

Public Relations Director

If you don't toot your own horn, who will notice your accomplishments? The answer is probably no one.

That is why the Public Relations Director in a Farmers Union division is so important. There is a lot of competition for the attention of the editor of your local newspaper and the producers of your local radio and television stations. If you want them to pay attention to what Farmers Union is doing, you need to give them a little help. Send them news releases regularly (samples of possible news releases are included in this manual) and get to know them on a personal basis. If you know of any breaking rural or agriculture news, tip them off so they feel that you are a good source of information for their news organization.

The Public Relations Director is also responsible for publicizing regular and special activities of the Farmers Union division and persuading both members and non-members in attending meetings and joining Farmers Union. Additionally, they should build good will for Farmers Union in the local community.

The public relations director is responsible for:

- Introducing themselves to local reporters, radio broadcasters, and TV producers
- Promptly delivering news releases announcing meetings, events, or activities, with their name, telephone number, and email address.
- Personally inviting members of the media to Farmers Union events well in advance.
- Keeping a digital file of published stories on the Farmers Union, as well as copies of news releases.
- Occasionally pitching stories about Farmers Union events or advocacy to local publications.
- Advertising events on social media and in newsletters

Helpful Hints for the Publicity Director

- Maintain good personal relations with your local newspaper editors and radio and tv producers. If your news isn't always used, don't get angry. Try again the next time. Stress the importance of your event to your community and invite the editor or producer to attend a meeting.
- If you have a good rural correspondent who writes the news for the local newspaper, make sure you keep them informed about Farmers Union events. If the area newspaper does not have a correspondent in your community, consider offering to do it (but only if you want to write a regular column and cover non-Farmers Union activities as well).
- Encourage your members to help put up posters and flyers about upcoming events.
- Local news is names of people and what they do. Make sure your stories contain the names of people involved and name the town or community where they live. It makes your Farmers

Union news interesting to more people and may help convince the editor that the Farmers Union news release is news and not just propaganda.

- Make sure your fellow Farmers Union members have pins for their lapels, bumper stickers for their cars, and other materials that keep the Farmers Union visually present in your community. The Membership Director should help with this activity.
- Watch for advertisements of local Farmers Union Insurance agents in area papers. These papers in particular should be targeted for Farmers Union stories and/or activity reports.
- Keep a few Farmers Union membership forms and a couple of ballpoint pens in your car and farm trucks. You never know when these may come in handy and make the difference between signing up a new member or losing that opportunity.