

**“Successful Marketing -
What You Need to Know”**

Gary W. Hornbaker
Retired Animal Science Specialty Agent – VCE
Producer – Clarke County
Mutton Bustn’ Farm

Direct Marketing Opportunities

- freezer lambs
- feeder or club lambs
- breeding stock (rams/ewes, purebred/commercial)
- research animals
- wool
- pelts/skins
- manure
- specialty products (sausage, “rent a sheep”, grazing, rodeo, exhibitions)

How much time, effort, and money can
you afford to devote to direct marketing
for a increased return?

Basic direct marketing concerns:

- Time
- Targeting your market
- Facilities and equipment
- Taxes and sales fees
- Product knowledge
- Promotion or advertising
- Regulations

Time



- Extensive personal contact
 - answer questions
 - show products
 - facilities preparation
 - travel to shows
 - letters
 - business cards
 - web site and email

Targeting A Market

- Freezer lamb market
- Ethnic/Religious market
- Retail food store market
- Restaurants
- Club lambs
- Breeding stock
- Specialty products

Facilities & Equipment

- Self assessment of operation -
 - slaughter facilities
 - disposal of offal
 - sorting and holding pens
 - loading facilities
 - SCALES !
 - storage areas

- truck and/or trailer
- display area (farm or shows)
- **computer**
- **fax machine**
- **iPhone**

Collection of Taxes and Fees

Virginia Sheep Industry Board Act-
Code of Virginia - Chap. 43, Sec 3.1
Lamb check off fee
\$.50 / head
Paid to Tax Commissioner each
quarter
Maintain records for 3 years

• **Virginia Retail Sales Tax Collection**

– **Code of Virginia Section 58.1 - 630**

– A farmer regularly engaged in selling tangible personal property at retail must register as a dealer and collect and pay the tax due on retail sales. The tax applies to regular or recurring sales of farm products by farmers or peddlers or at a public market, roadside stand, farm or any other place

Product Knowledge

- Do you know your true cost of production?
- Do you know your price?
- Do you know the grades or standards of your product?
- Do you have standard charges? Do they change?
- How do you handle money collections?
- Do you have guarantees or a satisfaction policy?
- Do you know what processing is available and what it cost?

Promotion

- farm signage
- mailings
- field days
- exhibitions or festivals
- web site
- associations and cooperatives
- ***Do not expect other people to sell your products for you!***

Promotion Assistance

- Virginia Cooperative Extension
- VA Dept. of Agr. & Consumer Services
- American Sheep Industry Association
- Local Government
- Breed or Product Association
- Organization or Business Publications
- **Word of Mouth !!!**

Regulations

- Specific Products
- Slaughter inspections under the *Wholesome Meat Act (Pub.L. No 90-201, 81 Stat. 585 (1967))*
 - federally inspected
 - state inspected
 - custom processing
 - products must be marked “Not for Sale”
 - home slaughter and usage

Words of Advise:

Sell animals by the head or products by the piece.

Get paid up front.

Do not assist with slaughtering, handling, or transporting meat.

Have a plan for marketing and disposal.

Try new ways of education, promotion, and communications.

Direct marketing is a challenging on-going process that isn't for everyone, **if it were easy everybody would be doing it.** Sometimes what might sound like a tremendous price or opportunity **really isn't !!!**
