

the many other more practical activities, the real needs of the future of the industry are:

1. Encouragement of industry-wide government inspection.
2. More research and education at all levels.
3. More consumer faith and confidence.
4. Removal of the stigma attached to the word fish.
5. Organization of our forces wholeheartedly for promotion of all seafoods on a national scale.

We must earn recognition, with the fervent hope that it will help us achieve any goal we may set, in an atmosphere of warm cooperation within the industry.

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## **The Kind of Promotion that Food Editors Like**

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FOOD EDITORS ARE an important link in food producers' efforts to tell the consumer the best ways to use their products. You may see the impact of a food editor in your own household. Your wife has two or three books and lots of recipe leaflets and pamphlets. She refers to them once in a while—on how long to roast a turkey or for a hot roll recipe. But who plants the thought of a new food—one she's never tried before—in her menus? A food editor, more often than not.

A newspaper is thrown on your doorstep at least once a day. Maybe a women's magazine comes to your house each month. Your wife sees a recipe in that newspaper or magazine for, as an example, baked mullet filets.

If this woman were not a fisherman's wife she may never have seen a mullet, much less cooked one. The filets in the newspaper picture look appetizing. The food editor describes the delicate flavor of mullet, its high quality protein at low cost. The recipe looks easy enough to follow.

"I think we'd like that," the homemaker says to herself.

If somebody doesn't wrap the garbage in the newspaper before she clips the recipe this woman tries mullet.

A good food editor makes sure the recipe is reliable before it is published. If the homemaker follows it carefully, she is a lifelong mullet customer. A food editor is your pipeline to the bride who has never cooked fish or seafood. She is your pipeline to the older housewife who doesn't like fish because she never learned that overcooking ruins flavor and texture. She is your pipeline to the woman who doesn't cook fish because she thinks frying is the only way—and frying makes the kitchen so hot. A food editor knows there are many ways to cook fish other than frying, but she wants help from you in telling the story.

Possibly a description of a food editor's job will show you how material from fisheries authorities can help her. Her prime interest is service to her readers, so any promotion of any industry should be aimed at the great reading public, with its quirks and great variety of interests. Her job is a busy one. I don't know a food editor in America who has time for everything she would

like to put on her food pages. Many food editors are one-woman departments. Her principal job is getting out her food page. Much thought, planning and searching for information go into this page. She selects pictures and recipes which appeal most to her readers. She may set up some pictures for photographing—a tedious job of selecting dishes and accessories and cooking photogenic food. She writes the copy, and it must be carefully written to be clear and to the point. She always works against a deadline. When presses start rolling if her food page is not in, it is too late. She gets hundreds of letters and telephone calls a month. "What makes my pie shell bulge?" "What's this conch (and new people in Florida call it that) you wrote about last Sunday?" or "How do you cook yellowtail?" her readers ask. She is barraged with mail from people who want her to use their products in recipes. Men and women come in person to put in a good word for their products. And there's the pest who brings a food product to her desk and says, "Give me a little plug on this!"

I think I speak for every food editor in the United States and the editors I know in Canada. If your approach is "Give me a little plug," you are not likely to get it. But if you provide good solid facts, new ideas and food news, a food editor welcomes your help.

No food editor in the land has time to develop all the recipes used in her columns and she cannot set up all the pictures. Some newspapers do not have competent food photographers, but even on The Miami Herald, with excellent food photographers, food competes with many types of news for photographic staff time. So a food editor depends on the food industry for much of the material she uses. We want an attractive picture, one that will make the reader think, "Oh, doesn't that look good!" If a picture does not measure up, it simply is not used. A food editor can be quite ruthless about throwing out poor pictures, for there are plenty of good pictures competing for space in her columns, and it is her business to attract readers.

The food editor needs recipes which appeal to a wide variety of tastes. She writes for people with all sorts of tastes and talents in cookery. She wants some quick recipes, and what is quicker than fish or seafood? She wants a few recipes for the woman who wants to impress the boss's wife with her cookery talents. These are the recipes with complicated sauces and the like. A food editor wants cook-ahead dishes for the reader who never serves fish because it is a last minute job. Chowders, gumbos, seafood curries and newburgs can be cooked ahead and reheated. In the recipe tell the food editor, "This dish can be reheated." If a reliable test kitchen supplies the recipe, a food editor can pass along the tip with complete confidence.

Many mothers and maybe food editors think children don't like fish. This is not true. A four-year-old was at our house for a month last year, and her favorite main dish was fish, but fish without bones. She ate fish sticks, broiled or fried fish if we peeled it off the bones, boneless fillets, shrimp and scallops, fish cakes. With a fish cake recipe, remind the food editor this is the way to serve fish to children.

Of course, I'm contradicting a current trend to make recipes and publicity releases shorter. Recipes and stories with them should be as short as possible. The average busy woman chooses a short recipe over a long one. I think food editors want any and all information pertinent to readers' problems of feeding their families. Pare down the adjectives to make room for useful information.

Most important, any recipe must be thoroughly tested. If a food editor is in

doubt about a recipe, she is apt to toss it in the wastebasket. She cannot afford to jeopardize her reputation for reliability by using a doubtful recipe. The recipe must be written in specific terms that any woman or man can understand. You and I know how to tell when broiled fish is done, but the bride may not.

I would like to see more seafood recipes which say, "Do not overcook." This is the major catastrophe of seafood cookery. Readers tell this tale of woe time after time—the fish was dry, the flavor was poor.

Developing recipes for food editors usually is a job for a publicity agency with a good home economics department. Such an agency has facilities for testing recipes thoroughly, and it has the staff to set up photographs. The National Fisheries Institute and Shrimp Association of the Americas are fortunate in choosing an agency known for reliable, tested recipes. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service also is an aid to food editors; I expect nearly every food editor uses Fish and Wildlife Service bulletins as references. We see Fish and Wildlife Service field representatives from time to time, so we can ask these men, "What about the snapper supply this year?" The Florida State Board of Conservation is unique, I believe, in having a home economist on its staff. She can do a close-to-home job by finding which fish and seafoods are expected in best supply and giving us recipes for them. We get frequent recipe releases from her.

Good photographs are another need of food editors. Newspapers are constantly having surveys made for them to study why food stories are, or are not, read. We know a recipe gets tremendously better readership if there is a picture with it, so we use few recipes without pictures. We know, too, that for good reproduction in a newspaper a picture must be sharp and clear, and free of too many or too dark shadows.

A food editor wants facts. Certainly, she knew a great deal about food or she never would have gotten her job. But her readers' questions can cover the universe—things she couldn't possibly know without asking the experts. Her readers are vitally interested in how to tell fresh fish from one not so fresh, so make sure food editors have a good, usable guide to selection of fish and seafood. Many pamphlets and the like provide this information, but make sure food editors have them.

A food editor wants to know when certain fish are in season. This is aid you can give on the local level. Let the food editor in your area know when a certain fish will be abundant. She may plan food pages weeks ahead. Notify her in advance of an expected abundance to give her an opportunity to arrange food stories on fish at the most plentiful seasons. A food editor appreciates beforehand information. She is eager to keep her food pages timely.

Another help fisheries men can give in their own cities is to acquaint food editors with locally available fish. A woman bred near the Great Lakes may be food editor of a Gulf Coast newspaper. Can you imagine what a newcomer from Detroit would tell a reader about conch if she was not warned he is a tough creature and needs special handling?

Keep the food editor in your city informed on new products as they come to market. A Fish and Wildlife Service representative told me of new frozen mullet products coming on the market soon. I knew my readers were interested, so this was used as a news item.

I think I speak for most food editors when I say we want to know fisheries marketing men in our areas. You are a source of expert local information. An

alert food editor often writes a national publicity agency handling a fisheries account with questions. But you know best if crabmeat or snapper will be in her home city markets next week.

And a word about getting your seafood market's name or a brand name in her columns: Don't expect it. Most reputable newspapers and magazines strictly forbid use of commercial or trade names in editorial columns. Name identification is bought and paid for in advertising columns. But when you cooperate in giving a food editor information you create an interest in fish and seafood. If you market the high quality seafood women want you will be rewarded.

A man in our office says to me jokingly many Thursdays, our big food page day, "Well, Jeanne, I see you are peddling shrimp (or whatever it is) today." A food editor doesn't consider she is peddling anything. Her prime interest is to serve the reading public. But her reading public also is a food buying public.

As a group, and individually, you can assist a food editor with recipes, pictures and facts. These are her tools in producing attractive, interesting food pages. You may call it promotion. The food editor calls it assistance. But if it is assistance it is the kind of promotion food editors like.

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## DISCUSSION

### Fish Merchandising Session

Discussion Leader: MURRAY WHEELER

Discussion Panel: SARAH ALBERSON, CHARLES E. JACKSON, JOHN MEHOS,  
ROBERT M. INGLE

### Selling Fish With "Point-of-Purchase" Advertising

O. H. STARK

- Q. Jackson: What suggestion can you make for increasing sales of fish from the frozen food cabinet?
- A. Stark: One approach is to sell a related item along with the fish and to suggest a recipe to combine the fish and that item. I would like to emphasize the importance of asking for opinions from buyers concerning your product. Pre-testing of new products is necessary. Also, get to the man who is in charge of a particular department in the store and find out what his likes and dislikes are. He can do more to push your goods than the store manager can.
- Q. Mehos: What is the cost of point of sale advertising in relation to return, compared with other media?
- A. Stark: Point of sale advertising is less expensive than any other type of advertising medium.