

The Future Is Now: Promoting and Selling the Philippines' Ube in the World Market

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Abstract: - One of the most popular sweets or desserts in the domestic and international market today since the year 1980's and 1990's is the Philippines' coconut-gel or the Nata de coco. Another delicious dessert, that is a local root crop, is the purple yam or the Ube. But unlike the Nata de coco, the Ube has not gained its marketable momentum in the international market. The purpose of this study is to raise the consciousness of the Ube local entrepreneurs in today's marketing and exporting the purple yam that will make the Ube, the next Nata de coco dessert overseas. The scope is limited only in the area of publicity and selling of Ube to the international market. This research enhances the awareness of the potential and current businessmen on the practical approach of promoting the Philippines' purple yam in the world market making it as the sought-after dessert nowadays.

Key Words: —*Dioscorea alata, ube, purple yam, root crop, desserts, nata de coco.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Dioscorea alata is the scientific name of the Ube (pronounced as OO-BHE). It is greyish-brown skins rooted crop. It is planted from months of May to December and its texture becomes soft when cooked. Ube has different variety like powder. Forms and uses of Ube at post-harvest stage can be powder for food coloring of popular, delicious, and wide variety of desserts.

Ube is a great source of potassium and vitamin C. It is also rich in antioxidants including anthocyanins which give them their vibrant hue and may help reduce blood pressure and blood sugar levels.

The Philippines' purple yam or Ube is already being accepted as the next big hit for the overseas market as referred by a local trade department. It is being distributed in the form of desserts in few restaurants in the US. And according a famous male-fashion magazine, patrons have to wait for weeks just to buy and taste of the Ube-flavored doughnut.

This violet-themed yam is a natural-marketing itself because as the customers are dipping or slicing through the dessert, they are fascinated with the uncanny color within.

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II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

During the 1990's era, a dessert called Nata de coco was making profits not only in the Philippines but also in other countries like Hong Kong, USA, and was very popular in Japan. The consumers' enthusiasm was advantageous to bring the admiration of this translucent, coconut-gel and chewy-product in its level of quality.

Without a doubt, Nata de coco flourished in the promotion and exporting to the different parts of the world.

Previous years before the covid-19 pandemic, the Philippine Ube is already rising in popularity in the export market but has not yet exploited and has not claimed its high status. Compared to the Nata de coco, the purple yam is yet to carry on its own potentiality in the export business.

III. CAUSES OF THE PROBLEM

Promotion channels for Ube business have not been fully utilized. Although there are several businesses of Ube products that already have infomercials and advertisements in the social media platforms, there are still many basic trade approaches that are needed to be done and to be done now.

So how Ube or the purple yam businesses can strategize to be internationally successful and to be able to delight the rising cravings of the export consumers at this present time?

IV. COURSES OF ACTION

The heed to the call of the consumers for being healthy, being self-conscious in what they do and in what they eat, makes Nata de coco special at this instant. Nutritional innovation in which it is promoted to be rich-in-fiber is prominent. With its sweetness, nutritionists re-created the improved variety dessert for the delight of its patrons.

The export business for Ube is best promoted through digital marketing. This action encompasses creating own e-commerce capable website, search engine marketing and the popular social media platforms.

As seen in a popular online selling platform, Ube is already available in many cities in the world. The only limitation is the logistics in some regions across the globe.

V. CONCLUSION

With the economic difficulty under current pandemic, promoting and selling has never been so challenging and to some extent, burdensome.

But still, with the timely evolution of digital platforms, the promotion and trade of goods is made convenient for both entrepreneur and consumer.

There are different factors which influence the risks in export business. One factor is consumer preferences and another is sales volume. Factors can also be the market demand and government regulations. But definitely, these risks can be calculated and revenues and profits will increase only if entrepreneurs perform due diligence. By taking this step in satisfying legal requirements, exporters will be protected from potential scams.

Selling online is the trend today in merchandising goods. It is the new normal. It can reach so many potential clients across the globe.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

For the purple yam to be successfully marketed and exported abroad, the involvement of people who will accomplish these actions, without exemptions are highly advisable.

Recommendation no. 1 is enhancing the branding. Putting "The New Nutritious and Delicious Ube" or other purposeful labels that would best describe the product is essential. Low calories and no cholesterol purple yam shall also be highlighted because

some folks nowadays are concerned about their healthy. They keen into what they are eating.

Recommendation no. 2 are enhancing the packaging and labelling. Glass jars with airtight-screw caps to be used for packaging a purple yam, for example, is probably the suitable way to preserve the Ube's freshness. The QR code should be part of the labelling also for nutrition list and webpage of the company or producer.

Business to business promotion strategy should be given a high regard is the no. 3 recommendation. Promote online to restaurant and grocery owners directly. With this approach, the of purple yams will be strategically available in food specialty outlets or distributors in some key cities. The Ube should be also promoted in major retailers abroad so that the product can establish its presence in the household cuisine.

Recommendation no. 4 is that entrepreneurs should seek promotion assistance from the trade and investment offices of the Philippine government across different cities abroad. These agencies specialize in trading and business matching.

The last, but not the least recommendation, is to tap the legitimate nata de coco accredited manufacturers, food processors, exporters and traders. They can also supply Ube to their existing list of clients and can be a multiplier factor for the successful exporting of Ube.

The above-mentioned recommendations are merely proposals if these strategies are not implemented straightaway without procrastination. The future is now for the Philippines' Ube to be promoted in the world market.

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