

Purdue Agriculture *Connections*

27 – Best Tabloid/Newsletter for external audience

Purdue University Department of Agricultural Communication

Contact: Tom Campbell, (765) 494-8084, tsc@purdue.edu

A. General description of the entry

Purdue Agriculture *Connections* is a 12-page, full-color tabloid produced three times a year by Purdue University's Department of Agricultural Communication.

Connections is distributed free to about 31,300 graduates of Purdue's College of Agriculture, as well as to all of its current students, faculty and staff.

Connections is also distributed at many College of Agriculture events, including the Indiana State Fair, bringing a typical press run to 50,000 copies. A Web version of the publication, including various photo galleries and additional stories not found in the print issue (Web Bonuses), can be found at: www.agriculture.purdue.edu/connections.

B. Goals and objectives of the project

Purdue Agriculture *Connections* is a medium for the open exchange of ideas, information, opportunities and knowledge between Purdue University's College of Agriculture and its extended family of alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends.

C. Documented results

"Purdue Agriculture Connections is a very valuable communications link with our alumni and friends, as it is the only publication that is distributed to everyone who has graduated from our college and to everyone who has made a gift to our program. As the alumni programs director, I know that it's valued by those who receive it when I continually get calls, notes, and e-mails to update addresses that specifically point out, 'I don't want to miss myConnections!' To me, that speaks volumes about how well the publication serves our audience.

"Since Connections' inception, I have noticed a marked change in the 'baseline of information' that our alumni have about our college and its programs. Connections devotes most of its copy to information about the College of Agriculture, as opposed to information about the Ag Alumni Association. Because the editorial team works closely with the Dean of Agriculture to coordinate stories with the college's current concerns and initiatives, I find that

my job as an envoy of the dean has been simplified. I can spend more of my face-to-face communications time addressing solutions or recruiting volunteers for projects, since, thanks to Connections, I no longer have to start at the beginning of an issue when meeting alumni audiences.

"Because of this, I really believe Connections has played a major role in my being able to 'ratchet up' our alumni relations to a higher level."

*Donya Lester, executive secretary,
Purdue Agricultural Alumni Association*

"Connections is the best newsletter I have seen from any unit at Purdue! Congratulations on creating a publication that is attractive, newsy, easy to read, and has something for everyone, whether a student, student parent, alumnus, employee, or friend! I read every article and will clip a couple to send to folks who probably are not on your mailing list."

*Betty M. Nelson, Dean of Students Emeritus
Purdue University*

"What a great issue of Connections, at least from my perspective. It's filled with good articles about teachers, students, and educational programs. My compliments. This should encourage our alumni to be positive in encouraging young people to continue their education in Purdue's College of Agriculture."

*Karl Brandt, associate dean,
College of Agriculture, Purdue University*

"I just want to pass a word of thanks to the ag alumni association. They have a great magazine that really will keep me up to date. Tom Campbell has some excellent pictures in the magazine, and the stories were understandable."

*Aaron Goedde, student
Purdue University*

"WOW!!! What a surprise you gave me. Thank you a lot. The article could not be better. Congratulations on a job magnificently done. Be advised that as of last Monday, we have received six contacts by Purdue Connections readers either ordering or sending e-mail comments. We hope they keep coming. Muchas gracias por tus finezas and may the good Lord bless you all. Please keep in touch."

*Baltasar Ferreiro, El Salvador coffee grower and
Purdue grad who was the subject of a Connections alumni profile*

D. Total annual budget

\$75,870 (annually) for printing and mailing, including 1,050 copies that are mailed internationally. The average cost per issue is \$24,620 on a press run of 51,200 copies, for an average cost of about 48 cents per copy.

E. *Connections* team members:

Tom Campbell, managing editor, primary writer, photographer

Frank Koontz, editor

Dan Annarino, graphic designer

Christine Roper, Web designer

Patty Mason, administrative assistant

Megan Madia, Development liaison

Members of the news unit of the Department of Agricultural Communication contribute additional stories. *Connections* is also a teaching tool. One standing feature, *Unretired*, is written by an undergraduate student in Purdue's Department of Agricultural Communication. It has given several students their first opportunity to be published.