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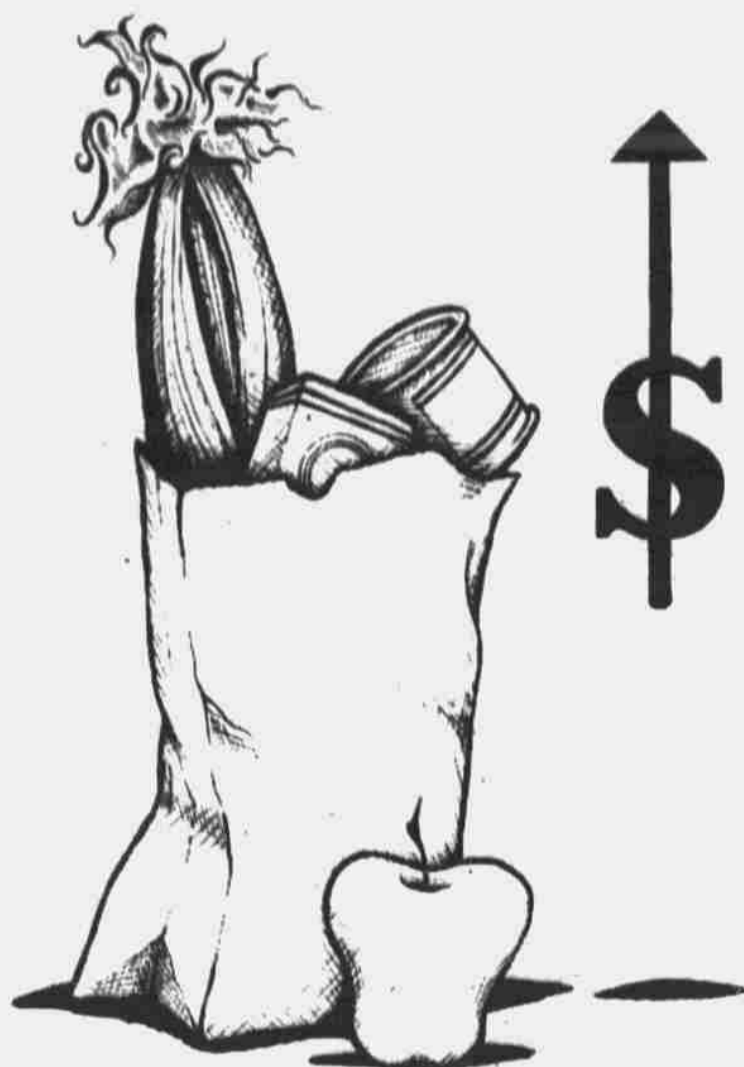
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## Supermarket price-slashing continues

By Kim Wilt



Price cuts initiated by Safeway Supermarkets will be permanent for the most part, according to a company spokesman.

Dick Knight, Safeway public relations manager, said that while "Super Saver" weekly specials will be temporary, the new prices will be the "everyday low price."

"We'll evaluate on an item-by-item, day-to-day basis," he said, "but as far as we're concerned, this is the way we're going to continue."

Safeway's competitors aren't predicting a permanent price war, but they agree that prices will remain low for a long time.

Allan Noddle, executive vice president of Hinky Dinky, said that while some prices could go back up after a few weeks, others could stay at the new low level for years.

"Some of the cuts will disappear quickly, and some will stay level for several years."

Hinky Dinky lowered its prices almost immediately when Safeway came out with its price cut, he said.

"They're attempting to gain a bigger market share, and we're not going to let them. We saw them doing this in Wichita, Kan., Kansas City, Mo. and Denver, Colo."

Russ Paybold the manager at B&R IGA, 1709 Washington St., agreed. He said that Safeway does not have a strong share of the Lincoln market, and is trying to increase it.

"This is a national program that Safeway is doing," he said. "We're going to remain competitive. We're just now working on it."

He predicted that the price cuts could last anywhere from a few weeks to three or four months.

Dan Schrier, president of Food-4-Less, a new Lincoln grocery, does not expect the price cuts to be a price war. Food-4-Less' prices are still lower than Safeway's, he said.

"They're trying to keep up with the people they're competing with" he said. "We're already under (their prices)."

Food-4-Less Shoppers bag and carry their own groceries. Schrier said the store usually does not advertise, but carried a price comparison with Safeway in Monday's Lincoln papers.

The full-page advertisement in Monday's Journal and Star listed more than 100 Food-4-Less items, and asked shoppers to compare those prices with "any full service store in this area."

Dwain Hutson, manager of Belmont Jack and Jill, 11th and Belmont St., said he is unsure how long the price war will last, but added that the store will lower its prices if Safeway's cuts appear to be permanent. Belmont Jack and Jill's prices were lower than Safeway's before the cut, he said. He said the store continually monitors the competitors prices.

Knight said that Safeway is not cutting prices as a reaction to a weak showing in Lincoln. The company usually introduces some type of promotion in late summer, using gimmicks, like bingo, or other games, he said. This year, the company decided price cuts would be more effective.

"There's always some kind of ad program, with some kind of customer appeal—and interest in it eventually wanes. Now, the customers don't want games or gimmicks, they want us to cut prices."

Safeway hopes to increase its sales in Lincoln by this move, he said.

"We are in business to sell groceries, and if we can sell more, we'll be pleased."

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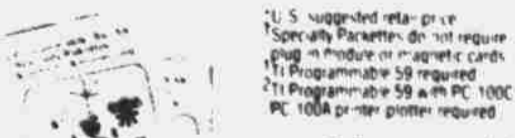
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