

Branding of local farm products to become Agricultural Self-reliant

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ARTICLE ID: 065

Introduction

India is a global agricultural powerhouse. India produces a wide range of agricultural products. Modern consumers are health-conscious, and they want high-quality fruits, vegetables, and processed foods that are also safe. The demand for branded items are increasing. In rural areas, the current production structure is largely conventional, with farmers producing agricultural products without regard for consumer demand or grading and standardizing (Pulicherla, 2022). It is critical to improve small farmers' status and make them self-reliant by raising farm output, promoting their agricultural activities, and enhancing their income by using branding as a tool.

Consumers assume that well-known branded products have higher quality or more features than unbranded products, hence branding add value to the products. Farmers can market and sell their farm produce using current retail methods. Farmers will be able to earn a fair price for their farm produce as a result of this and can become self-reliant (Ali *et al.*, 2005).

Branding of Agricultural Products

Branding is a successful marketing approach for agricultural products. By identifying the product, it assists in bridging the gap between the producers and its consumers. Farmers earn fair pricing for their farm products based on their quality. Branding products correctly guarantees improved quality (Kurzom, 2001).

From the viewpoint of the consumers, there is no discernible difference in most agricultural products. A market remains commodity-driven if products fail to differentiate in the eyes of the consumer. As a result, we can claim that for a consumer, all varieties of sugar, rice, or wheat are thought to be the same, and hence should be priced similarly. Prices are dropped and increased rivalry among producers and sellers increases when commodities



markets become more competitive and over-saturated because of oversupply in the domestic market and inflow of imported produce. As a result, there is a growing demand for agricultural product branding (Lyson, 2007).

Branding aids in the creation of consumer demand, giving farmers negotiating strength with a wide number of purchasers. Manufacturing and processed food products are now routinely given to customers as branded products, and branding methods have become a recognized aspect of marketing activity (Mubvamiet *al.*, 2003)

Ways of Branding Agricultural products

- **Branding Through Value Addition**

Value addition is the process of transforming a product from its original state to a more valued condition. Farmers can add value by focusing on the advantages of the agricultural product or service, such as quality, functionality, form, location, and timing. Certification of growers and processors can increase the value of agricultural products.

- **Retail Branding**

Farmers benefit from organized retailers' assistance in branding their products. It also contributes to the enhancement of product value. If branding at the farm level is not practicable, then branding at the point of sale is available option. Because agricultural produce store brands are of higher quality, retail branding will increase in the future, and organized retail will mostly offer food and food-related things.

- **Varietal Branding**

In agricultural marketing, varietal branding works differently. The patented crop variety that is superior and different from current kinds can be awarded a brand name. The variety owner can license the production and distribution of a specific variety and can set every equality standards.

- **Product packaging**

Farmers could attract more customers by properly packaging and branding their agricultural products. From a marketing standpoint, packaging design also entails



brand identification. When a consumer can recognize a brand based on its characteristics, this is known as brand recognition. Fresh fruits and vegetables benefit from packaging that extends their shelf life. Packaging materials aid in the improvement of the production process and perform three functions: optimum ventilation, product protection, and reduction of water loss.

- **Using Geographical Indicators as a Tool for Branding**

Geographical Indications are used to identify a wide range of agricultural and natural products. When exporting agricultural products, one can use GI to brand and advertise their products, especially in international markets. GI refers to agricultural products that have good attributes stemming from their producing location, soil type, and climatic conditions. Consumers are expected to pay a greater price for geographically branded products. Customers accept branded products and are willing to pay a higher price for them. It aids in the rise of sales and profit from farm produce. In the end, it pays off well for the farmer's efforts.

- **Assist in the Conveyance of Value**

In comparison to non-branded products, consumers believe that branded products are of higher quality, more reliable, and provide greater value for money. Customers are willing to pay more for premium branded goods. When compared to numbers two and three, the number one brand always demands a higher price premium.

- **Help for Product Differentiation**

Farmers can distinguish their farm produce from those of others because of branding. A brand gives a compelling incentive for a buyer to purchase a specific product. It aids the farmer in receiving a decent return from the farm.

- **Help in the development of brand loyalty**

For-profit generation, brand loyalty is critical. Repeat purchases are made by loyal customers, and they also help to generate referral sales. It is more crucial and less expensive to keep existing consumers than it is to acquire new ones. Customers become more loyal as a result of branding.



- **Produces a sense of pride in the producer**

Producers, marketers, and distributors, as well as those who are affiliated with branded items, take pride in their work.

The Challenges of Agriculture Produce Branding

- **Investment for building a brand**

Building a brand takes time and money, and it is an expensive endeavour. Only producers in excellent financial standing can invest in brand development. As a result, producers focus primarily on giving food to the local people and never consider branding.

- **Market Structure in India's Agriculture**

The mechanism of agricultural produce sales is inherently anti-branding. That is why the existing systems do not allow for any differentiation. They only want to pursue the traditional route, which means farmers are not getting a good return on their investment. Farmers aren't encouraged to produce high-quality products as a result, and they can't brand their products if they don't make high-quality items.

- **Value conscious consumers**

Consumers in India are particularly price concerned. They are always on the lookout for a good deal on a good product. The Indian consumer psychologist that branded things are relatively expensive. Branded products, according to them, are those that have an appealing label and packaging. They consider branded things to be high-quality products.

- **Size of the land holding**

The majority of farmers in India are marginal or small farmers who are unable to brand their agriculture products. They usually hold a distress sale to raise funds for their basic requirements. Farmers are unaware of the advantages of branding. The government and its many divisions must do extensive extension efforts.

The Future of Agricultural Product Branding

Globalization policies have catapulted Indian agriculture into the global spotlight, presenting a slew of opportunities and problems. With a high level of technology and management, there are several potentials for value addition, packaging, retailing, and exports.



of agricultural products in agribusiness. Farm food will be given the proper value through branding, processing, packaging, and distinct goods. Organic farming and specialty agricultural produce can help farmers build brands that attract considerably higher premium prices. Branding methods are now an accepted aspect of marketing activity, and it is commonplace for consumers to be offered branded manufactured and processed food products.

Farmers may market and sell their farm produce by collaborating with evolving modern store formats. It will assist them in obtaining a fair price for their farm produce. When products are appropriately labelled, it aids the consumer in decreasing search expenses, resulting in a price premium. As it develops, consumers will be assured of the freshness, healthiness, quality, and traceability of branded food.

Branding, distribution, and services are becoming increasingly important in modern food chains. Branding agricultural commodities could be a way to raise the price of our country's agricultural products on a world-wide and national scale. Branding aids in the creation of customer demand, and it allows producers to negotiate with purchasers. Branded agricultural commodities typically fetch a higher price for the producer and can foster brand loyalty, resulting in a large customer base and the producer's capacity to better serve market needs.

Commodities with no brand name have a difficult time surviving market ups and downs. As a result, it becomes vital to create brands to compete in the market. If branding at the farm is difficult, producers might brand their products at the point of sale. The major focus of organized retail is to add value to agricultural products (Grewal and Grewal, 2012).

Farmers can promote and sell their farm produce using current retail methods. It will assist them in obtaining a fair price for their farm produce. When products are appropriately labeled, it aids the consumer in lowering search expenses, resulting in a price premium. By creating a brand, farmers may reassure consumers about their products' freshness, healthiness, quality, and traceability.



Conclusion

Branding aids in the differentiation of products, the communication of product value to customers, the increase of profits, the creation of pride, making farmers self-reliant, and the retention of customers. To boost brand awareness and stimulate the diffusion of experience features by word of mouth, the majority of small agribusiness owners repackage their existing products under the name of their farm, ranch, organization, or business.

The profitability of agricultural products can be improved by adding value to them. The process of adjusting a product to transform it from its current state to a more valued state is known as value addition. It is the process of boosting an agricultural commodity's economic value and consumer appeal. Farmers can add value by focusing on the advantages of the agricultural product or service, such as quality, functionality, form, location, and timing. Certification of growers and processors can increase the value of agricultural products. There are numerous problems in building brands, including long-term commitment, thinking in terms of long-term goals rather than short-term goals, segment identification, competitive pricing, brand positioning, and promotion of a commodity as a category, among others.

India can export farm produce and become one of the top five exporters in the world if greater investment is made in food and fresh farm products branding. This will enable Indian farmers to earn more money and become self-reliant while also providing consumers with high-quality products.

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