

Land Conservation Survey

Lebanon, Connecticut

Conducted by:



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Lebanon’s farming history and culture	3
Tax exemptions.....	5
Future bond issues.....	6
Methodology.....	8
Appendix A: Annotated Questionnaire.....	9
Appendix B: Open-ended responses.....	23

Executive Summary

The town of Lebanon, Connecticut commissioned the Center for Survey Research and Analysis (CSRA) to conduct a telephone survey of registered voters in the town to gather opinions about land usage and potential referendums. The survey of 400 registered voters was conducted from November 18 to November 22, 2008. This section summarizes the key findings of the survey.

Key Findings

Lebanon residents value the town's farming history and heritage. More than eight in ten (86%) agree that Lebanon is one of the largest agricultural communities in Connecticut. When asked about their preferred focus of the town's planning efforts over the next ten years, more than seven in ten (71%) say farmland and open space preservation. Residents overwhelmingly believe that the town of Lebanon should strive to preserve farming culture. Nearly all (96%) agree that having working farms makes Lebanon a better place to live, and a similar number (93%) agree that preserving farmland and open space in Lebanon is important. More than three-quarters (77%) believe that the town should fund preservation efforts. Eighty-five percent are very or somewhat satisfied with the town's preservation efforts.

Almost all residents (98%) have heard of the Lebanon Farmer's Market, and of those, more than seven in ten (71%) have visited the market. Among residents who have not visited the market, more than half (53%) say that the market is at an inconvenient time or location.

Residents feel that the town should consider tax exemptions for agriculture land usage. Eighty-four percent favor partially exempting taxation on farm buildings to encourage farming. Nine in ten (90%) of those would favor this initiative, even if it cost them up to \$15 more annually in property taxes. More than eight in ten (83%) favor partially exempting taxes for certain types of farmland, such as dairy and orchards, and 86% of those would still favor the initiative if it incurred an increase of up to \$25 in their annual property taxes.

Opinions are somewhat mixed about potential bond referendums. More than two-thirds (70%) would favor a two-million dollar, 20-year bond referendum to support land preservation with a cost of up to \$50 in additional annual property taxes. Fewer residents (59%) would favor a four-million dollar, 20-year bond that could cost up to \$100 in additional property taxes. When asked about potential bond referendums that include recreational field construction, as well as land preservation, 62% say they would favor a two-million dollar, 20-year bond referendum (with up to \$50 in additional annual property taxes). Much fewer (41%) would favor a four-million dollar bond for both land preservation and field construction, which could incur up to \$100 more in annual property taxes.

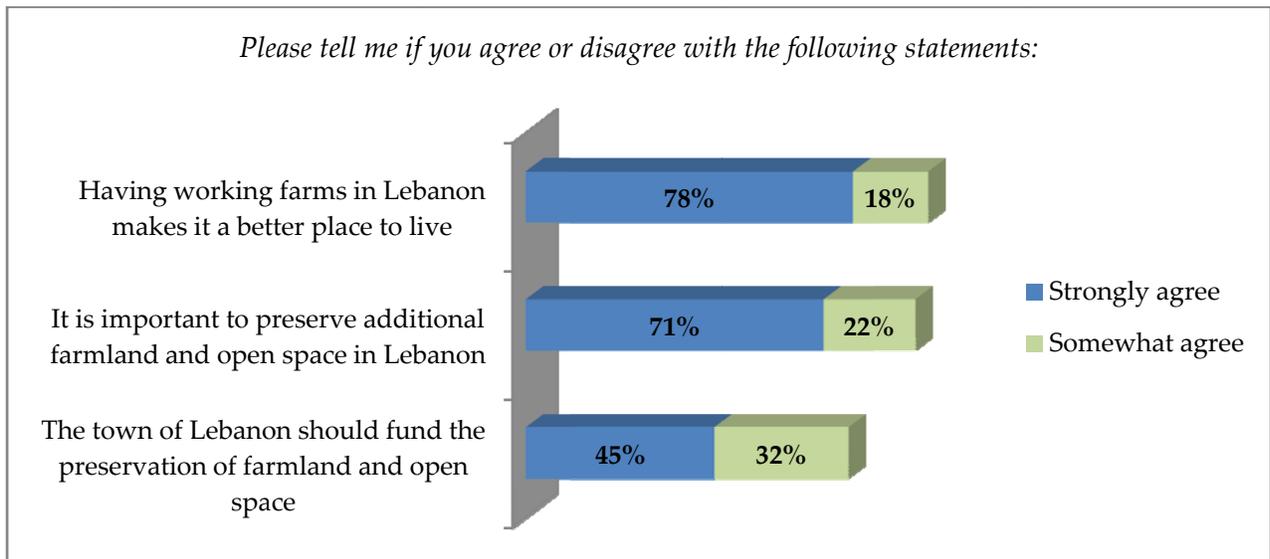
Lebanon's farming history and culture

Residents value the farming history of the town of Lebanon and want to see it preserved.

Residents of Lebanon overwhelmingly believe that Lebanon's heritage as a farming community is important to the town character. Eighty-six percent agree that Lebanon is one of the largest agricultural communities in Connecticut. Almost all residents agree (78%, strongly; 18% somewhat) that working farms make Lebanon a better place to live.

When asked how the town should focus its planning efforts over the next ten years, more than seven in ten (71%) say farmland and open space preservation. Nearly three-quarters (72%) favor the town establishing architectural guidelines for the Town Green and properties adjacent to it. While eighty-five percent of residents are satisfied with the town's efforts to preserve farmlands, there may be room for improvement as less than a third are very satisfied, while more than half (53%) are only somewhat satisfied.

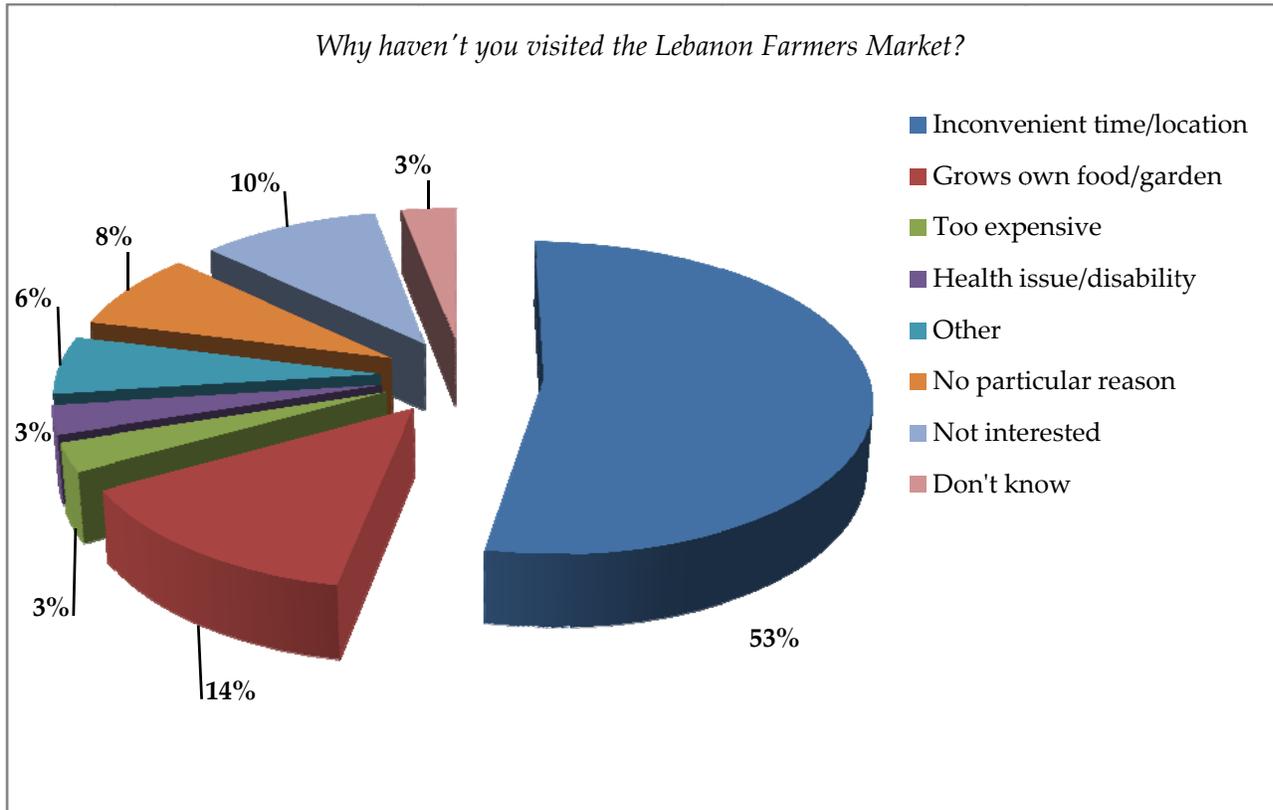
More than seven in ten (71%) strongly agree that it is important to preserve additional farmland and open space in the town, and another 22% somewhat agree. When asked about funding this initiative, almost half (45%) strongly agree that that the town should fund farmland and open space preservation and nearly a third (32%) somewhat agree.



Nearly four in ten (37%) voice concerns about farming and/or agriculture in the town of Lebanon. Of those who expressed concern, 27% worry about the decreasing farmlands in Lebanon, 6% worry about neighboring farms' ability to stay financially solvent, and 5% worry about conserving existing farmlands. Another quarter (25%) has concerns about zoning, planning, and regulation, and 14% worry about chemical runoff and pollution

The farmer's market

Nearly all residents (98%) have heard of the Saturday morning Lebanon Farmer's Market. More than seven in ten (71%) have visited the market. Of those who have never visited the market, more than half (53%) cite the market's inconvenient time or location of the market. Another 14% grow food in their own garden, and do not feel the need to visit the market.

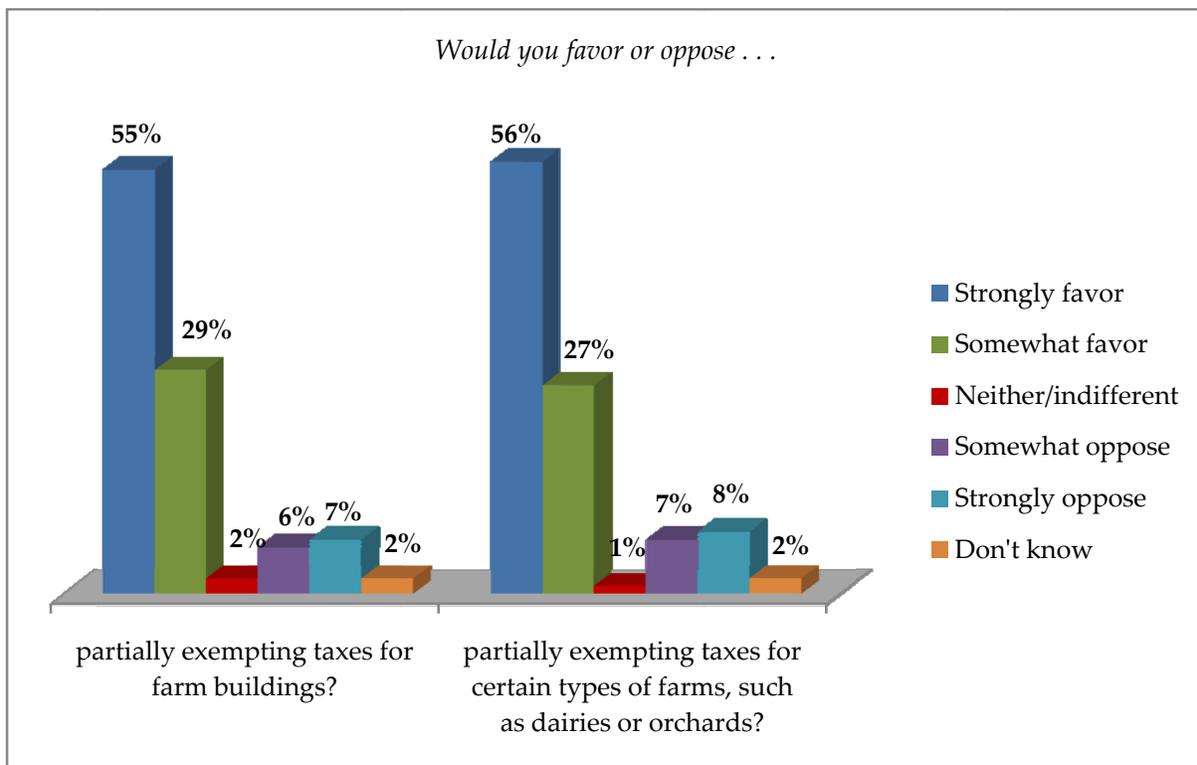


Tax exemptions

Residents overwhelmingly favor tax exemptions for farmland and agriculture use of land in Lebanon, even with potential tax increases in the future.

Residents agree that the town should consider tax exemptions for farmland similar to those offered by the state of Connecticut. Eight in ten residents favor an initiative to partially exempt taxes on farm buildings to encourage farming (55% strongly favor; 29% somewhat favor). Residents who favor the measure were asked if they would still favor it if it cost them an additional \$15 in annual property taxes. Of those asked, nine in ten favor the measure (61% strongly; 29% somewhat). Only 9% oppose the measure in light of the tax increase.

Residents were also asked if they favor or oppose partially exempting taxes for certain types of farmland, such as dairies and orchards. A similar number of residents favor this initiative— with 56% strongly favoring these exemptions, and another 27% somewhat favoring them. Only 15% oppose these tax exemptions (8% strongly, 7% somewhat). Of those who favor the measure, more than half (52%) strongly favor the initiative in light of a potential \$25 annual property tax increase, and another 34% still somewhat favor the initiative. Only 13% oppose the measure (7% strongly, 6% somewhat) in light of a potential tax increase.



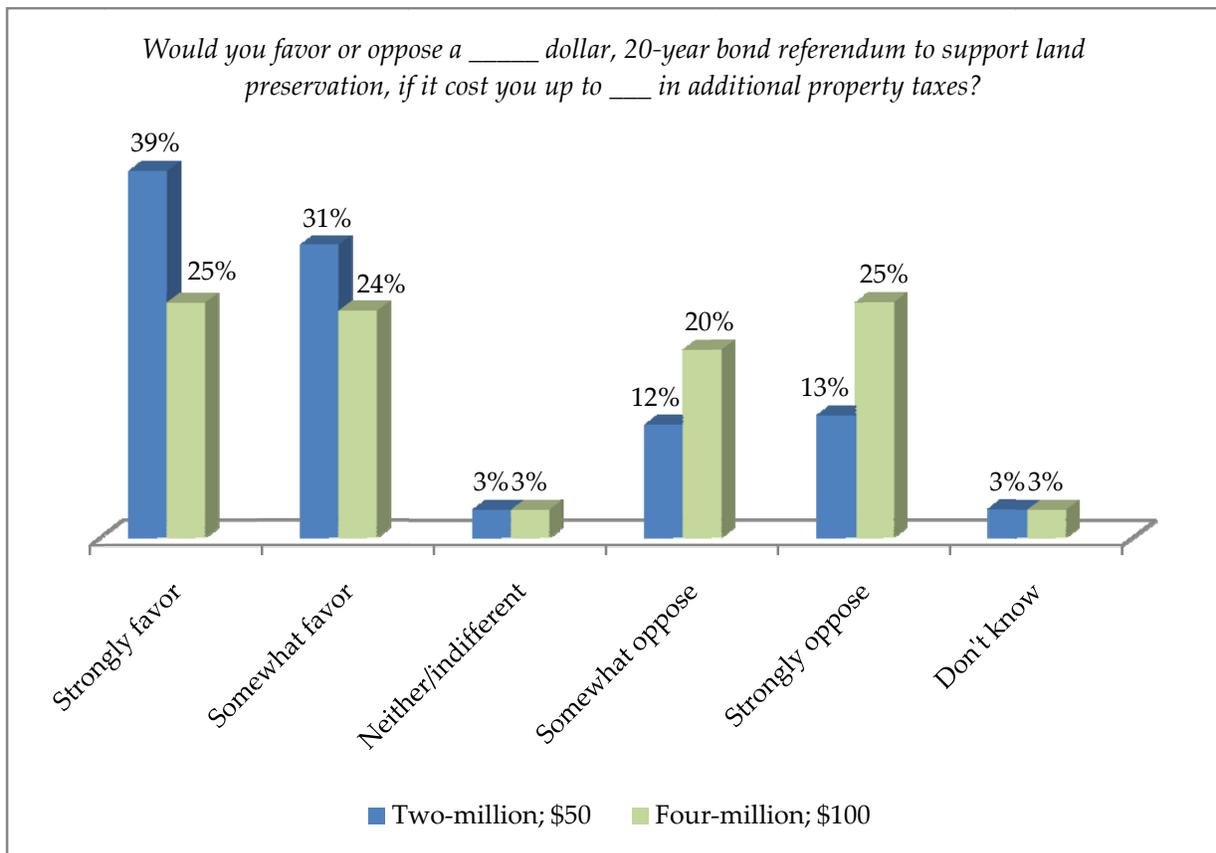
Future bond issues

Lebanon residents favor bond referendums to support land preservation, but are somewhat less inclined to support bond referendums if they also fund recreational fields.

As Lebanon residents value the town's farm heritage, most would support bond referenda that would help preserve farmlands and open space. When asked if they would favor or oppose a two-million dollar, 20-year bond referendum (at a cost of up to an additional \$50 in annual property taxes), seven in ten say they would favor the measure (39%, strongly; 31%, somewhat).

Respondents who opposed the measure (25%) were asked if they would support a measure that could incur up to an additional \$25 on their annual property tax bill. Only 21% of these opponents would support the referendum under those circumstances. Of those who maintained their opposition to the measure at either cost, the most common reason for objection is that taxes should decrease, rather than increase.

Support for a four-million dollar, 20-year bond that could incur up to an additional \$100 in property taxes was lower. Less than half (49%) would support it (25% strongly, 24% somewhat), while nearly as many (45%) would oppose it (25% strongly, 20% somewhat).

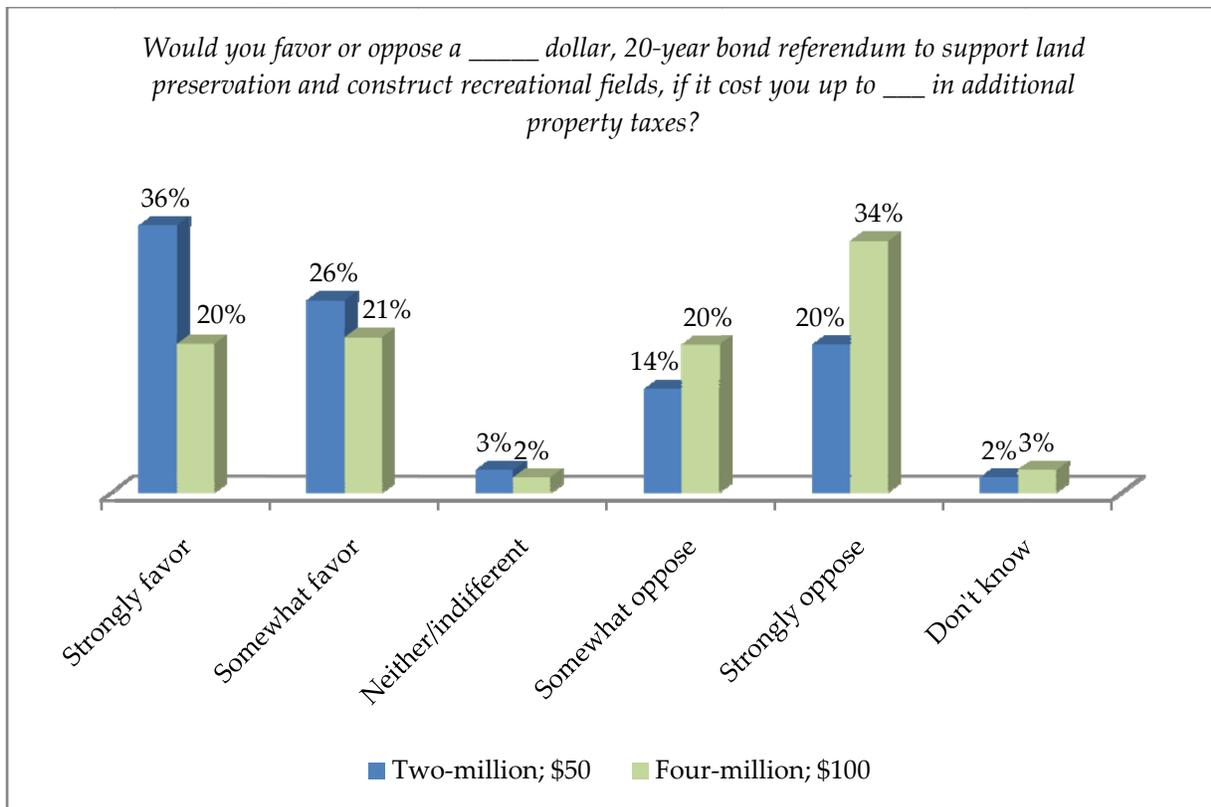


Recreational fields

Residents were asked about the same potential referenda, with the caveat that the money would be used to construct recreational fields (on property already owned by the town) in addition to land preservation. Support for these bond measures was more tepid than those that did not involve recreational field construction.

Sixty-two percent would support a two-million dollar, 20-year bond referendum (36% strongly, 26% somewhat) that allocated funds for both recreational fields and land preservation, while about a third (34%) would oppose the measure. Twenty percent of residents strongly oppose this measure (compared to only 13% who opposed the same measure without the provisions for recreational fields), and 14% somewhat oppose it. Only 14% of residents who oppose the measure change their minds when their potential annual property tax increase is reduced from \$50 to \$25. Of those who would not support the referendum at either cost, the most commonly cited reason (28%) is that existing recreational fields are sufficient, while another 27% object to further tax increases.

Just over four in ten (41%) support a 4-million dollar, 20-year bond referendum (at a cost of an additional \$100 annually) to construct recreational fields as well as fund land preservation, of which 20% strongly support it and 21% somewhat support it. More than half (54%) oppose the measure (34% strongly, 20% somewhat)



Methodology

The town of Lebanon, Connecticut commissioned the Center for Survey Research and Analysis (CSRA) at the University of Connecticut to conduct a telephone survey of registered voters in the town of Lebanon, to gather opinions about land usage and potential referendums. The telephone questionnaire was jointly developed by the town planner's office and CSRA. Findings are based on a total of 400 completed interviews with registered voters. The interviews were conducted between November 18 and November 22, 2008 by trained CSRA telephone interviewers.

This survey has a margin of error at the 95% confidence level of +/- 4.9 with a finite population. This means there is less than a one in twenty chance that the results of a similar survey of this size would differ by more than 4.9 percentage points in either direction from the results which would be obtained if all registered voters were interviewed. The margin of error for other sub-groups can vary.

Appendix A: Annotated Questionnaire

Q1. Just to confirm, are you a resident of Lebanon, CT?

Yes	100%
No	--
Count	(400)

Q2. Are you currently registered to vote in Lebanon?

Yes	99%
No	1%
Don't know	--
Refused	--
Count	(400)

Q3. What do you think is the MOST important issue facing the town of Lebanon today

School/Education issues	21%
High taxes	17%
Land preservation/open space	16%
Managing growth and development	12%
Economic development	8%
Budget Issues	6%
Preserving town character	3%
Government	2%
Municipal services	2%
The economy	2%
Zoning	2%
Energy prices	1%
Transportation/Road Maintenance	1%
Health care	0%
Other	1%
Don't Know	8%
Refused	--
Count	(400)

Q4. Please tell me if you think the following statement is true or false: Lebanon is one of the largest agricultural communities in Connecticut.

True	86%
False	11%
Don't Know	4%
Refused	--
Count	(400)

Q5. Are you aware of the Farmers' Market?

Yes	98%
No	2%
Don't know	--
Refused	--
Count	(400)

IQ5. The town of Lebanon runs a weekly farmer's market where local farmers can sell directly to residents. This market runs every Saturday morning, June through October at Town Hall.

Q5A. Have you visited the market?

Yes	71%
No	29%
Don't know	--
Refused	--
Count	(393)

Q5B. Why haven't you visited the Lebanon's Farmers' Market?

-Asked of those who answered "no" to Q5A. See appendix B for full results.

Not convenient location/time	53%
Not interested	10%
Grows own food/garden	14%
Too expensive	3%
Health issue/disability	3%
Other	6%
No particular reason	8%
Don't Know	3%
Refused	--
Count	(115)

IQ6. The Town of Lebanon has no local historic district, which means that all future building construction is subject only to current zoning and building guidelines.

Q6. Would you favor or oppose the town establishing architectural guidelines for the Town Green and those properties that are adjacent to it

Strongly favor	47%
Somewhat favor	25%
Somewhat oppose	10%
Strongly oppose	14%
Neither/Indifferent	2%
Don't Know	2%
Refused	--
Count	(400)

Q7. Over the next 10 years, which of the following should be the focus of Lebanon's planning efforts?

Farmland and open space preservation	71%
Commercial land development	17%
Industrial land development	7%
New residential development	2%
Don't Know	3%
Refused	--
Count	(400)

IQ8. A recent study determined that the number of Lebanon households (3,000) could double in the next hundred years. The study also determined that for every dollar collected in residential property taxes, \$1.12 was spent on town services, whereas farmland or open space cost the town only \$0.17 in municipal services for every tax dollar collected.

Q8. Knowing this information, do you still think your previous answer (Q7) should be the focus of Lebanon's planning efforts over the next ten years?

Yes	91%
No	4%
Don't Know	5%
Refused	0%
Count	(400)

Q8A. Which of the following do you now think should be the focus of Lebanon's planning efforts?

-Asked of those who answered "no" to Q8

Farmland and open space preservation	41%
New residential development	24%
Commercial land development	18%
Industrial land development	12%
Don't Know	6%
Refused	--
Count	(17)

Q9. Do you have any concerns relative to farming or agriculture in Lebanon?

Yes	37%
No	64%
Don't know	--
Refused	--
Count	(400)

Q9A. What are those concerns?

-Asked of those who answered "yes" to Q9. See appendix B for full results.

Farmlands decreasing	27%
Zoning, planning and regulation	25%
Chemical runoff/pollution	14%
Concerned about odors/smells	9%
Financial solvency of local farms	7%
Conservation of farmland	6%
Small-scale farms suffer while large-scale farms benefit	5%
Tax issues	3%
The wrong crops are being cultivated	3%
Organic farms should be the future	1%
Farm life is not popular	1%
Count	(146)

IQ10. I am now going to read you a list of statements. Please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following.

Q10A. It is important to preserve additional farmland and open space in Lebanon

Strongly agree	71%
Somewhat agree	22%
Somewhat disagree	4%
Strongly disagree	3%
Don't Know	1%
Refused	0%
Count	(400)

Q10B. Having working farms in Lebanon makes it a better place to live

Strongly agree	78%
Somewhat agree	18%
Somewhat disagree	2%
Strongly disagree	1%
Don't Know	1%
Refused	--
Count	(400)

Q10C. The town of Lebanon should fund the preservation of farmland and open space

Strongly agree	45%
Somewhat agree	32%
Somewhat disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	9%
Don't Know	2%
Refused	0%
Count	(400)

IQ11. Lebanon has initiated several programs to preserve its farmland such as enacting zoning regulations that help to preserve farmland and setting aside \$100,000 annually in the budget for land preservation.

Q11. How satisfied are you with the Town's efforts to preserve farmland?

Very satisfied	32%
Somewhat satisfied	53%
Not very satisfied	6%
Not at all satisfied	5%
Don't Know	4%
Refused	1%
Count	(400)

Q11A. Why are you not satisfied?

-Asked of those who answered "Not very satisfied" or "Not at all satisfied" to Q11. See appendix B for full results.

Preservation efforts are not implemented correctly	38%
"\$100,000 is not enough"	21%
Too much for farm subsidies	12%
Preservation is not government responsibility	10%
Zoning guidelines are unsatisfactory	7%
Commercial growth will be burdened	5%
This only benefits a few residents	2%
Other	5%
Don't know	--
Refused	--
Count	(42)

Q12. State law allows towns to partially exempt taxes on farm buildings in order to encourage farming. Would you favor or oppose this initiative in Lebanon?

Strongly favor	55%
Somewhat favor	29%
Somewhat oppose	6%
Strongly oppose	7%
Neither/Indifferent	2%
Don't Know	2%
Count	(400)

12A. Would you favor or oppose this initiative if it cost you up to \$15 in additional annual property taxes?

-Asked of those who answered "Strongly favor" "Somewhat favor" or "Neither/Indifferent" to Q12

Strongly favor	61%
Somewhat favor	29%
Somewhat oppose	3%
Strongly oppose	6%
Neither/Indifferent	1%
Don't Know	0%
Refused	--
Count	(342)

Q13. Similarly, state law allows towns to partially exempt taxes for certain types of farm land such as dairy and orchards. Would you favor or oppose this initiative in Lebanon?

Strongly favor	56%
Somewhat favor	27%
Somewhat oppose	7%
Strongly oppose	8%
Neither/Indifferent	1%
Don't Know	2%
Refused	--
Count	(400)

Q13A. Would you favor or oppose this initiative if it cost you up to \$25 in additional annual property taxes?

-Asked of those who answered "Strongly favor" "Somewhat favor" or "Neither/Indifferent" to Q13

Strongly favor	52%
Somewhat favor	34%
Somewhat oppose	6%
Strongly oppose	7%
Neither/Indifferent	1%
Don't Know	0%
Refused	--
Count	(333)

IQ14. Lebanon farm owners have preserved 3,500 acres of farmland through the State Farmland Preservation Program. This program provides limited state tax dollars to buy conservation easements on farms. Farmers continue to own the land and pay their taxes. The land remains open and available for agriculture and cannot be subdivided into building lots. Over the past 2 years the town has allocated \$175,000 to be used to assist property owners interested in land preservation. Currently, the Town is considering a 10-year initiative to preserve at least an additional 2,000 acres of farmland or forest land.

Q14A. Would you favor or oppose a 2-million dollar 20-year bond referendum to support land preservation, if it cost you up to \$50 in additional annual property taxes?

Strongly favor	39%
Somewhat favor	31%
Somewhat oppose	12%
Strongly oppose	13%
Neither/Indifferent	3%
Don't Know	3%
Refused	--
Count	(400)

Q14B. Would you favor or oppose a 2-million dollar 20-year bond referendum to support land preservation, if it cost you up to \$25 in additional annual property taxes?

-Asked of those who answered "Somewhat oppose" "Strongly oppose" or "Neither/Indifferent" to Q14A

Strongly favor	2%
Somewhat favor	19%
Somewhat oppose	25%
Strongly oppose	44%
Neither/Indifferent	9%
Don't Know	1%
Refused	--
Count	(109)

Q14C. What is the main reason you oppose this initiative?

-Asked of those who answered "Somewhat oppose" or "Strongly oppose" to Q14B. See appendix B for full results.

Taxes should decrease, not increase.	42%
Government should never regulate private land use	14%
The current model is not working	11%
Commercialization is important and necessary.	8%
There is already enough farmland	8%
Hurts the people of Lebanon	4%
Preservation is not productive	4%
There is not enough public information to support the plan	3%
Other	3%
Don't Know	3%
Refused	1%
Count	(74)

Q15. Would you favor or oppose a 4-million dollar 20-year bond referendum to support land preservation, if it cost you up to \$100 in additional annual property taxes?

Strongly favor	25%
Somewhat favor	24%
Somewhat oppose	20%
Strongly oppose	25%
Neither/Indifferent	3%
Don't Know	3%
Refused	--
Count	(400)

IQ16. Lebanon's Recreation Commission has identified the need to construct additional soccer and ball fields to meet the needs of current and future populations. The town owns land to construct these facilities.

Q16A. Would you favor or oppose a 2-million dollar 20-year bond referendum to support farmland preservation AND construct recreation fields, if it cost you up to \$50 in additional annual property taxes?

Strongly favor	36%
Somewhat favor	26%
Somewhat oppose	14%
Strongly oppose	20%
Neither/Indifferent	3%
Don't Know	2%
Refused	--
Count	(400)

Q16B. Would you favor or oppose a 2-million dollar 20-year bond referendum to support farmland preservation AND construct recreation fields, if it cost you up to \$25 in additional annual property taxes?

-Asked of those who answered "Somewhat oppose" "Strongly oppose" or "Neither/Indifferent" to Q16A

Strongly favor	5%
Somewhat favor	9%
Somewhat oppose	29%
Strongly oppose	48%
Neither/Indifferent	7%
Don't Know	1%
Refused	--
Count	(149)

Q16C. What is the main reason you oppose this initiative?

-Asked of those who answered "Somewhat oppose" or "Strongly oppose" to Q16B.
See appendix B for full results.

There are enough existing recreational fields	28%
Taxes and government spending should decrease	27%
Preservation and recreation should not be merged as one issue	17%
Other issues are more important	9%
I don't have children	9%
Other	8%
Don't Know	2%
Refused	--
Count	(116)

Q17. Would you favor or oppose a 4-million dollar 20-year bond referendum to support farmland preservation AND construct recreation fields, if it cost you \$100 in additional annual property taxes?

Strongly favor	20%
Somewhat favor	21%
Somewhat oppose	20%
Strongly oppose	34%
Neither/Indifferent	2%
Don't Know	3%
Refused	--
Count	(400)

IQD1. Finally, I have a few questions for classification purposes.

QD1. In what year were you born?

1984-1990 (Age 18 to 24)	3%
1974-1983 (Age 25 to 34)	8%
1964-1978 (Age 35 to 44)	19%
1944- 1965 (Age 45-64)	55%
1943 and before (Age 65 and older)	15%
Count	(400)

QD2. How many years have you lived in Lebanon?

Less than six months	1%
One to five years	13%
Six to ten years	14%
Eleven to twenty years	26%
Twenty one to forty years	35%
Forty one or more years	13%
Count	(400)

QD3. What is the highest grade of school or year of college you have completed and gotten credit for?

Grade school or less (0-8)	1%
Some high school (9-11)	2%
High school (12)	23%
Some college (1-3 years)	26%
College graduate (4 years)	27%
Post graduate (Masters or Doctorate)	22%
Count	(400)

QD4. Thinking about all of the elections that have been held in your community over the last several years, including local elections for school board members and budget issues, how many would you say you have voted in?

All	38%
Almost all	22%
Most	14%
Some	10%
A few	8%
None	8%
Don't Know	0%
Refused	--
Count	(400)

QD5. For classification purposes only, is the total yearly income of all the members of your family now living at home less than \$50,000 or is it \$50,000 or more?

Less than \$50,000	17%
\$50,000 or more	79%
Don't Know	1%
Refused	4%
Count	(400)

QD5A. Is that

-Asked of those who answered "Less than \$50,000" to question QD5

Less than \$25,000	22%
\$25,000 to less than \$50,000	69%
Don't Know	7%
Refused	1%
Count	(68)

QD5B. Is that

-Asked of those who answered "\$50,000 or More" to question QD5

\$50,000 to less than \$75,000	25%
\$75,000 to less than \$100,000	31%
\$100,000 or more	41%
Don't Know	1%
Refused	2%
Count	(314)

QD6. What racial or ethnic group would you most identify yourself with?

White	97%
Hispanic	1%
Native American	1%
Don't know	--
Refused	3%
Count	(400)

QD7. How many adults live in this household who are 18 years old or older including yourself?

One	11%
Two	63%
Three	18%
Four or more	8%
Count	(400)

QD20. Gender of Respondent

Male	36%
Female	64%
Count	(400)

Appendix B: Open-ended responses

Q5B. Why haven't you visited the Lebanon's Farmers' Market?

- We have a garden of our own (13 mentions)
- Health issues (3 mentions)
- I'm working when it's open (7 mentions)
- Do not drive (2 mentions)
- I do my shopping elsewhere (3 mentions)
- We sell our own stuff
- Just found out about it (2 mentions)
- Don't get up that early in the morning
- Busy with something else (3 mentions)
- Forgot about it (2 mentions)
- Not a morning person
- We get it from the farms themselves instead of going to the market
- Gets everything she needs from her own chickens and her mother-in-law
- No need to (2 mentions)
- I don't buy vegetables
- Wasn't in the country
- It costs the town way too much to run it and benefits only a few people
- We are usually in our summer rental
- Don't ever really think of it
- Just haven't been there at that time (2 mentions)
- It was suppose to be Lebanon farmers only and they are bringing in people to compete and now a lot of Lebanon farmers don't sell at the market.

Q9A. Do you have any concerns relative to farming or agriculture in Lebanon?

Q9A. What are those concerns? (Those who answered yes to Q9A)

- 'The smell of cow poop
- Becoming less and less
- The way the people on the town board are. I feel that they are going to force the seniors out of town, because taxes are 4-5,000 a year.
- Wants to preserve 2 acre zoning for rural atmosphere
- Chemical and fertilizer run-off is affecting the environment (18 mentions)
- Buyout made it so that cows no longer graze but are kept in farms
- Concerned that family farms will have trouble surviving in the future
- Concerned with acreage being allocated to farmers
- Conservation isn't there
- Crop damage and pollution problems
- The current use of agriculture land and plans for future development
- Developers will try to buy it out and preservation could be subject to high dollar real estate interest. Concerned about the wetlands like in Coventry and do not want them bought out in Lebanon.
- I think that education is overloaded with administrative costs.
- Everyone likes farms but they don't want to be next to one.
- Excessive amount of housing development going up everywhere
- Expanding milk farms, with hundreds of cows and the land can't handle it
- Farmers keeping their land
- Farming and agricultural has too strong a presence on the planning and zoning board.
- Doesn't want there to be 300 pigs in a stall living next door to her when taxes aren't going down
- Farmlands are disappearing (4 mentions)
- Farms and agriculture are exempt from taxes. We need commercial development in town to collect revenue by combining light commercial and farm development.
- Concerned that farmers are getting pushed out so preserve what is still around and strengthen those farms that are still in operation
- Problems with flies (6 mentions)
- Hard for people to farm with all expenses involved, don't have a lot of yield. (3 mentions)
- I'm afraid development will come in and take away open space and farmers will be tempted to sell their farms to builders.
- I believe we are losing young people to run the farms in the future, and we need to look for alternative uses for the property.
- I don't think the town really cares about the farmland that dates back 300 years. Instead they're concerned with making a quick dollar
- I don't want it to be lost.

Q9A. (Continued) What are those concerns?

- I grew up on a farm and I think we need more farming in the United States, not just Lebanon. I think we should produce our own food. I'd rather see more farming properties stay.
- I own a farm and want it to stay farm.
- I think they're giving too much tax money to the farmers already.
- I want it to stay a farming town.
- I wish there was more of it as we have lost a lot.
- I would like to see it continue in town and it's too hard for farmers to make it today in the town.
- If it's not taken care of we are not going to have it.
- I'm afraid we're losing farms. I've been here 10 years and I've seen a lot of new buildings where farms were.
- I'm in favor of seeing as much agricultural land as possible but also concerned about growth and jobs.
- Issues with planning and zoning board
- It's being pushed out.
- It should stay an agriculture town and needs to be preserved.
- There needs to be more vegetable farming.
- Farms are being eaten up by residential housing.
- Farms are disappearing.
- Too much space and not enough agricultural development
- Need to maintain farms
- Trucks might lead to a traffic situation
- Needs to stay as farmland
- Farms are dying out.
- It shouldn't be Lebanon's only concern.
- Keep farms going (3 mentions)
- Local officials are not in favor of farmland and open spaces but are benefitting from the sale of property.
- Loss of farmland and viable farms (3 mentions)
- Maintaining the current farmlands
- Concerned we're not having industrial farming and making sure livestock is being treated humanely, husbandry practices are good, and that farmers are able to sell their wares locally.
- Many farms being sold and resold for houses
- Agriculture is going away and it is hard to make a living.
- More promotion for local farms
- My concern is that it's dwindling
- My concern is that there are so many farms going out of business.
- Not a diversity of agricultural uses

Q9A. (Continued) What are those concerns?

- Not enough farmland
- Not having the correct balance between agriculture and other sectors of the economy.
- Old laws
- Concerned that its disappearing
- People are moving into farm area and don't want to put up with inconveniences of farm life
- Prefer small family farms over major conglomerates that take over every farm in town
- Preserve as much as possible
- Preserving the farm lifestyle
- Proposed regulations they are considering don't give adequate protection to new residential land and doesn't respect farmland preservation (true reservation).
- Public relations without complaints. People who are adjacent to farms will be nice and friendly so that the farms can have access to their customers and crop without any interference or any problems. Community raised cooperative ventures such as ocean spray.
- That they pay less taxes for their property than I do on mine. I don't think that's fair. Farms and open space should be taxed the same as everyone else.
- Regret that the farmers can't keep up with the cost of living.
- I am a retired farmer and farm operations have changed too much. The farms aren't run as well and they seem to be dying out.
- Should be organic farming and they need to start looking for local energy. Farmers need to grow things that are high in carbohydrates and for crops that have ethanol properties. They need to start using more resources like marijuana/hemp/flax to make clothing and automobile applications.
- Farmers should have the right to farm without getting harassed
- Some of the zoning proposals that have not been enacted yet could hurt agriculture.
- Need to stop building mansions on farmland or preserve the land.
- Sustainable farming is of great importance. There needs to be a focus on local farmers and local business, supporting the farmers like family friends rather than going to stores.
- That farming may deteriorate
- That the farm land is going away (2 mentions)
- That the small farmer is never going to make it in Lebanon and that only the rich ones will make it and the small farmers are just going to be struggling
- That they are all selling off the land because the people can't afford the taxes. It's scary to see all the development because all the trees, air, and animals are going away. We don't need anymore houses.
- The current building codes are not supporting farmland preservation. They require limited grade, and they have to build in middle of fields. The biggest problem is the town should not reward contracts to outsiders.
- The fact that farming cannot survive as the prices are going up and farmers can't make money

Q9A. (Continued) What are those concerns?

- That the family farms aren't existing here any more and that the farms we do have are very large and almost like factories.
- The farmers are not supported enough.
- The manure trucks spill on the town roads and make them slippery.
- The smell (2 mentions)
- The town government doesn't support local farmers enough.
- There are a few farms that have illegal immigrants on their farms...this is not right, it should be more structured, with more guidelines to follow.
- There has been a lot of property leased by Milstream inc. and we're not sure what those leases provide for land usage.
- There should be a proper development and balance between agricultural and commercial development where one is not stronger than the other.
- There was a referendum about a year ago regarding a minimum acreage for livestock, and I didn't think a 3 acre minimum should be required for one animal.
- They are not managed property as far as chemical drifting, manure drainage, (smells).
- They have a lobbyist as a town planner and they should have a planner because they do not have consideration for all people.
- They need to be more innovative in coming up with agricultural products that get a greater return.
- I think they should be preserved.
- In order to maintain our rural atmosphere and farming community, farms need to be more favored publicly and should be represented by the people who are farming more than the newer people who have come in just to buy a big house with some land.
- Town needs to actively try to get farms to be preserved and not turning them into developments.
- Town at present time has no ethics code.
- Try to keep the farmers going
- Use of the land and what product they develop
- Viability
- Want it to remain rural
- We are losing farmers yearly.
- We definitely need agriculture and open space and the lack of development, it's not going to solve our tax problems; need to focus less on agriculture and look for innovative ways to bring money in for the town.
- I would hate to see them disappear, but I don't think they should be the only focus.
- You have two major businesses that contribute to the tax basis of Lebanon, and I'm not sure the town appreciates them.
- Zoning changes

Q11. How satisfied are you with the Town's efforts to preserve farmland?

Q11A. Why are you not satisfied?

- Farmland does not produce tax paying services to the town, and the federal government subsidizes these farms.
- \$100,000 isn't enough money (6 mentions)
- A person should be able to do what he wants with his land as long as it doesn't interfere with someone else.
- Allowing too much growth
- Because if they don't preserve what they have now, they won't have anything in the future.
- Because there is enough preserved land right now, and they do not pay their fair share in taxes causing the home owners to pay the rest
- They haven't preserved any of the farmland. I went to school in this town and everyone was a farmer but not anymore.
- They should be doing more
- Can't just preserve the land but should utilize the land and do something else with it.
- Concerned with the open space and what they could do with it; wetlands vs. open space; told some farmers they could not build on their land.
- Need greater efforts to preserve rural character
- I don't believe that they are going out and buying the lands that are available. I believe they are picking and choosing and don't think that they take advantage of all the land.
- I don't think my tax dollars should be used for that.
- I have been told that we have people on our board that are opposite of what the survey is saying.
- The town wastes away too much money on stupid projects. They wasted a quarter of a million on a culvert on a back road.
- I live on McCaw Road which runs into Gee Road, and one farm closed down, new housing development, and now there is development on my road as well.
- I think the town government is too involved.
- It should be much more money.
- Not enough being done
- Not really preserving farmland
- Preserving farmland impedes the owners from selling for industrial development
- Seeing too much of it go to private developments; we should be doing more.
- Some are seriously trying to improperly get rich themselves and benefit from these changes and some for seeing pretty pictures,
- Spending too much on other things like mowing the town green, grant building permits for building properties and school system rather than land preservation. I would rather discourage building residential properties to preserve open space.
- The town should spend money on things that are critical.

Q11A. (Continued) Why are you not satisfied?

- There are so many federal programs that they are not taking advantage of that could help the town immensely.
- There is not much going on and too many houses coming in.
- They are doing something but it may not be the best.
- They are going about it the wrong way.
- They focus too heavily on farms.
- They have a farmers market without our town farmers, while receiving money from the state through grants which was supposed to go to the farmers for a sign to direct people on the roads and that was never done.
- They should not have input on everybody's property. 2/3 of zoning regulations are bad.
- Things not being used the right way
- Town should agree to fund it at a higher level and put more effort into it.
- When it comes down to actual situations the town is more supportive of builder than people preserving open space.
- Zoning guidelines

Q14C. What is the main reason you oppose this initiative?

- Because they are just farming and they need industry to pay the taxes, they cut the budget of the town of Lebanon, and lay off people.
- I am a senior citizen and I cannot afford to have my taxes raised. I think we need industry to lower our taxes.
- A lot of special interest groups not looking at things that are required like public safety, road issues, and dirty people out of politics.
- Already have enough land preservation, need some commercialization
- Already have pieces of farm preservation and at this point the land is just sitting there. I don't want it to sit there or be developed but people are just sitting on it.
- Because there is a better way to do it rather than put the burden on other tax payers
- Because it's just raising taxes
- Because no matter what you do, you will have growth and you have to balance growth.
- Because now economically it is not good. Feed my family or feed someone else's, I will feed mine.
- Because of the way it's structured now
- Because of today's economic climate, the money
- Because once it starts, the prices keep going up.
- Because the taxes are high enough as it is, you can't afford it
- Because we have no tax base as it is, if we preserve it, taxes will go up a lot more than 25 or 50 dollars.
- Because we shouldn't have to do that. Too much money is being spent on things that it shouldn't be spent on.
- Because we shouldn't have to pay for it

Q14C. (Continued) What is the main reason you oppose this initiative?

- Can't afford any more taxes
- Corruption. I'm involved in the situation as a tax payer and I know that certain families make out in this deal and others get looked over. It is just corrupted.
- Don't want to pay more taxes
- Don't believe in land preservation because it costs everyone more money to keep the land "preserved" for nothing.
- Farmers should not be paid for land that they own; any money to maintain open space should come from a land trust or the town paying for the land outright to maintain the open space.
- I'm a seasonal property owner and I'm allowed 6 months occupancy. I use no town services, my children don't go school there and I'm only given a 5% tax break. We are kicked off our property, every time they have a referendum it goes up.
- I believe it is not in the town's best interest as we don't have the farmers coming to support the farms.
- I believe private land should remain private and the town or state shouldn't get involved.
- I don't get a break on my taxes.
- I don't think that its something the government should be doing.
- I don't think the government should be reaching in my pocket to enrich someone else.
- I have to hear more about it as I am not sure what is owned by the town vs. the people.
- I start getting concerned when people don't have control over what they want to do with their own property.
- I think Lebanon has high taxes already and residents don't get very much for their taxes.
- If it's a state initiative, I'd be in favor.
- If we are going to bring industry in, we need a place to put it. I'm not against having forests, but you need a place to put industry.
- It's got to stop somewhere.
- It's not in the local government's mandate to do this.
- Keep the land the way it is, no commercialization
- My big thing is, I think they need to bring more commercial development into the town of Lebanon. I'd like to see other stuff come into the town. I'd think we'd earn more tax dollars through stores and restaurants.
- My taxes are too high already.
- Nobody has money right now
- Not enough information
- On limited income, retired, where is the money going to come from? Already struggling to pay current taxes
- Only owns a little bit of property.
- Other priorities for tax dollars like education
- People should do with land as they please and town should not be supporting it.
- Property taxes are high enough (2 mentions).

Q14C. (Continued) What is the main reason you oppose this initiative?

- The school education taxes
- Right now not all farmers are doing bad and by not paying taxes they are just taking away from homeowners.
- Seems like they are doing everything for farmers but nothing for those who are working there.
- She doesn't want to use her tax dollars to fund land that she cannot use
- Should be preserved if it's a working farm and they are producing some type of product for the people around
- Subsidizing land imperfectly, giving money to 'fake farms', prevents commercial interests from bringing in taxes
- Taxes are already high enough (4 mentions)
- The increase in money
- The increase in the taxes
- The larger landowners in Lebanon have reaped benefits on the land for a long time and the state pays them for it, so why should the rest of the residents in the town make up the difference.
- The main reason is I don't feel that they're getting money for this preservation that we're paying for them. I don't think they're getting the money. They already get tax breaks, and get the land. It's having your cake and eating it too.
- The town should not be that involved in the process
- There is a state program that funds it already, so they should use that.
- They already have enough farmland.
- They already have gotten enough, they just want more and more they never stop...pretty soon there will be no one paying for the services in the town.
- Think they focus too heavily on farmland, and don't care about businesses.
- Think we have enough land already.
- Understand what it means and understand that the truth is that they are exempting the property, but doesn't really mean that they can never subdivide or sell it. It's a game to keep them from paying current taxes, but preserves for them.
- We already have a lot of farmland.
- We already pay too much.
- Why should he have to pay more money?
- You say \$25 or \$50 but then you get a tax bill for \$1000. If you encourage businesses to come in and expand the tax base it relieves the residents. You have two very big agricultural businesses in town and they're considered demons.
- If they want to have the soccer leagues they should pay. Why should I pay for that?"
- They are not getting industry and commercial property. I know of a person who wanted to build a bigger garage after his burned down and they would not let him."
- I don't think that should be a function of government.
- If you lump the two together, I would favor the recreation, but if you lump it with the farmland preservation I have to be against it.

Q16C. What is the main reason you oppose this initiative?

- Because I know the town had been offered land that they decided that they didn't want
- Because it should be coordinated with the private soccer club.
- Because I'm nearing retirement
- Because I don't need to make this place more attractive for people to move here for sporting complexes. I'm against any development like that. I'm not up to building this place up to attract non-residents.
- Because I don't think that should be their focus
- I don't think we need to be building more soccer fields in Lebanon, I think we have enough
- Because I feel that the soccer benefits a small group of people. If they want it, they should raise the money.
- Because I support one and not the other
- Because I think the government shouldn't have to pay for this stuff, have private citizens pay for this
- Because if you are preserving soccer fields and cannot but any agricultural land, it is pointless.
- Because it's my tax dollars and there aren't enough children for the parks
- Because of population
- Because of the recreational fields. They are higher priorities'
- Because of the traffic it would cause
- Because she doesn't think they need more ball fields.
- Because the parents pay for the kids to play already and the tax payers shouldn't have to pay
- Because they are using up farmland to do that
- Because they don't want to pay additional and they already have enough land for that purpose
- Because today I feel that they put in kids today instead of having kids play ball, but kids do not know what it means to have a job or do manual work. Today these kids want to play sports and they have no responsibility.
- Because we don't need those ball fields
- Blending them all together
- Can't wrap up ball fields and farm land like that
- Because the taxes keep on rising and you need a cutoff point
- Corruption
- Cost to tax payers
- Already have basketball courts now and don't need more; limited budget right now, don't need things like that
- Doesn't have kids that would be using the fields
- Doesn't want any more spending because it's too much
- Doesn't want to put both initiatives together, only independently
- Don't have any use for recreational facilities because doesn't have young children.

Q16C. (Continued) What is the main reason you oppose this initiative?

- Lebanon doesn't need extra ball fields
- Don't think there is a need for spending a lot of money on recreational fields and doesn't have any kids.
- Don't want any fields near her neighborhood b/c she doesn't have kids
- Don't believe in land conservation
- Don't believe the town should spend that much money on recreation
- Don't need extra fields
- Don't need to put our future into debt, don't need to lump things together with farm preservation
- Don't think recreational field are as critical as to maintaining architectural integrity
- Don't think we can afford it
- Economy is down
- Enough ball fields in town already and she doesn't have any children.
- Farmland is more important
- Feels it is not needed
- For the same reason, I don't use town services as a seasonal town resident
- Getting older and she's going to be retiring and will have limited income
- Growth; have to plan for growth; they are trying to pretend that the town will not grow, but it will
- Doesn't think we need soccer fields for adults
- He lived in mid-west had fire protection, good schools, everything we paid \$700. Now pays 4,000 for the same thing. Where does the money go?
- I'm not sure we don't have enough land for recreation already.
- I don't like those two issues being lumped in together.
- I don't think the new recreation fields are necessary
- I don't think you should use tax payer money as there are other ways to do this.
- I don't want to tie preservation and sporting activities.
- I know they have that land and they always talk about building, why would they ask for more money if they were supposed to be doing it already
- I support land preservation for farm land but less spending on more ball fields (3 mentions)
- If the town already owns the land why spend money
- It is a waste of money.
- It is underhanded way of getting agriculture in, slide buy agriculture instead of focusing on recreation
- Its not the money its the idea that they want to take more land out of circulation and tax role...there is no one paying the brunt of it
- Keep the land private and don't get the town or state involved
- Kids are older now
- Location is in here backyard, area is well traveled
- Money for education could be better spent in educational areas.

- More of a need of farmland

Q16C. (Continued) What is the main reason you oppose this initiative?

- My kids are all grown and graduated
- No children
- Not enough info, they don't need to increase taxes.
- Not fair to combine the two initiatives
- Not in favor of recreational fields
- Not sure about recreation part
- Not sure that we really do need the additional recreational fields
- Opposed to it due to the ball fields
- Property taxes are high enough already (2 mentions)
- Recreational fields for the town are a good idea, but existing ones are so poorly run and managed that I think it is a danger to the town to put more money into the recreational fields.
- Industry needs a place to go
- Sounds like they are trying to merge the issues
- Spend way too much on schools, cut back if you want to do something else, too much farmland makes tax fall back on homeowner
- Still homeowners have no money to give...they are taxed heavily
- Taxes
- Taxes are too high, can't afford any more
- That once it starts the prices keep going up
- The cost is too much, they already have enough
- The fields are adequate already
- The idea is to conserve farm territory not to have parks for kids
- The kids have enough and they are already building a play structure
- The town has done a terrible job maintaining fields they already have.
- There are enough ball fields already (8 mentions)
- There is other ways to accomplish these things without asking for increases in taxes
- They could use that money for other things
- Thinks there are other ways for the recreation commission to raise money for new fields
- Too much in taxes and she wouldn't use it because she doesn't have kids
- We don't need to expand sports fields dramatically
- We have enough soccer fields, just need to fix those ones up rather than build new recreation centers.
- We have other things.
- We've constructed fields before and money was raised but not out of tax dollars
- What we have isn't being used so why put more money into it