

## **Social Media Policies Southern Region Extension**

### Alabama

Alabama Extension Social Media Sites

<http://www.aces.edu/pubs/docs/A/ACES-2408/ACES-2408.pdf>

Alabama Extension Social Media Guidelines

<http://www.aces.edu/pubs/docs/A/ACES-2210/ACES-2210.pdf>

Alabama 4-H Basic Social Media Etiquette for 4-H Volunteers

<http://www.aces.edu/4-H-youth/AL4-H/forvolunteers/documents/socialmedia-volunteers.pdf>

### Arkansas

<https://www.uaex.edu/social-media/>

### Florida

<http://ics.ifas.ufl.edu/docs/pdfs/socialmedia/social-media-guidelines.pdf>

### Georgia

CAES

<https://intranet.caes.uga.edu/policies-and-procedures/college-identity-policies/social-media-policy/>

UGA

<https://brand.uga.edu/social-media/guidelines?>

### Kentucky

<http://www.uky.edu/regs/sites/www.uky.edu.regs/files/files/ar/AR10-4.pdf>

### Louisiana

See attached

### Mississippi

See attached

### North Carolina

[University Social site](#)

[NC State Social Media Policy](#)

[Extension brand site](#)

Oklahoma

See attached

Puerto Rico

South Carolina

Tennessee

See attached

Texas

See attached

Virginia

Virgin Islands

# LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY AGRICULTURAL CENTER

Effective Date: July 18, 2006

AG CENTER PS-47  
Version: 0

## USE OF AGCENTER INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

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The AgCenter provides as part of its technology platform an electronic mail system, internet access, and access to various other information technology resources for use by employees in order to enhance the timeliness, quality and performance of their work. These tools are provided to employees for the accomplishment of their work as AgCenter employees.

### Appropriate Use

Use of information technology resources, including but not limited to email and internet access, is governed by Louisiana Revised Statutes and the Regulations of the LSU Board of Supervisors (Sections 5-8 and 5-9). These laws and regulations prohibit use of AgCenter resources for non-business reasons. Further, any activity or purpose that is in conflict with any AgCenter policy or procedures, such as the Sexual Harassment, EEO, or Violence-Free Workplace policy, is considered a violation of policy. Further, employees may not transmit personal comments or statements or post information to newsgroups or Usenet that may be mistaken as the position of the AgCenter.

The most serious violations of policy include use for any illegal activity or purpose; access to pornographic information; use of AgCenter property for an employee's outside employment or other personal activities/businesses, including personal farms, conducted for personal gain; and usage that is threatening or intimidating. As is the case with other forms of communication (telephone, written, meetings, etc.), employees are expected to use electronic forms of communication in a manner that is professional and is not demeaning, offensive, or disruptive. As a condition for access to and use the AgCenter information technology resources, each user is personally responsible for ensuring that each and all of these guidelines are followed.

**Appendices to this document, which will be updated periodically, contain further specifics regarding acceptable and unacceptable uses along with best practices and recommendations for the most effective use of IT resources.**

### Privacy

All computers and the data stored on them, including but not limited to email messages, databases, documents and spreadsheets, are and remain at all times the property of the AgCenter. All user network accounts and mailboxes require private passwords although this does not guarantee data privacy, nor should privacy be expected by anyone. The AgCenter reserves the right to retrieve and read any message stored, composed, sent or received; and to reset passwords and access user data at the discretion of management. An employee's use of AgCenter information technology resources constitutes the employee's consent to the AgCenter's access to, and waiver of the employee's privacy interest in, all data on the system. While the AgCenter does not monitor email and internet access as a routine matter, the AgCenter reserves the right to access and disclose this information in its sole discretion and/or for any business purpose.

Additionally, federal regulations such as the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act and HIPPA impose restrictions on the access and dissemination of AgCenter data. AgCenter personnel with access to AgCenter data must

be familiar with data privacy concerns and act accordingly when utilizing this data. As examples, AgCenter personnel with access to confidential data may only use the data in the manner for which intended, may not share the data with others not authorized to have access to the data, and must maintain the data in a manner appropriate to the level of confidentiality required.

## **Responsibility**

It is each individual user's responsibility to maintain the integrity of their network IDs and passwords. An individual's ID and password is their "key" to the system as well as their "signature" when accessing AgCenter resources. Proper protection of passwords and access to computers, laptops, cell phones and handheld devices is the responsibility of each employee. Additionally, it is the responsibility of each employee to ensure that they are operating with valid software licenses and that their machine is properly patched and protected with updated virus software. Employees may not obtain or use another's logonid or password, or otherwise access computer resources for which authorization has not been validly given. Employees also may not copy, impair or remove any software located on any computer resource or install any software on any computer resource that unreasonably impairs the function, operation and/or efficiency of any computing resources. Finally, employees learning of any misuse of AgCenter systems by any user or other individual or violations of this Policy are required to notify their Unit Head and/or HR. Guidelines accompany this policy in order to give further clarification with respect to requirements and user responsibility in this area.

Only certain people within the AgCenter are authorized to access another individual's computer, electronic media, electronic communications, or other electronic resources without the employee's permission. These individuals are the unit head, a person authorized by the unit head or higher level line administrator, and computer personnel in the course and scope of their responsibilities solely for the purpose of maintaining computers.

## **Violations**

AgCenter employees who participate in inappropriate and/or unauthorized use of AgCenter information technology resources or are otherwise in violation of this policy shall be subject to discipline as appropriate under the circumstances up to and including termination.

## **Appendix A – Email Usage Mandatory Requirements**

- Email messages should be limited to the conduct of AgCenter business and/or AgCenter sponsored activities.
- Email may not be used for: illegal activity; activity that is in conflict with any AgCenter policy or procedure; activities related to a personal business or for personal gain.
- Email messages shall not contain content that may be reasonably considered demeaning, offensive or disruptive to any employee. Demeaning, offensive or disruptive content would include, but would not be limited to, sexual comments or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments or any comments that would offend someone on the basis of his or her age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin, or disability. Employees should also refrain from using vulgarities, obscenities, sarcasm or exaggeration in e-mail messages.
- All employees must use updated virus software and exercise caution when downloading files.

### **Guidelines**

Email has quickly become one of the most important methods of communicating with each other and with our colleagues and constituents. The following guidelines are not intended to discourage your use of email, but rather to ensure that email is used responsibly, appropriately and with discretion.

You should never consider your electronic communications to be either private or secure. Email may be stored indefinitely on any number of computers, including that of the recipient. Copies of your messages may be forwarded to others either electronically or on paper. In addition, email sent to nonexistent or incorrect user names may be delivered to persons other than the intended recipient.

THINK before sending a message. It is very important that you use the same care and discretion in drafting email as you would for any other written communication. Anything created or stored in the computer may be reviewed by others. Before sending a message, ask yourself the following question: Would I want a judge or jury to see this message?

Do not forward or initiate chain or mass e-mail. Chain or mass email is a message sent to a number of people asking each recipient to send copies with the same message to a specified number of others. Employees should delete all chain email and all non-business related email immediately upon receipt and refrain from forwarding them to any other employees.

### **E-Mail Retention**

Our email system is a key component of being able to conduct business across the state and with all of our colleagues and peers. As such, it is backed up daily and plans are in place for being able to restore the system in the event of failure. This means, also, that backups can be used to retrieve even deleted emails. Backups are maintained for approximately one month, so emails that are deleted would still be on backup systems for another month after deletion. Also, it is important to note that when deleting an email, it goes into your “Deleted” folder which is also backed up. If you do not have your “Deleted” folder set to permanently remove items after a set amount of time, then emails you delete are maintained indefinitely in your “Deleted” folder as well as in the backups.

In a similar vein, emails that you send or forward are also stored in your “Sent” folder. If you forward a message and then delete it, a copy will be in your “Deleted” folder as well as your “Sent” folder. Until the message is deleted from both the “Deleted” folder and the “Sent” folder, it will remain active in the email system.

Finally, many email users use personal email folders and local archive files to maintain old emails for reference purposes. Please be aware that these are considered “official” business documents and can be subpoenaed in any investigations or suits that the AgCenter may be a part of. Please keep this in mind when deciding whether or not to keep any particular email correspondence.

## E-Mail Best Practices for Senders

- Do not use email to discuss or solve a sensitive personnel or work-place issue. For those issues and other issues of a complex nature, a phone conversation will have far better results. However, an email follow-up to the phone conversation is often appropriate.
- Avoid emotional overtones or content in your email.
- Avoid sending email that may contain controversial subject matters, once again, a phone call may be more appropriate and secure.
- Be succinct. The most effective email messages are short and to the point.
- Keep the message focused on a single topic.
- Include a subject line that captures the content of the message. This helps recipients prioritize, file and search for messages.
- Tag messages appropriately — do not label messages “High Priority” or “Urgent” unless they really are.
- Do not modify someone else’s message.
- Do not forward someone else’s message without permission.
- Do not “**reply to all**” unless “**all**” need to see your reply.
- Choose the number and size of file attachments with great care. Compress attachments whenever possible.
- Address email according to the expected action—list people in the “To” field if they should respond, and in the “CC” if they should read the message as information only.
- Avoid long dialogues and threads via email. The duration of the thread, too many topics and too many people copied can lead to confusion, and tax the system’s resources. If an email thread is getting long, it may indicate time for an in-person conversation.
- Consider message format because the recipient’s email system may not display the message as intended by the sender. Do not depend on alignments, fonts or colors to make a point.
- Broadcast emails addressed to large groups should be in support of AgCenter business, be used only where large groups of people would have an interest, and where targeting individual addresses would be too labor intensive or prone to error. Such broadcasts should only be made selectively and rarely.
- User mailboxes are not to be used for long-term storage. Retention should be for current topics and message threads. A good rule of thumb is to delete messages more than 90 days old.
- Users can employ a local .PST file to archive important messages.
- E-mail should not be used to move large files among work groups.
- Sensitive information should not be routed through public networks, such as the Internet.
- To avoid proliferation of junk mail, users of the AgCenter’s e-mail system should not reply to junk e-mail or give their e-mail address in Internet chat rooms or discussion groups. Delete all junk mail (spam). Do not respond and ask to be removed from the sender’s list as this often results in additional junk mail (spam).

## **Appendix B – Internet Usage** **Mandatory Requirements**

- Accessing information or services on the Internet should be limited to AgCenter business and/or AgCenter-sponsored activities.
- Access to the Internet may not be used for: illegal activities; use for private or personal gain; activities that are in conflict with any AgCenter policy or procedure; access to pornographic and/or other inappropriate materials and/or information.
- Internet access cannot be used for downloading any copyrighted content that has not been appropriately paid for and/or permission granted for its use.

### **Guidelines**

Access to the Internet is made available to employees in order to enhance their productivity in job-related activities. With the proliferation of information and systems available via the internet, many of the AgCenter's employees find themselves using the Internet frequently and many times on unfamiliar sites. The following guidelines will help to keep your machine secure as well as protect you from scams, spyware, viruses and spam.

- Use a browser toolbar that blocks pop-up ads. If you do get pop-up ads, do not click through.
- Create a user account on a "free" site, such as Hotmail. Whenever prompted to enter an email ID that is strictly for registering on a site, use the "free" email ID. This will help to limit your susceptibility to spam.
- When downloading content from the Internet, save it to a local drive and then scan it for viruses. Do not "open" or "execute" the item directly from the website.
- Download and use a spyware tool such as Spybot or Adaware.

### **Appendix C – Passwords** **Mandatory Requirements**

- Passwords must be changed every 90 days.
- Passwords cannot be repeated.
- Passwords must be at least 6 characters long and include at least one non-alphabetic character and at least one capital letter.
- Each employee will have his/her own unique network and email ID which is not to be shared. Employees are never to share their passwords with others.
- Employees must utilize a password-protected screensaver.

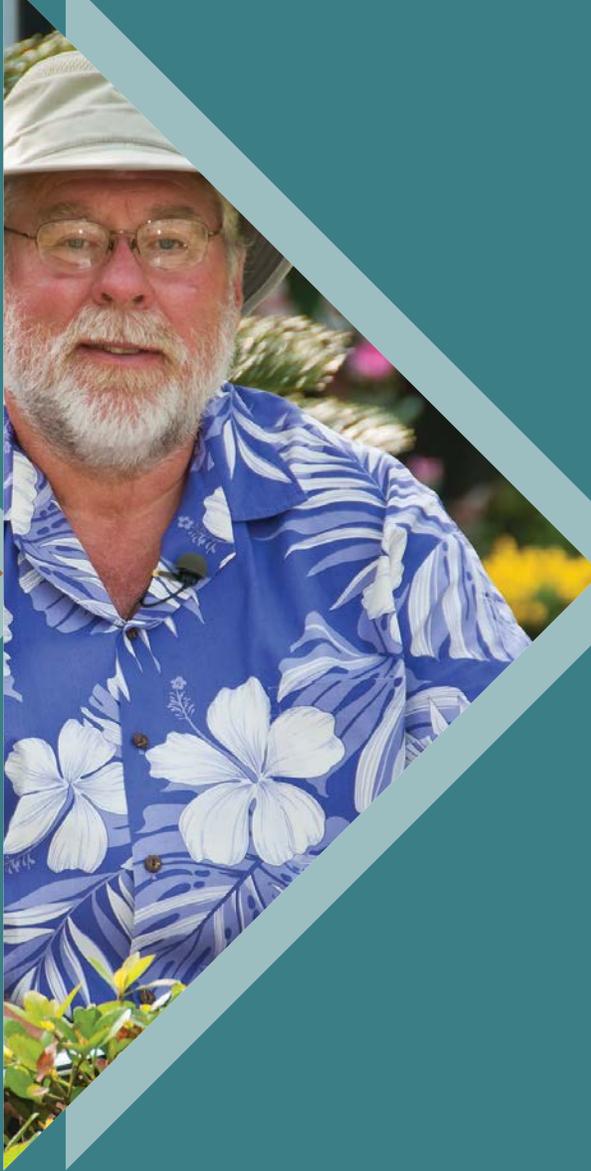
#### **Guidelines**

Passwords are an employee's "keys" to the AgCenter systems. It is vital that they are protected in an appropriate fashion. The following guidelines will help to ensure security while easing the burden of remembering complex passwords.

- Utilize a phrase instead of a word. For example, "We the people of the United States" could be represented by "Wtp0tUS". This password is very difficult to guess but very easy to remember.
- Do not write down passwords and keep them by your computer.

### **Appendix D – Software Licensing** **Mandatory Requirements**

- Employees of the AgCenter do not have the right to reproduce software.
- All software being utilized on AgCenter systems must be properly licensed. Documentation for this license is the responsibility of the department for individual computers and of IT for network software.
- AgCenter employees who become aware of misuse of computer software and/or related documentation must notify their supervisor and IT.



**MISSISSIPPI STATE**  
UNIVERSITY™

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**EXTENSION**

*Branding and Identity*

**POLICY**



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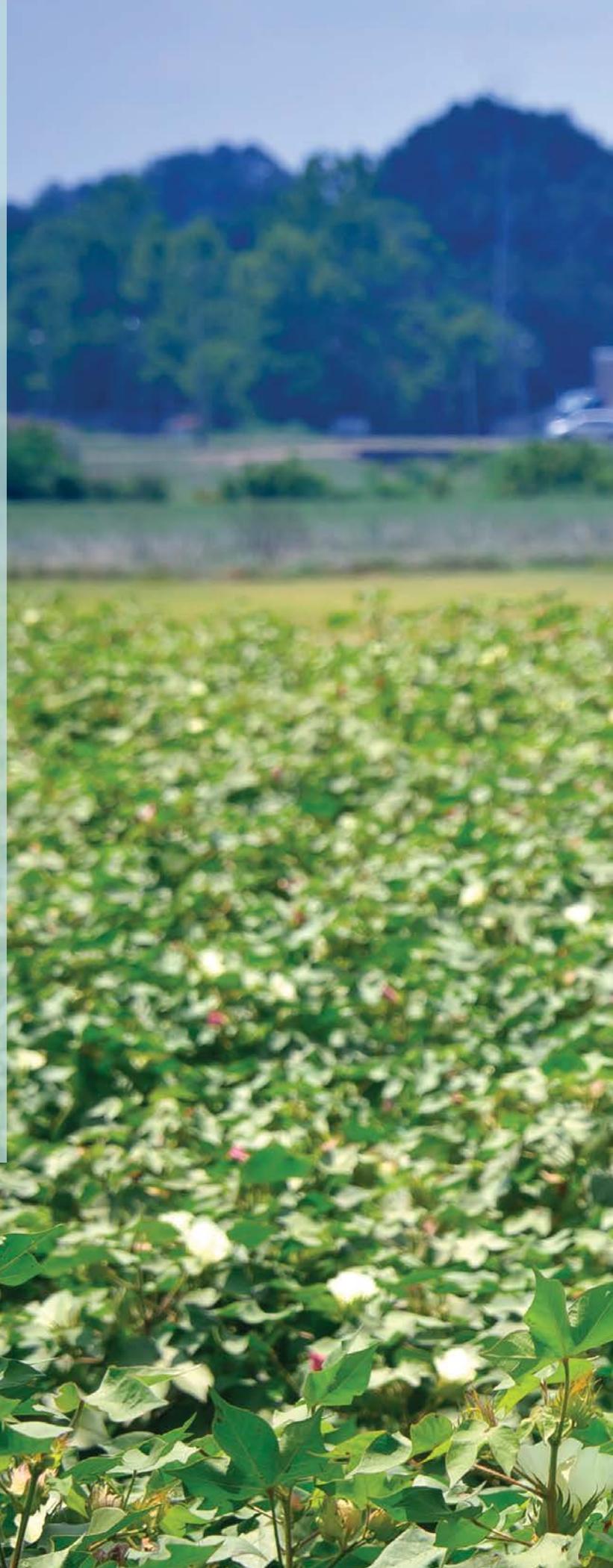
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## *Building Brand Awareness*

Extension's diversity in programs and audiences has always been one of our greatest strengths. But when it comes to creating public awareness, our highly fragmented identity has been one of our greatest weaknesses. The renewed commitment to branding is a major opportunity for us to unite behind a single name and visual identifier to build brand awareness for Extension.

We can increase the public visibility of our organization through frequent, consistent, long-term use of the Mississippi State University Extension Service name, logo, and other visual identifiers. Appropriate use of the logo and a commitment to professionalism in communications can enhance the overall reputation of MSU Extension. By adhering to the identity standards and following the marketing guidelines, each of us can help build a high level of brand awareness and a strong, positive reputation for Extension.





**Mississippi State University Extension Service** is the official name of our organization. It should be used on all signs, stationery, business cards, and all other products and materials used to identify us to the public.

Constant and repetitive use of the official name at all levels and by all units of the organization is the only way we can achieve brand awareness among clientele, elected officials, and the general public.

Here are key points to remember in using the name.

On first reference, use the full name. On second reference, shorten it.

The first time you use the agency name in text, use the full name: “Mississippi State University Extension Service.”

The second and subsequent times you use the name in the same document, you can use a shorter form of it: “MSU Extension Service” or “MSU Extension” or just “Extension.”

Examples:

- ▶ Stop by the Mississippi State University Extension Service office in Tupelo.
- ▶ The MSU Extension demonstration garden is located at 5th and Main.
- ▶ Extension volunteers staffed the booth at the health fair.

Sometimes there is a “the,” and sometimes there isn’t!

When using the full name “Mississippi State University Extension Service” in a sentence, use the “the.” Also, when using the short form “MSU Extension Service,” use the “the.”

If you use the short form “MSU Extension” or just “Extension,” there is no “the.”

Examples:

- ▶ Extension agents with the Mississippi State University Extension Service led the workshop.
- ▶ The 4-H Horse Show was sponsored by the MSU Extension Service.
- ▶ MSU Extension is an outreach education agency of Mississippi State University.

Do not use “MSU-ES” in external communications.

We will not shorten our name to a set of initials in our communication with external audiences. The acronym “MSU-ES” is meaningless and confusing to the public.

We realize that some use of “MSU-ES” may be required internally, such as on computer files or other internal identifiers. Some documents created by the Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine, which refer on second reference to all institutions and agencies by their initials, such as MAFES or CFR, will probably use “MSU-ES.” Some external organizations may do the same.

We cannot always control how others refer to us, but we can control our own use of the name to maximize public understanding.

“Extension” is always capitalized—even when it is used as an adjective.

Extension should always be capitalized when it is used to mean the Mississippi State University Extension Service or the nationwide Extension system in all materials we produce.

### Examples:

- ▶ Jefferson County residents benefit from a variety of Extension education programs.
- ▶ Please join us at the Extension open house on May 8.

When you are preparing a news release, remember that newspapers capitalize only proper names. The editor will capitalize Extension when it appears as part of the name Mississippi State University Extension Service, but will otherwise use lowercase—so you should follow news style in preparing news materials. In a column that appears under your byline, you may be allowed to capitalize Extension. Check with the newspaper editor. Further guidelines on using the Extension identity with the media are on page 28 of this booklet.

When used to identify county programs, Mississippi State University Extension Service should always be the most prominent identifier.

Our organization’s “brand name” is Mississippi State University Extension Service. County names should follow or be linked to the Extension name.

Name repetition is fundamental to marketing the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

**Do not** use “County Extension Service” as a substitute for Mississippi State University Extension Service.

When you use “County Extension Service” (such as “Lowndes County Extension Service”) in newsletters, printed materials, media work, presentations, or conversations, on signs, or when answering office phones, you are promoting a competing identity, which reduces our organization’s public visibility.

We cannot expect the public to know that “County Extension Service” means the Mississippi State University Extension Service, nor can we expect people to be aware of our work if we don’t identify our organization by its correct name. Using “County Extension Service” implies that there are 82 different Extension Services in Mississippi. We need the public to understand that we all work for just one: the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

County government is our valued partner. County program identification should be included, as in the following examples. County identification can be included on signs and materials, as long as Mississippi State University Extension Service is the dominant identity.

## Examples:

- ▶ Mississippi State University Extension Service, Hinds County
- ▶ Mississippi State University Extension Service in Claiborne County
- ▶ MSU Extension agents from the Lauderdale County office received a grant to fund this program.
- ▶ I am an Extension agent with the Mississippi State University Extension Service in Rankin County.

Program area names and program titles should follow the Mississippi State University Extension name.

Our major program areas (e.g., agriculture, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development, government and community development) and individual program titles (e.g., Master Gardener, Family Nutrition Program) should be branded initially with Mississippi State University Extension, and with Extension in subsequent references.

The **only** exception to this general rule is that the 4-H program's name may stand alone in text. For example, you do not need to say the Mississippi State University Extension Service 4-H program. However, every 4-H publication, including newsletters, must clearly indicate that 4-H programs are conducted by the Mississippi State University Extension Service and carry the Extension logo. News releases and other media materials must also indicate that 4-H is a program of the Mississippi State University Extension Service. Further guidelines on co-branding are provided on page 16. **Remember, this is not the case with other programs.**

## Examples:

- ▶ The family and consumer sciences specialists with the Mississippi State University Extension Service have developed a new five-lesson series on parenting young children.
- ▶ MSU Extension Master Gardeners in Noxubee County are offering a free composting workshop on Saturday.
- ▶ Extension Master Naturalist volunteers will lead the workshop.

The Mississippi State University Extension Service name can have a possessive form.

In many communications, especially upon second reference, you may want to use a possessive form of the Mississippi State University Extension Service name.

## Examples:

- ▶ Many of the Mississippi State University Extension Service's community resource development programs emphasize entrepreneurship.
- ▶ Extension's Master Gardener program can be found in fifty-four counties in Mississippi.



Our name, Mississippi State University Extension Service, is strengthened when shown with the logo identifying our organization and its “parent brand” of Mississippi State University. Just as our name must be used consistently and repeatedly, so should the logo. Here are key points about using the logo.

Use the logo exactly as it is.

Do not attempt to alter or recreate this logo in any way. You may, of course, change the size as needed (within the parameters described below), but do not “stretch” or “compress” it—maintain its original proportions. One way to accomplish this is to hold down your shift key while you pull on the image box to resize it. In many computer programs, this technique maintains the original proportions as you resize the graphic.

The official logos are available in color and black and white on the Extension intranet. Hover over the Resources tab at the top of the main page, then choose Marketing. Click Logos and Graphics. Or use this URL: [http://intranet.msucare.com/resources/marketing/logos\\_graphics.htm](http://intranet.msucare.com/resources/marketing/logos_graphics.htm).

When possible, print the logo in its official color or in black.



The official color is maroon (Pantone 505).

- ▶ When printing in four-color process or on your local color inkjet or laser printer, use the logo in the official color.
- ▶ If you are printing only in black, then, of course, print the logo in black.
- ▶ Do not print the logo in any other color. If you are using other colors, you may print the logo in white on a dark background (this is called “reversed out”). You can find a white version of the logo with the other official logos at [http://intranet.msucare.com/resources/marketing/logos\\_graphics.htm](http://intranet.msucare.com/resources/marketing/logos_graphics.htm).



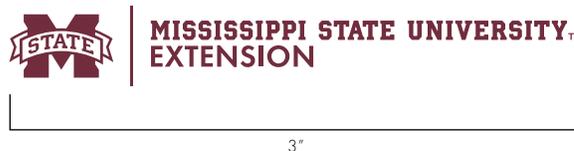
Do not separate the elements of the logo.

The logo is one unit and should be used that way. Corporations spend millions of dollars to establish their graphic identities. So, for example, people know that the golden-arches-shaped “M” stands for McDonald’s and the “swoosh” stands for Nike, whether the corporate name is there or not. However, the logos of most organizations, ours included, are not recognizable to the public when shown without the words.



Use the logo in an appropriate size for readability.

In printed materials, the logo should be no smaller than 2 inches wide for the vertical version and no smaller than 3 inches wide for the horizontal version. Given the relative sizes of the lines of text, these sizes are the smallest at which readability can be maintained.



These guidelines should be followed for almost all printing tasks. In the rare instances when the object to be printed or the printable area is smaller than the recommended size, the logo can be used smaller or the Mississippi State University Extension Service name can be used alone. For specific guidance, please contact Elizabeth Gregory North ([elizabeth.north@msstate.edu](mailto:elizabeth.north@msstate.edu)) or Phillip Smith ([p.smith@msstate.edu](mailto:p.smith@msstate.edu)).

Put the logo up front. Don’t bury it on the back.

Make the logo prominent. Except in very rare circumstances (such as equal partnership with another agency), the logo should be the most prominent identifier on any Extension materials. Put it on the first or top page or slide of any document, slide set, website, blog, etc. **Placing the logo on the back of a brochure or other printed materials is insufficient identification.**

When printing on dark backgrounds, use a “reverse” version of the logo.

When you are creating a sign or some other printed piece or object that has a dark background, a white (reversed-out) version of the logo will show up better than a color version.

You can find a white version of the logo with the other official logos at [http://intranet.msucare.com/resources/marketing/logos\\_graphics.htm](http://intranet.msucare.com/resources/marketing/logos_graphics.htm).



Extension doesn't own buildings. You can't buy stock in the organization. We don't have multimillion-dollar advertising campaigns or a store on every corner, like Starbucks or McDonald's. We exist only through our programs and our people. So, unless our programs and people are connected with the name Mississippi State University Extension Service—and visually with our logo—we have no identity with the public.

The following guidelines are intended to ensure that the Mississippi State University Extension Service identity is linked to all its programs and personnel.

The Extension identity must predominate over all other program identities, except 4-H. (See Co-Branding Extension with Other Organizations or Partners on page 16.)

The name and logo should appear in a predominant position on all printed materials (signs, publications, websites) produced for Extension programs, units, or offices.

“Predominant” means larger, at the top of the page, at the beginning, or on the cover page. Other identification of programs by name or by program logo/artwork should appear smaller or in a less dominant position.



No program logo (except the 4-H clover) should ever be printed in the same size as the Mississippi State University Extension Service logo or placed in an equally dominant position to it. A number of programs, such as Family and Consumer Sciences, Master Gardeners, and Mississippi Women for Agriculture, have logos or artwork. Those should be treated as artwork and can be used in a publication design, but **they must not be co-equal to the dominant Extension identity.**

Extension personnel must identify themselves with the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

Faculty with 100 percent Extension appointments must identify themselves *first* as employed with the Mississippi State University Extension Service. A secondary reference to one's academic or other unit may be used when appropriate. Faculty with joint or split appointments should use Mississippi State University Extension Service as their primary identifier when doing Extension work with clientele.

Saying you are an "Extension specialist" without stating the full agency name is insufficient. Exact wording of employee identification will vary depending on whether it is for an oral introduction, media work, publication, or even informal conversation.

For an employee to omit the Mississippi State University Extension Service name or logo in written or verbal communication is unacceptable.

### Examples:

These are INCORRECT.

- ▶ George Perry is an Extension economist with the Department of Agricultural Economics at Mississippi State University.
- ▶ Sandra Ard is a professor with the Family and Consumer Science program at MSU.
- ▶ Robbie Mixon is a 4-H specialist located at the Mississippi State University Research and Extension Center in Raymond.

These are CORRECT.

- ▶ George Perry is an agricultural economist with the Mississippi State University Extension Service.
- ▶ Sandra Ard is a family life specialist with the Mississippi State University Extension Service.
- ▶ Robbie Mixon, a 4-H Youth Development specialist with the Mississippi State University Extension Service, is located at the MSU Research and Extension Center in Raymond.

In all the correct examples, further references could include additional details, such as location, professorial appointment, or area of specialization, if they are relevant. (See also Identity Guidelines for Working with the Media on page 28.)

Extension faculty, agents, associates, and all other employees must indicate that they are employed with the Mississippi State University Extension Service as their primary identifier. Even though Extension agents are supported, in part, by counties, their primary identification should be with the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

### Examples:

These are INCORRECT.

- ▶ Betty Newton is CEA-FCS for Bolivar County.
- ▶ John Winegarden is a horticulturist with the Marshall County Extension Service.
- ▶ Harold Floyd is the county agent-ag for Attala County.

The problem with these identifications is that there is no way to connect the employee to the Mississippi State University Extension Service. Most readers will not know what CEA or other acronyms stand for in our organization. When a “County Extension Service” is identified, it creates the impression that the person is a county employee, rather than an employee of the Mississippi State University Extension Service. Although we have a significant partnership with counties, they are not Extension’s primary funding agency.

Examples: These are CORRECT.

- ▶ Betty Newton is a county Extension agent for Family and Consumer Sciences with the Mississippi State University Extension Service in Bolivar County.
- ▶ John Winegarden is a horticulturist with the Mississippi State University Extension Service, located in the Marshall County office.
- ▶ Harold Floyd is agriculture Extension agent in Attala County for the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

For more examples, see *Identity Guidelines for Working with the Media* on page 28. Please see page 23 for a discussion of the correct title for Extension agents.

Identify programs in a way that is understandable to your intended audience.

Technically, a particular Extension educational program could be identified at several levels shown below in descending order:

- ▶ Mississippi State University
- ▶ Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine
- ▶ Mississippi State University Extension Service
- ▶ Program area (Ag, NR, FCS, CRD, 4-H)
- ▶ Unit within program area  
(e.g., EFNEP, Ag Eco. Dept., Delta R&E Center)
- ▶ Geographic area (region or county)
- ▶ Program name  
(e.g., Master Gardener, Family Nutrition Program)

Here is an example in text:

Master Gardener is an Extension program offered in 55 counties, spanning the North, Central, Coastal, and Delta Regions, which was developed by Extension faculty in Horticulture, which is part of the Agriculture and Natural Resources program area within the Mississippi State University Extension Service, which is a member of the Division of Agriculture, Forestry, and Veterinary Medicine, which is a part of Mississippi State University.

Obviously, we would not want to describe the Master Gardener program this way because it offers far too many unnecessary details that confuse people outside our organizational structure or leave them with the impression of a huge bureaucracy. It is better to simply say, “The Master Gardener volunteer program is offered by the Mississippi State University Extension Service.” Use only those organizational level identifiers that are useful to your intended audience.

Of all the levels of our organization that we could identify, **the Mississippi State University Extension Service is the only one funded by the state legislature to support Extension work.** Our affiliation with Mississippi State University is clearly displayed in our name and logo. **Nothing else is necessary.**

Identify your office, center, or unit with the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

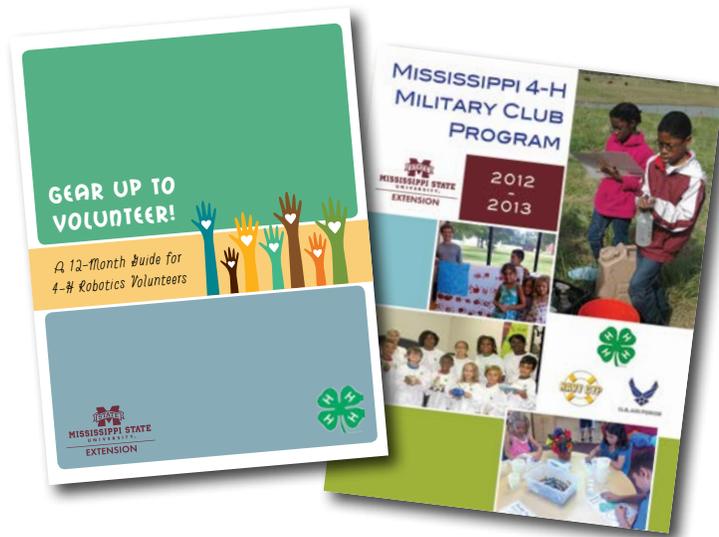
In signage, letterhead, documents, and other materials, offices, centers, and other units within Extension must use the Extension logo as their predominant identifier. That means, if the unit has a logo of its own, the Extension logo must predominate over the unit logo. Units should not identify themselves solely with the university.

When a unit is funded collaboratively by Extension and an equal partner, such as the university, Alcorn State University or its Extension program or experiment station, MAFES, FWRC, or one of the colleges within the Division, it should be identified with the logos of the funding partners.

Co-branding, which involves sharing identity, is necessary and appropriate in many circumstances. The following guidelines relate to co-branding internal to our organization, as well as externally with partnering organizations.

The Extension identity should be used with the 4-H logo on all 4-H materials.

The 4-H program is the only program area in Extension that has a national identity apart from its parent organization. Both the Mississippi State University Extension Service and 4-H benefit from co-branding that helps clientele, legislators, and the public understand that this youth program is a part of, and funded through, Extension.



The 4-H clover is the official logo of all 4-H organizations nationwide. All 4-H materials should include the 4-H clover to create and reinforce the 4-H identity. In addition, 4-H materials produced in Mississippi should include the Mississippi State University Extension Service logo to reinforce the relationship between Extension and 4-H.

The 4-H clover usually should be placed to the right of the Extension logo or stacked under it with enough white space to suggest that they are separate logos. The two logos should not be overprinted or mixed in any way.

The 4-H clover is protected by an Act of Congress, which provides even more protection than trademark status, and the guidelines governing its use are very specific. For more information about using the 4-H logo, see <http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/4-h-name-and-emblem>.

The only exception to co-branding Extension with 4-H is for promotional items intended for 4-H'ers (such as balloons, clothing, pencils, etc.) where space does not allow the use of both logos. Any such exception must be approved by the associate director for 4-H Youth Development.

Joint programs of the Mississippi State University Extension Service and the Cooperative Extension Program at Alcorn State University should be co-branded.

The Mississippi State University Extension Service and the Alcorn State University Cooperative Extension Program work together in a number of counties in Mississippi. In those counties and for joint statewide programs, signs and materials should be co-branded. The logos of both organizations can be shown side-by-side or stacked vertically, with enough white space to indicate that they are separate logos. The logos should be the same size.



Joint programs of the Mississippi State University Extension Service, the Mississippi Agricultural & Forestry Experiment Station, and other Division agencies and colleges should be co-branded.

The Mississippi State University Extension Service and other Division agencies and colleges, such as the Mississippi Agricultural & Forestry Experiment Station (MAFES), work as partners on many projects and programs. Extension and Experiment Station personnel are housed together at Mississippi State University Research and Extension Centers throughout the state.

The Extension and MAFES logos can be shown side-by-side or stacked vertically, with enough white space to indicate that they are separate logos. The logos should be the same size. Similarly, when the Extension program is conducted jointly with any other Division entity, it may be co-branded.



Joint programs of the Mississippi State University Extension Service may be co-branded with external organizations.

Although using multiple identities and logos reduces the impact of each, our external partners understandably want recognition for their contributions. Sometimes there's a question of how much credit to give, and in what form.

Here are some general guidelines:

- ▶ If Extension is the lead organization and the majority of work was done by our faculty and staff members, materials should prominently display the Extension name and logo, and cooperating groups should be listed in a manner consistent with their contribution.

- ▶ If an outside organization’s contribution was a donation of funds or goods (as opposed to actual development and delivery of the program), they should be listed as “sponsors” at an appropriate place in the program or other materials, but the overall identity for the program remains with Extension.
- ▶ If the outside organization is a true partner in developing and delivering the program, co-branding is appropriate. When using multiple logos, make sure they are the same size, and maintain adequate white space around them so they appear separate. Just as our Extension logo is not to be altered, you should not alter the logo of any partnering organization except to size it appropriately.

When many organizations contributed significantly to a program, it may be impractical to use the graphic logos of each organization but inappropriate to display the Extension logo alone. In that case, it may be better to omit all logos and simply use the names of Extension and the development partners.





Help communicate Extension's mission.

A mission statement helps define an organization's purpose and philosophy in easy-to-understand language. We measure all of our programs and other activities against the mission statement to ensure that they fit within our purpose. It is always appropriate to include the mission statement in program and promotional materials when space permits. We recommend using it freely on orientation materials for new volunteers, staff, and faculty.

### The Mississippi State University Extension Service's mission statement:

The MSU Extension Service provides research-based information, educational programs, and technology transfer focused on issues and needs of the people of Mississippi, enabling them to make informed decisions about their economic, social, and cultural well-being.

Use Extension's new slogan.

In 2008, the national Cooperative Extension System, led by the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP), began a multi-year brand research and development process. A nationwide brand and market study was carried out, including Extension employees, volunteers, and clients in every U.S. state and territory and a representative sample of the general population. Building on the research findings, potential messages about Extension's brand were developed and tested with focus groups of Extension stakeholders and members of the public in various locations around the country.

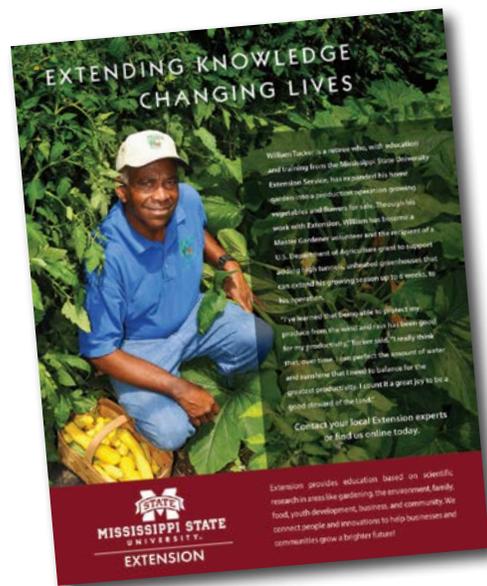
These research-validated messages were then shaped into tools, templates, and training to be used by Extension employees and volunteers to build a strong, positive, and consistent brand for Extension across the country.

The slogan for this brand-building campaign, which has been adopted by the Mississippi State University Extension Service, is:

**Extending knowledge. Changing lives.**

The slogan unites an explanation of the word “Extension” with our ultimate outcome—positive changes in the lives of everyone we serve.

We encourage you to use the slogan whenever and wherever possible—in the printed materials you create, in your email signature, everywhere you can imagine!



“Cross-sell” our program areas.

The Mississippi State University Extension Service offers educational programming in five core areas. In alphabetical order, they are:

- ▶ agriculture
- ▶ natural resources
- ▶ community resource development
- ▶ family and consumer sciences
- ▶ 4-H youth development

We tend to capitalize these program area names in internal communications, which is acceptable, although not necessary. Be aware that, in media releases, the names should not be capitalized.

“Cross-selling” refers to helping customers understand that a business has more than one product or service in which they may be interested. For example, the bank where you have a checking account will send inserts in your statement to let you know they also have home improvement loans available.

In Extension, we often call this “total program marketing”—or marketing the total Extension program. We know from the 2008 brand study, other research here in Mississippi, and from our own experience that many Extension clients often participate in one program but are unaware of other educational activities or programs. You can help promote the total Extension program by having client newsletters that cover more than one area, using brief introductions to presentations as a time to mention other activities, and including information from all program areas on enclosures and promotional materials.

## Answering the Telephone

Although there's room for flexibility, the Mississippi State University Extension Service identity should always predominate in Extension county, regional, and administrative offices.

On campus, staff located in academic departments or service units will follow departmental conventions. If possible, phones for Extension faculty within an academic department should be answered with the Extension identity.

Examples:

- ▶ "Mississippi State University Extension Service, this is Rose."
- ▶ "Good morning. MSU Extension Service, Rankin County."
- ▶ "Mississippi State University Extension Service, Chickasaw County. This is Tony."
- ▶ "Mississippi State University Extension Service Master Gardener Hotline, may I help you?"
- ▶ "MSU Extension Service, Central Region. How may I direct your call?"

## Voice Mail and Answering Machines

Record your outgoing message using the appropriate Mississippi State University Extension Service identity.

Example:

- ▶ "You have reached the Mississippi State University Extension Service office in Hinds County. Our office will be open at 8 a.m. on Monday..."

## Telephone Directory Listings

Directory listings are important marketing tools. We want prospective clients and partner organizations to find us easily.

For the next telephone directory, request a white-pages listing for

- ▶ "Mississippi State University Extension Service."

If you are in a county Extension office and you're not sure how to change or add to the listings in the telephone book, check with the person who pays the phone bill.

Here are examples of county directory listings:

- ▶ Mississippi State University Extension Service, Adams County
- ▶ Mississippi State University Extension Service, Lawrence County
- ▶ Mississippi State University Extension Service, Southwest Region
- ▶ Mississippi State University Extension Service, Coastal Research & Extension Center

Also request a listing under county government as Mississippi State University Extension Service, if possible. We understand that for historical or other reasons, you may need to use other listings (e.g., county agent under county government), as well.

## Identifying the County Office

When you refer to your office, do not say, for example, "Quitman County Extension Service." Instead, say, "Mississippi State University Extension Service, Quitman County office."

## Identifying the Extension Agent

When you refer to your job title or that of a colleague, **do not say** "county agent" or "county ag agent." Instead, say "Extension agent" or "Extension ag agent."

Even though "county agent" may be a much-used term, it is imperative that clients know their agents are part of the Mississippi State University Extension Service, too!

## Web Pages, Blogs, and Social Media

All web, blog, and social media accounts must display appropriate Extension identity.

See page 34 for complete guidelines on domain names, website hosting, and application development.

See page 35 for complete guidelines on web and social media presence.

## Internal and External Signs (including those on vehicles)

We realize signs are expensive and updating them may take some time. And we know that, in many cases, the style and look of our signs is dictated by the rules of our landlords, the county courthouse, and other situations.

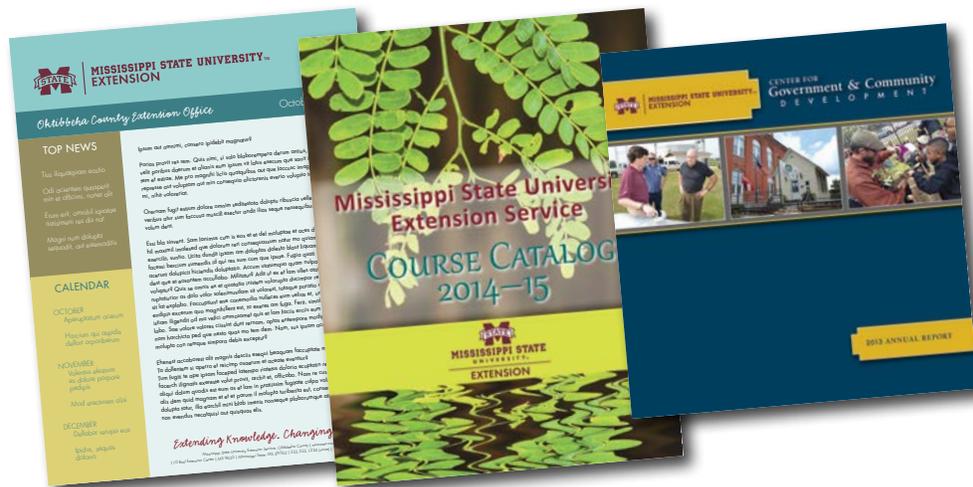
Agricultural Communications and Extension Administration are exploring possibilities for making standardized signs available to county and other offices; you will be informed if and when such plans are finalized.

If you are able to proceed with producing signs on your own, please follow these guidelines:

- ▶ Where you can determine the style of the sign, use the official logo.
- ▶ The name without the logo should be used only in cases in which tenant regulations do not allow the use of the logo.

## Publications

County, region, unit, and department offices produce a variety of publications, from newsletters to brochures and flyers. If these publications are done in support of Extension work, **the Extension logo should be prominently shown at the top or on the front cover.**



To meet mailing and other legal requirements, the publication should also include the equal opportunity statement, which can be placed in 8-point type at the bottom of the front page, on the back of a publication, or in another appropriate location.

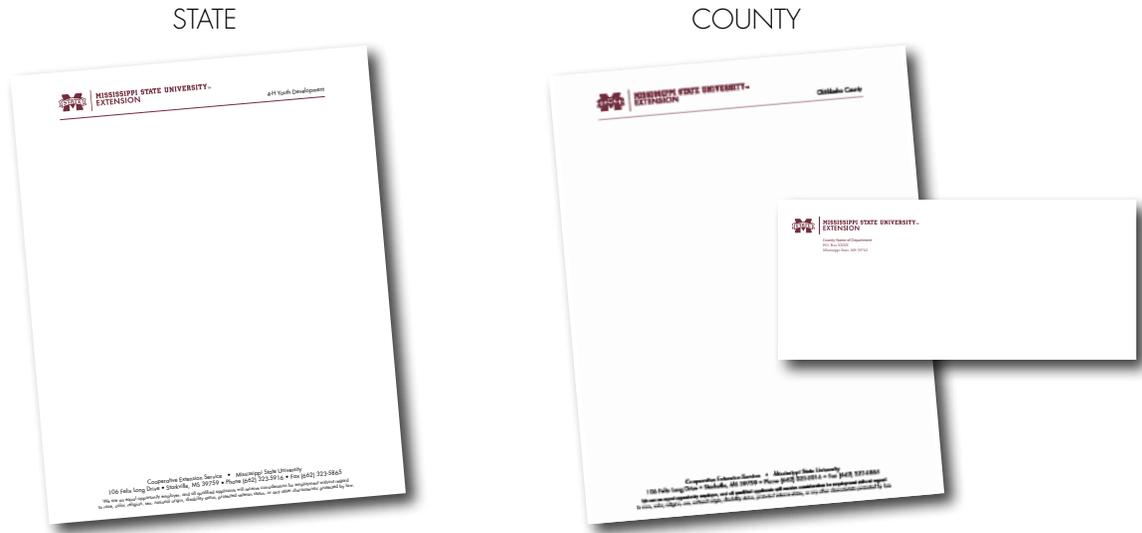
- ▶ Equal opportunity or non-discrimination statement:

We are an equal opportunity employer, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

## Letterhead, Envelopes, and Business Cards

The Mississippi State University Extension Service provides a single, uniform design for letterhead, envelopes, and business cards. All Extension employees are expected to use the official design.

Official Extension stationery, including letterhead and envelopes, is available through the Office of Agricultural Communications. Contact Keryn Page ([keryn.page@msstate.edu](mailto:keryn.page@msstate.edu)) to order stationery. There are specific design guidelines that must be followed. **Please do not create it yourself.**



Official Extension business cards can be ordered through the Extension intranet. Hover over Resources, then choose Supplies and Services. Click on Business Card Policies and Ordering Information. Or use this URL: [http://intranet.msucare.com/resources/support\\_services/business\\_card\\_form.htm](http://intranet.msucare.com/resources/support_services/business_card_form.htm).

All Extension employees are expected to order and use Extension business cards. Using the university business card when you are doing Extension work is not appropriate.



## Event Invitations

- ▶ Announcements and invitations to classes, programs, or events must also include this notification statement:

MSU Extension will provide reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities or special needs. Please contact our office [local phone number and email address] before a program or event to request reasonable accommodation.

The greatest assets of the Mississippi State University Extension Service are its people—faculty and staff members, Extension agents, program assistants, and volunteers. Each employee and volunteer has an important role to play in building the brand for our organization. That role starts by using personal identity tools that clearly identify each person’s affiliation with Extension, and carrying through with wearing our Extension name with pride.

Use items that identify you as an employee or volunteer with the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

The following are materials currently available to assist you in establishing your identity as an Extension employee or volunteer.

#### Business cards

Official Extension business cards can be ordered through the Extension intranet. Hover over Resources, then choose Supplies and Services. Click on Business Card Policies and Ordering Information. Or use this URL: [http://intranet.msucare.com/resources/support\\_services/business\\_card\\_form.htm](http://intranet.msucare.com/resources/support_services/business_card_form.htm).

Please do not create business cards yourself.

#### Name badges

Permanent, engraved plastic Extension name badges are provided to all employees. If you need one, contact Madeline Golden in Agricultural Communications ([madeline.golden@msstate.edu](mailto:madeline.golden@msstate.edu)).

Extra or replacement name badges cost \$2.

#### Vehicles

Vehicles owned by the Mississippi State University Extension Service must be identified with a door decal on both sides. The MSU Extension version of the MSU “spirit mark” (shown on page 27) may be used for these decals.

#### Email signatures

With the ever-increasing amount of communication done by email, your signature becomes an important form of identification. Often, the email address that shows in the header will not identify Extension. But you can compensate for that in your signature at the end. Use of an email signature is not optional.

At minimum, include your first and last name, your job title, and the agency name.

It is very helpful to include enough information so that the recipients may also contact you by email, phone, fax, or U.S. mail, or on the web. Following the structure of the models below is strongly recommended.

## Examples

Susan Russell, Extension Agent—FCS  
Lafayette County Office  
Mississippi State University Extension Service  
Extending knowledge. Changing lives.

2 Abercrombie Drive | Oxford, MS 38655  
555.555.5555 (voice) | 555.555.1234 (cell) | 555.555.5555 (fax)  
susan.russell@msstate.edu | msucares.com

John Smith, Extension Associate III  
Agricultural Communications  
Mississippi State University Extension Service  
Extending knowledge. Changing lives.

110 Bost Extension Center | MS 9625 | Mississippi State, MS 39762  
555.555.1234 (voice) | 555.555.5555 (cell) | 555.555.1234 (fax)  
john.smith@msstate.edu | msucares.com

## Apparel and Professional Accessories

Clothing and professional accessories should be printed or embroidered with the official Extension logo or the “spirit mark” shown below. The spirit mark is to be used **only** on clothing or vehicle door decals.



A variety of shirts, jackets, and other clothing, as well as professional accessories such as brief bags, totes, and aprons embroidered with the Extension logo are available for order from Land’s End Business Outfitters.

The Mississippi State University Extension Service e-store with Land’s End can be found at <http://ces.landsend.com/msu>. When placing your order, use the logo number 1432706.

The application of the logo typically adds \$5.95 to the cost of the item. However, Land’s End frequently runs specials that provide discounts on the prices of the items or that allow embroidery of the logo at no charge.

You can also work with local vendors to have clothing and other materials embroidered or imprinted with the Extension logo. You can download digital files of the logo from the Extension Intranet ([http://intranet.msucares.com/resources/marketing/logos\\_graphics.htm](http://intranet.msucares.com/resources/marketing/logos_graphics.htm)) to provide to your vendor. If you need a file format that is not available on the Intranet, contact Phillip Smith ([p.smith@msstate.edu](mailto:p.smith@msstate.edu)).

Using the Mississippi State University Extension Service identity in media work is extremely important. The publicity for Extension activities in the print and broadcast media may be the only way that a large portion of the public knows we exist or that we conduct effective educational work in response to community needs.

The single most important rule for media work is to always use the Mississippi State University Extension Service name on first reference. If you use other terminology, such as “County Extension Service,” you are fragmenting the agency identity by promoting an alternate name, which is meaningless because there is no such thing as a “County Extension Service.”

It’s important to be aware that, while we will always capitalize the word “Extension” when it is used as an adjective (such as “Extension volunteers,” “Extension agent,” or “Extension nutrition program”), newspapers will not. They follow the Associated Press (AP) style manual, which does not allow for such capitalization. This style is different from our preferred style, but it is correct for newspapers.

Here are guidelines for identity in various forms of media work.

## Media Releases

Contact information should be provided at the top or bottom of the media release, including your name, Mississippi State University Extension Service, county office designation, office address, phone, fax, and email.

### Example:

Contact:  
Russell James, Extension Agent—Agriculture  
Mississippi State University Extension Service, Panola County  
123 Main Street  
Batesville, MS 55555  
555-1234, fax 555-4321

If you use printed or electronic letterhead with the office address or an email with the correct email signature, that may be omitted from the contact information.

Use Mississippi State University Extension Service as the first reference in the media release. Thereafter, use Extension.

### Example:

Got spots on your leaves?

Horticulturists with the Mississippi State University Extension Service will be offering free plant disease analysis at the LeFlore County Home and Garden Show at Greenwood Arena this Saturday.

Joe Green, Extension horticulture agent, said home gardeners can bring plant samples by the Extension booth at the north end of the arena for analysis and advice on disease control.

When quoting yourself, other Extension employees, or volunteers in a news release, make sure the agency affiliation is clear.

### Examples:

- ▶ Mary Brown, Extension agent with the Mississippi State University Extension Service, said...
- ▶ Extension agronomist Max Planck is conducting the demonstration at the Conner farm.
- ▶ Mary Beth Rainey, a volunteer with the Mississippi State University Extension Service, will lead the meeting.
- ▶ Extension volunteer Alberto Gonzales received the Community Service Award...

## News Columns

A news column is dedicated space provided by a newspaper to an individual or a group of people, such as the staff of a county Extension office. Generally, if you have a column, you have a byline and control the content and how your job title and organizational affiliation are shown.

A byline at the top of the column will typically have just your name. However, if the newspaper editor prefers to list your affiliation there, it should be listed as Mississippi State University Extension Service, rather than just your county office or job title.

### Examples:

- ▶ Miriam Sparks
- ▶ Miriam Sparks  
Mississippi State University Extension Service

At the end of the news column, you are typically able to include a sentence describing who you are and your organization. You may choose how to write this, but you should include the agency name and your title or job role, if possible.

### Examples:

- ▶ Robert Franklin is a horticulturist with the Mississippi State University Extension Service in Tishomingo County.
- ▶ William Bird, Extension agent—agriculture, is with the Mississippi State University Extension Service in Forrest County.

If you have a news column in which the agency is not identified, visit with your editor about updating it.

## Radio and Television

Helping television or radio reporters get your correct name and affiliation should be a major goal every time you do an interview. On television, there is very little space for character generation (words at the bottom of the screen) to identify you. This makes it difficult to ensure that the agency and county or department affiliations are all included. It's always a good idea to give a reporter your business card so he or she has the correct information as a reference.

## Examples:

- ▶ Maxine Williams is a family and consumer sciences agent with the Mississippi State University Extension Service.
- ▶ Sissy Berthold is an Extension 4-H agent in Amite County for the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

Remember that, when you are being interviewed on the air or for a recording, you must be able to state your job and affiliation briefly, and it needs to be instantly understood. That typically means adopting a less formal, oral conversational style.

Here are ways you might identify yourself in speaking with broadcast reporters:

## Examples:

- ▶ "Bill Peterson, Extension agent for agriculture with the MSU Extension Service here in Pearl River County."
- ▶ "LaRae Marque, Extension agent for family and consumer sciences, Mississippi State University Extension Service."
- ▶ "Marsha Mason, food safety specialist with the Extension Service at Mississippi State."

Be aware that, in character generation for television, just your name and a couple of words are likely to be seen on screen to identify you, and the identification probably will not be complete or correct. Because of these limitations in broadcast media, it's always a good idea to include the agency name very early in your interview remarks and to wear branded clothing and/or your name badge, whenever possible.



Official Extension mail must have certain identity elements and legal statements.

These elements are required for official Extension mail:

- ▶ The official Mississippi State University Extension Service name and logo dominantly displayed.
- ▶ The equal opportunity or non-discrimination statement:  
We are an equal opportunity employer, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- ▶ A signature of the employee and his or her official Extension title (academic titles are allowed, but only when accompanied by the official Extension title).

A letter written on Extension letterhead is sufficient for official mail as long as it is signed by the employee and includes his or her title. When mailing publications or other materials, an enclosure slip that contains all of the elements listed above satisfies the official mail requirements.

Official Extension mail is only for official business.

Official mail is for the conduct of Extension work. Personal correspondence, job applications, holiday greetings, material for other organizations, and all other non-Extension materials do not qualify.

Conserve your Extension mail allocation. Notices about seminars, workshops, and conferences that require a registration fee should use your mail allocation only if a “no-profit” track record has been established. If the event has a history of generating a profit, the postage should be paid from the event’s proceeds.

Official mail must be sent in official envelopes.

Official Extension mail must be mailed in official envelopes including the official Extension logo and the appropriate return address.

Official envelopes in various sizes are available through the Extension Print Shop & Supply Office and should not be produced locally.

## Extension Base Identity Package

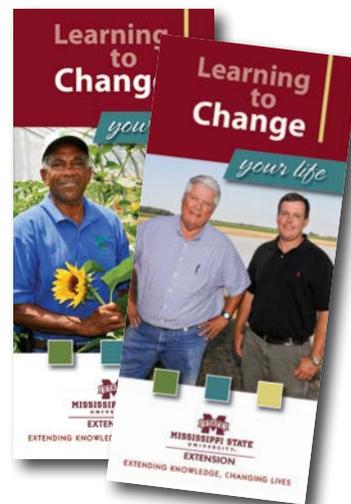
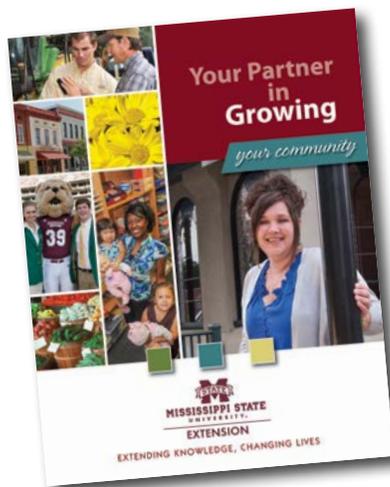
In addition to letterhead, envelopes, and business cards, these items make up the Base Identity Package for Extension. You can use them to create locally customized promotional pieces and packages carrying the appropriate agency identification. They are available free of charge from the Extension Print Shop & Supply Office or through the Publications Ordering System on the Extension Intranet.

- ▶ M-926, Extension Pocket Folders (Support Services-D3)
- ▶ M-1046, Extension Pencils (Support Services-D3)
- ▶ M-1324, Extension Notepads (Support Services-D3)
- ▶ M-1325, Extension Plastic Bags (Support Services-D3)
- ▶ M-2003, Extension Ink Pens (Agricultural Communication-E5)

## Extension Message Marketing Materials

These materials combine proper branding and identification with strategic messages about the agency, with the goal of building relationships with clients, potential clients, and key stakeholders. They are available free of charge from the Extension Print Shop & Supply Office or through the Publications Ordering System on the Extension Intranet.

- ▶ M-1959, "Learning to Change Your Life" (Extension client brochure) (Agricultural Communication-E5)
- ▶ M-1961, "Learning to Change Your Life" (info card for Extension clients) (Agricultural Communication-E5)
- ▶ M-1964, "Extension: Your Partner in Growing Your Community" (brochure for community leaders) (Agricultural Communication-E5)



## Domain Names

The Extension Center for Technology Outreach (ECTO) handles establishing, purchasing, and renewing domain names for all MSU Extension programs. This includes sub-domain names for the .msstate.edu domain, as well as domains for stakeholder or partner groups that are being managed by Extension personnel.

Do not establish or purchase new domains without approval of the ECTO head. Faculty, staff, or departments that have purchased domain names should work with ECTO to transfer domain ownership to a single domain registrar managed by ECTO.

## Websites

Contact ECTO first if you wish to create or develop a website. ECTO will determine the best choice for web hosting and will assist with establishing the web-hosting service and choosing an appropriate domain or sub-domain name.

Do not use third-party vendors or volunteers unless it is coordinated through ECTO. Websites created by parties other than ECTO or the Office of Agricultural Communications must be reviewed and approved by the head of ECTO before the site goes live or is publicized. Websites that do not follow branding guidelines for MSU Extension will not be approved.

## Mobile Apps

All mobile app development for MSU Extension must be coordinated by ECTO. Do not use or contract with outside vendors for app development unless you have prior approval of the ECTO head.

If contracting for development is needed, the ECTO head will work with you to make sure the scope of work is properly defined and that there is an appropriate plan for future support of the app.

ECTO is the only entity within MSU Extension that is authorized to publicly release mobile apps. Any and all mobile apps developed for platforms such as iPhone, iPod, iPad, Android devices, and other similar devices must be submitted to ECTO.

For more information or guidance on Extension websites and application development, contact Randy Loper, Extension Center for Technology Outreach department head, at (662) 325-3226 or [randy.loper@msstate.edu](mailto:randy.loper@msstate.edu).

Extension employees communicating via the web or social media must do so appropriately according to the standards of the environment in which they are operating. Conduct yourself online as you would in public. Be sure you are portraying a consistent and positive brand for Extension in the web and social media space. Extension's credibility in the digital world, just as in the real world, depends upon your credibility.

Social media accounts must display appropriate Extension identity. Icons for profile images have been designed for your use and are available on the Extension intranet (Resources > Logos & Graphics). Choosing a cover image and naming your accounts is extremely important. If you need assistance or guidance, contact Agricultural Communications social media strategist Ellen Graves at [e.graves@msstate.edu](mailto:e.graves@msstate.edu).



## Social Media Guidelines

All Extension social media accounts must be registered with the Office of Agricultural Communications.

If you already have social media accounts, fill out the Existing Social Media Account Registration Request form located on the Extension intranet (<http://intranet.msucare.com/forms.htm>).

If you want to set up new social media accounts, fill out the New Social Media Account Request form located on the Extension intranet. Please **DO NOT** create a new social media account without consulting with Ellen Graves.

For more guidance on using social media, please see MSU Extension Publication 2867 *Social Media Guidelines for the MSU Extension Service* or contact Ellen Graves at [e.graves@msstate.edu](mailto:e.graves@msstate.edu).

## MSU Extension Service Web Presence ([MSUcares.com](http://MSUcares.com))

To set up a presence or page on the MSU Extension website, contact Agricultural Communications web communications manager Art Shirley at [jas477@msstate.edu](mailto:jas477@msstate.edu). A staff of web designers will consult with you to set up a web presence and create a template for the page or pages. An editor from your group will then be granted access to maintain and edit content.

For information on website development by or for entities outside of the MSU Extension Service, see page 34.

## Blog Creation

To set up a new blog, contact the Extension Center for Technology Outreach. Extension blogs have a standard template. View an example at <http://blogs.msucare.com/turfgrass>. If you have an established blog on a third-party-hosted site, contact ECTO to convert these to an appropriate Extension site.

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This guide has been adapted, revised, and approved for use in Mississippi by Elizabeth Gregory North, Head, Agricultural Communications, from a document prepared by Ellen Ritter, Professor and Head, Agricultural Communications, and Elizabeth Gregory, Associate Professor and Extension Marketing Coordinator, Agricultural Communications, Texas Cooperative Extension, October 2001.

Produced by Agricultural Communications.

We are an equal opportunity employer, and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. GARY B. JACKSON, Director

# Social Media Guidelines *for the MSU Extension Service*



Social media is an innovative and powerful tool for interacting with Extension's many audiences. It is a great fit for Extension because it allows our organization to provide education, create communities of interest, build relationships, and engage with others in our communities. Extension encourages personnel to use social media as a way to promote the Extension brand and everything we have to offer. We have created these guidelines as a resource for developing each Extension expert's professional social media presence. By using these best practices, Extension as a whole can present a consistent and positive brand online, and make Extension's research and impact more evident to both internal and external audiences. Contacting MSU Extension Service social media strategist Ellen Graves ([e.graves@msstate.edu](mailto:e.graves@msstate.edu)) is always encouraged.

**These guidelines are a living document that will continue to be updated as social media and our organization's needs evolve.**

## **Registering and Managing Your Social Media Accounts**

**All Extension social media accounts should be registered with the Office of Agricultural Communications.** We ask you to register your account with Ag Communications for information

and continuity purposes only. We will not be managing your account. It is simply a way to get an accurate representation of Extension's presence on social media. It will also allow Extension's social media strategist to help you with any issues or questions about your accounts. And finally, we want to make sure that, if the person who created your account graduates, retires, or changes jobs, Extension will always have access to the account. To register an existing social media account, fill out the Existing Social Media Account Registration Request form located on the Extension employee intranet (<http://intranet.msucare.com/forms.htm>).

Please DO NOT create a new social media account before filling out the New Social Media Account Request form located on the Extension employee intranet. After it is approved, Extension's social media strategist will collaborate with you to create the new account.

Counties should follow Extension's brand policy on social media. For example, a Facebook page for the Extension office in Bulldog County should be named "Bulldog County Extension Office," NOT "Bulldog County Extension Service." In some instances, a social media platform might limit your naming options because of space. If you are unsure about what to do, contact Extension's social media strategist.

## Best Practices for Using Social Media

### *DO:*

- Post to your social media accounts daily or, at the least, weekly.
- At least two Extension personnel members should have access to social media accounts that represent a unit or program. This will help prevent forgotten passwords and guarantee access if someone retires, leaves, etc.
- The official hashtag for the MSU Extension Service is #MSUext. Its use is encouraged on Twitter and Instagram especially.
- Always fill out the bio section on Facebook pages, Twitter, and Instagram with an accurate description for yourself, your office, or your program.
- Answer people's questions promptly and adequately. Account holders must monitor social media accounts for such questions.
- Vary your posts to keep followers interested. Post newsy updates, share links to other web-based resources, include photos or videos, ask questions, or request input or feedback. Post information that ties to issues current in other media, such as news or weather reports.
- If anyone posts something profane or inappropriate to your page, delete it without comment.
- Write content specifically for the forum where you'll be posting it.
- When you share a web link, write a brief description of it in your post, along with the link. This way, you are telling your followers why you've chosen it for them and why you believe it's relevant to them.
- As a user of social media, pay attention to messages that generate good responses and lively discussions on the pages and accounts you like to visit. Use those posts as models for constructing your own.
- Use official Extension profile photos, cover photos, etc., for your professional social media accounts. Follow the established guidelines for their use.
- Posts should include information that is as complete and accurate as possible and that is valuable to followers/readers.
- Keep your posts friendly and engaging, just like your face-to-face interactions. This is your opportunity to put a human face on our agency in the social media space.
- If a member of the news media contacts you because of something you posted, respond promptly and courteously. Many media professionals are monitoring social media for leads on stories, and this could be a great way for you to build relationships and visibility in the mass media, too. If you need guidance on handling a media request, contact Agricultural Communications.

### *DON'T:*

- When identifying a minor in a photo, use only his or her first name in the caption to protect the minor's privacy.
- Don't post or tag a photo of a minor unless he or she has a signed photo release form on file that allows Extension to use his or her photo for promotional purposes.
- Don't re-post or retweet negative/inappropriate comments, even to point out their errors! Doing so just spreads the negativity further, and may even make it seem to have originated with you. If someone repeatedly posts inappropriate content, block that person using the features available in that medium.
- Please do not automatically post your Twitter feed to your Facebook page.
- Do not engage in arguments or vent frustrations when you are using social media

professionally. Communicate respectfully and positively with your contacts.

- Don't use overly technical or bureaucratic-sounding language.

## General Guidance

1. For the purposes of these guidelines, social media is defined as any online medium that provides for user interaction, discussion, and commenting (such as social networks, blogging, micro-blogging).
2. Agricultural Communications is responsible for overseeing the coordination of all social media activity for Extension and its units. Extension agency-level social media accounts will be created and managed by the Office of Agricultural Communications.
3. Social media accounts associated with the Extension Service should not be used to promote products, causes, or political candidates.
4. When your social media activity is observable by end-users, stakeholders, and/or other professional audiences, your behavior should represent you well and reflect positively on Extension. When using social media personally, do not incorporate Extension's name into your username (NOT "Extensiondude" or "MSUESSmurfette"), and do not assert that you are speaking for Extension.
5. You should conduct yourself online as you would in public. Extension's credibility in the social media world, just as in the real world, depends upon *your* credibility.
6. Web services, including all communications between electronic devices over a network that are not a feature of the social media accounts listed elsewhere in this document, and web hosting will be managed by the Extension Center for Technology Outreach (CTO).
7. Do not use a third-party service provider for web services or hosting unless it is coordinated through CTO.

## ***Social Networking (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)***

- When employees create or request accounts for Extension programs, units, or subject-matter areas on Facebook, *Pages are strongly recommended, instead of Groups or People*. Setting up a Facebook Profile or Person page for an organization violates Facebook's Terms of Service.
- Profile pictures for use on social media accounts will be created and managed by Agricultural Communications and provided to accounts as needed.
- Naming conventions and options will be provided by Agricultural Communications to ensure continuity for the Extension brand.

### ***Content Approval:***

- Account holders and managers should monitor comments, replies, and discussions and follow proper protocol related to issues that arise. Inappropriate comments on posts should be deleted immediately. Contact Extension's social media strategist for help if you have any questions.
- Units and/or programs are encouraged to create their own content with quality photos of Extension programs, activities, and/or information. The Extension website (*www.msucare.com*) is also a great place to find research-based information to post.
- Ag Communications is always a resource that can be used for creating social media content that is specific to your unit or program. Please contact Extension's social media strategist to communicate any ideas regarding content for social media accounts.

### ***Video posting services (e.g., YouTube)***

- Ag Communications will create and manage the official Extension presence on these services.
  - When posting locally produced video for official Extension educational or marketing purposes, these videos should be placed on the MSU Extension Service channel to improve accessibility through Extension's web presence.
  - Replies, comments, and discussions on the MSU Extension Service channel will be approved by Ag Communications before posting, while program, unit, or subject-matter personnel will handle these for accounts created for them. It is the responsibility of the account holder to closely monitor commenting and follow proper protocol for dealing with issues that may arise. *It is strongly advised that, unless dedicated time is established to carefully monitor commenting, the feature be disabled.*
- For Extension state-level blogs (such as for the Extension director or for Extension as a whole), content will be developed, organized, and posted by Ag Communications, in coordination with other faculty and staff.
  - Requests for specific content for the Extension blog(s) will be sent to Ag Communications.
  - In some instances, when a blog is part of a larger campaign for an educational program or initiative, these accounts may also be managed by Ag Communications, in collaboration with other faculty and staff.
  - Content for department- or unit-level or subject-matter-related blogs will be the responsibility of the program, unit, or individual subject-matter personnel.
  - To set up a new blog, contact the Extension Center for Technology Outreach. Extension subject-matter blogs can be found at <http://blogs.msucare.com>.
  - Ag Communications will periodically monitor all blogs for brand compliance and quality assurance.

### ***Blogging***

**Employees who have established blogs or other communication forums on third-party-hosted sites should work with CTO to convert such applications to an appropriate Extension site.**

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This document was revised and approved for use in Mississippi by Elizabeth Gregory North, Head, and Ellen Graves, Social Media Strategist, Agricultural Communications, Mississippi State University Extension Service. Some of this information was originally created by Elizabeth Gregory North, Max Malloy, and Travis Ward, AgriLife Communications, Texas AgriLife Extension Service; reviewed and updated September 20, 2010; based on the Texas Engineering Extension Service Standard Administrative Procedures document TEEX 61.99.99.99-10, approved July 14, 2009.



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# SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES



Updated 4/13/18

**Social media is a free tool that provides you an opportunity to engage with fans and followers.**

Create visibility and credibility for you, the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service and Oklahoma State University.

## HOW TO GET STARTED

- Before you establish a new social media presence, notify OSU Agricultural Communications Services at 405-744-4065 or [agcommservices@okstate.edu](mailto:agcommservices@okstate.edu).
- Start slowly. Choose one or two platforms to get started. Consider Facebook and Twitter.
- When choosing a name, think of terms fans will use to search.
  - Example “(insert county name) OSU Cooperative Extension Service.”
  - Consistency is key. Username should match across platforms.
- Be professional. You are representing OCES and OSU.

## FOLLOW BY EXAMPLE

- Follow OSU on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).
- Follow DASNR on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Pinterest](#).
- Follow other OCES accounts.
  - This will help you plan how to use this platform for your county.

## WHAT TO POST

- Utilize social media for posting meeting reminders, deadlines, events, food showdown contest results, community involvement, photos, links and videos.
- Offer information of interest to your followers.
  - Keep a record of questions you receive from season to season to help with this.
- Spread the word about OSU’s research by posting links to [fact sheets](#).

- Promote a positive image of OCES and OSU.
- Use content to build a relationship with media professionals. Many news reporters and editors use social media for leads on stories.

## BEST PRACTICES

- OCES and OSU content should be initially posted on official OCES or OSU pages, then shared on personal pages, if you wish.
  - Why is this important? DASNR has access to analytics on fan pages, but personal friend pages don’t provide any data. We also can help manage comments and questions in a timely manner, as well as identify audience interest for future educational content. Lastly, as a state agency, our information must be accessible to everyone, not limited to “our friends.”
- Make sure your posts are complete.
  - Consider who, what, when, where, why and how.
- Engage with your audience.
  - Vary posts to keep followers interested.
    - o Text only post
    - o Photo with caption
    - o Link previews with headline
  - Don’t be afraid to be creative, entertaining and helpful.



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# SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES



- If a fan or follower poses a question in a comment or private message, try to answer it promptly.
  - If you don't know the answer, simply let them know you are looking into it for them and make sure you follow up when you get the information.
- Respect copyright laws. If it's not your image or you are unsure of the source, do not post it.
  - The [Kitchensink photo database](#) is a great resource for DASNR-owned photos.
- Send followers to your website for more information.
  - Examples: a calendar of events, contest rules, dress review, contest entry forms, etc.
- Create a content calendar. Consistency is key.
  - Make sure your message is being communicated to the public regularly.
- Get the word out.
  - Consider adding hyperlinks to your social media platforms in your email signatures.
  - Add your usernames and social media icons to your marketing materials and meeting agendas.
  - Make an announcement before meeting to let your constituents know where to find you.



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# TENNESSEE

## Social Media Guidelines and Best Practices

UT Institute of Agriculture

**Definition:** Social networking is the use of a website to connect with people who share personal or professional interests. Social media are websites or other online means of communication, such as smartphones apps, that are used by large groups of people to share information and to develop social and professional contacts.

*(Source: <http://dictionary.reference.com/>)*

Social media in the past several years has exploded. It has become an important technology for effectively communicating information with the world in real time. It is a vehicle by which UTIA can engage in conversations with its diverse audiences -- internally and externally -- such as students, faculty, staff, alumni, researchers, partners, stakeholders, clients, parents, 4-Her's, news and media outlets, and more.

There is always "something" happening! With the ease of using mobile apps, anyone can share news and information at anytime, anywhere with anyone. The purpose of this document is to help those in the UTIA community who are interested in using social media to effectively share news and humanize research, outreach and educational successes and extend information that can better lives, businesses and communities.

The goal of this document is to describe the proper use of social media as not only a news outlet, but also as a marketing and networking tool. The document is divided into two parts. The "Social Media Guidelines" are required elements that constitute policies and procedures that apply to ALL social media accounts representing UTIA. The "Social Media Best Practices" portion of the document refers to proven recommendations for using the best etiquette and in the most complimentary manner for the Institute.

These guidelines and best practices were created by the Web Advisory Committee (WAC). The committee is composed of members from all areas of UTIA, including associate deans and personnel from the units, departments, information technology services and marketing and communications.

There are many social media products from which to choose, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, LinkedIn, and Flickr to name some of the most popular. The University of Tennessee officially has approved the use of Facebook, YouTube, Pinterest and Dropbox. This does not mean you are restricted to using just these accounts. However, it is highly advised before you register for an account that is not officially endorsed by UT, you carefully read the general terms and conditions of the account before you accept the account agreement.

## Social Media Guidelines

- Social media (SM) accounts associated with a department, county, center or program represent not only that entity, but also they represent the Institute of Agriculture, UT Extension, AgResearch, the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, the College of Veterinary Medicine and the University as a whole.
- If you establish a new social media account for a UTIA program/website, etc., you must have your county/regional director/supervisor's approval or your department head's approval. Contact the Department of Marketing and Communications or Information Technology Services if you have any questions or concerns about risk management.
- All social media accounts must be registered with UTIA Marketing and Communications. Contact [Doug Edlund](#) to register your site and your site's password. UTIA Marketing and Communications will compile and maintain a publicly available list of UTIA social media accounts (minus the passwords).
- New social media accounts for departments, counties, programs, centers, etc. should follow an established UTIA naming convention as set forth by UTIA Marketing and Communications. An account that is associated with an individual specialist, agent or faculty member representing UTIA should also follow a specific naming convention (Contact UTIA Marketing & Communications at 865-974-7141 for the approved naming convention).
- All social media accounts should be accessible by multiple UTIA personnel. This can be done in several different ways such as multiple managers in Facebook or providing multiple personnel the login information (email address/username and password) for Twitter or other social media channels. If an account administrator (owner) leaves the department/center/unit/Institute a transfer of the account to a new administrator/owner is not required.
- If an account administrator (owner) leaves the department/center/unit/Institute it is highly recommended that they are removed as manager (Facebook) and passwords associated with all social media accounts to which they had access be changed immediately.
- Focus on your area of expertise. If you do not feel confident with a subject, be honest about your lack of knowledge in that specific area and contact the appropriate content expert.
- Contact your supervisor, department head, or director when a discussion may involve sensitive subject(s).
- Be aware of your responsibility. You may be held responsible for what you post on your site and on the sites of others. Anything that is posted may be interpreted as an official statement from

UTIA.

- Protect all moderate/sensitive institutional information. Please refer to [the security website](#) for a definition on moderate sensitive information.
- Do not pre-release official news and/or announcements from the Institute via social media, blogs, etc. News and announcements may be considered under embargo until released by UTIA, (e.g., when a news release appears on the UTIA website.) Any questions regarding news items, announcements and the timing of their release should be referred to UTIA Marketing and Communications at 865-974-7141.
- UTIA associated social media posts should **NEVER** contain private opinions or beliefs. Remember nothing is “private” in social media. Anything you post can be seen by unintended audiences and have unintended consequences.
  - Posts are in “real time.” Once you post it, it cannot be retracted and will exist somewhere forever.
  - Proofread before you post. If you have concerns with the content you are about to post, do not post it. Err on the side of being conservative. Remember, **if you post it, you are responsible for it**...so be sure you are completely comfortable with the information you are posting.
- Do not upload, post, transmit, share, store or otherwise make publicly available on a social media account any private information of any third party, including addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, etc.
- Comply with trademark, copyright, fair use, financial disclosure, University policies, and Tennessee privacy laws.
- Give proper credit to work from another source. Never post copyrighted photos, music, text or video content without obtaining written permission from the copyright owner.
- Use your posts to market the Institute/department/county/program’s websites.

## Social Media Best Practices

### Considerations before You Get Started

- Issues to consider before applying for a social media account:
  - Evaluate the time commitment needed to keep content current on a regular basis. Inactive or dead accounts, can cause a negative reaction towards the Institute.
  - Determine the scope of your account and what you want to accomplish.
  - Determine your audience and how best you can serve them.
  - Determine who will monitor the account for appropriateness and accuracy.
  - Set goals for ways to engage and grow your audience and be prepared to meet them.

- Appoint a primary and secondary administrator of a social media account.

### Content Considerations

- Always use good judgment, basic etiquette and professionalism in your posts. Remember, content can go anywhere once it's posted.
- Write in a conversational style.
  - Strive for a genuine yet professional communication style.
  - Avoid slang, profanity, regional colloquialisms, or "market-speak."
- Engage your followers.
  - Listen and ask questions.
  - Show people you are listening by responding promptly.
  - Gain insight into your followers and engage them.
- Address your posts to the audience you are trying to reach.
- Always check your spelling and grammar before you post.
- Be mindful who you follow on any social media channel. Ask yourself if by following this individual/entities will it seem that you are promoting/condoning something that can be detrimental to the Institution, unit, department, or program.
- Be cautious of posting any personally identifiable information that can be used to locate another person offline.
- Be aware of the surroundings before you take a photo of a person(s) to be posted on a social media account. For example, ensure the person(s) in your Twitter photo posts cannot be easily identified with the surrounding background or scenery which may pose a security threat to that person(s).

This document was prepared by the UTIA Web Advisory Committee

*Approved by the Web Advisory Committee on October 16, 2014.*

*Approved by the UTIA Executive Committee on November 10, 2014.*

*Approved by the Chancellor of Agriculture on November 11, 2014*

## AgriLife Extension Social Media Guidelines

*This document has been developed to provide guidance on the engagement of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension personnel in various social media outlets. These guidelines refer to the publication and commentary on social media by employees of Extension. Social media refers to any social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, and any associated outlets. The most current version of this document will be maintained and hosted on the [AgriLife Extension employee website](#). For further direction refer to the Texas A&M University System social media guidance.*

- All county-level AgriLife Extension social media activity should be done through a designated AgriLife Extension social media account and not through an employee's personal social media account.
- Each unit participating in social media will designate two points of contact for its social media efforts and [provide that contact information](#) to the Extension Communications & Marketing Manager for coordination purposes.
- Social media should not interfere with other job duties or commitments but act as a positive enhancement of program goals and promotion.

### **PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE**

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All Extension employees using social media for personal use should maintain a clear distinction between personal and professional uses. When your social media activity is observable by end-users, stakeholders, and/or other professional audiences, your behavior should represent you well and reflect positively on Extension. When using social media personally, do not incorporate Extension's name into your username (NOT "Extensiondude" or "AgriLifeGal"), and do not assert that you are speaking for Extension.

### **PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA USE**

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Social media is a more casual form of communication, but we must maintain credibility, or our educational efforts are useless. Extension's credibility in the social media world, just as in the real world, depends upon your credibility. An important element of your credibility will be your ability to communicate authentically and respectfully as a member of the community.

All media, posts, tags, and other associated terms and actions from social media outlets are representative of the employees of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. It is best to follow all guidelines issued below:

- Respect copyrights of all content sources
- Plagiarism is still unacceptable, be sure to cite all content
- Maintain a professional communication style
- Be sure to check grammar, spelling, tone, etc.

It is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use or fair dealing of copyrighted material owned by others. You should never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute such work to the original author/source. It is good general practice to link to others' work rather than reproduce it.

## **CONTENT**

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Remain neutral; provide information for informed decisions; do not advocate (advance progress by informing readers about best practices; alternatives and consequences). Do not endorse or disparage products; beware promoting groups.

## **DEALING WITH TROLLS AND NEGATIVE COMMENTS**

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If anyone posts something profane or inappropriate to an Extension social media page, hide it or delete it without comment. Don't re-post, even to point out its errors. If someone repeatedly posts inappropriate content, they are considered a troll and should be blocked using the tools available in that medium.

Negative comments or misinformed comments can be treated as a learning and educational point. Be sure to respond in a non-confrontational way. If a person states opinions, leave the posts up as long as they are not offensive. Use your best judgment with negative comments and trolls.

## **TUTORIALS AND RESOURCES**

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Learn how to create a Facebook page and more at: <https://extcomm.teachable.com/>

**Additional online courses for AgriLife Extension social media use are available at:** <https://agrilife.remote-learner.net>. Click on the Employee Development section, look for the course title: **Social Media in Texas A&M AgriLife Extension**, click on the name of the course to enter, then log in or create a new account.

## Facebook

Be sure to review the following resources:

- [How to Create or Edit a Facebook Page](#)
  - [Facebook Page Template Information](#) - Go to File > Download As > Microsoft Word (.docx). Edit template as needed.
  - Facebook's [Getting Started Information](#)
  - Before advertising on Facebook, please enroll in [Facebook's blueprint courses](#)
1. Utilize a professional Facebook page, not a personal profile
    - Company, Organization or Institution
    - Category: Education
  2. [Facebook Page Name](#)
    - Place county or program name first, then the agency name
    - Example: Carson County - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
    - Example: Carson County 4-H - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
  3. Facebook [Username](#)
    - Example: @carson-txext
  4. Facebook [Profile Picture](#)
    - Create a [square profile picture](#) using the free version of [Canva](#) with the [AgriLife Extension logo](#) and County or Program name below white line
      - Examples: on [maroon background](#), on [white background](#)
  5. Facebook [Cover Photo](#)
    - Make sure it looks appropriate for the account - ex. Ag, FCS, county themed
  6. Facebook > Settings
    - On the Facebook page, click the 'Settings' link near upper right
    - General
      - Visitor posts – select 'review posts by other people before they are published to the Page'
      - Country Restrictions - add United States then select 'Only show this Page to viewers in these countries'
      - Turn on profanity filter and set to: Strong
      - Page Updates - uncheck 'Automatically publish posts when info is updated on this Page'
    - Post Attribution
      - Select post as your page and not as your personal account
    - Page Roles
      - Establish at least two page administrators
      - Notify the Extension Marketing and Communications Manager of designated page administrators for coordination purposes using this form:
        1. <http://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/fb/>
  7. [About > Edit Page Info](#)
    - General
      1. Category - Education
      2. Name - [county or program name] - Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
    - Business Info
      1. Created in 1915

2. Mission: *Through the application of science-based knowledge, we create high-quality, relevant continuing education that encourages lasting and effective change.*
- Contact Info
    1. Enter primary phone number that will be answered
    2. Enter email address for primary account that will be monitored
    3. Enter website address
    4. Add other links to social media accounts
  - More Info
    1. About: *Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service provides programs, tools, and resources that teach people how to improve agriculture and food production, advance health practices, protect the environment, strengthen our communities, and enrich youth.*
    2. Founding Date: 1915
    3. Privacy Policy link:  
<https://www.tamus.edu/marcomm/socialmedia/public/>
  - Story
    - Add a story for your county -or- copy and paste this text:
 

*The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is a unique education agency with a statewide network of professional educators, trained volunteers, and county offices. It reaches into every Texas county to address local priority needs. Some of our major efforts are in mitigating drought impacts; conserving water use in homes, landscapes, and production agriculture; improving emergency management; enhancing food security; and protecting human health through education about diet, exercise, and disease prevention and management.*

*AgriLife Extension demonstrates the latest technology and best practices to improve the state's food and fiber system, which serves all Texas consumers and contributes nine percent of the gross domestic product. Texas 4-H, our primary youth program, engages some 600,000 youth every year in learning projects, leadership development, and community service.*

*Learn more: <http://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/about/who-we-are/>*
  - Click the 'Edit Page Info' link near the upper right corner of the About page. The 'Edit your details' box will open. Click the 'Location' tab.
    1. Select 'Has a street address' if necessary. Add location address.
    2. Select if people can visit you at this location.
    3. Zoom in on map and review map marker location.
    4. Add hours of operation

8. Facebook Page Content & Activity Suggestions from the Communications Team
  - o Promote Extension events
  - o Repost content from/links to related sources (main AgriLife Extension page, AgriLife Today, Dinner Tonight, media interview/segments, Morning Ag Clips, ...)
  - o Cross-promote link to Facebook page in presentations, website, etc.
  - o Publish at least one original post per week
  - o Share, like or comment on other reputable posts multiple times per week
  - o Thoroughly inspect all shared links and webpages on a mobile device before sharing. Make sure web pages load quickly without usability errors such as pop-ups or intrusive advertisements.
  - o Live video applications (i.e.; Facebook Live) should only be used with thorough preparation and planning to ensure quality content and production.
    - *See Facebook Live Video Guidelines at the end of this document*

### Twitter ([See Getting Started](#))

1. Complete Twitter Name (20 character limit)
  - o Example: Carson Co. Extension
  - o Example: Carson Co. 4-H
2. Twitter [Username](#) (15 character limit)
  - o If one already exists, leave as is
  - o For new accounts, an example could be: @carsoncoext or @armstrongcoext
3. Twitter [Profile Image](#)
  - o Create a [square profile image](#) using [Canva](#) with the [AgriLife Extension logo](#) and County or Program name below white line
  - o Examples: on [maroon background](#), on [white background](#)
4. Twitter [Header Photo](#)
  - o Use a custom one or the default cover image
  - o Make sure it relates to the account
  - o Create a [header photo image](#) with [Canva](#) using [AgriLife Extension logo](#)
5. Twitter [Bio](#) (160 character limit)
  - o If possible, the Twitter bio should contain the county name: *AgriLife Extension helps Texans better their lives in Brazos County through the application of science-based knowledge.*
6. Website Link
  - o Link to county or program website address
7. Activity
  - o Publish at least one original tweet per week
  - o Share, like or comment on other tweets or webpages from reputable and vetted sources multiple times per week
  - o Use shortened links to web content – [Bitly](#), [Google URL Shortener](#), or use Owly links via a free [HootSuite.com](#) account
  - o Ask other accounts to follow you (include link in presentations, materials, etc.)
  - o Resources for reposted content:
    - AgriLife Extension (@txextension)
    - AgriLife Today (@agrifetoday)
    - Dinner Tonight (@DinnerTonightAg)
    - Walk Across Texas (@walkacrosstexas)

- Junior Master Gardner (@JMGKids)
  - USDA NIFA (@USDA\_NIFA)
- Thoroughly inspect all online web pages and properties on a mobile device before sharing. Make sure web pages load quickly without usability errors such as pop-ups or intrusive advertisements.

## Facebook Live Video Guidelines

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It is strongly recommended that all social media publishing activity be done through an official Texas A&M AgriLife Extension social media account and not through a personal social media account.

### I. Before Streaming Live Video

- Prepare, complete and practice your live presentation using a [script outline](#)
  - Prepare welcome messages and schedule upcoming live presentation notices
  - Complete a Title and Description for later posting of video to page album
  - Email other employees and ask them to share notices about upcoming live video and for their followers to like and interact during the live feed to increase the likelihood that your video will show up at the top of other news feeds
- Technology requirements
  - Make sure you have logged onto a strong Wi-Fi connection, or have a full connection to a 4G or LTE network
  - Facebook app is up to date
  - Mobile device is set to silent mode
- Camera set up
  - If necessary, clean camera lens with a microfiber or clean soft cotton cloth
  - Remove case or cover if it obstructs the camera lens
  - Mount or secure the camera so that it is at -or- near eye-level and will not shake or move too much during the live video feed
  - If holding the camera, practice firmly holding the camera to minimize movement and shake
  - Finally, remove any distractions in the background that will show up behind you in the video, pay careful attention to distracting sounds like air-conditioners, lights, doors opening and closing, cars, animals, etc.
- Test recording
  - Take a test video by opening the default camera app on your device. Turn on the selfie camera so that you can see the home screen and have the camera point at you at the same time.
  - Center yourself in the screen so that you are clearly seen from the mid-chest up to the top of your head. Leave a little space at the top incase the video is cropped in the Facebook feed. Record at eye-level and not underneath nose.
  - Record a test video and read sample text for about 5 seconds and then stop recording
  - Review test recording at 80% volume and make sure you can clearly be heard and that the camera is at a good angle, etc.

## II. Going Live with Facebook

Source: <https://live.fb.com/about/>

### Steps to broadcast live video:

1. Tap “What's on your mind” at the top of News Feed.
2. Select “Live Video” from the dropdown menu.
3. Add a description and choose your audience before hitting "Go Live." You'll see a three-second countdown before your broadcast begins!

### How do I know if a video is live?

- There will be a red icon at the top left-hand corner of the video indicating that it is a live video. The word “Live” is written next to the icon, along with the number of current viewers.

### What happens to the Live video after the broadcast ends?

- The video will be published to the Page or profile so that fans and friends who missed it can watch at a later time. The broadcaster can remove the video post at any time, just like any other post.

### Where do Live videos show up on Facebook?

- Videos will appear in News Feed and on the broadcaster's Page or profile while they are live. Once a broadcast has ended, live videos are eligible to show up everywhere that other videos appear.

### How do you rank live videos in News Feed?

- We recently made a small update to News Feed so that Facebook Live videos are more likely to appear higher in News Feed when those videos are actually live, compared to after they are no longer live.

### Is there a time limit for Live broadcasts?

- Live broadcasts can last up to 90 minutes.