

Mid East UDIA Reviews Promo Programs

COLUMBUS, Ohio — A retrospective of fluid milk advertising and an outlook on dairy promotion were the focus of Mid East United Dairy Industry Association's (UDIA) second annual meeting, held here in April.

More than 165 dairy producers, processors and related industry guests attended the meeting to "Focus on the Future" of dairy promotion.

Mid East UDIA President Herman Brubaker told the guests that "before we can be successful in our promotional efforts, we must first be prepared and focused on our goals and objectives for the future." He said that Mid East's advertising and promotion programs are a result of "sound planning, solid market research and strategic marketing."

Brubaker also noted the growth of commercial disappearance of dairy products over the past decade, attributing the tightened gap between supply and demand to dairy promotion programs, good marketing and a decrease in milk production.

While Brubaker did not suggest that dairy advertising is the sole source for the industry's success, he did say that since the implementation of the 15 cents per hundredweight promotion program, the dairy industry has enjoyed increases of more than three percent per year, for an increase in sales volume of nearly 7 billion pounds of milk since 1983.

Brubaker Recognizes Agreement With Pennsylvania Further success in cooperation,

to strengthen the dairy promotion investment, arises from the three-party "Promotion Partnership Agreement" between Mid East UDIA/The F.O. 36 Agency, The Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program, and The American Dairy Association and Dairy Council Inc.

This agreement calls for all advertising funds to follow the milk to market. It also eliminates the competition and solicitation of funds from producers, and allows for coordinated programming in the respective market areas, thus avoiding duplication of programs.

Brubaker said that Mid East/F.O. 36 Agency is especially proud to be a part of this "promotion coordination milestone" and looks forward to "continuing the successful working relationship into the '90s with such a promising marketing agreement."

Programs Focus On Consumer Needs

In outlining Mid East's marketing programs—advertising, retail merchandising, foodservice development, food publicity, nutrition education and communications—General Manager Scott Higgins noted that the association's strategy is to influence market demand of dairy products.

"Much of the success of the programs is attributed to recognizing a marketing opportunity and building sound consumer-directed

strategies to reach our audience," Higgins said.

Mid East focuses on four principle products and develops marketing strategies based on a variety of factors such as return on investment, market potential and consumer acceptance. These four products are milk, cheese, butter and ice cream, with others incorporated into promotions on a seasonal basis.

"The focus of 1990", said Higgins, "will be to emphasize and expand current industry training programs for retail merchandising and foodservice distributors."

He explained that educating the personnel who represent dairy products to the consumer is crucial for successful promotion programs. He also said that Mid East, in coordination with the United Dairy Industry Association federation of 25 member organizations and affiliated Dairy Council units, is focusing on the constantly changing consumers to position dairy products to meet their needs, wants and expectations.

"As an industry, we must treat consumers as our number one customers and respond to their expectations," he said.

Higgins concluded by assuring the producers who fund Mid East's programs that the association is recognized and managed as an extension of every dairy farm

operation collectively. The board of directors and staff of Mid East UDIA has dairy farmers' best interests in mind and will continue to develop programs designed to increase the demand for milk and dairy products.

Profiling the American consumer as "fast-paced, often misinformed, confused and health-conscious," director of nutrition education, Debbie DeLacey, prefaced Mid East's nutrition education programs. DeLacey said that "varied consumer profiles are the primary reason why a scientific, accurate and educationally sound nutrition education program is necessary and is an integral part of Mid East's programs."

"These programs and nutrition education materials contain key messages to create and maintain markets for milk and milk products," said DeLacey. "They highlight dairy product benefits to specific leader groups such as health professionals, educators and consumer leaders, who have an impact on people of all ages."

To counteract focusing on single issue controversies and avoidance diets, the Dairy and Nutrition Council-Mid East emphasis total diet and moderation, balance and variety with materials, film and loan projects, workshops, exhibits, newsletters and public service announcements and evaluation tools.

DeLacey said that many of these programs have the endorsement of recognized leading health care, educational and special interest associations.

Milk Promotion... A 40-Year Retrospective

Guest speaker Gary Horton, chief creative officer of D'arcy, Masius, Benton & Bowles/Chicago, presented a 40-year retrospective of milk promotion, tracing the way advertising strategies followed societal changes.

Horton noted that during the "traditional 1950s," when approximately 45 percent of milk purchases were home delivered, consumers were predictable and consistent. Milk had a wholesome image as an everyday beverage and faced little competitive challenges.

But political and social upheaval of the 1960s brought about new marketing challenges. The emergence of fast-food restaurants, more women joining the workforce and a leveling birth rate challenged long-standing traditions and values.

Soft drinks were aggressively repositioned from a treat to a beverage for anytime and anywhere.

Milk advertising reflected the consumer diversity of the era with commercials featuring teens, and women with decidedly different

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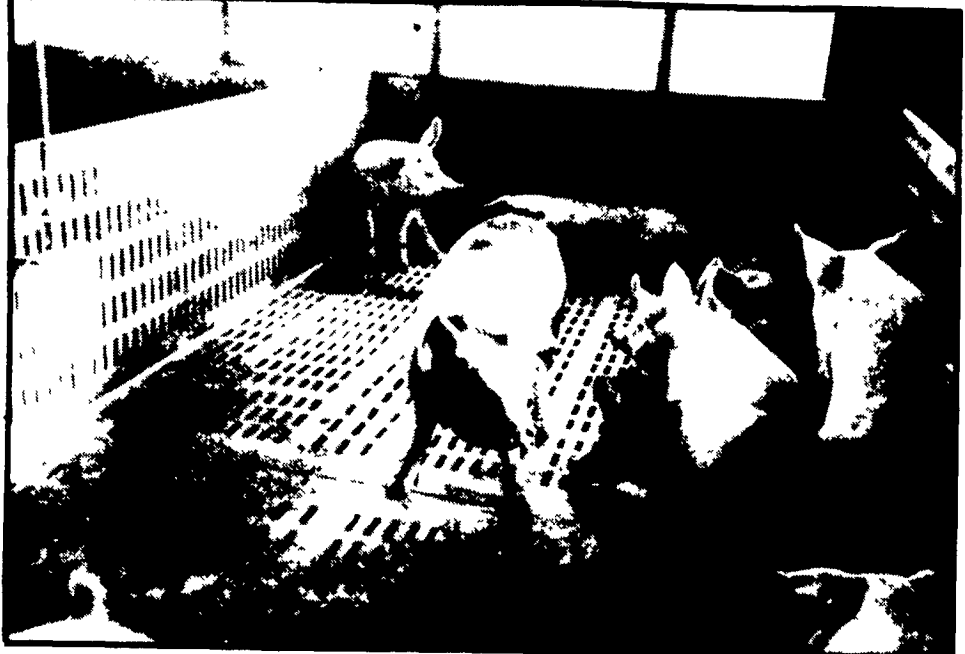
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