

The Survey of Rural Decision Makers is a biennial survey of New Zealand’s primary sector conducted by Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research since 2013. In 2023, there were ~5,200 respondents representing commercial and lifestyle farms, forests, and growing operations from Cape Reinga to Rakiura.

KEY RESULTS SHEET FIVE:

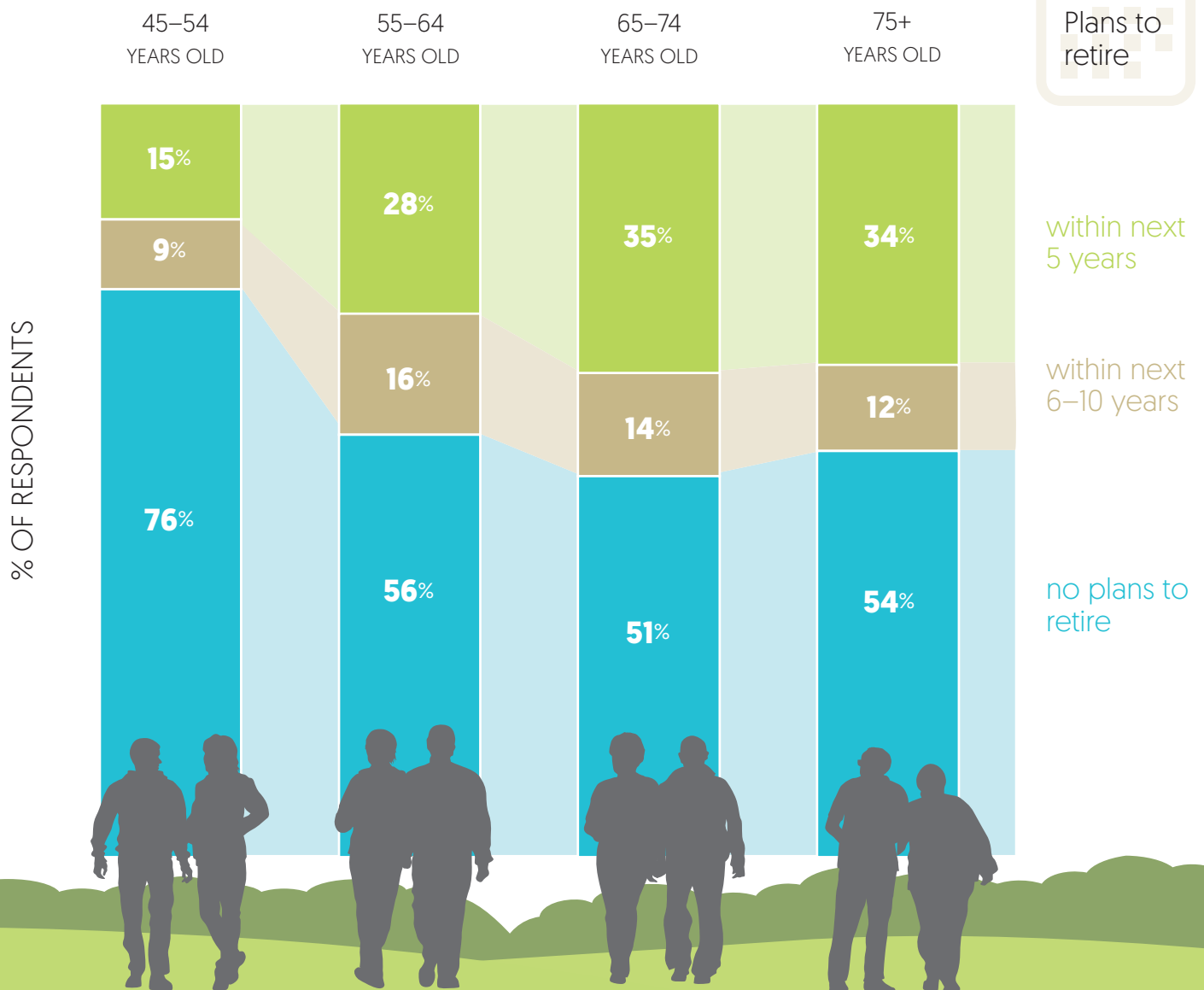
# Future intentions

We asked farmers, foresters, and growers about their retirement plans – when did they plan to downsize or stop managing their business, and what would they do with their land at that time?

Nearly half (45%) the respondents answering this question were aged 65 years or over, and a third were in the decade approaching retirement age (55–64 years).

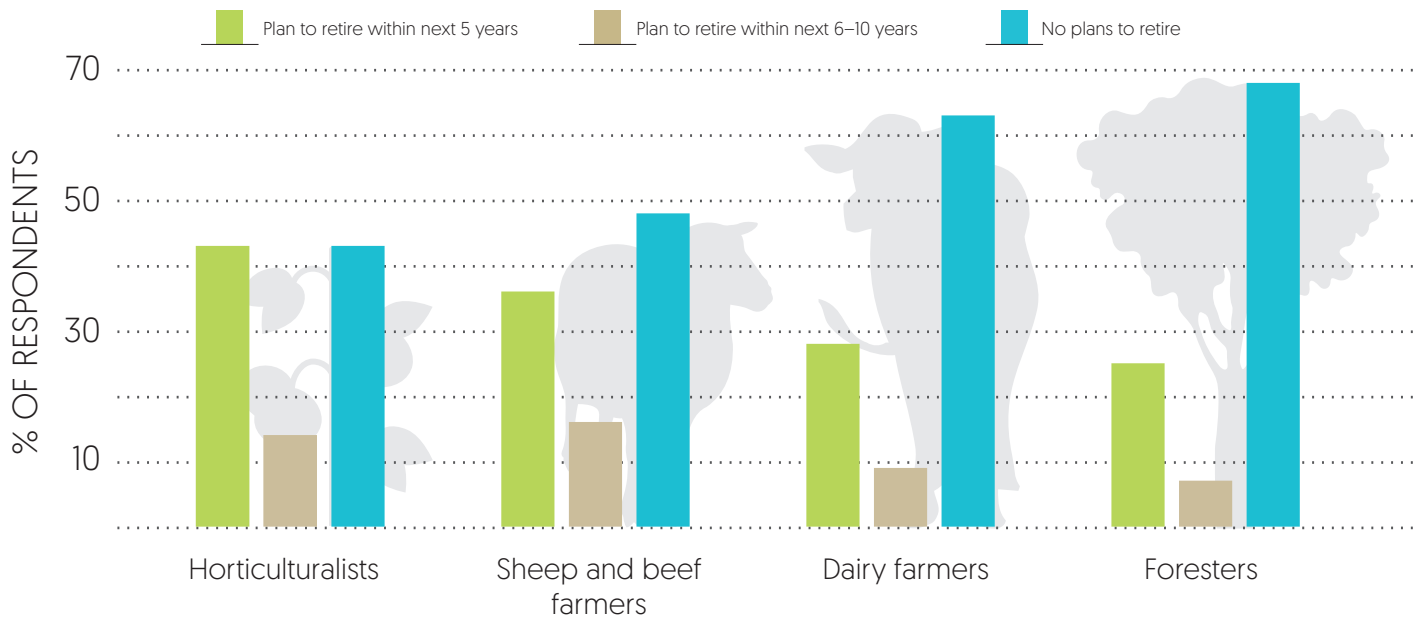
## RETIREMENT AGE

While about 1 in 3 farmers, foresters, and growers aged 65+ years plan to retire within 5 years, half of them have no intention of retiring within the next 10 years.



## RETIREMENT PLANS DIFFER ACROSS SECTORS IN THE 65+ AGE GROUP

In the age group of 65+ years, horticulturalists and sheep and beef farmers plan to retire earlier than dairy farmers and foresters. Most dairy farmers and foresters have no plans to retire.



## PLANS FOR LAND AFTER RETIREMENT

Most farmers and growers aged 65+ years plan to sell their land, but about one third of respondents are unsure what they will do. Respondents were asked to tick all that apply.

If they plan to leave their land to a successor, one third still have not identified who their successor is.



On retirement what will you do with your land?

NO 36% YES 64%



The Survey of Rural Decision Makers is designed to build a better picture of decision-making at the farm level, tackling topics that cannot be easily addressed in official statistics or directly by organisations. It is a valuable resource for policy makers, regional councils, industry groups and businesses. For further information, please contact: Pike Stahlmann-Brown: [brownp@landcareresearch.co.nz](mailto:brownp@landcareresearch.co.nz)

Further results will be added to our website as they become available: [www.landcareresearch.co.nz/srdm-2023](http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/srdm-2023)