

DIPLOMA THESIS

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Master's thesis

**Economic and Operational Challenges and Opportunities for
Local Sausage Producers in Erdenet, Mongolia**

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Summary

This study examines the economic and operational strategies of local sausage producers in Erdenet, Mongolia, amidst a rapidly urbanizing economy. With Mongolia's meat sector being a part of its farming heritage and economic structure local enterprises in Erdenet are at a critical juncture grappling with competition from global brands and local rivals from Ulaanbaatar. By using SWOT and PESTEL frameworks to analyze the regional sausage industry this research evaluates the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within the sector along with external factors impacting it. Additionally through consumer surveys and interviews with industry insiders we gain insights into market needs consumer tastes and operational hurdles. The results show that despite facing challenges like outdated technology, infrastructure constraints and strict food safety rules local producers demonstrate resilience and flexibility. The study highlights a preference for made sausages which hints at chances for local branding efforts and targeted marketing campaigns. Moreover it suggests avenues in digital marketing strategies and calls for enhancements in supply chain management practices. This exploration not illuminates the unique position of Erdenet's sausage producers but also provides strategic suggestions to enhance their competitiveness and sustainability, in Mongolia's changing economic terrain.

The local sausage industry in Erdenet Mongolia is currently exploring the impacts of urbanization on its operations. Conducting SWOT and PESTEL analyses understanding consumer behavior ensuring food safety developing market strategies and implementing marketing are key focus areas, for the industry.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nestled in the heartland of Mongolia, a country with a rich heritage in pastoral agriculture, the meat industry forms a cornerstone of both the economy and cultural identity. The distinctiveness of Mongolian meat, cherished for its origin in free-grazing livestock across boundless pastures, stands as a testament to the nation's pastoral legacy. Amidst these traditional roots, the local sausage industry in burgeoning urban centers like Erdenet faces a dynamic interplay of challenge and opportunity brought forth by the rapid urbanization and economic development predominantly centered in Ulaanbaatar.

The local meat producers of Erdenet operate on terrain bristling with complexity, vying with entrenched entities from the capital and the burgeoning footprint of international brands. These conglomerates benefit from their vast scales of operation, permitting them to exploit cost advantages, deploy extensive marketing, and adhere with relative ease to international safety protocols. In contrast, the smaller local producers joust with resource limitations, the obscurity of their brands, and intermittent market reach.

Amid this competitive milieu, the specter of food safety looms large, with public sentiment towards meat safety being vulnerable to the whims of rumor and isolated incidences of non-compliance, thereby casting a shadow on consumer trust—a shadow that falls most heavily on the smaller businesses with their modest means for damage control.

This intricate backdrop necessitates a deep exploration of the specific economic and operational dynamics that local sausage businesses in Erdenet contend with. This study endeavors to dissect these factors, to distill strategic interventions to bolster local competitiveness, and to nurture the sustainable advancement of Erdenet's regional economy. It seeks to furnish local producers with actionable insights to deftly maneuver through market complexities and to buttress their operational robustness.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Current Market Overview

Mongolia's post-1991 transition to a market-based economy heralds its nomadic tradition's continued imprint on its socio-economic fabric. With a per capita meat consumption that stood at a staggering 126.83 kg in 2021, the nation's carnivorous proclivities outpace much of the globe (FAO, 2021).

While mining sectors—fueled by copper, coal, and gold—anchor the Mongolian economy, agriculture remains significant, contributing to both the GDP and export sector. Mongolia's strategic position, landlocked between global heavyweights China and Russia, presents a distinctive set of trade dynamics and foreign relations complexities (National Statistics Office, 2024).

As of March 2024, the sausage industry recorded a significant output of 743.1 tons, a testament to a flourishing meat processing sector with growth potential extending to traditional products and a diverse range of meats (National Statistics Office of Mongolia, 2024).

Despite the ingrained carnivorous customs, Mongolia's formal meat processing industry, inclusive of sausage production, is in its infancy. Recent regulatory enhancements demonstrate governmental resolve to propel the sector towards modernization—a transition marked by the revocation of licenses from non-compliant establishments (source: <https://gogo.mn/r/o3319>).

Munkhdelger (2020) underscores the industrial bottleneck created by dated technology and subpar infrastructure, which caps the industry's competitiveness both domestically and abroad. Whereas corporate entities in Ulaanbaatar are evolving with technological strides, smaller players, especially in Erdenet, grapple with financial and logistical hurdles that dampen their growth and modernization endeavors.

Navigating the Sausage Industry Landscape

Mongolia's sausage market stands at a pivotal juncture, grappling with internal and external challenges. A dated industrial framework coupled with a dearth of skilled labor stifles the production of premium, large-scale outputs, while a volatile regulatory climate complicates operations for local manufacturers. Import policy strictures further compound these difficulties, barring access to modernization resources (Munkhdelger, 2020).

Export Dynamics and Opportunities

China dominates as Mongolia's foremost meat export consumer. Yet, the emerging adoption of Halal standards and the nascent urban dietary shifts within Mongolia indicate untapped potential for local meat processing entities. Engagements with international counterparts offer a conduit for technological acquisition and a fortified competitive stance in both domestic and international realms (Survey on the Domestic and Export Meat Value Chain in Mongolia, 2020).

Urbanization's Impact on Erdenet and Beyond

The expansion of Ulaanbaatar exerts a profound influence on adjacent cities such as Erdenet, shaping their economic ventures, demographic patterns, and infrastructural growth. This urban sprawl may initially siphon resources to the capital, but it also fosters infrastructure developments that could benefit local sectors, including sausage manufacturing. The uptick in urban populace stokes demand for consumer goods, potentially stimulating local business ventures.

Effective Marketing Strategies for Local Producers

Mongolia's projected economic upswing, as detailed in a 2024 Asian Development Bank report, holds promise for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), particularly in the food processing sector. This anticipated growth heralds an opportunity for SMEs, the fulcrum of Mongolia's industrial fabric. Governmental policies have been pivotal in steering this trajectory, fortifying the SMEs' capacity to contend with foreign imports while seizing Mongolia's burgeoning economic promise (Tsaschikher, 2023).

Operational Strategies and Technological Advancements

For local sausage producers, technological adoption and operational finesse are cardinal to elevate their market standing. The implementation of agent-based network planning could yield significant supply chain and market reach optimizations, thus driving down costs and surging efficiency (Yan et al., 2015).

Challenges and Regulatory Considerations

Local sausage makers in Mongolia navigate a thicket of legal and market challenges, not least of which are the stringent safety and quality standards mandated for global market participation. Geographical isolation exacerbates these challenges, inflating logistical costs and complicating market access (Jargalsaihan et al., 2023).

Future Trends and Opportunities

An emergent consumer preference for local, organic, and ethically crafted foods carves out new market niches, while digital marketing and e-commerce platforms offer expansive, physically unconstrained market access.

Research Gap

Despite exhaustive studies on global food industry practices, localized research within Erdenet, Mongolia, remains scant, rendering a full comprehension of the unique challenges and prospects local sausage producers face elusive. There is a pressing need for research calibrated to the unique market conditions of Erdenet to formulate economic and operational strategies conducive to the local sausage industry's thriving future.

3. MATERIALS AND METHOD

Study Framework

The aim of this research is to explore the operational tactics employed by sausage producers in Erdenet, Mongolia to effectively address the challenges they face in the market. To gain an understanding of the industry's environment we are combining qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. This approach involves conducting SWOT and PESTEL analysis collecting feedback from consumers through surveys and conducting interviews.

SWOT Analysis

We commence with a SWOT analysis to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the local sausage industry. Initially conceptualized by Albert Humphrey at Stanford University in the 1960s and 1970s this tool has emerged as an instrument for analyzing internal and external factors impacting businesses. Evolving from its origins as an analysis it has evolved into an essential strategic tool that aids in aligning business strategies and understanding market dynamics.

PESTEL Analysis

Our evaluation framework utilizes PESTEL analysis to assess how external factors might influence the industry. The acronym represents Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental and Legal aspects that we scrutinize to anticipate their potential impact on the business landscape in the near future.

By following this approach originally proposed by Francis Aguilar in 1967 we can identify opportunities and anticipate potential risks equipping us to navigate the intricate and ever changing business landscape of Erdenet.

Consumer preferences survey

To gain insights into local market requirements we will carry out a comprehensive survey focusing on consumer tastes sensitivity to pricing buying patterns and overall perceptions of sausage products. Our aim is to collect data from 80 Erdenet residents to generate statistically significant and practical findings about consumer behavior.

Interviews with local food businesses

To enrich our data collection efforts we intend to conduct structured interviews with two local restaurant proprietors and a sausage producer. These discussions aim to uncover anecdotes, obstacles faced and strategies influencing their businesses. Tailored inquiries will explore their marketing initiatives, operational strategies and ability to adapt to pressures and economic challenges. Each interview will be carefully documented, transcribed and analyzed for any trends or insights.

Data Examination

During the analysis stage we will sift through the data gathered from interviews to identify common themes. Simultaneously we will utilize statistical methods on the quantitative data obtained from consumer surveys to recognize patterns in consumer preferences and behaviors. Combining these discoveries with our SWOT and PESTEL examination will give us a more profound and detailed insight into the strategic landscape and potential prospects, within Erdenet sausage industry.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Market Challenges

One of the difficulties mentioned was the notable variations in market demand due to seasonal shifts. For example the head of Gandan Uul LLC highlighted a rise in sales during the warmer months almost doubling revenue compared to winter. This trend requires adjustments in production and stock levels to meet market needs.

Competition from Established Retailers:

Local producers such as Iderbayalag LLC face intense competition from established retail giants that offer a wide range of local and imported goods. The CEO of Iderbayalag LLC pointed out that in the three years the presence of major supermarket chains and large convenience stores in Erdenet has significantly increased competition.

Ensuring Food Safety Standards:

Another major hurdle is meeting food safety regulations especially when introducing traditional products into modern urban markets. The director of Khukh Uur Management LLC explained how they had to overhaul their traditional harvesting methods and switch to food safe packaging to meet urban market requirements.

Strategic Growth and Market Adaptation

Expanding Market Reach:

Gandan Uul LLC has strategically expanded its customer base by entering the markets of Ulaanbaatar. This move not only broadened their reach geographically but also involved diversifying their product range. "The move to Ulaanbaatar brought about changes for us expanding our horizons and market presence " remarked the director.

Diversifying Products:

Khukh Uur Management LLC is actively expanding its product range beyond its offerings. They are exploring markets with unique products like dried horse milk powder. The director expressed enthusiasm about this expansion mentioning, "We are excited about our endeavors, such as the dehydrated horse milk powder, which we believe will open up fresh opportunities for us."

Marketing Strategies and Customer Engagement:

Embracing Cultural Authenticity:

Khukh Uur Management LLC has tailored its marketing approach around the rich cultural heritage of its products. "Our airag is more than a drink; it embodies the essence of Mongolian culture, something we proudly showcase in our marketing campaigns " highlighted the CEO.

Innovative Marketing Approaches;

Iderbayalag LLC utilizes marketing tactics to interact effectively with consumers. This strategy has enabled them to maintain prices while upholding top notch quality standards. "Our focus on providing premium products truly resonates with our customers and sets us apart from competitors " noted the director.

SWOT Analysis of the Local Sausage Industry in Erdenet, Mongolia:

Strengths

- Cultural Heritage: The rich pastoral traditions offer an advantage by showcasing traditional livestock farming methods.
- Livestock Quality: Grazing freely in pastures allows for the production of premium quality meat with a distinct flavor and superior quality.
- Local Market Understanding: In depth knowledge of consumer preferences and behaviors.
- Government Assistance: Supportive measures from the government to empower medium enterprises as highlighted by Tsaschikher (2023).

Weaknesses

- Limited Resources: Operating on a smaller scale results in production costs compared to larger competitors.
- Obsolete Technology: The industry faces challenges due to machinery and infrastructure affecting efficiency and product standards (Munkhdelger, 2020).
- Market Accessibility: Limited access to markets due to logistical hurdles.
- Food Safety Compliance: Struggles with meeting food safety regulations.

Opportunities

- Market Expansion: The growth of Ulaanbaatar presents an opportunity for increased demand for sausage products in areas.
- Exploring New Markets: Introducing Halal standards and forming partnerships with companies could lead to new opportunities for exports.
- Utilizing Online Marketing: Leveraging media and online shopping platforms to connect with a broader customer base.
- Adapting to Consumer Preferences: Responding to the growing demand for sourced organic and ethically produced food products.

Challenges

- Facing Competition: Dealing with competition from major supermarket chains and global brands.

- Managing Seasonal Demand: Addressing fluctuations in market needs that may impact production planning.
- Navigating Regulatory Changes: Adapting to shifts in food safety regulations and import policies related to modern equipment that could impede business growth.
-

Analysis of Local Sausage Industry in Erdenet Mongolia using PESTEL Framework:

Political Environment:

- Government Initiatives: Implementation of measures for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) along with sector modernization efforts.
- Trade Dynamics: Mongolia's trade dynamics are shaped by its position, between Russia and China.

Economical:

- Growth Opportunities: Anticipated economic expansion as projected by the Asian Development Bank could enhance consumer spending capabilities.
- Resource Constraints: Financial constraints faced by local producers when scaling up operations.

Socio-economic:

- Demographic shifts: The shift towards living and evolving demographics may influence the types of products consumers seek.
- Cultural Taste Preferences: People showing a preference for locally sourced foods.

Technological:

- Advancements in Technology: The chance to embrace technologies to enhance efficiency in production processes.
- Planning Networks: Using agent based systems to streamline supply chain operations (Yan et al., 2015).

Environmental:

- Livestock Farming Methods: How traditional livestock rearing practices impact the quality and sustainability of products.
- Challenges of Geography: Overcoming obstacles posed by locations that affect transportation and market accessibility.

Legal:

- Regulations on Food Safety: Strict guidelines that oversee the industry and the importance of adhering to them.
- Importance of Export/Import Permits: Navigating through export rules and securing import licenses, for modern equipment. By combining these evaluations the Erdenet sausage industry can pinpoint areas for growth and anticipate challenges. This enables them to develop tailored plans that capitalize on their strengths and opportunities while addressing any weaknesses and threats amid a landscape influenced by various political, economic, social, cultural, technological, environmental and legal aspects.

Consumer preferences insights:

Consumption frequency:

The survey data reveals a range of consumption patterns among the participants with the most popular being 'More than twice a week' (20 participants) followed by 'More than twice a month' (16 participants). Noteworthy consistency is observed, as 10 respondents each reported consuming sausages 'Daily' and 'Once a week'.

Discussion: The data suggests a demand for sausages indicating a stable market for frequent consumption. Tailored marketing approaches could target these consumer behaviors offering promotions to regular buyers and incentives to less frequent consumers.

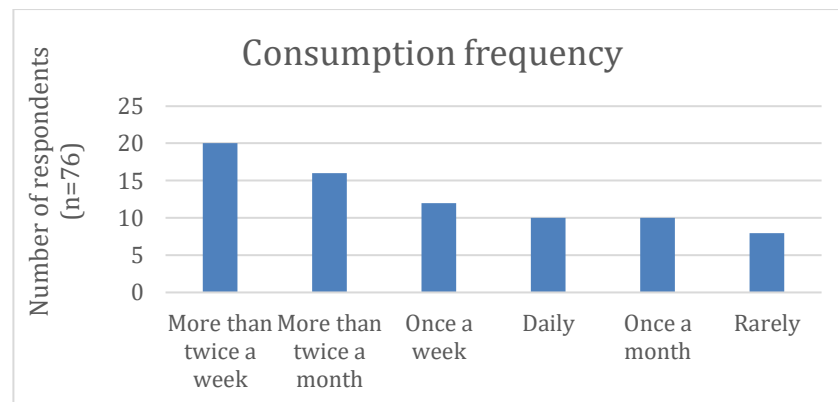


Figure 1. Consumption frequency (Own survey result)

Consumer Demographics:

Gender Distribution:

Findings; A significant majority of respondents are female (54) with a representation of males (22).

Discussion: The gender imbalance highlights the importance of considering preferences and purchasing behavior in marketing strategies and product development. Emphasizing convenience, health benefits and family related aspects could be factors in appealing to this demographic.

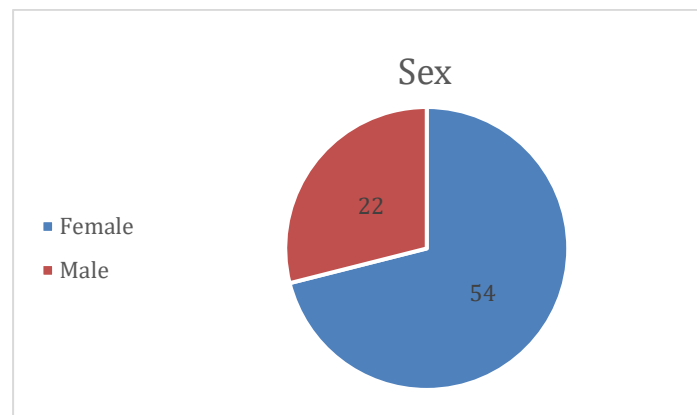


Figure 2. Sex demographics (Own survey result)

Location:

Findings: The survey indicates that most participants are from Erdenet (45) followed by Ulaanbaatar (27) and other provinces (4).

Discussion: The concentration of responses from Erdenet suggests a local market presence for sausages. Local branding and initiatives that focus on the community could really connect with this group.

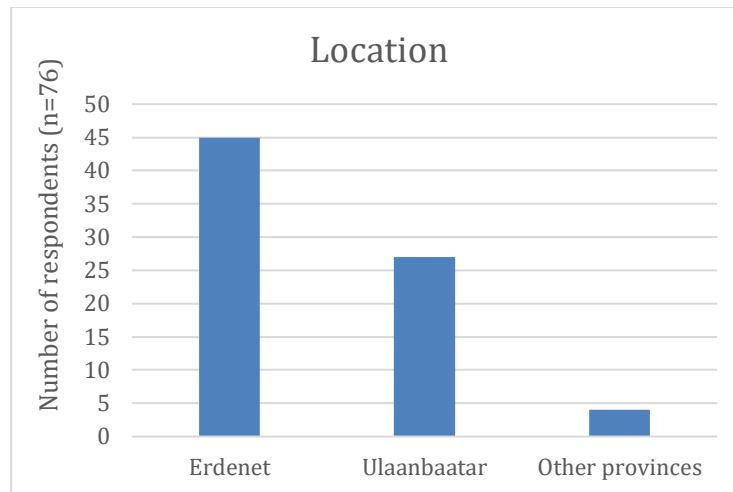


Figure 3. Location demographics (Own survey result)

Income level:

Findings: The income brackets '1,000,001 1,500,000 MNT' (19 respondents) and '1,500,001 2,000,000 MNT' (14 respondents) are the common ones while the '5000001 and above' category has the fewest responses (7 respondents).

Discussion: Given the prevalence of middle income individuals in the survey sample it seems that marketing strategies centered around affordability could be quite effective. Factors like affordability and getting value for money are likely to heavily influence purchase decisions within this income segment.

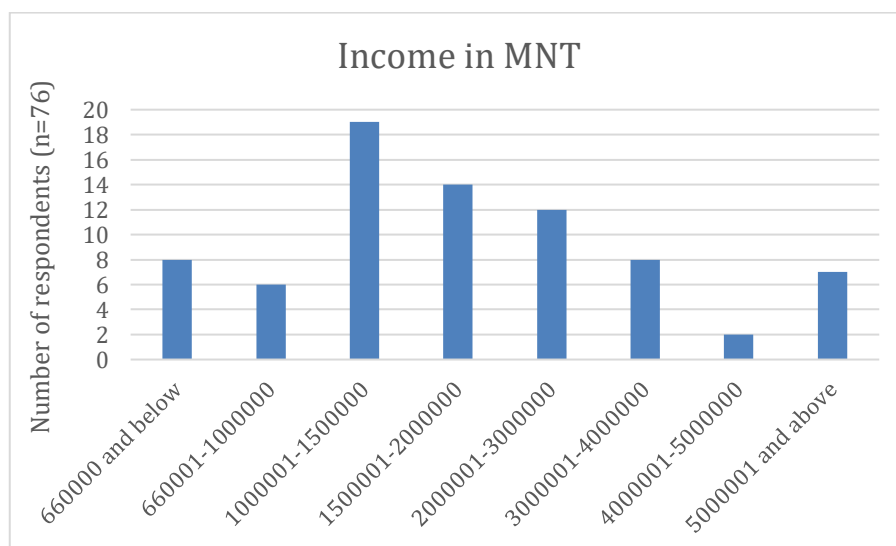


Figure 4. Income level (Own survey result)

Education level:

Findings; A majority of respondents have attained education (54) while fewer have vocational education (9) or high school level education or below (11) and only a handful have studied abroad (2).

Insights; The significant number of educated participants in the study suggests that they may appreciate detailed product information and assurances about quality. Promotional messages highlighting product excellence, sophistication well, as potential health benefits could resonate well with this educated consumer base.

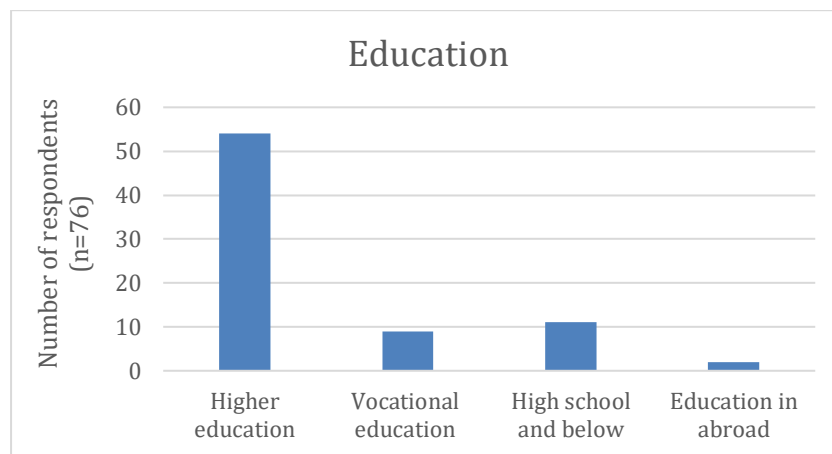


Figure 5. Education level (Own survey result)

Consumer preferences

1. The importance of pricing

Analysis: A majority of the survey participants show a level of sensitivity towards prices with a significant number considering price as "very important" (30 respondents) and "somewhat important" (24 respondents). This highlights how pricing plays a role in influencing consumer choices in the sausage industry.

Discussion: Given the importance of pricing it is recommended that local sausage producers implement pricing strategies that focus on generating a return on investment. To attract price consumers companies can position their products as both cost effective and high quality while maintaining the perceived value of their brand.

Price Importance:	Count
Very important	30
Somewhat important	24
Neutral	17
Not very important	4
Not important at all	1

Table 1. Consumer preferences: Price importance (Own survey result)

2. The perception of the brand

Analysis: The influence of brand perception is substantial as indicated by a portion of consumers who regard it as "very important" (29 respondents) or "somewhat important" (23 respondents). This emphasizes the trust and confidence that customers have in established brands.

Discussion: To capitalize on this opportunity manufacturers should prioritize enhancing their brand by upholding high quality standards and implementing marketing tactics. Building an resilient brand identity could cultivate customer loyalty and potentially enable businesses to set higher prices in the market. Packaging Influence

Insights; Packaging holds sway over the purchasing decisions of many consumers with 35 participants emphasizing its "strong influence" on their choices.

Thoughts; This suggests that appealing and designed packaging could be pivotal in attracting customers. Manufacturers could consider eco packaging alternatives or innovative designs that showcase the products quality and uniqueness enhancing its visibility on store shelves and appealing to buyers.

Brand Perception:	Count
Very important	29
Somewhat important	23
Neutral	14
Not very important	9
Not important at all	1

Table 2. Consumer preferences: Brand perception (Own survey result)

3. Impact of Packaging

Analysis: Packaging holds a sway over the buying choices of numerous customers as highlighted by 35 survey participants who emphasized its "strong influence" on their decisions.

Discussion: This suggests that visually appealing and innovative packaging could be pivotal in attracting customers. Companies might consider utilizing eco packaging solutions or inventive designs that showcase the products excellence and distinctiveness thereby increasing its visibility on store shelves and capturing consumer interest.

Influence of Packaging:	Count
Strongly influences	35
Moderately influences	9
Slightly influences	29
Does not influence	2
Not sure	1

Table 3. Consumer preferences: Influence of packaging (Own survey result)

4. Promotional Reach

Analysis: A considerable number of consumers (42 respondents) sometimes take note of promotions while a sizable portion (27 respondents) rarely come across them.

Discussion: Increasing the visibility and frequency of promotions could raise customer awareness and drive sales. Employing promotional tactics, such as eye catching in store displays or well executed online campaigns can effectively capture the interest of potential customers and significantly boost sales.

Promotion seen on the product	Count
Frequently	5
Occasionally	42
Rarely	27
Never	2

Table 4. Consumer preferences: Promotional exposure (Own survey result)

5. Brand Perception

Analysis: The survey indicates an inclination towards brand loyalty with a significant number of customers (43 respondents) expressing a desire to stick with well-known brands.

Discussion: Focusing on customer retention through loyalty programs or ongoing engagement efforts could bring about benefits.

By following these tactics you can effectively retain a customer base and potentially attract new customers through positive recommendations.

Brand Loyalty:	Count
More likely to purchase from familiar brands	43
Depends on the situation	19
Depends on the occasion	14

Table 5. Consumer preferences: Brand loyalty (Own survey result)

6. Perception between Domestic and Imported Products

Analysis: The data suggests that a large majority of participants (54 individuals) favored brands over international ones hinting at feelings of patriotism or a preference for homegrown products.

Discussion: By marketing their goods as locally manufactured using materials local producers can leverage this emotional connection. Emphasizing the origin could greatly appeal to consumers who prioritize supporting local businesses.

Perception of Imported or domestic products	Count
Yes, global brands are perceived more favorably	6
Yes, domestic brands are perceived more favorably	54
No, perception is similar for both	14
Not sure	2

Table 6. Consumer preferences: Domestic Vs Imported Product (Own survey result)

7. Local Vs. Ulaanbaatar Product Perceptions

Analysis: The survey shows varied opinions on brands based on their geographical location. Interestingly a significant portion of customers (33) exhibit a preference for local brands compared to those from Ulaanbaatar (12 respondents). However there is also a group (26 respondents) that does not distinguish between brands based on their origin suggesting that the brands location may not be crucial to everyone.

Discussion: This diversity in viewpoints provides an insight into consumer allegiances and preferences.

Perception of Local and Ulaanbaatar products	Count
Yes, Ulaanbaatar brands are perceived more favorably	12
Yes, local brands are perceived more favorably	33
No, perception is similar for both	26
Not sure	5

Table 7. Consumer preferences: Local vs. Ulaanbaatar Product (Own survey result)

Local producers are getting a message that highlighting the 'locally made' aspect could really strike a chord with customers. By tapping into community spirit and the popular trend of supporting businesses it could be a smart move. On the hand brands from Ulaanbaatar may need to step up their game in terms of quality and innovation. They could create stories around being cutting edge or offering something that local brands can't match. Also since a good number of consumers don't really care about where the brand comes from it seems like product quality and value for money might matter more than loyalty in the end. Both local producers and those from Ulaanbaatar could gain by focusing on these aspects and making sure they meet consumer expectations to stay competitive.

8. Interaction and involvement on social media platforms

Analysis: Social media engagement with sausage products is limited, suggesting underutilization of this channel.

Discussion: There is a significant opportunity to increase the intensity of social media marketing endeavors. Creating engaging content and interactive marketing campaigns may increase visibility and foster a sense of community among consumers, turning passive followers into eager brand advocates.

Consumer Engagement of social media on sausage products	Count
Very active	4
Somewhat active	26
Somewhat inactive	39
Very inactive	7

Table 8. Consumer preferences: Interaction and involvement on social media platforms (Own survey result)

9. Impact of Recommendations

Analysis: Recommendations have a modest impact on consumer decisions because the viewpoints of others significantly sway a large proportion of respondents (29).

Discussion: Promoting good word-of-mouth and utilizing influencer connections may significantly enhance brand exposure and reputation. By implementing techniques that focus on enhancing customer satisfaction, businesses may naturally achieve higher rates of customer referrals and conversions.

Influence of Recommendations:	Count
Strongly influences	16
Moderately influences	29
Slightly influences	18
Does not influence	11
Not sure	2

Table 9. Consumer preferences: Impact of Recommendations (Own survey result)

Preference for product characteristics:

Texture: It plays a role in how people perceive and enjoy meat products and can be evaluated based on qualities like tenderness, juiciness, firmness, compactness and chewiness.

Tender: This texture is gentle and easy to chew. Survey respondents showed a preference for the softness of meat products (19) and cooked sausages (43) indicating an appreciation for tender textures in these specific food categories.

Juicy: Juiciness adds a moistness that enhances the taste. The desire for juiciness was particularly evident in meat products (23 respondents) showcasing a craving for succulence.

Firm; Firmness indicates a sturdy texture. Smoked sausages were highly favored for their texture (46 respondents) meeting expectations for a robust bite commonly associated with smoked varieties.

Less Compact: A texture that may impact how easily the meat breaks apart. Across all product types this attribute wasn't as popular with meat products receiving the highest score from 5 respondents.

Chewiness: It suggests some bounce back quality that requires chewing effort. Among the options presented, chewiness was the least favored due to its appeal, across all product categories.

Texture	Tender	Juicy	Firm	Less compact	Chewy
Frozen meat products	19	23	25	5	4
Smoked sausages	21	4	46	1	4
Cooked sausages	43	9	23	0	1
Organ meat products	25	7	31	2	11

Table 10. Preference for product characteristics: Texture (Own survey result)

Appearance: The look of food items plays a role in how consumers choose what to buy, often serving as an initial signal of quality.

Very important: Many survey participants viewed appearance as crucial especially when it came to cooked sausages (37 respondents) and organ meat products (34 respondents) highlighting the importance of appeal in their purchase choices.

Moderately Important: This indicates that while appearance matters it may not be the factor. Frozen meat products received attention in this aspect (24 respondents).

Neutral Stance: Some consumers remain indifferent, to appearance influenced by preferences and the specific product being considered.

Appearance	Very important	Somewhat important	Neutral	Somewhat not important	Not important
Frozen meat products	32	24	18	1	1
Smoked sausages	34	25	14	2	1
Cooked sausages	37	22	14	3	0
Organ meat products	34	22	17	2	1

Table 11. Preference for product characteristics: Appearance (Own survey result)

Flavor: Different taste profiles like /umami, spicy, sweet herbal seasonings, salty and others play a significant role in enhancing consumer satisfaction and choice.

Sour/Umami; These flavors, known for their savory qualities are generally well liked across a variety of products indicating a preference for rich and intricate tastes. Herbal Seasonings; Aromatic seasonings are especially valued in meat items (as reported by 22 participants) hinting at a fondness for fragrant and tasty meats. Salty: An flavor that holds particular appeal, in smoked sausages (according to 22 respondents) aligning with the classic taste profile of smoked goods.

Taste	Sour/Umami		Sweet	Herbal		
	ami	Spicy		seasonings	Salty	Other
Frozen meat products	11	10	1	22	12	20
Smoked sausages	11	9	1	18	22	15
Cooked sausages	13	7	1	18	12	25
Organ meat products	13	10	5	16	15	17

Table 12. Preference for product characteristics: Taste (Own survey result)

Smell and Aroma: The aroma of food plays a role in how we experience it, often influencing consumer preferences. When it comes to attributes options include spicy, sour/umami, herbal seasoned, soft and more.

Smoky: This particular aroma is closely linked to smoked sausages according to 47 respondents evoking memories of smoking methods that give off a distinct smell.

Other: A variety of preferences were mentioned, especially in frozen meat products by 32 respondents showing an openness to a wide range of scent variations.

Smell, aroma	Smoky	Spicy	Sour/U	Herbal	Soft	Other
			mami	seasonings		
Frozen meat products	16	8	2	17	1	32
Smoked sausages	47	5	3	9	1	11
Cooked sausages	10	12	5	18	9	22
Organ meat products	22	7	8	17	0	22

Table 13. Preference for product characteristics: Smell, aroma (Own survey result)

Overview Satisfaction Levels: When we talk about satisfaction we're looking at how people feel about a product in terms of its texture, appearance, taste and smell. People rate their satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5 ranging from satisfied to very dissatisfied.

Neutral Feelings; Most people who tried products didn't express strong feelings either way signaling an opportunity to make improvements that can make customers happier.

Happy Customers; Only a small number of people reported feeling very satisfied with the products. This suggests there might be room for enhancing the products to meet customer expectations especially when it comes to frozen meat items where dissatisfaction was noted by a few respondents (6 people).

Overall satisfaction of current products	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neutral	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Frozen meat products	3	12	44	11	6
Smoked sausages	1	11	39	19	6
Cooked sausages	2	15	41	13	5
Organ meat products	4	12	40	15	5

*Table 14. Preference for product characteristics: Overall satisfaction of current products
(Own survey result)*

Customer Preference Analysis for Product Attributes:

Frozen Meat Products:

Texture: Customers show a preference for softer (19) juicier (23) and firmer textures (25) highlighting their appreciation for the versatility of frozen meat products.

When making purchasing decisions the appearance is a factor for consumers with 32 individuals deeming it extremely important and 24 individuals finding it fairly important.

Taste: Herbal seasonings (22) and a variety of flavors (20) are highly valued by customers suggesting a preference for diverse taste profiles.

The liking for aromas (16) and a range of other fragrances (32 under 'Other') indicates that aroma plays a crucial role in the product's appeal.

Overall Satisfaction: The general sentiment among customers leans towards neutrality with some expressing dissatisfaction. This suggests areas where improvements could be made.

Smoked Sausages:

Texture: The strong preference for firmness (46) suggests that customers expect a level of chewiness and resistance commonly found in smoked sausages.

A majority of consumers place value on visual appearances with 34 considering them extremely important and 25 finding them fairly important. This underscores the importance of appeal in products. Flavor; The main taste is salty which pairs with smoked foods. However there is also a variety of flavors that contribute to the overall taste experience.

Aroma: The primary aroma is smoky reflecting the smoking process used in the products production.

Overall Satisfaction: Most participants have a view although a notable number express some dissatisfaction indicating room for improvement.

Cooked Sausages:

Preference; textured sausages are highly favored, indicating a preference for tender and easily enjoyable sausages.

Appearance: Emphasis is placed on appearance with many considering it very important for an appeal.

Flavor: There is a liking for flavors with 'Other' flavors being the top choice followed by herbal seasoning.

Aroma: Consumers show an interest in diverse fragrances without a single dominant preference suggesting enjoyment, from a wide range of scents. Consumers generally express a mix of feelings leaning towards a sentiment (41) with some dissatisfaction

highlighting opportunities to enhance satisfaction by improving the flavors and textures.

Organ Meat Products:

Consumers show a preference for both firm (31) and soft (25) textures when it comes to organ meat items indicating a desire for a variety of textures.

An importance rating of 34 underscores the significance of appearance. This focus on how the products look may be linked to concerns about their freshness and quality.

In terms of taste, sour/umami (13) and salty (15) flavors are favored, aligning with methods of preparing organ meat.

When it comes to aroma people appreciate scents, with smokey (22) and other complex fragrances (22) ranking high in popularity.

Overall satisfaction levels tend towards neutrality (40) suggesting that consumers are generally content but there is room for innovation to create products.

Preference for Product Attributes Discussion:

Across all product categories there is a preference among consumers in Erdenet for diverse and intense flavors. This indicates that these customers have discerning taste preferences and producers should cater to these preferences. The emphasis on appearance, across all categories underscores the importance of appealing product presentation.

People appreciate the aroma found in smoked sausages as it aligns with the traditional expectations linked to this type of food. The textures of products differ. Frozen and organ meat items need a balance of firmness and softness while cooked sausages should be more tender. Brands can leverage the positive satisfaction levels by enhancing the sensory aspects that customers are most passionate about thus distinguishing themselves. Manufacturers could use this information to tailor their products to suit consumer preferences potentially boosting satisfaction and fostering brand loyalty in the market.

5. CONCLUSION

The study delved into the intricacies of the sausage production industry in Erdenet, Mongolia revealing a landscape marked by a blend of challenges and age old traditions. The findings shed light on how local sausage makers exhibit resilience and adaptability in an evolving economic environment shaped by urbanization and the swift growth of Ulaanbaatar.

Local producers face the task of upholding traditional meat processing methods while embracing modern practices to stay competitive in a tough market. By prioritizing food safety standards the industry showcases its commitment to meeting the evolving needs of both domestic and international consumers. The industry's ability to adapt, grow and transform underscores its agility in responding to shifts within global markets.

This thesis has captured consumer insights that highlight factors like price sensitivity, brand image and packaging influence consumer buying decisions significantly. The discerning preferences of consumers for sausage attributes such as texture, taste and aroma underscore the importance of tailored product offerings that cater to these specific preferences.

Moreover the research underscores a preference for locally made products over imported alternatives signaling a promising opportunity for regional brands to strengthen their foothold in the market.

To leverage this tendency could help showcase the authenticity and cultural connection of products potentially enhancing customer loyalty.

In the marketing realm studies suggest that there might be opportunities in utilizing influencer partnerships and social media for boosting brand visibility and engagement. Similarly the modest impact of referrals indicates that word of mouth could notably expand market reach.

1. It is recommended for sausage makers to explore implementing varied pricing strategies to enhance their products value proposition while upholding high quality standards.
2. By tapping into pride and underscoring the genuineness of indigenous sausage items one can gain a competitive advantage by highlighting Mongolian heritage.

3. In a market landscape investments, in creative packaging and marketing endeavors might serve as pivotal distinguishing factors.
4. Customer interaction and loyalty schemes can cultivate a loyal consumer base thereby reinforcing brand allegiance.
5. Utilizing social media platforms to establish a community centered around sausage offerings could lead to increased sales and market expansion.
6. A comprehensive consumer education campaign spotlighting the benefits of made bratwursts could potentially enhance the brands reputation and consumer trust.

The journey of sausage producers in Erdenet reflects the broader narrative of economic and cultural changes in Mongolia. Balancing between seizing chances and facing challenges, these producers not only uphold Mongolian traditions but also run their businesses adapting to evolving trends while staying true to their rich history.

This research lays the groundwork for studies by offering valuable perspectives that can guide decision making in policies and business strategies aimed at nurturing a thriving and successful sausage industry in Mongolia.

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Interviews

Interview 1: Interview with S. Sainbileg, CEO of Khukh Uur Management LLC (the company offers commercial traditional fermented horse milk “airag”)

Good morning! Thank you for agreeing to this interview. Could you briefly describe your role and responsibilities at your company?

Khukh Uur Airag Zoog Restaurant, established in 2017, has been at the forefront of bringing traditional Mongolian cuisines and food products, particularly airag, to a broader audience. As the CEO of Khukh Uur Management LLC, I'm deeply involved in overseeing the entire operation, from management to branding, and especially in the development of new products. Our flagship project, the Khukh Uur Terguun Airag, symbolizes our dedication to preserving and promoting traditional Mongolian fermented horse milk. We've also been working on the Khukh Sureg project, which integrates traditional livestock rearing and farming practices, underscoring our commitment to cultural and culinary heritage.

What challenges did you face when introducing traditional “airag” (the fermented horse milk) to the Ulaanbaatar market?

Introducing airag to Ulaanbaatar posed significant challenges, primarily around maintaining the product's integrity and safety. Traditional methods used by local herders often didn't align with the stringent food safety standards required in urban markets. We tackled this by standardizing collection processes at production sites and implementing food-safe packaging to ensure quality and safety. Our innovative use of quick freezing technology has been a game-changer, allowing us to break the seasonal constraints and offer airag throughout the year. This approach not only preserved the traditional flavor but also helped us navigate the pricing strategy effectively in a competitive market.

How does your product stand out from competitors? What are its unique features and advantages?

Our airag stands out due to its authentic production process and sourcing from Mongolia's most renowned airag-producing regions like Bulgan-Saikhan, Mogod, Arkhangai, Tuv, and Dundgovi provinces. We pride ourselves on being pioneers in realizing the value of branding in this sector, thereby establishing ourselves as a distinguished brand offering year-round production – a first in the industry. Our focus isn't just limited to traditional airag; we're continuously exploring ways to broaden

our portfolio to include a variety of traditional foods and drinks, thereby capturing the essence of Mongolian culinary culture.

How have you adapted your distribution network for selling traditional products in Ulaanbaatar's major market, and how do you maintain your brand's uniqueness during expansion?

Adapting to the Ulaanbaatar market required innovative distribution strategies. While partnering with delivery companies has been pivotal, the challenge of managing large-scale deliveries due to limited storage capabilities is ongoing. Our distribution is confined to Minii Suljee, GS25, Emart supermarket branches as third-party channels; we leverage our own restaurants as primary outlets, ensuring direct reach to our customers. This approach helps in maintaining the brand's authenticity and keeps us in control of the consumer experience. We're also focusing on expanding our logistic capabilities to meet the demands of a growing market, ensuring our unique products are readily available to a wider audience.

Could you share your experience in marketing the unique aspects of your product and the consumer reception?

Our initial foray into the market taught us valuable lessons about consumer behavior. We were the first to commercialize airag, and understandably, there was initial price sensitivity among consumers. Our marketing strategy emphasized the importance of supporting local food traditions and the value of our traditional practices. This narrative not only helped in justifying our price points but also resonated with consumers' growing appreciation for authentic and traditional products. Our approach has been to position our traditional offerings as not just alternatives but as premium choices compared to imported products, highlighting their cultural and nutritional value.

What lessons have you learned from introducing traditional products to larger markets and consumer reception?

Our expansion into international markets, particularly through our partnership with the American Anglo trade company, targeting the Mongolian diaspora in the USA, was an enlightening experience. We discovered that our airag, especially when it's at its ripest, is well-suited for long-distance transportation. Navigating through the complex web of documentation and permits was challenging, but our persistence paid off. This venture has opened up new avenues for us in terms of understanding global market dynamics and consumer preferences in different cultural contexts.

Long-Term Vision for Khukh Uur LLC: What are your future plans regarding product development, market presence, and brand evolution?

Looking forward, we are enthusiastic about diversifying our product range and increasing our market presence. We are in the process of developing a new line of products, including dried horse milk powder, which we see having great potential as a cosmetic ingredient, particularly in the Japanese and Chinese markets. This innovation is in line with Mongolia's free trade agreements and is backed by thorough market research funded by the World Bank. We plan to launch these new products by 2025. Additionally, expanding our restaurant chain and securing more contracts are part of our strategy to enhance our brand's reach and reputation. This ambitious vision is not just about growth; it's about cementing Khukh Uur LLC's role as a custodian of Mongolian culinary traditions and a pioneer in introducing these traditions to the world stage.

Interview 2: with the CEO of Gandan Uul LLC (a local processed noodle producer)

What are the most significant challenges you face as a local food producer in Mongolia?

One of our primary challenges is navigating Mongolia's distinct four seasons, particularly the harsh winters. Our product consumption sees a significant uptick during summer, almost 50% more than in winter months. This fluctuation contrasts sharply with Ulaanbaatar, where consumption patterns are more stable and less affected by seasonal changes, unlike the more variable demand we experience in Orkhon province.

What motivated Gandan Uul LLC's expansion to the capital, Ulaanbaatar, and how does it fit into your broader business strategy?

After completing my higher education abroad, I recognized that larger cities, particularly Ulaanbaatar, presented more significant opportunities for growth and networking. The capital offered an expansive, untapped market compared to the limited scope of Orkhon province. This strategic move was pivotal in scaling up our business and reaching a broader customer base, aligning perfectly with our long-term vision of expansion and market penetration.

In expanding your brand from Orkhon province to Ulaanbaatar, what challenges did you encounter, particularly considering market differences?

The journey into Ulaanbaatar's market was more challenging and time-consuming than anticipated. Initially, my focus wasn't on immediate profit but rather on establishing a solid foundation through contracts with large supermarket chains and engaging in extensive marketing activities. This included creative approaches like lottery and gift promotions, along with a robust social media campaign targeting consumers. It was a strategic investment, and we only started seeing tangible profits after two years of persistent effort and brand building.

How do consumer preferences and market dynamics in Ulaanbaatar differ from those in Orkhon province, and how have you adapted your products and marketing strategies to these differences?

In Orkhon province, the market is notably smaller, and consumers are significantly more sensitive to price changes. This contrasts with the urban market of Ulaanbaatar, where consumers exhibit heightened health consciousness and prioritize products that adhere to environmentally friendly and ethical production practices. Understanding these nuances, we tailored our marketing strategies to emphasize the quality and ethical sourcing of our products, catering to the less price-sensitive but more quality-focused urban consumers.

How have you adapted your supply chain to address the increased demand and geographic distribution challenges following your expansion to Ulaanbaatar?

To overcome the logistical challenges posed by our expansion, we strategically partnered with intercity transportation services, including food truck drivers. This approach was supplemented by utilizing railway transportation for more significant inventory transfers, despite the higher associated costs. These logistics adjustments were crucial for ensuring timely and efficient delivery to our Ulaanbaatar storage facilities and maintaining a consistent supply chain amidst growing demand.

How do you ensure the quality and consistency of your products as production scales up?

Our commitment to quality and consistency, even as production scales, is a testament to our chief operating officer's dedication. Operating from our production unit in Orkhon province, we strictly adhere to food safety procedures and utilize safe handling practices during deliveries. This includes the use of appropriate containers and food trucks, ensuring that our products maintain their high standards from production to delivery.

What branding and marketing strategies have proven effective in the competitive landscape of Ulaanbaatar's urban market?

Our successful branding and marketing strategies in Ulaanbaatar included innovative gift and lottery promotions, coupled with dynamic social media content creation, especially on popular food channels and chef shows. Our responsiveness during the COVID pandemic, particularly through our door-to-door delivery service, significantly enhanced customer loyalty. We recognized the importance of product accessibility and visibility, and our branding strategy highlighted the home-like quality of our noodles, evoking a sense of homemade authenticity that resonated well with our target audience.

Long-Term Vision for Gandan Uul LLC: Can you outline your future plans for product development, market expansion, and brand evolution?

Looking ahead, we are excited to unveil a new range of noodle products specifically designed for health-conscious consumers. These noodles will boast functional properties, aligning with the growing trend towards healthier eating. To support this expansion, we are planning to establish a second factory in Ulaanbaatar, which will feature automated production lines. This move is not only a step towards increasing our production capacity but also a significant leap in modernizing our manufacturing processes, thereby enhancing our efficiency and product quality. This forward-thinking approach is central to our strategy for not just sustaining, but also elevating our presence in both local and potentially international markets.

Interview 3: with the CEO of Iderbayalag LLC (local sausage & meat-based products)

Good morning! Thank you for allowing this interview. Could you please provide a brief description of your company's main activities and the role of your team?

Since our establishment in 2005, we've been a prominent family-owned company specializing in meat processing and sales in Erdenet city. As the founder and director of operations, I oversee the overall management and direction of the company.

As a local meat producer, what are the major challenges you face? What difficulties do you encounter in bringing your products to the market? How have you resolved them?

Competition has intensified with the emergence of three major supermarket chains and two significant convenience stores in Erdenet city over the last three years. This influx has brought numerous products from Ulaanbaatar and imported goods, presenting a challenging landscape for local producers like us to compete with their products they have introduced. Maintaining consistent product quality amidst these market dynamics and supply chain complexities has been a primary challenge. To address this, we've implemented stringent quality control measures and cheap prices.

How do you differentiate your products from those of your competitors? What are the unique features and advantages of your products?

Our products stand out through their unwavering commitment to consistent quality and taste backed by decades of industry expertise. Furthermore, our competitive pricing strategy ensures accessibility to a wide range of consumers without compromising on quality.

How do you carry out the promotion of your products? And how do you maintain the brand's integrity when expanding distribution networks?

Our promotional efforts are multifaceted, encompassing various channels such as targeted advertising, social media engagement, and strategic partnerships. By leveraging these platforms, we aim to increase brand visibility and attract new customers while reinforcing our brand identity. As we expand our distribution networks, preserving brand integrity remains paramount. We achieve this by carefully vetting potential partners, providing comprehensive training on brand standards, and implementing robust quality assurance protocols throughout the supply chain.

In terms of consumer acceptance and the positioning of your products, what branding and marketing strategies have been successful?

One of our most successful branding strategies has been our commitment to competitive pricing without compromising on quality. This approach has resonated well with consumers, allowing us to carve out a distinct market position and foster brand loyalty. Additionally, fostering strong relationships with suppliers and distributors has helped us streamline our operations and ensure timely product delivery, our focus on transparent communication and customer engagement has further strengthened our brand's reputation and credibility in the marketplace.

Long-Term Vision for Iderbayalag LLC:

Looking ahead, we remain committed to continuous product innovation and development to meet evolving consumer preferences and market trends. We plan to expand our market presence by targeting new demographic segments and exploring opportunities for geographical expansion and export diversification. Additionally, we aim to play a pivotal role in marketing Mongolian meat products, showcasing the quality and uniqueness of our locally sourced ingredients. Our aim is to become a top player in the meat processing industry, providing products that meet the varied needs of our customers both locally and internationally, with a focus on expanding our export capabilities.

Survey questionnaire

Welcome to our survey on sausage products in the food industry! Your input is invaluable in aiding our understanding of consumer preferences and purchasing behavior concerning sausage products. By participating in this survey, you're helping shape insights that can benefit both consumers and businesses in the sausage industry.

Consumption Frequency:

How often do you consume sausage products in a typical month?

- Daily
- Several times a week
- Once a week
- Several times a month
- Once a month
- Rarely
- Never

Demographic Information:

- 1. Age:
 - Under 18
 - 18-24
 - 25-34
 - 35-44
 - 45-54
 - 55-64
 - 65 or above
- 2. Gender:
 - Male
 - Female
 - Non-binary/Other
- 3. Location:
 - Urban
 - Suburban
 - Rural
- 4. Income Level:
 - Less than \$25,000
 - \$25,000 - \$50,000
 - \$50,000 - \$75,000
 - \$75,000 - \$100,000
 - Over \$100,000
- Education Level:
 - High School or lower
 - Some College/Associate Degree
 - Bachelor's Degree

- Master's Degree or higher
- Dietary Preferences:
 - Omnivore
 - Vegetarian
 - Vegan
 - Flexitarian

Consumer product preferences:

Organoleptic Characteristics for Smoked Sausage:

- Texture Preference for Smoked Sausage:
 - Which texture profile do you prefer for smoked sausage products? (Select all that apply)
 - Firm
 - Tender
 - Juicy
 - Crumbly
 - Chewy
 - Other (please specify): [Open text field]
- Appearance Importance for Smoked Sausage:
 - How important is the appearance of smoked sausage products to you when making purchasing decisions?
 - Very important
 - Somewhat important
 - Neutral
 - Not very important
 - Not important at all
- Aroma Preference for Smoked Sausage:
 - Which aroma profile do you prefer for smoked sausage products? (Select all that apply)
 - Smoky
 - Spicy
 - Savory
 - Herbal
 - Sweet
 - Other (please specify): [Open text field]
- Taste Preference for Smoked Sausage:
 - Which taste profile do you prefer for smoked sausage products? (Select all that apply)
 - Smoky
 - Sweet
 - Savory/Umami
 - Spicy
 - Tangy
 - Other (please specify): [Open text field]
- Overall Satisfaction with Organoleptic Characteristics of Smoked Sausage:

- How satisfied are you with the overall sensory experience (texture, appearance, aroma, taste) of the smoked sausage products you typically purchase?
 - Very satisfied
 - Satisfied
 - Neutral
 - Dissatisfied
 - Very dissatisfied

Organoleptic Characteristics for Cooked Sausage:

- Texture Preference for Cooked Sausage:
 - Which texture profile do you prefer for cooked sausage products? (Select all that apply)
 - Firm
 - Tender
 - Juicy
 - Crumbly
 - Chewy
 - Other (please specify): [Open text field]
- Appearance Importance for Cooked Sausage:
 - How important is the appearance of cooked sausage products to you when making purchasing decisions?
 - Very important
 - Somewhat important
 - Neutral
 - Not very important
 - Not important at all
- Aroma Preference for Cooked Sausage:
 - Which aroma profile do you prefer for cooked sausage products? (Select all that apply)
 - Savory
 - Herbal
 - Spicy
 - Mild
 - Other (please specify): [Open text field]
- Taste Preference for Cooked Sausage:
 - Which taste profile do you prefer for cooked sausage products? (Select all that apply)
 - Savory/Umami
 - Spicy
 - Mild
 - Sweet
 - Tangy
 - Other (please specify): [Open text field]

- Overall Satisfaction with Organoleptic Characteristics of Cooked Sausage:
 - How satisfied are you with the overall sensory experience (texture, appearance, aroma, taste) of the cooked sausage products you typically purchase?
 - Very satisfied
 - Satisfied
 - Neutral
 - Dissatisfied

Organoleptic Characteristics for Frozen Meat Products:

- Texture Preference for Frozen Meat Products:
 - Which texture profile do you prefer for frozen meat products? (Select all that apply)
 - Tender
 - Juicy
 - Firm
 - Flaky
 - Chewy
 - Other (please specify): [Open text field]
- Appearance Importance for Frozen Meat Products:
 - How important is the appearance of frozen meat products to you when making purchasing decisions?
 - Very important
 - Somewhat important
 - Neutral
 - Not very important
 - Not important at all
- Aroma Preference for Frozen Meat Products:
 - Which aroma profile do you prefer for frozen meat products? (Select all that apply)
 - Savory
 - Spicy
 - Herbal
 - Mild
 - Other (please specify): [Open text field]
- Taste Preference for Frozen Meat Products:
 - Which taste profile do you prefer for frozen meat products? (Select all that apply)
 - Savory/Umami
 - Spicy
 - Mild
 - Sweet
 - Tangy
 - Other (please specify): [Open text field]
- Overall Satisfaction with Organoleptic Characteristics of Frozen Meat Products:

- How satisfied are you with the overall sensory experience (texture, appearance, aroma, taste) of the frozen meat products you typically purchase?
 - Very satisfied
 - Satisfied
 - Neutral
 - Dissatisfied
 - Very dissatisfied

Marketing-Related Questions:

Price Importance:

- How important is the price of sausage products to you when making purchasing decisions?
 - Very important
 - Somewhat important
 - Neutral
 - Not very important
 - Not important at all
- Brand Perception:
 - How important is brand reputation when purchasing sausage products?
 - Very important
 - Somewhat important
 - Neutral
 - Not very important
 - Not important at all
- Influence of Packaging:
 - To what extent does the packaging design influence your decision to purchase sausage products?
 - Strongly influences
 - Moderately influences
 - Slightly influences
 - Does not influence
 - Not sure
- Advertising and Promotion:
 - How often do you come across advertisements or promotions for sausage products?
 - Frequently
 - Occasionally
 - Rarely
 - Never
- Effectiveness of Marketing Channels:
 - Which marketing channels do you find most effective in promoting sausage products? (Select all that apply)
 - Television commercials
 - Social media ads

- Online reviews/influencers
- In-store promotions
- Printed advertisements (magazines, newspapers)
- Other (please specify): [Open text field]
- Brand Loyalty:
 - Are you more likely to purchase sausage products from brands you are familiar with, or are you open to trying new brands?
 - More likely to purchase from familiar brands
 - Open to trying new brands
 - Depends on various factors
- Perception of Global vs Local Brands:
 - Do you perceive global sausage brands differently from local ones in terms of quality, trustworthiness, and authenticity?
 - Yes, global brands are perceived more favorably
 - Yes, local brands are perceived more favorably
 - No, perception is similar for both
 - Not sure
- Consumer Engagement:
 - How likely are you to engage with sausage brands on social media platforms (e.g., liking posts, commenting, sharing)?
 - Very likely
 - Somewhat likely
 - Not very likely
 - Not likely at all
- Influence of Recommendations:
 - How much do recommendations from friends, family, or online reviews influence your decision to try new sausage products or brands?
 - Strongly influences
 - Moderately influences
 - Slightly influences
 - Does not influence
 - Not sure

Thank you!

DECLARATION

the public access and authenticity of the thesis

Student's name: Enkhzul Sergelen
Student's Neptun code: G0SAUL
Title of thesis: Economic and Operational Challenges and Opportunities for Local Sausage Producers in Erdenet, Mongolia
Year of publication: 2024
Name of the consultant's institute: Institute of Agricultural Business and Economics
Name of consultant's department: Department of Agricultural Business and Economics

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