Social Media Marketing for Your Farm Business

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Why Social Media?
Your customers are there.

- 69 percent of U.S. adults had a social media profile in 2019.
- 74 percent of adult U.S. Facebook users and 63 percent of Instagram users visit these sites daily (and many multiple times per day).
- 3.48 billion people (close to half the world’s population) use some type of social media.
Social media is an ideal tool for farms.
Farming is visual.
Farming offers authentic stories.
People care about their food.

- Many are craving a connection to food and nature.
- People from all corners of the world are sharing photos of what they eat.
- 373.8M posts on Instagram for #food and 2.4M posts for #localfood to date.

"My grandfather used to say that once in your life you need a doctor, a lawyer, a policeman and a preacher but every day, three times a day, you need a farmer."

Brenda Schoepp – Farmer
The price is right...

- You don’t have to pay money to gain followers or make connections.
- However, remember to factor in the time it takes to build and maintain a social media presence.

* sort of
Getting Started
Which platforms should I use?

- **Who are your customers?** What social media platforms do they use?
- **How much time and effort** can you put in? It’s better to use 1-2 platforms than overextend yourself. Focus on platforms you can do well.
- **Do you (or does someone on your team) have photography, video, or recording skills?**
Facebook & Instagram

- **Largest number of users** can be found on these two platforms.
- **Most diverse audience**; Instagram skews younger.
- **Connect with customers** via comments, messages, links, and tags.
- Instagram is a bit better for **visual storytelling**; easier to use on a mobile device.
- Facebook is better at **promoting events and sharing links**.
- Easy to use both platforms simultaneously.
Other Platforms

**Twitter:** Useful for businesses that have news every day, throughout the day (such as a food truck). Used by journalists.

**YouTube:** Useful for sharing instructional video.

**Pinterest:** Great if you provide how-to, infographic, or particularly beautiful and inspiring content.

**SoundCloud:** Share and create community around podcasts.

**TikTok:** Growing platform for lipsynching videos, viral content.
Set up a business account.

- **Why?**
  - Access analytics and reports about your audience ("insights").
  - Create a professional home for your farm (more transparency).
  - Allows for multiple administrators or ability to assign "roles."
  - Business Manager offers more tools for advertising.

- **How?**
  - On Facebook, you must first have a personal account to serve as administrator for a separate business account.
  - On Instagram, you can have a separate business account or convert a personal account.
It can be tempting to use Facebook as a web home, but social media works best in conjunction with a website that can serve as a professional hub. This improves your search ranking and helps customers find you.
Creating Content
What are your goals?

- Are you **in it for “likes”** or do you just want information out there?
- Do you want to **drive traffic** to your website?
- Are you trying to **grow your customer base** by reaching new followers, or are you more focused on making your **current buyers** feel important/reminding them to shop with you?
- **What is your tone?** Are you playful, serious, dramatic? (A mix is okay!) Audiences are generally drawn to positivity, but being honest about setbacks or challenges can resonate and build community.
Think about a post’s intent.

- Call to action
- Storytelling
- Connection/Building Community
- Education/Inspiration
- Entertainment

The 80-20 Rule: 80 percent of posts should educate or entertain, and only 20 percent should promote/sell (that 20 percent is usually your call to action posts—but not always).
Call to Action

- Sign up for our CSA
- Visit us at market
- Buy tickets to our farm dinner
- U-pick at our farm
- Sign up for our workshop
- Vote for our new farm dog’s name
creasmanfarms • Following
Asheville City Market

creasmanfarms Dad called and said he wants PEACH cobbler for FathersDay! We have the recipe + fresh peaches, so what are you waiting for?! HERE TIL NOON!

#CreasmanFarms #FarmLife #SummerisBeginning #SummerisUnofficiallyHere #FarmEats #FarmToTable #FieldToFork #FarmToFork #Local #LocallyGrown #AppalachianGrown #FarmFresh #NothingFresher #NothingFiner #GotToBeNC #FreshPicked #Peaches #FreshPeaches #AshevilleCityMarket #BrevardFarmersMarket #TransylvaniaCoFarmersMarket #WeAreBrevard #AvL #HvL #BvD #Foodie #LocalFoodie #Locavore

❤️ 0 0 0

Liked by radfarmersmarket and 49 others

JUNE 15, 2019

Add a comment...
Hurricane Flo called! She said "Ya'll this might be the last week for peaches! Better get you some cause they might not be here next week!"
Storytelling

- Share your farm story or personal anecdotes (it’s up to you how personal).
- Introduce members of your farm team.
- Share stories of resilience or good humor in the face of challenges.
- Talk about the land or capture the beauty of the farm in different seasons.
- Go behind the scenes with daily chores. It’s okay to show the less-beautiful sides of farming.
- What are you doing in the off season?
Last May we were drowning... this May we are scorching... Farmers don’t have time to complain, they adapt! Now watering all day, every day it’s seems...
#PleaseBeNiceMotherNature
#OneExtremeToAnother #FarmLife
#CreasmanFarms #LocallyGrown #AppalachianGrown
Our orchard looks like a cotton field and we LOVE it! We’re BLOOMIN’ for this year’s apple crop!

#CreasmanFarms #Spring #FarmLife #OhWhatABeautifulLife #BEautiful #Bzzz #AppalachianGrown #828isGreat #HvLNews #HipHendo #avlNews #AppleBlossom

APRIL 11, 2019
Connection/Building Community

- Call out restaurants/businesses that buy your products and support your farm to make them feel valued. Tag their social media.
- Make your CSA members, farmers market regulars, etc., feel part of your farm.
- Connect with a network of farmers in the region (or nationally/internationally).
creasmanfarms: Another fresh delivery of apples to @vortexdoughnuts! Their apple fritter doughnuts are so good and the folks there are even sweeter! 🍎❝ Stop by and grab a fritter, and a cup of coffee and thank them for supporting so many local farms and businesses!
#CreasmanFarms #VortexDoughnuts #LocalsSupportingLocals #BestDoughnutEver #BestFritterEver #AppleFritter #AvLEats #FarmToDoughnut #AppreciationPost

40w

first_maven: Share the local! 

40w Reply

Liked by radfarmersmarket and 40 others
MAY 9, 2019

Add a comment...
creasmanfarms • Following
River Arts District farmers Market

creasmanfarms • Following
River Arts District farmers Market

Thanks folks for making the trek to @radfarmersmarket this afternoon! It was a muddy one but a good one! If you missed Market today, catch us Saturday!

70w
Education/Inspiration

- Highlight a specific crop or farm product. What makes it unique? Why do you grow it? How do you grow it? What can it be used for?
- Share a recipe or preservation tips.
- Talk about your farming practices and why you choose to grow in this way.
creasmanfarms • Following

creasmanfarms Do you know about our #York apples? They are another one of our 40+ varieties that we grow! Known for their oblong oval shape, they have a mostly tart little sweet flavor and are great for baking or eating fresh. This variety is over 180 years old! 🍎

#Heirloom #HeirloomApples #YorkApples #CreasmanFarms #Local #LocallyGrown #AppalachianGrown #FarmFresh #FreshPicked #GotToBeNCApples #AppleSeason #AppleFarm

20w

Like·Share·Save

Liked by monicholie and 38 others

September 30, 2019

Add a comment...
Entertainment

- Jokes, puns, silly stories—this kind of content can amuse and engage your audience!
- Did a vegetable grow to resemble a person?
- Did you dress up the farm dog in costume?
- Is someone on the farm a ham (maybe even your kids)?
creasmanfarms Just a couple of Dog-O-Lanterns Howlin’ around 🎃💀❤️.
#HappyHOWloween #BestPals
#FarmDogs #LifeOfAFarmDog
#PuppyPumkpins #LittleBelle #BigTink
#TinkErBelle #LifeOfTinkErBelle
#LifeOfBelleB

buckim ❤️
15w
15w  Reply

Liked by jenathan and 43 others
OCTOBER 31, 2019
Stop scrollers in their tracks:
Tips for memorable posts

● Choose interesting subject matter.
● Make photography a priority. Facebook posts with photos get 87% more engagement than those without photos.
● Write engaging captions.
● Be creative.
Pay attention to lighting.

- Adjust lighting on phone/camera
- Time of day matters—morning or evening light is best
- Avoid glare or washout from sun
- Try to get your subject to glow
Frame & focus: multiple shots
Edit photos if needed.
Plan ahead: Stage your photos

- Photograph interesting times on the farm: baby animals, big harvest days, peak blooms...
- Arrange products (such as a CSA share) against interesting backdrops (think about texture or contrasting colors).
- Hire a professional photographer (see if you can barter/trade). Clean up the farm.
In the moment: Be ready

- Keep your phone with you while harvesting or doing farm chores so you can easily snap a photo if the inspiration strikes. Phones can take great photos for social media!
- Even if one person is handling social media, have everyone on the farm contribute photos, giving a more well-rounded view of the farm operation.
Write an engaging caption.
Be creative.
Planning & Strategy
What’s working?

- Pay attention to reactions to different types of posts and use this to influence future post content, tone, and timing.
- What do other farms or businesses do on social media that you like?
- Instagram and Facebook business accounts give you valuable insights about your audience demographics and behavior.
This post is doing better than 85% of your recent posts. Promote it to reach a wider audience. View Insights.
When to post? How often?

- **Decide on a schedule** that works for you (daily, twice a week, multiple times a day) and be consistent.
- You may post less in the off season, but don’t stop posting completely. **Remind your customers** to look forward to seeing you again.
- Generally, the **best times to post** on social media are lunchtime and in the late afternoon (3 to 5 p.m.). There’s less activity in the evening and on weekends. Use insights to see when your audience is online.
Plan ahead.

- **Create a calendar.** This can be in your head, on paper, digital, etc.
- **Third-party apps**, such as HootSuite, let you to manage all of your social media. The free versions generally don’t offer as many features as paid versions. These can be useful, but are not necessary.
Schedule posts.

Scheduling is built into Facebook.

Scheduling in Instagram requires a separate app, such as HootSuite—but a hack is to save posts as drafts to quickly post them at a later time.
Building Your Audience
What the heck is a #hashtag?

- **A hashtag is like a filing system.** Store info about events, specials, and trending news.
- **Hashtags are searchable** and help new followers find you. The more you use, the more you will show up on search feeds.
- **Use the right hashtags.** Don’t make one up unless you plan to use it consistently. Research what is used by your target audiences.
- **Keep a list.** Make it easy to paste into your posts.

creasmanfarms Big apples. Little apples. Green apples. Red apples. All the apples will be at @radfarmersmarket TODAY from 3 to 6 at @plebavil See you soon, friends!

- #CreasmanFarms #GotToBeNCApples #FarmFresh #LocallyGrown #Tasty #AppalachianGrown #RADdistrict #RiverArtsDistrict #ExploreAsheville #FarmersMarket

creasmanfarms Sunday funday on the farm... pruned our youngest peach trees (all other pruning finished and brush chopped!), packed apples and got our first ever weather station installed and running! .

- #CreasmanFarms #FarmLife #WeatherStation #FarmersKnowWeather #SundayFunday
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Other Instagram Tools

- **Instagram Stories** are visible to people who don’t follow you. Often used for reposting from other accounts. Save featured stories on your main page.

- **Instagram Takeovers**, where someone else temporarily posts from your account, can be a great cross-promotion and introduction to new followers.
Understanding Algorithms

Facebook prioritizes posts by close friends, family, and groups in users’ news feeds (as opposed to posts from businesses and media). This makes it challenging to reach your audience and new customers.

- **Engage:** It’s not just about likes. Facebook rewards posts with “meaningful interaction.” Start conversations, always reply to comments, “love” comments. Avoid bait (“like if you love tomatoes”).

- **Video:** High-quality video is prioritized. If you have this skill, use it!

- **Post consistently:** Pages that post regularly & often are ranked higher.

- **Facebook Groups**

- **Paid advertising**
Facebook Groups

- You can join and **post to a group** as a business account.
- Engaging with groups can be a good way to **reach new audiences**.
- **Be careful walking the line between spam and promotion.** Understand a group’s purpose and values.
- It can take a lot of **time and effort** to find the right groups and consistently participate in them.
Paid Advertising

- **Boost existing posts** that are performing well or **create new ads** in Facebook’s Ad Center. Instagram promotions are managed here as well.
- **Set a budget**, as little as $1 per day.
- **Define your audience** based on demographics and interests.
- **Create a lookalike audience** by using current followers or a list of customer contacts (must use Business Manager).
Get Inspired!
Follow other farms.

- Working Hands Farm in Washington @workinghandsfarm
- Even Pull Farm in Oregon @evenpullfarm
- 3 Porch Farm in Georgia @3porchfarm
- Five Marys Farm in California @fivemarysfarms
- Culinary Gardener @theculinarygardener
- Olivette Farm @olivettefarmer
- Ten Mile Farm @tenmilefarm
- Colfax Creek Farm @colfaxcreekfarm
Do your homework.

1. Think of 5 tasks, chores, or crops that are coming up on the farm in March and jot down post ideas.
2. Plan a post in each of the categories.
3. Start taking photos and practicing!
Questions?