

MEATSUITE.com

# CREATING CONSUMER-FRIENDLY BULK MEATS

## *a guide for farmers*

Farms can get more value out of bulk sales through consumer-oriented product design and delivery. Pricing, a.k.a. your ability to charge more for your product, increases with each added level of customer service you provide.

Consumers are willing to pay for convenience, ease of receipt and payment, and an easy-to-use product. This guide introduces the possibilities for creating consumer-friendly bulk meats.



Cornell University

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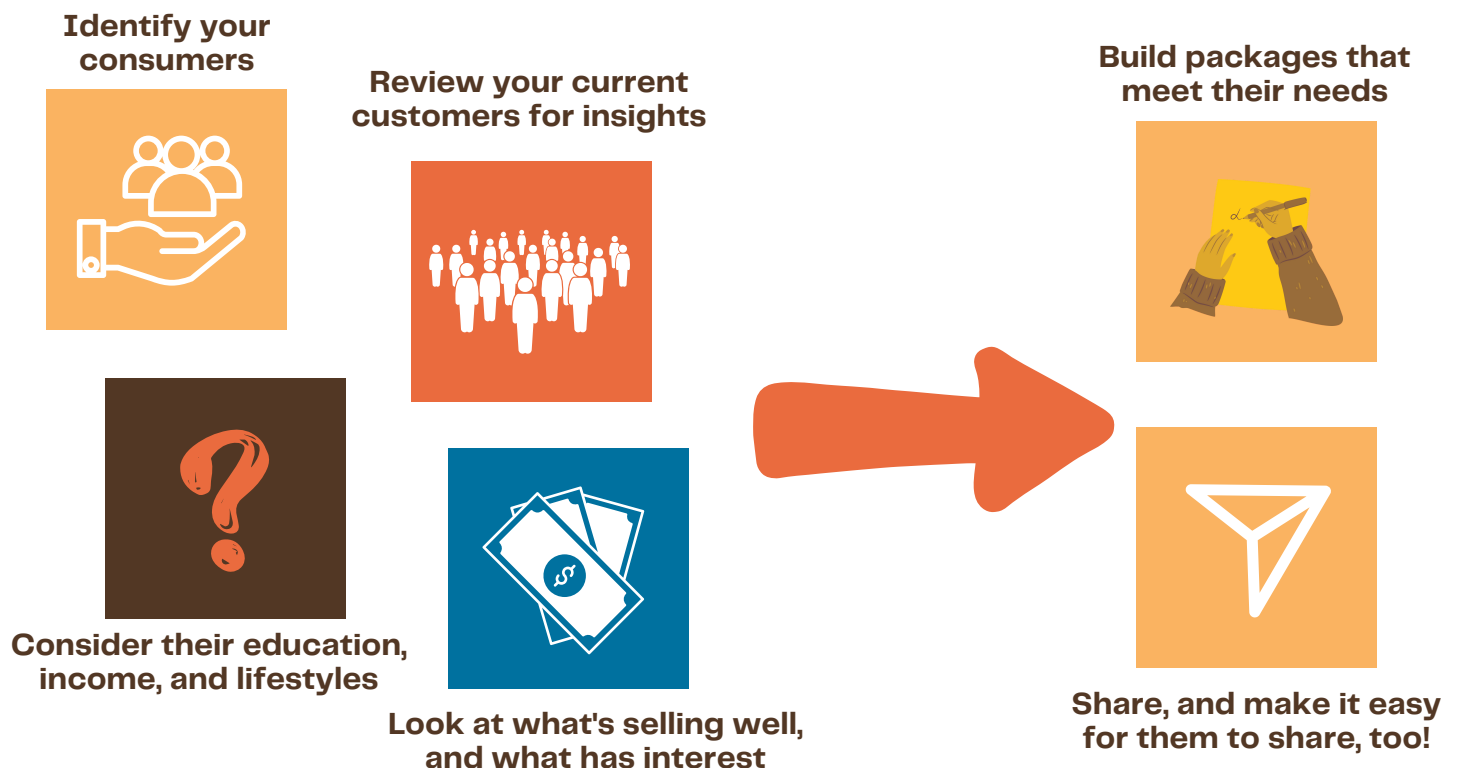
# 01 | think like a customer

All buyers, especially first-timers, appreciate a product that is easy to understand, easy to order, and easy to receive.

## UNDERSTANDING THE CONSUMER HELPS YOU CREATE PRODUCTS THAT ARE EASY FOR CONSUMERS TO CHOOSE.

Most consumers are not familiar with buying locally-raised meat by the quarter, half, or whole. To increase the opportunity to gain first time customers and retain them as repeat customers, it is important to understand the consumer's needs, preferences, and the decisions that drive their purchases.

Recruiting and retaining new bulk customers depends on identifying your specific target customer and understanding the factors that motivate their purchasing decisions. This information allows you to craft language and develop products that best suit your customer (and therefore their willingness to buy meat from your farm).



# 02 | streamline processing and pricing

## OFFER SUGGESTED CUT SHEETS

Most customers are intimidated by the choices of cuts from a whole or half carcass, and don't know how to fill out a cut sheet. Make it easy for them by offering 1-3 pre-built cut sheets to choose from.

If asked, you can still accommodate customers who wish to fill in their own sheets. Preset cut sheets can be designed with different target consumers and cooking styles in mind.

## OFFER SPLIT SIDES

Rather than offering a front or rear quarter, offer split sides, so the consumer gets some of everything. This way, they don't need to know the cuts specific to the front or rear of the animal.

## CONTACT THE PROCESSOR ON THEIR BEHALF

Do your processor and your customer a favor and don't ask the customer to call in the cut sheet. Call the cut sheet order in to the processor for them.

## SIMPLIFY PRICING

Price quarters, halves, and wholes in \$/LB HCW (hot carcass weight) including processing. Explaining a farm price and a processor price is confusing for the consumer. You can still mention that processing for optional products, such as patties, hot dogs, or sausages, comes with additional charges.

## PROVIDE A TAKE-HOME WEIGHT RANGE

When consumers inquire about pricing, state the price per LB HCW including processing, but also let them know a typical range for take-home weight and total cost.



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## 03 | take bulk buying to the next level

### MAKE IT EASY TO BUY

**Bundles are an assortment of cuts sold together**, not necessarily from one half or quarter animal. The consumer receives a price advantage, and the farm can manage inventory more easily than when selling by-the-cut.

### BUNDLE VALUE

**Bundle high and low value cuts together** to aid inventory management. High-value boxes might include grilling steaks, while low-value boxes might contain hotdogs or sausages.

### THEMED BUNDLES

**Create themed bundles** using language that appeals to the motivations of your target customer. For example, bundles might be marketed as the budget stretcher bundle, winter cooking bundle, holiday bundle, breakfast bundle, etc.

### BUNDLE SIZES

**Create different-sized bundles** to accommodate a variety of consumer budgets and freezer capacities. These can also be themed, like an apartment living bundle, or a big family bundle.

### BUNDLE VARIETY

**Create mixed species bundles** to add appeal.  
**Consider equivalent bundles as well** – fixed-weight quarters, halves and wholes and quarter/half/whole-equivalent bundles.

### FIXED WEIGHT

Fixed weight quarters allow you to have one flat price and weight; use a pre-made cut sheet with details for included cuts. When meat is processed, add or subtract ground meat to reach guaranteed weight. This is easiest for farms with consistent animals and some experience.

# 04 | make ordering & paying easy



## ACCEPT ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS

Create a free account such as Venmo, Paypal, and/or Square to accept payments electronically and accept credit cards. You can also use these services to email your customer an invoice.



## DEVELOP AN ONLINE STORE

If you are computer savvy, or can hire someone to help, create a simple online store with a service such as Squareup.com, Wix.com, or Shopify.com. An online store will allow customers to order and pay online.



## TAKE A DEPOSIT

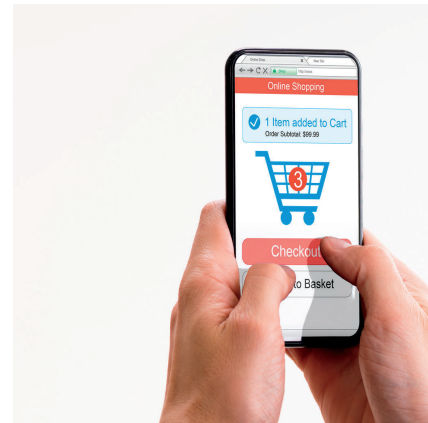
When selling traditional quarters, halves, and wholes, take a deposit before the slaughter date. Electronic payments are helpful here, for bookkeeping and for customers.



## PAY THE PROCESSOR YOURSELF

Give your customer just one price to pay and pay the inspected processor for them. Don't ask for two checks (one for the processor, one for the farm).

*\*When using a custom exempt processor, it is advised to have your customer pay the processor.*



### Accept orders by phone, text, or email

Today's consumer expects to order and communicate electronically.

Some consumers are even averse to making phone calls and prefer to text or email.

Accommodate consumers by accepting orders by phone, text, and email. Text and email have the advantage of creating a written record of the conversation.

# 05 | fulfill sales & expand marketing

## EXPAND ORDER FULFILLMENT OPTIONS

**Pick up the meat from the processor for your customer:** Help the processor and the customer by picking up the meat from the processor.

**Offer customer pick-up:** Offer customer pick up at the farm or a central distribution point.

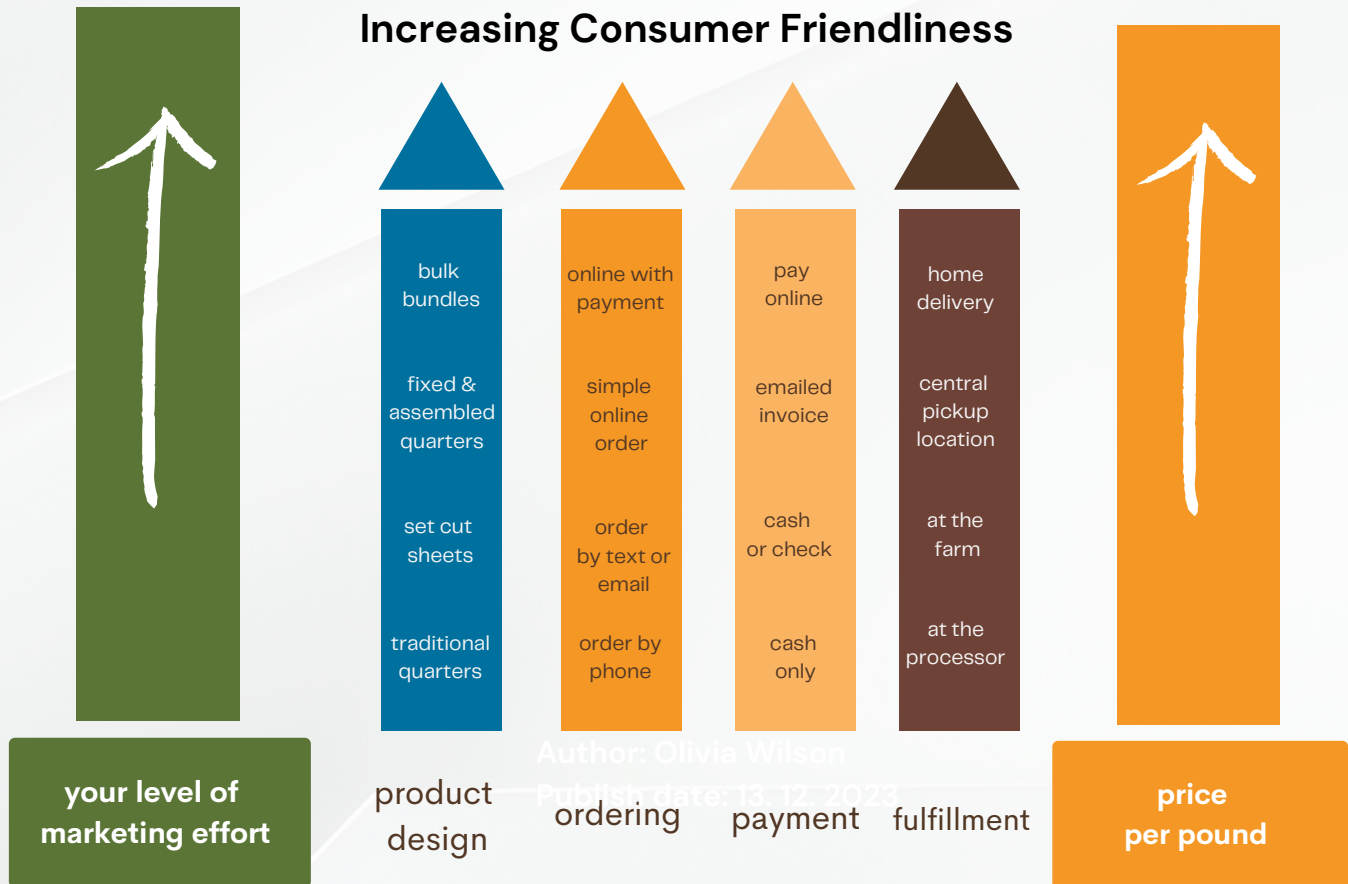
**Offer home delivery:** Consider offering home delivery (don't be afraid to charge for it).

## REACH MORE CUSTOMERS

**Create a farm profile on MeatSuite.com.** MeatSuite.com is a directory of farms selling meat in bulk quantities directly to consumers. Listing your products on MeatSuite is free and available to farms in North Carolina and New York.

# summary

**Increasing consumer friendliness requires more marketing effort, allowing you to charge more for your product.** This is because a higher level of service and convenience elicits a higher willingness to pay from consumers. The higher prices are "supported" by increased farm marketing effort.



**LEARN MORE AT [NCCHOICES.COM](https://ncchoices.com) AND SIGN UP FOR MEATSUITE AT [MEATSUITE.COM](https://meatsuite.com).**

This guide was produced by the team at NC Choices and Cornell University as a tool for farmers. NC Choices provides resources and tools for niche meat producers across the state. Meatsuite is a resource for farms selling meat in bulk which includes a variety of tools including a consumer-oriented directory of products.

