

# Print vs. Digital Survey

4-H Curriculum 2023

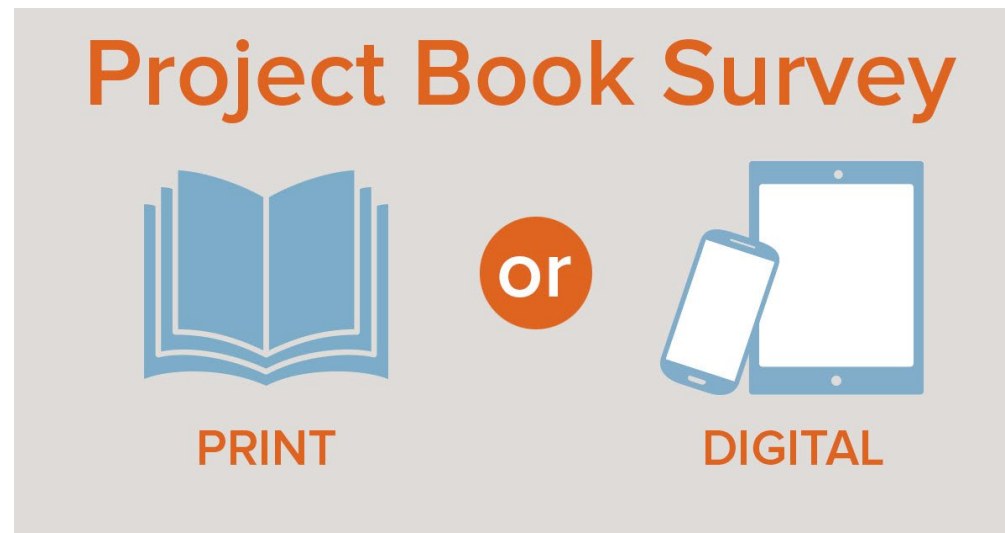
**CFAES**



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

# What Do Our Volunteers and Members Prefer?



## **BACKGROUND**

Ohio 4-H and other Extension professionals serve clientele who come from diverse backgrounds, including many with varying abilities and experiences in the use of technology. As we strive to meet the needs of youth, their families, and volunteers, we must offer up-to-date content but also adapt our delivery channels. These survey results are just one consideration as we move toward thoughtful content delivery that best supports our mission of positive youth development.

## **OBJECTIVE**

Over the last decade, the Ohio 4-H curriculum team has conducted several surveys of Ohio 4-H members and volunteers about preferences for delivery of project book content. With a short series of questions, we elicited feedback about which of these delivery channels our members and volunteers prefer—our current system of print project books, digital delivery, or both. In 2019, we added a question about which methods of digital delivery are preferred.

## THE SURVEY

- WHO:** 4-H volunteers and members
- WHAT:** Short questions about attitudes and preferences for print and digital content delivery
- WHEN:** Spring 2023
- WHERE:** At the Ohio 4-H Conferences and throughout counties through mid- April
- WHY:** We want to know which delivery channel our members and volunteers prefer.

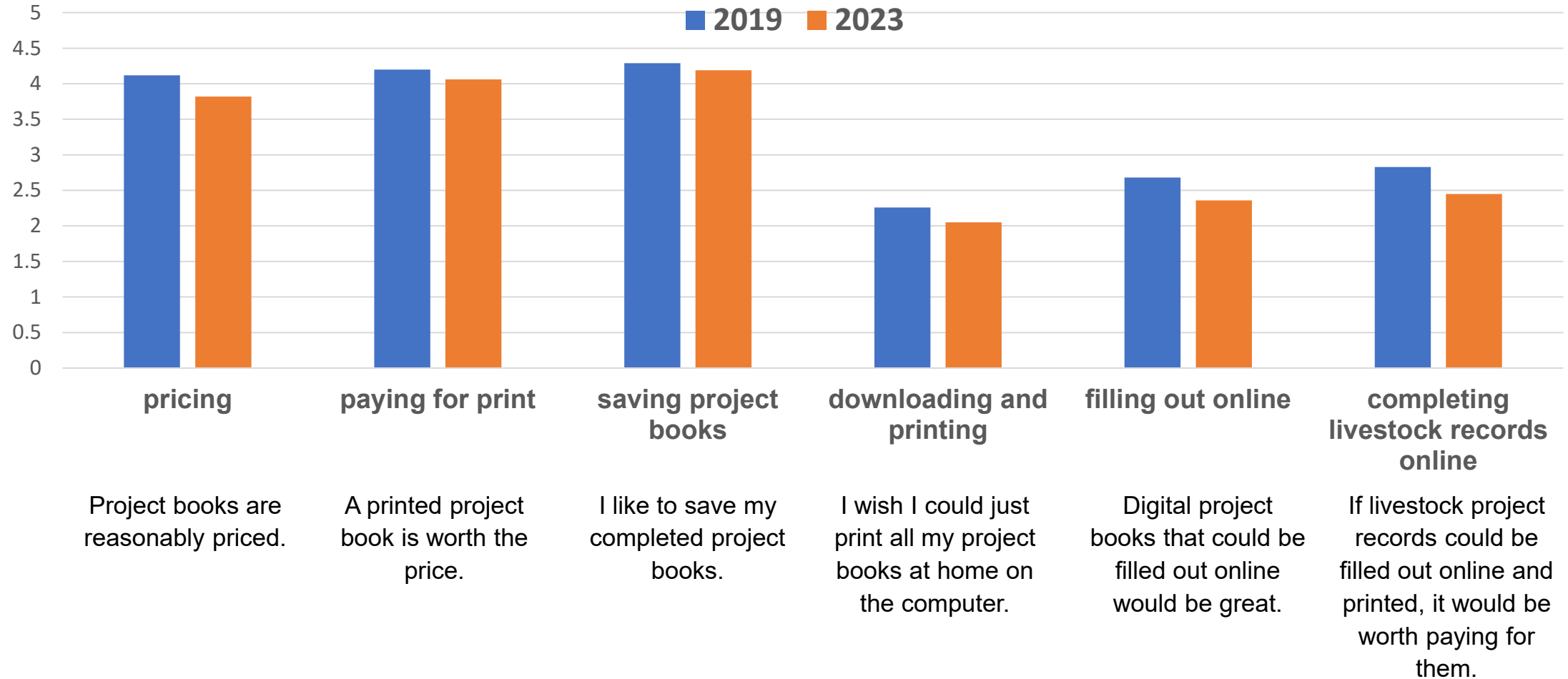
## THE RESPONDENTS

Each survey's respondent pool is a different mix of volunteers and members. We strive to increase the number of respondents, especially members!

YEAR	TOTAL	MEMBERS	VOLUNTEERS
2019	707	239 (33.8%)	468 (66.2%)
2023	1852	926 (50%)	926 (50%)

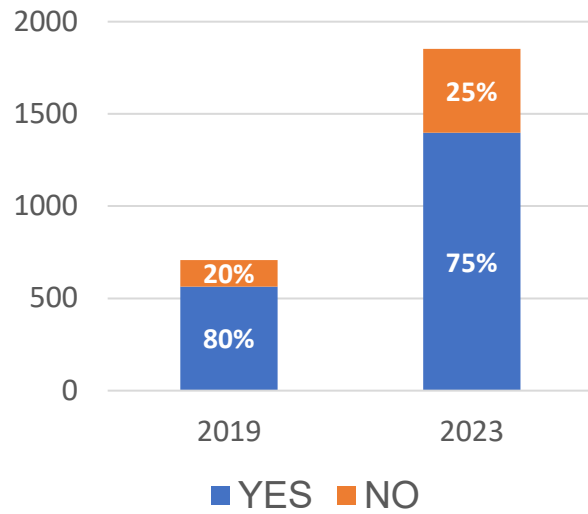
# General Attitudes

“Think about the project book(s) you are using now or have used recently. Read the following statements and place a check in the column that indicates your level agreement, from Strongly Disagree (0) to Strongly Agree (5). If you are a 4-H volunteer, think about these statements in relation to youth in your club or county.”



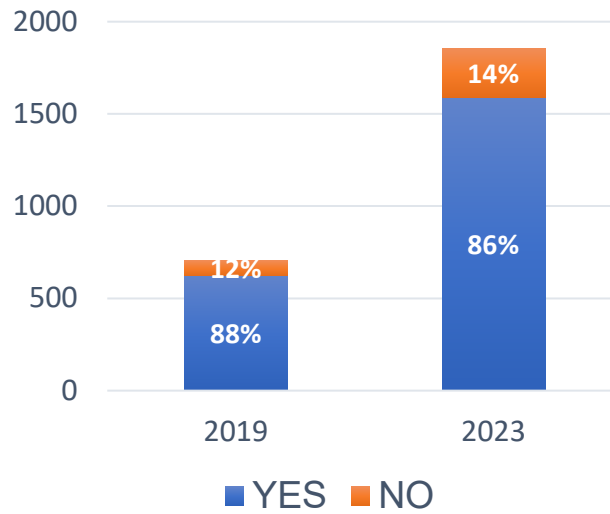
## INTERNET ACCESS

Do you have access to a computer with high-speed internet in your home?



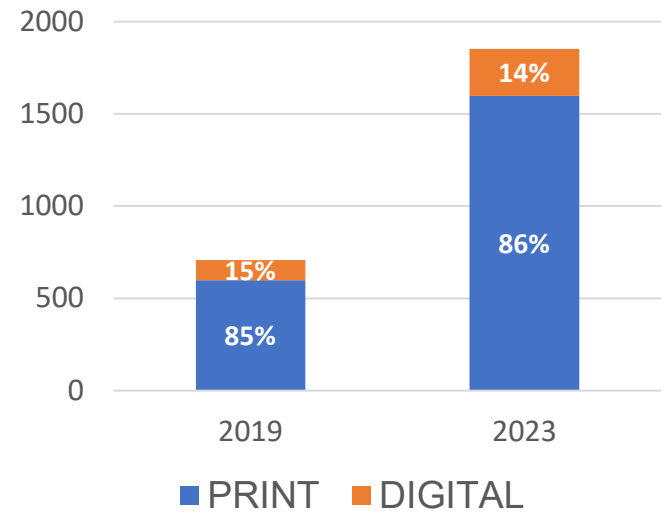
## MOBILE ACCESS

Do you have your own smart phone or tablet?



## PRINT VS. DIGITAL

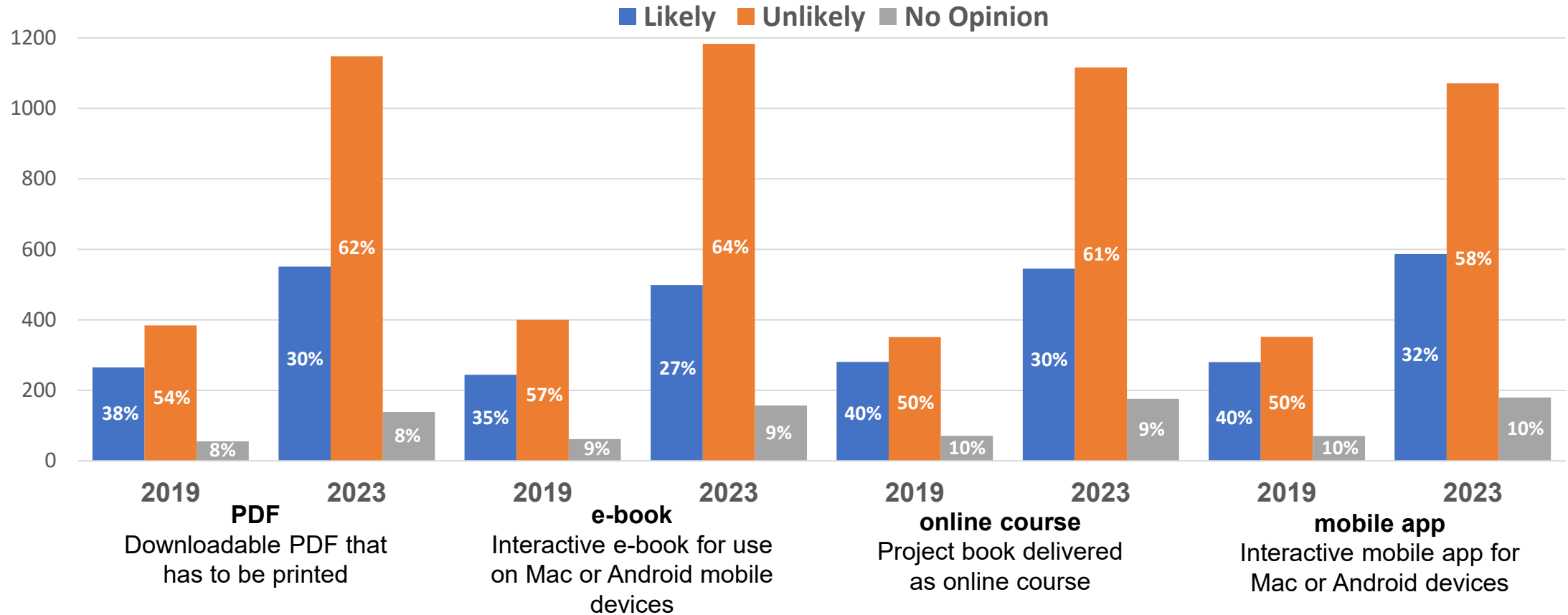
Generally speaking, if the price were the same, would you prefer print or digital project books?



*Although access to high-speed internet and mobile devices is prevalent among respondents (4-H members and volunteers), their overwhelming preference for project book format is print.*

# What Does Digital Mean?

“Last question! ‘Digital’ means many things these days. Please say whether you are LIKELY or UNLIKELY to use each of the following formats. None would be free, but none would cost more than a printed project book.”



*Most respondents to the 2023 survey say they are unlikely to use project books delivered in digital formats, whether PDF, e-book, online course, or mobile app. Interestingly, there was an average 8.5% drop in interest in digital products from 2019 to 2023.*

# 2023 Comments Summary

Of 1852 survey respondents, 653 left comments.

## Digital Delivery Advantages

- A digital app could be used to track livestock feeds, weights, etc.
- Digital is more environmentally friendly.
- Students who struggle physically to write and keep track of tasks might do better with digital.

## Digital Delivery Disadvantages

- There is limited or no internet access at home and at camps, barns, and club meetings where members fill out project books and get volunteer help.
- Judging and displaying digital projects at fairs might be difficult.
- Cost of internet access, devices, printing digital pdf materials, and/or transportation to library to complete adds up.
- Members are on screens in school already.
- Each member has a printed book, but they must share computer time in households with more than one member.
- Printers or computers can break; print is more reliable.
- Printed books make it easy to reflect on past experiences.
- Print projects are better for penmanship and fine motor skill development.

# 2023 Comments Summary

Of 1852 survey respondents, 653 left comments.

## Additional Comments/Opinions

- Print is too expensive; digital should be free or cheaper.
- Both print and digital options for projects would be best.
- Online courses, not digital pdfs, would be better.
- The digital format is ideal if content can be submitted and printing is not required.
- Online records would be good for self-determined and multi-year projects, such as livestock and shooting sports.
- Digital interview practice, anatomy quizzes, and a playable app would be good.
- A mobile app would be the preferred digital option.
- The member writing in print project book shows the member did the work, not the parents or someone else.
- Either digital or print might be the best option for students with learning challenges, depending on the challenge.
- Digital material is inappropriate for younger members and best for teens.
- Youth learn better when writing things down and with hands-on learning.
- Some members store photos, notes, experiments, and recipes for reference in printed project books.
- Projects should be print, experiential, and different from what youth do in school.