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ACROSS THE ISLAND

New approach to sales urged

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SOME OF our best shippers should explore the possibility of putting up a special quality pack of P.E.I. potatoes in attractive packages to compete with the best in modern packaging and marketing methods". The statement was made to me this week by Reid Sangster, provincial director of marketing.

"We need something new and different, something that is eye-catching and desirable to the modern housewife. It has to compete in the nations's supermarkets with the latest packaging gimmicks that scores of food processors and salesmen are offering to get a piece of milady's food dollar" Mr. Sangster emphasized. "Idaho potatoes are thriving on this sort of thing, we could do it too", he added.

"We have the best potato product in the world and some of our shippers are as efficient as you can find anywhere. We do not want something new, so much as we need a new approach to the potato marketing program."

"It would be excellent," the marketing director suggested, "if we could package a guaranteed product. But the product would have to bear a date stamp so the shipper here could not be held responsible for quality after a reasonable interval,

Marketing Premium Could Be Lost

WE JUST cannot afford to be complacent about our spud markets. Competition is becoming increasingly more difficult. We could lose our premium on the Canadian market unless we keep pace with the times", he urged.

The marketing director was chatting with me this week after a year of work on our marketing problems. In that time he has covered as much ground, met as many people and been in contact with as many probable sales outlets as it is humanly possible for one man to do.

HE HAS talked P.E.I. products to just about every marketing prospect within easy reach of our shippers and to some a great distance away. He spoke last fall, for example, to representatives from every country where Canada has a trade commissioner. "I met them all in one building at the trade fair in Ottawa organized by Hon. George Hees, trade and commerce minister." he explained.

The talks were interesting. He found, for example, that Italy wants sand with silica for glass making, and is interested in our canned lobsters. He talked to businessmen from twenty-two countries.

“P.E.I.s” Potato Tag Is Misleading

HE WAS disturbed by what he saw in an Ottawa supermarket. Potato packages carried the letters “P.E.I.s” in bold type at the top. But down in the bottom in fine print, it was revealed that the spuds were grown by a large Ontario organization that claimed the spuds were produced from P.E.I. seed. The misrepresentation and the attempt to capitalize on the appeal of P.E.I. potatoes were deeply resented.

Reid Sangster impresses me as a man who is tremendously in earnest about his job. Some of our people may disagree with some of his ideas at times – I think that is inevitable – but they can be sure that he is most sincere, when he offers advice or suggestions to improve marketing prospects.

He emphasizes that his job is not to sell commodities. It is to make such marketing opportunities possible for Island products by people who do the actual selling.

Federation Tradition Is Upheld

I HAD a brief chat this week with George MacDonald, the St. Georges man who is the new president of the P.E.I. Federation of Agriculture. He comes to the job qualified by several years of service in the federation. Prior to that he was the provincial president of the junior farmers federation.

A young man – he is still on the sunny side of 30 – he brings to the job the energy and the confidence of youth, balanced by the experience he has gained in farm organizations to date.

MR. MacDONALD asked me if I would clear up one thing for him with our readers. A Young Progressive Conservative Association meeting named him as a representative to a national meeting. It was reported in the paper before Mr MacDonald could learn about it – he was not at the meeting – and turn it down.

The new federation president wants people to know he has turned down the appointment. It has become traditional for federation presidents to keep away from partisan political activity and Mr. MacDonald intends to do just that.

Two P.E.I. Jerseys Are Class Toppers

PRINCE EDWARD Island Jersey men are prominent in national production records with class toppers in both the senior 2-year old and the junior 2-year old class.

Clark Brothers of New Wiltshire had the high senior heifer last month with Beacon Mabel's 9,614 pounds milk, 518 pounds fat. Edison B. Mutch, North River has River North Heather's Lass whose 7,721 pounds milk, 461 pounds fat topped the junior heifer production class.

Spirited Elections In Island Towns

I REPORTED last week that Montague was having a civic election contest that was raising new highs of interest and excitement.

I came away with the impression that Mayor Bruce Yeo was going to win against his young opponent, Gilbert Clements, but nobody to whom I talked seemed to think the triumph would be so decisive.

What I am wondering now is whether Mayor Yeo's six elections as Mayor and five elections as a councillor may constitute a P.E.I. record. I'll be glad to hear from somebody on this point.