



# The Typical Rural Kansas Grocery Store

Findings from the 2021 Kansas Rural  
Grocery Survey



2007

Beginning of Rural Grocery Initiative

2008

First Rural Kansas Grocery Store Survey

2021

Second iteration of the survey is administered







The Rural Grocery Initiative wants to hear from **you!**

KANSAS RURAL GROCERY 

# SURVEY COMING SOON




- ✓ 1. **Receive:**
  - Your survey should arrive by mail by early February.
- ✓ 2. **Complete:**
  - One survey should be completed by the grocery owner or manager.
- ✓ 3. **Return:**
  - Fold survey and return in provided pre-addressed and postage-paid envelope.

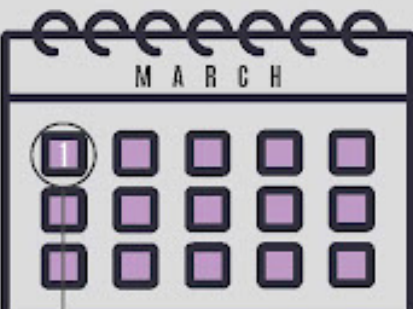
Please return your survey by **March 1, 2021**

FIND MORE INFO @ [ruralgrocery.org](http://ruralgrocery.org)


Don't forget to return your **Kansas Rural Grocery Survey!**



# SURVEY REMINDER



**MAIL TO:**  
Rural Grocery Initiative  
K-State Research and Extension



**Already received your survey?**  
Please complete the survey, fold and return in the pre-addressed and postage-paid envelope.

Please return your survey by **March 1, 2021**



# Research Amidst a Changing World



## COVID-19 STATEMENT OF IMPACT

While the Kansas Rural Grocery Survey was administered amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, we recognize that some of the information gathered via this survey may only represent a particular time throughout the pandemic, and may not fully speak to the prolonged experiences brought forth by the COVID-19 pandemic.





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# Typical Rural Kansas Grocery Store Owner

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57



On average, the rural grocer is 57 years of age.



40%



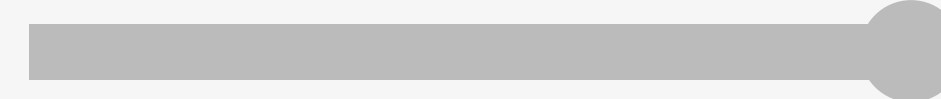
Have owned or operated the grocery store for more than 20 years.

62%



Have achieved some level of higher education

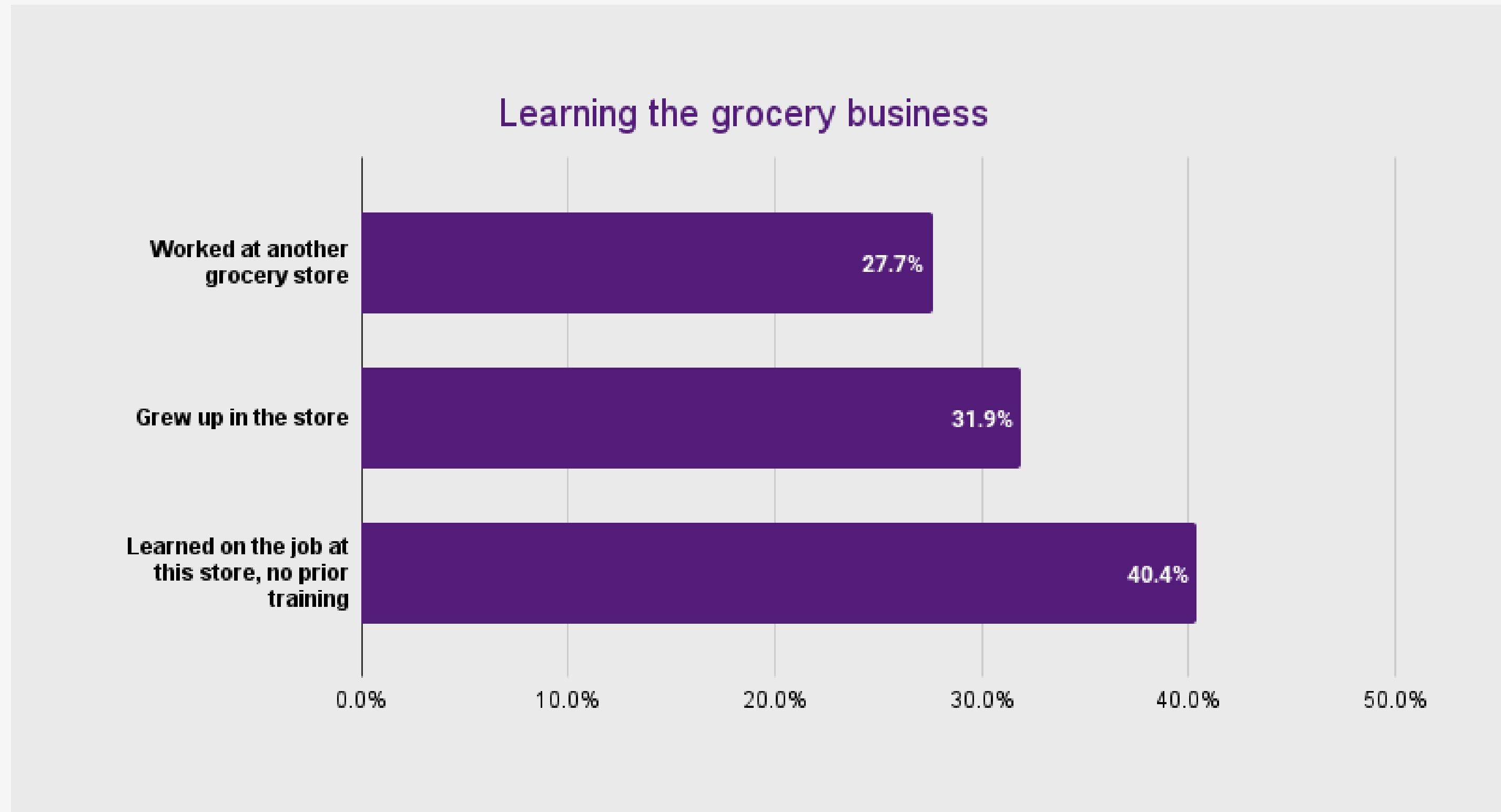
87%



Live in the same town or community as the store.



# Typical Rural Kansas Grocery Store Owner





# Typical Rural Kansas Grocery Store Owner

48%



The grocer or their spouse have full or part-time employment outside of the store.

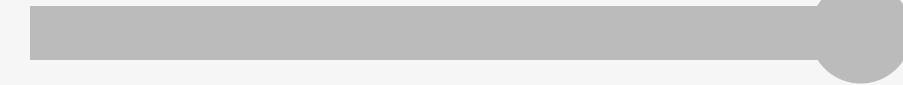
80%



Spend more than 40 hours working at the store per week



79%



Do not have any transition plans for the future management of their grocery store.

81%



Do not have any transition plans for the future ownership of their grocery store.

39% Plan to transition out of their store in the next 5-10 years

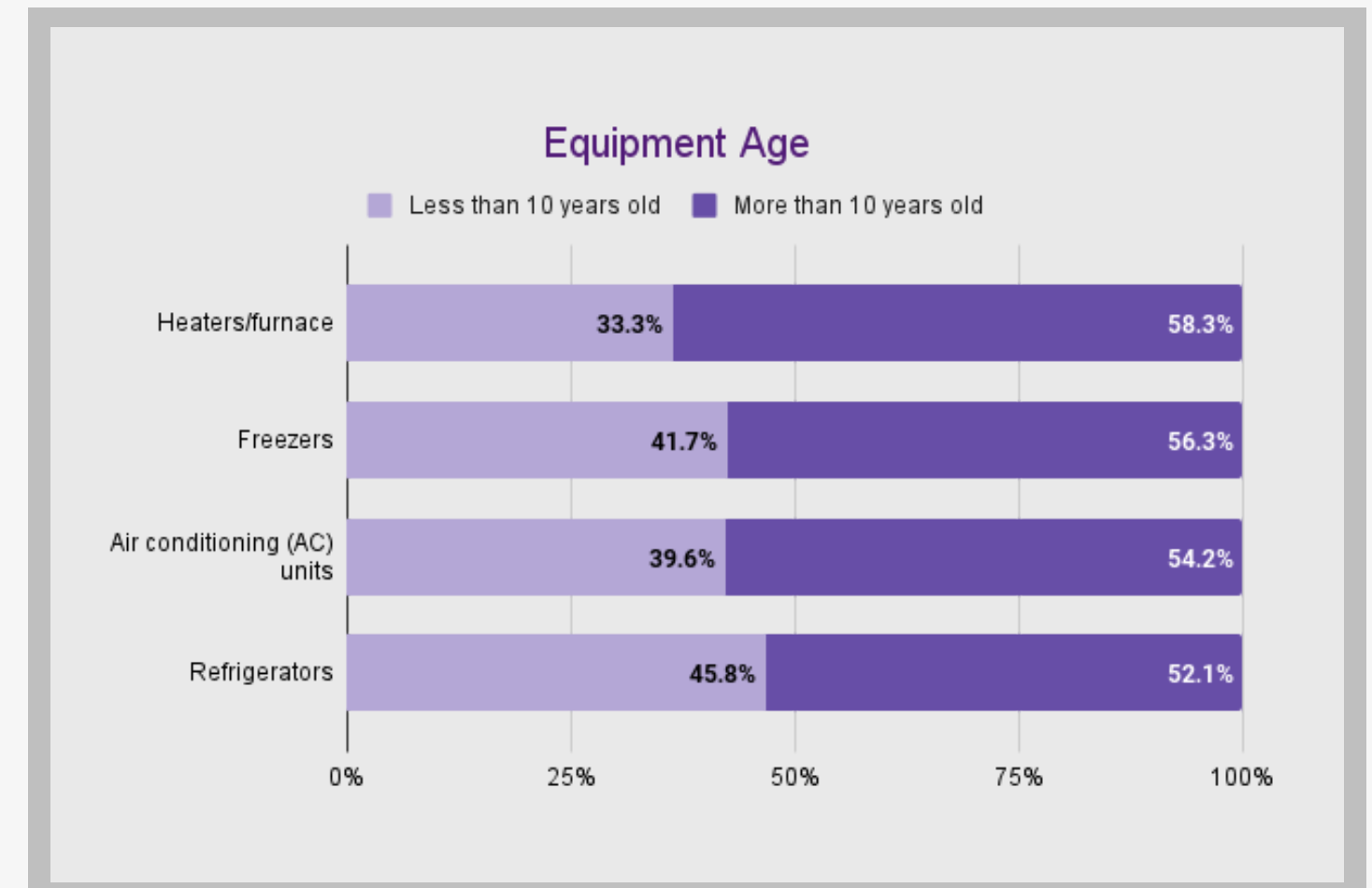
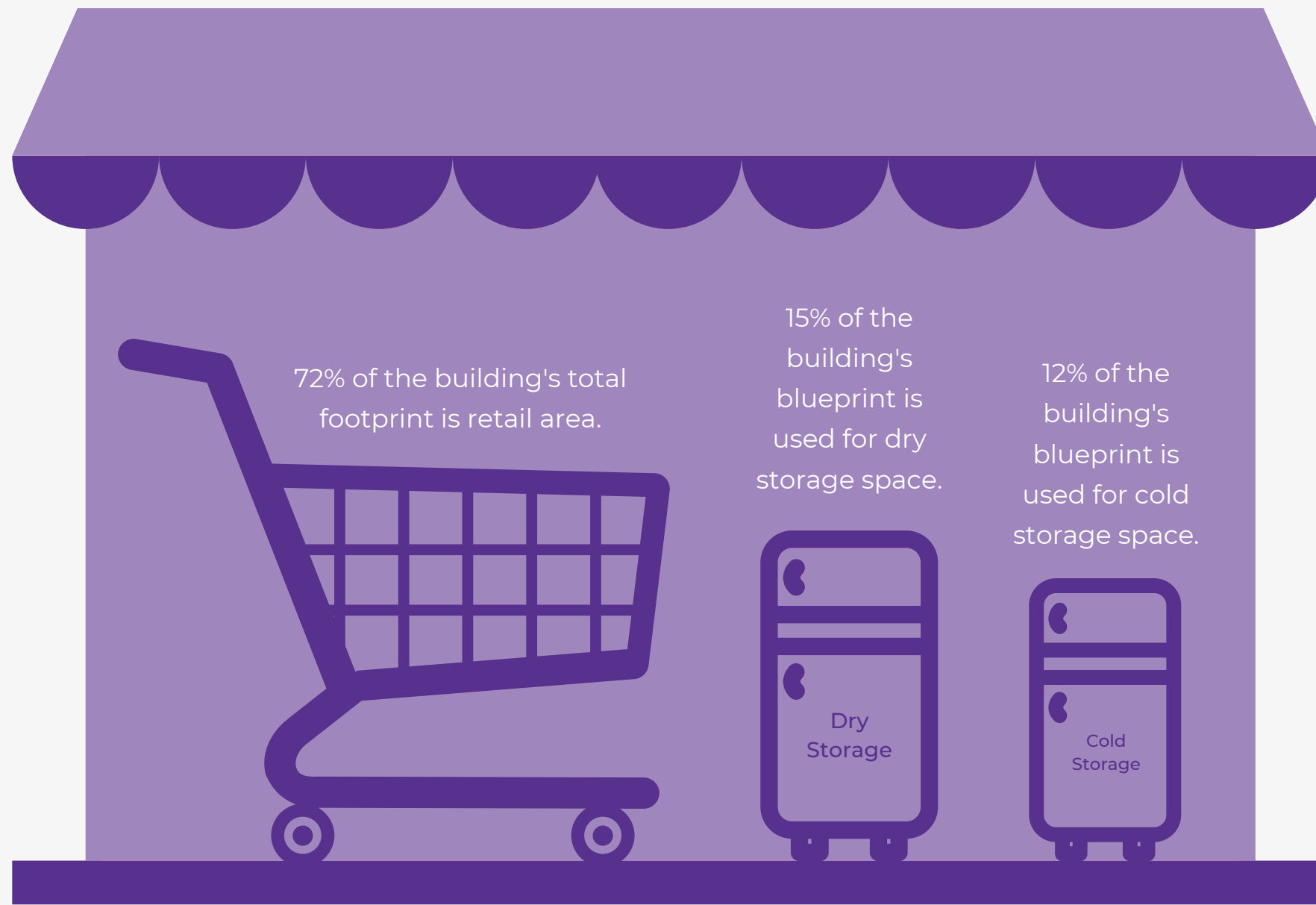


# Typical Rural Kansas Grocery Store

Average store size:  
9,628 sq. ft.  
(range of 1300 to 28,500 sq. ft.)

56% of stores reported  
annual gross sales of less  
than \$2 million

78% of stores are located in  
buildings that are more than  
30 years old

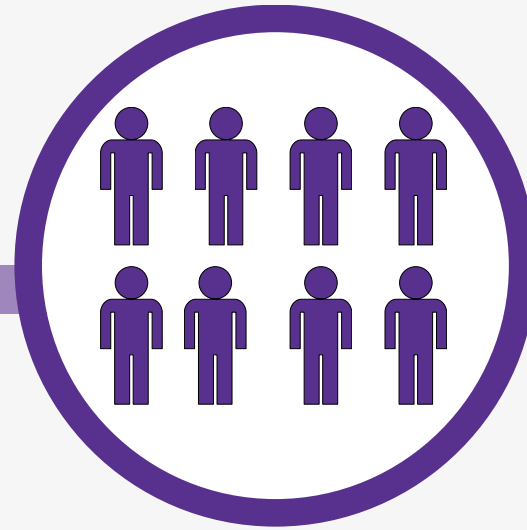




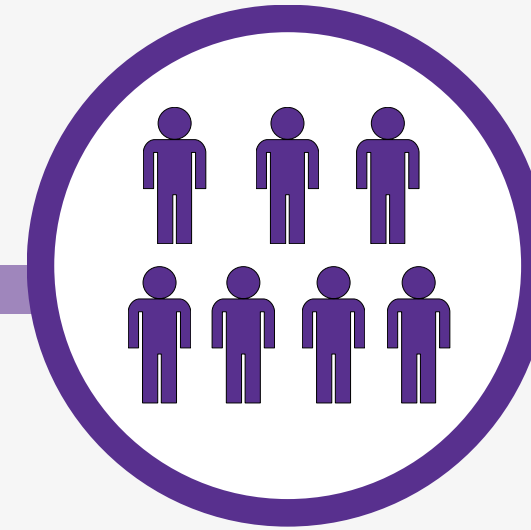
# Typical Rural Kansas Grocery Store



7 full-time employees



8 part-time employees



7 high school students

38%  
receive 1-5 hours of  
volunteer help per week

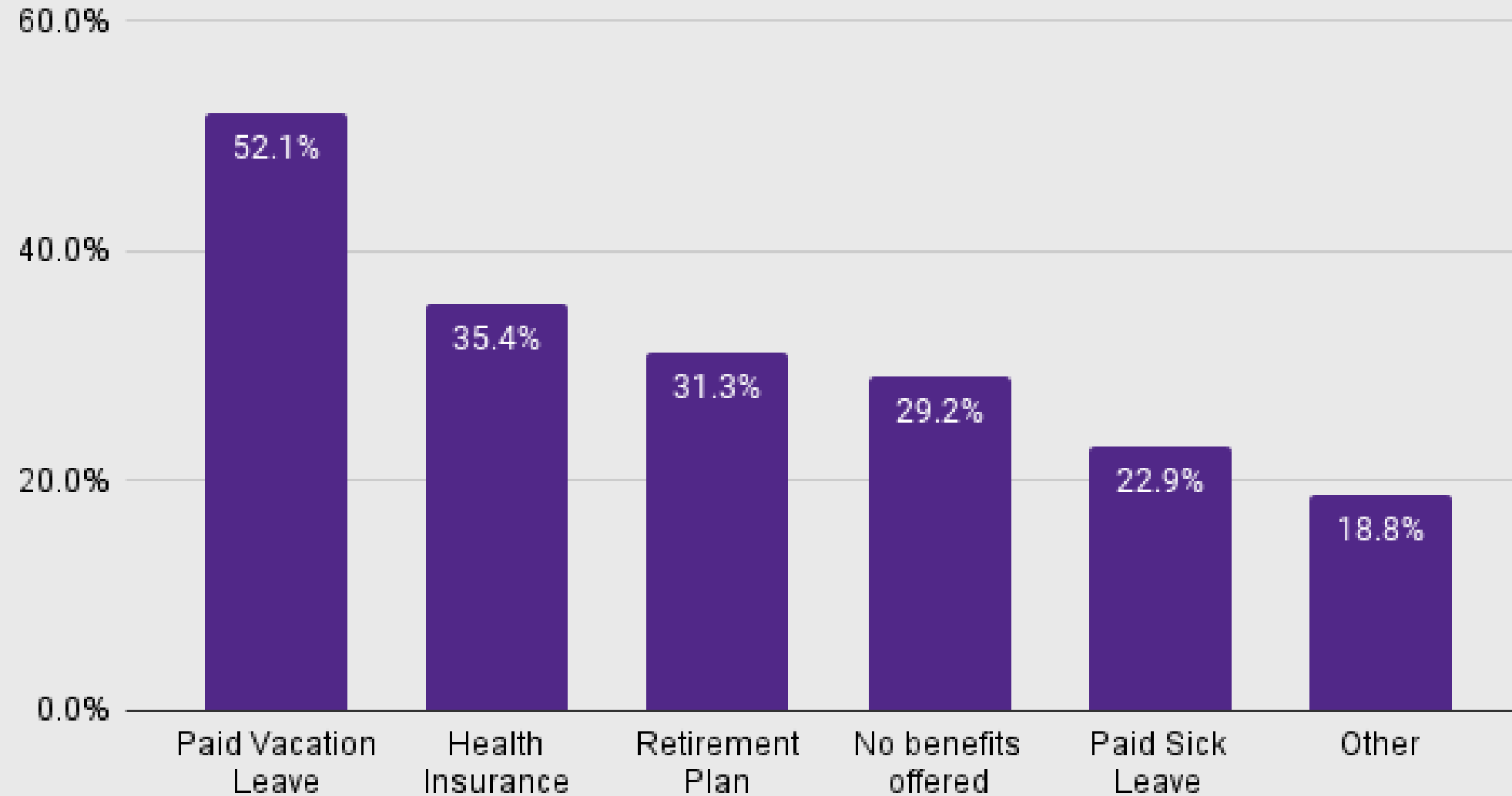
15%  
receive 6 or more hours of  
volunteer help per week

47%  
do not receive any  
volunteer help



# Typical Rural Kansas Grocery Store

What benefits do you offer your employees?



Compared to other businesses in their community...

35%  
rated their employee compensation as "competitive to very competitive"

41%  
rated their employee compensation as "slightly to moderately competitive"

24%  
rated their employee compensation as "not at all competitive"

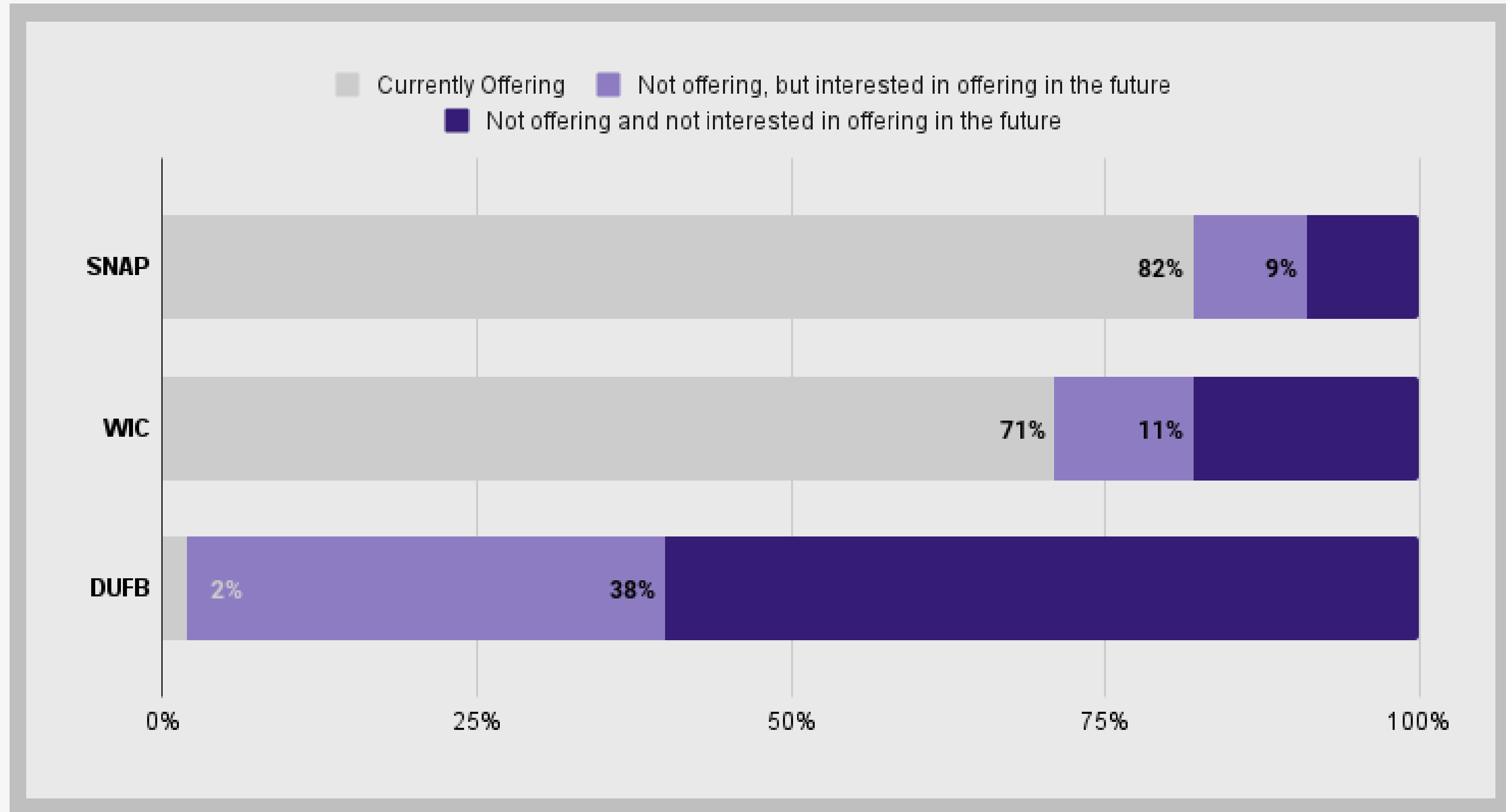


# Typical Rural Kansas Grocery Store





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# Customers

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64%  
have a customer base that is  
less than 2,500

80%  
offer some type of ethnic or  
cultural food

Hispanic (40%)

Asian (30%)

Amish food items (10%)





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# Meeting Customers Where They Are

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50%

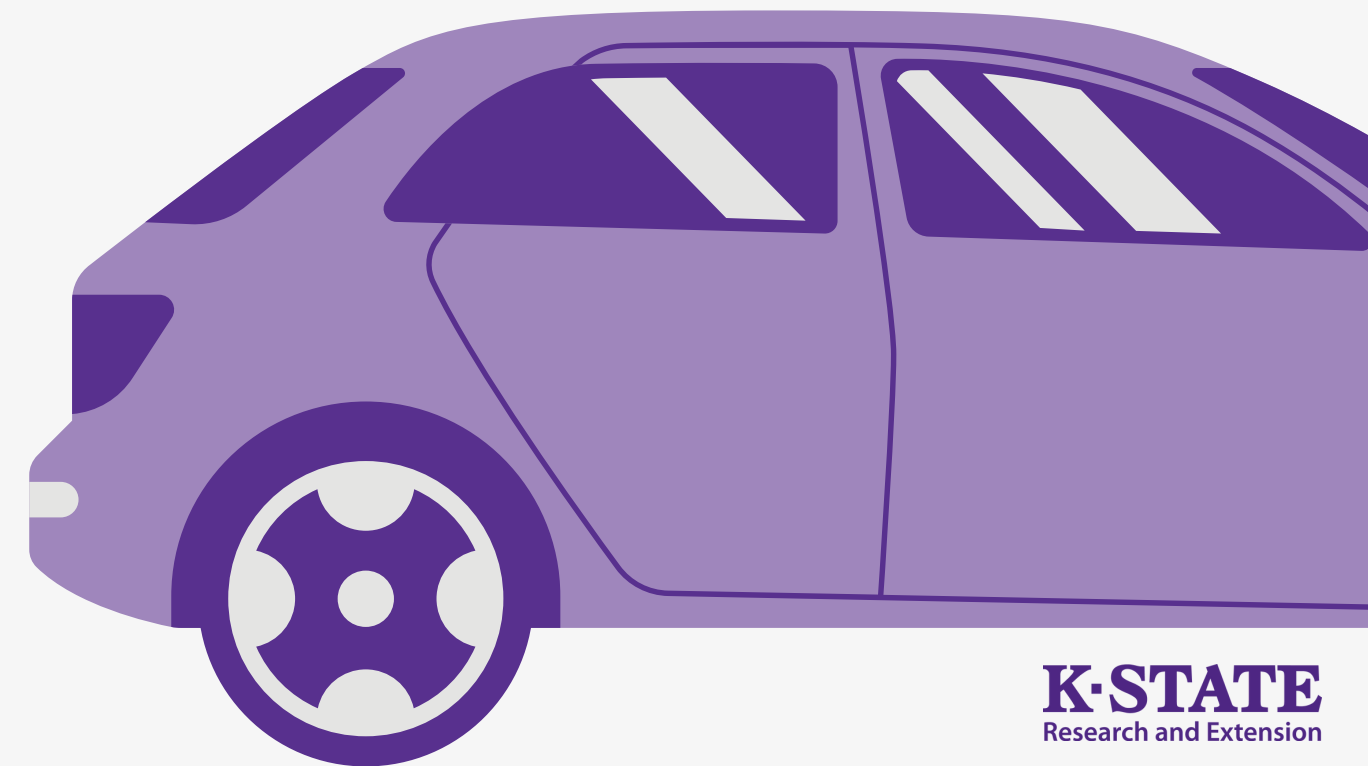
Currently offer an online shopping option  
or has plans to implement it within the  
next five years

87%

Currently offer curbside pick-up at their store

80%

Currently offer a grocery delivery option





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# Communicating with Customers

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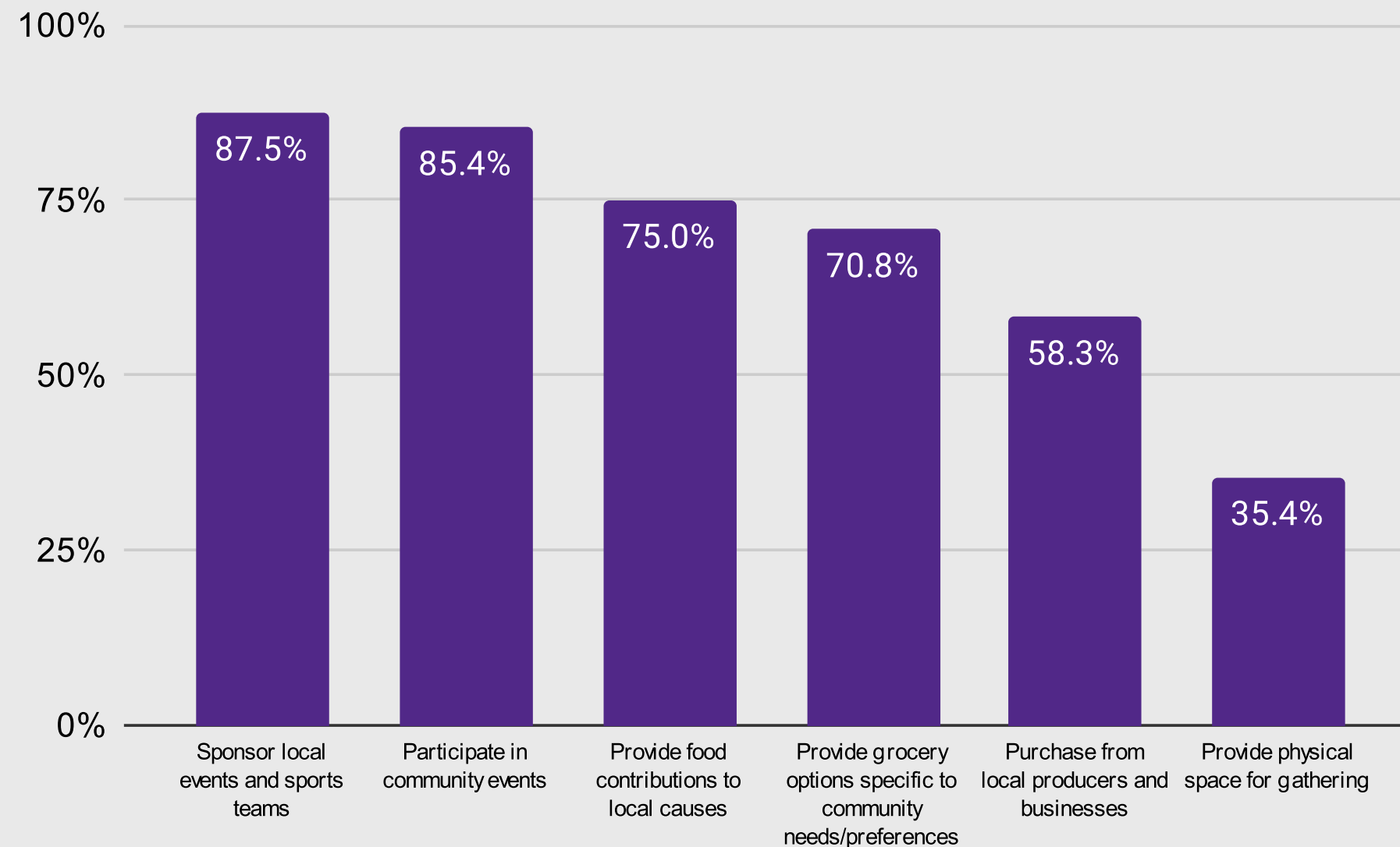
62% of respondents reported learning what their customers would like added to their store offering through personal conversations

26% of respondents reported learning what their customers would like added to their store offering through social media



# Supporting the Community

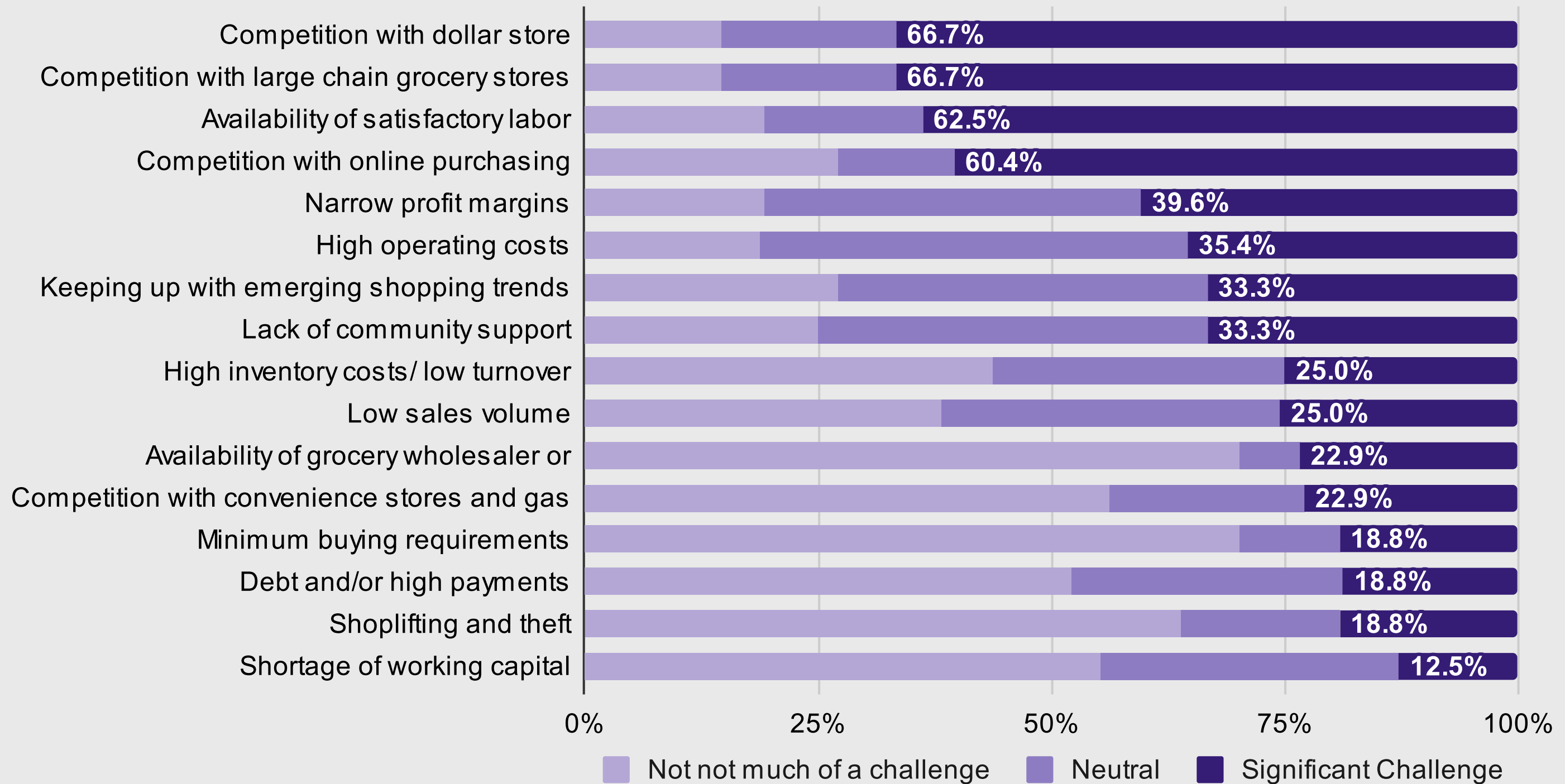
How does your store support the local community?



The Mildred store in Allen County, Kansas hosts a monthly music night that brings the community together for an evening of food and jam sessions.



# Challenges



# Challenges

	2008	2021
1	Competition (with Bix Box Stores)	Competition with dollar stores
2	Operating costs	Competition with large chain grocery stores
3	Labor (Quality/Quantity)	Availability of satisfactory labor
4	Narrow Margins	Competition with online purchasing
5	Taxes	Narrow Profit Margins
6	Government Regulations	High Operating Costs
7	Low community support	Lack of Community Support
8	Low sales volume	Keeping up with Emerging Shopping Trends
9	Shoplifting/Unpaid Accounts	Low Sales Volume
10	Distribution	High Inventory Costs



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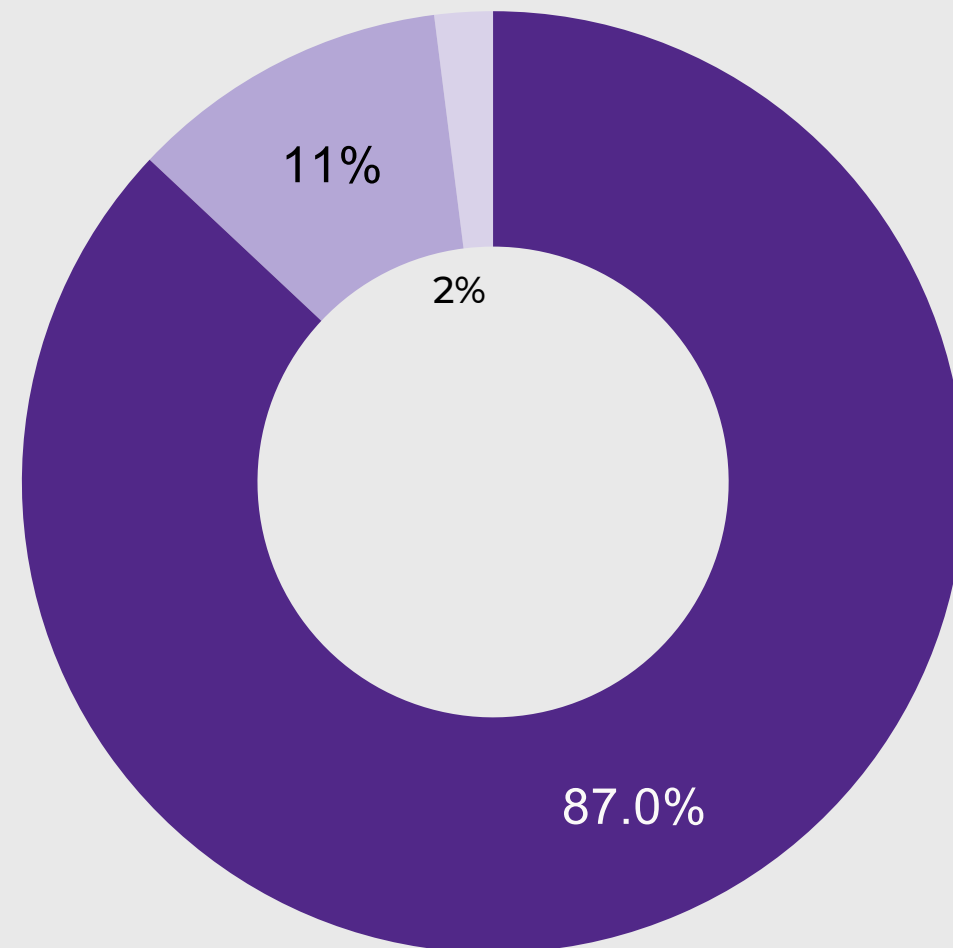
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# Impacts of COVID-19

How did COVID-19 affect your sales?

- Experienced a boost in sales
- Experienced a drop in sales
- Sales remained the same

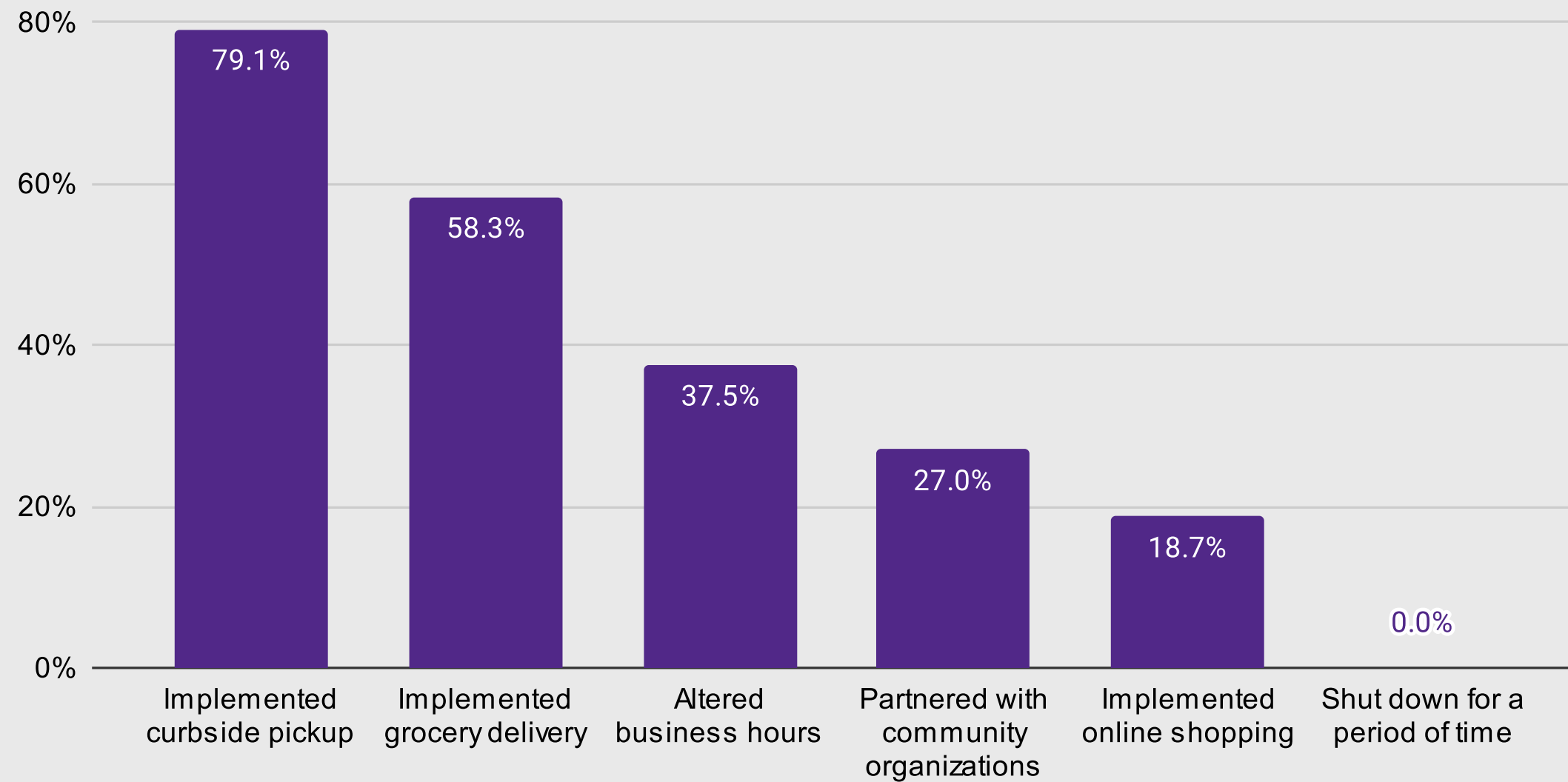


"Increase in local shoppers especially during shutdowns. At the beginning, due to shortages in larger areas cities, we had increased out-of-town shoppers from Wichita, Wellington, Arc City and Winfield. As it progressed we also had increased customers from larger cities where masks were required and arrows etc. were being implemented within stores."



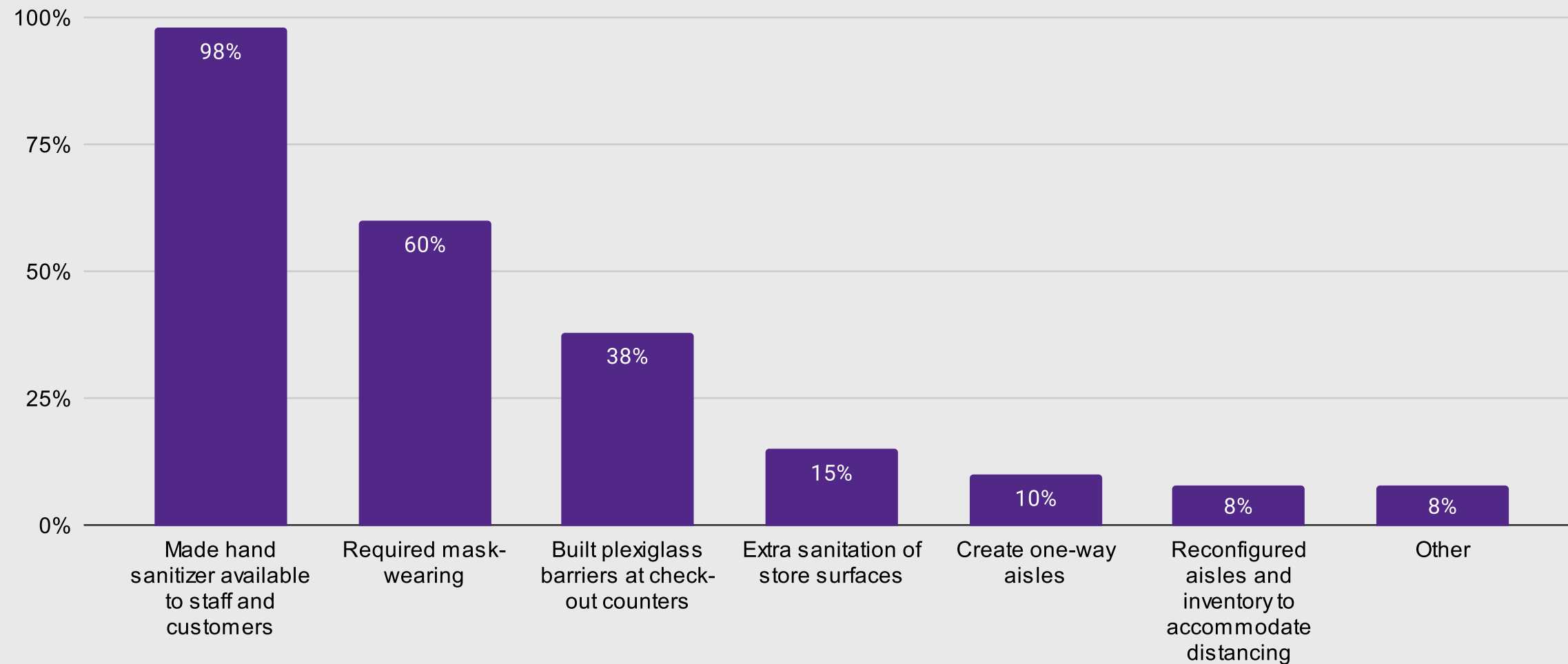
# Impacts of COVID-19

What changes did you make to your business operations as a result of COVID-19?



# Impacts of COVID-19

What additional safety precautions did you implement inside your store?



"We were able to show our community they could trust us to take care of their needs and provide a safe shopping experience."

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# Impacts of COVID-19

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“Shortages!” “[Our greatest challenge was] keeping stocked and [having] enough staff to operate.”

"Certain products very hard to receive but AWG did a fantastic job letting us know what products were available."



# Acknowledgements

Thank you.

Interested in receiving the full report?



Open your phone camera and hold it up to the QR code and follow the link.

Thank you for your time.

Rural Grocery Initiative

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[www.ruralgrocery.org](http://www.ruralgrocery.org)