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A Marketing Guide for Farm Retail Markets

by

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Objectives

1. To develop a marketing guide describing the process involved in managing and operating a farm retail market.
2. To develop a slide set on merchandising practices for farm retail markets, to be used for training.

Procedure

Data and information to be used in completion of this project will be obtained in the following manner:

1. Personal interviews of direct marketing firms will be conducted to determine merchandising and operating practices in the following areas: planning the market, basic layout, customer flow analysis and design, parking area and approach, pricing, adver-

tising and customer service. Pictures will be taken and market facilities will be analyzed first hand.

Justification

Delaware has a long and well recognized history in farm retail marketing, alias direct marketing. Recently, we have seen a renewed interest in direct marketing: roadside markets, farmer's markets and tail-gate marketing. In Delaware alone, there are approximately 130 farm retail markets, with another estimated 20 U-pick operations. The Delaware Direct Marketing Association (founded in 1983) currently has 45 member firms. The Mid-Atlantic Direct Marketing Conference and Trade Show held in Wilmington, Delaware in February, 1992 was attended by 425 marketers from 10 states and Canada.

While farm retail markets will never replace supermarkets, farm retail marketing is considered

to be a viable alternative for fresh produce and other farm related product offerings. In order to compete, direct marketers will need to operate efficiently with customer service as a top priority. The urban sprawl that has occurred over the past decade gives Delaware farm markets new opportunities to expand markets and product lines. This guide will be written to explain and describe the process involved in efficient and cost effective market operation.