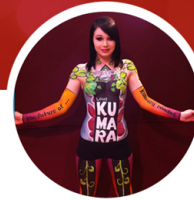




FRESH PRODUCE  
MARKETING LTD.

## How Understanding the Shopper Sells More Produce at Higher Prices: Introducing Love! Kumara™



### The client just wanted to refresh their packaging- but I found ways to revolutionise the entire category.

Clients hire me to help them sell more produce for more money.

When Delta Produce Co-operative approached me, the initial task was to fix stagnating sales and they believed a brand refresh was the best way forward.

However, taking some time to understand the product's background and history, I believed this would be a shortsighted strategy, one that would miss opportunities and leave dollars on the table.

As shopper research eventually revealed, there were multiple options to help Delta sell more kumara (sweet potato) than just redesigning and refreshing their kumara bags.

Understanding how shoppers select kumara and learning what is important to them about the product, I realised that if Delta Produce and their 25 growers were open to thinking un-traditionally about this traditional favourite...we could completely reposition kumara and move it from commodity to a value added veggie in the eyes of the shopper. We could create new products that shoppers not only wanted to buy...but were willing to pay more for.

We could then redesign their kumara bags and use the space as a 'mini-billboard.' It would require designing a 'face' of sorts, a brand with a memorable identity – one that shoppers could connect with and would also clearly show shoppers the value added benefit of the kumara they were buying.

### Selling More Kumara For More Money: 4 Steps

#### Step 1: Know the Customer Through and Through

Given we wanted to reposition kumara and drive both sales and value growth, I used research to learn all I could about how consumers buy and use kumara. How often do they buy? How much do they buy? Who buys it? How do they use it? How often do they eat it? How much do they like it? This then logically brought the question: What stops them from buying kumara more often? And, the further question, what can be done to sell more kumara at higher prices?



Shoppers want to buy smooth kumara, so they leave the knobby ones behind.





New Easi-Peel kumara sells at a price premium and provides shopper perceived value.

It turned out the main problem with kumara was that shoppers' found big kumara too unwieldy and they certainly were not interested in buying the knobby ones because they were wasteful and too much work to prepare.

Research also revealed that a percentage of shoppers were willing to pay more for smoother, medium sized kumara that were easy to prep and peel. This was the shopper-driven, value added breakthrough we needed – and Easi-Peel Kumara was born.

## Step 2: Use Variable Pack Sizes to Drive Value Growth

Interestingly, I also realized pack weights played a pivotal role in product pricing and influencing shoppers to pick up and buy a bag.

Testing quickly confirmed my intuition: The old, 1kg kumara bags worked against sales, simply because they enabled shoppers to easily 'price compare' loose vs. bagged kumara, meaning they would buy whichever was cheaper.

The old 1kg bag of kumara was adding no value whatsoever – in fact, it was actually adding costs. Given the goal was to add value to the bagged product and differentiate it from being bought purely on price, I pitched the growers the benefits of packing a 900g bag for the new value added, Easi-Peel kumara.

They agreed and feedback shows the growers are now earning a price premium for the Easi-Peels because the 900 g bag is now adding true value. This is the power of differentiating and packaging your products based on shopper driven needs.



This old 1kg bag wasn't focused on shopper needs and the weight meant shoppers price-shopped the category.

## Step 3: Analyse Your 'Harvest Output' Based On What Is Important To Shoppers

The third step in the kumara evolution project was to analyse Delta's entire 'harvest output' and look for new product opportunities based on what I had learned was important to shoppers. To do this, I had the growers send me every type of kumara that was harvested. From tiny baby kumara to tubular shaped; I asked to see everything.



Grower returns for little kumara have increased 400% with this new pack.

In looking at their 'harvest output' from a shopper's point of view, I discovered several new kumara products. For example, in the research, shoppers told us they wanted to buy little kumara that required no preparation at all. Given most kumara is roasted, shoppers wanted a pack they could open, rinse and roast with no peeling required.

Kumara naturally produces small, little kumara but traditionally these kumara were seen as more of a waste product. Once I realized shoppers placed value on the ease and convenience of little kumara and were willing to not only buy them, but pay a premium for them, we developed a new, Little Gourmet range of kumara and packed them in a 500g bag.

Have these little kumara delivered value growth to the growers? You bet. Returns to grower for the little kumara have increased 400% since the product launched. As one grower said, "While little kumara are only a small part of our harvest, every cent matters. The increased returns for what was once seen by us as a waste product has been truly welcome indeed."





## Step 4: Rebrand and Repackage In Order to Capture Shopper Attention

Now that we had new, shopper focused kumara products, we had to find a way to communicate their value. Given the growers didn't have millions to spend on marketing or advertising, I realised we could use the kumara bag as our primary shopper communication tool.

Produce packaging, like the kumara bag, is an in-store mini-billboard. It is a powerful sales and communication tool that, if done well, can prompt shoppers to buy.

For Delta, I created a new brand, using what shoppers told us about kumara. Kiwi consumers don't just like kumara, they love kumara. Hence, the new Love! Kumara brand.



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DELTA PRODUCE  
KUMERAS

I recently purchased a bag of your excellent Kumeras - smooth, easy peel - from the New World in WAHITI. I am overwhelmed by the quality and ease & I would like to thank you for producing these winners. Keep them coming they're great.  
Thanks

Second, we redesigned the packaging to be unique, eye catching and to communicate the shopper driven benefits of the product. For example, the Easi-Peel bag tells shoppers that the kumara inside is, "smooth, medium sized kumara easy to peel, cut and serve." The Little Gourmet bag tells shoppers the kumara inside this pack is, "whole baby kumara with no peeling needed."

Shopper feedback tells us customers love the new kumara packs to the extent they are even sending Delta fan mail.

Selling more kumara for more money was easy once we understood what shoppers wanted to buy and then delivered on that need.

### Growing Sales and Growing Value Means Being Willing To Challenge The Status Quo

One of the most fun and rewarding parts of my work – is that the process of creating Love! Kumara required very critical and even contrarian thinking. I had to be willing to challenge the status quo.

Delta Produce were not immediately enthusiastic when I told them they needed to grow more medium sized, smoother kumara, as you can understand. Growers grow for tonnes and this request went way beyond their comfort zone.

But it was exactly as a result of challenging the status quo, and asking growers to see things from a shopper point of view, that they realised it would be worth it to change.

And worth it, it has been.

"Lisa brings a strong intuition and consumer focused approach to her work. As a result, where we as growers saw just a brand re-fresh, Lisa saw whole new opportunities to reposition kumara as a more consumer-friendly vegetable. As a result of her vision in this area, we have completely changed the way we market and pack our kumara...and our growers are making more money as a result."

**Locky Wilson**  
CEO, Delta Produce Growers Cooperative

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