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AN IDEA - FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH

by
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The following brief excerpts of some of the presentations given at the Eighth Annual Fresh Produce Conference, held at the Kellogg West Center, on the Cal Poly campus, April 24 and 25 of this year, are only to spark your imagination as to how FDRS members might collaborate or individually produce on tape some of their work or program material; and to suggest that this idea might be a way in which the Society can extend itself into the halls of other educational institutions as well as into the conference rooms of industry. I am not trying to sell anything. Relax and enjoy it.

For the next few minutes I am going to play parts of some of the presentations on such subjects as "the vital part fresh produce plays in the success of a retail store", a first-hand report on the elec-

tronic checkout from an industry executive and from a store manager who has been operating a test store; you will hear how a leading produce wholesaler views the intrusions of F.O.B. buying into the traditional produce terminal market pattern; a leading independent supermarket tells how he survives in competition with chain stores; and Dr. Robert Maxie, Professor of Pomology, University of California, Davis, examines the problems food retailers face with increasing export and import of fresh produce.

The Kellogg West Center, Gary Entwistle, and I would like to present to the Society this cassette album containing two hours of highlight features from the conference. Possibly it will be the beginning of a library of similar programs that can be available on loan to Society members.

AN ECONOMIC EVALUATION OF TOTAL STORE SANITATION AND BOTTLE RETURN PROCEDURES AND COSTS IN OREGON RETAIL FOOD STORES

by
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As many of you probably know, through "Project Consumer Concern," a joint USDA-NARGUS venture developed guidelines and recommended procedures for instituting a voluntary program of total store sanitation in retail food stores. Detailed

information concerning the costs and problems associated with implementing this program, however, have not been established. In addition, the high volume of returnable bottles and containers now being handled by some food stores has created sanitation

problems and has also contributed to increased handling, storage, and investment costs. This has been especially true here in Oregon with the recent enactment of the Oregon Bottle Deposit Law which requires deposits on all glass and metal beverage containers (excluding wine bottles). This new legislation has caused substantial increases in the volume of these containers that must be handled at the retail store level, compounding the associated sanitation, storage, investment, and handling problems. Vermont has recently passed legislation similar to the Oregon Bottle Deposit Law and other states are likely to consider doing the same in the future. Detailed information on the costs, problems and procedures associated with handling returnables also has not yet been developed.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The major objective of this research is to determine the costs of implementing a more comprehensive sanitation program in retail food stores, including an evaluation of the costs and procedures associated with handling returnable bottles and containers at the store level. This study will be conducted in Oregon under a cooperative research agreement with the Agricultural Research Service and I will be acting as project leader. The specific research objectives are:

1. To determine the current procedures and associated costs and problems of cleaning and sanitizing all areas of retail food stores.
2. To determine the costs and problems of implementing improved sanitation procedures in retail food stores following the guidelines and recommendations established in Project Consumer Concern.
3. To determine the existing work methods, procedures, costs and problems involved in handling returnable bottles and containers in retail food stores.
4. To develop recommendations for improved methods for handling returnable

bottles and containers.

5. To analyze the economic impact of utilizing improved sanitation and returnable bottle handling procedures on retail food stores.

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

1. At least four typical Oregon retail food stores will be selected for study. These stores will be representative of the industry and will be equally divided with two representing average volume stores and two representing high volume stores.

2. Data will be obtained on current procedures used in cleaning and sanitizing all areas in each of the four stores selected for study. Information on time, labor, material, and equipment costs associated with existing sanitation work methods and procedures by department and for each store will be developed. Any problems associated with existing sanitation procedures will be identified and evaluated.

3. Improved sanitation procedures will be instituted in the four stores following the guidelines and recommendations established by the joint USDA-NARGUS committee for Project Consumer Concern. Data on time, labor, material and equipment costs associated with the improved sanitation work methods and procedures by department and for each store will be developed. These data will be compared to the existing sanitation and work method data derived on a similar basis to determine the differential costs associated with implementing improved sanitation procedures. Any problems associated with these improved procedures will be identified and evaluated.

4. Information on the existing work methods and procedures involved in handling returnable bottles and containers in the four retail food stores will be obtained and evaluated. Included will be methods for receiving empties and paying customers, storage equipment for collection and in-store transit, distances from receiving

points to sorting and storage areas, sorting methods and organization, cleanup and size, location, and cost of these areas. Data will be collected on the volume, number and types of returnable containers handled in each of the four stores including the number of vendors and frequency of collection. Data on labor, time, space, and equipment costs associated with the handling of returnable containers also will be obtained or developed. Any problems associated with existing returnable container handling practices will be identified and evaluated. Based on the research findings, recommendations for improving the existing methods of handling returnables in retail food stores will be developed. These will be instituted where deemed feasible, appropriate and acceptable by store management. The economic impact of utilizing improved handling procedures for returnable containers will then be evaluated.

SUMMARY

The findings of this research should provide retail food store operators with a better understanding of the costs associated with implementing improved sanitation management practices. As sanitation management practices improve and become more efficient in retail food stores, consumers should benefit from a reduction in food-borne illnesses attributable to retail food store operations and consequently receive a more wholesome and safe food supply. In addition, the findings of this study should enable retail food stores to increase their economic and operating efficiency in terms of handling returnable bottles and containers. Finally, the cost data developed should provide industry personnel and legislators with a better understanding of the economic impact the Oregon Bottle Deposit Law has had at the retail food store level.

COMMUNICATIONS AND LEADERSHIP CREDIBILITY

by

E. D. Ricker

Ricker and Associates

Personnel and Labor Relations Services

Flint, Michigan

How can the Food Industry increase profits....by bridging the gap between their human resources through effective communications. Bridging the gap in this framework refers to removal of work barriers that exist in the work climate. By removing these barriers, management can create the "right climate" for maximum employee productivity through "self-motivation" for greater net profits.

Removal of these barriers can be removed by focusing more attention to fundamentals and communications. Identifying frustrating barriers can easily be done by

conducting an employee opinion survey. By involving employees, you are practicing participation management, and if management follows through on removing these work barriers, they will be increasing their leadership credibility.

At a time when leadership is lacking, a true opportunity exists to strengthen this area with employees of the food industry. Labor Unions, Teacher Unions, and the Government have dampened their credibility throughout the nation and now is the time to make inroads and....more profits.