

Worksheet 36: Who in the World am I Marketing To?

Definitions:

Target Customer:

The typical customer you expect to market your products to.

Customer Profile:

A detailed description of a target customer to include demographic, geographic, and psychographic factors.

Demographic Factors:

The age, sex, education level, income level, marital status, occupation, religion, average size of a family of your target customer.

Geographic Factors:

Where your target customer lives or works.

Psychographic Factors:

The lifestyle, interests, attitudes, beliefs, values, personality, buying motives, and purchasing behavior of your target customer.

The key to marketing successfully is selling your products to the right person or business. Not everyone wants what you have to sell. When asked the question, “Who are your customers?” Most beginning farmers stop for a moment and may not have a clear picture of who exactly they are selling to, or more importantly who they should target to sell their products to. A common and incorrect answer given by beginning farmers is “Everyone eats, so everyone is my customer.” Yes, everyone eats, but they do not eat the same things, in the same manner. Taking the time to clearly identify your customers is money in your pocket. You will waste precious time and money trying to find customers AFTER harvest. Target your customers BEFORE planting.

The marketing options you selected in Worksheet 2 determine the type of customer you are targeting. If you chose a major channel, your customer has no idea who you are and is not really interested in having a personal relationship with your farm. However, you can develop a customer profile for businesses who you think will buy from you (Worksheet 2B). If you chose farm-to-firm or farm-to-customer channels, your customers are mildly or actively involved in having a relationship with your farm. Developing a customer profile helps you save money by targeting a specific audience (Worksheet 2A). Don’t box yourself in and consider only one customer or business to sell to. Times change and so do customers!

Being keenly aware of your target customer(s) involves answering the following questions:

1. Who is my target customer?
2. What do they value?
3. Where can I find them?
4. What do they buy?

Follow the next steps to answer these customer profiling questions.

Step 1: Start with ONE product in mind.

Write down ONE product you are considering selling here: (Hint: Do not just write goat. Be specific, for example, heat and eat curried goat meat.

Step 2: Identify the specific individuals and businesses interested in the ONE product you listed by creating customer profiles (Worksheet 1.31 and Worksheet 1.32).