

Figure and Table Titles and August *JOE* Highlights

Abstract

In the "Figure and Table Titles" section of this Editor's Page, I emphasize the importance of writing effective titles for graphic displays of data and provide strategies for doing so. And in "August *JOE* Highlights," I draw attention to this issue's wide range of articles related to youth development programming and summarize other topics that are addressed.

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Figure and Table Titles

Writing a title for a figure or table can make you feel a bit like Goldilocks: "This title is toooo long. And this title is toooo vague." Crafting figure and table titles that are "just right" can be a challenge! Any figure or table in a scholarly article should be clear, complete, and comprehensible on its own—even when taken out of the context of the article. In other words, readers should not have to search surrounding text for clues to the meaning of the data presented. One reason figures and tables must be able to stand in isolation is that they may be reused, with permission, elsewhere. Given this circumstance, getting the title just right is crucial.

When preparing to write a title, determine the essential information you need to convey: What happened? To whom? When? Where? Each of these components will not always be essential to understanding a figure or table—you should tailor the type of information you include to the data presented. To keep titles concise, supplement the information in a title by including a figure caption or table note as needed. Here's an example of an effective figure title from this issue's article about a uniquely multiyear succession planning program: "Knowledge Gained by Participants in Multiyear Farm and Ranch Succession and Estate Planning Program." This title conveys as concisely as possible the essential information of what happened and to whom, whereas a title such as "Knowledge Gained by Program Participants" would have been incomplete.

Writing effective figure and table titles is generally just a matter of giving the title some thought—although you might have to try out different titles to find one that provides the kind of contentment Goldilocks found in Baby Bear's bed!

August *JOE* Highlights

Approaches for serving Extension's youngest clientele are the focus of several articles in this issue. Strategies explored include preparing youths for careers in Extension and related fields, enhancing youth experiences through improved selection and training of youth development program volunteers, reaching underserved

youth audiences, involving youths in 4-H social media marketing, and conducting community assessments to better inform youth programming. Examples of the associated articles are the Feature "[Preparing Students for Extension Careers and Expanding U.S. Extension Reach Through International Service Learning](#)"; the Research in Brief offerings "[Prevalent Approaches to Professional Development in State 4-H Programs](#)," "[Preparing Youths for Careers in Agriculture Through State Crop Scouting Competitions](#)," and "[Factors Limiting Youth Participation in 4-H and Other Youth Development Programs in Underserved Communities](#)"; the Ideas at Work articles "[Unique Approach to Creating and Implementing a Social Media Strategic Plan](#)" and "[Effective Chaperone Selection and Training for Enhanced Youth Experiences](#)"; and the Tools of the Trade entries "[Engaging Latino Communities from the Ground Up: Three Tools](#)" and "[Using Community Assessments to Improve 4-H Youth Development Programming Efforts](#)."

This issue also provides a wealth of information for *JOE* readers beyond just those involved in youth development programming. The two Commentaries suggest ways to strengthen the Extension workforce and the practice of extension. The leadoff articles in the Research in Brief and Tools of the Trade categories explore the critical idea of demonstrating Extension's public value, and the issue is rounded out with excellent offerings on various agricultural and community development issues and other important topics.

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