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## QUALITY MEANS PROFIT IMPROVING PERISHABLE OPERATIONS, SANITATION AND PERFORMANCE

by

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Piggly Wiggly Southern, Inc.  
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Piggly Wiggly Southern of Vidalia, Georgia operates 60 supermarkets throughout South Georgia, doing \$250 million in annual sales. (Editors note: Recognized as outstanding perishable merchandisers in their trade area.)

As a part of our management development program for meat department managers and assistants, for produce department managers and for store managers, we conduct annual two-day seminars at the company headquarters. This year we followed-up the general program with a

series of mini-seminars in each division.

We are in our fourth year with our produce program, and a major impact is quality control.

The 1976 meat program was based on a detailed analysis of our store operations, conducted by Dr. Si Trieb and Dr. Jim Christian of the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service and Lewis Norwood of U.S.D.A. Cooperative Extension Service. They worked

with us in developing the information and in conducting the seminars.

The seminar program highlighted three major topics:

1. Customer Service
2. Sales and Profit (Planning and scheduling, work methods and layout, case layout merchandising, inventory control, sanitation.)
3. Personnel Development

We planned the seminar by deciding what we wanted to accomplish. It was an ambitious program. We really wanted to change attitudes on sanitation and work methods.

We developed a single objective and five expected results. Some of the results were easier to measure. Others were more difficult to evaluate.

#### Seminar Objective

To assist market managers and assistant managers in improving their skills so that they may project the desired Piggly Wiggly Southern image, better serve their customers, increase sales and profits, and continue to develop market personnel.

#### Expected Results

1. Improved work planning, using new written scheduling techniques.
2. Improved case layout, using planograms.
3. Reduce case pullouts 50% (and increasing shelf life of ground beef) by utilizing improved sanitation practices.
4. Improved effectiveness of customer service as measured by the meat consultants.

5. Improved personnel development.

One of the key factors in the success of the programs was getting our managers to write their own specific objectives and action programs for each of the five expected results.

We followed the general seminar with mini-seminars in each division. Our first program was Sanitation, and our second program, scheduled for January 1977, is Improving the Effectiveness of Market Clerks.

#### Results

1. Work planning has improved. We are now using a system of estimating labor.
2. More effective case layout.
3. Case pullouts were reduced nearly 80% at a projected saving of \$800,000 per year.
4. We plan to follow-up with an intensive market clerk and meats cookery program.
5. Through the enthusiasm of small-group meetings, we feel that personnel development has also improved.

Perhaps, the single most important ingredient in our success, was that every market consultant (division supervisor) helped develop the program and participated as a speaker. Therefore, we generated a great deal of personal follow-through.

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