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N.J. Voters Underestimate State's Open Space

Only 1 in 5 (18%) New Jersey voters correctly indicate that nearly half (45%), or 2.25 million acres, of New Jersey is open space, according to a recent Fairleigh Dickinson University PublicMind poll sponsored by the New Jersey Farm Bureau. Nearly two-thirds (62%) estimate that 30% or less of New Jersey is undeveloped, far below the actual amount. An additional 13% do not venture a guess, even when provided with a range of responses. Those in the urban core and the northeast parts of the state are just as likely as those in the southern and the rural northwestern regions to underestimate the amount of open space. "Clearly, New Jerseyans spend too much time on the turnpike," said Peter Woolley, the poll director. "New Jersey is a beautiful place beyond the sound barriers and the congestion."

Overall, only 3 of 5 (60%) correctly indicate the state's nickname—*the Garden State*—is related to farming. While this figure is statistically equal to those from the last two years, it is down from a high of 71% in 2006. Results vary widely across demographic groups. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of those over the age of 60 know about the moniker, compared to just 50% of voters under age 30. In the relatively rural southern portion of the state, 72% of voters correctly associate the nickname with farming, compared to only 49% of respondents in the urban core of the state, 51% in the northeast and 61% in the central part of the state.

Nearly 3 in 4 (72%) have "a lot" of confidence in the safety of the Garden State's locally grown produce. Those in the southern portion of the state have significantly more confidence (83%) than those in the urban (61%), northeastern (66%) or central (71%) part of the state. Voters aged 60+ have more confidence (76%) than those in the 18-29 age group (54%).

When it comes to the hot topic of global warming, 7 in 10 (70%) voters say it is a "somewhat" or "very" serious problem. Women are more likely than men (75%-64%) to believe it is a problem. But most striking, Democrats outnumber Republicans by nearly 2 to 1 (88%- 45%) in their belief that it is a "somewhat" or "very" serious problem.

However, despite the large number who say global warming is serious, few are willing to spending money fixing it. Only 3% would pay "significantly more" in their energy bills to help the environment by reducing the emissions that contribute to global warming. One in five (20%) say they would pay "somewhat more" and an additional 32% would be willing to pay "just a little more." Two in five (40%) say they are unwilling to pay any more at all to help reduce the emissions that contribute to global warming. Republicans are significantly more likely than Democrats (54%-29%) to say they are not willing to pay any more to ameliorate the problem.

"Congress would be well-advised to heed this public concern about raising the costs of energy products in addressing climate change," said Farm Bureau President Richard Nieuwenhuis. "It seems that recognizing the issue is one thing, but the costs of the remedies also should be considered when devising legislation.

The Fairleigh Dickinson University poll was sponsored by the New Jersey Farm Bureau and conducted by telephone from Oct. 22 through Oct. 28 using a randomly selected sample of 908 registered voters statewide aged 18 and over. The margin of error for 908 adults is +/- 3.3 percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence.

Tables, questions, and methodology available on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>
Radio actuality line: (201) 692-2846. *For more information, please call (201) 692-7032.*

Background Memo and Tables

The PublicMind poll was sponsored by the New Jersey Farm Bureau and was conducted by telephone from Oct. 22 through Oct. 28 using a randomly selected sample of 908 registered voters statewide aged 18 and over. The margin of error for 908 adults is +/- 3.3 percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from a number of factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations among interviewers. All PublicMind interviews are conducted by TMR, Inc. of Cedar Knolls, NJ. Professionally trained interviewers use a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection is achieved through computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a phone number (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected.

The questions included in this release are as follows:

NJ is made up of about 5 millions acres. Just your best guess, how many of those 5 million acres do you think are open space, like farms, woods, and meadows, and not developed with homes, buildings, and roads? Would you say approximately...

Responses	Overall	Northwest	Northeast	Urban Core	Central	South
15% or 750,000 Acres	22%	22%	24%	26%	18%	22%
30% or 1.5 Million Acres	40%	41%	39%	31%	45%	41%
45% or 2.25 Million Acres	18%	20%	17%	18%	19%	15%
60+% or 3 Million+ Acres	7%	7%	6%	9%	5%	8%
Don't Know	13%	10%	14%	16%	12%	14%

Northwest: Sussex, Hunterdon, Warren, Morris and Somerset counties

Northeast: Passaic and Bergen counties

Urban Core: Hudson, Essex and Union counties

Central: Ocean, Burlington, Mercer, Monmouth and Middlesex counties

South: Cape May, Atlantic, Cumberland, Gloucester, Camden and Salem counties

By the way, to the best of your knowledge, why is New Jersey called the Garden State?

Responses	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Farming/produce/vegetables	61%	70%	71%	63%	63%	60%
Gardening/flowers	11%	15%	9%	10%	9%	12%
Other	10%	6%	7%	7%	7%	8%
Don't Know/Refused	18%	10%	13%	19%	20%	19%

Responses	Northwest	Northeast	Urban Core	Central	South
Farming/produce/vegetables	67%	51%	49%	61%	72%
Gardening/flowers	13%	16%	16%	10%	9%
Other	5%	6%	7%	13%	5%
Don't Know/Refused	15%	27%	27%	16%	14%

By the way, to the best of your knowledge, why is New Jersey called the Garden State?

Responses	Age			
	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+
Farming/produce/vegetables	50%	53%	61%	65%
Gardening/flowers	8%	10%	16%	11%
Other	8%	11%	8%	7%
Don't Know/Refused	33%	26%	14%	17%

And what about safety... How much confidence do you have in the safety of locally-grown Jersey Fresh produce...?

Responses	2006	2007	2008	2009
A lot	69%	67%	72%	72%
Some	20%	23%	18%	20%
Just a little	5%	6%	4%	5%
None at all	2%	1%	3%	1%
Don't Know	5%	3%	2%	2%

Responses	Northwest	Northeast	Urban Core	Central	South
A lot	79%	66%	61%	71%	83%
Some	18%	28%	25%	19%	13%
Just a little	2%	2%	10%	6%	0%
None at all	1%	2%	2%	0%	2%
Don't Know	1%	2%	2%	3%	1%

Responses	Age			
	18-29	30-44	45-59	60+
A lot	54%	68%	74%	76%
Some	28%	24%	21%	16%
Just a little	7%	5%	4%	5%
None at all	6%	1%	1%	1%
Don't Know	4%	2%	0%	3%

In your view, how serious a problem is global warming?

Responses	Overall	Northwest	Northeast	Urban Core	Central	South
Very Serious	42%	37%	44%	50%	41%	40%
Somewhat Serious	28%	24%	21%	30%	31%	32%
Not Too Serious	12%	13%	17%	8%	12%	11%
Not a Problem	13%	20%	12%	10%	13%	14%
Don't Know	4%	6%	5%	2%	4%	3%

Responses	Gender		Ethnicity		Party Identification		
	Male	Female	White	Non-White	Democrat	Independent	Republican
Very Serious	35%	48%	37%	59%	61%	35%	18%
Somewhat Serious	29%	27%	29%	25%	27%	38%	27%
Not Too Serious	15%	10%	14%	7%	6%	14%	22%
Not a Problem	17%	10%	16%	5%	3%	8%	30%
Don't Know	3%	5%	4%	4%	3%	4%	3%

And how much more would you be willing to pay for your energy costs, such as gasoline and electricity, if you knew the extra money went towards reducing the emissions that contribute to global warming? Would you pay... (READ LIST, but Rotate so 1/2 to get top to bottom, 1/2 to get bottom to top)

Responses	Overall	Gender		Party Identification		
		Male	Female	Democrat	Independent	Republican
Significantly More	3%	4%	3%	5%	4%	1%
Somewhat More	20%	20%	20%	27%	16%	14%
Just a Little More	32%	29%	33%	36%	32%	27%
No More	40%	44%	37%	29%	42%	54%
Don't Know	4%	3%	6%	3%	6%	3%

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 Results are also available on the web at: <http://publicmind.fdu.edu>
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