wheatbeltlocal
Blog Contributor Information Pack

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Contents

About Wheatbelt Local

Wheatbelt Local is an online community designed to connect, inspire and assist local Wheatbelt residents. We launched in May 2014 and use our blog (www.wheatbeltlocal. com.au) as well as our social media channels (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and Pinterest) to create a supportive online community that connects with both current Wheatbelt residents and people living outside the Wheatbelt who have a connection or interest in the region.

Wheatbelt Local originated after realising that there was previously no online hub for news, events and matters relevant to the Wheatbelt region. Since the Wheatbelt is spread over such a large area and many people live on farms and in small towns, which can be isolating at times, Wheatbelt Local connects these people with other Wheatbelt residents in the same situation as themselves, as well as connecting them with resources and relevant news. We post about places/travel in the Wheatbelt, agriculture, news, events, current affairs, people and their stories, rural life, history, small business and more...

Wheatbelt Local is run completely by volunteers who are passionate about their region, and we rely on local people like you to help ensure that we can keep doing what we're doing. We aim to have blog posts published at least 3-4 times a week and go beyond being an online newspaper or information site, and instead share real stories and places, written by the people who live in and love our region.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Wheatbelt Local has a large target audience, aiming to reach anyone who has an interest in the Wheatbelt. This is mainly people who currently live in the Wheatbelt but also people who used to live in the Wheatbelt or just have a general interest in the region. Readers are both male and female aged from 12 all the way to 92 and live both on farms and in towns/cities. Whilst some posts may be specifically geared towards people of a certain age, gender or location, we aim to post a large variety of content that will be interesting for a range of different people.

However, the average Wheatbelt Local follower would be a female living in the Wheatbelt who is aged between 25 and 44.

Our best advice when writing a blog post would be to write it as if your target audience was yourself since there are many other people just like you following Wheatbelt Local.

The Basics of Contributing

The Wheatbelt Local blog would not be possible without volunteer contributors like you! Contributing to the Wheatbelt Local blog simply involves writing a blog post on a topic that interests you and that you believe will fit in with Wheatbelt Local and what we stand for (read the first page to get an idea of what we are all about!)

If you would like to contribute, but you're not sure what to write about see the next few pages for suggestions.

You are able to contribute either on a once-off occasion or more regularly, depending on how much you have to say and how much time you have to commit.

We are particularly looking for regular contributors, who are able to contribute articles on a regular basis, which can be weekly, fortnightly, monthly or quarterly, depending on how much time you are able to commit.

This can be in the form of a column, ie "Farming Tales with Doug", where you are able to contribute at set intervals on a certain topic, or through different unrelated articles that are published in their own right.

Otherwise, one-off articles that cover events, interviews or other ideas are most welcome as well.

CONTRIBUTOR BIO

When contributing posts to Wheatbelt Local, we would love it if you could also send through a "contributor bio", which will be used at the end of blog posts you submit as well as being shared on our contributors page and possibly social media pages.

Your bio does not need to be fancy - just a few sentences about you and what you do/like doing. For example:

"An agriculture enthusiast born and bred in the heart of the Central Wheatbelt on her families 5th generation cropping and prime lamb property. Currently studying Journalism in the big smoke with a passion to close the gap between urban and rural communities, particularly when it comes to agriculture. Enjoys a bon-fire and Shania Twain on a Friday night and is always up for a chin-wag."

A headshot should also be included with your bio.

What should I write about?

As previously mentioned, our best advice when writing a blog post would be to write it as if your target audience was yourself since there are many other people just like you following Wheatbelt Local. Write about something you know about and are passionate about!

We love contributions on a range of topics including:

- **Travel/places**

For example: the best camping spots in the Wheatbelt, a suggested roadtrip or a list of things we didn't know about a certain town

Sample posts: Tips For Exploring Dryandra Woodland and Surrounds, 6 Things Not to Miss in the Shire of Cunderdin, Wheatbelt Roadtrip #1: Southern Wheatbelt

- **Agriculture**

For example: innovative agricultural ideas, the pros and cons of owning a certain type of machinery, tips for choosing a sheep dog

Sample posts: Seeding Snapshot

- **Current affairs**

For example: your say on the GM debate or privatisation of CBH

- **Health and fitness**

For example: quick workouts under 10 minutes, where to get help if you're worried about a friend with depression or a mental illness, ways to make vegies fun for kids

Sample posts: Wheatbelt Winter Health Tips, Eating Healthy While Breastfeeding

- **Interviews and personal stories**

For example: a personal tale of why you moved to the Wheatbelt, an interview with a Wheatbelt celebrity, a recount of your experience on an agricultural exchange overseas

Sample posts: Chelsea Basham Talks About Growing Up in the Wheatbelt and Performing With Keith Urban, Take 10 with Fiona Palmer (The Saddler Boys), The Way We Roll Farm Style!

- **Cooking and recipes**

For example: the best hearty soup recipes, healthy packed lunch ideas, how to season a lamb roast

Sample posts: 5 Sweet Treats to Get You Through Harvest, Fruity Yoghurt Popsicles

What should I write about?

- **Rural life**

For example: choosing a boarding school for your child, a list of things only Wheatbelt residents will get

- **News and events**

For example: a recap of the annual show in your town, a list of family friendly events over summer, the opening of a new sports facility in your town

Sample posts: [Did Someone Say Bachelor and Spinsters Ball?](#), [Cook-Off Sets Merredin Astir](#)

- **Small business**

For example: tips on running a small business, top places to buy a Mother's Day present

Sample posts: [Wheatbelt Christmas Buying Guide 2015 {For Her}](#)

- **Wheatbelt history**

For example: the settlement of your town, the history behind a famous landmark or the progression of your town's annual show

- **Other**

For example: anything else you would like to write about... music, DIY, home decor, organisation, pets, gardening, reading/books, photography, sports, children's activities etc...

Sample posts: [A Birdwatcher's Guide to Birds in the Narrogin District](#), [Tips for Staying Safe around Snakes](#)

We also accept fiction pieces if you have an imagination and like writing short stories or fictional series.

How do I contribute?

Contributing to the Wheatbelt Local blog is as easy as 1,2,3...4,5!

(1) **Come up with an idea** about what you want to contribute (see the past two pages for suggestions) and whether you would like to contribute once-off or on a regular basis.

(2) **Pitch your idea** to the Wheatbelt Local team by sending an email to **info@wheatbeltlocal.com.au**

You'll just need to include your general idea... you don't have to have written the whole post yet! Also let us know whether it is a once-off idea or whether you would like to contribute regularly.

We will then give your idea the thumbs up and together we can decide on a deadline for the post (and future submissions if you plan on contributing more than once).

(3) **Write your post!**

See the next page for some tips and suggestions to take into consideration when you are writing a blog post.

If you are worried about your spelling, grammar or punctuation, don't! We have a great proof-reading team who can help out with that sort of stuff.

(4) **Email your finished post** and related photos to Wheatbelt Local (**info@wheatbeltlocal.com.au**) before the decided deadline (if you have trouble meeting it - just send us an email!)

Please send your finished post via Word Document as well as copied into the body of your email. Please include at least two high-resolution photos per post (if you don't have any, see the next page).

We will let you know that we have recieved your post and let you know when it will be published.

(5) **Wait for your post to be published.** When it is, share the link with your friends and family and spread the word (we will too!)

Then sit down and congratulate yourself on writing a published blog post!

Tips and suggestions

- Break down your post using questions, sub-headings and lists, making it easy to read. This post is a good example: [The Best Things to do as a Family in the Wheatbelt](#)

- If you don't have any suitable photos that suit your post, there are plenty of websites that offer free stock photos. Here's a handy link to help get you started: https://designschool.canva.com/blog/free-stock-photos/

- We will proof-read your post before it is published. Please don't be offended if we suggest a few changes!

- Use your personal voice... don't feel as though your post has to be technical and formal sounding. The more you use your personal voice, the more our readers will be able to connect with you and relate to what you are saying! This post is a great example: [Did Someone Say Bachelor and Spinsters Ball?](#)

- We do not have a word limit however we suggest that your post be between 700 - 1,700 words.

- If you plan on contributing regularly, you are welcome to talk to us about starting your own column... for example... "Farming Tales with Doug", where you can contribute at set intervals (ie. once every fortnight), much like a newspaper or magazine column.

- Your posts should not directly promote a business or company without prior consent (ie. they cannot be a big advertisement for your business and services) however you may include one link to your own blog or business page.

- There are other ways to get involved with Wheatbelt Local, such as doing an Instagram takeover, taking part in our Wheatbelt Walking Challenge or Christmas Card Exchange.

- We have a Facebook group which contributors are welcome to join and use to share ideas etc.

- If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to send us an email **info@wheatbeltlocal.com.au** and we will get back to you ASAP!