

HOW-TO GUIDE

Write a Letter to the Editor

Shared by Real Food Challenge, Slow Food USA and 350.org

About

Guidelines for letter-to-the editors vary, so do your homework. Go to the web site of your local newspaper to find out the exact word count and any additional guidelines specified by the publication.

How-To

1. *Focus on your passion for the food movement.* Tell your story while focusing on the action or event you are currently working on in the community.
2. *Think creatively.* Present the topic in an innovative way and introduce unique solutions to the challenge.
3. *Write clearly and concisely.* Follow the limitations given on the editorial or letters-to-the-editor page.
4. *Make a point.* Include your major points within the first few paragraphs. Limit the letter to one subject (your action), and keep it brief.
5. *Make it specific.* Say early on why you are writing, and when you mention your action/event, be explicit about its goal and what you're trying to achieve.
6. *Type your letter, spell check and proofread.* Don't forget to double space between the lines! And, always use correct grammar and punctuation.
7. *Sign your name and include your phone number and email.* If the newspaper is interested in publishing your letter they will need to get in touch to verify that you are whom you say.
8. *Mail, fax or email your letter.* Make sure to use the correct address listed for publication.

Checklist:

- Check out the guidelines provided by the publication
- Read recent letters to the editor from that publication to get a sense of the tone
- Have a brainstorm with friends
- Get a friend to proof-read your letter
- Send it, and follow up to make sure they received it

