

PLAN OF WORK FOR MECKLENBURG COUNTY
MARKETING INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS

SITUATION

The metropolitan area of Charlotte is a distribution center, moving large volumes of farm food products to a large number of consumers. The 231,046 rural and urban consumers in Mecklenburg County need adequate information and help in planning their food shopping, care and storage of food, and primarily in the selection of foods. Since approximately one-fourth of their income goes for food, Mecklenburg consumers need to have general and timely information on food shopping in order to get more value and satisfaction from their food dollar.

There are frequent periods during the year that certain agricultural products are in peak supply; hence, while burdensome supplies have a depressing effect at the market which may result in low prices to the producer, there is an opportunity to motivate consumers to benefit by economical buys while helping relieve or prevent a market glut.

With increased specialization in marketing there is a wider gap between producers and consumers. It is difficult for producers to keep well informed of changing consumer wants, shifts in demand, changes in marketing practices and competing areas of production.

OBJECTIVES

1. To expand the market for agricultural products.
2. To teach consumers how to get the greatest value from the food dollar.
3. To keep consumers, as well as food producers and processors, better informed on marketing, marketing trends and developments.

PROBLEM AREA
CONSUMER MARKETING
IN FOODS

NEEDS

WORK PLANNED

SPECIALIST HELP

1. Establishing
Consumer Mar-
keting program
in Mecklenburg
County

Acquaint the local people
with the consumer market-
ing program, its objec-
tives and suggested pro-
cedure for carrying it
out.

1. All extension agents to understand
the program, its objectives and
possibilities.
2. Develop a plan for gathering,
organizing and disseminating
pertinent information and
material to use in program.
Develop plan for evaluation.
3. Learn food production and
marketing channels and
facilities in the area.
4. Acquaint following groups with
consumer marketing program:
 - a. Food producers, handlers,
processors, consumers
 - b. Agriculture Workers Council
 - c. Agriculture food commodity
groups
 - d. Farm organizations
 - e. Home demonstration clubs
 - f. Other organized civic groups,
PTA, etc.
 - g. Mass media channels
5. Solicit cooperation of following
groups:
 - a. Food handlers: processors,
retailers and wholesalers -
sources for training information
 - b. Mass media - for time and space
for two weekly radio programs;
a weekly column in daily paper;
a weekly television program

Consumer Marketing Specialists
George Abshier and Ruby Uzzle,
1 day in December, 2 days in
January, to assist with con-
tacts and developing plans for
setting up program, evaluating.

Radio and TV Specialist Ted
Hyman - Assist contacts in
mass media. Train agents in
techniques. 2 days in January.

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2. Expand the market for agricultural products

A. Educational program for consumers on the current supply situation of agricultural products, and to teach them to make intelligent buying decisions

1. Coordinate efforts in marketing of all extension workers in county. Example, poultry marketing assistant.
2. Through mass media organizations, home demonstration clubs, civic clubs, etc., mailing list for circular letter "Tar-Heel Food Shopper", etc.
3. Inform consumers of periods of peak and/or seasonal supply in agricultural food commodities. Give priority to products in local area. Inform consumers of nutritive value, uses, price, selection, storage, etc., of current food products.
4. Channel information on current supply to quantify food service people.

B. Keep producers and processors informed of the changing consumer demands and trends

1. Keep informed on trends and consumer demands by observation surveys, personal contacts with consumers, retailers, wholesalers, specialists, State Marketing Department, commercial organizations, marketing research.

John Christian, Meat Specialist; to train agents in meat cuts selection and use; 2 days in February, 2 days in November.

W. C. Mills, Poultry; 1 day in March, 1 day in November; turkey selection and use.

C. P. Libeau, Egg Marketing; 1 day in April.

Nita Orr, Frozen Foods; Fruits and vegetables, 2 days in April; Meats and Poultry, 2 days in September.

Iola Pritchard, Food Conservation; Canning fruits and vegetables, 2 days in May.

Don Farris, Fruit and Vegetable Marketing; peaches, 1 day in June (Variety and Selection).

Henry Covington, Horticultural Specialist; marketing cantaloupes and sweet potatoes, 1 day in July, 1 day in Sept.

R. B. Redfern, Dairying; Milk Products, 1 day in May.

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		2. Keep producers and processors informed of consumer wants and improved marketing practices enabling them to make wise decisions concerning volume, time, place and form in which to sell, by letters, personal contact, conferences with other extension agents, farm commodity groups, home demonstration club market sellers, etc.	Al Eanadyga, Horticulture; marketing vegetables, 1 day in May
3. Consumers get greatest satisfaction and value from the food dollar	A. Information for consumers to judge and select values and quality of food in relation to cost and specific use	Through mass media, letters, organizations, "Tar-Heel Food Shopper", etc. One meeting of home demonstration clubs (1400 membership). Teach consumers: 1. Standards and grades. 2. How to interpret labels. 3. How to appraise "built-in service" of products. 4. To recognize seasonal influence on quality, supply and cost. 5. Nutritive value of foods.	George Abshier or Ruby Uzzle, Consumer Marketing Specialists; 1 day per month office conference on over-all program.
	B. Information for consumer on good marketing practices	Get information to consumers on good planning and practices as they relate to: 1. Stretching food dollar 2. Better nutrition for family 3. Saving time	Virginia Wilson, Nutritionist; 1 day in February, 1 day in June, 1 day in October. Mamie Whisnant, Home Management; 1 day in March on Management of Time.

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C. Information to consumers on care of food in the home

Furnish information to consumers on proper handling and storage of following:
1. Fresh foods
2. Frozen foods
3. Staples

Nita Orr, Frozen Foods

Virginia Wilson, Nutritionist

4. How to evaluate the consumer marketing program

To develop plan to measure results obtained

Continuously analyze programs to determine:
1. Cooperation and attitude of:
a. Mass media channels
b. Food handlers and processors
c. Retailers and wholesalers
d. Producers
e. Consumers

2. Adoption of practices by:
Producers
Consumers
Handlers

George Abshier and Ruby Uzzle, Consumer Marketing Specialists, and other subject matter specialists as needed.

Make this appraisal by:
1. Observation
2. Surveys
3. Opinion polls
4. Personal contacts