

Training on Developing Marketing Strategies for Organic Green Onion (*Allium fistulosum* L.)

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Abstract

Gedangan Village, located in Cepogo District, Boyolali Regency, is widely recognized as a producer of organic vegetables and has obtained Indonesian National Standard (SNI) certification for organic agriculture. The local community cultivates organic vegetables through farmer groups that receive direct guidance from the agricultural office, particularly the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group. Marketing strategy is a fundamental tool designed to achieve business objectives by developing sustainable competitive advantages. Therefore, the formulation of marketing strategies is essential for farmer groups. In this community service activity, the farmer group was trained to develop marketing strategies for organic vegetables using the SWOT method. Based on the results of the training and practical analysis of marketing strategies for organic Welsh onion in the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group, Gedangan Village, Cepogo District, Boyolali Regency, both the management and farmer representatives demonstrated an improved understanding of the importance of developing marketing strategies for organic vegetable products to ensure sustainable market growth. The participants were also able to conduct SWOT analysis to formulate marketing strategies for organic agricultural products, although further training is still required to enhance the managerial capacity of the farmer group.

Keywords: agricultural distribution, farm business development, farmer group capacity, product competitiveness, SWOT analysis

1. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is a primary economic sector in developing countries. Its role in national economic development is highly significant. Indonesia possesses vast land resources and favorable climatic conditions that are highly potential for agricultural development. This potential is further supported by Indonesia's large population, which can maximize the utilization of these resources (Rukmana, 2008). To date, agricultural systems in Indonesia are still largely conventional. According to Gliesman (2007), the negative impacts of conventional agricultural practices include soil degradation and declining soil fertility, reduced soil moisture, damage to surrounding ecosystems, increased erosion, and serious health issues for consumers due to pesticide use.

One approach to addressing these impacts is the transition toward sustainable agricultural systems. Sustainable agriculture practices include the use of organic and biological nutrients, crop rotation, integrated pest management, and the enhancement of biodiversity. Organic farming is an integral component of sustainable agriculture, emphasizing the use of natural organic inputs (Mayrowani, 2012). Organic agriculture is a holistic farming system that supports and enhances biodiversity, biological cycles, and soil biological activity. Certification of organic products—including production, storage, processing, post-harvest handling, and marketing—must comply with standards established by certification bodies (IFOAM, 2008).

One type of horticultural crop cultivated organically is the green onion (*Allium fistulosum* L.). This crop has long been recognized and cultivated in developing countries. Green onion is a leading vegetable commodity that has been intensively cultivated by farmers and contributes significantly to income generation and employment opportunities, thereby supporting regional economic development.

Boyolali Regency is one of the producers of organic green onions in Central Java Province. This is evidenced by the emergence of several institutions or organizations engaged

in organic agriculture in the region. The Utomo Jayan Farmer Group is one such organization that cultivates various organic vegetables, including green onion. Gedangan Village, located in Cepogo District, Boyolali Regency, is well known as a producer of organic vegetables and has obtained Indonesian National Standard (SNI) certification for organic agriculture. The local community cultivates organic vegetables through farmer groups that receive direct guidance from the agricultural office, particularly the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group. The Utomo Jayan Farmer Group has implemented organic farming principles in accordance with standard operating procedures, including land preparation using organic fertilizers, pest and disease control using botanical pesticides, and post-harvest handling. However, the group still faces challenges in marketing, as it currently has limited business partnerships.

At present, the business environment is highly dynamic, characterized by continuous changes that intensify competition across agricultural sectors. Increasing public awareness of organic agriculture has encouraged many companies in the conventional food sector to shift toward organic products to meet consumer demand. To remain competitive, organic producers must identify their strengths and weaknesses, as well as recognize potential opportunities and threats in the market. Marketing plays a crucial role as the spearhead of business activities, serving as a benchmark for success in capturing market share. Producers aim to influence consumer perceptions through product offerings, packaging design, and promotional strategies. The marketing mix is expected to sustain business continuity, support business development, and ultimately maximize profit. It consists of a set of marketing tools used by firms to achieve their objectives in target markets (Kotler & Keller, 2009).

As competition in the agricultural sector intensifies, the need for effective marketing strategy planning becomes increasingly important to maintain product competitiveness. Organic product certification serves as a mechanism to ensure that products meet established standards through inspection processes conducted by Organic Certification Bodies (KAN, 2007). Marketing strategy is a fundamental tool designed to achieve business objectives by developing sustainable competitive advantages through targeted markets and marketing programs (Tjiptono, 2009). Formulating a marketing strategy requires a comprehensive analysis of both internal and external environments. Internal factors such as strengths and weaknesses must be identified, while external conditions—characterized by rapid changes—create both opportunities and threats from competitors and evolving business climates. These external dynamics also influence internal conditions, leading to changes in the strengths and weaknesses of producers. Therefore, this community service activity aims to provide understanding and training for developing marketing strategies for organic vegetable products produced by farmer groups using the SWOT analysis method.

2. METHOD

The lecture method is a form of communication aimed at delivering information, guidance, and recommendations to an audience acting as listeners. The objectives of this method include providing information, persuading and convincing participants, and describing relevant conditions or phenomena.

1. Practical Session

The practical session involves the application of theories, methods, and other relevant aspects to achieve specific objectives and fulfill the needs of a particular group. This activity is systematically planned and structured to ensure effective implementation.

2. Evaluation

The evaluation of the training is defined as a systematic process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting information to assess the extent to which the training objectives have been achieved.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Internal Environment Analysis

According to Jauch and Glueck (1997), the internal environment refers to the process in which strategic planning examines a company's internal factors to identify its strengths and weaknesses, enabling it to effectively manage opportunities and address external threats. The internal environment encompasses factors within the organization that provide information regarding its strengths and weaknesses. According to David (2002), every organization possesses strengths and weaknesses derived from its internal environment. To identify internal and external factors in the marketing of organic green onion at the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group, data were collected through questionnaire-based interviews. The results of the internal factor analysis, which highlight the strengths and weaknesses of organic green onion marketing, are presented in the table below:

Table 1. Comparison of strengths and weaknesses in the marketing of organic green onion

Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal inspection and quality control are in place	Long-term storage reduces product quality
Promotional activities have been conducted	Limited market reach
Products are organically certified	Less attractive product packaging
Selling prices are consistent	Low youth involvement in agriculture and its products
Product stock is maintained in sufficient quantity	Limited use of technology in marketing
Adequate knowledge in organic green onion cultivation	Low farmer participation in marketing activities
Human resources actively participate in training	Lack of formal partnership agreements
Existing collaboration with several partners	Lack of transportation capital for distribution outside the region

Based on the table above, the strengths and weaknesses of organic green onion marketing in the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group, located in Gedangan Village, Cepogo District, Boyolali Regency, can be clearly identified.

External Environment Analysis

The external environment encompasses factors outside the farmer group that provide information regarding opportunities and threats. These factors play a crucial role in determining the success of the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group in marketing organic green onion. The external environmental factors are presented in the table below:

Table 2. External factors that determine the success of the farmer group in marketing

Opportunities	Threats
Increasing levels of community income	Availability of substitute products
High consumer interest and preference for organic products	Fluctuating consumer preferences
Advances in technology and information	The circulation of products falsely labeled as organic

Based on the table above, the opportunities and threats in the marketing of organic green onion by the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group in Gedangan Village, Cepogo District, Boyolali Regency can be identified. This analysis is essential to understand the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting the marketing process. Furthermore, it enables the farmer group to capitalize on existing opportunities while anticipating external threats.

Marketing Strategy Analysis

a. IFE Matrix Analysis (Internal Factor Evaluation)

The calculation of the IFE matrix analysis is presented in the table below:

Table 3. IFE matrix

No.	Key Factor	Weight (A)	Rating (B)	Weighted Score (A x B)
Strengths				
1	Planning is conducted according to procedures	0.048	3	0.145
2	Organizational structure is periodically updated	0.050	2	0.100
3	Farmers have high motivation	0.051	2	0.102
4	Annual evaluation is conducted	0.049	2	0.099
5	Internal inspection is conducted	0.050	3	0.150
6	Promotional activities are implemented	0.050	1	0.050
7	Products are organically certified	0.055	4	0.222
8	Selling prices are consistent	0.062	4	0.246
9	Product stock is maintained in sufficient quantity	0.051	3	0.153
10	Adequate knowledge of organic green onion cultivation	0.053	2	0.106
11	Human resources actively participate in training	0.053	1	0.053
12	Existing partnership networks	0.052	2	0.106
Weaknesses				
1	Long-term storage reduces product quality	0.053	1	0.053
2	Limited market reach	0.049	1	0.049
3	Less attractive product packaging	0.055	2	0.109
4	Low youth involvement in agriculture	0.056	1	0.056
5	Limited use of technology in marketing	0.056	1	0.056
6	Low farmer participation in marketing and lack of formal partnerships	0.056	1	0.056
7	Lack of transportation capital for distribution outside the region	0.056	2	0.113
Total		1.000	38	2.015

Based on the results of the IFE matrix analysis presented above, the strength with the highest weighted score is price consistency (0.246). This indicates that maintaining stable selling prices is a crucial factor for the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group in Gedangan Village, Cepogo District, Boyolali Regency, in developing organic green onion farming. The group stabilizes prices by gradually adjusting them over time. Meanwhile, the lowest weighted score among strengths is found in promotional activities (0.050), indicating that promotional efforts are still relatively limited and require further optimization, including the use of social media and other marketing channels. Regarding weaknesses, the factor with the highest weighted score is the lack of transportation capital for distribution outside the region (0.113). This

highlights the importance of distribution capacity in ensuring that organic green onions reach broader markets. Currently, distribution outside the region is limited to pre-ordered demand only. On the other hand, the lowest weighted score among weaknesses is limited market reach (0.049). This suggests that marketing activities remain suboptimal and need to be strengthened. Effective marketing strategies—such as the use of digital media, advertising platforms, and promotional tools—are essential to increase product visibility and expand market coverage beyond Boyolali. Additionally, establishing formal partnerships with external stakeholders or companies is necessary to enhance the distribution and market penetration of organic products produced by the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group.

b. EFE Matrix Analysis (External Factor Evaluation)

The calculation of the EFE matrix analysis is presented in the table below:

Table 4. EFE matrix

No.	External Strategic Factors	Weight (A)	Rating (B)	Weighted Score (A x B)
Opportunities				
1	Increasing community income levels	0.222	2	0.444
2	High consumer interest and preference for organic and healthy products	0.205	1	0.167
3	Advances in technology and information	0.205	1	0.159
4	Collaboration with other farmer groups	-	1	0.111
Threats				
1	Availability of substitute products	0.148	1	0.095
2	Fluctuating consumer preferences	0.114	2	0.175
3	Circulation of falsely labeled organic products	0.102	1	0.087
4	Lack of collaboration with external partners	0.095	1	0.095
Total		1.000	10	1.333

Based on the EFE matrix analysis presented above, the highest-ranked opportunity is the increasing level of community income, with a weighted score of 0.444. This indicates that the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group in Gedangan Village, Cepogo District, Boyolali Regency is experiencing growing recognition, as consumers increasingly perceive organic Welsh onions as high-quality products cultivated using natural inputs and careful harvesting practices. According to David (2013), the average total weighted score is 2.8. However, the total weighted score obtained in this study is 1.333, which is below the average benchmark. This suggests that the farmer group’s external position is relatively weak, indicating that its ability to respond to external opportunities and threats is not yet optimal.

c. IE Matrix Analysis (Internal–External)

The IE matrix is a tool that combines the total weighted scores from the IFE and EFE matrices to determine the strategic position of the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group in developing organic green onion farming. Once the position within the matrix is identified, the appropriate strategic approach for the farmer group can also be determined. Based on the IFE matrix calculation, a total weighted score of 2.008 was obtained, while the EFE matrix yielded a total weighted score of 1.333. The results of the IE matrix mapping are illustrated in the figure below:

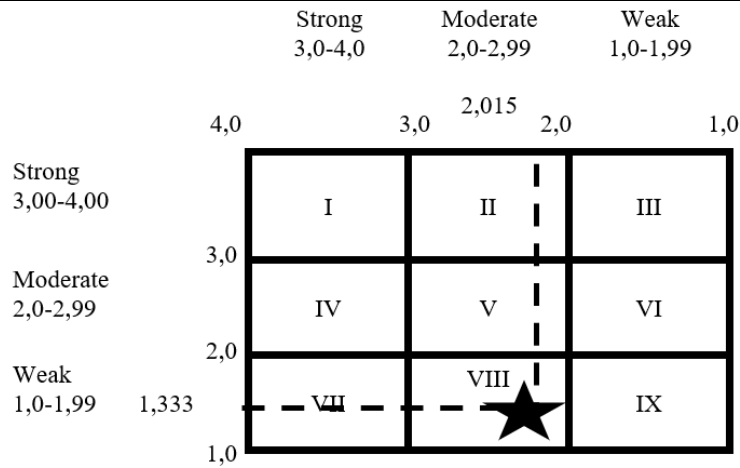


Figure 1. Total IFE matrix score

Based on the IE matrix results, the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group is positioned in Cell VIII. This position indicates that the group possesses both strengths and opportunities, placing it in a growth phase. Therefore, the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group is encouraged to pursue strategies such as market penetration, market development, product development, as well as backward and forward (horizontal) integration.



Figure 2. Discussion with the farmer group

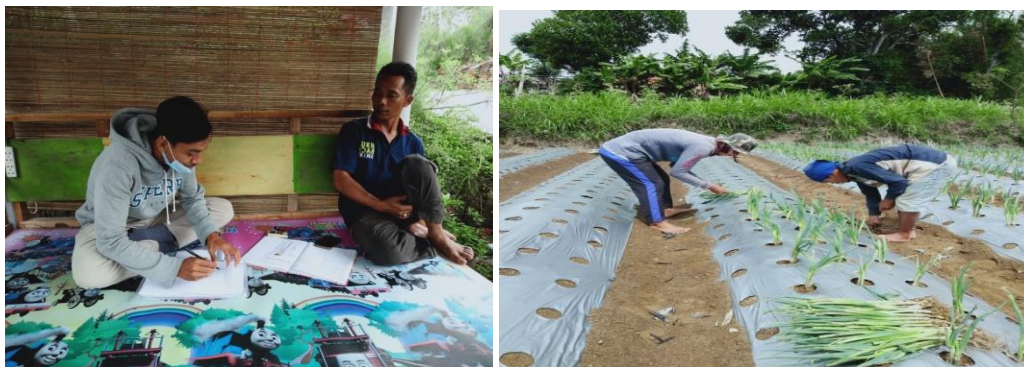


Figure 3. Farmer visits and farm site visits

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the training and practical analysis of marketing strategies for organic Welsh onion in the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group, Gedangan Village, Cepogo District, Boyolali Regency, both the management and farmer representatives have gained an understanding of the importance of developing marketing strategies for organic vegetable

products to ensure sustainable market growth. The participants were also able to conduct SWOT analysis to formulate marketing strategies, although further training is required to enhance the managerial capacity of the farmer group. The results of the SWOT analysis can be summarized as follows:

1. Internal Factors

a. Strengths:

The most influential strength in marketing activities has a weighted score of 0.246, indicating that price consistency is a crucial factor. The farmer group maintains stable selling prices by gradually adjusting them over time, which supports the development of organic Welsh onion farming.

b. Weaknesses:

The most significant weakness has a score of 0.111, reflecting the lack of transportation capital for distribution outside the region. This highlights the importance of distribution systems in ensuring that products reach consumers, as currently the group only distributes outside the region based on pre-orders.

2. External Factors

a. Opportunities:

The most influential opportunity has a weighted score of 0.444, indicating increasing community income levels. This suggests that the Utomo Jayan Farmer Group is gaining recognition, with consumers perceiving organic Welsh onion as a high-quality product cultivated using natural inputs and careful harvesting practices.

b. Threats:

The most significant threat has a score of 0.175, indicating that the group's external position is still below average. This suggests that the ability to respond effectively to external opportunities and threats remains limited and requires further improvement.

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