

Grocery Editor Reports

# Retailers Will Accept Egg Ideas

"Ninety-two per cent of the food retailers sampled reported they were satisfied with both the quality of eggs and the service they get from their suppliers," declared Lewis Milkovics, Progressive Grocer Perishables Editor, at the PENB Directors' Luncheon, in Chicago recently.

Progressive Grocer surveyed 980 independent store operators, 310 chain headquarters and 306 wholesale headquarters and received the highest percentage returns ever obtained with a four page questionnaire. Completed returns covered over 14,000 retail locations.

The answers indicated that egg sales were down. The late 1969 results indicated sales at 22 dozen per \$1,000 sales, whereas in 1968 the figure was 30 dozen. The per cent of egg sales to total dairy sales was 15 per cent compared with 17 per cent in 1968.

Grade A Large eggs continued to be the preference with 56 per cent. However, AA Large eggs, while still in third place with 15 per cent were only slightly behind the 16 per cent for Grade A Medium eggs.

Questions were included on egg price because consumers generally were complaining about price. In Dec-Jan, 41 per cent of the A Large, 44 per cent of the A Medium and 51 per cent of the AA Large were in the 75 to 79 cents per dozen range.

The frequently quoted "resistance price" traditionally for Grade A Large was estimated to be 74 cents or less by nearly half of the respondents. But, 37 per cent selected the range 75-84 cents and 15 per cent thought it was 85 cents or higher.

However, during 1969, 86 per cent thought the customer was willing to pay more. Over one-third believed the customer would pay five to nine cents more than the previous resistance level, 2 per cent chose the 10 to 14 cents more and one-fourth believed the customer would pay 15 to 19 cents more per dozen.

One of the most significant

● **Have You Heard?**

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How tie should do it just like they tie a shoelace — then adjust it for a neat appearance.

**Banana Skin Tells**

If the banana skin is yellow with green tips, you know the banana is partially ripe. You'll be able to cook, broil, or fry bananas of this color.

If the skin is all yellow, the banana is firm enough to cook or eat raw.

Bananas that are yellow, but flecked with brown, are fully ripe and good for topping on cereals, and in fruit cups, salads, and desserts.

facts from this report is that the retailers have discovered that the "resistance level" of the retail egg prices is not an inflexible barrier.

Another significant fact had to do with types of egg cartons. While paper still accounted for 81 per cent, paperboard dropped to 31 per cent, with molded pulp being used by 50 per cent.

The biggest change was in the use of molded styrofoam. In 1968, its use was reported by nine per cent. In 1969, this had increased to 37 per cent of the respondents. Many operators are using both the molded types.

Milkovic noted, "In color and design, the egg packaging industry has broken out of its monochromatic world into a multi-color splash that offers the alert retailer new excitement and sales." The preferred color is still white, followed by blue, green, yellow and gray. These are retailers' choices as influenced by the manufacturer. It was suggested that a consumer survey might be meaningful.

Eighty-three per cent of the respondents used a three-dozen multi-pak. Only eight per cent reported using them regularly, however. Nearly 60 per cent stated that the perforated carton should be discontinued. But 72 per cent said they would not handle a six-pack.

The big gun on ordering eggs in a chain set-up is generally the dairy manager or clerk. The same is true for wholesalers member stores. Among the independents, it's most likely to be the owner or assistant manager.

Egg displays, or the lack of

them, seems to be the prime responsibility of the dairy manager or clerk. Suppliers were active in only four per cent of the stores reported.

While egg display seemed to be improved, Milkovics observed that eggs are still not getting the display space their sales and profit warrant. Vertical displays, used by most,

with 10.5 shelf foot of space were nearly double that of bin displays. Those with wire baskets used 16-20 baskets.

"The retailer does not want to hear plain talk. He needs market information and facts about his individual retail egg operation. Customize a market strategy for him. Show him how he can sell more eggs. He will listen," concluded Milkovics.

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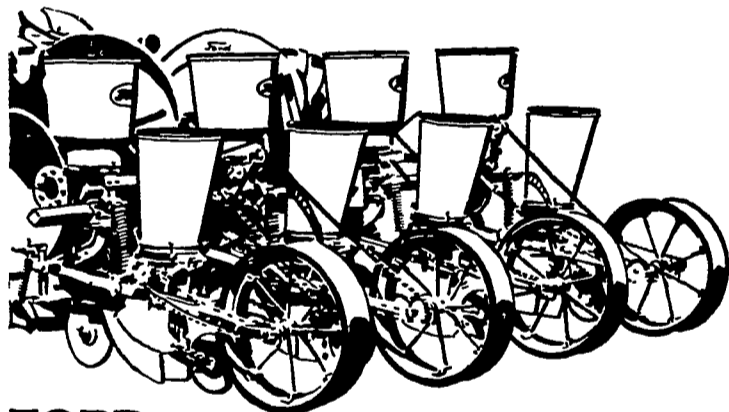


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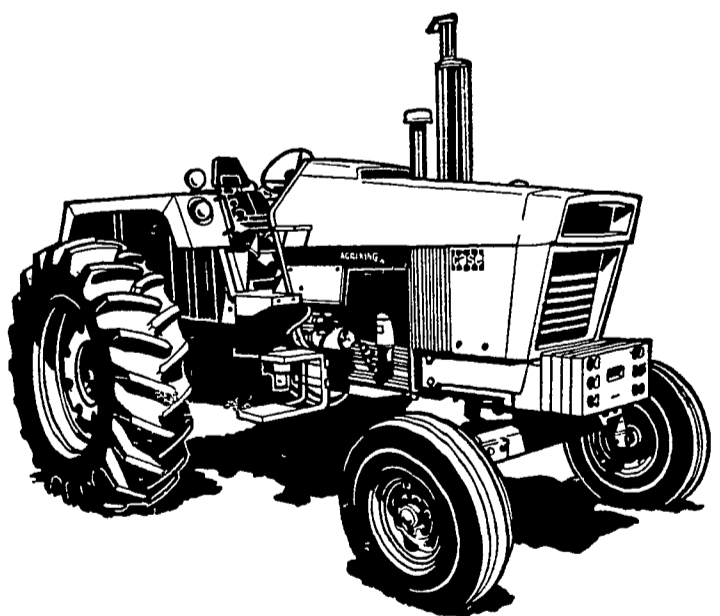
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