

10 Tips for Farm Social Media

(‘10 Tips for Farm Social Media’ is in conjunction with other articles to help farmers continue operations during COVID-19)

Below are 10 highlights to running a farm social media page. There are numerous sites and accounts available, but the rules are intended to apply across the board. Social media is a great way to connect with customers, continue relationships and promote a business. Social media takes some time and effort, but the article is intended to help jumpstart your efforts.

1. **Be Active, Be Consistent** – One of the most important factors for a well-run social media page is timely, consistent activity.

Too little activity and not many people see your page or your posts.

Too much activity and you run the risk of being seen similar to spam and people tuning out your message. Most of the time, there is plenty of activity on a farm to post about.

When you have a consistent pattern and time that you post, people start to notice and even anticipate your messages. It is a great thing to have customers looking for your activity.

2. **Visuals Are Effective** – People love to see a beautiful photograph or engaging video. Baby animal pictures, educational videos, and even cooking demonstrations are attention-grabbers.

It is hard to pay attention to text, especially if it is long or hard to read. When making a post, try to incorporate something visual. Text and information can be included close-by or in a different section.

Capturing customers attention will make them want to learn more about your farm. After they visit your site, then you can fill them in on other details about your operation.

3. **Engage with Your Customers & Community** – In conjunction with point number one, part of your activity will be engaging with your customers and community.

In general, the more followers and friends that interact with your page and posts, the more likely it is to be seen by others. Be creative in coming up with ways to connect with

clientele. From a local standpoint, when you engage in community pages, potential customers will see your page and activity.

You appreciate comments, likes, and shares on your page, so being a good contributor in your community benefits everyone. An online presence and word-of-mouth are probably the two biggest marketing tools you have available.

4. **The Goal is Farm Sales (Not Followers)** – Social media is a tool that can be used to help market and brand the farm. Using it effectively can greatly help your business.

It is great to have lots of friends and followers of your pages, but you want to turn that into sales and revenue for the farm. It would be better to have fewer followers that visit the farm, than hundreds of followers who never actually buy anything.

To that end, make sure your page and posts clearly point to how customers can purchase your products. Make it clear what you have available, hours, location, and ways to buy from you.

5. **Develop Your Brand Voice** – Your brand voice is the overall tone, personality, and entity that you want to present online. This voice embodies the personality that is unique and authentic to your brand. Define your *why*, and show that through your social media posts.

People do not buy what you do; they buy *why* you do it. What drives you? What drives your values? What makes your farm so unique? By knowing and showing your *why*, you appeal to consumers and gain their trust.

Your brand voice allows you to put your personal touch on everything. An online personality can set you apart from others and help customers identify your brand.

6. **Be Professional** – Treat social media that same way you treat any other communication channel. Focus on providing clear information to your audience, while giving an opportunity to interact with your account.

Respond to comments and messages in a timely and professional manner. If you are receiving negative comments or a conversation is not productive after a few replies, do not be afraid to block the individual or remove their comments. It is important to respect the consumer's beliefs, because they are looking for the truth behind their food. To that end, make sure responses are based on facts about your farm instead of opinions.

Take time to carefully proofread your posts. Incorrect grammar is a turn off for online customers. Keep your messages clear and stay consistent in your brand voice (point number five).

7. **Use the Features of the Site** – Every social media platform has unique tools that can help market your products. From stories to hashtags, live broadcasts to analytics, you can share and track almost anything with social media. Automatic responses are an easy way to engage with customers in a timely fashion. You can establish a hashtag for your business and encourage customers to use it when posting about your products or experience on your farm. Many platforms offer analytics that give insight on how well your posts are performing with your audience. Take the time to learn these tools and how you can maximize social media as a resource.

With social media, sometimes less is more. Choose the right sites that work for your farm, your products, and most importantly your costumers.

8. **Show What's Happening at the Farm**- Less than 2% of our population is directly involved in agriculture, but 87% of U.S. agriculture products sold are produced on family farms and ranchers¹. Although this disconnect is present, Americans are still interested in food production and have questions about how their food is produced²

You can show the public whatever you choose, in picture or video format. Assume most of your following will not understand what you are showing them and provide commentary and explanation of your post. Additionally, as you have farm happenings, milestones, and public events be sure to document and point these out.

Be prepared to answer questions in the comments and be professional and educational with your responses. This could be a great way for someone to learn more about you.

9. **Assign the Account**- Keep the voice of your page consistent by having one person in charge of the social media accounts. If the account is assigned as a job responsibility, this can help make sure there is consistent and timely activity on the page.

If you have multiple people posting on the account, have each person put their name and their position on the farm at the end of the text. Make sure each person posting knows the brand voice (point number five) and how to articulate your brand's message.

If someone does not like working on a computer, do not assign them to social media. Alternatively, if someone is very adept at technology and spends a lot of time using computers and mobile devices, they may be a fit.

10. **Have Fun**- Managing your social media accounts should not feel like a chore or a burden! There are lots of fun, interesting, and educational things to share.

You have complete control of what is shown on your farm page. If you prefer, you can keep your page strictly business and post sales information and what is happening on

the farm. Some decide to share their families or funny events that are a part of farm life, and that is also ok!

Your social media accounts should be a creative and fun outlet to promote your farm and agribusiness.

For more articles on farm marketing, visit

<https://www.clemson.edu/extension/agribusiness/index.html>

Follow the Clemson Extension Agribusiness Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/clemsonextensionagribusiness/>

¹Source: <https://www.fb.org/newsroom/fast-facts>

²Source: <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/nationwide-surveys-reveal-disconnect-between-americans-and-their-food-130336143.html>

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