

# IMPRESSIONS OF CANADIAN FOOD SAFETY

FOOD SAFETY INSPECTOR STUDY



JUNE 2017

PREPARED FOR THE AGRICULTURE UNION

# METHODOLOGY

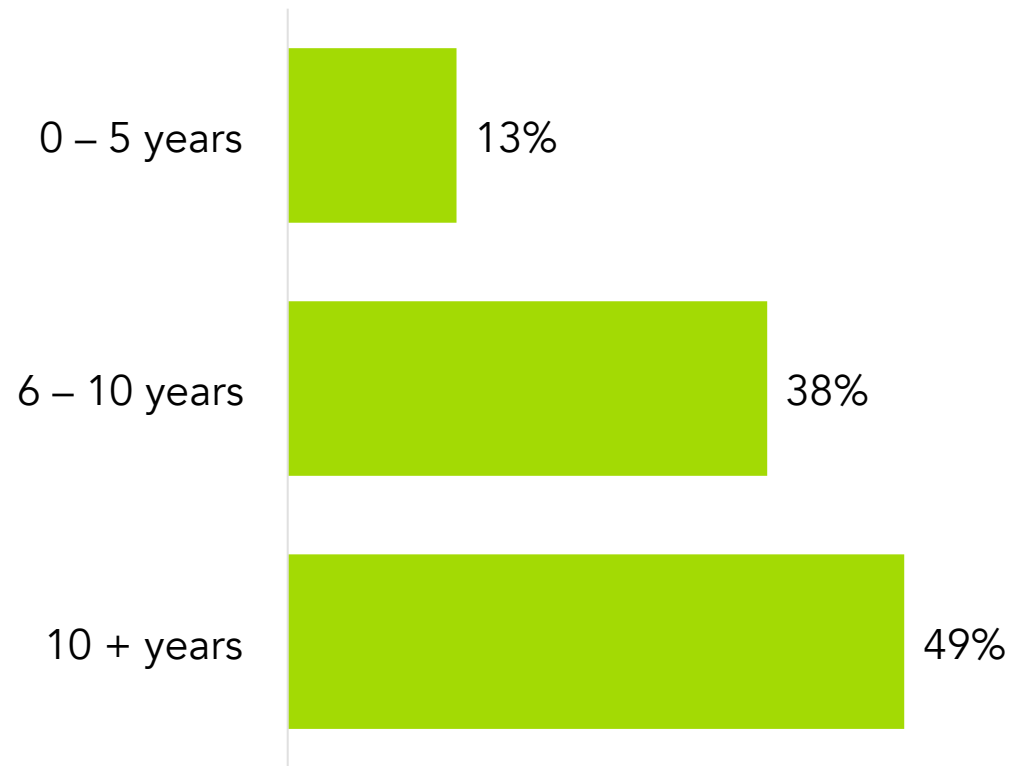
- The survey was conducted online with 488 members of the Agriculture Union in English and French using an internet survey programmed and collected by Abacus Data.
- The survey was completed from May 15 to June 16, 2017.
- An email invitation was sent to Agriculture Union members for which the union had an email address. In total, 2,085 members were invited to participate. The response rate for the survey was 23%.
- The margin of error for this study is 4.5%, 19 times out of 20.
- Results may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

# PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS



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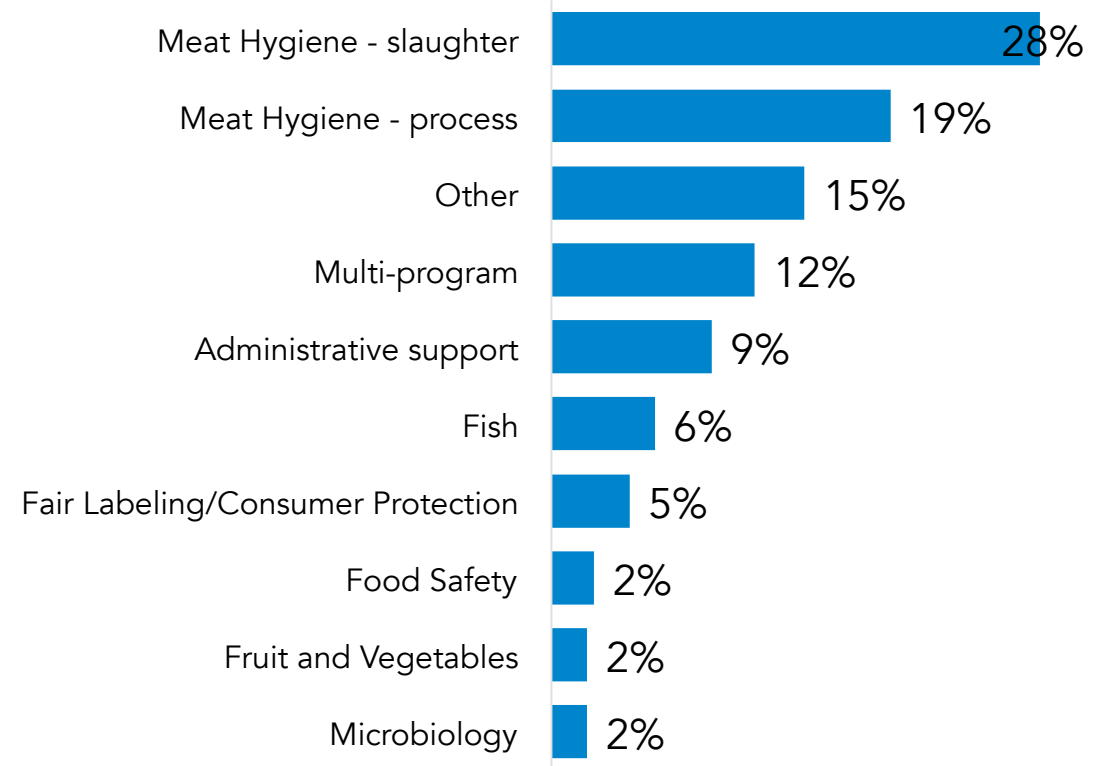
## LENGTH OF TIME AT CFIA



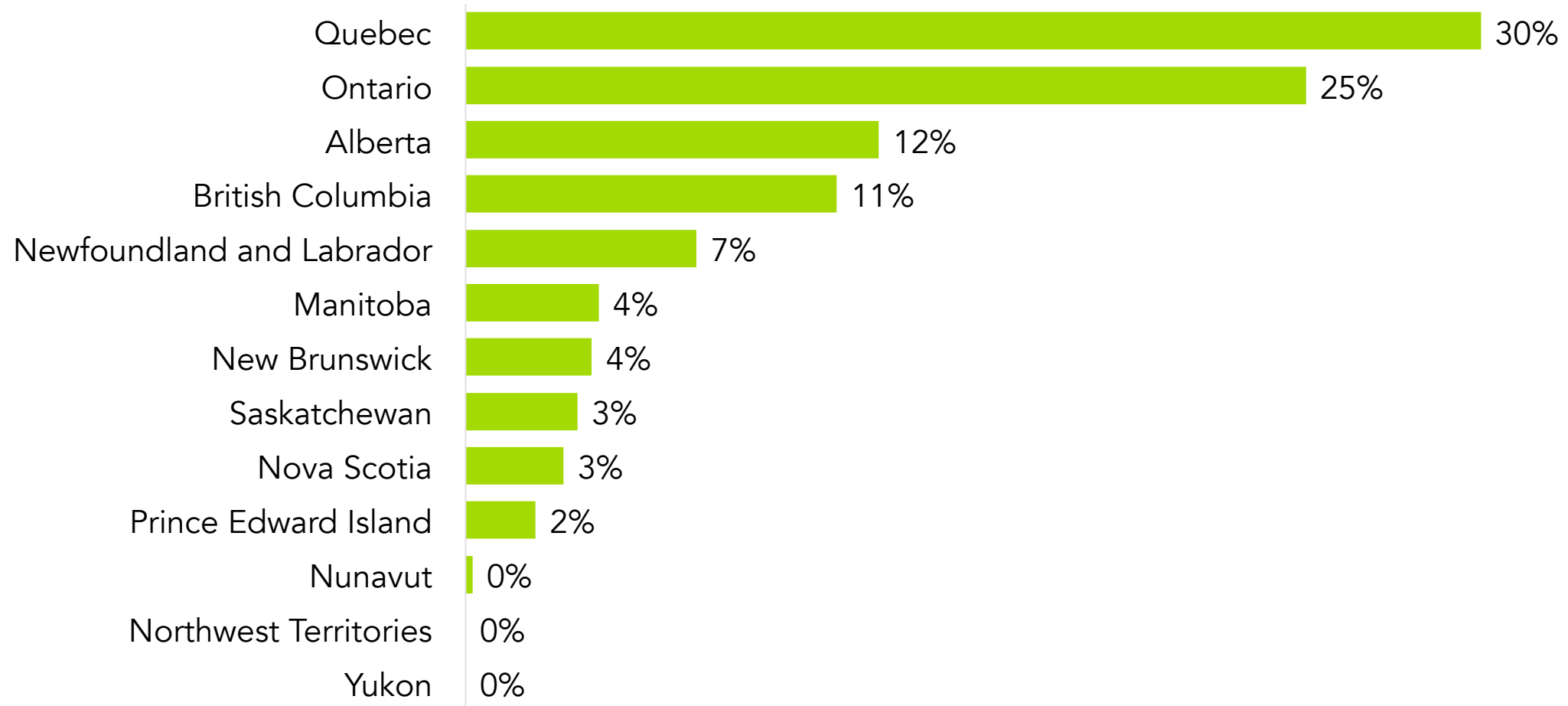
How long have you worked for the CFIA?

In which program do you work?

## PROGRAM AT CFIA



# PROVINCE OF EMPLOYMENT



In which province do you work?

# KEY FINDINGS



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The study reveals a food safety inspectorate that feels so short staffed a majority of respondents report that mandatory food safety requirements cannot be met at the sites where they work; a majority are of the opinion that food is less safe as a result of the shortages. The survey also found frontline food safety staff are not confident that “Inspection Modernization” will improve food safety outcomes.

- A wide majority (76%) of respondents believe it is likely that a major food borne illness will occur in the near future. Those who believe an outbreak in the near future is very likely is up significantly (33%) from 2016. Almost half (47%) believe Canadians have been exposed to this increased risk because of a shortage of inspection staff.

# KEY FINDINGS

- Among meat inspectors, only a third of respondents (33%) report that there are always enough staff to allow for a meaningful daily presence in establishments where their group is responsible. Six-in-ten (60%) disagree that there are enough staff to book off time for vacation, illness or other purposes.
- The CFIA has lauded Inspection Modernization, but only 4% of respondents believe it will reduce the chance of a major food borne illness outbreak. A strong majority (63%) believe it will do the opposite and increase the chance, up significantly from 2016.
- Six-in-ten inspectors (63%) report that the complement of staff in their immediate work area is inadequate to complete all tasks needed to ensure compliance with food safety requirements. Only 5% report staffing levels that are more than adequate while three-in-ten (34%) report adequate staffing levels.



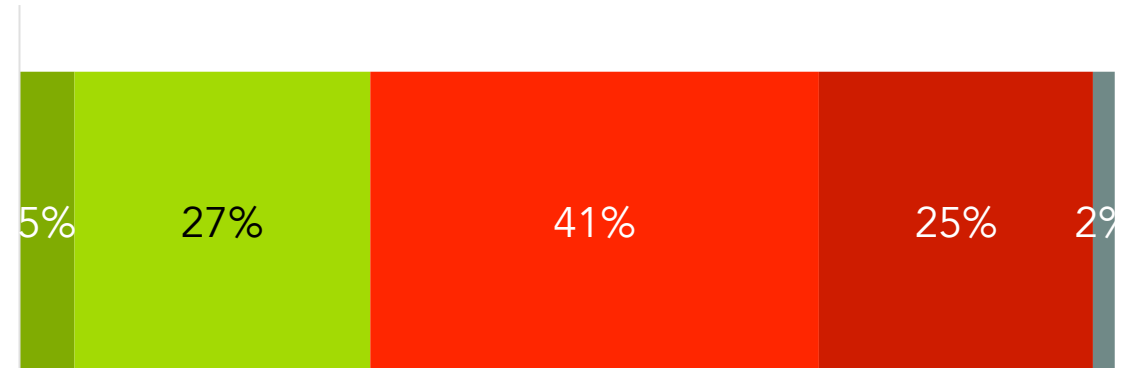
# DETAILED FINDINGS



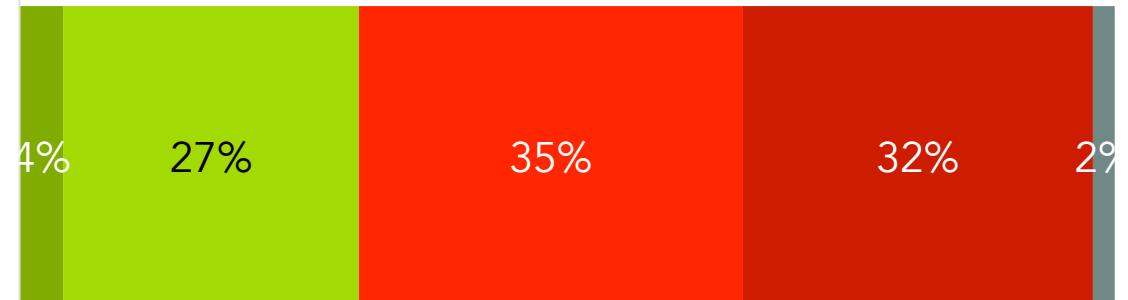
# INSPECTOR STAFF LEVELS

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

There are enough staff in my immediate work area to allow us to take leave for vacation, illness and other purposes.



There are enough staff in my immediate work area to allow us to book off for required training



Strongly agree

Agree

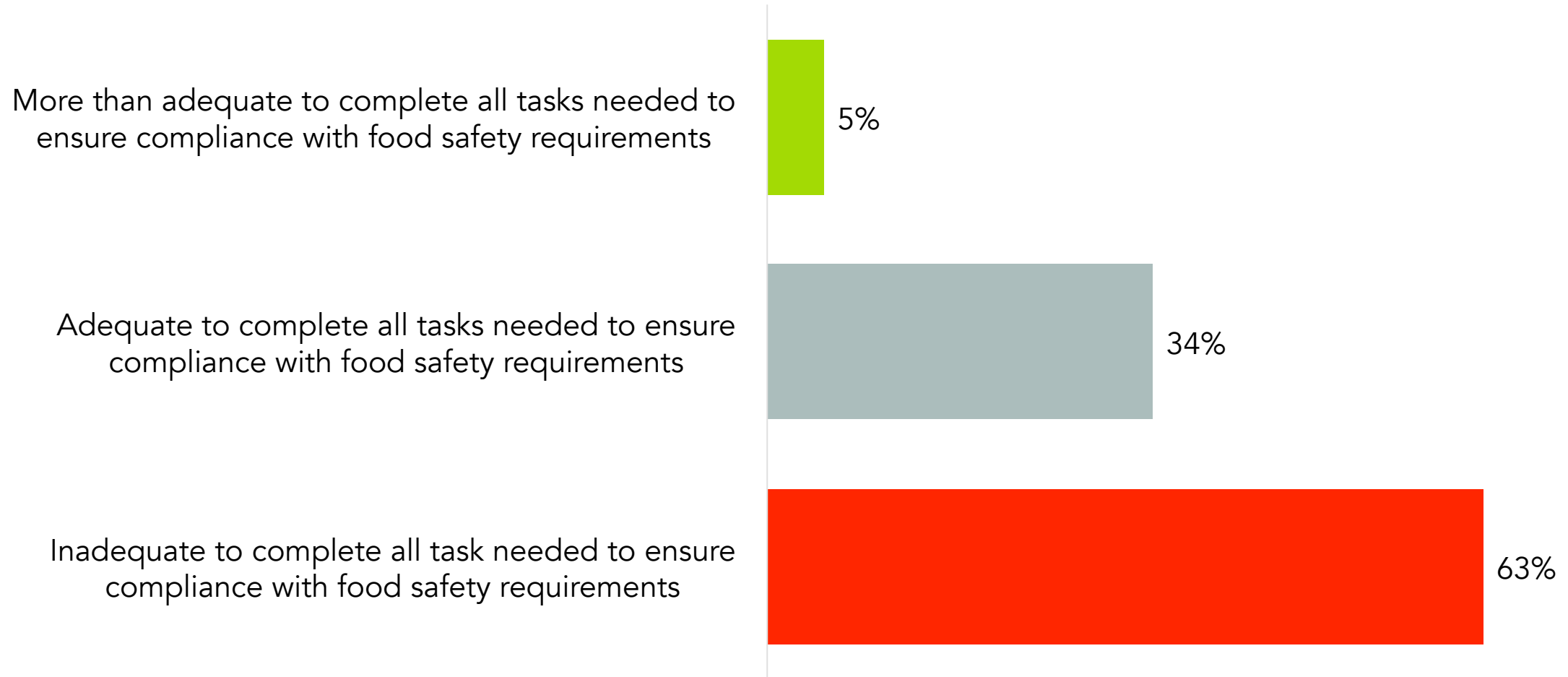
Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

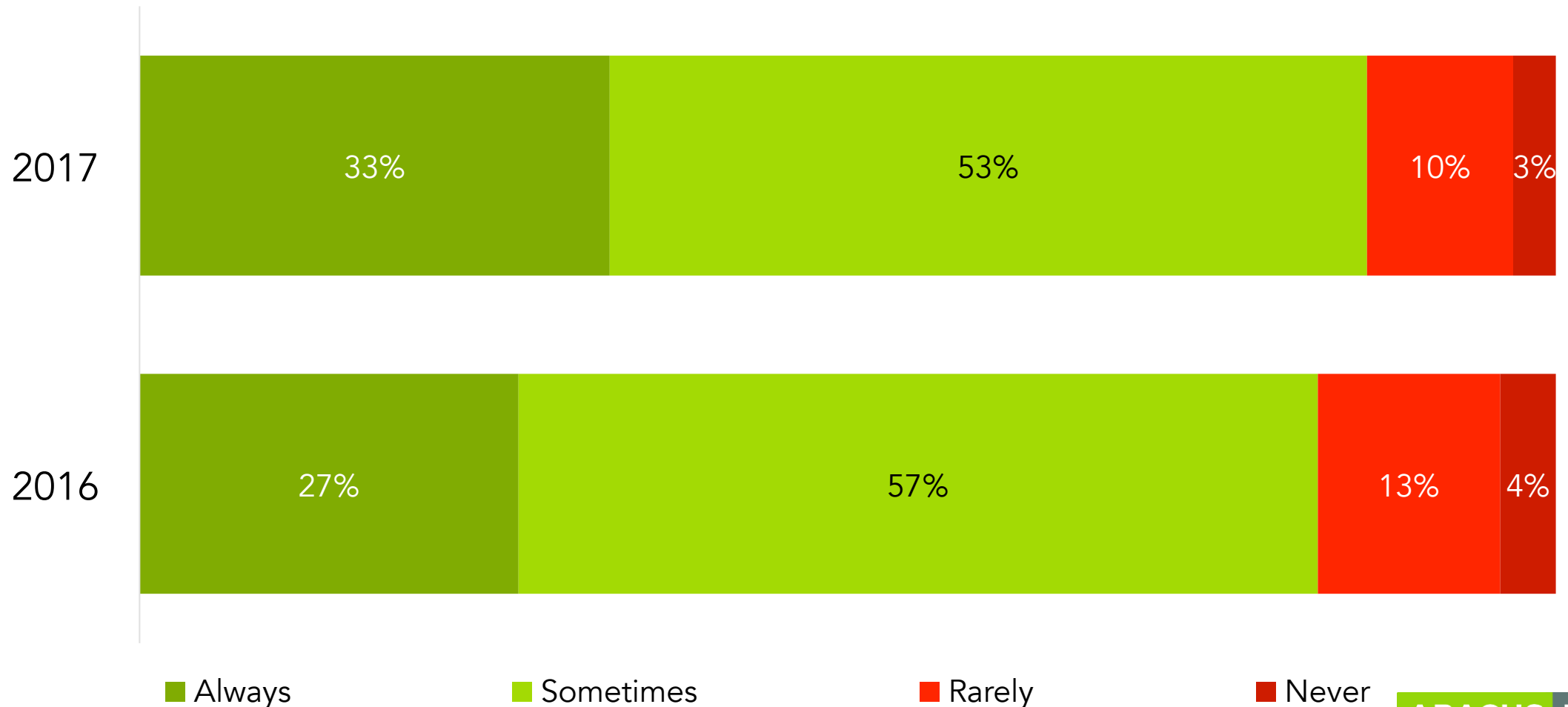
# PERCEPTIONS ABOUT CURRENT COMPLEMENT OF INSPECTION STAFF

Which of the following best describes the current complement of inspection staff/staff in your immediate working group?



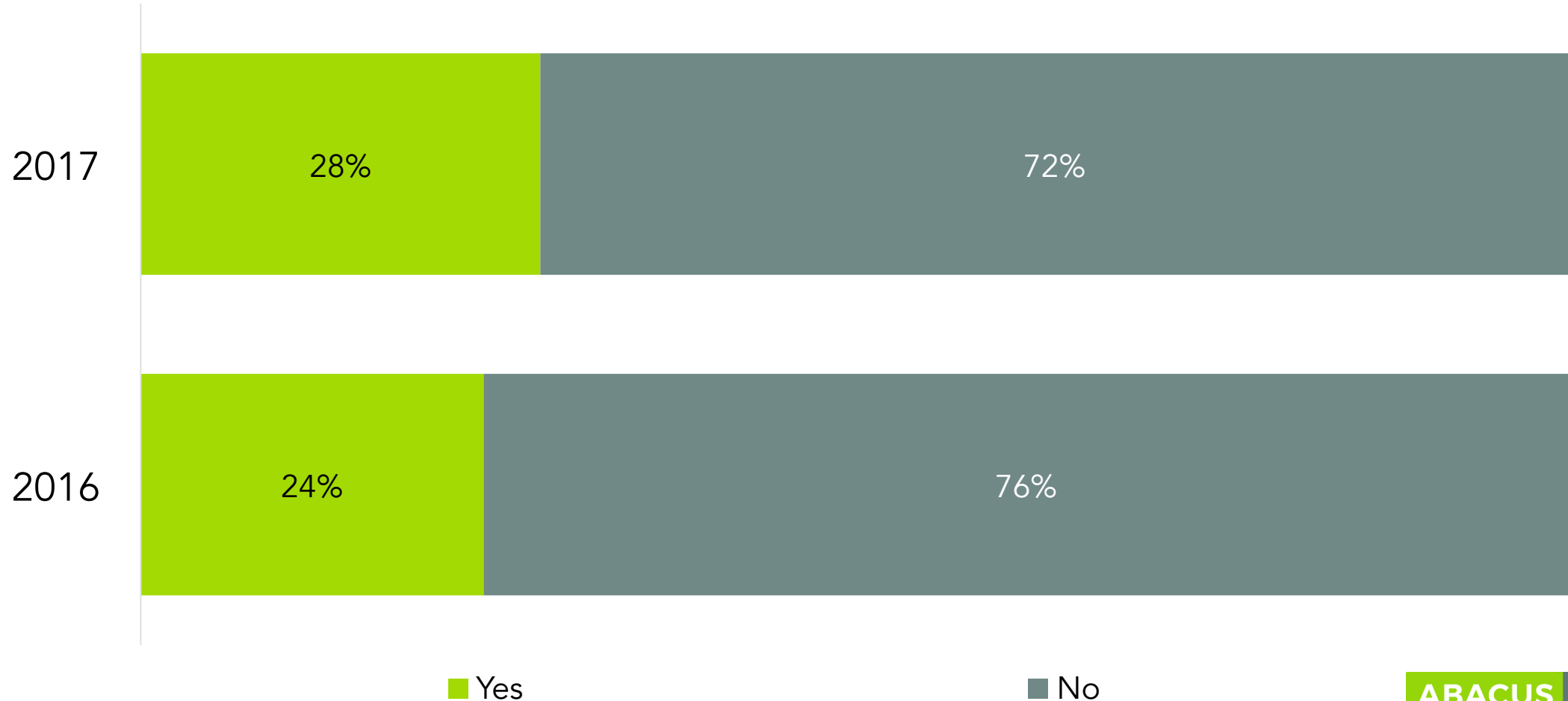
# DAILY PRESENCE OF MEAT INSPECTORS

Are there enough inspectors in your immediate working group to allow meaningful daily presence in establishments for which your group is responsible?



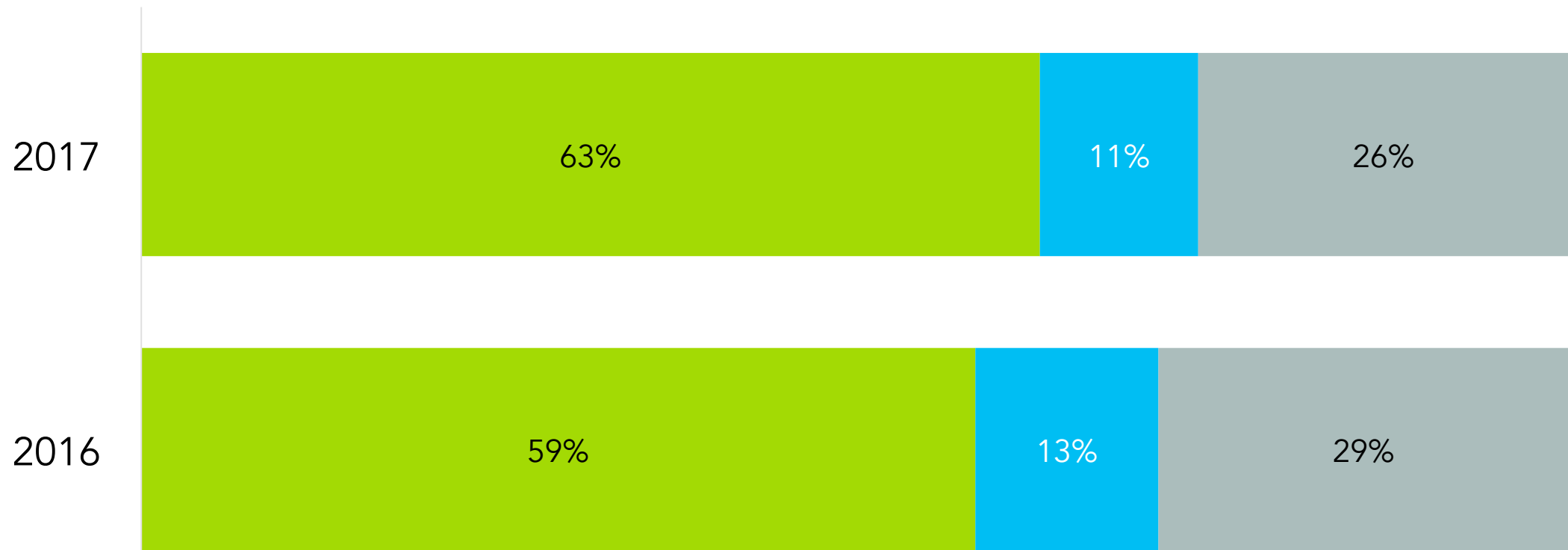
# REQUIRED FOOD SAFETY RELATED TASKS

Have you been asked or directed by CFIA managers to stop doing some required food safety related tasks?



# REASON FOR STOPPING FOOD SAFETY RELATED TASKS

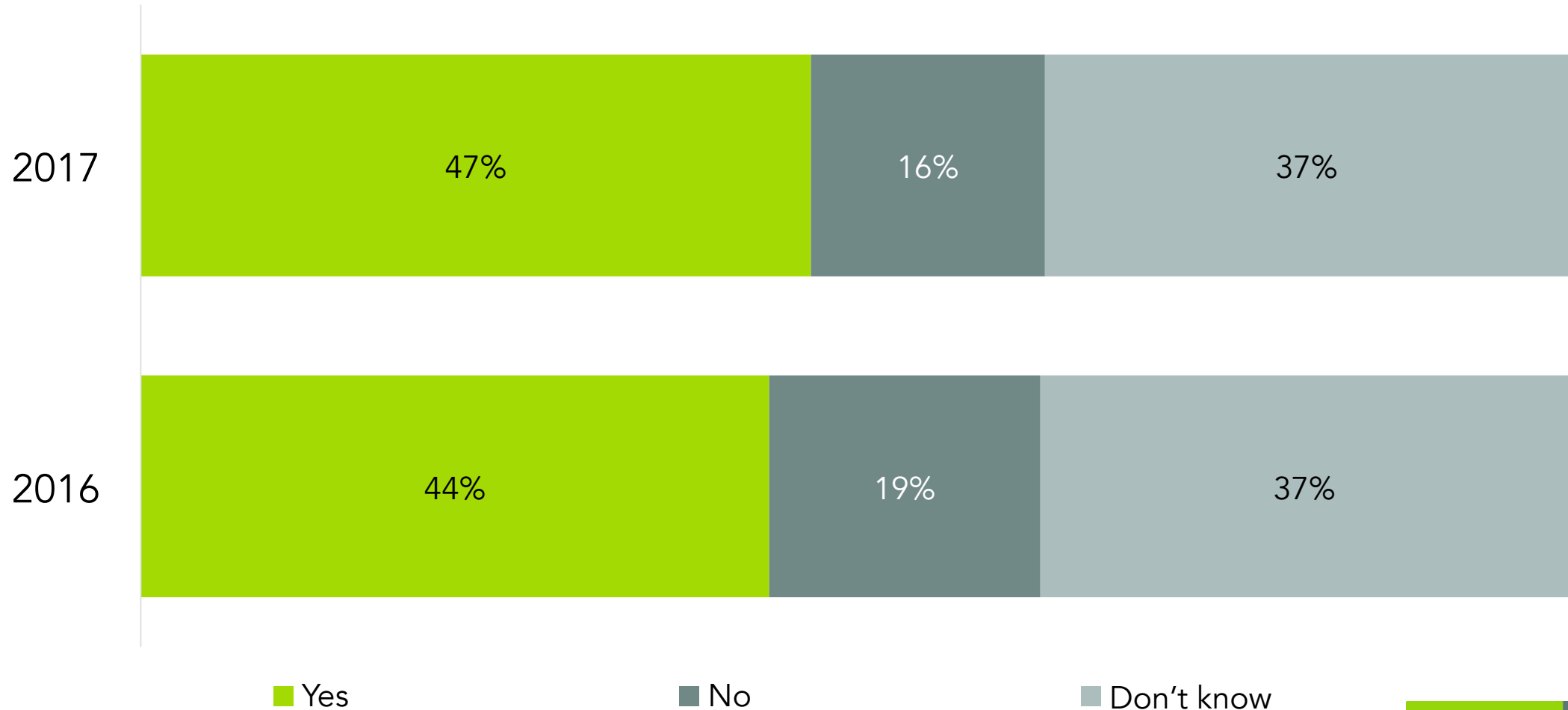
Which of the following best describes why managers at the CFIA asked you to stop doing some required food safety related tasks, in your opinion?



- There are not enough inspectors available to do all required food safety tasks
- The food safety tasks aren't necessary to ensure compliance with safety requirements
- Other

# INCREASED RISK OF FOOD BORNE ILLNESS

In your opinion, have Canadian consumers been exposed to an increased risk of food borne illness because of a shortage of staff?



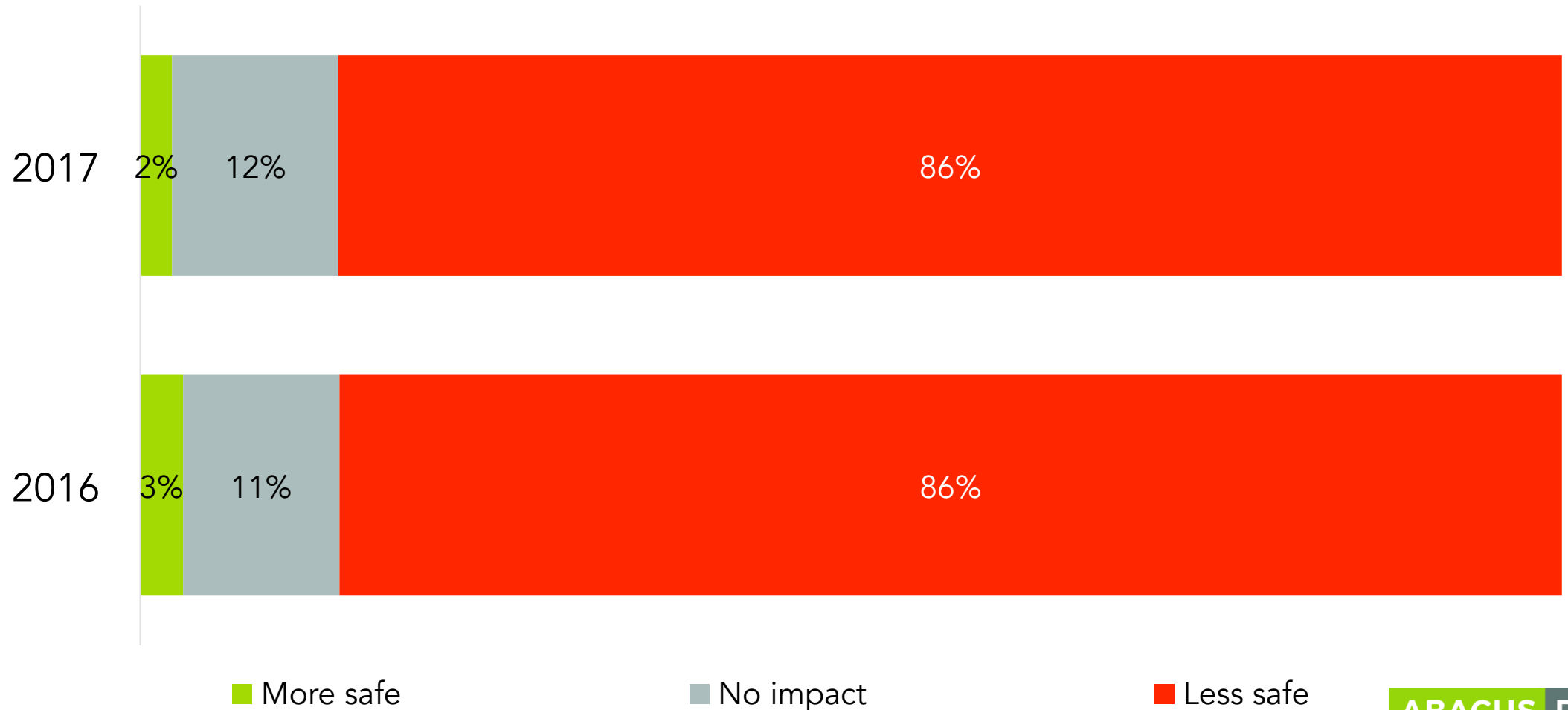
■ Yes

■ No

■ Don't know

# SELF REGULATION

As you may know, the CFIA is increasingly reliant on industry to self-regulate when it comes to food safety. Will this trend make Canada's food supply more safe, less safe, or will it have no impact on the food supply?



More safe

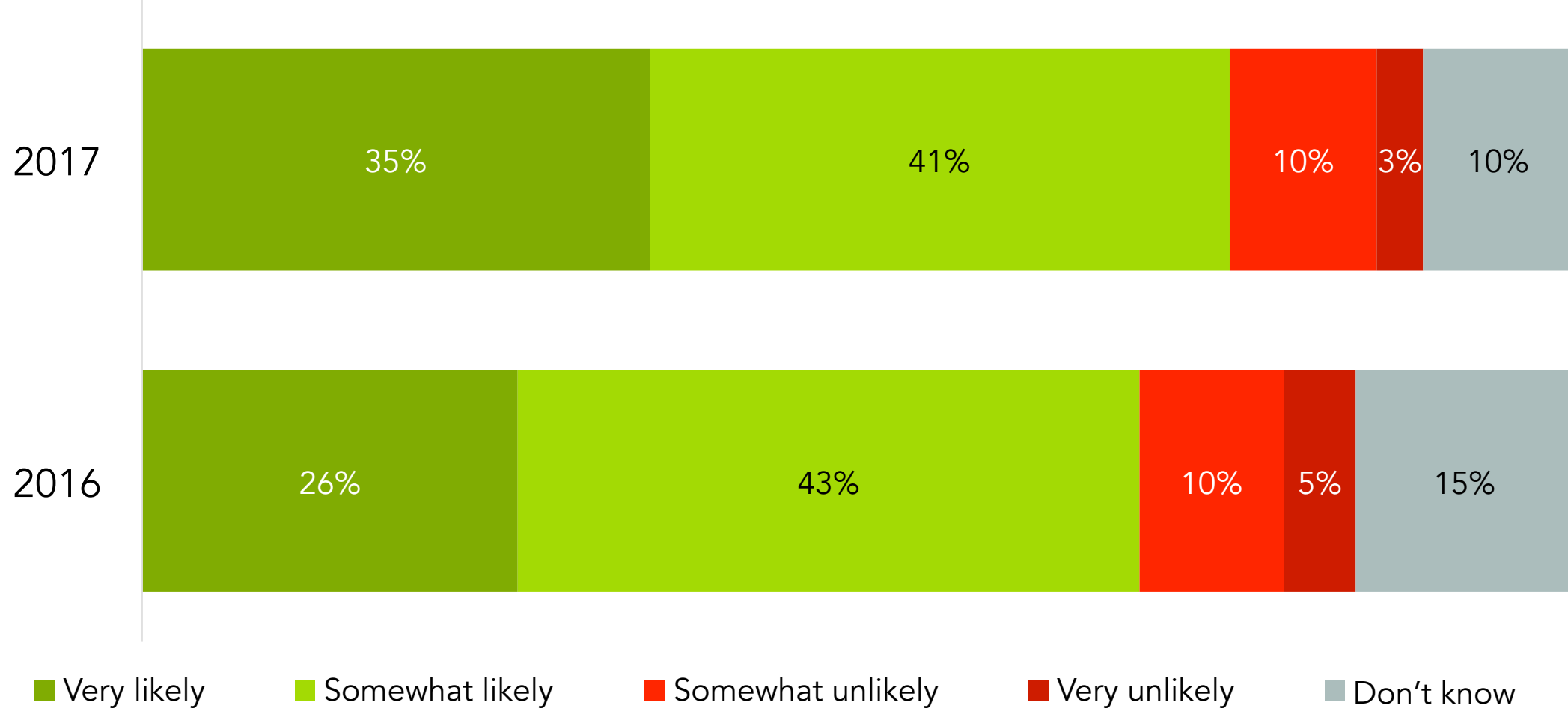
No impact

Less safe



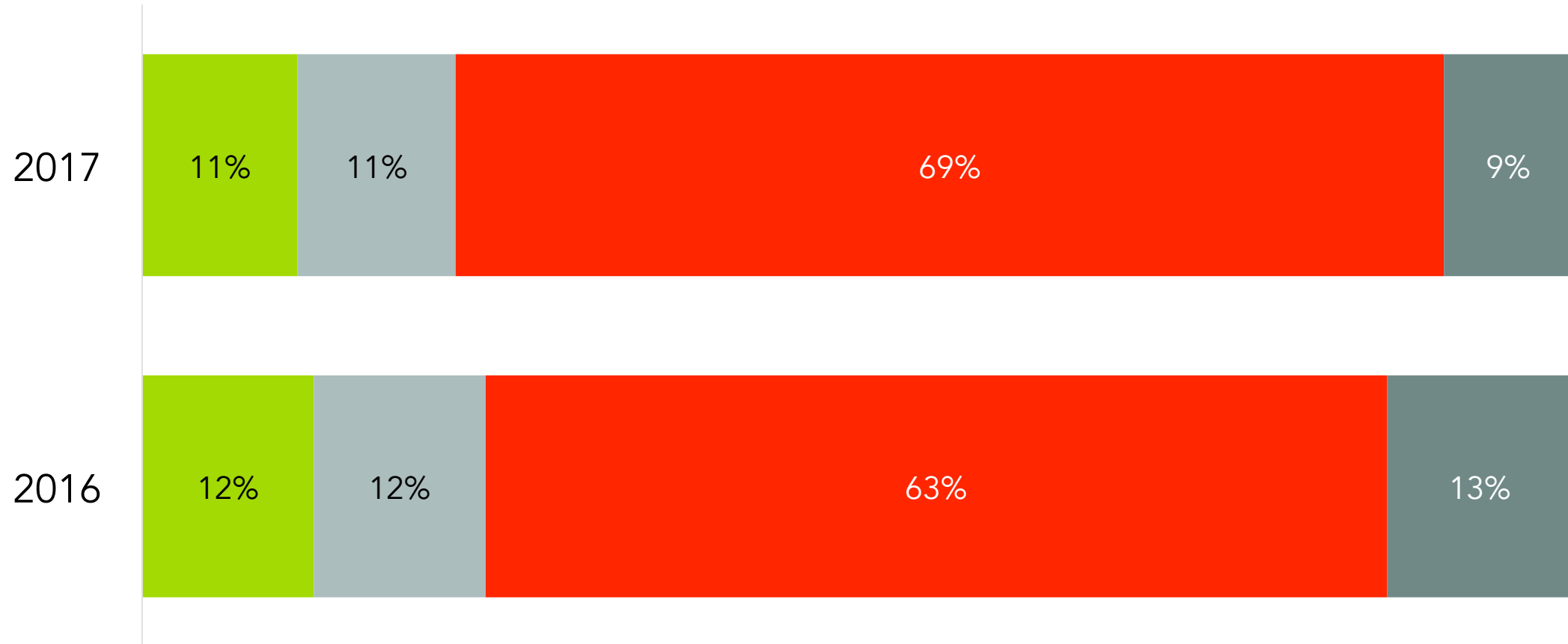
# LIKELIHOOD OF MAJOR FOOD BORNE ILLNESS

Given your knowledge and experience with the state of food inspection in Canada, what would you say is the likelihood that a major food borne illness outbreak in Canada will occur in the near future?



# CONSUMER CONFIDENCE IF CANADIANS KNEW WHAT YOU KNOW

If Canadian consumers had your knowledge about the level of food inspection in Canada today, do you think their level of confidence in the safety of food they consume would...



■ Increase

■ Stay the same

■ Decrease

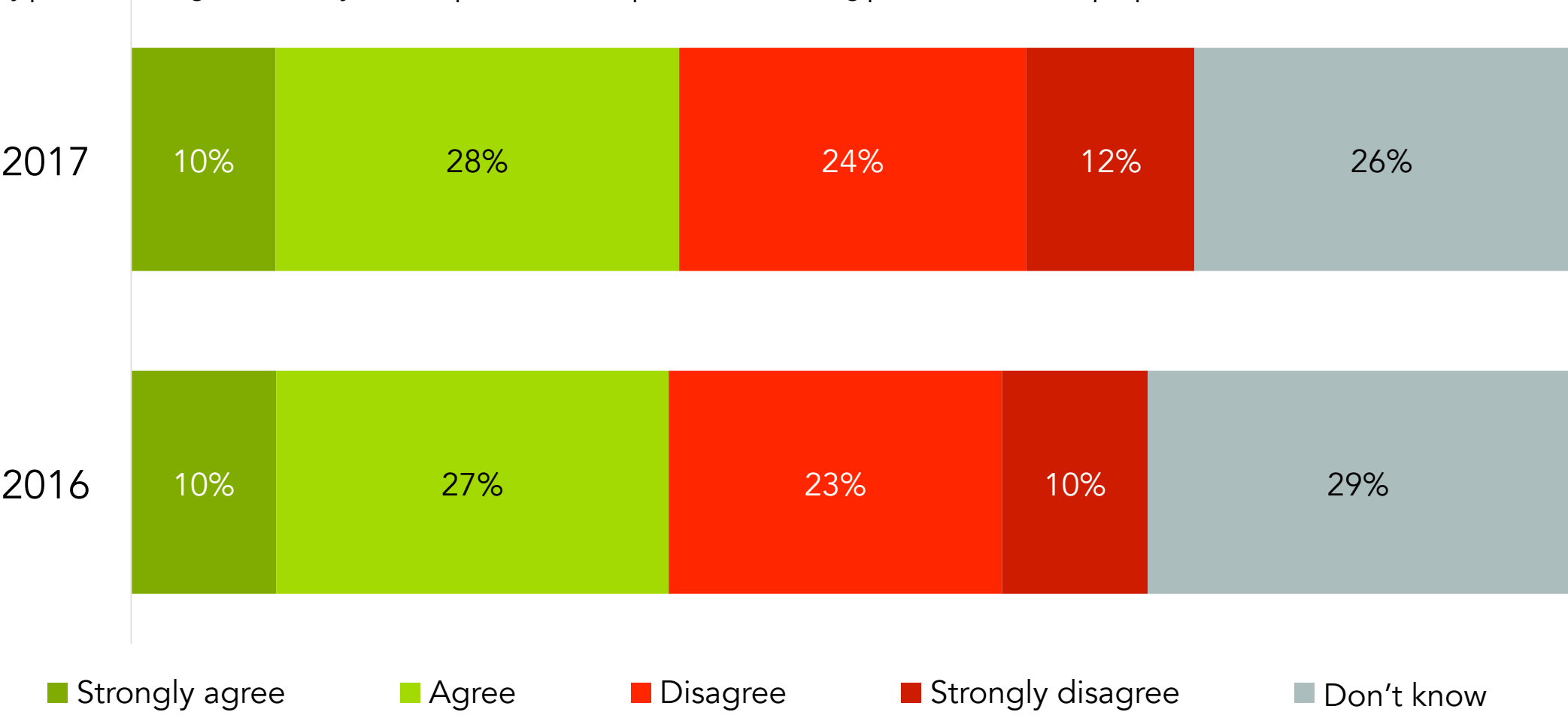
■ Don't know



All Respondents, n = 488

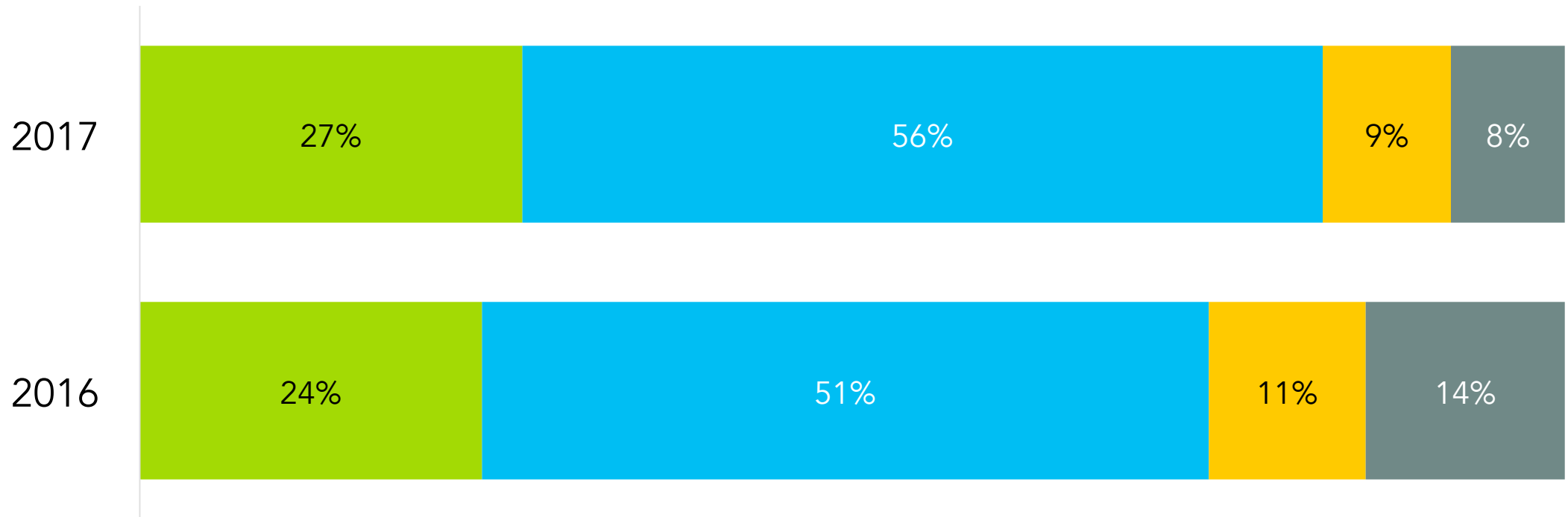
# THE COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION SYSTEM

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The Compliance Verification System has allowed me to be involved in day-to-day problem solving with industry to avoid problems in the plant from becoming problems that make people sick.



# MOTIVATION FOR CHANGING INSPECTION SYSTEM

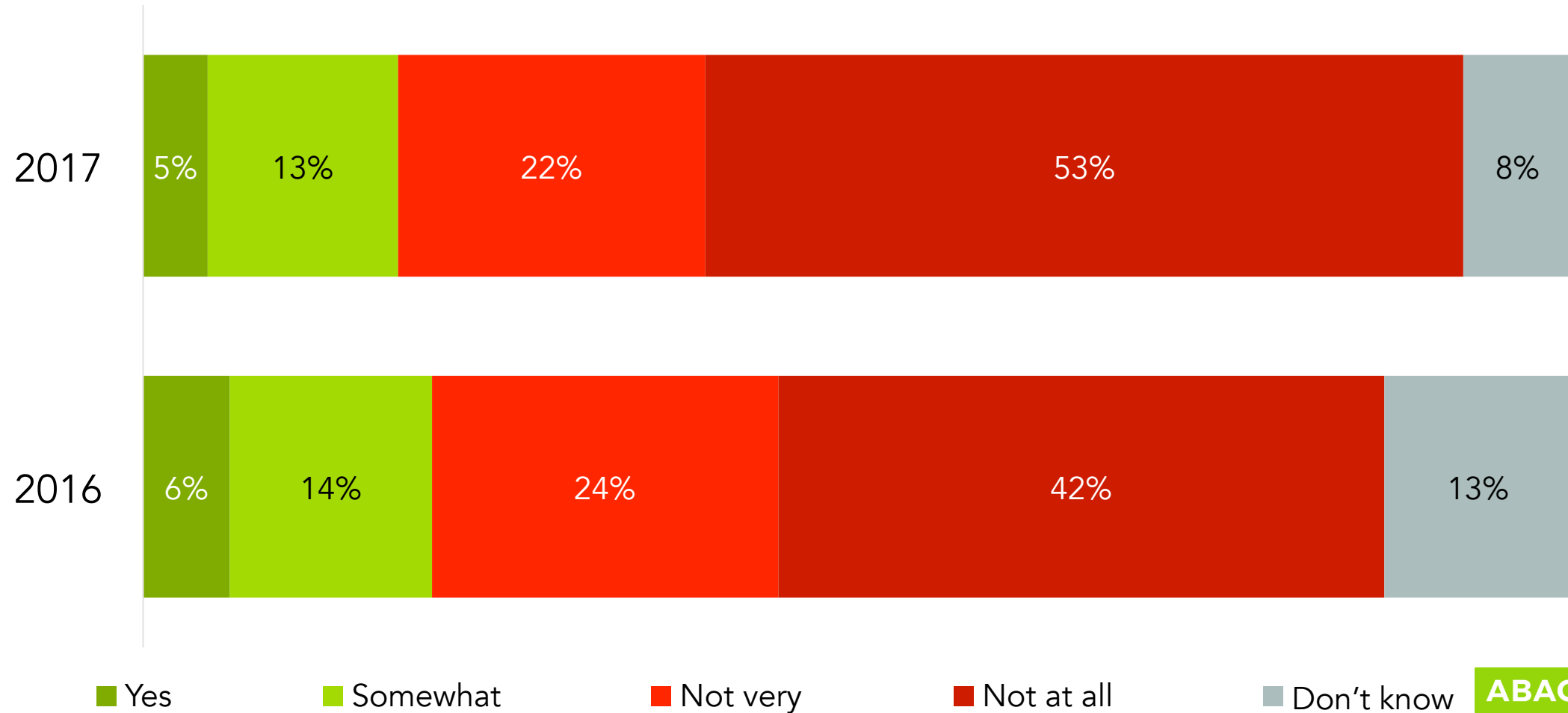
As you may know, the CFIA intends to replace the current commodity inspection system with a new system. The Agency is calling this change Inspection Modernization. In your opinion, what is the CFIA's motivation for doing this?



- To respond to dwindling resources at the CFIA
- To transfer more responsibility and liability from CFIA to industry
- To improve food safety outcomes
- Don't know

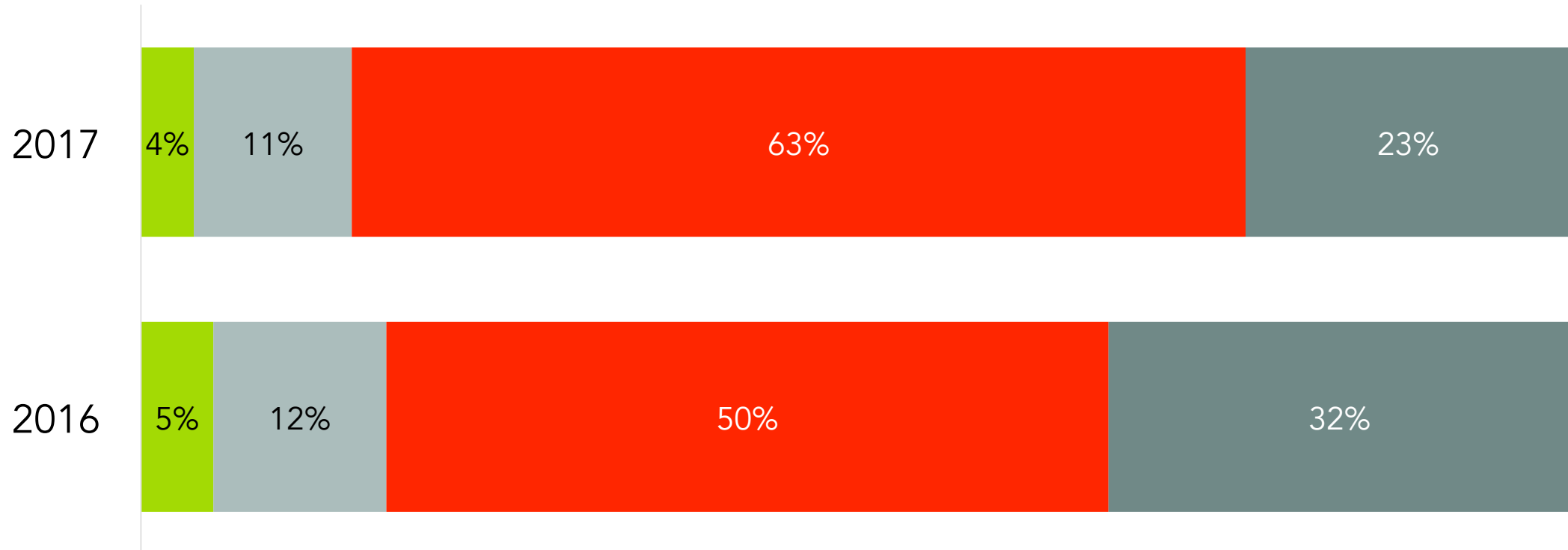
# INSPECTION MODERNIZATION – DO YOU FEEL QUALIFIED?

CFIA has said Inspection Modernization will allow the Agency to assign inspectors and frontline supervisors work outside of their area of expertise (for example, forestry experts inspecting fish, animal science experts inspecting plant material). Do you feel qualified to inspect products outside of your field of expertise?



# IMPACT OF INSPECTION MODERNIZATION

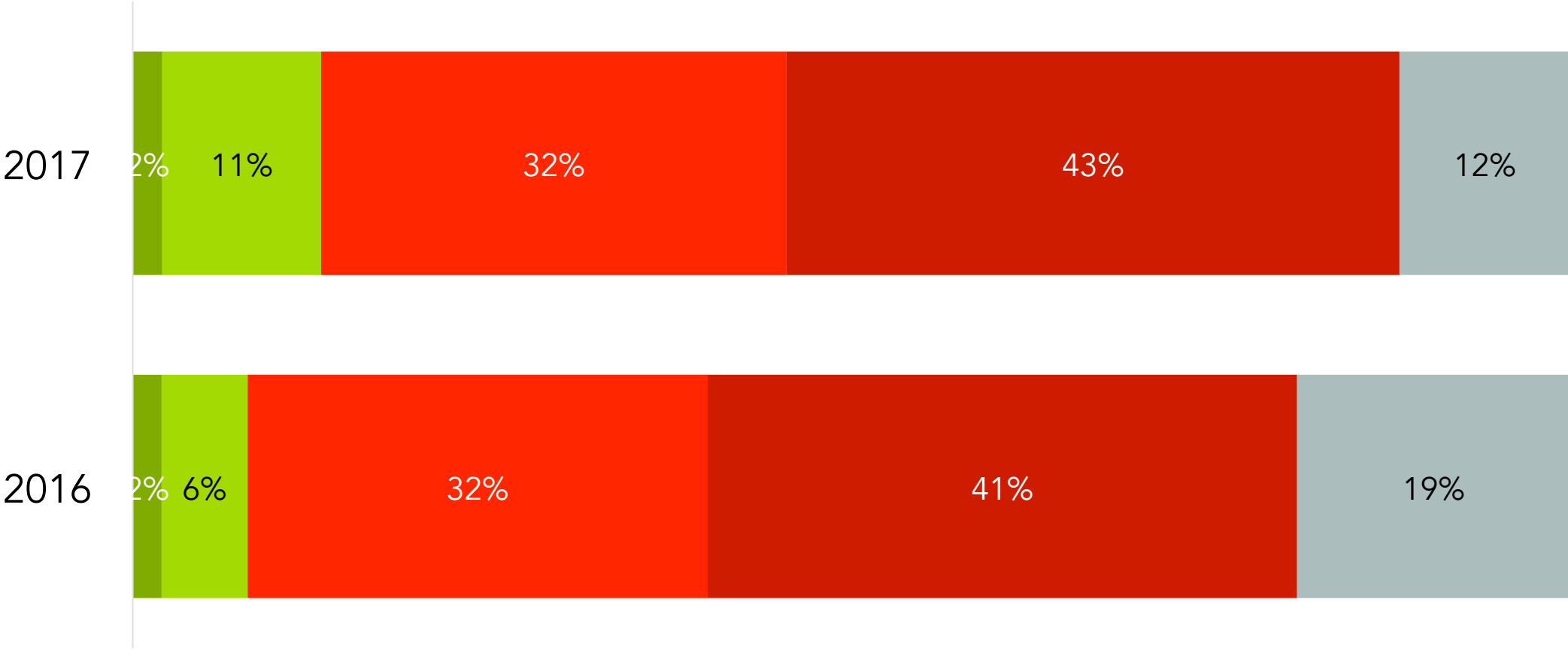
In your opinion, will the introduction of Inspection Modernization...



- Reduce the chance of a major food borne illness outbreak
- Make no difference
- Increase the chance of a major food borne illness outbreak
- Don't know

# I HAVE BEEN BRIEFED AND AM FULLY AWARE OF MY NEW ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? I have been briefed and am fully aware of my new role and responsibilities under Inspection Modernization



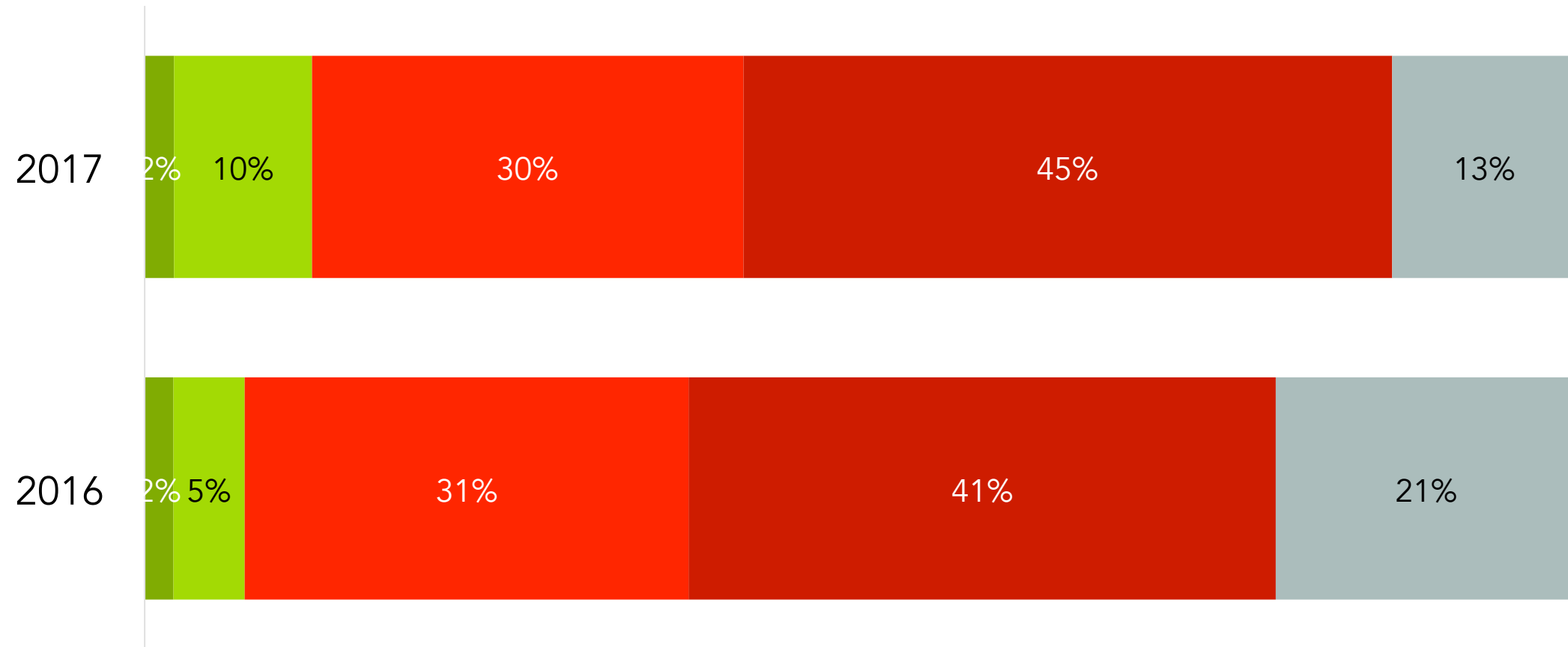
Strongly agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly disagree    Don't know



All Respondents, n = 488

# I HAVE RECEIVED ADEQUATE TRAINING TO FULFILL THOSE RESPONSIBILITIES

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? In preparation for the introduction of Inspection Modernization, I have received adequate training to fulfill those responsibilities



Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

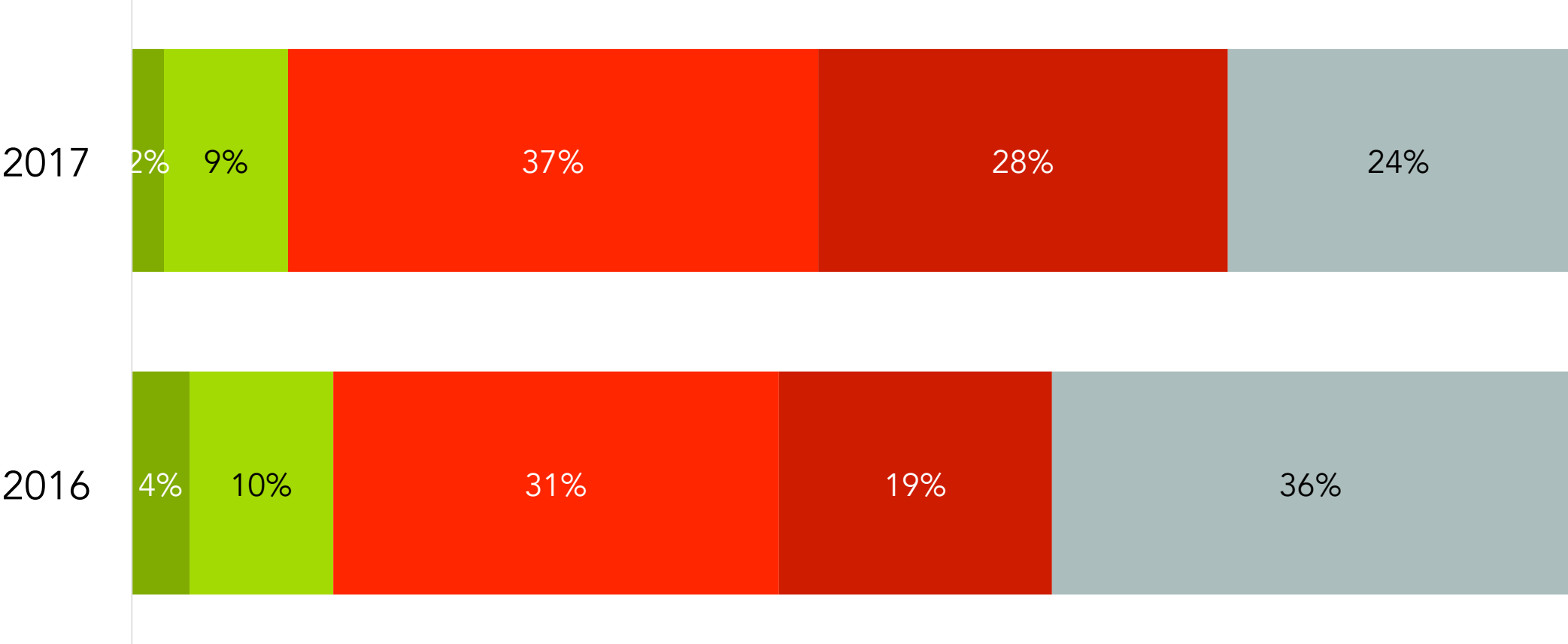


All Respondents, n = 488



# SENIOR LEADERSHIP AT THE CFIA WILL BE ABLE TO INTRODUCE INSPECTION MODERNIZATION WHILE PROTECTING CONSUMER SAFETY

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Senior leadership at the CFIA will be able to introduce Inspection Modernization while protecting consumer safety at the same time



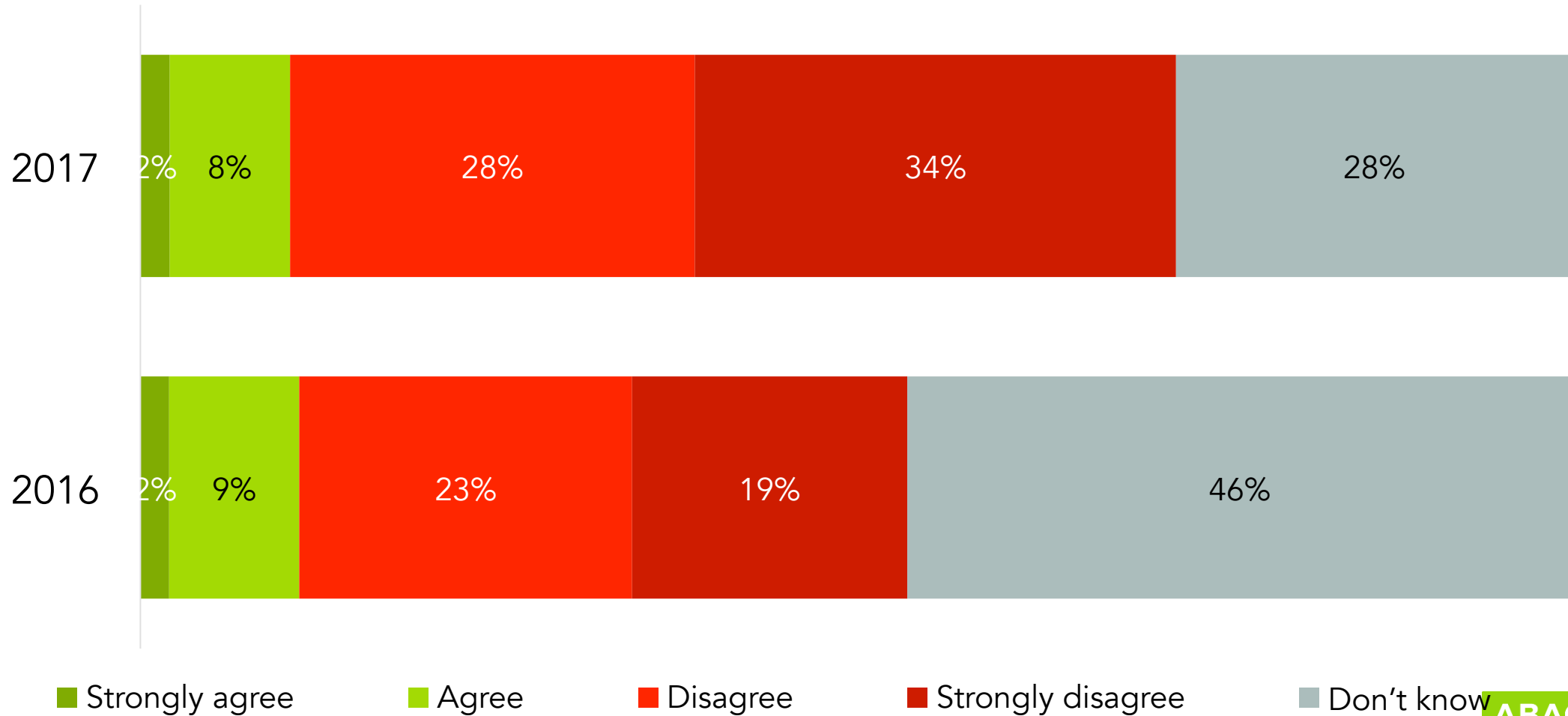
Strongly agree    Agree    Disagree    Strongly disagree    Don't know



All Respondents, n = 488

# INSPECTION MODERNIZATION WILL ALLOW ME TO DO MORE HANDS ON OVERSIGHT AND INSPECTION OF INDUSTRY

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? *Inspection Modernization will allow me to do more hands on oversight and inspection of industry*



Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

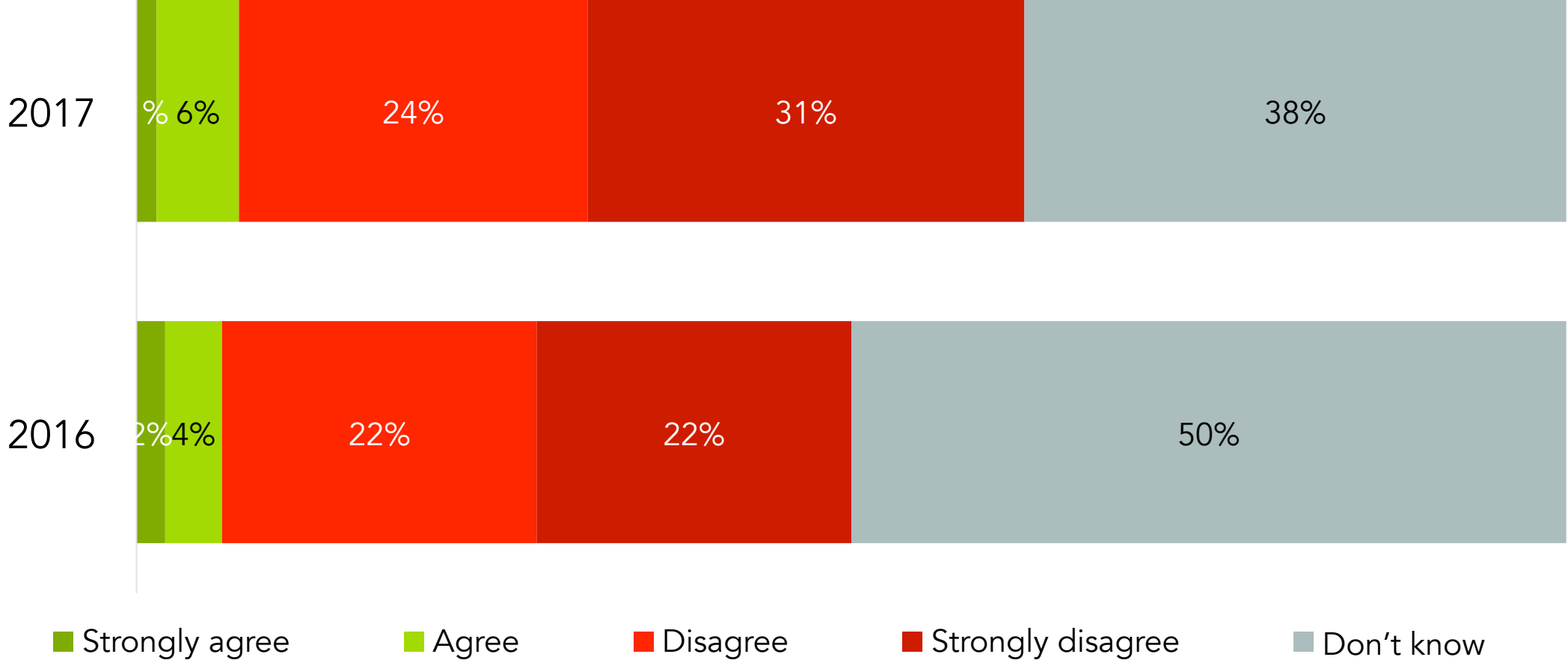
Don't know



All Respondents, n = 488

# AN ASSESSMENT OF RESOURCES NEEDED TO SAFELY IMPLEMENT INSPECTION MODERNIZATION HAS BEEN DONE

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? **An assessment of resources needed to safely implement Inspection Modernization has been done in my immediate work area**



■ Strongly agree   ■ Agree   ■ Disagree   ■ Strongly disagree   ■ Don't know



All Respondents, n = 488

# CONFIDENCE IN DIRECTION OF INSPECTION MODERNIZATION

Are you more or less confident than 1 year ago that Inspection Modernization is heading in the right direction?

