

America Saves Week 2011
Cooperative Extension Social Media Marketing Mini-Grant Proposal
Dr. Barbara O'Neill, CFP®, Rutgers Cooperative Extension
oneill@aesop.rutgers.edu

1. Goals for *America Saves Week 2011*

The goal of this project is to promote saving and enrollment in *America Saves* during *America Saves Week 2011* (ASW), February 20-27, 2011, through the use of a focused nationwide social media campaign that will be carried out by approximately 50 members of the eXtension Financial Security for All (FSA) Community of Practice (CoP). Leaders of local ASW campaigns could potentially participate as well. The project will involve research and preparation of 70 tweets and 70 Facebook messages about saving and ASW (10 per day for each of the 7 days of ASW) and dissemination among participating Extension educators' (and others') social media and traditional media (e.g., radio show) outlets. Each message will contain shortened links (e.g., bit.ly) to online Cooperative Extension and *America Saves* information about saving and ASW.

At the conclusion of ASW, we will use a triangulation (multiple methods) approach to evaluate impact:

- ◆ Participating Extension educators (and AS campaign leaders who participate) will be surveyed with respect to the extent of their outreach efforts (e.g., # of likes, followers, direct messages, etc.).
- ◆ A follow-up online survey for content users will be embedded in the final day's ASW messages, with incentives provided for completion. The survey will ask if they enrolled in *America Saves*.
- ◆ A unique hashtag (#exasw) will be inserted into all ASW messages to track their dissemination.
- ◆ Customized bit.ly URLs for Web pages about ASW and saving money will be created for this project.
- ◆ TweetReach and bit.ly analytics will be used to determine retweets and clicks on embedded links.
- ◆ Extension educators will use an "influence metric" (e.g., Twitter Grader, Klout) before and after ASW.

In addition, all tweets that are created for ASW 2011 will be saved for use in future years using Google Spreadsheets. The FSA CoP already does this to reuse some of its tweets that are seasonal in nature.

Work has already begun to develop this project. In November 2010, over 40 FSA CoP members volunteered to participate in a potential social media project during the AFCPE Extension pre-conference. In December 2010, a follow-up survey (Link: <http://is-nri.com/take?i=165058&h=WQ3pw0yXogGbA6s1uM4y7Q>) was sent to these volunteers, as well as to all FSA CoP members (about 300 Extension faculty total), to assess their current social media usage and skills and outreach and their interest in disseminating "ready to use" messages for Twitter and Facebook along the lines of the samples shown below:

Sample Facebook Message Format:

Strengthening our nation's financial literacy helps strengthen the economic security of millions of American families. It empowers them with the essential skills they need to protect their loved ones from financial hardship -- everything from how to better understand the fine print on a credit card agreement to how to best save for a rainy day. That's why strengthening financial literacy is a priority for President Obama. And it's why the President's Advisory Council on Financial Capability unveiled a new coordinated National Strategy for Financial Literacy at its first meeting today. Learn more at <http://www.mymoney.gov/about-us.html>.

Sample Twitter Message Format:

New National Strategy for Financial Literacy released today. Learn more at <http://www.mymoney.gov/about-us.html>.

On January 26, 2011, the FSA CoP is planning a Webinar to train its members how to use social media sites and evaluate their impact and outreach with tools such as bit.ly, TweetReach, Twitter Grader, Klout, and more. eXtension social media leader, Dr. Anne Adrian will be conducting the Webinar along with Dr. Barbara O'Neill (Rutgers University) and Andrew Zumwalt (University of Missouri), who will serve as project leaders. Dr. Adrian will also provide technical assistance throughout this project as questions and

implementation issues arise. She is a nationally known expert in educational social media use. This Webinar, like all others conducted by the FSA CoP, will be archived in Adobe Connect for later viewing.

A. Number and Types of Organizations to Participate

As noted above, we expect about 50 FSA CoP members (i.e., state specialists and county agents specializing in financial education) to participate in this project. In addition, if CFA would like, the FSA CoP will gladly make our Twitter and Facebook messages available to leaders of state, county, and city *America Saves* campaigns nationwide so they can distribute them to their followers/fans/friends as well. In fact, several participating Extension faculty for this project, such as Michael Gutter at the University of Florida and Carol Young at Kansas State University, already serve as *America Saves* campaign leaders in FL and KS.

B. Number of People to Be Reached Indirectly

Conservatively, if 100 people (Extension faculty and ASW leaders) disseminate ASW messages to 100 followers apiece, 10,000 people will be reached directly and, perhaps, several thousand more through re-tweets. Our December 2010 survey indicated that some Extension faculty have over 250 fans and followers.

Some participating Extension faculty might also elect to have direct (face-to-face contact) with potential savers during ASW. In Twitter language, this is called a “Tweet-Up” (i.e., where a Twitter user meets his or her followers face-to-face at a time and location that is announced to a group through a series of tweets).

C. Projected Number of People Taking Action

Conservatively, if just 5% of those who receive the social media messages actually enroll in ASW, there will be an additional 500 new savers added. In addition, thousands of others will be exposed to *America Saves* and Cooperative Extension content on savings, which is also beneficial.

D. Number of Savers to be Enrolled

Again, we conservatively project that approximately 500 people will enroll as American Savers as a result of this project. We will use the online survey and feedback from Extension faculty as ways to gauge this.

2. Monthly Objectives to Reach Goals

January 2011

- ◆ Tabulate FSA CoP online social media survey results (survey deadline is 1/7/11)
- ◆ Recruit at least 50 participating Extension faculty for project
- ◆ Conduct an FSA CoP social media training Webinar (O’Neill & Zumwalt & Adrian)

February 2011

- ◆ Develop and disseminate ASW social media messages for Twitter and Facebook
- ◆ Develop and disseminate online surveys for project participants and content users

March 2011

- ◆ Tabulate online survey results and feedback from project participants and content users
- ◆ Send a final project report to CFA

3. Tasks to Achieve Goals

- ◆ January 14- February 14, 2011- Recruit participating Extension agents; CFA recruits other partners (if desired)
- ◆ January 14- February 14, 2011- Research and write content of savings messages for Twitter and Facebook
- ◆ January 26, 2011- FSA CoP Social Media Webinar (it will also be archived for later viewing)
- ◆ February 15- Distribution of 70 Twitter and 70 Facebook messages to project participants
- ◆ February 2011- Develop online follow-up survey for followers/fans and include link in final ASW messages
- ◆ February 2011- Develop online follow-up survey for Extension educators and other project partners
- ◆ March 2011- Tabulate online survey results and participant feedback and send final report to CFA

4. Project Budget: \$1,200

- ◆ Project Management: Content development and evaluation (16 hours @ \$50)- Barbara O’Neill \$800
- ◆ Project Management: Participant contact and archiving content (6 hours @ \$50)-Andrew Zumwalt \$300
- ◆ Evaluation incentives \$100