



Drudgery That Pays Well

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Webinar Questions and Answers

1. Can you recommend a good data storage and analysis package?

The Excel spreadsheet is really good at storing the data and allowing for manipulation, graphing and charting information. I think it is underutilized for this and represents a low cost option as well, since most people have the Microsoft Office Suite, including Excel already on their computers.

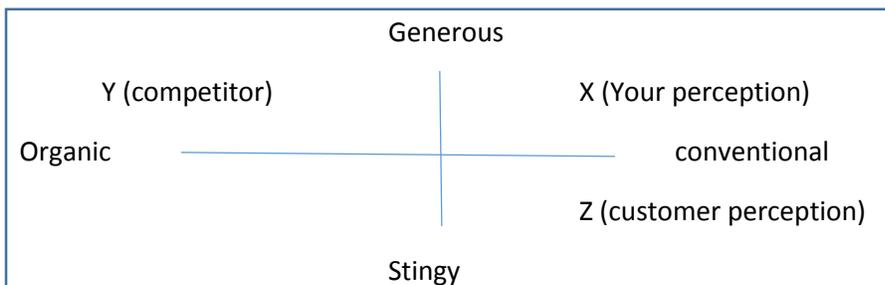
2. How stable are the various kinds of data that you recommend collecting -- good for a season, a year, several years?

Most information about your customers is not good beyond a year. People's lifestyles change, purchasing habits evolves and contact information is always changing. You will need to monitor and update customer information at least annually.

3. Can you more clearly explain a perceptual map?

This is a crisscross map of your farm or product characteristics. It will help you understand where you fit with your customers and against your competition, allowing you to make the necessary adjustments to bring your customers perceptions of your business in line with your own perception or the image you want your customers to have of you.

For example: if we look at a CSA program and the characteristics might be generous vs stingy share sizes and organic vs conventional production.



4. How do the 2 budgets, marketing and production, differ?

There are two budgets: marketing and production. The marketing budget will include all your marketing, advertising and promotion expenses. These can be anywhere from the cost of a radio spot to the cost of stamps to mail a direct mail piece or the cost of maintaining your website address.

The production budget is just that – it includes the costs of everything you must do to grow/develop/raise your product.

5. Where can I find more information on budgeting?

A good resource for production budgeting would be the Penn State Ag Alternatives site. They have excellent examples. <http://extension.psu.edu/business/ag-alternatives/farm-management/budgeting-for-agricultural-decision-making> Another resource is the Marketing for Profit webinar on Self Assessment. You can find this on the Federation website, http://www.nyfarmersmarket.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=125

6. How do you tie amount of sales to specific marketing efforts in different media?

This can be very difficult. But one suggestion is to assign a different promotion to each media. For example, a coupon on your e-newsletter and a mention on your Facebook page. Then you can track which campaign your customers respond to.

7. How do you get from this evaluation to return on investment so you can stay in business?

Your return is the accomplishment of your plan goals. So if you know what your goals are, then you would use your evaluation to determine if your strategies are helping you to reach your goals. If not, then you know you need to make some adjustments.

8. What resources I can use to identify whether there is a market for the product I want to get into i.e. meat, cheese, value-added products?

There are a number of resources you can use:

- USDA ERS (Economic Research Service)
- Trade organizations
- Local colleges – either they may have the data you need or they may assign your project to a marketing class to do the surveying you need

9. Do you have any hints for using Insightly, an online CRM tool? It's a bit overwhelming since all I've gathered before was contact info off of checks, and CSA memberships.

It can be overwhelming, but a general rule of thumb is to ONLY collect the information that you know you will use. So you definitely want customer contact information. Beyond that is a personal decision. What information would help you make good business decisions or build better customer relationships? That's the information you want to collect.