

## WASHINGTON STATE POTATO COMMISSION MARKET REVIEW - TRENDS & ACTIVITIES

by  
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### Consumer Trends (Dee Munson)

Market research is essential to show marketers where consumers are and where they are going. Without a sound grasp on consumer trends, marketing is like shooting a shotgun into an empty sky and hoping to bag something, anything.

A major research project, the Yankelovich monitor study, shows that there have been two major restructurings of American life in the past 50 years. The traditional 50's moved on to the revolution of the 60's, which led to the new values of the 70's and the adaptations of the 80's.

The key word for the 90's is "new or neo-traditionalism" -- a return to traditional values of home and family, but with new values learned along the way. The key is a balance of community and self.

What does this mean?

- \* The "me" generation is gone -- it's now me and my community.
- \* The extremes of food are gone -- no more nouvelle cuisine and outlandishly expensive items and meals.
- \* Technology is a partner -- be it home computers, microwaves in cars, shopping by phone.
- \* Convenience is the key -- consumers no longer shop till they drop, instead they are dropping shopping.
- \* The environment is important -- for the individual and the world.
- \* Family involvement is essential, even though the family is less and less a husband/wife/kids and may be any combination of people.
- \* Men's roles have changed. Interestingly, men are becoming more involved and aware of the needs of others, romance, relaxed schedules, ritual and appearance.

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- \* Women are getting tired of trying to do it all and shortchanging themselves. They are looking for balance.
- \* The fitness revolution is over and the focus is on healthy, balanced lifestyles.
- \* Nutrition is still a concern, but again, with balance. Consumers want to be informed, not seduced.
- \* Healthful-style foods are in, along with a renewed appreciation of the joy of food. Taste + convenience + health.
- \* The consumer is confident in making her/his own decisions and tired of being lectured.
- \* Microwave ovens are commonplace -- predictions say 90% of homes and 25% of cars will have them by 2001.
- \* The consumer looks, decides and trades off taste/time/price/convenience/health.

So what's the outlook for Washington potatoes?

Great! Potatoes fill the needs of the 90's consumer who is looking for value, information, good taste, convenience, ease in shopping, healthy and appealing-to-kids foods.

An Abridged Version of Remarks Delivered  
by  
Ron Hughes

- \* The largest crop in history; "fresh" movement needed -- quickly.
- \* Obvious movement channel -- supermarkets in our best marketing areas: Washington State, Southern California.
- \* Solicited participation of volume-moving retailers in both markets.
- \* Additional retail promotion activity during marathons in Charlotte and Los Angeles.
- \* Once the word of the promotion spread, we heard from eager retailers from most areas in California, Washington, Oregon and several other states.
- \* Final promotion participation: 12 states, 15 major markets, 23 retailing groups.
- \* Used cents-off coupons in retailers' own newspaper advertising.
- \* Offered advertising allowances in selected cases.
- \* Offered volume incentives in selected cases.
- \* Required feature ads and feature produce department placement in all participating stores.
- \* Timing: September - December, 1991.
- \* Second flight of activity offered to just Washington State retailers during National Potato Lovers' Month in February -- coupon activity only; every major retailing group in the state participated.
- \* Retailers astonished at movement increases; all want to repeat promotion whenever we let them.
- \* Additional interest expressed by Northern California retailers (they want in), and by Portland's leading retailer, who rejected the promotion when originally offered.