

Writing the basic meeting-announcement news release

Guidelines on formatting news releases

- When it comes to creating “paragraphs” in your news releases, forget what you learned in high school English. Long paragraphs are harder to read, so try to keep them to one, two, or three short sentences.
- The first time you mention your organization, write out University of California Cooperative Extension followed by (UCCE). Upon subsequent references, write UCCE.
- The first time you mention the Division, write out the UC Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources followed by (ANR). Upon subsequent references, write ANR.
- Double space
- Use only one side of the paper. If your release goes to two pages, do not staple them together.
- If you go to a second page, write “MORE” at the middle of the bottom of the first page.
- At the top of the second page, write: 2-2-2-2 and a “story slug,” which is a one- or two-word reference term for this release. (For example, in the top left hand corner of your release’s second page, it might say “2-2-2-2 GRAPE MEETING.”)

Gather the information

- Name of meeting
- Date, begin time, and ending time
- Foreign language translation
- Location of meeting – name of facility and street address
- Primary audience
- Registration fee, deadlines, address, telephone, fax, email, and Web
- Checks payable to (usually UC Regents)
- Overnight accommodations – Hotel, cost, reservation number
- Professional credit
- Newsworthy topics
- Agenda, speaker names and titles
- Program sponsors
- Contact information

Getting started

Fire up your word processing software program and dive in. On the following page is a sample news release. On the subsequent pages, a step-by-step guide for writing each paragraph of the basic meeting announcement release walks you through the process.



NEWS

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

January 10, 2020

CONTACT:
Morse Nunes
(559) 234-5940
mnnunes@ucdavis.edu

Vineyard pest management focus of UC field day Aug. 25

University of California Cooperative Extension viticulture advisors will outline vineyard pest management practices at a field day from 9 to 12 noon Aug. 25 at the Butterfly Hill Winery, 307 Dry Creek Road in Mariposa.

“Scientists will review precise insect monitoring techniques that can save growers thousands of dollars in unnecessary pesticide applications,” said Bob Smith, UCCE viticulture farm advisor for Madera County.

Topics to be covered include:

- Review of grape variety trials at the Kearney Ag Center by Mark Smith, UCCE farm advisor in Kings County
- Raisin marketing outlook by Mario Gonzalez, UC Cooperative Extension farm advisor in Stanislaus County
- A review of viticulture research by Bernadine Jones, horticulture specialist at UC Davis
- A review of DOV grape cultivars by Dave Barker, president of Ferndale Farm and Nursery in Porterville

The meeting is intended for grape farmers, pest control advisors, and agriculture students. Three hours of continuing education credit for pesticide applicators have been applied for.

To register, send a check for \$10 per person payable to “UC Regents” to John Doe, UC Cooperative Extension, 1720 S. Maple Ave., Fresno, CA 93710.

For more information or to register, contact Sandy Arnett, (559) 244-0574, bajones@ucdavis.edu.

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The top margin

Put the date on the top left, and the contact information on the right.

Example	
January 10, 2020	CONTACT: Morse Nunes (559) 234-5940, mnnunes@ucdavis.edu

The headline

Use a straightforward headline for basic meeting releases. Try to hook the reader's curiosity with reference to what people might learn at the event. The title should be no more than one line and in bold type. Most newspapers and magazines today prefer "sentence case" for headlines, as opposed to "title case." In sentence case, only the first letter and proper nouns are capitalized. In title case, all important words in the title have the first letter capitalized.

Examples
"PlacerGROWN" conference features revealing look at farmers' markets
Workshop to 'train the trainers' of pesticide handlers and field workers
Farming and e-commerce issues the topics at UC Executive Seminar in Sacramento

The first paragraph

The first paragraph, also called the lead, answers the following questions:

Who?	University of California Cooperative Extension
What?	Tour, symposium, meeting, etc.
When?	Date and time
Where?	Location

Examples

University of California Cooperative Extension viticulture advisors will outline vineyard pest management practices at a field day from 9 to 12 noon Aug. 25 at the Butterfly Hill Winery in Mariposa.

The biology and epidemiology of Pierce's disease, newly defined practices for safe use of sulfur in vineyards, and a system for drying raisins on the vine using traditional raisin trellises are among the half-dozen presentations slated for the 2001 San Joaquin Valley Grape Symposium 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Jan. 10, at the C.P.D.E.S. Hall, in Easton.

Executives at the helm of leading agricultural e-commerce enterprises – including AgEx.com, vTraction, John Deere, CoBank and Bank of America – speak Dec. 4 at the UC Agricultural Issues Center Executive Seminar on "Agriculture in an E-commerce World." The program runs from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the DoubleTree Hotel, 2001 Point West Way in Sacramento.

Private landowners are responsible for thousands of miles of roads and trails that crisscross the forests and ranches of rural California. Learning how to maintain and manage these roads more effectively is the focus of an Aug. 24 workshop – Maintaining Forest and Ranch Roads – organized by the University of California Cooperative Extension.

The second paragraph

Using a strong, conversational quote or simply narrative text, tell why this meeting is important to attend. Attribute the quote to a county advisor or other academic speaking at or involved in organizing the meeting.

Examples

“Scientists will review precise insect monitoring techniques that can save growers thousands of dollars in unnecessary pesticide applications,” said Bob Smith, UCCE viticulture farm advisor for Madera County.

“The profit margin in grape production is shrinking, making it vitally important for growers to be aware of research development that could cut production costs,” said Bill Jones, UCCE viticulture farm advisor for Fresno County.

Business professionals will learn whether it is might be wise to invest in new marketing, sales, and product tracking Web sites aimed at agricultural producers. Participants will learn what the various new e-commerce firms have to offer and how much their services cost.

The third paragraph

You can include a list of the topics and speakers here if you like.

Example

Topics to be covered include:

- Review of grape variety trials at the Kearney Research and Extension Center by Mark Smith, UCCE farm advisor in Kings County
- Raisin marketing outlook by Mario Gonzalez, UC Cooperative Extension farm advisor in Stanislaus County
- A review of viticulture research by Bernadine Jones, horticulture specialist at UC Davis
- A review of DOV grape cultivars, by Dave Barker, president of Ferndale Farm and Nursery in Porterville

The fourth paragraph

Tell whom the meeting is intended for and whether any professional continuing education hours will be offered.

Example
The meeting is intended for grape farmers, pest control advisers, and agriculture students. Three hours of continuing education credit for pesticide applicators have been applied for.

The fifth paragraph

Put your registration information here.

Examples
Registration is free and no advance reservations are necessary.
To register, send a check for \$10 per person payable to “UC Regents” to John Doe, UC Cooperative Extension, 1720 S. Maple Ave., Fresno, CA 93710.

The sixth paragraph

Include a contact name (first and last), phone number, and email address for more information about the program or registration. It is important to add this both as a paragraph and at the top of the page under “contact.” The name under contact is for the media to call. The name in the body of the news release is for the general public to call if they have questions.

Example
For more information or to register, contact Sandy Arnett, (559) 244-0574, bajones@ucdavis.edu.

The end

Close with three centered # symbols after the text. This tells editors they’ve reached the end.

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