



Science
Societies

Want to Improve Science Communication? Know Your Audience

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University of Hawai'i at Manoa professor Mikey Kantar and Dr. Bjarne Bartlett prepare students to go on the campus radio station KTUH. Photo by Kristin Matsumoto.

Everybody has something to say, but not everyone knows who they are talking to. Communication is essential for any innovation or discovery to be understood, adopted, and appreciated. Different audiences respond to different types of communication; however, for early agricultural scientists, it can be challenging to effectively relay messages to non scientific audiences. Most curricula at the graduate level focus narrowly on presenting to academic audiences, despite the applied nature and wide impact of agricultural work.

A new paper published in *Agricultural & Environmental Letters* summarizes this need and seeks to enhance understanding of science between people. The authors outline specific techniques that are intended to help novice and seasoned public speakers alike refine their message for any potential audience. Further, the researchers propose working with communication professionals and having them teach agriculture graduate students directly so that theory and practice can work hand in hand.

Allowing people from multiple fields and with multiple skills to work in collaboration rather than competition supports an atmosphere where ongoing understanding can take place. The communication strategies outlined in this paper can lead to more improved public engagement and understanding of science.

Adapted from Kantar, M. B., Wang, D. R., Hale, I., Pratt, R. C., Jensen, J. V., & Lewenstein, B. V. (2023). Improving agricultural science communication through intentionality. *Agricultural & Environmental Letters*, 8, e20115.
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