

Impact Statement Outline

This impact writing format is used for the Land-Grant/USDA science and education impact reporting project and database, on the Web at: <http://www.reeusda.gov/success/impact.htm>. While there's no single, "right" format for reporting impact, effective statements contain the three main elements highlighted in bold, and may provide the information listed under "other." Here are some details:

Key impact elements

- ❖ **Issue (Who cares and why?)**
- ❖ **What's been done?**
- ❖ **Impact (So what?)**
- ❖ Other
 - Title/topic
 - Contacts
 - Partners
 - Funding

Issue -- who cares and why?

In one paragraph, explain the problem or issue you're trying to solve and its importance. Ask yourself: What prompted this work? How important is this issue to a certain region, the state or nation? Are people suffering from this problem? How? If possible, quantify some part of the issue to provide a sense of scope. How widespread is the problem and who's affected?

The issue paragraph:

- Is the attention-getter that tells who should care and why.
- Is a brief problem/issues statement.
- Tells why this information is important and provides context.
- Briefly sets the stage, outlines the situation.
- May help frame the scope of the issue or problem you're addressing.
- May mention potential public payoffs.

What's been done?

In one or two paragraphs, describe what you did to solve a problem or address the issue. Provide brief details of the project that are meaningful to non-scientists to explain what you've done.

The "what's been done" section:

- Is a brief, general overview of activities and process so people know the context.
- You can list scope, number of years or people served, acres tested, etc., here.
- It provides only the "gist," not many details.

Impact

Here's where you quantify changes resulting from your work, if possible. In case of potential impact, here's where to use your estimates or anecdotes. Ask yourself: Did I solve a problem or make progress on a solution? What were the economic, environmental or social gains? Who benefited and how?

The impact paragraph:

- Is the heart of your statement.
- Quantifies economic, environmental or social change.
- Relates to real people and real-world problems.
- Reinforces so what and who cares.
- Reports scope of the outcome.
- May be a testimonial or anecdote.
- May include potential impact or outcome.

Partners, Funding, Contacts

- List a name, address, phone and e-mail contact for further information.
- You may want to mention partners or major collaborators.
- For some applications, it's important to list funding sources.