

Fruit Varieties and Horticultural Digest
 Horticulture
 *Plant Physiology
 *Soil Science Society of American Proceedings
Poultry
 Poultry Science
 Poultry Tribune
 World's Poultry Science Journal
 Food Technology
 Feedstuffs
 *Animal Breeding Abstracts
 Biological Abstracts
 British Poultry Science
 Broiler Business
Soils
 *Soil Science
 *Soil Science Society of America Proceedings
 *Agronomy Journal
 *Journal of Soil Science
 Plant and Soil
 Analytical Chemistry
 Association of Official Agricultural Chemists
 Journal
 Better Crops with Plant Food
 California Agriculture
 Hilgardia
 Journal of Colloid Science
 Journal of Physical Chemistry
 *Physiologia Plantarum

Plant Food Review
 *Plant Physiology
 What's New in Crops and Soils
Vegetable Crops
 *American Vegetable Grower
 Plant Physiology
 VEGA, Vegetable Growers Association
 Western Grower and Shipper
 American Potato Journal
 Economic Botany
 Euphytia
 Food Technology
 Fruit and Vegetable Review
 *Horticultural Abstracts
 Journal of Heredity
 Plant Breeding Abstracts
 Florida State Horticultural Society Proceedings
 Seed World
 *Soil Science
 *These titles are listed in more than one subject matter area.

GENERAL AGRICULTURAL INDEXES
 Agriculture Index
 Bibliography of Agriculture
 Monthly Catalog of Government Publications
GENERAL LIBRARY INDEXES
 Readers Guide
 Applied Science and Technology Index
 Business Periodical Index
 Biological Abstracts

JOURNALISM IS WORTH \$ \$

TO

YOU

Professional Writing and Publishing Pays Dividends

By E. B. Knight
 Chairman General Agriculture Dept.
 Tennessee Tech

Editor's Note: The following Articles were presented at the 1963 conference in an effort to interest the NACTA membership in writing and publishing.

Who was it that said, "The pen is mightier than the sword?" Alas, the writer of this paper cannot recall, if he ever did know the name of the originator of the quotation. However, there is a lot of truth in the statement,

for from the written words of mankind have come most of the ideas which shape our civilization.

Of course in this mechanized modern era the quotation may need a little editing so let us say it this way—"The NACTA member who regularly does a little professional writing with the ultimate objective of having it published will reap rewards which fully justify the time and effort which he has expended."

Ability to write professional and allied articles is like any other skill. It requires plenty of practice—the doing over and over again of those activities which are fundamental to the successful acquisition of the desired degree of proficiency.

In the dim, dark days, (the almost prehistoric times) when the writer of this paper was a green-capped Freshman at the University of Illinois, a favorite

saying among Aggie students was, "Us Ags Don't Need No Rhetoric." Never was a slogan more misleading, judging from my subsequent experience as a life long worker in the realm of professional agriculture.

Some Fundamentals

Basically, the budding author must be reasonably well grounded in the rules of English composition. He should know the "traffic signals" and "highway markers" and possess an adequate vocabulary especially in his specific professional area. Such items as topic sentences, key phrases and proper punctuation are among the essentials of a well written article or report. Once again, although continual practice may not produce 100% perfection, it does move a person well along towards that ever elusive goal.

Many potential writers or authors offer the feeble excuse that "they don't have anything that is worth while writing about." To which the author of this paper has at times rudely said, "Nuts,, Brother."

All of us know something which will interest others, else we couldn't justify the fabulous salaries we receive for teaching college students. Every branch of Agriculture is replete with information — Knowledge, practical hints, ideas as to trends and so on— which will help others along life's way. The trick is to prepare a story which separates the seed from the chaff and is written in language which meets the comprehension level of the anticipated reader.

Professional publications, farm journals, college bulletins and newsletters, weekly and daily newspapers, and similar publications have an insatiable demand for professional articles, hints to farmers, news items and research reports. True, their needs vary widely, so, match the story you are going to write to the type of magazine. Glance through the publication to which you intend to send your production. Note its style, content and organization, also the length of the average contribution. Then, follow the pattern which the periodical has established.

When submitting a paper for publication always observe the ground rules of the manuscript game. That is; (1) typewrite your paper double spaced; (2) use of adequate, simple title and sub-headings; (3) make sentences and paragraphs relatively short, and (4) have a natural flow or sequence of ideas.

Don't try to "tell it all" in one article, that is, do not exhaust your subject or

your supposed readers. Save some "Cannon Fodder" for the future just in case the editor likes your initial attempt and calls for more! Above all, make a couple of carbon copies—but send the original to the magazine together with a brief letter written on college stationery expressing your interest in the periodical and including your title below your signature.

The Dividends

Another old adage says, "If you make a better mouse trap the world will beat a path to your door." Perhaps this was true in Elbert Hubbard's time but the world operates differently these days and whether we like it or not it does pay to advertize.

An occasional, published article or story giving due mention to the author's name and institution and possibly his academic title is a decided asset professionally. It pays dividends in the form of personal satisfaction and recognition both of which materially boost one's moral. Too, by putting one's ideas on paper, these ideas tend to crystallize and become organized on a sound and comprehensive basis. In other words, system and order are natural outcomes of professional writing.

Then, as possessors of significant knowledge, skills, and abilities in a definite subject matter area, it is our duty as teachers to disseminate these materials widely and effectively. After all, our teaching should not be limited to the college students we face in the classroom. All teachers have a far wider, even if somewhat indirect responsibility which includes the spreading of the "gospel" to all who will listen—or read.

The writer of this paper has observed that professors who find time to author carefully prepared published articles frequently receive salary increases and promotions which just do not happen to their non-author colleagues. Administrative officials tend to view most favorably the recognition which accrues to the college when a faculty member's professional contributions appear in professional journals and other periodicals. (As an aside, when you have an article published use any legitimate means of arranging that the administrative eyes have ample chance to fall upon your printed contribution.)

Believe it or not, a number of professors of agriculture subjects quite regularly are paid modest sums of money by farm journals and commercial agriculture companies for preparing timely stories and technical arti-

cles. Report writing also brings cash to certain members of our profession. We frequently find some of our "brothers in the bond" conducting columns in newspapers and magazines. Incidentally, from such activities often come invitations to appear as speakers before layman organization with a fee and expenses attached!

All of the foregoing comments on Dividends may sound like a scheme for personal press-agenting or self-promotion. Possibly, to a minor degree this is true. However, for the most part professional writing is an obligation, a duty and a privilege—something all of us are obligated to do if we are to fulfill our responsibilities as dedicated educators.

Conclusion

In conclusion may I urge all of you, either as embryo journalists and writers of professional articles, or as writers with some experience, to get busy and expand your efforts in this area. A good place to try-out yourself or add to your past laurels is in the columns of our NACTA Journal. I am confident that our very capable editor, John Wright, will be most happy to receive your manuscripts.

And now, the best of luck to all members of the NACTA which is very dear to the present writer's heart. I am firmly convinced that our organization is destined to be a most potent factor in determining the future of our American agriculture economy.

THE VALUE OF WRITING AND PUBLISHING TO THE NACTA MEMBER

John A. Wright
Louisiana Polytechnic Institute

Much effort has been made in the last few years to encourage the members of NACTA to contribute articles for the Journal. Of course, our first and foremost aim in making our numerous appeals has been to obtain material to fill our publication. However, I no longer despair of a wealth in publishable materials. I make this statement because we find that many people are anxious to have an avenue through which they may have their material published. The fact that our Journal is national in scope adds tremendously to the prestige of having an article published on its pages.

Our purpose in scheduling this discussion on our conference program this year is to try to point out the value to YOU, Mr. NACTA Member, of (1) doing some writing and (2) having something published.

The VALUE of WRITING

The values that accrue to an individual from the exercise of creative writing may be very numerous. Since most of these are rather obvious when catalogued, we shall content ourselves with a brief explanation only of these personal rewards:

1. **Self-Expression**—Writing is an exercise in self-expression. There is an innate need for most persons to express themselves in some form of creative activity. Writing may satisfy this deep need for self-expression on the part of many of our members.

2. **Self-Satisfaction**—Writing is a potential source of considerable self-satisfaction and pride when an article is well done by an individual or when it serves a very good function.

3. **Aid to Clear Thinking**—Teachers who are called upon daily to express their thoughts and ideas and to impart knowledge, need every help possible in developing the ability to express these thoughts and ideas clearly, concisely and without confusing detail and subterfuge. Writing, (i.e., sustained efforts at writing) will do much to aid clear thinking and expression.

4. **Promotes Acquisition of Knowledge**—When put in the position of speaking authoritatively, one is forced to make sure of his facts. He is thus in a good "learning situation" and therefore is likely to assimilate a goodly amount of knowledge on the subject being treated.

5. **Increases Appreciation of Other's Efforts**—It is difficult for us to have very much appreciation for effort, whether great or small, unless our experiences have been similar to those in question. We have read books and articles all of our lives and perhaps never contemplated the human effort and energy that made them possible. An increased appreciation along these lines just might stimulate our interest in what we are reading and thus make our readings more fruitful.

6. **Makes One More Analytical**—Developing one's editing ability makes one read more analytically. Continuous writing (or editing) will certainly uncover whatever latent powers a person may have along these lines. When a person writes, he must edit; he

would never think of turning in the first draft of a paper, but would edit and polish and thereby grow in the art of creative writing.

7. **Develops Latent Talent**—Doubtless there are many in our organization who have unsuspected writing ability. If they, in their unsuspected, undiscovered state, should commence to write articles for the NACTA Journal or some other publication, a whole new life might open up for them—even a new career!

THE VALUES and OBLIGATIONS OF PUBLISHING

It is well to write, yea even beneficial as we have seen, but as the newspaper ad says, "Anyone can be a writer, getting the writings published is the difficult part."

We would like to point out the values to our members of having material published — yes and even the obligation in some instances of our publishing certain materials.

1. **Original Research**—If a person has done a piece of original research, regardless of the nature of the results — positive or negative—he has an obligation to write these results for his fellow workers. The data should be made available for the benefit of those who are interested in the same subject or problem.

The person who did the work has the obligation to do the writing because he is only one who knows enough about the work to write it down. Publishing such material not only reflects the attitude of wanting to share that which has been learned—no matter how small the piece of knowledge—but also satisfies the usual strong desire to be a disseminator of first-hand knowledge.

2. **Review Articles**—A person who has completed a comprehensive study of some subject for his own use, can render a valuable service to his colleagues by writing a review article and compiling an extensive bibliography. This would be a service from the standpoint of providing of information that they would not have in their own libraries. The editorial staff

feels that this is a most desirable thing for many of our members to do and that we could profitably carry a lengthy article of this type in every issue of the Journal.

3. **Self-Satisfaction**—It is gratifying to anyone to see his work or his name in print. The NACTA Journal gives you, its members, priority on publishing your material.

4. **Academic Prestige**—It is hardly necessary to belabor the importance of published articles in building academic prestige. We just need to get busy and do something to assure ourselves of this addition to our standing.

5. **Dollar Value**—Whether written into regulations and by-laws or whether understood and never mentioned, activities such as writing and publishing contribute much toward promotions and raises. A college administrator said in a recent letter to a faculty, "I certainly shall not penalize those who do not publish, but I certainly shall reward those who do make significant contributions to research." Try writing with the idea that in some way it could pay off in the future. Another aspect of cash potential is that of someone's developing or discovering actual talent and thus being able to sell an article or even a book.

6. **A Way to Support NACTA**—Perhaps, as we have said, the crisis of just obtaining material for the NACTA Journal has passed. What about the quality! There is an opportunity and an obligation on the part of each member to support this program of NACTA by helping to provide excellent quality material for publication. An outstanding publication can help increase our circulation of the Journal and raise the prestige of the organization.

You, fellow NACTA member, what will you do for yourself this year by trying your hand at writing an article? What will you do to promote the Spirit of NACTA by making a contribution to the NACTA Journal?