

UF/IFAS Social Media Commenting Guidelines

All social media platforms include a space for outside users to post comments. This handout provides direction on how to answer those comments.

What can I do about comments on UF/IFAS social media platforms?

- **FACEBOOK** – Facebook does not allow the user to disable comments completely on pages. While you must allow comments, there are ways to manage them.
 - » First, make sure your profanity filter on Facebook is set to strong. settings > profanity filter > strong.
 - » Second, you may hide comments, but we recommend you do this only when the comment fits the criteria described below.
 - » There is no way to delete a comment on Facebook. The best you can do is hide a comment.
- **INSTAGRAM** – This platform allows you to turn off commenting on posts.
 - » Find your published post and hit the ... in the top-right hand corner. Then hit “turn off commenting.”
- **TWITTER** – There is no way to delete or hide comments on Twitter.
- **YOUTUBE** – Disable comments
 - » You can disable comments on videos by settings> video manager and then choose a video.
 - » Then hit edit > info and settings > uncheck allow comments.

What do I do if someone asks a question?

- If you know the answer, respond to the question either in the comment thread or via a private direct message.
- If you don't know the answer, direct them to somewhere in UF/IFAS they might find the answer.

What if someone posts a negative comment?

- We realize that when UF/IFAS social media posts receive critical or insulting comments, it can be hurtful, and your normal reaction is to eliminate the post. But according to the law, the fact that a comment makes someone upset **IS NOT SUFFICIENT JUSTIFICATION** to hide it or to block the user.
- UF/IFAS is part of the University of Florida which is a public institution. Because of that, if we start limiting comments on social platforms, we are restricting individual free speech rights. **DO NOT** hide or delete any comment on social media unless:
 - » The comment constitutes a violation of the law.
 - » The content is irrelevant to the topic at hand. (A comment about UFOs on a post about dairy cows.)
- Do not respond to negative comments.

Can I just turn off comments at the time I post my content to avoid this issue?

- This feature is not available for Facebook or Twitter.
- On Instagram and YouTube it is permissible. Turn off comments at time of posting.

Can I block a user?

- UF/IFAS does not recommend blocking a user as this can be seen as censoring.

All UF/IFAS official social media accounts MUST follow the requirements described above. Not sure if your account is official? All official accounts can be found here:

- <https://www.ifas.ufl.edu/social-media/>
- <http://socialmedia.ufl.edu/accounts/>

NOT LISTED? Contact socialmedia@ifas.ufl.edu to get registered.

For questions on comments please contact April Martin at april.martin@ufl.edu.