



# NAWS

## 30 Years of Crop Workers

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UCD Farm Labor: Demand, Supply, and Markets  
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Disclaimer: The views are solely those of the presenters



# NAWS Overview and Key National Trends



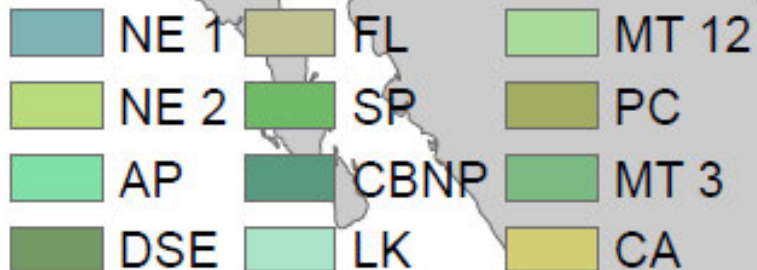
# What is the NAWS?

- National survey of crop workers
  - Began in Federal Fiscal Year 1989
- Annual sample of 1,500–3,000
- Locate workers at their farm jobs
- Reliable information on crop worker demographics, employment, and health
- State-level data only for CA and FL

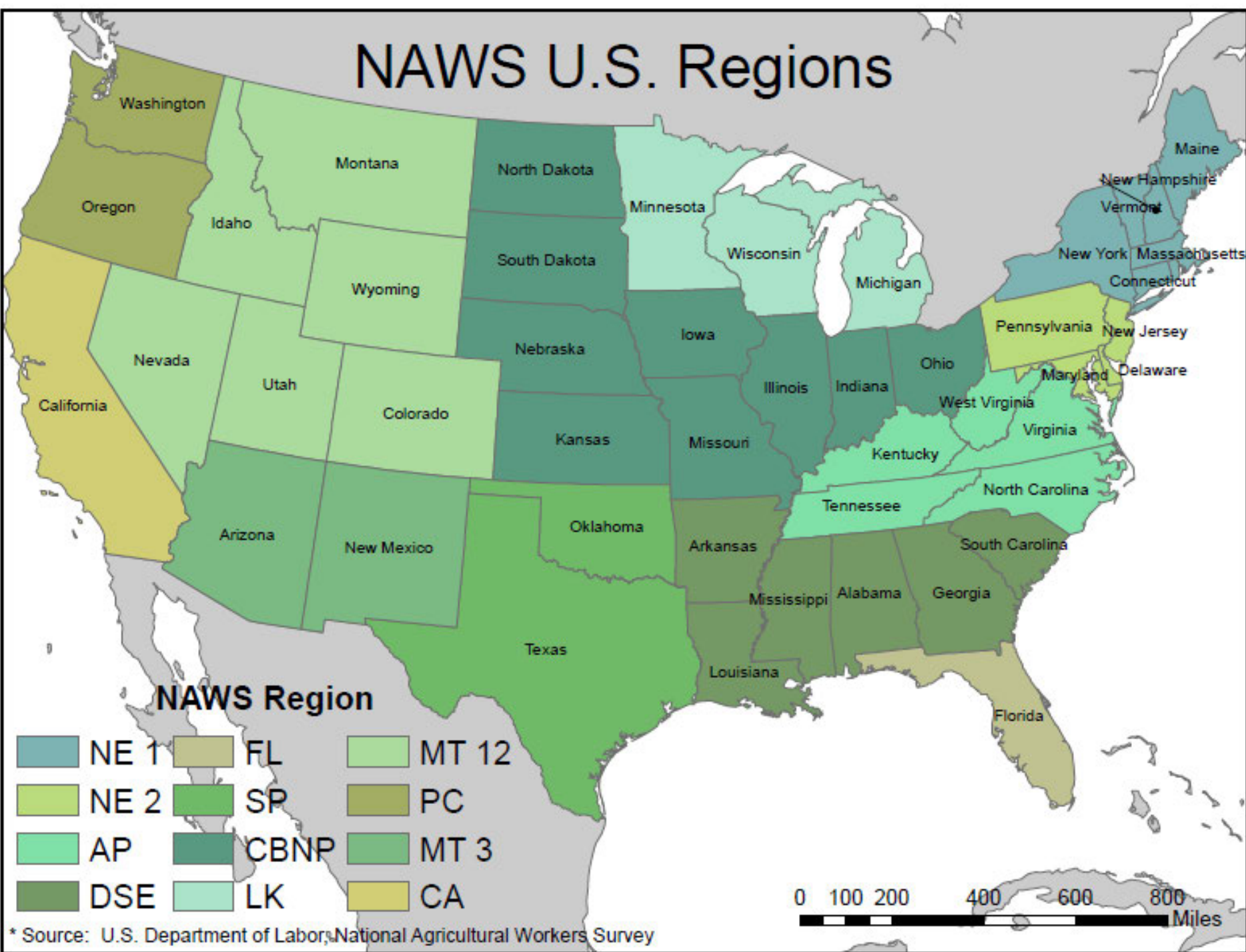


# NAWS U.S. Regions

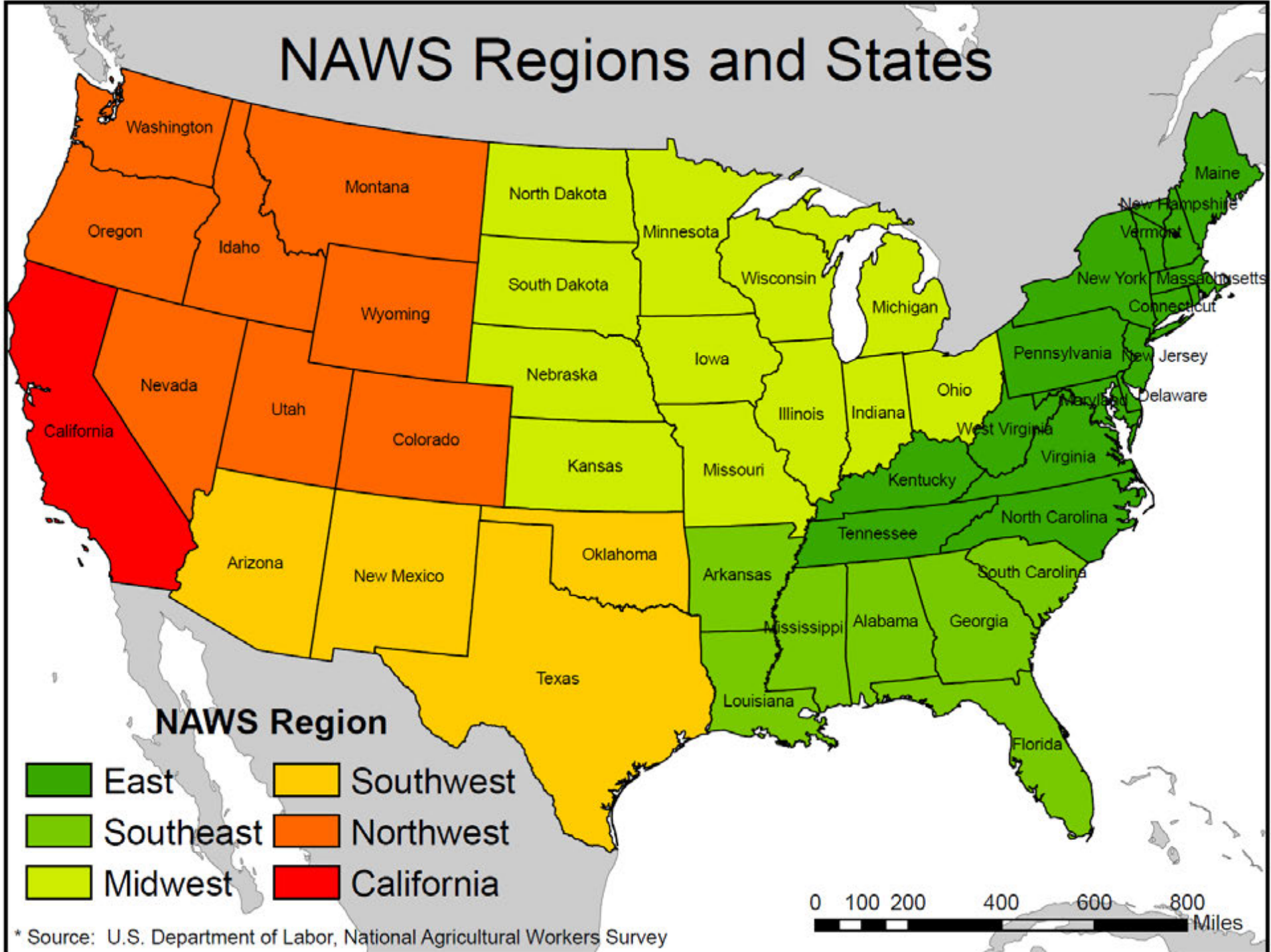
## NAWS Region



\* Source: U.S. Department of Labor, National Agricultural Workers Survey



# NAWS Regions and States

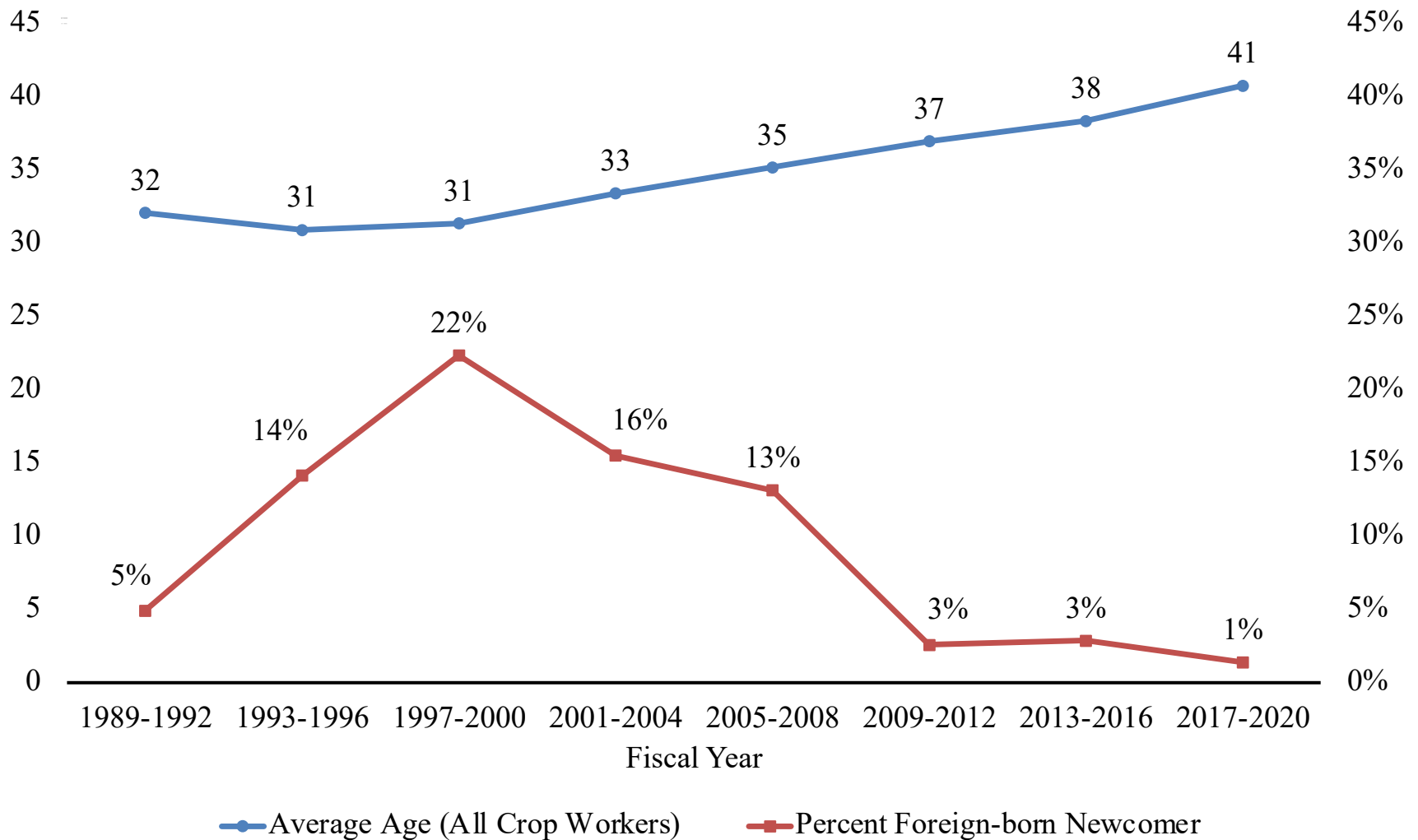


\* Source: U.S. Department of Labor, National Agricultural Workers Survey

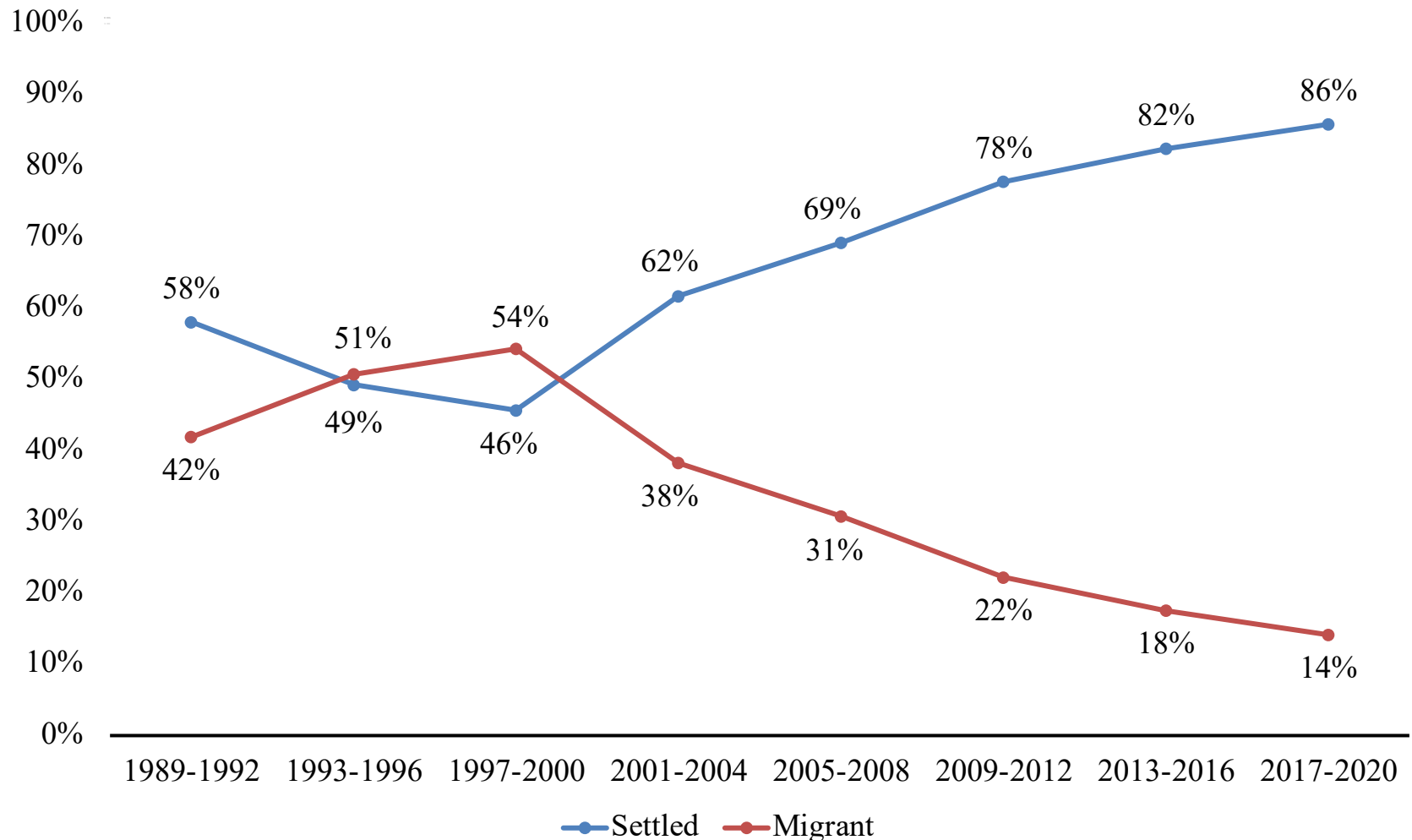
# What does NAWS collect?

- Demographics of worker and household members
- Wages, benefits, annual earnings (farm and non-farm) and other income
- Work history – last 12 months
- Experience and job tenure
- Use of social service programs
- Legal status
- Health care access and utilization, lifetime health history
- Supplemental questions to meet other (non-DOL) information needs

# Average Age of All Crop Workers and Percent of Foreign-born Newcomer

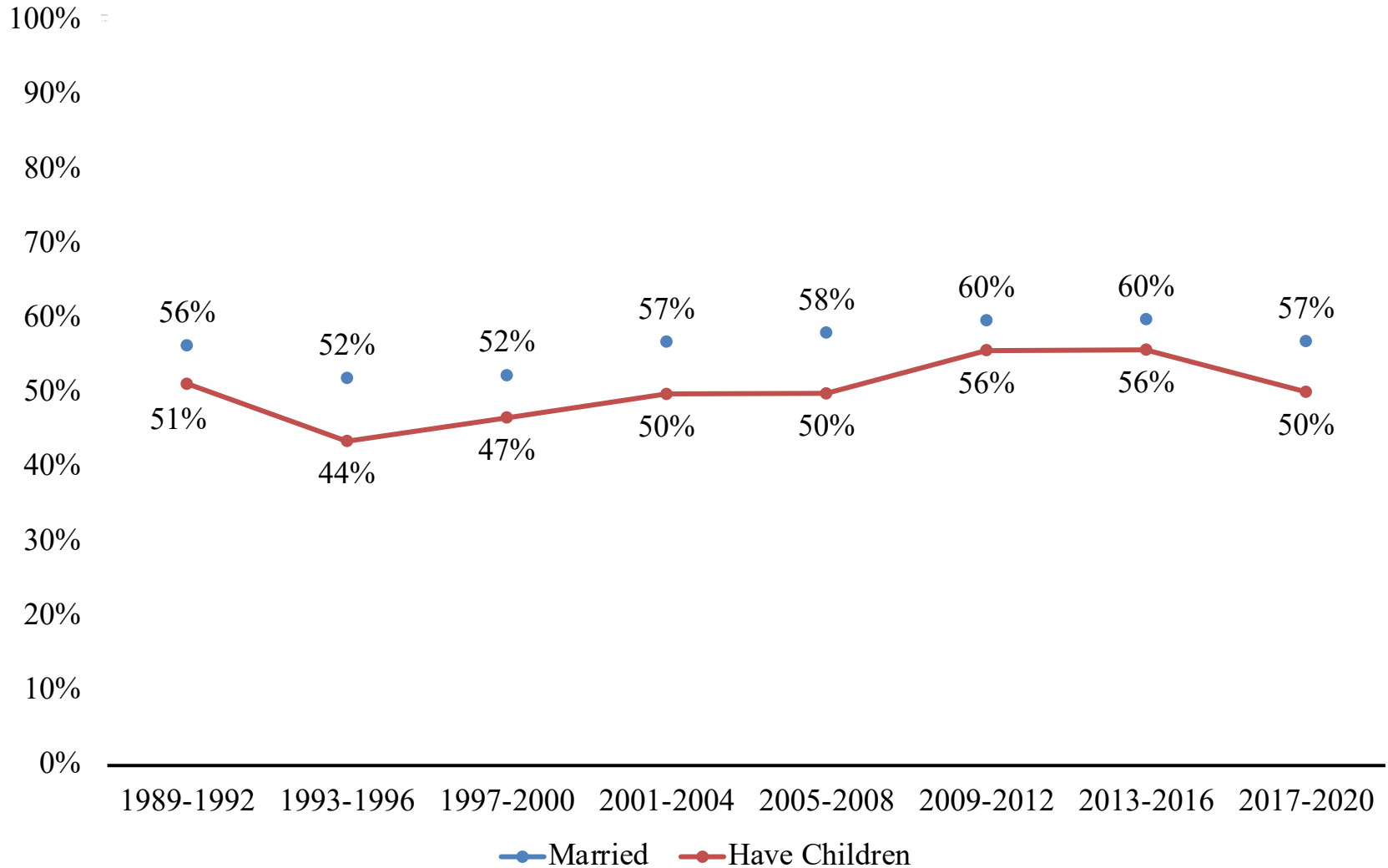


# Migrant and Settled Crop Workers





# Family Structure





New  
Crop workers  
Then and Now

# U.S. farm labor supply is tightening

- Mexican immigration has declined
  - Hanson et al. (2017), Durand & Massey (2019), Martin (2019)
- Workers are less willing to migrate for farm work
  - Fan, Gabbard, Pena, & Perloff (2015)
- Growers investing in labor-saving technology or transitioning away from labor-intensive crops
  - Konstandini et al (2014), Richards (2018), Devadoss et al (2020), Charlton & Castillo (2021)
- We try to answer: Who are the new (non-H-2A) crop workers?

# Crop workers by experience

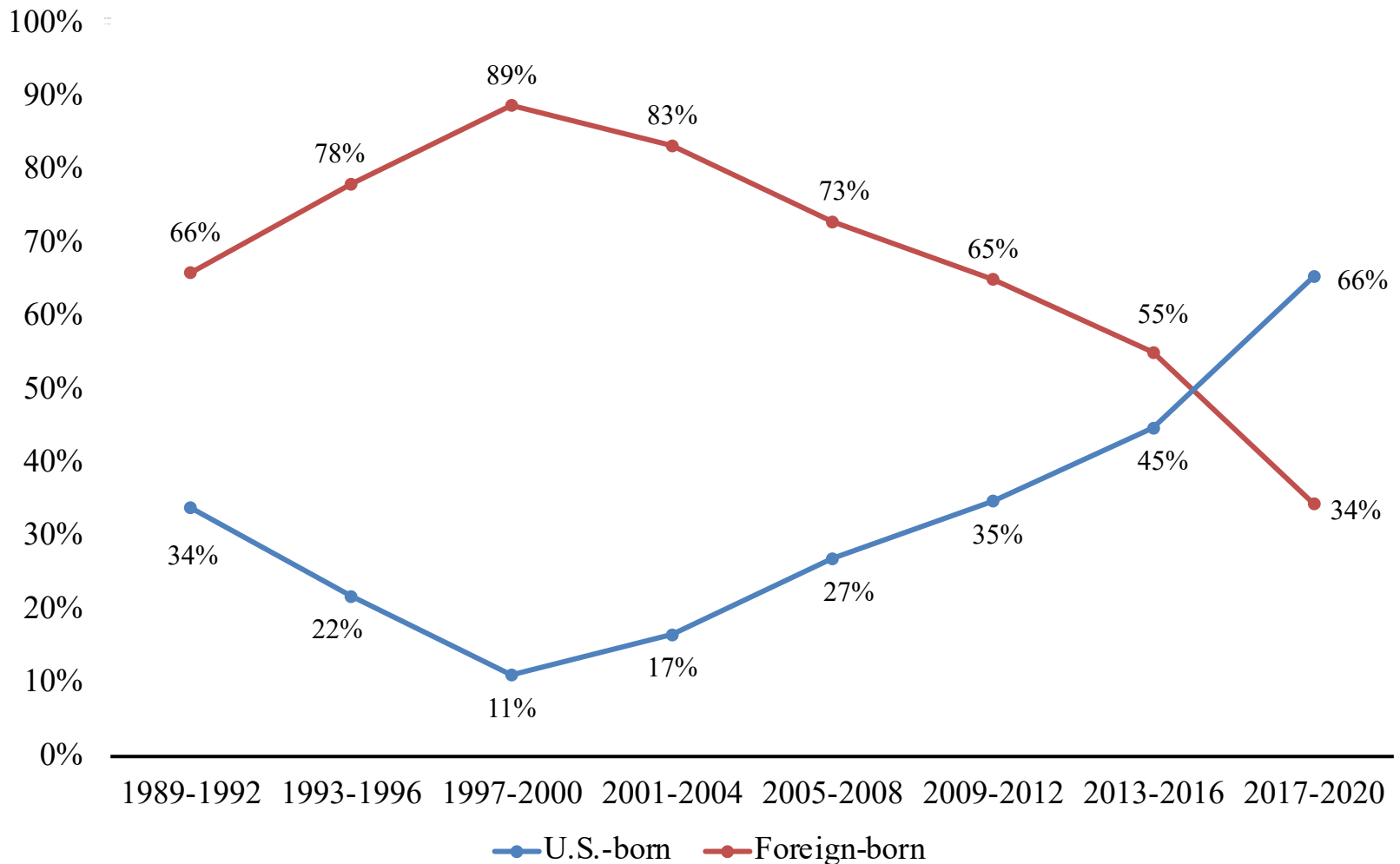
Fewer crop workers are new to crop work.

| Period    | At Most 23 Months |     | More Than 2 Years |     |
|-----------|-------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
|           | N                 | %   | N                 | %   |
| 1989-1992 | 1,193             | 15% | 6,734             | 85% |
| 1993-1996 | 2,752             | 28% | 7,217             | 72% |
| 1997-2000 | 3,205             | 33% | 6,651             | 67% |
| 2001-2004 | 2,177             | 25% | 6,373             | 75% |
| 2005-2008 | 1,767             | 23% | 5,791             | 77% |
| 2009-2012 | 1,042             | 14% | 6,674             | 86% |
| 2013-2016 | 1,161             | 13% | 7,732             | 87% |
| 2017-2020 | 939               | 12% | 7,157             | 88% |



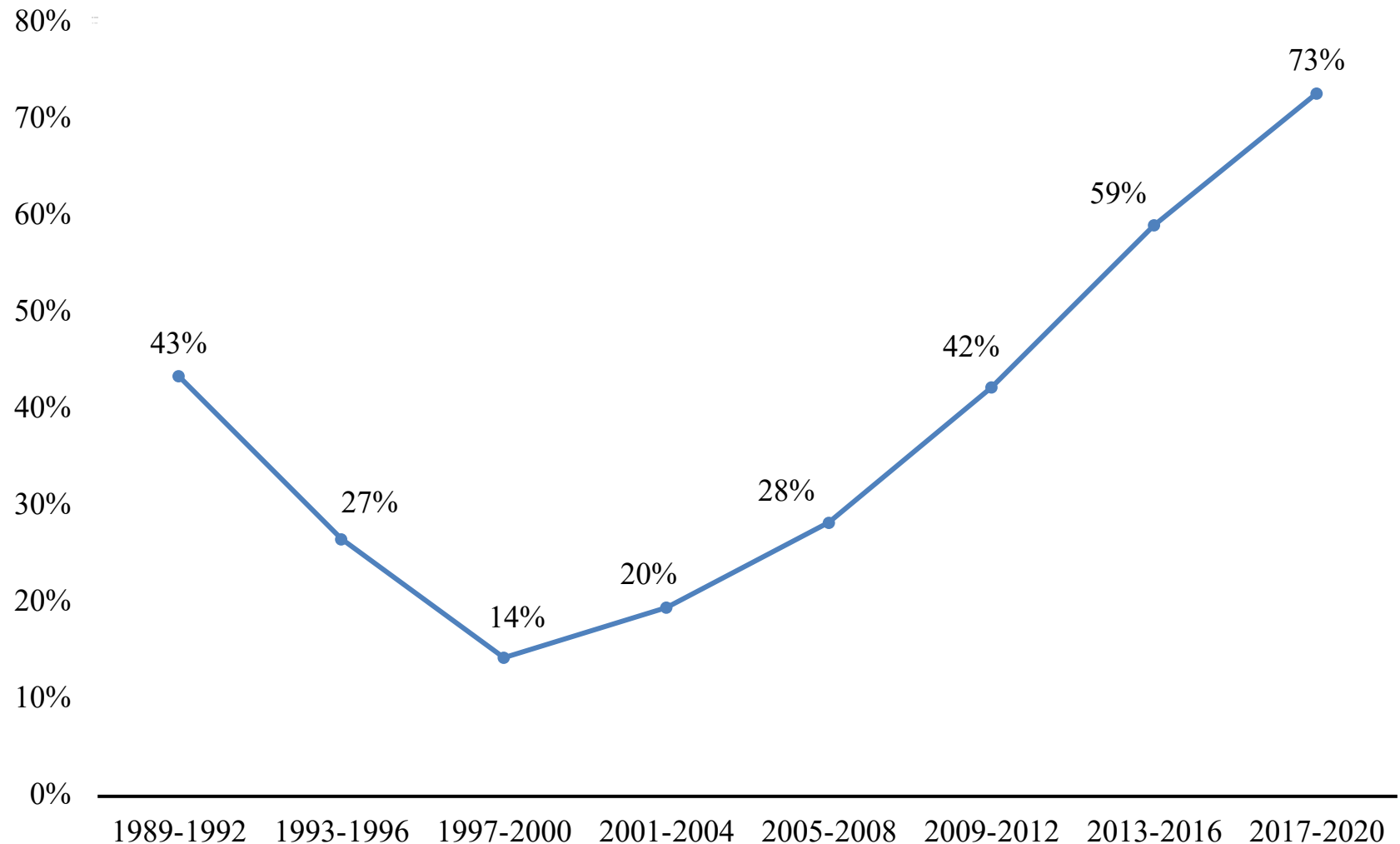
# New Crop workers by nativity

Two-thirds of new crop workers are U.S.-born.



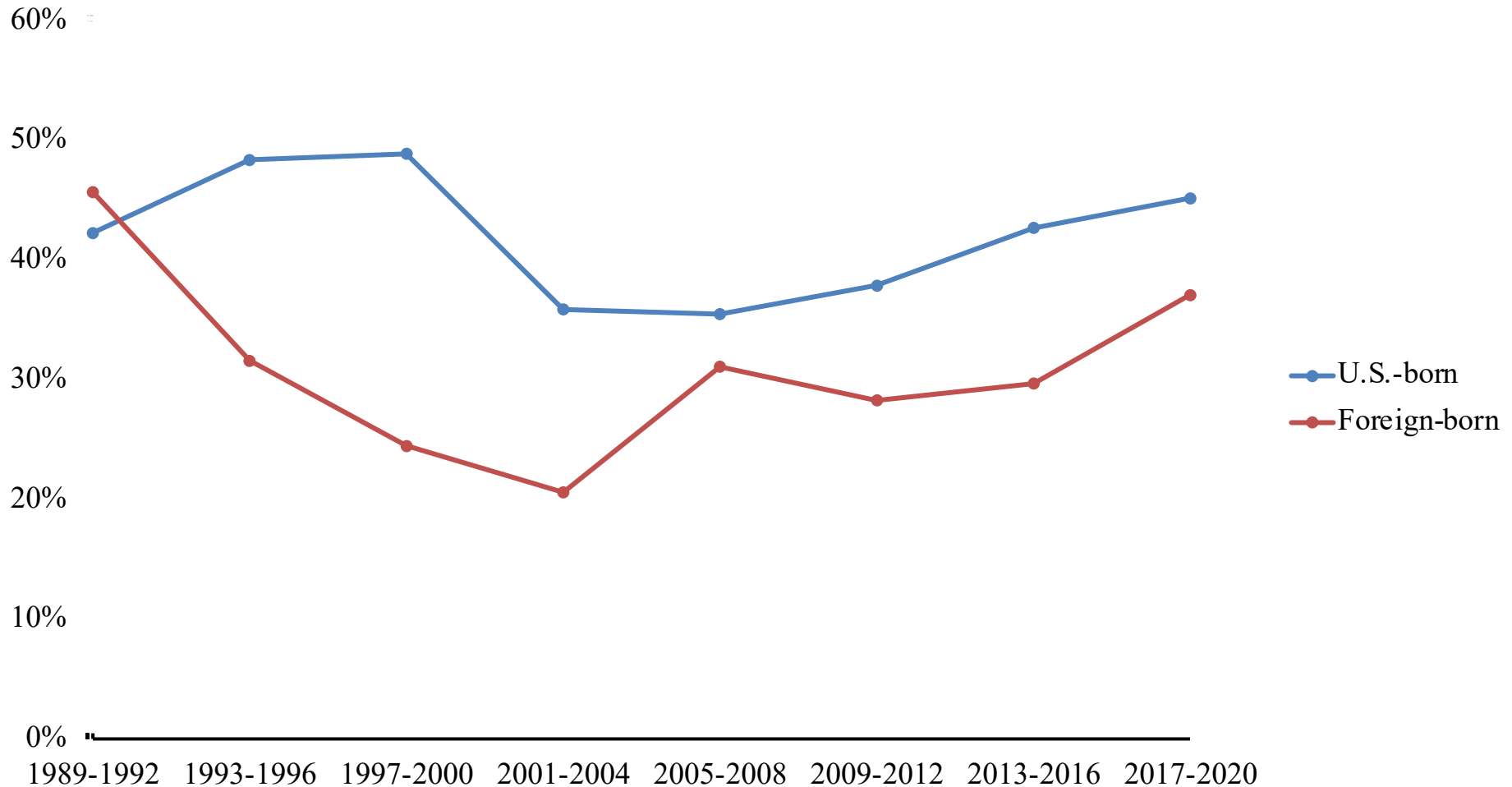
# Work authorization of new crop workers

Most new crop workers are authorized because they are U.S.-born



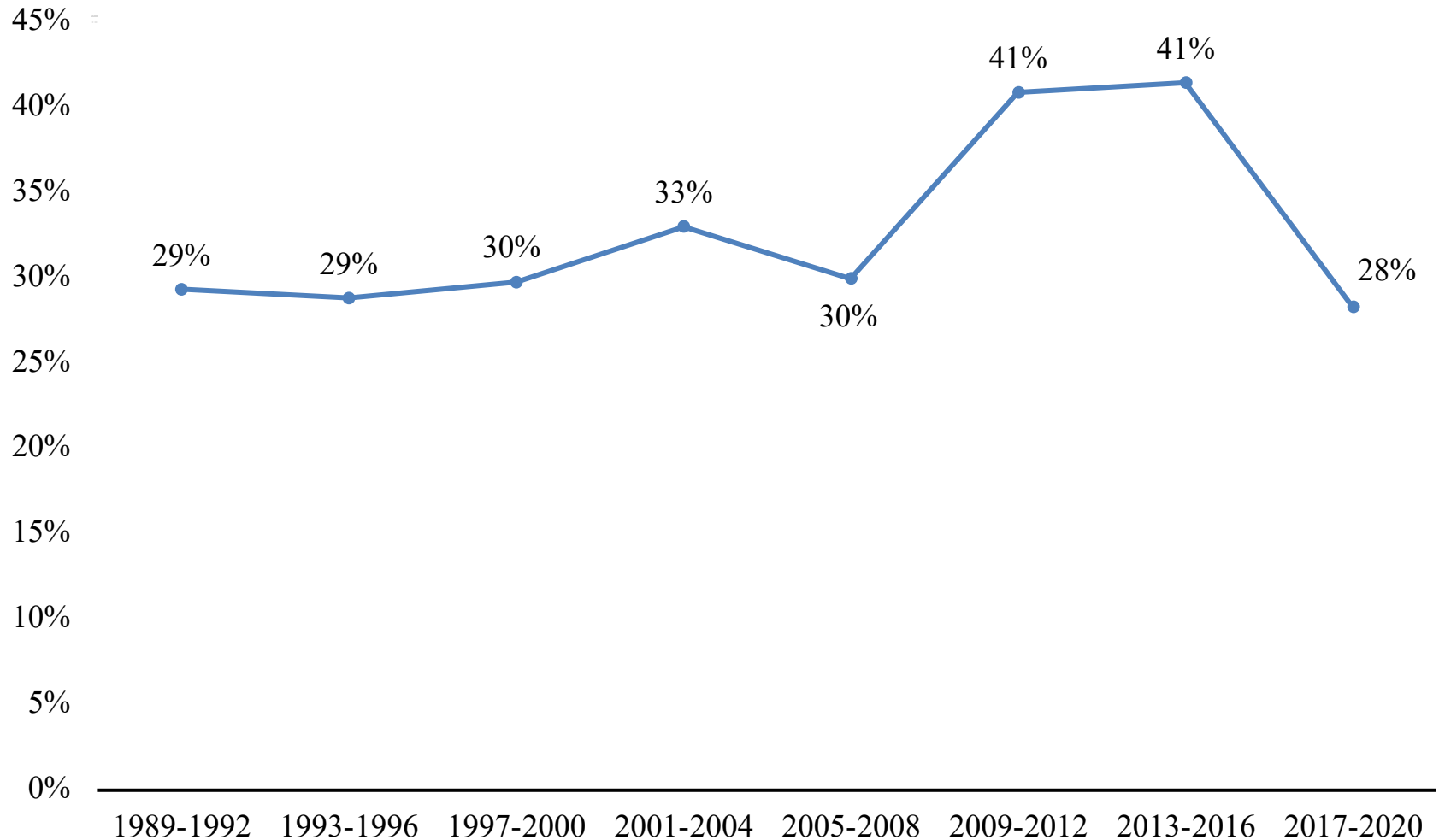
# New crop workers with crop worker parents

U.S.-born new workers are more likely to have crop-worker parents



# Parenthood among new crop workers

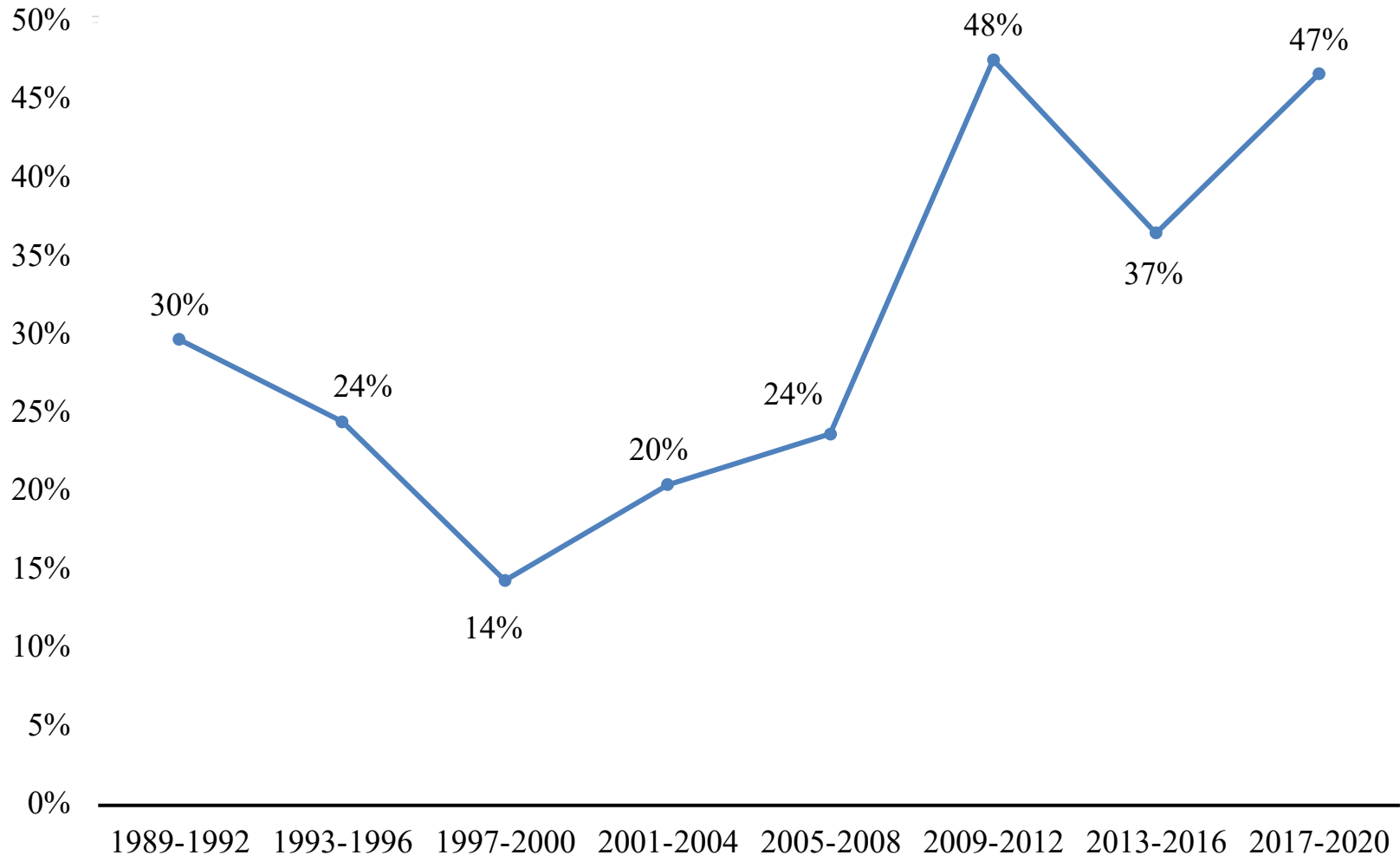
Significant drop among new crop workers in most recent period





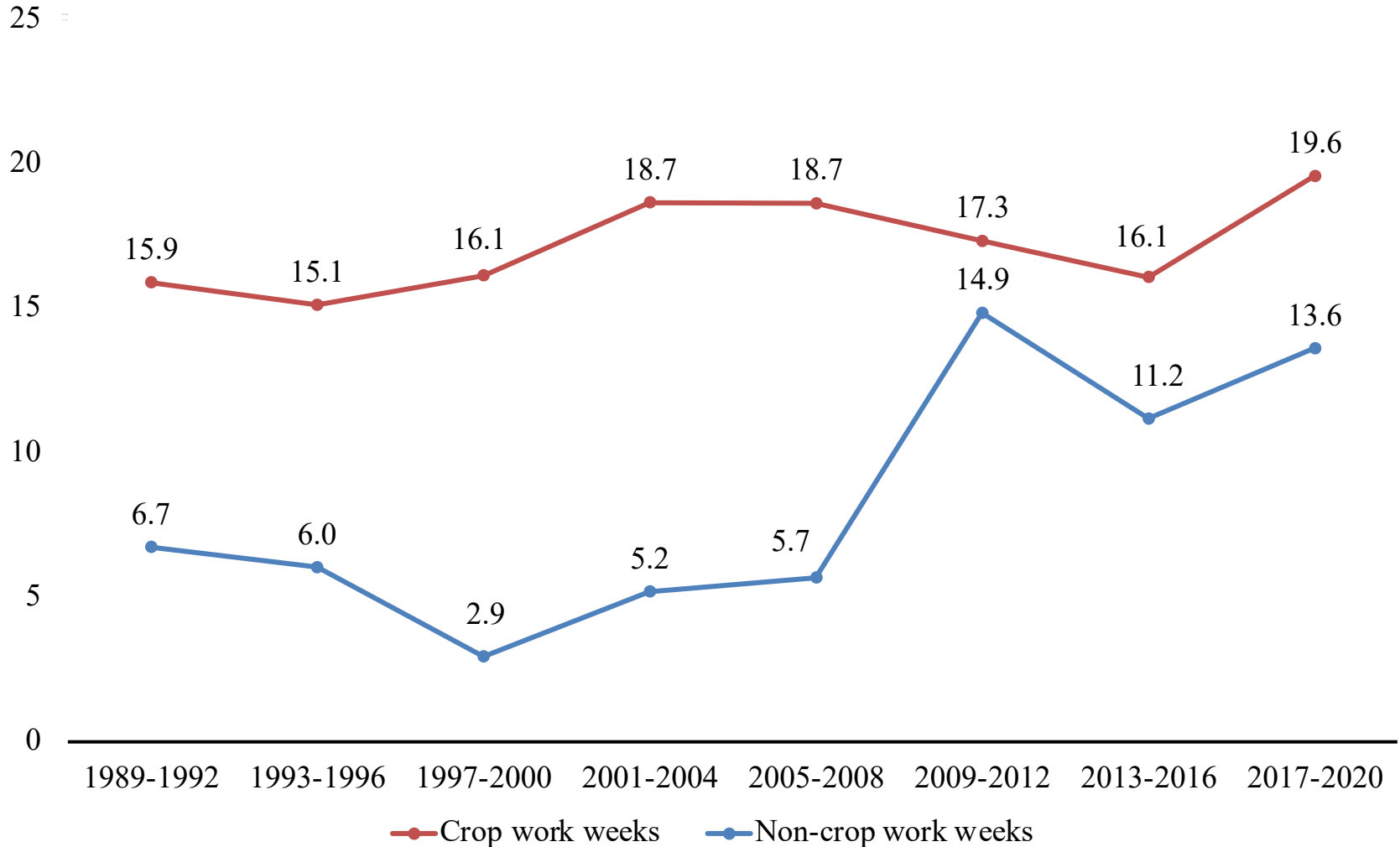
# New workers with at least one non-crop job

New crop workers are much more likely to have non-crop employment



# Weeks of crop and non-crop work

New crop workers are working more non-crop weeks in recent years

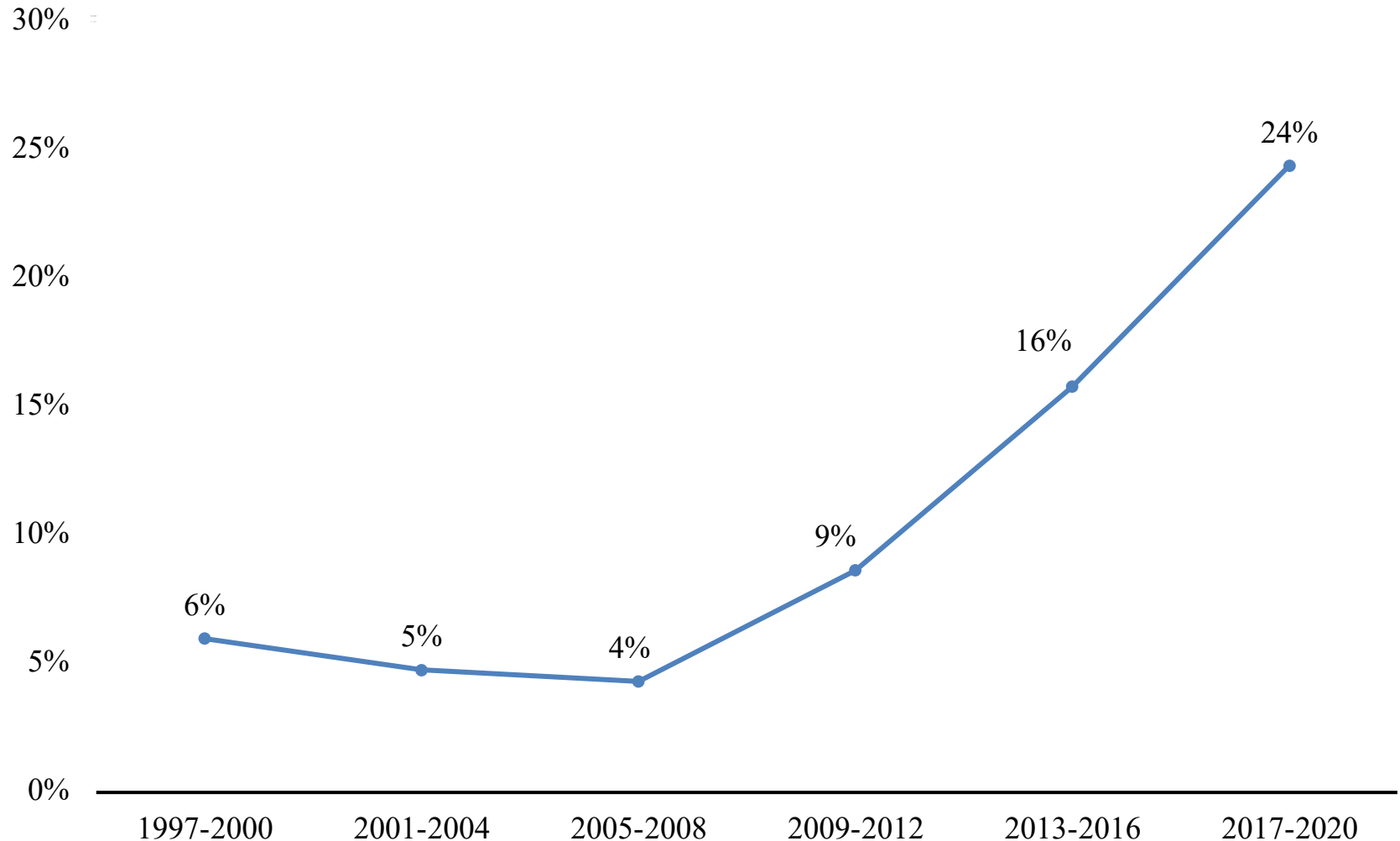




Changes in  
new Foreign-born

# Health insurance among new crop workers

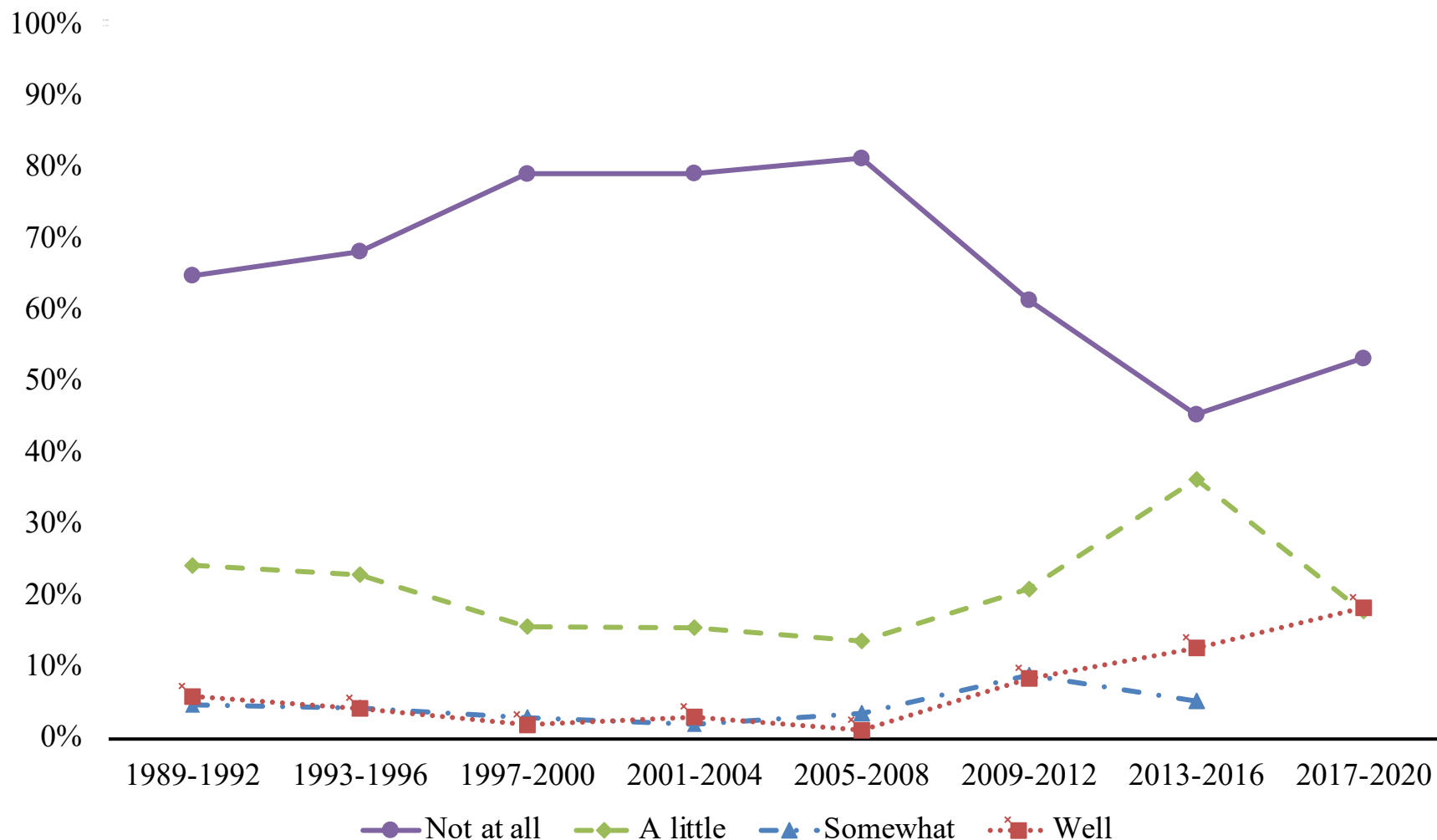
Foreign-born new crop workers have health insurance more often





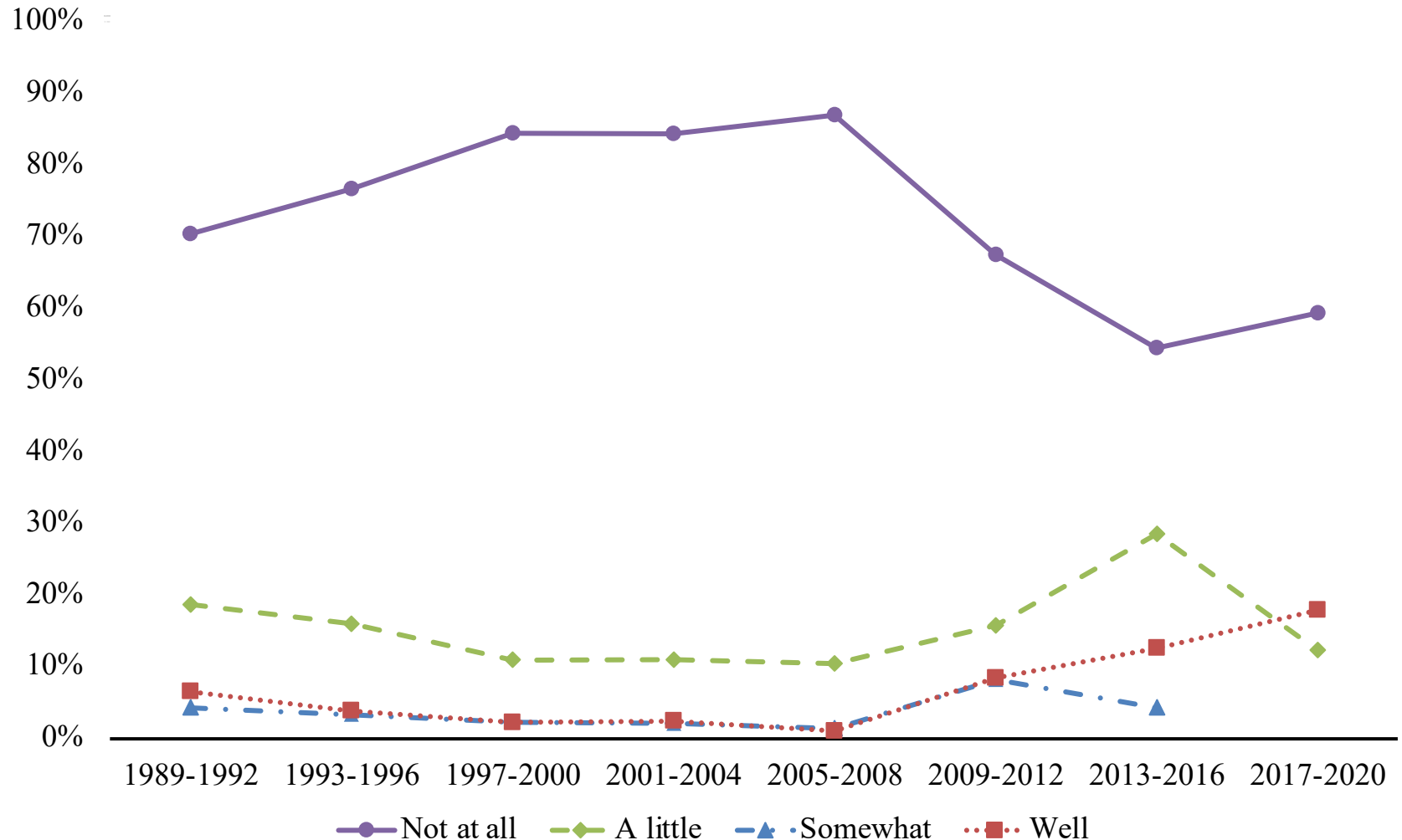
# New crop worker English speaking ability

Foreign-born new crop workers report better English-speaking ability



# New crop worker English reading ability

Foreign-born new crop workers report better English-reading skills

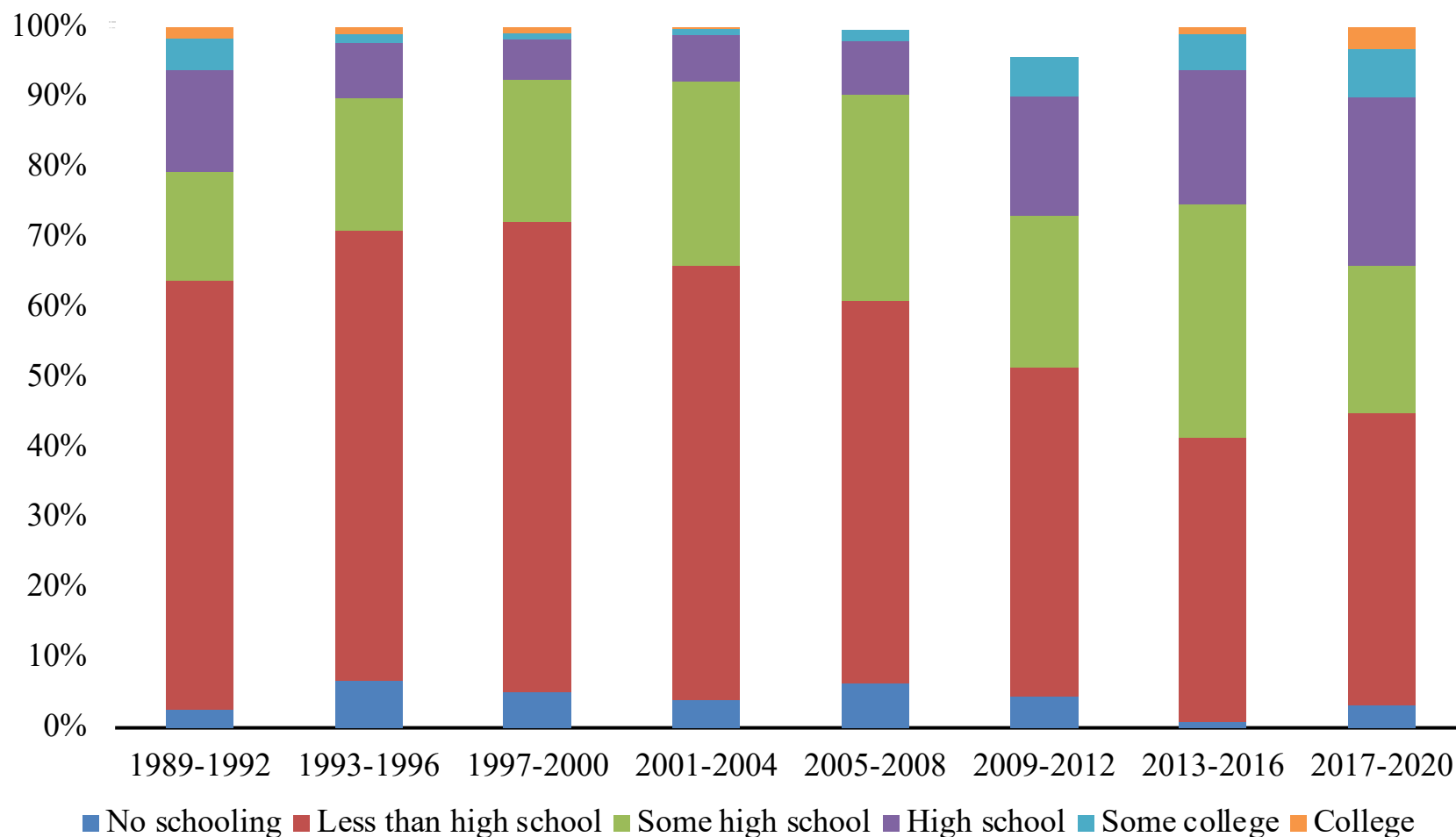




Differences between  
Foreign- and U.S.-born

# Educational attainment, new Foreign-born

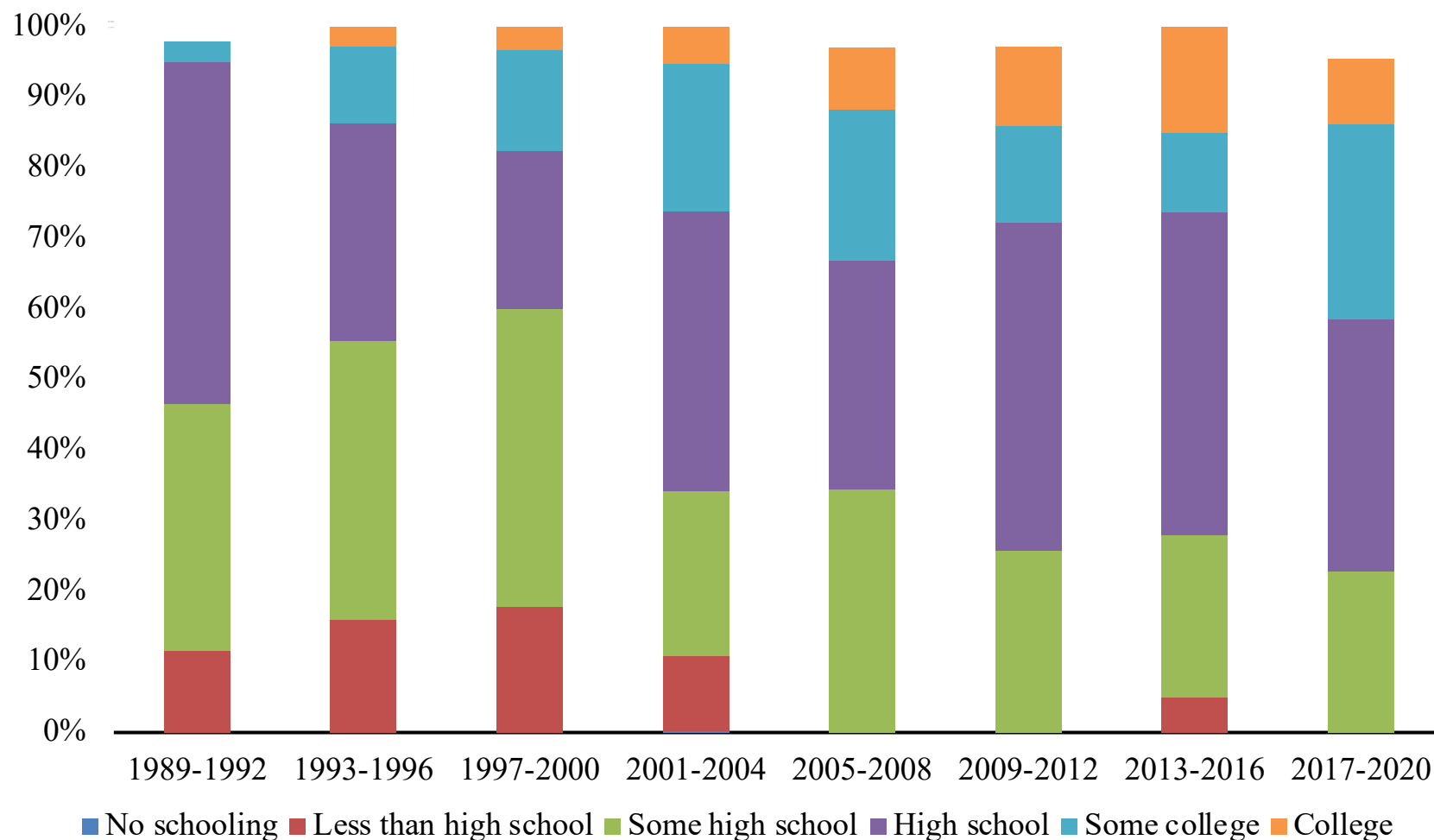
Two-thirds of new foreign-born workers have not graduated high school



1989-1992 College; 1993-1996 College, 2001-2004 College; 2005-2008 Some college; 2009-2012 No schooling and Some college; 2013-2016 No schooling, Some college, and College; and 2017-2020 No schooling, Some college, College estimates have relative standard errors between 31% and 50% and should be interpreted with caution. Missing data in the chart indicates estimates are suppressed because number of responses is less than 4 or relative standard errors for the estimates are greater than 50%.

# Educational attainment, new U.S.-born

## Four-in-five new U.S.-born have at least completed high school

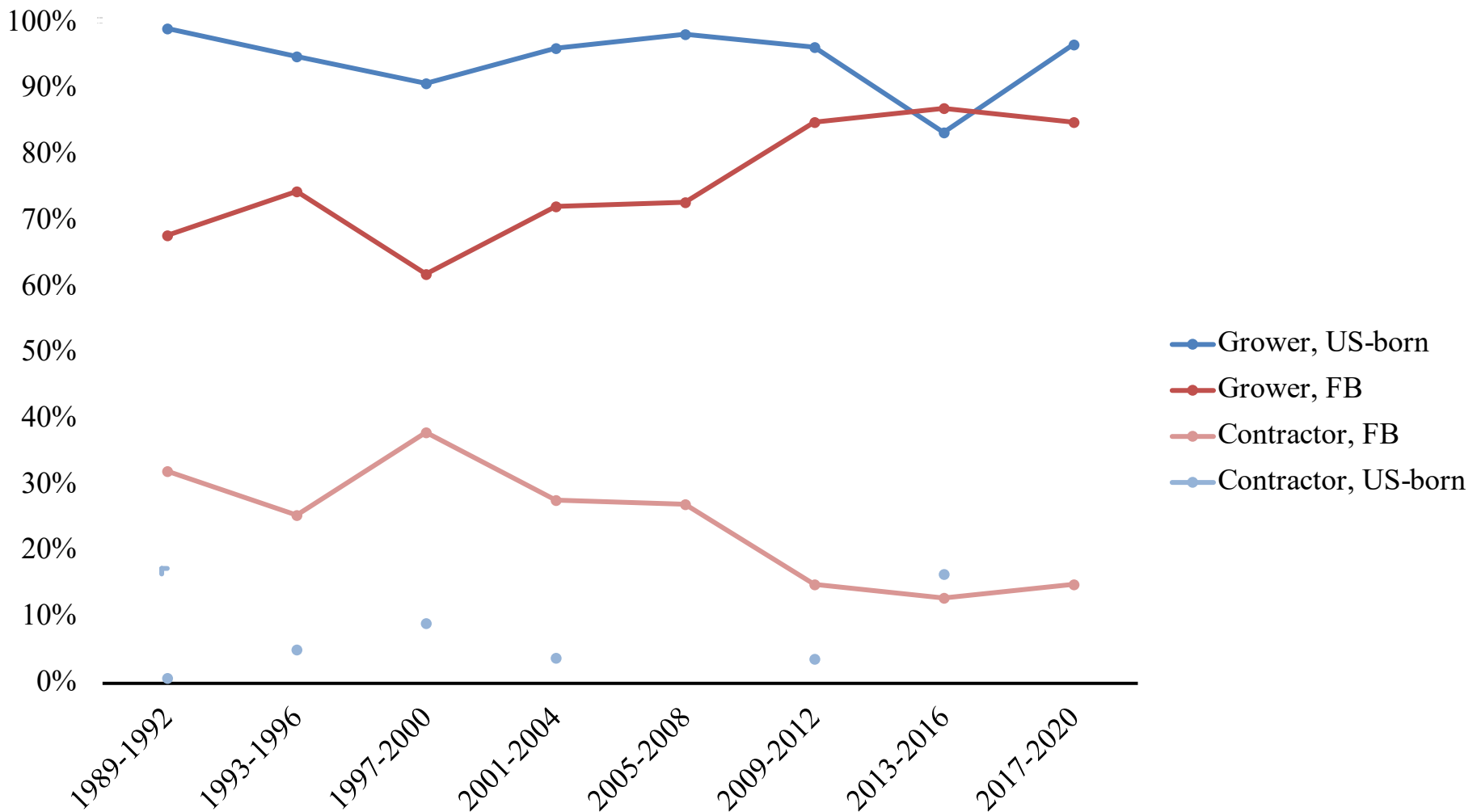


1992-2000 College; 2001-2004 Less than high school and College; 2005-2008 Some college and College; and 2013-2016 College estimates have relative standard errors between 31% and 50% and should be interpreted with caution.

Missing data in the chart indicates estimates are suppressed because number of responses is less than 4 or relative standard errors for the estimates are greater than 50%.

# New crop worker type of employer

U.S.-born workers are more likely to be directly employed by growers

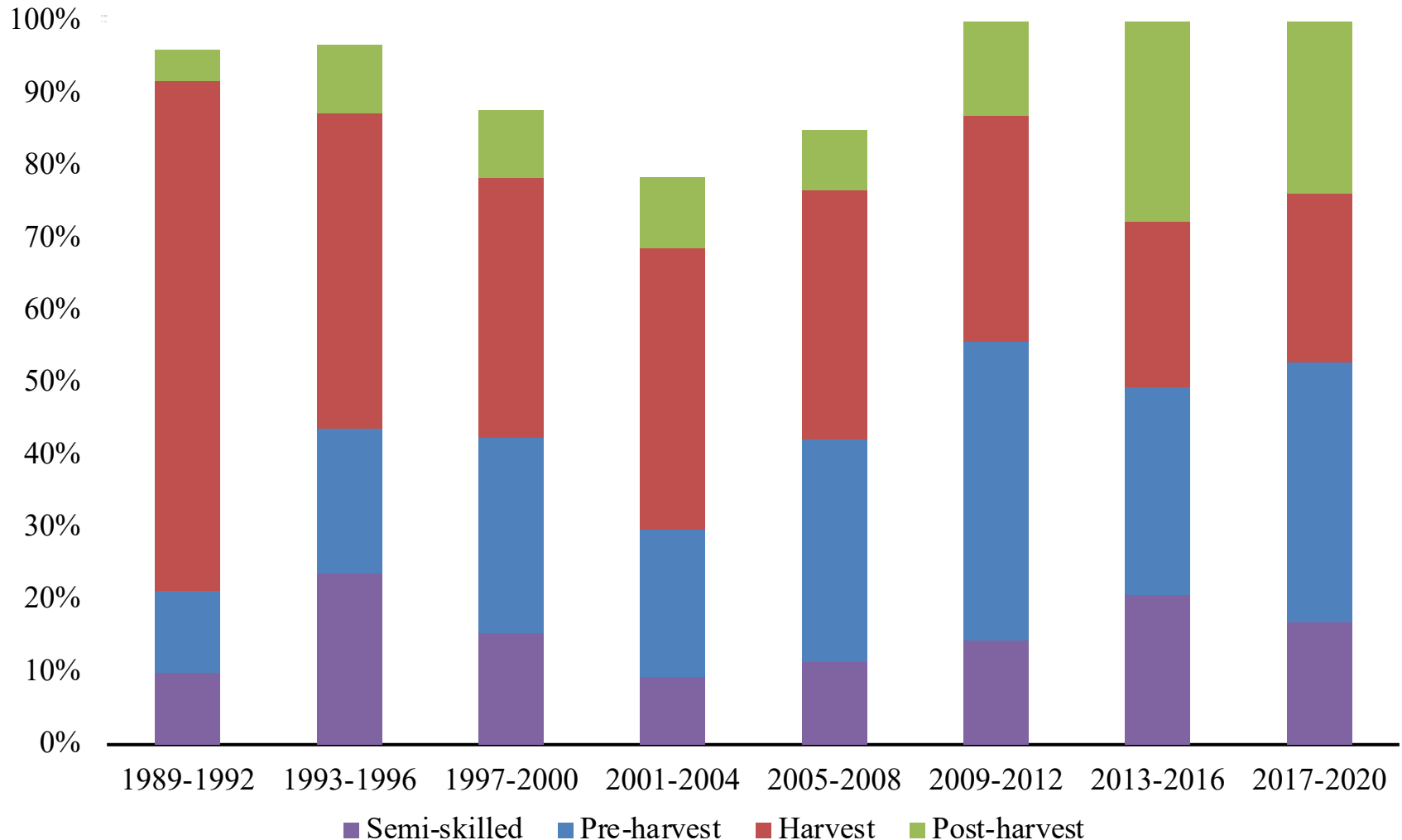


<sup>a</sup> Estimates have relative standard errors between 31% and 50% and should be interpreted with caution.



# Task At Time of Interview, new Foreign-born

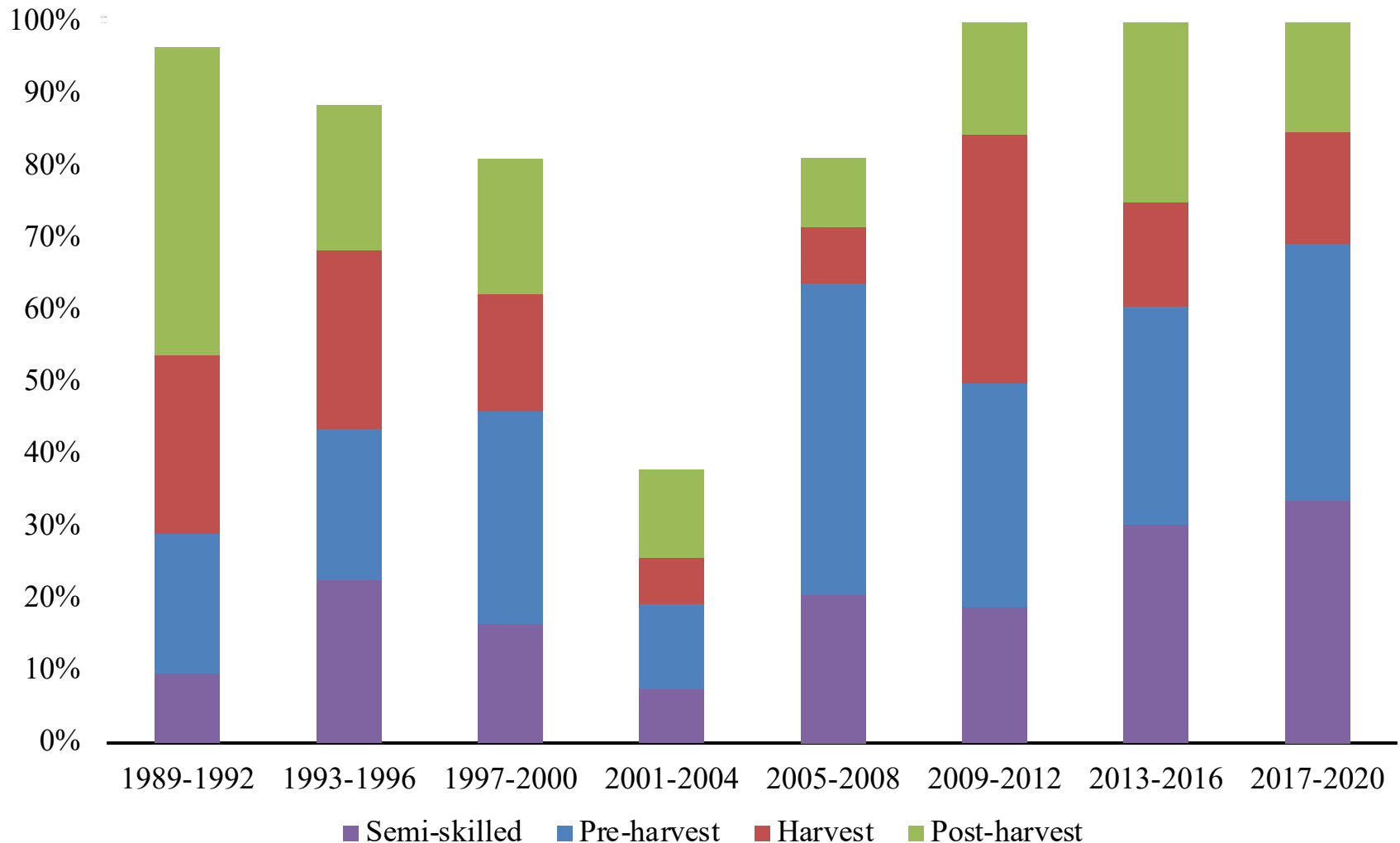
Pre- and Post-harvest tasks have become more common.



2009-2012 Post-harvest and 2017-2020 Semi-skilled estimates have relative standard errors between 31% and 50% and should be interpreted with caution.

# Task At Time of Interview, new U.S.-born

U.S.-born are more often engaged in semi-skilled tasks.



2001-2004 Harvest, 2005-2008 Harvest and Post-harvest, and 2017-2020 Post-harvest estimates have relative standard errors between 31% and 50% and should be interpreted with caution.



# The End

For more information on the  
NAWS:

Website

<https://www.doleta.gov/naws/>

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