



Two options for the value-added marketer are obvious. First, you could become a specialty supplier to a company that has a brand and market place slotting already going for it. This is the high volume, low margin approach to moving products in the short run. Keep in mind, if the target companies already have suppliers, the challenge is to somehow replace them through service, price or quality.

The second option is to create a product and a brand and then enter the retail market directly. This approach brings much higher margins but will certainly be slower in building volume. There are substantial costs involved in creating brand identity. There are costs to overcome in packaging and labeling that will be high in the early stages because volume is low. You will also need to compete for shelf space at retail. There are considerable costs for slotting fees paid to the store, but fees are negotiable to some extent.

Personal chefs and standard catering are also forms of solution marketing. Here you are providing more than just food. The service you provide is the large value item in the price equation. Many agricultural products are not traditional items in this format, a fact that signals opportunity for growth.

In a similar vein, the old idea of the lunch wagon at a factory parking lot or office complex is still quite viable. In fact, the idea of offering ready-to-heat-and-eat meals to workers as they exit the parking lot for home could be very well received. Most workers do not think about the evening meal until late in the day. The idea of stopping at the grocery or getting home to face the evening meal-fixing chore is not always a favorable one, so the opportunity is to provide them the solution through their car window as they leave.

### **Ethnic Marketing**

As you look for ways to sell the “whole set” of products coming from the crops or livestock you produce, it is important to take a really hard look at other cultures and countries for market outlets. Eating habits and tastes are closely tied to family upbringing and local/regional norms. This is known as marketing to the learned responses of your consumer.

For example, the demographics favor marketing pork into black and Hispanic markets. These groups eat more meat and poultry than whites and others, with Latinos being the highest.