

On the Predicament and Countermeasures of Agricultural Product Brand Construction in Cooperatives

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ABSTRACT

Brand building of agricultural products can not only bring direct economic benefits to cooperatives, but also improve the internal environment of cooperatives through large-scale and standardized production and operation, as well as improve the external industry and market environment through regional brand building of agricultural products, while cooperatives can improve their own social service system in brand building. And promote the development of local tourism and service industry through the exploration and publicity of the cultural attributes of the brand. However, the brand construction of cooperative agricultural products is faced with many difficulties, such as weak brand awareness of members, lack of professional personnel, difficult quality and safety supervision under decentralized production and management mode and poor competitiveness of individual brands, outdated production and marketing mode, and imperfect financial services matching brand construction. This paper analyzes the difficulties encountered by cooperatives in brand building and puts forward construction measures, and holds that relevant departments should strengthen the cultivation of brand awareness of cooperatives; Cooperatives should increase the reserve and training of professional personnel, individual cooperatives should rely on the scale and resource advantages brought by regional brand building or association to carry out their own brand building, and at the same time use modern marketing means to expand their own sales channels; The government should regulate the operation of financial institutions and increase the popularity of agricultural insurance.

KEYWORDS

Cooperatives; Brand construction of agricultural products; Dilemma and countermeasures

1. INTRODUCTION

The brand of agricultural products is the symbol of distinguishing agricultural products with different characteristics [1]. Its formation depends on the control of agricultural producers and operators on the pre-production, mid-production and post-production links and the choice of appropriate operation mode. Brand construction of agricultural products refers to the process of planning, establishing, cultivating and expanding the brand of agricultural products. This process includes the government, agricultural enterprises, new agricultural management subjects and farmers, including many subjects to participate in the establishment, among which agricultural enterprises and new agricultural management subjects are the construction subjects of agricultural products brand, and bear the actual construction tasks of agricultural products brand. Strengthening the brand construction of agricultural products is of great significance for promoting the high-quality development of Chinese agriculture as a whole, speeding up China's agricultural modernization and comprehensively promoting rural revitalization. China plans to cultivate 32 categories of regional public brands, and promoting the brand construction of agricultural products has become the consensus of governments at all levels and relevant departments of agriculture. As an economic organization that can unite families and

small professional households, cooperatives have the advantages of integrated management, policy inclination and public property, and become more and more important in brand construction. Based on the brand theory and many research results of China's agricultural product brand research, this paper analyzes the shortcomings of cooperatives in the current process of agricultural product brand construction, and tries to put forward corresponding policies.

2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BRAND BUILDING OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS TO COOPERATIVES

2.1. Economic Value

Nowadays, with the increasing productivity of farmers and the rapid development of agricultural production technology, more and more kinds of agricultural products can be provided to consumers in the market. Consumers' demand for the quantity of agricultural products in the past has gradually shifted to the demand for varieties, quality and safety of agricultural products. Contrary to this higher level of demand level, there is a serious information asymmetry between consumers and producers and operators of agricultural products. This phenomenon is unfavorable to both consumers and producers and operators of agricultural products. It not only means that consumers need to spend more time and energy searching for information of agricultural products, but also means that producers and operators will continue to pay the cost of recommending agricultural products and may have little effect [2]. The advantage of brand strategy adopted by cooperatives is that they can present the information of agricultural products to consumers in an all-round way, help consumers understand the quality of agricultural products, and give consumers brand commitment, which is conducive to cooperatives to maintain a stable consumer group. Secondly, the brand of agricultural products can guide the preferences of consumers, tap the potential consumers in the market, and expand the market share of agricultural products brands of cooperatives. High-quality brands trusted and favored by consumers have a unique premium advantage, which is higher than the same kind of ordinary competitive products in the market price, and this premium will also bring direct economic benefits to farmers.

2.2. Improve the Internal and External Environment of Cooperatives

Brand building of agricultural products can promote the large-scale operation, standardized production and standardized operation of cooperatives to a large extent, and improve the internal operating environment of cooperatives while bringing direct economic benefits. In addition, in the process of regional brand building, a large number of agriculture-related enterprises such as agricultural material suppliers, agricultural product processing and sellers, and logistics service companies can be attracted to enter the local market. The introduction of a large number of agriculture-related capital can improve the market environment and industrial environment of cooperatives in the region, which is of great benefit to the development of local cooperatives. On the other hand, cooperatives can enjoy the talents and technical resources gathered in the process of regional brand building of agricultural products, and further promote their own development.

2.3. Improve the Socialized Service System of Cooperatives

Adhering to the purpose of serving agriculture, cooperatives are committed to building a complete set of socialized service system, which comprehensively covers various agricultural services before, during and after production, and provides lasting and stable guarantee for promoting agricultural modernization. In brand building, cooperatives can provide farmers with a number of services, including the supply of means of production, the sale and circulation of agricultural products, the leasing of agricultural machinery, and financial and credit insurance services. The improvement of various services will not only help farmers to carry out agricultural production and stabilize farmers'

income, but also bring new production technologies and new management concepts to farmers. The introduction and cultivation of talents will infuse rural areas with energy and realize the creation of a smart and efficient agricultural model.

2.4. Cultural Value

In addition to the explicit value of economic benefits brought to cooperatives by brand building of agricultural products, the formation of characteristic agricultural products is generally strongly related to local customs and customs, which can be promoted among consumer groups through the cultural attributes of the brand, although the implicit value of such cultural attributes cannot be directly realized [3]. However, proper exploration and utilization may promote the development of local tourism and other service industries, and bring long-term economic benefits to the local industries in which cooperatives operate.

3. PROBLEMS EXISTING IN THE PROCESS OF BRAND BUILDING OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN COOPERATIVES

3.1. Outdated Production and Management Concepts and Weak Brand Awareness

At present, the brand awareness of cooperative producers and operators has not yet formed, and is generally restricted by the traditional backward production and management concepts. They believe that the end of production is marked by the harvest of agricultural products, and they have not yet penetrated the brand awareness into every link of the production of agricultural products before, during and after production. When summarizing the experience of brand building in western developed countries, scholars generally believe that the outdated concept of production and management caused by lack of brand awareness is the main reason hindering the brand building of Chinese agricultural products. In western developed countries, the production and management of agricultural products are mostly entrusted to professional agricultural cooperative organizations or agricultural enterprises. However, in China, as the main body of the construction, cooperatives are still in the exploratory stage of brand building. The quality of the members of cooperatives is generally not high, and they do not have a good understanding of the role of agricultural products brands and the changes in modern agricultural production and management concepts. The brand building of some cooperatives is difficult to push forward because of the outdated production and management concepts. Even if cooperatives have established brands, they do not do operation and maintenance, and the brand building of cooperatives is faced with the embarrassing situation of being nominal.

3.2. Scattered Production and Operation Mode

The basic requirement of branding is to achieve centralized production and operation at a certain scale. At present, the status quo of brand building of agricultural products in most cooperatives in China is as follows: The scale of a single cooperative is small, and cooperatives in the same region may hold multiple similar brands, which makes the production and operation of brand agricultural products more dispersed, bringing huge challenges to the quality supervision of agricultural products, at the same time, a single brand will be lonely or because of the same brand, unable to make itself have a strong market competitiveness. In addition, the brand construction of agricultural products requires supporting technical equipment from the cultivation, planting, circulation, and then processing, packaging and sales of agricultural products, and the high cost is difficult to be borne by a single cooperative under the state of decentralized management, and the application of many advanced technologies cannot be realized under small-scale management.

3.3. Poor Level of Brand Operation and Lack of Professional Personnel

The brand construction of agricultural products in cooperatives needs to select brand positioning, design brand image, use comprehensive means of brand operation to spread the brand and maintain the brand to stabilize the consumer group. This comprehensive, systematic and complex marketing planning process requires the brand operator to have the knowledge and experience of modern market planning. However, most of the actual management personnel for brand building in China's cooperatives are half-way monks, and have not received systematic training in this area. They generally do not have the brand operation ability to match modern brand building. In brand promotion and publicity methods, they still follow the old ideas, unable to follow up the current market and consumer demand, unable to highlight brand characteristics and selling points. Can not take the initiative to expand the market and form consumer brand loyalty, can not establish a stable consumer group. Therefore, cooperatives are often in a passive state in the market, unable to follow the market demand and consumer preferences in real time.

3.4.The Supporting Financial Services Are Not Perfect

The financial products and services provided by the current rural financial system for cooperatives are mostly to meet the needs of cooperatives for small and short-term revolving funds, and the scale is relatively scattered, which is difficult to meet the needs of modern agriculture. Although there are various forms of internal financing in cooperatives, almost all of them are funded by the conversion of means of production, labor and technology. Brand building is a costly, risky and slow project, and cooperatives cannot only meet the needs of maintaining, operating and developing brands with limited internal financing. Flexible and diverse financial instruments have become the inevitable needs of brand building for cooperatives. However, the current rural agricultural financial institutions are mainly rural credit cooperatives and rural commercial banks, which generally have many problems in the operation process of farmers' loan difficulties and high loan thresholds, and have many non-performing assets and poor service ability for farmers, which are difficult to provide strong support for brand building of cooperatives. Brand building is risky, and certain insurance measures taken by cooperatives can reduce production risks and stabilize farmers' income. However, for the whole agricultural industry chain, the degree of insurance participation is still shallow and the types of insurance are single. The level of insurance industry to provide guarantee for the brand building of cooperatives needs to be improved.

3.5. The Production and Marketing Model is Outdated

At present, cooperatives mostly rely on traditional chain stores and supermarkets to sell their own agricultural products. The single sales mode often leads to the phenomenon of "abundant production but no harvest" of agricultural products. Agricultural products are only sold in small local areas, and brand awareness is limited. Expanding the sales channels of agricultural products is the key to solve the problem of unsalable agricultural products, improve the visibility of agricultural products and increase the value of agricultural products [4]. However, at present, most cooperatives are limited by funds and cognitive ability, so they are not receptive to new marketing methods and have little willingness to open up markets.

4. STRATEGIES FOR BRAND BUILDING OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN COOPERATIVES

4.1. Cultivate Brand Awareness

Cultivating modern brand awareness is the basis for cooperatives to implement brand building. Cooperatives need to realize that brand building is an inevitable trend of the development of

agricultural productivity and agricultural product market. Only under the macro background of the current governments at all levels and relevant agricultural departments vigorously promoting the participation of various construction subjects in the construction of agricultural products brand can cooperatives realize brand building. Choose their own brand positioning with a long-term and development-oriented vision, implement brand strategies that can highlight their own differentiation, and finally stand out among similar brands and occupy a favorable position in the market. Governments at all levels and relevant departments of agriculture should strengthen publicity and guidance, popularize brand knowledge of cooperatives in various forms, help cooperative managers and their members realize the importance of owning and using brands for their own development, increase the enthusiasm of brand construction and development, and finally realize mature brand operation with scientific overall planning.

4.2. Reserve and Training of Professionals

Cooperatives need not only the core agricultural professional technical personnel, but also financial personnel and management personnel. In view of the special requirements for brand building of agricultural products, it is necessary to reserve and train a group of professionals who can master systematic brand operation. Cooperatives must introduce talents into their own planning, through the formulation of relevant talent introduction plans, with a variety of incentives to attract professionals from the society and universities, in a professional, complete training methods to train talents, so as to make them competent for the cooperative agricultural product brand construction work.

4.3. Carry Out Brand Building By Relying on Regional Brands or Joint Cooperatives

Regional brand is regarded as the product of brand development to a certain stage, and has been attached importance by governments at all levels in recent years [5]. Regional brands rely on the cultivation of regional superior agricultural products, construction through the overall strength of the region, the implementation of unified standardized production, which is more conducive to improving the quality of agricultural products, to meet the changes in consumer demand levels. Compared with a single brand, the regional brand has great influence, and the image is more distinct, which is easier to be accepted by consumers. At the same time, the scale benefits brought by regional brands can be enjoyed by cooperatives in all aspects of technology, production and sales. Individual cooperatives should help create regional brands of agricultural products with standardized production and standardized operation, and form positive interactions between cooperatives and regional brands.

The united cooperatives, on the other hand, are the economic organizations formed by cooperatives adopting the strategy of further cooperation. Compared with a single cooperative, the united cooperatives can realize large-scale purchase and sale, save transaction costs and expenses for the cooperatives, reorganize and coordinate the internal disordered brand resources, and integrate the same small brands into the big brands. Avoid the chaos caused by the competition of multiple similar brands in the region, and realize standardized production and standardized management with the linkage of bases.

4.4. Improve the Popularity of Agricultural Insurance

The government should issue relevant laws and regulations to regulate the many problems in the operation process of the existing township commercial banks and farm credit cooperatives, and promote the main financial institutions in agricultural areas to play more active roles in agricultural production. In addition, the government should strengthen the awareness and attention of cooperatives to agricultural insurance through publicity and guidance and provide practical financial subsidies, and help cooperatives choose insurance products suitable for their own brand development.

4.5. Expand Sales Channels

On the basis of retaining traditional sales channels, cooperatives should use modern marketing means to expand their own sales channels and increase the market share of agricultural products. For example, they should operate and maintain the public accounts of Tiktok and wechat related to agricultural products brands on the "we media" platform, and use the Internet and big data technology to publicize and promote agricultural products brands; The government also needs to play an active role in this process. Local governments can use their own authority to connect with advantageous platforms, and use the e-commerce platform to make the agricultural products produced by cooperatives in the region unified under the regional brand for sales, while promoting large orders with the platform side, and driving the development of local agriculture with strong regional brands. In addition to the use of modern Internet and big data technology, cooperatives should combine online and offline marketing models to help cooperative brand building, such as through the agricultural products exhibition activities led by the local government to sell and expand their own agricultural products brand awareness; Or through cooperation with other social organizations, to increase the sales of agricultural products by various means and ways.

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