



## Palm Sugar Marketing Strategy in Improving Community Welfare in Kunyi Village, Anreapi Sub-District

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### ABSTRACT

*Palm sugar is one of the commodities that has the potential to be developed in West Sulawesi, especially in Polewali Mandar Regency. This study aims to determine and analyze the marketing strategy of palm sugar in Kunyi Village, Anreapi District, Polewali Mandar Regency. This study uses a qualitative method with primary and secondary data collection with the data analysis method used in this study, namely the 7P Marketing Mix analysis. The results of the study indicate that palm sugar farmers in Kunyi Village do not yet have an effective marketing strategy to increase palm sugar sales. They face marketing constraints such as unstable selling prices and want to improve their marketing capabilities. This study recommends the development of effective marketing strategies, mentoring training programs, improving infrastructure, cooperation with stakeholders, and developing more diverse and quality palm sugar products to increase palm sugar sales and improve the welfare of the Kunyi Village community.*

**Keywords:** Marketing Strategy, Palm Sugar, Improving Community Welfare

### INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a vast and fertile agricultural country where most of the population's livelihoods are in the agricultural and plantation sectors. This sector provides food for most of its population and provides jobs for all existing workforces and functions scientifically, health-wise, and aesthetically. The plantation sector is quite potential as a source of income and foreign exchange for the country, namely palm plants and one type of palm plant. Palm plants produce sap as a raw material for making palm sugar which plays an important role in encouraging regional development and agro-industry development (Arif et al, 2023).

The most widely preserved plantation commodity is palm sugar, the raw material of which comes from the palm plant. The most widely cultivated palm production by the community is palm sap which is processed into palm sugar and this product has a very wide market. Palm sugar from palm sap is even superior to other sugars, because palm sugar has a much sweeter and sharper taste. Palm sugar is the result of concentrating palm sap by heating (cooking) until the water content is very low. (Purba & Ramadhani, 2022).

Palm sugar is one of the commodities that has the potential to be developed in West Sulawesi, especially in Polewali Mandar Regency. Despite having great potential, the area of palm plantations in West Sulawesi in the last 5 years (2018-2022) has actually experienced a tendency to decrease in production (Heryanto et al, 2023). Kunyi Village is one of the villages in Anreapi District, Polewali Mandar Regency which has a lot of tourism and agricultural potential which has quite large economic potential, especially in palm sugar production. However, production is still not optimal and has not been able to significantly improve community welfare.

Based on the results of observations made by researchers, the community in Kunyi Village has problems in selling the sugar they produce. In addition, the selling price of palm sugar in this village has not been able to significantly increase its income. Therefore, this study aims to identify effective palm sugar marketing strategies

in improving community welfare in Kunyi Village, Anreapi District, Polewali Mandar Regency.

Aren (*Arenga pinnata Merr*) is one type of palm plant found in Indonesia. Aren plants produce a liquid from tapping bunches known as sap. Aren sap has a chemical composition of 87.2% water, 12.7% carbohydrates, 0.24% ash, 0.2% protein, and 0.02% fat. that fresh sap that has just dripped from the bunch has a sweet taste, a distinctive aroma of sap with an acidity of around 5-6, sucrose > 12%, and alcohol. In addition to the tapping time, there are several factors that affect the productivity of sap, including elevation, rainfall and soil fertility. For example, in the rainy season the amount of sap produced will be greater, but the sugar content will be lower, causing the taste of the sap to be less sweet. Sap is a very sensitive material and is easily subject to a decrease in quality due to the large amount of microbial activity in it, so it is necessary to carry out good handling from tapping to storage. One of the efforts to maintain the quality of palm sap is by preparing the main tapping tool, namely the tube. The tube is a tool made of hollow bamboo used as a container to collect the dripping palm sap. The tube to be used must be washed first, then the inside of the tube is brushed using a long-handled brush. Then the tube is rinsed using boiling water and smoked with the tube upside down facing the stove (Hutami et al, 2023).

Marketing mix is a marketing strategy that consists of 4Ps, namely (1) Product: Product is a crucial element in marketing that meets the needs and desires of consumers. Factors considered in product formulation include quality, brand, excellence, and more (Rahmawati et al., 2019); (2) Price: Price is the value of a product measured in money. Price plays a significant role in the buying and selling process (Ningsih & Maika, 2020); (3) Place: Distribution is a marketing activity that facilitates the delivery of goods and services from producers to consumers (Mamonto et al., 2021); and (4) Promotion: Promotion is an activity that communicates product advantages and persuades target customers to buy. Promotion can be defined as a form of marketing communication that aims to influence and persuade target customers (Mamonto et al., 2021).

## RESEARCH METHODS

### Research Site

This research was conducted in Kunyi Village, Anreapi District, Polewali Mandar Regency, from January 6, 2025, to March 30, 2025. The study utilized primary and secondary data.

### Data Source

Primary data were collected through direct observation and interviews with palm sugar farmers in Kunyi Village. The respondent criteria were :

- Residents of Kunyi Village who are palm sugar farmers
- Have been in business for at least 2 years
- Aged 19 years and above

Secondary data were obtained from a literature review supporting this research topic, including books, journals, theses, and internet searches.

### Sampling Technique

This study employed a saturated sampling method, where the entire population of 30 palm sugar farmers in Kunyi Village was used as research samples. According to Suriani & Jailani (2023), saturated sampling is a sampling technique that uses all population members as samples, often used when the population is relatively small, less than 30 people.

### Data Analysis

Before conducting interviews, researchers will provide explanations about the research objectives and procedures, ensuring respondents understand and agree to participate. Respondents' confidentiality and anonymity will also be guaranteed. Collected data will be analyzed using the 7P Mix analysis, including 2:

- Product: Analyzing palm sugar products, including quality, features, and benefits.
- Price: Analyzing pricing strategies and their impact on sales.
- Promotion: Analyzing promotional strategies used.
- Place: Analyzing distribution channels.
- People: Analyzing human resources' role in marketing.
- Process: Analyzing the marketing process.
- Physical Evidence: Analyzing physical evidence supporting marketing.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Research Design

Palm sugar farmers in Kunyi Village currently rely heavily on collectors as their primary marketing channel. They sell their palm sugar products directly to collectors who come to their business premises and have become regular customers. However, the limited ability to market online is a significant barrier for palm sugar farmers to expand their marketing network.

Most palm sugar farmers in Kunyi Village are older adults who lack the skills and knowledge to use electronic devices such as smartphones to sell their products online. They are also unfamiliar with social media and do not know how to promote their products through online platforms.

This limitation makes it challenging for palm sugar farmers in Kunyi Village to increase sales and expand their marketing network. They are heavily dependent on collectors and have no control over the selling price of their products. Therefore, training and mentoring are necessary to enhance the online marketing capabilities of palm sugar farmers in Kunyi Village, enabling them to expand their marketing network and increase their income.

The main obstacle in marketing palm sugar in Kunyi Village is the unstable selling price. Significant price fluctuations, such as price changes of IDR 1,000-IDR 2,000 per kilogram in a short time, are caused by traders who manipulate market prices and make it difficult for farmers to plan production and increase their income. According to local residents, the price of palm sugar can fluctuate, for example from IDR 23,000/kg today to a higher or lower price tomorrow. This phenomenon often occurs, especially around certain days.

Here is the way to make palm sugar in Kunyi Village: The ingredients for making palm sugar in Kunyi village are Palm sap (Arenga pinnata juice), Largewok or pot, Firewood and coconut husk, Wooden stirrer and Palm sugar mold made from coconut shell. Palm sugar production process:



**Figure 1.** Palm sugar production process in Kunyi village  
Source: Primary Data (2025)

- 1) Palm sap collection: Palm sap is collected from tapped Arenga pinnata trees and brought to the palm sugar production site.
- 2) Palm sap cleaning: Palm sap is cleaned of dirt and other foreign objects to ensure good quality palm sugar.
- 3) Boiling palm sap: Palm sap is boiled in a large wok or pot until it boils, then grated coconut is added to give it a unique flavor and aroma.
- 4) Stirring: Palm sap is stirred continuously until it thickens and turns brown, indicating that the palm sugar is starting to form.
- 5) Palm sugar formation: The thickened palm sap is then poured into palm sugar molds made from coconut shells.
- 6) Cooling: The palm sugar is allowed to cool and harden in the coconut shell molds, forming a solid and high-quality palm sugar.
- 7) Packaging: The finished palm sugar is then packaged with dry banana leaves and is ready to be sold as a high-quality palm sugar product with a unique flavor.

The palm sugar production process in Kunyi Village is still done traditionally and requires sufficient skills and experience. However, this method produces high-quality palm sugar with a unique flavor, making it a highly sought-after product by the community. Palm sugar sales can increase the income of farmers and families, so that they can meet their daily needs. Palm sugar farmers hope to improve the welfare of the Kunyi Village community

by increasing income from palm sugar sales.

To enhance the welfare of palm sugar farmers in Kunyi Village, a comprehensive marketing strategy based on the 7P mix analysis can be employed. Here's how Marketing Strategies:

- **Product:** Develop diverse and high-quality palm sugar products, such as powdered or crystal palm sugar, to increase market demand and competitiveness.
- **Price:** Set stable and competitive prices by collaborating with collectors to establish a minimum price, ensuring profitability for farmers.
- **Place (Distribution):** Improve marketing networks through online platforms or partnerships with modern stores to boost sales and awareness.
- **Promotion:** Utilize effective promotional strategies like social media and community events to increase consumer awareness and demand.
- **People (Human Resources):** Provide training programs to enhance farmers' marketing skills and product management.
- **Process:** Upgrade infrastructure for palm sugar production and marketing to improve efficiency and quality.
- **Physical Evidence:** Enhance product quality and packaging to increase consumer confidence and sales.
- **Strengthening Welfare Linkages**
- **Poverty Reduction:** Increased income from palm sugar sales can contribute to poverty reduction in Kunyi Village.
- **Access to Education:** Improved welfare can lead to better access to education for farmers' families, enhancing overall community development.

#### **Policy Recommendations**

- **Training Program Assistance:** Provide training on marketing, product development, and business management for palm sugar farmers.
- **Content:** Marketing strategies, product development, and financial management.
- **Duration:** 3-6 months.
- **Funding:** Government or private sector sponsorship.
- **Income Increase:** Implement policies to stabilize prices and increase income for palm sugar farmers.
- **Mechanism:** Establish a minimum price for palm sugar, provide subsidies for farmers.
- **Partnerships:** Collaborate with e-commerce platforms like Tokopedia to expand market reach.
- **Potential partners:** Tokopedia, Shopee, Lazada.
- **Implementation**
- **Short-term:** Conduct training programs and establish partnerships with e-commerce platforms.
- **Long-term:** Monitor progress, adjust strategies, and explore new markets.

## **CONCLUSION**

The welfare improvement of palm sugar farmers in Kunyi Village can be achieved through the development of effective and comprehensive marketing strategies. By utilizing the 7P analysis (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence), palm sugar farmers can increase their income and improve their quality of life. Additionally, training and mentoring are necessary to enhance the marketing and business management skills of palm sugar farmers. By doing so, palm sugar farmers in Kunyi Village can improve their welfare and reduce poverty.

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