

The Evaluation of the Producers' View towards a Local Agricultural Food Product for Marketing; Isot Pepper of Sanliurfa-GAP, Turkey

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Abstract: It is aimed to evaluate producers' expectations, concerns and views towards to a local agricultural product, known as isot pepper, in GAP Region-Şanlıurfa of Turkey by means of problems of this sector by this study. The data come from 125 producers' surveys which were selected by simple random sampling method that were mainly from small scale entrepreneurship and interviewed face to face by the questionnaire. Likert scales and SPSS were used for the analyses. The results indicate that taste is the most important factor, more than half of the selling was done directly to the consumers within the province, mostly in black color with an open bag way. The price, branding and marketing were the main problems in the sector. The producers were not satisfied with the current prices and there were differences between the current and expected prices by 8.4% for the quality isot pepper and 22.7% for the normal one. These differences can be closed easily by differentiated product presentation, advertising and branding This study is the one of first of its kind for Şanlıurfa isot pepper in terms of the producer side.

Keywords: GAP-Şanlıurfa-Turkey, isot pepper, local agricultural products, marketing, producers' views and expectations

I. Introduction

It is essential to make production for increasing the population's food and consumption needs to be met. The amount of goods and benefits can increase with the production and by this way the consumer demands could be met. A product can be located in the market as long as it meets the consumers' needs. It is important to be in sustainable production at agriculture for the benefit of both side, the consumer and the producer. Therefore, consumers' demands should be known and the production must be shaped accordingly these demands. The demands based on attitudes, expectations, satisfactions and views which are important indicators in agriculture [1 to 6] and these indicators form willingness to pay [7, 8] and it is an important tool for formation of the appropriate price [9 to 11]. On the other hand, the producer is required to achieve satisfactory profit out of this production. Here are the forefront of marketing activities that is showing a continuation of production feature and it is directed to the production [12].

Şanlıurfa has significant potential in terms of agricultural production areas, due to having the fertile plains, such as Harran plain and being in the GAP (The Southeastern Anatolia Project) Region [13]. Diversification is an important subject for agricultural productions in terms of being alternative crop for better income for the producers. Red pepper cultivation is more prone to being an alternative product in agricultural production. Almost half of the fresh red pepper production in Turkey are produced in Şanlıurfa with 78,294 tons of annual average production [14, 15]. The isot pepper is produced as a spice either by fabrication or traditionally from fresh red pepper under the sun with some special natural treatments, either in red or black colors in Şanlıurfa. In this way, both the lifetime and economic value of the fresh red pepper is increased. If the fresh red pepper may consider as basic product then the isot pepper might be considered as potential or enriched product in terms of marketing. The potential product could be defined as to satisfy consumers' needs by addition some features or differentiation of the product [16] by processing. The color differences mainly arise from treatment styles under the sun with plastic bags and generally it is serving for sale to the costumers in open bags. On the other hand, packaging is important for the consumers, too. Besides, isot pepper is being a spice for foods and also it is a very useful product to health, too. In other words, red pepper is a high value product both in economics and vitamins aspects and it has a quite wide range of usage areas [17]. Many studies have shown that capsaicin (red pepper) may be useful as a nutraceutical, ameliorating metabolic profile and cardiovascular function [18]. Some studies in recent years showed that due to the high concentration of pigment (carotenoids) in red pepper and the vitamins (C, A, E vitamins) minimize cardiovascular diseases and also the risk and

incidence of certain cancers [19 to 21]. In addition, it has a positive effect on the regulation of blood sugar (hypoglycemic) [22] and may have an inhibitory effect on some neurological diseases, too [23]. It can also prevent unwanted oxidation reactions in the body [24, 25] and has been found to play a role in preventing Type 2 diabetes [26]. There are significant effective amount of the carotenoid antioxidants available in isot pepper which is made from fresh red peppers are said to have a positive impact on human health [27].

There are 15 enterprises engaged in manufacturing fabricated isot pepper, 3 enterprises are produced with traditional methods and the number of family businesses engaged in traditional production is around 550 in Şanlıurfa [15]. The total annual production is more than 3,500 tons in Şanlıurfa [15]. On the other hand, the products with regional features are used as a tool for development. In this way, both small family businesses are obtaining more profit and it is also increasing the value added of these products by the processing. Şanlıurfa isot pepper is a product with the local property, because of many reasons but it was not obtained the expected added value and branding yet [28].

The scientific studies are needed to affect positively for the better image and the profile of Şanlıurfa isot pepper in the market. Because, traditional isot pepper production is preferred by the consumers. It has a market value but it is not at desired level, too. These studies could also be used to ensure the sustainability of local enterprises, producers, protection of local values and as a tool for regional development. It is aimed to determine the problems of isot pepper sector and to define the expectations of the producers in terms of marketing with this study. This study is the one of the first of its type in Şanlıurfa for isot pepper.

II. Materials and Methods

The main materials of this study was obtained from Şanlıurfa isot pepper producers which were selected by simple random sampling method and interviewed face to face by a questionnaire. Within this scope 125 surveys were conducted with the participants who produce isot pepper which were mainly from the small scale family enterprises. The obtained data was transferred to Excel with a coding plan and it is used for the analysis. It is aimed to get detail analysis to explore the situation of isot pepper in the markets by means of producers side and define their expectations for sustainable production.

Likert attitude scale was used in this study that is developed by R. Likert (1930) in USA and widely used by the researchers to define attitudes, behaviors and expectations of a certain group about the researched topic. There are two situations in Likert scale; the wanted and the unwanted case. In the questionnaires, various questions were asked to determine attitudes and expectations of the producers' towards to isot pepper in terms of marketing. The principle is that producers assign their judgment in the researched topics that is isot, dried red pepper, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" and focusing on these judgments. The judgment statements should have a single meaning and definite outcomes in order not to confuse the participants. The accepted confidence level in Likert scale is 85% in general [29]. Besides, the measurements were made using SPSS in order to define the reliability of statistics and intra class correlation coefficient for statistical significance.

2.1. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha is used for the evaluation of Likert type questions and it measures internal consistency, which provides information about the reliability of a multi-item scale. If the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is high, the scale of substances said to be consistent with each other [30]. Values exceeding 0.6 indicate internal consistent scales, in other words, all items incorporated in the scale measure the same underlying construct [31 to 33]. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient from data set found as 0.81 and interclass correlation coefficient significance of F test with true value 0 was measured as $p < 0.01$ and given in Table 1 that indicates this research is reliable.

III. Results and Discussion

The descriptive statistics are given Table 2, where 50.4% of respondents were female and 49.6% male and 59.2% of them graduated from primary school, 23.2% of them from high school, and 17.6% of them graduated from higher education schools. The information about the sales of the producers are located in Table 3. According to the results more than half of the producers are selling isot pepper directly to the consumers mostly with the open bags and black in color. This is expected due to being of the isot pepper a traditional local product. Direct selling is a case in favor of both producers and consumers alike. Firstly, both sides saves the certain amount of money that is paid for intermediation activities. Secondly, there is an direct communications between both side that results to saving of time to understand demands and supply sides each other's based on expectations [34].

Producers were asked a question with options in order to identify the problems of isot pepper sector. They were also asked to rank in order of importance of these options by giving them to scores. By this way, analysis of the producers' overview to the problems in the sector was determined. According to the results, the

most important problem was price that is the basic function of income. The least important one was the weight and the amount of it due to selling in open bag that is the consumers have the freedom to take any amount they want. The distribution of the factors that ranked by the producers are given in Table 4.

The price is the most important factors in the sector according to the results that is an expected result. In fact, price is a flexible marketing tool and a value that is determined by the producers to their product [16]. In other words, price is revenue for producers and expenditure for the consumers. In this sense, price is a function of income. Supply is a result of agricultural production activities based on some costs. The supply of agricultural products are shaped depending on the production conditions and the given price by the consumers for goods. Products in order to be seen in the consumer market depend on finding buyers to across the charges that is spent by the producers [12] in order to make production. The price should be satisfactory to the producers in order to be able to supply of the goods and also should be reasonable for the consumers to buy. The production technique is also one of the factors that is constituting the supply. Isot pepper has local special production process that makes distinctiveness among the other types. Therefore production place also has importance and ranked at second important factor by the producers. A great deal of research focuses on how consumers shop, but the rationale behind their chosen behaviors remains somewhat underserved [35]. Selling place (shops) play a major role in purchase decisions. The consumers want to be ensure about selling place that is simply the consumer wants to leave the store happy and satisfied [36]. Consumers, in other word customers, are the most important people for any organization. They are the resource upon which the success of the business depends. Consumer satisfaction is at the heart of the selling process. One estimate is that it costs five times as much to attract new customers as it does to keep an existing one. The relationship between the customer and the organization is, therefore, an important one [37] because of without the consumers the organization would not exist. Branding and the brand value are considered to be the net present value of the estimated future cash flows attributable to the brand [38].

The producers are able to sell isot pepper directly to the consumers due to being local product and more than half of selling is done by this way. So, the producers can easily get feedback from the consumers about their product. Producers were asked a question with options in order to identify the consumers preferences during shopping, like attention for buying or the reasons for selection. They were also asked to rank in order of importance of these options by giving them scores. In other words, it has been requested to make ranking from the highest to the smallest numbers according to the their preferences. By this way, analysis of the consumers' preferences to the buying was determined. According to the results, the most important preferences was the taste of the isot pepper that is the sense, perception to distinguish the flavor. A person can perceive literally hundreds of different tastes as combinations sensations [39]. Not only does food nourish the body, it provides nourishment for the soul. One reason that taste and smell sensations are important is that they prepare human bodies for digesting food. There is another reason why taste and smell are crucial to health due to these senses provide information about the food [40]. The least one was the price that may sounds a contradiction according to the results of the producers but it is self consistent and significant. The distribution of the factors that ranked by the producers are given in Table 5.

The most important details in two consecutive tables were given above was the price and these results were significant. The producers are not finding the current sales price as enough satisfying their expectations and expenditures. In other words, they consider that current sales price was low. This result was also confirmed by the consumers that they gave least attention to the price during the buying of isot pepper. It means that either price was low or not important as compared with the other factors for buying preferences to the consumers. This result was also concluded that the survey with the producers were consistent itself. Accordingly, the producers were asked that what should be the price of quality and the normal isot pepper in the market. The responses received are given in Table 6.

In fact, the quality isot pepper selling price was around 30 TL (Turkish Lira) and the normal ones were around 15 TL at surveyed time. The differences between the current and expected prices are low that is 8.4% for the quality one and 22.7% for the normal ones. These differences can be closed with a simple marketing techniques such as promotion, advertising and more information about its benefit for health at broadcasting. The increase of economic and social welfare affects the consumer behaviors. A study conducted in Tokat province of Turkey is showed that more than half of the consumers are concerned about food security in terms of health consideration. It is also identified that 75.8% of the consumers tend to overpay for safe food. It has been concluded that the most of the information about food safety acquired from radio-television programs and TV advertising in which most influenced on the decision of purchase [41].

Producers were asked a question with options in order to identify the market problems of isot pepper sector. They were also asked to rank in order to importance of these options by giving them scores that is starting from the heights value to the lowest ones. By this way, the market problems of the sector was determined. According to the results, the most important problem was marketing. Because of isot pepper is being a local product, there is a marketing problem in general. In fact, finance, marketing and access to the

domestic markets are the major problems for small scale entrepreneurship. The small scale industries play a significant role in the economic development of the country by stimulating entrepreneurial skills, generating employment and contributing to export [42]. The least important one was the food safety, diseases and pests. This result is contradictory to the consumers. Since its produced by locally that is mainly by small family entrepreneurship, the producers believe that there is no risk of diseases and pests, so food safety is ensured. On the other hand, food safety is an important indicator for the costumers. In this regard, food safety concept has the most fundamental differences between the producers and consumers' point of view. The distribution of the factors that ranked by the producers are given in Table 7 and these results are significant.

Likert type of questions were used in order to determine the perception and attitude of the producers towards to the isot pepper by given factors. Participation factors were measured on the producers. Accordingly, the taste of isot pepper has the highest participation, where the lowest involvement was the place of sold. This is another contradiction between the producers and the consumers. The selling place is important for the customers in terms of easily access to goods for selection, visibility, accessibility and trust. However, selling place has not been enough solely, the sellers are also as important as in marketing. The producers believe that it is not important for quality products. In fact, it might be true for only local markets are taken into considerations, but not true for domestic and international markets, too. Given answers were located in Table 8.

IV. Tables

Table 1. Intraclass Correlation Coefficient

	Intraclass Correlation	95% Confidence Interval		F Test with True Value 0			
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Value	df1	df2	Sig
Single Measures	0,094	0,071	0,125	5,249	124,0	4960	0,000*
Average Measures	0,809	0,758	0,854	5,249	124,0	4960	0,000*

*indicates statistically importance of 1%

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	The Producer	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender	If male 1, female 2	1,50	0,502
Education level	If graduated from primary school 1, from high school 2, from higher education 3	1,58	0,774
Years In Sector	Years in production of isot pepper sector	13,50	11,809
Production amount	The average yearly total production amount (kg/year)	3007,14	11906,682
Selling amount	The average yearly selling amount (kg/ year)	2990,86	11908,055

Table 3. Some information about the producer sales

Sales are made to whom?	%	What is the preferred color in Sales?	%
Wholesalers	14.4	Black	44.8
Retailers	4.8	Red	20.0
Markets	3.2	Both of them	35.2
Directly to consumer	53.6	Where are sales made?	%
Some of these	24	Sales within the province	70.4
How are sales performed?	%	Intra-regional sales	12.0
With the open bag	71.2	Within the country	11.2
With the packing box	5.4	Some of these	6.4
Both of them	23.4		

Table 4. The problem of isot pepper sectors

Factors	Percentage of importance
Price	78.97
Food safety certificate	72.57
Branding and brand values of trust given	73.60
Place of production (Produced province and Region)	78.40
Packaging and its appearance	59.52
Weight and the amount of it	56.34
Selling place/shop	76.91

Table 5. The consumer preferences during buying of the isot pepper

Factors (Of the isot pepper)	Percentage of importance
The color	85.26
The smell	80.57
The appearance	73.94
The hygiene conditions	84.12
The taste	89.83
The bitterness	81.37
The price	70.06

Table 6. The isot pepper prices should be based on producers (TL=Turkish Lira)

Isot pepper quality type	Minimum price	Maximum price	Average price
The quality isot pepper	25 TL	70 TL	32.52 TL
Normal isot pepper	10 TL	50 TL	18.41 TL

Table 7. The market problems of the isot pepper according to the producers

Factors (Of the isot pepper sector)	Percentage of importance
Market deficiency	68.8
Marketing	80.9
Inability to branding	67.4
Promotion	79.3
Counterfeit goods	67.2
Market prices	71.2
Lack of producers' associations	71.3
Food safety, diseases and pests	65.5

Table 8. The producers' participations to the factors

Factors (Of the isot pepper)	Percentage of importance
Color and smell are important	88.48
Taste is very important	93.12
Isot pepper is bitter and bitterness is important	88.16
Production province and region is important	87.68
Food security is important during the processing of it	84.48
The brand is important for marketing	80.48
Packaging is effective in buying for the consumers	71.68
Selling place is important to purchase	69.12
There are problems in the marketing sector	80.48
Isot pepper could not become a brand for marketing	75.20

V. Conclusion

Diversification is a need for sustainable agricultural production and necessary for better income for the farmers. Featured local agricultural products are important for regional development. Isot pepper is a diversification of fresh red pepper, an alternative product and has market value. There is a branding and marketing problems of isot pepper, due to being a local product and mainly produced by the small entrepreneurships. The current price was not found satisfactory by the producers to meet their expectations. The differences between the current and expected prices are 8.4% for the quality isot pepper and 22.7% for the normal isot pepper. These differences can be closed easily by differentiated product presentation, advertising, food safety certificate and branding. In fact the consumers are able to pay these differences, because price was found has less priority for buying isot pepper at consumers' surveys. The branding and marketing problems may have been overcome by the establishment of a producers' associations. In this way, the production would be achieved a more standard way with a food safety certificate and fulfill the needs of the consumers that makes contribution to branding. The majority of consumers are finding traditional food products as moderately safe [43]. The Counterfeit goods, the hygiene conditions, food safety, diseases and pests are important issues for both side, the consumers and the producers. The food safety certificate will eliminate the concerns of the consumers by this way too. The branding develops consumers' loyalty and satisfaction, too. The marketing and branding are the backbone of selling that helps to provide more income and sustainability for the producers. Establishment of supply and demand balance are important for the benefit of the both sides. The outcome of this research may be used to the establishment of this balance. This study is the one of first of its kind for Şanlıurfa isot pepper in terms of the producer side.

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