

Sustainable ag practices rising: Survey

More than 70 percent of U.S. ag producers report they are operating with sustainable ag practices, according to the new Rabobank U.S. Farm & Ranch Survey.

This is the highest level since the survey began in 2008.

After a small decline in steps taken toward sustainable ag in the Rabobank Fall 2009 U.S.

Farm & Ranch Survey, 72 percent of all U.S. ag producers report they have taken steps toward sustainable ag — the highest since the inception of the measurement, the survey found.

“U.S. producers understand that to be in the ag business for the long term means taking care of the land,” Sterling Liddell, a Rabobank vice president, said in

a news release.

The most significant steps are using direct seeding (64 percent), minimizing use of chemicals (42 percent), crop rotation or diversification (39 percent) and reduced energy inputs (39 percent).

The survey also found those who were most likely to have taken steps toward sustainable

ag practices were:

- Tenant farmers — 80 percent
- row-crop farmers — 79 percent
- farmers in the West — 77 percent
- farms with gross farm income of \$1 million and more — 77 percent
- farms run by someone

younger than 40 years old — 76 percent

- farms with more than three employees — 74 percent and
- dairy producers — 73 percent

“Since larger producers tend to lead trends, it’s encouraging that they are making sustainable ag practices a part of their operations,” said Liddell.