

User Research



For our User Research, the team behind BLOO will cultivate ways to communicate and connect with local blueberry growers. After reaching out to our client, Dr. Delaplane, we scheduled a meeting with his coworker, Dr. Sial, and County Extension Coordinator James Jacobs. After the meeting, we had a better picture of the problem at hand and had found a clear path in moving forward.

Methods

Are you currently involved in the production of blueberries?

Yes

No

What is your role with blueberries, if any?

Your answer _____

Would you use an application that calculates the net profit and net loss of blueberries based on factors of specific pesticides?

Your answer _____

How many acres of blueberries do you manage?

Your answer _____

We are using both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. First, a survey will be sent to James Jacobs to be distributed among his blueberry farmer contacts. The survey consists of 19 questions asking about their basic demographics and their blueberry operations. The survey will help provide important insight into how different blueberry farmers think about and use pesticides. This in turn will help better inform us and our clients about their target user audience.

The survey will conclude by asking the participant if they are available for a phone interview afterward. This is our qualitative data piece. During the phone interview, we can obtain more nuanced data about our potential users, their life as blueberry farmers, and how they run their farm operations. During the phone interview, we aim to dive deeper and allow blueberry farmers to elaborate on their survey responses.

Using both qualitative and quantitative data will help our team develop a comprehensive idea of our app audience: blueberry farmers.

Hiccups

In all honesty, it was difficult to get in contact with our client about who his user audience would be by this point. Our project has taken a turn towards blueberries instead of bees; thus, we needed to rediscover our target audience. It took about two weeks before we were put in touch with someone who could connect us with blueberry farmers. As of now, our user research focuses on talking to new project stakeholders and understanding their potential user audience, and setting up instruments in preparation for research. We have plans to continue our user research, although our timeline may look different than previously planned.

What's next

We only recently gained access to blueberry farmers — our target audience for our app. We plan to collect and analyze more data to understand our potential app users and to optimize their experience with our app. Currently, we are at a stage where we are disseminating our survey among blueberry farmers. We hope to conduct phone interviews with local farmers to better understand their blueberry operations and their needs as blueberry farmers. Their feedback is critical to tailor the user experience of our app.

In the following sections, we will share the questions that are included in the survey:

Data Collection Methodology

Survey

Our initial outreach survey can be seen on [this Google Form survey](#). Most of the questions from this form was derived after speaking with one of our clients, Dr. Siel. The questions asks participants about their role with blueberry farming, their blueberry farm operations in general, and their farm operations as it pertains to pesticides.

Phone Interview

For our phone interview, we plan on allowing participants to expand on their blueberry farm operations, with a special focus on the use of pesticides. Below is a draft of our interview protocol, and we hope to share this with our clients for further feedback.

Introductions

Hello Mr.____, thank you for joining us for a phone interview. My name is ____ and this is my colleague _____. We're students at the University of Georgia working with Dr. Keith Delaplane, Dr. Ash Siel, and Mr. James Jacobs on an app that will hopefully help blueberry farmers calculate blueberry costs and profits as it relates to pesticides and pollinators. We greatly appreciate your time and your insights. Do you have any questions for us before we get started?

Building Rapport

- Can you tell me about yourself?

Understanding Blueberry Operations (relay information from survey)

- Can you tell me about your blueberry operations?

- How do you manage your blueberry operations?
- Have you considered using a technological tool to aid in your operation?
- Would you use an application that calculates the net profit and net loss of blueberries based on factors of specific pesticides?

Understanding Pesticides Use

- Can you tell me about how you manage pests on your blueberry crop?
- What kind of pests do you have to deal with?
- How do you manage those pests?
 - How often?
 - Is pest management different for different pests?
- How is your blueberry crop affected by these pests?
 - How much does it cost you?
- Anything else you'd like to share about how you control pests among your blueberry crop?

Understanding Pollination

- Can you tell me how you manage the pollination of your blueberry crop?
- How do you have access to these means of pollination?
- How much does that cost you?
- How is your blueberry crop affected by the kind of pollination you use?
- Do you believe using pesticides will affect your means of pollination?
 - Could you elaborate?
- Is there anything you'd like to share about the pollination of your blueberry crop?

Questions to Consider for Our Clients (answers in blue):

Questions for Delaplaine/James Jacobs

- Are there any specific questions you have for potential users?

- How many acres of blueberries do you manage? How many types of blueberries do you manage? How often do you spray for thrips? How many spray applications do you make? How much does it cost per acre to control thrips? How many pollinators do you use per acre? How much does it cost?
- Comparing these two costs — do you get benefits out of those spray applications? Do you think that hurts the bees as well?
- If you don't spray for thrips, do you think you will gain any benefit or lose any profits?
- What would be the best means of collecting this feedback?
 - Most of them will sit in on a call, first send the form
- Do you know any blueberry farmers we can survey?
 - They're very supportive
 - Best to contact through Mr. Jacobs