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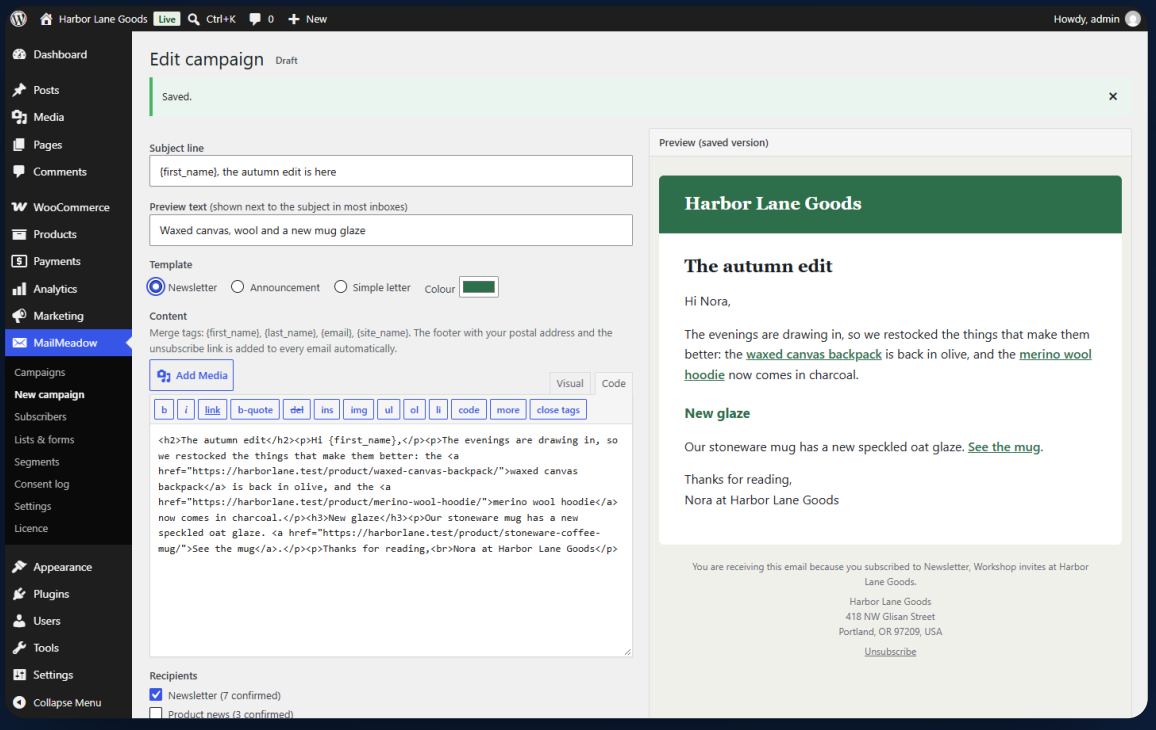
WORDPRESS PLUGIN · USER GUIDE

MailMeadow — WordPress Bulk Email Plugin for Newsletters

Version 1.0.0 · Installation, licence activation, every setting explained, FAQ and troubleshooting.



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MailMeadow — WordPress bulk email plugin: user guide

MailMeadow lets you collect newsletter subscribers on your WordPress site and send them email campaigns from your dashboard. People sign up with a form, confirm by email (double opt-in), and you write campaigns in the WordPress editor and send them in small, timed batches. Every email has a one-click unsubscribe link and the unsubscribe headers that mail apps use, and every sign-up, confirmation and unsubscribe is written to a consent log.

> **Important.** MailMeadow helps you follow email marketing rules such as the US CAN-SPAM Act and the GDPR: consent, an easy way out and your postal address in every email. It does not make your sending "compliant" by itself, and nothing in this guide is legal advice. Only email people who asked to hear from you.

Free works on its own. Pro adds sending through Amazon SES, SendGrid, Brevo or Mailgun, WooCommerce segments, open and click tracking, scheduled campaigns and a welcome series, CSV import with consent status, and bounce handling.

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1. Installation

1. Download the Free or Pro `.zip` from your Code Craft account (Pro) or install "MailMeadow" from Plugins → Add New (Free).
2. Plugins → Add New → Upload Plugin → choose the zip → Install Now → Activate.
3. A **MailMeadow** menu appears in the admin sidebar. A first list called "Newsletter" is created for you.

Moving from Free to Pro: delete the Free plugin (your subscribers, campaigns and settings are kept unless you ticked "Delete all plugin data") and upload the Pro zip. Both use the same folder name.

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2. Licence activation (Pro)

1. Open **MailMeadow** → **Licence**.
2. Paste the key from your purchase email and click **Activate licence**.
3. Pro unlocks as soon as coodecraft.com confirms the key. One licence covers one site.

Monthly and yearly licences: a notice appears three days before the end date. When a licence ends, the Pro features switch off cleanly: email goes back through WordPress mail, segments, tracking, scheduling, the welcome series, CSV import and the bounce webhooks stop, and every Pro setting stays saved. Lists, forms, campaigns, sending and unsubscribes keep working as in Free. Renew, then click **I have paid — check again** on the Licence screen.

3. Settings — MailMeadow → Settings (screenshot `pro-05-settings-sender.png`)

Sender

- **From name / From email** — who your emails come from. Use an address on your own domain. Whether mail reaches the inbox depends on your sending service and your domain's SPF, DKIM and DMARC records; set those up with your mail provider.
- **Reply-to** — optional; where replies go.
- **Postal address (required)** — shown in the footer of every campaign. The US CAN-SPAM Act and similar laws ask for a valid postal address (street address, PO box or registered mailbox). Until you add it, a notice shows on every MailMeadow screen and **Send now** is disabled.

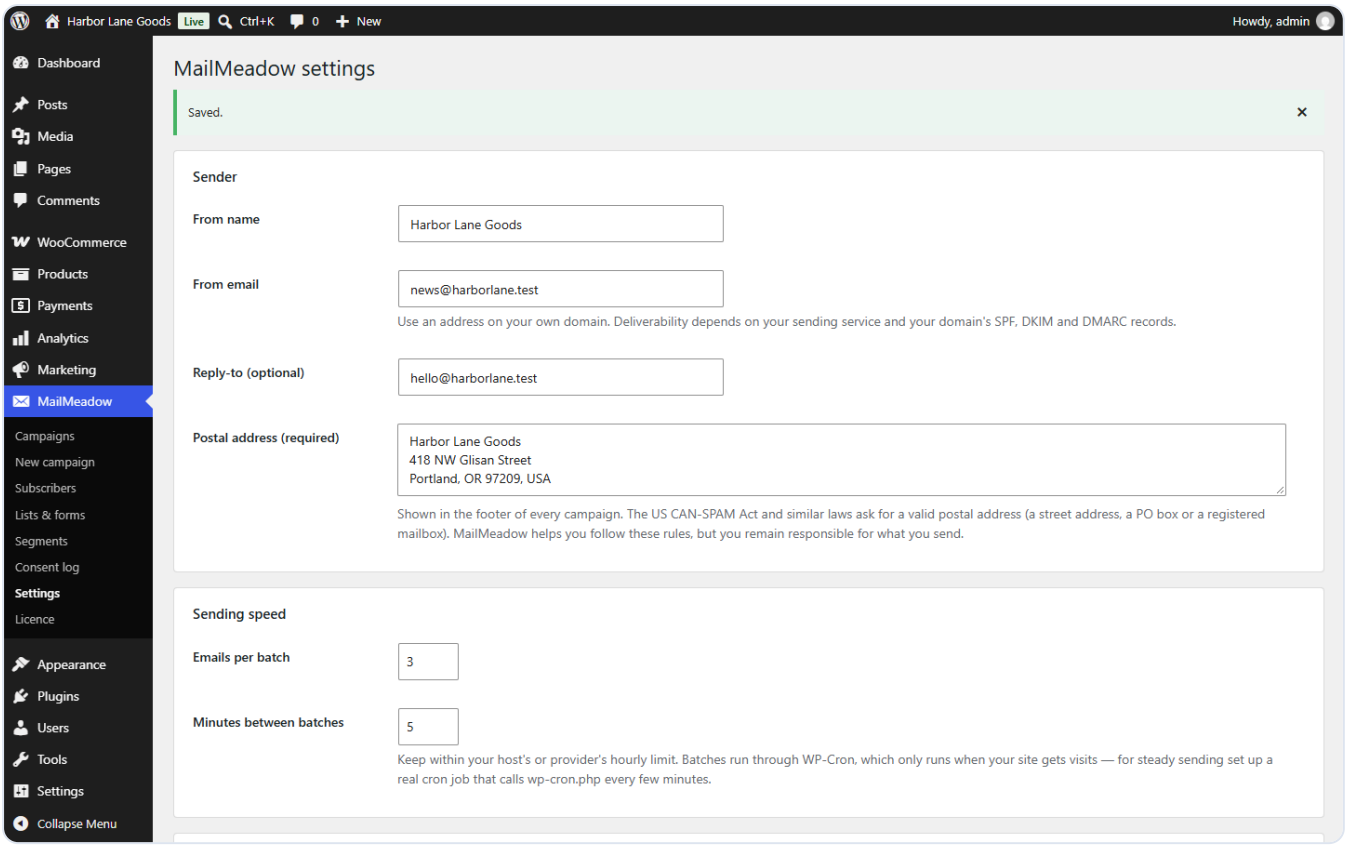
Sending speed

- **Emails per batch** and **Minutes between batches** — for example 50 every 5 minutes. Keep within your host's or provider's hourly limit.
- Batches run through **WP-Cron**, which only runs when someone visits your site. For steady sending, ask your host for a real cron job that calls `https://your-site/wp-cron.php` every few minutes (and optionally add `define( 'DISABLE_WP_CRON', true );` to wp-config.php).

Signup form and confirmation email

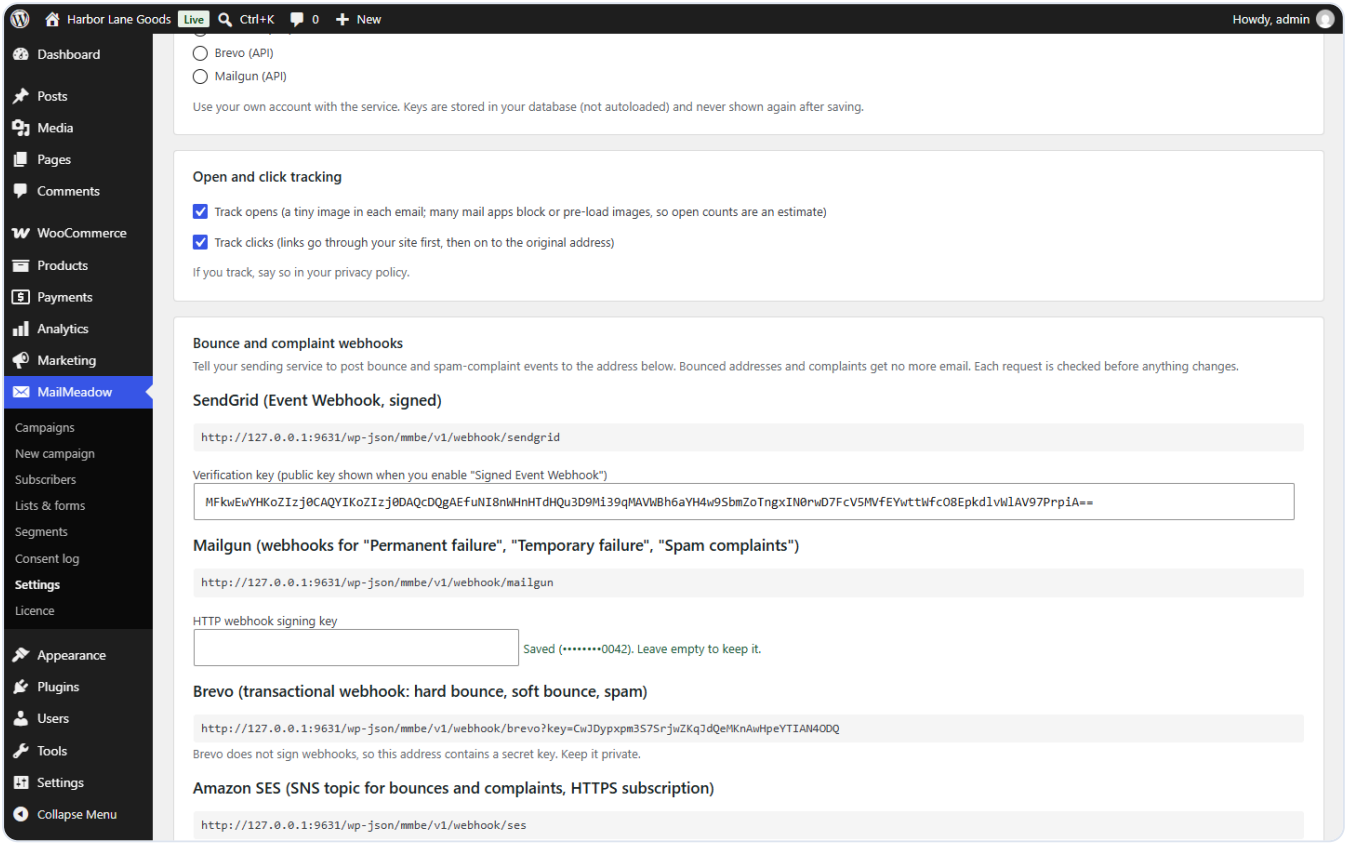
- First name field on/off, the consent checkbox text, the button text.
- The confirmation email subject and text. Tags: `{first_name}`, `{site_name}`, `{confirm_url}`. A "Confirm my subscription" button is added below the text.

Sending service (Pro) (screenshot) — WordPress mail (the default; uses any SMTP plugin you have), or the API of Amazon SES (region, access key ID, secret key), SendGrid (API key with Mail Send permission), Brevo (v3 API key) or Mailgun (sending domain, US/EU region, API key). Use your own account with the service. Keys are stored in your database with autoload off and never shown again after saving — leave a key field empty to keep the saved key.



Open and click tracking (Pro) — two tick boxes. Many mail apps block or pre-load images, so open counts are an estimate. If you track, say so in your privacy policy.

Bounce and complaint webhooks (Pro) (screenshot) — see section 10.



Data — tick "Delete all plugin data … when the plugin is deleted" only if you want deleting the plugin to remove subscribers, campaigns, the consent log and settings.

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4. Lists and signup forms — MailMeadow → Lists & forms (screenshot `pro-03-lists.png`)

Create as many lists as you need ("Newsletter", "Product news", "Workshop invites"…). The table shows confirmed and total members and the shortcode for each list.

Add a form to your site in either way:

- **Block editor** — add the **Newsletter signup (MailMeadow)** block (screenshot `pro-15-block-editor.png`) and pick the list, an optional heading and button text in the block settings.
- **Shortcode** — `[mmbe_form list="2" title="Workshop invites" button="Tell me about workshops"]` in the classic editor, a widget or a page builder.

The form asks for an email address, optionally a first name, and a consent tick box (screenshot `pro-front-form.png`). After submitting, the visitor sees "Almost done: please check your inbox" (`pro-front-form-sent.png`).

How the form keeps bots out: a hidden trap field (bots fill it, people never see it), a signed list ID (the list cannot be swapped in the page source), and a limit of five sign-ups per connection every ten minutes. There is no per-visitor token, so the form works on cached pages.

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5. Double opt-in and subscriber statuses — MailMeadow → Subscribers (screenshot `pro-14-subscribers.png`)

- **Unconfirmed** — signed up, has not clicked the confirmation link yet. Never receives campaigns.
- **Subscribed** — confirmed. Receives campaigns for their lists.
- **Unsubscribed** — opted out. Receives nothing more.
- **Bounced** — the address does not work (Pro bounce handling). Receives nothing more.

Every sign-up through a form sends a confirmation email. Clicking the link shows a "Subscription confirmed" page and changes the status to Subscribed. Someone who unsubscribed and signs up again has to confirm again.

Add a subscriber by hand: they get the same confirmation email and only receive campaigns once they confirm. Row actions: Resend confirmation, Unsubscribe, Delete (the consent log keeps its rows as your record).

6. Writing a campaign — MailMeadow → Campaigns (screenshots `pro-07-campaigns-start.png`, `pro-08-editor.png`)

1. Under **Start a new campaign** pick a template: **Newsletter** (coloured header with your site name), **Announcement** (centred, bold, for one piece of news) or **Simple letter** (looks like a personal email). Each starts with example text you replace.
2. Fill in the **Subject line** and **Preview text** (shown next to the subject in most inboxes).
3. Pick the **template** and **colour**; the preview on the right updates straight away.
4. Write the **Content** in the WordPress editor. Merge tags: `{first_name}` (or "there" when the name is empty), `{last_name}`, `{email}`, `{site_name}`. The footer with your postal address, why the person gets the email and the unsubscribe link is added automatically and cannot be removed.
5. Tick the **lists** to send to. Only confirmed subscribers are included; people on two lists get one email.
6. **Save draft**, then **Send test** to your own address — the test subject starts with "[Test]".
7. **Send now** (asks you to confirm). The preview shows the saved version.

7. Sending — batches, progress and unsubscribes (screenshot `pro-09-sending-progress.png`)

After **Send now** every recipient gets one row in the queue; a person can only ever be queued once per campaign, so nobody receives the same campaign twice — not when you click twice and not when a batch runs again. Batches go out on WP-Cron with your batch size and interval. The campaign screen shows "3 of 7 sent · 4 waiting · 0 failed · 0 skipped" and a progress bar; you can leave the page, reload it or come back later. **Pause sending** stops after the current batch; **Resume sending** continues.

People who unsubscribe or bounce while a campaign is sending are skipped. If the server crashes in the middle of a batch, the emails it was working on are marked "skipped" rather than sent again — an email may already have left.

Unsubscribing. Every email has an **Unsubscribe** link in the footer: one click marks the person unsubscribed and shows "You are unsubscribed" (`pro-unsubscribed.png`). Every email also carries the `List-Unsubscribe` and `List-Unsubscribe-Post: List-Unsubscribe=One-Click` headers (RFC 8058), so Gmail, Apple Mail and others can show their own Unsubscribe button, which works without opening a page. Both are written to the consent log.

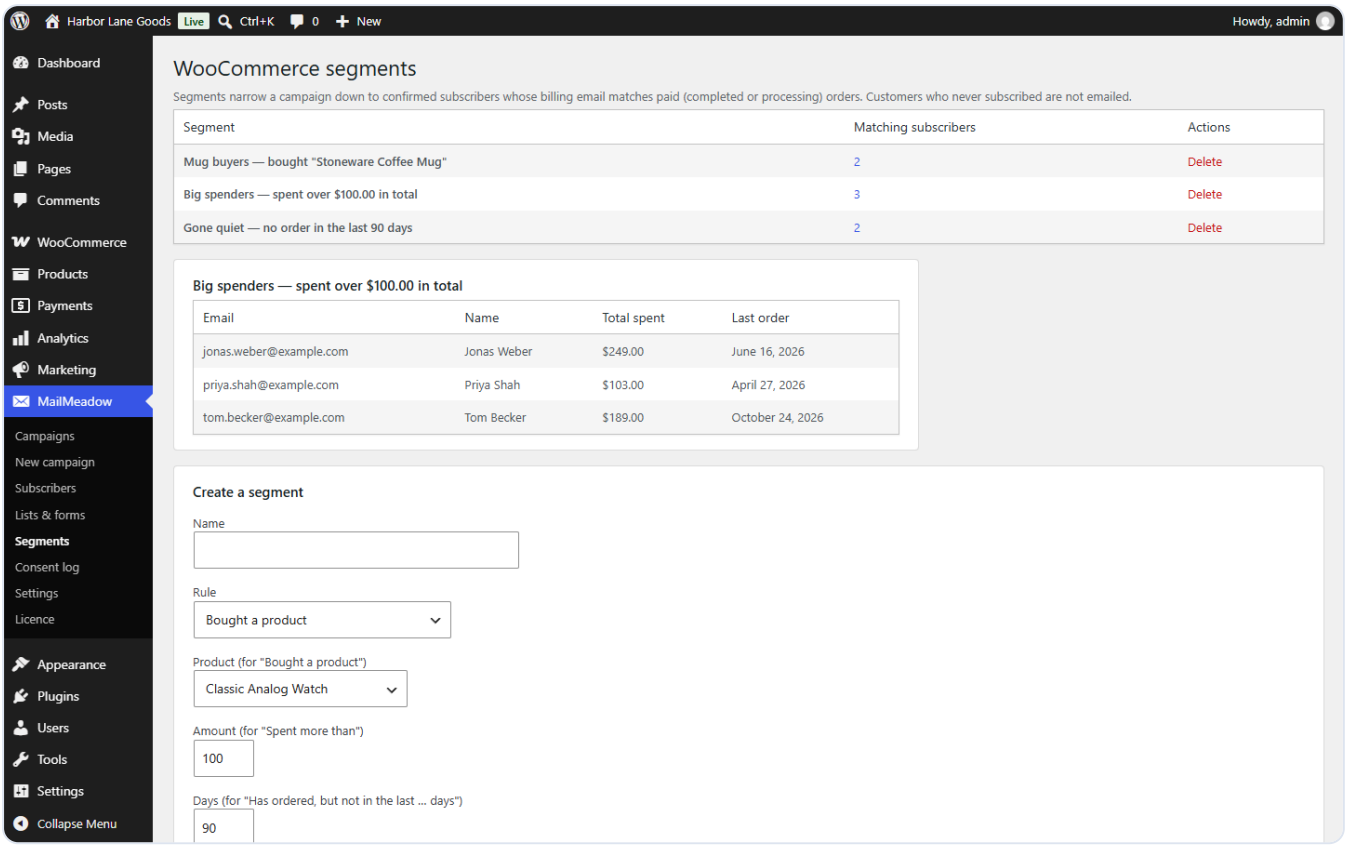
8. Consent log — MailMeadow → Consent log (screenshot `pro-11-consent-log.png`)

One row for every sign-up, confirmation, unsubscribe, import, bounce and spam complaint: the time, the email address, what happened, where (for example `form:block:64` = the block on page 64,

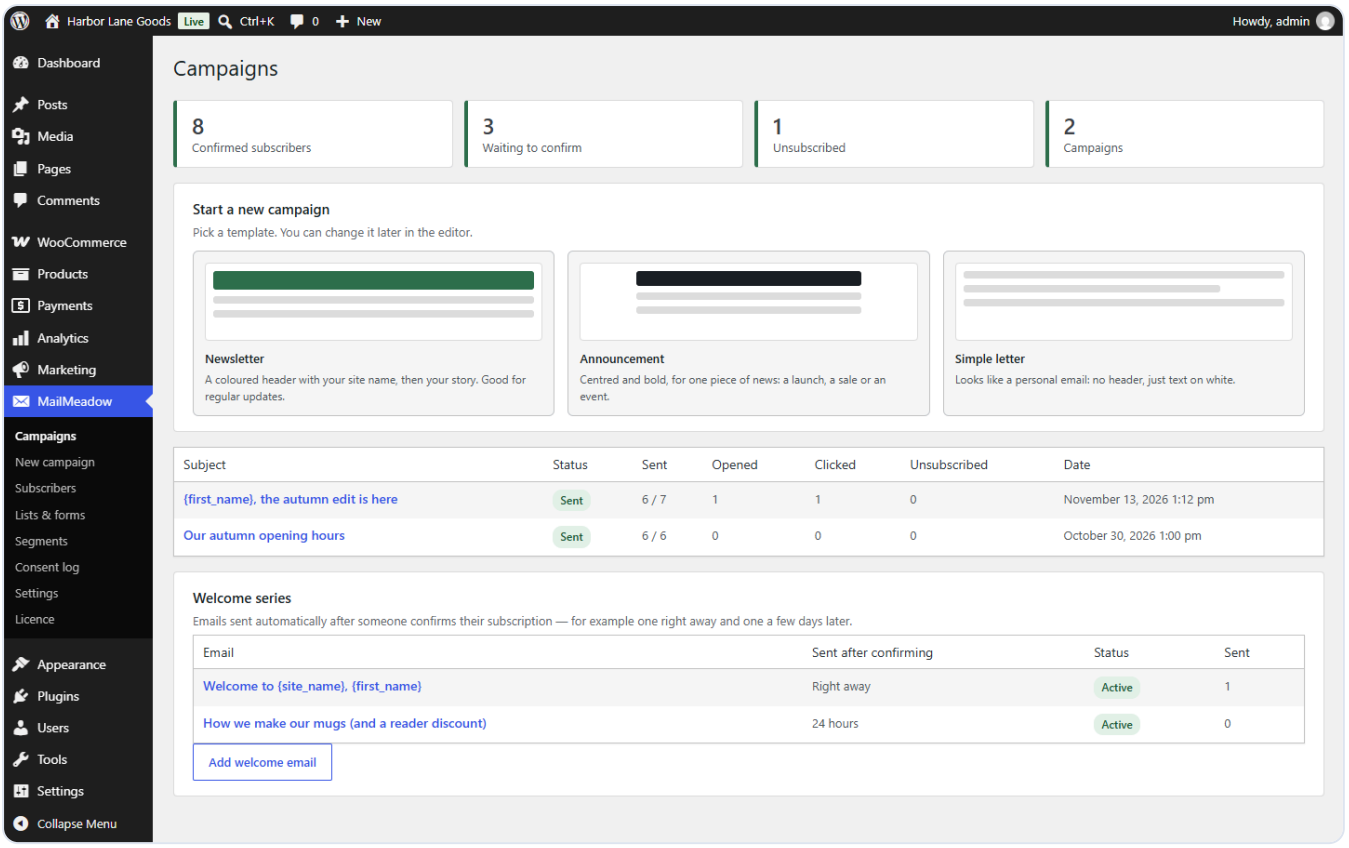
`confirmation-link`, `one-click (List-Unsubscribe-Post)`, `csv:shop-list.csv`, `webhook:sendgrid`), the IP address with the last part removed (for example 203.0.113.0) and details such as the list names or the campaign. Search by email address.

9. Pro features

WooCommerce segments — MailMeadow → Segments (screenshot). Create a segment with one rule: **Bought a product**, **Spent more than** an amount (all paid orders) or **Has ordered, but not in the last … days**. Paid means completed or processing orders (filter `mmbe_paid_statuses`). Click the number of matching subscribers to see who they are. In the campaign editor choose the segment under "WooCommerce segment": the campaign then goes only to the confirmed subscribers on the chosen lists whose billing email matches. Customers who never subscribed are never emailed.



Open and click tracking. With tracking on, each email gets a tiny image and the campaign's links go through your site first. The Campaigns screen shows how many people opened and clicked ( ). The click redirect only goes to links that are in that campaign and are signed for that email, so it cannot be used to send people to other websites. Links in emails already sent keep working if your licence ends.



Scheduled campaigns. In the editor pick a date and time next to **Schedule** and click it. The campaign starts on the first WP-Cron run after that time.

Welcome series. On the Campaigns screen click **Add welcome email**, write it, choose the lists and "Send this many hours after they confirm" (0 = right away, 72 = three days later), then **Save and switch on**. Every person who confirms on one of those lists from then on gets each welcome email once, at its time.

CSV import — Subscribers → Import from CSV. Columns: `email` (required), `first_name`, `last_name`, `status`, `consent_date`, `consent_source`. Status `subscribed`, `confirmed` or `yes` means the person already confirmed with you; `unsubscribed` or `no` is kept as an opt-out; anything else is imported as unconfirmed. People marked subscribed are only imported as subscribed when you tick "I confirm that the people marked subscribed agreed to receive email from me" — otherwise they come in unconfirmed. Unconfirmed people never receive campaigns and are not emailed by the import. Existing subscribers are never upgraded by an import; an opt-out in the file is always applied. The consent date and source from the file are written to the consent log.

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10. Bounce handling (Pro)

On **Settings → Bounce and complaint webhooks** copy the address for your service into its webhook settings:

- **SendGrid** — Event Webhook with "Bounced", "Dropped" and "Spam reports"; turn on **Signed Event Webhook** and paste the verification key into MailMeadow. Unsigned or wrongly signed requests are refused.

- **Mailgun** — webhooks for Permanent failure, Temporary failure and Spam complaints; paste the HTTP webhook signing key. Requests older than 15 minutes or with a wrong signature are refused.
- **Brevo** — transactional webhook for hard bounce, soft bounce and spam. Brevo does not sign webhooks, so the address contains a secret key; keep it private.
- **Amazon SES** — an SNS topic for bounces and complaints with an HTTPS subscription to the address. Enter the topic ARN to accept only that topic. Each SNS message's signature is checked against the AWS certificate, which is only downloaded from an `sns.<region>.amazonaws.com` address.

A hard bounce marks the address **Bounced**; three soft bounces do too; a spam complaint marks it **Unsubscribed**. Both are written to the consent log and the address gets nothing more.

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11. FAQ

Will my emails reach the inbox? It depends on your sending service, your domain's SPF, DKIM and DMARC records, your list and your content. MailMeadow cannot promise inbox placement.

Why did a campaign stop half way? WP-Cron only runs when your site has visitors. Set up a real cron job (section 3).

Can I import a bought list? No. Only email people who asked to hear from you.

Can I add a newsletter tick box to the WooCommerce checkout? Not yet. Customers subscribe with the signup form.

Does it track people without telling them? Tracking is off until you switch it on (Pro). Mention it in your privacy policy if you use it.

Is a confirmation email sent when I import? No. Imported unconfirmed people are simply never emailed.

What is deleted when I delete the plugin? Nothing unless you ticked "Delete all plugin data".

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12. Troubleshooting

- **No confirmation email arrives** — send yourself a campaign test. If that fails too, your site cannot send mail: install an SMTP plugin or (Pro) choose a sending service.
- **"Postal address required"** — add the address under Settings → Sender.
- **Sending stays at "0 of N"** — WP-Cron is not running; visit the site or set up a real cron job.
- **A provider refuses messages** — the error is shown per email in the queue (the "failed" count); check the API key, the verified sender address and the region.
- **Webhook returns 401** — the signing key, verification key or Brevo address does not match the one in your provider's settings.