



10 Top PR Tips for Flower Farmers



#1 Photography

Invest in good photography - not only of your flowers but also of you! Your flowers may well be beautiful, but people buy from people and they want to know about you too.

Get a few strong portrait shots of you with armfuls of flowers looking at the camera (great for the website, great for media, great for FFTF profiles) plus get shots of you at work, planting out, picking, arranging.

Make sure you have hi-res images otherwise they are going to pixelate on the printed page.

Put the pick of your pics into an easily accessible PR folder, so you're not scrambling about for images when a journalist calls and can just whizz them across by email.

#2 About Us/Your Story

This is where you get to tell your side of the story. It is also where you can hook in journalists looking for an interesting angle. Keep it brief but engaging. Cover subjects like:

- Who are you? (You'd be surprised how few people mention their names!)
- Why did you become a flower farmer?
- Are you a professional florist or gardener or a career changer with a passion for flowers?
- How does your background help you as a flower farmer?
- How did you get started
- Where's your plot and what does it look like?
- What do you love about what you do?
- What do you grow and who are your customers?

Give this copy some careful thought and it will be the PR gift that keeps on giving. You can use it on your website and in media releases in the About Us section, and you can take elements of it for adverts, advertorial or brochures.

Have your About Us copy ready as a pdf with hi-res photos from your flower farm to forward onto journalists with your full contact details.



#3 Media release 101

Everyone will write a media release slightly differently - you'll have your own copywriting style, you'll have a view on whether to include images, and what order to write things in. Here are our recommendations as a guide:

- If you're emailing, be sure to include all the text and images in the body of the email rather than as an attachment. There's otherwise a chance that your media release won't be opened.
- Put your logo at the top
- Put a line saying MEDIA RELEASE and giving the date
- Write a headline that sums up your story and grabs attention
- Write up to 4 bullet points highlighting the key points in your story
- Put in a lo-res version of your photograph - an image that relates to your story
- In the main text, cover the essentials about your story: who, what when, where, how and why
- Include a few figures eg acreage, number of years as a flower farmer, stems per year, varieties...
- Insert an **About Us** section with up to 2 brief paragraphs about your flower farm
- Insert an **About Flowers from the Farm** section - see PR resources
- Insert a Media Contacts section with your name, company name, mobile and landline numbers, email address, flower farm location address and your web address

And remember that media have space to fill - they need stories. Yours could be just what they are looking for, so don't be shy!

#4 Be targeted

If you know where you want your story, photoshoot or event to feature, try picking up the phone and speaking to someone. Have your media release prepped and ready to send over to back up your call, but you will find that the personal approach gets you further. Don't expect the person to say yes straightaway, but send them the media release and then follow up.

Consider whether your story is right for that particular channel and consider the angle to pitch to each contact. Do they write about lifestyle, careers, gardening, flowers, floristry, weddings, business ideas, rural affairs? If so, then you're in with a shot.

Equally, don't feel you have to say yes to an approach if it doesn't sit comfortably with your business.

#5 Get someone to proof-read

Everyone - without exception - needs a proof-reader. Whatever you write - a blog, web copy, media release, brochure - ask someone with decent spelling and grammatical skills to read it through, check it makes sense and mark up any howlers. It is very easy to be too close to a project to see the typos.



#6 Sell our British Flower USPs

The Unique Selling Points of British-grown flowers seem so blithingly obvious to us as flower farmers, that we can sometimes forget to point out that our British-grown flowers:

- have been grown on our flower farm so don't have far to travel
- are all freshly hand-picked to order from our fields for great vase life
- flower naturally with the seasons so there is always something new and unusual to pick
- have a beautifully garden-style, natural charm and can be deliciously scented

#7 You're not alone - you're part of the Flowers from the Farm movement

When you're chatting to your friendly media type, explain that you're part of a growing movement of flower farmers across the country - Flowers from the Farm. Set up in 2011, our cooperative now has over 500 grower members from the Scottish Highlands to Cornwall and the Scilly Isles. One flower farm at a time, we are bringing British flowers back. Only around 10% of flowers available to buy in the UK are actually grown here.

Flowers from the Farm has three principal aims:

- to encourage more people to grow cut flowers for market in Britain
- to promote British flowers
- and to foster friendship and sharing through meetings, activities and communication.

Send the Flowers from the Farm media pack for more background information on our cooperative. You'll find the pdf on the membership pages of the website.

#8 Plan ahead

If you're planning to hold an event - whether it's an open day, a workshop, British Flowers Week, a photoshoot, FftF event - be sure to think PR from the outset. Think who you want to come along to your extravaganza and where they would be likely get the information from. Pop the details onto your website and social media platforms nice and early and then get in touch with local magazines, papers, radio stations, blogs and local event websites and tell them what you're up to.

Write down the bare bones of your event - who, what, when, where and why - together with one of those gorgeous photographs of you on your flower farm (see #1) and send it out as media release to local magazines (who will work months in advance) and anywhere locally that tells people what's on in your area.



#9 Social Media

With social media, you are your own PR machine. You can control the messaging that goes out through social media. You can control the look, feel and content of the story. Think of social media posting in the same way as you think about compiling a marketing brochure. The images need to look good and fit with your business, so take the time to compose decent shots and engaging copy that people are going to want to share and that will inspire them to follow your story.

#10 Stay in touch

Once you've had some coverage, write and thank your media contact and be sure to keep in touch. Let them know of any changes on your flower farm or drop them a note when you have an event coming up. Perhaps send them some beautiful British flowers from time to time.

www.flowersfromthefarm.co.uk