

Elements of an Effective Fact Sheet

Copy that tells your readers what they want to know.

If you're writing about how adults can help teenagers resolve conflicts, your readers will want to know first off what strategies to use, methods of presentation, and examples of successful resolution tactics. Information about any research study either belongs at the end or should be eliminated. An introduction is probably unnecessary.

A writing style that suits your audience.

Most fact sheets are written for a consumer audience. You stand the greatest chance of reaching your audience if you write in a conversational style and use common, everyday language. Use the active voice as much as possible. Use contractions and the pronoun "you." As you write, pretend you're explaining your subject matter to a friend or an individual member of your audience.

Informative headings and subheadings throughout.

Break up your copy with a liberal sprinkling of logical, informative subheads. Subheads should give the reader an outline or overview of your topic.

- Short fact sheets may need only 1 or 2 levels of subheads.
- Long, especially complex, fact sheets may need 3 or 4 levels of subheads. In the outline of subheadings below, an 8-page fact sheet contains A-, B-, and C-level subheads.

Selling Your Farm Products

Direct Marketing of Agricultural Products **(A)**

Advantages of Direct Marketing **(B)**

Disadvantages of Direct Marketing **(B)**

Required Skills **(B)**

Types of Direct Marketing **(B)**

Farmers' Markets **(C)**

Roadside Markets **(C)**

Subscription Marketing **(C)**

Pick-Your-Own Marketing **(C)**

Community Supported Agriculture **(C)**

Selling to the Retail Market (Wholesaling) **(A)**

- The Advantages **(B)**
- The Disadvantages **(B)**
- Producer's Responsibility to Retailer **(B)**
- Selling to Restaurants **(B)**
- Other Important Marketing Considerations **(A)**
- Product Presentation **(B)**
 - Packaging **(C)**
 - Displays **(C)**
- Business Items **(B)**
- Rules and Regulations **(B)**
- References **(A)**

[Categories of Extension Publications](#) lists fact sheet basics