eXtension

Editorial Standards Manual

October 1, 2012
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1 Application of This Manual

eXtension content involves subject matter that is wide ranging and authored by contributors from varied disciplines, or Communities of Practice (CoPs). Because of these factors, eXtension editors have created this manual to ensure quality and consistency across eXtension content.

eXtension content is largely of three types: articles, frequently asked questions (FAQs), and news stories.

- For style and formatting guidelines for eXtension articles and FAQs, adhere to the standards delineated in the relevant CoP-specific editorial style sheet (if available), the current edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style (CMS)*, and this manual.
- For style and formatting guidelines for news stories, consult the current edition of *The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law (AP Stylebook)*. **Note:** eXtension editors edit only articles and FAQs, not news stories.
- For instruction on writing high-quality, discoverable content or using the Drupal platform to create eXtension content, refer to the *eXtension Content Development Handbook*.

Although eXtension style is based on guidelines provided in *CMS* and this manual, a CoP may use another guide as its primary style manual (e.g., *Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers*) or apply guidelines that differ from those provided in *CMS* and this manual. If a CoP applies editorial standards that differ from established eXtension style, the CoP should prepare a CoP-specific editorial style sheet listing those differences and publish this style sheet on its Admin page. (As an alternative, eXtension editors may build a CoP-specific editorial style sheet based on the content contributors are producing.) If a CoP develops a CoP-specific editorial style sheet, its guidance takes precedence over that provided in *CMS* and this manual. Consult it to find information about content, style, and formatting specific to the CoP.

In general, use *CMS* as your first resource for addressing editorial, style, and formatting questions. *CMS* covers most topics, either definitively or by indicating that a particular approach is recommended/preferred or may/should be used. Use this manual as a supplement to *CMS* for the following types of information:

- guidelines specific to eXtension formatting and content
- guidelines that contradict *CMS* or provide clarity where *CMS* is ambiguous
- guidelines that provide clarity where rules of English are ambiguous
- referral to applicable sections of *CMS*, 16th Edition (*CMS 16*) for areas of common confusion

**Note:** If guidance is provided in *CMS*, it is not repeated in this manual. Therefore, as an eXtension contributor or copy editor, you may wish to develop your own list of reminders for hard-to-remember rules.

To the degree possible, the organization of information in this manual aligns with the organization of information in *CMS*. However, because eXtension content is specialized and distinct, the organization herein does not correlate exactly with that of *CMS*.

As you apply the guidance provided in *CMS* and this manual to eXtension articles and FAQs, keep in mind the distinctions between nontechnical and technical texts. Most eXtension articles are nontechnical in nature and are intended for a general audience. Other articles are more technical/scientific in nature; they include the use of formulas, tables, technical jargon, reference lists, and so on and are intended for a more specialized audience. FAQs are nontechnical because they are consumer-oriented. Therefore, the vast majority of eXtension content should be considered nontechnical. Treat only content that is especially technical/scientific in nature as technical text.
This manual is a continually evolving document. The eXtension editors will make decisions as needed to address questions and comments from eXtension content developers and to address additional CMS ambiguities encountered by eXtension content developers.

2 Parts of an eXtension Article

2.1 General Principles

2.1.1 Left-align the following parts of eXtension articles: titles; subheadings; body text; captions; disclaimers; and all text in lists of contributors, sources, and additional resources.

2.1.2 Use roman type for the following parts of eXtension articles (unless some aspect of the text would otherwise be italicized, such as a book title): titles; subheadings; body text; hyperlink text; captions; disclaimers; and all text in lists of contributors, sources, and additional resources.

2.1.3 Apply the Normal style in the Paragraph Format group on the Drupal toolbar to the following parts of eXtension articles: body text; captions; disclaimers; and all text in lists of contributors, sources, and additional resources.

2.2 Title (Main Heading)

2.2.1 Use headline-style capitalization. Headline-style capitalization is an area of common confusion; see CMS 16 sections 8.157 through 8.159 for a discussion of this topic.

Examples:
- Improve Safety through Better Management Practices
- Recycling versus Reusing
- Machinery Wear-Out Life
- Invasive Species: Crupina vulgaris, Common Crupina

2.2.2 Do not insert a hyperlink in a title. Instead, repeat the relevant word or phrase in the first sentence of the article, and insert the link there.

2.2.3 Avoid using articles to begin titles unless the article would be capitalized in running text, as in an article that is part of an official name.

Examples:
- Keys to Personal Finance (not The Keys to Personal Finance)
- The Small Fruit Spray Guide: Summary and Comments
- The Learning Annex Offers Courses for Life

2.2.4 Avoid using abbreviations in a title unless the term you are naming is almost exclusively known only by its abbreviation and is widely known and used in that form (e.g., DNA). \textbf{Note: Consult the current version of Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary to identify widely known abbreviations that you may use in a title. If the dictionary lists the function of the entry as a part of speech rather than as an abbreviation, you may use the term in a title. For example, the dictionary lists DNA as a noun, so you may use DNA in a title.}

2.2.5 Do not repeat an article title as a subheading at the beginning of the body text.

2.3 Text Subdivisions

2.3.1 Subdivide the body of an article logically for clarity when appropriate.

2.3.2 Include at least one introductory paragraph of body text before the first subdivision in an article.

2.3.3 Introduce each section and subsection with an appropriate subheading.
2.3.3.1 Use the heading styles available in the Paragraph Format group on the Drupal toolbar to style subheadings. Apply the Heading 2 style to a subheading that introduces a main section within an article, the Heading 3 style to a subheading that introduces a subsection within a main section, and so on.

2.3.3.2 Use headline-style capitalization for all subheadings. Headline-style capitalization is an area of common confusion; see CMS 16 sections 8.157 through 8.159 for a discussion of this topic.

2.3.3.3 Avoid using articles to begin subheadings.
Example:
Common Challenges (not The Common Challenges)

2.3.3.4 Avoid repeating the article title in subheadings. For example, in an article titled *Urban Landscapes*, use the subheading *Planting Wildflowers* rather than the subheading *Planting Wildflowers in Urban Landscapes*.

2.3.3.5 Do not insert hyperlinks in subheadings. Instead, repeat the relevant word or phrase in the first sentence of the applicable section, and insert the link there.

2.4 Body Text

2.4.1 Do not include lines of space between paragraphs of body text. (The Drupal template design includes leading between paragraphs; therefore, there is no reason to add lines of space between paragraphs.)

2.4.2 Insert hyperlinks in the body text of an article as needed to enhance the reader’s online experience.

2.4.2.1 Do not overuse hyperlinks. For example, link to a supplementary article only the first time you mention the topic of the article.

2.4.2.2 Do not use a URL as a link. Instead, use the website name or other user-friendly language.
Examples (underlined blue text indicates hyperlink):
Find more information in the *Invasive Plant Atlas*.
Take the *survey*.

2.4.2.3 Insert links fluidly in the body of an article. For example, integrate a link in a sentence in a grammatically correct way, or provide a bulleted list of links introduced by an introductory statement.

2.5 Illustrations

2.5.1 Insert illustrations in the body of an article as needed to enhance the reader’s experience with the article. Illustrations, also called figures, include artwork, charts (graphs), line drawings, maps, photographs, videos, and so on. *Note: Authors, not editors, insert illustrations.*

2.5.2 Number illustrations intended to help the reader understand the content of the article. Do not number illustrations intended only to enhance the visual appeal of the page.

2.5.3 Include a caption under each numbered illustration. (As desired, you may include a caption for an unnumbered illustration.)

2.5.3.1 Begin the caption with the figure number. Capitalize and abbreviate the word *figure* before the number, and include a period after the number.
2.5.3.2 Include end punctuation after the caption whether the caption consists of a sentence fragment or one or more complete sentences.

2.5.3.3 Include a credit line at the end of each caption. Use the format shown in the following examples:
Fig. 1. Hydroponic gardening. Video: Smithsonian Institution.
Fig. 1. Lilies in bloom. Photo: John Doe.

2.5.4 Include a reference within the body text (text reference) for each numbered illustration, capitalizing the word figure in the text reference.
Example:
As Figure 1 shows, the bloom is miniscule.

2.6 Tables

2.6.1 Include tables in the body of an article as needed to enhance the reader’s experience with the article. Also, you may include a table or tables as the body of an article; if doing so, include a sentence or brief paragraph to introduce the table. Note: Due to the variety of ways in which tables may be included in eXtension articles (see the eXtension Content Development Handbook), tables may be inconsistent within and across articles. Do your best to make tables within an article and across a CoP’s articles consistent in structure, formatting, and so forth, applying as often as possible guidelines provided in CMS and this section of this manual.

2.6.2 Number and title each table, using sentence-style capitalization and including a period between the number and title but no period following the title (e.g., Table 1. Apple diseases). Center the table number/title above the table.

2.6.3 Use abbreviations in tables as needed. Use common abbreviations indicating distance, dimension, and measurements and abbreviations for common elements as needed. Use table footnotes to ensure that the meanings of less common abbreviations are clear.

2.6.4 Include a text reference for each table, capitalizing the word table in the text reference.
Example:
As Table 1 shows, use of various pesticides has generally decreased during the past decade.

2.7 End Matter

2.7.1 As desired, after the main text of an article, include any of the following end matter (in the order listed here): disclaimer, list of contributors, list of sources used to compile the article, list of additional resources that the reader may consult.

2.7.2 If you include end matter, insert a rule at the end of the main text of an article to separate the main text from the end matter. Use the Insert Horizontal Line button on the Drupal toolbar to insert the rule. If you will not include end matter, do not insert the rule.

2.7.3 If appropriate, include a disclaimer to clarify the purpose of the article. See the eXtension Content Development Handbook for information about when to use disclaimers and sample wording for general and CoP-specific disclaimers.

2.7.4 As desired, include a list of contributors to provide information about the authors and reviewers who contributed to the development of the article.

2.7.4.1 Introduce the section with the subheading Contributors. Apply the Heading 4 style in the Paragraph Format group on the Drupal toolbar to this subheading.
2.7.4.2 List contributors in alphabetical order, each on a separate line. For each contributor, provide the contributor’s name and affiliation. Use a comma to separate the name and affiliation, and omit end punctuation.
Example:
John Doe, State University
Jane Smart, University of State

2.7.5 As needed, include a list of sources used to compile the article.

2.7.5.1 Introduce the section with the subheading Sources. Apply the Heading 4 style in the Paragraph Format group on the Drupal toolbar to this subheading.

2.7.5.2 List the sources in alphabetical order, each on a separate line.

2.7.5.3 Apply CoP-specific style consistently to all entries in the source list.

2.7.6 As desired, include a list of additional resources that the reader may consult for more information on the topic of the article.

2.7.6.1 Introduce the section with the subheading For More Information. Apply the Heading 4 style in the Paragraph Format group on the Drupal toolbar to this subheading.

2.7.6.2 List the additional resources in alphabetical order, each on a separate line.

3 Parts of an FAQ

3.1 General Principles

3.1.1 Left-align all text in eXtension FAQs.

3.1.2 Use roman type for all text in eXtension FAQs (unless some aspect of the text would otherwise be italicized, such as a book title).

3.1.3 Apply the Normal style in the Paragraph Format group on the Drupal toolbar to the following parts of eXtension FAQs: body text, captions, disclaimers, and all text in lists of sources and additional resources.

3.2 Title (Main Heading)

3.2.1 Use the question as the title of an FAQ, and limit the question to 250 characters.

3.2.2 Use sentence-style capitalization.

3.2.3 Include appropriate end punctuation.

3.2.4 Do not insert a hyperlink in a title. Instead, repeat the relevant word or phrase and insert the link at an appropriate place in the body text.

3.2.5 Avoid using abbreviations in a title unless the term you are naming is almost exclusively known only by its abbreviation and is widely known and used in that form (e.g., DNA). Note: Consult the current version of Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary to identify widely known abbreviations that you may use in a title. If the dictionary lists the function of the entry as a part of speech rather than as an abbreviation, you may use the term in a title. For example, the dictionary lists DNA as a noun, so you may use DNA in a title.

3.3 Body Text

3.3.1 Use the FAQ answer to form the body text of an FAQ.
3.3.2 Do not include lines of space between paragraphs of body text. (The Drupal template design includes leading between paragraphs; therefore, there is no reason to add lines of space between paragraphs.)

3.3.3 Insert hyperlinks in the body text as needed to enhance the reader’s online experience.

3.3.3.1 Do not overuse hyperlinks. For example, link to a supplementary article only the first time you mention the topic of the article.

3.3.3.2 Do not use a URL as a link. Instead, use the website name or other user-friendly language. Examples (underlined blue text indicates hyperlink):
Find more information in the \textit{Invasive Plant Atlas}. View the \textit{survey results}.

3.3.3.3 Insert links fluidly in the body of an FAQ. For example, integrate a link in a sentence in a grammatically correct way, or provide a bulleted list of links introduced by an introductory statement.

3.4 End Matter

3.4.1 As desired, after the main text of an FAQ answer, include any of the following end matter (in the order listed here): disclaimer, list of sources used to compile the answer, list of additional resources that the reader may consult. \textbf{Note: It is typical practice not to include sources in FAQs; include sources only if necessary.}

3.4.2 If you include end matter, insert a rule at the end of the main text of an FAQ to separate the main text from the end matter. Use the Insert Horizontal Line button on the Drupal toolbar to insert the rule. If you will not include end matter, do not insert the rule.

3.4.3 If appropriate, include a disclaimer to clarify the purpose of the FAQ. See the eXtension Content Development Handbook for information about when to use disclaimers and sample wording for general and CoP-specific disclaimers.

3.4.4 As needed, include a list of sources used to compile the answer.

3.4.4.1 Introduce the section with the subheading \textit{Sources}. Apply the Heading 4 style in the Paragraph Format group on the Drupal toolbar to this subheading.

3.4.4.2 List the sources in alphabetical order, each on a separate line.

3.4.4.3 Apply CoP-specific style consistently to all entries in the source list.

3.4.5 As desired, include a list of additional resources that the reader may consult for more information on the topic of the FAQ.

3.4.5.1 Introduce the section with the subheading \textit{For More Information}. Apply the Heading 4 style in the Paragraph Format group on the Drupal toolbar to this subheading.

3.4.5.2 List the additional resources in alphabetical order, each on a separate line.

4 Grammar and Usage

4.1 Pronouns

4.1.1 Speak to the reader. If speaking to the reader means using the pronoun \textit{you}, do it. Using \textit{you} allows you to avoid awkward sentences and passive voice.
4.1.2 In articles, avoid the use of first-person personal pronouns, such as I and we, whenever possible. However, you may use we or one when referring to an experience that anyone would be expected to have. For example, although it might be best to write, “When most people drink adequate water each day, their health improves,” it is still legitimate to write, “When we drink adequate water each day, our health improves.” It is also acceptable to use we in mathematical derivations; for example, write, “To normalize the wavefunction, we need to find the value of the arbitrary constant A....”

4.1.3 In FAQs, you may use the first-person plural personal pronouns we, our, and ours. Do not use I, me, my, and mine. Note: It is understood that the answer to an FAQ comes from a CoP team, not an individual.

4.1.4 Use the gender-neutral pronouns it and its when referring to an animal.

4.2 Verbs

4.2.1 Use the imperative mood where appropriate.

4.3 Usage

4.3.1 In nontechnical text, use the word data as a mass noun, and use it with a singular verb. In text that is technical/scientific, use data to mean the plural of datum, and use it with a plural verb.

4.3.2 Word usage is an area of common confusion; see CMS 16 section 5.220 for a glossary of problematic words and phrases.

4.4 Bias-Free Language

4.4.1 Avoid language that may suggest gender bias.

4.4.1.1 Avoid including references to gender (e.g., woman doctor) unless necessary to add required detail to text, and eliminate terms that reinforce sexist stereotypes (e.g., co-ed, housewife).

4.4.1.2 Avoid the use of gender-specific suffixes whenever possible.

Example: chair (not chairman)

4.4.1.3 Use humans, humanity, or people instead of man or mankind. Use artificial, manufactured, human-made, or other appropriately descriptive wording instead of man-made.

4.4.1.4 When you must use a third-person singular personal pronoun, use the inclusive phrases he or she, his or her(s), and him or her. Do not use s/he, he/she, his/her(s), or him/her.

4.4.2 Avoid language that may suggest bias related to race, ethnicity, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation, and social position.

4.4.2.1 In general, in the identification of individuals or groups of people, use terminology that those individuals or groups use for themselves. For example, rather than describe someone as Asian American, if you know that the person prefers the more specific term Chinese American, use that term. If you are discussing Native Americans, recognize that some groups prefer the native language name of their group, such as Dine instead of Navajo. For direction and clarification, refer to recognized sources, such as the current edition of Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.
4.4.2.2 Use *enslaved person* or *enslaved people* to refer to a person or group forced into subjugation.

5 Punctuation

5.1 Commas

5.1.1 Include a comma before the coordinating conjunction at the end of a series.
Example:
When asked who helped him learn to be brave, the child gave credit to his teachers, a stray cat, and the family dog.

5.1.2 Use a comma after an introductory word or an introductory phrase of any length.

5.1.3 If you include an extension number in a telephone number, use a comma to separate the main number from the extension.
Example:
402-555-7890, ext. 321

5.1.4 When giving only month and year, do not use a comma or the word of to separate the month and year.
Example:
December 2012

5.2 Hyphens and Dashes

5.2.1 Use an en dash to separate numbers, letters, or words indicating a range in technical text.
Example:
2006–2009
January–June

*Note: For a discussion of number ranges, see CMS 16 sections 9.17 and 9.58 through 9.63.*

5.2.2 Do not use an en dash as a substitute for the minus sign.

5.2.3 Do not include spacing on either side of an em dash.

5.3 Slashes

5.3.1 When using numerals for fractions, you may use either formal typeset style (e.g., ¼, ½, ¾) or numerals separated by a slash (e.g., 3/8, 7/16). However, apply style consistently within an article. The typeset fractions are available as special characters or symbols in most desktop publishing/word processing programs and in Drupal, but only the three most common fractions are available (i.e., ¼, ½, ¾). Use the typeset fractions unless other fractions are included in a document. When that is the case, use numerals separated by a slash for all fractions.

5.3.2 In general, do not include a space on either side of a slash. Spacing around slashes is an area of common confusion; see CMS 16 sections 6.104 through 6.110 for a discussion of this topic.

5.4 Quotation Marks

5.4.1 Use double quotation marks for nesting quotations (quotations within quotations). *Note: Normally, American usage requires double quotation marks (“”) for direct quotations and single quotation marks (‘’) for nesting quotations. However, Internet search engines consider single quotation marks to be part of the word or phrase and will find that word or phrase only if the search
string is also within single quotation marks. Using double quotation marks for nesting quotations avoids this complication.

5.4.2 Avoid or minimize the use of scare quotes (also called orphan quotes)—quotation marks used to alert readers that a term is used in a nonstandard, ironic, or other special sense. For example, you would not use scare quotes around safety or safety measures in the sentence Such safety measures occasionally harm people rather than protect people.

5.4.2.1 As needed for clarity, you may use quotation marks on first reference of a word or phrase that may be unfamiliar to your audience. Do not enclose subsequent references to the word or phrase in quotation marks.

Example:
The term “quality of the pregnancy” refers to the value of the calf that will be born.

5.4.3 Apply block quote style, which indents both left and right margins, to quotations of more than six lines.

5.5 Lists

5.5.1 Use letters or numbers in a run-in list only if needed to clearly separate the items in the list. (Note: The preference of letters or numbers is a CoP-specific decision.) When using letters or numbers in a run-in list, use roman type for the letters or numbers, and enclose the letters or numbers in parentheses.

5.5.2 Use vertical lists to draw attention to a list or to present a list of lengthy items or a list that is long or multileveled.

5.5.2.1 Wherever possible, introduce a vertical list with a complete sentence that ends with a colon.

5.5.2.2 Use numerals for items in a vertical list only as needed to indicate sequence or order of importance. Otherwise, use bullets for items in a vertical list.

5.5.2.3 Wherever possible, form all items in a vertical list as either complete sentences or fragments. Note: When a vertical list must contain a mix of complete sentences and fragments (as in the example shown here), include end punctuation for both the complete sentences and the fragments.

Example:
In your report, include the following information:
• your name and address.
• name of the invasive species.
• exact location of the sighting. Include GPS coordinates if possible; otherwise, identify the nearest crossroads.

5.5.2.4 Style and formatting of vertical lists are areas of common confusion; see CMS 16 sections 6.121, 6.122, and 6.124 through 6.126 for a discussion of these topics.

6 Spelling, Distinctive Treatment of Words, and Compounds

6.1 Recommended Resources for Spellings and Definitions

6.1.1 Consult Webster’s Third New International Dictionary and the current edition of its chief abridgement, Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, to check spellings for eXtension content. For
all entries that list multiple spellings, use the first form unless an alternate spelling is part of an official name. For discrepancies between the two dictionaries, follow the *Collegiate*.

6.1.2 For exceptions to Merriam-Webster spellings or for discipline-specific words not listed in either dictionary, consult the relevant CoP-specific editorial style sheet.

6.1.3 For spellings of compounds formed with specific terms and words formed with prefixes, see CMS 16 section 7.85, pages 379 through 384.

6.2 Possessives

6.2.1 Form possessives of singular nouns ending in s with or without an additional s. Either form is generally acceptable, but maintain consistency within an article or FAQ.

6.3 Emphasis

6.3.1 Use italics to place contextual emphasis on a word, phrase, sentence, or longer section of text.

*Note: For the purposes of search engine optimization (SEO), apply bold formatting to emphasize a word, phrase, sentence, or longer section of text. See the eXtension Content Development Handbook for more information about developing content that aligns with SEO practices.*

6.3.2 As needed, set off text with a caution or warning label. Use a caution label when damage to equipment or less-than-serious injury could occur. Use a warning label when serious to severe injury or death could occur. Set the word *caution* or *warning* in all caps immediately preceding the applicable text.

Example:

*CAUTION* Set the emergency brake before leaving an all-terrain vehicle parked on a hill.

6.4 Computer Terminology

6.4.1 Use the closed spelling *email* in references to electronic mail. You may use *email* as a noun or a verb.

6.4.2 Use correct terminology to discuss URL parts. URLs generally have the parts shown in the table that follows, in the order shown.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part Name</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>protocol</td>
<td>http://</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>domain name</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ca.uky.edu">www.ca.uky.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subdirectory (path)</td>
<td>coahome/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>file name</td>
<td>pubs.htm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.5 Compounds

6.5.1 Hyphenation of compounds and closing of compounds are areas of common confusion; see CMS 16 sections 7.77 through 7.85 for a discussion of these topics. *Note: You may wish to deviate from CMS guidance and avoid hyphenation of a compound adjective if the meaning of a term is clear (e.g., best management practices).*

7 Names and Terms

7.1 General Principle
7.1.1 For guidance on discipline-specific terminology, consult the relevant CoP-specific editorial style sheet.

7.2 Names of Places

7.2.1 Treatment of place names is an area of common confusion; see CMS 16 sections 8.43 through 8.58 for additional discussion of this topic.

7.3 Names of Organizations

7.3.1 Use names and terms related to the Cooperative Extension System appropriately.

7.3.1.1 On first reference to the Cooperative Extension System, use the term Cooperative Extension System. On subsequent references, you may use the shortened form Cooperative Extension. Always capitalize the shortened form Cooperative Extension.

7.3.1.2 Capitalize the word extension when used as an adjective referring to the Cooperative Extension System, individual local Cooperative Extension services and offices, and Cooperative Extension personnel (e.g., Cooperative Extension agent, Cooperative Extension specialist).

7.3.1.3 Do not capitalize the word extension when referring to general outreach programs.
Example:
He devoted his career to agricultural safety research and extension.

7.3.1.4 Spell the name of the website of the Cooperative Extension System correctly: eXtension.

7.3.1.5 Use the term local Cooperative Extension office rather than the term county Cooperative Extension office to describe a community-based Cooperative Extension office.

7.3.2 Use terms related to the system of land-grant universities appropriately. Hyphenate the term land-grant when used as an adjective, and do not capitalize the terms land grant and land-grant.
Examples:
University of Wisconsin is a land-grant university.
Several land-grant university experts contributed data about grains.
The Morrill Act of 1862 funded the establishment of educational institutions through land grants.

7.3.3 Use terms related to 4-H appropriately.

7.3.3.1 The correct name for the department is 4-H Youth Development; however, you may use 4-H alone on all references.

7.3.3.2 Avoid using 4-H to start a sentence.

7.3.3.3 Refer to members of 4-H as 4-H members or 4-H’ers.

7.3.3.4 Do not use the possessive form 4-H’er’s; instead, use 4-H member’s.
Example:
The judges evaluate each 4-H member’s project.

7.4 Historical and Cultural Terms

7.4.1 Use headline-style capitalization for legal cases.
Example:
Norton versus Everyone Else

7.4.2 Use the term green as desired to describe something related to environmentalism.

7.5 Scientific Terminology
7.5.1 Identify animals and plants by their scientific names or their common names, depending on context.

7.5.1.1 Use single quotation marks around cultivar names. Place punctuation outside the single quotation marks.
Example:
Two cultivars are ‘Arvika’ and ‘Forager’.

7.5.2 Lowercase the word vitamin, and use capital letters and numerals for vitamin types.
Examples:
vitamin A
vitamin B12

7.5.3 Treatment of scientific terminology is an area of common confusion; see CMS 16 sections 8.118 through 8.151 for additional discussion of this topic, including information about capitalization, abbreviations, Latin names, and usage that may apply to specific CoPs (e.g., Consumer Horticulture).

7.6 Brand Names and Trademarks

7.6.1 Use a generic term instead of a branded product name whenever possible. For example, write “hook-and-loop enclosure” rather than “Velcro” or “zippered bag” rather than “Ziploc bag.” If you must use a brand name, ensure correct spelling by consulting a company website or another authoritative source. **Note**: CMS prefers omission of the symbols ™ and ® (capitalization of the name is sufficient); however, if you use the symbol, use it only at the first mention of the brand name. See CMS 16 section 8.152 for a discussion of this topic.

7.7 Titles of Works

7.7.1 Italicize brochure names.

7.7.2 Treatment of titles of works is an area of common confusion; see CMS 16 sections 8.154 through 8.195 for additional discussion of this topic.

8 Numbers

8.1 Numerals versus Words

8.1.1 In general, use Arabic numerals for numbers 10 and larger. Write out numbers smaller than 10. **Note**: This is the general rule for eXtension style, so wherever CMS refers to the “general rule” or “general principle” for numerals versus words, consider this to be that general rule/principle.

8.1.2 In tabular matter, use numerals exclusively.

8.1.3 The decision of whether to use numerals or words is an area of common confusion; see CMS 16 sections 9.2 through 9.53 for additional discussion of this topic.

8.2 Punctuation of Numbers

8.2.1 Punctuation of numbers is an area of common confusion; see CMS 16 section 9.55 for discussion of this topic.

8.3 Number Ranges

8.3.1 Formatting of number ranges is an area of common confusion; see section 5.2.1 in this manual and CMS 16 sections 9.17 and 9.58 through 9.63 for discussions of this topic.
9 Abbreviations

9.1 General Principles for Nontechnical Content

9.1.1 In running text, use only abbreviations for terms that are almost always abbreviated, such as DNA in content that discusses deoxyribonucleic acid, or abbreviations that help make content concise and user-friendly, such as ABF in content that repeatedly refers to the American Beekeeping Federation. Otherwise, limit the use of abbreviations (including symbols) to parenthetical text, illustrations, tables, and source lists.

9.1.1.1 Consult the current version of Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary to identify terms that are almost always abbreviated. If the dictionary lists the function of the entry as a part of speech rather than as an abbreviation, the term is almost always abbreviated.

9.1.1.2 Do not assume that readers are familiar with an abbreviation. Establish the meaning of an abbreviation the first time you use it in running text by spelling out the term and including the abbreviation in parentheses. For example, write, “American Beekeeping Federation (ABF).”

9.1.1.2.1 If the first use of a term occurs in an article or FAQ title, a subheading, or a caption, spell out the term without including the abbreviation, and then establish the meaning of the abbreviation at first use in running text.

9.1.1.2.2 After establishing the meaning of the abbreviation, use only the abbreviation on subsequent references.

9.1.2 Use an ampersand (&) only when it is part of a proper noun, such as the official name of a company or product (e.g., AT&T); do not use it as a replacement for the word and.

9.1.3 Use plural and possessive forms of abbreviations when needed. Do not pluralize an abbreviation if the spelled-out term is plural. For plurals of abbreviations, add s. For possessives of abbreviations, add ’s.

Examples:
BSs (bachelor’s degrees)
JPEGs
ROPs (rollover protective structures)
the USDA’s latest guidance

9.1.4 Use contractions as desired to make content user-friendly.

9.1.5 Use of abbreviations is an area of common confusion; see the remaining entries in this section of this manual for additional information and CMS 16 chapter 10 for a complete discussion of this topic.

9.2 General Principles for Technical/Scientific Content

9.2.1 As needed, use technical or scientific abbreviations in running text and otherwise to make content concise and audience-appropriate.

9.2.2 Do not use contractions.

9.3 Abbreviation of Names and Titles

9.3.1 Do not abbreviate the names of academic degrees in running text. Instead, spell them out, using lowercase letters and an apostrophe (where applicable).

Examples:
bachelor’s degree
master’s degree
doctorate

9.3.2 Use the abbreviation Co., Inc., or Ltd., not the spelled-out version of the term, at the end of a company name.

9.3.3 In general, spell out names of agencies, associations, and organizations at first use in running text. However, you need not spell out names of agencies, associations, and organizations familiar to readers of your CoP’s content. For example, readers of the Beef Cattle CoP content are familiar with the abbreviation USDA, so developers of Beef Cattle CoP content would write only “USDA” at first use of the term. Include all abbreviations that will not be established at first use on the CoP-specific editorial style sheet.

9.4 Abbreviation of Geographical Terms

9.4.1 When abbreviating the name United States, use the abbreviation US without periods. When abbreviating the names of US states and territories, use the two-letter postal codes (e.g., AK for Alaska). Note: As with other abbreviations, do not use abbreviations for state names in running text.

9.4.2 Spell out the word Highway when referring to specific US or state routes in running text (e.g., US Highway 66). Abbreviate the state name for state highways after first reference. Spell out the word Interstate at first use when referring to specific interstates; use the abbreviation I- on subsequent references.

9.4.3 Follow CoP-specific style for abbreviation of global positioning coordinates.

9.4.4 The use of abbreviations for geographical terms is an area of common confusion; see CMS 16 sections 10.28 through 10.37 for additional discussion of this topic.

9.5. Abbreviation of Designations of Time

9.5.1 Abbreviate names of months in tables to save space, using these three-letter abbreviations without a period: Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, and Dec.

9.5.2 Abbreviate the designation of a decade as desired, as long as clarity is not compromised.
Example:
The ’90s were a period of economic growth.

9.6 Scholarly Abbreviations

9.6.1 Abbreviate the word number when used to indicate position; do not use the number symbol (#).
Example:
This project was funded by federal grant no. 34000XYZ.

9.6.2 The use of scholarly abbreviations is an area of common confusion; see CMS 16 sections 10.43 and 10.44 for additional discussion of this topic.

9.7 Abbreviations Related to Technology and Science

9.7.1 In content that is technical or scientific in nature, use abbreviations for units of measurement and miscellaneous discipline-specific abbreviations (e.g., dpi [dots per inch]) as needed. You need not establish at first use abbreviations familiar to readers of a CoP’s content. Include all abbreviations that will not be established at first use on the CoP-specific editorial style sheet.
9.7.1.1 For units of measurement, use International System of Units (SI units) abbreviations or abbreviations for US units, depending on context. Use one or the other or both (giving one form first and the second form in parentheses immediately following the first form) consistently within a document and preferably across a CoP’s content.

9.7.1.2 If using US units of measurement, apply the following guidelines:

- Do not use the prime symbol (′), single quotation mark (‘), double prime symbol (″), or quotation mark (“) to represent foot and inch in running text. You may use the prime and double prime symbols in tabular matter; do not use apostrophes or quotation marks in place of the prime and double prime symbols.
- Use abbreviated words not exponents to indicate squared or cubed US units of measurement. For example, use the abbreviation sq ft not ft².
- Use the abbreviation ac for acre and the abbreviation ac-ft for acre-feet when preceded by a specific amount. Use the abbreviation bu/ac for bushels per acre when preceded by a specific amount; do not use the abbreviation bu/A or bu/acres.

9.7.2 Use abbreviations such as tsp for teaspoon, tbsp for tablespoon, and lb for pound in recipe ingredients lists; do not end the abbreviation with a period. Do not use abbreviations in the directions that follow the ingredients list.

9.7.3 Spell out the word percent in running text that is not technical or scientific in nature—for example, write, “Usage will increase from 2 to 3 percent over the next five years.” In content that is technical or scientific in nature, use the percent symbol (%) with numbers (e.g., 5%). Do not include a space between the number and the symbol.

9.7.4 For temperatures, use the word degree and the name of the scale, such as Fahrenheit, (if it is necessary to include the scale) in nontechnical text. Use the degree symbol, and abbreviate the type of measurement in technical text. In nontechnical text, use the word minus, not a minus sign, to indicate temperatures below zero—for example, write, “If the temperature is expected to fall to zero overnight, cover the plants. If the temperature reaches minus 15 degrees, the plants will die.”

9.7.5 The use of abbreviations related to technology and science is an area of common confusion; see CMS 16 sections 10.52 through 10.71 for additional discussion of this topic.

9.8 Abbreviations Related to Business and Commerce

9.8.1 If you include an extension number in a telephone number, use a comma to separate the main number from the extension.
Example:
402-555-7890, ext. 321

9.8.2 Spell out the term not applicable in running text. Abbreviate it as NA (not n/a) in other text. You need not establish this abbreviation at first use if it will be familiar to readers of your CoP’s content. Include all abbreviations that will not be established at first use on the CoP-specific editorial style sheet.