



2025 REPORTS

Scaling Smart

By Marc Rosenbohm

REPORT SNAPSHOT

Outlook: Agricultural software firm Bushel has released its 2025 State of the Farm Report, providing an in-depth look at how farms of all sizes are navigating the evolving agricultural landscape. The report shares insights from 1,300 farms located primarily in the Midwest, representing mostly corn and soybeans but other crops as well.

Impact: Regardless of your plans for your operation's future, it can be beneficial to know what those around you are doing and thinking. In particular, understanding the priorities of larger farms could offer ideas when scaling up, making improvements, or navigating a period of increased financial pressure and consolidation.

Larger farms today are prioritizing technology and software as well as operational efficiency. And, despite increased financial pressure in the agricultural economy, they're still planning to grow. That's according to Bushel's 2025 State of the Farm Report, which provides an in-depth look at how farms of all sizes are navigating the evolving agricultural

landscape, particularly in the areas of technology, growth and key opportunities.

Though farms of all sizes were surveyed, the insights from larger operations are particularly useful for farms that intend to grow, as they reveal how bigger farms think and operate and what topics are most important to them.

The largest farms revealed that technology was the second-highest priority for them — likely a key to scaling for any smaller operation with an eye on growth.

The report shares insights from 1,300 farms across primarily Midwestern states. Though these farmers grow corn and soybeans primarily, many other crops are represented as well, including cotton, rice, alfalfa, dry edible beans, millet, pulse crops, sugar beets and

Opportunities Outlook

	Operation Efficiency	Marketing	Field Efficiency	Technology
>10,000 Acres	71%	39%	42%	43%
5,000-9,999 Acres	54%	41%	38%	30%
2,000-4,999 Acres	53%	53%	38%	32%
500-1,999 Acres	42%	45%	39%	21%
<500 Acres	37%	33%	35%	13%
2025 Bushel Average	46%	42%	38%	23%



Notes: Percentages are the share of respondents who see each opportunity as a top priority. Respondents were free to choose more than one.
Sources: Bushel's 2025 State of the Farm Survey, Terrain

sunflowers. The farms range from small (less than 500 acres) to very large (over 10,000 acres), offering a broad perspective on the state of farms.

OPPORTUNITIES

When it comes to opportunities, increasing operational efficiency ranks high as a top priority among all farms. However, it is even more of a top priority among the largest farms, with 71% indicating it as a top priority.

Midsize farmers see room for improvement in their marketing strategies more so than the largest farmers. And farmers in the smallest category have less of an emphasis on technology as an opportunity for their operation. However, the largest farms revealed that technology was the second-highest priority for them — likely a key to scaling for any smaller operation with an eye on growth.

In 2025, use of software programs or applications accelerated among the largest farms (over 5,000 acres).

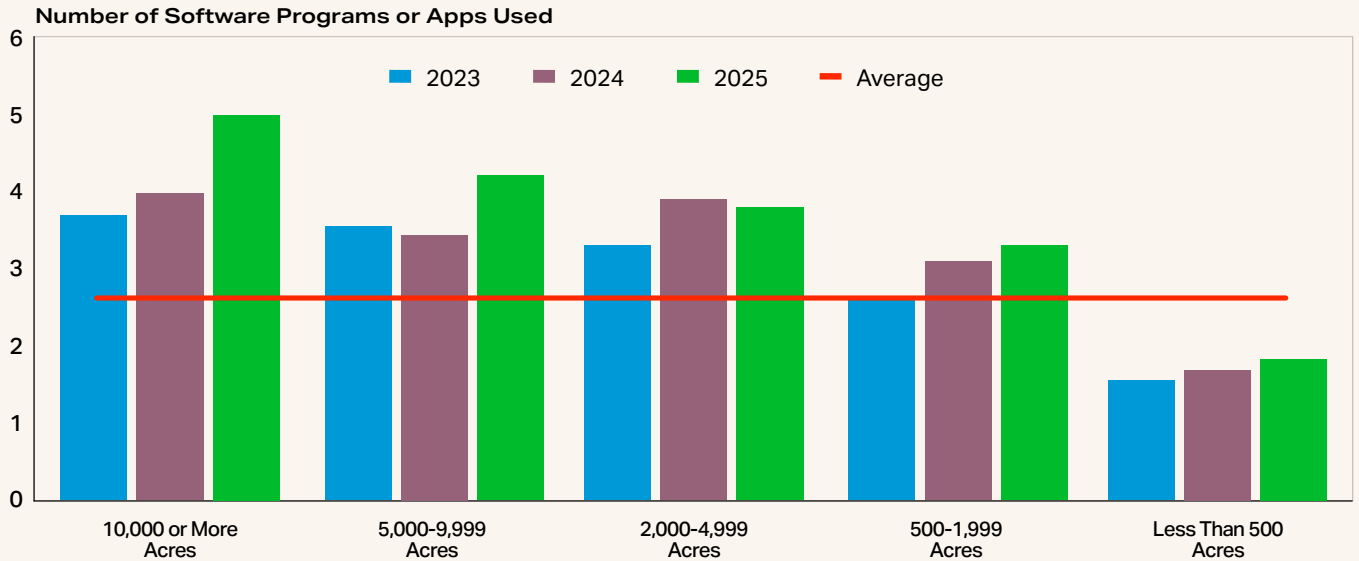
RECORDKEEPING AND FARM MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

In 2025, use of software programs or applications accelerated among the largest farms (over 5,000 acres). Specifically, each reported using about one additional software or app this year compared with the past two years. In general, larger farms are using one or two more software programs or applications than the average farm in 2025.

A higher proportion of larger farms report using software or apps for a wide range of farm-related activities, from accounting and financial recordkeeping to weather and grain marketing. This highlights the importance of incorporating technology to make operations more informed and more efficient.

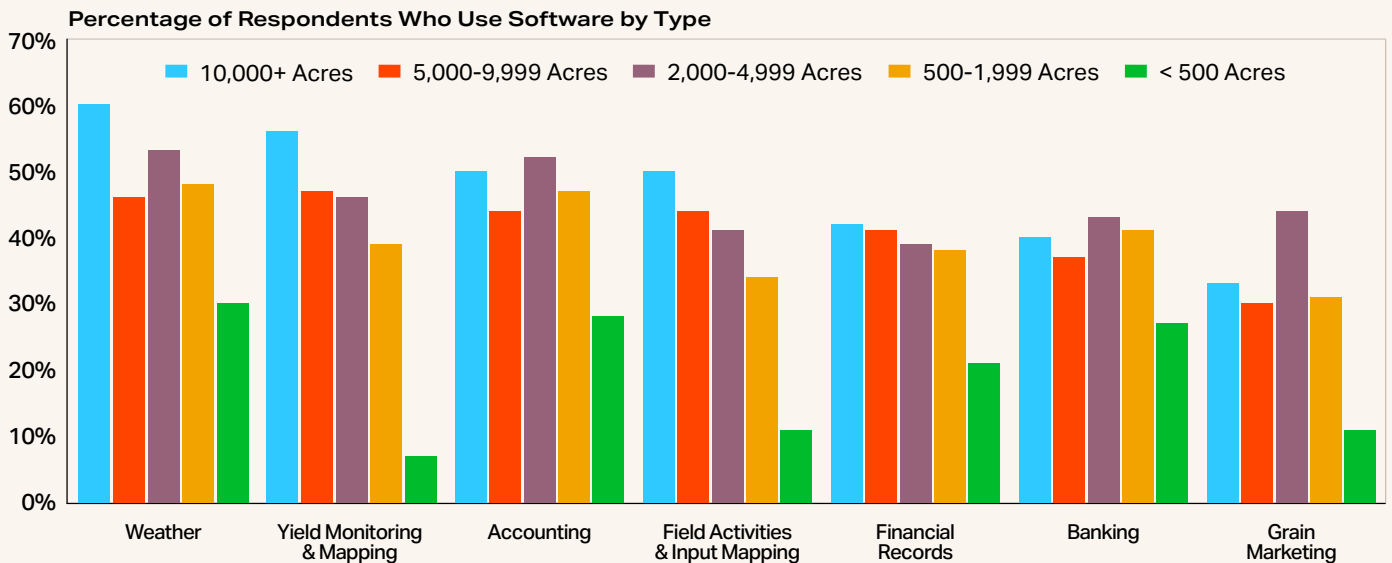
When it comes to recordkeeping, the largest farms indicated they use more software and connected systems to keep their records than smaller farms. None of the large farms surveyed reported using the pen-and-paper method of recordkeeping. As operations scale, there tend to be more people involved in management or operations or external service providers. Digital tools — whether connected systems, software or even Excel — make getting the right information to the right people at the right time more efficient.

Larger Farms Use More Software and Apps



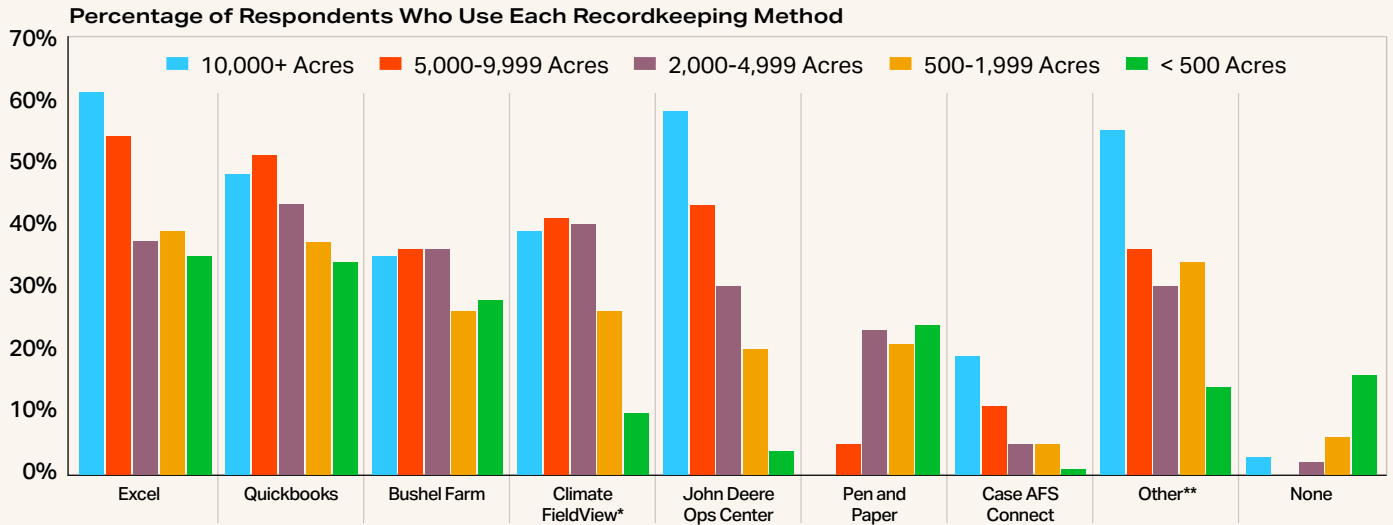
Sources: Bushel's 2025 State of the Farm Survey, Terrain

Software or App Use by Farm Activity



Sources: Bushel's 2025 State of the Farm Survey, Terrain

Methods of Recordkeeping Vary by Farm Size



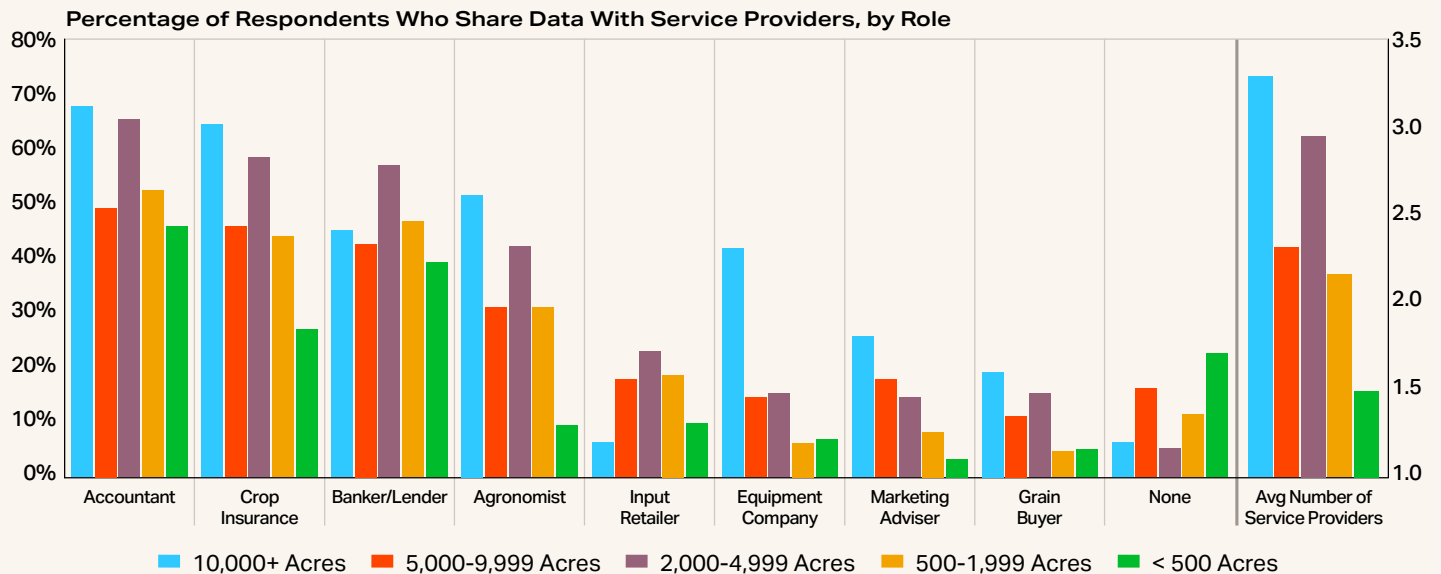
*Includes FieldView, FieldView Imagery or Prescriptions and FieldView Cab

**Other or write-in responses include Raven and Trimble but are predominantly accounting software other than QuickBooks

Sources: Bushel's 2025 State of the Farm Survey, Terrain



Larger Farms Share Data With More Service Providers



Sources: Bushel's 2025 State of the Farm Survey, Terrain

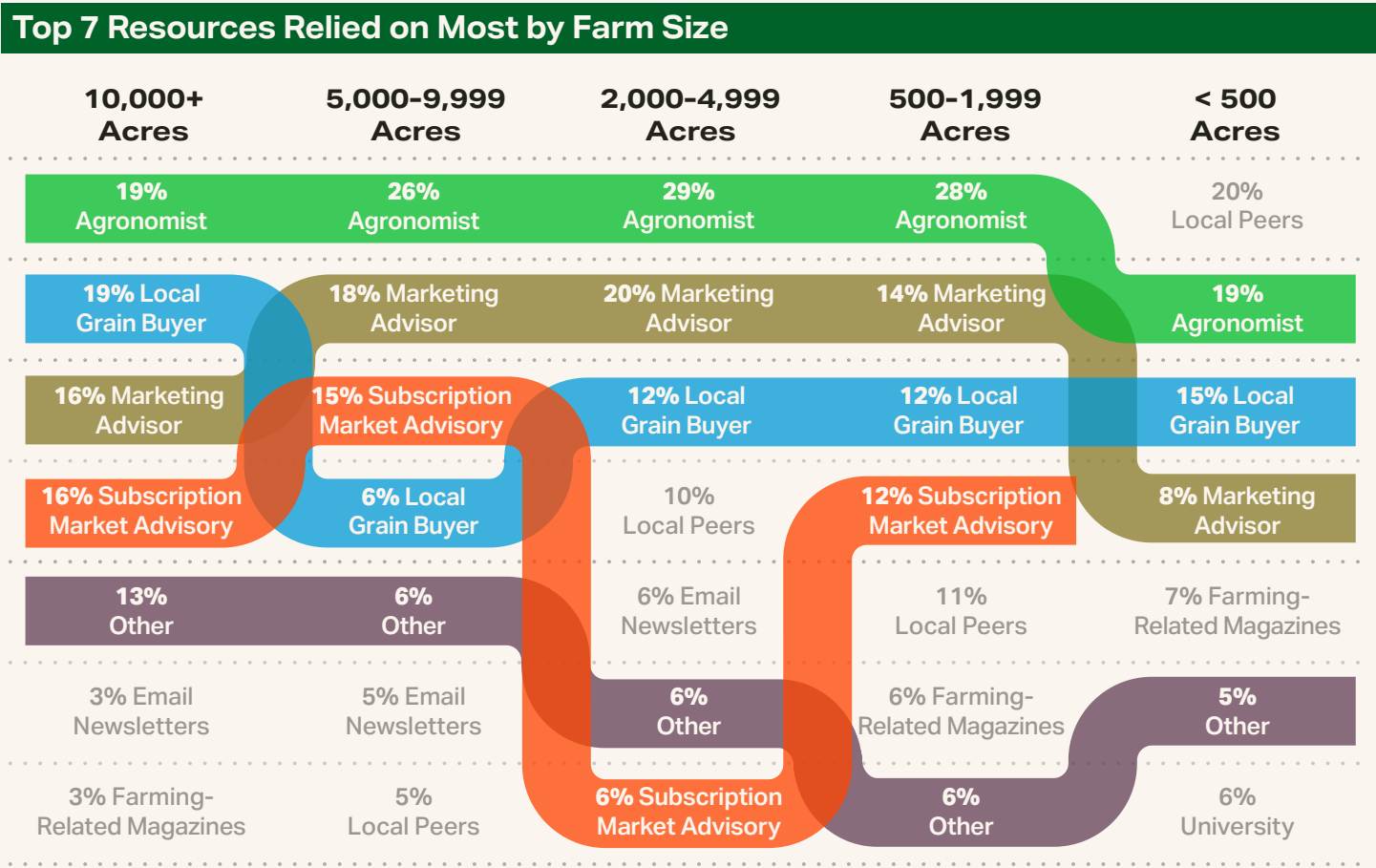
When looking at the number and type of service providers that data is shared with, the larger farms tend to share data with more service providers. This may indicate that larger farms tend to operate more as a team, relying on more specialized individuals or teams to accomplish specific tasks such as accounting, agronomy or marketing.

Among the producers in the largest category surveyed, the share of respondents who indicated they intend to grow increased sharply from 30% in 2024 to 70% in 2025.

Across all aspects of farm operations and farm management, one theme is recurring: Larger farms consume more data, use more software applications, and rely on more outside services and resources. This highlights the importance of building a trusted team of services, resources and software regardless of whether you are positioning your operation for growth or looking for ways to improve.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Growth plans have scaled back in 2025 as farmers have readjusted their plans to a tighter financial environment. (See “[Tailwinds Needed: An Early Look at 2026 Farm Income.](#)”) This was observed across almost all size classes surveyed, with one exception: the largest farmers. Among the producers in the largest category surveyed, the share of respondents



who indicated they intend to grow increased sharply from 30% in 2024 to 70% in 2025.

Interestingly, this group of farmers also had a lower level of concern for input costs, machinery costs and land values in 2025 than in 2024. This suggests they may have found a profitable strategy, are now potentially less concerned about land values, and are now returning to their plans for growth.

Understanding the priorities of larger farms could offer ideas when scaling up, making improvements, or navigating a period of increased financial pressure and consolidation.

Farmers growing crops outside the big four (corn, soy, wheat and sorghum) have scaled back expansion plans noticeably in 2025, with 73% indicating they

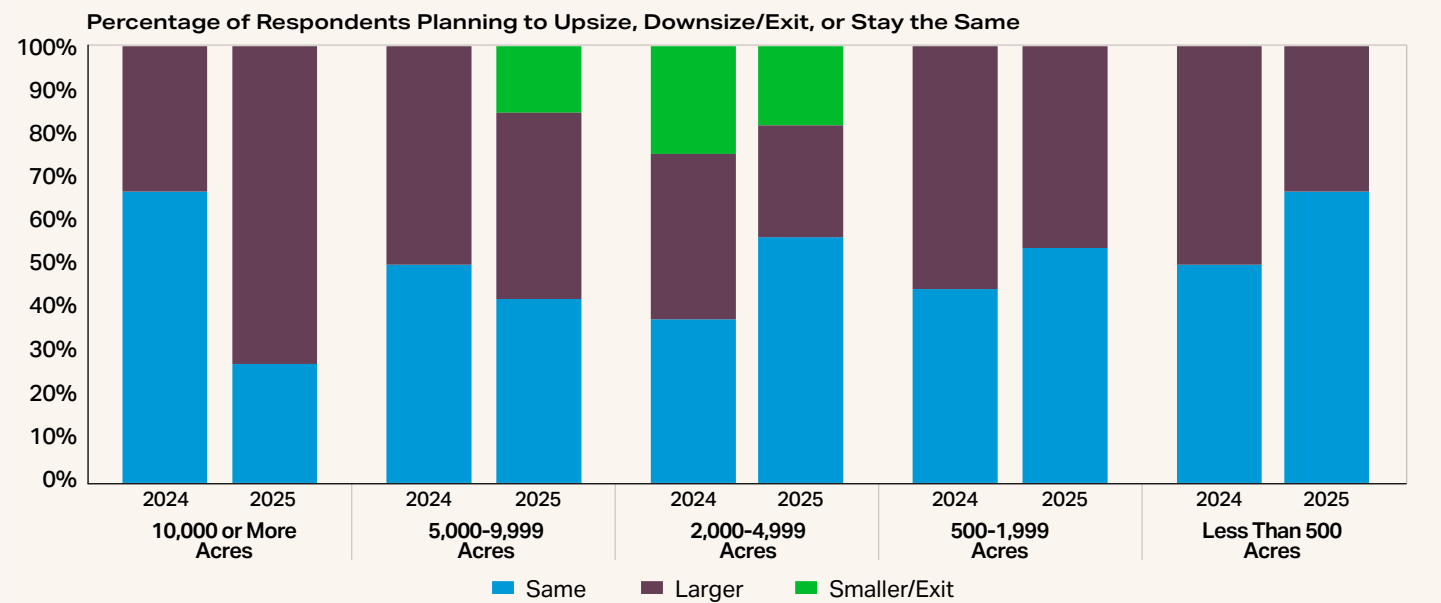
plan to stay the same size, compared with 42% in 2024. Just 13% indicated they plan to expand, down from 50% the year before. These results potentially reflect lingering financial issues among the other eight crops of cotton, rice, alfalfa, dry edible beans, millet, pulse crops, sugar beets and sunflowers.

A SMART STRATEGY

Regardless of your plans for your operation’s future — to size up, size down or stay the same size — it can be beneficial to know what those around you are doing and thinking. In particular, understanding the priorities of larger farms could offer ideas when scaling up, making improvements, or navigating a period of increased financial pressure and consolidation. For example:

- Larger farms see opportunity in improving operational efficiency and a higher-than-average share view technology as an opportunity (43% for the largest farms versus the full sample average of 23%).
- Larger farms use more software tools and share data with more external service providers, emphasizing the importance of assembling the right team for farm success.

The Largest Still Plan to Grow



Sources: Bushel’s 2025 State of the Farm Survey, Terrain

- The very largest are still planning to grow. They have either achieved significant economies of scale, have a management strategy that works in a tough economic environment, have a robust risk management strategy, or possibly other factors.

To read a full copy of the original report, see <https://bushelfarm.com/state-of-the-farm-report/>.

ABOUT TERRAIN

Terrain’s expert analysts distill vast amounts of data to deliver exclusive insight and confident forecasting

for a more resilient agricultural economy. Terrain is an exclusive offering of AgCountry Farm Credit Services, American AgCredit, Farm Credit Services of America and Frontier Farm Credit.

ABOUT BUSHEL

Bushel is an independently owned software company and leading provider of software technology solutions for farmers, grain buyers, ag retailers, protein producers and food companies, headquartered in Fargo, North Dakota.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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