

Research on the Construction of Marketing Mode of Agricultural Products in Hunan Province under the Environment of “Internet +”

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Abstract: Implementing the rural revitalization strategy is an inevitable requirement for solving the contradiction between the people’s ever-growing needs for a better life and unbalanced and inadequate development. At present, Internet technology is accelerating the extension and penetration of agriculture and rural areas, and has achieved remarkable results in agricultural technology promotion, market information services, agricultural and rural e-commerce, precision poverty alleviation and other aspects. Agricultural Internet of things and big data also show very broad application prospects. Hunan, as the hometown of fish and rice and a large agricultural province, is an important national food production base and high-quality agricultural product supply base, which has assumed great responsibility in ensuring national food security. Therefore, the “Internet + agricultural products” marketing of Hunan Province is the key to achieving rural revitalization.

Keywords: Agricultural Products, Hunan, Internet +, Marketing Mode.

1. Introduction

The rural revitalization strategy was first proposed by Comrade Xi Jinping in the report to the 19th CPC (Communist Party of China) National Congress on October 18, 2017. The report to the 19th National Congress pointed out that issues concerning agriculture, rural areas and farmers are fundamental issues bearing on the national economy and people’s livelihood. We must always make solving issues concerning agriculture, rural areas and farmers a top priority and implement the rural revitalization strategy. The rural revitalization strategy “is an overall and historic task bearing on the comprehensive construction of a modern socialist country”. Taking the supply-side structural reform as the main line, cultivating the sustainable development mechanism of rural revitalization, and improving the marketing ability of featured industries are the top priorities in promoting the development of regional featured industries. With the rapid development of economic globalization and information technology, the network economy has gradually become an important driving force for economic development, with the proposal of “Internet +” as the focus of expression. The combination of “Internet +” and traditional agriculture and the construction of a new marketing mode of “Internet + agricultural products” will provide new ideas for the rural revitalization strategy to solve the problems of agriculture, rural areas and farmers, with infinite future prospects.

2. Literature Review

In recent years, some scholars have conducted research on the network marketing of agricultural products, among which the research hotspots focus on marketing means and marketing policies and other related issues.

Zhang Jiahai and Lu Shangkun (2022) [1] found through investigation that the marketing of agricultural product in Heilongjiang Province was the key to rural revitalization.

Under the background of the widespread popularization and application of the Internet, online consumption has surged, and the integration of the Internet and the service industry has deepened. Chen Guanqun (2022) [2] proposed that, with the rapid development of 5G, big data, mobile Internet and other modern technology and information technology means, the development of society has entered the new era, which presents a big challenge for the development of various industries, especially the industry of marketing of agricultural products. Because of its traditional marketing concept and marketing methods, the quality of some agricultural products is relatively good, but the price in the market is not satisfactory. Therefore, it is urgent to further explore new marketing methods of agricultural products under the background of “Internet +”, and gradually promote the stable development of agricultural economy. According to Li Ting (2022) [3], the marketing of agricultural product based on the “Internet +” mode has become the main form of development of agricultural product marketing. Based on the present, agricultural products enterprises, farmers and marketing platforms should focus on the future, take the development mode of “Internet + marketing” as the carrier and enhance the innovation ability of marketing mode of agricultural products, so that the development of marketing of agricultural products can adapt to a variety of different environments. According to scholar Zhu Jingyi (2015) [4], the current agricultural product marketing in Hunan Province is still basically in the production-oriented marketing stage, which aims to make producers’ agricultural products pass to consumers or users, which is a typical production-marketing mode. The structure of this channel mode is unreasonable, and the circulation link is too long, which makes the operation efficiency of the channel low. There are other shortcomings, such as lack of effective management of channel members, unstable channel relations, and lack of effective management and control of marketing channel conflicts.

Based on the marketing theory and the development law of

“Internet +”, combined with the supply-and-demand relationship between agricultural producers and consumers, this paper innovatively carried out the construction of the marketing mode of agricultural products in Hunan Province under the environment of “Internet +”, and provided the theoretical basis and practical basis for the construction of the marketing mode of agricultural products in Hunan Province.

3. The Present Situation and the Existing Problems of Marketing Mode of Agricultural Products in Hunan Province

3.1. The Background of Agriculture in Hunan Province

In nearly five years, the departments of agriculture and rural areas at all levels of Hunan Province have vigorously implemented the rural revitalization strategy as an effective means of development of “agriculture, rural areas and farmers” in a new era. In accordance with the requirements for high-quality development, it is essential to improve agricultural and rural modernized management system and management ability, earnestly give top priority to agricultural and rural development, and keep agricultural and rural economy of the whole province steady and positive. According to preliminary statistics, in 2021, the added value of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery in the Hunan Province was 453.019 billion yuan, up 3.5% year on year, and the growth rate was 0.3 percentage points higher than the national level. Specifically, the added value of agriculture was 252.397 billion yuan, up 3.6 percent; the added value of forestry was 33.916 billion yuan, up 9.4%; the added value of animal husbandry was 101.632 billion yuan, down 2.2%; the added value of fishery was 29.751 billion yuan, up 7.1%; the added value of professional activities of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery and their auxiliary activities was 35.323 billion yuan, up 8.2%.

3.2. The Present Situation of Marketing Mode of Agricultural Products in Hunan Province

3.2.1. The Practitioners Marketing Agricultural Products Through the Internet

At present, the practitioners engaged in online marketing of agricultural products in Hunan Province are mainly aged between 45 and 55 years old, accounting for more than 50%, followed by 35-45 years old, accounting for about 30%, while the practitioners aged between 25 and 35 years old, accounting for only 5.3% of the total personnel. Last but not least, 6.4% are under 25 years old and 7.3% are over 55 years old, indicating the aging of practitioners. The social status of practitioners over 35 years old is mostly farmers who produce and sell their own products, while those under 25 years old are network anchors who conduct live stream of agricultural products. The social status of practitioners is also relatively simple. And according to the survey, the practitioners, of which only 9.2 percent have a college degree or higher, engaged in the Internet marketing of agricultural products, are undereducated.

3.2.2. The Environment of Marketing Agricultural Products Through the Internet

The China statistical yearbook data show that at present, the Chinese Internet has played an indispensable role in

people’s daily life. By the end of 2020, there are more than 1 billion Internet users in China. Internet availability rate is 65%. Tools for surfing the Internet include electronic communication tools such as mobile phones, tablets and computers, among which surfing the Internet with mobile phones accounts for 99.2%. Surfing the Internet with mobile phones has become the main means for most netizens to access the Internet. The sharing and opening of information resources is deepening, and the value of data is beginning to emerge. Agricultural and rural big data is massive. Although the foundation is relatively weak, through effective data collection, sorting, development and utilization, authoritative government information services can be provided for consumers, and reliable business information services can be provided for producers. Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs leads the way to four big platforms of China, namely, traceability system for the quality and safety of agricultural products, system for the basic data for agricultural and veterinary drugs, system for the market information on key agricultural products and system for information on new types of agricultural businesses. It also organized, including Hunan Province, 21 provinces and municipalities to establish the pilots of the big data for eight kinds of main agricultural products, so as to improve the monitoring and early warning system.

Internet infrastructure has been improved, and conditions for supporting “Internet + agriculture” have been significantly improved. At the request of The State Council, relevant departments have deepened the implementation of broadband rural projects, continued to promote universal telecommunications services in rural areas, and significantly improved rural Internet infrastructure conditions. By the end of 2017, the proportion of administrative villages with broadband reached 96.9 percent, but many farmers’ mobile phones were used as communication tools rather than Internet tools. Compared with the proportion of urban broadband which reached 99.2 percent, it can be seen that the gap between urban and rural areas is still large.

With the increasing availability rate of the Internet, the number and scale of marketing modes combining the Internet with the marketing activities of agricultural products in Hunan Province have also greatly increased, which, through the e-commerce platforms with extensive information, invigorates and rejuvenates traditional agriculture.

3.3. Problems Existing in Marketing Mode of Agricultural Products in Hunan Province

3.3.1. The Internet Infrastructure is Backward

Because the social identity of the practitioners engaged in online marketing of agricultural products is mostly farmers who produce and sell themselves, and the main residence of farmers is in rural areas where the Internet infrastructure is backward. At present, Internet-related infrastructure in rural areas is weak and public Internet access resources are scarce. Although under the support of national policies and enterprise investment, China’s rural Internet infrastructure has been significantly improved. For example, “every village can access the Internet”, “every township has a website” and “home appliances go to the countryside”. However, at present, the basic conditions for network use in some rural areas of Hunan Province are still very scarce, and the growth conditions and space for network use are insufficient. According to the survey, 21.7 percent of non-Internet users in

rural areas did not have Internet access equipment such as computers, and 4.1 percent did not have Internet access conditions in their local areas. Especially in rural areas with backward economic development, the rate of family owning computers and mobile phones is low, and Internet cafes have become an important place for rural residents to contact and use the Internet. However, Internet cafes in those areas lack supervision and management, the environment is poor, the update cycle of computer hardware is long, and the computer configuration is low.

3.3.2. The Farming Group has Old-Fashioned Values and is not Receptive Enough

Currently in Hunan Province farming practitioners as a whole are older with stubborn conservative thought, and adhere to the use of traditional marketing strategy for agricultural products. Basically, they are undereducated and can not accept the concept of new Internet e-commerce platforms. They lack the ability to learn and use Internet knowledge and also do not have other channels to learn deeply, which is easy to produce the fear. As a result, they don't actively participate in the new marketing mode of "Internet + agricultural products", which produces some resistance to the promotion of agricultural products.

3.3.3. Professional and Technical Personnel are Scarce

First of all, it is found through investigation that as an important agricultural production base in China, all universities, junior colleges and educational resource systems in Hunan Province do not involve the training of professional and technical personnel specializing in marketing through the channel of "Internet + agricultural products". Contemporary young people do not have strong interest in traditional agricultural industry. Moreover, there are not relevant preferential policies in Hunan Province to introduce high-quality technical talents, which leads to the lack of better development, combination and utilization of agriculture-based advantages and the rapid development of the Internet in Hunan Province.

Secondly, young people are reluctant to return to the countryside to engage in agriculture. To build a new countryside and realize rural revitalization, young people need to return to rural areas. However, many graduates majoring in marketing, influenced by traditional ideas, believe that only by staying in the city can they get ahead. To engage in agriculture is hard with low income, so they are reluctant to return to the countryside to engage in agriculture. To some extent, this contradiction hinders the development of rural revitalization in Hunan Province.

3.3.4. The Quality of Agricultural Products is not in Place

First of all, there are still a large number of small and scattered producers and operators in the agriculture of Hunan Province. Small-scale farmers lack the necessary quality and safety knowledge and standardized production skills, which are often more prone to problems such as non-standard use of agricultural and veterinary drugs and excessive pesticide residues.

Secondly, there is the problem of unauthorized live anchors selling fake agricultural products in tort. Taking Yanling Yellow Peach as an example, in August 2022, with the commercial value of the brand of Yanling Yellow Peach rising all the way, there also appeared the phenomenon of foreign live anchors selling fake Yanling Yellow Peach at a low price and posing as "Yanling Yellow Peach" to make huge profits

on Douyin platform. This matter has been highly valued by the local government. Consumers can report through the national 12315 complaint reporting platform, or directly contact the relevant market supervision department to investigate the situation. The quality assurance and brand maintenance of agricultural products in Hunan Province can not be separated from the support and assistance of the local government.

3.3.5. The Platform for Public Supply and Demand Service is not Perfect

In the process of Internet marketing of agricultural products in Hunan Province, practitioners mostly use WeChat, Huya and Douyin and other live streaming platforms. Due to the limitation on the standardization of related platforms, those platforms can not fully show the features of agricultural products in Hunan Province, so as to promote agricultural products in Hunan Province. In addition, the scale of Internet marketing of agricultural products is small, not forming a cluster effect. Moreover, the live streaming platforms are not equipped with some functions suitable for agricultural products.

4. Suggestions on the Construction of Marketing Mode of "Internet + Agricultural Products" in Hunan Province

4.1. Strengthening the Construction of Internet Infrastructure

4.1.1. Strengthening Organizational Leadership and Improving Institutional Mechanisms

A leading group on the construction of information and communication infrastructure has been established to clarify the responsibilities of relevant departments, establish a working mechanism for promoting the "Broadband China" strategy, and strengthen the overall coordination of the construction of information and communication infrastructure. Through the establishment of the joint meeting system, a system and mechanism with unified leadership of the people's government, overall coordination of the city-level and county-level governments, active participation of various departments, and specific implementation of communication enterprises has been formed. Relevant departments regularly study and focus on solving problems such as project approval, land acquisition and demolition, and environmental coordination. In the process of construction, governments, departments and enterprises jointly provide guarantee and support for broadband network construction.

4.1.2. Adhering to Planning Guidance and Strengthening Top-Level Design

The construction of base stations will be included in urban and rural planning, and the responsibilities of relevant government agencies, tower companies and operators to participate in the construction of communication infrastructure will be clarified. Relevant departments carry out special studies on the construction of communications infrastructure to clarify the construction objectives, tasks, construction time limits and key areas and establish a coherent mix of urban and rural construction, land use, transportation development and other plans.

4.1.3. Strengthening Supervision and Coordination and Implementing Assessment Mechanisms

The government will include broadband network construction into the target management assessment of “doing practical things for the people”. In order to effectively promote the achievement of construction tasks, one is to implement work responsibilities. The annual work plan is distributed into several communication enterprises, and specific project work leaders and information staff are designated. Second, relevant departments will establish a complete work promotion mechanism, hold regular coordination meetings, strengthen coordination on prominent issues, and ensure the completion of annual construction targets and tasks. Third, relevant departments will promote joint construction and sharing, coordinate communication enterprises to adhere to the principle of joint construction and sharing, improve the utilization rate of communication infrastructure, avoid repeated construction, and achieve the strategic goal of broadband access to villages in a planned and step-by-step manner.

4.1.4. Innovating Work Patterns to Ensure that Information Benefits the People

Affected by factors such as rural geographical environment, dispersed residence and low effective consumption, broadband network construction cycle is long, input cost is high, and daily maintenance is difficult. All communication enterprises should overcome difficulties and play an active role in bandwidth expansion, speed increase and fee reduction, communication interface and platform construction, and promote the application of broadband network business together with relevant departments such as public security, commerce, tourism, education and so on, so as to effectively cover urban and rural areas.

4.2. Encouraging and Guiding Farmers to Make Good Use of the Internet

Relevant departments will implement the cultivation plan for high-quality farmers, accurately select cultivation objects, strengthen the construction of cultivation system, and improve the quality and efficiency of cultivation work. The government should fully implement the plan to cultivate high-quality farmers, carry out Internet training for key groups such as large farming and breeding households, family farm operators, leaders of farmer cooperatives, and returnee entrepreneurs, and strive to improve the technical skills and comprehensive quality of farmers in using the Internet. The first is to formulate training plans, organize local governments to do a good job in finding and meeting the needs of farmers, take counties as units, carry out extensive publicity and investigation, find out the number and needs of farmers who are willing to participate in the training, formulate training plans according to the needs, and ensure the training effect. The second is to build a cultivation system, make good use of agricultural schools, agriculture-related colleges and universities, county vocational education centers, township adult culture schools, agricultural research institutes, agricultural technology extension institutions and other education and training resources. They will guide and encourage Internet agricultural enterprises to give full play to their advantages and actively participate in the cultivation work.

4.3. Training and Introducing Professional and Technical Personnel

Relevant departments will increase policy support, optimize entrepreneurial services, strengthen typical promotion, attract more young people to participate in the industry of “Internet + agricultural products”, and provide strong talent support for rural revitalization. They should make good use of educational and training resources, which guides students to love agriculture, rural areas, and farmers, and enhance their sense of honor. At the same time, the local governments should introduce relevant supportive policies to attract young people such as college graduates, young migrant workers and veterans to join the industry of “Internet + agricultural products”. First, they should increase policy support and timely implement policies such as tax reduction and venue arrangement for qualified young entrepreneurs. The second is to build an entrepreneurial platform. The government can set up national rural innovation and entrepreneurship bases (parks) and typical rural innovation and entrepreneurship counties with their own characteristics across the country to provide low-cost, all-factor and convenient entrepreneurial services for young entrepreneurs and provide a display platform for young entrepreneurs. Third, they can attract talents with local love and family love, guide local areas to establish a contact mechanism for local migrant workers, attract young talents to return home with local love and family love to start businesses and innovate, and provide supporting public services.

4.4. Strengthening Green and Safe Construction and Brand Building of Agricultural Products

Safety is the first meaning. To ensure the quality and safety of agricultural products is what every producer must ensure. First of all, producers themselves should reduce the use of pesticides and other chemical products for agricultural products. They also ensure the clean and harmless production environment. For example, agricultural products can not be produced near some chemical plants or sewage plants. When looking for the supporting industries, attention should be paid to whether they are suitable for the safety standards of their own agricultural products. When selecting transportation and distribution service companies, strict inspection should be required to ensure that they meet the standards of safe transportation of agricultural products. Then relevant government functional departments should strengthen the legislation, regulate safety standards, and strict law enforcement to crack down on corruption and profiteers. Government and enterprises work together at the same time. The government can open up the channel for the enterprise to control the quality. The enterprise can build the local brand image. Mutual reciprocity and mutual benefit are required to secure the safety of “Internet + agricultural products” and let the customers feel relieved and buy at ease.

4.5. Building a Special Supply and Demand Service Platform

Relevant departments should accelerate the informatization of agricultural operations. They establish and perfect the system for the supply chain, the system for the operational service and the system for supporting security, which are suitable for marketing agricultural products through the Internet. In view of the unique time and space attributes of

agricultural products, they strengthen the intelligence of the service platform, so that consumers can better understand the information of agricultural products through the supply and demand service platform, and carry out customized services. According to the different needs and consumer preference, the consumers can be detailedly classified so as to provide the special function and meet the shopping needs of consumers. At the same time, they simplify the process of transportation of agricultural products from the producers to the consumers and improve the efficiency of transportation, in order to ensure that consumers receive the fresh agricultural products, thereby reducing consumers' shopping concerns. This will comprehensively improve consumers' shopping experience, increase the viscosity of customers, and gradually expand the service scale so that the supply and demand service platform of "Internet + agricultural products" can effectively provide convenience for producers and consumers.

5. Conclusion

The marketing of agricultural product in Hunan Province has entered a new stage of development. The traditional single marketing means have begun to be transformed and upgraded to branding, greenization and networking so as to promote the digital transformation of agricultural production and promote the green ecological high-quality development of agricultural products in Hunan Province. However, at this stage, there are still problems such as backward Internet infrastructure, conservative values and insufficient acceptance capacity of agricultural groups, lack of professional and technical personnel, inadequate control of quality of agricultural product and imperfect public supply and demand service platform, etc. Therefore, to strengthen the construction of infrastructure of the Internet, encourage and guide farmers to make good use of the Internet, train and introduce professional and technical personnel, strengthen the construction of the greenization and safety of agricultural products, establish brands and build special supply and

demand service platform boost the upgrading of the service system for modern agriculture in Hunan Province and inject new vitality to rural revitalization strategy.

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