



**SHARE YOUR FARM STORY: MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS TOOL KIT  
Farm & Agriculture Resources for Media (FARM)**

**INTERVIEW TIPS**

- Research the publication, media outlets and/or reporter or writer ahead of time to get a feel for their style and approach. Thank to the Internet, this has become much easier to do.
- Ask what types of questions you will be expected to answer so you can prepare your replies ahead of time.
- Do not assume the audience knows everything you do. Remember to explain what “sustainable” and “organic” agriculture is as well as terms like “CSA” (i.e., community supported agriculture).
- Remember to say the specific name of your farm to get it on the air, instead of saying “our farm.”
- Focus on your farming story and why you choose to farm with sustainable agriculture principles in mind. Don’t attack other growing methods since the story may be perceived as hostile. Keep things positive.
- Ask the reporter ahead of time if they would like one of your favorite farm recipes (that showcases what you raise or grow) for the station or publication’s website. A recipe offer is often well received since it prompts the audience to hit the media outlet’s website. Be sure to include your farm website with the recipe and ask for a link back.
- Ask when the piece will run or, if it is a video or audio, where it will be available online as video or a podcast. If the article or story is not archived on the Internet, ask if the reporter or producer can send you a copy of the clip for you to use on your own website pressroom.
- If you receive a call from a reporter out of the blue and you feel unprepared, ask them what their deadline is and set a time you will call them back. Never feel obligated to take the interview without any preparation or when you feel rushed or unfocused.

**POINTERS BY SPECIFIC MEDIA**

**TELEVISION**

- If a TV crew will be coming out to your farm, suggest attractive backdrops to film against. A vibrant growing field, aesthetically pleasing barn, flowerbeds, animals or renewable energy systems are good options. Having some harvested vegetables on hand in attractive containers (i.e. tomatoes in a rustic bushel basket) add a lot to the filming session.
- If you will be doing the interview at the TV studio, offer to bring some produce, plants or other items for colorful props that showcase your business.
- Clothing: Wear something you’re both comfortable in and that presents yourself well on camera. Solid, bright or pastel colors look best. For example, a solid royal blue shirt is always a good choice for TV. Avoid white or black since it can make you look washed out. Also avoid clothing with fine patterns or shiny jewelry since they can be distracting. Don’t wear sunglasses or T-shirts with logos or words (unless you have something with your farm that would be easily identifiable and appropriate).
- Look directly at the camera or your interviewee whenever the crew is filming and smile as much as possible. You will often be directed to whom you should face to carry on the interview (sometimes you will be directed to not look at the camera at all). A warm grin goes a long way



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on film. Even when the interviewee is talking a camera may be directed at you, so keep smiling.

### **RADIO**

- The radio station will most likely call you directly at the designated interview time or a few minutes before. Ask if the interview will be live or recorded, approximately how long it will be and if there will be listener call-in questions. To keep the interview conversational, it helps to occasionally repeat the host's first name. For example: "That's a great question, (insert name of host)." If the show has call-in questions from listeners, referring to the caller by name is also helpful.
- Test your landline phone ahead of time. Do not use a cell phone. Turn off call waiting for the duration of the interview. Contact your local phone company for specifics on how to do this. Usually it is a simple number code to enter in your phone to make call waiting inactive for the duration of the interview.
- Remember radio interviews go by very fast. Feel free to keep notes in front of you during the interview to remember key points. It's easy to talk fast when being interviewed on the radio. Remind yourself to speak slowly and avoid "ums," "likes," or "you knows."
- Keep your energy level high. One way to do this is to stand up while talking. Feel free to use your hands when you talk and smile – even though no one is looking at you. Your positive energy will come through in your voice.
- Radio listeners can't "see" your farm, so be sure to include detail and "colorful" descriptions: "I harvested a rainbow of fresh produce this morning."

### **WEB-BASED MEDIA**

- Interviews for blogs and other web-based publications are often handled by the writer sending you questions to reply to via e-mail. While this may take more time investment on your part, it enables you to fully control your answers and avoid being misquoted. Additionally, you can be longer and more detailed in your reply for web-based publications. Use catchy language that reflects the personality of your farm and try to avoid clichés and simple generalizations.
- Ask if they can use a photo of you and your farm to enhance the piece and what size/format they need.
- The benefit of web-based media is that any corrections can be readily and quickly made. Be sure to check the final piece on-line (including any links) and contact the Webmaster or writer if any suggested corrections need to be made.