

Western Profiles of Innovative Agricultural Marketing



Examples from Direct Farm Marketing and Agri-Tourism Enterprises



Western Extension Marketing Committee

Cooperative Extension

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Publication AZ1325

Traditional commodity marketing channels have not provided sufficient returns for many small- and medium-sized farmers to maintain a viable livelihood in recent years. This publication examines how several operations in the West have migrated from a traditional commodity-focused business into a successful direct marketing enterprise within the last ten to fifteen years. Even though direct marketing allows farmers to retain a much higher share of consumer food expenditures, the elements needed to make this production-marketing strategy a success are often not well understood. In part, this is because of their increased complexity as compared to commodity production-marketing systems. Traditionally, commodity producers have set goals for high yields and low costs of production in order to be “low cost” producers. However, personality skills, relationships, superb quality and service, willingness to change, and general business savvy have also been found to be key for the direct farm marketing and agri-tourism enterprises examined in this publication.

Western Profiles is not intended to be a step-by-step guide on how to start a direct farm marketing or agri-tourism enterprise, but rather to identify the more subtle and unique factors behind the failures and successes of the enterprises examined and to determine their strategies for meeting future challenges and risks. Direct marketing has proven to be a successful and sustainable alternative to traditional commodity markets for many agricultural producers in the western United States. As the enterprises considered in this publication show, direct marketing requires knowledge of long-term goals, substantial planning, flexibility, and adaptation.



A publication of the Western Extension Marketing Committee
<http://cals.arizona.edu/arec/wemc/wemc.html>

I SEN 0-9748669-0-3

9 0 0 0 0



97809741866901