

CO-OP TOURS

by

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Knowledge comes by seeing things. We learn 83% through sight. We retain 30% of what we see.

Co-op members know what they own when they see what they own. This has been the slogan of the Consumers Cooperative Association, Kansas City, tour program for twelve years. This slogan plus publicity, plus the cooperation of CCA personnel, plus interested tour guides in each plant, plus a lot of hard work (riding around with tour groups), plus careful planning and thorough execution, plus the willingness of CCA's top management to meet and answer questions--all of these things, and more--have made the CCA tour program a success.

A chartered bus costs about \$475 for 800 miles. CCA pays one-third. The local co-op or the member pays the other two-thirds. CCA provides two meals en route and a picture (8"x10" cost 75¢) for each board member and employee on the trip, plus a 16"x20" picture for the local co-op bulletin board (cost - \$3.50). About a week after the tour, we send each tour member a letter and a growth chart which outlines the basic facts about the growth and development of CCA.

For several years we gave tour members a spiral notebook, 8½¢; a ball-point pen, 6½¢; three picture-postcards, 2½¢ each; and an 8"x10" picture, but this was discontinued. We now give them a small kit of literature only. Last year we had 140 busloads with 4,273 people and 54 organized tours with 992 people. In thirteen years we have entertained 706 busloads with 20,437 people and 429 organized tours with 7,328 members and patrons. Recognition of this program is given in CCA's annual report, in Leadership and in Team-mates. This program has the stamp of approval of the CCA distribution division and is always emphasized in CCA fieldmen's conferences. The Cooperative Consumer carries stories twice a year.

The member relations department assumes responsibility for setting up the tour, issuing confirmations, making hotel reservations, and programming the tour at each point. We issue detailed schedules to local managers and fieldmen. We generally plan for the hotels and meals even though the members are picking up the tab.

In the beginning of the program--twelve years ago--I, personally, would meet these groups in Lawrence, Kansas, forty miles away, or Coffeyville, 170 miles, and ride with them a day or two, answering questions and keeping the tour on schedule. Now, however, due to the large number of tours, it is impossible to do this; and so I meet them only in Kansas City. We now have--in almost every case--an experienced local man who has made the trip previously. Local managers are encouraged to bring county agents, PCA managers, VO-AG teachers, bankers FFA boys, etc.

Many local managers believe that the added co-op purchases from the members making the tour will add sufficient gross margin to more than pay

