Tweet Content
Our tweets fall into four main categories (listed in order of prevalence):
- New or timely publications
- CES/AES events and news
- Retweets
- @ replies to other users
It's important to develop and use an authentic voice in your tweets. You want followers to be able to tell there's a real person behind your Twitter content.
Photos and videos are great content to add to your tweets; keep in mind, though, that photo/video links eat into your 140-character limit.

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

Retweets
Our retweets fall into three main categories:
- Content related to ag or Extension (in NM or U.S.)
- NMSU/CES/AES stories in local media (Sun-News, etc.)
- “Fun” content (e.g., images, facts about NM/ag/crops/etc.)
Retweets diversify our content while engaging with similar or like-minded users.

@ replies
Sometimes we reply directly to other users, for two reasons:
- Answering questions/comments from users: On rare occasions, users tweet us directly with a question/comment. It's important to respond as quickly as possible to show that we are listening and engaged with what users are saying about us. It's also a great opportunity to interact with users.
- “Fun” content: Sometimes we will spot a tweet that provides a good opportunity to interact with users.
Twitter is a real-time service, and tweets are constantly streaming through your timeline. If you follow a lot of users, you may be overwhelmed by the volume of tweets, and it may be
difficult to spot these opportunities for “fun” interactions.

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.

**Hashtags**

Adding a pound sign (#) in front of a word makes it clickable and searchable on Twitter (e.g., #water, #pecans). If you want to use more than one word in a hashtag, the term must be mashed together—no spaces/punctuation (e.g., #CooperativeExtension, #NewMexico).

The following are two good ways to utilize hashtags:

- **Campaigns**: You can create a hashtag that is specific to a messaging campaign (e.g., NM Tourism Department’s #NewMexicoTRUE). Add the hashtag to your tweets and ask others to use it. You can then track the hashtag’s use.

- **Conversation topics**: Hashtags can be used to add your tweets to ongoing conversations or to help users who are interested in a certain topic discover your content. If you have room, add one or two simple, descriptive hashtags to your tweets (e.g., #gardening, #climate, #energy). When users search for a particular hashtag, they will see your tweets along with all other tweets using the hashtag.

Before using a hashtag, it's a good idea to run a search on it to get a sense of what that hashtag's conversation is like. For example, we used #alfalfa in alfalfa-related tweets until we discovered that almost all tweets using #alfalfa were talking about the Little Rascals and not forage crops.

**Twitter Client**

Many people use a separate application to manage their Twitter accounts. We like TweetDeck (https://about.twitter.com/products/tweetdeck). TweetDeck allows you to set up columns for different areas of your Twitter account, such as your timeline, any @ mentions or retweets, direct messages, and hashtag searches. It’s a great tool to help separate important aspects of your Twitter stream and to make your stream of incoming tweets more manageable.

**Tweet Scheduling**

TweetDeck allows you to input the content of a tweet and then schedule when the tweet will be posted. We use this feature to write a week of tweets at one time, and then schedule them to be posted throughout the week. This takes about an hour. This way we are not stopping multiple times a day to write tweets.

We tweet at least twice a day, once around 10:30 am and once around 2:30 pm. We are in the process of gathering analytic data on our followers to better determine their tweeting habits, which will help ensure we tweet at times when users are most active.

Because Twitter is a real-time, streaming service and because users are active during different times of day, your tweets will not be seen by all of your followers all of the time. It’s therefore a good idea to “recycle” content by posting similar (but not identical!) versions of a tweet at different times of day. This helps ensure that more of your followers will see specific content.

**Tracking Link Clicks**

Since tweets are limited to 140 characters (including spaces!), many people use a URL shortening service to shorten links in their tweets. 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 are getting clicks and which links are most popular.
Social Media Tips: Twitter

Tweets

- **NMSU Extension Pubs** @NMExtensionPubs · 23h
  Check out our guide on the basics of aquaponics and learn if it's right for your farm or garden. bit.ly/11d2a8j

- **NMSU Extension Pubs** @NMExtensionPubs · Mar 18
  @NMSU research program looks at alternative uses for cotton byproducts, including... growing shrimp? bit.ly/11C7bTKx | faaquaculture

- **NMSU Extension Pubs** @NMExtensionPubs · Mar 18
  Are you ready to own a horse? Get the facts on costs/responsibilities of owning a horse. bit.ly/Yan1MTbq

- **NMSU Extension Pubs** @NMExtensionPubs · Mar 18
  Upcoming cattle producer conference to focus on feral hogs, cattle health, drought. March 28 in Alamogordo. bit.ly/Yk9kbojv

- **NMSU Extension Pubs** @NMExtensionPubs · Mar 17
  New Mexico 4-H members get a look at state government in action during the recent legislative session. bit.ly/NmLJKo

Fun interactions

- **Steve Ramirez** @SteveRamirez6 · Feb 8
  Just curious. What's your favorite comfort food on a cold day like this in Las Cruces? Soup, grilled cheese, oh, enchiladas? What?

- **NMSU Extension Pubs** @NMExtensionPubs
  @SteveRamirez6 Posole!

  11:36 AM · 6 Feb 2014

- **Steve Ramirez** @SteveRamirez6 · Feb 8
  MMMM! Red or green - or does it even matter?!

- **NMSU Extension Pubs** @NMExtensionPubs · Feb 8
  @SteveRamirez6 Any posole is good posole!

Retweets

- **NMSU Extension Pubs** @NMExtensionPubs
  Wow! RT @UWAgGuy: What a great shot by Donna Cuny, one of our educators in Natrona County. pic.twitter.com/NEIewcxxZK

FAQs and help topics to get you started using Twitter at: support.twitter.com