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**Improved Meat Marketing for Small Scale and Direct Marketing Farms in the Northeast**

PART II. Creating Measurable Marketing Objectives

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In Part I, we discussed how a marketing strategy can make the farm's investments in marketing more effective. In essence, strategy is a technique to improve the rate of gross sales per hour of labor spent on marketing. A second technique is to set specific and measurable marketing objectives. Objectives aid the farm in planning, decision making, and execution of marketing activities.

Accomplishing an unmeasurable objective is a difficult task. Consider this example:

*"I need to start saving more money."*

How do you know when you've accomplish this? When you deposit \$20 into a savings account, are you done? The more detail you can add to an objective the EASIER it becomes to plan, execute, and ultimately succeed. Objectives transform marketing from a never ending, undefined job to a manageable task with specific outcomes which begin and end.

Consider this version of the saving money example:

*"I'll put \$20 from the second paycheck of the month into a savings account, starting in September."*

With this improved statement, we know when to begin and if we are on-track. If September ends and we only saved \$10, we know we need to deposit another \$10 or adjust our objective. A well-constructed marketing objective will contain a **measurable goal**, a **timeline**, a **budget**, and a **target audience** for the objective.

A measurable goal is usually a sales quantity but can also include other marketing goals

such as, number of restaurants you've contacted or Facebook likes. The goal should be quantified, and then, when measured against your timeline it creates a rate to measure your success against. In the example below, the farm must sell 8 quarters/month or 2 quarters/week.

*We plan to sell 32 beef quarters (8 head) between Sept. 1 and Dec. 31.*

Adding a target audience helps make the task easier. Ideally, the farm will use the target audience from their strategy sentence (see our previous article). The target audience allows you to develop a plan to reach consumers with a product and message that appeals to their specific interests.

*We plan to sell 32 beef quarters to homeschool families in a 3-county area between Sept. 1 and Dec. 31.*

Finally, adding a budget to get this objective accomplished sets you free to come up with innovative, creative ideas to accomplish your objective. Come up with a percent of gross sales you are willing to spend, or whatever amount seems reasonable to you. Once you know how much you have to spend and your timeline, you can get really creative.

Consider our example: If the average beef quarter brings \$600 to the farm, they stand to earn \$19,200. The time line is 4 months or 16 weeks. We can also look at the budget per beef quarter sold.

Marketing Budget Rate	Total Marketing Budget	Per Month (4 mos.)	Per Week (16 wks.)	Per Beef Quarter (32)
10.0%	\$1,920	\$480	\$120	\$60
5.0%	\$960	\$240	\$60	\$30
3.0%	\$576	\$144	\$36	\$18

The chosen budget informs the farm's plan. Here are some creative possibilities:

- **Idea 1:** Hold 2-3 open farm days, invite homeschool groups by email, Facebook, and fliers. Advertise in local media and in places that homeschool families are likely to see it. Offer a farm tour and pass out fliers explaining the value of purchasing a beef quarter. Include a coupon or offer a discount to anyone putting a deposit down for a quarter during that period.
- **Idea 2:** Hold two open farm days and hand out free burgers (your own product). Announce a special raffle for a FREE quarter- everyone who puts down a deposit for a quarter gets entered for a chance to win their quarter for free. Print up fliers and advertise on Facebook, at local churches, and homeschool group email lists.

The budget might look like: Printing & Advertising: \$110. Our own ground beef and burger rolls, napkins, charcoal: \$250. Give away one quarter: \$600. Total budget is \$960 (5% of our gross, \$19,200).

Specific written objectives make your marketing job easier. Combined with a marketing strategy, objectives make each marketing effort pay off better than the lack thereof. Objectives are measurable, so you can track your progress and adjust midstream when you are not seeing the results you were expecting. Objectives and strategy combined also inform what promotions to offer, where to advertise, when, and with what message.

Like marketing strategy, useful objectives take some thought and time. Try holding a marketing meeting with your team. Brew some coffee, bring some sales goals and get to brainstorming. You might come up with some fun and creative ways to market.

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