

# DISCUSSION SESSIONS

## Communication Program Planning

Discussion Leader, GORDON GRAHAM, ARIZONA

OPINION AND POLICY LEADERS INTRODUCTION — *Ovid Bay, Washington, and Jim Johnson, Idaho*

Review of papers by Dennis Avery and Milton Morris

These papers caused us to consider the following questions and points which might serve as a starting point on the discussion.

1. What can and should ag college information offices do—if anything—about trying to cover the developments of the Farm Program and the Farm Bloc? Is this “too political”? Do we have resource people we can quote for material for our audience on state and national policy?

2. Can we ignore this area and still be relevant and most useful to our audience? The *Sunday Atlanta Journal* had a front page report on the proposed new Rural Development bill. Should we follow this up with a state story on the subject? Why or why not?

3. How do you identify opinion and policy leaders?

4. What do you do for these opinion-policy leaders after you manage to identify them? Direct mail? Personal contact? How do you do backup PR for the budget effort with the state legislature? (Pennsylvania reported they invite groups to the campus for an audio visual presentation.)

5. How do you keep a list of opinion-policy leaders current? Have each county agent check it annually, or what?

6. If FOOD is becoming more important and AGRICULTURE less important, are we wrong in stressing “agriculture” when we should be stressing the positive value of “food”?

7. Dr. E. T. York, of University of Florida, tells us that "agriculture being a minority group need not be all bad." He thinks we still determine our "political influence."

8. Are we hung up on "selling agriculture" because we think this is what opinion and policy leaders want to hear?

**Our role:** Is in interpreting the national setting to our rural constituents. We do not stave off powerful economic forces that are shaping agriculture and rural life today. But, we can help farmers understand their position. Key question is who can we use at each campus to do the interpreting?

Finally, we editors have to understand the political-economic changes going on before we try to interpret changes for our audience of opinion-policy leaders.

#### LESSONS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EDITORS FROM THE HATCH "GATEKEEPERS" STUDY — *Hadley Read, Illinois*

The study seemed to indicate the following needs:

1. To be more aggressive in conducting studies of the use being made of our editorial output .

2. To take whatever action is needed to upgrade the professional quality of our output—conception of audience, content, and writing style.

3. To develop closer professional relationships with media representatives to better determine their editorial needs and problems.

4. To restructure our editorial services to permit specialization of services for specialized needs of media serving specialized audiences.

5. To resolve the conflict between quantity and quality—if, indeed, there is a conflict.

6. To reorient our concept of purpose for editorial services so that the emphasis is on the needs of the receiver rather than upon the wishes of the sender.

#### MASS MEDIA GATEKEEPERS AUDIENCE — *Ralph Hamilton, Tennessee*

We have probably worked the closest with the newspapers in the state. Certainly one reason has been that a member of our staff was at one time the field manager for the Tennessee Press

Association. He knows personally nearly every newspaper editor and his family.

This staff member makes it a point to stop at newspaper offices regularly on his visits to county extension offices. He says hello to the editor, asks about his business or family, asks about his working relationship with the county extension staff, and moves on. This regular contact makes it possible to work with these newspapers on an individual basis when field days are coming up, when an extension agent wants to start a personal column, or when we have a special promotion program.

All of us who are concerned with newspaper work in the department make it a habit to attend all meetings of the Tennessee Press Association. At the formal and informal sessions of these meetings we have a chance to renew acquaintances, learn of problems facing the editors, and perhaps plant a new idea or two.

We work closely with the office staff of the Tennessee Press Association each year in the special editorial program called "Profitable Farming." This effort is coming up for the 11th year. We provide about four newspapersize sheets of camera-ready copy for every newspaper in the state. The Press Association attempts to provide advertising for all papers, or for selected groups or for individual papers for these editions.

We encourage county extension staffs to provide their editors with local copy and photos for these editions and over the years, more and more of the copy for these editions has become locally developed. We know of several agents who take photos throughout the year for these editions. In some cases, the papers provide the film and do the developing.

Probably 120 of the state's 155 newspapers take part each year. Sizes of the special editions may range up to 40 pages or more. We have found this service to be of much help in keeping agriculture in the minds of these editors. Their efforts in getting copy and selling ads make them more aware of the local importance of agriculture.

#### PLANNING AND OPERATION OF INFORMATION PROGRAMS RELATING TO HOMEMAKERS — *Ed Ferringer, Indiana*

Two major messages come through upon reading Nellie McCannon's paper on communicating with "homemakers, alias, fam-

ilies and consumers." First—the research indicates that homemakers have changed markedly in the past few years—and are indeed still changing—in terms of interests and perceived needs and problems.

Secondly, the audiences we need to reach with family living information—and I include low income audiences—are not media poor. The hardware for a great mass of communications is in place and ready to go. How we use it effectively is not so precisely mapped out.

Nellie has told you how homemakers have changed in interests, knowledge, and experiences. She touched on the need for added uses of mass media in disseminating family living and consumer information. The big need is for us and the subject matter people with whom we work to learn more about our audiences and how to reach them.

My own observations in Indiana tend to confirm Nellie's premise that university specialists may be out of tune with audiences. It may, however, be a matter of being tuned to the wrong audiences or not enough audiences. We seem to devote a great deal of effort to communicating with traditional home economics club members. There are about 3,100 clubs in Indiana with a total of 52,000 members. The population of Indiana is roughly 5,194,000, or about 1½ million families. We know how to reach the 52,000 . . . we haven't yet found the way or the willingness to commit resources to reaching the vast majority.

Just as there is no one family/homemaker/consumer audience, there is no one communications battle plan that can be followed in carrying out educational programs aimed at this overall group. There must be as many communications programs as there are audiences. We need to identify those audiences, learn all we can about them, plan communications to reach them, and remain flexible enough to change.

#### COMMUNICATING WITH HOMEMAKERS — *Jack Jackson, Maryland*

We have made extensive and effective use of television in communicating information to homemakers.

Agents and/or specialists conduct five weekly 30-minute programs on commercial TV stations of Baltimore and one on each

of two CATV stations located in more rural areas of the state. In addition, working through our extension TV specialist, John Wagner, agents and specialists make frequent guest appearances on established shows presented by Washington stations.

**"Garden Living,"** aired at 8:30 Saturday morning throughout the year, and re-broadcast at 9:00 a.m. Sunday during the spring months, has been on the air regularly since 1959. Conducted by two home-horticulture agents, the show deals with lawn and garden information and is designed to meet the needs of all home-gardeners . . . not homemakers alone.

**"Learning To Do"** is a show for low-income families . . . living primarily in metropolitan Baltimore. It is aired at 6:30 a.m. Tuesday and repeated at 6:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Thursday of each week. The show is conducted by two home economics agents, a black and a white. Representatives of various service groups frequently appear as guests, explaining how low income families can take advantage of services available through their agencies or organizations.

**"Consumer Count-Down"** is a seven-minute daily feature aired 6:45 a.m. Monday through Saturday. Aimed primarily at consumers, it deals strictly with market information and is conducted on alternate days by a male and female marketing specialist. In addition to "how-to-do-it" information relating to the selection and purchase of consumer goods, the show also includes "behind-the-scenes" type of information designed to help consumers better understand the entire production and marketing process.

**"Look and Cook"** was Maryland's first series of TV programs for homemakers. This series started on WBAL in 1948 . . . 23 years ago.

With a number of changes in title and format, the program continued on a weekly schedule until 1960, when the name was changed to "At Home in Maryland."

From 1960 to 1964, under the broad general supervision of the Baltimore City agent, "At Home In Maryland" was presented by agents from surrounding counties . . . with a different agent responsible for each week's show.

In 1964 Shirley Mott, a home economics editor from the state staff, was assigned full responsibility for the show. Under her di-

rection the show is aired weekly throughout the year at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, and from June 1 through October, it is repeated at 1:30 Monday afternoon. Shirley plans and presents each show . . . it is in effect the "Shirley Mott Show."

The show is aimed at a general homemaker audience. Subjects deal with current developments and problems of concern to the typical family. . . . drugs, nutrition, environmental enhancement, health programs, etc.

Shirley carefully selects her subjects, working in close cooperation with both her extension associates and station personnel. Once a major subject is selected, it is presented through a series of shows. Each series on a given subject includes from three to as many as 12 shows, each covering a separate phase of the broad subject.

This procedure provides Shirley an opportunity to coordinate her shows with special public service campaigns that the station may be conducting. This, in turn, enables WBAL to include our shows in their overall publicity and promotion.

#### THE RURAL DISADVANTAGED — *David E. Ryker, Arkansas*

As extension communicators, we are constantly faced with new directions, new programs, and new audiences. As our state extension services change directions to keep abreast of the rapidly changing times, new programs at both the state and national level are designed and new audiences must be faced.

Leighton Watson, Director, Appalachian Center Information and Educational Technology, West Virginia University, gave us an analysis of one of our audiences . . . the rural disadvantaged. While many of his remarks are based upon what he terms "Appalachian Society" we can apply the same yardstick to our own audiences who have been "left behind."

In looking at the rural poor, we are seeing a phenomena which did not exist in the early days of extension. We had rural poor during the depression years of the early 1930's and early 1940's, but they lived in a different environment, with different attitudes and with different sources of help.

After WW II a "new" kind of rural poor began to emerge and it soon became apparent that the traditional extension programs, highly successful in the past, would have to be modified, or in

some instances, new approaches developed to reach these audiences.

It is a mistake to classify poverty simply by income. As Mr. Watson points out, there is poverty of personal development and human resources. Often, these factors make the "poor" harder to reach and to help than those who have very little income.

Mr. Watson pointed out a number of concepts and made some statements which, I feel, have a direct bearing on our effectiveness in communicating with the rural disadvantaged.

Extension's educational efforts are shifting from individual to group decision making . . . from subject matter to consultation on principles and process. But often there is a lack of citizen involvement in decision making.

Disadvantaged mistrust local government officials as a rule but consider it as a "normal" way things are done.

Many in poverty have high aspirations, but they lack basic education and skills and have lived a generation or more in an environment of poverty. Also, in a community with scarce natural resources there tends to develop an integrated way of life in keeping with the setting.

However, as more contacts are made with "higher" communities, young people will be less willing to accept the culture of the disadvantaged community.

Local opinion leaders are highly selective in the kinds of change they will advocate. The message must be in line with the value system of the culture or with the specified interest of a segment of society.

Interaction and communication with the outside are two main forces which can lead to the creation of new social systems and to the de-emphasis of old ones.

As extension editors we are concerned about reaching all the poor. We recognize that the Land-Grant system offers help. It is our job to get it to those in need. I hope these discussions will lead to more effective programs of communicating with the rural disadvantaged.

#### COMMUNICATING TO THE RURAL DISADVANTAGED THROUGH MASS MEDIA—*Arland R. Meade, Connecticut*

We need to know what media the rural disadvantaged consume, how much, and what their level of confidence in each medium is.

For purposes of this statement I'm arbitrarily defining "rural disadvantaged" as those living in Connecticut's most two rural counties (Tolland and Windham) and whose major family wage earner is in very low categories of the Trodahl Occupational Prestige Scale.

The sampling in our study was random for all citizens of the counties whether on farms, rural villages, or the few small cities of the area. The term "rural" is correct in relationship to the remainder of Connecticut but not universally rural by more specific parameters.

The same survey covered the inner city of Connecticut's largest city (Hartford). The identical occupational prestige scale was used. A difference was that half of all the "rural" people in the survey were in the lowest three of eight categories but nearly all of the black people in the sample were in those categories. This produced relevant samples of 60 black inner city interviewees and 34 rural white ones.

All questioning was by telephone, and the interviews ranged typically from 12 to 25 minutes each.

<i>Question</i>	<i>Rural and white</i>	<i>Inner city and black</i>
	(Figures are percentages unless otherwise indicated)	
How many working radios, including car, do you have?.....	3.7	2.6
Are you satisfied with the radio programming on the station available to you? (excluding those who said "don't know") YES.....	87.1	92.9
In general, what's the main reason you listen to radio? (open ended)		
MUSIC.....	14.7	30
NEWS WEATHER.....	26.5	20
COMPANY/BACKGROUND.....	17.6	18.4
DON'T KNOW.....	14.7	15.0
ENTERTAINMENT.....	11.8	8.3
EDUCATION.....	8.8	6.7
HELPS WITH WORK.....	5.9	2.9
Do you feel that the radio stations you listen to devote.....time to community service?		
ENOUGH.....	58.8	53.3
NOT ENOUGH.....	17.6	35.0
TOO MUCH.....	2.9	0.0
NO OPINION.....	20.7	11.7
Do you feel that the radio stations you listen to devote.....time to minority groups?		
ENOUGH.....	50.0	41.7
NOT ENOUGH.....	20.6	28.3
TOO MUCH.....	0.0	3.3
NO OPINION.....	29.0	26.7

How many working television sets do you have?.....	1.7	1.6
People I see on TV shows are like people I see in real life. Tell me whether you agree or disagree. (averages based on those with an opinion)		
AGREE.....	36.4	64.3
DISAGREE.....	63.6	35.7
Shows on TV tell about life the way it is. Do you agree or disagree?		
AGREE.....	29.4	56.7
DISAGREE.....	70.6	36.7
DON'T KNOW.....	00.0	6.6
TV news about black Americans is..... than news about anyone else?		
LESS FAIR.....	17.6	28.3
ABOUT SAME.....	61.8	55.0
MORE FAIR.....	14.7	6.6
DON'T KNOW.....	5.9	11.1
Yesterday, how many hours did you watch television?.....	2.68	4.12
Where would you turn if you wanted to learn about local news? (excluding those who didn't know)		
NEWSPAPER.....	66.7	21.4
TELEVISION.....	9.1	50.0
RADIO.....	21.2	25.0
OTHER PEOPLE.....	3.0	1.8
If you came across contradictory information, which source would you believe? (excluding those who didn't know or wouldn't say)		
TV.....	17.6	30.0
NEWSPAPER.....	5.9	15.0
MAGAZINES.....	11.8	15.0
OTHER PEOPLE.....	8.8	10.0
RADIO.....	8.8	13.3
DON'T KNOW AND NO ANSWER.....	47.1	16.7
Why did you make that choice?		
DON'T KNOW.....	47.1	28.3
MORE CONFIDENCE.....	23.5	21.7
MORE AND BETTER COVERAGE.....	2.9	8.3
PREFER LISTENING AND SEEING TO READING.....	0.0	8.3
MORE ACCURATE.....	5.8	8.3
Black people I see on TV shows are like black people I see in real life. Agree or disagree?		
AGREE.....	32.4	46.7
DISAGREE.....	44.1	50.0
DON'T KNOW OR NO ANSWER.....	20.6	1.7
Shows on TV tell about the life of blacks the way it is. Do you agree or disagree?		
AGREE.....	26.5	43.3
DISAGREE.....	52.9	53.3
DON'T KNOW OR NO ANSWER.....	20.6	3.4

What magazines do you read, in order of preference		
FIRST CHOICES (excluding don't knows)		
NEWS WEEKLIES.....	40.7	41.3
BLACK (EBONY etc.).....	00.0	30.4
WOMENS.....	33.3	15.2
READERS DIGEST.....	11.1	6.5
How many telephone calls did you make yesterday?.....	1.92 av.	3.07 av.
How many calls did you receive yesterday?.....	2.05 av.	3.27 av.
What was the main reason for most of the calls		
you made..... (excluding don't knows)		
OBTAIN INFORMATION.....	47.8	16.3
GIVE INFORMATION.....	13.0	14.3
SOCIAL TALK.....	39.1	69.4
What was the main reason for most of calls received?		
(excluding reasons not known)		
OBTAIN INFORMATION.....	40.9	14.9
GIVE INFORMATION.....	13.6	19.2
SOCIAL TALK.....	45.5	66.0

The similarities of the two groups in this study may be as useful as the dissimilarities.

A biometrician compared means of the responses and found that in many cases the differences between the groups were not statistically significant—that is, for samples of these sizes, the average differences had a high likelihood of occurring by chance.

If there is sufficient substantiation of the considerable similarity in use of media by the urban and the rural disadvantaged, facts from other studies might have some bearing on our finding ways to reach the rural disadvantaged short of many more substantial studies.

Dr. Bradley Greenberg, professor of communication at Michigan State University, reported the following (extracted) before the national commission on causes and prevention of violence.

“There is no great difference in access to the other major mass media between the more and less advantaged citizens. . . . It is not in terms of access that the media have their potential impact, but in terms of usage. . . . For the low-income American, television is the preponderant, if not quite the sole, source of mass media stimulation. It is his critical link to the outside world of the “haves.” . . . Among all adults across this country, TV is regarded as the principal information source for general news, world news, political news, etc. At the same time, it is far and away favored as the most credible or believed source. It is even more so regarded by low-income Americans. . . . There have been

data gathered at the University of Kentucky of rural poor. I am not aware of the details of informations about the behavior of rural poor.”

NOTES AND COMMENT ON AGRIBUSINESS MEN AND WOMEN —  
*Jim Morrison, California*

There are several ways to get the job done: You can tell someone else the basic idea for a story; or you can outline in considerable detail what the possibilities are; or you can do it yourself. The “do-it-yourself” method is not always the best answer.

We in California have had some remarkably good results with so-called success stories when we provided the leads and let our friends of the press take hold. Sometimes this is not always the simplest way—you must provide all of the answers, the complete story, as a rule, if you are going to please a metropolitan reporter or editor. Most of you will realize that if you have to get all those facts together, it's almost easier to do the whole thing yourself.

Basically, we have been pleased with the results, and recommend this system to others. Often, we find it possible to send out our own story—well rewritten, to be sure—to our own lists after some specific metropolitan paper has appeared with its version. So far we have heard no complaints.

We have had good results in getting the story of agribusiness men and women told—and good success in reaching these same people—by working through our county farm and home advisors. With more staff help than we now have we could do a whale of a job in developing the leads gathered through contact with our county people. Every statewide program would be enhanced considerably with the establishment of a qualified farm reporter on every county staff of agricultural extension—within reason, of course, depending upon the basis of county strengths. In the long run, the statewide communications program, as related to newspapers, television, and radio, would be paying for itself in added understanding and exposure to the public.

COMMENTS ON AGRIBUSINESS MEN AND WOMEN — *James S. Holderness, Hawaii*

We all pay homage to the concept that knowing our audiences is the first requirement of effective communications. But doing

something about it in the modestly staffed college publications office takes guts because of the pressure to get into print.

Where communications work shops are not held regularly, it isn't uncommon to get a blank stare from an author, especially the research type, when you ask him whom he is writing for and what his reader may do about what he is expected to read.

Where editorial manpower is limited, the administrative pressure tends to be toward pages of copy produced rather than to fuss about who is reading it. This is exactly the situation Fred Jones has reported to us today. The pressure to publish is a formidable foe when a manuscript has been on the desk for a few weeks. In this environment, we should seize every opportunity to educate our administrators and our authors to this thing called audience analysis.

Based upon what Fred Jones told us, the total agribusiness audience for the U.S. is projected at around 24 million for 1975. The majority of this group is in processing, perhaps 12.5 million. Another 7.5 million are in the farm supply business. Just under 4 million are actually involved in production. Some authorities would exclude the production sector from agribusiness. Yet this is the small audience upon which we zero in. Only a little organized work is done for the processors and hardly any for the farm supply sector.

Did you notice Fred Jones' approach in examining the audiences in which he was interested—the processing and supply sectors. For convenience, he broke them into simple categories: tractor and implement, lumber, farm supplies, etc. Then, he talked to representatives for these groups to find out what the audience's characteristics were. The approach did shed light on the audience of interest, and anyone doing media work could correct for special biases in reaching the selected audience. Are we editors talking to those people who deal with and know our various audiences enough? I don't think so.

When was the last time your shop prepared a questionnaire for one of your audiences? Most of us canvass our mailing lists. Why not ask a few more questions than just "do you want to receive?" Most shops can use more demographic information such as education, age, kind of business, and specific interests. Such information will help push back the dark corners in our subject matter selection, editing, and distribution.

Audience analysis is a little of pay dirt that we can carry back to our shops and put to work. Let Fred Jones' words motivate you to learn more about your audiences. Then go the final step: put what you learn to work in your editing.

YOUTH AUDIENCE — *Ralph Hamilton, Tennessee*

Generally, university communication staffs have been concerned with helping others in their universities prepare and deliver messages to the youth audience. Little has been done by communication staffs to deliver their own subject matter to youth.

We know that today's youth are surrounded by the media and that they talk among themselves about the need to communicate more freely with each other.

Perhaps it is time that communication staffs give serious consideration to and then take action to communicate their own subject matter to the youth audience. As professional communicators, we should be capable of developing such educational programs and executing them.

The 4-H Club program in each state is a ready-made mechanism to carry out this program.

I propose that we develop a communications project that will be of particular appeal to and have solid material for high school age youth. Every large city and nearly every small town have a radio station and a newspaper. These two media want local material and they are not sufficiently staffed to collect it.

Young people are regularly engaged in preparing exhibits, taking photos, and even preparing and selling advertising. The community of today is an excellent laboratory for a young person to learn and practice mass communication skills as well as face-to-face skills.

I urge that this communication program be broadly based. It should attempt to cover written, visual, and oral communication. We can not only prepare young people to be more skillful and effective communicators but perhaps we can also help them to be more critical users of the media.

SENIOR CITIZENS — *Jim Johnson, Idaho*

What do we really know about communicating with senior citizens? Quite frankly I know very little, nor have I been able to

find very much in the way of research results to enlighten me. However, I can raise some questions:

What conditions must we be concerned with that make the senior citizen different from another audience? In what respects won't the tried and true communications process work with the senior citizen? Are the communication barriers only physical ones such as poor eyesight or poor hearing? Or are the barriers more psychological in nature?

In Idaho, one of the most pertinent questions to be raised is: should we be overly concerned with trying to communicate with senior citizens? Should we make special efforts to design messages, dip up appropriate content material, and arrange effective avenues of communication for this particular audience?

We have a very limited staff (three people covering most of the usual ag information shop waterfronts. We don't have resource people available who can provide us with information. We have to assume that some of the information we normally make available through these channels has an interest to the senior citizen and that he takes advantage of it in whatever form it comes. We don't like the idea of ignoring a particular audience, but we really have no choice.

This same problem must come up in every state. For the state with a larger staff, the ag information department administrator must decide how much manpower and resources should be committed to communicating to this special audience.

But let me go back to raising questions. We heard this morning that the senior citizen prizes his health above all else. It gives him freedom as well as well-being. This also means he visits his doctor frequently, either for assurance or for consultation and help. Could specialized material aimed at the elderly be made available by maintaining supplies of various printed pieces in doctors' offices? Are any states doing that now? If so, how effective has it been?

We also learned this morning that the senior citizen wants mobility. He will continue to drive his car as long as he can, for instance. This would indicate that the car radio is a good avenue of communications. But is it? I have talked with some senior citizens who indicate they never turn their car radio on. It distracts them too much, or it has too much of "d--n hippy music on it."

Hopefully, there would be at least one station in each area of a state that would present programming palatable to the senior citizen. Has any state had any experience concerning use of radio in communicating ideas to the senior citizens?

As mobility goes down for the senior citizen, I suspect that television viewing goes up. My limited experience with elderly friends and acquaintances would indicate that television is a favorite entertainment medium and time-killer . . . as long as eyesight is equal to the job. No doubt this medium could be used effectively, and I would be curious to know what other states have done on TV and how effective these efforts have been.

About the only concrete thing I have to offer about communicating with senior citizens came to me from the daughter of our experiment station editor. She has worked with senior citizens in a nursing home, and she says simply, "Talk louder."

COMMUNICATING WITH THE AGED — *Arland R. Meade, Connecticut*

The only trait common to the aged is their chronicity, states a University of Connecticut gerontologist.

We would go far awry, he adds, if we assume that anything else is very common to the aged. And although we typically call all those over 65 years "the aged," he says there are distinct differences between the "young elderly" and the "very old elderly"—beyond the physical differences.

The research literature shows little about communication problems relating to the aged. A 124-page fact book entitled *Aging in Connecticut* discloses nothing about problems or procedures of communicating with the aged. This book was produced by money from AOA Title III for the White House Conference on Aging, 1971.

However, Dr. Howard Rosencranz, director of the project in Connecticut, told me that he knew of no studies dealing with communication to the aged through the mass media.

He was sure, however, from survey data, that the elderly spent more time watching TV than with any other mass medium. He also felt that:

1. Many of the messages intended to reach the aged, don't.
2. The aged typically refuse to trust information presented,

even though with the best of intentions. And this lack of belief in the word of strangers of course holds up action, reduces results.

The aged mistrust strangers who offer to help them, even if the strangers carry appropriate institutional credentials. The stigma of the word "charity" is still real among the present elderly—although it seems likely not to be among those to come.

Dr. Rosencranz feels that good interpersonal relations are vital in building trust with the elderly. This would seem to be one strike against using the mass media to provide needed information to the aged. Perhaps a kind of "interpersonal" relations can be developed between the aged and the agencies which wish to help them; then information from those agencies through the mass media would become more acceptable.

Still, Connecticut experiences demonstrate that mass media can effectively convey educational information.

Through a newspaper squib we offered a 16-page booklet which incorporated a worksheet through which any person could calculate the probability of being eligible for food stamps.

Requests were abundant and some were obviously from the aged. One woman touchingly explained the situation of her invalid husband and herself—and stated that her City Hall had said they were not eligible for food stamps because they owned a house. Such a statement from City Hall was false. This letter prompted me to send sample booklets to the chief executives of every township and city in Connecticut.

We have received direct feedback from announcements over radio also. And on a weekly TV interview series "For the Consumer"—now completing its fourth TV year—the annual one-shot program on tax relief for the elderly outdraws many of the other topics. The elderly obviously watch this medium and act on a message seen on its screen.

I suggest that the Extension Service develop a direct-mail distribution to organizations in which there are many elderly. Those organizations would, in advance, be invited to pass the information along to members in ways they know best—or with some guidance from extension county or regional staff.

The potential of working through their own organizations—and therefore to a degree combining a kind of interpersonal contact with the mass media—is indicated by the number of members in the American Association of Retired Persons. Little Connecticut has 45,000 members of this organization. And the Con-

necticut Council of Senior Citizens includes 91 senior-citizen clubs and councils, embracing more than 80,000 members.

A booklet published by the largest newspaper in the state "Where to Get Help in Greater Hartford," (our largest city) listed 17 organizations and agencies providing a variety of services to the elderly.

Such groups seem ready-made to help relay useful information. They would be very interested gatekeepers. Factors of trust and established interpersonal relations within these organizations already exist.

Without criticizing or evaluating the expenditures of the Connecticut State Department on Aging, I note that 3.1 per cent is allocated for mass media and 3.1 per cent for adult education. Perhaps mass media, with special preparation, could increase effectiveness of dollars allocated for all these activities.

#### COMMUNICATING WITH DEL-MAR-VA COMMERCIAL FARMERS THROUGH AN ANNUAL MEETING — *Jack Jackson, Maryland*

In Maryland, Delaware, and the two "Eastern Shore" counties of Virginia, we have had a very satisfying degree of success with a unique annual soybean meeting.

The meeting is designed to provide commercial farmers with information on **needs** and **opportunities** for increased soybean production on the DelMarVa peninsula.

This is a cooperative venture. The meeting is planned and conducted by extension representatives and soybean processors and users of the area. The cost of the entire program is underwritten by industry representatives involved.

DelMarVa is one of the nation's major broiler areas. A look at a map will show that the area is rather isolated from major feed-producing regions of the country, making the importation of feed unusually difficult and expensive.

Birds produced in the area consume approximately 300,000 tons of soybean meal annually; an additional 30,000 tons is used in feeding cattle and other livestock. With reference to soybean meal, this creates an annual need for approximately 14½ million bushels of beans.

In 1966, the year after the annual soybean meeting was started, bean production in the area was slightly more than 5 million bushels—leaving a deficit of 9 million.

Plants for processing most of the 14 million bushels needed had been established. Though conditions for profitable soybean production were favorable, production had dropped from better than 10 to slightly more than 5 million bushels during the preceding five years.

The goal of the sponsoring groups was to increase **profitable** soybean production and to make the area more self-sufficient with reference to its feed needs.

About 800 growers attended the first meeting and attendance was up to 1,200 last year. Industry representatives tell us that this is the biggest soybean meeting of the country. Since 1965 acreage has steadily increased from 376,000 to over 403,000. By 1969, production was up to 12½ million bushels. (Because of drought, it dropped to about 9 million last year.)

Immediately following each meeting a steering committee meets, reviews the last meeting, and develops plans for the next. Committees start work immediately and another fall meeting is held to firm-up program plans, speaker arrangements, and a final publicity campaign.

Though attendance is not restricted, only those directly involved in soybean production, processing, and marketing are encouraged to attend. Industry representatives who are members of the sponsoring group provide a catered luncheon for those in attendance. A kit of informational material, including all speeches and publications covering all aspects of production, processing, and marketing, is provided each person in attendance. These kits are distributed **at the conclusion** of the meeting and no one has access to them while the program is underway.

Along with Jerry Webb of Delaware, a representative of our department serves as a member of the steering committee, and with Jerry's cooperation we take the lead in providing support for the group's publicity and promotional activities. This includes follow-up stories sent to all known industry publications immediately following the meeting.

#### COMMUNICATION CHANNELS FOR COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE — *Herbert H. Brevard, Texas*

Delmar Hatesohl has presented challenging as well as perplexing situations in talking of "Commercial Farmers—What Are

They Like?" Perhaps this will cause all of us to assess our individual positions and chart new courses of endeavor.

Let's look for a moment at some of the challenges we face.

1. Can we really define our audience? Do we really mean commercial farmer or have we fallen into the trap of using an easy reference? Should we categorize the farmer audience more selectively and aim at smaller groups?

2. What are the educational characteristics of the audience? To what extent is the farmer audience educated, either academically or informally? Does the number of years of formal education really measure the understanding and learning ability of farmers?

3. Do we understand the social and family characteristics of farmers? Have we made use of available research to learn what makes a farmer "tick"? Do we relate ourselves, other specialists and the administration to the farmers' problems or do we attempt to maintain a teacher-student relationship and assume that we are the great center of all good knowledge?

4. Do we produce materials which the farmer will utilize for the sake of efficiency and operational improvement or do we design to satisfy our own egotism? How much "original" material has been produced in the last 12 months?

5. Do we consider the farmer and his family as members of the normal society or as a special group with no common interests, desires, and characteristics?

6. Do we use available methods and techniques to determine how we will reach our objective? Or, do we even have an objective? Do we cooperate with specialists, commercial outlets, and other parts of the university or do we attempt to be so individualized that we are actually competing with those who could help us?

7. What does the commercial farmer expect from extension and researchers? Have we made attempts to really fill these expectations?

8. Have procedures been established in information offices to keep the staff informed about available information and communication techniques? Do we capitalize on audience behavior?

The questions could go on and on as we talk about communicating with commercial agriculture. Probably, we could summarize by asking "Are we doing our job and fulfilling our obligations as we should and to our full capabilities?"

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE — *Jim Morrison, California*

During my boyhood, my Father, who was not a farmer, taught me some things about milking a cow. Perhaps there may be a lesson in my recollections.

He taught me that there is only one way to milk a cow—the right way, which is the gentle way. You approached the gentle Jersey calmly, usually talking quietly, and always from the proper side—her right side.

Once on a wintry morn, in a hurry to get a chilly task completed, I rushed with mittenless hands into a frosty Iowa barn, slid the bucket into place, and grabbed hold. My bovine buddy rewarded me with a whomp of an icy, wet tail, put her foot squarely into the bucket—and bawled. When I told my Father, he said, "Well, wouldn't you?" Next time, at his suggestion, I warmed my hands.

Some months back, a friend of mine with the newspaper was complaining that he had some trouble with an agricultural client and he wondered why. His description of how he had approached the client indicated to me he probably used the same "cold hands" on his prospective news lead that a young boy back in Iowa once used on a sensitive Jersey cow.

Often it has been impressed upon me by some of my fellow writers and editors that we are doing a favor for folks by telling their stories. Well, maybe we are, but in dealing with commercial agriculture, we owe something to them, too, in giving the university's role its proper perspective in relation to the client's success.

Certainly, in any deal with a client, we ought to warm our hands a bit, and give it all we've got with the neat, gentle approach. And most surely, in our efforts to get commercial agriculture to listen to us, we ought to be at least as gentle, and smooth, and warm in our approach as a fledgling young milker learned to be in a chilly cow barn, on a cold winter's day back in Iowa.