

Identifying key determinants of supply chain risk management: a qualitative study amongst smallholder agropreneurs of fresh fruits & vegetables in Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Due to their perishable nature, the supply chain of fresh fruits and vegetables is sensitive and uncertain, which poses several risks to agropreneurs of fresh fruits and vegetables in Malaysia. The country's farming community faces dire challenges in terms of escalating food production costs and the need to push for higher productivity gains. In particular, agri-fresh supply chains need to be managed in ways that help firms and managers effectively handle risks and improve performance. Therefore, to investigate the complex nature of agri-fresh supply chain risk, a qualitative study was conducted amongst 50 smallholder agropreneurs from five different states of Malaysia. Using thematic analysis of respondent interviews, multiple risks were identified that highly impact performance and create uncertainty along the supply chain. Although most agropreneurs work well internally, the major issue faced by them is the failure to implement external supply chain risk management with other trading partners. Moving forward, to minimize supply chain risks and increase performance of agri-fresh supply chains in Malaysia, the development of a formal mechanism of supply chain risk management is necessary.

Keyword: Supply chain; Supply chain risk management; Fresh fruits and vegetables; Independent and contract agropreneurs; Malaysia