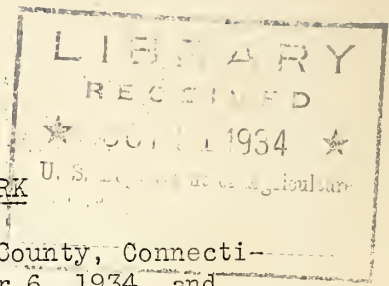


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WHAT I LEARNED ABOUT MARKETING FROM 4-H CLUB WORK

A radio talk by Edith C. Slate, local leader, Tolland County, Connecticut, delivered in the National 4-H club radio program, October 6, 1934, and broadcast by a network of 58 associate NBC radio stations.

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4-H club work has meant a lot to me. As far back as I can remember I have keenly enjoyed farm life, and have always been interested in the duties involved - especially those dealing with animals and the out-of-doors. I always had kittens, chickens and calves at my disposal to pet and work with. So, naturally, 4-H club work appealed to me and added to my interest by teaching me new methods and principles that would give me a chance to work out my ideas and ambitions.

I started in club work by joining a dairy club and for eight months kept records on my father's herd of about fifteen cows. I then acquired a calf of my own as a club project. This project did not offer the chance for advancement that I desire so I turned to poultry. My brother and I went into partnership and purchased 100 Leghorn pullets. This was in 1928. At this time my mother and father had a flock of some 500 birds. In a year or so my father sold out his interest in this flock to my brother and me, so that now we have a three-member partnership.

In October 1932, our Extension poultryman and county agent conceived the idea of selling eggs in regulation 4-H cartons. I was for the plan as I was interested in trying to improve our retail trade. We had a small retail egg route in a nearby city at that time; since starting with the 4-H cartons this route has doubled. These boxes called for the same specifications in regard to producing and packing the eggs as do the regular state grade boxes which I have been using for the past year, due to my having outgrown the right to be a 4-H club member. I believe that this standard box has helped by putting a product before the people that they can rely on as being good. Our name is printed on these boxes also, which makes a trade name to be recognized as on other products.

Our egg route has given us a foundation whereby we sell other products. During my three years as leader of a garden club I became interested in marketing vegetables. I learned a lot in regard to vegetable marketing in this work as leader of our garden club, more so I think than did the members of it. At present I sell quite a few vegetables on our route. Also I have canned the meat from over 100 hens and have sold nearly all of this. My brother markets a big supply of fancy grade A potatoes and mother sells raised doughnuts on this same route. Though of course all of the people don't buy all of these things, they all help to swell the rather slim farm income.

My poultry club work has helped me to produce good eggs and to grade and candle them thereby making them easier to sell. The training in record keeping has been a help and also added interest to the work. I have found that it is

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sometimes a great satisfaction to look back a few years and see the improvements that we have made. Sometimes these same records are a reproach for backsliding and make me buck up and try harder.

Retail marketing has proved to be mighty interesting. It brings one into contact with all types of people and you see them in a different light in their kitchen of a busy morning than they appear at an evening function. I like people in their kitchens best, I think.

Of course it hasn't been such an easy job to build up a route just at this period when business is in a slump. There is a lot of keen competition and there is also that attitude carried by a lot of people who say, "Oh I can get eggs at the store for two cents less than you charge, and an egg is an egg."

We have tried several types of advertising such as house to house canvass and post card ads, but have found that satisfied customers are the best means of getting new customers. When they get something they like they talk about it, and incidentally give us a boost to a new customer. And there are people that do appreciate quality and service. We also welcome suggestions from our customers as we feel that they must be satisfied in order to keep them buying, and we therefore try to serve them honestly and fairly. I think the 4-H club spirit helped to instill this desire for fair dealing on my part.

Due to the fact that we sell in a mill city with most of the work at a stand still, there is a demand for cheaper eggs, therefore we sell a large quantity of smaller, second grade eggs as a side line. It is our desire, however, to increase our sales of the first-class eggs because these give better returns and offer a better chance for real advancement into a bigger business.

With the start that the 4-H clubs have given me, I hope that we can progress and always be a credit to the 4-H clubs and the things they stand for.

One other thing that I owe to my club is this opportunity to broadcast over the radio and to walk the sidewalks of New York, both of which are some treat and a wonderful experience.

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