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Development Strategies for Corn Farming to Enhance Farmers' Income in Lubuk Basung District: An Islamic Economic Perspective

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Abstract*:* This study aims to identify strategies for developing corn farming businesses to increase farmers' income in Lubuk Basung District. The research is classified as qualitative research, with a focus on understanding meaning rather than generalization. The summary of the research findings shows that corn farming businesses can apply the SO (Strengths–Opportunities) strategy to develop their businesses and achieve competitive advantages in the agricultural sector. The conclusion is that corn farming in Lubuk Basung possesses more dominant strengths and opportunities compared to weaknesses and threats.

Keywords: Corn Farming; Development Strategy; Farmer Income Improvement.

Abstrak*:* Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui strategi pengembangan usaha tani jagung dalam meningkatkan pendapatan di Kecamatan Lubuk Basung. Penelitian ini digolongkan penelitian kualitatif dan hasil penelitian kualitatif lebih menekankan makna dari pada generalisasi. Teknik pengumpulan data pada penelitian ini ialah analisis SWOT. Ringkasan hasil penelitian ini ialah usaha tani jagung dapat menggunakan strategi SO dalam mengembangkan usahanya untuk mencapai keunggulan bersaing di dalam dunia usaha. Kesimpulannya yaitu usaha tani jagung di Lubuk Basung memiliki berbagai kekuatan dan peluang yang lebih dominan dibandingkan dengan kelemahan dan ancaman.

Kata Kunci: Strategi Pengembangan; Usaha Tani Jagung; Pendapatan Petani.

A. Introduction

Indonesia's economy relies heavily on the agricultural sector since the majority of its population works in this field, making it not only a significant contributor to

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foreign exchange but also a major source of livelihood. Farming activities produce food, feed, fiber, industrial raw materials, and income through the processes of land cultivation, planting, maintenance, harvesting, and livestock management (Abubakar 2021).

The role of farming is crucial not only as a provider of food and raw materials for industries but also as an indicator of farmers' welfare, measured by the income they generate. Farmers' income is calculated from the total value of products that are sold, consumed, stored, or used for payments, while farming costs include all production inputs charged to agricultural output (Hoesalin and Dkk 2023).

Based on observations regarding the harvested area, production, and productivity of corn in Lubuk Basung District, a consistent downward trend has been observed between 2021 and 2024. In 2021, the harvested area for corn reached 7,478 hectares, with a total production of 58,510 tons and productivity of 7.87 tons per hectare. A decrease occurred in 2022, when the harvested area shrank to 7,155 hectares, production dropped to 54,020 tons, and productivity declined to 7.60 tons per hectare. The downward trend continued in 2023, with 7,046 hectares harvested, 51,582 tons of production, and productivity of 7.32 tons per hectare. By 2024, a significant decline was recorded: the harvested area dropped to 6,055 hectares, production to 43,997 tons, and productivity to its lowest point in four years, 7.27 tons per hectare (Kurnialwalti and H 2022).

This decline in corn productivity and production in Lubuk Basung indicates multiple issues in the development of this commodity. One major challenge faced by farmers is the limited application of agricultural technology, leading to inefficient land management, planting, and harvesting practices. This inefficiency directly affects corn productivity, which in turn impacts farmers' income. Low productivity means reduced harvest quantities, resulting in less corn available for sale and consequently lower income for farmers.(Mujiadi 2022)

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B. Research Method

Based on the problem formulation and objectives that have been established, this research is categorized as qualitative research. Qualitative research aims to provide an in-depth description of the conditions, characteristics, and meanings of a particular object or phenomenon. This approach is used to examine the object in its natural setting, where the researcher acts as the main instrument in the process of data collection and analysis. Data were collected through triangulation, while data analysis was carried out inductively. The results of this study emphasize the interpretation and meaning of the studied phenomenon rather than the generalization of findings (Rita and F. 2022).

C. Results and Discussion

In the analysis of Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) and External Factor Evaluation (EFE), two matrices are used. The first is the IFE matrix, which serves to determine the extent to which internal factors influence the enterprise. The IFE matrix summarizes the internal conditions of the corn farming business, consisting of its strengths and weaknesses, which are assessed based on the ratings and weights obtained from interviews with corn farmers in Lubuk Basung District (Sinaga 2022).

Table 4.1
IFE Matrix

Internal Strategic Factors	Weight	Rating	Score
Strengths			
1. Availability of agricultural land	0.15	4	0.60
2. Adequate local labor force	0.12	3	0.36
3. Farmers' experience in corn cultivation	0.10	4	0.40
4. Support from farmer groups and related institutions	0.13	3	0.39
Weaknesses			
1. Limited business capital	0.14	2	0.28
2. Market access not yet optimal	0.12	2	0.24
3. Cultivation technology still simple	0.10	2	0.20
4. Lack of understanding in farm management	0.13	2	0.26
Total	**1.00**		**2.73**

Source: Processed data, 2025

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Explanation:
1. Rating 4 = Very Important
2. Rating 3 = Important
3. Rating 2 = Less Important
4. Rating 1 = Not Important

Based on the analysis results, the internal factors of corn farming in Lubuk Basung show a total weighted score of 2.73, consisting of 1.75 for strengths and 0.98 for weaknesses. This indicates that the strengths of corn farming are more dominant than its weaknesses. Therefore, the weaknesses that exist can still be managed effectively by utilizing the available strengths (Saragih 2022).

The second matrix, External Factor Evaluation (EFE), is used to determine the impact of external factors on the business. The EFE matrix summarizes the external conditions of corn farming, consisting of opportunities and threats, assessed through interviews with local farmers (Nurkholis 2022).

Table 4.2
EFE Matrix

External Strategic Factors	Weight	Rating	Score
Opportunities			
1. Stable market demand for corn	0.18	4	0.72
2. Government programs supporting the agricultural sector	0.15	3	0.45
3. Support from microfinance institutions	0.13	3	0.39
4. Export market potential	0.14	3	0.42
Threats			
1. Corn price fluctuations	0.13	2	0.26
2. Competition with imported products	0.12	2	0.24
3. Unpredictable climate change	0.15	2	0.30
Total	**1.00**		**2.78**

Explanation:
1. Rating 4 = Very Important
2. Rating 3 = Important
3. Rating 2 = Less Important
4. Rating 1 = Not Important

Based on the results of the EFE matrix, the total weighted score obtained is **2.78**, with **1.98 for opportunities** and **0.80 for threats**. This indicates that the corn farming sector in Lubuk Basung is relatively strong in utilizing opportunities to overcome external threats (Indah and P 2022).

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The next step is to select one of the four strategies generated from the SWOT matrix based on the total weighted scores. The strategy with the highest score is considered the most effective in guiding future business decisions and development directions (Fiqriansyalh and Dkk 2022).

Table 4.3
SWOT Matrix of Corn Farming Enterprises

External Factors / Internal Factors	Opportunities	Threats
	1. Stable market demand 2. Growing related industries 3. Development of processed products	1. Competition with corn products from other regions 2. Pest and disease attacks 3. Corn price fluctuations that can affect farmers' income
Strengths 1. Availability of sufficient land for corn cultivation. 2. Availability of adequate labor to support agricultural activities. 3. Farmers have experience in corn cultivation.	**SO Strategies** 1. Utilize local land and labor to meet stable market demand and take advantage of government programs in the agricultural sector. 2. Gain benefits from employing local labor.	**ST Strategies** 1. Optimize the use of land to meet stable market demand. 2. Utilize local farmers to assist the workforce in corn farming. 3. Use farmers' experience to anticipate price fluctuations and competition

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	3. Farmers' experience serves as a strength in developing corn cultivation.	with corn products from other regions.
Weaknesses 1. Limited business capital. 2. Lack of farmers' knowledge about marketing and product diversification. 3. Low selling prices during harvest season (over supply).	**WO Strategies (Weakness–Opportunity)** 1. Join cooperatives or farmer groups to strengthen capital and marketing. 2. Participate in agricultural training programs from the government or private institutions to improve technical and post-harvest capacity. 3. Access government assistance programs to obtain subsidies for fertilizers, seeds, and modern farming equipment.	**WT Strategies (Weakness–Threat)** 1. Establish shared storage warehouses to prevent crop damage and sell products when prices are high. 2. Develop market and price information systems so farmers can choose the right selling time. 3. Implement intercropping or crop diversification systems to avoid dependence on a single crop during price fluctuations.

Based on the SWOT matrix above, several alternative strategies can be applied by corn farmers in Lubuk Basung District to improve their competitiveness and income through innovation and effective management. These include:

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1) **SO Strategy (Strength–Opportunities):**
   This strategy focuses on using all existing strengths to take full advantage of opportunities. For corn farming, this includes utilizing available land and local labor to meet stable market demand and leveraging government support programs for agriculture (Jetsi and W 2022).
2) **WO Strategy (Weakness–Opportunities):**
   This strategy aims to minimize weaknesses by capitalizing on opportunities. Farmers can engage in training programs to improve their technical and post-harvest skills or form cooperatives to access financial support and market networks (V and Mustaki 2021).
3) **ST Strategy (Strength–Threats):**
   This approach uses internal strengths to overcome external threats, such as leveraging farmers' experience to anticipate price fluctuations and competition from imported corn (Qomarialh 2022).
4) **WT Strategy (Weakness–Threats):**
   This defensive strategy seeks to reduce weaknesses and avoid external threats, such as creating market information systems and implementing crop diversification to stabilize income (Harmin and Jandu 2022).

Weighted Score Analysis

After analyzing the SO, WO, ST, and WT strategies, corn farming enterprises must choose the strategy with the highest total score as the most effective (Syvia and Hayati 2022).

Table 4.4
Total Weighted Scores

Strategy Type	Calculation	Total Score
SO (Strengths + Opportunities)	1.75 + 1.98	**3.73**
WO (Weaknesses + Opportunities)	0.98 + 1.98	**2.96**
ST (Strengths + Threats)	1.75 + 0.80	**2.55**
WT (Weaknesses + Threats)	0.98 + 0.80	**1.78**

Source: *Processed data, June 14, 2025*

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Based on the table above, the highest total score is 3.73, corresponding to the SO strategy, followed by WO (2.96), ST (2.55), and WT (1.78). Since the SO strategy achieves the highest score, it is the most appropriate approach for developing corn farming enterprises in Lubuk Basung to achieve competitive advantage in the agricultural sector.

D. Conclusion

Corn farming enterprises in Lubuk Basung District possess more dominant strengths and opportunities compared to weaknesses and threats. Farmers need to maximize their existing strengths such as the availability of adequate farmland, sufficient local labor, and extensive experience in corn cultivation to take advantage of existing opportunities, including stable market demand and government programs that support the agricultural sector.

Based on the results of the Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) analysis, it was found that the strengths of corn farming outweigh its weaknesses, indicating that the identified weaknesses can still be managed by optimizing the potential that already exists. Meanwhile, the External Factor Evaluation (EFE) analysis shows that corn farming has greater opportunities than threats, which signifies the farmers' ability to face external challenges effectively.

From the total weighted score analysis, the corn farming business is positioned under the SO (Strength–Opportunities) strategy quadrant, with the highest total score of 3.73. Therefore, the SO strategy is considered the most suitable approach for the development of corn farming in Lubuk Basung, as it allows farmers to leverage their internal strengths to seize external opportunities and achieve competitive advantage in the agricultural sector. Based on these findings, several recommendations can be proposed:

For Future Research: Subsequent studies are encouraged to broaden the research scope in order to develop more effective corn farming development strategies that can significantly increase farmers' income.

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For the Local Community and Farmers: The people of Lubuk Basung should pay closer attention to and understand the development strategies used in the agricultural sector, particularly in corn farming, so that they can optimally utilize their strengths and opportunities to overcome challenges and improve the competitiveness of their farming enterprises.

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