

North Carolina EFNEP Social Media Guidelines

This document gives guidance to the publication of and commentary on social media by employees of NC EFNEP. For the purpose of this document, social media means any facility for online publication and commentary, including without limitation: blogs, wikis, social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube. This document is in addition to and complements any existing or future policies regarding the use of technology, computers, email, and the internet, including NCCE Marketing Resources, and the included Social Media Assets which can be found at: <https://intranet.ces.ncsu.edu/brand/n-c-cooperative-extension-brand/downloads/#SocialMedia>

EFNEP employees are free to publish or comment via social media. These guidelines will help employees communicate on behalf of EFNEP through social media in a consistent and coordinated way. EFNEP employees are encouraged to use these guidelines to the extent they identify themselves as an EFNEP employee (other than as an incidental mention of place of employment in a personal blog on topics unrelated to EFNEP). Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary. All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that EFNEP employees must otherwise follow.

Setting up social media

Social media identities, login ID's, and user names may not use EFNEP's name without prior approval from the NC EFNEP Social Media Manager. It is required that the NC EFNEP Social Media Manager retains an accurate and updated password for all EFNEP social media pages. When employment with NC EFNEP ends, access to these pages will also end.

Be honest

Do not post anonymously, use pseudonyms or false screen names. We believe in transparency and honesty. Use your real name, be clear who you are, and identify that you work for EFNEP in your county. Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out. Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy by considering the content carefully and being cautious about disclosing personal details.



Protect your own privacy

Don't be afraid to be yourself. People want to communicate with a real person. Being able to identify the person behind the message is important when building a relationship. Likewise, be open about your affiliation with EFNEP and NCCE. Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see. Remember, whatever is posted on the Internet is there forever. Questions on how to change security settings may be directed to the NC EFNEP Social Media Manager.

Don't tell secrets

It's perfectly acceptable to talk about your work and have a dialog with the community, but it's not okay to publish confidential information. Confidential information includes things such as unpublished details of current projects, financial information, research, and identities of any EFNEP participants.

Respect your audience, EFNEP, and your coworkers

The public and EFNEP's employees and participants reflect a diverse set of customs, values, and points of view. Avoid saying anything contradictory or in conflict with the EFNEP website. This includes not only the obvious (no ethnic slurs, offensive comments, defamatory comments, personal insults, obscenity, etc.) but also proper consideration of privacy and topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory - such as politics and religion. Use your best judgment and be sure to make it clear that the views and opinions you express are yours alone and do not represent the official views of EFNEP.

Be the first to respond to your own mistakes

If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly. If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material or a defamatory comment about them), deal with it quickly - it is better to remove it immediately to lessen the possibility of legal action.

Don't forget your day job.

NC EFNEP's purpose in utilizing social media is to assist you in the recruitment and retention of participants, encouraging participants as they make positive changes, serving as a resource to participants for health information that supplements what they



learn in class; and promoting EFNEP to partnering agencies. As such, NC EFNEP has taken great care to assure that your participation does not interfere with face-to-face delivery and interaction with families and youth. Think of social media the same as you would think about how you use your email.

Content

When posting to NC EFNEP Social Media Pages, make sure that you are sharing reliable and research-based information. There is a wide array of reliable information from NCSU and A&T as well as other Land Grant Universities across the nation. Look for information that comes from reliable websites ending in *.gov*, *.org*, and *.edu*.

Social media tips (See Appendix A).

Stay positive

If you see misrepresentations made about EFNEP on social media, you may point that out. Always do so respectfully and with the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is factual and that it does not disparage that party. Avoid arguments. If you notice arguments or negative comments on an EFNEP account, you may intervene with a brief comment to discourage conflict, so long as the comment is positive and does not take a side in the argument. If you are unsure how to intervene or feel uncomfortable intervening, please notify the NC EFNEP Social Media Manager immediately via email with the subject line "URGENT: Social Media Attention Needed."

Suggestions for positive comments:

- "Try this source for information regarding...."
- "This might be a question to ask an expert. Can I get back to you?"
- "Nutrition information can be confusing."

Respect copyright laws

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. This includes photographs, videos, and other media. 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. When in doubt, ask the NC



EFNEP Social Media Manager. If you are posting something that you did not create, make sure you have permission to post it. There are several copyright free sources available ([Pixabay](#), [Unsplash](#), etc.)

Protect EFNEP participants

EFNEP participants should never be cited or obviously referenced without their explicit approval. Never identify a participant by name without their permission and never discuss confidential details of any participant (this includes tagging participants on social media). It is acceptable to discuss general details about kinds of projects and to use non-identifying pseudonyms for a participant so long as the information provided does not violate anyone's confidentiality or make it possible for someone to identify the participant. Do not mention or tag your location (school name, address etc.) when posting a picture unless you have a signed photo release for everyone visible in the picture. When in doubt, ask the NC EFNEP Social Media Manager.

Photo Releases

When posting pictures of anyone that is not NCSU or A&T staff, it is crucial that you have a signed photo release on file for these individuals. For adult EFNEP participants, a signed copy of the adult entry form is sufficient. Make sure you are aware which participants did not sign the photo release portion of the entry form. For youth participants, a separate photo release is needed and requires a guardian's signature. A copy of this photo release can be found on our website and on the [intranet](#). If you have used, or plan to use a photo in any way, you must turn in a copy of the photo and a copy of the photo release(s) (or the signed photo release on the last page of the adult entry form) for all individuals pictured in the photo. These items should be submitted to your RNEA with your monthly reports.

If you are unable to obtain a photo release from participants, you can post images and videos *only* if they do not show a participant's face in any way. Additionally, if you do not have a photo release you should not state your specific location. For example, do not post "*Lakewood Elementary School second grade students...*" Instead, you could write "*local elementary school students in Caswell county...*"



There are many ways you can capture engaging photos of participants without showing their faces. Try taking photos of participants hand's preparing food, finished recipes, or physical activity with only the back of their heads showing.

Approved photo examples (no photo release required):



Enforcement

These guidelines are developed to assure that NC EFNEP Social Media aligns with the social media policy of our land-grant universities and our organization. Additionally, these guidelines are established to assure that the participants of EFNEP and the reputation of the program are protected. Violations of these guidelines and/or of the policies of affiliated entities will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for cause. When in doubt, ask the NC EFNEP Social Media Manager!

For questions & concerns, please contact the NC EFNEP Social Media Manager:

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APPENDIX A: Social Media Tips

These tips are not mandatory but may contribute to the successful use of social media.

- Quality matters. Use a spell-checker and proof-read every post.
- Write in simple language. Remember our audience includes not only participants, but also community partners, university faculty, and other professionals.
- Avoid writing lengthy posts or posts with technical language.
- Engage with your followers.
- If someone posts an accomplishment, respond with positive feedback.
- Ask questions in your posts to encourage responses.
- Be personable
- Respond to all comments
- Do not promote a store or brand.
- Connect with local community organizations by sharing their appropriate content.
- Share your upcoming classes and events on social media.
- Include appropriate hashtags.

Social Media Post Ideas:

- If you are grocery shopping and see a sale on a healthy item, mention the sale (e.g. “Broccoli is in season. What’s the lowest price you have found?”)
- If you are craving a certain unhealthy food, but choose a healthy alternative snack (e.g. “I was craving French fries driving home from work—but instead snacked on a bag of carrot sticks I had packed in my purse!”)
- My kids loved the mashed potatoes and cauliflower I made for dinner from this week’s Recipe of the Week! Give it a try and post a picture of your finished product in the comments below.
- Does anyone have a favorite healthy, on-the-go breakfast item?
- My goal this week is to go for a walk after dinner every night! Does anyone want to join me in the challenge?
- Produce in season is often a better value. It’s *strawberry* season and a great time to pick-your-own strawberries! Check out *Marble’s Farm* in *Hayton, NC* for a fun family activity this weekend! (Try to list all available locations in your county.)



Instagram

1. Photos and videos

- a. Make sure to focus on posting high quality photos and videos on this platform. This will not only separate your account from others but it will attract new followers and look very professional if maintained.

2. Engagement

- a. Ways to keep in touch with your followers:
 - i. Posting on your profile (photos, videos, and gifs)
 - ii. Posting a story (photo or video)
 - iii. Creating 'highlights' of your stories on your profile
 - iv. Using Instagram Live
 - v. Commenting, responding, or reacting to comments left on your posts.
- b. Writing the caption for a post:
 - i. Only the first three lines of your captions are visible when viewing a post. Try to include a call to action in this space, such as :
 1. 'Click the link in the bio'
 2. 'Tag a friend'
 3. 'Have you tried this?'
 4. 'Leave a comment ... "
- c. Commenting, responding, and reacting to your followers can help create an open environment and increase engagement. If you see one of your participants posting a success story, make sure to comment or like their post!
 - i. Encourage your participants to tag your EFNEP county account!
- d. Emojis
 - i. Emojis are a great way to show even more emotion. It adds a more personable connection with your followers. Make sure not to overdo it and keep them relevant.

3. Hashtags

- a. Informative hashtags are better than abstract ones
 - i. #EFNEPworks vs. #WTF (what the french fry.)
- b. Other appropriate hashtags include:
 - i. #EFNEPworksNC #EFNEPworks #EFNEP #movemore #eatsmart
- c. Make sure they relate to your post
- d. You can use hashtags within the caption, not just at the end.
 - i. Example: This #recipe for #PumpkinPie is one of my family's favorites.
- e. You can have up to 30 hashtags but remember, don't overdo it!
- f. Make sure you know the meaning of your hashtag and that there are no hidden meanings behind it that do not represent the values of EFNEP.



4. Tag your location

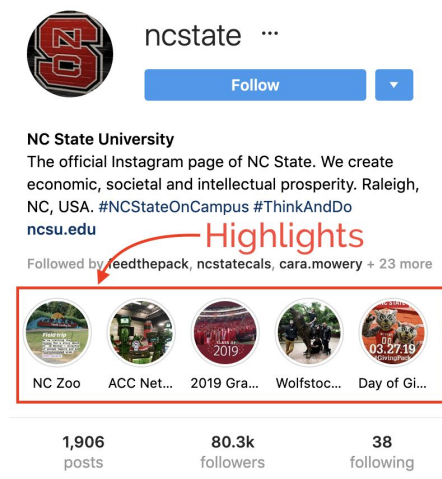
- a. This can be helpful for certain events. Tag your location when you are doing adults programs to let your audience know where you are located. This feature is important because it could broaden your reach of potential followers. (Remember, if there are participants shown in your post you must have a photo release on file before tagging your location.)

5. Posting on your 'story'

- a. Instagram stories are posted at the top of the Instagram app. This means when you post something on your story, it will show up when your followers open their Instagram app.
- b. You can use text, hashtags, gifs, polls, and many more features to make your story interactive and intriguing.

6. Story highlights

- a. This feature allows you to save and organize your stories. Otherwise they will disappear after 24 hours.
- b. These saved stories can be categorized into folders or 'highlights' on your profile for your viewers to refer back to.



6. Instagram Live

- a. Instagram Live allows you to interact with your audience by video chatting with multiple people at once. If your adult class gets canceled, you could go live on Instagram as a backup plan if your participants follow your page.
 - i. You can do remote Q and A's
 - ii. Ask for feedback on things
 - iii. Give you followers a behind the scenes look
- b. Try to promote live streams ahead of time in order to get more viewers when you go live. You can try posting on your story beforehand to remind your viewers that you'll be doing a live stream.

Facebook

1. Perfect your profile picture

- a. This is one of the most important aspects of a Facebook page or profile because it's usually the first thing people see!
- b. If using a county extension page, work with your county staff to make sure that the EFNEP logo is incorporated onto the county page if possible.

2. Don't forget your cover photo

- a. The cover photo is likely the second thing your viewers will see.
- b. Be creative and personalize your cover photo. Try including photos of an event or participants (make sure you have a photo release for these participants.)

3. Content

- a. When using a research based website link make sure to include a picture to attract your followers to click the link (rather than just posting the link by itself.)
- b. Diversifying your content can be refreshing for viewers. Make sure to provide a variety of recipes, tips, activities, events, etc.
- c. If you run out of ideas, try searching for social media holidays. There are many fun themed days that relate to EFNEP such as National Watermelon Day.
- d. Create a contest! Ask participants to share, like, or comment on a post to win.
 - i. Ask if your county would offer a small prize to giveaway.

4. Remember to be different

- a. Part of what keeps followers on social media coming back to your page is the fact that you bring something different to the social media game. Try these tips:
 - i. Content diversification
 - ii. Quality media (Photos, Videos, etc.)
 - iii. Audience engagement
 - iv. County/local specific media and content

5. Media

- a. Remember that the people accessing your Facebook page are using cell phones, tablets, and computers.
- b. Make sure that the media you're posting is inclusive to all types of devices and that the media you post is clean and the best quality possible.
- c. If something doesn't look the way you want it to look like, ask the NC EFNEP social media manager for help.

6. Optimize your post timing

- a. Look at your page insights and see when the best days and times to post are.
- b. Schedule your content during the times when you will get the most engagement.
- c. NOTE: On Facebook, the times shown on the Insights are in Pacific time zone. So, if the insights show a busy time at 6:00 PM, that is actually 9:00 PM.

