

Agricultural Communication

Writing Portfolio

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May 7, 2024

Dear Reader,

My name is Hannah Everhart, and I am currently a Junior pursuing a dual degree in the Agricultural Communication and Internatinoal Agriculture fields. Since coming to college, not only have I changed my major three times, but I have had a variety of different internships to supplement my studies. Through this journey I have really narrowed the field I would like to pursue after college and decided that I would love a career within corporate communications or doing non-profit communications.

AGEDS 327 brought me varying ideas of the career paths within the Agricultural Communication field such as research, technical writing and crisis communications. I feel that within my career I will most likely utilize crisis communication plans most. This summer I have a corporate communications internship with Midwest Dairy and upon interviewing them they said that crisis communication would be a crucial part of my role. Additionally, I feel that the feature story was something that I will further utilize within corporate communications as we want to recognize the good just as much as the bad within the industry.

Since completing part of the new requirements within the Agricultural Communication major, I have found that I really enjoy video and photo editing as well. Video editing has been something that I have found to be increasingly popular within the communication field and I find it to be very fun. I completed a podcast project and a video editing project as two separate finals within the new curriculum, and I felt that both have better equipped me for my future in communication. I sincerely hope that you enjoy looking through my portfolio and if you have any questions feel free to reach out!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hannah M. Everhart', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hannah M. Everhart

Platforms Comparison Essay

Communication has evolved in ways that one would not be able to wrap one's head around 500 years ago. From the first newspaper in 1704, to the first radio broadcast, to a now completely new wave of communication in the form of various social media platforms; the means of communication in today's day in age is truly limitless. Newspaper was one of the first widespread means of communication to be utilized, and in 1777 we saw the first newspaper to encourage articles on farming, *The New Jersey Gazette* (Tedrick, 2009). Nearly 140 years later we saw the rise of the first radio broadcast to incorporate a crop and weather report. Farmers were able to listen to this rather than having to sit and read a paper. Fast forward to now, the year 2024, we have a social media platform called TikTok that allows people within the agricultural industry to create short videos with audio, text, and visuals to convey a message. Needless to say, the evolution of communication has done wonders for the agricultural industry, but let's first take a look into print materials, more specifically newspapers.

According to *Association for Communication Excellence*, the first newspaper was published and distributed in 1704, and since has made its way as a morning staple into households all across the United States. After 73 more years, we saw the rise of the first newspaper that supported the idea of articles on farming, *The New Jersey Gazette*. These early forms of print materials that supported agriculture were essential in the spread of new and innovative information within the agricultural industry. Newspaper offered daily snippets of agricultural information on trade, varying crops, and agricultural methods and practices that farmers could introduce on their operations. This was also one of the first forms of print media that was available on a day-to-day basis, as books took several years to write and distribute.

Within the next 100 years and into the early 1900's, we see a steep incline of newspapers and agricultural publications within the agricultural world, and this alone could be what supported the academic field of "Agricultural Journalism." Between the years 1880 and 1920, the number of agricultural publications shoots from 1 million all the way up to 17 million (Telg, 2011).

According to our course book *Agricultural Communications in Action: A Hands-On Approach*, "the first course in agricultural journalism was taught at Iowa State University in 1905, and the first department of agricultural journalism was formed at the University of Wisconsin in 1908" (Telg, 2011). Considering there is an overlap between academic courses and print materials being circulated, there is no coincidence that newspapers had some type of influence in the creation of these courses.

Now that the 1900's have come about and agricultural coursework is being taught at universities, it only makes sense for new innovations to aid in the spread of agricultural knowledge, thus the radio broadcast is born. Radio provided a whole new perspective for all Americans, not just farmers and ranchers. The idea that you could hear the President in your living room is something that most people could not wrap their heads around, and it quickly became a staple in several households. Another reason as to why radio became popular was due to the convenience of it; farmers and ranchers could plow a field, drive from acre to acre, or work on equipment while tuning into the radio and making them masters of multitasking. In 1915, the United States hears its first radio broadcast with a weather and crops report generated from University of Wisconsin that is transmitted in morse code (Tedrick, 2009), which later goes on to be the first university to house a program in "agricultural journalism." Following that in 1923, the first full-time radio broadcaster, Frank Mullen, began hosting regular broadcasts and helped found a radio show called "The Farm and Home Hour" in 1929, according to *The*

Asheville Radio Museum. Radio led to further advancements in technology, but what made newspapers stand out against it?

While both radio and newspapers were effective methods of communication there were definitely advantages to one over the other. Newspapers were distributed every day and provided more than just agricultural content for the common reader. One of the main benefits of the paper was that it gave people a routine in the morning, and a sense of self. For example, one would pick up the paper, read it while drinking a cup of coffee in the morning, and ultimately close it after they've finished. This allowed the average American to have some time to themselves before starting the day completely. Additionally, the newspaper boom of the 1880's highly contributed to the academic field of agricultural journalism, now known as agricultural communication, as radio broadcast was still a relatively new technology. However, every method of communication comes with some type of downside. In this instance, the newspaper walked so the radio could run. More and more we see society continually increasing the number of tasks that are in a daily schedule, and because of that fewer people read the paper and prefer to listen to the radio. Radio is easily transportable via vehicle and allows the person listening to multitask better. This created a sense of convenience for farmers and ranchers as their workdays are long and filled with intense, laboring tasks. Considering that radio became popular right around the time that agricultural journalism became its own sector in academia, it allowed for continued study within the field. The basis of the coursework may have been centered around print media, like newspapers, however, radio allowed for further study as it was a new innovation in its time. Lastly, radio was a catalyst for several means of modern-day communication methods, first television and now an app that has become increasingly popular, TikTok.

Social media has become increasingly popular over the past 10 years and the app TikTok has flourished within the past three years. TikTok is a platform that allows creators of all kinds to create video content that is paired with audio and text and utilizes an algorithm to show the kinds of videos that are “for you” based on past likes and post interactions. TikTok allows anyone from videography professionals to amateur content creators to produce media about whatever they would like, whenever they would like. It also allowed for teens and young adults to better connect during the Covid-19 pandemic, when we couldn’t utilize face-to-face interactions. According to an article posted by Macquarie University, “TikTok is the fastest growing social media platform globally,” (Conville, 2023) which allows for spread of all kinds of information. Often times, agricultural influencers on TikTok can be seen taking viewers through a day in their life, advocating for agriculture as a whole, or debunking common myths within the industry, which easily spreads factual and helpful information to people who may not know much about the agricultural industry. However, there is always a downside in the ability to mass communicate easily.

TikTok has its perks, however, the spread of misinformation is just as easy as the spread of factual information in today’s society. With Newspaper and radio, typically before something is produced or broadcasted there are multiple people fact checking the data that will be distributed to the masses, however, that is not the case when it comes to platforms like TikTok. Due to its ease of access, TikTok allows users to easily spread false information that is not as regulated as newspaper and radio which ultimately can impact agriculture in a negative way. Additionally, since a “for you page” is regulated off of a user’s likes and dislikes, then it will show them content that they agree with rather than what is factual. We often see a spread of misinformation surrounding hot topics like animal welfare and carbon emissions due to

agricultural practices. So, what does this tell us about modern communication methods in comparison to those that came before?

Despite its downfalls, TikTok has worked wonders in the umbrella of social media as a whole and without the early contributions of newspapers and radio, we would not see technology of its kind. In reality, it comes down to what message someone is trying to convey when they decide to use a specific means of communication. For example, for something that needs to be shared, but is something that you may need time to mull over, then print newspapers are the better way to go over a TikTok video. On the flipside, newspapers have become decreasingly popular with the rise of social media, and a lesser means of effective communication. Radio falls into the middle of the pack and allows for the best of both worlds. It is a highly effective means of mass communication and allows you to multitask easily. Ultimately, radio, out of the three, seems to be the outlet of communication with the most perceived longevity and most effective communication method.

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The Asheville Radio Museum. (n.d.). *Farm Radio*. avlradiomuseum.

<https://www.avlradiomuseum.org/farm-radio#:~:text=The%20first%20broadcast%20to%20farmers,Home%20Hour%20%2D%20started%20in%201929.&text=To%20learn%20more%2C%20check%20out,the%201920s%20and%201930s...>

Nate Dobbels: Advisor, Agriculturalist, Mentor

By Hannah Everhart

Growing up in a small town in Illinois on a family farm, Nate had a significant amount of his future planned when he was in high school. From a young age Nate always thought that he wanted to be an agricultural engineer, little did he know he would end up being an advisor at Iowa State University, and the path that took him there was different than most. During his time in high school, Nate was heavily involved in FFA and 4-H, let alone living on a row crop operation, which were his driving forces to get involved in the

agricultural industry. In high school, he was also named one of the Top 10 FFA Chapter Presidents for the State of Illinois which only further aided in his passion for the industry. He then continued his education at Iowa State University, where he decided to pursue a degree in Agricultural Engineering. Nate looked into numerous different schools to begin his collegiate journey, but ultimately settled on Iowa State because of its prestigiousness within the agricultural engineering field.

After attending college for a little while, Nate ultimately found his love for teaching and decided to switch into the AGEDS field. It was after his switch in majors that he realized his future career path would lead in the direction of higher education. After receiving his



Undergraduate degree in Agricultural Education from Iowa State University, he was then advised to go somewhere different for his master's program to have a new experience under his belt. After asking whether he expected to be back at Iowa State, he replied with a resounding yes, however he did not expect to return in the manner he did. When Nate started his journey of pursuing a career in higher education, he initially thought that he'd end up in something related to student affairs rather than advising. He

described his interest in academic advising as an opportunity that was "the right place, at the right time," seeing as part of his interest in his current position was due to his academic advisor from his undergrad career. "He was always that person that I could go to when I needed something, so when the unique opportunity was presented to apply for a job to serve in the same role that you were influenced so much by as a student, in your home department, it's a no-brainer," was the response when asked about why he decided to apply to his current position. Additionally, he wanted to go back to his agricultural roots, and the position he applied for prior to this one did not offer agriculture.

Academic advising is not an easy task, especially when it's for college kids who come from a variety of different backgrounds, however, it's something that Nate excels at. Several students have made it known that their academic success and future endeavors have been at the aid of Nate and his skills when it comes to advising. After a brief interview with one of his academic advisees and PAS club members, Kaylee Young, stated that "Nate has been a crucial aspect of both my academic and personal since being here at Iowa State University. His dedication to each individual student shines through with each conversation that we have." According to a study posted by Louisiana State University, "Quality student-faculty interactions are key in predicting student success. Studies found that interactions with faculty benefit students socially; through this interaction, students feel a greater connection to the college and sense of belonging (O'Keeffe, 2013)," only further proving the positive revelations about Nate to be true. After chatting for a while, Nate expressed that a significant amount of this passion came from his undergrad where he excelled in a space that is completely different from the agricultural field, Student Government.

Student Government makes a crucial impact on several student's lives on the Iowa State University campus, which comes as no surprise as to why Nate decided to get involved. At the end of his sophomore year, Nate and some of his close friends decided to run for student senate and ended up being elected to positions. This expanded his passion for helping students, and in hindsight was a crucial part of his career path. His first senate seat led him to then run for Vice President of the Student Body with



Mentor, Nate Dobbels, meeting with an advisee to ensure academic success.

one of his close friends, and they ended up getting elected to those positions. One of his greatest impacts that he made while he served as the Vice President of the Student Body was the implementation of Cyclone Cinema, a new way for students to see popular movies. To this day, Cyclone Cinema is still very successful, and becoming more inclusive by incorporating international films into the semesterly lineup. Upon hearing about that, Nate was ecstatic to hear that Student Government is continuing to do great things for students on Campus.

As the interview concluded, Nate expressed he would not have changed his journey in the least, and that a significant amount of it has led to him being able to help so many students. He expressed that his favorite part about ending back up at Iowa State was undoubtedly the students, seeing as we have some of the best in the country, and Iowa State offers so many new opportunities for each one of those students. He left me with the philosophy of "If you have a bad instructor, you have a bad semester. If you have a bad advisor, you have a bad college career."

Survey Project

The Beef Industry: Investigating consumer knowledge in comparison to preferences of grass-fed vs grain-fed beef.

Introduction: I intend to survey consumers about their knowledge and preferences of grass-fed vs grain-fed beef in order to see if there is a correlation between the two. To do this, I will use a random sampling by approaching every 8th person outside of Hy-Vee grocery stores in the following locations: Ames, Council Bluffs, Des Moines, Iowa City, and Davenport. I intend to collect data from 10 respondents per store, per month for 6 months, totaling 60 respondents per store and 300 respondents total. To collect more data through a focus group, I will invite 30 respondents to participate for a \$20 Visa Gift Card. I will host 6 focus groups of 5 participants each, and they will be randomly selected from our pool of 30 participants.

Questionnaire

1. What is your age?
 - a. < 25
 - b. 25-34
 - c. 35-44
 - d. 45-54
 - e. 55+
2. Education Level
 - a. No Degree
 - b. High School
 - c. Some College
 - d. Associates
 - e. Bachelors
 - f. Masters
 - g. Doctorate
3. Field of Study (If pursuing or obtained college degree, if none write N/A)
 - a. _____
4. Gender Identity
 - a. Cis Male
 - b. Cis Female
 - c. Trans Male
 - d. Trans Female
 - e. Gender Fluid
 - f. Non-Binary
 - g. Other _____
5. Where do you prefer to buy your beef from?
 - a. Local Producer
 - b. Grocery Store
 - c. Local Meat Locker
 - d. Other _____

6. How much beef do you prefer to purchase at one time?
 - a. In Bulk
 - b. One item at a time
 - c. A few items at a time
 - d. Other _____
7. Define Grain-Fed beef in your own words.
 - a. _____
8. Which “health” labels appeal to you? (Choose all that apply)
 - a. Grass-Fed
 - b. All-Natural
 - c. Organic
 - d. Low-Fat
 - e. Antibiotic-Free
 - f. Other _____
9. What are other factors, we haven’t covered, that you take into consideration when purchasing beef products?
 - a. _____
10. Do you consider grass-fed beef products to be healthier than grain-fed beef products?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Other _____
11. Would you consider grass-fed beef products higher quality than grain-fed beef products?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Other _____
12. How often do you consume beef products in a month span?
 - a. Once a month
 - b. Twice a month
 - c. Once a week
 - d. Multiple times a week
 - e. Almost every day
 - f. Other _____
13. Do you prefer to buy Grass-Fed or Grain-Fed Beef?
 - a. Grass-Fed
 - b. Grain-Fed

- c. Other _____
14. Are you willing to pay a premium for the perceived health benefits of Grass-Fed Beef?
- Yes
 - No
 - Maybe, (Explain) _____
15. What is a staple cut of beef or beef product in your household?
-

Focus Group Questions

1. When you hear the term “grass-fed beef,” what is your initial thought? (unaided recall)
2. “Grass-fed beef tends to be lower in calories since it has less fat,” what does this mean to you? (aided recall)
3. When you hear the term “grain-fed beef,” what do you think of? (unaided recall)
4. “Studies have shown that grass-fed cattle produce 20% more methane in their lifetime than grain-fed cattle,” how does this information relate to you? (aided recall)
5. Would you consider grass-fed beef to be healthier than grain-fed beef, and if so, why? (Opinion)
6. How likely would you be to purchase grass-fed beef over grain-fed beef based on the nutrition facts? (Prompt, focusing on purchase behavior related to health)
7. Do you think that grass-fed beef should be more expensive than grain-fed beef? (Opinion)
8. How likely are you to purchase grass-fed beef over grain-fed beef if it is more expensive? (Prompt, focusing on purchasing behavior related to price)

Sources for Aided Recall Questions

<https://union.ces.ncsu.edu/2021/07/809396/> (Q2)

<https://newzealmeats.com/blog/grain-fed-vs-grass-fed-beef-greenhouse-gas-emissions/#:~:text=Studies%20have%20shown%20that%20grass,lifetime%20than%20grain%20Dfed%20cattle.> (Q4)

Roundtable Discussion – The Ocean and how it works with Agriculture.

Not very many people in class had much knowledge of how the ocean and agriculture worked together, so this roundtable was a learning experience for most. The ocean has become a resource that some farmers utilize heavily in their operations, specifically in aquaculture.

Aquaculture is the growing and harvesting of aquatic plants, fish, shellfish, etc. and has benefitted the market for seafood immensely. One thing that society as a whole runs into with traditional fishing methods is the insane cost to the consumer, overfishing that causes ecological damage, and how to regulate laws in international waters. With aquaculture you are able to host fish farms off of the coasts, in small lakes, and even in indoor spaces to better accommodate the needs of consumers without damaging the environment.

The most difficult thing as communicators that we'd run into with this topic is the idea that fish can be farmed in an indoor space, and that they can taste very similar, if not better, to wild caught fish, shellfish, and crustaceans. Additionally, if consumers knew more about the negative impacts that traditional fishing methods, and policies have on ecosystems then aquaculture products would ultimately be more popular than wild caught. Something that would also be difficult to communicate is the risks associated with aquaculture.

Crisis Communication Plan

Company Profile

- Name of company: **Ag Chem Solutions**
- Size of operation: **Incorporated**
- Location: **Ames, Iowa**
- Number of employees: **100,000**
- Goods and services: **Chemical Application, Soil Research and Chemical Research**

Crisis Forecasting

- Brainstorm 2 likely but very different crises:
- Describe the imagined crisis specifically. Explain what happened and its many effects on employees, business, industry, health, environment, and community, etc.: **There has been a defect in a chemical that was found to be the leading cause of crop loss. There has been an issue with a molecular makeup of this chemical in the lab that has caused loss and decreased revenue for our company and consumers who were using our chemical.**

Communication Touchpoints

- Discuss how you would communicate information in 3 places within the crisis - beginning, during, and after. Describe message, medium, and audience for each.

	Who is our audience?	What is our message?	Which delivery platform do we use?
Beginning of crisis	Row Crop Farmers	We apologize for the unintended results that this chemical has had on your crop populations. As soon as we heard of the issue, we put an immediate recall on this product in order to ensure that all distributors stop sales for this immediately.	Press release and email communication

Beginning of crisis	Distribution companies	We know that there is an issue with our chemical product. We are issuing an immediate recall against the sale of it until we know further details. Are there any other products that we can substitute in its place for the time being?	Press release and email communication.
During crisis	Row Crop Farmers	We have pinpointed an issue with our chemical, and we now know that there is a molecular makeup issue in our chemical that is causing crop loss. We encourage those who have our chemical on hand to bring it in so we can properly dispose of it. As well as allow for reimbursement for the product purchased and/or a substitution in chemical.	Press release and email communication

During crisis	Distribution companies	We have pinpointed an issue with our chemical, and we now know that there is a molecular makeup issue in our chemical that is causing crop loss. We encourage those who have our chemical on hand to stop selling the product and take the chemical off the shelf to avoid others using the defective product. We will allow for reimbursement for the product and/or a substitution in chemicals.	Press release and email communication
After crisis	Row Crop Farmers	We worked diligently to fix our molecular makeup mistakes. We researched a replacement for being able to replenish the soil that this chemical was used on and destroyed. We would like to express how sorry we are and that we are working to make it up to those who were involved in this loss. As well as an outline of the steps we are taking to make sure this doesn't happen again. We have another product on the way that will be	Press release and email communication

		used as a replacement for the product lost during our molecular mistake in the previous chemical.	
After crisis	Distribution companies	We worked diligently to fix our molecular makeup mistakes in our chemical that was causing crop loss. We would like to express how sorry we are and that we are working to make it up to those who were involved in this loss, as well as an outline of the steps we are taking to make sure this doesn't happen again. We have another product on the way that will be a replacement of the product that was taken off the shelves.	Press release and email communication

Technical Writing Piece

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 2, 2024

Contact: Hannah Everhart
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New Hope Vet Med Kennel Cough Outbreak: What Pet Owners Need to Know

AMES, Iowa – Pet owners who have taken their **dog or cat** to New Hope Vet Med on or before April 22nd, 2024, should call immediately if their pet has experienced any irregular symptoms, due to a kennel cough outbreak in the outpatient rooms. New Hope will be sending an email to all patients that were brought in on or after April 22nd, 2024, with an informational packet on what kennel cough is, what symptoms to look for, and how to stop the spread. Informational packets will be sent to email that is on patient file. Informational packets will be sent out Friday May 3, 2024, at 8:30am, and will be again sent out in our monthly news letter sent out on the first of each month.

New Hope encourages all pet owners to follow [this link](#) to learn more about kennel cough and the effects it may have on your pet. Kennel cough is typically not a severe illness and is the common name for bronchitis in dogs, and occasionally cats. Similar to bronchitis in humans, kennel cough can be derived from a number of different viruses or bacteria in the respiratory system and causes your dog or cat to cough. Other common symptoms aside from coughing include runny nose, sneezing, or eye discharge. Those who have been into the office during or after the outbreak to call in if any further questions arise, or serious symptoms.

Dr. Sandra Lovegood, Lead Veterinarian at New Hope Vet Med, sees cases of kennel cough often and wants pet owners to understand how to treat it. “Kennel cough only becomes serious when dog and cat owners don’t know what to do to get rid of it,” Dr. Lovegood states, “we want to make sure that all of our patients are well taken care of because they’re part of New Hope’s family too!”

For further questions and informational resources about kennel cough visit the New Hope Vet Med website at www.newhopevet.com/kennel-cough-resources or reach out to Senior

Director of Communications, Hannah Everhart by email: hme-newhopevet@gmail.com or phone: 317-501-2247.

New Hope Vet Med is committed to welcoming your pet as a member of our family and ensures quality services for your furry friend. Services provided include general wellness checks, emergency services, orthopedic care, medication fulfillment, and specialty services. New Hope staff is trained to help pet families in all different situations to ensure that all needs are met while creating a low-stress environment. For more information about New Hope Vet Med reach out at newhopevet@gmail.com or call in at 317-501-2247.