

"Good Things Grow in Ontario"

A lot of good things, in fact. Some 200 commodities come out of the soil of this province; a farm gate value alone of \$3.4 billion. In fact, Ontario produces 30% of Canada's agriculture and food products and processes 56% of all food processed in Canada.

Many people's lives depend on agriculture. In Ontario, 1 in 5 people derives a living from the food industry. Agriculture and food is big business in Ontario.

In addition to producing and processing food products, there is an obligation to market the product; to ensure it's in stock; to ensure its price is competitive, to get it to market; to inform the consumer about its quality and availability. Has Ontario met that obligation? Recent food sales indicate that the province could be doing more to stimulate the agriculture and food industry.

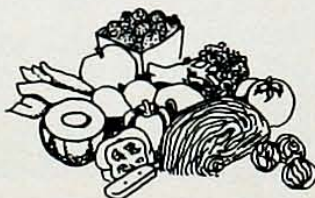
During the early 1970's an alarming decline in sales of various Ontario food products became a dominant trend. For example, in 1965 Ontario-produced peaches accounted for 80% of the total Ontario market for canned peaches. By 1978 the share had dropped below 20%.

Furthermore, over the last 10 years Ontario food imports have been growing an average of 5% faster than Ontario food exports. This is especially disconcerting as Ontario has the ability to produce 40% of the total imports. The farm gate value of those replaceable imports is \$520 million annually. Translated to economic terms, a loss in market share, both domestically and internationally, results in lower production and a decline in the utilization of agricultural land for food production. This, coupled with a severe pressure from the urban development, will lead to a permanent loss of food-producing capability, an inefficient and unprofitable agricultural economy, and dependence on foreign sources for the food products required to feed the people of Ontario.

The Government of Ontario has stated its commitment to maintain a healthy and productive agricultural sector. As a result, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food has assumed responsibility for giving leadership to both the agriculture and processing sectors of the industry in developing markets for Ontario products.

The economic conditions today are generally encouraging for the expansion of the agricultural industry. Ontario farmers are in a reasonably good financial position to invest in the future in spite of present interest rates. The current level of the Canadian dollar at approximately 85¢ affords opportunities for growth in exports, as well as replacement of imported products. The recent tariff changes may rejuvenate the existing processed fruit and vegetable industry as well as establish new processing industries such as tomato paste.

Ontario has the ability and capacity to produce a greater volume of food. The overall objective of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, specifically the Market Development Branch, will be to increase the average annual growth rate of farm income in Ontario from its historic level of 1.7% to a 4-5% level by 1984.



The objective will be accomplished by accelerating the growth rate of Ontario food exports, and replacing 35% of replaceable agriculture and food imports in Ontario by 1984. In dollar amounts, our target replaceable imports are approximately \$200 million of the total \$520 million farm gate value.

The communication tool of import replacement is the Foodland Ontario program. Foodland's marketing objective is to expand the domestic market and stimulate consumption of Ontario food products to the benefit of producers, processors and distributors of Ontario agricultural products.

Foodland's communication objectives are to create increased consumer awareness of the wide range of food products produced and/or processed in Ontario. The program is also designed to create greater understanding of the importance of the agriculture and food industry to the social and economic health of all Ontario.

After 2 years of Foodland, as of November, 1979, research showed that 50% of Ontarians were becoming aware of the need to "buy Ontario" to keep the province healthy. Also, "buying Ontario" assured the consumer of a first class quality product. After 18 months, the Foodland logo was being recognized up-front by 43% of the consumers polled.

The first one is to communicate the quality and range of Ontario produce and processed food available. This has been seen in the Foodland Ontario News advertisements highlighting one or more foodtypes, usually with a recipe.

The second campaign attempts to convince consumers that "buying Ontario" not only assures them of quality, but also fosters the economic health of Ontario.

The fundamental benefit of both campaigns is quality, which, together with the Foodland logo and signature "Good Things Grow in Ontario", lends an element of consistency and recognizability to the total Foodland campaign.

The primary medium for delivering this message, is daily newspapers, as they have proven very effective in reaching the Ontario consumer. The detailed explanation of newspaper advertising is crucial to the success of the point form supplementary media such as billboards, transit advertising, mall posters, and rural radio, also used to inform the consumer about the Foodland Ontario program.

Point-of-purchase merchandising in retail stores is highly effective in terms of display return for dollars spent. The Foodland program includes display markers, price cards, buttons and crests, signboards, and information and recipe booklets.

Then our public and media relations encompass a broad range of activities such as answering consumer inquiries, publishing press releases, liaison with schools and food editors, appearing on radio and T.V. talk shows to discuss the Foodland program.

Foodland exhibits are also a cost efficient method of reaching the public with the message. Exhibits have been recently located at Ontario Place, the C.N.E., Eatons'

