

Branding as the Marketing Strategy for Organic Products

: A Case Study of Moral Rice

Associate Professor Juthatip Patrawart¹

² Cooperative Academic Institute, Faculty of Economics, Kasetsart University, 50 Phaholyothin Rd. Jatujak Bangkok 10900 Thailand.

Abstract

In 2006, the Dharma Ruamjai foundation's farmers (DRF) who grew organic Hom Mali rice, in Yasothron province, had experienced the rapid price slump. After engaging in the participatory action research (PAR) program which employs of the knowledge management method on the production and marketing, the development of channel distribution and branding. The participated farmers have agreed to adopt the moral conduct within the group by committing to give up on liquor, smoking and gambling and have used these moral codes in the new brand for their organic Hom Mali rice called "Moral Rice". During 2006-2009, there were 108, 82 and 160 farmers participated in the Moral Rice network program which have produced 168, 464 and 1,464 tons of rice paddy respectively. To date, the Moral Rice, which has successfully set the farm price 25% higher than the market price of organic Hom Mali Rice in the same area. Currently, the Moral Rice is developing its new distributing channels through various networks such as the Thailand Post (Yummy Post Project), leading department stores and direct sales. Moreover, the DRF farmers group has established and operate 16 Moral Rice learning centres across Yasothorn and nearby provinces for public knowledge sharing. Hence, strategic branding through PAR method can deliver the long-term solution for farmers to overcome the marketing problems and create brand attachment to the consumers in various distribution channels.