



Michelle Miller

Michelle Miller, better known as the Farm Babe, is a Florida based internationally recognized speaker, published writer and columnist, and an online influencer as a full-time advocate for agriculture. She started her social media outreach over seven years ago to better bridge the gap between farmers and consumers, making a name for herself as a dedicated “mythbuster” in food and farming. Farm Babe has hundreds of thousands of followers and an average social media reach of more than million monthly. She’s been featured in Forbes & has caught the attention of the Today Show, Inside Edition, CNN, People magazine, and more... a guest on Dr. Drew, has influenced corporations as powerful as Burger King, and has proudly spoken alongside some of the biggest names in food and farming today.

Victor Villegas

Victor Villegas is the Technology and Media Support Coordinator for Oregon State University Extension. He provides tech and media support and trainings for OSU Extension faculty and staff across Oregon and enjoys helping people learn how to use technology to improve their work and lives.

Lori Greiner

Lori Greiner serves as the Publications Manager for Virginia Cooperative Extension at Virginia Tech. She is responsible for overseeing the production and promotion of VCE’s publications and educational materials. As the managing editor of VCE publications, she works with faculty members to identify publication topics and creative ways to disseminate information. Lori also serves as the content manager for Virginia Cooperative Extension’s Publications and Educational Resources website. Lori has been a member of ACE since 2005 and currently represents ACE on the Journal of Extension Board.

Michele Payn

Michele Payn, CSP, connects the people and science of food and farming as principal of Cause Matters Corp. She is known for being a community catalyst, a passionate advocate for global agriculture, and antagonizing people into action. Michele has worked with farmers in more than 25 countries, raised millions of dollars for 4-H and FFA, and founded AgChat and FoodChat on Twitter. She is the author of three books: #1 best seller and IPPY gold medalist Food Bullying, IPPY bronze medal winner Food Truths from Farm to Table, No More Food Fights! and Agriculture's Growth Journal. Michele's degrees are in Agricultural Communications and Animal Science from Michigan State University. She has earned the Certified Speaking Professional designation, awarded to less than 10% of professional speakers globally. She resides with her 'city slicker' husband and cow-loving daughter on a small farm in central Indiana. She enjoys Registered Holsteins, the MSU Spartans, and making memories with friends around the table. Michele connects conversations around the food plate at www.causematters.com and on social media with @mpaynspeaker.

Veronica Figueroa As communications manager for the Florida Fruits and Vegetable Association, Veronica is responsible for ensuring members are fully informed on industry issues through a variety of channels, including FFVA.com, our Harvester blog, numerous email newsletters, digests and bulletins, and social media. She serves as a board member on the Agriculture Communicators of Florida and the Public Relations Society of America's Orlando Chapter.

Teresa Thorne Teresa is the Executive Director of the Alliance for Food and Farming (AFF). The goal of the AFF is to provide science-based produce safety information to consumers so they can make the right shopping choices for themselves and their families. She has more than 30 years of experience in strategic communications on behalf of the produce industry. As part of her strategic communications work, Teresa has also overseen numerous public opinion research projects designed to gain perspective about consumer attitudes on food safety, pesticide use, environmental issues, and labor. Teresa was previously the Communications Director for the California Strawberry Commission. Prior to joining the Commission, Teresa was an account supervisor with the national public relations firm Gibbs and Soell, Inc. where she executed PR programs for major corporate clients. Teresa is a graduate of California State University, Fresno with a degree in journalism and a minor in plant science. She gets her passion for farming and agriculture from growing up as a citrus farmer's daughter in the San Joaquin Valley of California.

Lourdes Mederos Lourdes serves a dual role for the UF/IFAS Communications Department of the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS). As public relations manager of a statewide Spanish outreach initiative, she brands UF/IFAS by strategically planning, implementing, developing, and distributing content to Spanish-speaking media and consumers. She also serves as the public relations specialist for the coastal stretch of Southeast Florida, promoting the work of scientists and faculty at three research centers and six county Extensions. She provides strategic media relations, crisis communications, and branding support. Lourdes' 30-year career started with 11 years as a bilingual journalist covering higher education, healthcare, environment, government, and Hispanic communities, mainly at the Tampa Tribune but also at the Miami Herald and St. Petersburg Times. She also worked briefly at the Wall Street Journal early in her career. The remainder of her career has focused on specialized areas of public relations, including media relations, brand development, and corporate communications at higher education, healthcare, and city and regional government entities. When she is not working, she enjoys cooking and sharing her favorite Latin dishes and tapas with friends and families, salsa dancing, pontooning, reading and reminding her kids how important it is to be bilingual.

L'Tonya Davis	<p>L'Tonya Davis is the first chief diversity and inclusion officer at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). She is responsible for leading USDA in its ongoing efforts to improve diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA) across the department and oversees the implementation of USDA's first-ever DEIA Strategic Plan. Davis holds a Master of Public Management and a Bachelor of Communications from the University of Maryland, College Park. She completed the University of South Florida's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion certificate program, the Strategic Diversity and Inclusion Management program at Georgetown University and the New Inclusion Quotient, an Office of Personnel Management (OPM) diversity and inclusion program. She also completed the Leadership for a Democratic Society program at OPM's Federal Executive Institute. Davis is the co-vice-chancellor of the African American Federal Executive Association and serves on the board of the Atholton High School Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA). In her spare time, she enjoys real estate, traveling, cooking, and practicing yoga. She lives in Howard County, Maryland, and has one daughter who attends Elon University in North Carolina.</p>
Latasha Ford	<p>Latasha Ford is the research communications manager for Fort Valley State University's College of Agriculture, Family Sciences and Technology. She currently serves as member services director on the ACE Board of Directors.</p>
Terri Moore	<p>Terri Moore is the Vice President of Communications for the American Farm Bureau Federation. She leads their communications at the national level, coordinating with affiliated Farm Bureaus in all 50 states, serving nearly 6 million members. Previously, Terri led communications operations at the state and federal levels, including as Deputy Director of Communications at the White House, Director of Communications at USDA, Chief of Staff in the U.S. Senate, and Communications Director for the Governor of Nebraska. Prior to joining AFBF, she served as a communications consultant, advising a broad range of clients. Terri began her career as a broadcast journalist.</p>
Shabnam Izadi	<p>Shabnam Izadi serves as the senior equal opportunity specialist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Prior to this role, Izadi served as Title VI manager for the Maryland State Highway Administration and was considered a subject matter expert for the Department of Transportation, where she spearheaded Title VI efforts for the state of Maryland. With more than 10 years of experience with civil rights compliance and laws, Shabnam works diligently and passionately to ensure that educational institutions understand what it means to commit to equity and civil rights through compliance but most importantly, through a comprehensive approach, where she builds relationships to ensure that people understand why commitment to equity is so important and goes beyond compliance. Her extensive experience includes conducting compliance reviews and complaint investigations under a wide range of civil rights laws and regulations, including Title VI, Executive Order 13166 Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act, and Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act. She works diligently to ensure that programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance are administered equitably, are free from discrimination, and comply with federal civil rights laws and regulations.</p>

Patrese Atine	<p>Patrese Atine is the first assistant vice president for Indigenous and Native American Affairs at Colorado State University (CSU). Prior to CSU, she served as director of congressional and federal relations at the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, focusing on maintaining partnerships with federal agencies to meet the unique needs of Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), students and Tribal Nations. Patrese is also an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation. She also earned a graduate degree in education, policy, planning and administration from Boston University. At CSU, Patrese leads CSU's outreach to Tribal communities and works with the CSU community on Native and Indigenous issues on campus. She also partners with Tribal leadership to increase student recruitment and retention.</p>
Whitney Stone	<p>Whitney Stone is an assistant professor of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Communications in Oregon State University's Department of Agricultural Education and Agricultural Sciences. She earned her doctorate in Agricultural Education and Communication, specializing in agricultural communication, at the University of Florida in 2022. Her research interests include underrepresented populations in agricultural and rural communities, mental health communication, and art-based methodologies.</p>
Jimmy Nazario-Negron	<p>Jimmy Nazario-Negron currently serves as an Accessibility Specialist within the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). His role focuses on ensuring the accessibility of digital resources to a wide audience. Prior to his role at NIFA, Jimmy worked at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), where he served as an Information Specialist. In this capacity, he was responsible for drawing patents and providing essential web support. His time at NIST allowed him to develop a strong foundation in information management and digital technologies. Before joining NIST, Jimmy dedicated 11 years of his life to serving in the United States Army as a Medical Lab Technician. His service included three deployments to combat zones, with two in Iraq and one in Afghanistan. During these deployments, he played a crucial role in supporting medical operations. Jimmy's academic achievements include a Bachelor of Science degree in Digital Communication and Media/Multimedia from the University of Maryland University College, and an Associate of Applied Science degree in Graphic Design from Montgomery College. Originally from Bayamon, Puerto Rico, Jimmy spent his early years there until he made the decision to enlist in the US Army at the age of 18.</p>
