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# MEMBERS' EVALUATION OF THE VIRGINIA FOOD DEALERS ASSOCIATION

by  
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"Is our present program really meeting the needs and wants of our members? What changes should we be planning in this program to better meet present and anticipated member needs and wants? How can we best get the answers to these questions?"

These questions continuously face food industry association executives. This study was one attempt to obtain answers for one association, the Virginia Food Dealers Association.

## Objectives

The specific objectives of this study were:

1. To determine members' opinions concerning various present Association services and activities;
2. To obtain opinions concerning potential Association services and activities; and
3. To test one method, a mail questionnaire, for obtaining these opinions.

The results of this study indicated that the VFDA membership is please with the services offered by the Association, especially in the legislative field. Respondents also were complimentary of

the leadership, timely pertinent information received from the Association, particularly through the Bulletin, and the coupon redemption and insurance programs.

While there were few specific criticisms, there were some aspects mentioned which should be evaluated to determine whether Association efforts in these areas should be strengthened. Among these were The Foodsman, a management succession plan for the Association, more management training for food retailers, assistance with developing or securing store operations manuals, and possibilities for increased personal contact between Association leadership and the membership. None of these areas were spelled out by respondents as major problems but should be considered by Association leadership for ideas which might strengthen the already strong membership appreciation.

It was evident that the membership had little understanding of the inner workings of the Association. At present, this had little effect on their overall evaluation of its value. It is conceivable, however, that this lack of understanding could create future Association difficulties.

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