Fact Sheet Writing Tips
For OSU Extension Community Development Professionals

Fact Sheet Ideas and Writing

Fact sheets are available to all on ohioline.osu.edu This collection provides unique information available from OSU Extension to help people solve problems, answer questions, and improve their farms, businesses, and lives.

Planning, Designing, and Enhancing Your Fact Sheet

Most people will access Ohioline through a search engine (like Google or Bing). These searches will display the title and first paragraph of the fact sheet. The fact sheet's intent and content need to be easily read to encourage readers to click on the fact sheet. Some ideas:

- Make the title as short as possible with the first words containing the main subject (i.e., the name of the program) so the content can be easily determined.

- The first paragraph should be a summary of the problem or the program - the reason the fact sheet was written and the solution or implementation/process (how this fact sheet will help them).

- The first subheading will show on most browsers when the person accesses the fact sheet. Make sure this subheading reinforces the title so someone skimming the content will know they are on the right page.

- Photos are great – especially near the beginning. Color photographs provide a prompt to the web searchers on the fact sheet's content.

Describing the Problem and Solution: Your Fact Sheet Content

Write the fact sheet as if you were talking to someone about the problem and solution. Discuss the most important information first to keep their attention. Some ideas:

- Start with a photo – use a photo pertinent to your topic or an image to engage the reader.
  - If you do not have a photo, consider using pixabay.com or unsplash.com to find one relevant to your fact sheet. **Note: Do not use clip art.**

- Use bullet points to make it is easier to skim and find information.

- Use tables, graphs, or charts to illustrate ideas to increase comprehension by the reader.

- Unique facts and history about the subject can be added—put these at the end for the interested reader to find.

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

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Criteria upon which Your Fact Sheet will be rated by Reviewers

Your submission will be reviewed by at least three subject-matter experts for the formal blind peer review. Ratings and comments will be based on:

Content:

- Contribution – expands or updates research and knowledge base; does not duplicate existing materials; contributed to one or more OSU Extension priority areas

- Audience – of broad interest and appropriate to the target audience

- Usefulness – helps target audience improve effectiveness; suggests applications; uses appropriate participatory learning experiences, if applicable

- Rigor – based on valid/reliable information, sound concepts; content is empirically, logically, and/or theoretically supported.

Readability:

- Interest – captures and holds the reader's attention

- Understandability – uses easy-to-understand language; flows smoothly

- Development – appropriate sequences; constructs paragraphs and sentences to support central ideas and conclusions

- Mechanics – uses acceptable standards of spelling and grammar

Submitting Your Fact Sheet for Publication

Fact sheets are to be written in Microsoft Word with no branding. Photos/images/graphs should be placed into the Word document. Be sure to have separate jpg files available for use later in the process.

Complete information about the Review Process for OSU Extension Educational Materials, including instructions for submitting fact sheets to the CD assistant director for review, can be found in the [OSU Extension Policy and Procedures Handbook](). The fact sheet will be peer reviewed and final edits will be made by the author before submission to Extension Publishing for formatting and posting to Ohioline.

Want to discuss ideas for writing or revising a fact sheet? Contact:
David Civittolo (civittolo.1@osu.edu or 614-292-5942)

Questions about the process? Contact:
Sandy Odrumsky (odrumsky.1@osu.edu or 614-292-6232)