

Current Situation, Problems and Countermeasures of Brand Construction of Agricultural Products in Hubei Province*

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Abstract

Implementing agricultural product brand strategy is an inevitable choice for developing modern agriculture and participating in international competition. Hubei is a large agricultural province, but the overall strength of agricultural enterprises is weak; brand awareness is weak; and it lack of well-known agricultural product brands, and the development of agricultural products processing industry lags behind, which directly restricts brand creation. Hubei agricultural development must establish brand awareness, rely on local resources, highlight local characteristics to develop relevant brands, and vigorously promote standardized production of agricultural products, consolidate the quality foundation of branded agricultural products, improve brand technology content, and continuously enhance brand added value.

Keywords

Agricultural Product Brand, Agriculture, Hubei

1. Introduction

As China's agriculture enters a new stage of development, the domestic agricultural product market environment has undergone a fundamental change—the supply of agricultural products has changed from a shortage to a relative surplus, and consumer demand for agricultural products has shifted from quantity to quality. With the opening of the domestic market after China's accession to the WTO, China's agriculture is facing increasingly fierce competition in the international market, and the competition in the agricultural product market is

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gradually transformed into the competition between agricultural product quality and brand. Strengthening agricultural brand building and implementing agricultural product brand strategy are inevitable choices for developing modern agriculture and participating in international competition. It will not only enhance the market competitiveness of agricultural products, but also increase the added value of agricultural products, increase farmers' income, promote the adjustment of agricultural industrial structure, and also contribute to the construction of a new socialist countryside.

In 2016, the Ministry of Agriculture of China identified the key points of agricultural brand building in the new era, and participated in the research and preparation of the "China Brand Development Strategy" with the Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the Ministry of Commerce, the General Administration of Quality Supervision, and the State Administration for Industry and Commerce, and promoted the establishment of "China". "Brand Day" laid the foundation for the next step of promoting the establishment of the Agricultural Brand Leading Group of the Ministry of Agriculture and coordinating the construction of national agricultural brands. The "Guiding Opinions of the Ministry of Agriculture on Accelerating the Development of Agricultural Brands" was subsequently issued to further clarify the work priorities and implementation paths of China's agricultural brands. On January 22, 2017, the Ministry of Agriculture issued a notice on the 2017 Agricultural Brand Promotion Year, and the Ministry of Agriculture decided to define 2017 as the Agricultural Brand Promotion Year [1]. Hubei is a large agricultural province with abundant agricultural resources and has always been an important agricultural production base in the country. After years of hard work, the province's agricultural transformation and upgrading has made great progress, but brand agriculture has always been a short-board in Hubei. Accelerating the implementation of Hubei agricultural product branding is a requirement and inevitable trend of Hubei's agricultural and rural economic development. The purpose of this study is to analyze the current situation of agricultural products brand in Hubei Province, and to provide suggestions and guidance for the construction of agricultural products brand in Hubei Province.

For exploring Hubei Province agricultural products brand development path, around the core content of agricultural products brand and basic theory, this paper surveys the present situation of the development of agricultural products brand in Hubei Province, the current brand of agricultural products in Hubei Province are analyzed, summarized the main problems in the process of brand development, according to the actual situation of Hubei Province, targeted put forward the suitable countermeasure and the suggestion for the construction of agricultural brand in Hubei Province. Based on the research of the agricultural product brand construction in Hubei Province, to solve the key problems existing in the construction of agricultural products brand in Hubei Province, seeking the effective methods and countermeasures to solve the problem of its, give

full play to the agricultural products brand to promote the development of modern agriculture, promote agricultural supply side the advantage of structural reform, in order to realize the steady and rapid development of modern agriculture in Hubei Province.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Foreign Related Research

The emergence of the brand concept can be traced back to the Roman era. But the development and research of brand theory has gone through a relatively long-term process. Burleigh B. Gardner and Sidney J. Levy (1955) published the article “Products and Brands” in the Harvard Business Review, which marks the beginning of modern brand theory research. They believe that brands have a set of qualities that satisfy customers’ rational and emotional needs. The value of its creation should focus on developing a personality value [2]. David Aaker (1996), a professor at the University of California, Berkeley, used case studies to study brand building and made recommendations on how to create strong brand characteristics, manage sub-brand extension systems, and develop brand equity [3]. Philip Kotler (2001), the famous father of marketing, believes that the main point of the brand is a set of specific characteristics, benefits and services that the seller provides to the buyer for a long time. A good brand is not only a guarantee of quality, but also a more complex symbol mark. A brand can express six meanings: attributes, interests, values, culture, personality, and users. The most lasting meaning of a brand should be its value, culture and personality, which define the foundation of the brand. Kotler believes that building a brand is good for both buyers and sellers. The brand provides product quality information to the purchaser, implying that the consumer can obtain the emotional benefits from the product, helping the consumer to find products that may be beneficial to them; the brand is beneficial to the seller to obtain the buyer’s stable preference for the product, for the seller to bring come to profit. He believes that in today’s world, enterprises should not only create brands, but also have brands, and at the same time should pay attention to the management of brands [4]. David F. Dalessandro and Michele Owens (2001) in the United States proposed the ten principles for creating competitive brands [5]. The book “Positioning” by Al Ries and Jack Trout (2002) in the United States explains the importance of brand “positioning”, the most influential concept of American marketing in the past. The development of brand theory cannot be truly guided by positioning theory [6] “Strategic Brand Management” by Kevin Lane Keller (2004), a tenured professor at the Stanford Business School in the United States, summarizes Western brand theory to some extent. Keller elaborated on the importance of the brand, pointing out that the brand is an intangible asset and core competitiveness that is more important and longer than the enterprise product. It is an image that the competitor can’t imitate and a high sense of customer identity and loyalty to the company. On this basis, the Keller system elaborated on the “consumer-oriented”

brand equity establishment method and brand asset management method [7].

As a branch of brand theory, agricultural product brand theory is based on the brand theory of different viewpoints and dimensions, combined with the characteristics and development laws of agriculture. Western countries' research on agricultural product brands lags behind the research of industrial product brands. The research results of its brand are mainly reflected in the industrial and service industry brands. The research results of its brand are mainly reflected in the industrial and service industry brands. The theoretical results of the specificity of agricultural product brand are relatively small, mainly being discussed from the aspects of program management of agricultural products, certification of origin of brands, standardized production of agricultural products, and promotion of product marketing [8].

2.2. Domestic Research

The attention of Chinese business and academic circles on brand issues began in the 1990s. The monographs on brand theory are comprehensively discussed: Lu Taihong and Yan Danni (1998)'s "Overall Brand Design", based on the foreign brand design theory, discusses the overall brand design issues, including brand equity, brand identity system, brand Communication, brand packaging design, overall brand design operation, brand team management and other content [9]. Wang Xinxin (2000)'s "New Competitiveness: Brand Property Rights and Brand Growth Mode", put forward the concept of brand property rights, and combined with the actual situation of domestic enterprise development, in-depth discussion of brand growth methods, differential manufacturing, information creation, relationship building, etc. He also deeply reflected on the creation of famous brands in Chinese enterprises and proposed the strategic choice of Chinese enterprises to create brands [10]. Huang Shengbing and Lu Taihong (2000) studied the development of China's own brand and analyzed the correlation between brand and economic development, starting from the five factors affecting brand extension (including core brands, markets, companies, consumers and other marketing factors, etc.), proposed a brand extension success rate model [11]. China's consulting industry has made a lot of efforts in brand practice. Su Xiaodong, GuoXiaohua, and Hong Ruisheng (2002)'s "720° Brand Management: Concepts and Applications" of Xinge Brand Management Center elaborated the seven steps to create a brand [12]. At the same time, ZengZhaohui (2002), another consulting strength figure, also launched the book "Brand Winning", proposing a practical approach to building a brand. The brand creates a fifteen-step method [13]. Branding Theory by Brand Expert Yu Mingyang (2002) constructed and improved the theoretical framework of the brand discipline [14].

Domestic research on agricultural product brand construction started late. Zhang Kecheng (2009) proposed that the construction of agricultural product brand is different from the construction of agricultural brand. The extension of agricultural brand is far greater than that of agricultural product brand. The

connotation of agricultural product brand has broad and narrow meaning. The broad agricultural product refers to the attribute that can reflect the quality and mark of agricultural products. The narrowly defined agricultural product brand only refers to the registered trademark of the enterprise for its own agricultural products. He put forward the theory of brand management of agricultural products. He believed that brand management of agricultural products had a great driving effect on agricultural development and enhanced the sustainable development ability of farmers [15]. Shi Yajun (2010) believes that the construction of agricultural product brands is conducive to increasing the benefits of producers and operators of agricultural enterprises, and is conducive to consumers purchasing agricultural products and helping the government to regulate the market. China's rural areas are vast, natural resources are endowed, and the level of regional economic development is unbalanced. This determines that China needs to follow objective economic laws, promote rural development in rural areas, and developing agricultural products in the new socialist countryside is important content [16]. Li Jianjun (2013) researched the brand building of agricultural products based on the agricultural industrial chain. It is considered that the construction of agricultural product brand is an important subject, which is restricted by many factors such as the agricultural industrial chain. Due to the irrationality of the agricultural industrial chain, it must be to a certain extent, it hinders the sales of agricultural products in the market, which also restricts the income of farmers and the economic development of the region. For the construction of agricultural product brands, it is necessary to carry out practice and exploration for the agricultural industrial chain, further exert the role of the government and farmers' professional households in the construction of agricultural product brands, and establish and improve the agricultural product industrial chain system [17]. Yan Xiangpeng (2013) believes that China is currently in the key historical stage from traditional agriculture to modern agriculture, from agricultural power to agricultural power, from product marketing to brand marketing transformation and upgrading. Agricultural product branding is the maximization of agricultural benefits and market quality. The embodiment of production specialization is also the engine to promote the economic development of poor mountainous areas [18]. XuChuanbo and Lu Yuanqiang (2016) believe that the quality and safety of agricultural products are crucial in the construction of agricultural product brands. Food safety is a common problem facing the whole world, and all countries are making unremitting efforts [19]. In addition, He Zhongwei, Liu Fang (2014) and Li Xiushan (2014) conducted research on the construction of agricultural product brands in specific regions of China (such as Beijing and Linyi) and proposed corresponding countermeasures [20] [21].

3. Research Methods

3.1. Literature Research Methods

Through a lot of view literature periodicals, read relevant policy documents and books, collecting relevant information and data, according to the research con-

tent of numerous experts and scholars, combining with economics, brand marketing and other related theory, the theoretical building of agricultural products brand in Hubei Province are systematically described.

3.2. Combination of Positive Analysis and Normative Analysis

Positive analysis refers to the description of the things that make a series of objective system analysis, is not the result of the things that make the corresponding judgment. Normative analysis is different from the positive analysis, it is mainly the process and results of things behavior and value judgment, answer the question of "how to do". In this paper, positive analysis is mainly used in the description of the brand construction in Hubei Province analysis and normative analysis application in agricultural brand construction of the government in implementing measures and countermeasures.

3.3. Case Analysis Method

In the process of writing, consult the Fuwa, ZhouHaYa, Qianjianglobster and other agricultural products brand, through the above examples, analyzes the problems of agricultural products brand in Hubei Province, put forward the countermeasures for the construction of agricultural products brand in Hubei Province.

4. Development Status of Agricultural Product Brands in Hubei Province

4.1. Current Status and Problems of Agricultural Products Brand Development in Hubei

Hubei has always been an important agricultural commodity base in the country. As the saying goes, when Huguang has a Bumper crop, the country will be free from hunger. After years of construction, the comprehensive agricultural production capacity has been steadily improved. The output of major agricultural products is in the forefront of the country, and the output of freshwater aquatic products is the first in the country. Grain, cotton, oil, pigs, poultry, eggs, vegetables, fruits, tea, Chinese herbal medicines, edible fungi, and konjac occupy a pivotal position in the country. At present, the total agricultural economic output of Hubei continues to increase, and the total output value of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery, as well as the total output value of plantation, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery are increasing year by year. The total output value of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery is growing at a rate of 16.7%. The total amount of major agricultural products has obvious advantages, and the internal structure of agriculture has been continuously optimized and adjusted. The comprehensive strength of leading enterprises in agricultural industrialization has gradually increased, and the level of mechanization of agricultural production has been continuously improved [22].

Since the end of the 1990s, Hubei Province has established the agricultural

product brand with the development and certification of three products such as pollution-free agricultural products, green foods and organic foods and agricultural products geographical indications (namely “three types of products and one indication”). By the end of 2016, there were 1670 “three products and one standard” enterprises in the province’s effective period, with a total of 4176 brands and a total output of 19.57 million tons. The number of brands ranks among the top in the country [23]. On January 25, 2019, the Agricultural and Rural Affairs Department of Hubei Province issued the “Three-Year Cultivation Plan for Agricultural Products Brands in Hubei Province”, focusing on the creation of two provincial-level core brands of Qianjianglobster and Qichun wormwood, and cultivating 20 regional public brands and 200 enterprises product brand. Starting from 2019, Hubei Province will implement the “222” action of agricultural product brand cultivation in accordance with the mother-child brand model of “regional public brand + enterprise product brand”, that is, focus on cultivating two provincial-level core brands, 20 regional public brands and 200. Through three years of cultivation, the corporate product brands have basically formed a modern agricultural development pattern of standardized production, industrialized operation and branded marketing. At present, Qianjiang lobster, Yichangtangerine, Jianlifinless eel, and Zigui navel orange are among the four well-known agricultural products in Hubei. They are selected as “National 100 agricultural product brands, “Enshigyokuro” and “Lichuankung fublack tea” are well-known in the north and south of the country, and “Qianjianglobster” is popular all over the world. Hubei Agricultural Products Brand building has achieved certain results.

4.2. Problems in the Construction of Agricultural Product Brands in Hubei Province

4.2.1. Lack of Well-Known and Strong Agricultural Product Brands

Hubei Province has a lot of agricultural product brand resources, but there are not many famous brand agricultural products in Hubei Province that are famous at home and abroad. There are fewer famous brand products such as Fuwa, ZhouHaYa and Qianjianglobster, which are famous in the country. The advantages of leading industrial products are not obvious, and they are not commensurate with the resource endowment of Hubei Agricultural Province. Among the 500 most valuable brands in China announced by the World Brand Lab, 75 agricultural products were selected, including 11 from Beijing, 9 from Sichuan, and 8 from Shandong, while Hubei Province only the three brands of Daohuaxiang Group, Zhijiang Wine and Jinpai were selected, which can only be regarded as medium level in the country, and the brand value is obviously insufficient [24].

4.2.2. The Overall Strength of Agricultural Enterprises Is Weak, and Brand Products Fail to Dominate the Market

Most agricultural enterprises in Hubei Province are small in scale, lacking of independent innovation ability, many primary products, few deep processing

products, short industrial chain, low added value, weak competitiveness, and weak driving ability. Although some local strong agricultural products have local characteristics, they do not reflect their advantages in the market segment. Among the local agricultural product brands, there are not many products that have real scale and competitive advantages. The production of small-scale workshop-style agricultural products in Hubei Province is mostly based on “family” organizations. Their ability to sell abroad is very limited, and their main products cannot stand firm in the market. Most of the operators are retail investors. They have no cohesiveness, use their own methods to produce and develop, have fewer advanced varieties, have backward production technology, low human quality, weak innovation and service capabilities, lack of development potential, and extensive agricultural products. The following series of questions have yet to be resolved.

4.2.3. The Development of Agricultural Product Processing Industry Lags Behind, Forming a Direct Constraint on Brand Creation

Although the agricultural product processing industry in Hubei Province has developed rapidly in recent years, it still lags behind. The outstanding problem is that the scale structure is irrational, the number of enterprises is large but the scale is small, the processing level is low, and more than 70% of the grain is still sold in the form of raw grain [25]. Some products that have undergone primary processing, due to poor processing and inaccurate packaging, give people the impression of low grade and low quality, which directly affects the added value of the brand, and also imposes certain constraints on the establishment of strong brands.

4.2.4. Affected Brand Awareness of Agricultural Enterprises

The understanding of the importance of agricultural product brand construction is not in place in some places in Hubei Province. It is not important to understand the importance and urgency of agricultural product brand building from the strategic height of promoting brand construction and promoting agricultural branding. Agricultural enterprises have a weak brand awareness and market awareness, and lack the initiative to cultivate brands and open up markets.

5. Countermeasures and Suggestions for Hubei Agricultural Product Brand Construction

5.1. Establish Brand Awareness

Hubei Province agricultural product brand construction is the primary solution to overcome the subjective psychological barriers of brand operators, to let them take the initiative to generate awareness of brand building and recognize the necessity of brand building, willing to actively learn the knowledge theory of brand building, and actively explore and explore a road to brand building for your own business. First of all, farmers and enterprises can be encouraged to visit agricultural products enterprises with better brand building status, let the facts explain

the meaning of the brand and promote their awareness of brand building. Second, the government should also be more inclined to encourage, reward and support the development of good agricultural product brands and form a benign induction cycle. At the same time, the holding of learning sessions, training courses, corporate exchanges and industry associations to introduce and exchange the importance of brand building and the great changes brought to the enterprise are also good channels for brand operators to generate or enhance brand awareness.

5.2. Relying on Local Resources, Highlighting Local Characteristics and Developing Related Brands

Hubei agricultural production has a unique advantage. The Yangtze River runs through it, and the soil and light resources are abundant. It is suitable for agricultural production and has good conditions for developing agricultural products. Agricultural production has high requirements for the natural environment and production conditions. For a long time, Hubei Province has produced unique agricultural products with regional advantages due to different natural environments and production habits. Therefore, in the process of developing agricultural products construction, we must integrate our own superior resources, cultivate characteristic agricultural products and increase the scale, and transform them into the advantages of market competition; while making full use of natural resources, we must consider the resources of local history and culture. The characteristics of culture are embedded in the process of brand building and development.

5.3. Vigorously Promote the Standardized Production of Agricultural Products and Consolidate the Quality Foundation of Branded Agricultural Products

According to international standards, national standards, industry standards and actual needs, we will revise, improve and upgrade the existing provincial technical standards for various agricultural product production technical specifications and operating procedures, establish an agricultural product standard system that is in line with international standards, and gradually realize the agricultural product standard system full coverage, focusing on the formulation and implementation of a number of agricultural product e-commerce product standards. Accelerate the formulation and improvement of agricultural product input management, product classification, product origin and quality traceability, storage and transportation, packaging and other standards. Strengthen the demonstration zones for agricultural products standardization, such as the establishment of aquatic aquaculture demonstration farms, standardized breeding farms for livestock products, and quality and Safety County of agricultural products, and give full play to its role as a model leader in standardized production.

5.4. Greatly Improve the Brand's Scientific and Technological Content and Continuously Increase Brand Added Value

Accelerate the integration process of agricultural science and technology “production, study and research”, guide enterprises to closely cooperate with scientific research institutions, and establish and improve the technical support system for the whole process of seed industry, breeding, processing and circulation. Give full play to the role of research and development platforms such as the strategic alliance of technology innovation in the freshwater product processing industry in Hubei Province, and strive to break through key technologies such as artificial breeding, standard production, processing and preservation, and environmental protection, and form a group of key technologies to promote the expansion of agricultural products and product value. Featured products comprehensively enhance the scientific and technological content of agricultural products brands.

6. Conclusion

This paper analyzes the status quo of agricultural products brands in Hubei Province, and puts forward some existing problems. The corresponding countermeasures are listed for how to cultivate agricultural products brands. We believe that as long as the government, agricultural product processing enterprises and farmers work together, Hubei Province's agricultural product brand construction will be better and better, and the brand value will be higher and higher, which will eventually lead Hubei Province's agricultural product brand to lead the country and the world.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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