



IN-THE-FIELD VIDEOS

TIPS AND TRICKS TO FILM YOURSELF

FOR AG OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

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Social media and videos are one of many ways farmers gather information, so they are an important tool to use when trying to promote conservation agricultural practices^(1,2,3,4).

This “selfie-style” video positions the recorder as an expert as they share their experiences and knowledge. It also facilitates a connection to the audience. This is especially important when farmers choose to create

videos of themselves where they share their story, as farmers benefit from peer-to-peer learning⁽⁵⁾.

This sheet will help you consider the various elements to create a good-quality video; planning, filming, capturing audio, and creating b-roll.

PLAN TO SUCCEED

CONSIDER THE PURPOSE OF THE VIDEO

A good video starts by determining a specific reason for creating it. This will guide all the other choices you make throughout the video project.

- Example #1: To educate a farmer about how they could do a practice.
- Example #2: To do a field update on a practice you’ve already shared.
- Example #3: To show a non-farmer some aspect of farming.

BRAINSTORM CONTENT TO INCLUDE

Use the purpose you defined as a guide to brainstorm content you should include.

- What does your audience need to know?
- What of that do you think they know, what do you think they probably don’t know?
- What terms may be unfamiliar to them?
- What equipment may they need to be shown?
- Etc.

OUTLINE TALKING POINTS

Outline a few points you want to touch on, or write a script.

**Tip* Consider using a teleprompting app.*

- *These apps allow you to write a script or talking points, and display the words across your phone screen for you to read. The words will be visible to you, but they won’t appear in your video. These are a great way to remember your talking points, and keep your video concise.*

- *Teleprompter for Video (<https://scripted.video/>)*
- *Free and works on Android and iOS.*

PLAN THE LENGTH OF YOUR VIDEO

This “selfie” style of video is meant to be very short. Time passes very quickly while filming. Therefore, you must be concise.

Target Length of Videos for Media Platforms:

- Facebook Reels = 30-90 seconds
- YouTube Shorts = <60 seconds

FILMING YOURSELF

PREPARE THE CAMERA

Use the front-facing camera lens.

- This is the camera that's on the same side as your phone screen.

Clean your camera lens.

- Use a clean, soft rag to gently wipe the lens off. The cameras on our phones almost always have fingerprints on them unless we intentionally clean them off.

Hold the camera vertically (up and down)

- This selfie-style video displays vertically when it's played across social media platforms. So, to maximize "screen real estate" film vertically.

CHECK PHONE SETTINGS

Most cell phone cameras' default video settings have decent filming quality.

- Additionally, we're going for connection and "realism" with our audience with this style of video, so production quality doesn't have to be top-notch.
- If you have the option, record in 1080 p (full resolution), and 30 frames/second. If you can't do this, just go with your default video settings.

**Tip* Turn on your "Do Not Disturb" feature, or "Airplane" mode so your filming isn't interrupted if you receive a call or text.*

SELECT THE LIGHTING

Stand with sunlight to your side, or somewhat in front of you. Don't stand with the sunlight to your back as that'll cause you to be very shadowed in the video.

- Don't squint into the camera though, so it's a matter of finding a sweet spot.

**Tip* Use shade to your advantage. Stand in the shade of a tractor, field edge, etc. to help you balance the light.*

FILM SMOOTHLY

Hold the camera and yourself as still as possible. If you do have to move, promote smooth video footage by moving slowly.

**Tip* Bend your knees and elbows and try to "glide" across the ground to help you hold the camera more still while moving.*

HOLD THE CAMERA AT ARM'S LENGTH

Hold the camera as far from your face as is comfortable.

For most flattering angles, keep the camera even with your face or slightly above you (do not film with the camera below your face).

**Tip* Prop your phone up on something, or use a phone stand. This saves your arm, and helps keep the video smooth.*

REMAIN AWARE OF THE BACKGROUND

Keep an eye on what's behind you and watch for distractions.

- For example, avoid spots of bright distracting colors, or things you don't want your audience to focus on, such as a neighbor's field with bare ground between the rows when you're trying to feature interseeding.

**Tip* Feature the item or "thing" you talk about by placing it behind you in the shot. This is best done if you stand slightly to the side of the frame, then place that item over your shoulder in the shot.*

FILMING YOURSELF (CONTINUED)

CAPTURE QUALITY AUDIO

Speak clearly and calmly.

Don't allow wind to blow across your phone's microphone (which is often located on the front/screen-side of your phone).

**Tip* Position yourself so the wind is blowing from behind the phone, or use objects (such as standing behind a building) to block the wind.*

Stay alert for noises that may interfere.

- For example, a truck or farm equipment passing by, corn leaves rustling, a plane overhead, birds chirping, etc. Simply stop talking and wait for that distraction to pass, then resume talking. If that's not possible, move farther from that noise and face your microphone away from the sound.

FILMING B-ROLL

WHAT IS B-ROLL?

B-Roll is secondary footage that's used alongside the main footage of a video. It provides context, enhances the story, and creates visual interest.

DO I NEED B-ROLL?

Not necessarily.

- If you were able to show elements of what you were talking about in your video, you probably don't need extra footage.
- Or, if you were simply doing a talking update, you also probably don't need b-roll.
 - However, if you are trying to demonstrate something, or reference a topic viewers are likely unfamiliar with, it's a good idea to use video to SHOW rather than TELL your audience what you're talking about.

WHAT TO FILM?

Refer back to the purpose you outlined for your video. What does your audience need to know, or see, to understand your message?

- With farms, a lot of times B-roll includes showing a piece of farm equipment, a crop, or a practice that is being talked about. But this could be anything you talked about in your video or feel is important for the viewers to see.

HOW MUCH TO FILM?

Capture about 15-30 seconds of B-roll footage for each "item" you want to feature.

QUESTIONS?



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