SWOT Analysis and Strategy Discussion of Agricultural Product Brand Construction in Pingguo City

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Abstract Enhancing the agricultural product brand construction serves as an effective measure to accelerate agricultural and rural modernization, as well as an essential requirement for comprehensively promoting rural revitalization. To facilitate the development of agricultural product brands, optimize the agricultural industry structure, and further achieve the strategic goals of rural revitalization, this study takes Pingguo City in Guangxi as a case study. Using the SWOT analysis method, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of agricultural product brand construction in Pingguo City are examined. Based on this analysis, corresponding strategies are proposed to enhance the brand development of agricultural products in the region.

Key words Rural revitalization, Agricultural product brand, SWOT analysis, Pingguo City of Guangxi

0 Introduction

Agricultural standardization and brand development are of great significance in comprehensively enhancing the quality of agricultural products and facilitating the transition from traditional to modern agriculture. The report to the Party's Twentieth National Congress explicitly called for all-around efforts to revitalize rural areas, continued priority development of agriculture and rural communities, accelerated efforts to build China's strength in agriculture, and solid actions to promote the growth of rural industries^[1]. The No. 1 Central Document of 2024 emphasized the need to enhance the development level of rural industries, promote the integrated development of primary, secondary, and tertiary industries in rural areas, optimize and upgrade the agricultural product processing industry, improve the quality of rural circulation systems, and strengthen measures to increase farmers' income^[2]. These policies underscore that deepening local industries and developing distinctive agricultural sectors are effective pathways to accelerate agricultural and rural modernization. Implementing an agricultural product branding strategy, building strong agricultural brands, and enhancing the market competitiveness of agricultural products are crucial measures for increasing farmers' income, improving agricultural efficiency, and achieving comprehensive rural economic development.

In 2020, under the guidance and recommendation of the Office of the Network Scurity and Informatization Committee of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Pingguo City was approved as one of the first national digital village pilot zones in Guangxi. In this context, with the support of "Internet +" e-commerce channels, Pingguo has achieved certain successes in the brand building of its agricultural products. However, with rising production levels and shifting consumer demands, increasing both the "quantity"

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and improving the "quality" have become crucial tasks for Pingguo City to address contemporary challenges, maintain its traditional advantages, and promote the sustainable development of the rural economy^[3]. Therefore, under the new circumstances, how to effectively enhance the brand construction of agricultural products in Pingguo City, analyze its internal strengths and weaknesses as well as external opportunities and threats, and propose practical strategies to facilitate brand building and transformation has become an important issue that requires urgent resolution.

1 SWOT analysis of agricultural product brand construction in Pingguo City

SWOT analysis is a strategic planning research approach that involves the assessment of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Its value lies in its ability to help organizations identify key factors in both their internal and external environments, thereby enabling the formulation of targeted strategic plans^[4]. Since its introduction, this method has been widely applied across numerous fields, including enterprise strategic management and urban strategic planning. In recent years, it has also been gradually adopted in areas such as rural construction and the development of rural industries.

1.1 Internal strengths

1.1.1 Rich agricultural product resources. Pingguo City, located in southwestern Guangxi, boasts favorable natural conditions and abundant resources, providing a solid foundation for agricultural production and processing. In recent years, through the implementation of the "one village, one product" strategy, the city has integrated high-quality agricultural products from various townships and developed three major economic models: the "mountain economy," "column economy," and "water economy." This effort has fostered the growth of specialized industries such as fruit orchards, free-range chickens, sericulture, oil tea camellia, hog farming, and shrimp aquaculture, while also promoting the construction of fruit planting bases. A series of local agricultural brands have been developed, including Pingguo Yao Chicken,

Zhuangxiang Family Pingguo Rice, Baguililang Drinking Water, and Guzhou Tea Green, Black Tea, and Green Tea organic products. Additionally, pollution-free agricultural products such as sweet peppers, citrus, and live chickens have been certified. Notably, "Pingguo Guizhong Spotted Pig" and "Pingguo Pitaya" have been successfully recognized as national agricultural geographical indicators. The city has nurtured nine leading agricultural enterprises, 425 specialized farmer cooperatives, and 1 032 family farms, significantly enhancing the brand image of Pingguo's agricultural products.

- 1.1.2 Well established infrastructure. In recent years, Pingguo City has progressively enhanced its three-tier urban and rural logistics distribution system and upgraded wholesale and agricultural markets. These improvements have continuously elevated local production and living conditions while increasing the mobility of agricultural products. By leveraging modern facilities, the city has achieved whole-chain management from farmland to market. The introduction of cold chain logistics infrastructure has effectively addressed challenges related to the storage and preservation of agricultural products. Cold storage facilities have been established across three major fruit bases in Pingguo, with a total capacity of approximately 2 600 t for fresh produce such as bananas, pitayas, and citrus fruits. This development has significantly strengthened the city's capabilities in storage, freshness preservation, and commercial processing of agricultural products.
- Attaching great importance to skills training and talent cultivation. In recent years, Pingguo City has enhanced support for talent development in agricultural product branding by increasing rural training efforts, establishing a skilled personnel database, and strengthening policy support. In line with the development needs of local rural talents, the city organizes targeted vocational skills training programs covering fields such as agricultural technology, construction, rural tourism management, and e-commerce operations. These programs offer "menu-style training" options to farmers, catering to diverse technical demands and improving the professional skills and employability of local talent. In addition, Pingguo City actively promotes academic education by leveraging its university park as a base to provide vocational education and technical training courses, thereby raising the educational level and overall competence of local professionals. The city's "Local Talent Database" includes four main categories: specialized technicians, breeding experts, management specialists, and rural governance talents. This database serves as a resource for providing technical guidance to farmers in agricultural production.
- 1.1.4 Digital technology promoting agricultural product marketing. Relying on the opportunity as a "National Digital Rural Pilot County," Pingguo City has been expanding digital network coverage in rural areas, focusing on building a "Digital Countryside" and driving the revitalization of rural industries through digital empowerment. Based on the "Internet + " model for modern agriculture, the city has established a county-level agricultural informa-

tion platform operation center and standard agricultural information service stations. It is also intensifying efforts to promote the e-commerce into Rural Areas comprehensive demonstration project. By setting up both online and offline sales zones for agricultural products, and building the public brand "Good Fruits in Life," Pingguo is effectively promoting and selling its agricultural products through multi-channel marketing strategies, including live streaming and influencer economy.

1.2 Internal weaknesses

- 1.2.1 Characteristic industries are large but not strong. From the perspective of industrial development, although Pingguo City has established specialized industries such as fruit production, sericulture, and free-range poultry farming with the fruit industry in particular having achieved a certain scale effect, the products sold remain predominantly primary agricultural goods. There is a lack of deep processing, low capacity for mechanized sorting and commercial packaging, and insufficient scientific and technological support for the industry. The rapid expansion of orchard acreage has not been matched by the adoption of advanced practical technologies. Inadequate support for breeding new varieties, coupled with the introduction of non-local seedlings and mixing of cultivars, has resulted in inconsistent fruit quality across different townships. This failure to ensure uniform standards undermines the ability to meet consumers' growing demand for diversified and high-quality fruit products.
- 1.2.2 Brand benefit is not high. Pingguo City's agricultural products, such as "Pingguo pitaya" and "Pingguo Guizhong Spotted Pig", have obtained geographical indication (GI) certification. However, innovative marketing strategies are lacking, resulting in low brand recognition and limited market influence. As a result, the potential of these brands remains underdeveloped, and awareness among consumers outside the region remains low. Furthermore, large-scale farmers and specialized farmer cooperatives exhibit insufficient brand consciousness and little effort in building their own brands. This leads to fragmented and small-scale production and operation, which hinders the standardization of quality and the consistency of the brand image for agricultural products in Pingguo City^[5].

1.3 External opportunities

1.3.1 Favorable policy environment. At the national level, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs issued the *Opinions on Accelerating the Promotion of Strengthening Agriculture through Brand Construction* in 2018, which emphasized the need to cultivate a number of national agricultural brands with significant influence, broad market coverage, strong international competitiveness, and rich cultural connotations. This document underscored the importance of using branding to strengthen the agricultural sector [6]. In 2022, the Ministry further released the *Special Implementation Plan for the "Three Products and One Standard" Upgrade Campaign in Agricultural Production*, which systematically outlined related efforts across various industries and fields, including crop farming, animal husbandry, fisheries, crop variety culti-

vation, brand development, and standardized production^[7]. In practice, the selection and development of national geographical indication products have helped enhance the added value and cultural significance of regional brands (geographical indications).

At the local level, both the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region Government and the Pingguo Municipal Government have been continuously improving policy support mechanisms to facilitate the brand development of agricultural products. For instance, Guangxi has introduced the Guangxi Agricultural Products Marketing System Construction Plan, while Pingguo City has enacted the Implementation Plan for High – Quality Construction of a Modern Characteristic Agricultural Demonstration Zone in Pingguo City (2022 – 2025). These policies are designed to enhance the branding efficacy of Pingguo's agricultural products, strengthen their market competitiveness, improve agricultural efficiency, and increase farmers' income through institutional support.

1.3.2 Development trend of integration of agriculture, culture, sports and tourism. The integration of agriculture, culture, sports and tourism industry is an important direction in the strategy of rural revitalization. Its core is to integrate the multiple functions of agriculture, culture, sports and tourism to form a complex development model. This integration can not only promote the development of rural economy and society, but also effectively improve the quality of life and income level of farmers. The construction of cultural tourism brand is the key to enhance the attractiveness of tourist destinations. Mining and inheriting cultural elements, combined with modern design and commercial means, can create a cultural tourism brand with unique competitive advantages, and promote marketing through the "Internet + " platform, which can not only enhance the cultural identity of consumers, but also enhance the brand value and attract more consumers. For example, Wuxuan County, Guangxi, through exploring a new path for the integration of e-commerce and tourism, has built an industrial chain that integrates the production, processing, leisure and sightseeing of agricultural products and the sale of special products, and has come out of an integrated development model combining agriculture, tourism, culture, and e-commerce, where agriculture drives tourism, tourism promotes agriculture, and culture and tourism are intertwined.

1.4 External threats

1.4.1 Intense homogeneous competition of agricultural products. With the accelerating process of agricultural branding, an increasing number of agricultural product brands are entering the market, leading to intensifying competition. From the perspective of specialized industry development, the fruit industry in Guangxi has reached a relatively mature stage, with various counties (districts) actively developing local characteristic and high-quality fruits. However, compared to more advanced counties (districts) such as Tiandong County and Wuming District of Nanning City, Pingguo City still lags significantly in both fruit quality and industry profitability. Its market recognition remains insufficient, putting it at a competitive disadvantage. In addition, the management models

and marketing strategies for agricultural products in Pingguo City suffer from homogenization. In the "Internet + " era, marketing approaches across different regions have become highly similar, leading some businesses to compete primarily through low prices. As a result, high-quality agricultural products fail to achieve the prices they deserve, undermining the overall sales environment.

1.4.2 Changes in market demands. With the changes in consumer demand and the advent of the "Internet +" era, the marketing strategy of agricultural products needs to change from product-centered to customer-oriented. This requires that the brand building of agricultural products can quickly adapt to market changes, pay attention to product quality and brand image, and provide personalized and differentiated products and services to meet the diverse needs of consumers. As far as the fruit industry is concerned, with the fruits from Vietnam and Thailand entering the Guangxi market, the sales of homogeneous agricultural products in Pingguo City have been affected. Compared with similar fruits in Pingguo City, fruits in Vietnam and Thailand are affected by high temperature and sunshine time, and have the advantages of early maturity and long supply period, which has a certain impact on the fruit market in Pingguo City. This not only increases the competitive pressure of fresh fruit sales in Pingguo City, but also makes the fruit producing areas in Pingguo City have to constantly improve their product competitiveness in order to maintain their market position.

2 Strategies for agricultural product brand construction in Pingguo City

Based on the analysis of the internal and external conditions of the agricultural product brand construction in Pingguo City, the strategies to further improve and strengthen the brand building of agricultural products in Pingguo City are obtained, namely, the strength-opportunity strategy, the strength-threat strategy, the weak-opportunity strategy, and the weak-threat strategy.

- **2.1** The strength-opportunity strategy The strength-opportunity strategy of agricultural product brand construction in Pingguo is to maximize the use of various development opportunities provided by the external environment with the help of internal strengths.
- 2.1.1 Cultivating business entities and improving industrial level. On the basis of continuously practicing the "cooperatives + companies + farmers" model to support agriculture, Pinguo City should explore and refine the production and operation model characterized by "large enterprises taking the lead, small and medium-sized enterprises providing support, cooperatives serving as the link, family farms and professional farmers forming the foundation, and modern industrial parks acting as the carrier" [5]. This will effectively enhance the intensification, specialization, organization, and socialization of the agricultural industry. (i) It is recommended to strengthen leading enterprises, focus on implementing various policy measures, attracting key leading enterprises to invest and establish operations, cultivating fruit industry groups, supporting the construction of large fruit wholesale markets, build-

ing industrial technology service platforms, and enhancing group management capabilities. (ii) It is recommended to foster new types of agribusiness. Continue to intensify efforts to cultivate new types of agribusiness such as farmer cooperatives, family farms, and large specialized households. (iii) It is recommended to extend the agricultural product processing industry chain. Introduce preferential policies for the deep processing of agricultural products and the development of related industries, support the development of processing industries such as dried fruit, fruit juice, and vermicelli, accelerate the development of supporting industries such as packaging and labor training, and promote the cluster development of the agricultural product processing industry.

- Innovating brand marketing and developing cultural 2, 1, 2 tourism e-commerce. The innovation of agricultural product brand marketing extends beyond technological and product advancements to include innovations in marketing strategies and mindsets. Pingguo City needs to gain a deep understanding of consumer demands, identify the core values and distinctive features of its agricultural product brands, and select appropriate marketing channels for promotion. By continuously optimizing and innovating marketing strategies while staying attuned to market changes and emerging technological trends, the city can more accurately identify target consumer groups and formulate more effective marketing strategies. Pingguo City boasts a rich red cultural heritage and has been honored as the "Hometown of Longevity in China." It can leverage the appeal, influence, and driving force of red tourism, health and wellness tourism, border culture and customs tourism, and rural tourism to explore a "tourism + characteristic agriculture" model. For instance, the Pingguo Shiyi Modern Sericulture Industry Demonstration Zone adopts a model of "industry-university-research + cooperatives + farmers," promoting the development of the sericulture industry among farmers in surrounding towns and attracting primary and secondary school students to engage in sericulture agricultural tourism and research activities in mulberry gardens. In addition, as the first and only county-level city in Guangxi with two Tier—A professional football clubs, a unique status nationwide, Pingguo has attracted a large number of fans and tourists in recent years. By organizing regional agricultural product exhibitions and sales events during football matches, the city provides fans from various regions with a more immersive experience of Pingguo's distinctive agricultural products, thereby enhancing the brand influence of these products through the platform of football events.
- **2.2 Strength-threat strategy** The strength-threat strategy of agricultural product brand construction in Pingguo City refers to the brand building of agricultural products on the basis of using its own strengths to reduce the impact of external threats.
- **2. 2. 1** Strengthening scientific and technological support and promoting the cultivation of superior varieties. (i) It is necessary to vigorously promote the high-standard cultivation, breeding, and extension of citrus, oil-tea camellia, sericulture, poultry, and other industries, support the construction of seed industry demonstra-

tion zones, enhance regional capacity for supplying improved varieties, and leverage the foundational role of the seed industry in advancing high-quality agricultural development. (ii) It is recommended to actively promote the application of new agricultural technologies and continuously improve the quality of agricultural products. Strengthen cooperation with leading enterprises and higher education institutions to extend standardized production technologies for fruits such as bananas, dragon fruit, and Orah mandarins. Combined with relevant experimental research and demonstrations of production techniques, this will provide technical support for enhancing agricultural product quality^[8]. (iii) It is recommended to promote green cultivation and breeding models, develop and extend green production technologies such as origin cleaning, water-saving irrigation, reduction of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and recycling of waste materials. Steadily expand integrated and rotational farming and symbiotic models such as "rice-crayfish co-culture" and "red-fleshed honey pomelo + freerange chicken farming under forests. "

2.2.2 Accelerating the construction of talent team and improving the level of digital management. The cultivation of professional talent and agricultural industrialization, along with the building of agricultural product brands, are mutually reinforcing and synergistic. To enhance the brand image of Pingguo's agricultural products and achieve high-quality agricultural development in the city, it is essential to further optimize the training pathways for agricultural technical professionals. This should be guided by the employment needs of agricultural industrialization, with targeted focus on key technological advancements such as pest and disease control, soil quality improvement, and integrated water and fertilizer management. Emphasis should be placed on practical application to provide growth opportunities for technical experts. Besides, efforts should be made to cultivate versatile talents with interdisciplinary skills, particularly by developing a modern market operations team that meets the demands of agricultural product brand competition. Continuous strengthening of brand promotion and marketing for agricultural products is crucial. Relevant talent and intellectual property protection policies must be implemented in detail, guiding various professionals to participate in entrepreneurship competitions, apply for trademarks and patents, and seek geographical indication certifications during their entrepreneurial and employment endeavors. In addition, enhancing digital management capabilities can effectively increase the market appeal, competitiveness, and influence of agricultural product brands. Promoting the deep integration of new-generation information technologies such as the Internet of Things, big data, and artificial intelligence with the "Three Products and One Standard" (quality, brand, standardized production, and traceability) in agricultural production will enable traceability of product origins, merchant information, and inspection results through a "single code." The adoption of an "Internet + farmers' market" management model will facilitate the integration of online and offline markets. Encouraging and supporting farmers' markets to connect with e-commerce platforms or online stores, leveraging live-streaming sales and short video promotions, will boost the sales of high-quality agricultural products and enhance their market competitiveness.

- **2.3** Weakness-opportunity strategy The weakness-opportunity strategy of agricultural product brand construction in Pingguo City refers to the brand building of agricultural products on the basis of making full use of external opportunities to make up for internal weaknesses and reverse the status quo.
- **2.3.1** Optimizing industrial structure and strengthening pillar industries. (i) Relying on the resource endowment advantages of Pingguo City, we will establish agricultural demonstration zones with regional characteristics and strengths. This includes creating new industrial demonstration zones by introducing major planting, breeding, industrial cluster, and industrial town projects, as well as developing leisure agricultural demonstration zones by capitalizing on the area's rich tourism resources. These efforts will further expand, strengthen, and optimize regionally distinctive agricultural industries, promoting a "specialized" development path for agriculture. (ii) Establishing a fully integrated industry chain model—covering breeding, processing, and marketing—such as a "poultry breeding-feed processing-hatchery-broiler and duck farming-meat processing" system, will help increase agricultural output value and farmers' income. (iii) Promoting the production of green and high-quality agricultural products by highlighting the benchmark and exemplary role of green food, organic agricultural products, and geographical indication products in enhancing brand appeal. Policy guidance will be used to boost the enthusiasm and initiative of enterprises and producers in engaging in green and high-quality agricultural production.
- Building a well-known brand based on characteristic strengths. We need to adhere to the principle of "government guidance, market dominance and enterprise main body", focus on the characteristics of agricultural products in Pingguo City, focus on strengthening brand building and protection, and promote the "brand" development of agricultural industry. (i) It is suggested to continue to cultivate brands, implement the brand promotion project of agricultural products, and focus on promoting a series of well-known brands such as "Pingguo Dragon Fruit" and "Pingguo Guizhong Spotted Pig". (ii) It is proposed to strengthen the quality control of agricultural products, improve the level of production organization and standardization of agricultural products, ensure product quality, and enhance consumers' trust and loyalty to the brand. Build e-commerce supply chain management system, pay close attention to quality control testing and product traceability, shape regional public brands, smooth production and marketing channels, support leading enterprises to do a good job in brand management of agricultural products, explore the establishment of "public brand + enterprise brand" management mechanism, and strive to improve brand scale and efficiency^[5]. (iii) It is proposed to accelerate the integration of primary, secondary and tertiary industries, build leisure agriculture and rural tourism demonstration sites, modern characteristic agricultural industrial parks,

- etc., and make use of the demonstration role and influence of industrial integration to further promote the brand development of agricultural products.
- **2.4** Weakness-threat strategy The weakness-threat strategy of agricultural product brand construction in Pingguo City refers to the brand building of agricultural products on the basis of trying to overcome their own weakness and actively respond to external threats.
- 2.4.1 Strengthening policy support and guarantee. Policy support and guarantees are crucial for the building of agricultural product brands. The Pingguo municipal government should play a macro-control role by providing policy guidance and financial support for agricultural brand development, as well as guiding and encouraging agricultural enterprises to participate in brand building and marketing activities. (i) Continued efforts should be made to increase financial investment and subsidies, particularly for agricultural projects and enterprises with development potential but insufficient funds. The Pingguo government should further promote the implementation of national policies supporting "agriculture, rural areas, and farmers" as well as the development of small, medium, and micro enterprises, so as to foster sustained and healthy growth in the agricultural processing industry. At the same time, it is essential to establish and improve the quality standard system for agricultural products, strengthen supervision over agricultural brands, and ensure the authenticity and reliability of their image. (ii) It is recommended to learn from agricultural development models in other regions and, through comparative analysis, identify the optimal development path suited to local conditions. Additionally, efforts should be made to enhance investment promotion, strengthen professional organizations, and cultivate talent to boost innovation capabilities in agricultural science and technology. (iii) There is a need to improve the agricultural support system, including managing inflation expectations to ensure overall stability in agricultural product prices, thereby protecting farmers' interests.
- **2.4.2** Attaching importance to brand differentiation development and image management. (i) Emphasis should be placed on brand marketing and market promotion, with careful management of relationships among different agricultural product brands within the region to maximize brand benefits. Pingguo City should adopt diversified marketing strategies, including online social media campaigns, offline exhibition participation, and the establishment of partnership networks. It is also important to successfully organize events such as Pingguo "Friendship Festival" and the Farmers' Harvest Festival, establish modern platforms for exhibiting and selling distinctive agricultural products, and facilitate the participation of products from modern agricultural demonstration zones in promotional events to enhance the visibility of Pingguo's agricultural products. (ii) It is recommended to innovate products and services to meet diverse consumer demands. As consumers increasingly prioritize quality and health attributes of agricultural products, brands in Pingguo must continually innovate by developing new

products and services that align with market needs. Utilizing internet platforms for differentiated brand marketing and launching customized products for specific consumer groups can effectively enhance the brand's market competitiveness. (iii) Strengthening the development of brand storytelling and innovating consumer experiences are essential. By narrating compelling brand stories and delivering high-quality consumer experiences, trust and loyalty toward the brand can be strengthened. Pingguo City can integrate science education with Party building and patriotic education, combine industrial culture with red culture, and develop a "green + red" agricultural culture as the core of its brand narrative. Through packaging design, brand communication, and other methods, the appeal and recognition of the brand can be enhanced.

3 Conclusions

At present, Pingguo's abundant resources, significant geographical advantages, robust talent support, and the rapid growth of the "Internet +" industry provide a solid foundation for the development of its county-level agricultural products. However, in the face of intense competition due to product homogeneity and shifting market demands, the branding and development of agricultural products in Pingguo City still have a long way to go. Moving forward, Pingguo should actively align with national strategies such as rural revitalization, seize policy opportunities aimed at integrating primary, secondary, and tertiary industries in rural areas, and capitalize on the development of digital village pilot programs. Efforts should focus on promoting the convergence of agriculture, culture, sports, and tourism, leveraging the strengths of co-construction, co-governance, and sharing to engage all stakeholders in the branding initiative of agricultural products. Only through these measures can Pingguo optimize its traditional industrial structure, facilitate the emergence of leading agricultural product brands, increase farmers' income, and achieve innovation and sustainable development in the national agricultural industry.

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