

Survey Says! Part two: Focused Efforts Pay Off

How satisfied are our clients with our farm plan services? King CD set out to find the answer to this question with our first customer survey in 2009 and a second survey just last summer. Our goal was to gain insight on how well we were serving our customers and what we could do to improve. The survey included people who had used our farm plan services, e.g., farm planning, site visits, manure spreader and soil testing. The results of the 2009 survey were extremely positive, with 99% of respondents saying they would recommend King CD to friends, neighbors or colleagues!

Even though our service ratings were all between “good” and “excellent,” this 2009 survey allowed us to identify some areas where we could improve. As a result of this feedback, we overhauled our Farm Plan format to make it more user-friendly and began to emphasize follow-ups with land managers to support and encourage their efforts. We are pleased to say that these extra efforts resulted in noticeably higher scores on both of these service areas. Ratings for both went from “good” in our 2009 survey to “very good” in 2011!

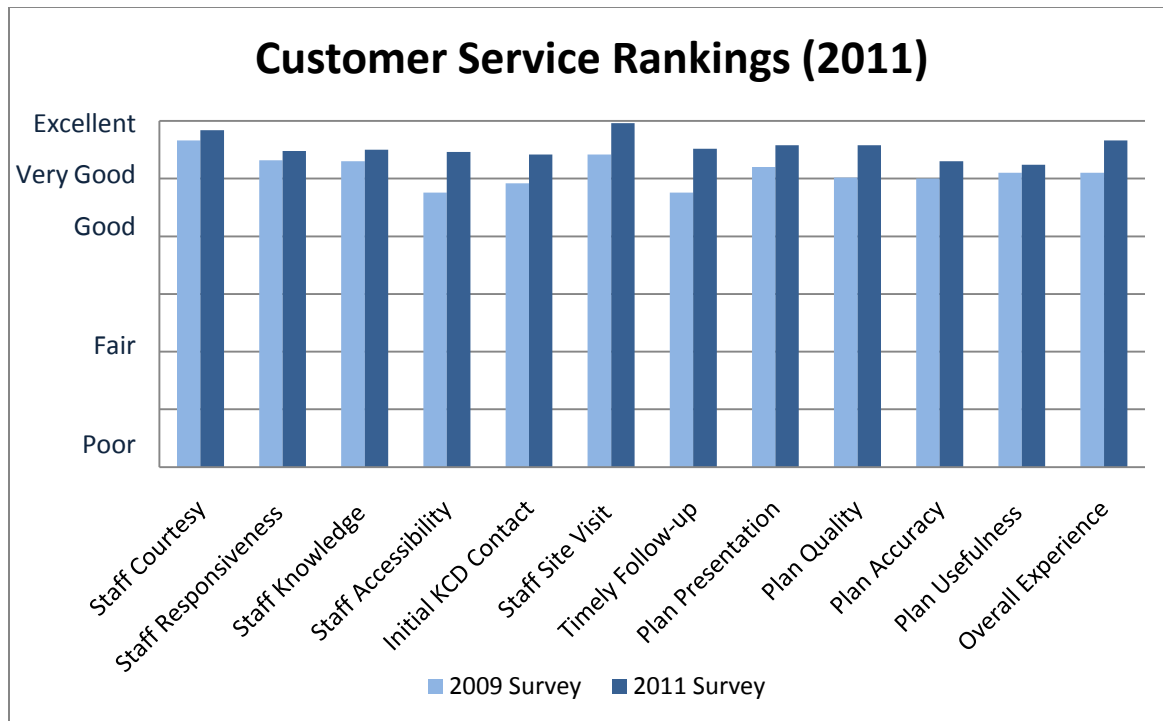
Here’s what else we learned:

Walking the Land

We received some of our highest ratings for District staff site visits with land managers . We were especially glad to receive this feedback because site visits are at the core of conservation planning. At a site visit, a landowner or manager meets with one of our resource planners and shares their goals and concerns with respect to the land. The District planner can then share the research s/he has done on the property, such as soils and hydrology. The planner and the land manager can then walk the property and discuss management challenges, such as mud, weeds or manure management while considering any natural resource concerns (e.g., erosion or wildlife habitat). By providing individuals with the information and guidance they need, we hope to encourage land managers to take natural resource stewardship into their own hands.

Soil Testing is Catching On

We were pleased to hear that nearly 30 percent of respondents are now taking advantage of our free soil testing service, a program we began just a few years ago. Soil testing can help guide the use of fertilizers, which improves land productivity, saves people money and protects water quality by reducing runoff.



Here are just a few of the wonderful comments we received from survey participants:

- Our King CD Farm Plan gave us specific guidelines for better management of our pastures and runoff. Financial assistance helped with runoff management and rotational grazing.
- King CD staff is knowledgeable, passionate and willing to help. They are prompt in returning calls, go the "extra mile" and understand the complexities involved. A very admirable and high quality group of individuals!
- The service and helpful advice has been a huge help in allowing me to learn about my property and how to best care for it, but I think the #1 service that King CD provided was the cost-share program. This program allowed me to undertake important projects that have made a huge improvement to my property that I could never have afforded on my own.
- King CD works WITH land owners, rather than as a regulatory agency, which is helpful for those who have concerns about property rights.
- With help from King CD, I have been able to make positive changes to my property that have saved me time and expense while making my property more environmentally friendly. I have in turn been able to share this information with other land owners so they too can improve their properties. King CD is a huge asset to our community.
- How refreshing to work with people regarding land use and not be tied up in political red tape and outrageous fees.

We are so thrilled to receive feedback like this. We are especially proud that 100 percent of respondents indicated that they would recommend us to others. Still, we recognize that we have areas to improve. We received a lot of valuable input and ideas from survey respondents. This feedback helps us know what our most valuable services are and where we can focus our efforts to continually improve our services. Thank you to all those who responded!