



#PlantBasedTreaty

How to write an impactful letter to the editor of your local news outlet

Newspapers and magazines publish letters written by their readers to stimulate discussion and represent the spectrum of public opinion. Letters to the Editor remain amongst the most-read sections of newspapers and magazines — online and in print. Whatever you write — should it be published — will be read by a large number of people with a variety of perspectives; neighbours, MPs, and mayors alike.

How to write an effective letter to the editor

Open with a greeting:

Something as simple as 'To The Editor' will work, but use the editor's name if possible as it may increase the possibility of your letter being read.

Grab the reader's attention:

Your opening sentence is key to the success of your letter: it should immediately inform readers what you're writing about, and entice them to keep reading. If you are writing in direct response to a previously published article, cite its date and title in the first sentence. If not, introduce your argument clearly, and go from there.

Following the opening, here is a suggested structure for your letter:

1. Give a persuasive explanation of why the issue is important
2. Provide reputable evidence to substantiate claims (plantbasedtreaty.org has resources you can use to find quick facts and data)
3. State your opinion about what should be done/possible remedies to the issue
4. Sign off with your name and contact details (these won't be published, but the paper may use this for follow up or verification)

Keep in mind these quick tips:

- **Short and sweet:** Letters to the Editor are usually around 150 words, so keep this bite-size length in mind as you are writing. Another thing to remember is that many

readers may not have the same knowledge or passion about the topic as you; so concise sentences work best.

- **Relevant:** If you can link your letter to related issues that have been in the news recently it will increase your chances of getting publishing.
- **Make it personal:** It is compelling to read an article with anecdotes and personal opinion — so don't be afraid of sharing your passion.
- **Edit and proof:** Whether you come back to your letter an hour or two later, or get a friend to read over it with fresh eyes, it's important to proofread your letter before you send it in to avoid any mistakes.
- **Follow the guidelines:** Most newspapers will set out guidelines regarding what they require in Letters to the Editor submissions. Follow these to increase the likelihood of your letter getting published.
- **Don't give up!** Newspapers and magazines receive more letters than they have space for, so don't feel deflated if you don't see yours published straight away. Keep writing, because dedication and persistence pays off.