

SUPERMARKETS AND SUPER MARKETING

INTRODUCTION

Vendor's stalls; the merchant hocking his wares; meat hanging on a hook for all to inspect; vegetables that must be sold today, before they spoil; pushcarts; haggling over prices; sawdust; a sweaty hot day; wilted produce; and, of course, flies ... all are memories of the good old days. It's quite different in today's ice white fluorescent supermarket with its cryovac-packed meat; refrigeration; neat aisles pyramiding products from near and far, from brussels sprouts to undershorts and imported wine to plastic garbage bags; a glass-like finish on the floor; and all the equipment and technology needed to man the world's largest industry.

Yes, the supermarket is the retail arm of the world's largest industry -- FOOD. Every supermarket has a meat room where cleaning and sanitizing is important; a "showroom" floor that must be kept in tip-top shape; air-conditioning and refrigeration units that desperately need water treatment chemicals; and trucks, terminals, warehouses, and processing plants of all kinds.

SIZE AND VARIETY

As we have pointed out, supermarkets have changed a lot during the past several decades. Stores have gone from corner groceries to mammoth supermarkets that sell many types of merchandise besides food. Floor space has gone from two or three thousand square feet up to 35,000 square feet and more. Colours and display techniques have run the gamut of extremes. Where it once took a gross margin of 35% to operate the corner grocery, the supermarket is now getting by with 7%, leaving a net profit of 1% or less.

As time goes by, the importance of sanitation and appearance is ever increasing.

SANITATION

Supermarkets are extremely interested in sanitation. Federal, provincial and local government agencies, as well as consumer groups are putting on the pressure. The Food and Drug Act and the Food and Drug Regulations issued by Health and Welfare Canada, require all food products to be handled under sanitary conditions and state that only wholesome product may be offered for sale. If wholesome products are offered for sale in an unsanitary environment, the product will be considered violating this law. Most provinces and local Food and Drug Departments and/or Boards of Health have adopted this Federal "Model Law." However, the requirements of some provinces and some localities are more rigid than the Federal law.

For other than regulatory reasons, supermarkets have realized that sanitation makes good sense. For example, good sanitation practices actually increase profits. Why? Because they 1) reduce spoilage and trim, 2) increase shelf life, 3) reduce returns and re-wraps, 4) improve customer relations, 5) improve meat colour, and 6) reduce

employee sickness. Tests have been conducted by universities, as well as major supermarkets, which conclusively support the worth of sanitation. Test results show an increase in meat room profits from five to 12% when a very uniform sanitation program is used.

This means adequate sanitation is not only important to satisfy consumer and governmental agencies, but can be the tool to reinforce the sagging profits now prevalent in meat, produce, and delicatessen retailing.

APPEARANCE

The supermarket is a display area and its physical appearance is very important. This means windows, floors, and display cases must be clean and shining -- free from bugs, odours, and other foreign materials.

We will get into these and other areas as we progress.

WHAT ARE THE KEYS TO SELLING THE SUPERMARKET?

First of all, supermarket management is frustrated with the sanitation problem. Store managers, in the main, are responsible for expenses and profits of their individual stores resulting in sanitation sometimes being viewed as expensive and of secondary importance. Yet, the management to which the store manager must report, understands that one unsanitary store can possibly jeopardize the community with the regional and/or divisional operations of the corporation hanging in the balance. Consequently, the store manager is in an uncomfortable position of being expected to maintain high sanitation standards, and also to minimize those expense items that do not produce direct revenues.

Most food retailers know what proper sanitation is, but they may not know how to go about it. However, good store appearance does not necessarily mean sanitary conditions, and this must be pointed out. Store operations generally have good cleaning procedures and usually need first to be convinced that "sanitation" improvements are measurable, and, second, be educated about the application of chemicals to achieve proper sanitation. This is where we come in; we have the system and enough field strength to make it work. The system will be described later, but we should deal with the topic of field strength at this point.

No, of course you can't force any store to use our methods, but once you get acceptance from the home or division office, you or one of our representatives across the country can work with individual store, training and explaining our system. Conducting seminars for store management in various districts or divisions can play an important role in the acceptance and compliance with any program.

What we are trying to say is that, in the Supermarket Class of Trade, or in any other area you may contact, involvement with customers is the key to your business. Any supermarket can buy the best chemicals but if they are not applied correctly, the

chemicals and the sales representative are of no value. This means having a genuine concern for helping them improve their operation.

AREAS OF SALES CONCENTRATION IN SUPERMARKETS

THE MEAT ROOM

The meat room does not represent the largest dollar sales potential, but it is the most visible area of concern and the area where you can become most "involved" with helping your customer solve problems. By doing this, you will gain his confidence and can easily move into other areas of his business. What do you have to sell the meat department?

1. YOUR SERVICES

Your most important tool is your willingness and ability to make your system work to the advantage of the customer.

2. YOUR SYSTEM

Our experience and background in the supermarket business exceeds that of any other chemical company. We can provide procedures, manuals, and wall charts. All are important in setting up a systematic cleaning and sanitizing procedure for the meat department. While the primary purpose of cleaning and sanitation is to protect public health, there are a number of other benefits in which your supermarket customers will be interested.

3. INCREASED PROFITS

Contrary to what you might think, good sanitation practices actually increase profits. Why? Because they reduce spoilage, increase shelf life, improve customer relations, reduce returns, and improve employee health.

4. SANITATION SEMINARS

Melrose Chemicals has participated at every level in helping supermarkets train their people in sanitation.

5. CENTRALIZED PURCHASING

This helps chain accounts' home offices know what is happening in their store, to say nothing of the economies of buying in large quantities from one location.

6. LOWER OUT-OF-POCKET COSTS

The cost of products from Melrose Chemicals is almost always less expensive than having to take products off the supermarket shelf. More important, our products were developed to meet the demanding needs of the supermarket operator, as opposed to the consumer. Our systems control usage and provide maximum levels of sanitation.

THE SYSTEM

Although there are many ways you can make initial approach to the supermarket, it will be necessary for the purpose of this discussion to look at a single way and follow it through.

As we discussed earlier, it is best to make the first approach at the meat department, which is the area of most concern. Your expertise in cleaning and sanitizing are most needed and welcome here.

METHODS OF CLEANING

You must first decide what products to use. There are two basic cleaning methods for cleaning and sanitizing.

1. TWO-STEP METHOD

The area is first cleaned with an alkaline material; this is followed by the use of a sanitizing agent. This is the best method to use to assure a complete cleaning and sanitizing job.

2. ONE-STEP METHOD

This uses an alkaline cleaner combined with a sanitizing agent in a single product which accomplishes both jobs at the same time.

There is no way of knowing which method is used more frequently.

Each method has its own advantages.

Products that are recommended are described below.

GENERAL CLEAN "F" ... Self Foaming General Purpose Cleaner.

GENERAL CLEAN "F" is a liquid "self-foaming" moderately alkaline cleaner that penetrates, disperses, and emulsifies tenacious soils by synergistic action.

A-420 ... Heavy-duty Alkaline Liquid Cleaner and Deruster

A-420 is used to penetrate and remove dried-on or burnt deposits of oil, grease, carbonised food, paint and organic finishes, rust, scale and other stubborn soils.

DEAMY ... One-Step Hard Surface Disinfectant / Cleaner / Sanitiser / Virucide / Fungicide / Mildewstat / Deodorant

DEAMY is a multi-purpose product for hospitals, institutional and industrial use, suitable for disinfecting, cleaning, sanitizing, and deodorizing in hard water up to 400 ppm hardness and in the presence of up to 5% organic soil.

D-600 ... Cleaner - Disinfectant - Fungicide

D-600 is designed to clean and disinfect surfaces used in food operations, veterinary clinics, nursing homes and hospitals.

After selecting the products, store operating personnel must be carefully instructed on proper use of the products.

First, set up the sink cleaning operation. If you have a two-sink operation, use DEAMY in the first sink followed by D-600 for the second sink. If it is a three-sink operation, use GENERAL CLEAN "F" or A-420 in the first sink, potable water in the second sink and D-600 in the third sink. These products can be uniformly dispensed by a DOSATRON™ dispenser. The detergent and sanitiser in the sink baths are used to clean heavily encrusted utensils and/or machine parts.

You must detail the cleaning operation for the operating personnel. Here are the basics of such a program.

OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR PERSONNEL

1. Scrape all tables and equipment.
 2. Scrape floors with long-handled scraper to loosen adhering fats and other soils.
 3. Sweep area with stiff broom. Pick up and remove all refuse from the area.
 4. Put all product in coolers. Pick up aprons, pans, and loose hand equipment; put in proper storage area.
 5. Break down meat mill, hand saws, cubers, and put loose parts in sink. Remove all loose meat scraps, using brush or scraper, and put in bone can.
 6. Make correct strength cleaning/sanitizing solution in sink and allow parts to soak.
 7. Make correct strength cleaning/sanitizing solution in bucket or automatic spraying equipment and clean tables and equipment. NOTE: When a spray technique is used, make sure that electrical equipment is not exposed.
 8. Complete the cleaning of parts in the sink and reassemble all equipment.
 9. Mop and dry floor (or clean with automatic equipment if floor drains or wet vac are available). After automatic equipment is finished with detergent, use sanitiser solution.
- Cleaning responsibilities for assigned areas should be given to each employee. The success of the program will depend 100% on the policies and follow-up carried out at the store level. There can be no compromise with bacteria. A complete job is necessary. One area not cleaned will contaminate the entire room during production hours, and consequently, the entire program will have minimal effect.

MEAT DEPARTMENT SANITATION CHECKLIST

The following sanitation check list will help you in your initial survey:

1. Are floor, walls, ceilings, and doors of cooler in good repair, clean, free of meat scraps, meat fat, or residue?
2. Is meat being received at an internal temperature below 1°C?
3. Is temperature of cooler in the desirable range of -2°C to +1°C?
4. Do all lights in meat cooler burn?
5. Are rails clean? Are meat hooks and trees clean and free of fat buildup? Are work benches clean?
6. Are floor drains and grease traps clean? Regularly attended and sanitized?
7. Are work-area floors, wall, ceilings, work surfaces, conveyors, meat blocks, meat grinders, saws and knives cleaned at regular intervals using standard methods and materials? If not, which of the above need immediate attention?
8. Are floors, walls, and ceilings in meat preparation area in good repair?
9. Is temperature in work area below 13°C?
10. Is product being handled quickly to maintain internal temperature below 1°C?
11. Do all personnel maintain good personal hygiene? Clean fingernails and head coverings? Fresh clean aprons or smocks daily? Do they wash their hands with soap before starting to handle nonwrapped meat products?
12. Is towel dispenser available at the sink?
13. Is all packaging in storage racks off the floor, in a neat and orderly manner?
14. Is sawdust being used on floors of the meat department?
15. Is all merchandise being received, code-dated, and rotated in coolers and backroom area?
16. Are all trash cans properly sanitized and covered?
17. Are backup boxes clean and free of everything except wrapped products ready for sale?
18. Is temperature of backup box between -2°C and 0°C?
19. Are display cases cleaned regularly using approved methods and materials? Do cases present a proper appearance? Are they clean and neat?
20. Do cases have a temperature in the range of -2°C to 0°C?
21. Is product displayed below the load line?
22. Is the floor behind display cases clean and free of debris?
23. If store has a Deli Department, is all the equipment cleaned regularly using approved methods and materials? Are spoons, knives, pans, slicers, barbecue machine clean?
24. Is temperature of barbecue machine within desired range? Is spit 63°C or higher? Warm holding area 60°C? Cold holding area -2°C to +1°C?
25. Do Deli employees wash their hands frequently with soap and water, particularly after handling raw poultry and other raw materials? Before handling cooked products?
26. Is floor of meat sales area clean? Does the entire area have a neat, orderly, clean appearance?

THE PRODUCE ROOM, ETC.

Too often in discussions of supermarket sanitation, the Produce Room, the Deli, the Bakery, and Rest rooms are neglected. While none of these are quite as critical as the Meat Room, a comprehensive cleaning and sanitizing program must include them. The same methods and reasons that apply to the Meat Room also apply here. We find that these areas are seldom, if ever, cleaned and sanitized adequately. Consequently, they present an excellent opportunity for expanding the use of your products and services. Use the same cleaner/sanitiser and follow this sanitation checklist.

PRODUCE DEPARTMENT SANITATION CHECK LIST

1. Are floors, walls, ceilings, and door of cooler in good repair? Clean and free of dirt? (Open all doors and inspect door jams, etc.)
2. Is temperature of cooler in the desirable range?
3. Is produce cooler adequately lighted?
4. Is product in cooler dated as to day of arrival, to assist in proper product rotation?
5. Are walls, floors, and ceilings of work area clean? In good repair? Free of cobwebs, mould, miscellaneous dirt, and debris?
6. Is garbage disposal unit clean and free of debris?
7. Is ice-making machine clean on outside? Is the inside washed periodically and thoroughly cleaned, using approved sanitising materials and methods?
8. Are packaging materials and supplies stored in proper racks, in a neat and orderly manner?
9. Are wrapping tables, conveyors, and shrink tunnel clean, neat and orderly?
10. Do all personnel maintain good personal hygiene? Clean fingernails and head coverings? Fresh clean aprons or smocks daily? Do they wash their hands with soap?
11. Is a clean hand sink with hot water, soap, and disposable towels available?
12. Are display cases, mirrors, racks, and tables cleaned regularly using approved methods and materials? Do cases, tables, and racks have a clean, neat appearance?
13. Do display boxes have proper air circulation and temperatures? Are pads or boxes used to display product in refrigerated cases, thus cutting off air circulation? If so, why?
14. Are produce packages code-dated and properly rotated?
15. Is floor in produce sales area clean? Does the entire area have a neat, orderly, clean appearance?

EQUIPMENT

There are two-types of automatic equipment: low pressure and high pressure. **LOW PRESSURE** - Allows chemicals to be mixed and applied, as well as rinsed with low pressure. This type of equipment works under line water pressure and is used in the majority of supermarket cleaning.

HIGH PRESSURE - This is (basically) the old method of cleaning supermarkets. This was due, primarily, to the lack of a good detergent. Consequently, the high pressure spray helped in cleaning operations.

There are a number of low-pressure foam applicators recommended for the supermarket area.

SOME ADDITIONAL POINTS

We should mention a couple of other things which do not directly concern us but may be helpful in selling supermarkets.

One is temperature control. No chemical sanitation program is of any value if processing areas and the product cannot be kept at the temperatures below:

Meat - Internal temperature 2°C

Cooler - Keep at -2°C

Work area - Keep at 13°C

Sawdust on the floor is the second factor related to your job. It is part of the classical heritage of the meat department, but it's dusty, supports bacterial growth, and, in some localities, is illegal.

Success in the meat room will give you the opportunity to move on to other areas.

FLOOR CARE

Floor care has the largest dollar sales potential of any area in the supermarket. Food retailers spend millions and millions each year for floor finishes, strippers, and sealers. More important, they spend ten to twenty times this material cost on labour to apply them.

A well finished floor is important to food marketing; it can add or detract from the feeling of a wholesome food area. However, we often find supermarkets using old, out-dated methods of floor care. This, of course, gives you a chance at the business.

You will recall that we said good service in the meat department would help you get other business. Floor care is an excellent example of this. Ask your customer to let you show how you can improve his floor maintenance program in two or three stores. If you have helped him in the past, he will have a hard time refusing you.

DISTRIBUTION AND PROCESSING FACILITIES

Supermarkets today have all kinds of distributing and processing facilities. In some cases, we get store business after doing a successful job in a plant or warehouse; in other cases, vice versa. Either way, these supporting operations are a large potential area for sales.

The greatest potential is in the production plants. Many supermarkets have meat, produce, candy, and dairy plants. There is (will) be a Salesforce Guide for each of these operations; please refer to them for details.

Another big sales area is distribution. This means trucks and terminals. Did you know that the world's largest privately-owned fleet of trucks is owned by a supermarket chain. The Kroger Company owns, services, and operates over 8,000 trailers. Even the smallest chain has some trucks. They all require outside cleaning and internal cleaning and sanitizing. You will want to refer to the Salesforce Guide on truck washing if you have an opportunity to make this kind of a presentation.

Supermarkets warehouses provide another sales opportunity. Almost every chain has one or more, and often they are quite large. The biggest sales potential here is floor maintenance. Our **DG-2003** has been doing an excellent job for this application. Recommended use concentration is 1:20 to 1:40.

WATER TREATMENT CHEMICALS

Supermarkets can consume more cooling tower water treatment per square foot than almost any other type of account. This is because they not only have air-conditioning, but a great deal of refrigeration equipment. Downtime on air conditioning and refrigeration equipment is potentially critical in this business. When the temperature in the store goes up - out go the customers; when the refrigeration equipment doesn't work, the product spoil and profits go down.

In the past, neither we nor our competitors in the water treatment field thought it economically feasible to sell water treatment equipment and chemicals to supermarkets, except at the plant or warehouse level. The development of the DOSATRON[®] and one-product simplicity has changed all that. When you put water treatment business together with meat room and floor care, store visits become much more lucrative. The positive benefits of water treatment are quite dramatic. One supermarket chain told us they saved 50% on their electric utility budget after installing the MELROSE water treatment system. They also reduced the service calls of a refrigeration supplier by 50%. See the Water Treatment Manual for details on this program.

Earlier, we told you why you should sell water treatment to supermarkets, and why they will buy our system. The Water Treatment Manual presents the technical side of selling and servicing our line. Our purpose here is to give you a little information relating only to supermarkets.

1. Most older supermarkets, and some new ones, have water-cooled systems. Of course, they can often have dual systems with both airconditioning and refrigeration equipment that is water cooled.

2. Very few supermarket systems have had regular water treatment. The general procedure is to wait until they get so scaled up that something malfunctions; then they call a refrigeration service company to acid descale the unit on an emergency basis, which is very costly.

3. Because of the situation described in above, it is important for you to remember that **PROTECTO 7702** removes scale at roughly the same rate as it was deposited.

Therefore, if it has been two years since the system has been descaled, it will take two years of treatment before the full benefit of a clean system can be realized.

4. Since we are not in the refrigeration service business, we recommend that you do not attempt to acid descale these supermarket systems. This is a job for a refrigeration service company and should be done before our equipment is installed.

5. The supermarket should purchase the equipment and have their plumbers or a contractor install it. You should be present at each installation to be sure everything is done properly.

6. Supermarkets have a hard time getting their personnel to even mop a floor properly; for that reason, we feel it is essential to the success of the program that you make a service call approximately once per month. At this time, check the operation of the DOSATRON[®], the chemical concentration, and slug feed the algaecide.

If you keep the points above in mind, you will find this business profitable for both you and your customer.

ADD-ONS

Supermarkets, just like all your other accounts, have toilets, stainless steel, and glass which need cleaning. In the winter there is ice in the parking lot and year round there are insects. The trend today is to have carpeted specialty departments featuring wine or gourmet foods, and carpets get dirty quickly. Hand washing is very important in any food handling business, and drain cleaning is a necessity.

You will often find groceries using products off their shelves for cleaning and maintaining the areas mentioned above. However, these products are costly. They also reduce inventory and are not designed for industrial use. More important, their use cost is quite a bit higher than ours.

GOVERNMENTAL REGULATIONS

Although we often resent government intervention in our daily lives, we will have to admit that governmental agencies have done a great deal to insure that we get wholesome food. And, of course, this has helped the chemical business and is helping more and more every day.

Most often, supermarkets are inspected by the city or county health department, which in the past was not equipped with the manpower or the technology to do a very effective job. Today in many cities, this picture is quite different. Consumerism, new laws, and enforcement of old laws has put a good deal of pressure on the supermarket to maintain sanitary conditions.

Local inspection can be a real problem for large chains, due to the lack of uniformity from county to county. Some require a three-compartment sink, some a sanitizing rinse, and others 82°C water. It is helpful for the supermarket to be able to show city or county

health departments that they are using a uniform procedure like ours being used in all their store.

You can do a great deal to help yourself by becoming acquainted with local inspectors. They will most likely be glad to meet you and listen to your presentation on how you can make their job easier. Often, they will give you leads. If impressed enough with your sincerity and ability, they may recommend you and your products. No matter what, it is well to know and find out what they expect.

Inspection is getting tougher and tougher, and compliance on the part of the individual supermarkets will be critical. A red tag in a meat plant may slow down business, but the customer never sees it. Can you imagine what would happen if a supermarket had to display a sign on the meat department which say, "Close due to unsanitary conditions". First a reporter goes out and buys a pound of ground beef from major retailers in his area. Samples are taken to an independent laboratory where they are analysed for total plate count of bacteria, insect parts, rodent hairs, and other extraneous material. Then the results are published in the newspaper. As you can imagine, the effect is dramatic, to say the least. Therefore, supermarkets are anxious to see you. They want a sanitation program that works.

Here is one good way for you to get supermarket business.

THE BACK DOOR METHOD

"The back door method," is very applicable here. Visit a store near you. See what they are doing. Be a concerned customer. You'll be able to make a better presentation if you know what is going on -- particularly, if you know about their weaknesses. You may personally know the manager of the store where you shop. If so, he can help you by giving product testimonials, and can fill you in on past and present supermarket procedures.

In this business, as in any other, it is important to get to the person who makes the buying decisions. With supermarkets, the person is sometimes in Engineering ... sometimes in Purchasing. It may be the Meat Merchandiser, or perhaps the Sanitation Manager.

When you have located the person who makes the decisions, and you have made your presentation, ask to survey three or more stores and set them up on MELROSE cleaning and sanitation procedures. When this is approved, the rest is up to you. Never simply "drop off" samples. Work with the test stores so products are properly used and a fair evaluation is made.

RECOMMEND A SYSTEM

When you have convinced the supermarket to use MELROSE products, it will be necessary to recommend a system. The extent of your recommendation will depend on how many areas of the operation you are dealing with. Also, the amount of service you should provide will vary directly with the amount of products/equipment you are selling the.

The key to your proposed system is simplicity. No matter how technically correct, it will not be of any value if it is not followed. The more simple the program, the better are its chances of success.

You should tailor-make the system for the particular store, and include all areas using your products. It is important for supermarket management to support the program. You should work with them every step of the way to gain their acceptance.

It is important that store personnel have a thorough understanding of the problems and concepts involved. Unless all employees involved know and understand their roles in the sanitation program, and the importance of their contributions, optimum results cannot be achieved.