

ANALYSIS OF TARGETING STRATEGY TO IMPROVE MEAT QUALITY INTO BLACK PEPPER STEAK PRODUCTION

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Abstract

The quality of meat is crucial for the success of dishes like black pepper steak. Producers must ensure high-quality meat that aligns with consumer preferences to maintain customer satisfaction. This paper examines how targeting strategies can enhance meat quality in black pepper steak production by aligning production practices with consumer expectations. The research methods were interview, questioner, and observation. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study surveyed consumers to assess their preferences regarding meat quality attributes such as tenderness, marbling, and flavor. The theories used were Ningsih and Diana explained the impact of segmenting, positioning and targeting strategy toward customer decision to buy the product. Results showed that 75% (15) consumers from 20 respondents prioritize tenderness and moderate marbling in meat. Flavor was cited by 65% (13) respondents as the deciding factor in ordering black pepper steak, 60% (12) respondents are willing to pay a premium for sustainably sourced and ethically produced meat. Targeting strategies are essential for improving meat quality in black pepper steak production. By understanding consumer preferences and adapting production practices accordingly, businesses can elevate customer satisfaction and differentiate their products in a competitive market. Future research could explore the effects of cooking techniques and flavor pairings on overall consumer experience.

Keywords: improve, meat, quality, strategy, target

A. INTRODUCTION

The quality of meat is a pivotal factor in the success of meat-centric dishes such as black pepper steak. Both producers and restaurant owners recognize that ensuring high-quality meat, which aligns with consumer preferences, is crucial for customer satisfaction and ultimately drives business success. In the competitive meat industry, targeting strategies increasingly focus on segmenting consumer preferences, identifying the attributes that elevate product quality, and optimizing these characteristics in the production process (Gunawan, 2013). This paper explores the role of targeted strategies to enhance the quality of meat used in black pepper steak production, drawing on marketing, food science, and culinary theories. The sensory attributes of the meat, including its tenderness, flavor, juiciness, and overall presentation, play a central role in shaping the dining experience. Achieving this level of quality requires a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence meat quality and a commitment to aligning production processes with consumer expectations. In the highly competitive meat industry, targeting strategies are increasingly focused on segmenting consumer preferences, identifying the attributes that elevate product quality, and optimizing these characteristics in the production and supply chain (Sleman & Saleh, 2016).

This paper explores the role of targeted strategies to enhance the quality of meat used in black pepper steak production, drawing on theories and insights from marketing, food science, and culinary practices. By integrating perspectives from these disciplines, producers and

restaurateurs can develop a more nuanced approach to improving meat quality and ensuring that it meets the diverse needs of consumers (Merdian, 2007). In particular, targeted strategies involve tailoring production methods to meet specific market demands, leveraging consumer insights to drive product innovation, and ensuring consistency in quality to build brand loyalty (Riyani et al., 2021).

Previous research has highlighted several critical factors impacting meat quality, such as cattle breed, feed type, meat processing methods, and the significance of proper aging and storage. For instance, Smith et al. (2020) demonstrated that consumer preferences for premium cuts like ribeye or sirloin are predominantly influenced by sensory qualities such as tenderness, flavor, and juiciness. These attributes are closely tied to genetic factors, feeding regimens, and post-slaughter processing techniques. For example, cattle breeds known for marbling, such as Wagyu or Angus, often produce meat with superior tenderness and flavor, making them popular choices for high-end steak dishes (Maheswari, 2019).

Feed type also plays a significant role in determining meat quality. Grain-fed cattle, for instance, often produce meat with higher marbling and a richer flavor profile compared to grass-fed cattle, which are valued for their leaner, more natural taste. Understanding these distinctions allows producers to target specific consumer segments more effectively. Similarly, proper aging methods, such as wet aging or dry aging, enhance meat tenderness and flavor by allowing natural enzymatic processes to break down muscle fibers. Studies by Johnson and Harris (2019) have underscored the importance of these practices, noting that consumers are increasingly drawn to sustainable and ethical production methods that enhance both quality and appeal.

Sustainability and ethics have become critical considerations in the meat industry, driven by growing consumer awareness and demand for environmentally responsible practices. Sustainable farming techniques, humane treatment of animals, and transparent supply chains not only contribute to improved meat quality but also build trust and loyalty among ethically conscious consumers. These factors are particularly relevant in the premium meat market, where buyers are often willing to pay a premium for products that align with their values.

In addition to production methods, marketing strategies play a vital role in shaping consumer perceptions of meat quality. Effective branding and communication emphasize the unique selling points of a product, such as its origin, production process, or certification (e.g., organic, grass-fed, or hormone-free). Restaurants can further enhance this appeal by incorporating storytelling into their menus, highlighting the journey of the meat from farm to table, and emphasizing the craftsmanship involved in its preparation.

The culinary aspect of black pepper steak also merits attention, as the preparation method and accompanying flavors can significantly influence how consumers perceive meat quality. Chefs often use techniques such as sous-vide or reverse searing to ensure the meat is cooked to perfection, preserving its tenderness and juiciness while enhancing its natural flavors. Pairing the steak with complementary ingredients, such as freshly cracked black pepper or rich sauces, further elevates the dish and creates a memorable dining experience (Julinar et al., 2005).

Drawing on these insights, this paper aims to identify effective strategies for aligning meat production and marketing practices with consumer expectations. By leveraging advancements in food science, sustainable production methods, and targeted marketing approaches, producers and restaurateurs can ensure that the meat used in black pepper steak meets the highest standards of quality. This holistic approach not only enhances consumer satisfaction but also strengthens the competitive position of businesses in the dynamic and evolving meat industry.

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appeal. These studies lay the groundwork for developing targeted strategies that align production practices with consumer expectations (Rangkuti, 2019).

The theoretical framework for this study draws upon marketing theories of targeting and segmentation, coupled with food quality management models. Kotler & Keller (2016) assert that effective targeting requires businesses to identify specific consumer segments, understand their unique needs, and develop products that meet those demands. Furthermore, Grunert's (2005) food quality perception model posits that consumer satisfaction is influenced by both intrinsic (taste, texture, and juiciness) and extrinsic factors (such as ethical sourcing and branding). By integrating these theories, businesses can develop a more comprehensive approach to meat production that not only enhances product quality but also builds stronger connections with ethically conscious and quality-driven consumers.

The insights from this research are particularly valuable for producers and restaurants looking to enhance their black pepper steak offerings. By understanding and applying targeting strategies that address both intrinsic and extrinsic quality factors, businesses can deliver a product that not only meets but exceeds consumer expectations, fostering loyalty and differentiation in a competitive market. This study integrates these theories to explore how targeted strategies can optimize meat quality specifically for black pepper steak production, creating a competitive advantage through alignment with consumer preferences.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study utilizes a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research to provide a well-rounded analysis. A survey was conducted with 20 respondents to understand consumer preferences related to meat quality in black pepper steak, focusing on attributes such as tenderness, marbling, and flavor. Survey participants also shared their willingness to pay a premium for specific quality attributes and sustainable practices. In addition, in-depth interviews with chefs and meat producers were conducted to gain insight into the production practices that impact these quality attributes. Statistical analysis, including correlation analysis and regression, was employed to examine significant relationships between consumer preferences and meat quality factors.

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The survey and interview results provide critical insights into consumer preferences and highlight the importance of specific practices in meat quality enhancement for black pepper steak. Below is a breakdown of these findings with theoretical support for each point.

1. **Meat Tenderness and Marbling:** The survey revealed that 75% (15) consumers prioritize tenderness and moderate marbling in meat, as these attributes contribute to an enjoyable texture and richer flavor. Tenderness emerged as the most crucial factor, with consumers linking it directly to their satisfaction with black pepper steak. This finding aligns with Grunert's (2005) food quality model, which suggests that sensory attributes like texture and tenderness are primary factors in consumer satisfaction. Grunert's model emphasizes that intrinsic qualities, including marbling, are pivotal to perceived quality and directly influence consumer choices. By focusing on tenderness and marbling, producers can cater to these intrinsic quality preferences, which Kotler & Keller (2016) note are essential in effective targeting strategies. Specifically, targeting these attributes enables producers to deliver a product that aligns precisely with customer expectations for black pepper steak, thereby enhancing satisfaction and encouraging repeat purchases.
2. **Flavor as a Primary Factor:** Flavor was cited by 65% (13) respondents as the deciding factor in ordering black pepper steak, suggesting that it is a non-negotiable element of quality. Grunert's model further supports this finding, as it identifies taste as a core driver of perceived product quality in the food industry. This demand for robust flavor points to the importance of flavor-enhancing practices, such as seasoning and preparation methods that enhance the natural taste of the meat. Chefs interviewed in the study highlighted that proper aging techniques, particularly dry-aging, significantly enhance the meat's flavor,

aligning with flavor perception theories such as those proposed by Kardes, Cronley, and Cline (2015). Their research underscores that sensory cues like taste can create positive customer experiences and strengthen loyalty. By emphasizing flavor in production and preparation, producers can meet this non-negotiable quality aspect, ultimately increasing consumer satisfaction and loyalty.

3. **Sustainability and Ethical Production:** 60% (12) respondents are willing to pay a premium for sustainably sourced and ethically produced meat. This finding aligns with Johnson and Harris's (2019) research, which notes that ethical production is increasingly valued by consumers who are mindful of environmental and ethical implications. The willingness to pay more for sustainability indicates that extrinsic factors like production practices significantly influence consumer behavior. Grunert's (2005) model on food quality perception highlights that extrinsic factors, such as brand ethics and environmental commitment, enhance overall product appeal and attract socially conscious consumers. Kotler & Keller (2016) also emphasize that modern targeting strategies must incorporate consumer values, particularly in markets where ethical and environmental considerations are rising. For producers and restaurants, promoting sustainable practices not only broadens their appeal to a growing segment of environmentally conscious consumers but also establishes a positive brand image, creating a competitive advantage in the premium steak market.

Discussion

The findings suggest that targeting strategies for optimizing meat quality in black pepper steak production should focus on three main areas: sourcing high-quality cuts, employing effective aging techniques, and promoting sustainable and ethical practices. These three pillars are not only essential for meeting consumer expectations but also for strengthening brand reputation, capturing a larger market share, and fostering long-term customer loyalty. Below is an in-depth discussion of each area, supported by relevant theories and empirical findings.

1. Sourcing Premium Cuts

The preference for tenderness, marbling, and flavor in black pepper steak underscores the importance of sourcing premium cuts such as ribeye and sirloin. These cuts naturally offer the marbling and rich flavor profile that consumers associate with high-quality meat. According to Kotler and Keller's (2016) principles of targeting, understanding and addressing specific consumer preferences enables businesses to tailor their offerings to align closely with market demands (Catenazzo & Fragnière, 2010). Producers and restaurants that prioritize these sought-after cuts can create a competitive advantage by ensuring their products meet the highest standards of taste and texture.

Selecting specific cattle breeds known for producing premium-quality meat is also a critical component of this strategy. For example, Wagyu and Angus breeds are renowned for their superior marbling and tenderness, making them ideal choices for black pepper steak. By focusing on these breeds, producers can align their offerings with consumer expectations, achieving a closer match between product attributes and market preferences. This approach also aligns with brand differentiation theory, which emphasizes the importance of highlighting unique product qualities to appeal to quality-conscious consumers. By positioning their products as premium options, businesses can effectively distinguish themselves within a competitive market.

Moreover, sourcing premium cuts provides an opportunity to enhance value through storytelling. Highlighting the origin, breed, and production methods of the meat can add an emotional connection for the consumer, further elevating their perception of quality. For instance, marketing materials that emphasize the use of locally sourced, grass-fed Angus beef can resonate with consumers who value transparency and authenticity in their dining experiences.

2. Importance of Aging Practices and Feed Quality

Aging practices, particularly dry-aging, were identified as critical for enhancing the tenderness and flavor of meat. Dry-aging, a process that intensifies meat flavor through controlled enzymatic breakdown of muscle tissues, is particularly valued in premium steak dishes like black pepper steak. This finding aligns with Grunert's (2005) model, which emphasizes the importance of intrinsic product attributes, such as taste and texture, in meeting and exceeding consumer expectations. By incorporating dry-aging into their production processes, producers can enhance the sensory qualities of their meat, providing a superior product that appeals to discerning consumers.

Equally important is the quality of feed provided to cattle. Nutrient-dense diets, including high-quality grass or grain feed, significantly influence the flavor, texture, and marbling of the meat. Grass-fed cattle, for instance, are known to produce leaner and more flavorful meat, which is increasingly preferred by health-conscious and quality-focused consumers. Research by Buehler and Halweil (2019) confirms that feed quality directly impacts key sensory attributes, underscoring its importance in the production of premium meat. Producers who invest in high-quality feed not only improve the intrinsic qualities of their meat but also position themselves as providers of healthier and more desirable products (Raharja et al., 2010).

Combining effective aging techniques with superior feed quality allows producers to maximize the potential of their meat, creating a product that consistently delivers on consumer expectations. For restaurant owners, highlighting these production practices on menus or in marketing materials can further reinforce the perception of quality, enhancing the overall dining experience.

3. Sustainability and Ethical Production

The growing consumer demand for sustainably and ethically produced meat presents a significant opportunity for businesses in the meat industry. A considerable portion of consumers are willing to pay a premium for products that align with their values, as confirmed by Johnson and Harris's (2019) findings. This shift in consumer behavior reflects broader societal trends toward environmental consciousness and ethical consumption, making sustainability a key consideration for producers and restaurant owners.

Adopting sustainable practices, such as reducing carbon emissions, minimizing waste, and using renewable resources, allows producers to differentiate their products in a competitive market. Additionally, ethical practices, including humane animal treatment and transparent supply chains, enhance trust and loyalty among ethically conscious consumers. These practices align with theories of corporate social responsibility (CSR), which suggest that businesses embracing sustainability and ethics are more likely to foster customer loyalty and achieve long-term success.

Kotler and Keller (2016) emphasize that targeting strategies incorporating consumer values, such as sustainability, can enhance brand reputation and attract a broader audience. For instance, producers and restaurants that prioritize eco-friendly packaging, support local farming initiatives, or achieve certifications such as "Certified Humane" or "Organic" can effectively capture the attention of ethically aware consumers. Marketing campaigns that highlight these initiatives can further enhance the brand's appeal, positioning it as a leader in ethical and sustainable practices.

The integration of sustainability and ethics into meat production also supports broader industry goals of reducing environmental impact and promoting social responsibility. For businesses, this commitment not only meets consumer expectations but also establishes a foundation for long-term resilience and growth in an evolving market.

Implications for Producers and Restaurant Owners

The findings suggest that producers and restaurant owners can significantly benefit from prioritizing intrinsic quality factors, such as tenderness and flavor, alongside extrinsic factors, such as sustainability and ethical production. By adopting targeted strategies that align with specific consumer demands, businesses can differentiate their products, enhance brand

loyalty, and capture a larger share of the market. For producers, this involves investing in premium cattle breeds, nutrient-rich feed, and advanced aging techniques to optimize meat quality. It also requires a commitment to sustainable and ethical practices that resonate with modern consumers. For restaurant owners, showcasing these practices through menu descriptions, marketing campaigns, and customer interactions can elevate the dining experience and reinforce the perception of quality.

Ultimately, a holistic approach that addresses both intrinsic and extrinsic factors positions businesses to satisfy the evolving preferences of quality-conscious and ethically aware consumers. By focusing on these key areas, producers and restaurants can not only enhance their market position but also contribute to a more sustainable and transparent meat industry.

The Need for Future Research

While this study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing meat quality and consumer satisfaction in black pepper steak production, there remain several areas that warrant further investigation. Future research could explore the intersection of technological advancements and traditional practices in meat production, such as the application of precision agriculture and smart farming techniques to optimize feed quality and livestock management. For example, investigating how AI and IoT (Internet of Things) technologies can improve cattle monitoring and meat processing could yield innovative strategies to enhance product quality.

Another area for future research is the evolving preferences of younger, more environmentally conscious consumers. Studies could examine how generational shifts influence the demand for sustainable and ethically produced meat, and how producers can adapt their practices to cater to these changing expectations. Additionally, the role of alternative proteins and lab-grown meat as competitors to traditional premium cuts could be analyzed, particularly in terms of their impact on consumer perceptions of meat quality and sustainability. Research could also delve deeper into regional and cultural differences in consumer preferences for black pepper steak and other meat dishes. Understanding how local tastes, dietary habits, and cultural values influence the perception of meat quality could help producers and restaurants tailor their offerings to specific markets. For instance, preferences for marbling, flavor intensity, or ethical certifications may vary significantly across regions, and exploring these variations could offer actionable insights for targeted marketing and production strategies.

Finally, future research should consider the long-term economic impacts of sustainable practices in the meat industry. While this study highlights consumer willingness to pay a premium for sustainable products, further exploration is needed to understand the scalability and profitability of implementing these practices on a larger scale. Comparative studies examining the cost-benefit balance of traditional versus sustainable production methods would provide valuable guidance for producers aiming to transition toward more ethical and environmentally friendly operations. By addressing these areas, future research can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of meat quality optimization and sustainability, enabling the meat industry to meet evolving consumer demands while promoting long-term economic and environmental viability.

D. CONCLUSION

The optimizing meat quality in black pepper steak production requires attention to both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that align with consumer preferences. The consumers prioritize tenderness, flavor, and sustainability when selecting black pepper steak. Producers can meet these demands by sourcing premium cuts, applying effective aging practices, and ensuring cattle are fed nutrient-dense diets. These practices enhance the sensory qualities of the meat, such as texture and taste, meeting consumers' high expectations for premium steak. The sustainable and ethical production practices are increasingly influential, as many consumers are willing to pay a premium for responsibly sourced meat. The growing importance of environmental and ethical factors in consumer decision-making. By highlighting these

aspects, producers and restaurants can attract ethically conscious customers and establish a positive brand image. This targeted approach not only satisfies immediate consumer needs but also builds long-term loyalty by resonating with quality- and sustainability-oriented customers, creating a competitive advantage in the market.

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