

Adoption of Modern Packaging Means as an Important Marketing Strategy for Cattle Feed Products: A Case Study in Eastern Up



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Abstract

Cattle feed industry in India is gradually evolving into an organized sector and the feed manufactures are increasingly adopting modern and sophisticated methods and marketing strategies in this sector. However, the feed industry sector has failed to attract the attention of the packaging industry and personnel which is one of the hindrances in order to promote this segment by incorporating modernized convenient and attractive packaging means. Therefore, this article presents an understanding of change in consumption pattern of branded and non-branded compounded cattle feed, change in the demand for packaged cattle feed and attitudes of the dairy farmers towards incorporation of modernized quality in packaging of compounded cattle feed through a case study conducted in Varanasi district of Eastern UP. The study clearly reveals the preference of branded and packaged compounded cattle feed with suitable, convenient packaging material with attractive design and colour combination for which farmers are even ready to pay extra price. Therefore, the compounded cattle feed industry must adopt modern packaging technologies with latest packaging material and design in order to enhance sale and profitability and reduce wastage and deterioration in quality the compounded feed.

Keywords: Compounded cattle feed; Feed industry; Packaging

Introduction

The livestock sector has emerged as one of the fastest growing agricultural sub-sectors in India. It is expected that the growth could further accelerate due to growing income and the high-income driven demand for livestock products [1]. Cattle feed industry- a major component of animal feed industry is currently evolving from a fragmented industry into an organized sector [2-4]. The feed manufactures are increasingly adopting modern and sophisticated methods in an effort to incorporate best global practices. The concept of branded animal feed as a packaged commodity, though not a very recent concept, is gaining popularity in Indian context [5]. The packaged feed, as a product, possesses special features like hygiene, quality, convenience to handle and influences buying behaviour of the farmers. The importance of packaging can best be understood by the example of the introduction of sachet which made the shampoo available and affordable to the millions of the rural people in our country even in the far remote area of the countryside. However, these convenient and small scale modern packaging approaches have not yet been incorporated by the Indian feed industry sector. It is well known that attractive and convenient packaging is the important marketing strategies for any commodity which

influences the buying behaviour of the customers. Thus, the adoption of modernized convenient packaging for cattle feed will not only promote its marketability; rather has capacity to infiltrate the balanced compounded cattle feed even to the poorest of the marginal and small livestock farmers of our country. A one kg branded compounded cattle feed pack present on the shelf of the grocery shop will certainly make its way to the house of livestock farmers even with small earnings who never afford a half quintal feed pack for his cattle.

Therefore, based on a case study conducted in Varanasi District of Eastern Uttar Pradesh this article presents an understanding of change in consumption pattern of branded and non-branded compounded cattle feed, change in the demand for packaged cattle feed and attitudes of the dairy farmers towards incorporation of modernized quality in packaging of compounded cattle feed.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted by collecting data from five blocks namely Sewapuri (A), Kashi Vidyapith (B), Arajiline (C) Rohaniya (D), and Chirai Gaon (E) from each direction of the Varanasi city.

Further, from each block, five villages were selected on random basis distributed evenly in the block. From each selected village, 10 representative dairy farmers having dairying as their primary occupation (with at least 50% income from dairying) were selected randomly for survey. While selecting respondents, due care was taken to ensure that they were evenly distributed in the village and truly represented animal management practices prevailing in the area. The demography of the respondents including their land holding, occupational diversification, income from dairy sector and size and pattern of dairy animal holding is presented in Table 1. Primary data were collected using personal interview method and pre-tested questionnaire by on the spot observations by visiting each of the farmers. The family heads or some responsible members of the family were contacted and were explained the purpose of the visit and requested to give the answers of various questions set in the proforma. For the purpose of accuracy, data based on observations were collected by visiting the same farm at least twice. Altogether 250 dairy farmers were selected using random sampling technique. The farmers were asked questions related to use of Compounded Cattle Feed, their brand preference and questions related to packaging preferences and packaging quality which were included in the proforma. The methodology adopted for the study makes it both analytical and exploratory which analyses the current trend and future prospects of cattle feed industry in India. Further, the study explores the importance of modern packaging strategies and technologies for marketing of cattle feed products, based on the feedback from the field-based study.

Table 1: Land holding, occupational diversification, income from dairy sector and size and pattern of dairy animal holding by the respondent dairy farmers.

Attributes	Distribution of Respondents	
	Frequency (n=250)	Percentage
Land holding (ha)		
Landless (<0.2)	21	8.4
Marginal (0.5≤0.2)	94	37.6
Small (2.0≤0.5)	70	28
Medium (5.0≤2.0)	45	18
Large (≥5.0)	20	8

Results and Observations

Table 2: Preference of branding and packaging parameters in compounded cattle feed purchase by the respondent dairy farmers.

Attributes	Dairy Farmers				
	Marginal (n=23)	Small (n=127)	Medium (n=76)	Large (n=24)	Total (n=250)
Feed Consumption Pattern					
Only homemade concentrate feed	15	21	8	0	44
	-65	-17	-11	0	-18
Only purchased compounded cattle feed	0	26	29	21	76
	0	-20	-38	-88	-30

Occupational Diversification		
Dairy	30	12
Dairy+Agriculture	111	44.4
Dairy+Agriculture+Service	59	23.6
Dairy+Service	14	5.6
Dairy+Laboures	27	10.8
Dairy+Business	9	3.6
Total income from AH sector		
<1 Lakh	44	17.6
1 to <2.5 lakh	108	43.2
2.5 to 4.0 lakh	56	22.4
>4.0 lakh	42	16.8
Size of Dairy Animal Holding		
1 to 2 (Marginal Dairy Farmers)	23	
3 to 7 (Small Dairy Farmers)	127	
8 to 20 (Medium Dairy Farmers)	76	
>20 (Large Dairy Farmers)	24	
Dairy animal holding pattern		
Indigenous cows	15	6
Crossbred cows	115	46
Buffalo	35	14
Indigenous cow+Crossbred cow	30	12
Indigenous cow+Buffalo	21	8.4
Crossbred cow+Buffalo	23	9.2
Indigenous cow+Crossbred cow+Buffalo	11	4.4

Duration of study

Visits to dairy farmers for observations and interviews and collection of data continued for three months (April-June) during the summer period of 2015.

Tabulation and analysis of data: The raw primary data obtained from respondents were tabulated and analyzed using descriptive statistics and frequency analysis using SPSS 16 software to obtain frequency and percentage of each type of information.

Both homemade concentrate and compounded cattle feed	8	8	9	3	130
	-35	-63	-51	-12	-52
Preference Of Branded Versus Non-Branded Cattle Feed					
Non branded cattle feed	8	12	2	0	22
	-35	-9	-3	0	-9
Branded cattle feed	7	92	68	24	191
	-30	-72	-89	-100	-76
Any type	8	23	6	0	37
	-35	-18	-8	0	-15
Preference Of Packaged Versus Non-Packaged Cattle Feed					
Non-packaged	9	14	12	3	38
	-39	-11	-16	-13	-15
Packaged	8	90	51	17	166
	-35	-71	-67	-71	-66
Any type	6	23	13	4	46
	-26	-18	-17	-17	-18
Preference Of Size Of Pack					
Larger pack (50kg)	2	19	14	11	46
	-9	-15	-18	-46	-18
Medium pack (20/25kg)	9	45	26	13	93
	-39	-35	-34	-54	-37
Small pack (10kg, 5kg)	12	63	36	0	111
	-52	-50	-47	0	-44
Preference Of Packing Material					
Gunny bag	4	18	11	4	37
	-17	-14	-14	-17	-15
Plastic bag	6	41	26	11	84
	-26	-32	-34	-46	-34
Polythene pack	13	68	39	9	129
	-57	-54	-51	-38	-52
Preference of Packing Design					
Well designed pack	17	108	68	22	215
	-74	-85	-89	-92	-86
No concern for packing design	6	19	8	2	35
	-26	-15	-11	-8	-14
Preference of Color Combination of Pack					
Prefer Attractive Color Combination	15	83	58	19	175
	-65	-65	-76	-79	-70
No concern	8	44	18	5	75
	-35	-35	-24	-21	-30
Eagerness to Pay For Convenience Packaging					
Yes	16	109	64	21	210
	-70	-86	-84	-88	-84
No	7	18	12	3	40
	-30	-14	-16	-12	-16

Numerals in the parenthesis are percent value of responses of dairy farmers of either of the four categories viz. Marginal, small, medium and large.

Preference of the respondent dairy farmers for branding and packaging parameters desirable in compounded cattle feed is presented in Table 2. The majority of the respondents (81.2%) participating in the study were small and medium size dairy farmers with average dairy animal holding from 3 to 7 and from 8 to 20, respectively. However, about 9.2% marginal and 9.6% large dairy farmers were also in the study group. Feed consumption pattern in the study area revealed that the utilization of purchased compounded cattle feed was highest (100%) in large dairy farmers followed by 89 % in medium and 83% in small dairy farmers. The preference of branded cattle feed and packaged cattle feed was 30, 72, 89 & 100% and 8, 90, 51, & 17% respectively, in marginal, small, medium and large dairy farmers. Given them a choice, almost 81% dairy farmers told that they will prefer medium (20-25kg) to small (5-10kg) pack size compound cattle feed instead of the big (≥ 50 kg) pack. It was observed that, majority (52%) of farmers will like to have polythene as their desirable packaging material followed by plastic bag (32%) and only a few (15%) preferred traditional gunny bags as packaging material. Majority of the dairy farmers (74-92%) of all the groups preferred well designed pack with attractive colour combination and pictures (65-79%) if choices will be given to them. It was further observed that the majority of the farmers in all the groups were ready to pay more prices for suitable, convenient and attractive packaging of feed materials.

Conclusion

Compound cattle feed- a commodity with nascent marketing in India, is gaining momentum now a day and has an excellent and promising scope for growth in the country. The compound cattle feed industry has been hitherto ignored by the packaging industry and personnel. The present study clearly reveals the preference of branded and packaged compounded cattle feed with suitable, convenient packaging material with attractive design and colour combination for which farmers are even ready to pay extra price. The results clearly indicate that the compounded cattle feed industry must adopt modern packaging technologies with latest packaging material and design in order to enhance sale and profitability.

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