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Developing a Community Marketing Plan

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CORNHUSKER ECONOMICS

Developing a Community Marketing Plan

Market Report	Yr Ago	4 Wks Ago	12/3/10
<u>Livestock and Products,</u>			
<u>Weekly Average</u>			
Nebraska Slaughter Steers, 35-65% Choice, Live Weight.....	\$81.07	\$97.52	\$102.62
Nebraska Feeder Steers, Med. & Large Frame, 550-600 lb.	107.76	121.25	144.00
Nebraska Feeder Steers, Med. & Large Frame 750-800 lb.	95.44	111.37	124.50
Choice Boxed Beef, 600-750 lb. Carcass.	139.48	159.57	163.01
Western Corn Belt Base Hog Price Carcass, Negotiated.	59.81	60.70	66.34
Feeder Pigs, National Direct 50 lbs, FOB.	*	*	*
Pork Carcass Cutout, 185 lb. Carcass, 51-52% Lean.	62.76	75.96	77.50
Slaughter Lambs, Ch. & Pr., Heavy, Wooled, South Dakota, Direct.	93.50	154.62	159.12
National Carcass Lamb Cutout, FOB.	242.98	343.26	354.50
<u>Crops,</u>			
<u>Daily Spot Prices</u>			
Wheat, No. 1, H.W. Imperial, bu.	4.39	6.17	6.55
Corn, No. 2, Yellow Omaha, bu.	3.42	5.59	5.52
Soybeans, No. 1, Yellow Omaha, bu.	10.17	12.31	12.67
Grain Sorghum, No. 2, Yellow Dorchester, cwt.	5.77	9.34	8.93
Oats, No. 2, Heavy Minneapolis, MN, bu.	2.52	3.70	3.75
<u>Feed</u>			
Alfalfa, Large Square Bales, Good to Premium, RFV 160-185 Northeast Nebraska, ton.	*	170.00	140.00
Alfalfa, Large Rounds, Good Platte Valley, ton.	82.50	75.00	72.50
Grass Hay, Large Rounds, Premium Nebraska, ton.	*	*	*
Dried Distillers Grains, 10% Moisture, Nebraska Average.	120.00	161.50	173.75
Wet Distillers Grains, 65-70% Moisture, Nebraska Average.	42.50	55.00	54.00
*No Market			

When you think of the word “marketing” what comes to mind? Do you think of advertising and promotional strategies in print, other forms of media or the internet? Maybe you think of direct marketing flyers, email blitzes or email newsletters?

Typically, individuals equate marketing with specific promotional tools, but in reality it is a much broader process. It traditionally starts with identifying consumer wants and needs and developing products or services to meet those needs. The next step for the business owner is to match up their product or service benefits with potential customers groups. Then one tries to find the best methods to communicate those product or service benefits to the group. Ultimately, if the product or service is a good match, there is a sale and both the business owner and consumer are happy!

But what if you are trying to sell an entire community could you use the same business approach? How would it be different? Communities do a great deal of promotion, but often it is targeted in two areas, tourism development and business recruitment. What would a more strategic community marketing approach look like if your target audience were new residents?

These are the questions driving the work behind a team of extension professionals in North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska. Funded through a United States Department of Agriculture National Research Initiative grant, the team will work with six case study communities in the three state region to help them better market themselves to new residents.

One of the tools being developed is a framework that pulls various aspects of a marketing process together. It takes very traditional business marketing principles and puts a community “spin” on them.

The framework is composed of three main components: 1) identifying those realities that the community can't do very much about, and 2) acknowledging those realities that the community can do something about. Once those aspects are addressed a community can move on to the marketing questions, the third component which is critical in developing a marketing plan: What do people want in our community? What potential new resident groups do we target? What is our message and how do we reach these groups? (See Figure 1.) Within each of the three main components there are additional questions in the framework to encourage community dialogue and coax out marketing insights.

As part of the research project the group has already conducted two surveys, providing the communities with baseline market information on new residents as well as some future projections of labor market needs in the area. From this data communities will have the opportunity to think more strategically about what kinds of new residents the community should target. Determining the “selling” message and identifying how to reach these potential new residents will be determined by community discussions in the near future.

There is much to learn. Does this framework provide the right guidance as communities develop a marketing plan? Are other aspects needed? What works well and what needs to be improved in the process? Answering these questions will fine-tune a marketing tool that has the potential to help rural communities become more successful in marketing their community.

(Burkhart-Kriesel is a member of a research team funded by a USDA National Research Initiative. Other University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL) Agricultural Economics and Extension faculty and staff members included Bruce Johnson, Charlotte Narjes, Becky Vogt and Connie Hancock. Randy Cantrell, faculty member with the University of Nebraska Rural Initiative and Patricia Kennedy, faculty member in the UNL College of Business Administration, also participated in the project.)

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