

DATE: Sept. 12, 2021

TO: Jonathan Stemmle

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RE: Target Audience for Renewable Energy Campaign

We are writing to discuss who the Missouri Farm Bureau should target with their campaign. We will detail the demographics and psychographics of farmers to provide the Missouri Farm Bureau with a narrow consumer profile.

As a strategic communications team, we believe we need to target small, family farm owners. Specifically, we want to reach farmers who prioritize keeping their farms financially independent in the face of economic difficulties caused by the pandemic.

According to the USA Facts article *"Who is the American Farmer?"* more than 64% of farmers are male, and more than 62% of farmers are over the age of 55 (USA Facts, 2021). Noting that our target demographic tends to live more traditional family and community-focused lifestyles, it is important to focus on how renewable energy can benefit them and their community. Moreover, the majority of family farms focus on growing crops rather than raising animals (USA Facts, 2021). Around 775,000 farms in America focus on crop production rather than raising animals (USA Facts, 2021). This data shows us that energy use on these community-based farms is used solely on cultivating crops rather than animal feed houses. "Using just 1% of the land as a wind farm, we sustain 99% of farmland and generate stable, additional income for local farmers" (WARC, 2017). Based on this information, we know the implementation of renewable energy will not take away from land used for crop production. With the pandemic affecting industries around the globe, a stable income for our nation's farmers would be a welcome sight.

In most industries, traditional media is declining. However, farmers consume traditional media in higher quantities than other consumers (Nourish, 2021). Specifically, 73% of the farmers surveyed in the Nourish Food Marketing study said they use print agricultural publications weekly. These trade publications will be viable media channels for our future campaign. Additionally, "75% of farmers use social media, most commonly YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter, in that order" (Nourish, 2021). For those who use digital media, their main focus is on "ag-related education/information." We can benefit from traditional media in the aspect of viewership; we can benefit from digital media because it targets the consumer's objective of education.

To better understand the market, Agri-Pulse segmented farmers into five subcategories: independent elites, enterprising business builders, classic practitioners, self-reliant traditionalists and leveraged lifestylers. "Nearly 51% [of independent elites] have succession plans in place" (Wyant, 2019). They are not worried about the future of agriculture because they believe they can make a profit no matter the circumstances. Enterprising business builders are the "least change-resistant" because growth is their No. 1 priority. Classic practitioners and self-reliant traditionalists are loyal to traditional farming practices and are unlikely to innovate their farms. Lastly, leveraged lifestylers "think they have done everything right," yet they are vulnerable due

to a lack of business knowledge. Those with characteristics of enterprising business builders and leveraged lifestylers are most likely to shift to renewable energy without any persuasion. By focusing our marketing efforts on the traditional practitioner segment, we can help inform a market segment needing additional revenue of ways to keep themselves financially independent in the changing field of agriculture.

To illustrate this we have constructed a consumer profile. John is a 58-year-old male. He has a wife and two children who now have families of their own. He owns and operates a farm, growing corn and soybeans in northwest Missouri. John enjoys reading his morning newspaper, scrolling on Facebook and watching college football. John falls into Agri-Pulse's third category: the classic practitioner. He is loyal to traditional farming practices and sticks to what he and his family have always known. His farm has been in his family for generations, but the pandemic has put him in a difficult financial position. With falling demand and competition from corporate farms, John is at risk of having to sell his land to a corporate farm. John wants to keep his farm but doesn't know how to make the extra income to keep his farm in his family's hands.

Although farms account for a small portion of the national GDP, "farm products contribute heavily to other parts of the economy, including manufacturing, restaurants, [and] retail" (USA Facts, 2021). Keeping farms in business is crucial to our economy. Creating a successful campaign encouraging the shift to renewable energy requires an understanding of our audience. Important more than anything now is that we need to "understand the various shades and hues of the rural consumer" (WARC, 2021). Moving forward, we intend to focus on building trust with our farming audience and prioritizing information over persuasion.

References

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