DEVELOPING EXTENSION PUBLICATIONS FOR EDIS

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INTRODUCTION

EDIS (Electronic Data Information Source) is the premier electronic information storage and retrieval system of peer-reviewed Extension scholarship that enables citizens to access information provided by the Cooperative Extension Service at the University of Florida. Developed in the 1990s, the EDIS library has grown to be a large collection of electronic files with a variety of purposes. That diversity, while allowing important flexibility, also creates challenges in defining and developing EDIS products. This document offers clarification and guidelines for Extension faculty writing for EDIS.

MISSION AND VISION

EDIS publications share four essential qualities:

1. They support or contribute to Extension programs.
2. They communicate information pertinent to target audiences and their issues, including ways to foster healthy lifestyles, environment, or economy.
3. They provide production and management recommendations by UF/IFAS.
4. They are both sufficient to the topic and written in a way that is relevant to our partners and target audiences.

TARGET AUDIENCES

In most cases, EDIS publications help answer the questions any UF/IFAS Extension clientele would have about the topic of interest. In cases where the target audience will have specialized expertise (crop irrigation managers or veterinary students, for example) EDIS is still an appropriate venue for sharing information with them. Typically, target audiences include agricultural and horticultural producers, homeowners, Extension agents, industry or governmental staff, land managers, other professionals, youth and interested citizens. This diversity of target audiences for EDIS publications makes it very important that authors describe their target audiences in the introduction and keep in mind the communication style appropriate to that audience.

THE ROLE OF EDIS IN CONTEXT OF EXTENSION COMMUNICATIONS

EDIS has a specialized role in UF/IFAS Extension communication. It is a collection of official long-form content developed in support of Extension program area goals and objectives and co-published by Florida Cooperative Extension and one of the UF/IFAS academic departments. UF/IFAS ensures the authority and authenticity of EDIS publications through several processes:

- Authors must include current UF/IFAS academic faculty. County faculty may author publications in collaboration with UF/IFAS academic faculty.
- Fact sheets and major revisions of fact sheets have been peer reviewed by internal and external reviewers that have been selected by the corresponding author's Department or Center EDIS editors.
  - Internal reviewers should include at least one UF/IFAS specialist who can provide expert review on content.
  - External reviewers should review content and include at least one individual with expertise in the subject matter who is not employed by the home Department/Center.
- All EDIS publications and creative works have been approved by the Department Chair and Center Director of the corresponding author and the statewide leader of the relevant Extension program(s).
- Once approved, professional editing and layout provided by IFAS Communications Services ensures a uniform standard of quality in the final publication.

EDIS is one of many channels for communication available to UF/IFAS content authors. Other options that can be considered as part of an overall communications strategy are blogs and social media, news releases, infographics, video, or print products. Material that needs to be made available online but is not suitable for any of these formats can be submitted to the UF Institutional Repository or research sharing platforms, such as Zenodo (**https://zenodo.org**) or ResearchGate (**https://www.researchgate.net**).

TYPES OF EDIS PUBLICATIONS

As originally developed, the EDIS system collected, organized, and served all the various types of Extension publications in the same way, using the same formatting, and managed them with a single set of policies, which includes the internal and external reviews and approvals previously described. But to better meet the varying publication needs, we categorize different types of EDIS publications as follows for more specific guidelines and policies.

Differentiating Collections in EDIS

Detailed publication criteria are included in the Appendix.

1. Extension Education Publications
   a. Peer-reviewed Fact Sheets.
   b. Organism ID and biology: illustrated descriptive information of one or more organism or species.
   c. Management guides: Usually collections of book chapters or an EDIS series, may primarily consist of IFAS recommendations and/or conveniently arranged tabular data. Reviewed and/or revised annually. Authorship tends to change frequently.
2. Extension Creative Works
   a. Program materials: Formatted brochures, handouts, forms, posters, or other materials (but not evaluation materials) that are used in support of Extension programs.
   b. Curricula and training handbooks: Curriculum and training materials belong in EDIS if they are project books for 4-H leaders and youth, lesson plans for educators, or professional development training. Individual lesson plans should not be published as separate documents; rather, they should be compiled into one document that includes background information such as the intended audience, how it was produced, and how it should be used.

FACT SHEET GUIDELINES

The typical EDIS publication is a fact sheet, with other types of publications sharing many of these features.

A good EDIS fact sheet should include:

- An introduction that frames the problem, identifies the target audience, provides the rationale for the document, and defines how it should be used. A short abstract may be useful.
- Language that is both technically accurate and at the same time free of jargon, academic terminology and burdensome vocabulary. It should be accessible and interesting to people without a college degree (unless written for a specialized audience as part of a broader Extension program).
- A summary that reminds the reader of the key points and directs them to supplemental information.
- Numbered and captioned photographs and illustrations that add to the visual appeal of the publication and illustrate key points.
- Citations and a literature cited section, such as used in peer-reviewed publications, is not required but may be valuable for documents intended for technical subject matter and professional audiences that expect references to be cited.

FORMAT

The standard format for EDIS education publications is 8.5 x 11-inch printed pages, laid out using a standard EDIS template. Alternate formats are common for Extension creative works. Templates have been developed for items such as large print handouts, one page ID sheets, forms, curricula, and trifold brochures. Regardless of the delivery format, the content of an EDIS publication must conform to the standards outlined above.

SUMMARY

The publishing process and management policies described in this publication are intended to help UF/IFAS ensure the ongoing authority and relevance of Extension publications. Ultimately, the quality and relevance of our EDIS collection depends on the contributions from our authors and reviewers. Extension faculty writing for EDIS should begin with a clear understanding of their target audience, the role the planned publication is expected to play in their Extension program, and the publication type and format best suited to those goals. Reviewers and approvers of EDIS publications also play a vital role by ensuring UF/IFAS EDIS publications are of the highest quality. Through this process, we will continue to demonstrate that EDIS is the primary system for peer-reviewed Extension scholarship.

APPENDIX: PUBLICATION TYPE CRITERIA

Extension Education Publications

Publication Type	Peer-reviewed Fact Sheet (Publication)
Target Audience	General public, non-core professionals, and core professionals.
Purpose	Support or contribute to Extension programs by communicating information pertinent to target audiences and their issues.
Content	A wide variety of topics covered concisely and clearly; focus is on UF/IFAS science, programs, projects, and data and how they address issues of public interest. • This series should not be used to release new scientific data or information that has not been published elsewhere. • May be used to summarize or publicize results of previously published studies and their implications. • May be used to release new information about UF/IFAS programs and products. • They may include production and management recommendations. • Must be sufficient to the topic and written in a way that is relevant to our partners and target audiences.
Visual style	UF/IFAS Branding guidelines must be used. The EDIS fact sheet templates comply with these guidelines. Generally extensive use of color illustrations.
Numbering	Official IFAS Publication Number must be used.
Authorship	At least one current UF/IFAS faculty member must be associated with the work as author. County faculty may author publications in collaboration with UF/IFAS academic faculty.
Review/editing	Minimum of two technical peer reviews required. Internal and external reviewers that have been selected by the corresponding author's Department/Center editors. • Internal reviewers should include at least one UF/IFAS specialist who can provide expert review on content. External reviewers should review content and include at least one individual with expertise in the subject matter who is not employed by the home Department/Center. Must be edited. There will be a UF/IFAS peer reviewed stamp on publications that meet these criteria.
Approval	Must receive administrative approval of Center Director (if from REC), Department Chair, and UF/IFAS Extension Program Leader(s) before publication.
Lifecycle	Review by designated author every 3 years to determine if it should be retained, revised, or archived.
Archive	UF Digital Library's Florida Historical Agriculture and Rural Life Digital Collection **http://ufdc.ufl.edu/flag**

Publication Type	Organism ID and biology (Publication)
Target Audience	General public, non-core professionals, and core professionals.
Purpose	Inform about the biology, identification, and use of one or more organisms or species.
Content	Illustrated descriptive information of one or more organism or species. These do not include management information but may provide links to relevant management publications.
Visual style	UF/IFAS Branding guidelines must be used. The EDIS fact sheet templates comply with these guidelines. Generally extensive use of color illustrations.
Numbering	Official IFAS Publication Number must be used.
Authorship	At least one current UF/IFAS faculty member must be associated with the work as author. . County faculty may author publications in collaboration with UF/IFAS academic faculty.
Review/editing	Minimum of two technical peer reviews required. Internal and external reviewers that have been selected by the corresponding author's Department/Center editors. Internal reviewers should include at least one UF/IFAS specialist who can provide expert review on content. External reviewers should review content and include at least one individual with expertise in the subject matter who is not employed by the home Department/Center. Must be edited. There will be a UF/IFAS peer reviewed stamp on publications that meet these criteria.
Approval	Must receive administrative approval of Center Director, Department Chair, and UF/IFAS Extension Program Leader(s) before publication.
Lifecycle	Review by the corresponding or designated author every 3 years to determine if it should be retained, revised, or archived.
Archive	UF Digital Library's Florida Historical Agriculture and Rural Life Digital Collection **http://ufdc.ufl.edu/flag**

Publication Type	Management Guide Fact Sheet (Publication)
Target Audience	Commercial
Purpose	Provide most current UF/IFAS management recommendations to target audiences.
Content	Usually collections of book chapters or an EDIS series, may primarily consist of IFAS recommendations and/or conveniently arranged tabular data.
Visual style	UF/IFAS Branding guidelines must be used. The EDIS fact sheet templates comply with these guidelines.
Numbering	Official IFAS Publication Number must be used.
Authorship	Authorship changes frequently. Handbook or series has designated editors.

Review/editing	• Minimum of two technical peer reviews required. Internal and external reviewers that have been selected by the corresponding author's Department/Center editors.
	  ◦ Internal reviewers should include at least one UF/IFAS specialist who can provide expert review on content.
	  ◦ External reviewers should review content and include at least one individual with expertise in the subject matter who is not employed by the home Department/Center.
	Must be edited.
	There will be a UF/IFAS peer reviewed stamp on publications that meet these criteria.

Approval	Must receive administrative approval of Center Director, Department Chair, and UF/IFAS Extension Program Leader(s) before publication.
Lifecycle	Reviewed and/or revised annually by relevant Extension working group.
Archive	UF Digital Library's Florida Historical Agriculture and Rural Life Digital Collection **http://ufdc.ufl.edu/flag**

Extension Creative Works

Publication Type	Program Materials (Applies to Creative Works that are available on EDIS)
Target Audience	Participants in Extension programs
Purpose	Support of Extension programs
Content	Formatted brochures, handouts, forms, posters, or other materials (but not evaluation materials) that are used in support of Extension programs.
Visual style	UF/IFAS Branding guidelines must be used. EDIS brochure and handout templates comply with these guidelines. Design subject to ICS Creative Director approval.
Numbering	Official IFAS Publication Number must be used.
Authorship	At least one current UF/IFAS faculty member must be associated with the work as an author.
Review/editing	Any technical content should be adapted from current EDIS peer-reviewed publications. • At least one internal reviewers with relevant expertise to evaluate readability and clarity of content. Must be edited.
Approval	Must receive administrative approval of Unit Leader (DED, Center Director or Department Chair), and UF/IFAS Extension Program Leader(s) before publication.
Lifecycle	Review by corresponding or designated author every 3 years to determine if it should be retained, revised, or archived.
Archive	UF Digital Library's Florida Historical Agriculture and Rural Life Digital Collection **http://ufdc.ufl.edu/flag**

Publication Type	Curricula and Training Handbooks (Applies to Creative Works that are available on EDIS)
Target Audience	4-H leaders and youth, educators, trainers
Purpose	Structured instruction/education setting
Content	Curriculum and training materials belong in EDIS if they are project books for 4-H leaders and youth, lesson plans for educators, or professional development training. Individual lesson plans should not be published as separate documents; rather, they should be compiled into one document that includes background information such as the intended audience, how it was produced, and how it should be used.
Visual style	UF/IFAS Branding guidelines must be used. Design subject to ICS Creative Director approval.
Numbering	Official IFAS Publication Number must be used.
Authorship	At least one current UF/IFAS faculty member must be associated with the work as author.
Review/editing	Any technical content should be adapted from current EDIS peer-reviewed publications. • At least one internal reviewer to evaluate instructional design, readability and clarity of content. Must be edited.
Approval	Must receive administrative approval of Unit Leader (DED, Center Director or Department Chair), and UF/IFAS Extension Program Leader(s) before publication. Youth-related curricula must receive administrative approval of 4-H program leader.
Lifecycle	Review by corresponding or designated author every 3 years to determine if it should be retained, revised, or archived.
Archive	UF Digital Library's Florida Historical Agriculture and Rural Life Digital Collection **http://ufdc.ufl.edu/flag**