

Market Analysis

In this section discuss the marketing mix, product or service, distribution channels, price and promotion. Discuss these items in comparison to the industry in general and against your competition.

Focus on your target markets. Explain how your market has people willing to buy or who may buy the product. Show that you have enough potential buyers for the company to survive and grow. Discuss the demographic characteristics of potential customers and why they may want to buy your product.

Points to cover are:

- 1. Customers**
Identify customers and potential customers. Discuss demographic information about customers such as age, gender, income, type of work and where they are located.
- 2. Market Size and Trends**
Discuss market in current unit and dollar size. Include future industry growth and trends. Support with documentation.
- 3. Competition**
Identify the competition and where it is located. Discuss competitors' annual sales volume, market share, strengths and weaknesses. Discuss key differences of your company and product compared to the competition and your product price compared to the competitors' price.
- 4. Estimated Market Share and Sales**
Include projected unit and dollar sales and area of the sales territory.
- 5. Product Distribution and Sales**
Discuss how this type of product is sold in the market place. Discuss distribution and your plans compared to customary practices.
- 6. Competitive Advantages**
Discuss the competitive advantages of your company and product compared to industry and competition.
- 7. Analysis**
Analyze strengths and weaknesses of your product line and company versus competitors' product line and company.

..... Sample Market Analysis

① Market Analysis Customers

Family Farmers Choice has developed a database of present customer who buy on a regular basis and customers who have bought only occasionally as the opportunity presents itself, such as at farmers markets. Customer demographics show the current customers are in an income range of \$45,000 or more, two income families, professional occupations, concerned about the environment and located primarily in urban areas. Research also shows these customers are Internet users and willing to order product from our business via the Internet.

Research conducted by Farmers Choice has verified that there is a market segment large enough to justify the investment in the processing facility. Further, the premium these consumers are willing to pay will allow the shipment of products to nearly all geographic locations in the country. Focus groups, market surveys and product demonstrations at several locations were used to develop demographic profiles of each promising location so that zip codes could be used to easily identify future markets when expansion is deemed appropriate. (Note: Results of the surveys can be provided if additional information is desired.)

A significant number of consumers are concerned about where their meat products are coming from and how these products are processed. The company will market directly to that group. Since they are highly informed consumers, however, a major task will be to establish credibility.

In the farmers markets targeted for sales there are an estimated 100,000 potential customers (based on census estimates). At present, Farmers Choice has reached only a fraction of that customer base.

Based on data in the U.S. Census Bureau databases, estimated customer potential is as follows:

Big Town Farmers Market	55,000
Lotus	10,000
Keeper	10,000
Sagmore	15,000
Cool Springs	5,000

Market Size and Trends

U.S. pork production continues to trend upward:

② 1997	18.2 billion pounds of pork produced
1998	19.0 billion pounds of pork produced
1999	19.4 billion pounds of pork produced

Source: Steve Meier, National Pork Producers Council. 1999 figures based on USDA estimate.

Average prices received by the producer have decreased in recent years:

1997	\$52.90 per hundred weight
1998	\$34.40 per hundred weight

U.S. per capita consumption of pork is declining:

1980	57.3 pounds per person
1996	49.1 pounds per person

In spite of declining per capita consumption of pork, consumers still spend more money on pork per year than on poultry and fish. Average annual expenditures for pork in 1998 were \$146 per person per year, second only to beef at \$218. The expenditures for all meat (beef, pork, poultry and fish) decreased slightly from the 1997 annual expenditures. (Source: Consumer Expenditures Survey, 1984-98, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

According to USDA data, higher expenditures for pork versus poultry may have been due to retail prices. For example, in June 1998, the average retail price for pork was \$2.29 per pound, compared to chicken at \$1.55 per pound.

Consumer Perceptions of Pork

According to a survey conducted by the National Pork Producers Council, more than three out of four family cooks believe pork is a healthful choice. The same study indicated families prefer pork because it tastes good. Survey respondents also cited pork's versatility, nutrition and value as key reasons for its popularity.

Ranking of the favorite cuts:

1. Chops
2. Tenderloins
3. Roasts
4. Ribs

Pork producers work hard to deliver the product that the consumer wants.

Consumers wanted leaner pork and they got it! Compared to 1983, pork of 2000 has about 31 percent less fat content.

General Trends in Meat Consumption

There are a number of new and emerging trends in meat marketing which are relevant to the interest of this feasibility study. In general there are three consumer preferences today which are driving major changes in the meat industry.

- **Consumers are demanding meats that require little preparation time.** Population and labor trends are driving this preference. An unprecedented number of women are in the workforce today. There is an increasing number of single adult households in the U.S.; of those, the number of single parent, female-headed households is increasing, resulting in more than ever limited time for meal preparation within U.S. households. A Yankelovich poll (reported by the American Meat Institute) claims that half of all Americans spend less than 45 minutes cooking an evening meal compared to the two-hour meal preparation typical in American households 30 years ago. People have a limited amount of time and don't want to spend it cooking. Add to this the fact that at 4 p.m., 60 percent of

Americans do not know what they will eat for dinner. The implications are that the meat marketing industry has a whole new challenge for capturing palates and dollars.

- **Consumers have little knowledge of and skills for cooking.** Studies report that many consumers feel that their knowledge of cooking and skills for meal preparation are more limited than those of their parents and grandparents. Furthermore, the American Meat Institute reports that many American consumers find meat preparation to be challenging. Implications for meat marketing are that meats are becoming increasingly available as meal-ready or with minimal preparation.
- **Consumers are concerned about health and nutrition when buying meat.** The Food Marketing Institute claims that nearly 80 percent of Americans want to eat food they perceive to be extremely healthy and that 42 percent are willing to pay more for low-fat versions of commonly consumed products. In the lunch meat and hot dog markets, a record 50 percent of the products offered are items with reduced or low fat.

Consumers are demanding changes from the meat industry and the industry is responding. Numerous options and innovations can be observed at all levels in production, processing and packaging. The retail point of sale is taking on a new look.

Emerging Trends in Meat Marketing

Case-Ready Meat: These are value added fresh meat products that the supermarket purchases in precut packages. Due to new packaging technologies, precut, tray-ready packages tend to offer a longer shelf life than conventional products. Often hermetically sealed, they offer customers trimmed, individually wrapped, consistent portions. Case-ready meats eliminate extra steps in handling for retailers and consumers alike.

Consumer-Ready Products: These products go a step beyond the case-ready meat products by including preparation tips, cooking instructions, spices, or seasoning packets. Portions are indicated on the package. Consumer-ready products include items such as marinated meats, stuffed chops, kabobs and seasoned steaks and roast which are ready to take home and pop into the oven, microwave or place on the grill.

Home Meal Replacement: These are fully prepared products which free the consumer from all responsibility of meal preparation. They often come packed and portioned as entrees with options to purchase complementary side dishes or extras. Also known as TOTE (Take Out To Eat), these dinners in a bag are the way in which supermarkets and grocery stores are competing with restaurants to gain business from Americans who choose not to prepare their own meals.

The market analysis shows a broad range of prospective clients. The green labeled, eco-labeled, naturally labeled, food industry is in a boom period. While there are a growing number of items from a growing number of vendors becoming available, Family Farmers Choice is approaching the market as a multi-choice provider of products with a face.

The owner/members of Family Farmers Choice have spent 10 years carefully laying the groundwork and learning the methods for success. The value-added

cooperative is now poised to make the most of established connections with consumers and other marketers of natural items handcrafted on family farms.

Family Farmers Choice is set to offer food, fiber and manufactured products that either nourish, provide comfort or address a desired taste or want. The members of Family Farmers Choice have proven an ability to adjust their product lines while also displaying a tenacious desire to provide whatever level of sweat equity is required to preserve their independent ways of life as family farmers. The owners/members have also provided 50 percent of the equity requirements per early feasibility estimates.

The food-with-a-face concept of marketing is still relatively new and enjoys some sense of novelty in the marketplace. The genuine authenticity that can be verified by Family Farmers Choice is not yet common in the commercial consumer marketplace, which gives the Family Farmers group a leg up on the competition.

The industry of specialized foods and handmade, one-of-a-kind products is on a steady upward growth curve; and Family Farmers Choice is poised to capitalize on the consumer's desire for these items.

While a bouncing economy can affect many areas, specialty food items and unique crafted goods are generally less affected than the main, with unique items typically finding favor in the marketplace. The following article, reprinted, provides a degree of verification.

Farmers Rated Best in Ensuring Food Safety

*Survey Identifies Consumer and Editor Opinions about Food Issues
DES MOINES, Iowa— Tuesday, September 29, 1998— Food safety has surpassed issues such as crime prevention, health and nutrition, environmental protection, water quality and recycling as the most important public issue facing consumers. However, **consumers give farmers high marks for their efforts to assure a safe food supply**, a survey by the International Food Safety Council, a restaurant and foodservice industry coalition, shows.*

Fifty-nine percent of consumers surveyed said **farmers are doing an excellent job to ensure a safe food supply**. Supermarkets came in a close second at 57 percent, followed by food processors (44 percent), restaurants (42 percent), consumers (38 percent), government agencies (34 percent), and meat/poultry packers (29 percent).

"The survey clearly shows that **consumers hold farmers in high regard for their efforts to produce safe and wholesome products**," said Bill Brewer, public relations counsel for the Food Practice Group. "**This offers an opportunity for the agricultural community...**"

*1998 Food Issues Survey News Release
Presented in association with the International Food Safety Council, a restaurant and foodservice industry coalition.*

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Family Farmers Choice Products

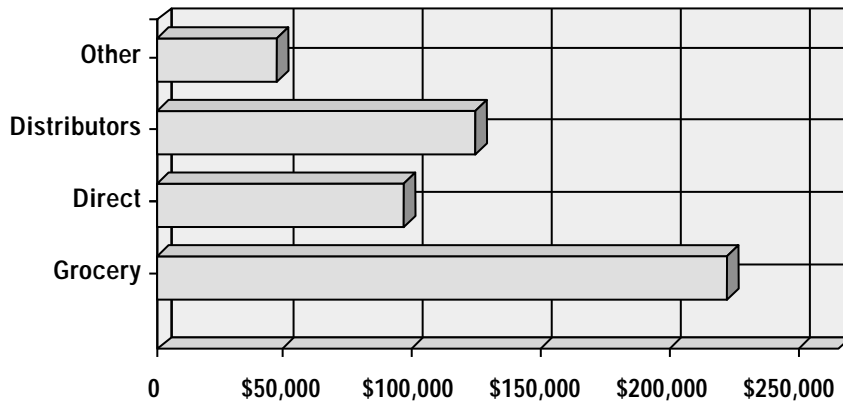
Chops	Ham	Pork Roasts	Other
Smoked Boneless Pork Chops	Bone-In Spiral Sliced Ham	Pork Roast	Bacon
		Precooked Pork Roast	Smoked Pork Loin Ribs
Fresh Smoked Pork Chops			

The following tables show the pricing strategy that Farmers Choice will use for their products:

Product	Price Calculated per Pound
Smoked Boneless Pork Chops	\$1.46
Fresh Smoked Pork Chops	\$1.08

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Potential Markets



Customer Categories	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Other	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$30,000	\$50,000
Distributors <i>(includes restaurants)</i>	\$30,000	\$40,000	\$85,000	\$100,000	\$125,000
Direct <i>(includes farmers markets)</i>	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$70,000	\$80,000	\$100,000
Grocery	\$0	\$85,000	\$130,000	\$190,000	\$225,000
TOTAL	\$100,000	\$200,000	\$300,000	\$400,000	\$500,000

5 — Product Distribution and Sales

Meat products are sold in a variety of ways somewhat dependent on fresh or frozen and size of package. At present, ethnic markets and specialty food markets are underserved. A survey of the phone company's yellow pages, showed only two markets selling to ethnic groups in our proposed trade area. Regardless of whether the market is a niche or traditional market, the meat sales are still handled in the same manner.

Types of sales include:

- Over the counter in locker plants or meat shops
- By mail order
- Via Internet
- Door-to-door sales and delivery
- Grocery stores
- Institutional food vendors
- Specialty marketing
- Prepared food sales

Farmers Choice will not have any unique food sales methods. Rather, the company will sell via specialty markets, such as farmers markets, as frozen foods, shipping product sold via Internet or phone orders and over the counter at the processing facility. For a small company, Farmers Choice will cover as many marketing avenues as time and resources permit.

4 — Estimated Market Share and Sales

The potential sales volume for the projected sales area is \$10 million. This is based on USDA estimates, as obtained from the USDA Web sites and Iowa State University Extension estimates, which combine population numbers and consumption numbers. With a projected sales volume of \$500,000, Farmers Choice will not have a large market share.

3 — Competition

Competition is formidable. The competitors have more buying power, more clout in the marketplace and more financial resources to cut deals with suppliers. Farmers Choice has no illusions of coming into the market place and easily capturing sales. It will need to work hard to gain and keep sales. Customers have well established buying habits for meat products coupled with established preferences for products, packing and freshness.

Competition is in the form of three main categories:

1. Large chain grocery stores for retail customers.
2. Small independent locker plants with retail counters.
3. Meat brokers and institutional food sales groups selling to restaurants.

The main competition will be pork products marketed in the traditional manner, i.e., as a commodity. Typically, the consumer does not know where the product comes from and where and how it was processed. Family Farmers plans to differentiate its products from commodity meats in the following manner:

- Preserve the identity of products from the hog raiser to the consumer,

- whether the product is sold in meat markets, grocery stores, restaurants or delicatessens.
- Hogs will be raised in open pastures on a rotation basis, as opposed to highly dense confinement buildings, thus minimizing the investment required and eliminating waste disposal and related environmental problems. Studies have shown that hogs raised in this manner have fewer health problems, thus reducing the need for medicines of various types, further reducing production costs.
 - Establish that the brand “Family Farmers Choice” offers products that are safe and are of consistent high quality, thereby deserving of a premium price.

Who are our competitors? We do not know the annual meat sales volume of our competitors or their market shares. Such figures, if published, were not available for this study.

Farmers Choice prices will be competitive and, in some cases, higher than competing pork products found through other distribution channels. The higher cost, about 5 cents per pound higher on average, will result from the key differences of Farmers Choice product versus competitors'. Again, the sales history indicates consumers are willing to pay a very slight premium to get product that meets their criteria.

6 — Some key differences of our product include:

- It is a natural product, free of hormones.
- It is provided by farmers known to the consumer, as in “food with a face.”
- Quality is assured as all hogs are raised to an audited quality system.
- No quality problems will come from processing due to our small facility and worker responsibility for quality.
- Doorstep delivery is available where possible.
- Customers can visit the factory where the food is made.

6 — Competitive Advantage and Analysis

The following table outlines how Farmers Choice compares to the competition in terms of product and other factors, including strengths and weaknesses. The analysis is of Farmers Choice against the competition by major groups. While there may be key differences against individual stores or businesses, these do not exist in large enough quantity to affect sales or strategy of Farmers Choice.

Points of Comparison	Locker Plants	Groceries	Brokers
Reputation	+	0	0
Quality	+	0	+
Natural Product	Yes 0	No +	No +
Market Share	0	-	-
Financial Resources	0	-	-
Total Product Line	0	-	-
Customer Service	+	0	+
Custom Processing	Yes 0	No +	No +

Rating scale:

0 means Farmer Choice is no better;

+ means Farmers Choice is better; and

- means Farmers Choice is in a worse competitive position.

Following is an analysis of Farmers Choice strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats:

SWOT Analysis

(Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats)

Strength	Weakness
Members invested a lot of cash in coop	Members personal finances are weakened
Coop has many charter members	Size and needs of member operations vary
Quality is trademark of cooperative	Consumers may not recognize quality

Opportunities	Threats
Market hungry for coop's fresh meats	Fresh meats provide thin net profit margins
Many area farmers markets to attend	Farmers markets rely on great volunteer effort
New ethnic markets are expanding rapidly	Major companies also pursuing ethnic markets

What Does the Coop Have to Sell?

Carcass Breakdown (Pork)

Typical Market Pig

Live weight (pounds)	250
Carcass weight (pounds)	184
Backfat 10th rib (inches)	0.9
Loin-eye area (square inches)	5.2
Fat-free lean index (percentage)	48.0
Pounds of lean meat	88.6

Primal Cut	Retail Pork	Other Products	Carcass Total
Ham (45.0 lbs) 24%			
Cured ham	25.5		
Fresh ham	2.3		
Trimmings	5.8		
Carcass breakdown			
Skin, fat, bone		11.4	
TOTAL	33.6	11.5	45.0
Loin (33.8 lbs) 18%			
Backribs	3.2		
Boneless loin	10.7		
Country style ribs	7.6		
Sirloin roast	5.7		
Tenderloin	1.6		
Trimmings	1.6		
Fat and bone		3.4	
TOTAL	30.4	3.4	33.8
Side (34.9 lbs) 19%			
Cured bacon	19.0		
Spare ribs	5.8		
Trimmings	9.1		
Fat		1.0	
TOTAL	33.9	1.0	34.9
Boston Butt (14.7 lbs)			
Blade steaks	4.4		
Blade roast	7.8		
Trimmings	1.7		
Fat		0.8	
TOTAL	13.9	0.8	14.7
Picnic (16.6 lbs)			
Boneless picnic meat	12.6		
Skin, fat, bone		4.0	
TOTAL	12.6	4.0	16.6
Miscellaneous (39.2 lbs)			
Jowls, feet, tail, neckbones, etc.	15.4		
Fat, skin, bone		22.0	
Shrink and loss		1.8	
TOTAL	15.4	23.8	39.2
GRAND TOTAL	139.8	44.4	184.2

*Retail cuts on semi-boneless basis. Fully boneless would show lower retail weights.
Source NPPC, Purdue University and Texas A & M University, 1994*

Retail Meat Prices and Pork Price Spreads

Item (cents per lb)	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Loin chops	277	285	327	327	315	324	322	329	341	348
Sliced bacon	188	177	213	222	192	193	199	217	247	268
Ham, rump, shank	159	160	185	168	149	159	164	158	187	194
Pork retail value	183.4	182.9	212.6	211.9	198.0	197.6	198.1	194.8	220.9	213.5
Pork whlsl value	101.0	99.2	118.3	108.9	98.9	102.8	99.0	98.9	117.2	110.2
Pork farm value	69.4	70.4	87.2	74.5	67.8	72.5	63.0	66.7	84.6	81.1

Source: USDA and Bureau of Labor Statistics

Market Research

Market research does not necessarily have to be highly sophisticated, expensive or complicated. It can be very much a do-it-yourself thing. The important thing is to make sure it gives you reliable information that you can use in building your business. Market analysis results in information about the market potential, which provides the basis for accurate sales forecasting and your marketing strategy. Its basic components include:

- an estimate of the size of the market for the product/service;
- projected market share;
- information about your market; and
- analysis of the competition.

Market research involves activities designed to obtain data about the market and falls into two main categories.

- Primary research collects new data through market surveys and other field research – specific studies that are conducted on behalf of your company.
- Secondary research gathers pre-existing information that is useful to your purposes from published sources.

In addition to conducting research, it is quite valid to rely to some extent on your own opinions and observations, especially if they have to do with your local community. “Outsiders” will not know a community like the people who’ve spent their lives there. However, it is important to back up your opinions with data and research. Don’t rely solely on your intuitive feelings; they’re probably not enough to go to the bank with. Resist the temptation to only look for data that confirms your opinions.

Information you gather goes into estimating the sales your company will achieve during its first few years of operation. The feasibility study and business plan you are putting together are built upon these estimates. Because research is one of the principle tools for determining whether the business will work, it is worth making an investment.

You need to be as specific as possible about the dimensions (size, trends) of the opportunities your business faces. Since a new business doesn’t have a track record, your research must be thorough enough to enable you to make realistic sales estimates.

How do you figure out whether adequate demand exists for your product?

■ Primary Research

Primary research is information you gather first-hand. Common examples of primary research information-gathering techniques include personal interviews, surveys and focus groups.

Methodologies are ways in which you contact sources for your information. They might include:

- in person
- telephone
- fax
- Internet mail
- U.S. mail

Observation

Observation is also a common technique. You record what your customers do naturally. Through observation, market researchers determine how consumers behave as they buy

Since a new business doesn't have a track record, your research must be thorough enough to enable you to make realistic sales estimates.

and use a product, or how they are influenced by some marketing strategy being used by the business. This method works very well in a retail environment. It is a useful technique to learn how and then, perhaps, why customers purchase a product that is in direct competition with your product. If your product is already being sold, you might watch how your customers act while purchasing your product.

A pitfall of the observation technique is that the presence and/or bias of the observer can influence the behavior of the subject. As you observe customer behavior in stores, markets, etc., try to be inconspicuous in your presence.

When businesses gather primary data, they often are gathering qualitative data. Qualitative data is data that cannot be counted. It reveals the quality of a subject's experience or beliefs. Qualitative research is gathered by allowing customers to answer questions in an open-ended, unstructured manner. Customer preferences might be examples of qualitative data.

Focus groups, one-on-one discussions or interviews can provide qualitative data.

Quantitative data describes things that can be measured and analyzed with statistical analysis. These are expressed in numbers and reveal such things as the quantity of customers with a particular characteristic. How much do your customers earn each month? How old are they? How much do they spend each month on groceries?

Both qualitative and quantitative information can be important to you as you do your market research. There is a problem with using only quantitative data gathered from a small number of individuals. It may not be a large enough number of people, with a large enough product sampling to be reliable for decisionmaking. Would you make the decision to completely change your product based on the thoughts of a handful of customers? When you combine quantitative and qualitative data, however, you can expand what you learn by combining or showing connections between observations, preferences and the quantitative data you have developed. You can develop a good base of information, for example, about the characteristics of your typical customer.

The following tips will be useful as you design the research tools you will use in conducting your primary research.

Creating a Survey

- Keep questions short, simple and to the point.
- Make it very easy for the respondent to complete.
- Use questions that involve a ranging scale of 1-5 (1= strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree).
- Surveys should take no longer than 5-10 minutes to complete.
- Be careful not to bias the answers with your question construction.
- Offer respondents some reward for completing the survey (money, discounts, prizes, etc.).
- Say, "Thank you."

Hints for a Good Focus Group

- Assemble 6-10 people who you think would buy your product.
- Gather in an informal, relaxed setting.
- Use someone who is an excellent interviewer/moderator with good listening skills.
- Initiate open-ended questions.

- Listen as participants share ideas, respond to one another and stimulate one another's thinking.
- Gently guide the discussion for no more than one hour.
- Take notes during the session and also audio tape it for accuracy.

Old, New Tricks

- Enclose pre-stamped envelopes with mail surveys.
- Tap into the knowledge of the reference librarian at the library.
- Talk with other business people in the area. Benefit from their experiences.
- Get on-line and use browsers.
- Read advertising and marketing industry periodicals.

■ Conducting Primary Research

Two important questions to be answered by your primary research include:

1. Who is your customer?
2. Who is your competition?

The place to start your primary research is with your customer. You may ask, "What information should I find out about my customer?" The answer is "everything." The better you know and understand your customer's wants, needs and desires, the better able you are to meet those needs with a product that sells. The goal of gathering and analyzing this information is to prepare a customer profile. This customer you expect to market your product or services to is called your target customer and represents an average or typical customer. It may be one profile of one customer group or several profiles covering several customer groups.

Demographic vs. Psychographic Customer Data

Businesses gather demographic and psychographic data in order to discover more about their customers. Demographic data describes specific characteristics of an individual such as age, level of education, occupation, income, marital status and address. Psychographic (lifestyle) data describes an individual's activities, interests, opinions and beliefs. This data give marketers insight into such things as how potential customers live, make buying decisions or plan for the future.

To illustrate the magnitude of demographic and psychographic trends, consider the following psychographic trends that have directly impacted marketing strategies today.

Shifts in Age Make-up of the American Market

In the U.S., 77 million baby boomers make up one-third of the population and represent one-fourth of the economy's purchasing power. As baby boomers reach their peak income earning years, their income is expected to double. The size of the youth market (people ages 12-19) is expected to continue decreasing, but its spending is increasing. The mature market (individuals 50 years old and over) commands half of the discretionary income in the U.S. and holds 77 percent of its assets. Within 30 years, one-third of all Americans will fit into this group.

Changes in Family Composition

Increases in the divorce rate and the percentage of working women and a decrease in the birthrate after 1960 have all caused major changes in the make-up of the typical American family.

A competitive advantage comes from offering more value to your customers than your competitors. Value can come from, among other things, a higher quality product, lower prices, better service or more convenient distribution.

Increasing Proportion of Working Women

In 1990, 58 percent of women worked, as compared to 33 percent of women in 1950. Women are entering the work force at younger ages and changing the face of American business in nearly every industry. The time crunch that many working women feel has helped to fuel the boom in catalog and telephone shopping and other timesaving services.

Increase in Ethnic Backgrounds

Cities have traditionally held people from many different ethnic backgrounds, but rural areas have tended to be more homogenous. The strong economic conditions in the U.S. have spurred the need for more workers in rural areas. Rural America now is home to people of many different colors, nationalities and religions. This ethnic diversity provides numerous opportunities to develop new specialty and ethnic markets for meat products.

Shifting Male-Female Purchasing Roles

Because more women are working in addition to having a family, men are playing a larger role in child care and household duties than ever before. Although 80 percent of the grocery shopping is still done by women, marketers are beginning to see a shift in who makes the purchasing decisions. Because women are earning more money and achieving more professional independence, they are spending more money on travel, dining out, entertainment and luxury products.

Those are only a few of the major trends you can observe, research or read about that could affect the products you wish to take to the market place.

Identifying Your Competitive Advantage

After you have identified your target customer(s) and developed a good understanding of your competition, you are able to identify your competitive advantage. A competitive advantage comes from offering more value to your customers than your competitors. Value can come from, among other things, a higher quality product, lower prices, better service or more convenient distribution.

If you are able to provide a high quality product, you may have a competitive advantage over your larger competitors. You would only want to position yourself in this way if your customers value quality. What is it your customers value?

A competitive advantage has two key criteria:

- It must be something your customers value.
- It must be something you do better than your competitors.

Some examples of a competitive advantage are:

- Developing a new technology.
- Serving a specialized customer niche.
- Establishing unique distribution channels.
- Obtaining production cost advantage due to better sourcing (locating and purchasing the inputs needed for your production).
- Building a unique brand identity.

■ Secondary Research

You can obtain much of the information you need through secondary research. It is available to the public from government statistics, computerized databases and directories. Much of it can be gleaned from the Internet.

Some good resources for industry-specific information are:

- **U.S. Industry Outlook**
A book that provides an economic and market overview of hundreds of industries.
- **Dun and Bradstreet**
Phone: (800) 552-3867
www.dnbcorp.com
- **Moody's Manual of Investments**
- **Standard and Poor's**
Phone: (800) 437-3528
- **Value Line**
Phone: (800) 654-0508

Figures can be obtained for average sales in many industries or similar industries from Robert Morris and Associates, which publishes an annual survey of major industries, organized by Standard Industry Classification (SIC) number.

- **Robert Morris Annual Statement Studies**
Robert Morris Annual Statement Studies, One Liberty Place, Philadelphia, PA 19109

There is a national or regional association for almost every industry under the sun. Find the appropriate one for your business. Call to find out what type of resources are available.

Attending a trade show can be a good way to learn about other businesses, such as discovering competitors' pricing structures and gaining ideas on type of products to develop. Some major food trade shows include:

- **Natural Products Expo East and West**
Natural Products Expo East and West, Baltimore MD, (303) 939-8440
Registration Department, exporeg@newhope.com
Marketing Manager, expomarketing@newhope.com
- **Fancy Food Show**
Rosbach International Trading Corp., 47 Portland Pl., Staten Island, NY 10301-2806
Phone: (718) 816-0423
Fancy Foods.com
- **Institute of Food Technologies**
221 N. LaSalle St., Ste. 300, Chicago, IL 60601-1291
Phone: (312) 782-8424
info@ift.org
- **Food Marketing Institute**
655 15th St. NW, Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 452-8444
fmi@fmi.org

Subscribing to food-trade publications and business magazines enables you to learn about product trends. Some industry trade journals include:

- **Chef**
- **Delicious!**
New Hope Communications Inc., 1301 Spruce Street, Boulder, CO 80302
Phone: (303) 939-8440
www.newhope.com/cgi-bin/feedback_form.dgi

- **Food and Beverage Marketing**
*ABM Adams Trade Press, Daniel J. Corcoran, Vice President/Internet Development,
 6001 Cochran Rd., Ste. 300, Solon, OH 44139
 Phone: (440) 248-1125
 dcorcoran@adamsbusinessmedia.com*
- **Food Management**
*Food Management, Inc., 2448 76th Avenue SouthEast, Suite 203, Mercer Island, WA
 98040-2781
 Phone: (206) 232-9771
 talktous@cfm-inc.com.*
- **Gourmet News**
*P.O. Box 3047, Langhorne, PA 19047-3047
 Phone: (215) 788-7112*
- **Gourmet Retailer**
*Gourmet Retailer, 6201 Howard St., Niles, IL 60714
 Phone: (847) 647-9787
 eloeb@gourmetretailer.com*
- **Meat and Seafood Merchandising**
*Vance Publishing Company, 10901 W. 84th Terrace, Lenexa, KS 66214
 Phone: (913) 438-8700
 www.producemerchandising.com*
- **Natural Foods Merchandiser**
*New Hope Natural Media, Inc., 1301 Spruce Street, Boulder, CO 80302
 (303) 939-8440
 Mary Scott, Business Editor, at msscott@newhope.com*
- **Organic Food Business News**
*Hotline Printing and Publishing, P.O. Box 161132, Altamonte Springs, FL 32716
 Phone: (407) 628-1377*
- **Nationals Restaurant News**
*Nationals Restaurant News, 425 Park Ave., 6th Floor, New York, NY 10022
 Phone: (212) 756-5188
 http://www.nrn.com*
- **Restaurant Hospitality**
*Penton Media, 1100 Superior Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114-2543
 Phone: (800) 659-5251
 corpcomm@penton.com*

After gathering your primary and secondary research information, you are ready to analyze your market potential. You should be ready to answer these questions.

- Who is your target customer?
- What are the defining characteristics of your target customer?
- Who is your competition?
- What are your competitor(s)' product(s)?
- What is your current trade area?
- What is your market size?
- What are your market trends?
- What is your market potential?
- What is your true production potential?

Resource

*Adapted from Marketing,
 Research and Analysis;
 NxLevel Training' U.S. West
 Corporation.*

Building Your Databases

In doing your research for this venture and in any previous work experience, you probably have come across lots of databases. They are used to store, analyze and retrieve all kinds of information. Now you will need to build your own – probably several. Databases not only ensure timely retrieval of information, but they can give strength to your decisions.

What kinds of databases will you need? Good starting points would be one for all contacts in your business that could be used for mailings, one to gather appropriate names for seeking further information down the line, etc. Some database programs will allow you to put all information about any and every contact you make (or should make) in a listing that also describes the type of contact it is, what potential it has for your business, times you have used it, characteristics about it, and so on. These typically are called relational databases.

Other database systems are less complicated and less “intuitive.” It might be wise to establish the general all-purpose list, then set up separate databases for customers, suppliers and other vendors, subcontractors, etc.

Any contact you have made at any point should be on a database. Any contact that you think you should make should be on a database. File drawers and folders, even computerized address listings, have worked for projects, committees and family information purposes. Now that you have a business to run, you need to step up to the database level.

The type of database program you purchase and use is up to you. There are advantages and disadvantages to the various programs on the market. Some things to keep in mind, however, are typical questions applying to any computer software program:

1. How well will a program integrate with the other computer programs you use?
2. How much of various types of capacity in your computer will it take to run the program efficiently? Do you have it in your system?
3. Will it allow you to store all of the information you think you might need?
4. Will it perform quick sorting and retrieval of information in ways that help you?
5. Is it something you can learn to operate quickly and not just keep unused on the shelf?

Producer Survey

In carrying out your research, you will want to focus also on the “supply” side of your business. If your business is based on taking a new product to the market place or taking your products to the market place in a different manner, are you acting alone or are you pulling together a group of producers to manage this business activity?

If you have appropriately measured the market value and consumer attraction to what you are doing, will you be able to meet demand? Or are you going to need to increase the amount of product in your venture? What is the interest level among other producers in working with you – now or down the road (a need that should be indicated in your research)?

You might be wise to survey other producers about these things. Considering such factors as how wide a geographic area you reasonably can work within and what types/sizes of producers work into your plan, secure a mailing list of all who fit the description. The questions that follow would typically be included in your survey. As you do this, keep in mind that you are announcing – or promoting – your plans to others. Your survey questionnaire should be accompanied by a letter from you indicating your need for the information and what you plan to do with it (in limited fashion).

Sample Survey Questions

Are you interested in producing for a private, local venture?

Yes No

If yes, how many head per year would you be willing to supply?

Are you interested in alternate methods of production; for example, organic?

Yes No

Do you already serve any specialty markets?

Yes No

If so, what are they?

Are you willing to maintain specific product identification?

Yes No

Please add additional comments.

Thank you!

Your survey questionnaire should be accompanied by a letter from you indicating your need for the information and what you plan to do with it (in limited fashion).

Analysis of Some Competitors

Anyone involved in pork marketing will inevitably brush up against one of the “big guys” in the business. It recently has been argued that the pork market is shifting from a commodity market to a value added market. The commodity market paradigm suggests the product is homogenous — by definition this excludes price enhancement and product differentiation. The obvious signs indicate the only way to compete is on a cost basis. However, there has been a consumer revolution in recent years whereby the demand for products with special attributes is becoming ever greater.

Evidence that the big guys are responding to these value demands is provided by examining 10K financial reports required of publicly traded pork production and processing firms by the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC). Following is a brief overview of some of the companies and a sampling of key competitive strategies they have put forth.

■ Smithfield

Smithfield is a relatively new major player in the hog and pork industry. In 1999, it had sales of \$3.7 billion and profits of more than \$94.9 million. Smithfield’s recent purchase of one of the largest pork integrators, Murphy Family Farms, provides an even greater ability to control quality attributes enhanced by genetics and prescribed environment management practices. Common brands processed by Smithfield include Smithfield, John Morrell, Patrick Cudahy and Ember Farms.

Following are some quotes from their 10K statements:

As consumers have become more health conscious, pork producers and processors including the Company have focused on providing leaner fresh pork products as well as fat free, lower-fat and lower salt processed meats.

This reveals Smithfield Foods strategy of responding to consumer desires by developing leaner products. The company goes further in the second objective of the five itemized strategic objectives:

... use of the leanest genetics commercially available to enable the Company to market highly differentiated pork products.

Smithfield argues that capturing value is linked to product development.

■ Hormel Foods Corporation

Hormel Foods Corporation is a multinational manufacturer and marketer of consumer-branded meat and food. It enjoys a strong reputation among consumers, retail grocers and foodservice and industrial customers. Perhaps one of its best-known products is SPAM, which has been on the market since World War II. Other products manufactured by the corporation include hams, bacon, sausages, franks, canned luncheon meats, stews, chilies, hash, meat spreads, shelf-stable microwavable entrees, salsas and frozen processed foods.

These selections are sold to retail, foodservice and wholesale operations under many well-established trademarks, including: Black Label, By George, Chi-Chi’s, Cure 81, Always Tender, Curemaster, Di Lusso, Dinty Moore, Dubuque, Fast ‘n Easy, Homeland, Hormel, Little Sizzlers, Mary Kitchen, Old Smokehouse, Peloponnese, Range Brand, Rosa

Grande, Sandwich Maker, SPAM and Wranglers. These products are sold in all 50 states by Hormel Foods sales force personnel assigned to offices in major cities throughout the United States. Sales brokers and distributors support their efforts.

The headquarters for Hormel Foods is in Austin, MN. Company facilities that manufacture meat and food products are located in Algona, Knoxville and Osceola, IA; Atlanta, GA; Aurora, IL; Beloit, WI; Fremont, NE; Oklahoma City, OK; Stockton, CA; and Wichita, KS. Various companies perform custom manufacturing of selected Hormel Foods products.

Hormel's Fremont plant also has pork slaughtering operation, and Rochelle Foods, a wholly owned subsidiary in Rochelle, IL, provides the company with additional raw material through its pork slaughtering operation. Jennie-O Foods, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary based in Willmar, MN, is a leading producer of whole and processed turkey products sold to retail and foodservice outlets.

Another wholly owned subsidiary, Dan's Prize, Inc., headquartered in Cornelia, GA, operates a manufacturing plant in Long Prairie, MN, that produces roast beef, corned beef, prime rib, pastrami and other cooked meats for foodservice and deli operators.

Hormel has more than 11,000 employees.

■ IBP

IBP is the world's largest processor of beef and pork products. IBP began processing hogs in 1982. Six years later, the company was the largest processor of hogs in the world. IBP is the world's largest producer of fresh beef, pork and related allied products and is also a high quality supplier of fully prepared meats for the retail and food service industries.

IBP employs 42,000 people and has 48 plants in North America, regional sales offices throughout the United States and international sales offices in the U.S., England, Mexico, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, China, Canada and Russia.

IBP has been considered a least-cost producer of fresh pork and beef products.

These comments are edited from its 10K statements.

IBP's primary products include boxed beef and fresh pork which are marketed mainly in the United States to grocery store chains, meat distributors, wholesalers, retailers restaurant and hotel chains, and processors who produce cured and smoked products such as bacon, ham luncheon meats and sausage items.

In 1994 the Consumer Products Division purchased Prepared Foods, Inc., from International Multifoods, Inc. Prepared Foods is a wholly owned subsidiary of IBP, with a plant in Santa Teresa, NM. In 1995, the Consumer Products Division purchased and renovated a facility in Columbia, SC, for processing fresh meat and value added consumer-ready items. The New Mexico plant and the South Carolina plant and the cooked meat facility connected to the Waterloo, IA, pork facility to process fresh meat into value added consumer ready items.

IBP, Inc.

*800 Stevens Port Drive
Dakota Dunes, SD 57049*

Phone: (605) 235-2061

e-mail: IBP@ibpinc.com

http://www.ibpinc.com/

Management believes that significant opportunities exist for the sale of value added, consumer-ready products as consumer acceptance of such products grows and packaging technology improves. Currently, the Consumer Products Division procures cooked meats for service customers and consumer-ready products. The Consumer Products Division is continually exploring the potential for additional consumer-ready products.

■ Excel Corporation

Excel Corporation, a wholly owned subsidiary of Cargill, Inc., is the recognized leader in the beef and pork packing industry. Headquartered in Wichita, KS, Excel is a global meat company with more than 20,000 employees worldwide.

The company offers an extensive line of premium quality beef and pork products and programs to recognized retail and commercial food service markets around the world.

The following is edited from what Excel Corporation has to say about itself:

Providing leadership in food safety, product quality, advanced microbial science technology, electronic commerce and value added products and services that set us apart, Excel continues to stretch the definition of the traditional meat packer by expanding our growing products and services as we continue to drive the industry.

It's true. It's the total package. No other meat packer delivers these fundamentals. We call these fundamentals mineral rights! The components of a business that we stake our reputation on, each and every day. We wouldn't go to market without them, and "Best Total Value" expresses them.

Excel employs about 20,000 people and has processing facilities and sales offices in the United States, Canada and Australia, and international business offices in Australia, China, Honduras, Japan, Korea and Taiwan.

Excel evolved through a series of business combinations dating back to 1936, when Excel Packing Company was formed in Chicago. In 1941, the business moved to Wichita. In 1970, Excel was incorporated as Kansas Beef Industries. The company's primary area of expertise was cutting sides of beef into wholesale cuts of meat. In 1974, Kansas Beef Industries merged with Missouri Beef Packers. Missouri Beef was incorporated in 1964 and developed its expertise in cattle slaughter.

The name of the newly merged company became MBPXL-MBP for Missouri Beef Packers and XL for Kansas Beef Industries' original name of Excel. In 1979, MBPXL was acquired by Cargill, Inc., and became a wholly owned subsidiary. Based in Minneapolis, MN, Cargill is an international processor, marketer and distributor of agricultural, food, industrial and financial products. In 1982, the MBPXL name was changed to Excel.

Excel entered the pork processing business in 1987 when it acquired plants from Hormel in Ottumwa, IA, and Oscar Mayer in Beardstown, IL. The company opened its first plant outside of the United States in 1989, when operations began at the Cargill Foods beef facility in High River, Alberta, Canada. It began operations in Australia in 1991.

Excel Corporation

Excel Beef Plants	Pork Plants	Beef/Pork Further Processing Plants	Case Ready Plants
Dodge City, KS	Beardstown, IL	Booneville, AK	Newnan, GA
Fort Morgan, CO	Marshall, MO	Marysville, CA	Taunton, MA
Frona, TX	Ottumwa, IA	Nebraska City, NE	Toronto, Ontario, Canada
High River, Alberta, Canada		Orange City, IA	
Plainview, TX			
Schuyler, NE			

Excel International Locations	Sales Offices	Distribution Operations	Research and Development
Tamworth, Australia	Atlanta, GA	Boise, ID	Wichita, KS
Wagga Wagga, Australia	Columbus, OH	Chicago, IL	
	Dallas, TX	Denver, CO	
Hong Kong, China	Denver, CO	Louisville, KY	
Shanghai, China	Philadelphia, PA	Medley, FL	
San Pedro Sula, Honduras	Wichita, KS	Tracy, CA	
		Phoenix, AZ	
Osaka, Japan		Plainview, TX	
Tokyo, Japan		Salt Lake City, NEV	
Seoul, Korea		San Antonio, TX	
Taipei, Taiwan		St. Louis, IL	
		Mount Holly, NJ	
		Wichita, KS	

Farmland Products

- Bacon
- Catfish
- Extra Tender
- Pork
- Ham
- Hot Dogs
- Lunch Meat
- Sausage

■ Farmland Industries, Inc.

Farmland Industries, Inc., declares as its mission "to be a Global, Consumer-Driven, Producer-Owned 'Farm-to-Table' Cooperative System."

Headquartered in Kansas City, MO, Farmland Industries claims 600,000 farmer-owners in the U.S., Canada and Mexico with sales in all 50 states and nearly 60 countries. Their Web site is: www.farmland.com.

Highly diversified, Farmland supports major business lines in crop production and crop protection products, livestock feeds, petroleum, grain processing and marketing, and the processing and marketing of pork, beef and catfish products.

Farmland was founded in 1929 as the Union Oil Company. By its 50th anniversary in 1979, it had become one of the nation's largest farmer-owned cooperatives, with its pork processing subsidiary Farmland Foods emerging as one of the leading meat companies. Sales in the Refrigerated Foods and Livestock Production Group were \$3.8 billion in fiscal year 1999.

The Refrigerated Foods and Livestock Production Group Management Report from the Farmland's 1999 Annual Report emphasizes the cooperative's special emphasis on seeking value by responding to customer preferences and needs.

Accomplishments on the pork side of the business include:

- Began a two-year pilot pork project to identify food safety risks from on-farm through to consumer.
- Expanded the CaseReady™ line by opening the Salt Lake City CaseReady™ facility.
- Reinforced our already deep commitment to food safety and quality by establishing a new department to lead this effort.
- Redesigned product packaging to stand out even more in the retail meat case, with a bold new "Blue" theme on the entire Farmland family of products.

Highlights in the beef division include:

- Introduced a new beef program called Black Angus Link that will allow more beef producers to reap the benefits of raising and feeding high-quality Angus and Angus-cross cattle for the Farmland Black Angus® label.

The 1999 Annual Report also states:

Your brand is increasingly well recognized by consumers. In a recent unaided survey, 33 percent of respondents associated your Farmland brand with our tag line, "Proud to be farmer owned.®" Researchers consider a 20 percent unaided recognition excellent. The Farmland brand draws consumers to your products, and the quality keeps them coming back.

Farmland has numerous facilities around the U.S. and world. Following is a listing of their key offices and Iowa plants.

Farmland Industries, Inc.		
Farmland Offices	Address	State and Zip Code
World Headquarters	3315 N. Farmland Trafficway	Kansas City, MO 64116
Grain Division	10100 N. Executive Hills Blvd.	Kansas City, MO 64153
Refrigerated Foods Group	10150 N. Executive Hills Blvd.	Kansas City, MO 64153
Feed & Grain Processing Oper.	10380 N. Executive Hills Blvd.	Kansas City, MO 64153

Iowa Pork Processing Sites	
Farmland Foods, Inc.	Farmland Foods, Inc.
401 Grant Road	701 E. 16th Street
PO Box 98	PO Box 490
Carroll, IA 51401	Denison, IA 51442
Phone: (712) 792-1660	Phone: (712) 263-5002
Meat processing and packing	Pork processing and slaughtering

Pork Yield and Consumption

■ Carcass Breakout on Yields

Data from the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC), Purdue University and Texas A&M University offers this breakdown of a 250-pound market hog.

The hog will produce a 184-pound carcass that breaks down this way:

- HAM: 45 pounds, 24 percent of the carcass: 25.5 pounds for cured ham, 2.3 pounds for fresh ham, 5.8 pounds of trimmings and 11.4 pounds of skin, fat and bones.
- LOIN: 33.8 pounds, 18 percent of the carcass: 3.2 pounds of backribs, 10.7 pounds of boneless loin, 7.6 pounds of country-style ribs, 5.7 pounds of sirloin roast, 1.6 pounds of tenderloin, 1.6 pounds of trimmings, and 3.4 pounds of fat and bone.
- SIDE: 34.9 pounds, 19 percent of the carcass: 19 pounds of cured bacon, 5.8 pounds of spareribs, 9.1 pounds of trimmings and 1 pound of fat.
- BOSTON OR SHOULDER BUTT: 14.7 pounds, 8 percent of the carcass: 4.4 pounds of blade steaks, 7.8 pounds of blade roast, 1.7 pounds of trimmings and 0.8 pound of fat.
- PICNIC: 16.6 pounds, 9 percent of carcass: 12.6 pounds of boneless picnic meat and 4 pounds of skin, fat and bone.
- MISCELLANEOUS: 39.2 pounds, 22 percent of the carcass: 15.4 pounds of jowls, feet, tail, neckbones, etc., and 22 pounds of skin, fat and bone. Another 1.8 pounds is shrink and miscellaneous loss.

That provides a total of 139.8 pounds of retail pork and 44.4 pounds of skin, fat, bones and shrink.

The retail cuts here assume a semi-boneless basis. Fully boneless cuts would provide less total meat. The figures are based on a carcass with 1.2 inches of backfat, a 5.2 square-inch loin-eye, a 43.7 percent fat-free lean index and 88.6 total pounds of lean meat.

■ Carcass Breakdown (Pork)

Typical Market Pig

Live weight (pounds)	250
Carcass weight (pounds)	184
Backfat 10th rib (inches)	0.9
Loin-eye area (square inches)	5.2
Fat-free lean index (percentage)	48.0
Pounds of lean meat	88.6

Carcass Breakdown

Primal Cut	Retail Pork	Other Products	Carcass Total
Ham (45.0 lbs) 24%			
Cured ham	25.5		
Fresh ham	2.3		
Trimmings	5.8		
Skin, fat, bone		11.4	
TOTAL	33.6	11.5	45.0
Loin (33.8 lbs) 18%			
Backribs	3.2		
Boneless loin	10.7		
Country style ribs	7.6		
Sirloin roast	5.7		
Tenderloin	1.6		
Trimmings	1.6		
Fat and bone		3.4	
TOTAL	30.4	3.4	33.8
Side (34.9 lbs) 19%			
Cured bacon	19.0		
Spare ribs	5.8		
Trimmings	9.1		
Fat		1.0	
TOTAL	33.9	1.0	34.9
Boston Butt (14.7 lbs)			
Blade steaks	4.4		
Blade roast	7.8		
Trimmings	1.7		
Fat		0.8	
TOTAL	13.9	0.8	14.7
Picnic (16.6 lbs)			
Boneless picnic meat	12.6		
Skin, fat, bone		4.0	
TOTAL	12.6	4.0	16.6
Miscellaneous (39.2 lbs)			
Jowls, feet, tail, neckbones, etc.	15.4		
Fat, skin, bone		22.0	
Shrink and loss		1.8	
TOTAL	15.4	23.8	39.2
TOTAL	139.8	44.4	184.2

NOTE: Retail cuts on semi-boneless basis. Fully boneless would show lower retail weights.

Source: NPPC, Purdue University and Texas A & M University, 1994

Retail Meat Prices and Pork Price Spreads

Item (cents per lb.)	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Loin chops	277	285	327	327	315	324	322	329	341	348
Sliced bacon	188	177	213	222	192	193	199	217	247	268
Ham, rump or shank	159	160	185	168	149	159	164	158	187	194
Pork retail value	183.4	182.9	212.6	211.9	198.0	197.6	198.1	194.8	220.9	213.5
Pork wholesale value	101.0	99.2	118.3	108.9	98.9	102.8	99.0	98.9	117.2	110.2
Pork farm value	69.4	70.4	87.2	74.5	67.8	72.5	63.0	66.7	84.6	81.1

Source: USDA and Bureau of Labor Statistics

■ Consumption Figures

The average market hog (250 lb.) yields 72 percent or about 184 pounds of dressed carcass. That carcass will be reduced to about 139.8 pounds of retail consumables. The average per capita consumption for the 1998-99 time frame was 62.8 pounds, according to the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC).

Assuming the retail pork yield of consumable product was evenly consumed, it would take 10,000 average Americans to consume 4,492 standard size market hogs per year. Put another way, 100,000 people would be required to consume 44,924 hogs; or 1,000,000 people to consume 449,236 hogs.

The difficulty with such a coarse analysis is in the fact that consumption of the various products is subject to variance due to many factors. These factors are seasonality, ethnic preferences and regional differences probably based on localized culture.

For instance, Blacks and Hispanics consume about 53 percent more pork than the average per capita level (NPPC). Given that, the areas heavily populated with these groups would be substantially better targets for pork.

Seasonality is important to hams (Easter) and has traditionally impacted bacon (BLTs), but that impact has been negated to some extent by the widespread use of bacon on fast food sandwiches and bacon wrapped cuts.

Regional differences meld the ethnic issue into more subtle cultural history and tradition. An example would be the Southern states' barbecue tradition. Over time, these traditions transcend ethnicity and people just expect to find such fare. It becomes a part of the cultural wallpaper and supports a steadier level of disappearance.

Obviously, religion is a factor because certain religions will not eat pork at all and even co-products such as lard are taboo, such as in Muslim and Jewish cultures.

Notes

