

Farm Shows - You have to admire the Effort

Every season is farm show season from the full fall feast of Canada's Outdoor Farm Show to South West Ag, London Farm Show, the new Veg Tech X-change, grower days and supplier showcases galore. I know I enjoy the opportunity to see long time customers and the chance to make new ones and there is nothing like a bit of carnival atmosphere to make tractors shinier and sales pitches sweet as cotton candy. You just have to admire the effort the exhibitors exhibit. But I worry when I hear information that is about as substantial as the pink stuff.

One of my favourite customers is freshly back from the extravaganza that is the Louisville Farm Show and he certainly got to see and hear a great deal of great information, great technology and big iron under the big top. He was also treated to a few surprising tid-bits that he passed on to me to see if they passed the B-S-Ometer. As he suspected, some of the suppliers seemed to be so keen on getting his business they were willing to stretch facts wider than a wallmart waistband.

This gentleman, like most astute buyers, knows he can see it out there and come home to buy it here where he will be serviced by local experts who are looking for a sustainable business relationship, the kind built on trust and a genuine desire on behalf of the supplier to look after the customer. The buyer and seller know full well that it has to be a mutually beneficial relationship. The buyer must receive value for the product and quality support that should go with it and the seller needs to not only make enough to stay in business but to stay focused on that customer so he stays in business. The afore-mentioned meter can't be anywhere but registering zero.

Farm Show hucksterism has no place in business. Neither does 'Show Special Pricing'. If this product is worth x dollars, and I am going to charge you x dollars 364 days of the year, what makes it worth less on Farm Show day? All a show special does is make a customer wonder if they have to pay too much the rest of the time. A product should be worth what it is worth, every day. Discounts could apply when a product is nearing end of shelf life perhaps, but then the buyer and seller know why it is stickered.

Don't think I am sour grapes because a competitor beats me up over bargain prices. I often reap the rewards of someone else doing the selling, because the buyer has no reservations about leaving their table to come to me for service. Price slashing competitors are like unpaid salesmen to me. All I can say is thanks for not properly valuing that sale, I'd be glad to. I am offering a tip of the hat to those who enjoy the bright lights but come home to do business. I'll do my best to offer the same great products and value your business every day of the year. Drop by my booth at the show and we'll do business no meters required.

Karon