WRITING STRONG IMPACT STATEMENTS

The parts of an impact story are like gears in a machine. With all the gears in place, the machine works efficiently and effectively. No one benefits from clunky communication. Keep impact statements well-oiled with these guidelines.

WHAT WAS DONE?
- Who was involved?
- Mention innovative techniques
- Don’t go on about theory/methods
- Include Extension activities

WHAT WAS LEARNED or PRODUCED?
- Share major results
- Share important outputs
- Enumerate outputs

WHAT WAS THE ISSUE & WHY?
- Use hot topics & buzzwords
- Make people care

WHAT WERE or COULD BE THE IMPACTS?
- What kinds of impacts?
- Show scope & magnitude
- Target specific stakeholders

REVIEW THE IMPACT STATEMENT

Does it...
- tell all parts of the story?
- use up-to-date stats?
- NOT use jargon, abbreviations or acronyms?
- spell out units?
- use an active voice?
- use adjectives?
- stay concise & focused?

GET THE GEARS SPINNING
Strong impact statements can be used in:
- Press releases
- Newsletters
- Magazine articles
- Newspaper stories
- Social media posts
- Grant applications
- Legislative briefings
- Displays & posters

IMPACT =
△ condition*
△ behavior
△ knowledge
*economic, environmental or social

STAKEHOLDERS:
industry reps
gov’t officials
college leaders
producers
consumers
scientists
resident
voters
media

Still having TROUBLE?
- Think about potential impacts
- Do NOT ignore the small stuff
- Use anecdotes
IMPACT WRITING WORKSHEET. Follow these steps as a guide to writing a good impact statement.

IDENTIFY AN IMPACT.*

What impact did this project have?

Who was impacted?
Where did this impact occur?

What did researchers do to achieve this impact? What major accomplishments, study results, or outputs led to this impact? (e.g., studies showed that X pesticide is more 10% effective than Y pesticide; 10 new training workshops)

Did researchers use any unique or innovative methods/tools?
Which researchers/institutions were involved?

What issue were the researchers trying to address? (e.g., 50% of corn crop was lost to damage from pests in 2012)

Who cares about this issue? (e.g., farmers; consumers)

Why do they care about the issue? (e.g., farmers are losing money; consumers want safe, steady food supply)

Buzz words or hot topics related to this issue? (e.g., food security; environmentally friendly; global warming)

Any anecdotes?

USE THIS INFORMATION TO WRITE AN IMPACT STATEMENT.
Remember, your impact statement could be one sentence or an entire paragraph.

REVIEW YOUR IMPACT STATEMENT.
Did you remember to...

☐ talk about all parts of the story?
☐ use up-to-date stats?
☐ NOT use jargon, abbreviations or acronyms?
☐ spell out units?
☐ be explicit about scope & magnitude?
☐ write with an active voice?
☐ use adjectives?
☐ be brief?
☐ stay focused?

Think about your audience.