



INTERVIEWING WITH LOCAL MEDIA

Engaging with local press is an effective way to share your story, promote American Pecans and build visibility for your business. Engaging with journalists may seem daunting, but it doesn't have to be! Here's what you need to know to ensure a great press interview.

ABOUT LOCAL MEDIA

Local reporters have a unique point of view, informing what they look for in stories. Keep in mind that these reporters:

- Will write from a local-first view, and have a deep understanding of the community,
- Care most about relevance to local consumers and businesses,
- May or may not already be familiar with the pecan industry and local agriculture (depending on region and the contact).

These reporters are most interested in current happenings and WOW factors, controversial topics in their communities, and effects on local and real people. Remember that reporters are generally friendly, curious and want to hear from you.

WHAT TO TALK ABOUT

The most important information for reporters is the **who, what, when, where, why** and **how**, so be prepared to answer these questions within the context of your conversation. They will also want to hear the **most important background information and the facts** of your story, so be prepared to share **stories, local examples, analogies** or **trends** where relevant.

Always do your homework prior to the interview by:

- Researching and understanding the publication and reporter.
- Connecting with the reporter in advance to get an idea of what they want to discuss.
- Establish 3-4 key talking points – the key takeaways you want the reporter and audience to know and practice them. The APC is happy to supply you with some simple talking points about the benefits of American Pecans, should it be helpful to your preparation.

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INTERVIEWING TIPS & TRICKS

1

BRIDGING

Give a short, honest answer, then segue back to your points in order to stay on topic. Examples include:

- Time: "Historically that has been the case, but today..."
- Don't Know to Do Know: "I don't know the answer to that, but I do know..."
- Importance: "That used to be important, but now..."

2

HOOKING

Encourage follow-up questions by using a "tease" or preview of an interesting topic. Examples:

- Something Surprising: "You'd be surprised at what the research showed..."
- What We Know: "We've learned quite a bit about this issue..."
- List of Points: "There are several things that are important..."

3

FLAGGING

Verbal signs to help guide reporters and emphasize a point. This is also a great way to get back on track if you feel an answer has gone on too long or gone off course. Examples:

- Most Important: "The main point to remember is..."
- Most Exciting: "The most exciting aspect of this is..."
- Bottom Line: "The bottom line is..."



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ADDITIONAL TACTICS

- Keep in mind your primary goal – what do you want the reporter to know?
- Use sound bites – short, to the point responses are easier to follow and for the reporter to work into his/her story.
- Politely correct reporters, when necessary, to ensure they have the right information.
- Always be positive and respectful. This supports your brand, your viewpoints and your message.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- If you don't know the answer to a question, feel free to say so.
- If you are interrupted, you can let the reporter know that you'll address their question in a moment.
- When speaking with reporters, remember that nothing is "off the record" and may appear in the final story. Never share details you wouldn't want to see in print or on TV - such as financials, trade secrets, controversial opinions, etc.
- If the reporter lacks focus and fires off multiple questions at once, stay calm, answer the question you want and try to address the broad issue.
- When the reporter pauses for a few seconds after you have responded to a question, don't feel the need to keep talking. Doing so often leads to your saying more than you wish. If this happens, you can restate the key messages and/or quietly wait for the next question.

CONTACTING THE APC

*You can always contact the APC should you have questions about speaking with local media about American Pecans. Feel free to contact us at **industry@americanpecan.com** or **(817) 916-0020**.*