Quality Rural Produce: Marketing and Handling Strategies for Rural Grocers and Growers

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INTRO
INTRODUCTIONS

- Name and business
- What puts your town on the map?
AGENDA

- Produce merchandising
- Backroom handling
- Produce guide
- Local foods success and challenges
- In-store tour and discussion
MARKETING: NOT JUST ADVERTISING!
Merchandising Produce: Farmers Markets for Inspiration
Product Variety and Sorting

- Standards sold multiple ways
  - Bulk
  - Bagged
  - Multiple price points
Merchandising with Signage
Use Color Breaks
Use Color Breaks

At Farmers Market
Abundance Sells

- Illusion
- False bottoms
- Tiers
Abundance with a Sample

- Mix materials
  - Baskets
  - Bags
Abundance through Height

- Spilled basket
- False bottom
Thematic Displays
Display Building
Filling a Display

- Cross-merchandising
- Shelf stable and perishables
Merchandising: You

- Knowledge base
Backroom Storage

X marks partials

Date received
Cooler Backstock
Crisping

- Warm (not hot) water
- Fresh cut on greens
Produce Handling Guide

Asparagus
- Keep upright in chilled water.
- 32°F
- 1-3 weeks

Bell Peppers
- Chilling injury after 2 weeks below 45°F.
- 45°F
- 1-3 weeks

Broccoli Family: cauliflower, Brussels Sprouts, etc.
- Storage at 50°F reduces shelf life to 5 days. Cabbage can be stored for months. Mist! Avoid free-standing water on cauliflower.
- 32°F
- 1-3 weeks
Activity

▪ Pairs: What is your top problem items?
▪ What is your best tip for holding those products longer?
LOCAL FOODS IN YOUR GROCERY

- Strategy: Try Consignment
  - 10-20% to grocer
  - Farmer stocks once or twice weekly
  - Grocery tracks sales and culls product
LOCAL FOODS IN YOUR GROCERY

- Strategy: Be a CSA or farm drop site
  - Convenience
  - Build reputation for freshness
Local Grower Checklist

- Consistent communication
- Invoicing
- Quality product
- Industry standards
LOCAL FOODS IN YOUR GROCERY

▪ Discussion (in pairs)
  – If a grower, have you sold to a grocery before?
    ▪ What worked? What didn’t?
  – If a grocer, have you carried goods from local farmers?
    ▪ What worked? What didn’t?
Financial Resources

- USDA (REAP) funds for cooler and energy efficiency improvements
- Kickstarter: Bonnie’s Hometown Foods
Thank You

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