THE PARTS OF AN IMPACT STORY:

WHAT IS the ISSUE, WHY WAS IT an ISSUE & FOR WHOM IS IT an ISSUE?
• Connect to hot topics.
• Make people care.

WHAT WAS DONE?
• Describe major research/Extension activities.
• Who was involved?
• Be brief and clear.
• Don’t go on and on about methods.
• No jargon.
• Highlight innovation and collaboration.

WHAT WAS LEARNED or PRODUCED?
• Share major findings, but don’t list a ton of data.
• Share important tools, products, workshops, and other outputs.

WHAT WERE the IMPACTS?
• Why do the project/program results and outputs matter?
• What kind of impact?
• How big was the impact?
• Where did the impact occur?
• Who was impacted?

IMPA C T =
△ condition*
△ behavior
△ knowledge
*economic, environmental or social

Still having TROUBLE?
• Think about potential impacts.
• Explain how your research creates a foundation for future impacts.
• Describe the ripple effect of small and/or early impacts over time.
• Show how your work is playing a part in certain impacts.

MULTISTATE projects:
• Describe the benefits or importance of multistate collaboration.
• Keep activities and impacts organized by type, objective, or other scheme.
• Work together on impact statements.
• Track impacts over time; show progress and return on investment.

This guide was developed by the Multistate Research Fund Impacts Program as a supplement to the Impact Writing Workshop “Big Impact: Why Impact Reporting Matters and How to Do It Better.” You may share this document, but please do not alter or use without attribution. For more information, visit mrfimpacts.org.
IDENTIFY THE PARTS OF YOUR IMPACT STORY.

What issue is being addressed? (e.g., 15% of dairy cow population was lost to disease in 2016)

Who cares about this issue? (e.g., farmers; consumers)

Why do they care about the issue? (e.g., farmers are losing money; consumers want safe, steady dairy supply)

What did the project do to address the issue? (e.g., studied disease, hosted field days)

Did the project use any unique or innovative methods or tools?

Who was involved?

What were the major results or outputs? (e.g., a new vaccine is 10% effective than others)

What kind of impact did the project have or could it have? (e.g., changes in condition, behavior, or knowledge)

Who was impacted? (e.g., farmers, consumers, local businesses)

Where did this impact occur?

How big was this impact?

USE THE INFORMATION ABOVE TO WRITE AN IMPACT STATEMENT.

REVIEW YOUR STATEMENT.

Did you remember to...

☐ talk about all parts of the impact story?
☐ NOT talk too much about methods/theory?
☐ NOT use jargon?
☐ use numbers to show magnitude?
☐ write with an active voice?
☐ only share meaningful info?
☐ be concise?
☐ include a link to more information?

SHARE YOUR STATEMENT.

Think about your audience.

Industry reps  Government officials  College leaders  Fellow scientists

Producers  Consumers  Area residents  Voters

Think about where to share your impact.

- Databases
- Social media
- Department leadership
- Communications team
- Newspapers/magazines
- Speeches
- Interviews
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