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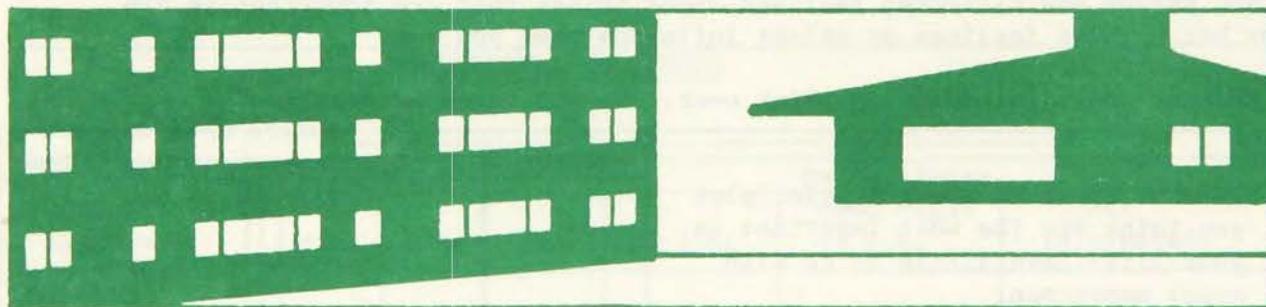
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# Your resources, decisions, and dollars

## home environment -- unit II



AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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You are a consumer. You use many of the goods and services available on the market today. When you pay money for something you become a consumer. Are you a smart and alert consumer? It's quite a challenge and involves making decisions. Some of these decisions may be big ones, and some may be small.

Some decisions will be very important to you, especially if you have a limited amount of money to spend or if you will have to live with the results of your decisions for a long time.

In making a decision you have to make choices. These choices are influenced by your values and the resources that are available to you.

**--YOUR VALUES WILL INFLUENCE YOUR DECISIONS.**

Each person has different feelings about things that are important to him or her. These feelings or values influence what you buy.

Here are some statements to think over. Do you agree or disagree?

	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
Values (those ideals and principles you think are the most important in your life) have little to do with money management.			
The intelligent use of money is necessary to achieve important goals.			
Many people do not know what is really important to them and what they want from life.			
Vague values and goals lead to unsuitable economic choices by individuals, families, businesses, and government.			
Your spending choices are one expression of your values and goals.			

Now discuss these statements with your friends. How do they feel about these statements? Do they agree or disagree? After talking with them, have any of your opinions changed? Here are some other questions for you to think about.

- a. What are some things that influence people to buy one product rather than another?
- b. Why do you think someone deliberately might buy something he knows he cannot pay for?
- c. Why do some people buy things they do not really need or want?

--RESOURCES ARE TO HELP YOU REACH YOUR GOALS AND SOLVE PROBLEMS. CONSIDER ALL YOUR RESOURCES AND THE ALTERNATIVES TO A PROBLEM BEFORE MAKING A DECISION.

What are some of the resources you have available to you? They could include time, money, talents and skills, knowledge of how to do something, community opportunities, and, of course, you. Some resources may seem more important to you than others. Your personal feelings and values affect the way you feel about how you will use your resources in different projects. Time and money may be limited. Your interest and the amount of energy you have may vary. Once you know how to do something, the skill and knowledge always will be there.

Think of a home environment project you are doing or would like to do this year. Think of the personal resources you have available for this project. Which ones will you use the most to complete this project? Which ones the least? How do you feel about the use of your resources in doing this project? The following chart will help you. Place an "X" in the columns that best describe the amount of use and how you feel about it.

<u>MY PERSONAL RESOURCES</u>						
Project I am doing: _____						
Personal Resources	Amount Needed:			My Feelings:		
	Much	Some	None	I like!	Some might be O.K.	Not Interested!
Time						
Money						
Interest						
Energy						
Ability/Skill						
Knowledge						

Think of an article you would like to have around your home and probably will buy. What do you want this article to do for you? \_\_\_\_\_

What special features do you want in this article? \_\_\_\_\_

What alternatives are there in getting this article? (Make it myself, buy in local stores, buy from catalog, do without, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

What resources need to be considered as you think about these alternatives?

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Circle the alternative you think is best in solving your problem. Are you satisfied with your decision? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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--ADVERTISEMENTS CAN GIVE YOU INFORMATION ABOUT AN ITEM. THEY ALSO CAN BE A POWERFUL INFLUENCE ON WHAT YOU MAY BUY OR WANT.

Advertisements can influence what you buy. Each day we see, hear, and read many ads from television, radio, magazines, newspapers, and even roadside signs. How much impact does this advertising make on your buying and spending habits?

You can find out many things through ads: prices, new products, new uses for products, stores that carry certain items. On the other hand advertising can make certain products more tempting than usual. Learn to put advertising to work for you when you are shopping for certain goods and services and to ignore it if you are not. Consider your needs. Keep your goals in mind.

Find out more about advertising in your community. What kinds of ads are most common--radio, television, newspapers, billboards, flyers, posters, promotional campaigns by individual stores?

- \* To whom do they appeal?
- \* How do they attract your attention?
- \* Do they appeal to your emotions and your values?
- \* Do they give the impression their product will make you a better person?  
If so, how?
- \* Do they give valuable information about their product?
- \* What factual claims do they make?

Select two advertisements for household equipment or home furnishings items. Study the advertisements. Why might advertisements be appealing to you? Why do advertisers think you might want to buy their product? Are there other people to whom the ads might appeal more (young married couples, elderly, career people, etc.)? Mark in the following chart those reasons mentioned or illustrated most often in each of the two advertisements. Then place an "X" in the last column to mark the three reasons you consider most important to you. (Your own personal values will influence you here.)

	Advertisement #1	Advertisement #2	Your reason to buy (check three)
Source			
Item advertised			
Reasons to buy:			
Efficiency - saves time, energy			
Eliminates work			
Beauty of item			
Physical comfort			
Enjoyment, pleasure			
Saves money			
More time for family, friends			
Safety			
Ease of use and care			
Prestige, popularity			
Other reasons:			

--COLLECTING AND STUDYING INFORMATION BEFORE BUYING HELPS YOU MAKE A GOOD DECISION. COMPARISON SHOPPING IS ONE WAY TO FIND THE BEST BUY.

Select a home furnishings item you or someone in your family needs or would like to have. This could be a study lamp, towels, placemats, chair, rug, bedspread, or other item. Decide what you really want and need in this item. Think about such things as construction, type of materials used, color, design, comfort, care features, and any other features that you may want in the item.

After you have decided what you want, collect and study advertisements telling about the item. Check consumer buying guides and extension publications. Check, too, with relatives and friends to see what experiences they have had with various products. Find out what they liked and disliked. Then look in several stores to find the item you want. If possible, compare products in a department store, speciality store, discount store, and catalog. Compare the different qualities and prices. Do you see what you want? Would it be better to look more before buying?

Whatever your choice when shopping, be courteous. Your attitude towards sales personnel, merchandise, and store service will affect your buying ability and the type of service you will receive at the store. After you have made your choice, be willing to take responsibility for your decision.

Item _____	Store 1	Store 2	Store 3
Is it needed?			
How often would it be used?			
Brand name			
Size, space needed			
Style or special features			
Material used in construction			
Color, pattern			
Quality of construction			
Durability for intended use			
Safety of use			
Reliable dealer and manufacturer			
Warranty or guarantee, if any			
Price			

Did you find an item that fits your needs? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

What was your final decision (purchase, do without, continue shopping, make at home, etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you done other activities that have helped you make decisions or use your resources? If so, write them here. \_\_\_\_\_