Knight Lab Storytelling Tools for Showcasing your Farm and Food Systems Work

WFAN operates from a set of established values statements found HERE>>

One of our values, Storytelling, articulates the power of story as a catalyst for change.

WFAN states:

- WFAN values the power of story as a means of connection, communication and knowledge sharing.
- WFAN values diverse ways of learning and information exchange which are critical to shifting the dominant narratives in food and agriculture systems.

Storytelling taps into our ever growing scaffold of development as an individual living in community. Our brains evolved to learn and grow through the interpretation of gestures, symbols, and imagery--and eventually, through the use of language. We still combine all of these expressions to share and to listen and to hopefully, ultimately, understand each other and ourselves, better.

Storytelling in regenerative agriculture shows up in many different spaces. Sometimes, we aim to educate our consumer base in order to grow our business, share our conservation work, and build community. We offer the following information about the Knight Lab’s free digital storytelling resources, below, to help WFAN members find tools that will help you tell your story, for your goals, in your own way.

What is the Knight Lab?

“Northwestern University Knight Lab is a community of designers, developers, students, and educators working on experiments designed to push journalism into new spaces. The Lab provides an open, collaborative environment for interdisciplinary exploration and conversation, where students and professionals learn together and from one another. In short, we’re energized by hard questions worth answering; we believe in the process as much as the product.” ([https://knightlab.northwestern.edu/](https://knightlab.northwestern.edu/))

What are Knight Lab’s Storytelling Tools?
“We build easy-to-use tools that can help you tell better stories. We’re probably best known for our innovative suite of open-source, adaptable, and lightweight tools for media makers. The most popular, TimelineJS, has been used by more than 250,000 people to tell stories seen hundreds of millions of times, and is available in more than sixty languages. We also develop prototypes of tools for reporting, data management, research, and storytelling, often in connection with Northwestern classes. Students from our community have gone on to work at the New York Times, Vox Media, NPR, Medium, FiveThirtyEight, the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, Huffington Post, and more.” (https://knightlab.northwestern.edu/)

**What Knight Lab tools does WFAN recommend?**

**StoryMap**

**Example:**

**Ideas for Integration:** Use Storymap to showcase the following areas of your farm, business, or organization using the geographic impact lens

- Citizen science projects
- Habitat restoration
- Water quality work
- Customer feedback stories
- Reach/Impact of your products

**If your web host is Squarespace:** You will need the business plan to embed interactive maps

**StoryLine**

**Example:**

**Ideas for Integration:** Use Storymap to showcase the following areas of your farm, business, or organization using an impact/growth over time lens

- Building soil health
- Cover-crop successions
- Succession planting
- Seed to post-harvest of specialty crops
- Progress of capital infrastructure projects
- Progress of educational programs
If your web host is Squarespace: You will need the business plan to embed interactive maps

I want to utilize these tools! How do I start?
1. Head to the following website: https://knightlab.northwestern.edu/
2. Scroll down to “Storytelling Tools” section
3.) Scroll further
4. Choose and click on StoryMap or Storyline. For this example, we will work with Storymap:
5.) To jump into “Make a Storymap” you will be prompted to create an account via your Google account:

6.) You will be asked to name your map and then move into creation mode:
7.) The Options Toolbar in the upper left corner allows you to change dimensions, the map color and style and more. Here, we are going to change from Toner Lite to Watercolor.

8.)
9.) Your geographic focus and the story you are sharing will dictate how you set-up specifics. Here, WFAN is chronicling member farmers and their work in building soil organic matter. So, we will create a “title page” first.

10.) Hit preview to see what your screen will look like
11.) To add “locations” and corresponding stories, you will create a new “slide” and first, drop a location in the location bar:

12.) Then - create content for the slide. Utilize the options toolbars to add images, change styles, and more.
13.) Remember to continue to press save. You can create as many location/slides as you would like.

14. When you are ready to embed your map into Squarespace, find the embed link in Storymap by pressing the *Share* button in the upper right corner and scrolling down to find the embed code.

14) Copy the embed code. In Squarepace, when you choose to create a new content block, scroll down the options until you find the embed option, and paste the embed code there. Your Storymap will be live on your website. Here is how WFAN’s live map appears:
15.) Create a rich tapestry to build out your Storymap by adding additional content block in Squarespace. To see how WFAN did this, visit our page HERE>>

*Good Luck and Have Fun!*