

# Analysis of Agricultural Product Marketing Channels with Tashan Pomegranate as an Example

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**Abstract** In the context of the digital economy, agricultural product marketing has also undergone new development, and the models of agricultural product marketing are constantly innovating. Based on the current sales situation of Tashan Pomegranate, this paper analyzed the existing sales channels of Tashan Pomegranate. It found that Tashan Pomegranate currently has insufficient online marketing channels, incomplete logistics system, and a lack of comprehensive talents in online marketing. In response to the existing problems, constructive recommendations are proposed for the online marketing channels of agricultural products in Lieshan District, and a network marketing path suitable for Tashan Pomegranate in Lieshan District was explored.

**Key words** Digital economy, Agricultural product marketing channels, Tashan Pomegranate

## 1 Introduction

With the official arrival of the "Internet Plus" era, China's digital economy has been booming. Digital economy is a more advanced economic stage after agricultural economy and industrial economy<sup>[1]</sup>, and has become a new driving force for sustainable social development<sup>[2]</sup>. While combining with agricultural development, digital economy has changed the sales mode of traditional agricultural products, increased farmers' income and provided conditions for the development of agriculture, rural areas and farmers<sup>[3]</sup>. Promoting the development of modern agriculture and the sale of agricultural products has become a concern of the whole society, and rural e-commerce has ushered in a major opportunity under this background. At the government level, the state has provided great policy encouragement. In 2021, China issued the 14<sup>th</sup> *Five-Year Plan for E-commerce Development*, which clarified the key points of e-commerce development and proposed that rural e-commerce is an important field and project for the future development of e-commerce and an important way to promote rural revitalization.

The Tashan Pomegranate is produced in Lieshan District, HuaiBei City in Anhui Province, with a long history of pomegranate cultivation. In order to promote local development and achieve the goal of continuously expanding the pomegranate industry in Lieshan District, HuaiBei City has issued relevant policies to develop efficient agriculture. Taking Tashan Pomegranate in Lieshan District, HuaiBei City, Anhui Province as an example, we analyzed the current status of its agricultural product marketing channels based on the actual sales situation of pomegranate, identified the shortcomings in the application of marketing channels based on the marketing characteristics of Tashan Pomegranate, to improve the marketing channels of Tashan Pomegranate in combination with

modern internet trends, taking precise measures to enhance the sales of Tashan Pomegranate for local relevant entities, which will provide a reference basis for promoting the improvement of local agricultural economy and increasing the income of farmers.

## 2 Current status of existing marketing channels for Tashan Pomegranate

### 2.1 "Characteristic Town" tourism picking and retailing

The Lieshan District of HuaiBei City promotes the development of tourism, vigorously develops efficient agriculture to expand the pomegranate industry, develops eco-tourism with the support of the government, and builds the "pomegranate industrial park + tourism" mode. The government encourages the construction of industrial parks with complete functions such as "agricultural industry + community tourism" and culture, builds pomegranate characteristic towns with distinctive industrial characteristics and strong local cultural flavor, and holds "Pomegranate Festival" to select pomegranate king, etc., thus building Lieshan District into a pomegranate garden attracting tourists from all over the seasons<sup>[4]</sup>. According to statistics, only during the pomegranate tourism and cultural festival, visitors to the garden to pick their own can account for more than 30% of sales. The "tourism picking" mode in the process of displaying culture promotes pomegranate products, not only enhances the sales of pomegranate, and more effectively boosts the development of pomegranate industry.

### 2.2 Cooperation between growers and wholesalers

The government of Lieshan District has implemented a brand strategy for agricultural products, registered the "Taxian" brand trademark of pomegranate, and increased the visibility of Tashan Pomegranate during the sales process. On this basis, the government of Lieshan District has established professional organizations such as the Lieshan District Pomegranate Association and the Taxian Pomegranate Professional Cooperative Association to cultivate a professional team of farmers' pomegranate brokers, laying the foundation

for the sale of Tashan pomegranate to various parts of the country. Contact dealers throughout the country for sales, procurement from the origin, and logistics delivery. The cooperative sales between local cooperatives and dealers account for 35% of local pomegranate sales; In addition, in order to expand the appreciation space of pomegranate products and achieve high yields and harvests, the government has also adopted project support methods to help farmers build more than 30 constant temperature refrigerated warehouses, extending the sales period of pomegranate by nearly half a year. By the New Year's Day and Spring Festival, pomegranate can increase value by 10% to 30%. These measures not only sold Tashan pomegranate to various parts of the country, but also doubled the sales price of pomegranate compared to the past, increasing the income of farmers.

**2.3 Cooperation between growers and processing enterprises** Collaborating with processing enterprises is also the main channel for growers to sell pomegranate. After the large pomegranate fruits are picked by tourists and purchased by wholesalers, the sales of the remaining small pomegranate fruits are difficult. Every year during the pomegranate harvest season, local growers store small fruits separately according to their classification. In order to solve the problem of small fruit sales, local pomegranate cooperatives and individual growers cooperate with factories in local and Shandong provinces to purchase small fruit products. This can extend the industry chain of pomegranate products, and the factories further process pomegranate drinks and brew pomegranate wine, increasing the added value of pomegranate while extending the sales time of pomegranate, solved the sales problem of pomegranate, reduced losses, and increased the income of growers.

### 3 Insufficient sales channels for Tashan Pomegranate

Lieshan District has developed various offline channels for the sales of local pomegranate through the development of tourism, cooperation with wholesalers, and docking with processing enterprises. In the current context of the digital economy, Anhui Province proposes to improve the digital level of agricultural production, actively adapt to digital transformation, seize new opportunities for industrial digitization, and achieve deep integration of e-commerce with other industries<sup>[4]</sup>. However, there are still some problems in the online marketing sales channels, talent cultivation, and logistics system construction of Tashan Pomegranate in Lieshan District, which have become obstacles to the sales of Tashan Pomegranate.

**3.1 Mainly relying on traditional channels, lacking online sales channels** At present, the sales channels of pomegranate in Lieshan District are mainly traditional, with cooperation with wholesalers accounting for the largest proportion of sales. However, traditional wholesalers involve multiple sales levels, and most of them only reach consumers through multiple layers of intermediary agricultural products, which to some extent restricts the sales of pomegranate in Lieshan District. Pomegranate is prone to damage during transportation, and the layers of intermediate channels

can affect the sales of agricultural products. Moreover, if the channels are long and there are many links, it can easily cause price differences in the sales of agricultural products. This not only damages the interests of agricultural product growers, but also greatly increases the purchasing cost for consumers. The government of Lieshan District has issued policies to actively transform sales channels, respond to the national policy of e-commerce entering rural areas, and actively promote the integration of e-commerce with pomegranate industry sales to promote pomegranate sales. However, it is still in the early stage of exploration, and the local network marketing infrastructure is not yet perfect. In the era of the Internet, Lieshan District needs to keep up with the times and develop network marketing. With the help of e-commerce models, pomegranate sales can be greatly increased.

**3.2 Lack of network marketing talents** The origin of Tashan Pomegranate is in the Lieshan District. In recent years, the vigorous development of the pomegranate industry has also promoted the cultivation of pomegranates. More and more farmers have invested in pomegranate cultivation. Although the number has increased, the local farmers' ability to apply the network is not high, mainly due to the overall low education level of farmers in the Lieshan District. Farmers have a lot of knowledge about the cultivation and variety of pomegranate, but their ability to utilize the internet is not high. They are not familiar with the process and application of online sales channels, which limits the use of online marketing channels for agricultural products. There are difficulties in using online marketing channels in Lieshan District.

**3.3 Incomplete logistics system** The key to using online marketing channels for internet sales in Lieshan District is to improve the local logistics system, facilitate logistics and distribution in rural areas, and enable consumers to purchase pomegranate online and deliver it to them in the shortest possible time. Long term transportation may affect the quality of pomegranate and cause collision damage, affecting the reputation of pomegranate growers and the shopping experience of consumers. The logistics construction for online marketing is not yet perfect, which can lead to low logistics efficiency in rural areas<sup>[5]</sup>. Currently, the only logistics company in cooperation with Lieshan District is postal service, and the express stations are only open during the harvest season of pomegranate, and not during the off-season. Moreover, the logistics fees are high and the utilization rate is low.

### 4 Countermeasures and recommendations

**4.1 Formulating relevant policies to strengthen awareness of online marketing** The root cause of the lack of use of network marketing channels in Leshan District is that farmers rely too much on traditional channels and have little understanding of network marketing and lack of knowledge of network marketing. The government should make a specific analysis of the development mode of the network marketing channel of Tashan Pomegranate in Lieshan District, and create new sales channels according to the problems<sup>[6]</sup>. The government should formulate relevant policies with

the promotion of network marketing and sales as the core<sup>[7]</sup>, train farmers on network marketing knowledge, strengthen their awareness of using network marketing channels to sell pomegranates, guide farmers to participate in network marketing, enhance the atmosphere of pomegranate farmers' willingness to participate in network marketing, make full use of TV, radio, Internet and other media to increase the publicity of local network marketing. Invite local pomegranate growers with good income through online marketing to share their experience, summarize and promote the practices and experiences of rural online marketing development, and eliminate the strangeness of farmers to e-commerce<sup>[8]</sup>. On the basis of traditional channels, the use of digital technology to expand the pomegranate sales channels, the use of big data, the Internet of Things and other digital economy technology timely access to market information, equipment supplement, to enhance the development level of agricultural products network marketing, promote the sales of Tashan Pomegranate.

**4.2 Cultivating comprehensive marketing talents for "agriculture + online marketing"** Under the support of government policies, professional talents and experts were invited to pomegranate planting park for on-site guidance, which improved farmers' professional knowledge of pomegranate planting. However, there is a lack of network marketing talents in the development of network marketing channels in Lieshan District. The local government should not only consider the network marketing knowledge of the cultivated people but also consider the understanding of the local pomegranate industry and pomegranate varieties when cultivating talents. Due to the age restriction, local growers have low level of cultural knowledge, low awareness of the Internet, and need to improve their ability to accept new things. Therefore, it is necessary to cultivate talents from local young people, who know more about the Internet and can quickly accept the new mode of online marketing channels. The government strengthens the supplement and cultivation of young people's agricultural knowledge and knowledge of online marketing channels, and conducts training on online marketing training techniques for marketers<sup>[9]</sup>, so as to deeply understand the details of transactions in e-commerce and cultivate truly comprehensive talents of "agricultural knowledge + online marketing"<sup>[10]</sup>. At the same time, the government should improve farmers' awareness of online sales, organize online knowledge learning activities, popularize online knowledge and strengthen the publicity of online learning, organize pomegranate farmers to learn Internet technology, improve farmers' comprehensive online marketing ability, so as to better promote the villagers' understanding of online marketing of agricultural products in Lieshan District and drive the sales of pomegranates. The penetration rate of Internet marketing.

**4.3 Improving the logistics system** The construction of rural logistics system requires the dual support of enterprises and the government to build a complete logistics system and break through the bottleneck of the last mile of rural logistics. The government should ensure the full coverage of the local rural 5G communica-

tion network, build a good network infrastructure, a stable Internet communication environment, and a complete rural network communication infrastructure to improve the development level of logistics<sup>[5]</sup>. Infrastructure should be easily accepted by farmers, easy to operate, and easy to maintain. In the construction of specific logistics, on the one hand, it is necessary to cultivate the talents required in the logistics system with the support of the government, and build an agricultural product logistics system and logistics information network platform with local pomegranate transportation characteristics; on the other hand, it is necessary for professional logistics enterprises to cooperate with the local area of Lieshan District to build logistics warehousing and transfer centers. The professional system of the enterprise can help the local construction of logistics systems to avoid detours and have advanced packaging, storage, and quality supervision management models. Under the dual protection of the government and enterprises, promote the construction of the logistics system in Lieshan District, and better assist in the online marketing and sales of Tashan Pomegranate.

## 5 Conclusions

The digital technology generated by the digital economy has brought new development opportunities for Tashan Pomegranate to open up new sales channels, and the development of network marketing has also brought challenges to the local area. In this context, agricultural products everywhere seize the opportunity to develop digital countryside and use network marketing channels to promote the sales of agricultural products. Based on the current sales channel of Tashan Pomegranate, Countermeasures and suggestions for the development of Internet marketing are proposed from both the government and farmers to provide directions for the improvement of local Internet marketing infrastructure, so as to effectively standardize the online marketing services of agricultural products in Lieshan District, promote the sales of Tashan Pomegranate and promote the development of rural economy through increasing the sales of agricultural products<sup>[11]</sup>.

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Province needs to strengthen the spirit of self-reliance, and support tea bases and processing enterprises in the province with a certain foundation to apply for export qualifications and export independently. In addition, Guizhou Province should stress the talent training and application technology research and development, expand the picking and processing utilization rate of summer and autumn tea, improve the utilization rate of industrial resources, and focus on expanding the scale of exports. Moreover, it is necessary to concentrate on promoting the comprehensive utilization of the tea industry, pay attention to the research and development of high-end health care products, cosmetics and other high value-added products in the tea industry, and research and development of tea drinks with large consumption. Finally, it is recommended to consider the comprehensive utilization of processing waste, extend the overall industrial chain of the tea industry, enhance the added value of the industry, promote the prosperity of the industry, and serve rural revitalization.

**5.3 Making use of policy advantages to strengthen international market development** Guizhou Province should seize the opportunity of rural revitalization policies, take advantage of national policies for foreign cooperation such as the signing of the Belt and Road Initiative and RCEP, and use various preferential measures to stabilize the existing market in the cooperation area, quickly enter the new tea market, and explore the unique connotation of Guizhou tea. Through actively participating in various exhibitions in regional cultural exchanges, countries and cooperation areas, Guizhou Province should tell the unique tea stories and tea culture of Guizhou, and strengthen and follow up the publicity, promotion and sales. In addition, it is recommended to strengthen the exploration and satisfaction of unique needs and preferences in the target market, accurately develop and position products, and strive to achieve more high-end customized products to be accepted and realize the new positioning of Guizhou tea.

**5.4 Building a new service platform and actively responding to the requirements of the international market** Guizhou Province should make use of existing tea services and research institutions to support the combination of technological research and industrial development to form a new platform in the context of ru-

ral revitalization. It is recommended to use resources such as the Internet and other new technologies, domestic review bases and WTO/SP review experts to do everything possible to collect the latest requirements and typical cases of technical barriers to trade in existing and target markets, and carry out targeted analysis and countermeasure research. The countermeasure research should fully learn, absorb and improve relevant standards and specific requirements at home and abroad, promote the upgrading of standards through technical trade barriers, and promote the improvement of quality through standard improvement, so as to lead the overall improvement of Guizhou tea for both domestic and international markets. Finally, Guizhou Province should release and promote the research results in a timely manner, and cultivate a talent team for the whole tea industry chain that is oriented to dual circulation and rural revitalization and meets the requirements of improving the quality and efficiency of Guizhou's tea industry, so as to ensure that Guizhou tea goes out smoothly.

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