

# idea corner

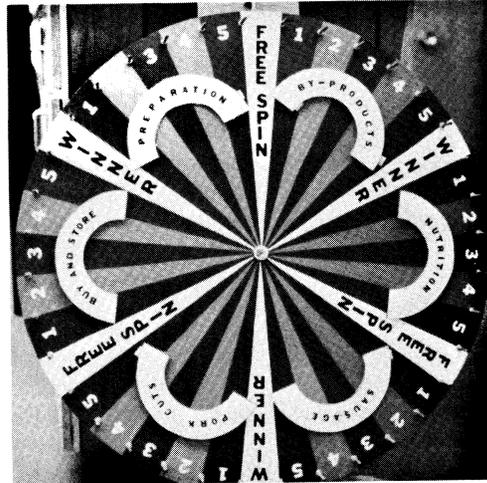
## Using a "Wheel of Fortune"

Can evaluation make educational displays more effective at fairs and festivals? A wheel of fortune has helped my county better use displays. While the wheel itself is popular, it has also provided information for evaluating the relationship of display topics to clients' educational needs.

In this pork-producing county, Extension annually provides educational information to hundreds of Pork Festival visitors. Activities and displays are planned to acquaint consumers with the uses of pork from food, clothing, and pharmaceuticals to the sheer delight of knowing pigs.

Working with Extension personnel, a committee of local volunteers plans and produces various educational programs and displays. That committee generally bases its programs on interest reflected by festival goers from previous years. But the committee needed a better way of discovering just what the visitors didn't know about buying and using pork products.

A wheel of fortune, adapted in 1981 from a wheel used by the Indiana Cooperative Extension Service, and used again in 1982, provided some evaluation of the public's understanding of pork. Participants spin a wheel to be asked questions about pork nutrition, preparation, selection and storage, sausage, and by-products.



*The Wheel of Fortune.*

The wheel, cut from 3/4 inch plywood, is hinged on a base for easier transporting. The motor from a fan provides the turning mechanism, and long screws are used as pegs to stop the pointer. Pre-shaped sections are painted white, scarlet, and gray. Question categories are placed on the wheel on cardboard, backed with loop and tape, making it easy to change topics for other situations.

A quantity of each question, with answer, is typed and filed in a partitioned box. The person manning the exhibit can then quickly find the question that corresponds to the wheel number, ask the question, and know if it was answered correctly.

If the participant gives an incorrect answer, he/she is told the correct answer, is given an appropriate hand-out on the topic, and the misanswered question is filed in a second

box. The the second file provides a record of missed questions, thus identifying specific areas in which more educational efforts are needed.

Correctly answered questions are signed by participants and dropped into a box from which the winner of a ham is chosen each day.

A volunteer can manage the exhibit, while the home economist can use the exhibit as a chance to answer consumers' questions and offer further information on pork.

Throughout the year, the home economist uses the tallied results to help determine topics for news articles, pork programs, and public displays. More importantly, the Pork Festival Committee uses the results for direction in planning special displays for the following festival.

The wheel of fortune is popular, attracting 600-800 participants during each festival. Those waiting in line to spin the wheel learn by hearing others' questions and answers. Players return to try again or bring other family members to try their luck and knowledge. While the players are enjoying the experience, they're also providing data to help in future educational programming.

Involving participants actively in learning and evaluation makes displays more effective.

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