

ACDC NEWS

November 2021

The lost art of being a food merchant

We have added to the ACDC collection a recent article about creativity and training needs in the produce departments of food stores. Veteran food executive Mike O'Brien emphasized the need to deliver a positive, unique, and memorable experience for shoppers.

"It comes down to trust, empowerment and education," he said. "Many supermarkets find that letting their people get creative is a key part of the puzzle, so nurturing a company culture that supports a beyond-the-basics approach is essential. ... It is somewhat of a lost art in today's fast paced world of data, low price and lack of labor." Automating and executing by corporate dictum "won't get you what you really want..."

You can read his suggestions [here](#) in this *Produce Market Guide* article.

Hold government, other players accountable with investigative agricultural reporting

Journalists in the agriculture sector should do all they can to hold regulators, policy executives and private-sector players accountable for transparency, efficiency and development of the sector. So advised Ini Ekot while speaking to agricultural reporters and editors on "Investigating the Agricultural Sector" at a three-day intensive training in Abuja, Nigeria. The Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism organized this program.

Participants also learned of existing constitutional empowerment for journalists to hold leaders accountable in African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Gambia.

You can read this 2019 article in *Guardian Nigeria* [here](#).

Source: Agricultural Communications Documentation Center, University Library, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL, 61801 • **Phone** :217-300-0029 • **Email:** acdc@library.illinois.edu • **Website:** <https://www.library.illinois.edu/funkaces/acdc/> • **Twitter:** @ACDCUIUC

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News deserts and ghost newspapers: Will local news survive?

“This report is the fourth on the state of local news produced by the Hussman School of Journalism and Media at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. It measures what has been lost, while also assessing what must be done if we are to nurture and revive a vibrant news landscape in the third decade of the 21st century.” Penelope Muse Abernathy, Knight Chair in Journalism and Digital Media Economics, authored the 121-page research report (2020).

You can read the report [here](#).

Simplistic journalism and rural America as a scapegoat

“There are ways for the industry to support better and more incisive reporting on rural communities.” So reported Sarah Jones, a staff writer for *New York Magazine*, in a 2019 article we have added from *Dissent Magazine*. Decrying fabricated, stereotyped reporting about rural people and matters, she suggested that journalists “take steps to ensure that rural communities are empowered to tell their own stories.”

You can read the article by open access [here](#).

Potentials and limitations of citizen journalism initiatives

Researchers Kalyani Chadha and Linda Steiner explored this timely topic through a case study involving rural and tribal communities in central India. The citizen journalism enterprise, CGNet Swara, was initiated to act as a bridge between those communities and professional news outlets. Findings revealed “failure to ‘bridge’ the citizen-professional divide and to position the experiment in terms of the larger public sphere” as a force for democracy.

You can read the article in *Journalism Studies* by open access from the publisher [here](#).

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Communicator events approaching

Uncertainties of the COVID-19 health issue continue to prompt flexible event planning. Here are plans of which we are aware, with contact information you can use for details.

November 17-19, 2021

“Harvesting News for Rural America,” Convention of the National Association of Farm Broadcasting (NAFB) in Kansas City, Missouri.

Information: <https://nafb.com>

February 13-14, 2022

National Agricultural Communications Symposium in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists in New Orleans, Louisiana.

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

June 12-14, 2022

Annual Conference of the Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Life and Human Sciences (ACE) in Kansas City, Missouri.

Information: <https://aceweb.org>

Pondering the future of agricultural journalism

We close this issue of *ACDC News* with an observation we enjoyed and appreciated from Betsy Freese when she was executive editor at Meredith Corporation in Des Moines, Iowa:

“I would like to see a robot try to do what I do.”

Offering information and best regards

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 valued international collection. We welcome them in hard copy (sent to Ag Comm Documentation Center, Room 510, 1101 S. Goodwin Avenue, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61801) - or in electronic format sent to acdc@library.illinois.edu