



Process Guide for Producing Amazing Food Demonstration Videos with a Purpose

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Introduction

There are many reasons for Extension personnel to produce food demonstration videos. They may be part of a program curriculum, produced as part of a regular series for public access, or produced to illustrate a specific cooking technique. Whatever the reason, it is important that the producer defines the purpose of the video and the desired outcomes. This will guide how the video is produced, narrated, and disseminated, as well as how its impact is evaluated.

Here are some guidelines and tools to help you produce purposeful and high quality videos that make an impact.

Defining the purpose for food demonstration videos

A clearly defined purpose for the food demonstration video will guide what is demonstrated, the look and feel of the video, and how it is ultimately used and distributed. The purpose can be very specific or more general, it can be singular or multi-faceted. Examples:

- To teach how to modify cake recipes to lower the fat content, and provide information about healthy dietary fat choices.

- To illustrate 3 basic cutting techniques, introduce 3 types of kitchen knives, and review knife safety guidelines
- Teach how to operate a slow cooker, discuss the time saving benefits of a slow cooker, and demonstrate how to cook a roast in a slow cooker.
- Attract viewers in order to make them aware of an Extension program

Once the purpose is defined, the type of food demonstration video to produce, the key messages to convey, and the way it will be disseminated can be decided.

Types of food demonstration videos

There are many types of food demonstration videos, and you can get an idea of the variety of types by looking at those publicly available. Some common types include:

- Videos featuring the individual talking and making the food that may include shots from multiple angles.
- Videos illustrating the food preparation actions with narration, with few if any shots of the individual.
- Short videos without narration that illustrate the food preparation with text providing details of ingredients, quantities, etc.

Preparing for production

Now that you have defined the purpose of your video and chosen the type of video you are going to produce, you should plan out the video shots you are going to take, and what you are going to say. There are several tools appended to this publication that will help you do this. Here are the basic steps:

1. Outline the key messages that you want to convey in the food demonstration. (See Food Demonstration Outline Template provided) For Extension purposes these messages will generally fall into four categories:
 - Nutrition and health
 - Food safety
 - Cooking tips and techniques
 - Purchasing
2. Create a shot list. Videos are much more engaging if they are composed of many different shots. Depending on the length of the video, you may have 15 - 50 different shots that you will put together to make up your video. Think through the steps of the food demonstration from start to finish. Make a list of each shot you will take for each step. (See the Shot List Template provided) Be specific, for example:
 - Front on shot of me standing behind the kitchen counter with ingredients in foreground.
 - 45° angle close-up of garlic and onion cooking in frying pan stirred by spatula.
3. Write your narrative. You can write your narrative first and then use the narrative to create your shot list, or vice versa. Choose the method that works best for you, but be sure to include the key messages that you outlined for your video.

With this preparation work completed, you are ready to begin filming.

Producing the video

Equipment, the filming area, composition of your shots, and the filming process are all important considerations in the production of your video.

Equipment

You do not need expensive equipment to produce a good video. In fact, you can film the entire video with your smartphone. Some relatively inexpensive pieces of equipment that you should consider include:

- A tripod. Look for a tripod with legs that lock with clips (not screw tips) and that can extend up to 50-60 inches. An adjustable center column is a plus. You might also consider getting a smaller table top tripod.
- Phone holder that will attach to the tripod and allows you to easily adjust the phone's orientation.
- A fluid head to attach to the tripod and phone is optional, but will allow you to get smooth panning and tilting movements.
- Microphone. The quality of your audio will make a big impact on the quality of your video. Choose the best microphone in your price point. Wireless microphones provide maximum mobility, but there are good wired microphones, as well (See resources).
- Lighting. Having appropriate lighting for filming is important. Natural light can be used, but depending on it limits where and when you can film. Investing in an inexpensive lighting system will improve your video quality and give you more flexibility. (See resources)

Setting up the filming area

Many different spaces can function as a nice filming area. The space you need will depend

on the type of food video you have chosen to produce.

Food videos that feature the individual speaking and preparing the food will require staging the area where the action is happening. Be sure the space is clean and uncluttered, although strategically placed items that add color or interest can add quality to your video.

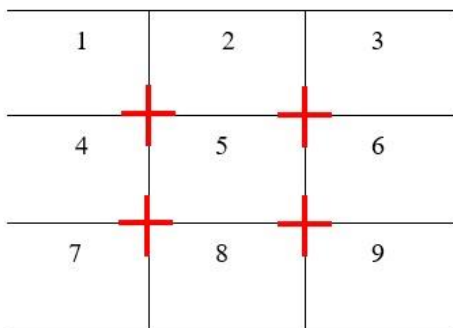
Set up the phone/camera and look to see what is being captured in the background prior to filming. To create depth in your shots, avoid filming the person with a wall directly behind them. Finally, pay attention to the lighting. Adjust your lighting to get rid of unwanted shadows and illuminate the objects of focus in the shot.

For close-up action shots and still shots, decide what is going to be in the field of the camera. Set the camera up, look through it and adjust so that only the items you intended are in the shot. Again, check the lighting. If need be, add additional lights at various angles to remove unwanted shadows and increase sharpness.

Composition

The rule of thirds

Imagine two lines running across your camera/phone frame horizontally and vertically that produce nine sections, with four intersection points.



This grid can serve as a reference for positioning the objects in your video or photo. When you position the most important elements

of your image at the intersection points, you produce a much more natural image. Off-center composition is pleasing to the eye because it's typically where the eyes go first. Viewers are also able to interact with the space between the subject or object when it is off center. Try to position the most important object of your filming at the intersection points of your frame.

Styling your photos

Styling your shots is easy, and can add interest to your video. When appropriate, add objects of interest or color in the frame of your shots. Wooden cutting boards, colorful kitchen towels, salt and pepper shakers, and many other items can serve this purpose. These can be thematic throughout the food demonstration video.

You should produce a thumbnail photo of your finished product for videos demonstrating recipes. This is a perfect opportunity to style your shot, with a nice placemat and plate, garnish, perhaps utensils and a filled drinking glass. Be creative.

Camera angles

The camera angle will impact your shots and should be chosen to fit the purpose. The most common angles used are the overhead shot, 45° angle, 30° angle, and straight on shot. For each of these angles you should set up your camera, choosing what will be the primary object of focus, and look through the camera to ensure you are getting the perspective you want.

The 45° angle is the most used. It will give depth to the shot and will include surrounding objects. You will have to adjust the closeness of the camera to the object to get only those items you want to include. Dropping the camera/phone down a bit to the 30° angle will show more of the background. This angle will work with food shots not obscured by deep containers, a deep frying pan for instance.

Straight on shots are great for foods that have layered ingredients, like hamburgers, sandwiches, layer cakes and puddings, among others. The straight on shot allows visualization of all of the layers, and the action to create them.

Finally, the overhead shot is used a lot. This shot has no depth, which makes it easier to make a composition, your food becomes the shapes and colors that you place into your frame. Because of the lack of depth, these shots can be overused, so be judicious in its use.

The filming process

Before beginning filming, be sure that you have enough memory on your phone or in your camera memory card. If you are using your phone it is a good idea to put it into airplane mode so that your shots are not interrupted by incoming calls and texts. There are many ways to approach filming and narrating. This publication describes one method that can be modified to meet the need of the photographer.

This method conducts the filming process in two steps. The first is to record your audio (the A role), and the second is to film your shots (the B role). You can record all of your narration at one time. If while recording you make a mistake, simply wait a few seconds and start again. You will be able to edit the audio to remove errors and match the audio to your shots in the editing phase. In some instances, you may be recording the audio as you are filming. This may be the case if you plan to have shots where you are introducing the food demo, or where you are featured preparing the food and talking at the same time.

Next, film each of the shots that you have detailed on your shot list. The shots that do not include the person can all be taken without narration. Once this is done, you are ready to edit and produce your video.

Do's and Don'ts

Practical experience has taught some lessons about what to do and not do during the filming process. Here are a few:

- Do use the same microphone and recording device to record your audio. If you use several microphones
- your sound quality will vary when you put your video together.
- Do wear a solid color outfit, if in front of the camera.
- Do be sure to practice good hygiene and cutting skills in your video
- Don't film yourself with a wall *right* behind you. There will be no depth to the photo.

Editing your video

Editing your video is a thoughtful process of arranging your shots to create a flow and tell a story. It involves enhancing the shots with music, narration, text, and transitions.

There are many different editing software options for use on your computer to edit your videos. You can also edit your video on your phone using any one of the editing apps. Some capabilities that you should look for in an editing software or app include:

- Able to split video and audio
- Has at least 3 audio tracks
- Has at least 3 video tracks
- Can add titles and text, control over their appearance
- Picture-in-picture feature (nice to have)

Camtasia is a software available through Virginia Tech that has all of these features, and includes a set of music that can be used to enhance your videos.

There are many ways to approach editing your video. In general, you will upload your audio, video and still shots to the program. You may also have additional images, like your thumbnail photo, title images, required organization identification slides (See

Standards for final production) among others. You will put these items onto the audio and video tracks in the order you want them to appear. A general outline of steps include:

- Upload your audio. Place on the audio track and cut it into the audio clips that correspond with your shots removing any errors or unwanted audio. Put the audio clips in sequence.
- Upload the shots you have taken from your shot list to the program. Place the shots on the video track in sequence. Align with the relevant audio clips.
- Place your introduction image(s) in the foremost position on the video track.
- Place your ending image(s) at the end of the video track.

If your software allows, add titles, text, or any other images onto your video clips as appropriate. Alternatively, you can also create images of these and insert them onto the video track in the appropriate position between video clips.

- Music clips can be added at the beginning and end of the video on a separate audio track at this time. Most programs will allow you to fade the music in and out, and adjust the audio volume.
- Finally, add transitions between your video clips. This will help create a smooth video that moves from one scene to another seamlessly.

Hints:

You will be moving your video and audio clips around as you put the video together. Be sure to keep all of the audio and video clips together as you do this to keep them synchronized.

Standards for final production

Like all VCE publications, there are standards for identifying the publication, as well as some best practices.

- You must identify VCE at the beginning and ending of the video. The VCE nondiscrimination statement is included in the end slide. Standard slides have been prepared for this purpose and are available.
- All videos must be closed captioned.
- When using copyrighted recipes or images, the author must attain and retain permission for their use.
- Be aware of showing branded items. Try to hide the labels if feasible.

Posting food demonstration videos

It is recommended that Virginia Cooperative Extension food demonstration videos be posted on the [VCE YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/c/VAExtension) (<https://www.youtube.com/c/VAExtension>) site and added to the [VCE Publications and Resources website](https://pubs.ext.vt.edu) (<https://pubs.ext.vt.edu>). This will increase the likelihood that your content will be easily found and shared. Follow the [Guidelines for Publishing VCE Produced Videos on the VCE intranet](https://bit.ly/3PDXfIK) (<https://bit.ly/3PDXfIK>) for details on how to get your video posted.

Software for putting it all together

Here are a few examples of editing software that meet the criteria outlined in this publication

- Camtasia
- Adobe Spark
- Sony Vegas Movie Studio Platinum Suite 12 (PC)
- Pinnacle Studio 17 (PC)
- iMovie (Mac)
- Final Cut Pro (Mac)

Resources

Equipment

- Lighting
- Microphone
 - Roku
- Tripods
 - Manfrotto Compact Action Aluminum Tripod (Black) MKCOMPACTACN-BK (<https://bhpho.to/3vfiWjK>)
 - Desktop tripod
 - Flexible tripod
- I-phone attachment
 - Ulanzi ST-02 Metal Smartphone Tripod Mount 0505 B&H Photo Video (<https://bhpho.to/3OHdAVg>)

Editing Software

- TechSmith Camtasia

TechSmith Camtasia 2019 is a basic video editor with built-in features for screen recording. Download a free trial for 30 days from Techsmith. Camtasia is available from Departmental Software for \$170.00.

<https://www.techsmith.com/video-editor.html>

<https://www.techsmith.com/tutorial-camtasia.html>

<https://itpals.vt.edu/softwarelicensingcenter/depsoftware.html>

Food Demonstration Video Trainings:

- How to Make Cooking Videos by Michelle Johnson (<https://www.udemy.com/course/how-to-make-cooking-videos/>)
- Edit Professional Looking Cooking Videos in an Hour or Less by Michelle Johnson (<https://www.udemy.com/course/how-to-make-cooking-videos/>)

- <https://youtu.be/TWAGULBE1pM> (5 Part Series) - by Phillip Lemoine

Sources for Healthy Recipes:

- Virginia Family Nutrition Program recipes on the Eat Smart, Move More website: (www.eatsmartmovemoreva.org)
- Virginia Family Nutrition Program recipes on the Virginia Cooperative Extension website : (<https://ext.vt.edu/food-health/family-nutrition-program/recipes.html>)
- MyPlate website: (<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/myplatekitchen/recipes>)
- American Heart Association website: (<https://recipes.heart.org/en>)
- American Diabetes Association website: (<https://bit.ly/3BIT61x>)
- American Institute for Cancer Research website: (<https://www.aicr.org/cancer-prevention/healthy-eating/>)
- Virginia Family Nutrition Farmers Market Recipes on the Virginia Cooperative Extension website - (<https://ext.vt.edu/food-health/family-nutrition-program/recipes.html>)

Nutrition and Food Safety Information:

- Partnership for Food Safety Education, FightBac! [website - http://www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org)
- Nutrition information from Choose My Plate website- (<https://www.choosemyplate.gov>)

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2022

FST-429NP



Food Demonstration Video Outline

Outline the purpose, objectives, and key messages for your food demonstration video. Use this information to determine the format and mode of dissemination of the video.

Food Demonstration Title: _____

Video Purpose:

Video length (minutes):

Objectives:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Key Messages:

Nutrition and Health

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Food Safety

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Cooking tips and techniques

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Purchasing

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Nutritional Analysis of Recipe (as applicable)

Total Servings:

Serving size:

Calories:

Total fat (g):

 Saturated fat (g):

 Trans fat (g):

Cholesterol (g):

Total Carbohydrate (g):

 Dietary fiber (g):

 Sugar (g):

 Added sugars (g):

Protein (g):

Sodium (mg):

Vitamin D (mcg):

Calcium (mg):

Iron (mg):

Potassium (mg):



Making Your Shot List

A shot list is an organizational tool that lists each of the videos, photos, images that will make up your food demonstration video, and the narration that will accompany them. Think through the steps of your food demonstration and the various shots that will illustrate those steps. Describe the camera position and images that will make up each shot. Then add the narration that will accompany the shots. Once the list is complete, set up and take each shot, using the check box to mark when the shot is complete.

| Narration | Shots | Done |
|-----------|-------|------|
| | | |
| | | |
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