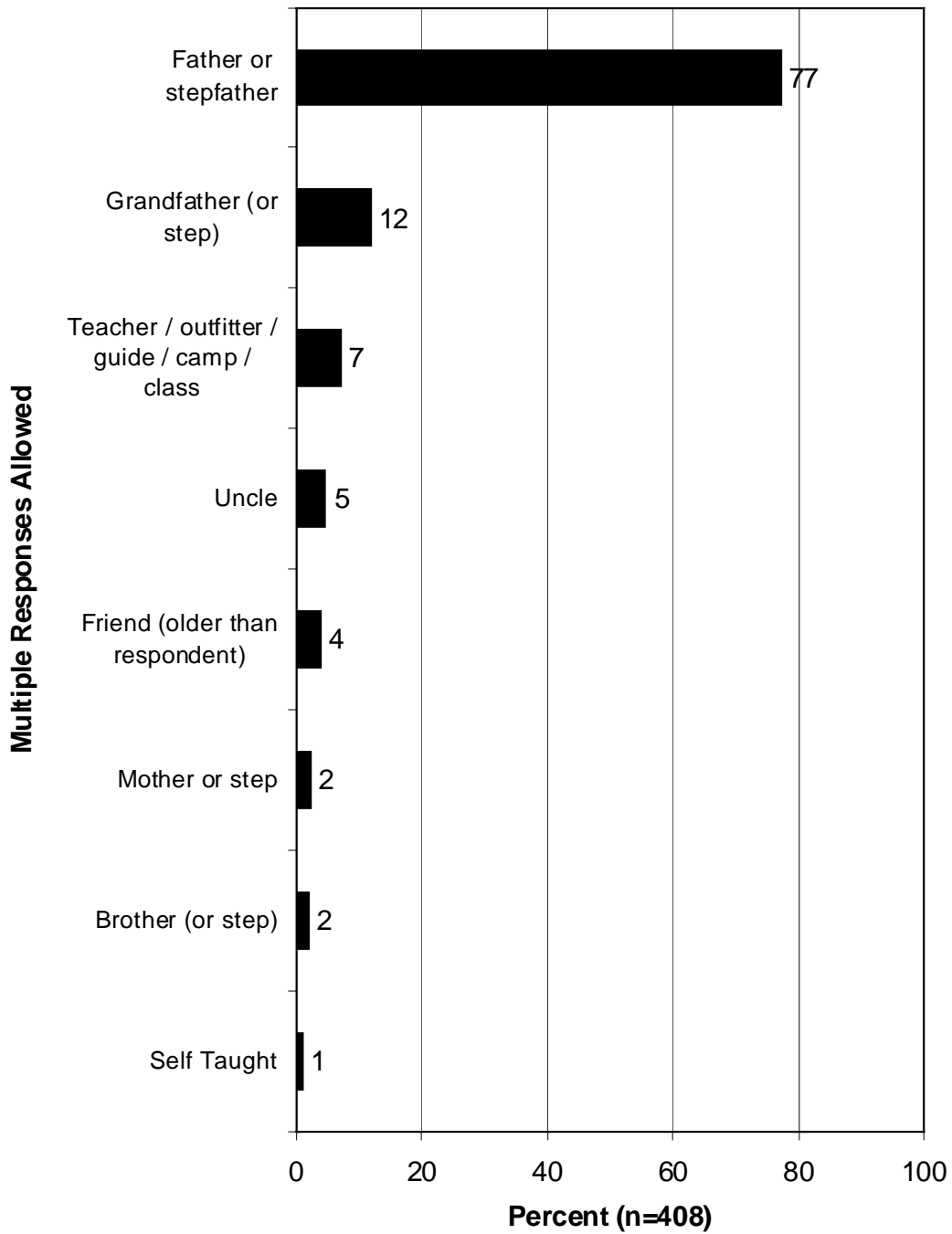
- The same four questions discussed above were asked of 2001 youth license holders regarding concerns about hunting that they may have. Again, the intent of the series of questions was to assess their concern about the declining number of hunters, and concern about the declining number of hunters was low relative to other concerns. The mean rating of concern about the declining number of hunters was just barely above the midpoint, at 5.30, and only 9% rated their concern about the declining number of hunters at a 9 or 10. Note that this group showed more concern about anti-hunting sentiment than did adults—perhaps youth being more susceptible to peer pressure than are adults. Overall for this group, loss of habitat was the top concern.

- Despite the results of the series of questions discussed above, adult hunting license holders who have not been on a Youth Weekend Hunt think that hunting recruitment efforts by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife are important: 80% say that such efforts are important, with 48% saying that they are *very* important. Only 10% say that such efforts are unimportant. When adult hunting license holders (those who had hunted outside of a Youth Weekend Hunt) were asked about the importance of the goal to recruit new hunters into the sport for the health of the sport itself, an overwhelming majority (88%) say this goal is very or somewhat important (with 64% saying it is *very* important). Finally, the 2001 youth license holders also indicate that the goal of recruiting new participants into hunting is important: 91% said it is very or somewhat important.

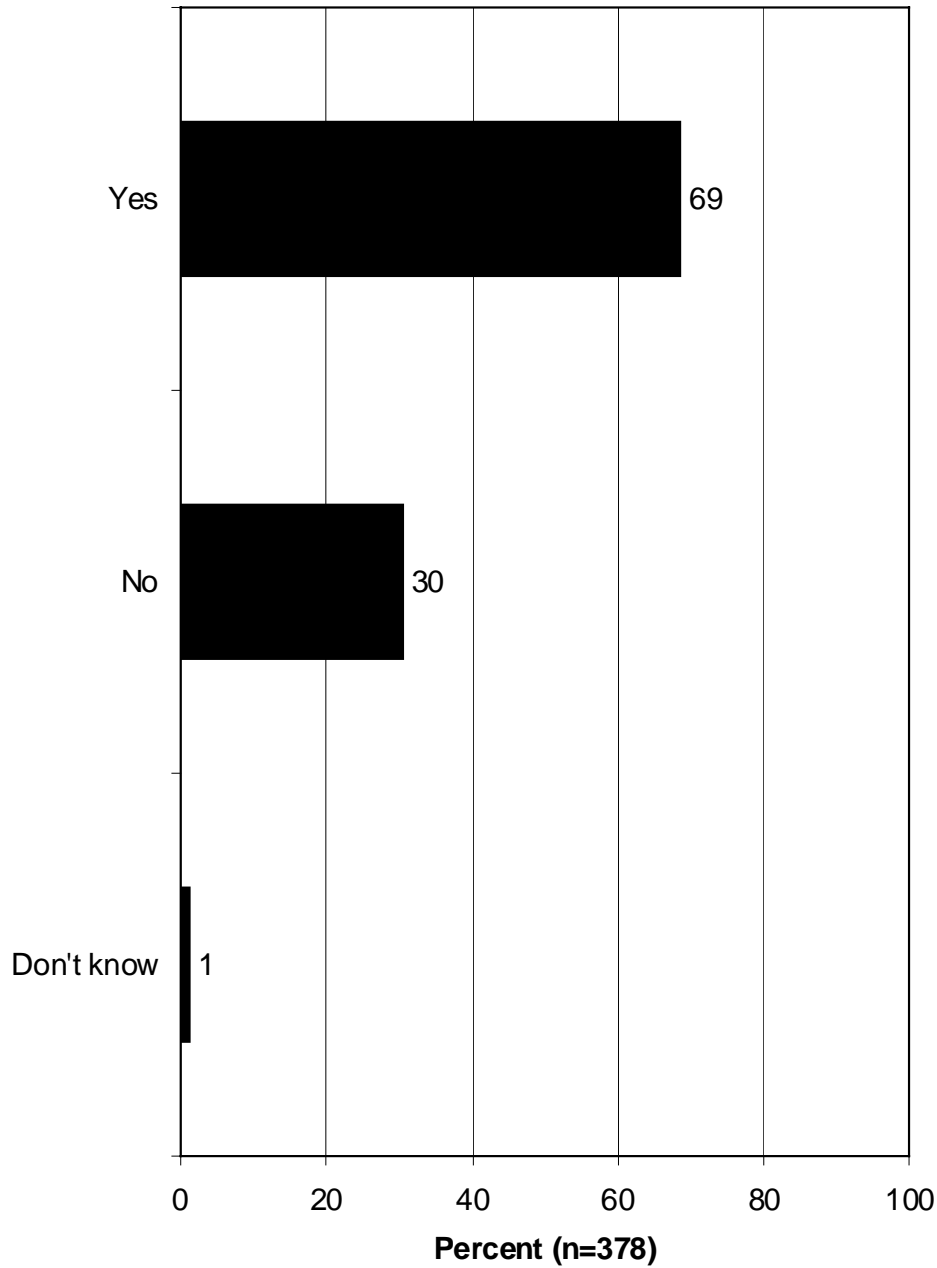
Q77. Who first taught you how to hunt? (Adult hunting license holders.)



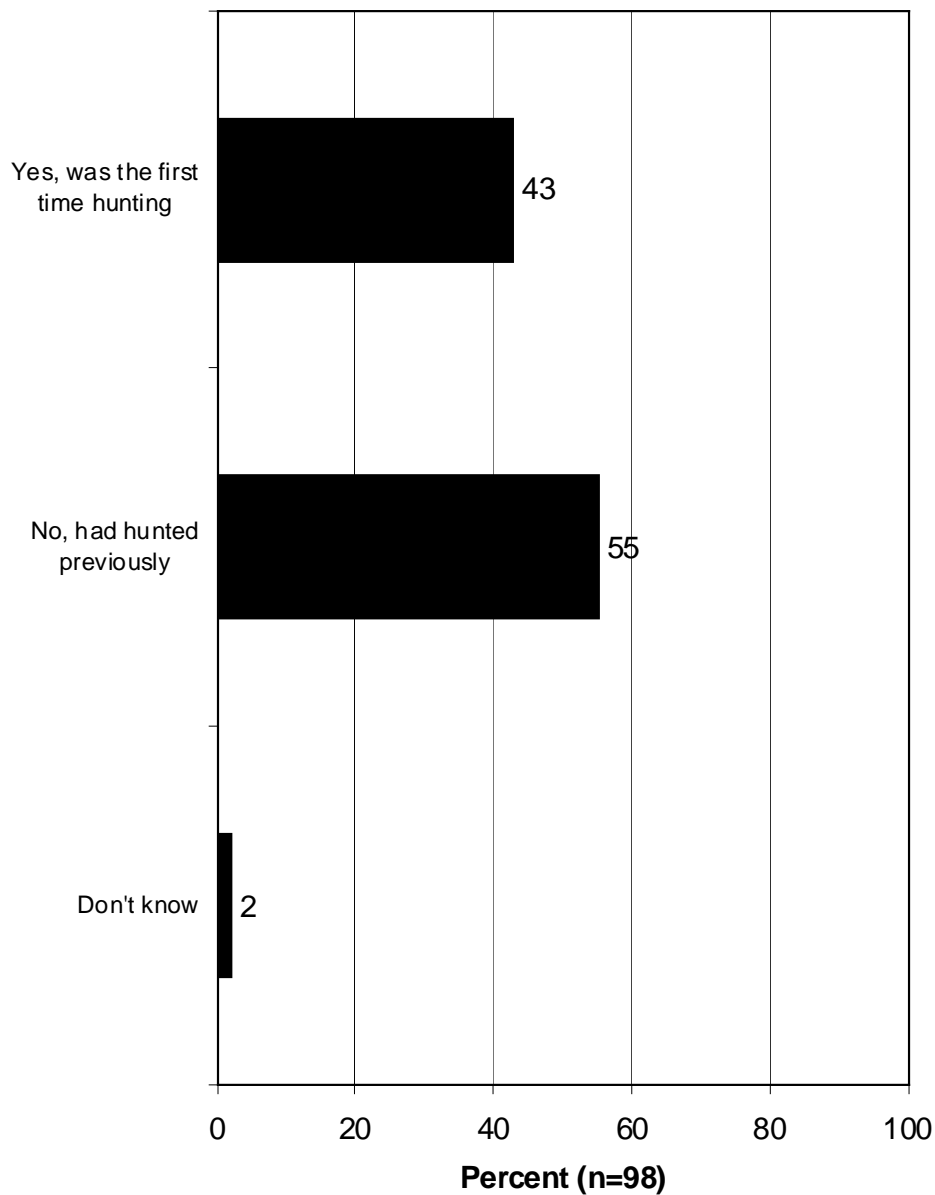
Q68. Who first taught you how to hunt? (Current youth license holders.)



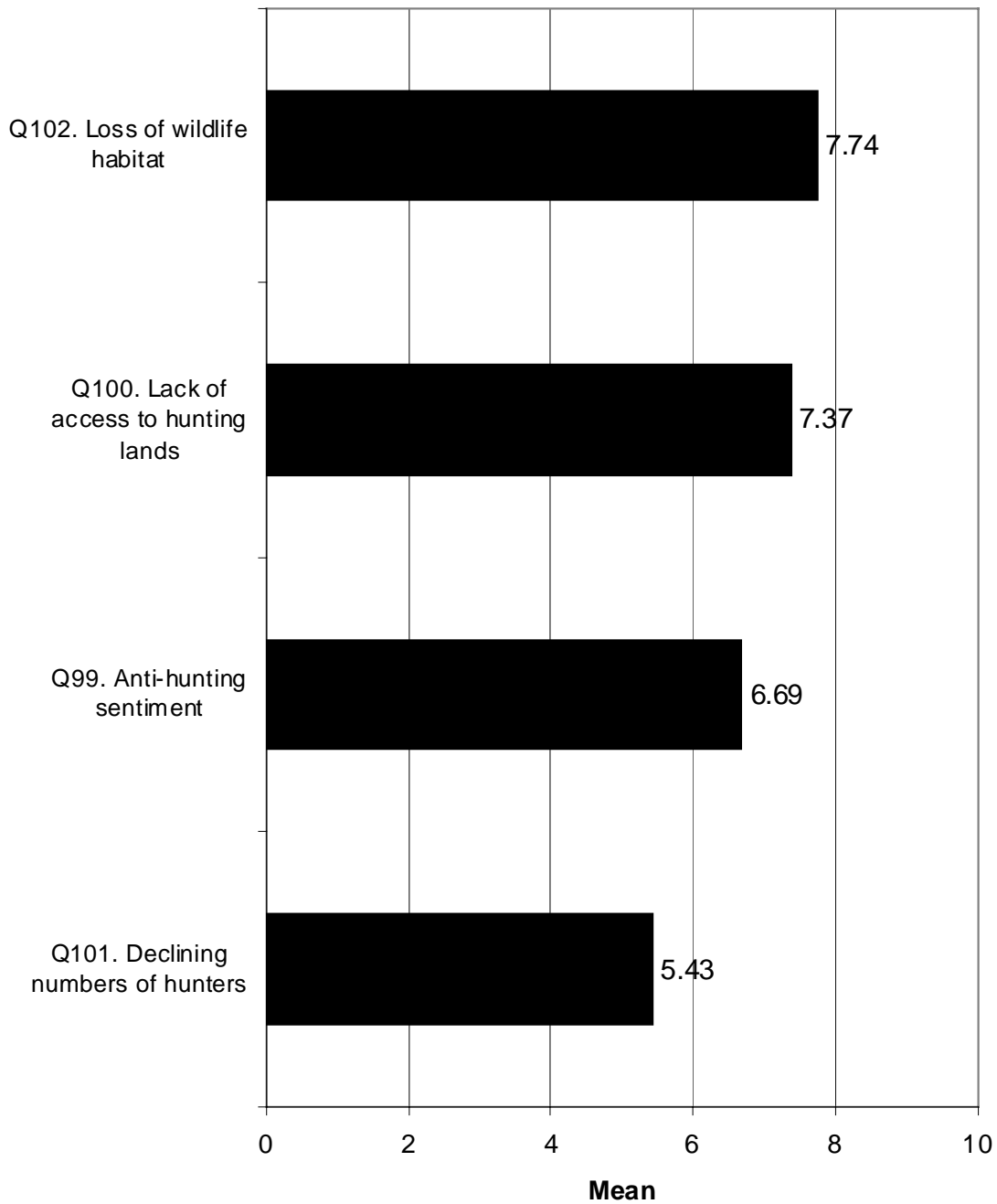
Q22. Was that first Youth Weekend Hunt the first time you hunted or accompanied someone hunting? (Asked of those who have been on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)



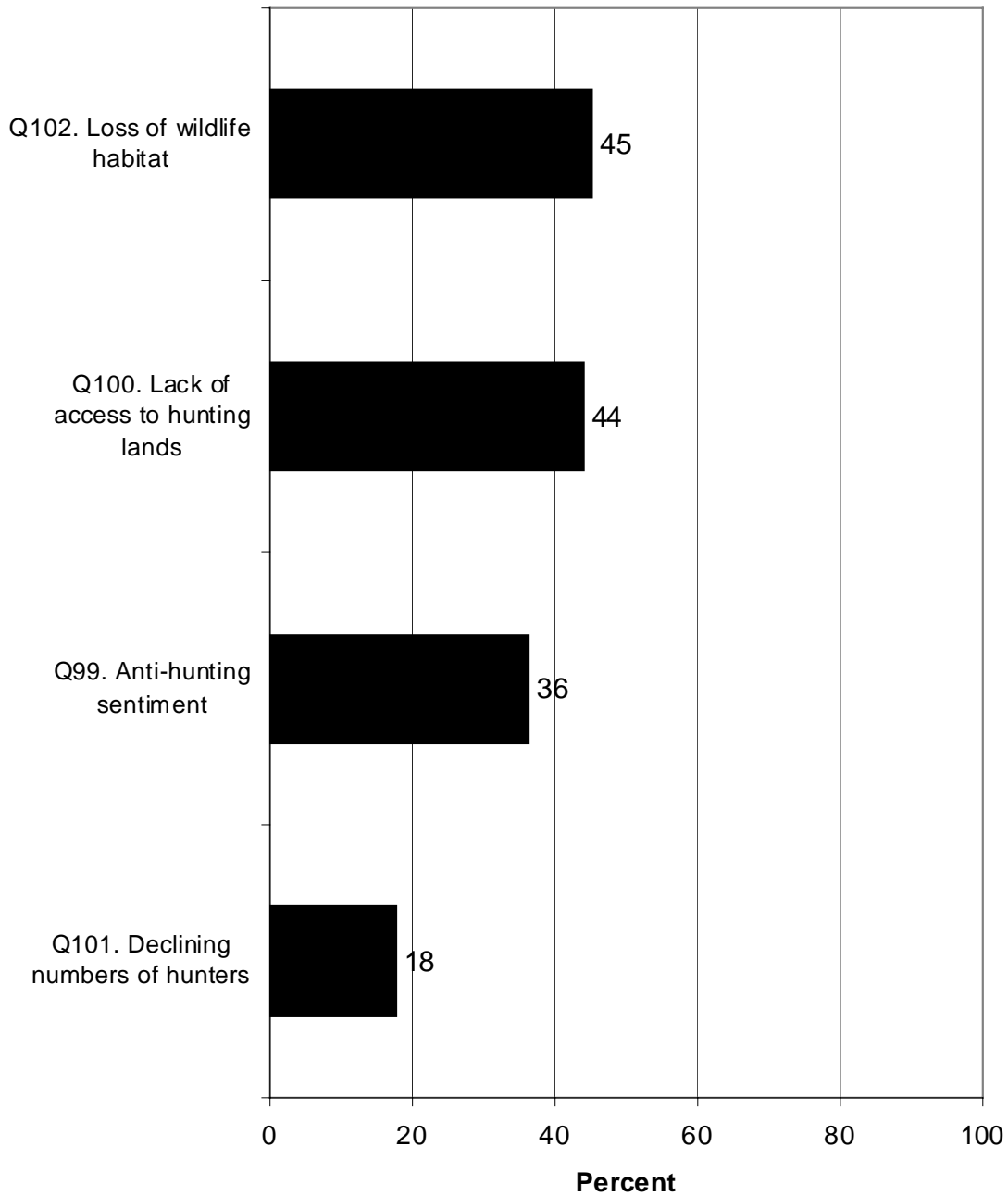
Q21. Was your first Youth Weekend Hunt the first time you hunted or accompanied someone hunting, or had you done so before your first Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



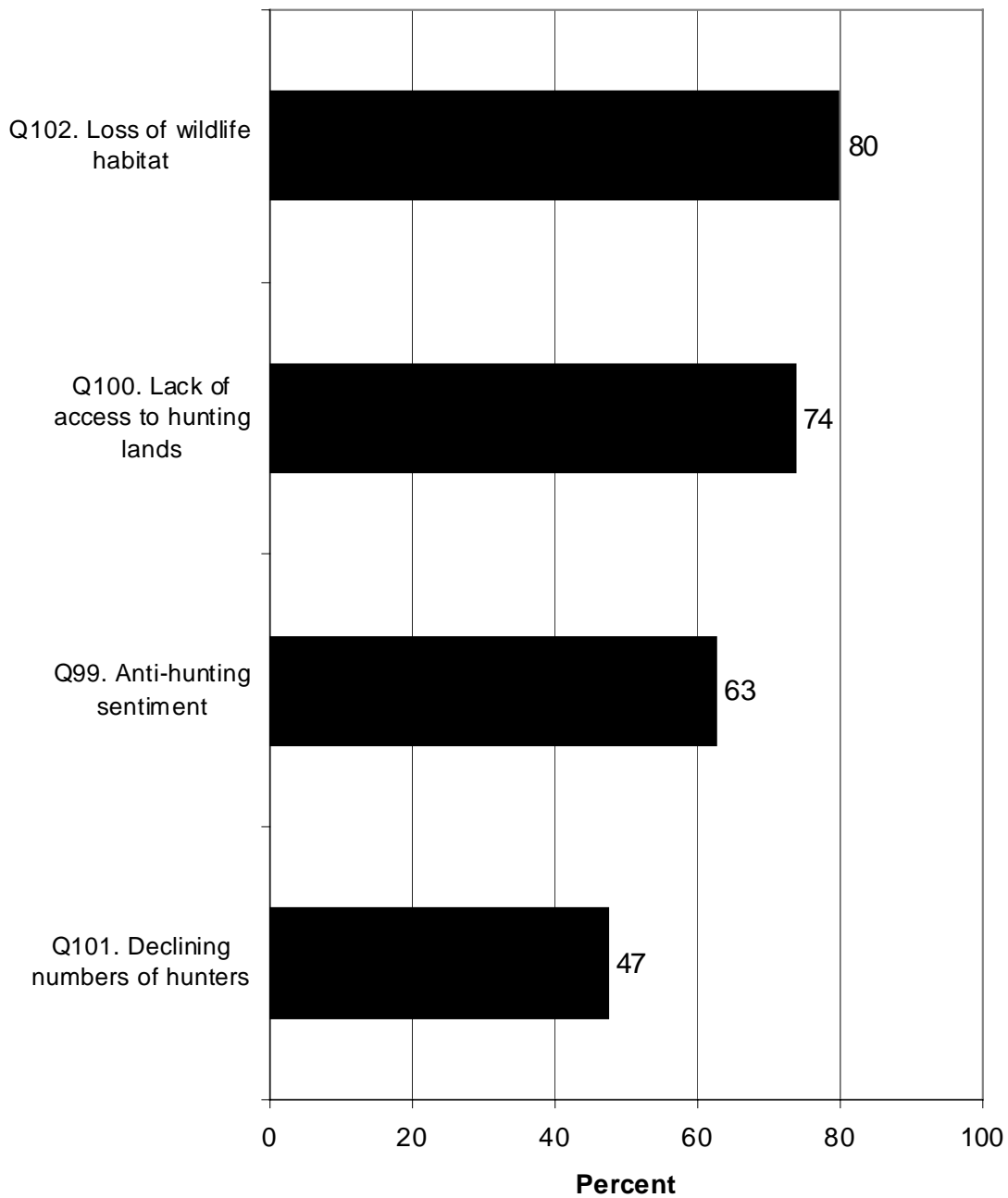
Q99-102. Mean ratings of concern about each of the following. (Adult hunting license holders.)



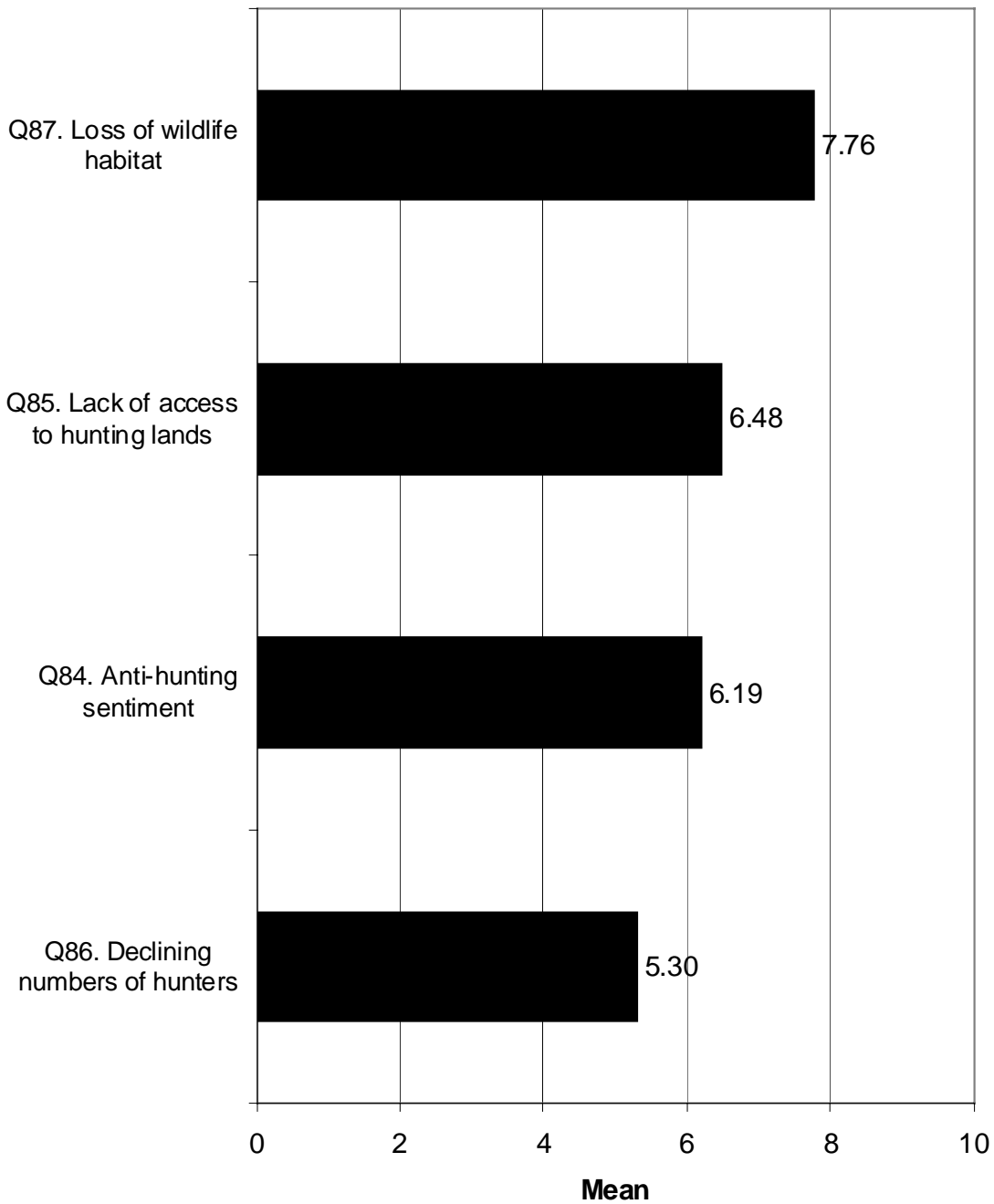
Q99-102. Percent giving a rating of 9 or 10 in concern about each of the following. (Adult hunting license holders.)



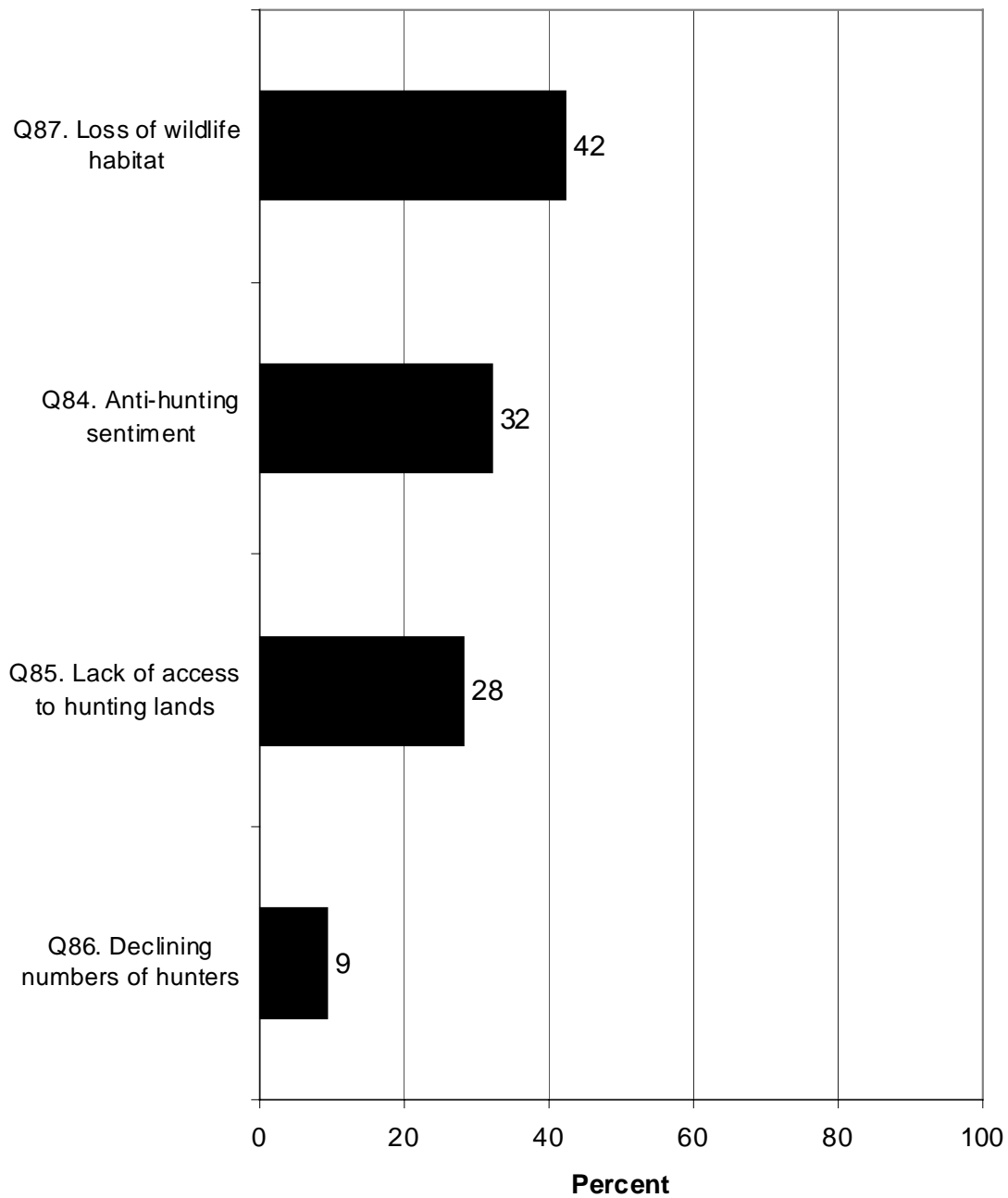
Q99-102. Percent giving a rating of greater than the midpoint (5) in concern about each of the following. (Adult hunting license holders.)



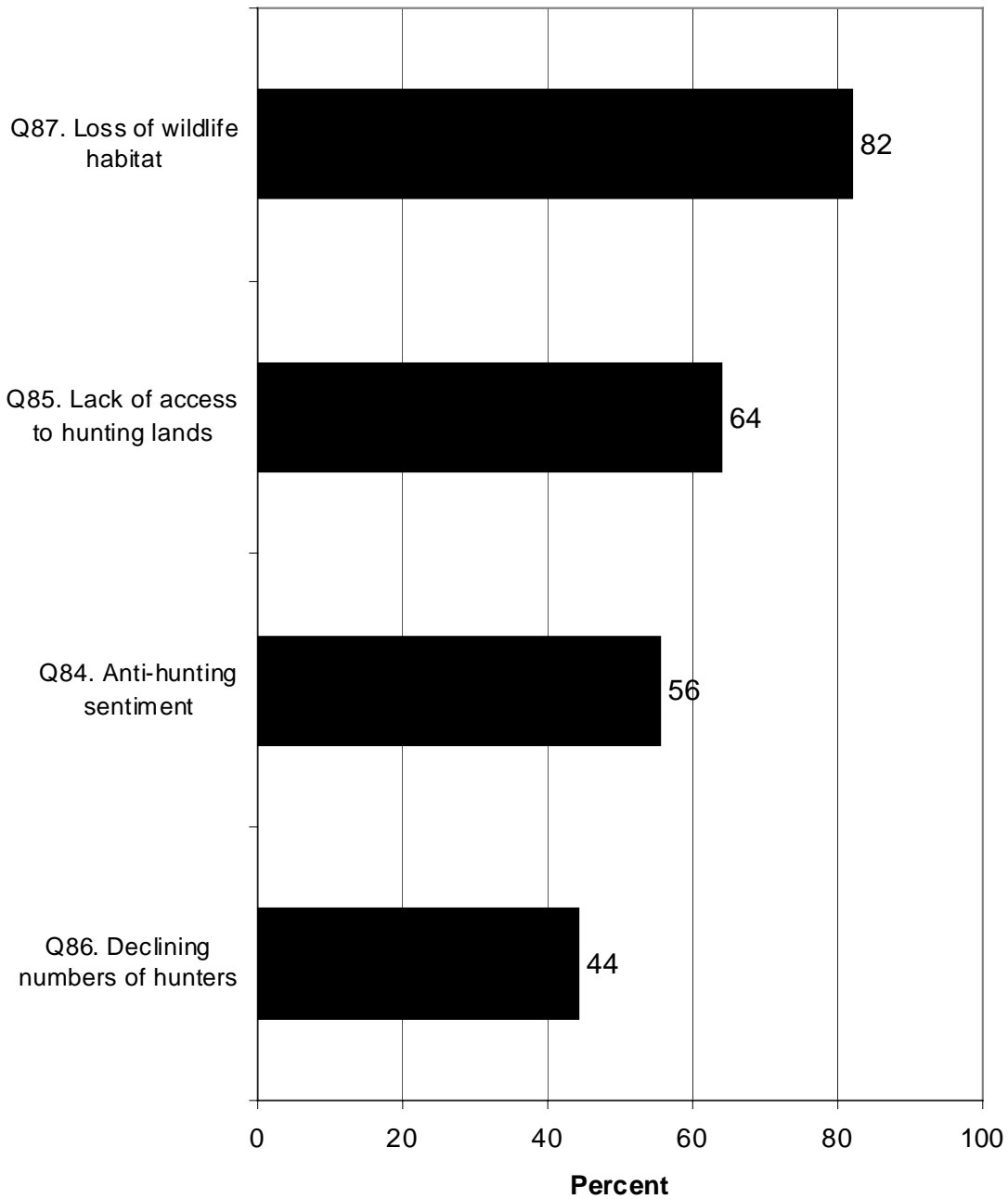
Q84-87. Mean ratings of concern about each of the following. (2001 Youth License sample.)



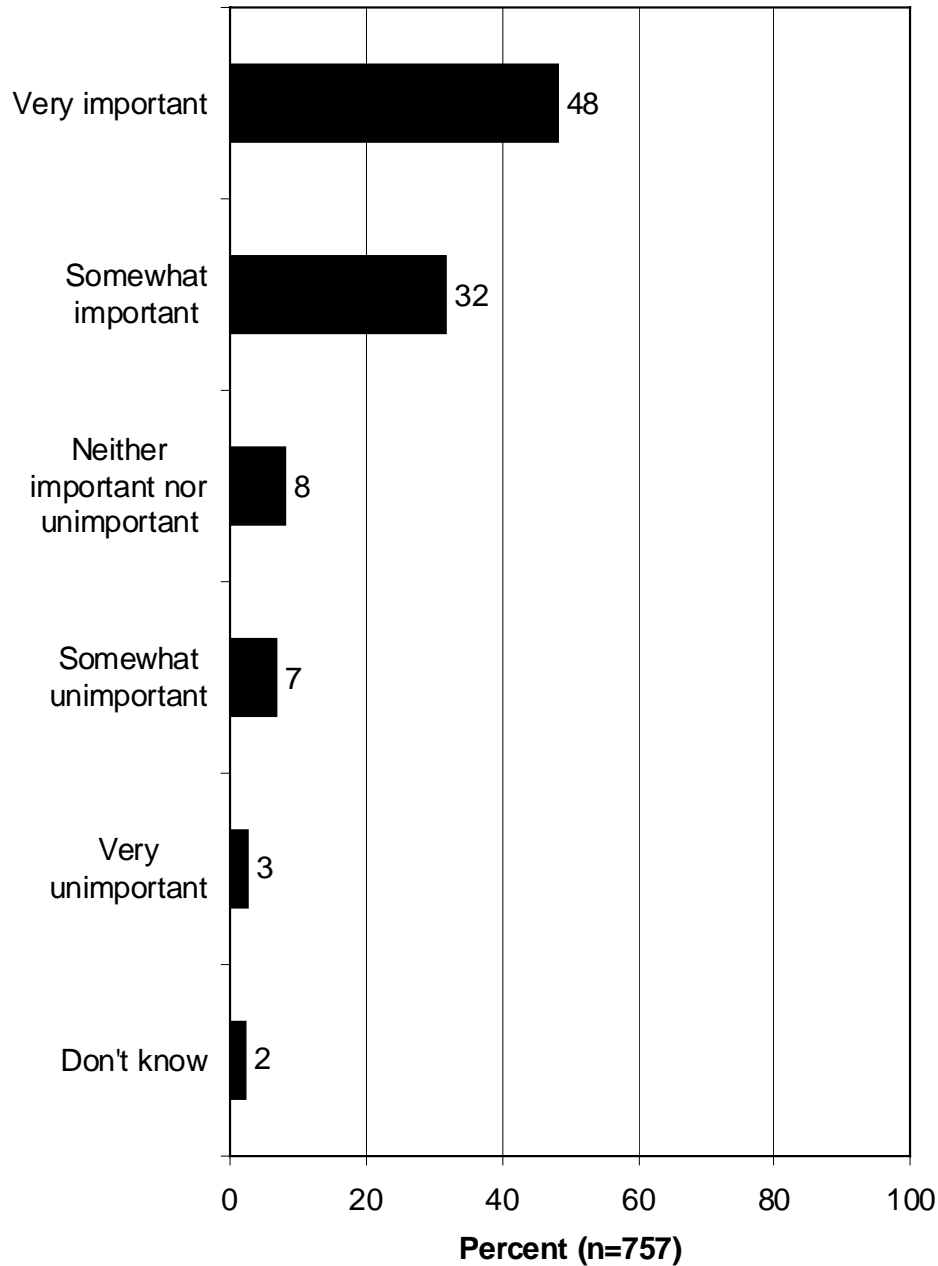
Q84-87. Percent giving a rating of 9 or 10 in concern about each of the following. (2001 Youth License sample.)



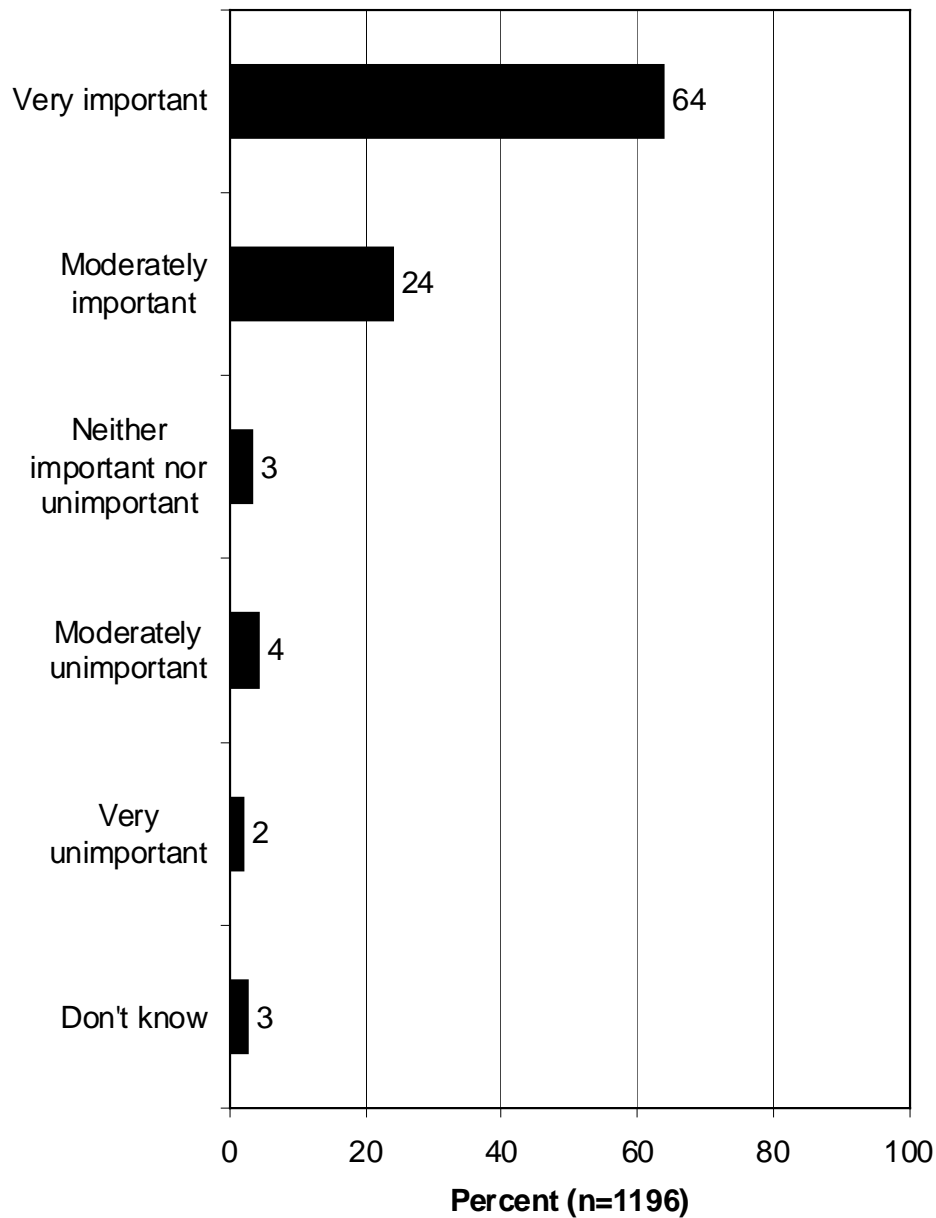
Q84-87. Percent giving a rating of greater than the midpoint (5) in concern about each of the following. (2001 Youth License sample.)



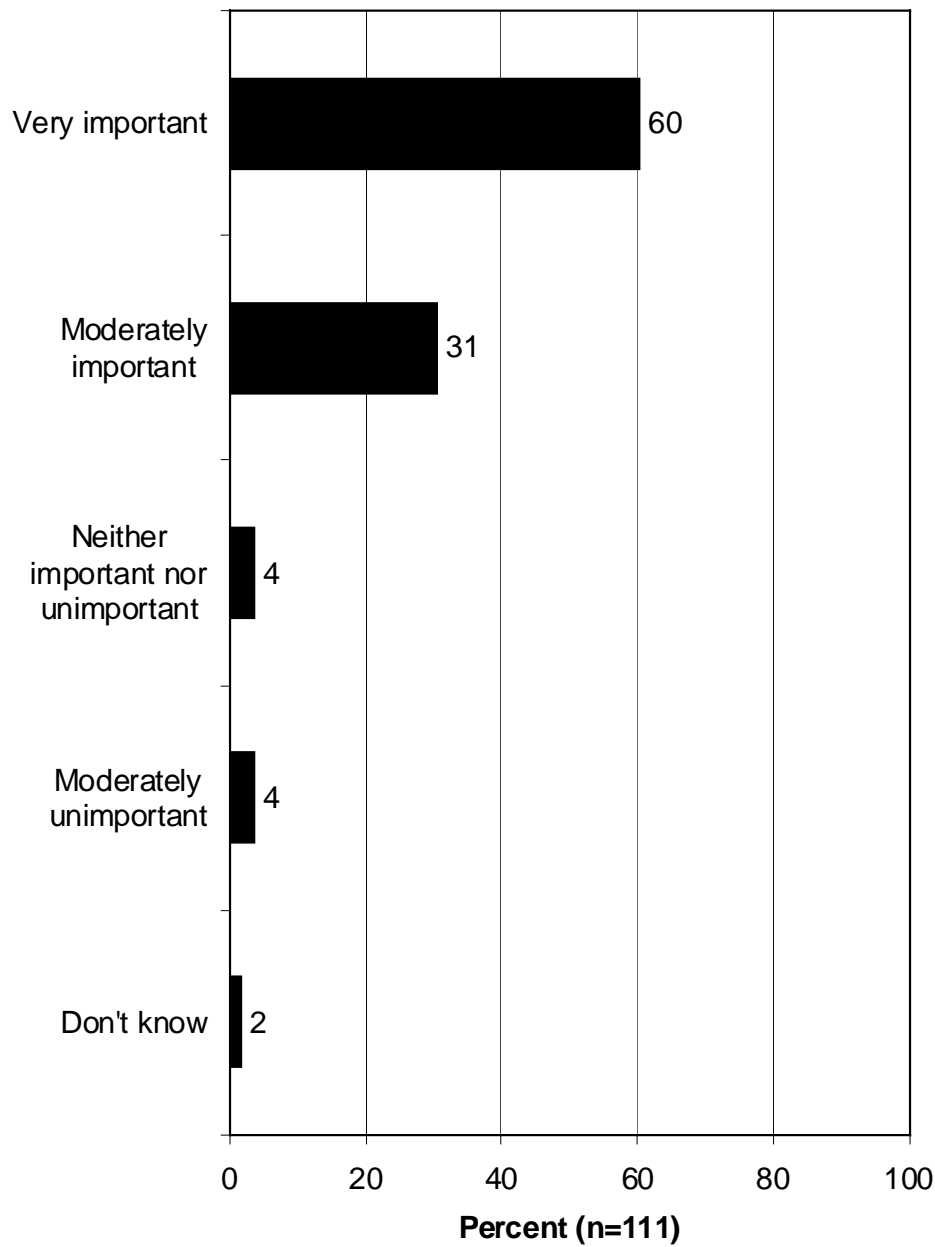
Q103. How important or unimportant should hunting recruitment efforts by the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife be? (Asked of those who have not been on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



Q117. How important or unimportant is the goal to recruit new hunters into the sport of hunting for the overall health of the sport itself? (Asked of those who hunted during any time other than a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



Q96. How important or unimportant is the goal to recruit new hunters into the sport of hunting for the overall health of the sport itself? (2001 Youth License sample.)



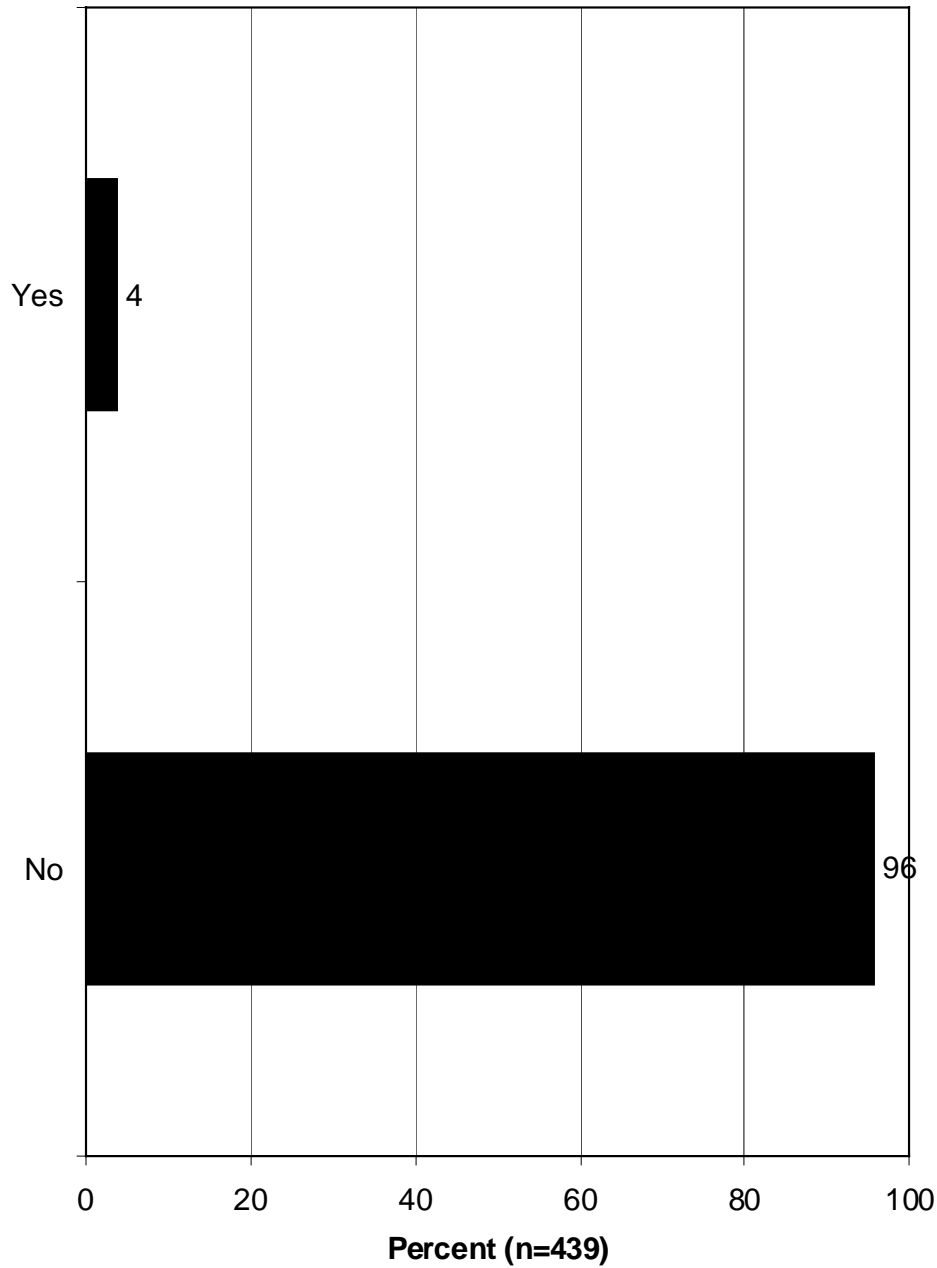
HUNTER BEHAVIOR DURING YOUTH WEEKEND HUNTS

- A very small percentage (4%) of participants in a Youth Weekend Hunt among adult hunting license holders personally observed a wildlife violation. Likewise, only 4% of 2001 youth license holders who participated in a Youth Weekend Hunt personally observed a wildlife violation.
 - Overwhelmingly, those adult hunting license holders who observed a wildlife violation think that the hunter knew the law but violated it intentionally. (Also, of the 4 respondents among the 2001 youth license holders who observed a wildlife violation, 2 of them indicated that the violator knew the law.) Among the adult hunting license holders who observed a violation, nearly half (47%) indicated that the violation was that the mentor was carrying the firearm and/or shooting game. (Of the 4 respondents among the 2001 youth license holders who observed a wildlife violation, 2 of them indicated that the violation was that the mentor shot the game.)

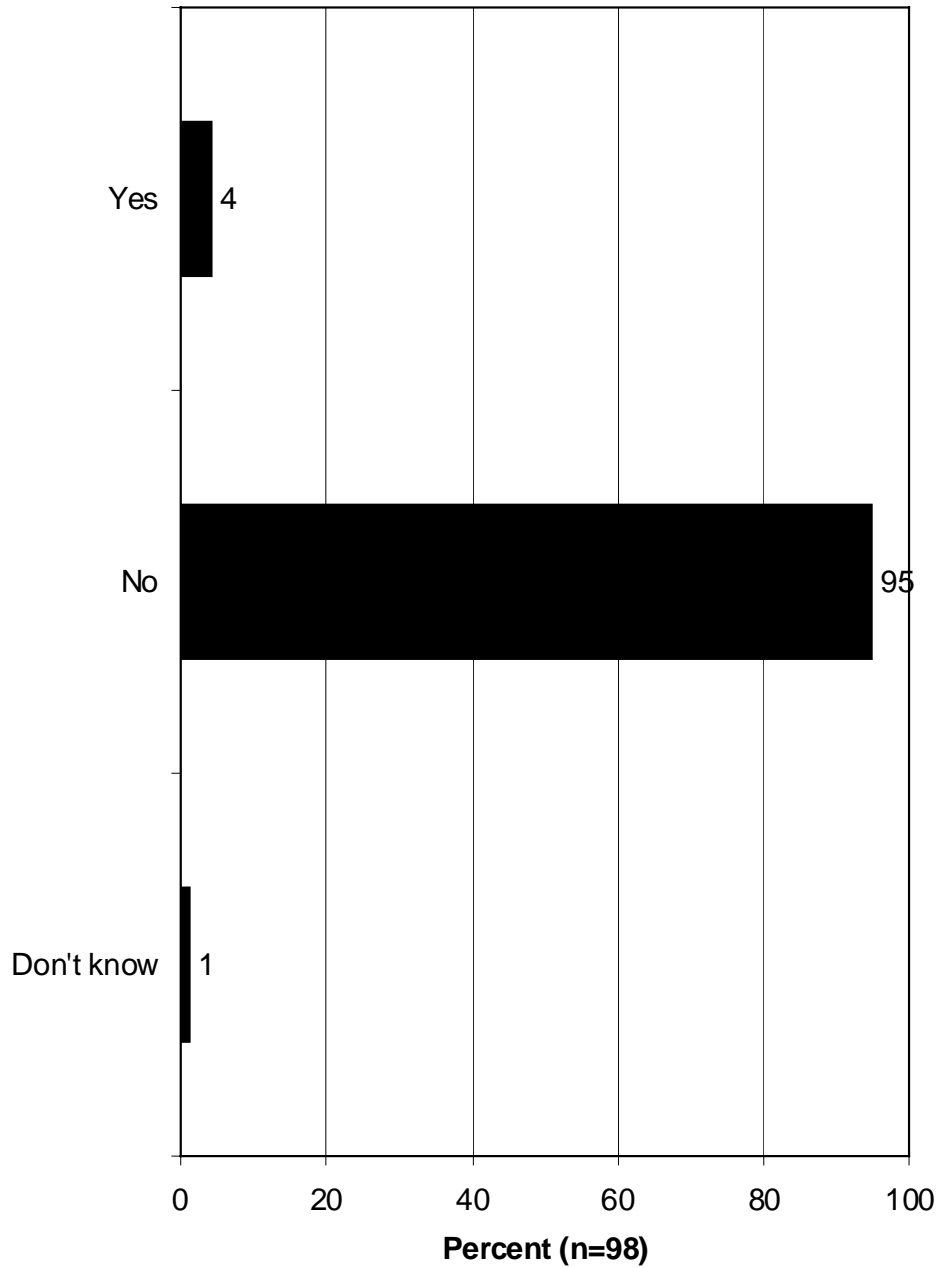
- About a third of participants in Youth Weekend Hunts (33%) from among adult hunting license holders say that adult mentors frequently or occasionally illegally shoot the game instead of having the youth shoot the game; meanwhile, 43% say rarely or never. Among 2001 youth license holders, 27% say that adult mentors frequently or occasionally illegally shoot the game instead of having the youth shoot the game; meanwhile, 48% say rarely or never.
 - A crosstabulation of the adult hunting license holders' results by participation as a youth or as a mentor shows that the two groups are about the same in their responses regarding the frequency in which mentors shoot the game instead of the youth. The researchers conjectured that perhaps the youth would be more likely to report such action than would mentors (youth perhaps having less of a social constraint on reporting illegal behavior); however, the crosstabulation does not support this. In fact, mentors are just slightly more likely than are youth to say that mentors illegally shoot the game frequently or occasionally. Overall, neither youth nor mentors have a majority who say that mentors frequently or occasionally illegally shoot the game.

- A slight majority of participants in Youth Weekend Hunts (51%) say that unethical hunting behavior during Youth Weekend Hunts is a big or moderate problem. Among 2001 youth license holders, a slightly higher percentage (59%) say that unethical hunting behavior during Youth Weekend Hunts is a big or moderate problem. (Note, however, that for both groups, saying “moderate” problem is much more common than saying “big” problem.)

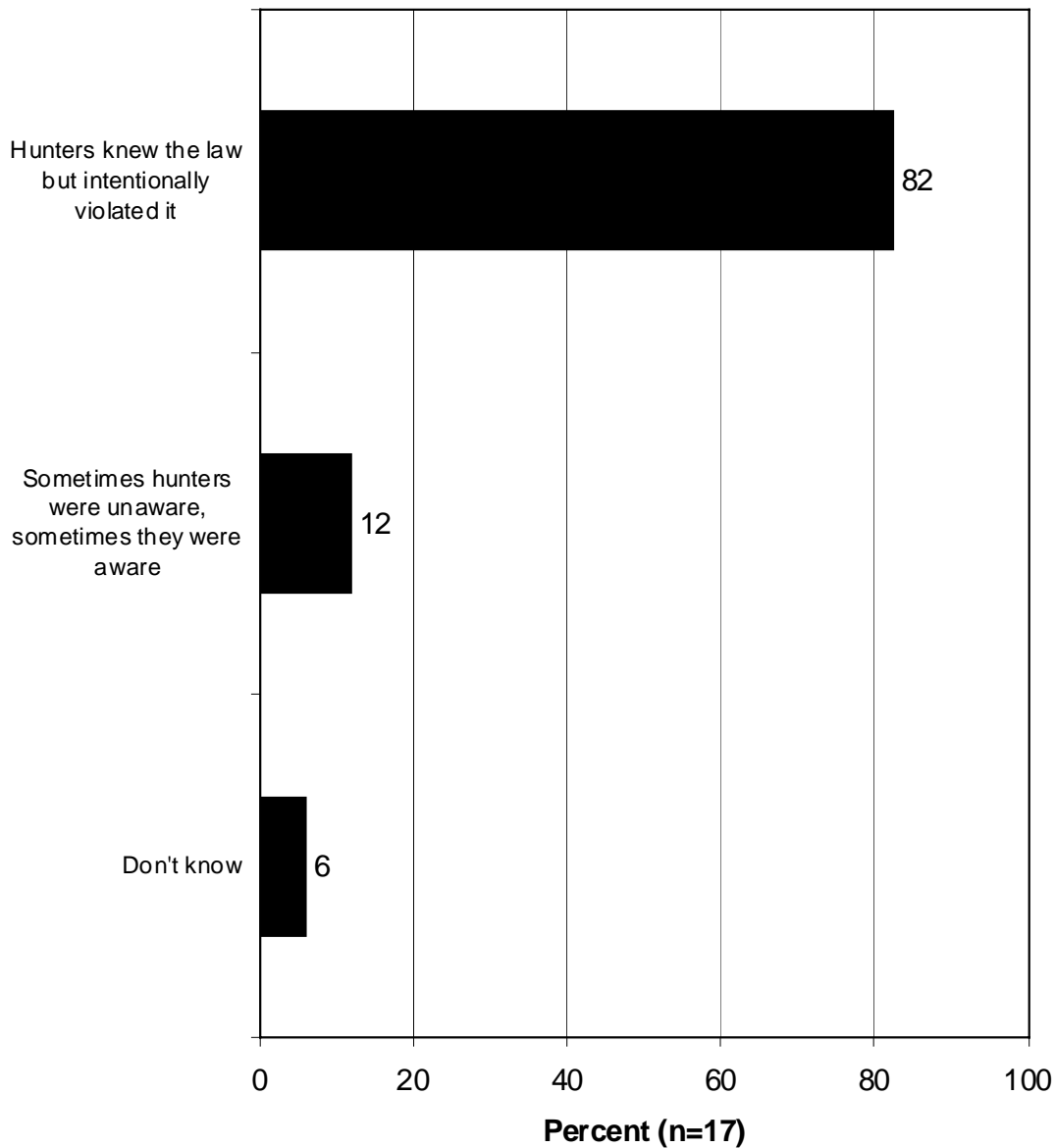
Q110. In the past 2 years, have you, personally, observed a wildlife violation during a Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who have gone on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



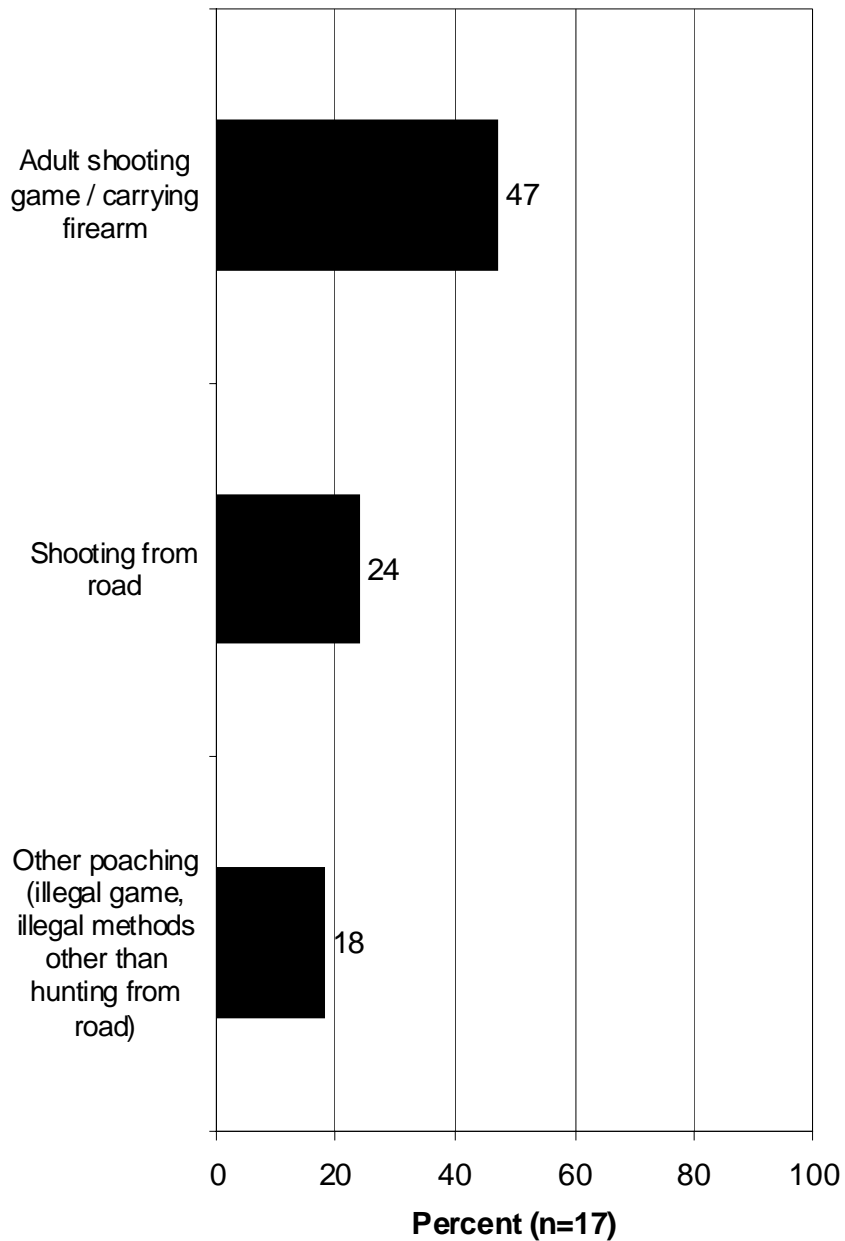
Q28. Have you, personally, observed a wildlife violation during a Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



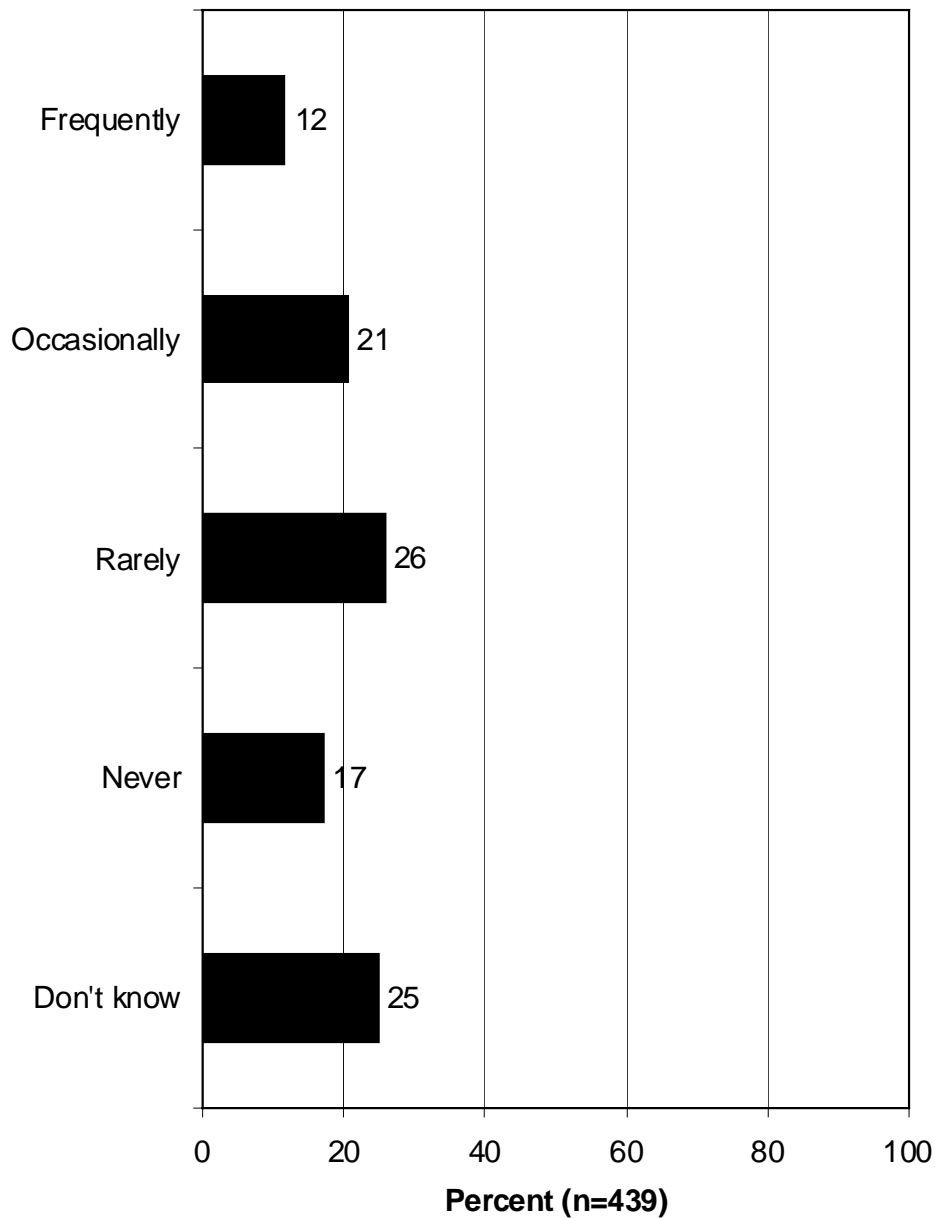
Q111. In general, do you think the hunters involved in these violations were unaware of the law, or do you think that they knew the law and violated it intentionally? (Asked of those who have gone on a Youth Weekend Hunt and have observed a wildlife violation.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



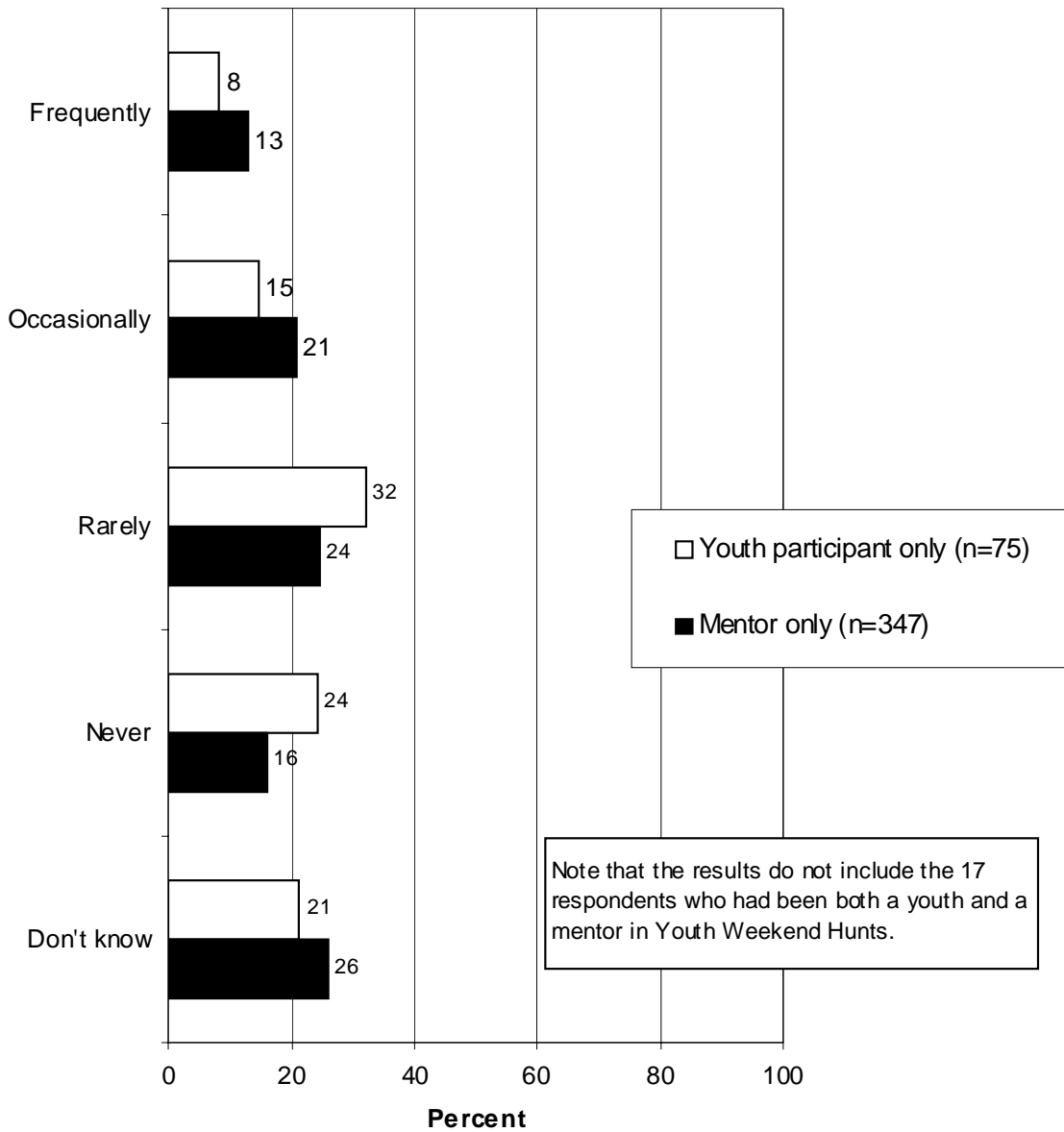
**Q112. What wildlife violation did you observe?
(Asked of those who have gone on a Youth
Weekend Hunt as a hunter or mentor and have
observed a wildlife violation.) (Adult hunting license
holders.)**



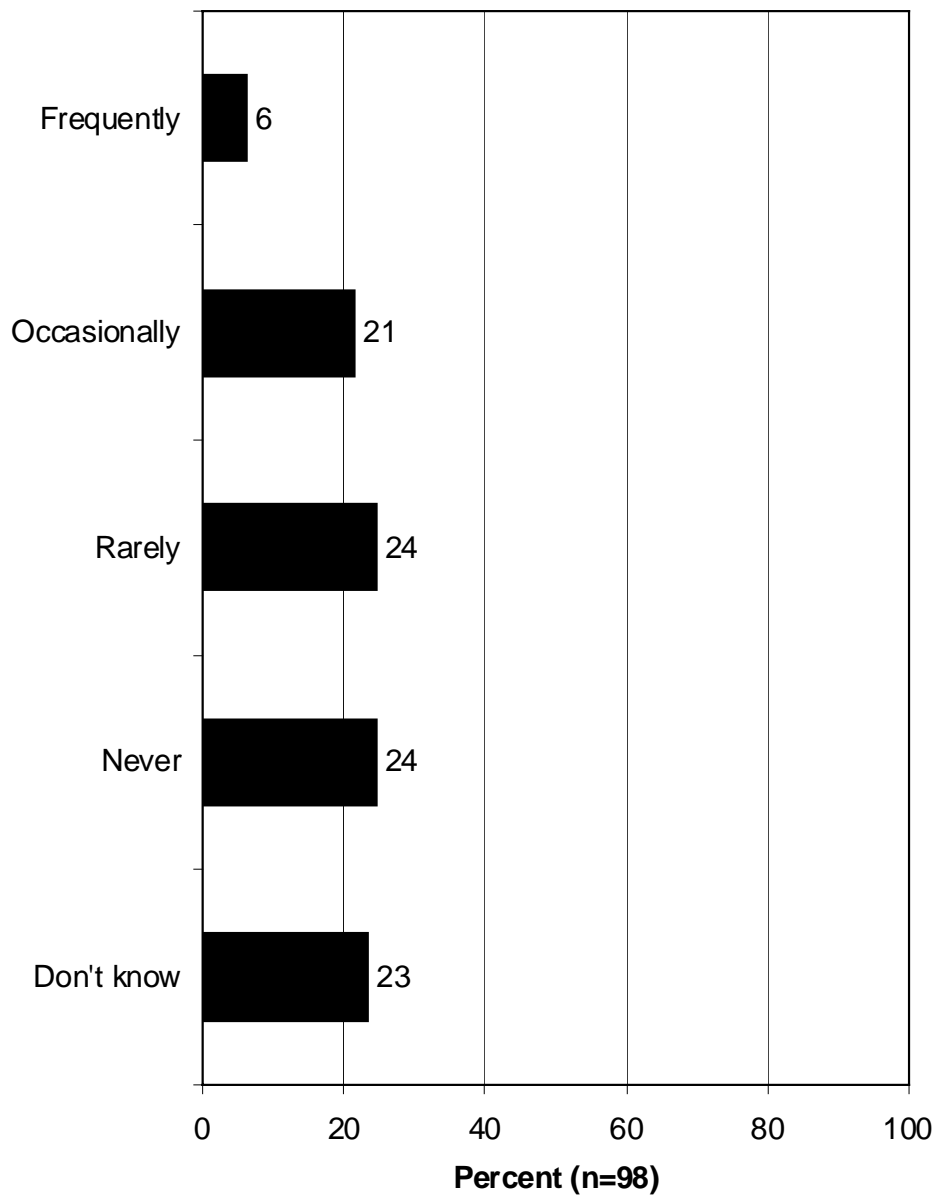
Q113. How often would you say that adult mentors during Youth Weekend Hunts illegally shoot the game instead of having the youth shoot the game? (Asked of those who have gone on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



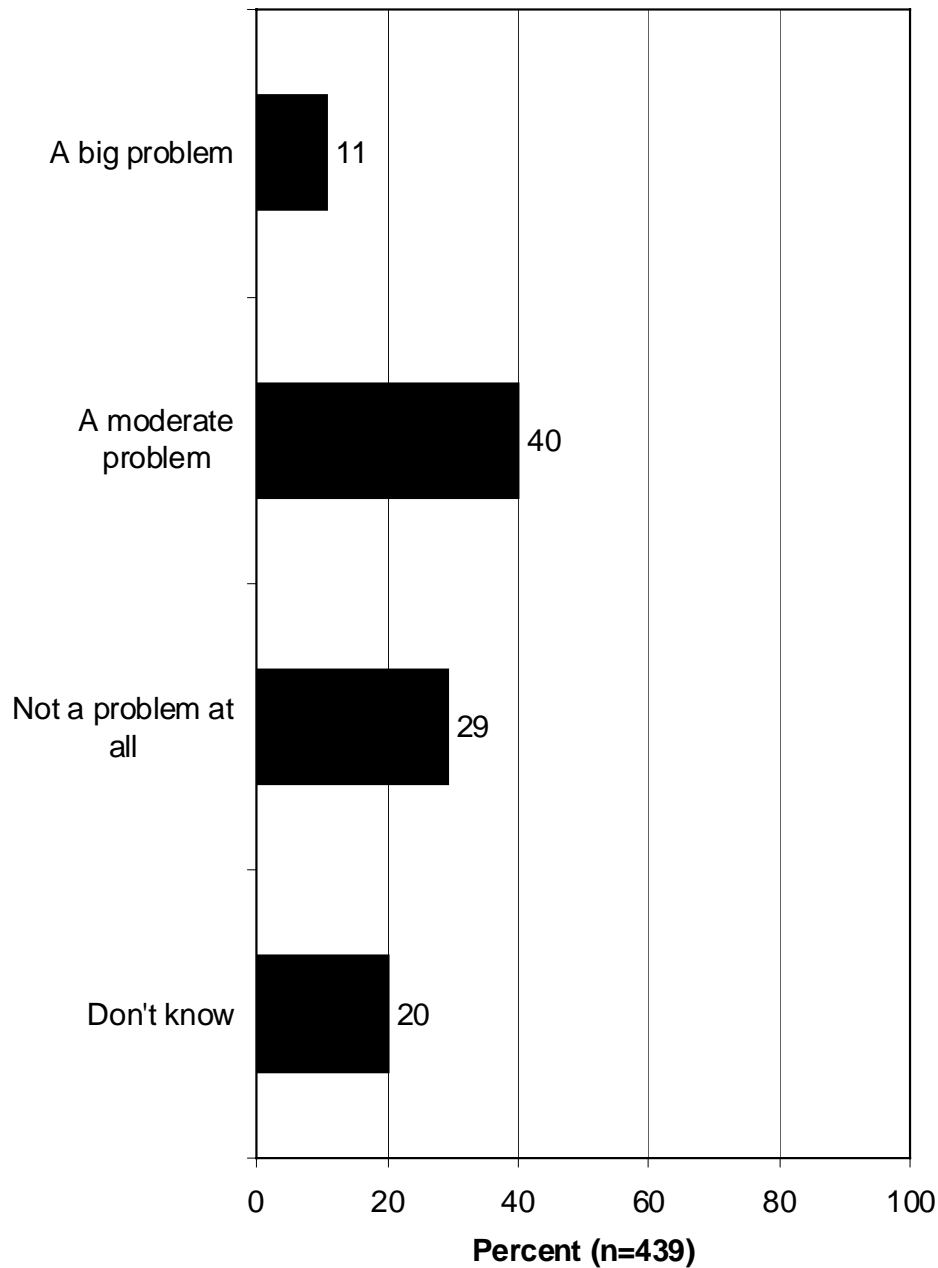
Q113. How often would you say that adult mentors during Youth Weekend Hunts illegally shoot the game instead of having the youth shoot the game? (Asked of those who have gone on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



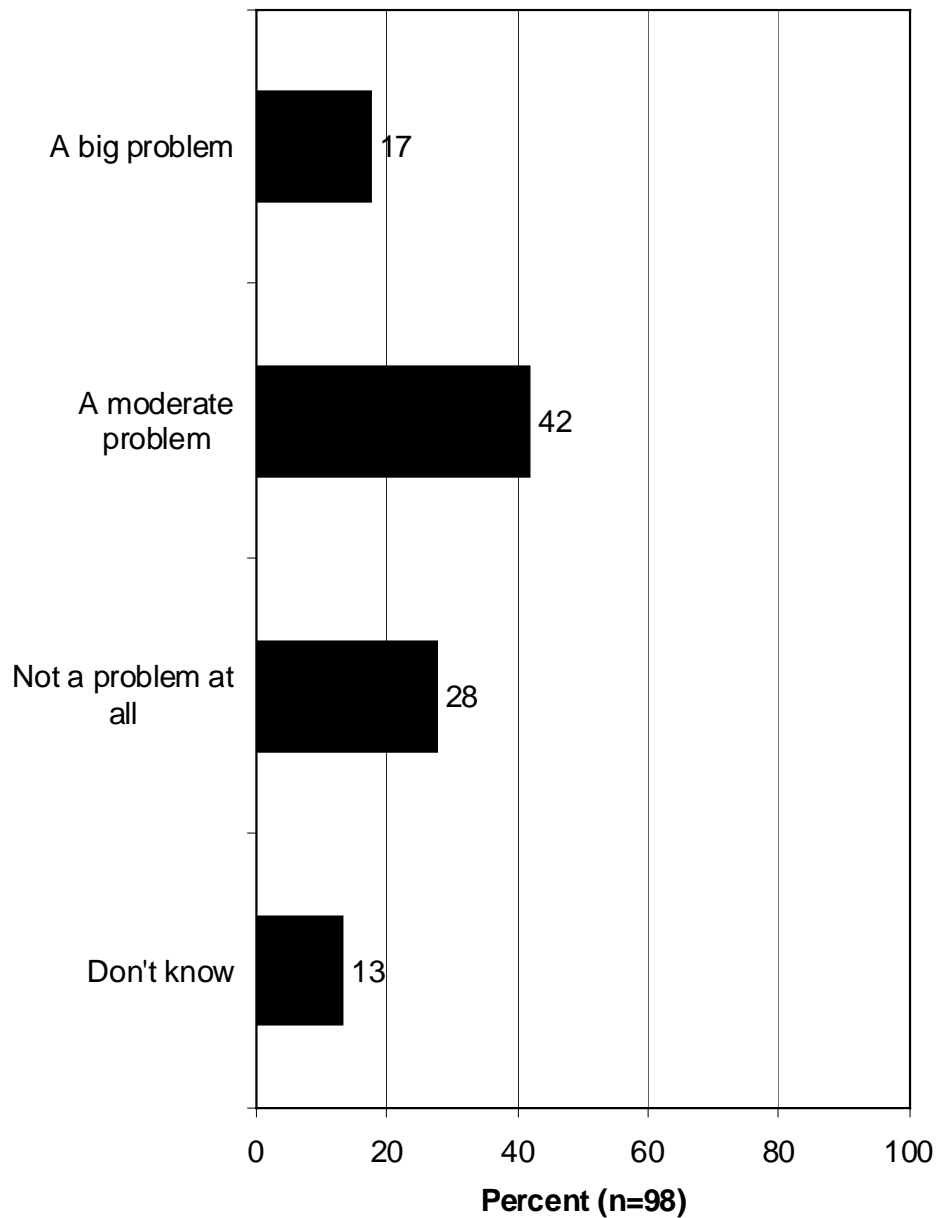
**Q31. How often would you say that adult mentors during Youth Weekend Hunts illegally shoot the game instead of having the youth shoot the game?
(Asked of those who hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (2001 Youth License sample.)**



Q114. How much of a problem do you think unethical hunting behavior is during Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who have gone on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



Q32. How much of a problem do you think unethical hunting behavior is during Youth Weekend Hunts? (Asked of those who hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



PARTICIPATION IN HUNTING IN GENERAL

Overall Participation in Hunting

- Note that none of the questions regarding participation was asked of a general population sample; therefore, the participation rates reported below are of various groups of hunters, such as current youth license holders or 2001 youth license holders.

- Nearly all current youth license holders (95%) hunted in 2006.

- A large majority of current youth license holders (85%) have hunted at some time in Vermont other than a Youth Weekend Hunt.

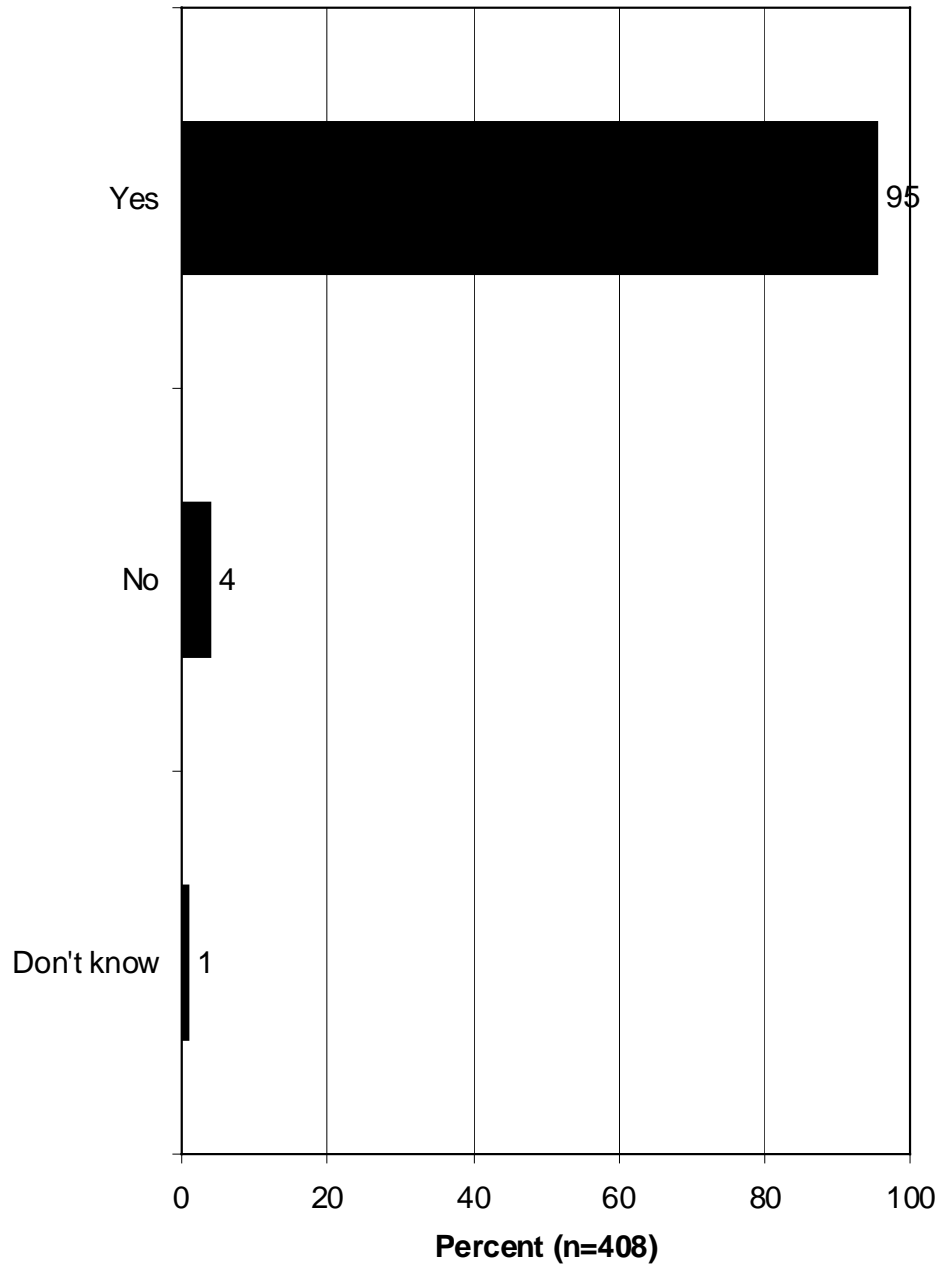
- Based on several questions, the 2001 youth license holders sample could be categorized as follows:
 - 84% hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt in 2001 and since then,
 - 12% did not hunt a Youth Weekend Hunt in 2001, but hunted in 2001, and hunted since then as well,
 - and 5% hunted a Youth Weekend Hunt in 2001 but *not* since then.

- Avidity was quite strong among adult hunting license holders: a large majority (70%) hunted all 5 of the past 5 years. Only 3% had not hunted in the past 5 years.
 - Among those adult hunting license holders who had hunted during a Youth Weekend Hunt, nearly all also hunted during a season that was *not* a Youth Weekend Hunt.

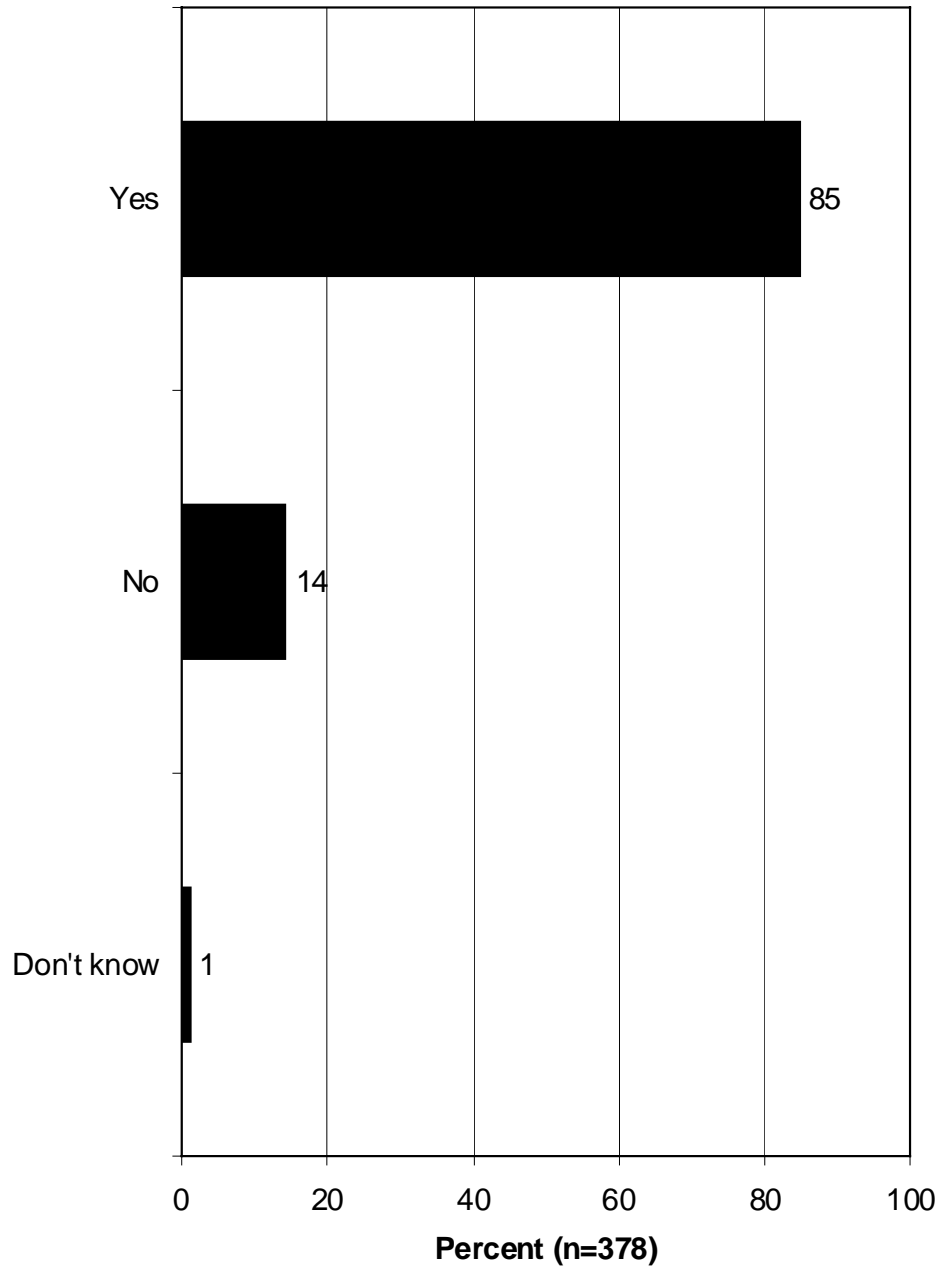
- Those current youth license holders who had hunted other than a Youth Weekend Hunt were asked how many of the past 5 years they had hunted: they are fairly evenly distributed among years, ranging from 18% who went only 1 year to 25% who went all 5 years. Note that with a younger sample than the adult sample, some respondents may not have been old enough to have hunted 5 years.

- Nearly all current youth license holders who had been on a Youth Weekend Hunt (94%) indicated that they would hunt in Vermont, even if the state did not have a Youth Weekend Hunt.

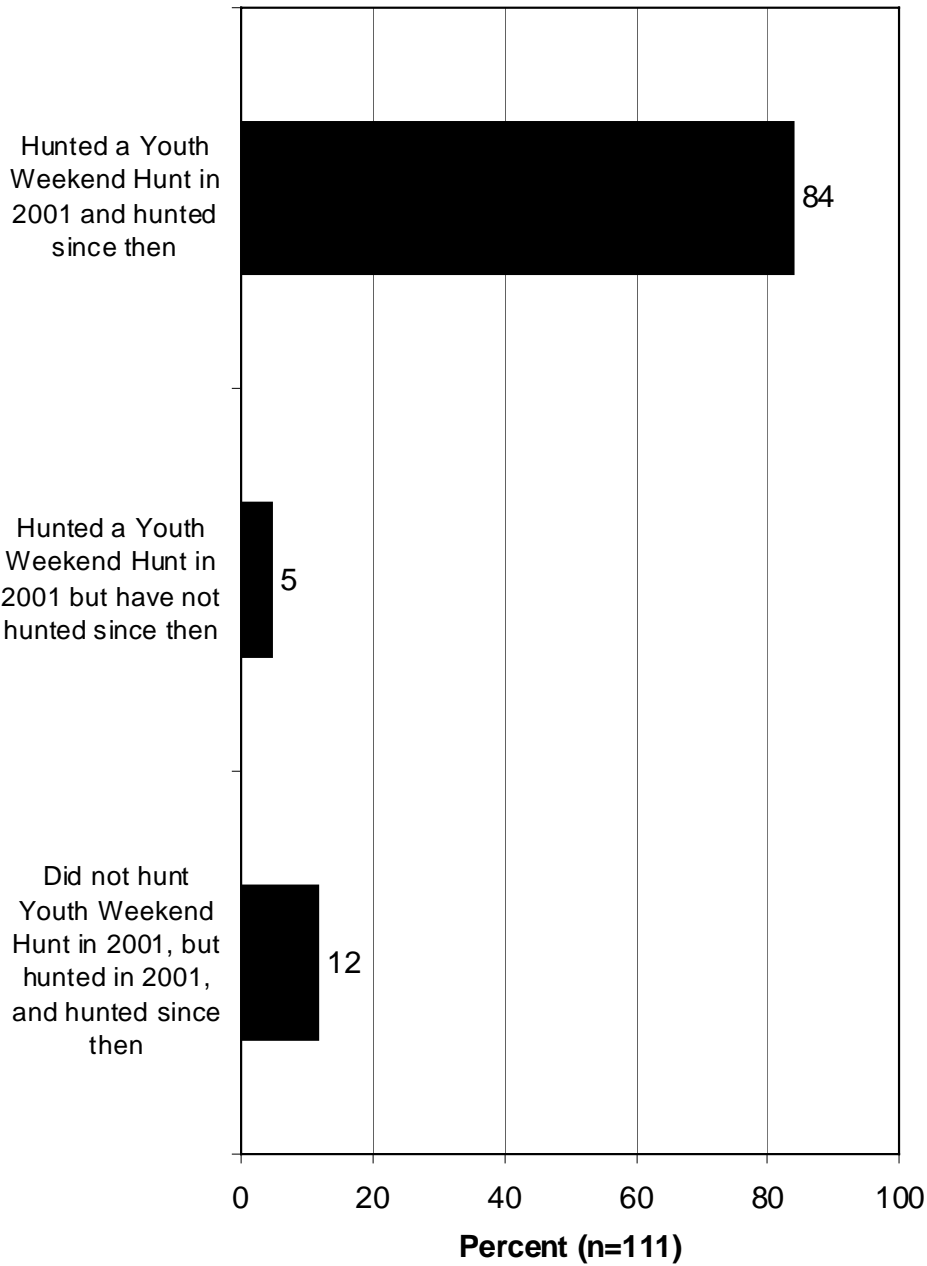
Q103. Did you hunt in 2006? (Current youth license holders.)



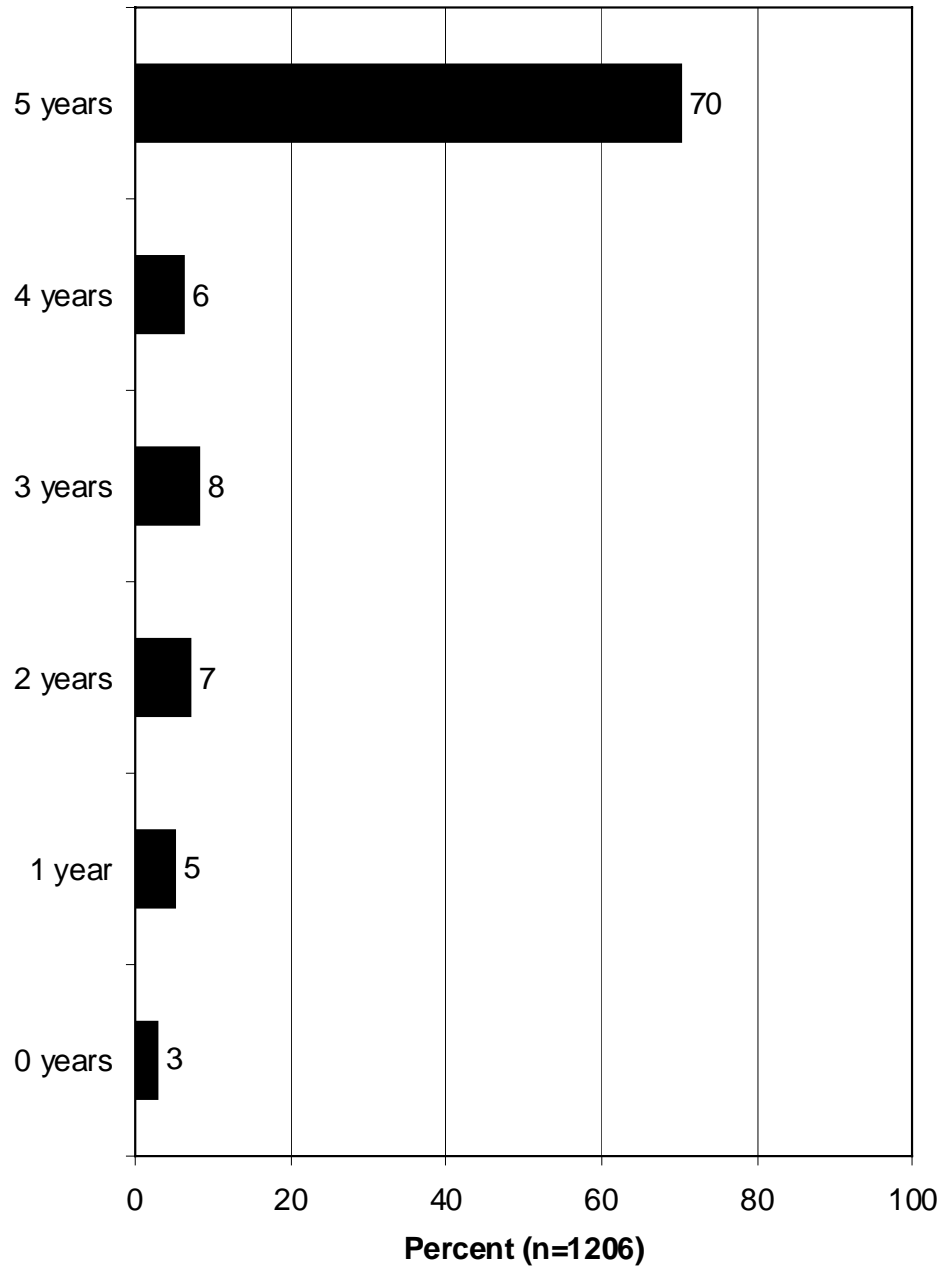
**Q46. Have you hunted at any time in Vermont not during a Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who have been on a Youth Weekend Hunt.)
(Current youth license holders.)**



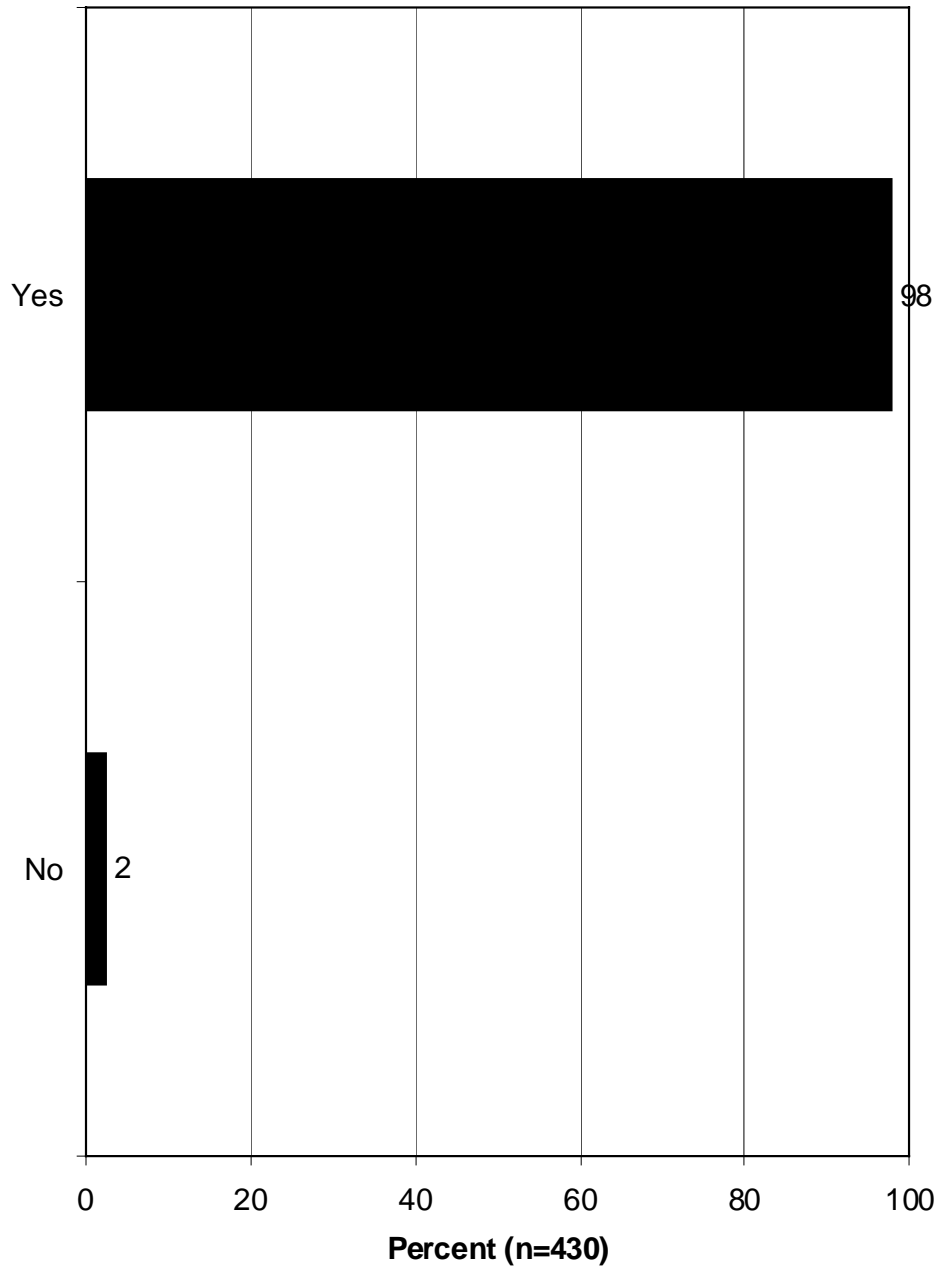
Breakdown of sample. (2001 Youth License sample.)



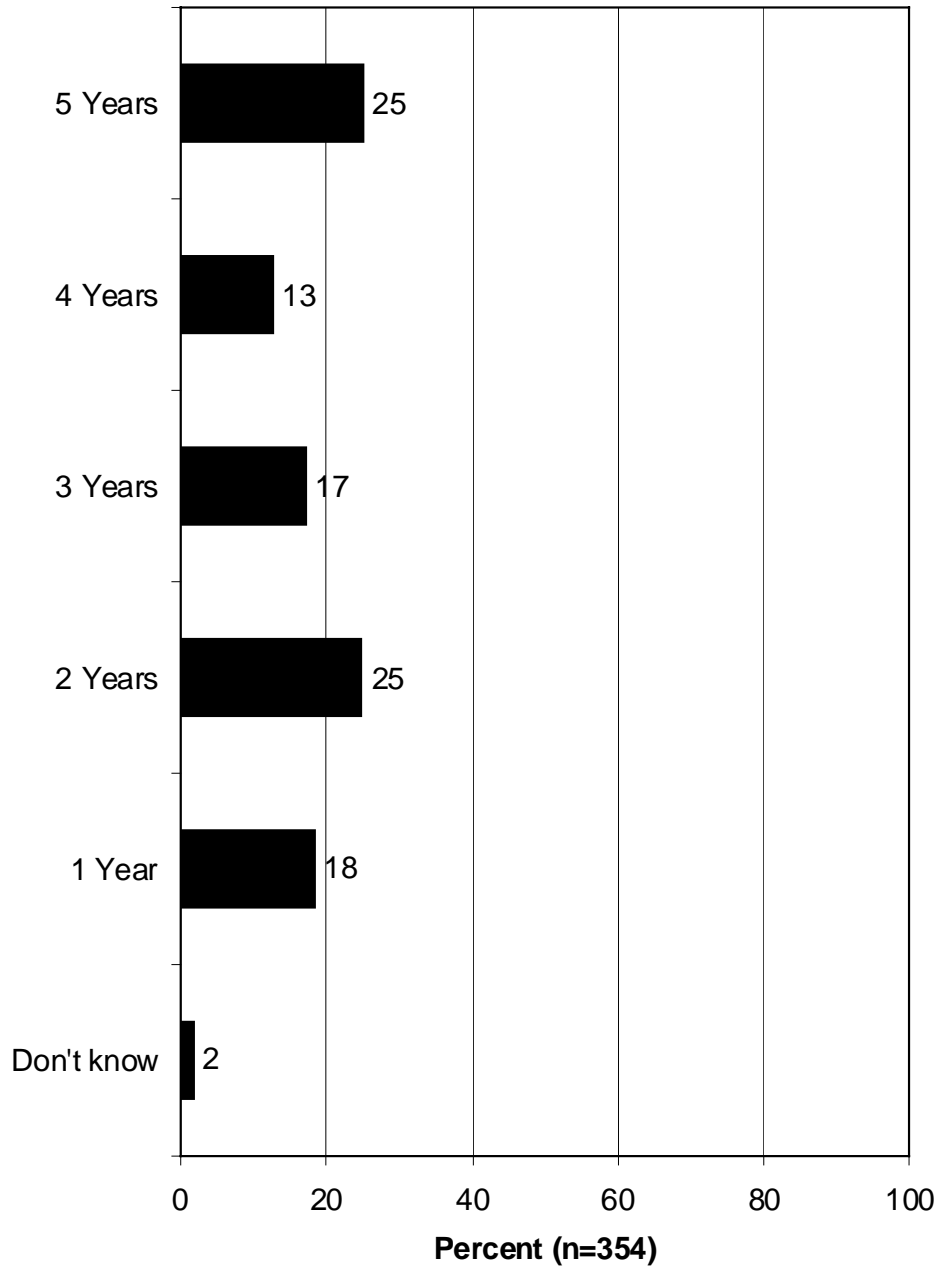
Q8. How many of the past 5 years have you hunted? (Adult hunting license holders.)



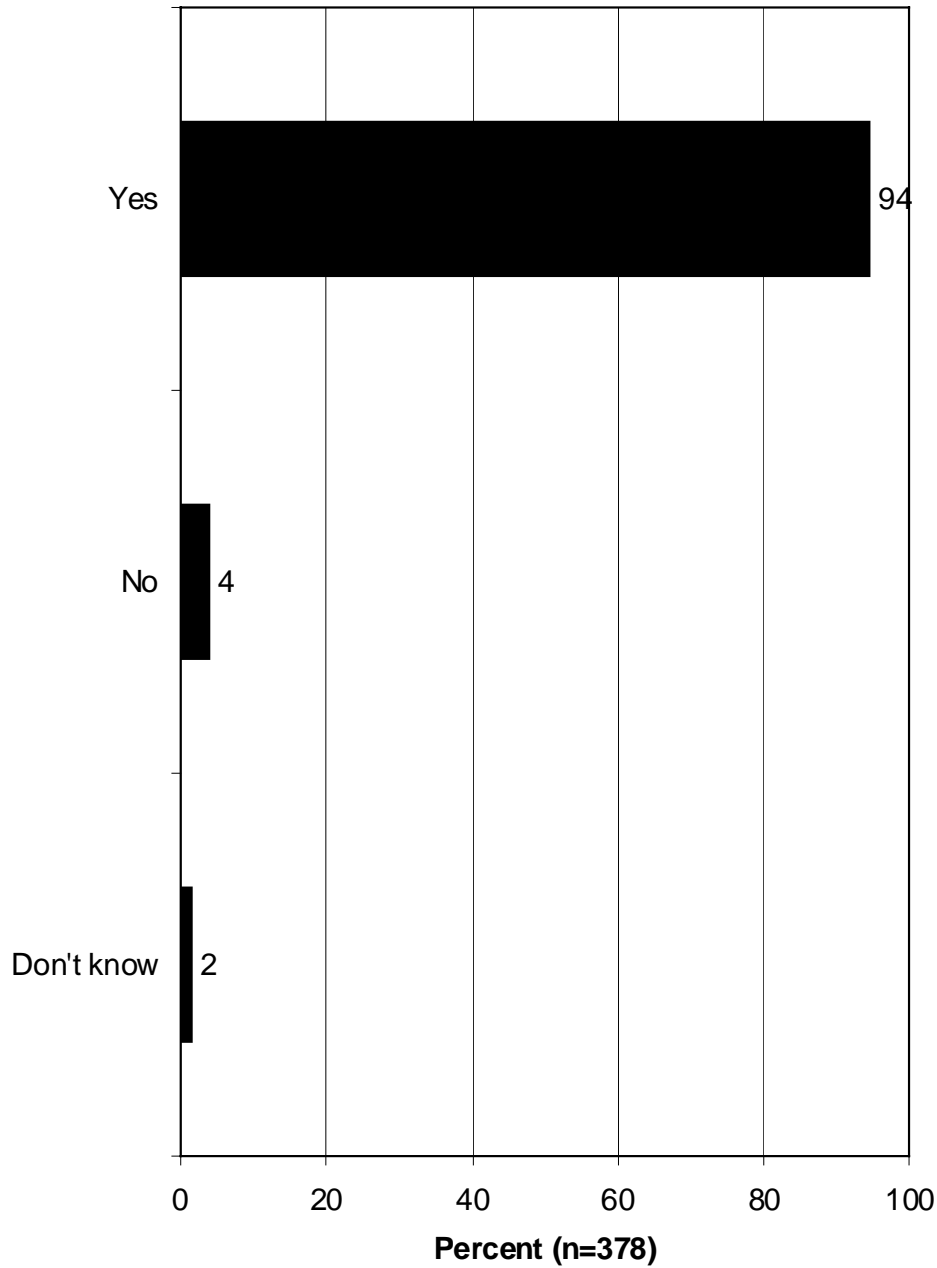
Q43. Have you been hunting in Vermont not during a Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who participated in the Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



**Q52. Including 2006, how many of the past 5 years have you hunted any season, Youth or non-Youth?
(Asked of those who hunted a non-Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)**



Q30. Would you hunt in Vermont even if the state did not have a Youth Weekend Hunt? (Asked of those who have been on a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)

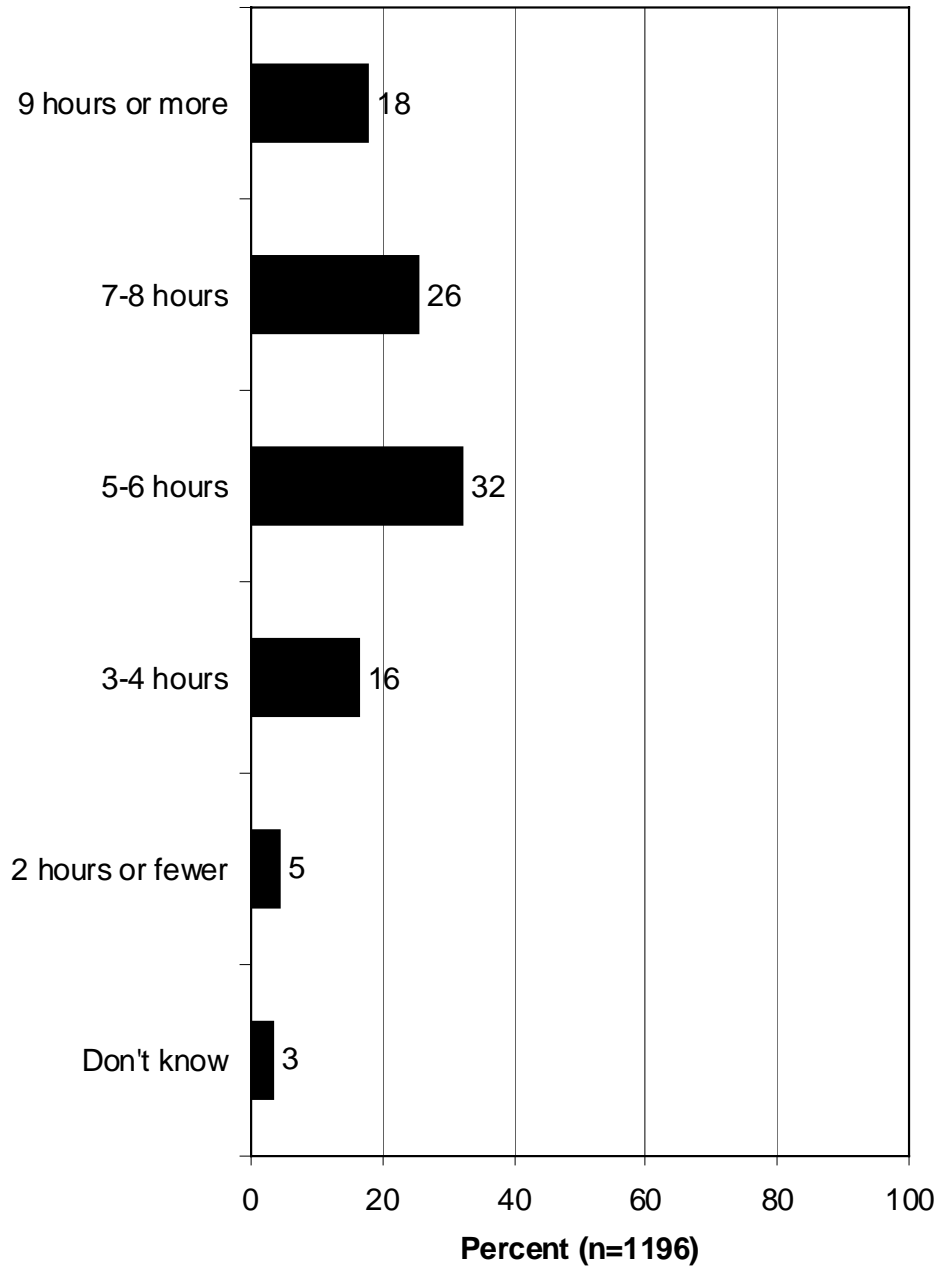


Hunting Avidity

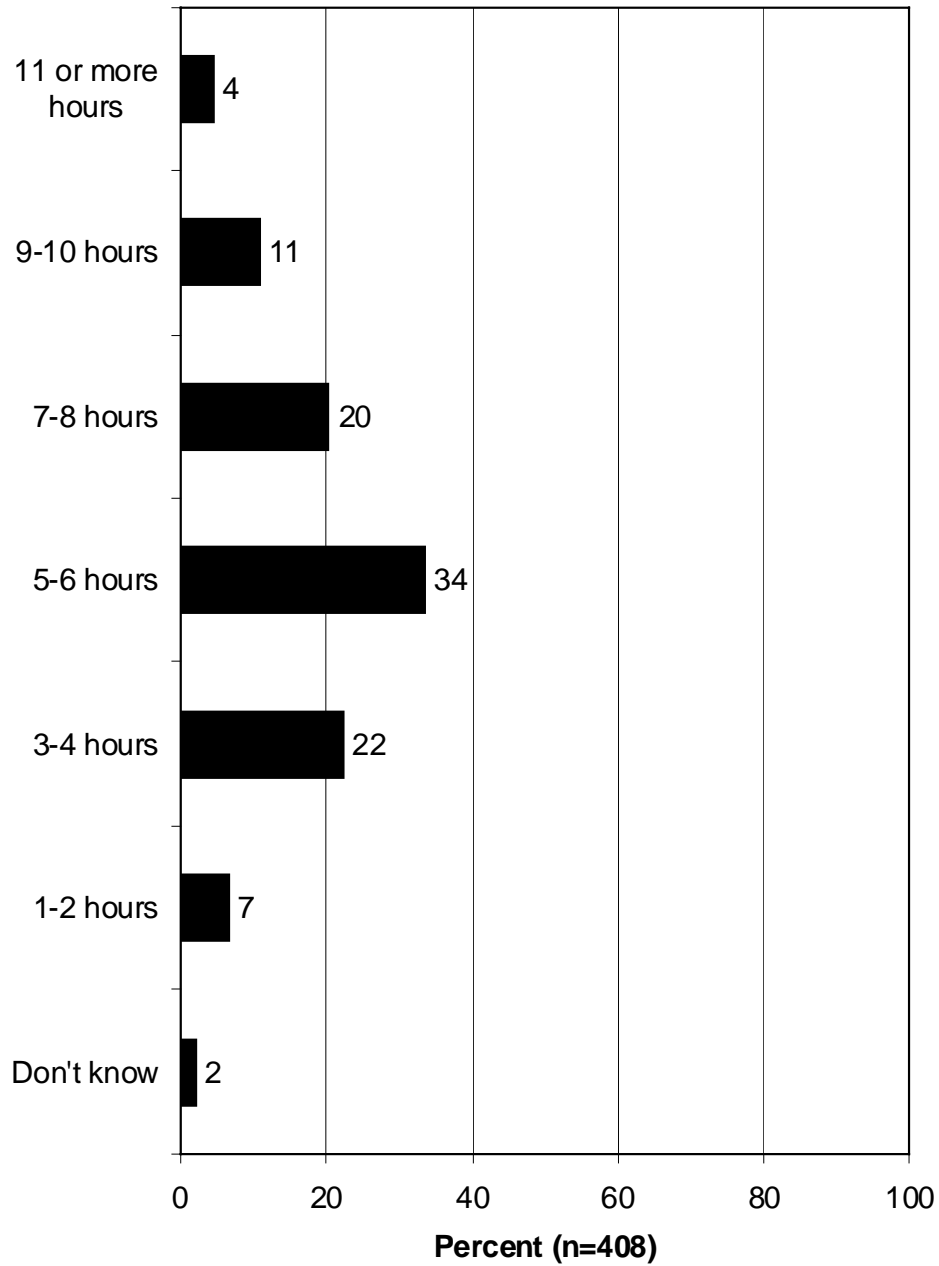
- Typical hunting days among adult hunting license holders entail 5 to 6 hours of hunting (32% hunt within that time range—the most common answer), although 44% typically hunt 7 or more hours in a day. A typical hunting day among current youth license holders is similar, but perhaps slightly shorter for some: 34% hunt from 5 to 6 hours (the most common answer), while 36% hunt 7 or more hours.

- The majority of adult hunting license holders (65%) hunted for 2 weeks or less in the last year they hunted; nonetheless, 31% hunted for more than 2 weeks. Among current youth license holders, 79% hunted for 2 weeks or less in the last year they hunted; on the other hand, 16% hunted for more than 2 weeks.

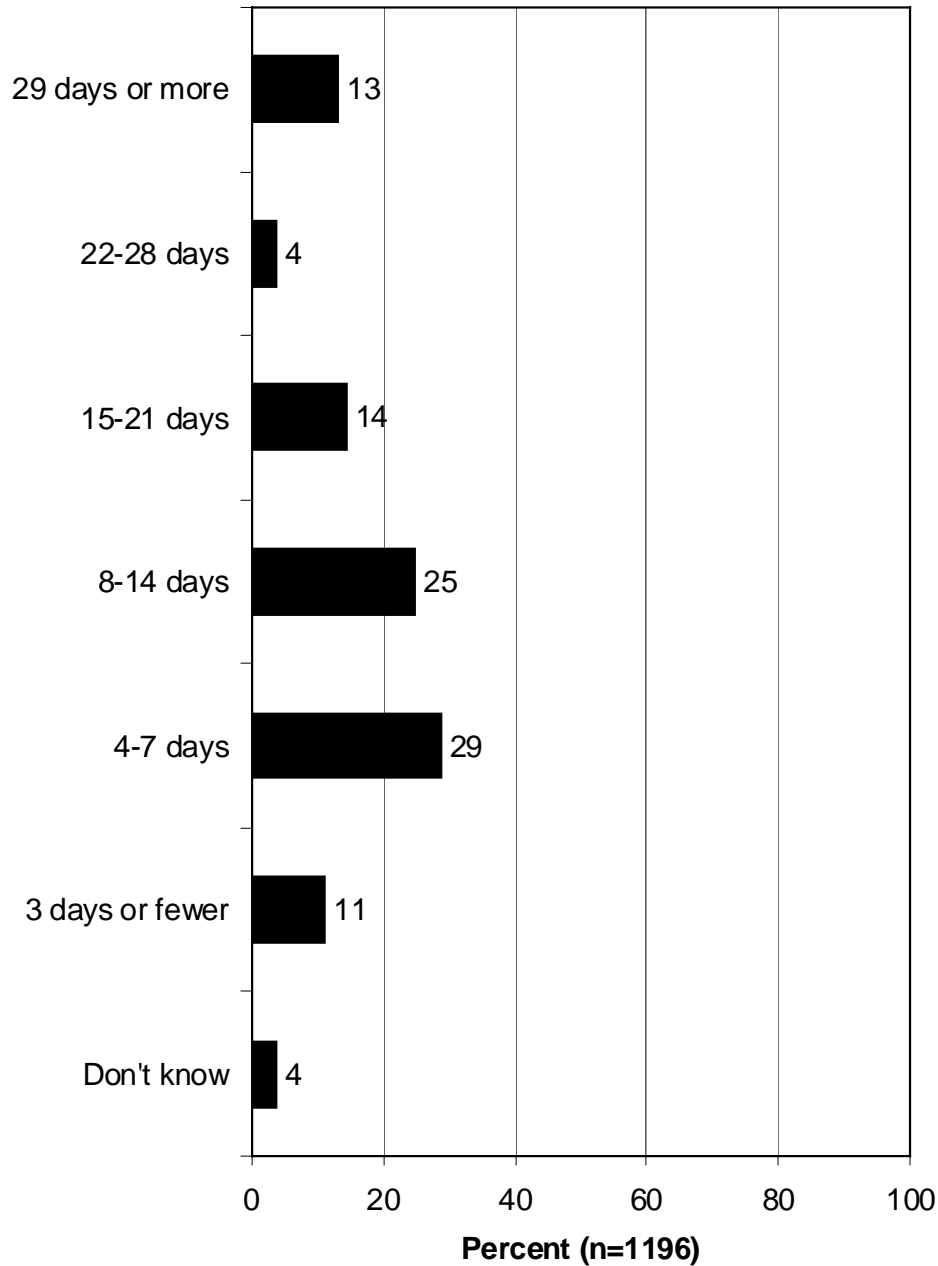
Q93. How many hours in a day do you usually hunt? (Asked of those who hunted during any time other than a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



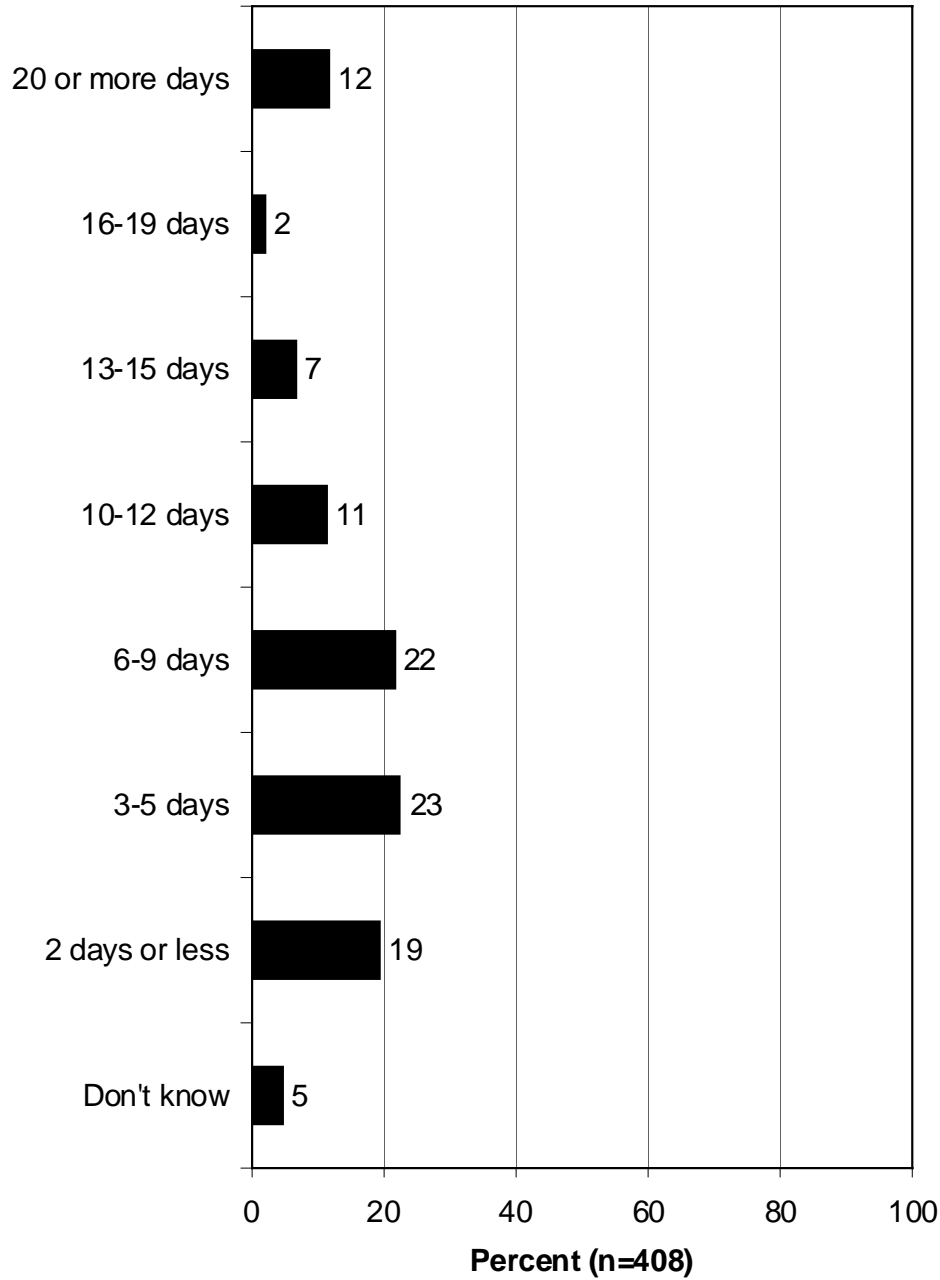
Q90. How many hours in a day do you usually hunt? (Current youth license holders.)



Q94. How many days did you hunt in Vermont the most recent year you hunted? (Asked of those who hunted during any time other than a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



Q92. How many days did you hunt in Vermont the most recent year you hunted? (Current youth license holders.)



Species Sought, Hunting Equipment, and License Types

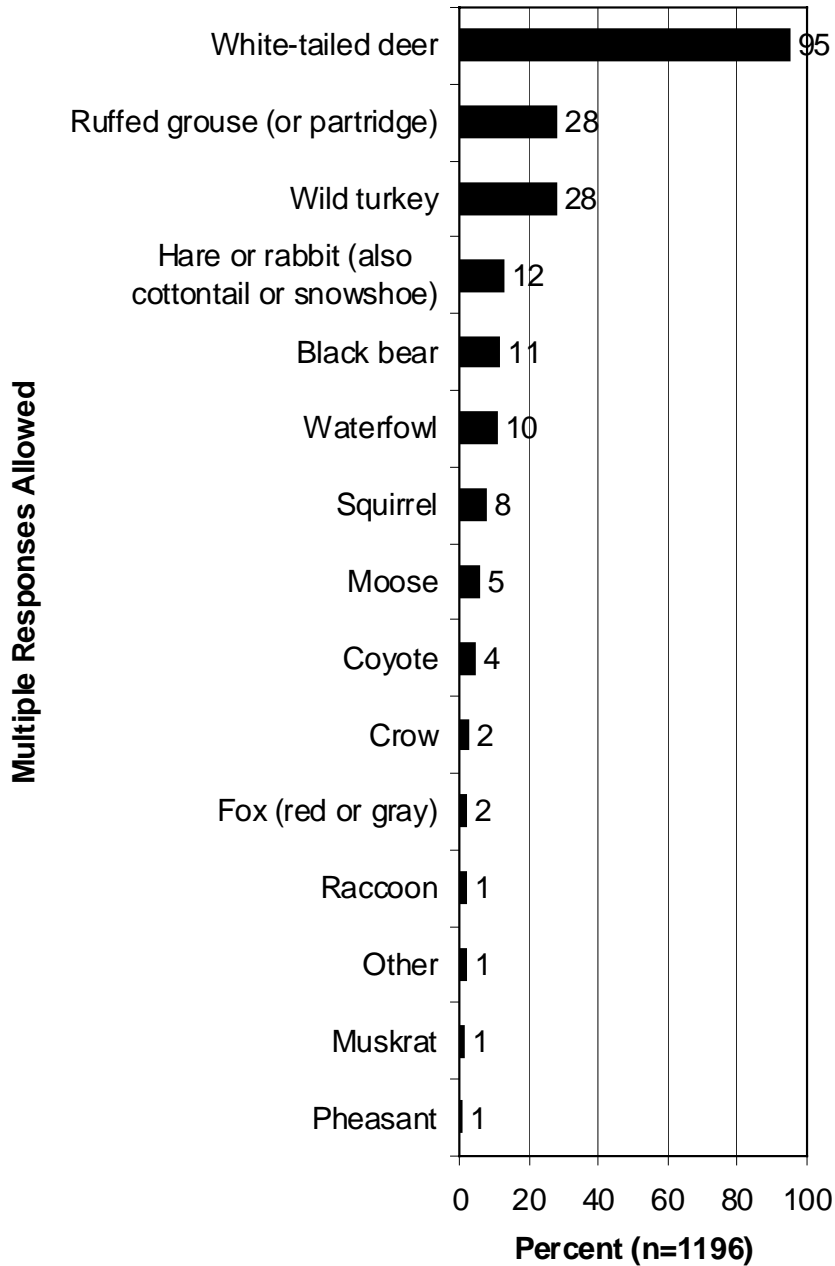
- White-tailed deer is the species of choice among the adult hunting license holders in the sample: 95% hunted white-tailed deer. Ruffed grouse (28%) and wild turkey (28%) are also popular. Among current youth license holders, white-tailed deer is the most sought species (97%), followed by wild turkey (20%) and ruffed grouse (17%). Finally, white-tailed deer is the most sought species (95%) among 2001 youth license holders who hunted after 2001, followed by wild turkey (39%) and ruffed grouse (24%). Among the 2001 youth license holders who did not hunt a Youth Weekend Hunt, white-tailed deer was the most commonly sought species in 2001.

- Rifle is the hunting equipment of choice among adult hunting license holders: 89% use a rifle during a typical year of hunting. Nonetheless, 46% use a shotgun, 29% use archery equipment, and 29% use a muzzleloader rifle.

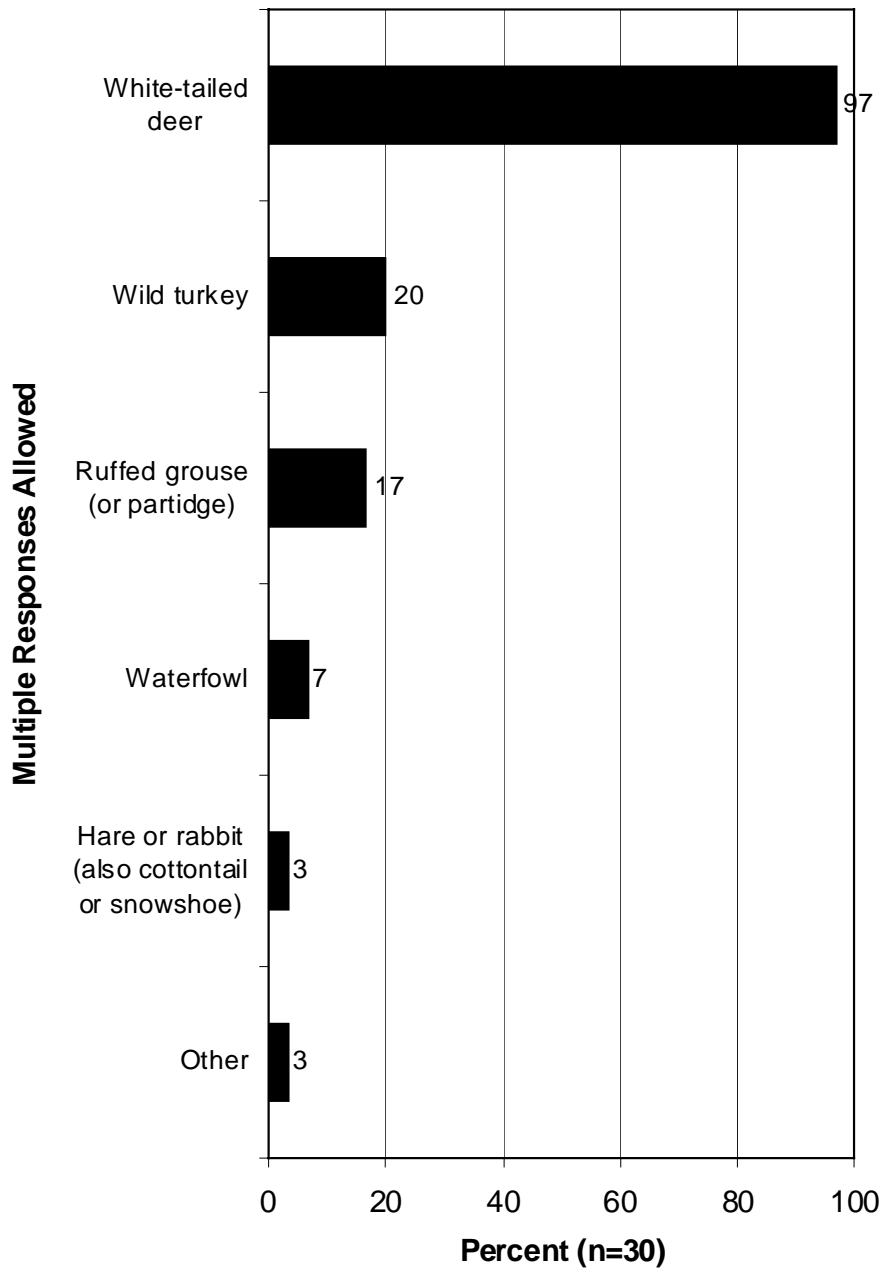
- Among current youth license holders, a rifle was the most common equipment (80%), followed distantly by shotgun (35%), when asked what they had used during their most recent year of hunting. Very low percentages (no more than 5%) used more specialized equipment such as a muzzleloader or archery equipment.

- Rifle is the leading hunting equipment among 2001 youth license holders who have hunted since 2001, when asked about the types they use for hunting in Vermont: 98% use a rifle. Nonetheless, 44% use a shotgun, 33% use archery equipment, and 23% use a muzzleloader rifle. Rifle was also the most common among 2001 youth license holders who did not hunt a Youth Weekend Hunt.

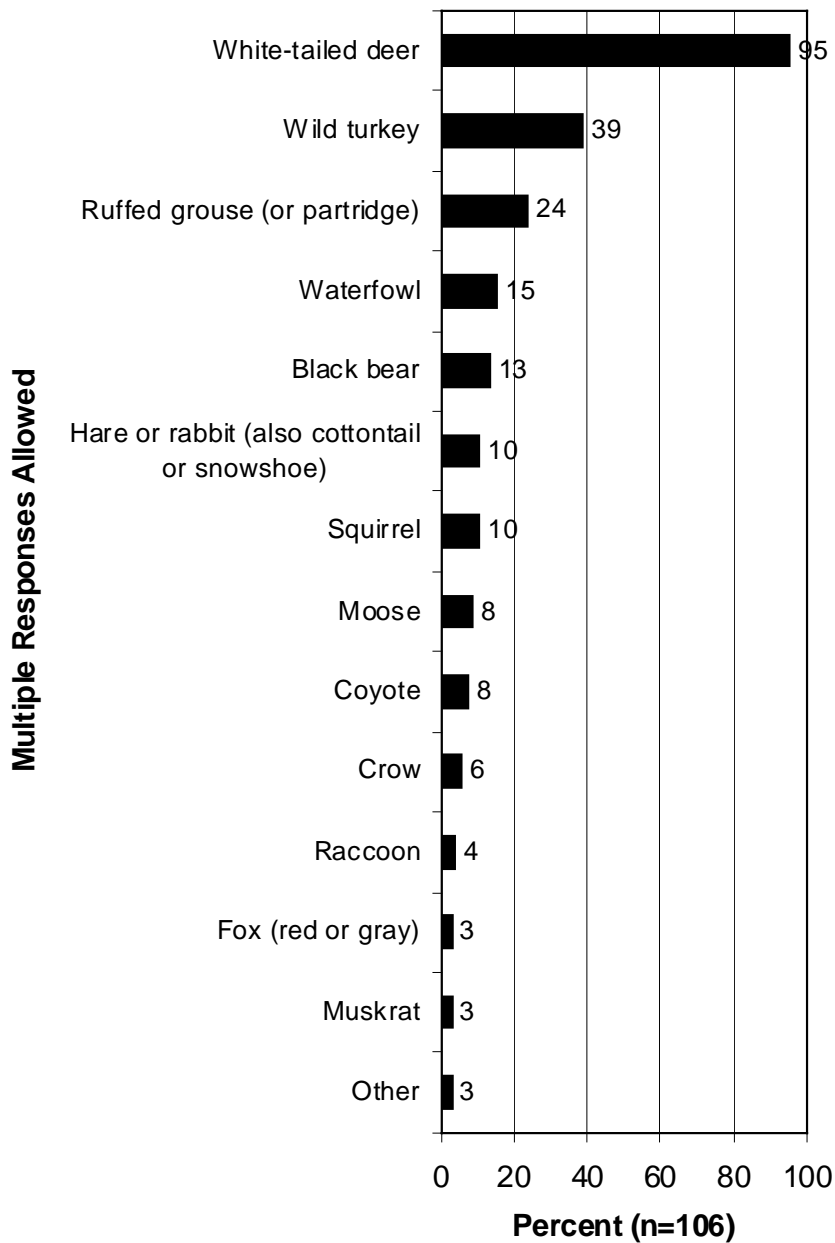
Q61. What types of game do you typically hunt in Vermont? (Adult hunting license holders.)



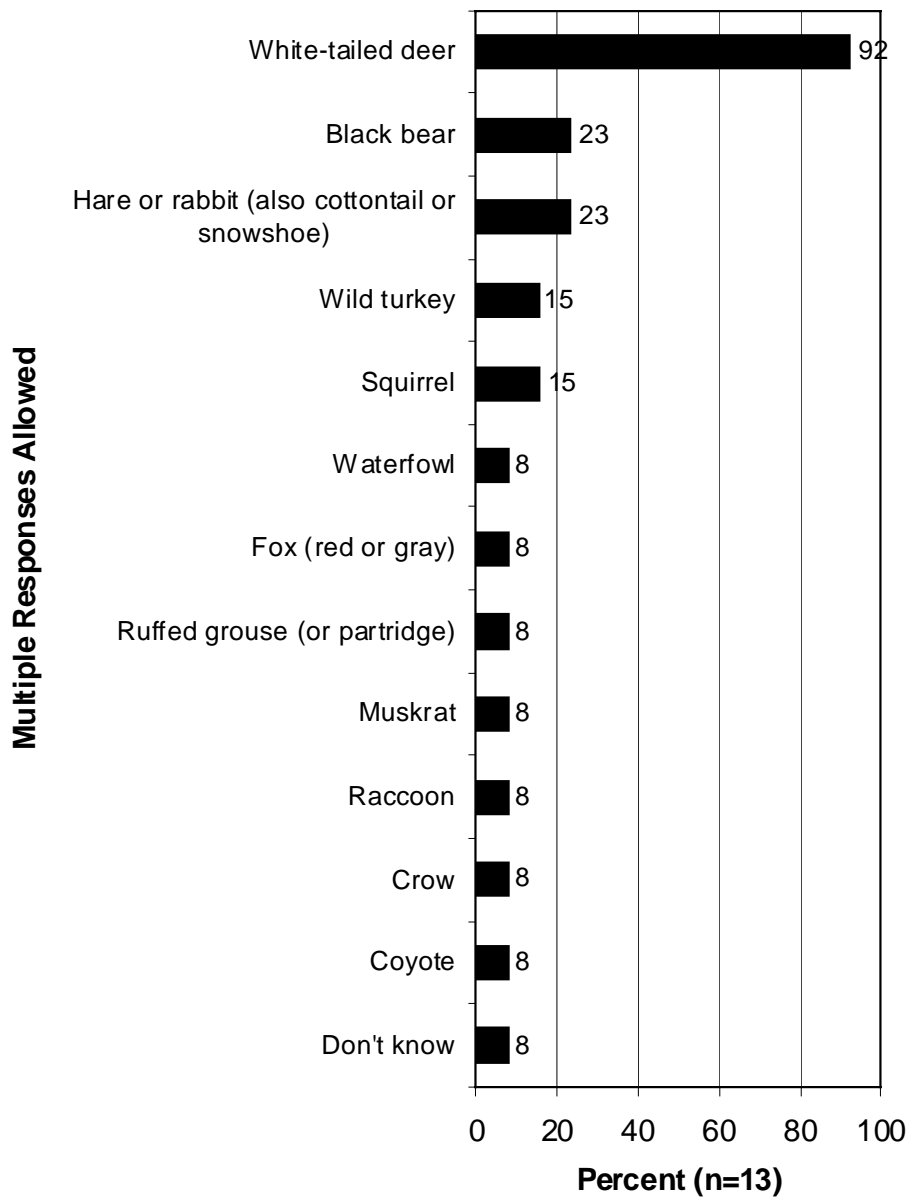
Q97. In the most recent year you hunted in Vermont, what types of game did you Hunt? (Asked of those who did not hunt in a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)



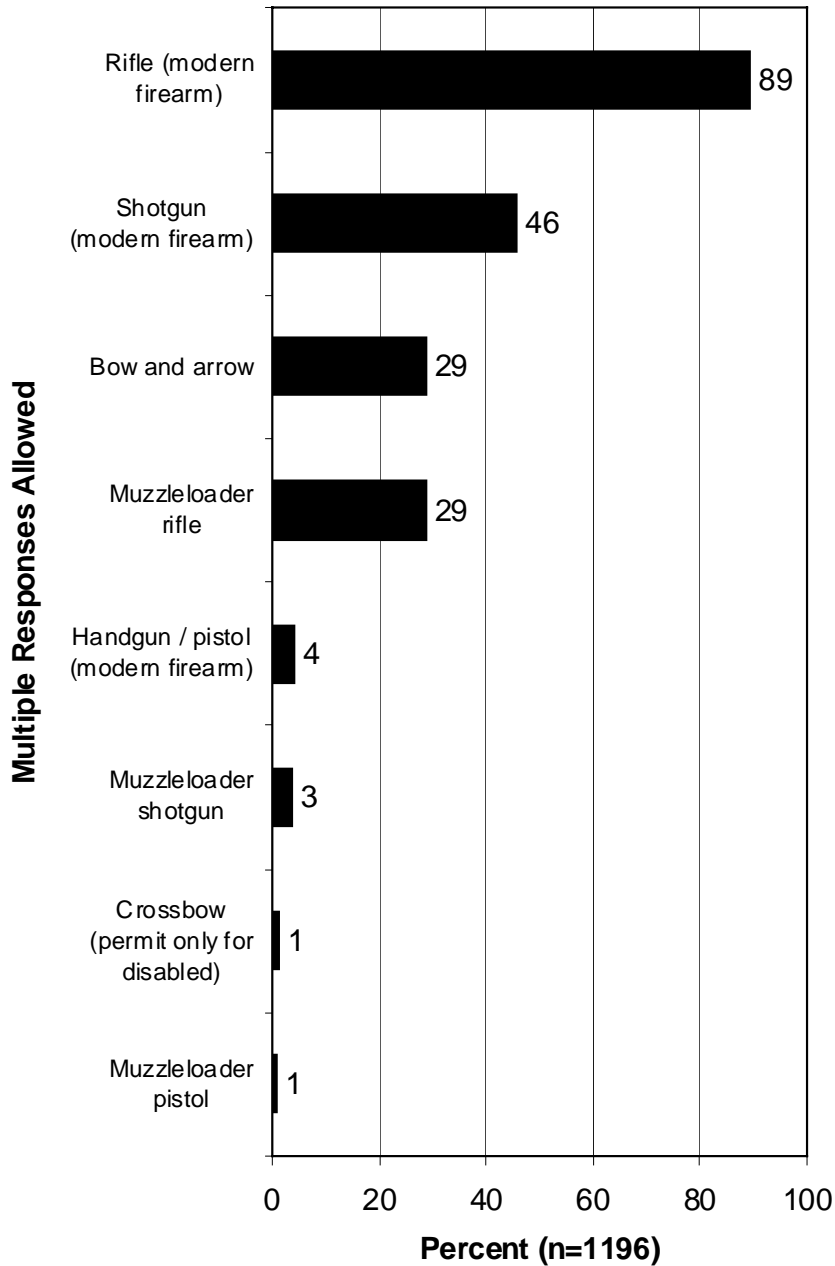
Q37. Now I'm going to ask about your hunting in Vermont. What types of game do you hunt in Vermont? (Asked of those who hunted since the year of their Youth Hunt license.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



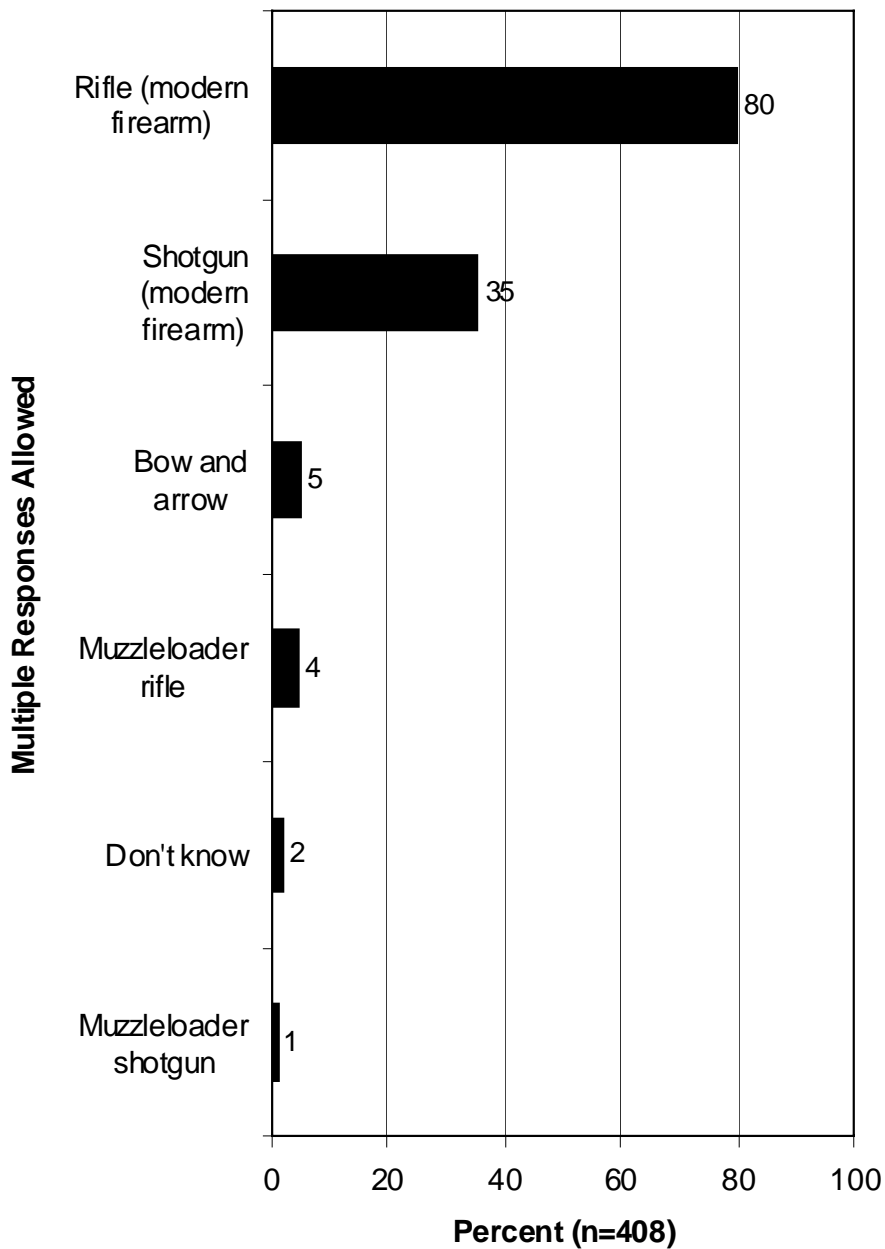
Q51. Now I'm going to ask about your hunting in [2001/ year of first Youth hunting license]. What types of game did you hunt? (Asked of those who did not hunt a Youth Weekend Hunt but hunted in 2001 with their Youth license.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



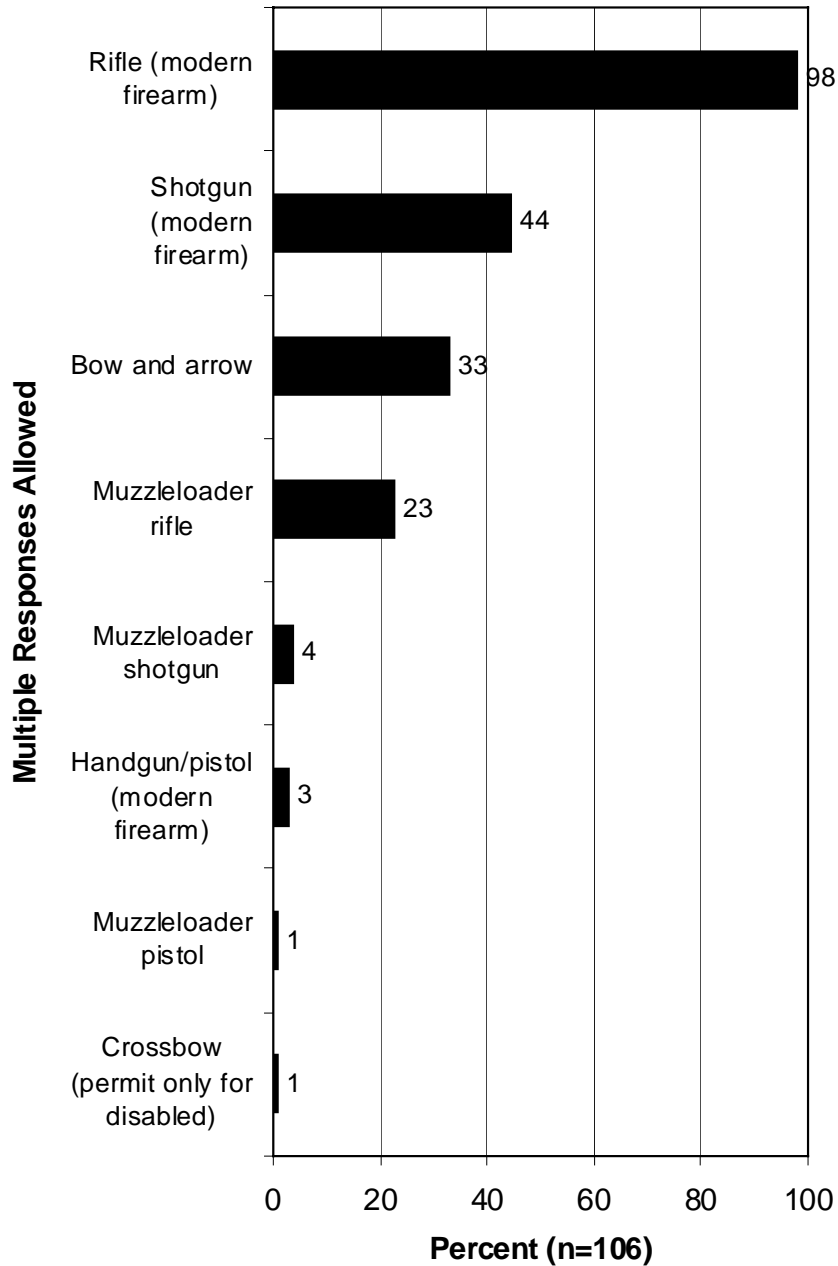
Q65. What types of hunting equipment do you typically use throughout the year when hunting in Vermont? (Adult hunting license holders.)



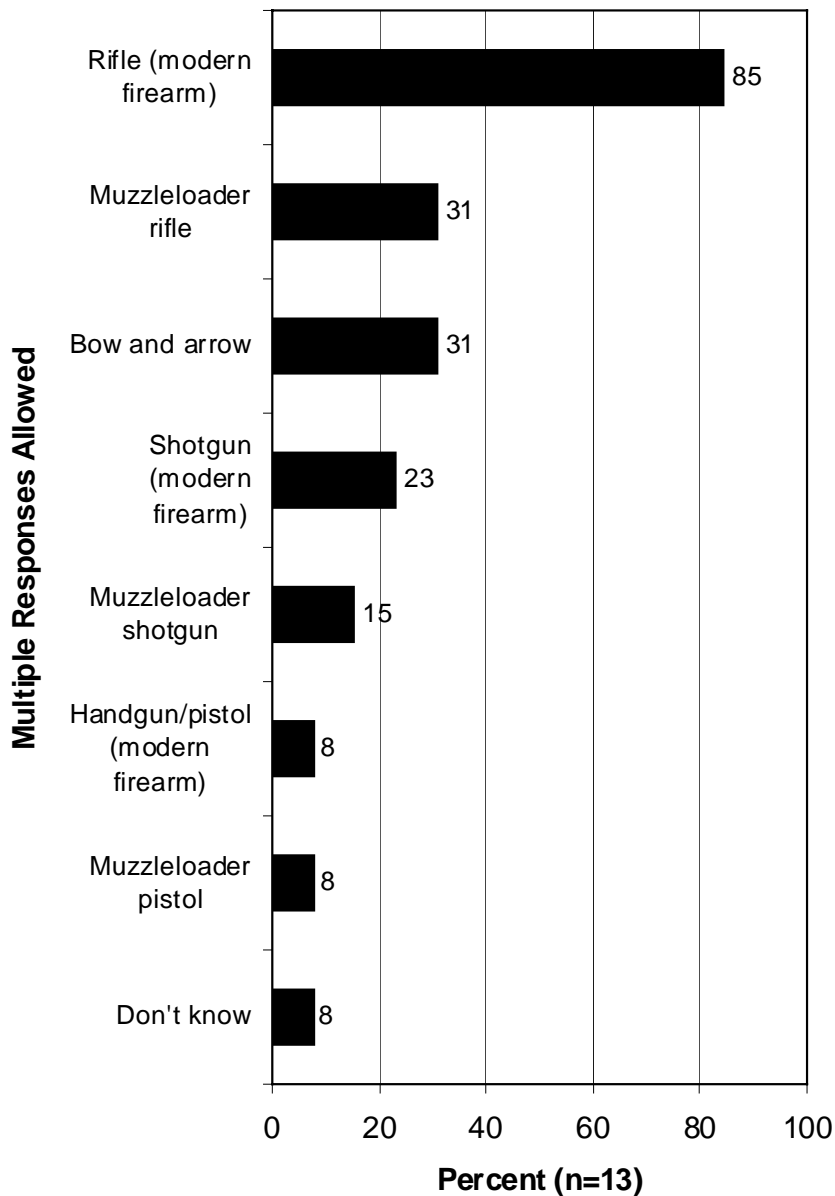
Q76. What types of hunting equipment did you use during your most recent year of hunting? For this question I am interested in any hunting, not just Youth Weekend Hunts. (Current youth license holders.)



Q43. What types of hunting equipment do you use in Vermont? (Asked of those who hunted since the year of their Youth Hunt license.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



Q57. What types of hunting equipment did you use in [2001/ year of first Youth hunting license]? (Asked of those who did not hunt a Youth Weekend Hunt but hunted in 2001 with their Youth license.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



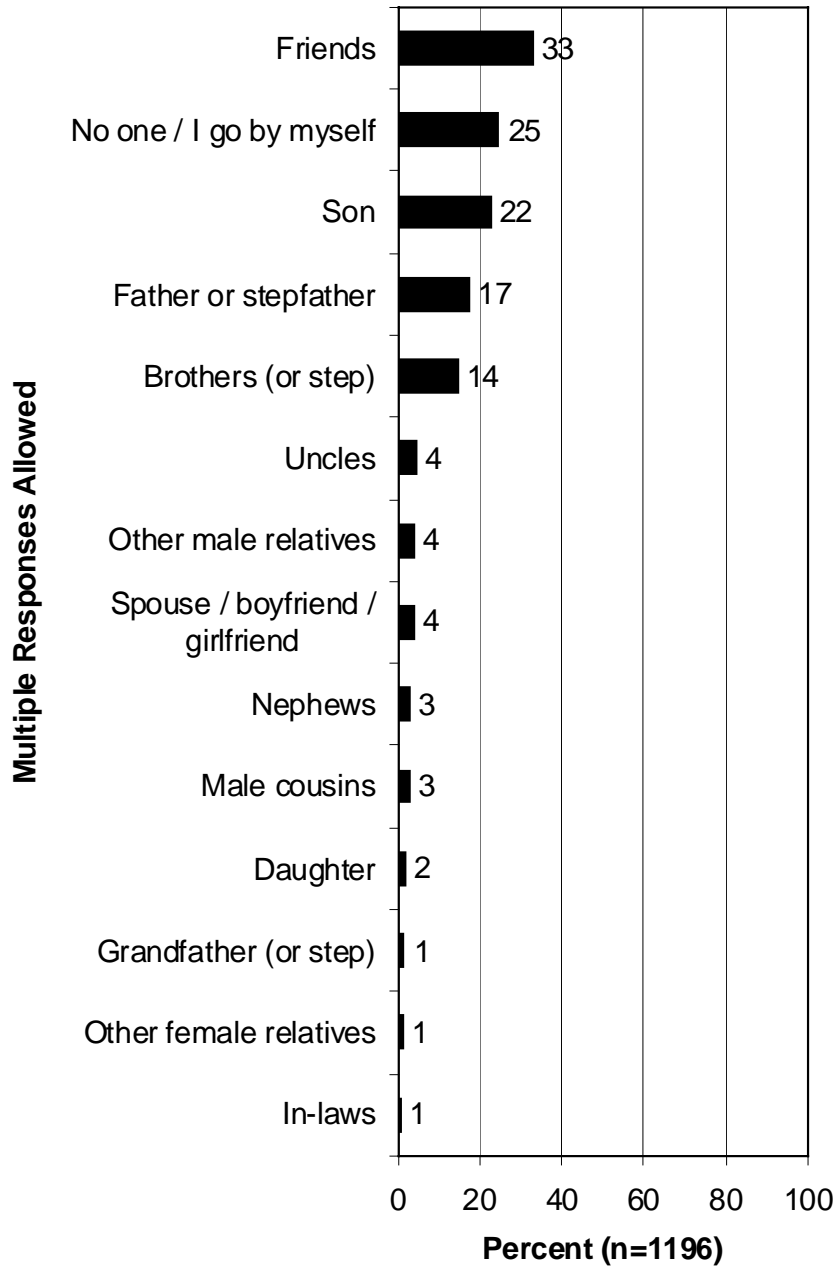
Hunting Companions

- Among adult hunting license holders, the most common hunting companions are friends (33%), sons (22%), fathers (or stepfathers) (17%), and brothers (14%). Note that a quarter of hunters (25%) say that they hunt alone.

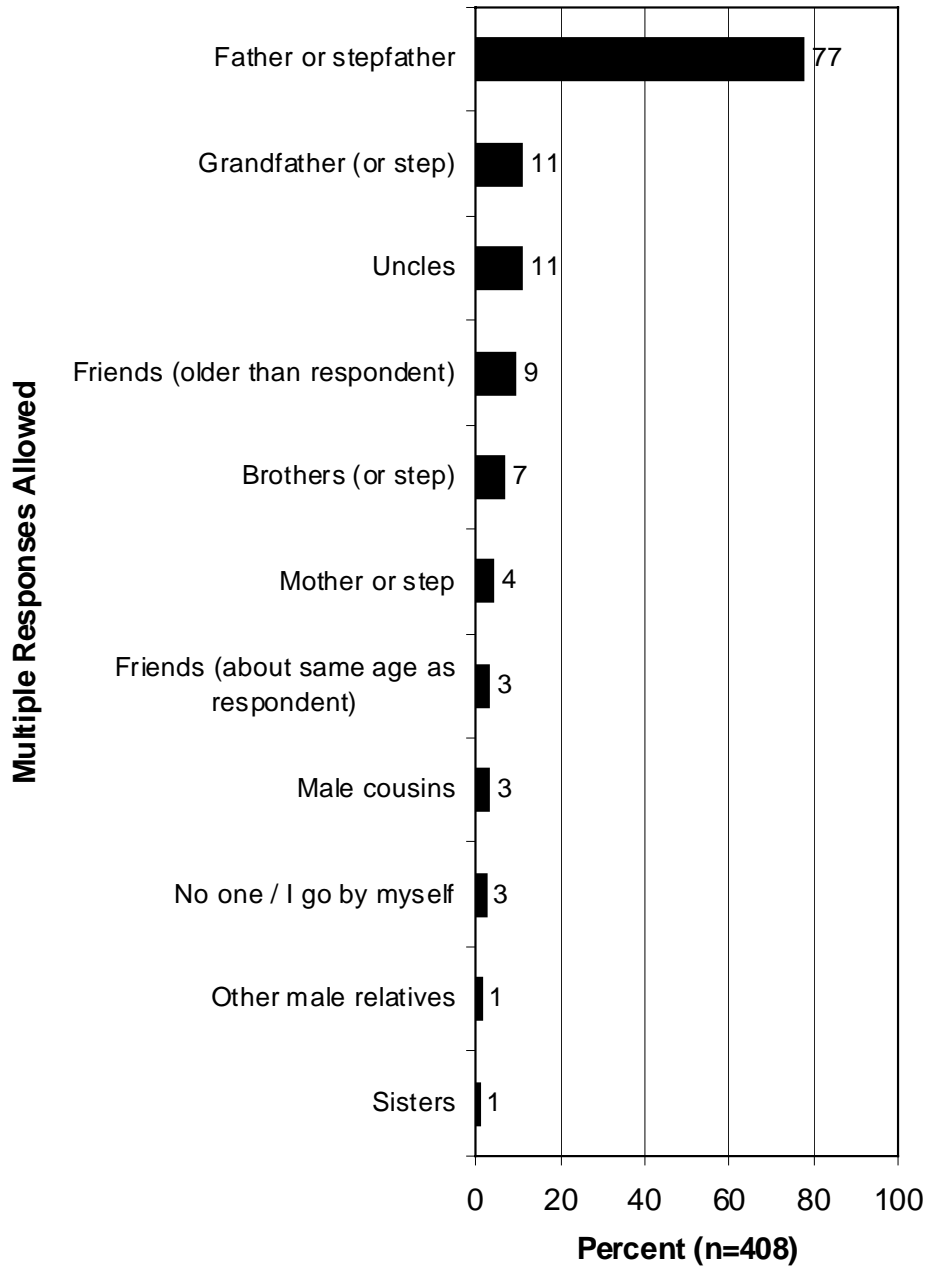
- Among current youth license holders, father or stepfather is the most common hunting companion by far (77% gave this answer). This is distantly followed by grandfather or step (11%) and uncle (11%).

- Nearly half (48%) of adult hunting license holders (those who had hunted any season other than a Youth Weekend Hunt) had taken a youth hunting during any season other than a Youth Weekend Hunt. (This graph is shown in the section of this report titled, “Mentoring During Youth Weekend Hunts.”)

Q81. With whom do you usually hunt? (Adult hunting license holders.)



Q72. With whom do you usually hunt? (Current youth license holders.)



Satisfactions and Dissatisfaction with and Constraints to Hunting

- Satisfaction is high for hunting in Vermont in all three surveys.
 - A majority of adult hunting license holders (70%) report being satisfied with their hunting in Vermont; nonetheless, 22% report being dissatisfied.
 - An overwhelming majority of current youth license holders (91%) report being satisfied with their hunting in Vermont.
 - A large majority of 2001 youth license holders who hunted since 2001 (82%) report being satisfied with their hunting in Vermont; only 10% are dissatisfied. Among those 2001 youth license holders who did not hunt a Youth Weekend Hunt (only a small percentage did not), most were satisfied with their hunting in 2001.

- The top constraint on hunting participation among adult hunting license holders is lack of time. Other constraints that caused hunters not to hunt as much as they would have liked include lack of access, lack of game, and age/poor health. Another question asked about things that may have detracted from hunting enjoyment, even if they did not prevent hunting participation, and lack of access and lack of game are the top dissatisfactions.

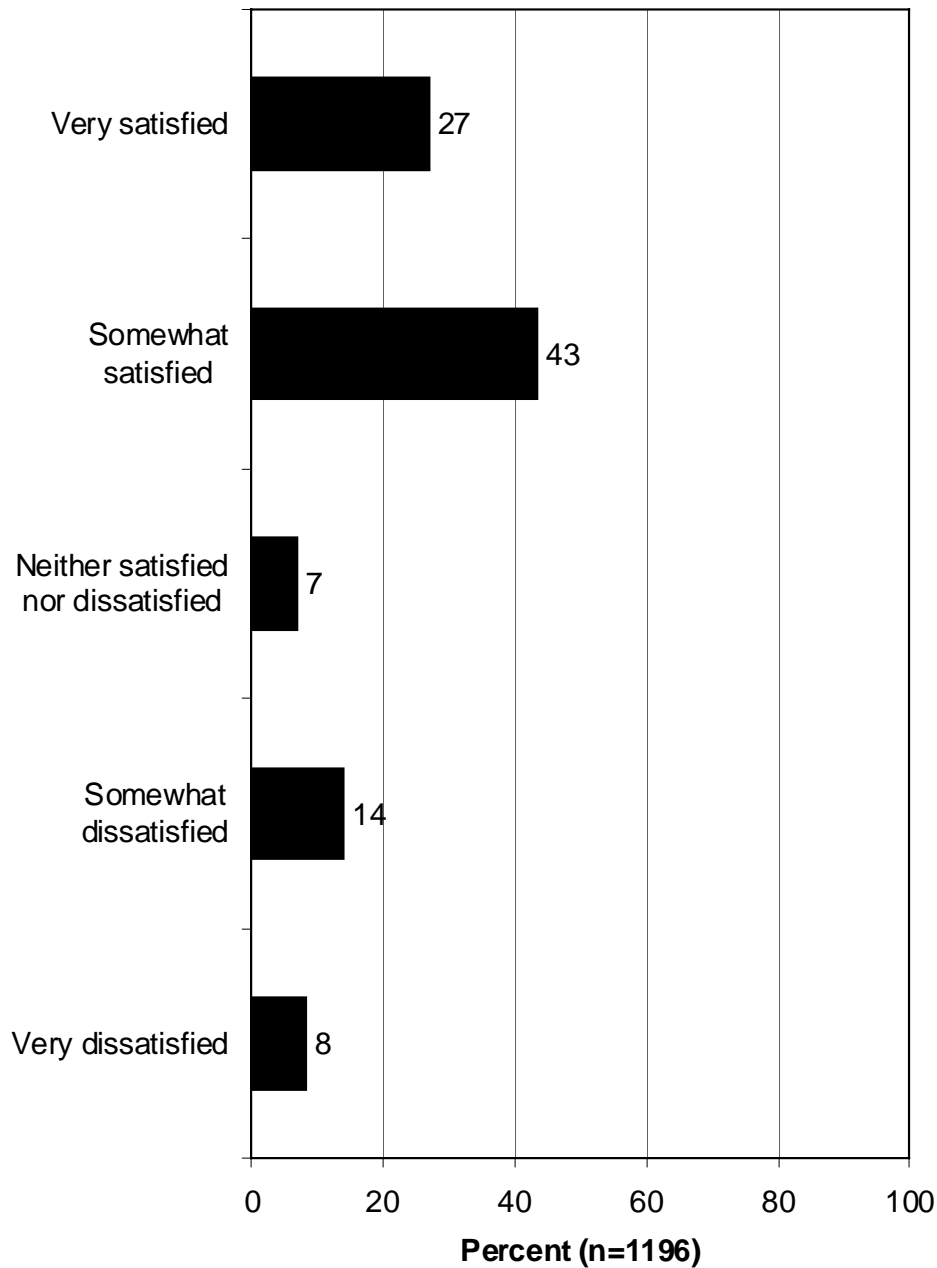
- Among current youth license holders, the top constraint on hunting is time (19% gave this answer); note that a majority (63%) answered that nothing has caused them *not* to hunt as much as they would have liked. The top things that have taken away from enjoyment, even if they did not prevent them from hunting, include access problems (5%) and lack of game (5%). Note that the large majority (70%) said that nothing has taken away from their hunting enjoyment.

- Among current youth license holders who had been on a Youth Weekend Hunt but had not otherwise participated in hunting, the top reason that they did not participate in hunting other than a Youth Weekend Hunt was simply time constraints (31%).

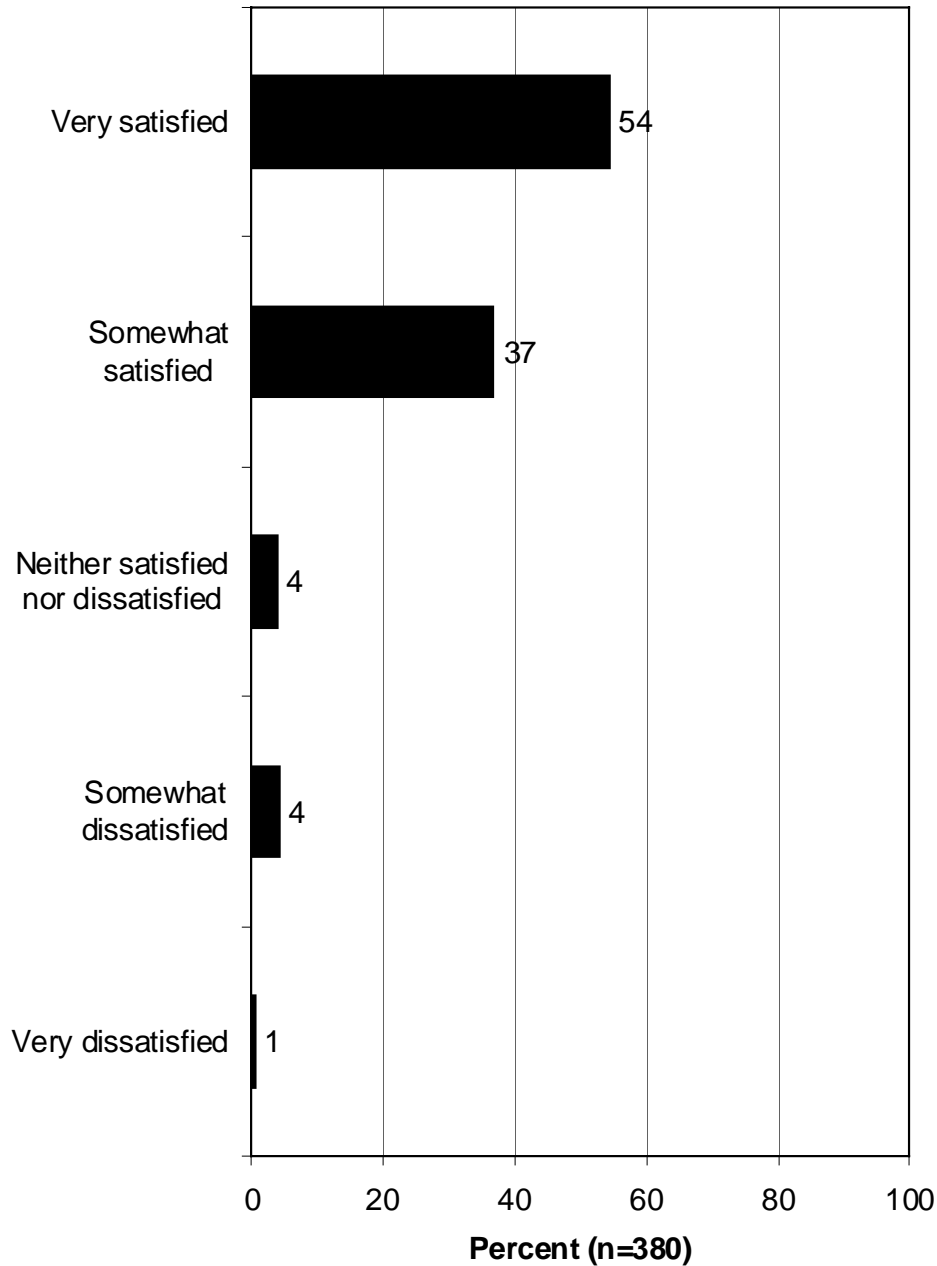
- The section of this report titled, “Hunting Initiation and Hunting Recruitment and Retention,” discusses four questions that were asked of adult hunting license holders regarding concerns about hunting that they may have. The results suggest that hunters are more concerned about

particular factors that would affect individual hunts (loss of habitat, lack of access) rather than factors that would affect the sport of hunting as a whole (anti-hunting sentiment, declining number of hunters). (As indicated, these graphs are shown in the section of this report titled, "Hunting Initiation and Hunting Recruitment and Retention.") The results among 2001 youth license holders is also shown in this section, again with declining number of hunters low in concern relative to loss of habitat.

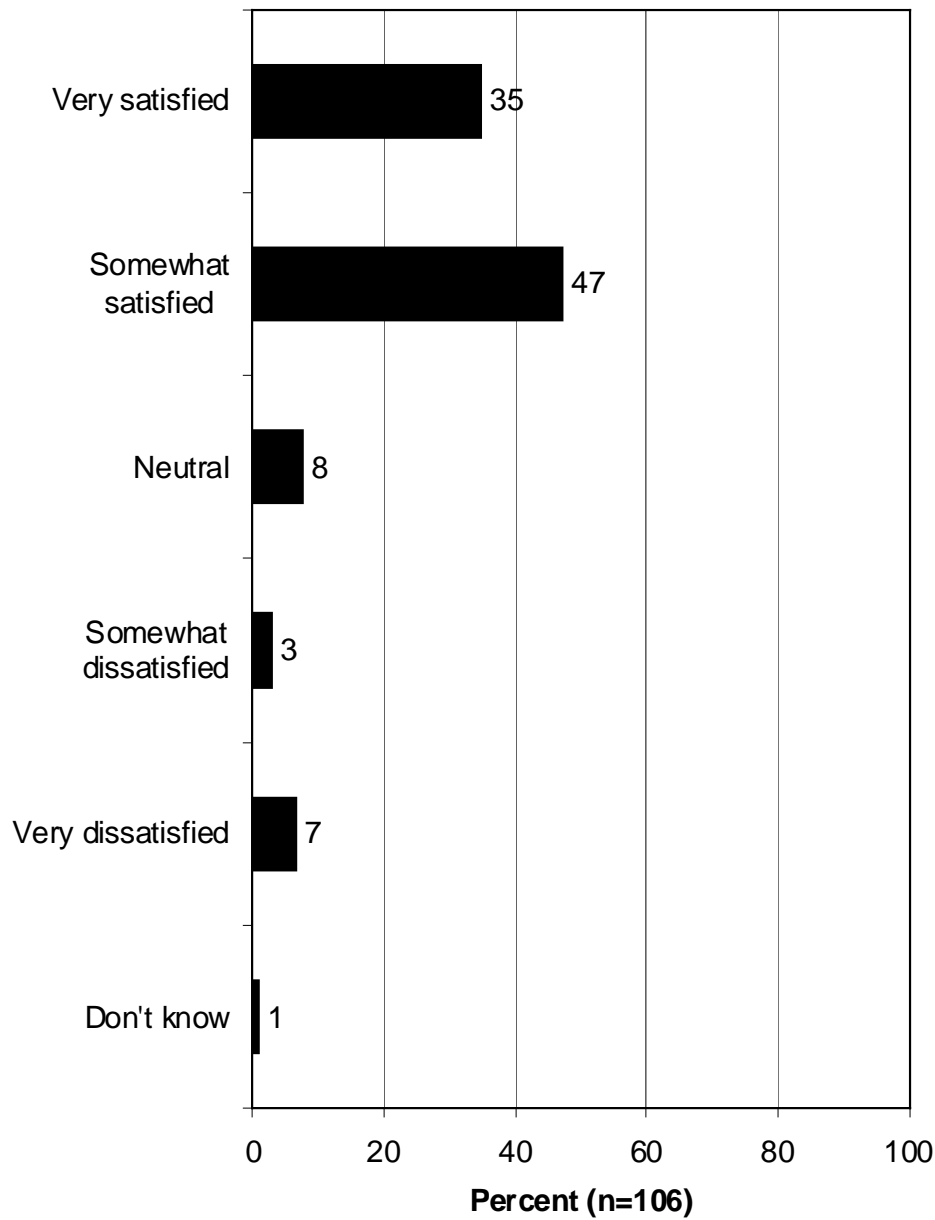
Q66. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your hunting in Vermont? (Asked of those who hunted during any time other than a Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Adult hunting license holders.)



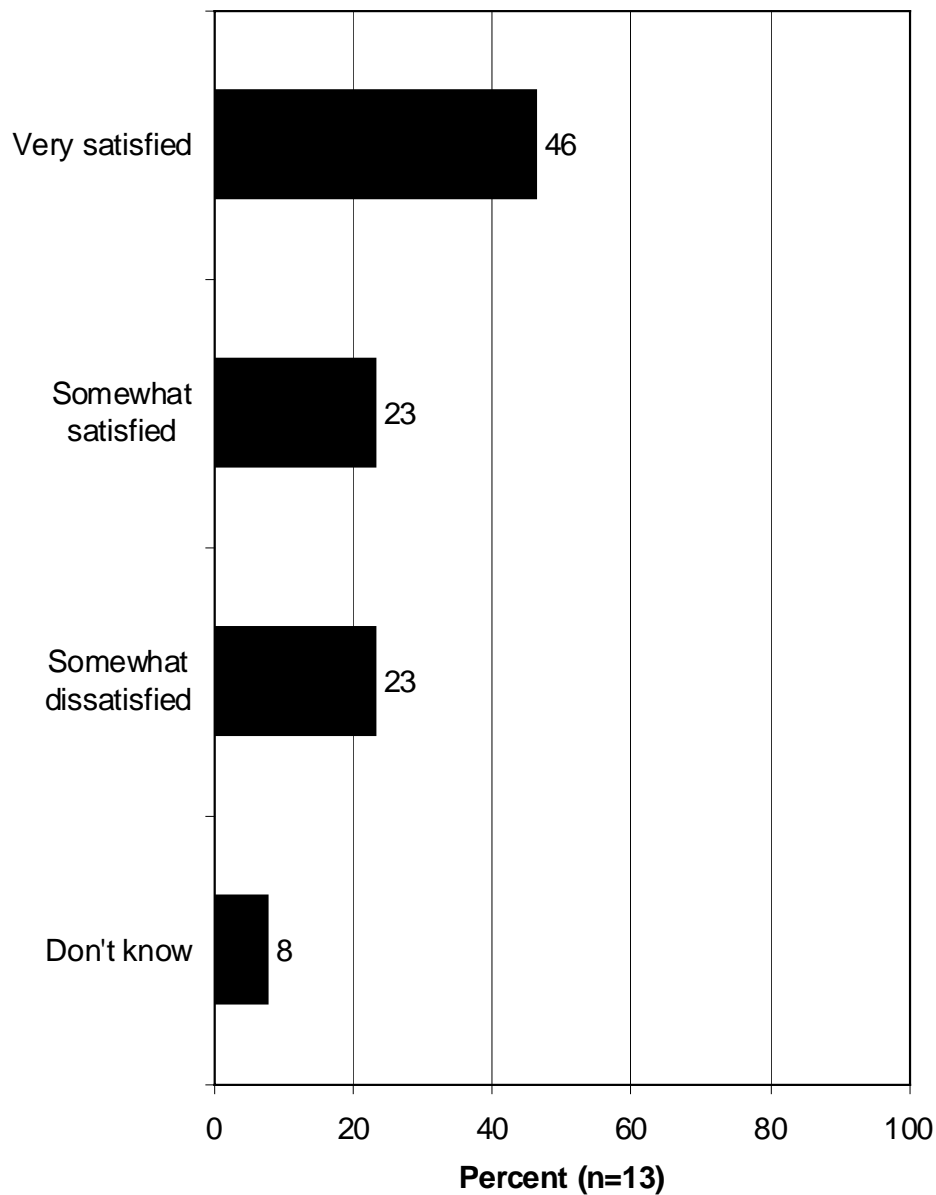
Q56. How satisfied with your hunting in Vermont have you been? (Asked of those who hunted more than one year on a Youth Weekend Hunt and those who hunted a non-Youth Weekend Hunt.) (Current youth license holders.)



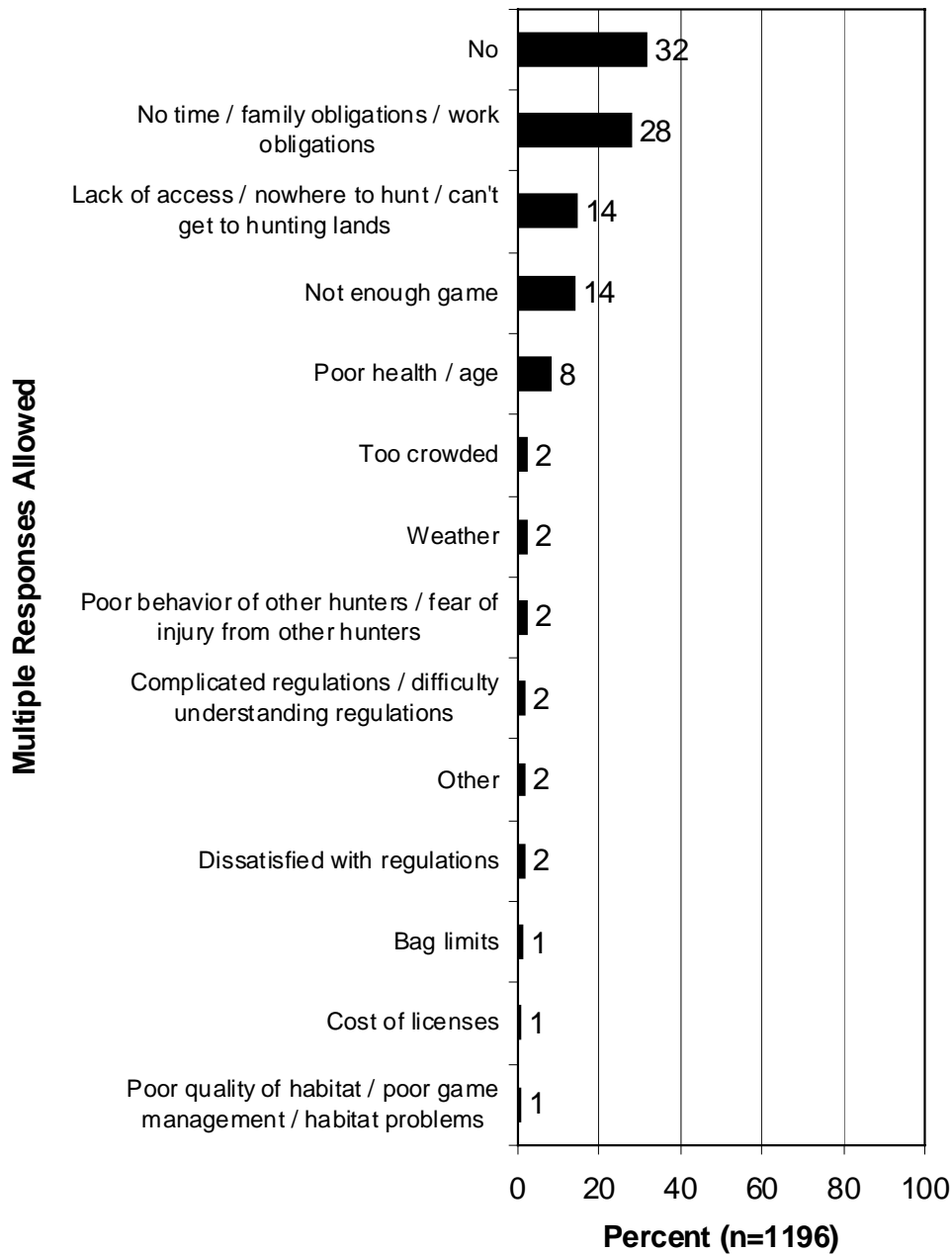
Q47. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your hunting in Vermont? (Asked of those who hunted since the year of their Youth Hunt license.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



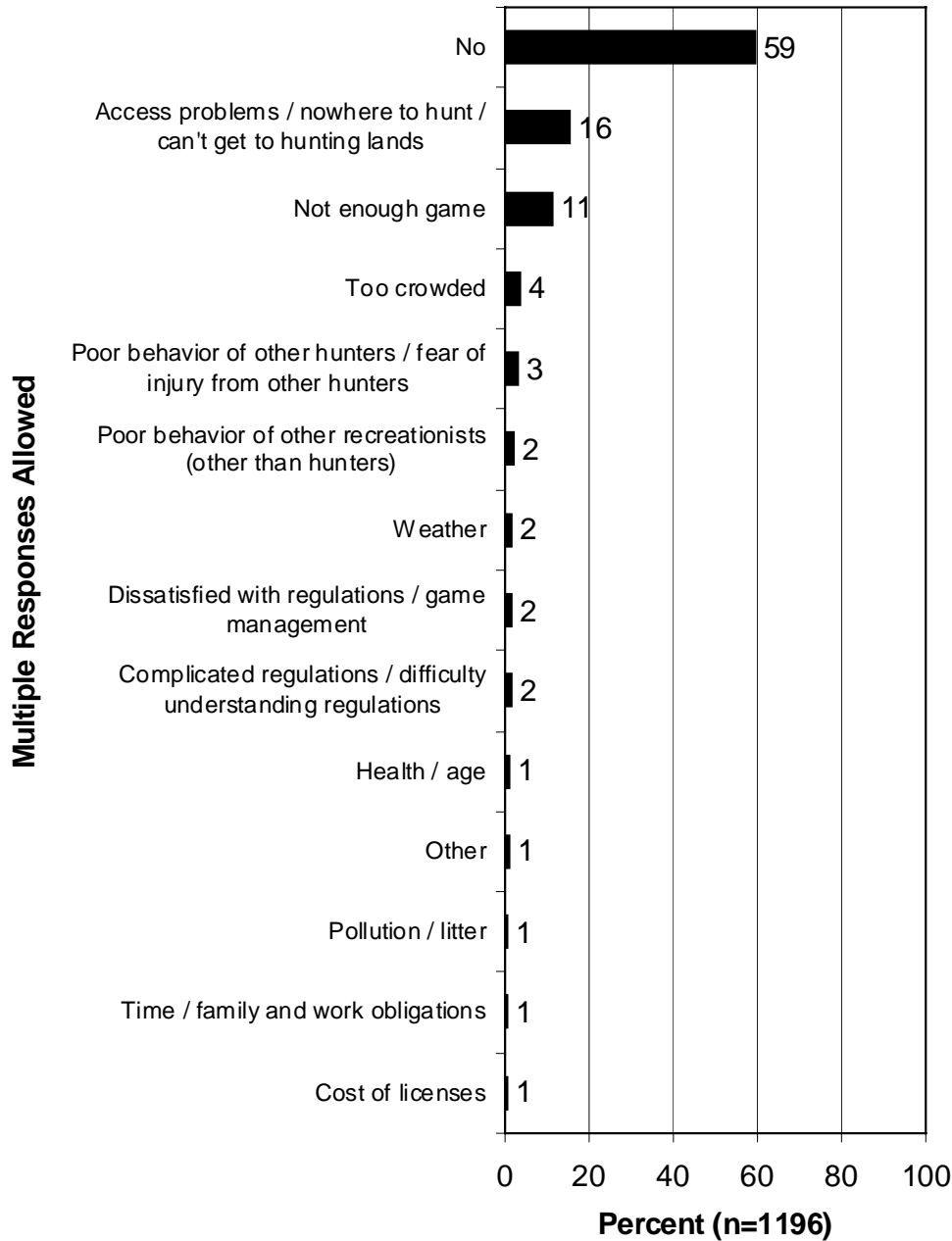
Q58. How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your hunting in [2001/ year of first Youth hunting license]? (Asked of those who did not hunt a Youth Weekend Hunt but hunted in 2001 with their Youth license.) (2001 Youth License sample.)



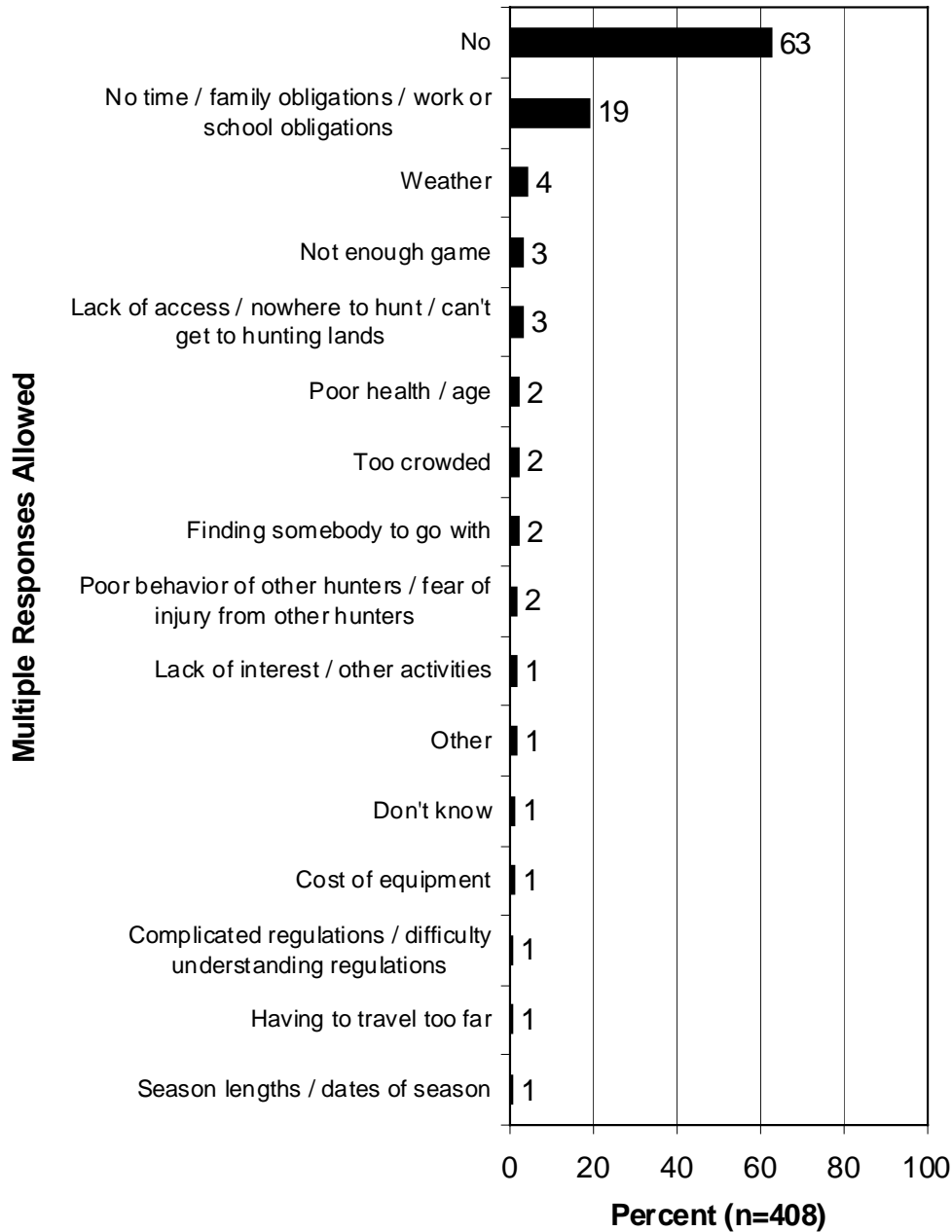
Q69. Are there any things that have caused you not to hunt as much as you would like? (Adult hunting license holders.)



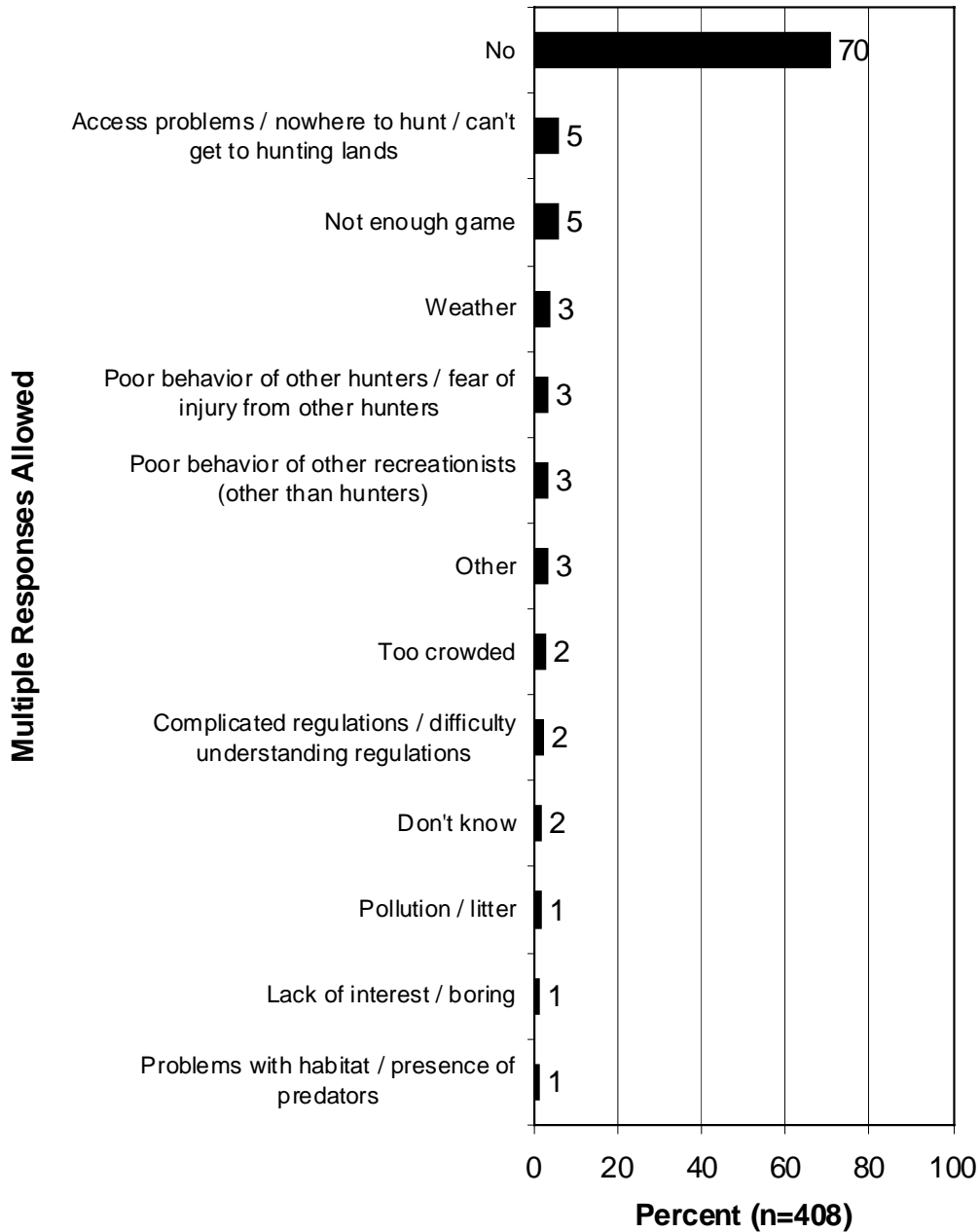
Q73. Are there any things that have taken away from your enjoyment of hunting, even if they didn't keep you from hunting? (Adult hunting license holders.)



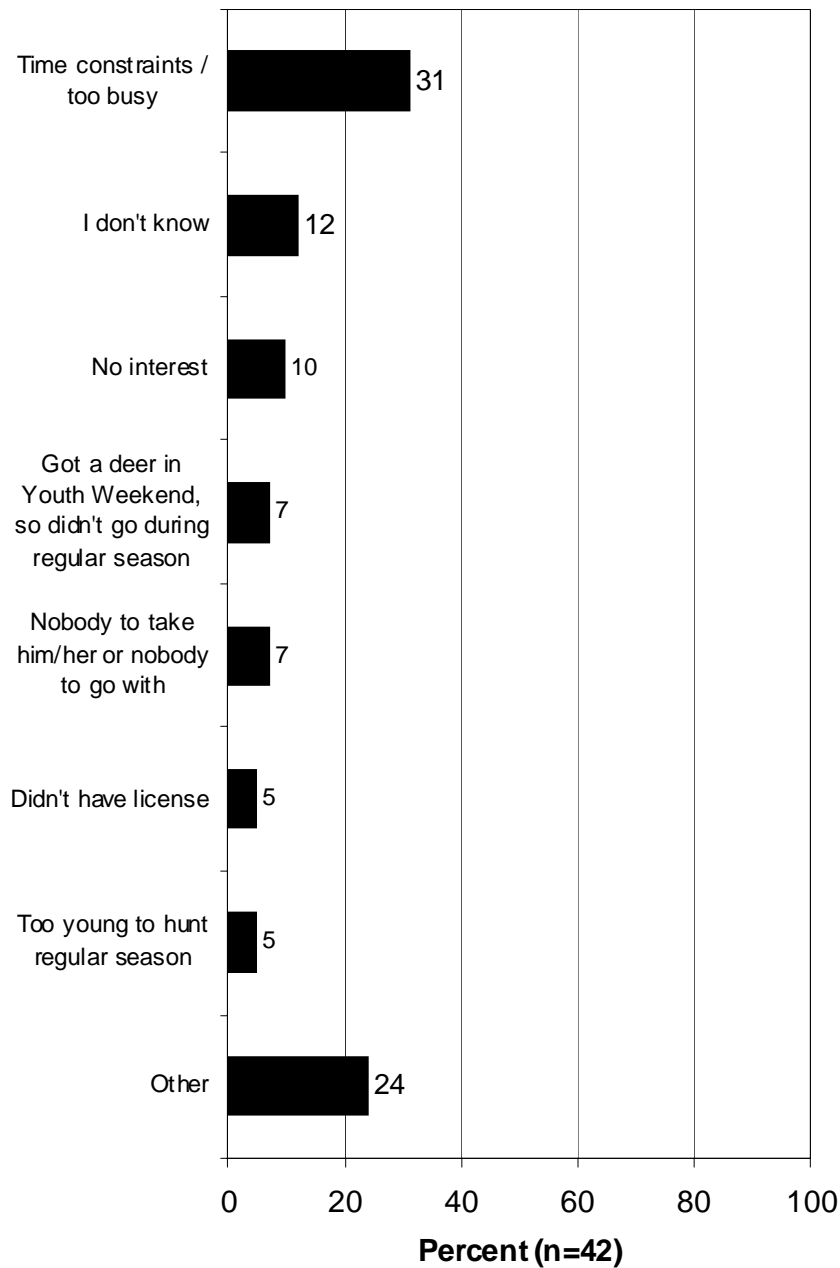
Q64. Are there any things that have caused you not to hunt as much as you would like? (Current youth license holders.)



Q59. Are there any things that have taken away from your enjoyment of hunting, even if they didn't keep you from hunting? (Current youth license holders.)



Q47. Why didn't you hunt a regular or non-Youth season? (Asked of those who have been on a Youth Weekend Hunt but did not hunt during the regular season.) (Current youth license holders.)

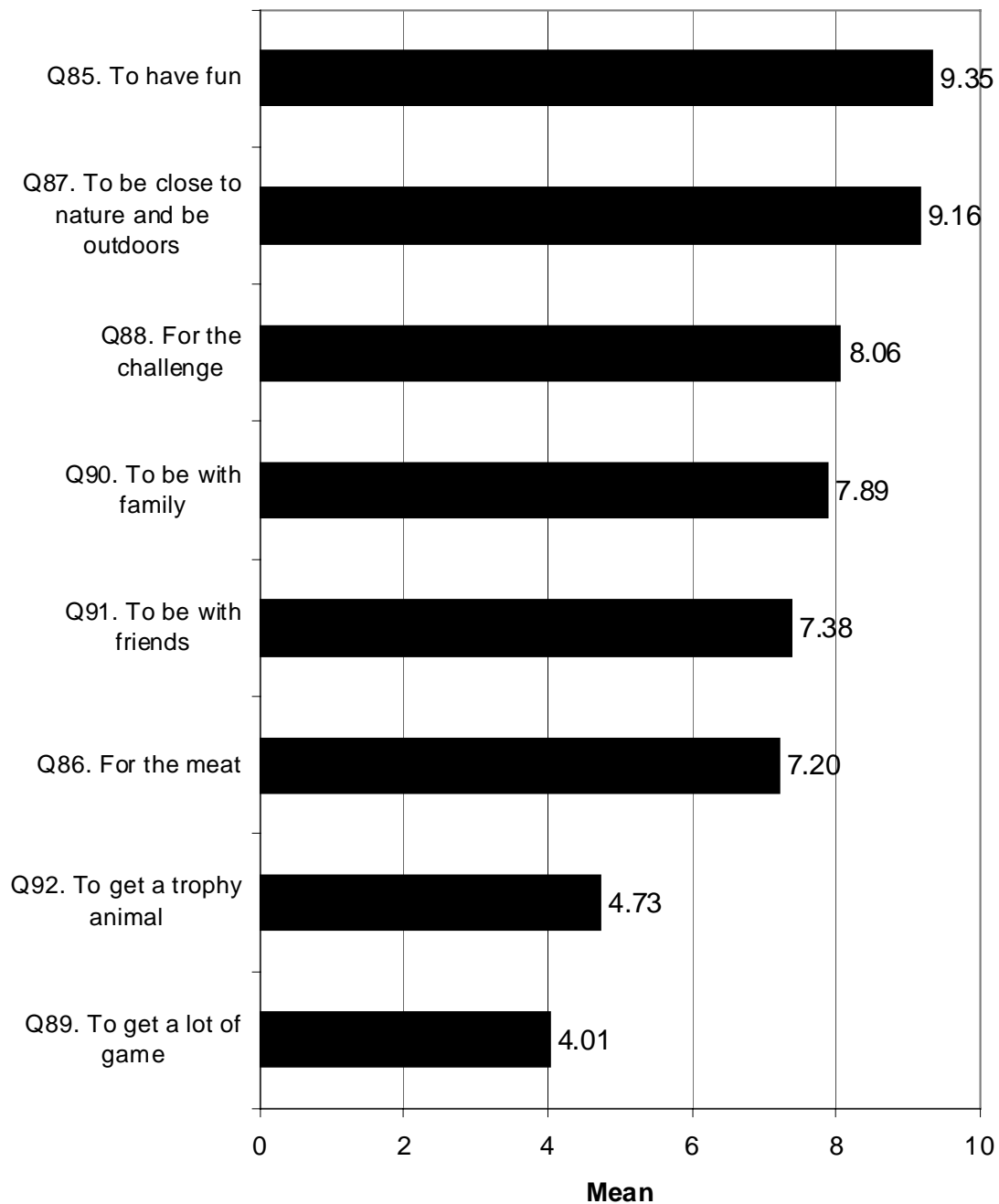


Motivations for Hunting

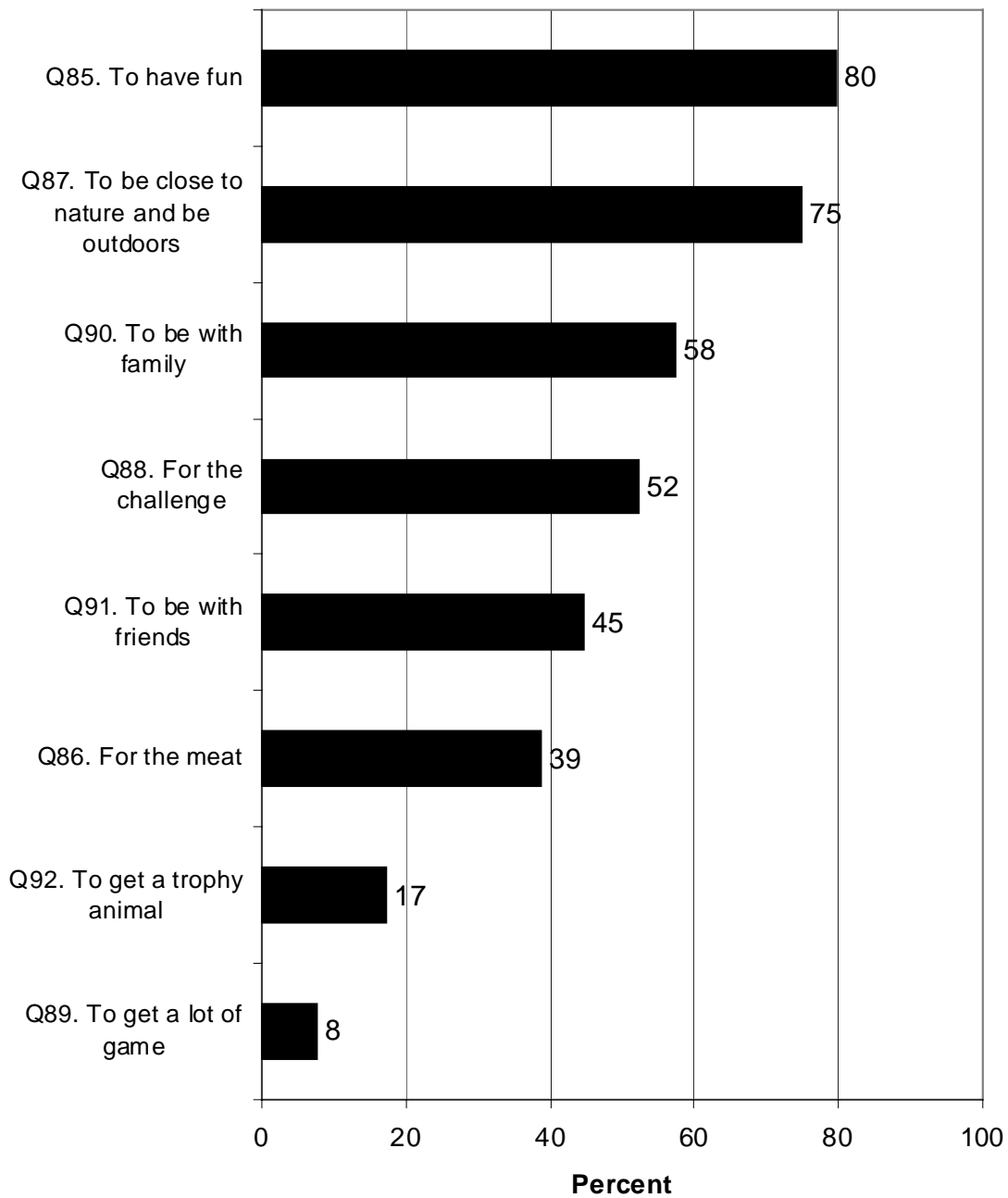
- Among adult hunting license holders, having fun and being close to nature/being outdoors are the two most important reasons for hunting. Two reasons are markedly low in ratings of importance: getting a trophy animal and getting lots of game. Note that the aesthetic/recreation reasons (e.g., to have fun, to be close to nature, to be with family) are higher than utilitarian reasons (e.g., for the meat, to get a trophy).

- Among current youth license holders, having fun and being close to nature/being outdoors are the two most important reasons for hunting. Three reasons are markedly low in ratings of importance: getting a lot of game, getting a trophy animal, and being with friends. For the most part, aesthetic/recreation reasons are high on the ranking (with the exception of being with friends) and utilitarian reasons are low on the ranking. The results of these questions among 2001 youth license holders are quite similar to those among current youth license holders.

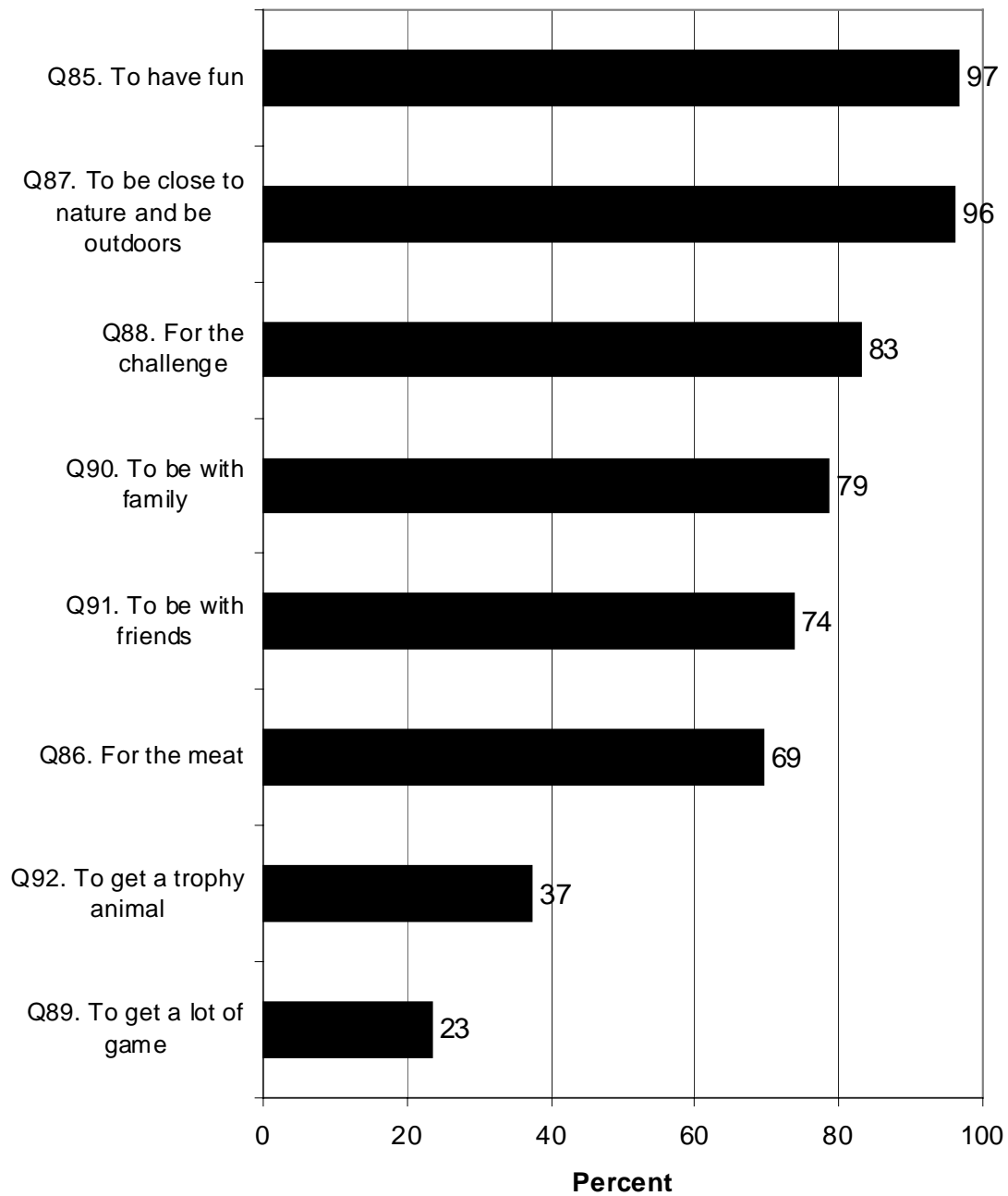
Q85-92. Mean ratings of the importance of the following as a reason for hunting. (Adult hunting license holders.)



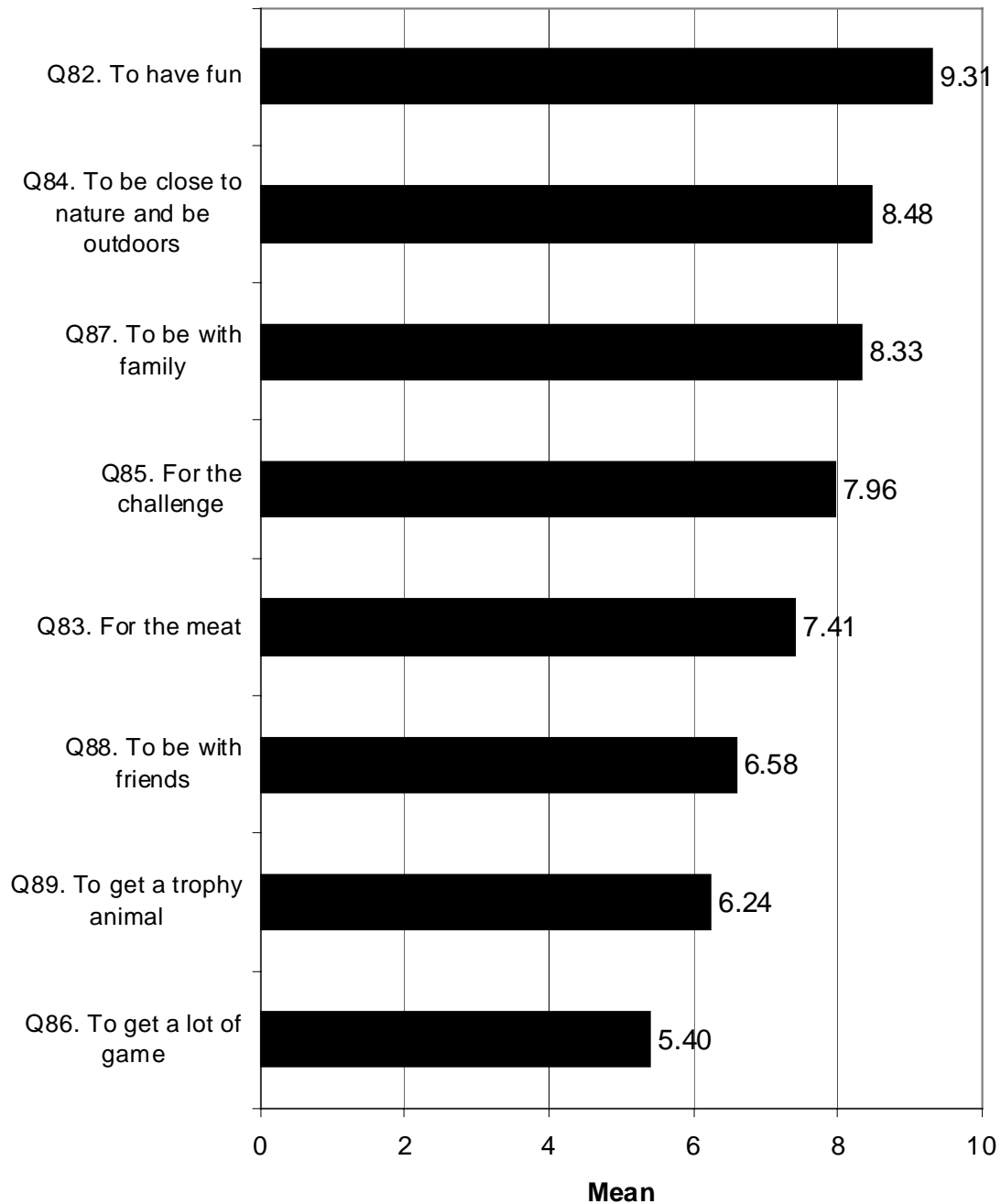
**Q85-92. Percent giving a rating of 9 or 10 in importance for the following reasons for hunting.
(Adult hunting license holders.)**



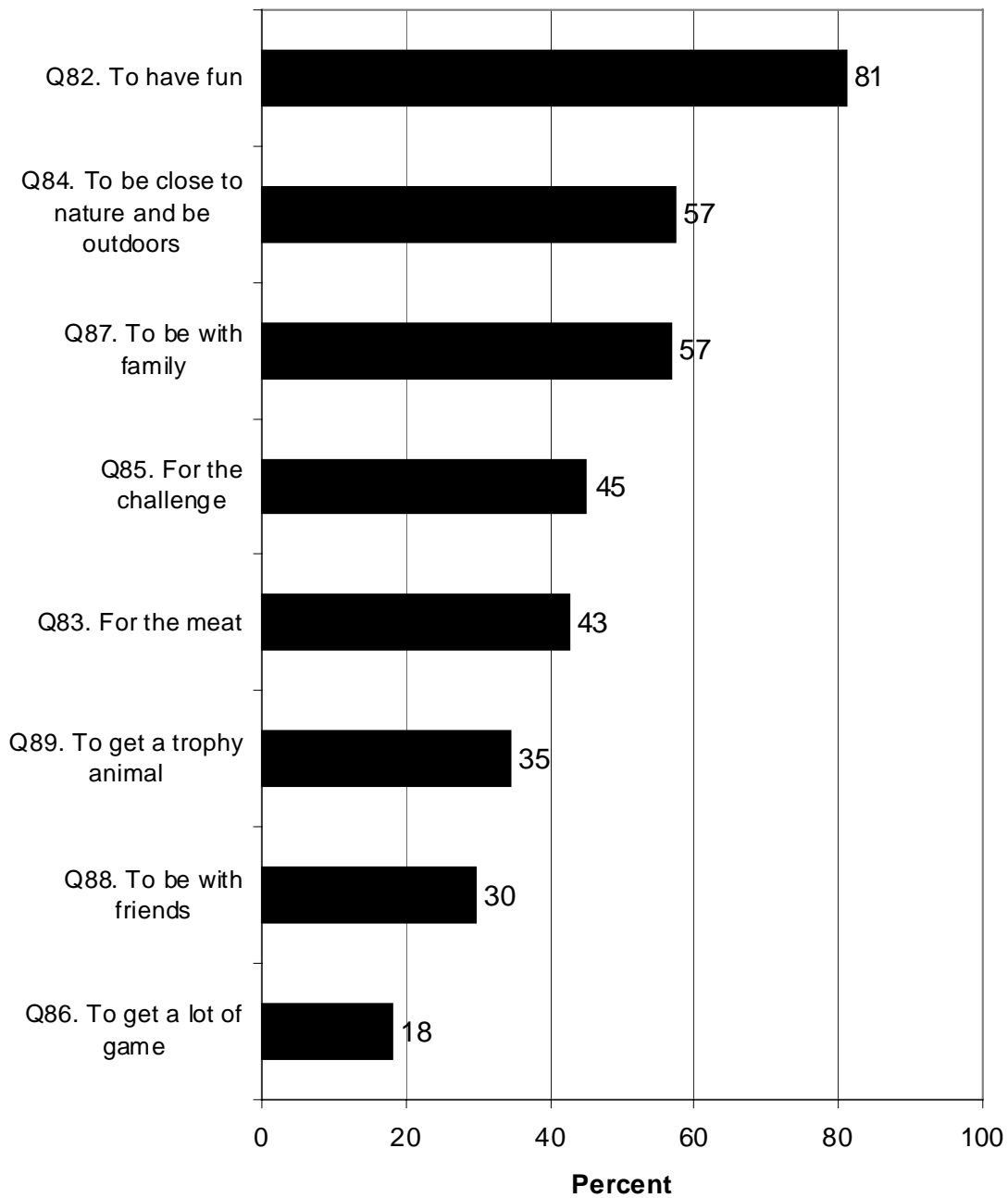
Q85-92. Percent giving a rating of greater than the midpoint (5) in importance for the following reasons for hunting. (Adult hunting license holders.)



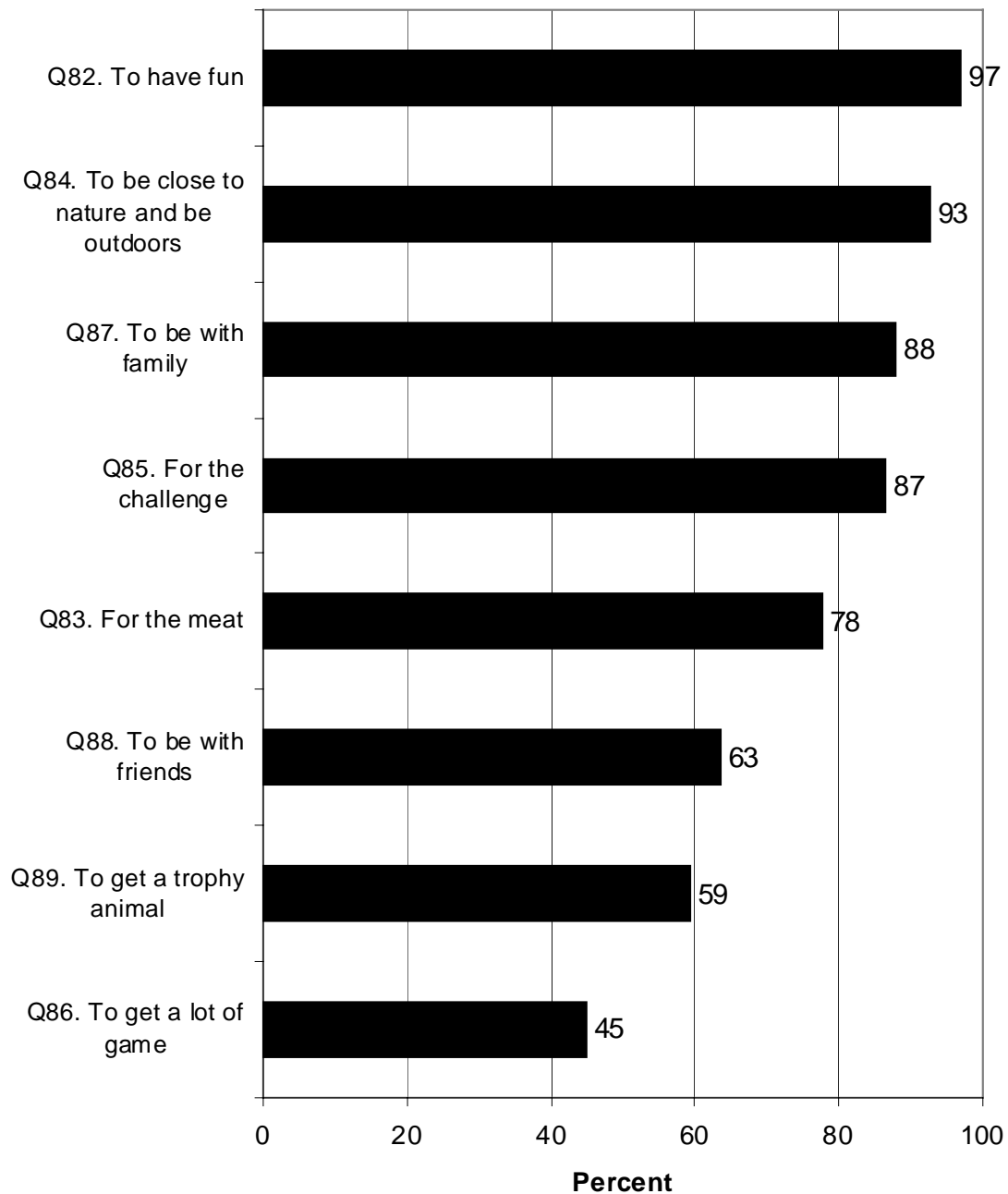
Q82-89. Mean ratings of the importance of the following as a reason for hunting. (Current youth license holders.)



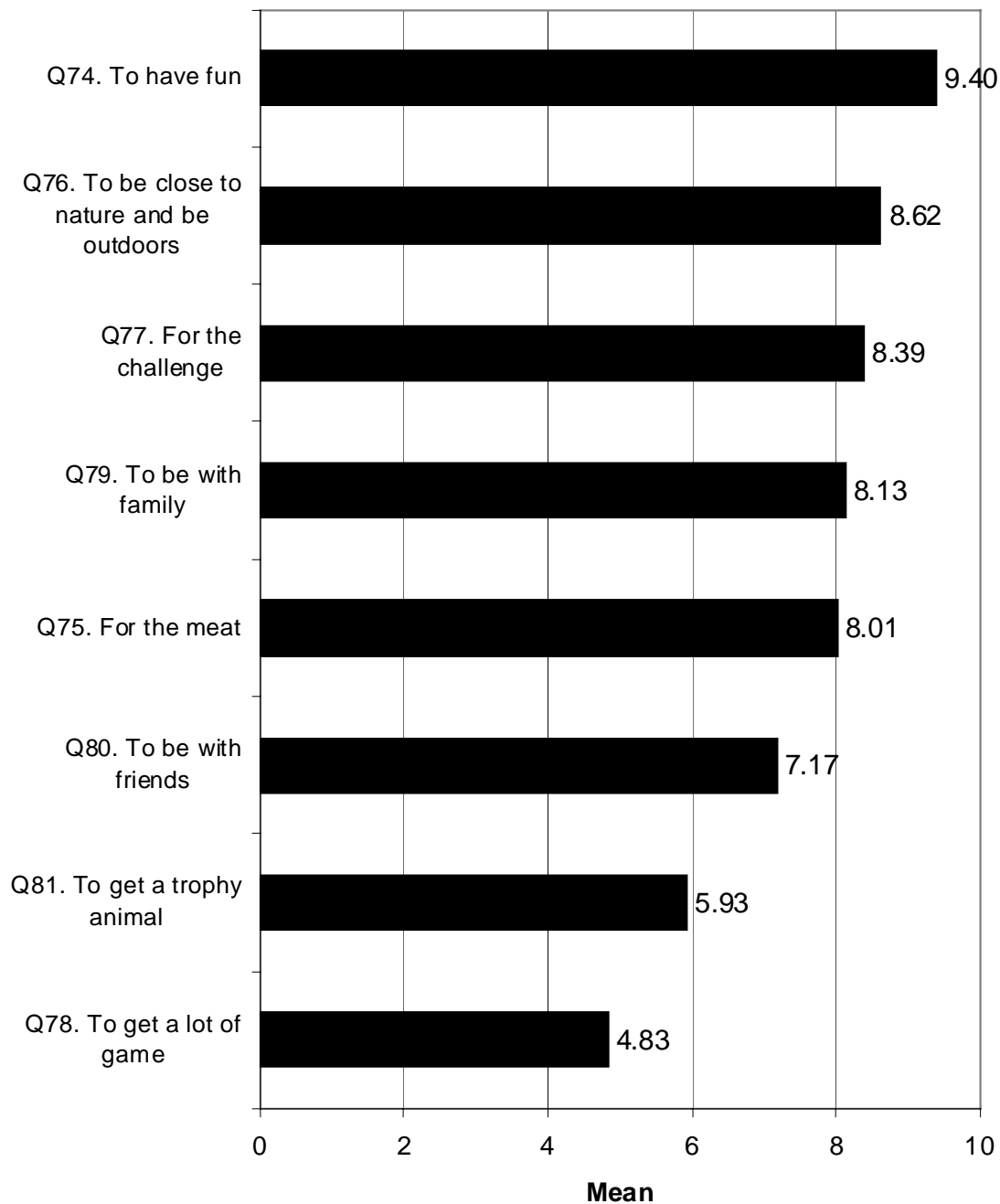
**Q82-89. Percent giving a rating of 9 or 10 in importance for the following reasons for hunting.
(Current youth license holders.)**



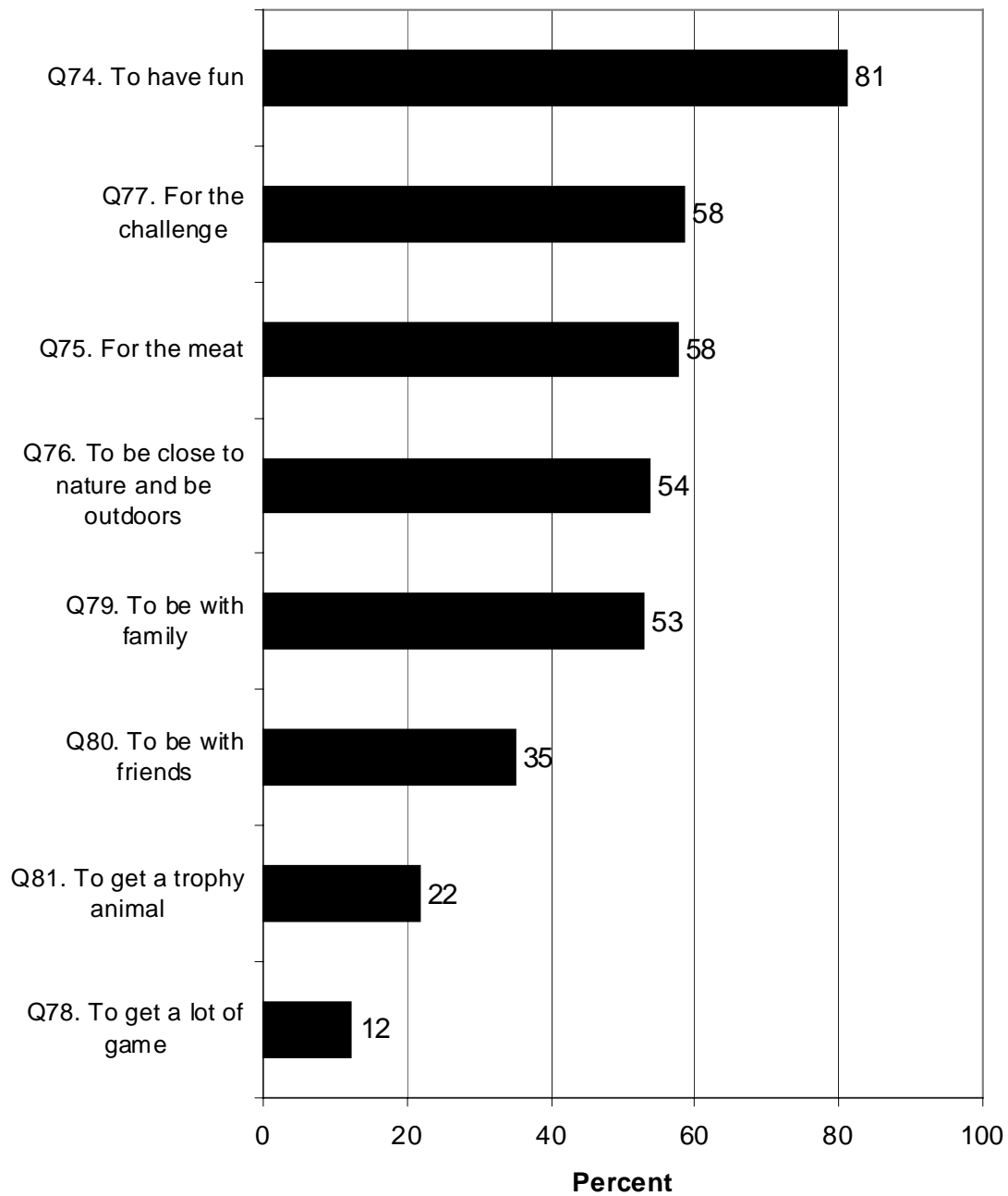
Q82-89. Percent giving a rating of greater than the midpoint (5) in importance for the following reasons for hunting. (Current youth license holders.)



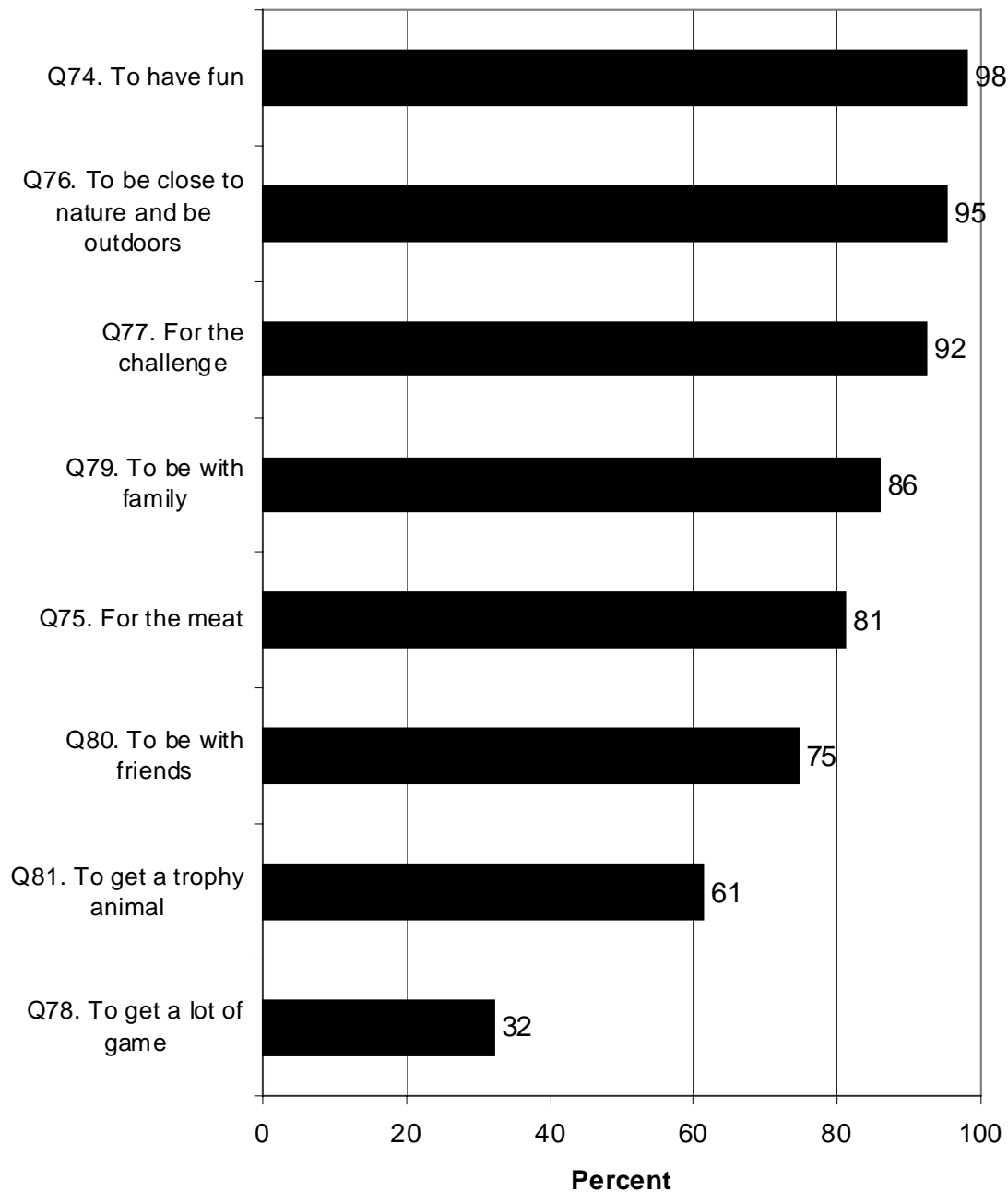
Q74-81. Mean ratings of importance of each of the following reasons for hunting. (2001 Youth License sample.)



Q74-81. Percent giving a rating of 9 or 10 in importance for each of the following reasons for hunting. (2001 Youth License sample.)



Q74-81. Percent giving a rating of greater than the midpoint (5) in importance for each of the following reasons for hunting. (2001 Youth License sample.)



Opinions on Hunting

- All those from among the 2001 youth license holders who did not hunt subsequently (only 5 of them did not hunt again) personally support legal hunting, and all of them say that most of their friends support legal hunting; 2 of these 5 respondents talk about hunting with their friends. (Because of the low sample size of 5, these question results are not shown in graphs.)

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Note that the demographic data were used in many crosstabulations in the report, such as graphs comparing males and females. The data are also useful by themselves and are discussed below.

Adult Hunting License Sample

- The overwhelming majority of adult hunting license holders (91%) are male.
- Most Vermont adult hunting license holders identify themselves as white (94%).
- The ages of adult hunting license holders follow a bell curve, with the peak in the 45-54 years old category.
- Approximately 2 in 5 adult hunting license holders (41%) have attended some college, with or without a degree; 28% have an Associate's degree or higher.
- Occupations of adult hunting license holders are shown.
- Household incomes of adult hunting license holders follow a bell curve, slightly skewed to the lower end of the range, with the peak in the \$20,000 to \$39,999 category.
- Counties of residence of adult hunting license holders are shown, with Chittenden, Rutland, and Washington the leading counties.

Current Youth Hunting License Sample

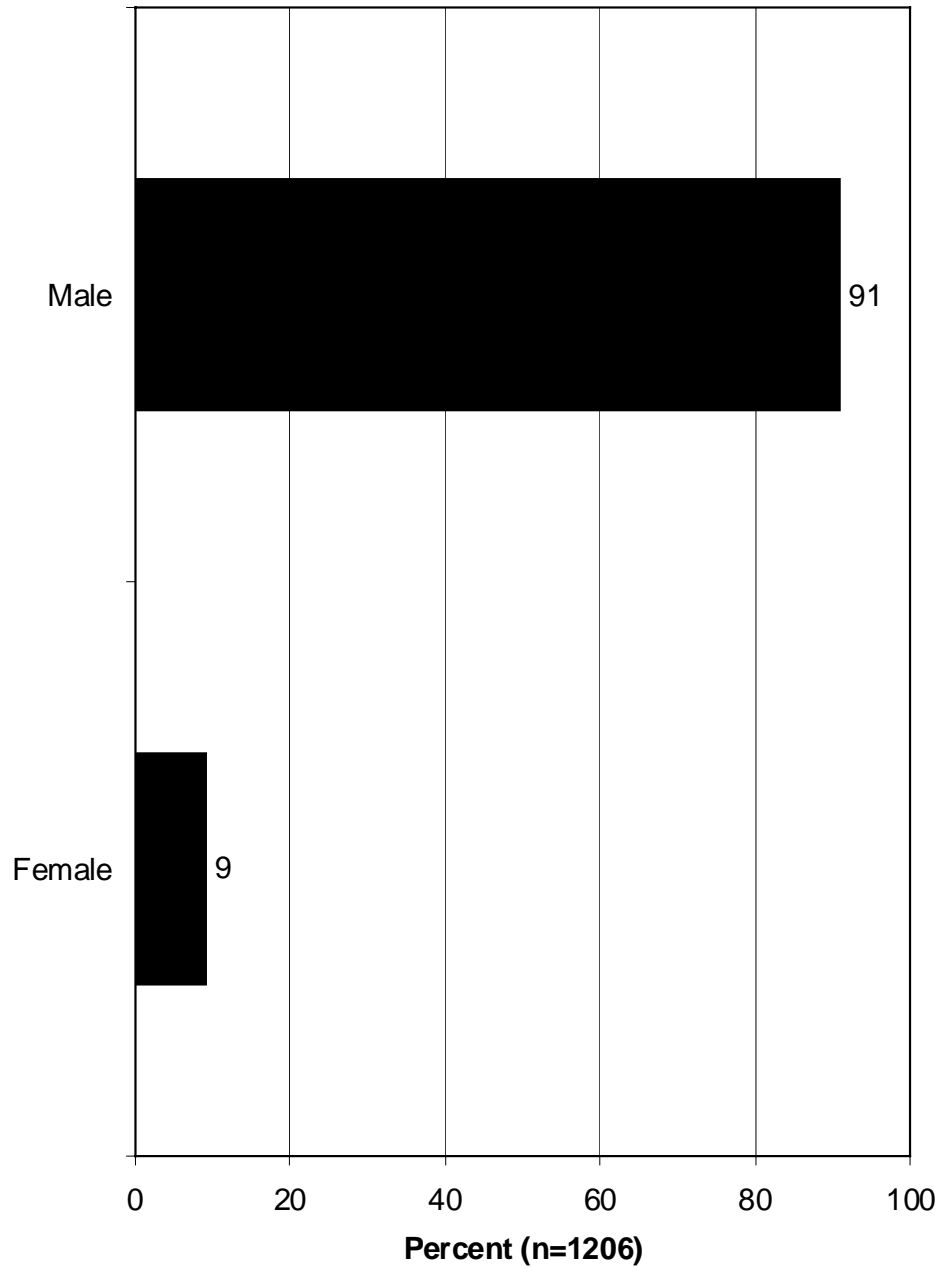
- The large majority of current youth license holders are male (81%).
- Ages of current youth license holders are shown, with the majority (64%) being 13 to 16 years old.

- A large majority of current youth license holders live with both parents (73%). Meanwhile, 21% live primarily with one or the other. Of those who live primarily with one parent, more than half regularly spend time with the other parent.
- Counties of residence of current youth license holders are shown, as are the counties in which the other parent lives (for those who live with a one parent and spend time at the other's house).

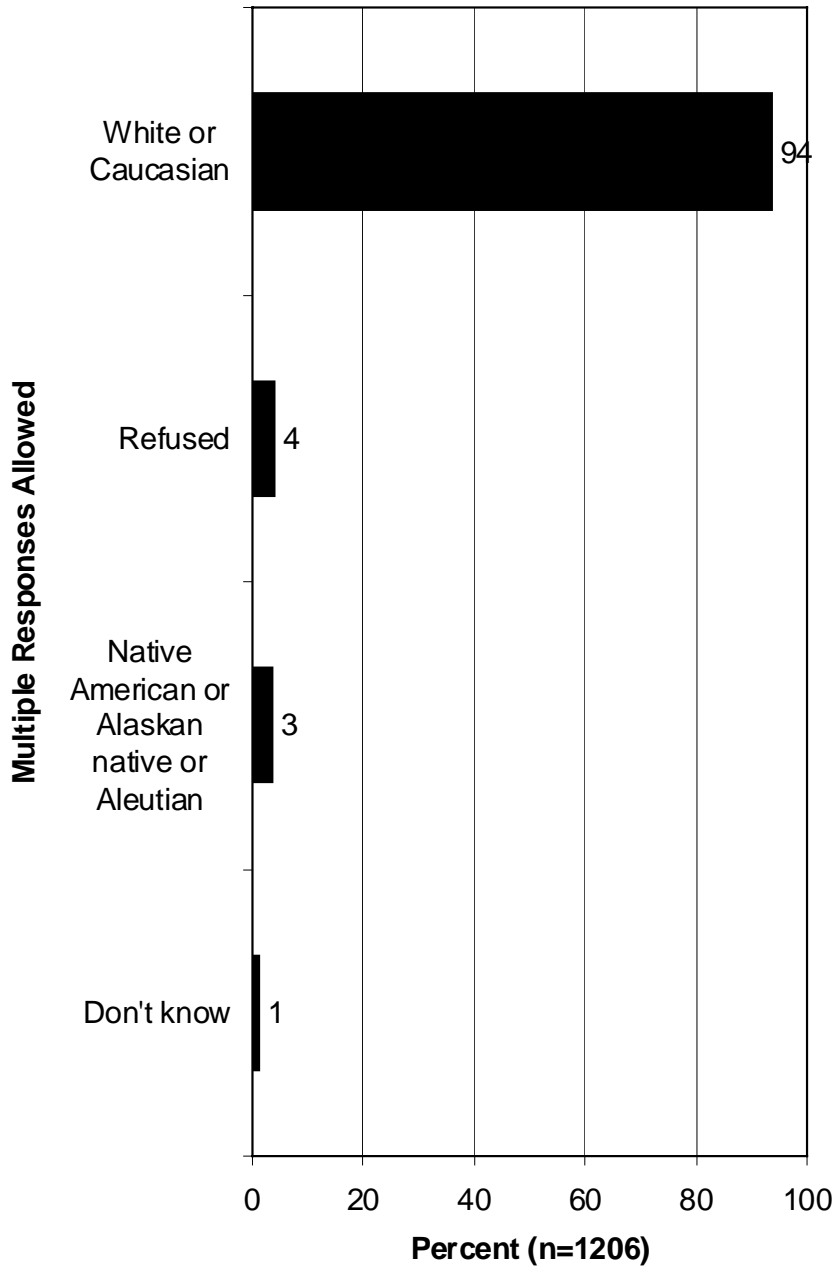
2001 Youth Hunting License Sample

- Most 2001 youth license holders are male (93%).
- Nearly all 2001 youth license holders consider themselves white/Caucasian.
- Ages of 2001 youth license holders are shown.
- Of the 2001 youth license holders sample, 68% live with their parents, while 32% live on their own.
- Educational attainment is shown among 2001 youth license holders; because of the relatively low age of these respondents, the results appear skewed to the low end of the educational level.
- Counties of residence are shown for the 2001 youth license holders.

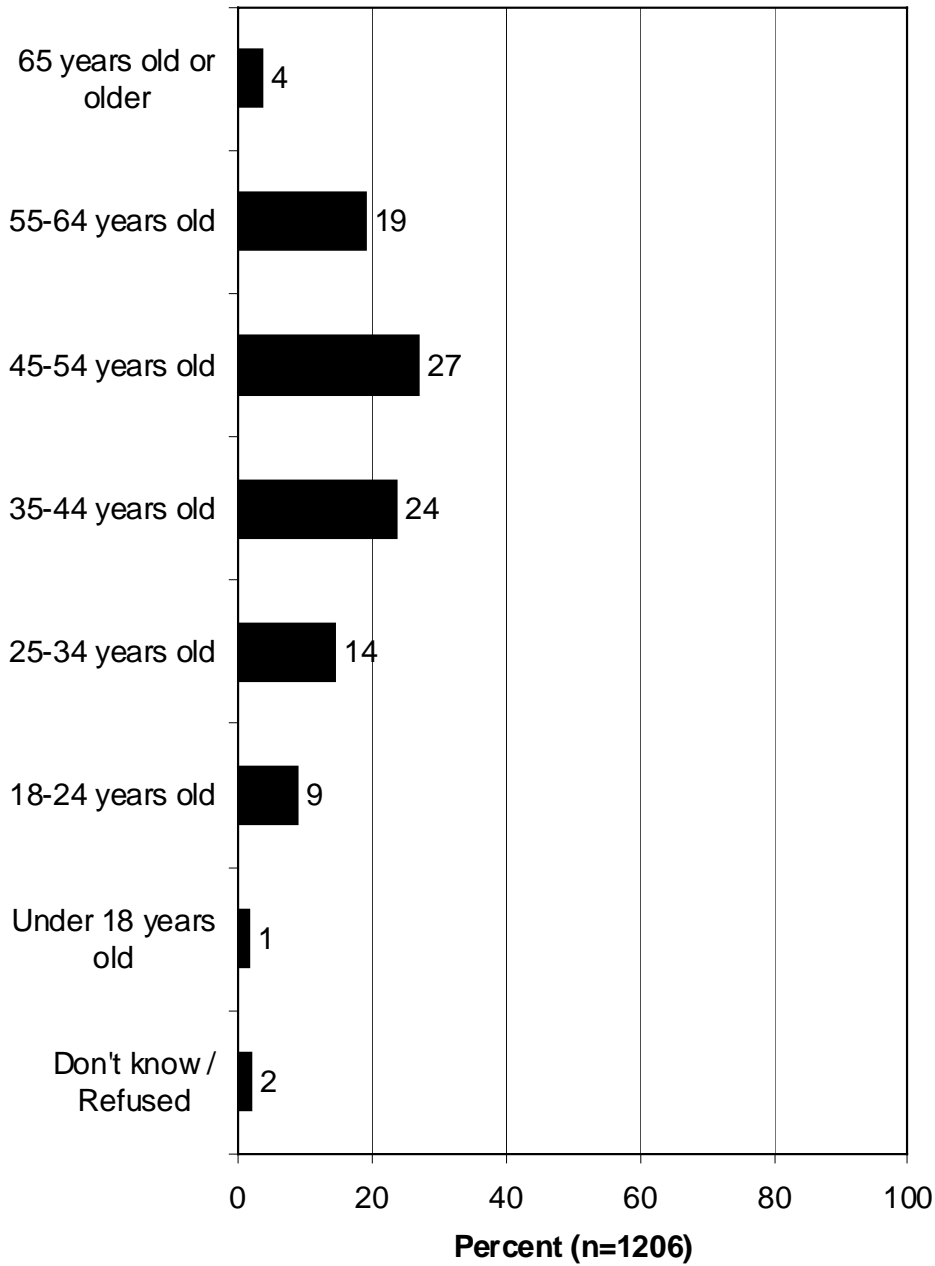
Q136. Respondent's gender (not asked, but observed by interviewer). (Adult hunting license holders.)



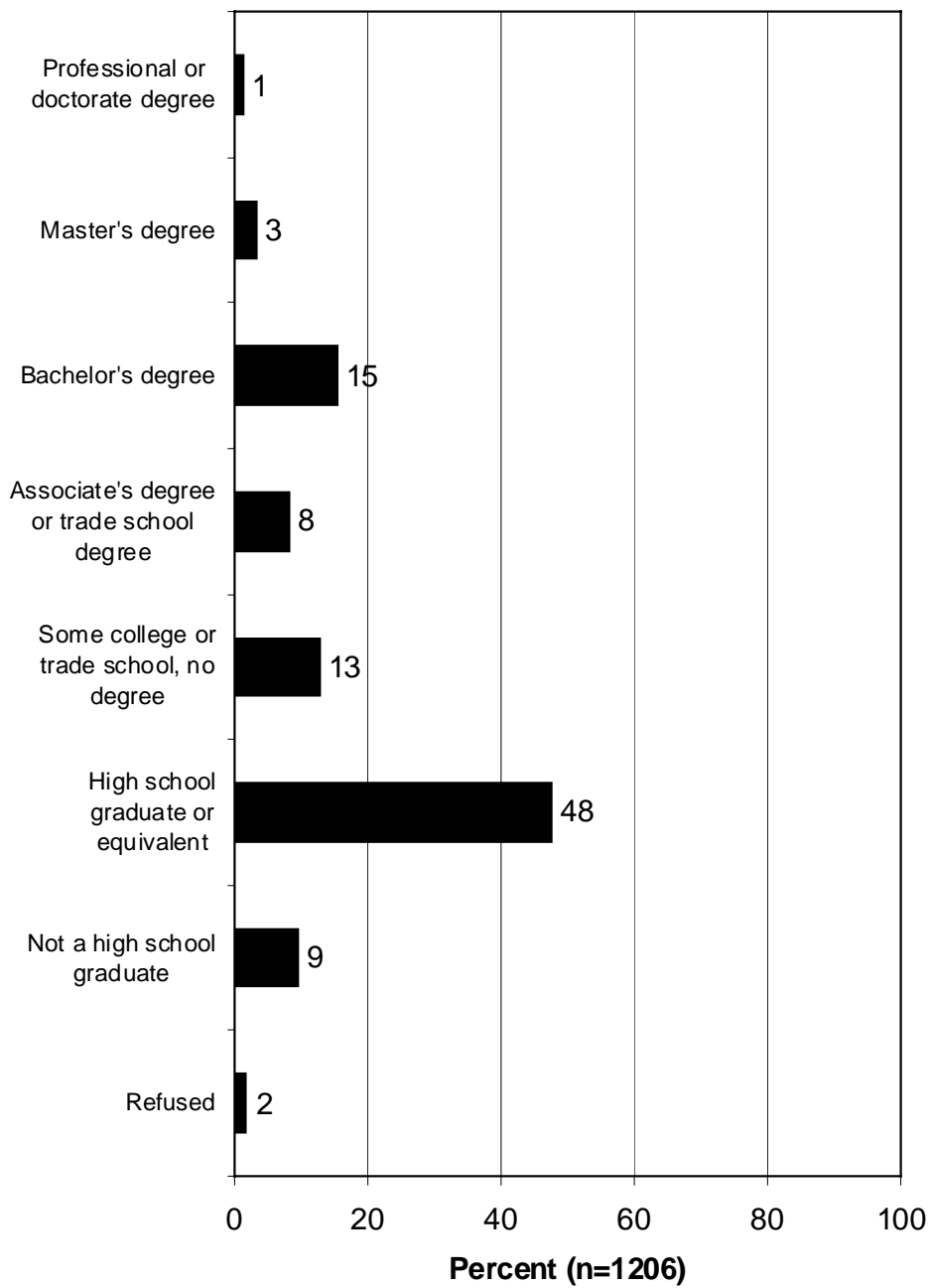
Q126. What races or ethnic backgrounds do you consider yourself, and please mention all that apply? (Adult hunting license holders.)



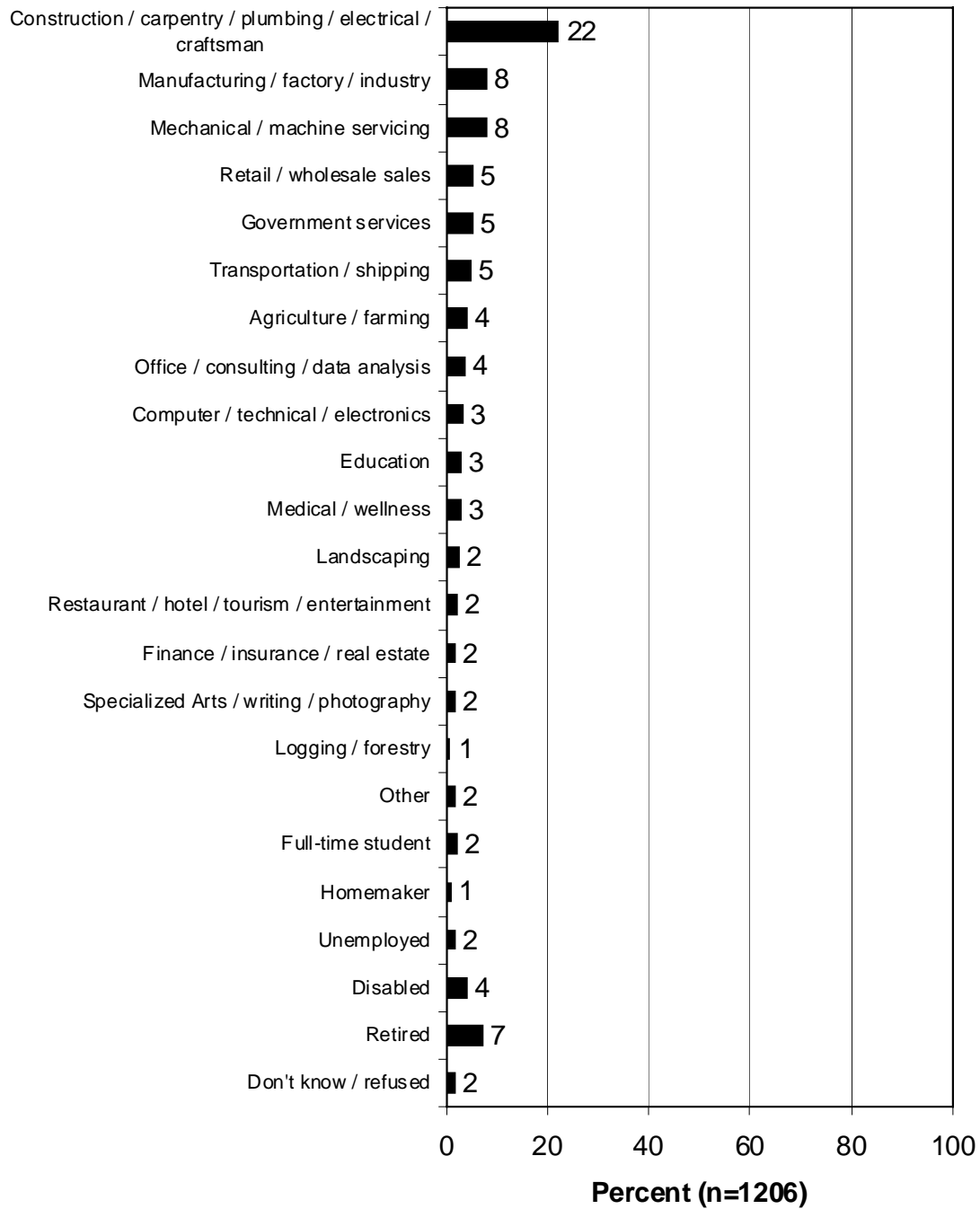
Q129. May I ask your age? (Adult hunting license holders.)



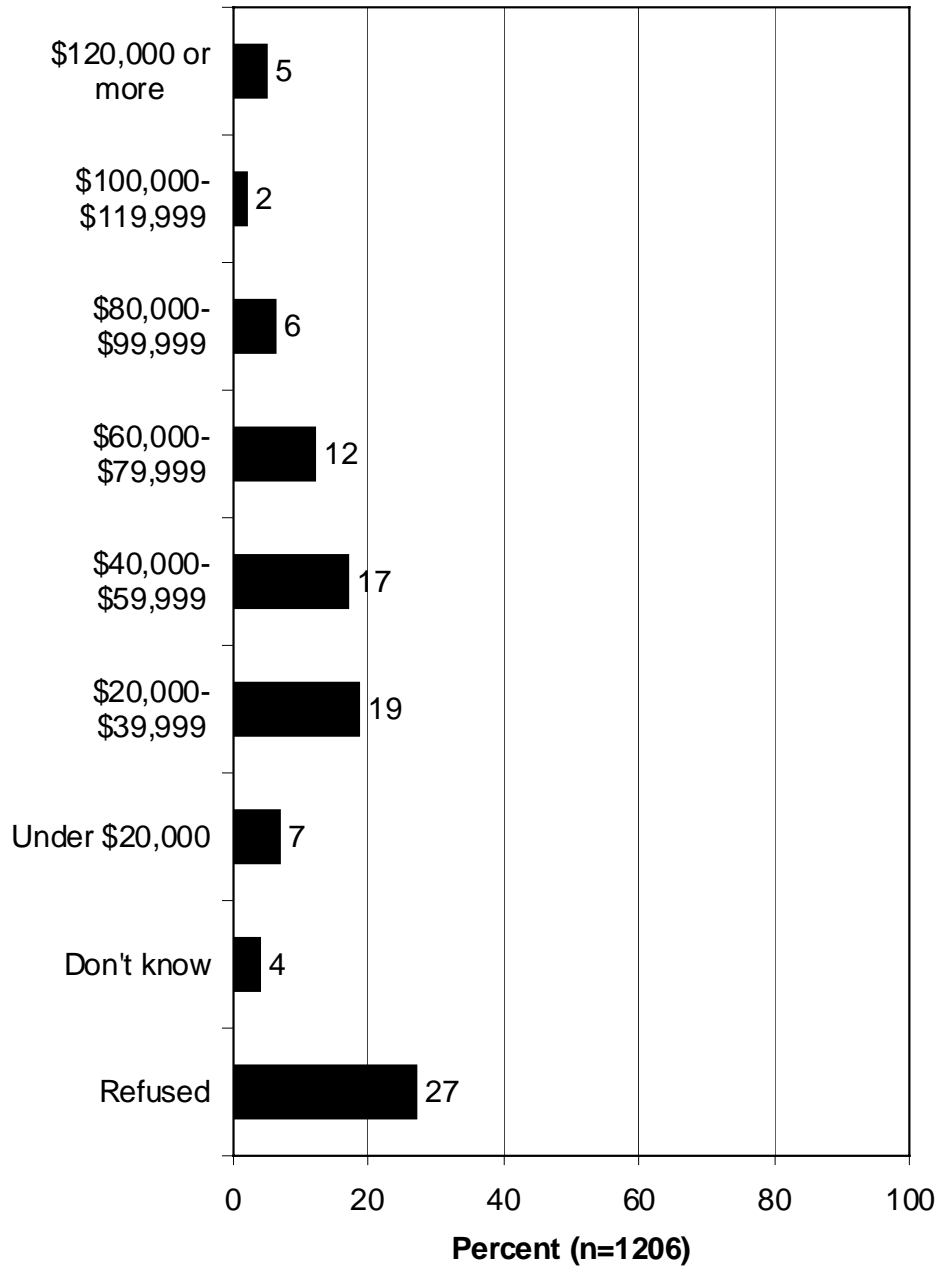
Q119 What is the highest level of education you have completed? (Adult hunting license holders.)



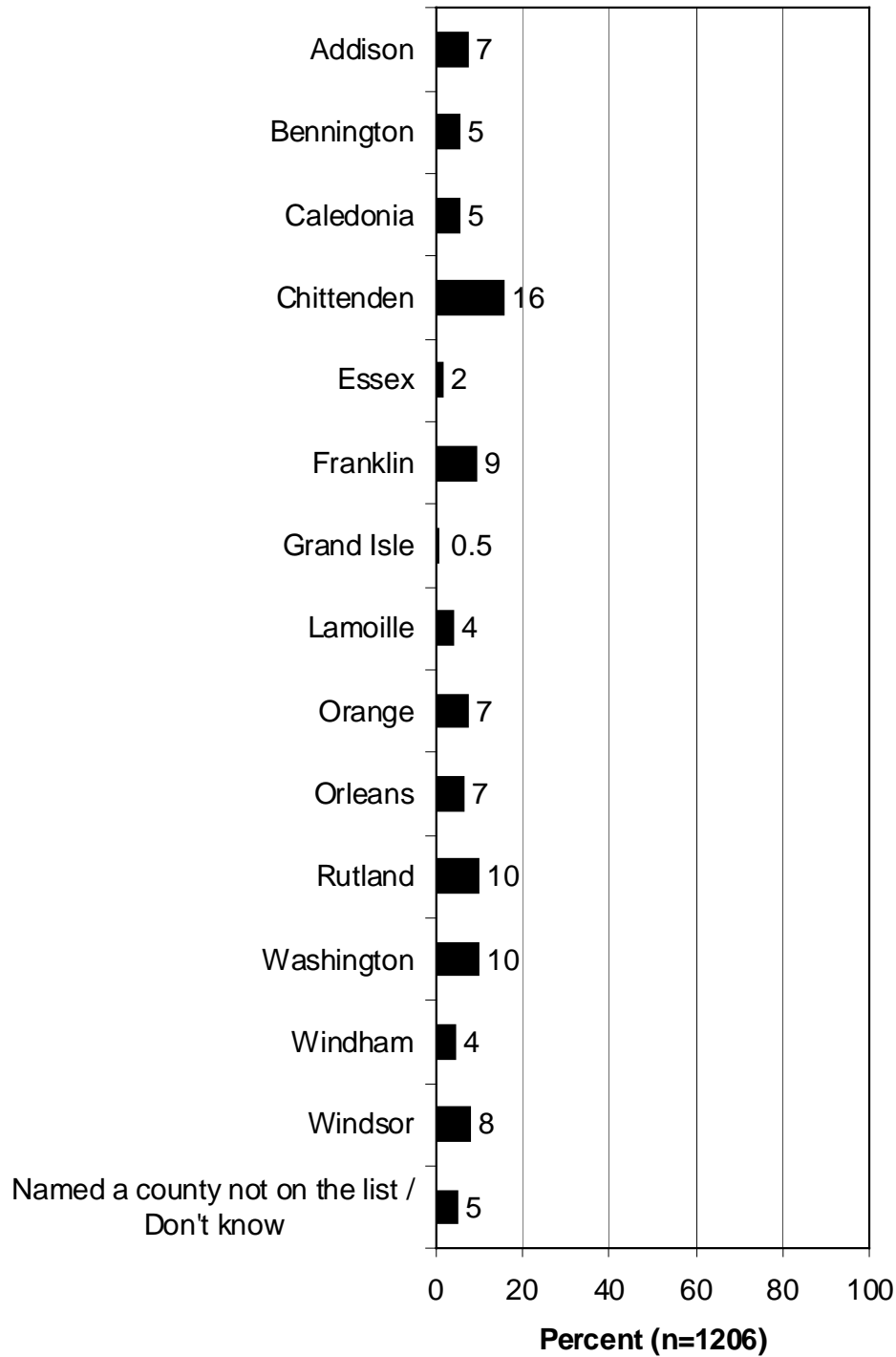
Q120-121. Respondent's occupation. (Adult hunting license holders.)



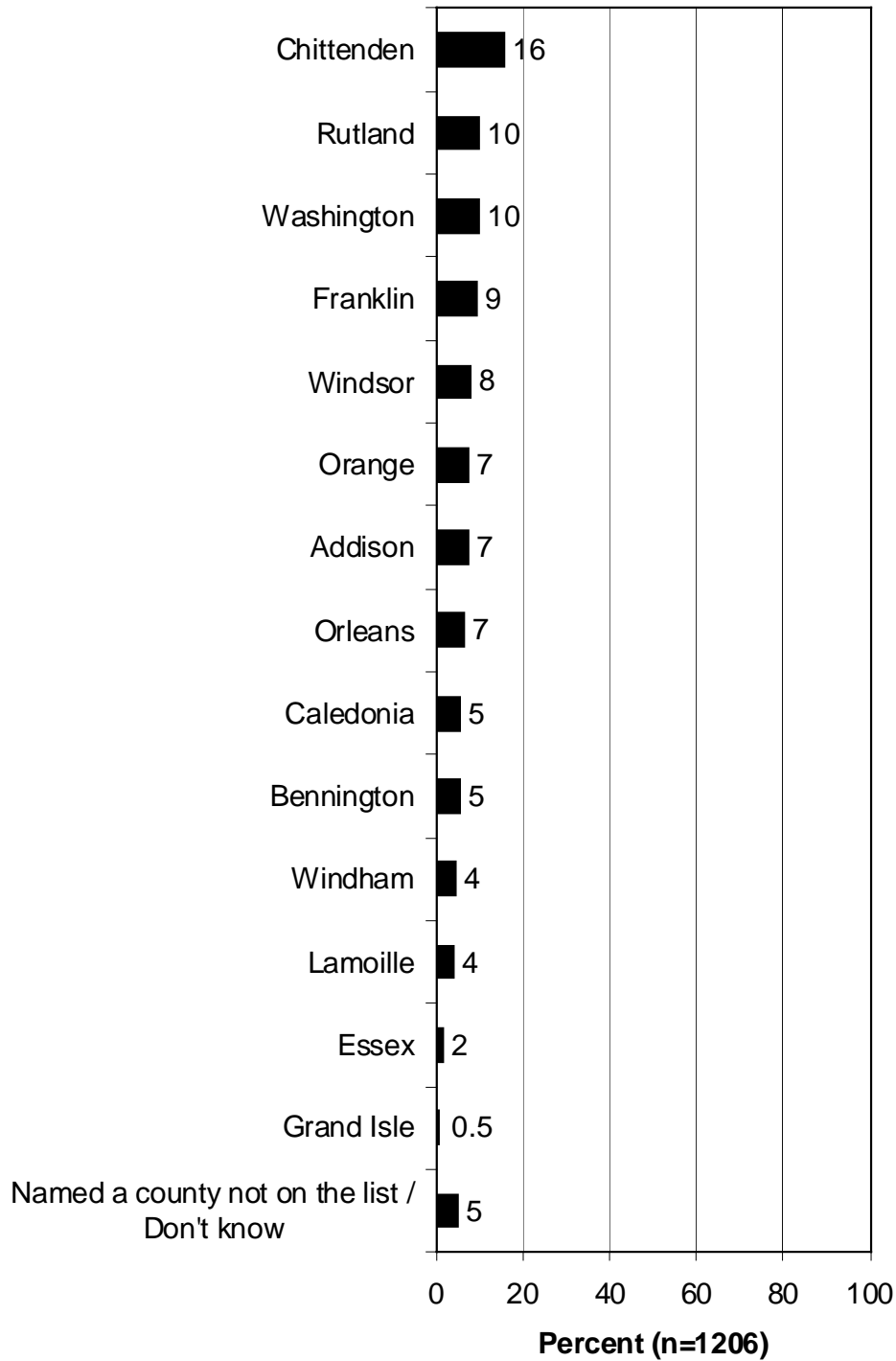
Q123. Which of these categories best describes your total household income before taxes last year? (Adult hunting license holders.)



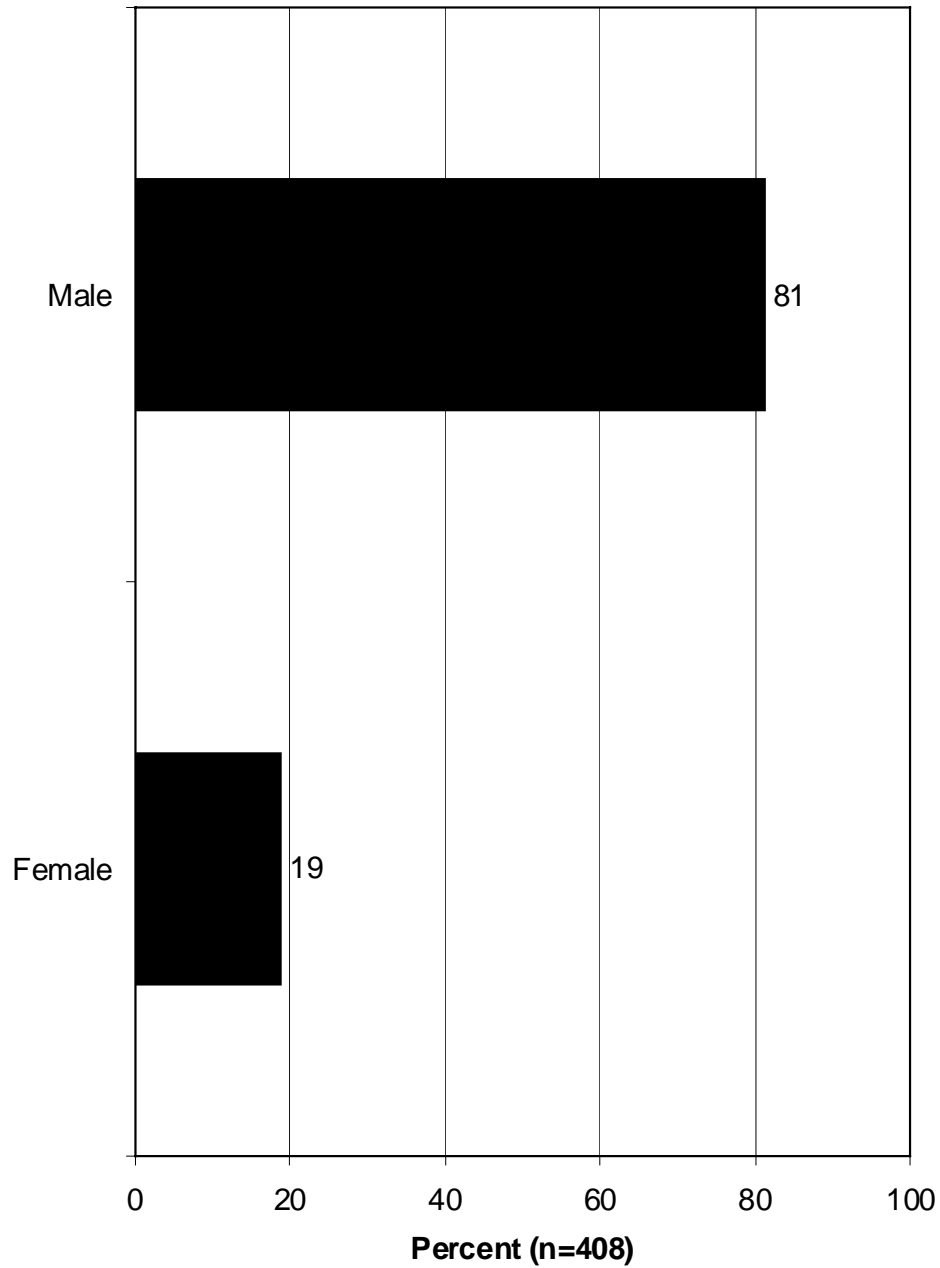
Q128. What is your county of residence? (Adult hunting license holders.)



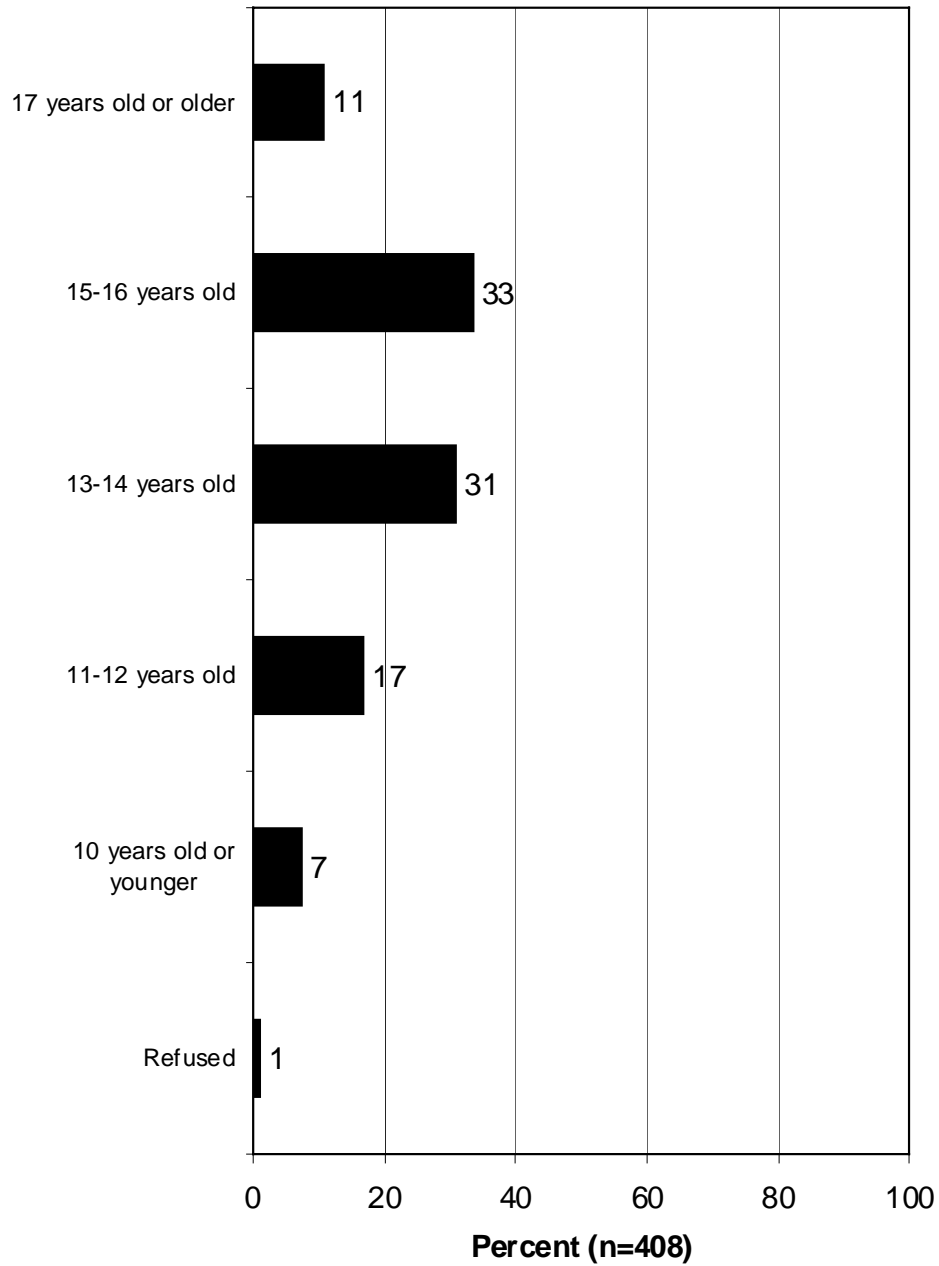
Q128. What is your county of residence? (Adult hunting license holders.)



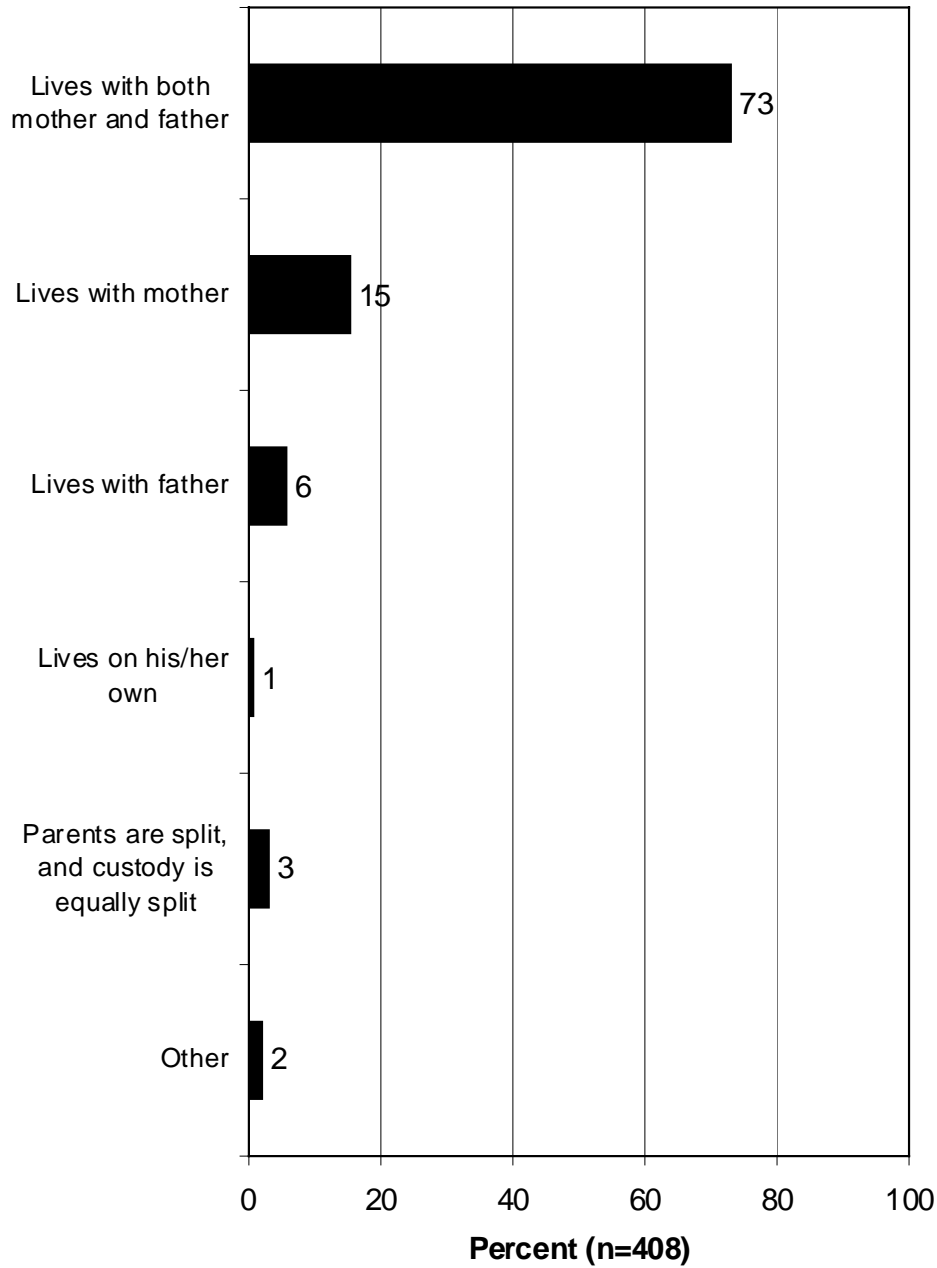
Q118. Respondent's gender (not asked, but observed by interviewer). (Current youth license holders.)



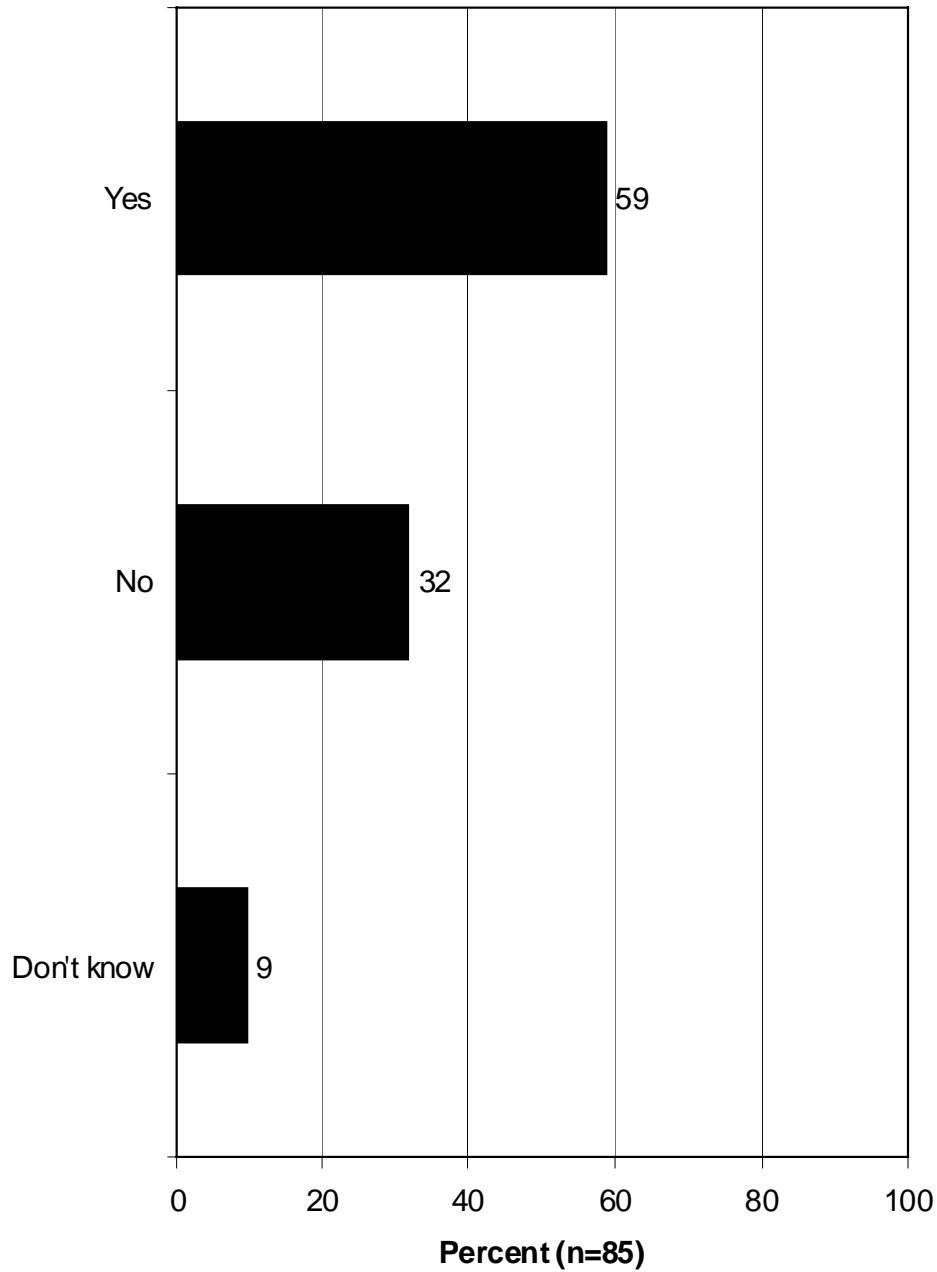
Q105. What is your age? (Current youth license holders.)



Q106. Do you live with your mother and father both, or just one or the other? (Current youth license holders.)



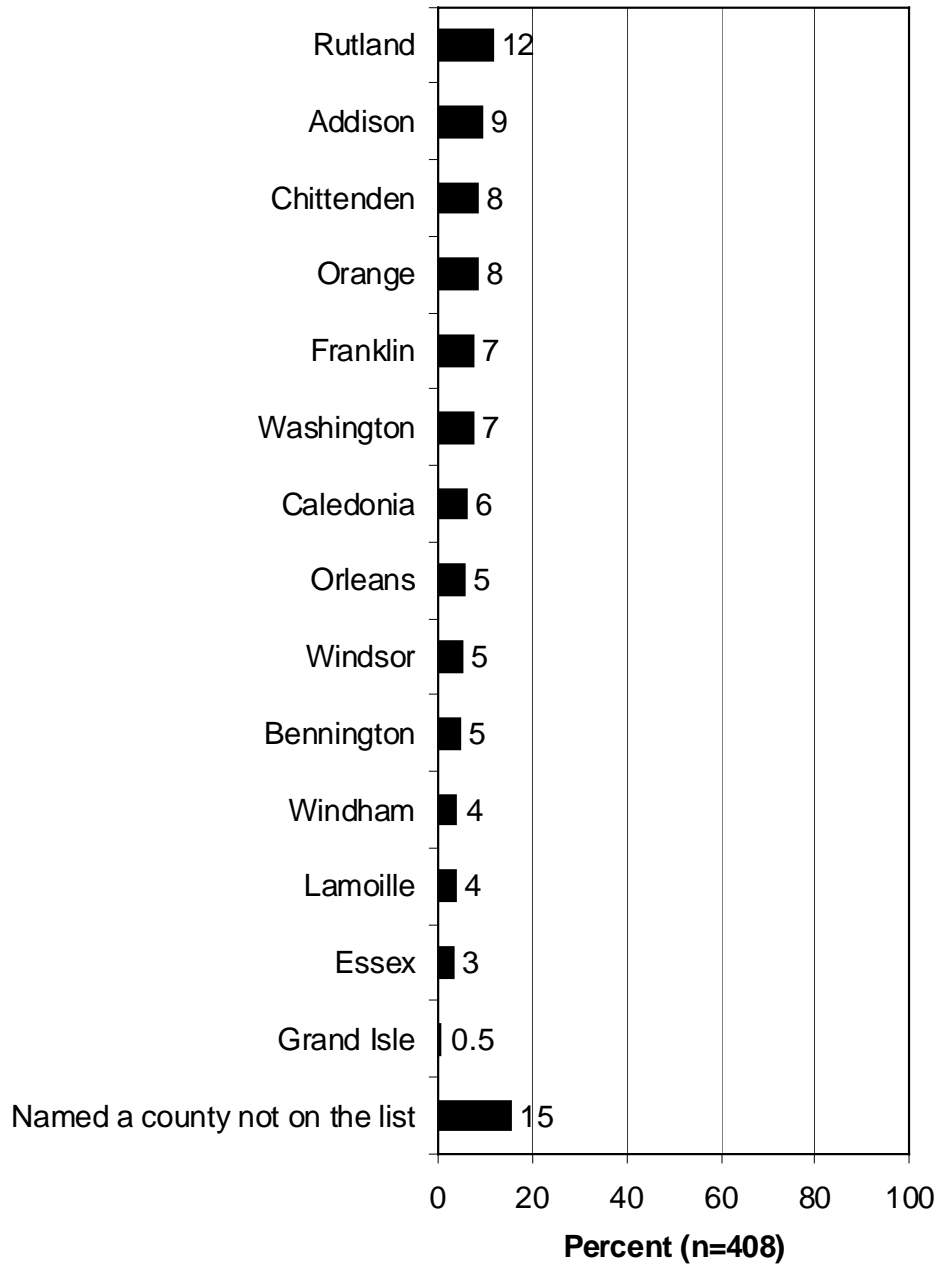
Q109. Do you regularly spend time or spend the night at your [other parent's] house, too? (Asked of those who live with one parent.) (Current youth license holders.)



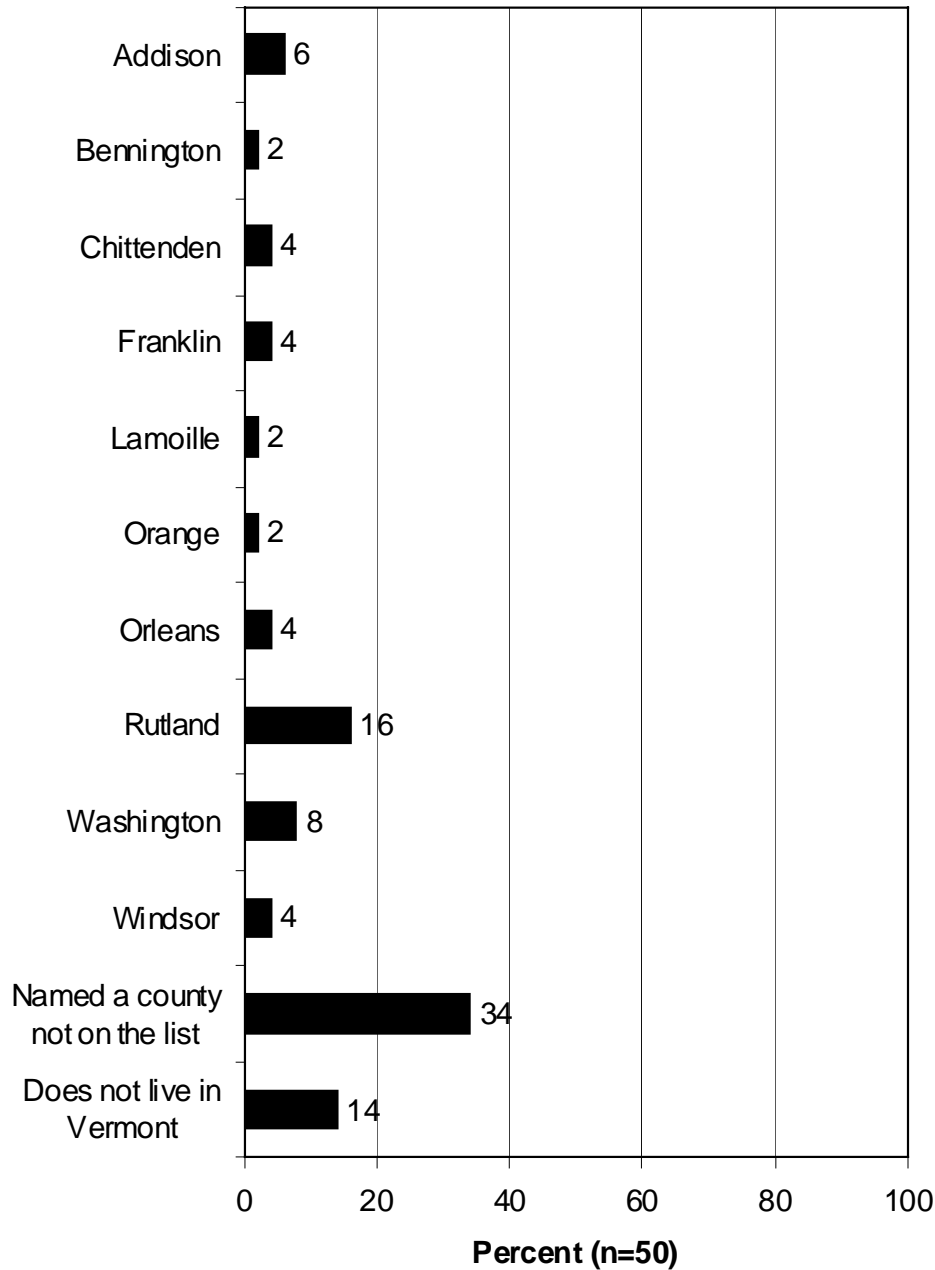
Q110. What is your county of residence? (Current youth license holders.)



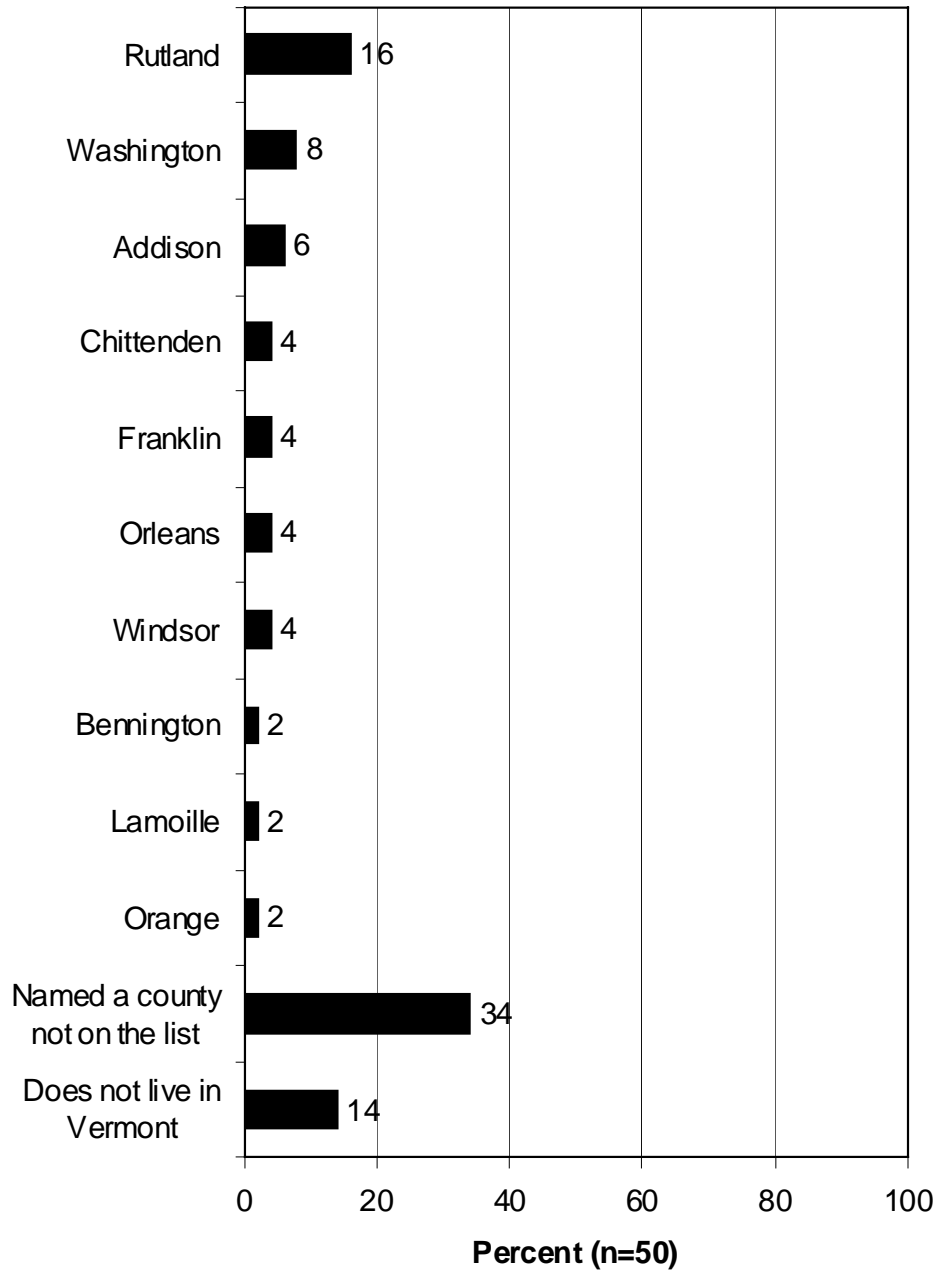
Q110. What is your county of residence? (Current youth license holders.)



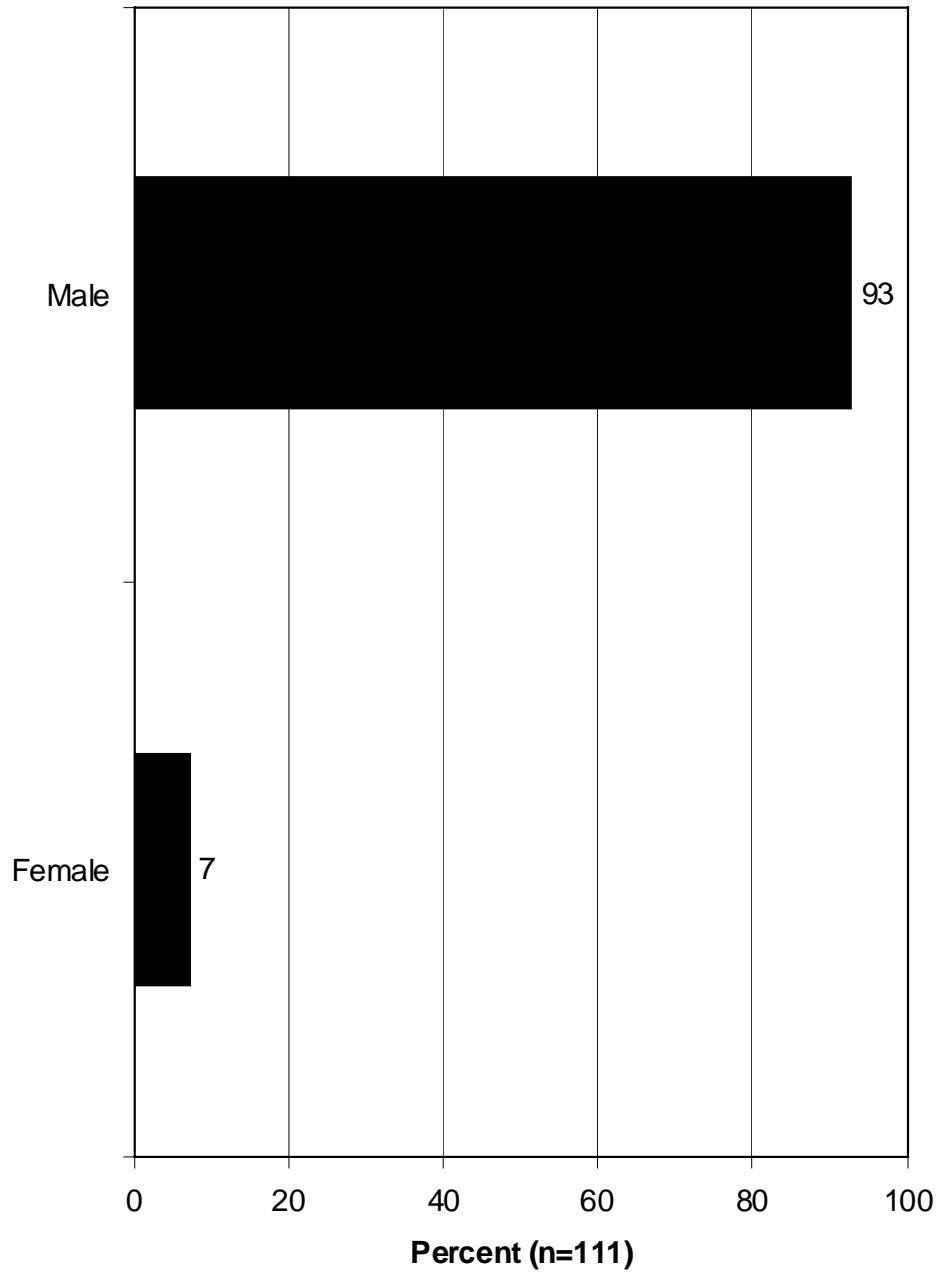
**Q113. In what county does your [other parent] live?
(Asked of those who live in a single parent household but regularly spend time at their other parent's home.) (Current youth license holders.)**



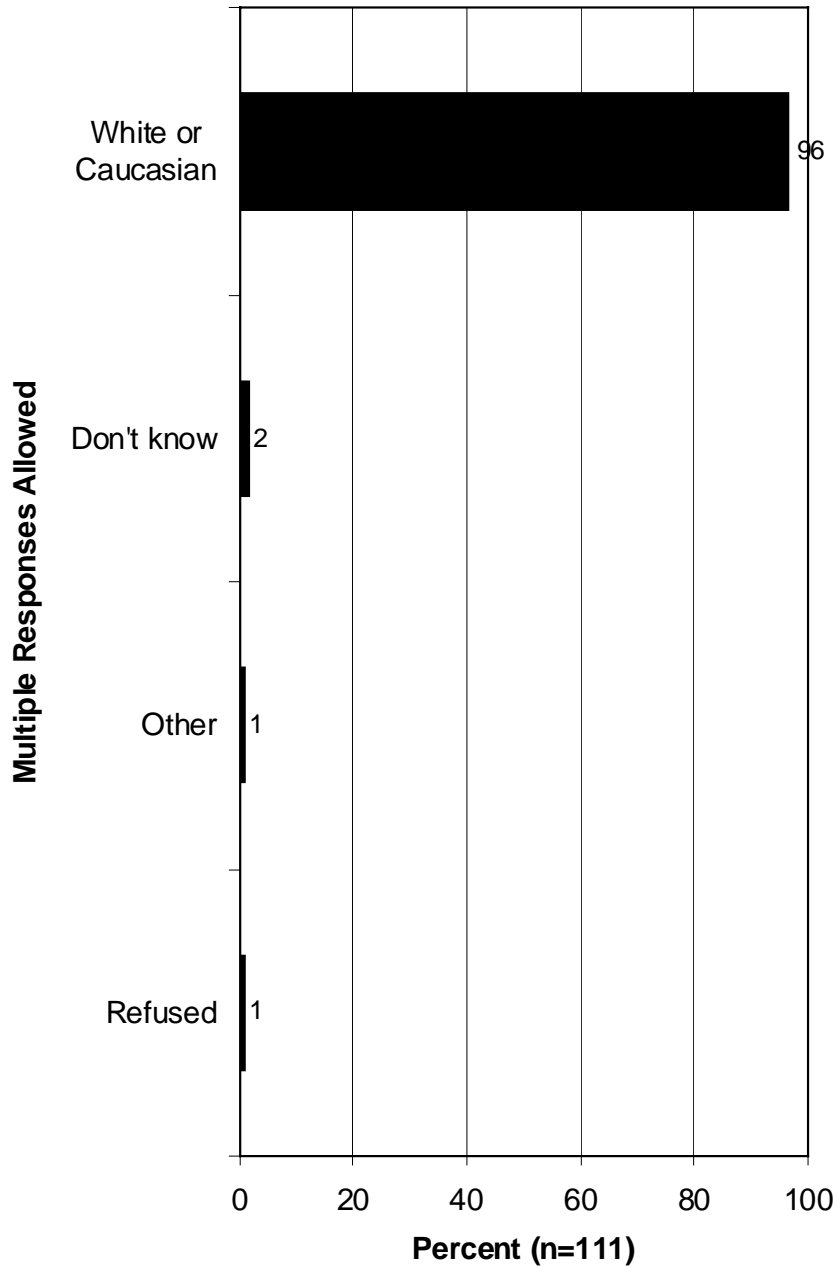
**Q113. In what county does your [other parent] live?
(Asked of those who live in a single parent
household but regularly spend time at their other
parent's home.) (Current youth license holders.)**



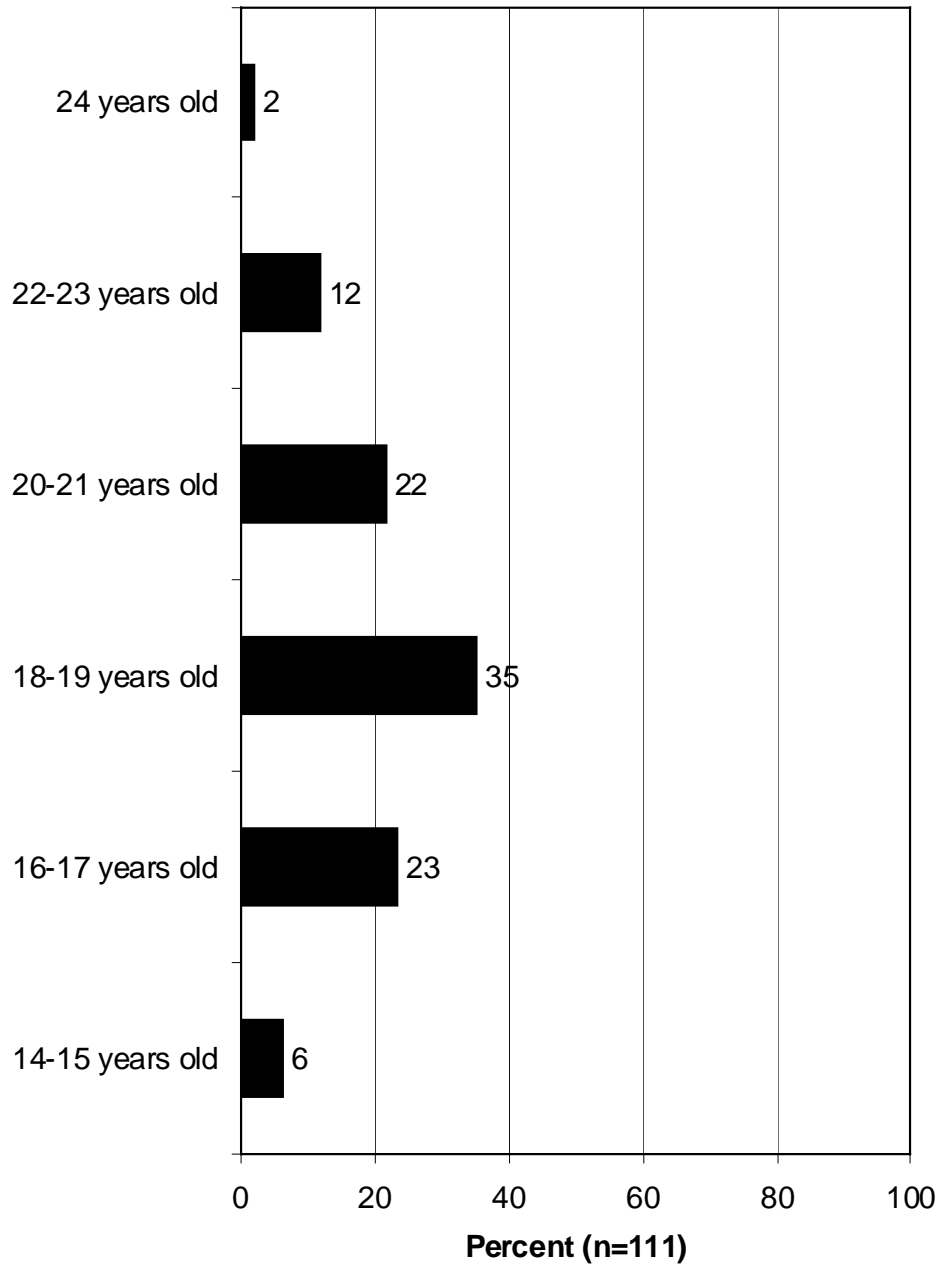
Q116. Respondent's gender (not asked, but observed by interviewer). (2001 Youth License sample.)



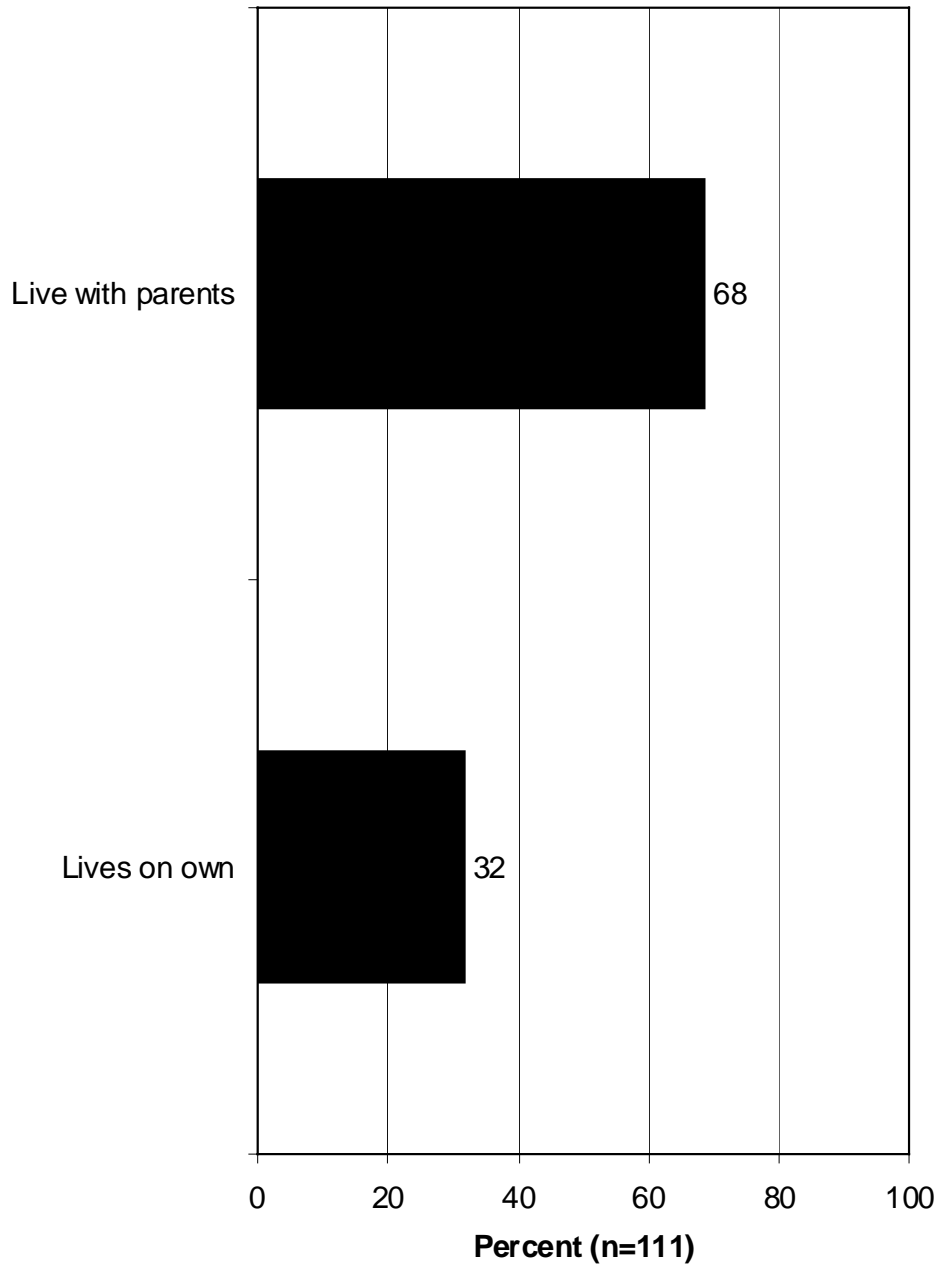
Q106. What races or ethnic backgrounds do you consider yourself, and please mention all that apply? (2001 Youth License sample.)



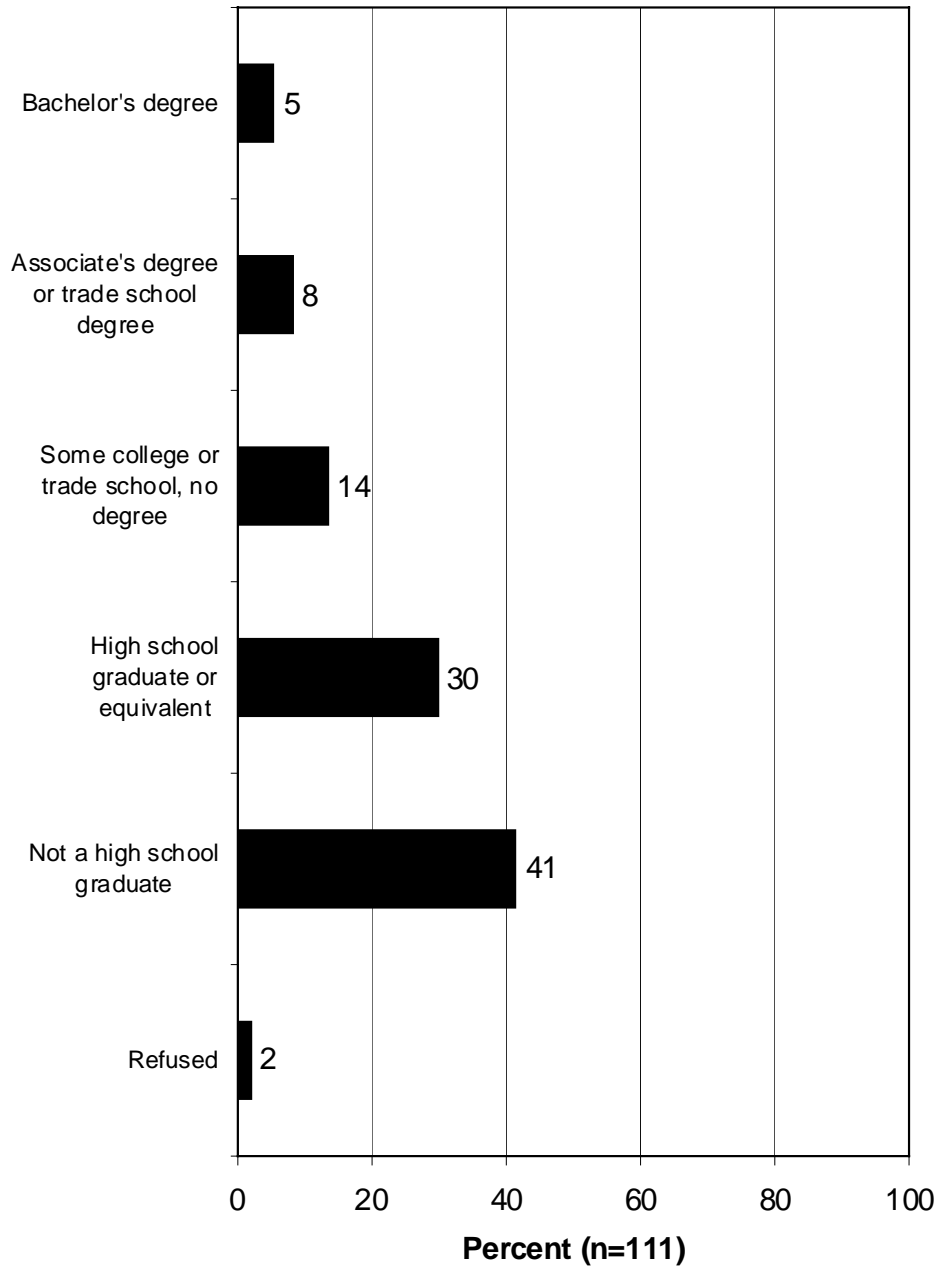
Q109. May I ask your age? (2001 Youth License sample.)



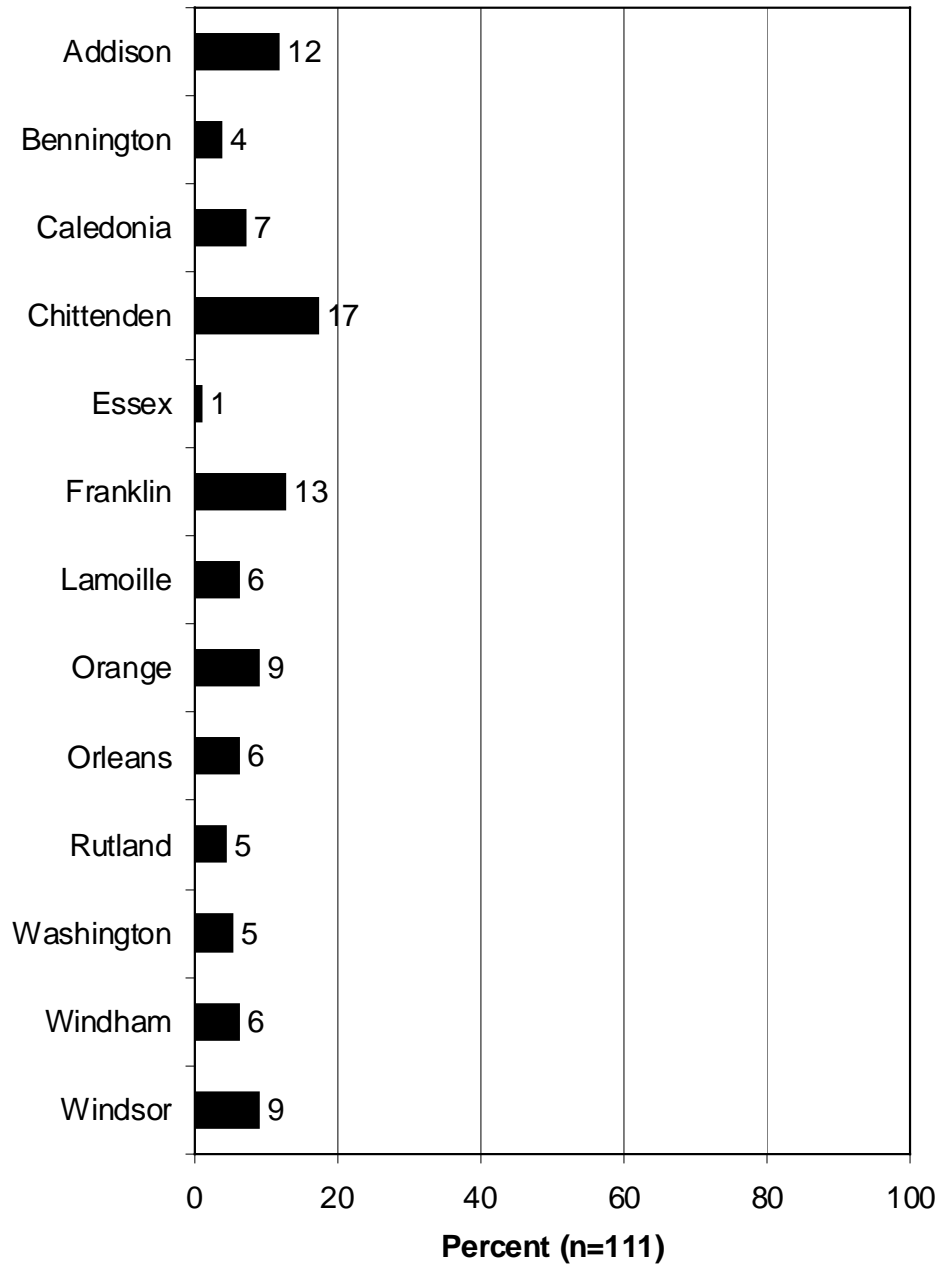
**Q98. Do you live with your parents or on your own?
(2001 Youth License sample.)**



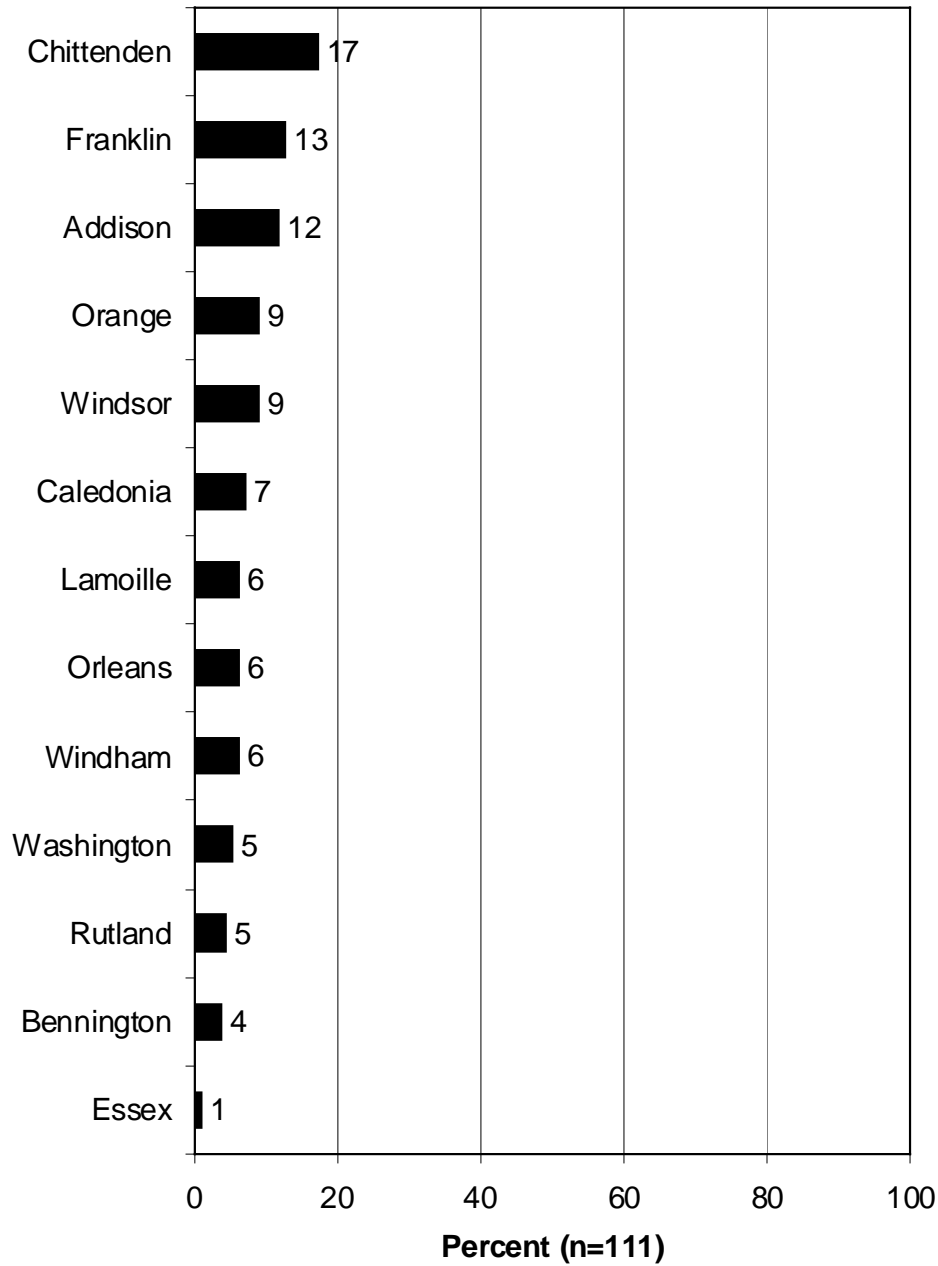
Q99. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (2001 Youth License sample.)



Q108. What is your county of residence? (2001 Youth License sample.)



Q108. What is your county of residence? (2001 Youth License sample.)



SURVEY RESULTS OF VENDORS

The research entailed a survey of hunting license vendors to help determine the number of free youth hunting tags for the Youth Weekend Hunts that are issued. For a youth to hunt during a Youth Weekend Hunt, he/she must be under 16 years of age, have a valid hunting license, be accompanied by an unarmed adult hunter (also with a valid license), and *obtain a free youth deer/turkey/waterfowl tag*.

METHODOLOGY OF VENDOR SURVEY

The list of 332 vendors, as mentioned above, was obtained from the VFWD. The research team attempted to contact every vendor. Of the 332, the researchers successfully contacted 224 of them (a 67% response rate). The actual number of free youth deer and turkey tags were recorded from the vendors that were successfully contacted. An estimate of the number of free tags issued by the nonresponding vendors was made, as explained below.

Included with the information on the vendor list was total hunting license sales numbers of the vendors. Using these data, the vendors were categorized into large (sales of more than 10,000 licenses), medium (from 9,999 down to 2,100), and small (below 2,100). The number of free youth tags each vendor issued was recorded, and a rate of free tags out of all tags was determined and averaged for large, medium, and small vendors. (Because the differences in the average numbers were statistically significant among the groups, the remaining nonresponding vendors were divided into the three categories before the average number of free tags was attributed to them.) These averages were then applied to the nonrespondents.

Combining actual reported results from those vendors that provided data with the estimates from the nonrespondents produced the total estimate of free youth deer and turkey tags issued.

RESULTS OF VENDOR SURVEY

- Using the survey of vendors, from a list provided by the VFWD, and accounting for nonresponse of some vendors, the research team estimates that 8,768 free youth deer tags and youth turkey tags were issued in 2006 (6,348 free youth deer tags, and 2,420 free youth turkey tags).

- The highest number of free tags issued by a vendor was 319 (this was a large-sized vendor). Among the medium-sized vendors, the highest number issued was 56, and from the small-sized vendors, the highest number issued was 27.

ABOUT RESPONSIVE MANAGEMENT

Responsive Management is a nationally recognized public opinion and attitude survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues. Its mission is to help natural resource and outdoor recreation agencies and organizations better understand and work with their constituents, customers, and the public.

Utilizing its in-house, full-service, computer-assisted telephone and mail survey center with 45 professional interviewers, Responsive Management has conducted more than 1,000 telephone surveys, mail surveys, personal interviews, and focus groups, as well as numerous marketing and communications plans, need assessments, and program evaluations on natural resource and outdoor recreation issues.

Clients include most of the federal and state natural resource, outdoor recreation, and environmental agencies, and most of the top conservation organizations. Responsive Management also collects attitude and opinion data for many of the nation's top universities, including the University of Southern California, Virginia Tech, Colorado State University, Auburn, Texas Tech, the University of California—Davis, Michigan State University, the University of Florida, North Carolina State University, Penn State, West Virginia University, and others.

Among the wide range of work Responsive Management has completed during the past 20 years are studies on how the general population values natural resources and outdoor recreation, and their opinions on and attitudes toward an array of natural resource-related issues. Responsive Management has conducted dozens of studies of selected groups of outdoor recreationists, including anglers, boaters, hunters, wildlife watchers, birdwatchers, park visitors, historic site visitors, hikers, and campers, as well as selected groups within the general population, such as landowners, farmers, urban and rural residents, women, senior citizens, children, Hispanics, Asians, and African-Americans. Responsive Management has conducted studies on environmental education, endangered species, waterfowl, wetlands, water quality, and the reintroduction of numerous species such as wolves, grizzly bears, the California condor, and the Florida panther.

Responsive Management has conducted research on numerous natural resource ballot initiatives and referenda and helped agencies and organizations find alternative funding and increase their memberships and donations. Responsive Management has conducted major agency and organizational program needs assessments and helped develop more effective programs based upon a solid foundation of fact. Responsive Management has developed Web sites for natural resource organizations, conducted training workshops on the human dimensions of natural resources, and presented numerous studies each year in presentations and as keynote speakers at major natural resource, outdoor recreation, conservation, and environmental conferences and meetings.

Responsive Management has conducted research on public attitudes toward natural resources and outdoor recreation in almost every state in the United States, as well as in Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Japan. Responsive Management routinely conducts surveys in Spanish and has also conducted surveys and focus groups in Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese.

Responsive Management's research has been featured in most of the nation's major media, including CNN, ESPN, *The Washington Times*, *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and on the front pages of *The Washington Post* and *USA Today*.

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