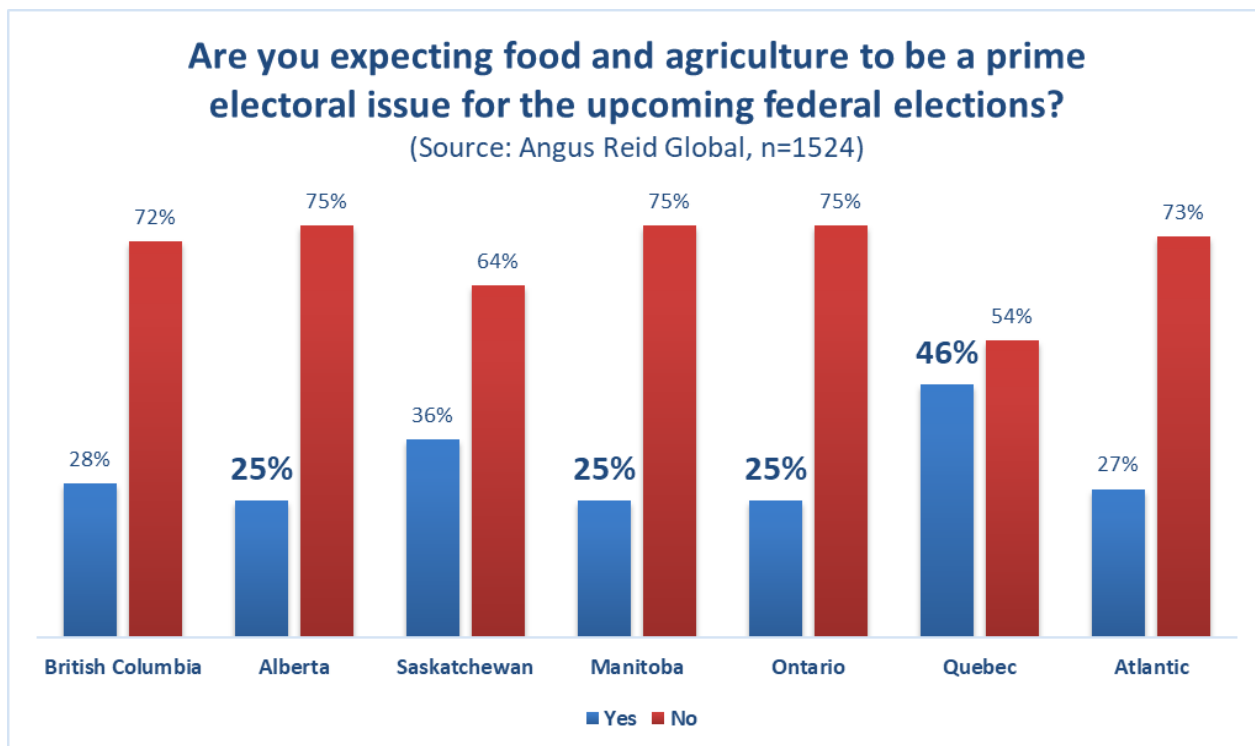


*“Our new survey shows Canadians care about food affordability and consider it as an important issue for this Federal election, but the country is extremely divided about global trades for the sector. The Conservatives are considered the best national stewards of the agrifood sector, followed by the Liberals and the Green Party. The People’s Party of Canada’s support for agrifood policy equals the New Democratic Party’s.”*

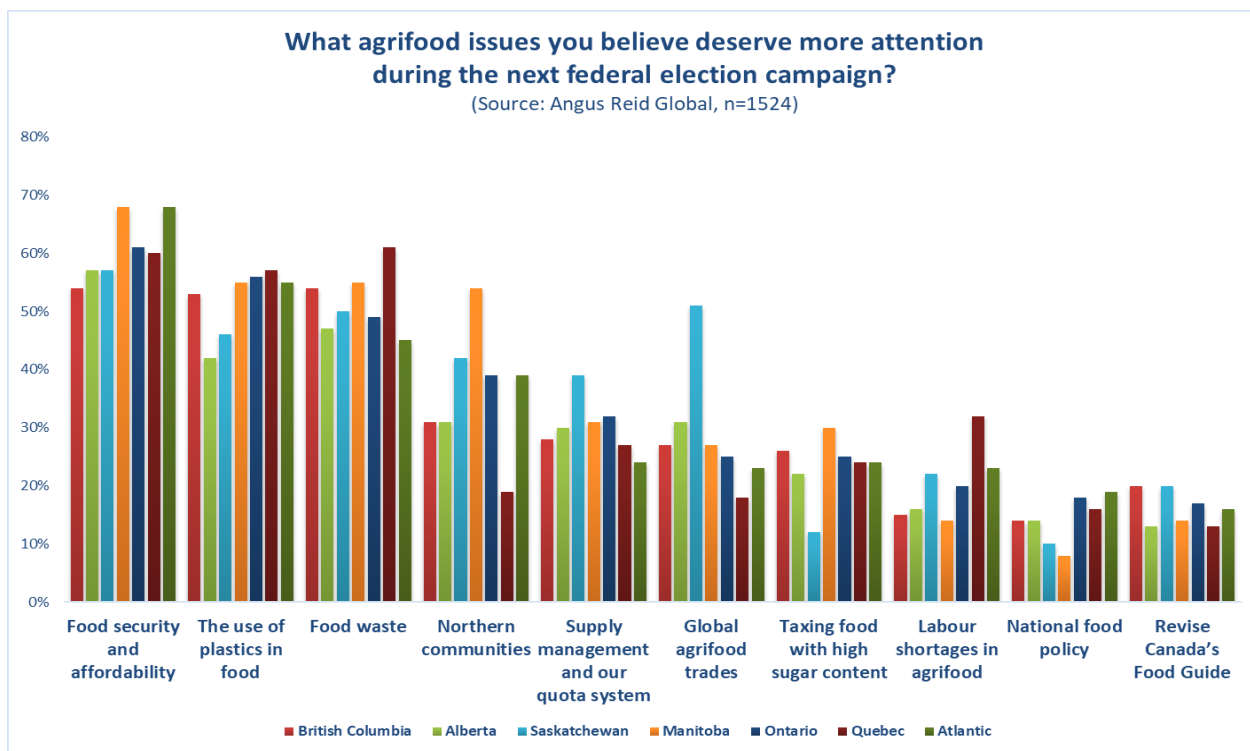
**New survey suggests Canadians consider food security as most important electoral issue; country divided on agrifood global trades.**

HALIFAX, NS. (September 17, 2019) - When it comes to food and agriculture, the **Liberal Government** over the last four years has given us plenty. We now have a more urban food guide, a food policy and a handful of new trade deals to help our agrifood sector grow. Some of the initial work on these initiatives preceded the current government, but, overall, we can safely say that the last four years have been interesting, but elections often suppress in-depth discussion about food and agriculture, as other priorities and crises arise. We rarely see anything come out of an intensive national campaign, as other priorities tend to garner more attention.

A recent survey conducted by **Angus Reid Global** on September 9, with the support of Dalhousie University’s **Agri-Food Analytics Lab**, suggests Canadians’ expectations are consistent with what we have seen with other elections in the past. Only 31% of Canadians believe food and agriculture will be a prime electoral issue for the upcoming federal election. **Alberta, Manitoba** and **Ontario** have the lowest level of optimism, at 25%, and **Quebec**, the highest, at 46%.



However, when asked about issues that deserve to be covered during the campaign, some regions stand out. Participants could choose more than one issue and less popular issues were dropped. Significantly, three out of five Canadians believe food security and affordability to be one of the most important issues for this election. **Manitoba** and the **Atlantic Region** have the most respondents with this view, at 68%. The use of plastics in food has clearly caught the attention of voters in recent months. The survey suggests that 54% of respondents believe the use of plastics in food to be an important electoral issue. All regions come in above 50% on this issue, except for **Alberta** and **Saskatchewan**.



Our survey suggests that food waste is the third most important agrifood issue for Canadians in the coming election, with 61% of **Quebecers** agreeing, compared with 45% in the **Atlantic Region**. Feeding Northern communities also ranked high, with 54% of **Manitobans** seeing it as an important issue for this fall's campaign, compared with 19% in **Quebec**.

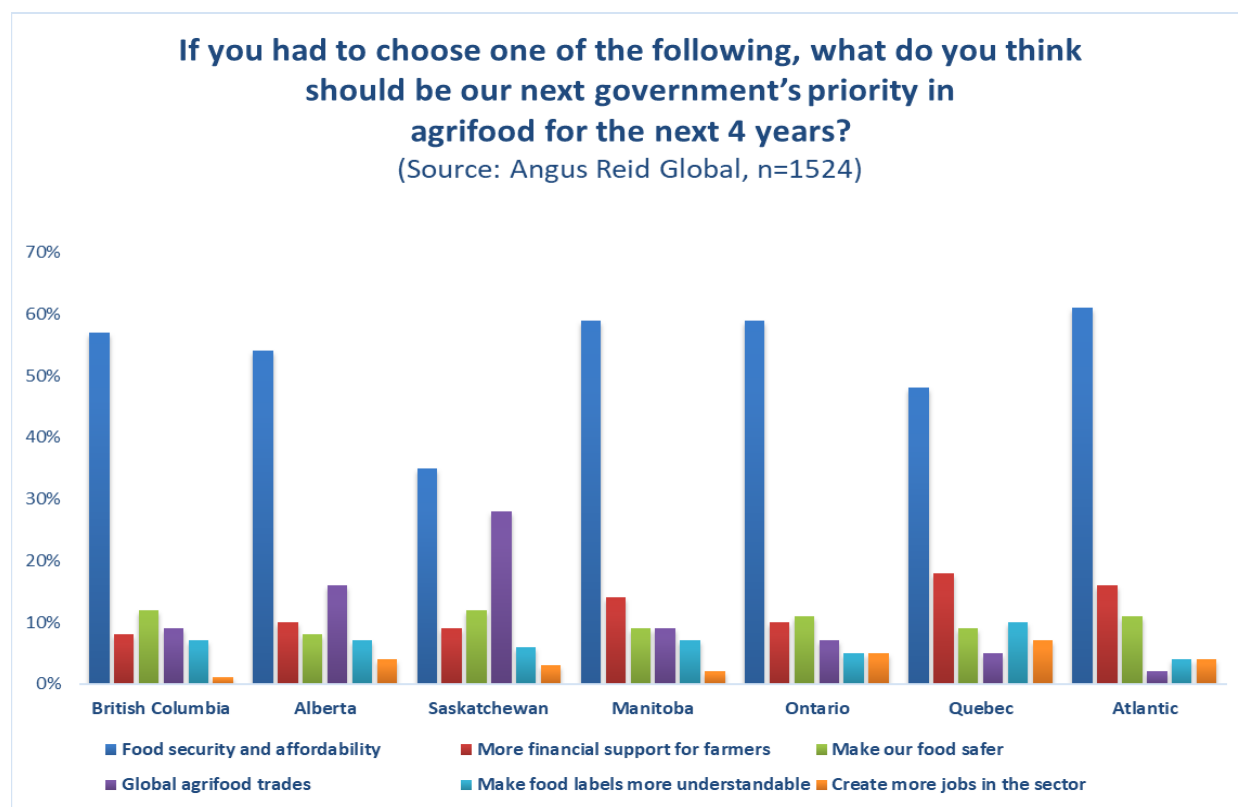
The country is clearly divided on agrifood trade policy. Supply management and our quota system, a protectionist policy that goes against global trades, is also an issue Canadians care about. Oddly, **Saskatchewan** ranked highest at 35%, even though, generally, supply management is not an important issue in the province. Where supply management is economically influential, 32% of **Ontarians** and 27% of **Quebecers** believe this to be an important issue. On the other side of the trade spectrum, however, respondents in **Saskatchewan** have trade on their minds with 51% believing global trades to be an important issue for this campaign, compared to only 19% in **Quebec**.

Taxing food with high sugar content comes up from time to time during elections around the world. While 30% of **Manitobans** see taxing food with high sugar content as an important electoral issue, only 12% do in **Saskatchewan**.

Labour shortages are a reality everywhere in the agrifood sector these days. A total of 32% of **Quebecers** see labour as a very important agrifood policy issue right now, followed by the **Atlantic Region** with 23%.

During their term, the Liberals offered Canadians a National Food Policy and a new food guide. Only 16% expect the next government to set a new course and revise the new food guide. For changes to the National Food Policy, approval rates are generally higher in the east of the country but don't exceed 19%. Both **British Columbia** and **Manitoba** have the highest rate of respondents wanting the new food guide to be revised, at 20%.

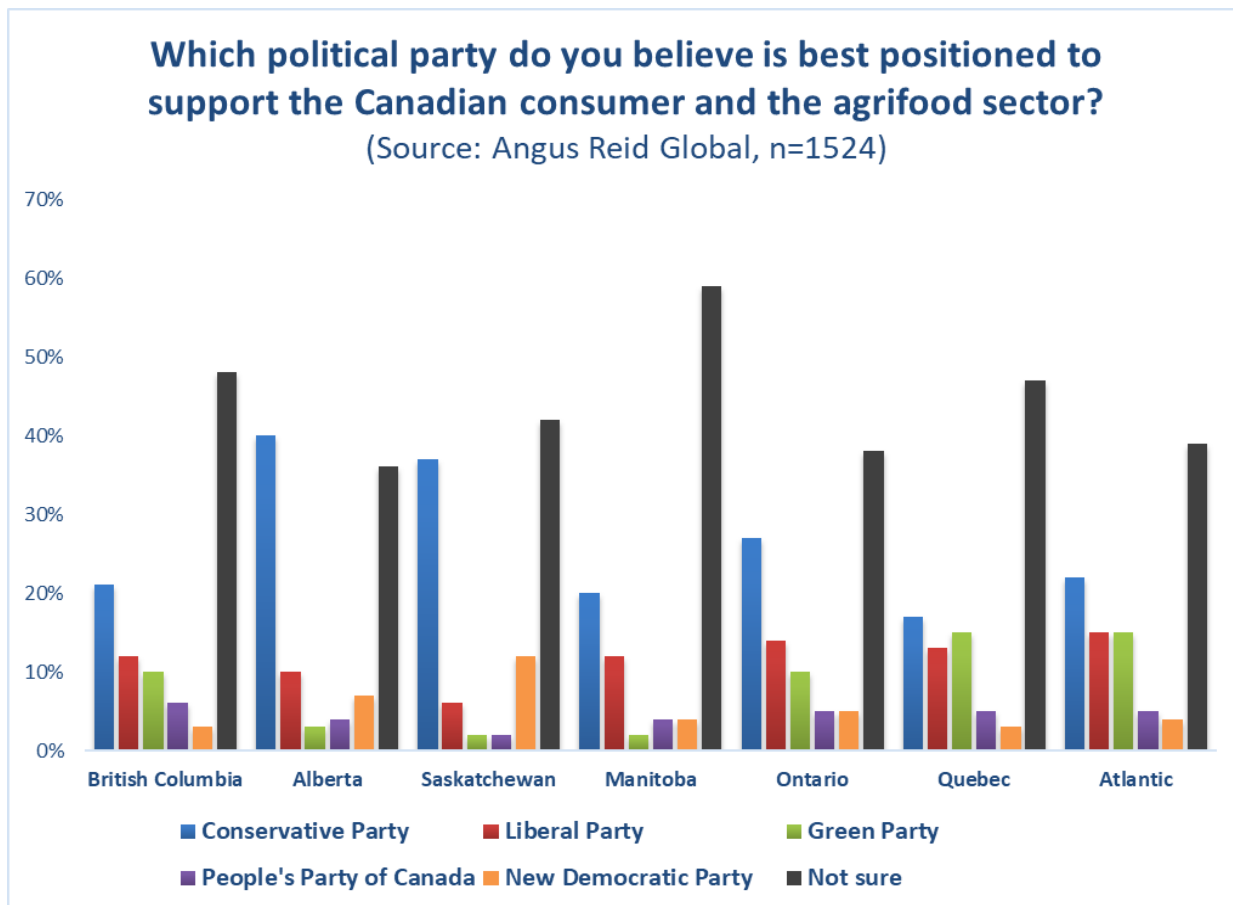
Looking ahead, Canadians were asked about priorities in agrifood for the next government. Participants could select only one priority. The most important issue for most Canadians remains food security and affordability, at 55%. Other issues garnered much less support.



Support for farmers ranked as the second most important issue, with the support of 12% of Canadians. **Quebec** is where most respondents see support for farmers as most significant, at 18%, followed by the **Atlantic Region** at 16%. Food safety is the third highest ranked issue for the next government, at 10%, receiving equal support in most regions. Global trades received the support of 28% of respondents in **Saskatchewan**. In the East, trades are not considered an important for the next government. About 5% of **Quebecers** see this as an important issue while in the **Atlantic**, only 2% do.

Finally, Canadians were asked which national party is best positioned to support the agrifood sector. Results were interesting. The **Conservatives** are seen as the best national stewards for the agrifood sector, followed by the **Liberals** and the **Green Party**. The Conservatives rank first in every region. The **Green Party** ranks second in **Quebec** and the **Atlantic** region. Interestingly, the **People's Party of Canada** ranks second in **Saskatchewan**. In fact, the **People's Party's** support for agrifood policy equals that of the **New**

**Democratic Party**, nationally. However, the number of respondents who are unsure is very high at 42% nationwide.



**Notes:** For this survey, the sample size was 1,524 from across the country, with a margin of error of 2.9%, 19 times out of 20. Other issues such as the use of pesticides in farming and urban agriculture were on the list but results were insignificant. Climate change was not added as an issue as it affects many aspects of the industry, directly or indirectly. The Bloc Québécois was not included in the survey because it doesn't nominate any candidates outside one province, and it will not likely have a nation-wide platform. Parties included in the survey are those with candidates in several provinces with a chance to win at least one seat.

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