

HARNESSING THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR ADVOCACY



PEOPLE. POWER. PURPOSE.

Social media is a powerful tool, especially if you know how to use it effectively. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other platforms are great ways to advertise events, mobilize supporters, and attract attention to issues that might otherwise be overlooked by traditional media.

Social media can help you connect with:

- Public officials who can take action on your cause,
- Organizations which can help increase awareness of your issue, and
- People who like you and are invested in your success, such as customers, employees, and community partners.

BEST PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA



FOCUS

Short posts are significantly more likely to go viral. Keep your posts brief, with a clear call to action.



GRAB ATTENTION

Social media is highly visual. Use authentic videos and photos to attract more views, likes, and shares. Text images, graphics, and memes can also be effective.



AMPLIFY

Engage your followers by asking them to spread the word. Tag elected officials or community stakeholders and use hashtags to draw attention to your campaign.



MOTIVATE YOUR AUDIENCE

People are more likely to take action if they believe their participation will make a significant impact, they see a pressing need for immediate support, or they perceive that the issue is personally relevant.



GENERATE INTEREST

Use interesting facts and figures. For example, “Did you know that less than 2% of the USDA’s annual research budget is spent on organic production topics?!”



POST OFTEN

Posting regularly will keep your campaign active, maintain follower engagement, and increase the number of people who see your posts when it matters most. Be careful not to “spam” your followers though.



PLAN AHEAD

Identify campaign milestones and local events and then plan your posts to coincide with or avoid them.



SHARE CONTENT

Sharing information from other groups will advance your cause and facilitate collaboration.



BE SOCIAL

Interact with your audience. Reply to their messages, ask them for their ideas, or thank them for their support.

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REACHING PUBLIC OFFICIALS WITH SOCIAL MEDIA

FOLLOW



Elected officials are on social media because they want to hear from their constituents. Share news about your farm, say thank you when they take a favorable action, make suggestions, or gain attention by sharing their posts. By following their accounts, you can track what issues your elected officials are prioritizing as well as upcoming events.

FOLLOW UP



Some officials use social media more than others. You may not get a response when you tweet at your decision-maker or leave them a comment on Facebook, but your message still gets through. If they do respond, be prepared to reply in a timely fashion.

LEVERAGE MEETINGS



When you meet a decision-maker in person, let them know that you've been interacting with them on social media. After the meeting, express your thanks publicly on social media, tagging them. Lawmakers respond well to photos with their constituents, so try to snap a shot with the lawmaker during the meeting. When public officials can connect messages with the people sending them, they pay attention.

STAY LOCAL



Only reach out to representatives in your district. Tag the location of your post using a city or farm name to highlight that you're local and to make posts more discoverable by your elected officials.

CREATE A SPIKE



Organizing a "day of action" can be a useful way to create a spike in social media posts and draw attention from policymakers. This can be especially effective if paired with phone banking and in-person visits.

SOCIAL MEDIA POST EXAMPLES TO GET YOU STARTED

Be sure to include a visual element in your post. In these examples, a photo or video of farmers John and Jane Doe at their farm or at the farmers market would be a good choice.



[@ YOUR ELECTED OFFICIAL], our community is stronger because of organic and sustainable farmers, like [JOHN AND JANE DOE]! We need your help to create a future where these farmers thrive and are rewarded for growing nutritious food that protects our environment. Please [CAMPAIGN CALL TO ACTION]! Learn more at [CAMPAIGN LINK].



[@ YOUR ELECTED OFFICIAL], organic and sustainable farmers, like [JOHN AND JANE DOE], are making our communities stronger. I urge you to [CAMPAIGN CALL TO ACTION]. [CAMPAIGN LINK] #[CAMPAIGN HASHTAG]



Organic farmers, like [JOHN AND JANE DOE], are making our community better! That's why I'm an @ohioecological member. I'm working to ensure [CAMPAIGN CALL TO ACTION] so farmers like them can feed our community and protect the environment. Help me by reaching out to [YOUR ELECTED OFFICIAL]. Learn more in the link in OEFFA's profile. #[CAMPAIGN HASHTAG]