#### **AGRISOCIONOMICS**

Jurnal Sosial Ekonomi dan Kebijakan Pertanian

ISSN 2580-0566 http://ejournal2.undip.ac.id/index.php/ agrisocionomics 5 (2): 128-140, November 2021

## CONSUMER PURCHASING DECISIONS ON PROCESSED FOOD PRODUCTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Submitted 30 October 2020; Accepted 20 April 2021

#### **ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi keputusan pembelian konsumen selama masa pandemi COVID-19. Dipilih 75 responden dengan kriteria telah membeli produk makanan olahan berbahan dasar sayur dan buah secara online dan offline selama masa pandemi COVID-19 di Kota Malang. Metode analisis yang digunakan adalah regresi dengan model logit. Variabel terikatnya adalah keputusan pembelian, sedangkan variabel bebas yang digunakan antara lain kepercayaan (terkait penanganan) kepada pedagang, kepercayaan (terkait penanganan) kepada kurir, informasi positif (berpusat pada manfaat), informasi negatif (berpusat pada risiko), pelabelan, dan dukungan pemerintah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa masing-masing variabel berpengaruh positif terhadap keputusan pembelian, namun hanya satu variabel yang berpengaruh signifikan yaitu pelabelan. Penelitian ini menyarankan agar produsen dapat mengembangkan pemasaran produk makanan olahan dengan menambahkan label secara lengkap, seperti label halal.

Kata kunci: keputusan pembelian; pengolahan makanan; pandemi covid19; regresi logit

#### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to analyze the determinant factors that influence consumer purchasing decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Seventy-five respondents were selected with the criteria of having purchased processed food products made from vegetables and fruits online and offline during the COVID-19 pandemic in Malang. The analytical method used was a regression with the logit model. The dependent variable is the purchase decision, while the independent variables used include social trust (related to handling) to merchants, social trust (related to handling) to couriers, positive information (benefit-centered), negative information (risk-centered), labeling, and government support. The results showed that each variable positively influences purchasing decisions, but only one variable has a significant effect, namely labeling. This research suggests that producers can develop marketing for processed food products by adding complete labeling, such as halal labels.

Keywords: purchasing decisions; food processing; COVID-19 pandemic; logit regression

## INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic spread throughout the world, including Indonesia, has emerged as a new threat to every country. The Indonesian government recommended

limiting community activities, such as work and study from home to prevent coronavirus transmission. This condition has an impact on the community in meeting food needs. Consumers will also prioritize the fulfillment of life needs, especially food, so that consumers will determine decisions in making purchases of food goods online. The rapid growth of technology in society is inseparable from this change, thus creating a new lifestyle in online buying and selling transactions.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increase in goods shipments by 80% to freight forwarders in Indonesia, especially for the delivery of food commodities and necessities (Safitri, 2020). Meanwhile, consumer demand for healthpromoting foods has increased over the last (Kamrath, decade 2019). Therefore, producers and marketers of food products need to understand the consumer decisionmaking process during the epidemic outbreak. This understanding is beneficial for knowing potential consumers (Lim & Hahn, 2019).

Shopping is a significant consumption activity that affects many aspects of a consumer's life. Shopping is done online, in stores, or shopping centers, making the retail environment even more sophisticated, with shopping often blurring transactional, social, and recreational boundaries (Maggioni et al., 2019). The mental orientation of consumers, which is reflected in consumer decision-making styles, often influences shopping decisions (Wesley, LeHew, & Woodside, 2006), where consumers' mentality is currently affected by the spread of the Covid-19 virus outbreak.

In the current global era, Indonesian people are becoming more consumptive. This opinion is in line with the Ministry of Trade (2013). Based on observations and predictions made by the Ministry of Trade in 2020, the demand for food remains high. The demand for food products is a food demand that is only intended for ordinary households. Moreover, Nurcahyo (2018) stated that the food industry in the community would continue to develop following the population

growth of the region. It happens because food products are one of the essential things for human life. Therefore, people do shopping activities to fulfill food needs. In today's global era, it can be seen that the rapid development of technology makes it easier for people to make buying and selling transactions through various online sites, especially for processed food products. According to Maggioni et al. (2019), whether shopping is done online, in stores, or shopping malls, the retail environment is becoming increasingly sophisticated, with shopping often blurring transactional, social, and recreational boundaries.

When shopping, one of the most important things for consumers is making purchasing decisions. A purchase decision is action taken by consumers purchasing a product to decide whether the product is purchased or not and evaluate two or more products to choose one product (Kotler dan Keller, 2012). The more variety of food products sold by producers online and offline will make it increasingly difficult for consumers to make purchasing decisions. This condition also has an impact on producers who increasingly have competing products. Therefore, manufacturers also need to take appropriate actions to compete with other competing products. Moreover, according to Butkowski et al. (2020), efforts to inform the public about the risks and benefits of new technologies are constrained by the public acceptance that depends on consumer decision-making. According to Wesley et al. (2006), consumer decisions when shopping are often influenced by the consumer's mental orientation, which is reflected in the consumer's decision-making style. Consumers also make purchasing decisions based on various intangible factors,

not only related to product dimensions (Rybaczewska et al., 2020).

Several factors cause consumers to have viewed when deciding to purchase food products online, namely the level of consumer confidence in the health protocols carried out by merchants and couriers. According to Fitdiarini (2015), consumer confidence in the safety of products sold by manufacturers is formed through evidence related to positive experiences by other consumers regarding products marketed to the public. It is also supported by the speed of information circulating on social media in the community. In addition, there are factors such as information about food products sold and completeness of data on product labels. According to Sugara dan Dewantara (2017), consumer trust and intention in buying a product will increase when the information on the product and the appearance of the online sales website is complete.

Moreover, the most crucial factor influencing consumers in purchasing products online during the COVID-19 pandemic is government support in handling COVID-19. The existence of a health protocol recommendation issued by the government will significantly affect consumer decisions in determining the decision to purchase a food product online.

Manufacturers play a significant role in determining purchasing decisions by consumers. According to Lim & Hahn (2019), it is beneficial to understand the consumer decision-making process to find out potential consumers. However, a decision-making process is not only by knowing the factors that will affect the buyer but also a role in the purchase and the decision to buy. Based on these problems, this study aims to analyze factors influencing consumer purchasing decisions for processed food products with

raw materials for vegetables and fruits during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted in Malang, East Java, in June-August 2020. The increasing number of positive COVID-19 patients in Malang City had made Malang City included in the black zone area. Therefore, various online sales strategies by vegetable and fruit merchants began to develop, either through WhatsApp or other official applications. The local government officially limited all forms of community activity, especially outside the home, with strict health protocols. The activities of people who were used to buying processed food products such as vegetables and fruit offline in markets or supermarkets were also reduced to protect themselves from the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Therefore, this location's determination was expected to represent the decision to purchase processed food products online in the COVID-19 pandemic.

The data was collected using the judgment sampling technique, which takes respondents by determining the criteria according to the research needs. The criteria in question were that every individual who purchased processed food products made from vegetables and fruits online or offline during the COVID-19 pandemic in Malang was at least 17 years old at the time of the study and was domiciled in Malang Raya. This study used seventy-five respondents by considering the research objectives, cost, and time constraints (Sekaran & Roger, 2016; Clark & Creswell, 2015).

The data used in this study is primary data using a Likert scale of 1-5 (strongly disagree – strongly agree) on statements related to research variables. This primary data was obtained directly from the respondents by using an online questionnaire through the media in Google Forms provided

by the researcher. The questionnaire consists of three parts: the introductory section, which contains an introduction to consumers regarding whether consumers make purchases of processed food during the COVID-19 pandemic. The second part contains the respondents' data in this study, and the last part contains the relationship between the variables that support consumer purchasing decisions.

The analytical method used was logit regression with STATA software, which determines the probability of an event occurring by matching the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The logit regression model will produce a functional relationship for consumers to buy processed food online during the COVID-19 pandemic. The logit regression equation in this study can be written as follows.

$$\ln \frac{p}{1-p} = \beta 0 + \beta 1X1 + \beta 2X2 + \beta 3X3 + \beta 4X4 + \beta 5X5 + \beta 6X6 + \varepsilon.$$

From this equation, P is the number of consumers, (1-p) = the opportunity for consumers to buy processed food during the COVID-19 pandemic;  $\beta$ 0=Constant;  $\beta$ =Coefficient ( $\beta$ 1,  $\beta$ 2,  $\beta$ 3,  $\beta$ 4,  $\beta$ 5,  $\beta$ 6) and X=Independent variables (X1, X2, X3, X4, X5, dan X6).

Table 1. Research Variables

Variables	Code	Source	Description
Purchasing Decision	Y	Nguyen et al. (2015)	Consumer purchasing decisions; Y=1, consumers buy processed food products online. Y=0, consumers buy processed food products
Social trust (related to handling) towards merchants	X1	Kaptan <i>et al.</i> (2017), Butkowski <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Respondent's level of confidence in the handling of food products by merchants
Social trust (related to handling) towards couriers	X2	Kaptan <i>et al.</i> (2017), Butkowski et al. (2020)	Respondent's level of confidence in the handling of food products by couriers
Positive information (benefit-centered)	X3	Butkowski et al. (2020)	Positive information (benefit- centered) towards food products so that consumers fulfill their food needs by buying products online more often.
Negative information (risk-centered)	X4	Butkowski et al. (2020)	Negative information (risk-centered) towards food products so that consumers are more reluctant to buy food products online
Labelling	X5	Bandara <i>et al.</i> (2016); Butkowski <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Product name or brand, description of raw materials, compositional additives, nutritional information, expiration date, product contents, and legality information, including the halal logo.
Government support	X6	Butkowski <i>et al.</i> (2020)	Government support for handling food safety

Meanwhile, the logit model must meet the simultaneous test requirements (LR chi2) and the goodness of fit criteria. Information regarding the research variables is presented in Table 1.

### **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Consumer Characteristics of Processed Food Products in the COVID-19 Pandemic Characteristics of consumers affect the consumer purchasing decision process. Each product has different consumer characteristics. The characteristics of consumers in this study are divided into gender, age, education, income, and the

number of family members. The number of respondents in this study is 75 respondents.

Based on age characteristics, the group of respondents aged 17-26 years is 60%. While respondents aged 27-36 years by 28%, and the number of respondents aged more than 36 by 12%. Respondents with the age group 17-26 years can be classified into consumers with a young age. The respondent group is the one who consumes the most processed food products purchased online. According to Ratnaningsih and Prasetyo (2017), the generation born in the ratio of 1980 to 2000 is the millennial generation. This generation is a generation that was raised by technological advances.

Table 2. Characteristics of Respondents Based on Age

Respondent		Age		A 4
	17-26	27-36	>36	- Amount
Male	11	4	2	17
Female	34	17	7	58
Total	45	21	9	75
Percentage	60%	28%	12%	100%

Table 3. Respondent Characteristics Based on Education

		Education				
Respondent	Junior High School	High School	D3/D4/S1	S2/S3	Amount	
Male	0	6	11	0	17	
Female	2	29	22	5	58	
Total	2	35	33	5	75	
Percentage	2.7%	46.7%	44%	6.6%	100%	

Table 4. Respondent Characteristics Based on Number of Family Members

Consumer —	Numl	Number of Family Members			
	< 3	3 - 5	> 5	Amount	
Male	5	12	0	17	
Female	10	40	8	59	
Total	15	52	8	75	
Percentage	20%	69.3%	10.7%	100%	

With the development of this technology, millennials can send messages, access educational sites, and make online transactions (Kroski, 2008).

The latest education level of respondents in the junior high school category is 2.7%. Meanwhile, respondents with the last education level in the SMA/SMK category are 46.7%. Respondents with the latest education level D3/D4/S1 are 44%, and in the S2/S3 category are 6.6%. From the education level category, one group that shows a small percentage is Junior High School. A higher level of education in consumers will tend to influence product selection.

The number of respondents' family members with many less than 3 is 20%. Respondents with several family members between 3 and 5 are 69.3%, and the number of family members more than 5 is 10.7%. The number of family members is very influential on purchasing decisions because the number of family members is closely related to household consumption (Meitasari et al., 2020).

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, respondents with an income of less than IDR

2,000,000 are 53.3%. The number of income respondents with an of IDR 2,000,000-3,000,000 is 38.7%. Respondents with an income of IDR 4,000,000-IDR 5,000,000 are 2.7%, and respondents with an income of more than IDR 5,000,000 are 5.3%. Meanwhile, during the COVID-19 pandemic, respondents with an income of less than IDR 2,000,000 are 68%. The number of respondents with income between IDR 2,000,000-IDR 3,000,000 is 25.4%. Respondents with an income of IDR 4,000,000-IDR 5,000,000 are 1.3%, and respondents with an income of more than IDR 5,000,000 are 5.3%. Judging from the income before and after the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of respondents with an income of less IDR 2,000,000 from before the than pandemic increased after the COVID-19 pandemic, so the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly affected income. The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected Indonesia's economic growth due to the slowing global economy (Nasution et al., 2020).

This economic slowdown has had an impact on the decline in people's income during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 5. Respondent Characteristics Based on Income before the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Income before the COVID-19 Pandemic (Rp)							
Respondent	< 2.000.000	2.000.000- 3.000.000	3.000.000- 4.000.000	4.000.000- 5.000.000	> 5.000.000	Amount	
Male	5	9	0	0	3	17	
Female	35	20	0	2	1	58	
Total Percentage	40 53.3%	29 38.7%	0 0%	2 2.7%	4 5.3%	75 100%	

Table 6. Respondent Characteristics Based on Income during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Income during the COVID-19 Pandemic (Rp)								
Respondent	< 2.000.000	2.000.000- 3.000.000	3.000.000- 4.000.000	4.000.000- 5.000.000	> 5.000.000	Amount		
Male	8	6	1	0	2	17		
Female	43	13	0	0	2	58		
Total	51	19	1	0	4	75		
Percentage	68%	25.4%	1.3%	0%	5.3%	100%		

## **Purchase of Processed Food**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, people needed processed food products with the main ingredients of vegetables and fruits to meet nutritional needs, especially to increase body immunity. However, due to the limited purchase of products to meet in person due to social distancing, there is another option, namely online purchases. The following is the number of consumers who purchased processed food products online and offline during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on the results obtained, there is almost no difference between respondents or consumers during the COVID-19 pandemic because there is only one respondent difference. However, there are still more who choose to purchase processed food products offline. If consumers make purchases offline, consumers can see firsthand the condition of the product to be purchased. Meanwhile, the types of processed food products purchased online are fruit/vegetable juice, fruit salad, fruit chips, and more, where most of the respondents buy fruit/vegetable juice products (51.3%). Consumers who make purchases online are influenced by time efficiency and ease of service (Hardiawan, 2012). Online transactions require intermediary media. Respondents who make transactions with

cash are 45.9%, while respondents who transact through digital payment services such as GoPay or OVO are 32.5%, and the rest by bank transfer method.

## The goodness of Fit Test

The goodness of fit test is used to test whether the resulting model is good or not. Pearson's Goodness of Fit value is 52.69 with a p-value > 0.05. So, it can be concluded that with a significance level of 5%, the resulting model is good or data fit.

## **Logistics Regression Results**

The analytical method used is logistic analysis regression to determine the relationship between variables in determining purchasing decisions for processed food products. This analytical method is in line Handayana (2012)that logistic with regression is a method that can be used as a tool to find out and explain the relationship between one or more explanatory variables (independent variable) to responses (dependent variable). The value of the prob>chi2 logistic regression model is 0.0549, which means that the independent variable can explain the dependent variable simultaneously. However, only one variable has a significance level below 10%, namely labeling. The logistic regression results also produce equations to determine purchasing

**Table 7.** Number of Respondents in the Method of Purchasing Processed Food Products

Purchasing Method	Number	Percentage
Online	37	49.3%
Offline	38	50.7%
Total	75	100%

**Table 8.** The Output of Goodness of Fit Test

Test	Value
Pearson chi2	52.69
Prob > chi2	0.5

Tabel 9. Output Hasil Analisis Regresi Logistik

Variable	Coef.	Std. Err.	Z	P> z	[95 conf.	<b>Interval</b> ]
Social trust (related to						
handling) towards merchants	.0824667	.4386533	0.19	0.851	7772781	.9422114
(X1)						
Social trust (related to						
handling) towards couriers	.2007219	.4546251	0.44	0.659	690327	1.091771
(X2)						
Positive information (benefit-	.1679817	.4027152	0.42	0.677	6213257	.9572891
centered) (X3)	.10/761/	.702/132	0.72	0.077	0213237	.7372071
Negative information (risk-	.3852228	.3031384	1.27	0.204	2089175	.9793631
centered) (X4)	.3032220	.5051504	1.2/	0.204	2007173	.7773031
Labeling (X5)	.5682202	.314696	1.81	0.071	0485741	1.185014
Government Support (X6)	.1119494	.3382968	0.33	0.741	5511001	.774999
Constanta	-5.534427	1.861341	-2.97	0.003	-9.182589	-1.886265

Description: Number of obs =75; LR chi2(6)= $\overline{12.34}$ ; Prob > chi2=0.0549; Log likelihood = -45.811774; Pseudo R2=0.1187

decisions for processed food products as follows.

$$[n \frac{p}{1-p} = -5.53 + 0.82 X1 + 0.20 X2 + 0.17 X3 + 0.39 X4 + 0.57 X5 + 0.11 X6 + \varepsilon ]$$

The logistic regression method of odds ratio aims to determine how likely consumers will purchase processed food

products. From these results, it can be seen that all variables have a positive effect on food product purchasing decisions, but only the labeling variable has a significant effect. On the other hand, the indicator that a consumer will or will not make a decision can be seen through the value of the odds ratio (Hendayana, 2012).

Table 10. The Output of Logistics Regression Analysis Odds Ratio

Variable	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	Z	P> z	[95 conf.	<b>Interval</b> ]
Social trust (related to						
handling) towards merchants	1.085962	.4763611	0.19	0.851	.4596555	2.565649
(X1)						
Social trust (related to						
handling) towards couriers	1.222285	.5556814	0.44	0.659	.5014121	2.979545
(X2)						
Positive information (benefit-	1 102015	.4763779	0.42	0.677	5272210	2.604626
centered) (X3)	1.162913	.4/03//9	0.42	0.677	.33/2318	2.004020
Negative information (risk-	1 460042	.4455958	1.27	0.204	.8114622	2.66276
centered) (X4)	1.409942	.4433936	1.4/	0.204	.0114022	2.00270
Labeling (X5)	1.765123	.5554784	1.81	0.071	.9525867	3.270734
Government Support (X6)	1.118456	.3783702	0.33	0.741	.5763154	2.17059
Constanta	.0039485	.0073494	-2.97	0.003	.0001028	.1516371

Description: Number of obs=75; LR chi2(6)=12.34; Prob > chi2=0.0549; Log likelihood = -45.811774; Pseudo R2=0.1187

# **Factors Influencing Consumer Purchasing Decisions**

Several factors underlie consumer purchasing decisions. In this study, six variables are factors that influence consumer purchasing decisions online for processed food products. The factors are trust in merchants, trust in couriers, benefit-oriented information, risk-oriented information, product labels, and support from the government.

Based on the logistic regression analysis results, each variable has a positive relationship with making food purchasing decisions during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, only one variable has a significant effect below the 10% error rate. The odds ratio value of 1.08 on the variable of trust in merchants means that each addition of one unit of trust in merchants will increase the purchasing decision of processed food products by 1.08 times. However, based on the results of the Z test, this variable cannot explain partially because the resulting value is greater than the 5% significant level. According to Kurniawan et al. (2018), trust will encourage consumers to make product purchases because consumers do not know the condition of the products marketed by merchants. Consumers will also feel more comfortable when a sense of trust in the producer or merchant of the processed food product has been formed. With trust in merchants and producers, consumers will be more willing to buy these processed food products. Consumers will also choose merchants or producers who can be trusted and have good relations between merchants and consumers.

The variable of trust in couriers in this study is consumer confidence in courier services and protection when distributing

goods online, such as spraying disinfectants on the packaging, using hand sanitizers, using masks, and checking body temperature. In comparison, the variable trust in couriers in offline purchasing activities that do not involve couriers will better describe consumer confidence in everyone who interacts with them both in service and product purchases. This courier trust variable should also have an important influence in determining purchasing decisions. Based on the logistic regression results in this study, purchasing decisions for processed food products will increase by 1.22 times when there is an increase in trust in the courier by one unit. It explains that the role of the courier is also very influential on product purchasing decisions. According to Fitdiarini (2015), consumer confidence in the safety of products sold by manufacturers can be formed through evidence related to positive experiences by other consumers regarding products marketed to the public. The COVID-19 pandemic has also caused consumers to consider courier services that distribute products ordered by consumers. Consumers consider more reliable courier services to avoid various unwanted events in purchasing processed food products online. However, the results were not significant in this study because the effect was not significant or minimal.

The effect of information on the benefits and risks of purchasing processed food products should also be one of the influencing factors. However, in this study, the effect of positive information variables related to product benefits was not significant. At the same time, the effect of the negative information variable related to product risk has a weak significance level of 20%. Based on the logistic regression analysis results, the addition of one unit by consumers who know information about the advantages and

disadvantages, then the decision to purchase processed food products will increase by 1.18 times. It happens because, during the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers will read more information about products marketed online. Moreover, when there is an increase in consumer knowledge related to various negative information about the processed food product, by one unit, it will increase consumer purchasing decisions by 1.47 times. According to Sugara dan Dewantara (2017), consumer trust and intention to buy a product will increase with information. It is closely related to consumer confidence in a product. know consumers already advantages or disadvantages, or risks of a processed food product, this information will consumer confidence. during this COVID-19 pandemic, consumers have many considerations in buying a product online to read much information about the products being sold.

Product labeling is the only variable that has a significant effect on consumer purchasing decisions. The results of the logistic regression of the study show that each additional unit of labeling completeness will increase purchasing decisions by 1.77 times. The effect of labeling is influential because the product label can explain information about the product. Therefore. the completeness of product information on the label is very helpful for consumers in knowing the product information. According to Edi Wibowo dan Mandusari (2018), each label included in the product can describe the responsibility and honesty of the merchant; besides that, halal labeling can also increase consumer confidence in the products being sold. Therefore, the label becomes a container of information about products that will improve consumer purchasing decisions. Therefore, the consumers are also more calm

comfortable when the complete and information on the product label is listed in full such as information on product types, information product expiration on durability, prices, product benefits, halal certificates, BPOM (National Agency of Drug Food Control), organic, or other supporting certificates.

The decision to purchase processed products during the COVID-19 food pandemic has also caused the government's role to become crucial, such as implementing PSBB (Large-Scale Social Restrictions) and Normal, which affect consumer purchasing decisions. The logistic analysis regression results state that each additional unit of government support will increase consumer decisions by 1.12 times. However, it is not significant, or the effect is so tiny that it is not significantly different. During this COVID-19 pandemic, more and more people are buying and selling online, especially when the government imposed PSBB in several considered unfavorable conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. It happened because of the advice from the government to carry out activities from home. The decision to enforce the health protocol recommended by the government has influenced consumer purchasing decisions.

#### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Consumer purchasing decisions for processed food products during the pandemic are not much different from conditions before the COVID-19 pandemic because the main reason for purchasing processed food is based on consumer needs. It is shown by all variables in the study, which include social trust (related to handling) to merchants, social trust (related to handling) to couriers, positive information (benefit-centered), negative information (risk-centered), labeling, and government support, has a positive influence

on determining purchasing decisions for processed food products. However, only one variable has a significant effect, namely labeling. Therefore, it is essential for producers or business people to provide information about the type of product, net weight, expiration date, price, product benefits, halal certificate, BPOM, organic, or other certificates on their products. Based on this research, the use of technology and social media will significantly assist producers in focusing their market share, especially on young people and housewives who are consumers of processed food products both marketed online and offline.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We want to thank the Faculty of Agriculture, Brawijaya University, who has realized the research through the PNBP funding scheme of the Faculty of Agriculture, and all respondents who have been willing to participate in responding to questionnaires that are accessed online. Hopefully, this research is helpful for all parties concerned.

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