



To Market, To Market We Go

Objective: Students will consider the marketing aspects of agriculture and the jobs involved.

Summary: Students make up a radio, television and newspaper advertisement for an agricultural product.

Time: 1 hour spread over two days

Student Grouping: Three to five students per group

Materials: Various costumes, props, color crayons and paper, a variety of magazine and newspaper ads.

Background Information: One aspect of agriculture that is not often recognized is advertising. (Where would we be without “Clo the Cow” billboards?) Many products are advertised in different media. The advertisers try to design ads that will appeal to the audiences using the targeted media.

Packaging is closely related to this topic. If the product doesn't look appealing, buyers are likely to pass it by no matter what the quality. Artists are hired to design the labels that go on packages. Printing companies produce the labels and other packages used.

In Sonoma County we are fortunate to have many events and programs that promote agricultural products, and these enable farmers to more easily market their farm commodities. Such events include the Sonoma County Harvest Fair, numerous farmer's markets, and the new Wine Center in Rohnert Park. Farmers can also advertise in the Farm Trails map which promotes their farms as places where city dwellers can come and buy directly from the farm. More than 200,000 copies of this map are distributed annually. **Select Sonoma County**, also known as the Sonoma County Ag. Marketing Program, promotes agricultural products for farmers by sponsoring “tastings” for chefs, produce buyers, food writers, etc., who will start asking for Sonoma County products for their menus.

Just the Facts: Dairy owners all over the U.S. agreed in 1983 to contribute 15 cents from every hundred pounds of milk they sell to state and national advertising campaigns. That represents about \$874,000 a year dedicated to advertising for Sonoma County dairymen. One-third of the money is spent on a national campaign and the remaining two-thirds is spent on the state and local levels. The California

Milk Board created the “Milk, it does a body good” theme in 1983 still used today. The “Real California Cheese Seal” was developed in 1984. The industry's message seems to be finding its target. Since 1984, California cheese has doubled its market share and Californians eat more than the national average of dairy products. Finding a market for a product can make or break any agricultural enterprise.

Sonoma County is unique in that we have the nation's first county-wide agricultural marketing organization—Sonoma County Agricultural Marketing Program (SCAMP). SCAMP was formed in 1989, and its unique purpose is to preserve Sonoma County's agricultural heritage. The “Select Sonoma County Products” label identifies local produce, fruit, meats, fish, nursery products and processed foods from Sonoma County.

Sonoma County Farm Trails was founded in 1973. Since that time, the Sonoma County Farm Trails map has guided consumers through the spectacular Sonoma County countryside to “experience a farm,” sample and purchase local fresh fruit, vegetables, processed foods and wines, or select a rare plant from a small nursery.

Another way to sample and purchase Sonoma County products is to visit one of the eleven farm markets located throughout the county. See the Teachers Resources Directory for a listing of these markets.

Each year during the first weekend in October, the harvest is recognized and celebrated at the Harvest Fair. This showcase of Sonoma County products is held at the Sonoma County fairgrounds in Santa Rose and honors the agricultural community's contribution to the county's economy and way of life.



Preparation:

1. Find some examples of advertising for this project. If possible, videotape some television advertisements from kids' shows and adult programs. Newspaper and magazine ads are also good examples. Bring in magazines and have students find the examples themselves. Magazines of varied interest will have varied advertisements. For example, a health food magazine will have very different advertisements from a skateboarding magazine. Have students bring in old magazines the week before the activity.
2. To ensure variety, assign the products to be advertised. Some locally produced items to consider are: oysters, salmon, wool products, beef, milk, yogurt, cheese, ice cream, broccoli, organic lettuce and flowers. Other processed agricultural products will work: breakfast cereal, juices, potato chips and pizza.

Procedure:

1. Ask kids what their favorite commercial is. What is their least favorite? Who do they think makes them up? How do they get paid? Are the commercials the same on Saturday mornings as they are during a news broadcast? Why?
2. Break the class into groups. Assign a product for them to advertise.
3. Explain to students that they are to make up an advertisement for a print media (newspaper or magazine), for radio and for T.V. They will present their ads to the class.
4. Have them design their ads on the first day. On the second day they can bring necessary props, written scripts and completed print media ads. Give them 15 minutes to practice their T.V. ad, then have the class present their ads.

Questions for Discussion:

- Which ad is hardest to come up with?
- What kind of magazine/newspaper is your ad designed for?
- Would your T.V. ad be better received by cartoon watchers or news watchers? Why?
- Who is more important to reach? Why?
- Who besides the rancher helps get milk to your house?

Extensions:

- Have students make tapes of their radio ads and videos of their T.V. ads.
- See if a local agricultural enterprise would like to use some of the students' ideas.
- Use the advertisements for a "Farm Day" display. (See the Resources Directory listing under "National Ag Day" for more details on this annual event.)

