

# – ACDC News –

June 2020

## Timely reminder for agricultural journalists

On May 3, members of the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists got a timely reminder about the work of agricultural journalists. IFAJ President Owen Roberts used the United Nations celebration of World Press Freedom Day to highlight an example of their special role in keeping people informed and safe.

“The world will change hugely in the next 365 days as we grapple with the pandemic,” he emphasized. “But two things won’t change: these are farmers’ needs to feed the world, and journalists’ role in helping them do so.”

You can read the [reminder](#) on the IFAJ website.

## How the world feels these days about the environment

We recently added to the ACDC collection a global snapshot of how satisfied people are with their efforts to preserve the environment and the quality of their air and water. Results show wide-ranging results of this 2019 World Gallup Poll among adults in 145 countries and areas.

You can read the [findings](#) on the Gallup Blog. They were released April 22, on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Earth Day.

## “Polarized communities and local journalism”

During this U.S. election year, rural journalists and communicators may find special interest in a case study reported during 2018 in the journal *Journalism*. Researcher Andrea Wenzel used focus groups, story diaries, and local interviews to analyze how increasingly partisan attitudes and messages affect relationships and media in “a complexly purple” region of Kentucky.

Findings highlighted how partisan distrust weakened links among actors in local storytelling networks. Distrust involved media and extended to fellow residents and community groups associated with “other” political perspectives. Findings offered an example of how use of communication infrastructure theory can strengthen trust through collaborative engagement on local issues.

You can read the journal article, “[Red state, purple town: polarized communities and local journalism in rural and small-town Kentucky](#).” at the Journal *Journalism*.

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## Where to begin communicating about weight (and obesity)

Begin with words? Begin with silhouettes?

Findings of recent research among adults in Australia suggest the latter. “Silhouettes may act as an effective visual cue in initiating weight related discussions,” concluded the authors of a 2019 article in *BMC Public Health*. Participants in an online survey were asked to categorize their own body size using medically accepted words and previously published silhouettes.

- A majority of respondents were able to self-perceive their weight status accurately using silhouettes
- Females were significantly more likely than males to be accurate in their self-perception, using both medicalized words and silhouettes
- Weight status misperception was more likely to exist among those in the underweight BMI or obese BMI categories than in the healthy weight or overweight categories
- Respondents in the obese BMI category were significantly more likely to accurately self-perceive their weight status through silhouettes than medicalized words.

You can read the journal article, “[Is social exposure to obesity associated with weight status misperception?](#)” at *BMC Public Health*.

## Impact today of radio broadcasts and audio CDs on smallholder farmers in Uganda

We have added to the ACDC collection a 2019 research report that identified audio media as vital sources of information for resource-poor farmers in western Uganda. Researchers Mark Kaahwa and Chang Zhu involved 1,000 smallholder banana farmers in a study featuring a baseline survey, an intervention, and an end-line survey.

Results revealed a statistically significant association between radio broadcasts/audio CDs and knowledge gain regarding most banana farming practices by farmers. Farmers’ characteristics such as age, gender, and level of education did not influence the uptake of knowledge.

You can read the research report, “[The effectiveness of audio media in enhancing farmers’ knowledge](#),” at the International Journal of Recent Contributions from Engineering, Science and IT .

## Issue 20-06

### **Sample dilemmas help teach ethical decision making in an agricultural sales course**

A 2020 article in the journal *Applied Economics Teaching Resources* reported on use of a hypothetical case study to help university students identify and address ethical dilemmas. The title is: "The ethical choice: confronting ethical dilemmas with industry participants in a curriculum."

Researcher Cheryl Wachenheim of North Dakota State University introduced students to dilemmas such as using "little white lies" to customers and others as part of the sales process. The article included six questions the teacher can use to guide use of the case.

You can read the article, "[The Ethical Choice: Confronting Ethical Dilemmas with Industry Participants in a Curriculum](#)," at *Applied Economics Teaching Resources*.

### **Communicator events approaching**

Uncertainties of the COVID-19 health issue continue to prompt flexible event planning, as you know. Here are plans of which we are aware, with website addresses you can use to track updates.

#### **June 23-25, 2020 (postponed until 2021; other opportunities planned for 2020)**

Annual conference of the Agricultural Relations Council (ARC).

Information: <https://agrelationscouncil.org/conference-registration>

#### **June 24-25, 2020 (virtual conference being offered)**

"Be inspired Chicago!" Annual conference of the Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Life and Human Sciences (ACE).

Information: <https://www.aceweb.org/>

#### **June 24-28, 2020 (cancelled for 2020)**

Conference of the International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors at the University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada.

Information: <https://www.iswne.org>

#### **June 24-29, 2020 (cancelled for 2020)**

"Farming today for the society of the future." Annual Congress of the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ) in Bredsten, Denmark.

Information: <https://ifaj.org/events/annual-congress>

#### **August 11-13, 2020 (on-site conference rescheduled from April 15-17 with virtual option)**

"Charting the course." Conference of the National Agri-Marketing Association (NAMA) in Kansas City, Missouri.

Information: <https://www.nama.org/agri-marketing-conference.html>

## Issue 20-06

### **September 14-16, 2020 (on-site conference rescheduled from June 1-3)**

“Spice up your creativity.” Annual CCA Institute of the Cooperative Communicators Association in Buffalo, New York.

Information: <https://www.communicators.coop>

### **November 14-18, 2020 (on-site conference rescheduled from July 25-29)**

“Ag Media Summit 2020.” AMS is an industry-wide gathering of agricultural media and communications professionals in Kansas City, Missouri. It joins together AAEA–The Agricultural Communicators Network, Livestock Publications Council, and Connectiv Ag Media Council.

Information: <https://agmediasummit.com>

## **A few words of caution about advancing technologies**

We close this issue of ACDC News with an observation by Charles Chaput in *The devil and politics*:

“Fools with tools are still fools, and the more powerful the tools, the more dangerous the fools.”

## **Best regards and wishes during this challenging time**

ACDC is a resource for you, so please feel free to invite our help as you search for information. Don't forget to follow us on Twitter [@ACDCUIUC](https://twitter.com/ACDCUIUC). And please suggest (or send) agricultural communications documents we might add to this unique and valuable international collection. We welcome them in hard copy (sent to Ag Comm Documentation Center, Room 510, 1101 S. Goodwin Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801) - or in electronic format sent to [acdc@library.illinois.edu](mailto:acdc@library.illinois.edu)