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Marketing Strategy for Dragon Fruit Farming in Sukamaju Village, Telulimpoe District, Sinjai Regency

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Abstract: This research is motivated by the significant development of dragon fruit farming in Sukamaju Village, which has high production potential but still faces marketing constraints such as dependence on middlemen, which results in suboptimal farmer income. The purpose of this study was to determine strategies for increasing dragon fruit farming income in Sukamaju Village, Tellulimpoe District, Sinjai Regency. This study uses a quantitative descriptive method with a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis as the primary analytical tool to formulate the strategy. Sampling was conduted using purposive sampling of 40 dragon fruit farmers. The analysis results indicate that dragon farming is in a very strong strategic position and has good prospects for development. This is evidenced by a total score of 3.88 for the Internal Factor Matrix (IFAS) and 3.85 for the External Factor Matrix (EFAS). The Internal-External (IE) Matrix analysis place the farm in cell I, within the "Grow and Build" strategy area. Therefore, the most appropriate strategy to implement is an aggressive and intensive strategy. Based on the SWOT Matrix, the priority strategic alternative is the SO (Strengths-Opportunities) Strategy, which focuses on leveraging key strengths such as agro-climate suitability and early harvest times to saize significant market opportunities through digital marketing and processed product development.

Keywords: Marketing strategy, Dragon Fruit Farming, SWOT Analysis

1. Introduction

The agricultural sector is a strategic sector in Indonesia's economic development because it plays a role in providing food, absorbing labor, and increasing the income of rural communities. One subsector that continues to grow is horticulture, which has high economic value and promising market prospects. Horticultural commodities not only contribute to food security but also have the potential to improve farmers' welfare through the development of agribusiness-based enterprises. In recent years, dragon fruit has become one of the horticultural commodities experiencing increasing demand due to growing public awareness of healthy food consumption.

Dragon fruit's superior nutritional value, such as vitamin C, fiber, and antioxidants, makes it highly sought after by consumers. In addition to being consumed fresh, dragon fruit also has the potential to be developed into various value-added processed products, such as juice, jam, and chips. The increasing consumption of healthy fruit among the public opens up significant opportunities for the development of dragon fruit farming. However, the increase in production has not always been in line with the increase in farmers' incomes, due to persistent obstacles in marketing, distribution, and market share.

In Sinjai Regency, particularly in Sukamaju Village, dragon fruit farming is growing rapidly and has become a horticultural commodity that is beginning to be commercially cultivated. Data from the paper shows that dragon fruit production in this region has increased from approximately 950 tons in 2020 to approximately 1,250 tons in 2024. This situation indicates significant business potential. However, this increase in production has not been accompanied by an effective marketing system. Most farmers still rely on middlemen, resulting in a relatively weak bargaining position, and farm-level selling prices tend to fluctuate, especially during the peak harvest season.

Marketing issues are a critical issue in the development of the dragon fruit agribusiness. Farmers generally still rely on conventional marketing methods, with limited access to modern markets and digital marketing. Furthermore, product diversification is still low, resulting in underutilization of the added value of their products. In these circumstances, appropriate marketing strategies are needed to enable farmers to increase product competitiveness, expand market reach, and achieve higher profits. The marketing strategy approach not only includes aspects of product, price, distribution, and promotion, but also needs to consider internal and external factors that influence business success.

One approach that can be used to formulate a marketing strategy is a SWOT analysis. This analysis is used to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced in business development. For dragon fruit farming in Sukamaju Village, strengths include agro-climate suitability, increased production, economic value, and product attractiveness. Meanwhile, weaknesses include dependence on middlemen, a lack of understanding of marketing strategies, and limited diversification of processed products. Externally, opportunities arise from increasing market demand for healthy fruit and the use of digital media, while threats stem from market competition and price fluctuations.

Given these conditions, research on the marketing strategy for dragon fruit farming in Sukamaju Village is crucial for formulating appropriate and applicable strategies. The research findings are expected to contribute to the development of horticultural agribusiness, particularly dragon fruit, through recommended marketing strategies that can increase business competitiveness, expand market access, and boost farmer income. Furthermore, this research can also serve as a reference for local governments, farmer groups, and agribusinesses in formulating policies for horticultural commodity development at the local level.

2. Methodology

2.1 Type of Research

This study uses a quantitative descriptive approach to analyze the marketing strategies of dragon fruit farming in Sukamaju Village, Tellulimpoe District, Sinjai Regency. This approach was chosen because it allows for a systematic description of actual marketing conditions and identifies internal and external factors influencing dragon fruit farming development.

2.2 Location and Time of Research

This research was conducted in Sukamaju Village, Tellulimpoe District, Sinjai Regency. The location was selected through purposive sampling, considering that the area is a center for horticultural production, particularly dragon fruit. The research was conducted over three months, from June to August 2025.

2.3 Types of Research Data

The research location was purposively determined in Sukamaju Village, Tellulimpoe District, Sinjai Regency, South Sulawesi Province, considering that the area is one of the dragon fruit production centers in Sinjai Regency. The research was conducted from August to September 2025.

2.4 Data Collection Techniques

The data used consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly from farmers through field

observations, interviews, and questionnaires. Secondary data was obtained from documents from relevant agencies, such as the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the Sinjai Regency Agriculture Service, and various relevant scientific literature.

2.5 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted using a SWOT analysis approach. The analysis stages included identifying internal and external factors, developing Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) and External Factor Evaluation (EFE) matrices, and then formulating alternative strategies using the SWOT matrix. This analysis was used to determine the most appropriate marketing strategy to increase the competitiveness and income of dragon fruit farmers in the research area.

2.6 Sampling Technique

The research population was all dragon fruit farmers in Sukamaju Village. The sampling technique used purposive sampling, with the following respondent criteria: (1) farmers actively cultivating dragon fruit, (2) having run a business for at least one planting season, and (3) willing to be respondents. The sample size was set at 40 farmers, which was considered representative to describe the condition of farming businesses at the research location.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Identification of Internal Factors

The results of the study on calculating internal factors of the marketing strategy for dragon fruit farming in Sukamaju Village, Tellulimpoe District, Sinjai Regency can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. IFAS Matrix

Internal Factors	Weight	Rating	Score Value
STRENGTH (S)			
Agroclimate Suitability	0.13	4.44	0.58
Increased Production	0.12	4.00	0.47
Nutritional Value and Unique Appeal	0.1	3.5	0.36
High Economic Value	0.09	3.08	0.28
Relatively Fast Harvest Period	0.13	4.28	0.53
SUB TOTAL	**0.56**	**19.31**	**2.22**
WEAKNESSES (W)			
Dependence on Middlemen	0.12	4.11	0.49
Low Understanding of Marketing Strategies	0.09	3.06	0.27
Traditional Post-Harvest Practices	0.13	4.39	0.56
Limited Diversification of Processed Products	0.10	3.36	0.33
SUBTOTAL	**0.44**	**14.92**	**1.66**
TOTAL	**1.00**	**34.23**	**3.88**

Source: Primary Data processed 2025

The IFAS Matrix analysis results indicate that the dragon fruit farm at the study site has a very strong internal position, with a total score of 3.88, significantly above the average of 2.5. This favorable position is primarily supported by strength factors, which collectively contribute a score of 2.22. Despite its internal strength, the farm is not without weaknesses, which total a score of 1.66. The high scores on these two factors indicate that immature sales methods and a market structure dominated by middlemen are the most serious obstacles that suppress potential income and prevent farmers from obtaining better added value from their products.

3.2 Identification of External Factors

The results of the study on calculating external factors for marketing strategies for dragon fruit farming in Sukamaju Village, Tellulimpoe District, Sinjai Regency can be seen in the following table:

Table 2. EFAS Matrix

External Factors	Weight	Rating	Score Value
OPPORTUNITIES (O)			
High Market Demand	0.10	3.47	0.35
Increasing Healthy Lifestyles	0.10	3.28	0.32
Marketing Opportunities Through Digital Media	0.13	4.44	0.58
Strengthening Bargaining Position Through Digital Media	0.13	4.31	0.55
Development of Processed Products	0.11	3.64	0.39
SUB TOTAL	**0.56**	**19.14**	**2.19**
THREATS (T)			
Competition with Other Producing Regions	0.10	3,78	0.33
Seasonal Price Fluctuations	0.12	3,75	0.50
Farmers' Weak Bargaining Position	0.09	3,81	0.27
Product Perishability	0.13	3,89	0.55
SUB TOTAL	**0.44**	**15,22**	**1.66**
TOTAL	**1,00**	**34**	**3.85**

Source: Primary Data processed 2025

The EFAS Matrix analysis results indicate that the dragon fruit farm is highly responsive to its external environment, with a total score of 3.85, well above the average of 2.5. This position is primarily driven by strategic opportunities, which have a total score of 2.19. On the other hand, there are several external threats with a total score of 1.66 that require vigilance. Overall, the conclusion of this EFAS analysis is very positive. With a total opportunity score (2.19) greater than the total threat score (1.66), this farm has a strong external foundation for growth.

3.3 Internal-External (IE) Matrix

The Internal-External (IE) Matrix is a strategic management tool that maps a business unit's competitive position onto a nine-cell grid, based on two primary dimensions: the total score of the IFAS Matrix (internal factor analysis) on the horizontal axis and the total score of the EFAS Matrix (external factor analysis) on the vertical axis. It begins by calculating the total score of both analyses and then plotting the results onto the matrix to find the intersection point that determines the business's position.

The Internal-External (IE) Matrix Analysis is a crucial tool for mapping a business's strategic position based on an evaluation of its internal and external conditions. Based on the previous analysis, the dragon fruit farm achieved a total IFAS score of 3.88, placing it in the Strong internal category. At the same time, its total EFAS score of 3.85 places it in the High external category. When these two coordinates are mapped, the dragon fruit farm's position falls firmly within Cell I of the nine-cell matrix. A position in Cell I represents the most ideal scenario and falls within the "Grow and Build" strategy area. This indicates that the dragon fruit farm not only possesses very strong internal strengths but also operates in an external environment brimming with opportunities and has an excellent ability to respond to them. The combination of strong internal capabilities and a supportive external environment creates a solid foundation for significant expansion.

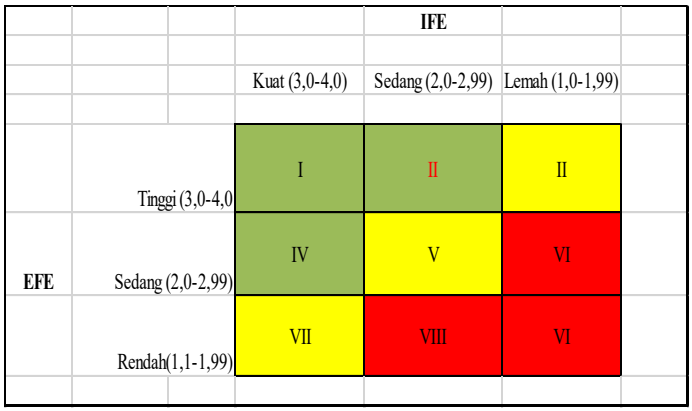


Figure 1. IE Matrix

3.4 SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis is a method for systematically identifying various factors to formulate a strategy. This approach is based on logic aimed at maximizing strengths and opportunities, while minimizing weaknesses and threats. Through a SWOT analysis, various alternative strategies can be formulated that can be developed to increase the income of dragon fruit farming businesses in Sukamaju Village, Tellulimpoe District, Sinjai Regency.

Tabel 3. SWOT Matrix

IFAS / EFAS	***STRENGTHS (S)***	***WEAKNESSES (W)***
	Agroclimatic Suitability Increased Production Nutritional Value and Unique Appeal High Economic Value Relatively Fast Harvest Period	Dependence on Middlemen Poor Understanding of Marketing Strategies Traditional Post-Harvest Practices Limited Diversification of Processed Products
OPPORTUNITIES (O) High Market Demand Increasing Healthy Lifestyles Marketing Opportunities Through Digital Media Strengthening Bargaining Position Through Digital Media Product Development	***SO STRATEGY*** Aggressive Digital-Based Market Penetration: Leveraging increased production (S2) and high economic value (S4) to meet substantial market demand (O1). This strategy is implemented through intensive digital marketing (O3) that emphasizes the product's uniqueness and nutritional value (S3) to attract consumers who embrace a healthy lifestyle (O2). Development of Superior Processed Products: Leveraging agro-climatic conditions (S1) that produce quality raw materials and a fast harvest period (S5) to ensure supply continuity. This strength is directed at seizing opportunities for developing processed products (O5), thereby creating high-value derivative products. Strengthening the "Sinjai Dragon Fruit" Branding: Combining all existing strengths—from agroclimate (S1) to product quality (S3)—to build a strong brand image through digital media (O3). The goal is to strengthen the bargaining	***WO STRATEGY*** Digital Marketing Capacity Building: Addressing the lack of understanding of marketing strategies (W2) by leveraging digital marketing opportunities (O3). This can be done through training or mentoring farmers on how to use social media and e-commerce, which can ultimately reduce dependence on middlemen (W1). Post-Harvest Modernization for Added Value: Leveraging opportunities for processed product development (O5) and high market demand (O1) as momentum to improve traditional post-harvest practices (W3). With a clear target market for quality products, farmers will be motivated to implement better sorting and packaging practices.

	position (O4) and create a unique product identity in the market.	
TREATHS (T) 1. Competition with Other Producing Regions 2. Seasonal Price Fluctuations 3. Weak Bargaining Position of Farmers 4. Perishable Nature of Products	***STRATEGI ST*** Product Differentiation Based on Local Excellence: Using agro-climatic suitability (S1) and product uniqueness (S3) as the basis for differentiation. By highlighting the unique characteristics of "Sinjai Dragon Fruit," this farm can compete more effectively with products from other producing regions (T1). Supply Chain Optimization: Leveraging the fast harvest period (S5) to plan a more efficient distribution channel. The goal is to minimize product storage time in the warehouse, thereby mitigating the impact of perishable product characteristics (T4) and avoiding losses due to seasonal price fluctuations (T2).	***STRATEGI WT*** Strengthening Farmer Institutions: Addressing farmers' weak bargaining position (T3) and dependence on middlemen (W1) by establishing or strengthening economic institutions such as cooperatives. Cooperatives can act as collective entities for price negotiations, seeking new markets, and serving as training centers to address the lack of understanding of marketing strategies (W2). Implementing Post-Harvest Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): Reducing the impact of perishable products (T4) by abandoning traditional post-harvest practices (W3). This can be achieved by implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for sorting, grading, and packaging, which can extend shelf life and maintain product quality.

Source: Primary data, processed 2025

Based on the results of the analysis, alternative strategies to increase income from dragon fruit farming in Sukamaju Village, Tellulimpoe District, Sinjai Regency, are as follows:

3.4.1 S-O Strategy

The SO strategy is the most fundamental and aggressive approach within this analytical framework, closely aligned with the "Grow and Build" mandate of the IE Matrix. The primary focus of this strategy is to leverage all dominant internal strengths to proactively seize any external opportunities that arise.

3.4.2 W-O Strategy

The WO strategy is a turnaround approach, intelligently leveraging external opportunities to address and improve internal weaknesses. This strategy plays a crucial role in supporting an aggressive growth strategy (SO). By strengthening a fragile internal foundation, this strategy ensures that existing weaknesses do not hinder future business expansion and growth.

3.4.3 S-T Strategy

This is an approach that focuses on using internal strengths as a shield to face or mitigate various external threats. Although the dragon fruit farming business in Sinjai is considered strong, the external environment still presents risks that can disrupt business stability. Therefore, this strategy is designed to leverage existing superior assets and capabilities defensively to protect the business from competitive pressures, market fluctuations, and other risks.

3.4.4 W-T Strategy

The WT strategy is the most defensive approach, aiming to minimize internal weaknesses while simultaneously avoiding external threats. In the "Grow and Build" scenario experienced by the Sinjai dragon fruit farm, this strategy may not be a top priority, but it plays a crucial role as a foundation for risk management. The goal is to close vulnerabilities to prevent the business from collapsing under severe external pressure.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the marketing strategy for dragon fruit farming in Sukamaju Village, Tellulimpoe District, Sinjai Regency: (a) The strategic position of dragon fruit farming in Sukamaju Village is very strong and promising for development. This is evidenced by a total IFAS Matrix score of 3.88, indicating solid internal strength, and a total EFAS Matrix score of 3.85, indicating excellent responsiveness to the external environment. (b) The Internal-External (IE) Matrix analysis places dragon fruit farming in Cell I, within the "Grow and Build" strategy area. This position indicates that the most appropriate strategy to implement is an aggressive and intensive strategy. (c) Based on the SWOT Matrix, the highest priority strategic alternative is the SO (Strengths-Opportunities) Strategy. This strategy focuses on leveraging core strengths such as agro-climatic suitability and an early harvest period to seize significant market opportunities, primarily through digital marketing and processed product development. Other supporting strategies are aimed at addressing weaknesses such as reliance on middlemen and traditional post-harvest practices, as well as mitigating threats such as competition and price fluctuations.

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5. Suggestions

Based on the conclusions that have been outlined, here are some suggestions that can be submitted to various related parties: **For Dragon Fruit Farmers,** (1) Establishing Economic Institutions: Farmers are advised to proactively establish or strengthen institutions such as cooperatives or Farmer Group Associations (Gapoktan). This step is crucial for improving collective bargaining power, reducing dependence on middlemen, and providing a platform for collective access to information and markets. (2) Adopting Digital Marketing: Farmers are expected to actively learn and utilize digital platforms such as social media (Facebook, Instagram) and e-commerce for marketing. This can expand market reach, shorten long distribution chains, and ultimately increase income. (3) Improving Post-Harvest Quality and Diversification: Farmers need to begin implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for post-harvest handling, such as proper sorting and packaging to increase sales value. Additionally, farmers can explore opportunities for small-scale product diversification, such as making juice or jam, to add value.

For Policy Stakeholders, (1) Institutional Facilitation and Assistance: The Sinjai Regency Agriculture Office and the Cooperatives and SMEs Office are advised to provide facilitation, assistance, and legal assistance for dragon fruit farmers in establishing cooperatives or Gapoktan (Farmer Groups). (2) Providing Training and Education: The government is expected to regularly hold training and outreach programs relevant to farmers' needs. Training materials can cover digital marketing, modern post-harvest techniques, financial management, and technical processing of dragon fruit derivatives. (3) Providing Access to Capital and Technology: Providing easy access to capital sources (for example, through the People's Business Credit (KUR) program) and appropriate technology assistance for post-harvest processing. This assistance is crucial for encouraging farmers to diversify their products.

For future researchers, (1) Analysis of Strategy Implementation Effectiveness: This research focuses on strategy formulation. Future researchers are advised to conduct a study on the implementation effectiveness of the recommended strategies to measure their tangible impact. (2) Downstream Industry Feasibility Study: Conduct a more in-depth feasibility study on the potential for developing a downstream industry or dragon fruit processing unit in Sinjai Regency, including financial, technical, and market analysis for specific processed products. (3) Consumer Behavior Analysis: Conduct research focused on analyzing consumer behavior and preferences for fresh dragon fruit and its processed products. The results of this study can be used to develop sharper and more targeted branding and marketing strategies.

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