

# Social Media Audit & Conversation Analysis



Willamette Farm and Food Coalition

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## **PURPOSE**

Willamette Farm and Food Coalition (WFFC) is a Eugene-based nonprofit that supports the development of a sustainable local food system in Lane County. As a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, WFFC depends on membership enrollment and grant funding to support its operations.

WFFC connects local residents, institutions and restaurants to farmers in the area who produce everything from vegetables, beans and grains, to goat cheese and meats. To build on the outreach of its free annual publication, the Locally Grown Guide, the organization uses social media to cultivate relationships with its members and potential supporters.

We completed a social media audit and conversation analysis to evaluate WFFC's social media presence in comparison to other Oregon-based nonprofits that also promote local food systems and to propose recommendations to improve its social media presence.

## **METHOD**

We analyzed WFFC's Twitter feed and Facebook page in comparison to those of three similar organizations: Food Roots, Ten Rivers Food Web (Ten Rivers) and Friends of Family Farmers (FoFF). For the purpose of the audit, we analyzed each nonprofit's social media activity for a three-month period from Jan. 1 through March 31, 2013. WFFC has an active Facebook page, as well as one that does not get updated, so we only include the active account in our analysis. One of the groups, Ten Rivers, does not use Twitter.

Some of these nonprofits have other social media accounts, including blogs and YouTube channels. However, none of the groups used its other social media platforms frequently during our study period.

For this audit, we counted each organization's own Twitter posts, retweets and replies as "tweets." To quantify the response level on Twitter, we calculated each retweet, reply and favorite from anyone outside the organization as an interaction. For Facebook, we recorded status updates, calendar listings, videos and pictures as "posts." On Facebook, we counted likes, shares and responses as interactions.

Due to the limited social media presence of the nonprofits we evaluated, we manually coded most of the data to generate our results. We also used Edelman's TweetLevel to analyze Twitter data. We attempted to use Social Mention to track what social media users were saying about these organizations, but found the online tool of little use because the nonprofits generated little conversation.

## **RESULTS: SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIT**

### ***Brand Consistency***

As a whole, WFFC’s branding is inconsistent. The group uses its website logo as its Facebook profile picture, while its Twitter profile picture is a photograph of small pumpkins in a bowl. There is a minimal level of consistency with a food-based theme, because WFFC uses a photograph of carrots and radishes as its Facebook cover photo, but its brand remains inconsistent regarding the profile photographs on its social media sites. WFFC’s website has easy to find buttons for both Twitter and Facebook, but the nonprofit needs to cross-link its Facebook page and Twitter profile.



WFFC’s Facebook cover photo of locally grown carrots and radishes.



the organization’s logo.



WFFC’s Twitter profile picture, while food-based, is inconsistent with the use of its logo for its Facebook profile picture.

Ten Rivers does a better job of developing brand consistency across social media platforms, using the same logo for its Facebook profile picture, website and blog. However, the Facebook and website logos use noticeably different shades of green; the Facebook logo is a much lighter shade. Every page of Ten Rivers’ website features a small Facebook link.

FoFF uses the exact same logo for its website, Facebook profile picture and Twitter profile picture. Its brand consistency breaks down on Twitter, where its handle is @Farmfriends and the name associated with its account is the acronym FoFF. Its logo and the link to its website are the only things that say “Friends of Family Farmers” on its Twitter homepage.

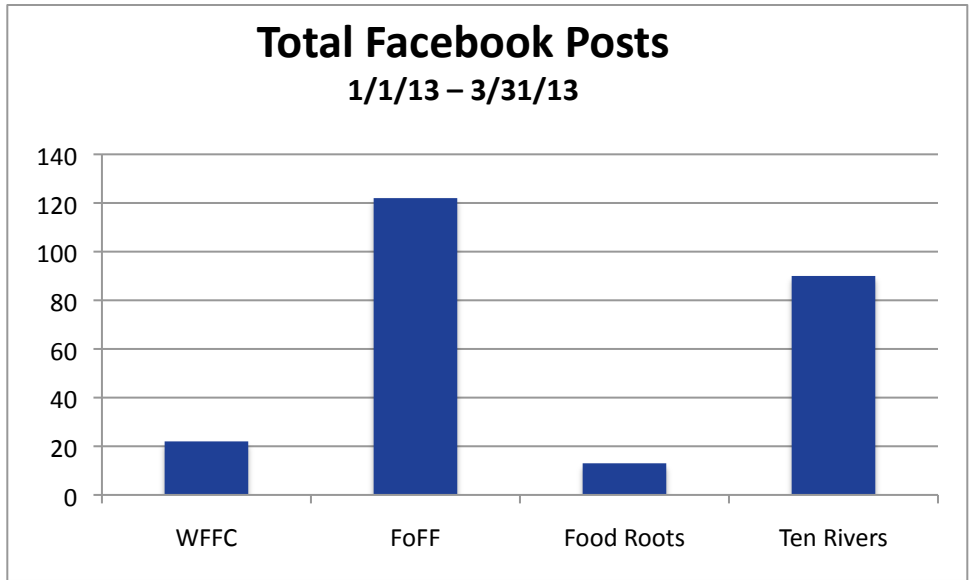
Food Roots is consistent with its branding across nearly all of its social media platforms. The same logo appears on its website, Facebook page, Twitter profile, and YouTube account. The only Food Roots platform that used a different logo was the group’s blog, which has been inactive for nearly a year. It is fair to assume that Food Roots’ blog uses an old logo. The nonprofit also consistently uses the slogan “cultivating a healthy food system” when defining its mission statement.

### ***Channel Frequency***

#### *Facebook*

We analyzed the channel frequency of each nonprofit’s Facebook and Twitter accounts by recording the number of times each platform was updated in the three-month study period. WFFC posted to Facebook 22 times during that period, averaging 0.24 posts per day. A majority of its posts raise awareness of upcoming events and fundraisers or comment on previous events.

During the same time period, Ten Rivers posted 90 times, an average of one post each day. Similar to WFFC, Ten Rivers typically posted to inform its followers of upcoming events and classes it hosted.

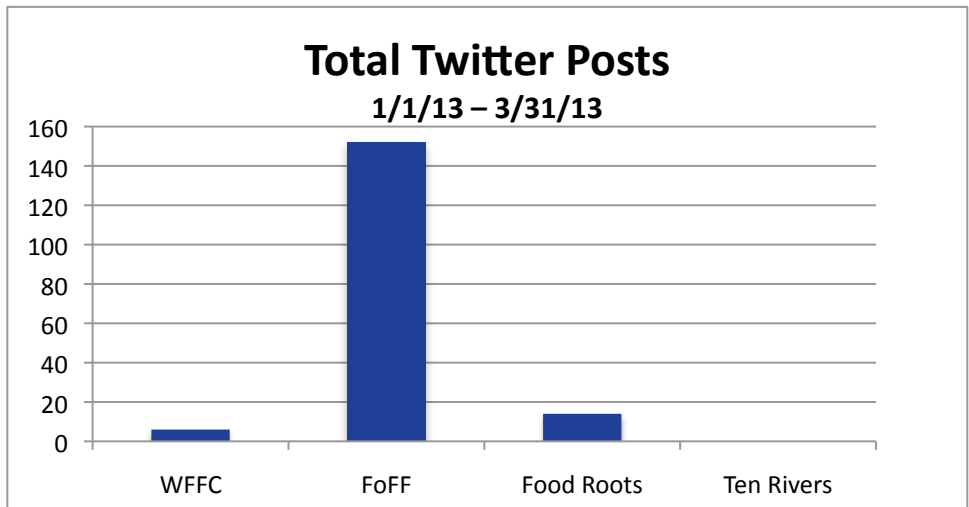


FoFF posted 122 times, averaging 1.36 posts per day. Most posts were about events or links from similar organizations around the Web.

Food Roots posted 13 times, or 0.14 posts per day. Food Roots generally posted about upcoming events and thanked participants for attending previous events. Compared to the other organizations, Food Roots posted more photos, which appeared to earn the most likes.

#### *Twitter*

WFFC only tweeted six times over the three-month period, five times in January, once February and never in March. Two of the group's tweets in January used the same two hashtags: #eugene and #eugeneats. We found no other hashtag use.



During the three-month study period, FoFF tweeted 152 times. The nonprofit never directly tweeted to other accounts, retweeted other Twitter users or used hashtags. It did not interact with its followers.

Food Roots tweeted 14 times during the evaluation period. The organization did not use any hashtags, and most tweets linked back to photos on its Facebook page.

### ***Voice***

WFFC maintains an informative voice but posts very few questions to its followers to cultivate engagement. The communication is asymmetrical with little room for followers to participate in the conversation. However, its posts have an enthusiastic tone and use exclamation points in almost every post, which creates a very approachable and positive Facebook environment.

Ten Rivers maintains a very professional and educational voice on its Facebook page. The nonprofit also posts very few conversation starters.

FoFF uses a professional tone on Twitter and Facebook as well, without responding to followers on its Twitter feed or in the comment threads of its Facebook posts. FoFF does, however, directly address its Facebook fans in many of its posts by urging them to attend events and asking them questions in a bright and friendly manner.

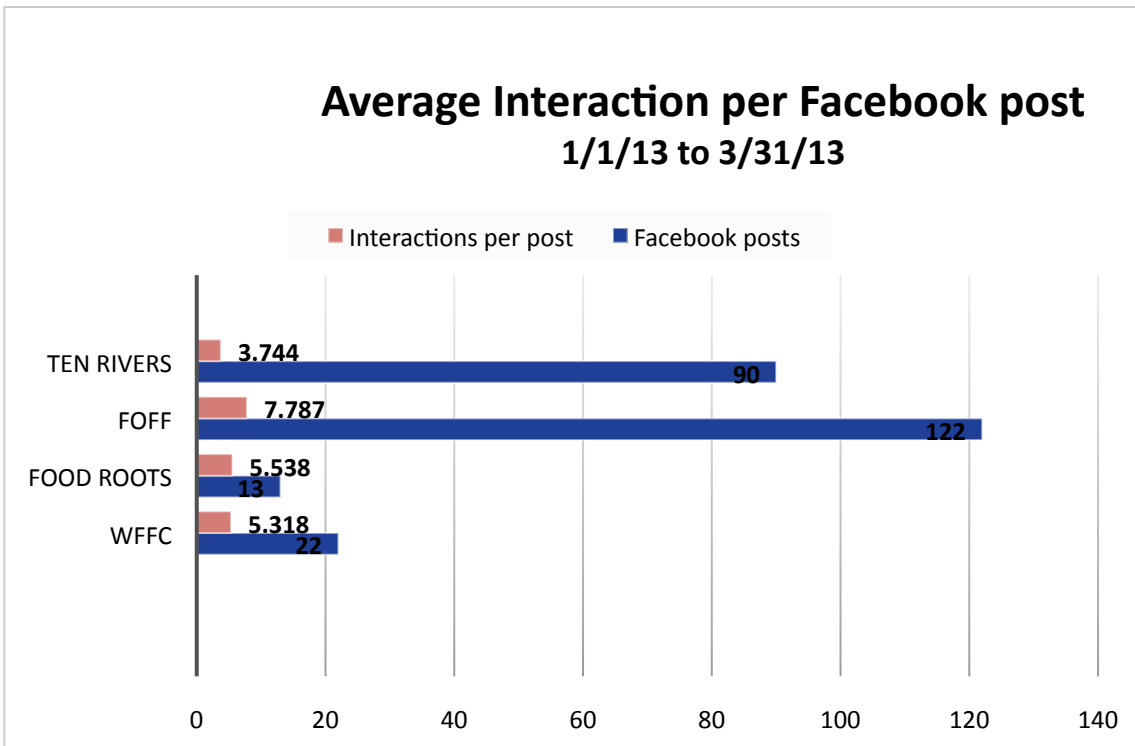
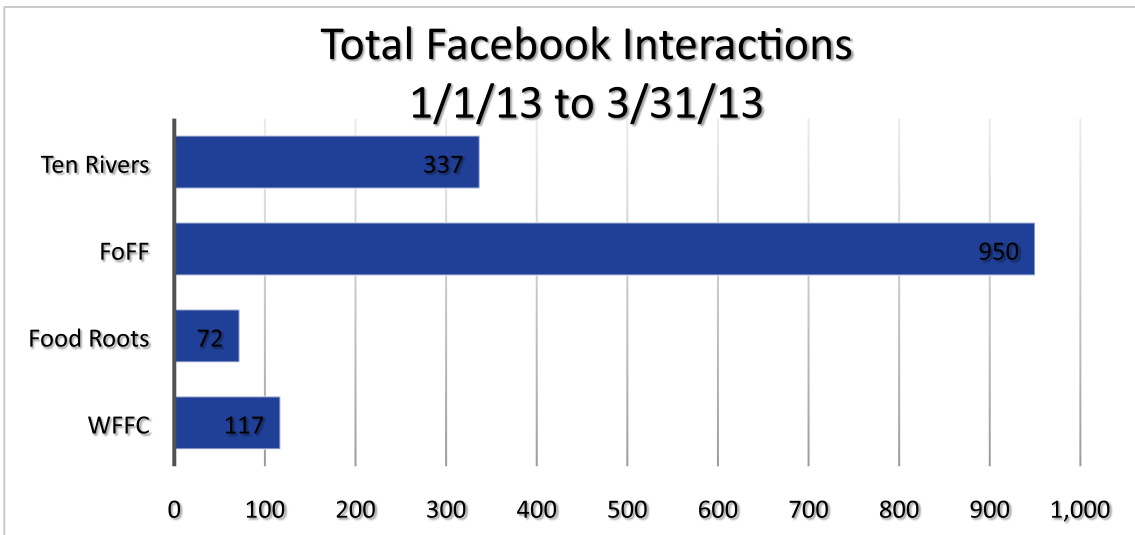
Food Roots displays an instructional and friendly tone with a combination of Ten Rivers' professionalism and WFFC's excited tone and periodic use of exclamation points.

### ***Interaction***

During the study period, WFFC posted to its Facebook page 22 times, generating a total of 117 interactions from fans. We compared its Facebook activity to that of its fellow nonprofits' pages. Food Roots posted only 13 times, netting 72 interactions. Ten Rivers posted 90 times and received 337 interactions. FoFF posted 122 times, generating 950 interactions.

The data show that nominal value of Facebook posts does not necessarily correlate with an organization's ability to generate interaction with an audience. WFFC used Facebook almost twice as frequently as Food Roots, and Ten Rivers posted over three times more posts than either organization. However, both WFFC and Food Roots generated more responses per post than Ten Rivers.

FoFF was by far the most active Facebook user of the group, drawing the most responses per post as well. We concluded that this is due to FoFF's strategy of directly addressing its fans. The first graph below displays each organization's total interactions. The following graphs represent the average number of interactions per Facebook post for each nonprofit.



WFFC tweeted six times during our survey period, generating seven interactions – all retweets. However, the seven retweets were not evenly distributed; they came from only two posts, leaving four tweets with zero interactions.

Food Roots tweeted 14 times during this period without generating a single interaction. FoFF, once again the most active social media user, tweeted 152 times to its followers and received 22 interactions.

Frequency of Twitter use did not correspond to level of interaction. This was even more apparent than Facebook use. WFFC generated more than one interaction on average for each tweet, while the much more prolific tweeter FoFF had to tweet almost seven times for every response.

WFFC sparked the most interaction on its Facebook page during the study period by inviting fans to attend a fundraising event at the local McMenamins brewpub for a school garden project. The post received 16 interactions, 12 likes and four shares. The post directly addressed WFFC's supporters and made a strong pitch that going to the event would be both fun and a socially responsible way to support its core mission to support farm fresh food.

The group's most popular tweet, which garnered four retweets, retweeted a link from an Atlantic Monthly article on the value of teaching kids how to cook. On both Facebook and Twitter, WFFC's most popular posts raised awareness about issues and events connected to its core mission.



WFFC's least popular Facebook posts, which both received a single like, were a video of a Ten Rivers bulk food buying event and an event listing for a fundraising dinner at Mazzi's, a local restaurant. The event listing's social media popularity may have been affected by the confusing title ("% Night at Mazzi's!") that clouded WFFC's connection to the event.

The majority of WFFC's tweets received no interactions. The group tweets so infrequently, just once every 15 days on average, so its posts are likely to get buried by more prolific posters in its followers' Twitter feeds, especially without hashtags.



### ***Responsiveness***

WFFC very rarely tweets, generating little Twitter activity for an audience to respond to. However, by directly addressing followers and retweeting content, the organization demonstrates that it understands Twitter users expect to engage in a conversation.

While FoFF posted more than once a day on average, it did not respond to followers who commented on its tweets. Nor did the group use hashtags, retweet others or use other strategies to invite its followers to engage in its Twitter feed.

Food Roots did not post enough to generate any kind of activity.

### ***Themes***

Followers of the nonprofits we studied tended to respond to the organizations' posts instead of starting conversations about them. As a result, WFFC and the other nonprofits generated the themes that other social media users used to talk about the groups.

The major Twitter themes that WFFC embraced were the hashtags #eugeneats and #eugene, which shows the group attempted to join the ongoing conversation about Eugene and its culinary culture. On Facebook, WFFC fans responded most frequently to the organization's posts about its own events and how to become part of the farm programs.

For the other nonprofits in our study, prevalent themes on both Facebook and Twitter included announcements of and details about upcoming events and information about



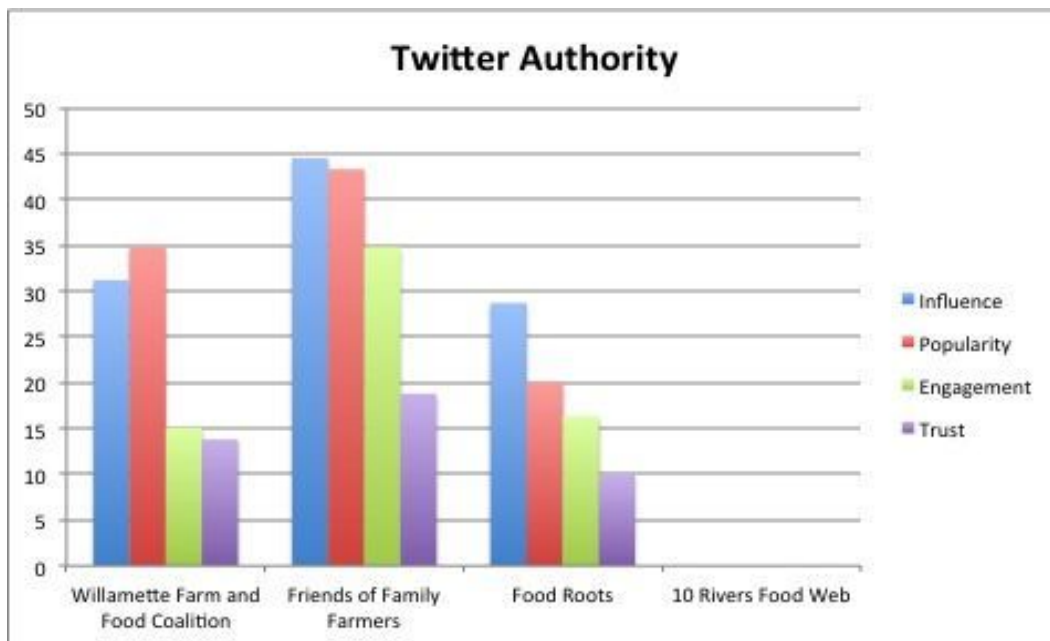
previous events. The followers of these organizations responded mostly with shares and likes.

### ***Authority***

We used Edelman’s TweetLevel to evaluate WFFC’s social media authority. For comparison, we evaluated the scores of the two similar nonprofits in our audit with Twitter profiles. All three Twitter users scored relatively poorly on TweetLevel, with WFFC ranking in between the other two groups.

On a scale of 1 to 100, Food Roots gained the lowest score, 28.7, and was considered a viewer/commentator. WFFC scored 31.2 and was labeled a commentator – one step above Food Roots. FoFF Farmers earned the highest TweetLevel score, 45.7, ranking as a curator.

However, while WFFC’s general influence score was higher than that of Food Roots, WFFC ranked slightly below Food Roots in engagement level, 15.1 compared to 16.3. At 34.8, FoFF’s engagement score was again the highest. The engagement score evaluates interactions and conversations that stem from Twitter posts, an important component of a successful Twitter account.



WFFC was the only nonprofit with a popularity score higher than its influence score – 34.8 versus 31.2. The popularity score signifies the number of followers a user has, as well as the number of lists and their respective followers. However, FoFF still earned a higher popularity score at 44.5. Food Roots had a popularity score of 20.

WFFC could increase the value of its Twitter use and the size of its audience by following and interacting with influential Twitter users who tweet about sustainable

farming and local food systems. We suggest WWFC follow three such users, who influence the greater social media conversation about these topics.

Food writer Michael Pollan (@michaelpollan) and New York Times columnist Mark Bittman (@bittman) both score as Amplifiers on TweetLevel – users who have large Twitter followings and create buzz around the conversations that others generate. The national nonprofit Slow Food USA (@SlowFoodUSA) scores as an Idea Starter/Amplifier, meaning that the organization is part of the small group that spawns the ideas that Twitter users talk about.

## **RESULTS: CONVERSATION ANALYSIS**

### ***Sentiment Analysis/Traditional Media***

As a relatively small nonprofit with a regional focus, WWFC is more likely to gain local and regional media coverage rather than national attention. We used Google’s search engine to manually track WWFC presence in the news media.

In February, WWFC was mentioned positively four times in the local news media: in the Register Guard article “Local Food on Menu,” on the KLCC radio spot “Farm to School Program Expanding to Reach More Lane County Schools,” on the KMTR television spot “Farm to School” and on the KEZI television spot “Eugene School Celebrates Grant Award.” WWFC’s Farm to School program generated all four positive stories. The program – which educates students about the importance and availability of fresh, locally grown food – expanded in February.

During the three-month period, FoFF was mentioned in four newspaper articles. Two were positive and two neutral. Ten Rivers was featured in a single, neutral online news article. Food Roots received neutral coverage in three newspapers.

Overall, WWFC and FoFF received the most coverage. But WWFC received 100 percent positive coverage while FoFF’s coverage was 50 percent positive and 50 percent neutral.

### ***Sentiment Analysis/Social Media***

Because WWFC and the other nonprofits in our audit do not have very deep social media profiles, it was difficult to ascertain what others were saying about them on social media. The social media conversation about the groups we evaluated was overwhelmingly positive but too infrequent to seem of much noteworthy value.

We used a combination of Google queries and searches on Social Mention – a tool for tracking what social media users say about an organization – to determine the types of conversations social media users had about our nonprofits during the study period. We also searched several hashtags (#WillametteFarmandFoodCoalition, #FriendsofFamilyFarmers #TenRiversFoodWeb, #FoodRoots) and Twitter handles (@foodrootsnw, @Farmfriends, @WillFarmFood) to see how our nonprofits were being talked about.

We found that supporters of these nonprofits rarely posted about them outside of the organizations' own pages. We consider all retweets as positive mentions for these organizations. To measure sentiment analysis on Facebook, we recorded all fan interaction on their own pages, which we coded as positive.

Three organizations blogged positively about WFFC during the audit period, Slow Food Eugene and two sustainability-related academic organizations (Lane Community College's Sustainable Food Committee and the University of Oregon's Sustainability Center). In January, one Twitter user posted twice about a WFFC sponsored event and six users retweeted WFFC tweets, giving the organization a 100 percent positive, but overall negligible, social media buzz outside of Facebook. WFFC had 117 Facebook interactions, most of which were shares and likes.

One Twitter user tweeted positively about Food Roots during our survey period, but we could not find any blog posts that mentioned the group. The organization had 72 interactions on its Facebook page over the three months.

FoFF was mentioned positively twice in blog posts during this time. Both posts, written by one of our researchers, were linked to on Facebook and tweeted via a personal Twitter account. FoFF received 20 retweets, two responses and two favorites, netting a total of 24 positive Twitter interactions. It also generated 950 positive interactions on its Facebook page.

The only mention Ten Rivers received outside of its own media channels appeared to be a March 19 job listing on [centraloregonfoodpolicy.org](http://centraloregonfoodpolicy.org), which we perceived as a neutral interaction. Ten Rivers does not have a presence on Twitter, and its Facebook page received 337 interactions.

## ***Discussion***

During the audit period, January through March 2013, WFFC engaged its supporters through social media campaigns on Twitter and Facebook with mixed results. While the group generated some awareness of important events and programs, mainly through its Facebook page, it did little to effectively brand itself or engage supporters on either platform.

General responses regarding WFFC and its work remain positive or neutral on Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms. While WFFC did not receive any negative mentions, most of the discussion regarding WFFC revolved around the issue at stake rather than the organization itself. A number of organizations work to develop a sustainable local food system; some mention WFFC as an important contributor. There is little discussion of WFFC's individual success but rather about the success of the local food system as a whole.

Because WFFC and the other nonprofits we evaluated work collaboratively, none of them have branded themselves competitively against each other. This has proven to be

effective in terms of discussion, as shown by the lack of negative mentions, responses or interactions regarding these groups.

### ***Recommendations***

We have several recommendations to improve WFFC's social media campaigns.

- WFFC's two Facebook pages create confusion for its audience. The group only posts updates to one account. The other simply shares employee biographies and contains little content. This extraneous account will lead to a loss of audience if potential fans are mistakenly directed to it. If the organization combines these two accounts it will create a single, effective outlet for Facebook interactions, which can also contain information about the organization and its employees as an effective branding strategy.
- WFFC should cross-promote all of its social media accounts. This allows the audience to easily locate each social media platform, leading to increased engagement and a larger audience. This strategy will also enhance SEO for the organization.
- WFFC needs to be more active on Twitter. During our observation period, WFFC tweeted an incredibly low number of times, with five out of six total tweets coming in January. It is imperative to create opportunities for the audience to interact with WFFC and gain information. By developing its Twitter presence, WFFC will increase general audience engagement, leading to an amplified awareness of and support for the nonprofit and its goals.
- Also, WFFC should dramatically increase its hashtag use. It only used two hashtags used during the three-month evaluation period – neither directly relate to the organization. We recommend that the nonprofit create its own hashtags, such as #WFFC, #Farm&Food and #WillFarmFood, and incorporate them in every tweet. Other popular farming-related hashtags include #WillametteValley, #localfarms and #eatlocal.
- WFFC should promote conversational interaction with its audience. This includes asking questions, asking for opinions, posting forums for debate and creating other posts that will generate responses from the audience. Currently, WFFC mainly has informational posts on both its Facebook and Twitter accounts, neither of which generate much interaction or engagement. By transforming its social media content to favor response-generating posts, WFFC will increase both its audience and its level of engagement with that audience. Increased engagement with supporters will in turn lead to greater support for WFFC and its core mission of building the local food system.

## MEET THE TEAM



Sarah is a junior at University of Oregon in the School of Journalism and Communication with a major in public relations. Sarah's interest in public relations continues to grow through internships, university classes and community involvement. Sarah purchases farm-fresh eggs from a friend who raises free-range chickens and is interested in the evolution of a local food system here in Lane County.

Matt Korn is a senior at University of Oregon in the School of Journalism and Communication with majors in public relations and communication studies. Matt hopes to continue building his portfolio and eventually work in automotive PR. Matt grew up cooking with fresh picked vegetables from his family's garden.



Carolyne Snipes is a junior at the University of Oregon in the School of Journalism and Communication with a major in public relations. Carlyne hopes to work in the nonprofit industry doing media relations after graduation. Having worked with many animal-oriented nonprofits, Carlyne is passionate about animals. Growing up, she raised chickens and grew vegetables at her home in California, so she can appreciate the value of local farming.

Ephraim Payne is a freelance journalist writer and editor specializing in stories about sustainable farming, green living and environmental management. He often writes about Oregon's small farmers and the local food system. His work appears in the High Country News, In Good Tilt and the Eugene Weekly. Ephraim is currently seeking a graduate certificate in nonprofit management at the University of Oregon. His backyard homestead includes four overly pampered chickens and an organic garden hidden in a jungle of a yard.

