

# County Narrative Reports

Revised November 2020

County narrative reports are used to regularly inform county commissioners and district directors of Extension programming activities, successes and upcoming events. Narrative reports are required by the North Dakota Century Code:

*“An extension agent shall file a statement of the agent’s work with the board of county commissioners either monthly or within a mutually agreed upon timeframe not to exceed one year.”*

– North Dakota Century Code (NDCC), 11-38-10

NDSU Extension and the North Dakota Association of Counties have agreed that reports need to be submitted on at least a quarterly basis (four times per year) to meet the statutory requirements, although some counties submit narrative reports on a monthly basis or every two months.

## Guidelines:

**Each county is unique. NDSU-branded templates are available for adaption for the county narrative report. The following guidelines are recommended in terms of content:**

- A. Submit one combined county narrative report to the board of county commissioners and respective district director at least every three months.
  - a. The county coordinator is responsible for ensuring updates from other agents are collected in a timely fashion to allow for creation of the document.
  - b. The quarterly county narrative is expected to be shared with the board of commissioners and district director by the 15th of the next month. For instance, the January-March county narrative is due by April 15. (This is the same timeline recommended for entering your Quarterly Efforts Program Report).
  - c. Please also send the county narrative to other decisions makers and affiliated groups such as legislators in your district(s), advisory board members and State Board of Agricultural Research and Education representatives in your counties ([www.ag.ndsu.edu/sbare](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/sbare)).
  - d. Please email your county narratives to your district director and copy the administrative support staff.
- B. Provide staff names, positions and geographic area (photos of staff also are helpful).
- C. List the months included in the county narrative (for example, January-March 2021).
- D. Include the NDSU Extension logo. Using the NDSU Extension logo for your county is acceptable.
- E. Aim for a concise and easy-to-skim style. Avoid lengthy narratives.
- F. Include photos to make the document visually appealing.
- G. Focus on program successes and impacts; testimonials and success stories are powerful for decision makers.
- H. Write short paragraphs and break them up with spacing to make the text easier to read.
- I. Include a future calendar of events or highlight a couple of future events.
- J. Do not report on every educational activity in each report; focus on key impacts.
- K. Spell out acronyms at least once before using them again in the document.
- L. Proofread! Have at least one other person review the document prior to distribution.

Examples of county narrative reports are available from district directors. Update the format every three to five years to be fresh.