

Polanyian Protective Countermovements: The Case of Organic Producers in Canada

RPLC Webinar
November 25, 2019

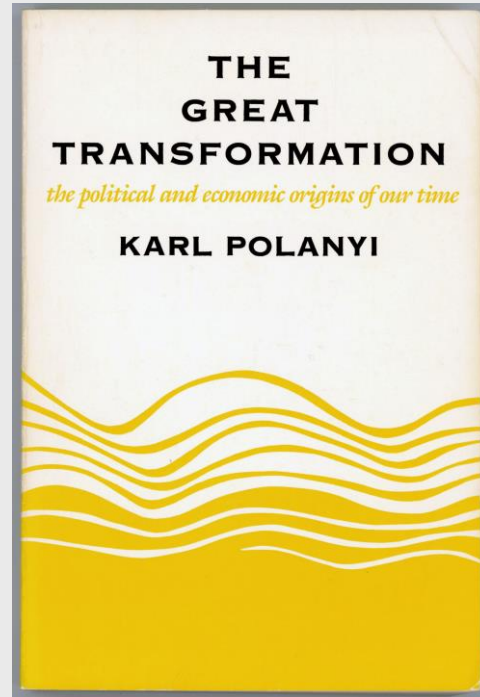
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University of Guelph

Webinar Content

- What is a “Polanyian protective counter-movements”?
- Overview of Organic
- Survey results
- Research findings
- Policy implications

40 min presentation ~ 15 min of questions

The Work of Karl Polanyi



The “double movement”

Free market exchanges do not produce optimal outcomes in terms of livelihoods when its related to human and natural resources.

What are you doing when there is an issue with something?

You complain about it...

You protest...

You act...

Unorganized, spontaneous and non-ideologically organized from all classes of society

Contradictions

– Originally focussed on Governmental protection

Child labour, safety measures, public libraries, policies for trade unions, agrarian tariffs, land laws, management of currencies...

What about marginal groups?

What about trusts and network and civil society actions?

What about market tools like labelling and cooperatives?

Organic Agriculture

- Market tool

- Issues

 - Soil degradation, industrialization, modernization, changes in the diet, loss of connection with the land, synthetic inputs...

 - Genetically engineered organism (G.E.), pollution, artificial light, social justice....

- Third party certification system

 - Federal Organic Regulations

Conventionalization

Altieri, Letourneau and Davis (1983) -> Go beyond agronomical changes

Seufert, Ramankutty and Mayerhofer (2017) -> Focus on inputs

Padel, Röcklinsberg, & Schmid (2009) -> Not much social elements

Buck, Getz and Guthman (1997) -> Organic market is a market like others

Barnham (1997), Guthman (2007), Cid-Aguayo (2011), Mostafanezhad (2016)

Research Questions

Do Canadian certified organic producers show a Polanyian reaction to negative economic, social and environmental impacts of agricultural markets?

Survey

- Electronic bilingual survey through Canada
- Shared by organic organizations (non-representative sample)
- February 27, 2019 to May 12, 2019
- 126 respondents

-> Unique survey structure

Survey Structure

		Economic			Social			Environmental							
Responses	Str. Agree 5												Consequence	←	
	Agree 4														
	Neither 3														
	Disagree 2													Certification	←
	Str. Disagree 1														
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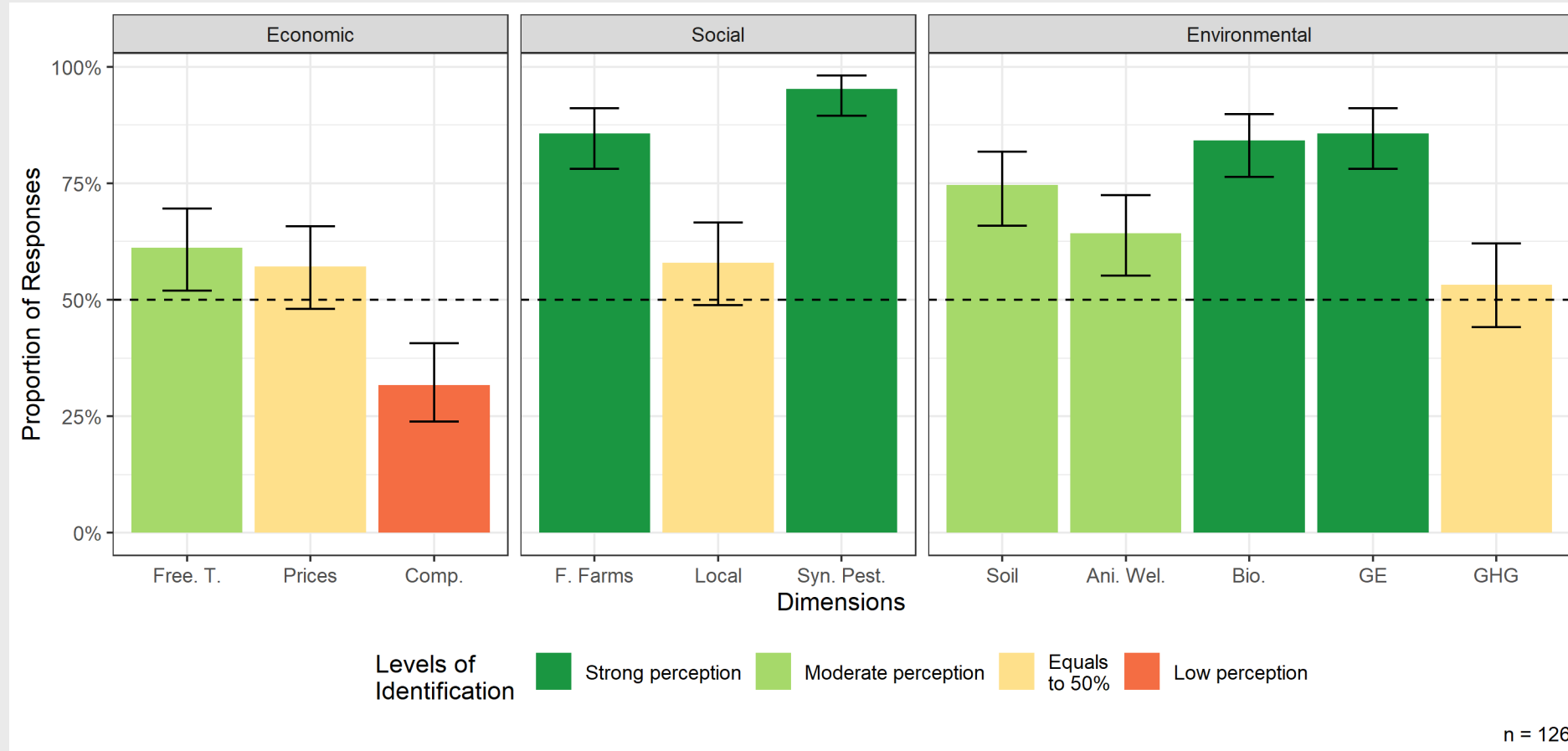


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Do Canadian certified organic producers identify negative effects of agriculture?



Takeaways

- 7 dimensions have significantly more than 50% of agreement for the perception of a negative effects
- *Competition* is not a dimension that the majority of producers are considering as negative

Types of Responses – Polanyian

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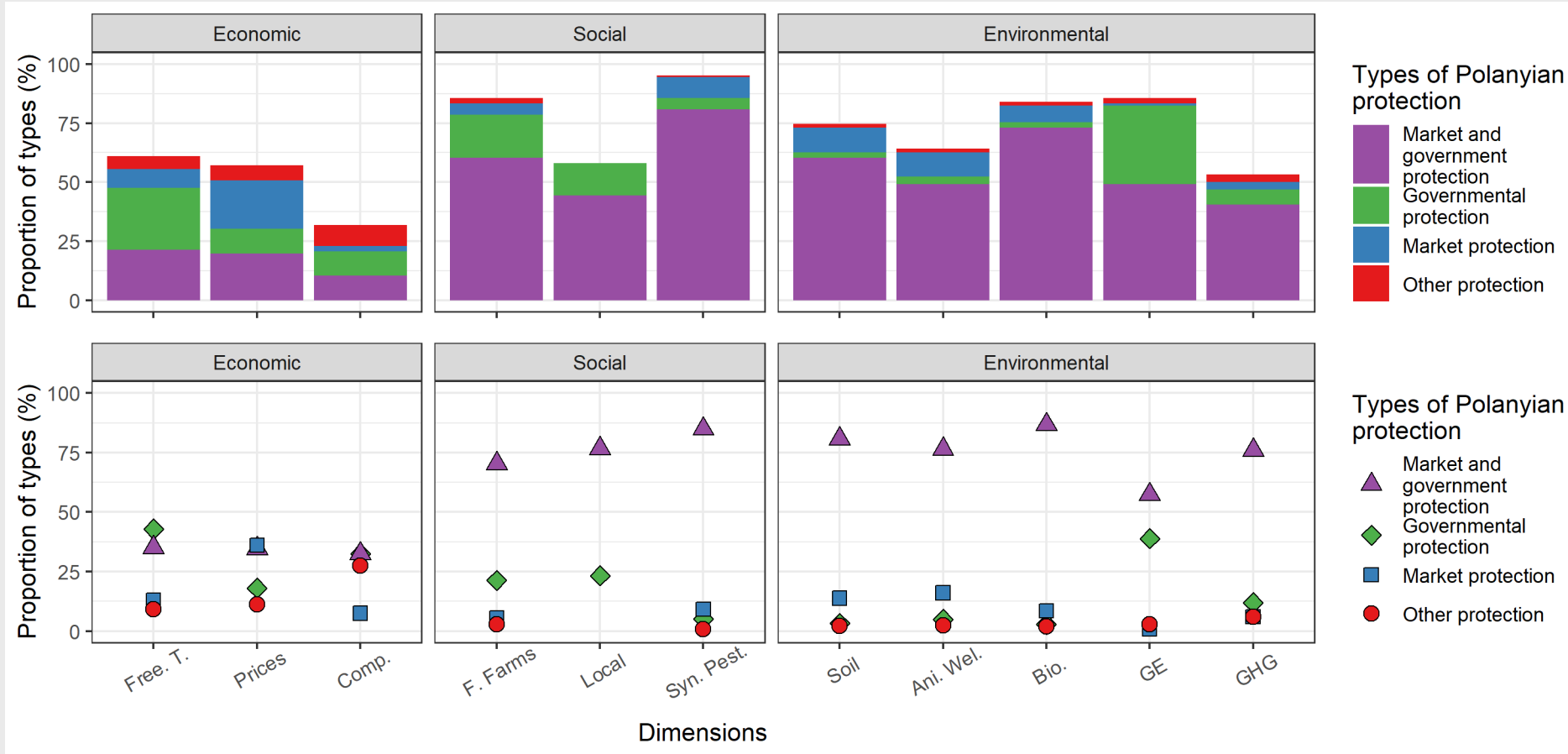
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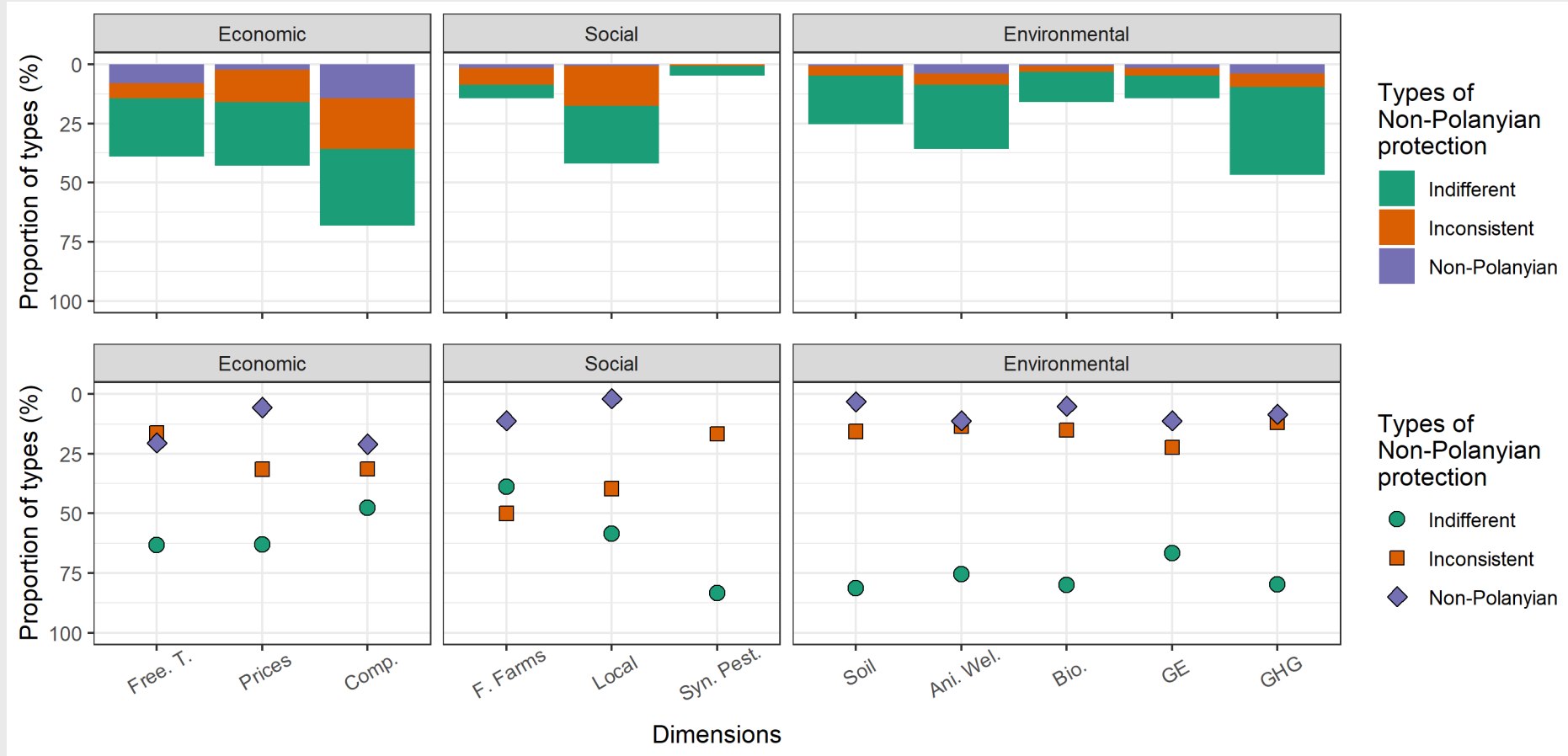
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Types of Responses – Polanyian



Types of Responses – Non-Polanyian



Takeaways

- Again, important variations between the dimensions and between the categories
- Market AND Government protection is the favored types of protection
- Limits to market protections?
- More issues?

Meaning for Organic Agriculture

- It is working!
- But there is still more to do...

Policy Implication

- The economy is ours!
- Mechanism of protection for the three suggested types of protective responses: Government, Market tools and Civil Society
- Market tools work by there are limits (G.E)
- A need for complementarity

Thank you

Biography

Altieri, M. A., Letourneau, D. K., & Davis, J. R. (1983). Developing Sustainable Agroecosystems. *BioScience*, 33(1), 45–49. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1309244>

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Buck, D., Getz, C., & Guthman, J. (1997). From Farm to Table: The Organic Vegetable Commodity Chain of Northern California. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 37(1), 3–20. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9523.00033>

Guthman, J. (2007). The Polanyian Way? Voluntary Food Labels as Neoliberal Governance. *Antipode*, 39(3), 456–478. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8330.2007.00535.x>

Malin, S. A. (2015). *The Price of Nuclear Power: Uranium Communities and Environmental Justice*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Malin, S. A., & Alexis-Martin, B. (2019). Embedding the atom: Pro-neoliberal activism, Polanyi, and sites of acceptance in American uranium communities. *The Extractive Industries and Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2018.12.004>

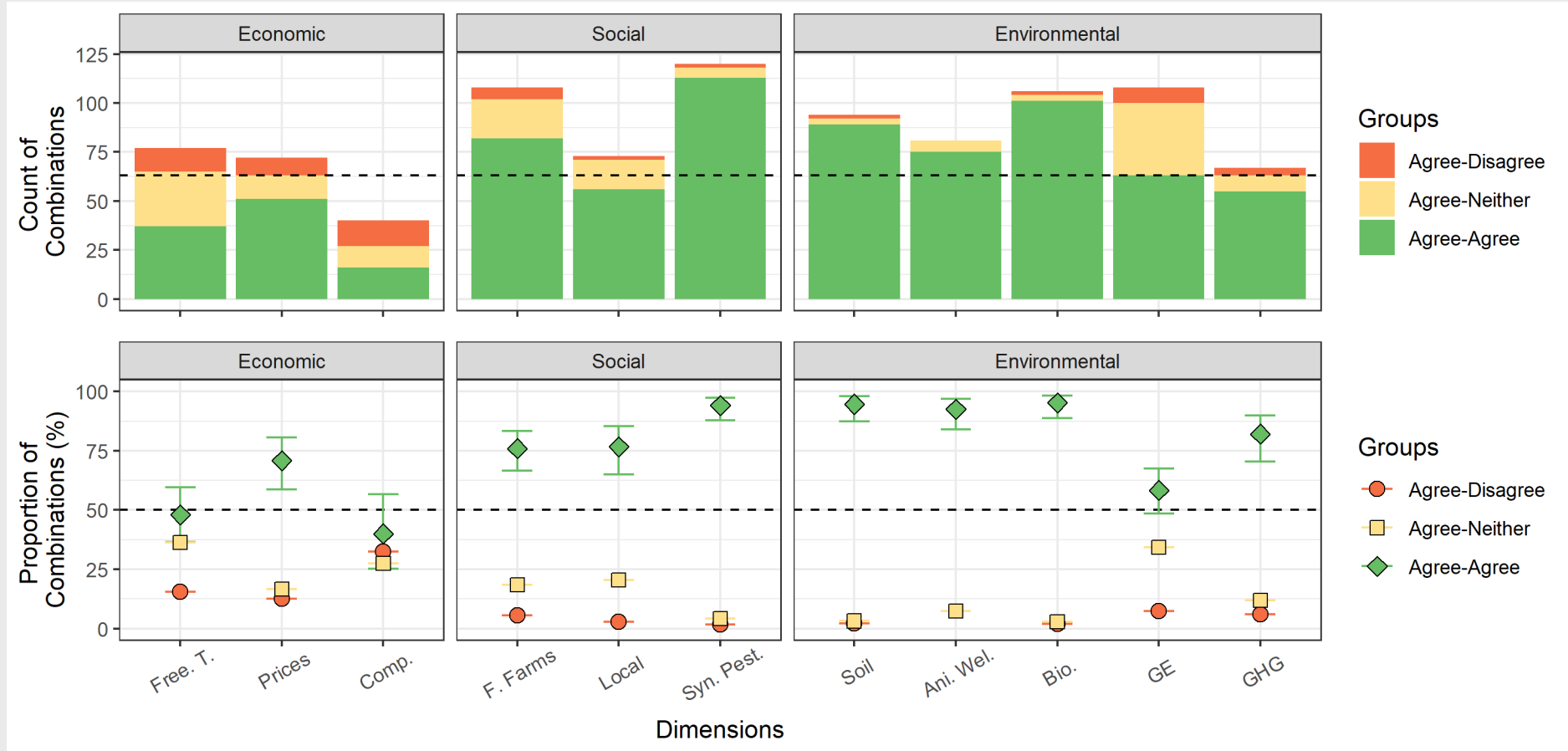
Malin, S. A., Mayer, A., Shreeve, K., Olson-Hazboun, S. K., & Adgate, J. (2017). Free market ideology and deregulation in Colorado's oil fields: Evidence for triple movement activism? *Environmental Politics*, 26(3), 521–545. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09644016.2017.1287627>

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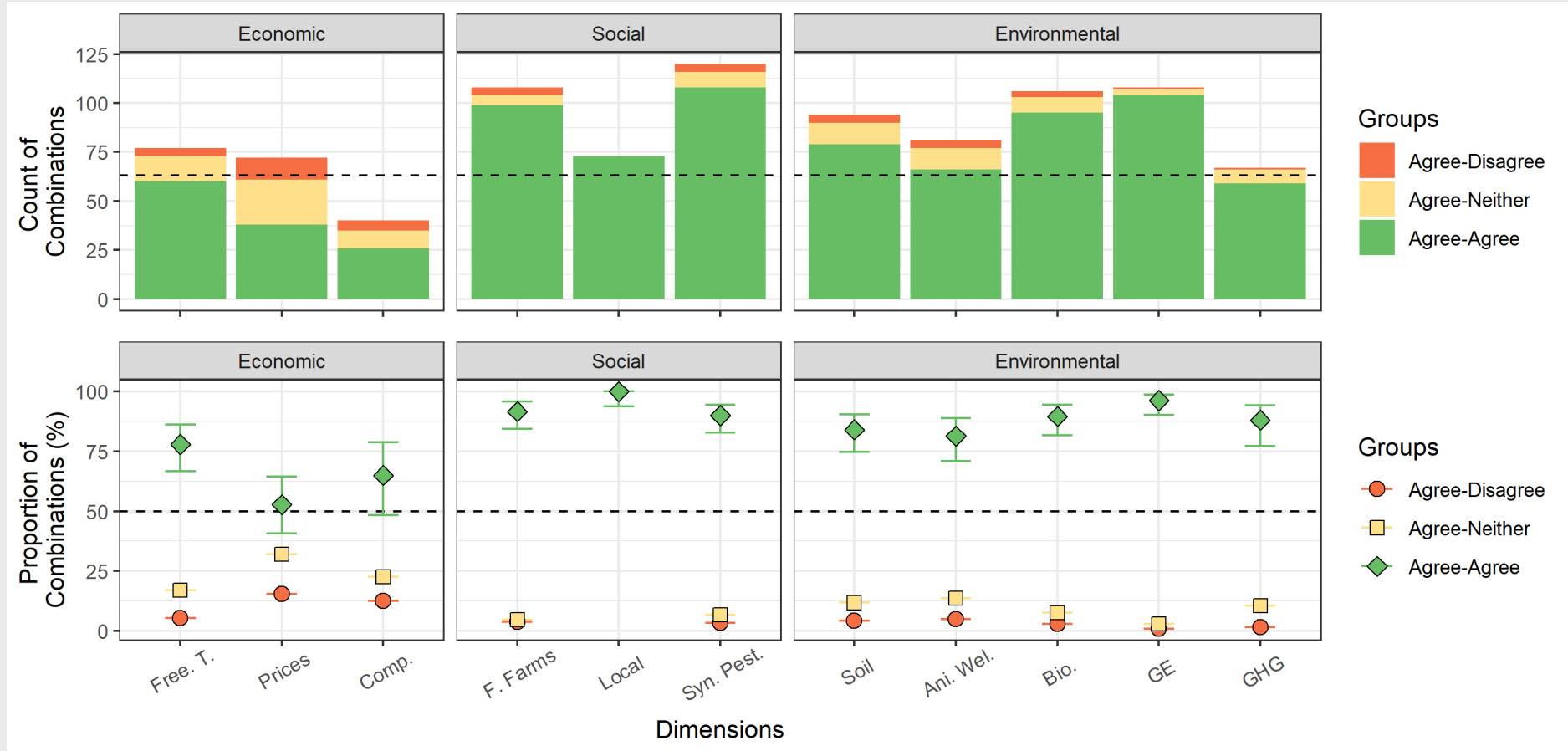
Mostafanezhad, M. (2016). Organic farm volunteer tourism as social movement participation: A Polanyian political economy analysis of World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF) in Hawai'i. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 24(1), 114–131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2015.1049609>

Padel, S., Röcklinsberg, H., & Schmid, O. (2009). The implementation of organic principles and values in the European Regulation for organic food. *Food Policy*, 34(3), 245–251. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodpol.2009.03.008>

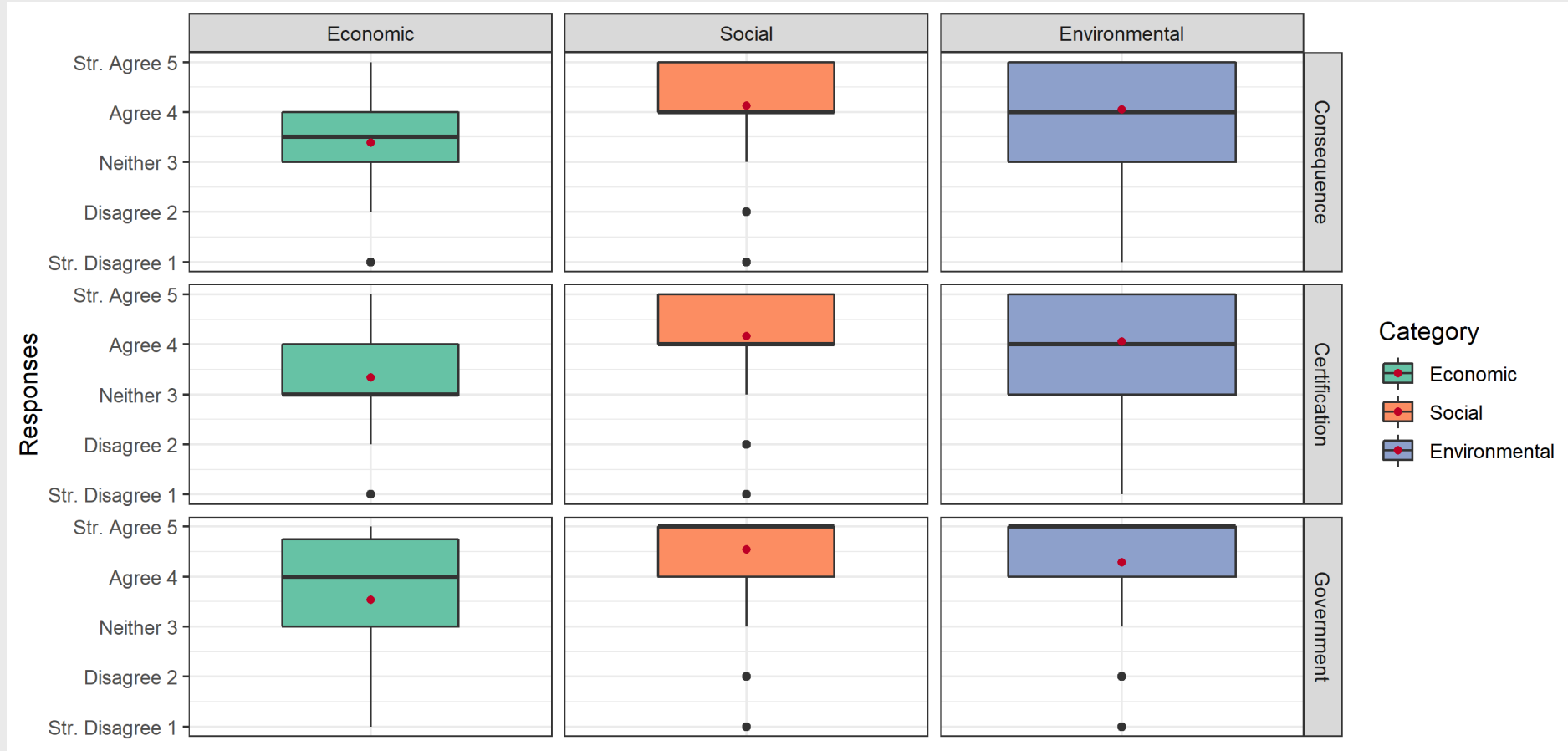
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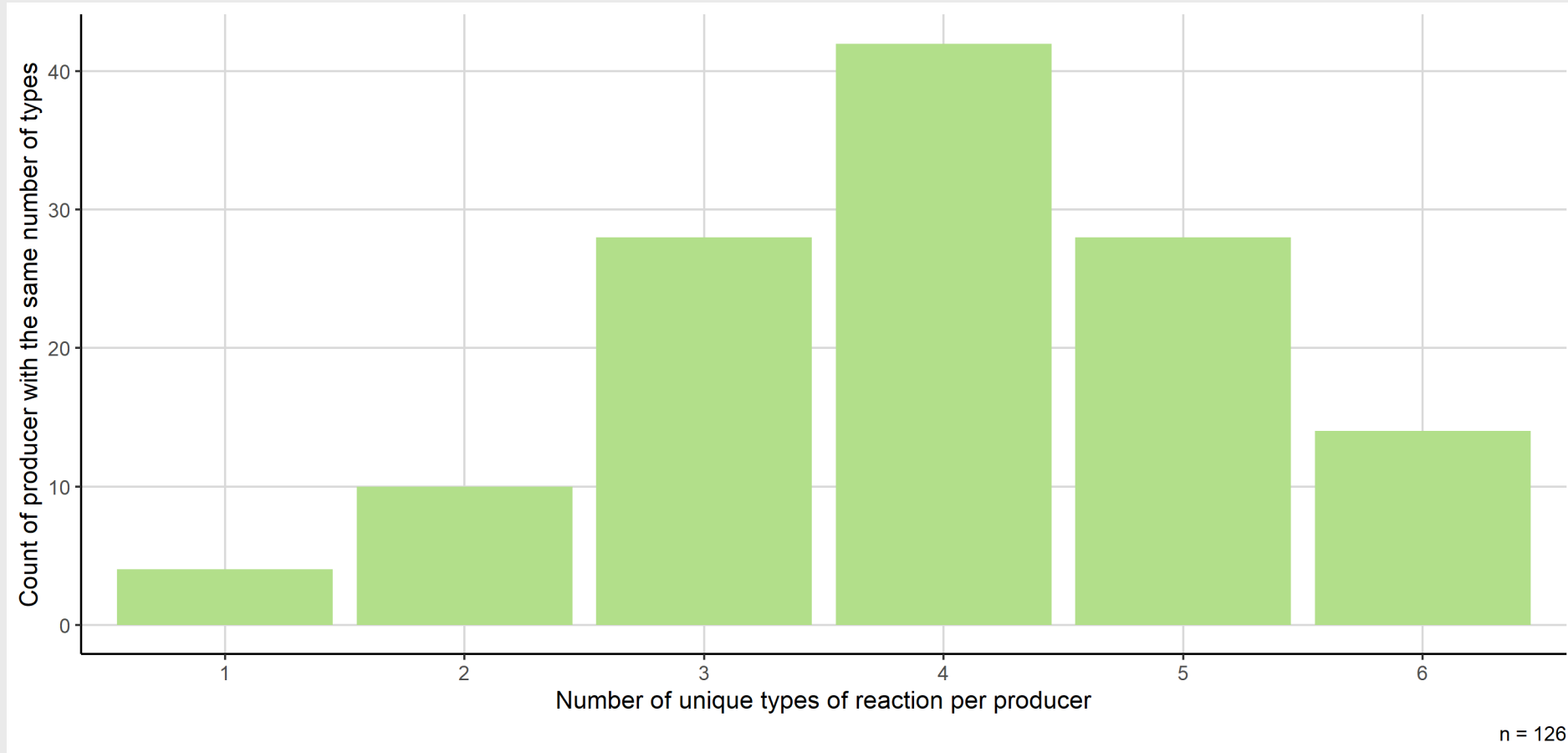
Government



Categories and Themes



Number of protective responses per producer



The sample is predominantly composed of male (52%) English speakers (61%) with a university degree (37%). Individuals from the province of Quebec (35%) and British Columbia (25%) represent the majority of respondents from a total of nine provinces and territories. Those who plan to keep farming in the foreseeable future comprises 96% of respondents. While many respondents have one specialized production (48%), the majority has two types of production (19%) or more than two (32%).