Social Media Tips: Pinterest

Agricultural Experiment Station • Cooperative Extension Service

Pinterest Best Practices: pinterest.com/nmextensionpubs/
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**Social Media Goal**

Our primary goal is to raise awareness and encourage engagement about the following:

- New and timely AES/CES publications
- Extension and Experiment Station events and news
- College of ACES and NMSU events/news

We must try to engage our followers by providing content that they find interesting and relevant to their lives, with the goal of driving them to our publications website and NMSU in general. It takes time to discover what your followers find interesting. Start by posting about the work you and your peers are doing.

We recommend you develop your group’s goals before starting social media accounts.

**Boards**

Pinterest is primarily a photo-sharing website made up of topic-specific online “boards.” Our boards reflect our goals of awareness and engagement and were developed to reflect the publication categories that we produce; for example, “How Does Your Garden Grow” is about gardening and “1 Oz. of Prevention” is about health and nutrition. We’ve also developed supplemental “fun” boards in topic areas that have proven to be popular, like “My New Mexico,” which reflects our state pride, and “Form follows Function” about upcycling and recycling. We’ve also developed an NMSU Extension board called “Making a Difference,” which promotes NMSU Extension and university-wide programs doing good in our communities.

**Pin Content**

Since our focus is our AES/CES publications, we try to select beautiful photos to promote them, as well as Extension/Experiment Station, ACES, and NMSU news and events. We select a relevant photograph, describe our pin clearly, and add links to our publications or news articles from the NMSU News Center.

**Note:** Any NMSU employee can request high-resolution photos from the NMSU photo archive free of charge: http://photo.nmsu.edu/

There are a few new strategies we plan to start using to support NMSU/CES/AES and help grow our engagement, such as incorporating NMSU’s “All About Discovery” theme into our posts. We will tag/mention like-minded users or other stakeholders in our posts. Finally, when we have a post that mentions an agent, specialist, or other NMSU personnel, we plan to start contacting them and encouraging them to share that post on their own social media channels.

**Basic Pinning Guidelines**

- Spread and share quality content enhanced by beautiful photos.
- A beautiful photo should have the following pin-worthy characteristics: good composition,
conveys emotion, tells a story, eye-catching, and distinct. A good photograph will cause the viewer to have an emotional reaction—whether it is “WOW” or a sigh, you want your viewer to feel something. A good photograph should always tell a story so the viewer can be emotionally invested. Telling a story is always a great way to capture the viewer’s attention. A good photograph captures special moments in time that are visually interesting and unique.

- Find a creative way to engage others and start a conversation on our board topics. (EX: Start a board that shares your department’s favorite recipes, their tips on gardening, or motivational quotes.)
- Answer questions promptly.
- Make sure that you pin from the original source. Lots of people share images from other Pinterest boards and websites (Google, Tumblr) that are not from the original source.
- Make sure that we credit all our sources, especially if we were not the one taking the photo.

**Repins**
In order to be an active member of Pinterest, we regularly share others’ content throughout our boards, but we always try to focus on NMSU’s Extension mission of outreach and service by promoting our work.

**Scheduling**
We currently post in the morning and mid-afternoon and focus on one board each day. We post about one publication and one ACES/NMSU news story every day with a link to posted HTML/eBook or news story. We also share one or two beautiful photos to that board from other followers/visitors that come through our Pinterest feed and from other Extension boards. We check our boards periodically throughout the day for comments or questions that may have been posted so we can respond in a timely manner.

**Tracking Link Clicks**
Pinterest board titles are limited to 180 characters and captions are limited to 500 characters. We use bitly.com, which is a free URL shortening service that also tracks the number of clicks your links receive. This is an easy way to see which of your links users are clicking on and which links are most popular.

**Reference Materials**
Since Pinterest is a photo-sharing website, we need to follow copyright and usage guidelines. Here is a list of resources you may find helpful:

**Copyright and Usage Guidelines Obtaining Copyright Permission from Others**
by Frank Sholedice
http://aces.nmsu.edu/pubs/guidelines/copyright-permissions.html

**MIT Libraries Using Images: Copyright & Fair Use**
http://libguides.mit.edu/usingimages

**The Best Ways to Be Sure You’re Legally Using Online Photos**
by Sara Hawkins
http://lifehacker.com/5992419/the-best-ways-to-be-sure-youre-legally-using-online-photos

**Copyright Fair Use and How it Works for Online Images**
by Sara Hawkins
http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/copyright-fair-use-and-how-it-works-for-online-images/

**Pinterest for Dummies**
by Kelby Carr

**Recommended Pinterest Sites with Repinnable Content**
MyPlate Recipes
http://www.pinterest.com/MyPlateRecipes/

UGA Extension, Bacon County
http://www.pinterest.com/baconcounty/

Cooperative Extension 100 Years
http://www.pinterest.com/exter100years/

Extension Master Gardener
http://www.pinterest.com/emastergardener/
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**Board: 1 Oz. of Prevention**

*Image of a Pinterest board titled “1 Oz. of Prevention.”*

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**Board: How Does Your Garden Grow?**

*Image of a Pinterest board titled “How Does Your Garden Grow?”*

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**Board: Making a Difference**

*Image of a Pinterest board titled “Making a Difference.”*

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**Example of repinning others’ content to our gardening board.**

*Image of a Pinterest pin titled “DONA ANA COUNTY 4-H MEMBERS WORK TO SEW PILLOWCASES FOR CHILDREN FIGHTING CANCER.”*

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**Diabetes Health: What is diabetes?**

For more information follow this link to Circular 569A: Control Your Diabetes for Life. What is Diabetes? aces.nmsu.edu/... (NMSU photo)