

## Developing A Brochure For Your Farm APPPA GRIT issue 24

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One of the most inexpensive ways to advertise your farm and bring in consumers is through the use of brochures. A good brochure will inform potential customers of the products and services you have available. Current customers will also have something they can provide to their friends to use to direct future customers to you as well. These can be placed on community information boards, commonly found in supermarkets and with a little modification can be used as a mailing to existing and new customers. Have your farm brochure available on pickup day and include them with your customers order.

A well thought out brochure will include your name, logo, brief philosophy/history, hours you are open, products you have, payment services available, website, e-mail and contact information. You will also want to consider if you will use a tri-fold type brochure, or a letter or poster style sheet. Many word-processing programs have templates that can be used to help with the layout.

Professional, professional, professional, your brochure may be the first and last impression you leave on a potential customer. Make sure it looks professional. If your brochure is sloppy customers may equate it to your products the same way. Develop the flow from page to page that is pleasant to the eye and easy to read. When displaying them at your point of sale keep them neat and clean.

To begin, write out a brief statement about your farm. This would include information such as why you started farming, how long you have been farming, information on the principles of the operation, and the benefits of your product. Write out your mission or vision statement if you have one. You may want to include other information such as affiliation with consumer groups or producer associations i.e. APPPA, organic groups, etc. Introduce new customers to pastured poultry; many may not know what pastured poultry is so it is always desirable to have a brief introduction to your model. The following is taken from an APPPA brochure *"Pastured Poultry is a production system that employs raising chickens directly on pasture. The birds are moved regularly to fresh pasture, which allows the birds to be raised in a cleaner, healthier environment. Pastured Poultry is raised the old fashioned way, on fresh green pasture and wholesome grain. Processing is often done on the farm in a clean healthy, sanitary environment."* Many producers also include a narrative of the health aspects and whether they use medications or not. Make your statements as friendly as possible, make your customers feel as if they are part of the family. Consumers have a lot of choices to pick from, even as far as locally raised products are considered. Make the case as to why they should come to your business instead of some else.

Other considerations for inclusion are price, do you sell per pound or per bird? Do you offer different cuts? What is the average weight per bird? What is the availability of product? Is it fresh or frozen? Does the customer need to pick up on processing day or can you hold it over for them? Do they need to pre order? How about ordering by e-mail? Do you provide additional services such as delivery? You may not need to address all these questions, but try to include the most pertinent information.

Once you have put your thoughts on paper begin to layout the brochure. On the part of the brochure that the customer will see first, you will want your logo or farm name in clear bold type. If you are going to make a color brochure you may want to use "power colors" such as purple or red. These colors catch the eye and cause a reaction that will make the brochure stand out and say, "Pick me up"! Most people will pick up a piece of literature and make up their mind if they are going to read it in about 3-5 seconds. So you want them to "want" your brochure. Consider, in the case of a tri-fold brochure, the way the customer will open it up. Again, remember you want them to read your brochure, so the opening page is the place to use words that catch their eye. Catchwords today are "All Natural, Naturally Raised, Hormone Free, Drug Free, Environmentally Friendly, and Sustainable. Set out the point you are trying to make in large letters and follow up with a brief explanation under it in smaller font. If the customer likes what they see in large bold print they will take the time later to read the small print. The opening page should have only a few important statements. As they continue to open the brochure lay it out in such a way as to lead them through your farm.

On the next section list your mission/vision, why you do what you do, a brief history about your operation. Perhaps your short term or long term goals, and include some information about the farm and family. Where did your farm name come from? It may be of interest to your customers. Remember to make them feel at home. Don't go into a long dissertation about yourselves or philosophy, this is really about them, providing good healthy food for their families. It is much better to have the customer walking away wanting a little more information than overwhelming them with too much detail. A second informational page may be helpful for the customer to read at a later date. Make yourself available to answer more detailed questions that might arise from your brochure.

Use bullets to emphasize your strong points. As people scan the brochure the bullets will grab them and pull them in. Use underlining to separate thoughts or points. You may want to include a free coupon for new customers to tear off and bring in to redeem their gift if you offer one.

One of the things I often notice about brochures is the failure to provide contact information. A good place for this is in the middle of the back of a tri-fold brochure because this will be the back of the brochure when folded. Have you ever watched a person pick up a brochure? Most people look at the front and turn it over and look at the back. In those 3-5 seconds they have already decided if they will keep it or not. So on the back is a good place to put your phone number in large easy to read print. Beneath the phone number put your mailing address and other contact information such as a website or e-mail address.

Due to the fact that your brochure shouldn't have a lot of wordiness to it, you may want to include pictures. You know the old saying "a picture is worth a thousand words". Pictures of birds foraging in a field may be great to you as you took them, but what about the person looking at your brochure who isn't familiar with your farm? Make sure the pictures are clear. Give some thought to what the background of the picture is, does it portray a neat clean farm, are the animals portrayed in a clean comfortable setting? Believe it or not many people have a hard time looking at the live version of what they might be having for supper. Pictures that are too "cutesy" of young stock may turn people off when they equate it as dinner on their plate.

If all this planning is too much for you APPPA now has a new Producer Plus membership with one of the benefits being access to a producer plus web page. On the site will be several different brochures that you can download and make the changes specific to your farm and print them out with very little effort.

Overall, spend some time thinking your brochure through even before you sit down at the computer. With today's color printers and colored papers available at the office discount stores you can print off a few and see if you need to make changes. Brochures are a low cost tool that you can use to promote your business.