



Marketing of processed aren agroindustry (kolang–kaling) rokan hulu district

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to look at the marketing of processed sugar palm agroindustry (Kolang – Kaling) in Rokan Hulu Regency. This research was carried out by Rokan Hulu Regency because Rokan Hulu Regency is one of the regencies that has a large distribution of palm plants and has developed in the household industry. This research was carried out using a survey method on consumers who consume palm agro-industrial products, namely kolang-kaling. Respondent collection was carried out using the Simple Random Sampling method. The survey was conducted purposively which aimed to find out how the marketing process of kolang-kaling products occurred in Rokan Hulu Regency. The results show the response of consumers to the appearance of the product, packaging that still does not use special packaging, and the absence of product labels. Meanwhile, in terms of price, kolang-kaling follows the prevailing price in the market, which is Rp. 10,000 – 15,000. The distribution of kolang-kaling is carried out to traditional markets only, and promotional activities are still carried out on a limited basis (direct sales).



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INTRODUCTION

Sugar palm plants belong to the Arecaceae (beca nut) tribe. The stems are not thorny, not branched, the height can reach 25 meters, and the stem diameter can reach 0.5 meters. Palm leaf stalks can reach 1.5 meters long, leaf blades can reach 1.45 meters long, 7 cm wide, and the underside of the leaves is waxy. People have long identified palm trees as trees capable of producing materials for the craft industry (Withaningsih et al. 2019). Almost some of these plant products can be utilized and have economic value, as well as their products, such as fruit and sap, that can be used as food and beverage ingredients. Four trees belong to the sugar palm group: *Arenga Pinata* (wurmb), *Arenga Undulatifolia* Bree, *Arenga Westerhoutii* Griff and *Arenga Ambcang* Becc (Witno et al. 2022). Among these species known for their benefits are *Arenga Pinata*, known every day as palm or palm sugar. Palm plants are almost like coconut trees, if the coconut tree trunk is clean (old leaf midribs quickly come off), then the palm tree trunk is very dirty because the trunk is wrapped in fibers, so the old leaf midrib is challenging to take or detach from the trunk (Ilyas et al. 2018).

Agroindustry is one of the essential subsystems in the agribusiness system that has the potential to encourage high economic growth (Siregar and Lubis 2019). Because of its relatively large market share and added value to national products. Furthermore, the agroindustry can hasten the transformation of the economic and agricultural sectors into industries. Sugar palm (*Arenga pinnata*), a plant with numerous applications, is one of the potential agroindustries. A plant is a versatile tree because almost all of its parts have multiple uses. The roots can be used to make plaits, the stems can be used to make drains, roof wuwungan, sticks or galars, brooms and baskets, the young leaves can be used to wrap cigarettes, and the fibers can be used to make ropes, brooms, roofs, and brushes. The sap can be used to make brown sugar and palm sugar, while the seeds can be used to make kolang-kaling. (Azhar et al. 2021).

Rokan Hulu Regency is one of the regencies in Riau Province, with sugar palm plants spread over two sub-districts. namely Rambah District and Bangun Purba District (Dinas Perkebunan Provinsi Riau 2021). In Ramadan, there is an increase in demand for Kolang-kaling, and the

price can reach Rp. 20,000 to Rp. 25,000/kg compared to prices outside the fasting month which are only around Rp. 10,000 to Rp. 15,000/kg. This condition shows that plantation commodities such as sugar palms with high economic value can be utilized, especially to produce Kolang-Kaling and other sugar palm products.

Marketing activities must support agro-industrial production, where production and marketing are closely related and cannot be separated (Terentyev et al. 2020). In this connection, the community as producers and marketing institutions with all the marketing functions carried out have a decisive contribution and influence each other.

Kolang-Kaling is only sold locally (traditional markets). Local Kolang-Kaling farmers sell their wares at markets in the Rokan Hulu Regency area via stalls selling household goods. Product innovation, particularly in marketing, is uncommon. formulation of the issue Farmers in agroindustry processing are generally focused on family needs (subsystem) rather than market demands (market-oriented) (Mukti et al. 2018). The Kolang-Kaling agroindustry is still primarily managed by the local community, and better processing is still required because it is a small industry. Furthermore, low product competitiveness is caused, among other things, by insufficient quantity and quality, resulting in a wide range of shapes, sizes, colors, and production techniques.

Agro-industrial production must be supported by marketing activities, where production and marketing are closely related and cannot be separated from each other. In this connection, craftsmen as producers and marketing institutions with all marketing functions performed have a decisive contribution and influence each other. In the current conditions, the large number of agro-industries that are growing has resulted in fierce competition, therefore the right marketing strategy is needed to be able to compete and increase market share.

Quality is the determining factor or the basis for general assessment for consumers, so it will be the basis for considering consumer purchasing behavior (Pakurár et al. 2019). Besides that, marketing of production products is still limited in the Rokan Hulu Regency area and traditional markets in the District, and studies on marketing

aspects are required to develop the potential of Kolang-kaling products as superior products in the Rokan Hulu Regency area. study on the marketing aspect is needed. The aspect studied in this research is the Marketing of Processed Palm Agroindustrial Products (Kolang-Kaling). How is the processed sugar palm agroindustry (Kolang-Kaling) marketed in Rokan Hulu Regency? The purpose of this study is to examine the marketing of processed sugar palm agroindustry (Kolang-Kaling) in Rokan Hulu Regency.

METHODS

Location of Observation

This research was carried out in the Rokan Hulu Regency's, Rambah and Bangun Purba Subdistricts. The location was chosen deliberately because these two sub-districts have a distribution of sugar palm plants, and the home industry has developed an agroindustry of processed sugar products.

Measurement Methods

The method used in this study is a survey method to consumers. Sampling was done based on the Simple Random Sampling method (simple random). The consumer survey was conducted on purpose (deliberately) with up to 50 people participating as respondents in order to improve the marketing process of Kolang-Kaling products. The criteria of consumers who buy processed products are Kolang-Kaling and willing to be interviewed.

Materials and Equipment

The data collection method combines field studies and literature studies by studying literature (books, journals, magazines, and relevant papers) and field studies using interviews, questionnaires and observations. The data collected in this study consisted of primary data and secondary data. Primary data includes the marketing process and marketing mix (product, price, distribution and promotion). Primary data were obtained from questionnaires to farmers, consumers and traders. Secondary data were obtained from the literature and related agencies.

Data analysis

Primary data were tabulated and grouped according to research objectives and analyzed descriptively, qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative description analysis was conducted to describe the processed palm sugar (Kolang-Kaling) agroindustry's marketing mix (product,

price, promotion and distribution), as well as a picture of consumer acceptance of processed palm sugar products.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Kolang–Kaling Agroindustry

Sugar palm trees only bear fruit once, The female flower appears on the top of the plant. In one plant, four to five female flower panicles can appear at once, and all will become fruit. The male sugar palm flowers will continue to appear more and more downwards until the plant dies (Nurmayulis et al. 2021). This sugar palm flower is usually tapped to take the juice as an ingredient for brown sugar. At the same time, this sugar palm fruit which will be processed into form, must be picked when it is still very young. First, the farmer will climb the sugar palm plant, pick the fruit, and immediately split it. If the maturity level is correct, the fruit will be harvested. The right level of aging is essential in the Kolang-Kaling agroindustry. Fruit that is too young will result in brittle and crumbly fruit when crushed. On the contrary, fruit that is too old will produce too hard fruit. Frog seeds from ripe fruit, the hardness is extraordinary.



Figure 1 Sugar palm fruit that is ready to be harvested

The Process of Sugar Palm Fruit Production becomes Kolang-kaling.

Sugar palm fruit is a type of fruit that can be processed into processed food products, namely Kolang-kaling. The raw material is sugar palm fruit seeds that are half ripe. The process of processing sugar palm fruit into kolang-kaling takes approximately one week. The process of processing sugar palm fruit into kolang-kaling is briefly described in a flow chart, as shown in Figure 2.

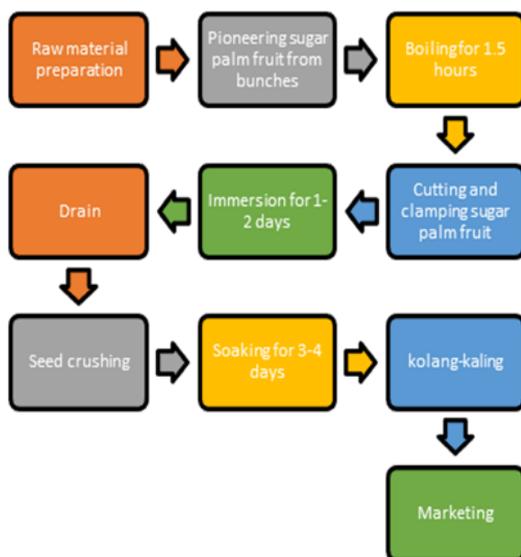


Figure 2 Kolang-kaling production process

The fruit that has been picked, then the fruit will be pioneered, and the fruit is separated from the bunch. It will be boiled for 1.5 hours. After that, the fruit will be cut. The clamping process aims to separate the skin of the fruit from the flesh of the fruit, taking these seeds must be done extra. Be careful because the fruit contains oxalic acid (ethanedioic acid, H₂C₂O₄), which will cause itching and skin irritation. The seeds of Kolang-kaling that have been separated from the fruit are followed by soaking for 3 -4 days, after which the process of *pengempangan* or flattened by hitting them manually with a wooden bat. After that, all the seeds of Kolang-Kaling are soaked in lime water for at least a day and a night. The purpose of immersion with lime water is first to neutralize the seeds of Kolang-kaling from the remnants of oxalic acid. Second, the seeds of Kolang-kaling are not crushed when cooked further, as compotes or sweets. Soaking with lime water also increases the shelf life of the Kolang-kaling seeds before reaching the hands of consumers. The process of the Kolang-Kaling agroindustry is so complicated

and lengthy, and this is the obstacle in its production, so it is still tricky to mass produce (Idris et al. 2021).



Figure 3 Kolang-kaling that has been boiled and removed from the fruit's skin.

Marketing Kolang-Kaling

In marketing, an audit of the marketing environment is required, both the macro environment and the task environment. The macro-environment sees threats and opportunities arising from the company's demographic, economic, natural, technological, political and cultural environment (Silva and Castañeda-Ayarza 2021). Task environment: a) market and customer: look at the central market segments, how customers make purchasing decisions, and how they rate the company for product quality, value and service; b) other factors in the marketing system: who are the company's competitors and what are their strategies, strengths and weaknesses, how the company's channels carry out their duties, what trends affect suppliers, which publics create problems or opportunities (Kerdpitak 2022).

Planning is necessary to keep up with developments and face increasingly fierce competition in the future (Tohānean et al. 2020). Without planning, an organization may resort to extreme measures to avoid losses or maintain viability.

The marketing of Kolang-Kaling in Rokan Hulu Regency is outstanding. Demand for Kolang-kaling during the fasting month increased compared to outside the fasting month. However, it is infrequent to find this from outside the fasting month.

Product

The product is composed of a series of identifiable benefits. These benefits include the

service provided, the price offered, the design, the packaging, the guarantee or warranty, the seller's image or reputation, the quality of the product, and its physical characteristics. The importance of each of these benefits will vary in different market segments.

A product is a group of tangible and intangible characteristics of a product that is offered in the market and causes attention, selection, and consumption to satisfy consumers.

Table 1 Flanged products

No	Product	sugar palm fruit
1	Product attribute	-
2	Branding	-
3	Packaging	√
4	Labeling	-
5	Product support services	-

Source: Processed data

Product attribute

A product is a set of attributes, both tangible and intangible, including color, price, the good name of the factory, the good name of the store that sells it (retailer), and factory services and retailer services, which the buyer receives to satisfy his desires (Lin et al. 2021). The Kolang-kaling products sold in traditional markets do not have any attributes because they are still processed traditionally.

Branding

A brand is a sign or symbol that gives the identity of a particular good or service in words, pictures or a combination of both (Gretzel and Collier de Mendonça 2019). The Kolang-kaling that is produced does not use a brand because the Kolang-kaling that is produced only uses a simple plastic bag.

Packaging (Packing)

Attractive packaging or wrapping will accelerate the smooth sale of goods. According to Alma (2014), "Packaging is not only a service but also as a salesman and a carrier of trust, where a packaging of a product is the final vision of a trustworthy consumer".

The meaning of packaging or wrapping for consumers is that the packaging of goods remains clean and practical to take home, durable and easy

to store, shows the scales inside are correct, shows the quality of goods and can raise self-esteem for those who buy. In this modern era, in stores or supermarkets, consumers are increasingly educated, so this packaging acts as a marketing tool. In supermarkets, consumers can read for themselves all information listed on the packaging; they can be sure or hesitant to buy the product by reading the packaging (Alma 2014).

Labeling

Labeling is either a simple etiquette affixed to the product or an intricately designed graphic part of the packaging. The label may include only the brand name or much information. The law may require additional information if the salesperson prefers a simple label (Rusmiyati and Bustomi 2019).

The Kolang-Kaling product does not have a label on the packaging because it only uses simple and unattractive plastic bag packaging.

Price

One external factor influencing pricing decisions is the market (Amalia 2019). Price is the amount of money charged for a product or service. More broadly, price is the sum of all the values consumers exchange for the benefits of having or using the product or service. The pricing strategy of the Kolang-Kaling agroindustry can be seen in table 2.

Table 2 Kolang-Kaling Pricing

No	Price	Sugar palm fruit
1	Cost orientation	-
2	Demand orientation	√
3	Competitive price orientation	-

Source: Processed data

Determination of the price of processed Kolang-kaling products is demand-oriented by setting the prevailing price in the market. Price of one-kilogram sugar palm fruit IDR 10,000-15,000. The results show that a price spike in sugar palm fruit during the fasting month reaches Rp. 20,000-25,000/kg. Based on consumer opinion, the price of sugar palm fruit is still affordable for consumers. Determining the price of a company's product is a fairly important problem because it can affect the company's life and death and the company's profit (Elvania 2018).

Distribution

Producers use a distribution channel for an item to distribute the goods from producers to consumers or industrial users. The institutions that distribute these goods are producers, intermediaries, end consumers, or industrial users (Suprianto et al. 2021).

Decisions about distribution channels are essential for a company. The distribution strategy carried out by agroindustry sugar palm fruit can be seen in table 3.

Table 3 Distribution of sugar palm fruit

No	Distribution	sugar palm fruit
1	Wholesalers or toke	-
2	Directly to traders in the market	√
3	Direct to consumers	-
4	Through agents and brokers	-

Source: Processed data

Distribution sugar palm fruit, until it reaches consumers properly, is a factor that is always considered. Agroindustry sugar palm fruit supplies raw materials from its plantations to control the continuity of production. Distribution by agroindustry sugar palm fruit into the hands of consumers, namely direct distribution. Direct distribution is distribution through traders in the market.

Promotion

Promotion is a type of communication that gives convincing explanations to potential consumers about goods and services (Rivaldo et al. 2022). Promotion strategy is the organization's action and control of communication to customers and target audiences (target audience). Promotion strategies can be done using advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, publicity and public relations.

The purpose of promotion is to get attention, educate, remind, convince potential customers and then influence the increase in sales (Mi et al. 2019). Promotional strategies can be carried out in palm sugar, and the palm sugar agroindustry can be seen in table 4.

Table 4 Promotion Sugar palm fruit

No	Promotion	Sugar palm fruit
1	Advertising (advertising)	-
2	Personal selling	√
3	Sales promotion (sales promotion)	-
4	Publicity (publicity)	-

Source: Processed data

Promotions in agroindustry sugar palm fruit are still limited. Promotions are carried out by agroindustry sugar palm fruit; namely, the promotion is also done through personal selling (personal selling). Agroindustrysugar palm fruit does not do intensive promotion because the produser thinks that the product is sold out without promotion. This is because people already know sugar palm fruit well, and it is often used in making various dishes.

In achieving a broader marketing reach, agroindustry producer sugar palm fruit needs to carry out more continuous promotions to consumers so that the product is more widely known to the public. In addition, continuous coaching is needed from the relevant agencies.

Consumer Assessment of Products

Consumers choose Kolang-Kaling products. After all, they see the production area of Kolang-kaling itself because they have proven that the Kolang-Kaling consumed by the community is used to consuming Kolang-kaling. Moreover, the people in the two villages are known to be very reliable in producing Kolang-kaling with a tastier and softer taste than Kolang-kaling from other areas. Kolang-kaling is produced from old palm seeds, which are processed into Kolang-kaling. Kolang-Kaling is very liked by the community and can only be found during the fasting month and is very rarely found in months other than the month of Ramadan.

There is a difference in the average frequency of sugar palm fruit product purchases for every consumer. On product sugar palm fruit, the frequency of consumers buying during the fasting month is as many as five consumers (0.50 percent).



Figure 3 Kolang-kaling is ready to be sold in traditional markets

The habit of Kolang-Kaling consumers only buys during the month of fasting, and traders of Kolang-kaling are also commonly found at that time. Table 5 shows that consumers buy very much during the fasting month, meaning there is a relatively great demand for Kolang-kaling.

Table 5 Buying Behavior of Products from time to time

No	Description	Sugar palm fruit	
		Amount	%
1	Purchase Frequency		
a	Every week	5	0.10
b	once a month	5	0.10
c	Every six months	-	-
d	Sometimes	15	0.30
e	Fasting month	25	0.50
f	Never buy	-	-
2	Place of Purchase		
a	Market	45	0.90
b	Direct from the craftsman	-	-
c	along-along	5	0.10
3	Price		
a	10,000	-	-
b	12,000	-	-
c	15,000	50	100

Source: Processed data

Consumer Assessment of Distribution

Apart from being found in markets, some sell using motorized vehicles, and people often call it along-along. Consumers claim that it is elementary to get this Kolang-kaling. Getting Kolang-kaling is not difficult because it is very often found in the markets, especially during the fasting month. Kolang-kaling obtained by consumers is a product produced from the Rokan

Hulu area. Consumers buy more and more Kolang-Kaling from Rokan Hulu because the seeds of Kolang-Kaling produced from this area are giant and soft, in contrast to Kolang-kaling from other small areas in size. Sugar palm fruit is more minor.

Consumers generally consider processed palm products (Kolang-Kaling) easy to obtain. Consumers obtain processed products and products is to buying them in traditional markets in the Rokan Hulu Regency area.

Consumer Assessment of Prices

Prices directly or indirectly impact rent, interest rates, profits and wages, and other factors related to production. These factors affect what is produced, how goods are produced and what and who buys them. Table 5 shows the price of each kilogram; the price per kilogram is Rp. 15,000. With this price, consumers can still reach a broader market in Rokan Hulu Regency.

CONCLUSIONS

From the results of the study, it can be concluded that the marketing of Kolang-Kaling in Rokan Hulu Regency is: 1) The marketing of Kolang-kaling products is seen from the product, product packaging, no special packaging, and no product attributes. In terms of price, Kolang-Kaling is oriented to demand with the prevailing price in the market, namely Rp. 10,000 – 15,000. Meanwhile, from the distribution of Kolang-Kaling to the hands of consumers, it is effortless to find in traditional markets. Moreover, the existing promotions are still relatively limited. (private sale). 2) consumer assessments of Kolang-kaling products, people like Kolang-Kaling, for products that are often found during the fasting month compared to other sales outside the fasting month, so that the assessment remains positive on this Kolang-kaling product, Kolang-Kaling producers must always maintain quality and product continuity. Always there even outside the fasting month.

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