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ACTION SHEET: SUBMITTING STORIES TO MEDIA OUTLETS

Restaurant Campaign

Once a restaurant has added to their menu one or more plant-based, oil-free meals, a key next step is to get the word out about this great new option. Seeing an article or positive review of their restaurant in the local newspaper is likely to motivate and encourage restaurants. Writing a Letter to the Editor or a positive restaurant review can be a very effective way to advocate for healthier menu items. This Action Sheet has been crafted as part of the larger Restaurant Campaign and is likely an important step in sustaining plant-based/oil-free menu options long-term.

Pitching Your Idea

- First - do your homework. Identify one or more local newspapers which might be receptive to publishing your Letter to the Editor (LTE) or doing a piece about the newsworthy item. Understand their submission requirements (e.g., word count limitations, will they accept photos, etc.) and timeframes, get the contact person's name, and also understand their circulation numbers.
- Approach the restaurant owner or manager and propose your idea. Explain that you want to support this restaurant's effort to expand its healthy plant-based menu options, by expanding its customer base. Explain your plan to reach out to local newspapers with a review of their restaurant and the delicious plant-based meal(s) that they offer.
- Be sure to remind the restaurant owner/manager that you cannot guarantee your letter will be published, and offer to share with him/her the final draft for comment.
- Offer as a backup to pitch and post via social media.

Getting Started

- Every media outlet is likely to have different requirements, but most will require your name and contact information, such as an email or phone number.
- If you are mailing a letter in, consider including a return address.
- Most newspapers prefer digital inquiries, so check which option is best.
- Decide whether you would like to remain anonymous and specify this information in your letter.
- If you remembered to take a photo of your meal, consider including it with your letter.



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Crafting Your Letter

- Try to keep your letter between 100-200 words. Newspapers have limited space to print LTEs.
- Introduce the topic/subject of your letter, including the restaurant's name and location.
- Explain why the restaurant stands out to you—in this case, the plant-based, oil-free meal you were able to experience, the Certificate that the Restaurant has earned as part of a larger, national campaign (The PlantPure Communities Restaurant Campaign), and perhaps the service or a few words about the owner.
- Write with your senses! Describe how the meal tasted, looked, or any other interesting details that will entice the reader. Adjectives are your friend!
- Include a call to action. Encourage the reader to visit the establishment and support this and other local restaurants who understand that many Americans are struggling with food borne illnesses, but still want to go out and enjoy a tasty meal.
- Briefly reiterate why the restaurant stands out to you to conclude your letter.
- Provide contact information about the restaurant, including the address and/or website.
- Thank the editor for his/her time.
- When your final draft is nearly complete, take a step back, and think about an appropriate title that covers your main point that will also entice the newspaper to run the LTE and their readers to read it, then add the title.

LTE Example

- If you need more guidance, please refer to the example in the Templates section.



We welcome your suggestions and ideas! Please send them to info@plantpurecommunities.org. This material may not be used out of context. Please refer to PPC's terms and conditions for more information. Updated February 2018.