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Water scientists: trusted, but their advice may not be followed

A note of caution appeared in an article about the priorities people assign to various sources of information about water issues. Researcher Sadie Hundemer examined factors that affect residents' perceived willingness to change their water beliefs based on information provided by scientists as well as by less-scientific institutions, such as media and interest groups. Her study involved 806 Florida and Georgia (USA) residents.

Results prompted her to suggest, "...while the words of scientists influence the public's water beliefs, other information sources are also influential and can reduce the impact of scientists' messages."

You can read "[Prioritization of scientific sources of water information](#)" in this 2024 *Journal of Applied Communications* article by open access.

Congratulations to the new director, Institute for Rural Journalism

We are pleased to extend congratulations to Benjy Hamm as new director of the Institute of Rural Journalism and Community Issues, based at the University of Kentucky. He assumed that important responsibility in August, 2023.

Writing in *The Rural Blog*, he emphasized how "journalists and trusted news organizations are more important now than ever."

You can read "[Moving forward: New director's thoughts...](#)" by open access.

Are consumers ready to eat insect-fed poultry?

Results of recent research among Italian consumers revealed positive attitudes toward buying meat and eggs from insect-fed (IF) poultry.

“Moreover, we find that food neophobia and entomophobia negatively affect Italian consumers’ attitude towards those products, while the trust in the role of public authorities in securing food safety positively impacts on it. Also, consumers’ propensity towards sustainable food increases the likelihood of buying IF animal products.”

You can read “[Back to the future: Are consumers ready...](#)” in *Future Foods* by open access.

“...it is high time for the diffusion of sustainable agricultural practices...”

So concluded researchers in a 2024 issue of the *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*. The team had examined use of pesticides in the Erode District, among the most predominant paddy rice regions of western Tamil Nadu, India. Probability sampling involved the communication network of farmers in 10 villages.

Among the findings and suggestions:

- “...surveyed farmers used excessive pesticides every day”
- The excess pesticide application could be largely attributed to lack of awareness about the ill effects of pesticides
- Local input dealers agricultural officers, and spray men were the significant informants regarding pesticide-related information
- Those sources should be included in the extension setup to promote and motivate farmers to use pesticides sustainably

You can read “[Understanding the communication network of farmers...](#)” by open access.

“I talk to producers like I’m a producer!”

We are adding to the ACDC collection an article in *Advancements in Agricultural Development* about how extension professionals view climate change and frame their communications about it with producers. Researchers K. R. Wilson and S. C. Mukembo surveyed 112 Missouri extension professionals online.

They concluded:

- Extension professionals need participatory training on climate change
- They also need to build climate literacy while teaching climate scientists best practices for communicating these issues to the public

You can read “[I talk to producers like I’m a producer](#)” by open access.

Communicator events approaching

Here are event plans you may find helpful, with contact information you can use for details. We welcome suggestions or revisions for this calendar

April 3-7, 2024. Annual conference, Society of Environmental Journalists, Philadelphia, PA. Information: <https://sej.org/initiatives/sej2024-annual-conference-philadelphia-pennsylvania-april-3-7>

April 22-25, 2024. Conference of the Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education (AIAEE) at the University of Florida, Gainesville. Information: <https://www.aiaee.org/2024-Conference>

April 24-26, 2024. “Bright Horizons,” conference of the National Agri-Marketing Association (NAMA) in Kansas City, Missouri. Information: https://www.nama.org/bright_horizons.html

April 29-May 1, 2024. Annual meeting of the Turf and Ornamental Communicators Association (TOCA) in Las Vegas, Nevada. Information: <https://www.toca.org/toca-events>

May 16-18, 2024. “Return to horse country,” conference of American Horse Publications (AHP) in Lexington, Kentucky. Information: <https://www.americanhorsepubs.org/ahp-annual-conference/>

Learning to communicate

We close this February issue of *ACDC News* with a Norwegian proverb about the pace of learning to interact with others:

“A child learns to speak quicker than he learns to keep silent”

ACDC is a deep and open resource for you, so please feel free to invite our help as you search for information, local to global. You are welcome to follow us on Twitter [@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, 510 ACES Library, 1101 S. Goodwin Avenue, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61801) – or in electronic format sent to acdc@library.illinois.edu