

Editorial

Most organic or ecological growers find marketing not only mysterious but also intimidating. Are these feelings justified? No.

Reduced to its most simple statement of action: "marketing is everything a grower does to move a product to market." But that's where the work causes growers to lose their nerve. If you do have these fears, take heart, because it's self-analysis time. Try this little exercise (assume you are a certified organic grower):

- Have you done your best to live up to and exemplify organic certification standards?
- Have you complied with regulatory and marketing board norms?
- Have you carefully designed on paper then performed a reasonably intelligent market research exercise before starting to sell your organic products (or did you just put it out there and wondered why it didn't sell)?
- Have you gauged the competitive barriers which the food industry has thrown in front of you and recognized the special challenges faced by organic agricultural products?
- Have you identified and targeted your organic customer as someone exhibiting specific needs, attitudes and tastes?
- Have you understood the overall concept of niche marketing, then defined and positioned your product for that so-called 'organic niche' that belongs to you?
- Have you thoroughly analyzed organic pricing and packaging options to allow you to design your product simply and environmentally?

- Have you grasped, then set to paper a formula for designing your advertising, promotional and sales strategies?
- Have you 'costed out' the organic marketing strategy you plan to use so that it is affordable and attainable for your farm enterprise?

If you can answer yes to many of these questions, you are a better marketer than you realized. Congratulations! If not, your task is clear, so get to work!

(Above information was quoted from 'Organic Product Marketing Strategies' a teleconference distance education offered October/94 by Assiniboine Community College, Brandon, MB.)

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