

## SETTING UP A MEDIA SCHEDULE

1. Choose a high school 4-H member that is well-spoken and would be a good person to do an interview. Meet with them and ask them if they would be interested in representing his/her local 4-H chapter by visiting the media. Let them know that you will be scheduling this and that you will let them know exact times, etc. once you have the schedule complete. You can provide them with a copy of the “Talking Points” and a copy of “Keys to a Successful Media Interview” included in this packet.
2. Contact the Blue Bell representative to introduce yourself and find out when they might be available to visit the media (ex. week of Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>). (They will be made aware ahead of time that you will be contacting them.)
  - a. Keep in mind that if a big event is coming up you will want to avoid scheduling media for that day or week. The best situation for you in scheduling media is a “slow media” day...in other words, they don't have much to cover. Obviously, you can't control the weather, or natural disasters...but if a yearly festival is taking place you may want to take that into consideration before scheduling.
3. Once you know which week works best for both you and them, then you can proceed to contacting the media.
4. Review your media contacts list. The contact name and number you have been provided is for a sales representative for each respective station. They will be able to assist you in reaching the news producers and/or assignment editors to hopefully arrange for the interview.

\*In most cases, radio stations are generally more eager to work with you than TV stations will be. But don't lose faith; the important thing to remember is that the story of Texas 4-H 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary is a worthy story for news coverage.
5. Schedule TV first and then Radio. TV interviews are a little more of a challenge to schedule since there are limited opportunities. Radio is generally more flexible and can be scheduled more easily around the TV interviews.

### ***Tips Before you call:***

- Be positive! Remember this is an exciting event- Texas 4-H is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! This will only come around once!
- Don't be pushy or forceful; the rep. is not the decision maker when it comes to interviews and this is an opportunity for you to build a relationship with the media as well.

# SCHEDULING TV INTERVIEWS

**Tip:**

-Be aware of their news schedule, for example: Ch. 2 may have a local morning, noon, evening and late news; however, Ch. 3 may only have local evening and late news (some stations have Good Morning America, etc. in the morning which is a national news program). Also, you may find that a station has a local talk show for example "Great Day Houston". These types of shows are always eager for fun stories such as this.

1. When talking with the TV sales representative state your name, who you are with and who you are representing (ex. "My name is Jim Smith, I am the County Extension Agent and today I am calling on behalf of Texas 4-H"). Next explain the reason for your call (ex. I wanted to give you guys a call because Texas 4-H is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and we want to get the word out about what a great program this is and also we have a special treat that ties in with our celebration.) Explain to them that one of the high school's 4-H youth would be the spokesperson to do the interview. You can then proceed to explain that you will also be bringing Blue Bell Ice Cream's newest flavor which will benefit Texas 4-H. You can then say that you would like to find out if you could schedule an interview on \_\_\_\_\_ station. (Generally you are going to have more luck on an early morning news or noon news than on evening news.) You may go ahead and state that you would like to be on their morning news, etc.
  - a. If the rep. tells you that they can't help you, ask them to provide you with contact information for the producer or assignment editor of the specific show you are trying to get on. (For example, "could you please provide me with the morning producer's contact number so that I might be able to contact them directly to set something up").
  - b. In some cases the rep. may tell you that you would have better luck getting on-air if you call directly rather than going through the sales dept.
2. The representative/producer is probably going to ask for some type of press release. You can either ask for their e-mail and forward it to them or you can fax it to them. You will want to send the 2 attached press releases.
3. After the phone conversation, document what was discussed and if a potential date/time was discussed jot it down so that you can avoid overbooking. Make note of when to follow up (ex. the rep. may have told you they could know something on Wed. after their staff meeting...make a note to follow up on Wed. afternoon).
4. When you call to follow up, again state your name and who you are representing. Also mention when your previous conversation took place (ex. "Hi Carol, my name is Jim Smith with the County Extension Office, we spoke this past Monday about scheduling an interview for one of the 4-H kids to come talk about 4-H and our celebration this year."
5. Hopefully, the rep. or producer will have a date and time designated for you to arrive and when you will actually appear on air. Make notes on the conversation as they describe what they expect. If you have any questions, need directions, etc. ask them at this time. Let them know that they can expect you, the 4-H student and a Blue Bell representative. Inform them that the Blue Bell representative will be bringing the new flavor for everyone at the station to sample (also, if there is a studio audience we will dip ice cream for them as well). Ask the rep. or producer if they could estimate how many people they might have in their offices around that time of day when you will be there (also ask about studio audience if applicable).

- a. If the station says that they cannot schedule an interview then thank them for their time and make sure to let them know you appreciate the effort.*
6. Once you have all of the details ironed out with the TV station, make sure to add this stop to your schedule. See the sample schedule included in this packet.
7. As you schedule each interview be sure to keep the Blue Bell contact and your 4-H student in the loop, perhaps just a brief e-mail to keep the lines of communication open.
8. Be sure to contact each TV station and follow the above steps for each.

# SCHEDULING RADIO INTERVIEWS

## *Tip:*

-Radio interviews will be easier to schedule as you have more flexibility on time. For example, during the day TV only has a morning news (which may only be an hour or two long) and a noon news which often times is only 30 minutes.

Compare this to radio which is on air all day long and you can schedule just about any time during the normal work day (obviously depending on availability). Be sure you have all of your TV schedule set before you begin calling on radio.

- Also, usually there is more than one station within a station group (ex. KTBX and KKYY are both Clear Channel stations)- so you may want to ask each rep. about each of their individual stations. For example, Bob Wright may be the rep. for KTBX and Jane Doe is the rep. for KKYY. You will probably need to contact each of them. If there is a very friendly rep. you may ask them if they wouldn't mind talking with the other rep's for you to see if they could get the interviews all scheduled together within the same hour or so. This will be helpful so you don't have to make more than one trip to that station group.)

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