



UNITED STATES

AG
Careers.com

Agribusiness Workforce Preparations for COVID-19

Survey research results on preparations and actions taken by the agriculture industry during the COVID-19 pandemic



AgCareers.com's Response

Resources Library

AgCareers.com is committed to providing support to agricultural employers during the pandemic. For more information, view the [AgCareers.com COVID-19 Resource Page](#).

Temporary & Seasonal Job Postings

AgCareers.com realizes that a lack of temporary labor creates great challenges. To bridge this gap, AgCareers.com is offering [FREE temporary and seasonal job postings](#) during the pandemic.

On-Demand Webinars

Organizations can help their employees by encouraging continued online learning at their convenience. AgCareers.com is offering [on-demand webinars for FREE](#) during this time. Topics vary from Handling Difficult Conversations, to Building High Trust Teams, and many more.

For media inquiries contact Erika Osmundson, Director of Marketing & Communications, erika.osmundson@agcareers.com; 800.929.8975 x6000.

About the Survey

The COVID-19 situation is rapidly changing. AgCareers.com continues to keep a pulse on employers' thoughts about recruitment and other key employment issues.

To identify trends during the pandemic, AgCareers.com conducted two surveys of agricultural employers. Additional surveys will be conducted to continue to understand the impact of COVID-19.

131 US agricultural organizations participated in the first survey, and 110 in the second survey.

Employer Survey:

Survey 1: March 11 – March 19, 2020

Survey 2: March 25 – April 1, 2020

AgCareers.com also surveyed employees and job seekers about COVID-19's impact on their employment. More than 400 participated in the first survey, and 255 in the second.

Job Seeker/Employee Survey:

Survey 1: March 16 – March 26

Survey 2: March 29 – April 5

The following outlines survey highlights to support the agricultural industry.



Communication

Employer:

Organizations have taken measures to communicate and inform employees about COVID-19.



Employee:

Employees rated their employer, on training and education provided in preparation of the outbreak, better than average at 53%. This was slightly up from the first survey (48%).

Over 31% of employees rated their employer as below average for training and education provided. However, there were fewer rated below than in the first survey (40%).

Has your organization taken measures to communicate and inform employees about COVID-19 and how employees can best protect themselves/minimize exposure?

Survey 1: 87% Yes



Survey 2: 99% Yes





Planning & Preparation

Employer:

An increasing percentage of organizations have a business continuity plan in place to minimize risks to the business (87%). This was an improvement from the first survey where 59% said a continuity plan was in place.

Employee:

Employees rated their employer's preparedness to deal with COVID-19; 52% of employees rated their employer as better than average. Up slightly from the first survey.

Those that felt their employer was below average decreased from the first survey (33%) to the second (28%).

Comparing employees' concerns for their employer vs. concern for their own employment; employees are still more worried that their employer will suffer, than their personal employment status.



Remote Work

Employer:

86% of employers allowed some or all employees to work from home during the COVID-19 crisis. An increasing number of employers indicated all employees were now able to work from home.

Has your organization accommodated work from home/remote working as recommended by health officials?

	Survey 1	Survey 2
Yes, for all employees	11.45%	16.36%
Yes, for some employees, but not all	72.52%	70.00%
No, employees are unable to work remotely	16.03%	13.64%

Participants in both surveys agreed that the least likely to work remotely were operations roles (warehouse/manufacturing) followed by production roles (barn/field workers).





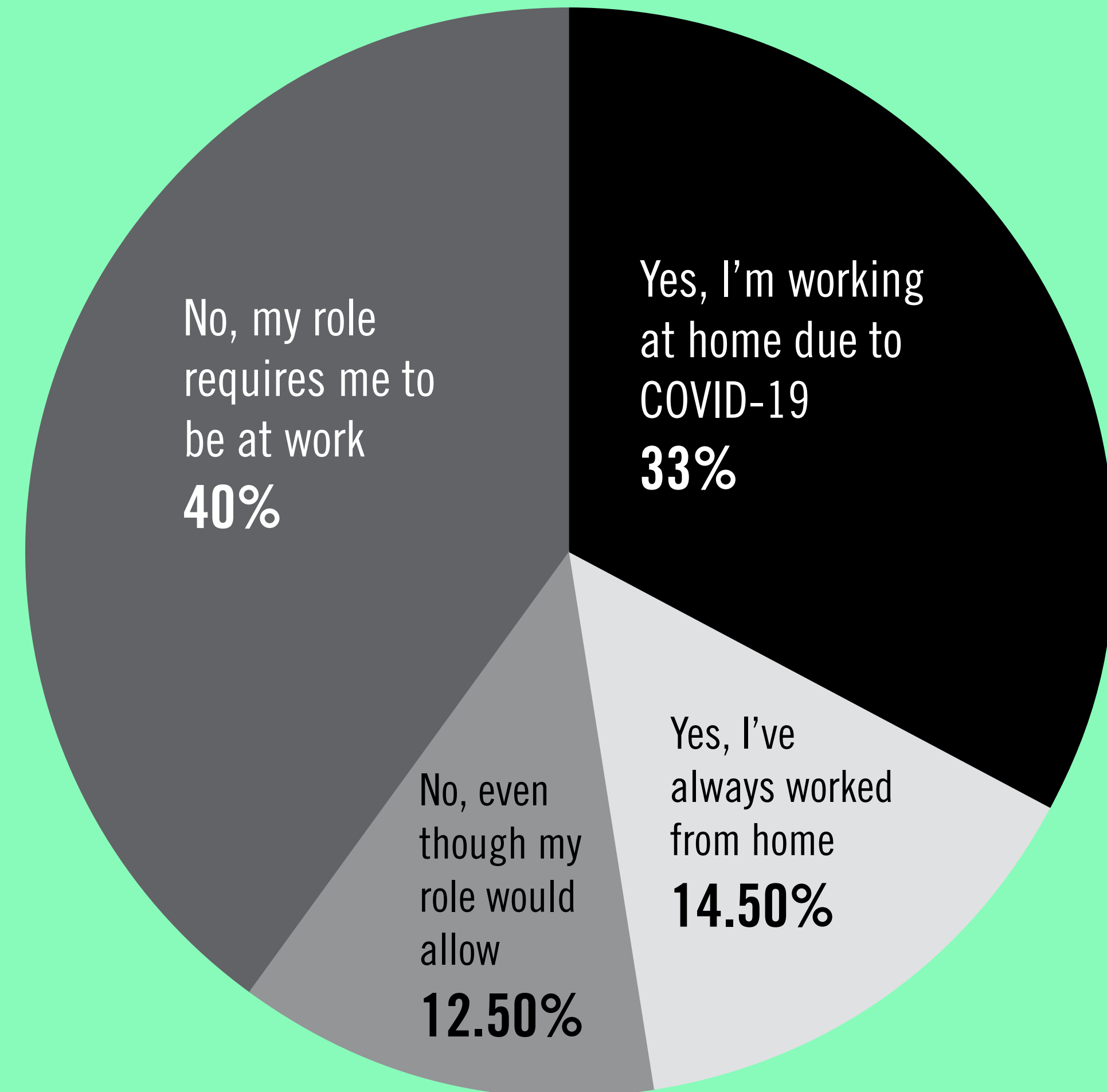
Remote Work *continued*

Employee:

One-third of US employees report they are now working from home because of COVID-19. Forty percent said their roles require them to be at work.



Are you currently working from home because of COVID-19?





Coverage

Employer:

Employers' dominant coverage plan for sick or absent employees is now work rotation – minimize exposure among staff with on and off schedules. More than half of employers are also using role shifts – bringing employees from other functional areas in to temporarily cover. This was a noted area of change in planning from survey 1 to survey 2.

How does your organization plan to provide coverage for sick or absent employees?

- Survey 1:
1. Ask 'well' employees to cover (with or without overtime pay)
 2. Work rotation - minimize exposure amongst staff with on & off schedules
 3. Role shifts - bring employees from other functional areas in to temporarily cover
- Survey 2:
1. Work rotation - minimize exposure amongst staff with on & off schedules
 2. Role shifts - bring employees from other functional areas in to temporarily cover
 3. Ask 'well' employees to cover (with or without overtime pay)



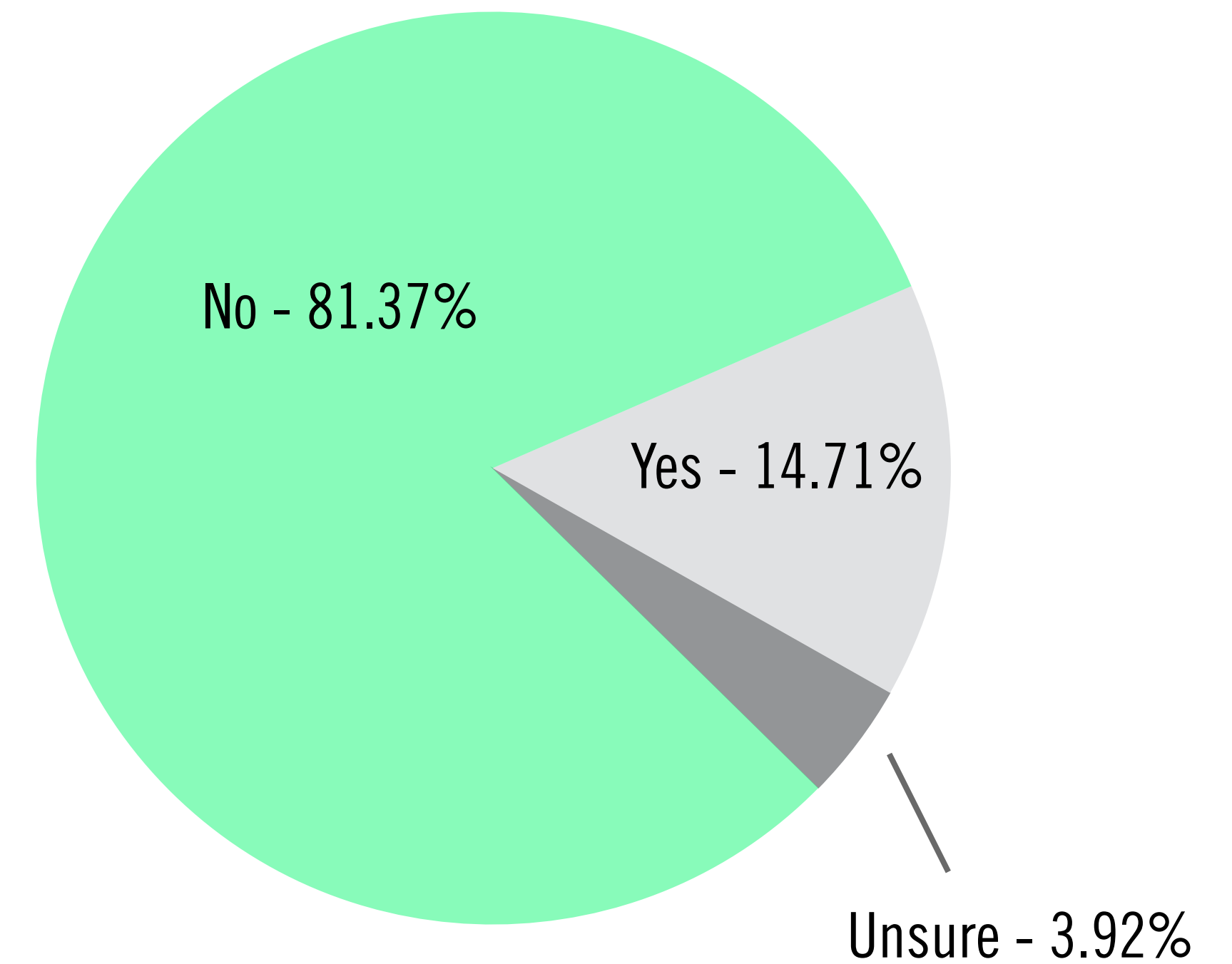
Employment

Employer:

So far, most ag employers have NOT taken action to manage employment numbers within their organization (layoffs, furlough, reduction in force, etc.).

For those that have acted, furloughs (reduction of hours/days without pay) was the most frequent action, followed by reduction in staff of less than 5%.

Have you taken any action currently to manage employment within your organization thus far (layoffs, furlough, reduction in force, etc.)?





Employment *continued*



Employee:

We asked employees if COVID-19 changed their employment status. Positively, 75% said there's been no change.

The most common change was a reduction in work hours, noted as 8.5% in our first survey, and 10% in our second survey.

No change at all	74.87%
Reduction in hours	10.05%
Temporarily laid off	5.03%
Indefinitely laid off	2.01%
Dismissed from employment	1.01%
Other (please specify)	7.04%



Internships



Employer:

More than half (56%) of organizations are expecting to have intern(s) in 2020.

Forty-five percent of employers are still evaluating their plans. More than one-third are moving forward as planned.

We are still evaluating what our plan will be	45.45%
Nothing, we are planning to proceed as planned	34.55%
Reducing the number of total interns/summer students	9.09%
Keeping interns on, but doing so remotely	5.45%
Discontinuing program completely & informing students	3.64%
Discontinuing program, but offering student(s) opportunity for next summer	1.82%
Discontinuing program but still supporting student(s) with financial commitment	0.00%



Hiring

Employer:

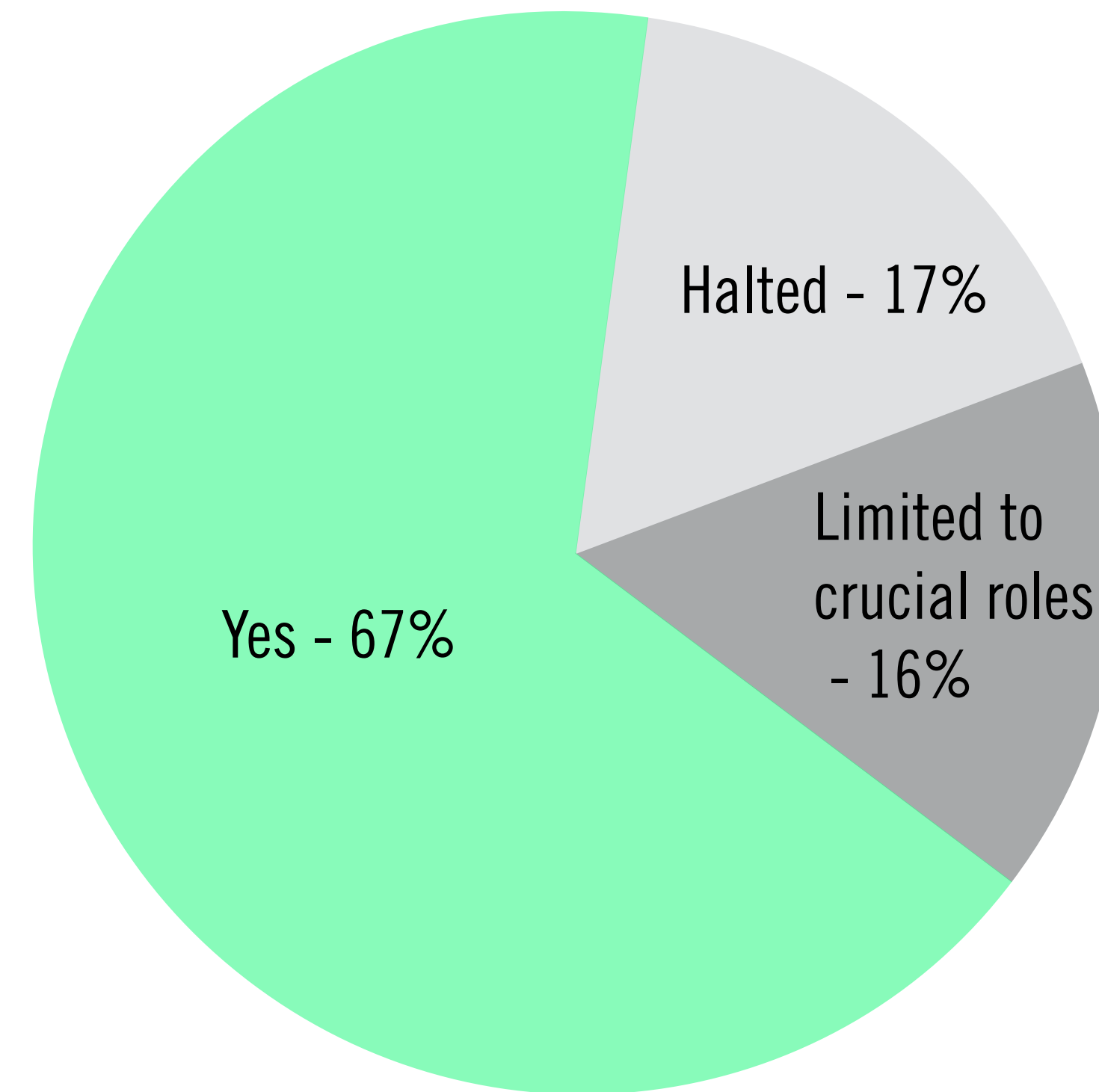
The majority of employers are still continuing recruitment and hiring efforts despite COVID-19.

More employers are increasing recruitment to cover potential employee shortages due to illness/absenteeism.

An increased number of organizations are also limiting hiring to crucial roles.

Are you continuing your recruitment and hiring as projected despite COVID-19?

Survey 2:





Hiring *continued*

Employee:

We asked job seekers and employees how the pandemic changed their employment mindset. In both surveys, 46% were exploring their options.

In survey two, nearly 30% were actively searching before COVID-19 and are still looking.

COVID-19 has led to an increase in potential candidates, as nearly 20% weren't looking, but are searching now. Thirteen percent said they weren't searching before but are casually looking now to understand their options. Over 5% weren't looking prior to COVID-19 but are aggressively searching now to manage risk.

I wasn't actively or casually looking & still am not	41.13%
I was actively looking for a new job & still am	28.14%
I wasn't looking but am casually looking now to understand my options	12.99%
I was actively or casually looking but am not now	12.55%
I wasn't looking but I am now aggressively searching to manage risk	5.19%



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Connect with us for COVID-19 resources:
<https://www.agcareers.com/covid19usa>

For media inquiries contact
Erika Osmundson,
Director of Marketing & Communications
erika.osmundson@agcareers.com
800.929.8975 x6000

AG
Careers.com

1-800-929-8975

agcareers@agcareers.com

