



Advertising and Promotion Practicum 2014 Michigan FFA Ag. Sales Contest



Background information:

Syngenta, a world leader in crop protection, has recently developed a new soybean seed treatment called “Clariva Complete Beans”. This biological seed protection is applied directly to the seed before it is delivered to the farmer. Upon planting the seed into the soil, the biological organism begins to protect the soybean seed from harmful Soybean Cyst Nematodes (SCN). Protecting soybean roots from SCN allows the soybean plant to grow healthier and produce more yield for the farmer at harvest.



The advantage of using a biologic nematode control such as Syngenta’s “Clariva Complete Beans” is that you only kill the bad nematodes (those which feed on the soybean roots) while preserving the beneficial nematodes in the environment. Other benefits include:

1. As a “biological nematocide”, it is different than all other seed treatments in the market today.
2. It reproduces in the bodies of the SCN, killing them and creating additional bacteria in the soil to infect more SCN, providing season long control of SCN.
3. It is a naturally occurring bacteria, so it is safe to handle, and safe to the environment.

Assignment:

You have been hired by Syngenta to develop a 1 page (8 1/2” X 11”) advertisement to go into the Michigan Farmer Magazine. The goal of the ad is to get farmers to purchase their soybean seed with the new “Clariva Complete Beans” seed treatment. The advertisement is to be in full color and will be published in the May, 2014 edition. Your target audience is all Michigan farmers who raise soybeans. You have 30 minutes to prepare this advertisement. (you may cut up and use the Technical Bulletin in your advertisement.)

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Customer Relations Practicum

2014 Michigan FFA Ag. Sales Contest



Background Information:

You are a Sales Associate for the “Happy Harvest Hay Company”, a local producer of high quality bales of hay. You sell products directly to customers primarily consisting of horse and livestock farmers. Earlier today, one of your customers called the store to complain about the hay that they purchased a week ago which is moldy inside the bale. The customer mentioned on the phone that they tried to feed it to their horses, but the horses would not eat it. Upon further investigation, it was determined that 10 of the 100 bales they purchased were moldy and not feedable. The remaining 90 bales are in good shape and are being eaten by the horses just fine. The customer is not happy and wants you to not only replace the 10 bad bales, but also provide an additional 10 bales for free to make up for their inconvenience.

The customer service policy for the Happy Harvest Hay Company is to replace only those bales that are found to be of poor quality in the eyes of the consumer, free of charge. The Happy Harvest Hay company does not waiver from this policy, but does pride itself in delivering high quality hay, with good delivery personnel and never running out of hay when the customer is in need. They also offer delivery 7 days a week and have been in business for 23 years. This horse farm has been your customer for 8 years and this is the first issue they have had with hay quality from your business. It was determined over the phone earlier today that the reason for poor quality hay was a leak in the roof of the storage barn prior to delivery to the horse farm and not the fault of the customer. It is your responsibility to empathize with the customer, hold to your policy, and ensure that this customer will continue to be your customer in the future.

Assignment:

You have 5 minutes to prepare and then 10 minutes to resolve this situation. At the end of your 5 minute preparation time, the contest volunteer will take you from your preparation area to your “customers” (the judges). There will be 2 judges in the room. One judge will play the part of the “customer” while the other judge evaluates your effort.

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Market Analysis Practicum

2014 Michigan FFA Ag Sales Contest

Contestant's Copy



I. Background:

You have been hired by Sam Woolworth to help him decide what to do with the 200 acres of grass land he just inherited in northern lower Michigan. Sam is currently a 1000 acre grain farmer in Mt Pleasant, MI, is 60 years old, and is ready to retire from grain farming. He and his wife have always wanted to raise market sheep and have always wanted to move further north where life could move at a slower pace. They have the opportunity to rent out their current acreage for \$100 per acre to the neighbor farmer, or allow the neighbor to farm it on "shares", allowing Sam to be paid in grain (40 bushels per acre) which he could use to feed sheep up north. They have hired your team to do a Market Analysis and make recommendations to them about their options.

II. Market Research:

Upon doing your research, you learn that the farm up north has 150 acres of the 200 acres that already is fenced in for pasture, but does need some repairs. There is a 3 bedroom log house on the remaining 50 acres, which is wooded. There is a dedicated well to water the livestock and a 40' x 80' pole barn that is currently being used for storage but could be converted to house some sheep or hay. Ewes will need winter protection from the weather and will need a draft free place to lamb in February. Sam is aware of a "sheep leasing" option which would allow him to lease 100 ewes (female sheep) which would allow him to quickly get into the lamb raising business. Ewes generally produce 1.5 lambs per year. He can lease the ewes for \$30/ewe annually and there are currently 150 ewes and 3 rams (male sheep) available to lease in the area. The ewes will eat 2 pounds of corn each day from August 1 until April 15 when the lambs are weaned (taken away from the ewes milk and put on grain). Sam can either purchase corn for \$4.50/bushel or use corn produced on his Mt. Pleasant farm earned through the lease of his land that he rented out. He will have an average veterinary and medication cost of \$5.00 per sheep. Hay will be fed daily from November 1st to May 1st at a cost of \$20/day. Hay will not be needed during the summer because they can be placed out on pasture. Shearing of the ewes will be done once per year at a cost of \$3.00/head. Electrical cost will average out to \$60/month. Straw costs to bed the sheep will run \$800 annually. The lease agreement allows for a 5% cull rate (death or removal of old ewes from the flock) and no additional cost.

The 150 lambs born and weaned will be on grain from April 15 – August 15 at a rate of 4 pounds of corn per day and will be on pasture for their hay needs. These lambs can be sold at a market weight of 130 pounds at the current market price of lamb which is \$1.20/pound live weight if taken directly to market. If sold via retail channels, directly to customers, they can be sold for \$2.50/pound but this requires advertising and additional time to manage a retail business. You will also have a \$2.00/head veterinary and medication cost and a \$3.00/head shearing cost for these lambs prior to taking them to market.

III. Your Assignment:

You need to help Mr. Woolworth make some decisions on the future direction of this business consideration:

1. Goals: Both short term (less than one year) and long term (greater than 1 year) goals.

Note: Be creative and thorough/complete in your responses.

2. Development of a Proper Marketing Mix to reach those goals, including:

- Products and possible services.
- Style of business (retail, wholesale, delivery, etc).
- Price, and pricing policies
- Promotions or Programs to secure new business.

Note: Be sure to show your knowledge of Marketing Concepts.

3. Development of Evaluation and Control procedures.

In the next 20 minutes, you are to **prepare a one-page “summary sheet” of your recommendations to be given to the judge as well as your team’s oral presentation.**

Upon the completion of your 20-minute preparation time, you will then have 10 minutes to present your recommendations and “summary page” to the judge.

Note: Due to the time constraints of Mr. Woolworth (the judge), your presentation will be limited to the allotted 10 minute time frame.

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Prospecting Practicum

2014 Michigan FFA Ag. Sales Contest



Background Information:

You are a salesperson for PlantScape Plus, the local landscaping company. You are in charge of the sales of landscape design and installation. You annually design and install 130-150 landscapes at individual family residences in a 30 mile radius. You have been employed at this location for 10 years.

Your company had a booth at the annual Spring Home and Garden Show last week where you collected the names and addresses of many prospects. One particular prospect, Charlie Simpson, was interested in creating a landscape design on the north side of the house. The area is 16' x 20' and Charlie has a budget of \$4000 to spend on this project and really wants to have a water feature incorporated into the design.

Your company specializes in landscape designs which include water features. Being that this design is to be placed on the north side of the house, you know that you will need to use plants that like shade. You will need to find out some basic information to help plan your design including: the availability of electricity to run a pump for the water feature, the maximum height desired for the landscape, any plant preferences that Charlie might like to include, interest in rocks, wood, or statues, and what level of annual maintenance Charlie wants for the landscape (ie: low maintenance or more high maintenance). PlantScape Plus also offers an annual landscape maintenance program to their customers. It costs \$100/year for low maintenance areas, and \$150/year for higher maintenance areas. This service covers one spring and one fall maintenance service.

Your Assignment:

You will be calling Charlie Simpson to discuss design interests, answer question, collect basic information and set up an appointment to meet at the house to draw up a basic design and sell Charlie a new landscape design and installation. You can also offer a maintenance service plan for free for the first year if they sign up for a 4 year maintenance contract in addition to purchasing the design and installation prior to May 1st.

You have up to 5 minutes to prepare and 8-10 minutes to complete your call.

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Telephone Skills Practicum

2014 Michigan FFA Ag. Sales Contest



Background Information:

You are the Farm Equipment Salesperson for the local John Deere equipment store. You were talking to Chris Johnson, a 5000 acre corn and soybean farmer, at the local livestock auction the other day and Chris wanted to know more about the new John Deere “ExactEmerge” row units. He had heard that the ExactEmerge row units could plant corn seed accurately at over 10 miles per hour, which is twice as fast as current row units on corn planters can plant corn seed.

Chris currently uses a 24 row John Deere corn planter which is 5 years old. Replacing all 24 row units with the new ExactEmerge row units would cost \$2000/row unit, but would allow Chris to plant 2500 acres of corn in half of the time it took last year when they only planted at 5 miles per hour. Timely planting in the spring of the year is critical to successful corn production. Due to rains and cold weather in May, there are only a few days which are most suitable for planting. This ability to plant more seed when soils are ready makes faster planting appealing to many farmers. If farmers don't get their corn planted in May, then yields will be decreased and the farm will lose money.

Your Assignment:

You are to call Chris Johnson, build a stronger customer relationship, and answer more questions about the ExactEmerge row units from John Deere. Chris is an early adopter of technology and is very interested in these new row units. You are also asked to set-up an appointment with Chris to go out to the farm and show them the row units in person. You have 5 minutes to prepare and 10 minutes to handle this call, including checking on the condition of Chris' current John Deere planter and combine.

****The adult volunteer will tell you when your 5 minute prep time has expired. You can then call the judge to begin the contest.***

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