

第一届全国国际商务专业学位 创新创业精英挑战赛

**Green Pearl under the Belt and Road Initiative:
Development and Internationalization of Qixiang Coffee and
its Organic and Ecological Industry Chain**

打造一带一路上的绿色明珠
——“奇象咖啡”有机生态产业链的国际化延伸之路

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Abstract: This article investigates the development strategies and developing process of Qixiang Coffee Company, a diversified agricultural company of coffee planting, processing, and selling which is located in Pu'er, Yunnan. Qixiang Coffee has gone through a great many difficulties, like the pricing crisis since 2009 and the sales dilemma in 2014 when it bought 50-year use right of 3900 mu land and started to plant coffee. However, Qixiang Coffee still made it to establish its own brand and be successfully listed on Shanghai Stock Exchange. What's more, in the context of The Belt and Road Initiative, Qixiang is trying to open the international market recently. Qixiang Coffee's success is related to the stable and sound economic growth of China, and the policy supports of The Belt and Road Initiative. More importantly, its success lies in having a sober assessment of the situation and complying with the international trend. This case study analyzes the problems and challenges Qixiang confronted with while running local coffee business and its advantages and feasibility to export in the context of The Belt and Road Initiative in three aspects:

- The organic and ecological production chain
- Brand management
- Export to the international market

This study may inspire the managers of Qixiang Coffee with fresh consideration and cognition on future direction, and may also be of reference value for other small-size agricultural companies which are eager to take advantages of The Belt and Road Initiative.

Keywords: Qixiang Coffee; the Belt and Road Initiative; the organic and ecological production chain; brand management; international market

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摘要: 本案例描述了云南普洱的一家以有机生态产业链闻名的集咖啡种植、加工、生产、销售为一体的多样化循环农业开发公司——奇象公司的发展战略与发展历程。从2009年公司买地种咖啡到2014年咖啡销售受挫，再到公司建立自己的品牌并在上海股交所挂牌，到近期一带一路的大背景下公司尝试开拓国际市场。虽然在这个过程中也遇到过挫折险阻，奇象还是一一克服，以远超同行的速度快速成长，这得益于稳中向好的中国经济发展走势和一带一路国家发展战略背景，更得益于公司顺应市场趋势、符合实际、放眼未来的发展战略的制定。本案例在一带一路国家发展战略背景下，从有机生态产业链、品牌管理、出口国际市场这三大模块探究了奇象咖啡公司在一带一路上的国际化发展战略的优势和可行性，分析奇象咖啡在经营发展中遇到的问题与挑战，引发对奇象咖啡未来发展的思考，对其他农业企业具有一定的借鉴和参考价值。

关键词: 奇象咖啡；企业战略；一带一路；有机生态产业链；品牌管理；国际化

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1. Case Introduction

1.1 Introduction

"Rumbling!Rumbling!"

2015, the first year of the implementation of The Belt and Road Initiative, witnessed the opening of the new international freight train (Kunming-Europe CHINARAILWAY Express). The train, which connects Yunnan, central Asia and Western Europe, is like a leviathan across the Eurasian continent, bringing vigor and opportunities to the Silk Road.

The opening of this train is on the tiptoe of Mr. Lanjun Sa's expectation, who is the president of the Pu'er Xinfeng Agricultural Development Co., Ltd. The core project of his company, Qixiang Coffee, mainly produces organic coffee beans and coffee powders. Kunming-Europe CHINARAILWAY Express helps to transport Qixiang's high-quality coffee to foreign markets (like Central Asia and even Hamburg, Germany). In the past, if small coffee producers like Qixiang, wanted to export to Europe, the only approach is shipping. This would take them almost 30 days which is beyond their ability due to the tough capital turnover and huge risk of marine transportation. Currently, in order to promote Yunnan as the global coffee warehousing and trading center, the government not only specially opens this freight train for coffee transportation, but also introduces various preferential policies to support local coffee companies.

"I have been running coffee business since 2009 and have encountered an ocean of difficulties. Now I see the hopes from the The Belt and Road Initiative. Small companies like Qixiang could grasp this opportunity to expand the business and spread our local coffee brand to other countries, with strong supports from the government."

Recalling the memories of setting up the organic coffee company, Qixiang, all sorts of feelings well up in Mr. Sa's mind.

1.2 The Establishment of Qixiang and its Organic and Ecological

Industry Chain

1.2.1 The Establishment of Qixiang

Talking about the origin of Qixiang, there is a small story between Mr. Lanjun Sa and coffee. At the end of 2008, Mr. Lanjun Sa arranged a trip to Pu'er with his staff of a coal mine and he discovered that many farmers were planting coffee trees there. The bright red coffee cherries, like a string of lanterns, warmed Mr. Sa's heart. Through enquiring, he was surprised to discover that Pu'er is one of the most suitable location for planting coffee trees. The species of local coffee is the *Coffea Arabica* and was mostly purchased at a low price by the leading coffee companies, like Nestle and Starbucks. Mr. Sa felt a little pity because the purchasing price is too low compared with the coffee drinks sold by Nestle and in Starbucks.

During the trip, Mr. Sa happened to meet a man who was selling his coffee plantation. An idea appeared in Mr. Sa's mind: "How about running an organic coffee plantation myself?" Soon afterwards Mr. Sa purchased the land use right of over 3900 acres of land in Yi Xiang Town, Simao District, Pu'er City in 2009. At the same year, Qixiang Coffee was officially established.

1.2.2 The Establishment of Organic and Ecological Industry Chain

"Our purpose is to run a healthful and environmental coffee company." President Sa expressed himself to his staffs: "The organic and ecological agriculture may cost a lot while the output is less than that of conventional agriculture. But I believe it is worthwhile since it can ensure the quality of the coffee and win trust from our customers. What's more, it will be the direction for the high-level coffee industry in the future."

President Sa introduced the high-quality coffee species, Arabica, bringing vitality and vigor to this red earth. Owing to the coffee trees' favor in shadowy places, Qixiang planted the nut trees, fruit trees and tea bushes so that they could produce diversified products while creating a shadowy environment for coffee trees. Under the blue sky and in the brilliant sunshine, a flock of cow and sheep walked along the mountains care-freely. Their feces could be mixed up with the pericarps

and fallen leaves to ferment the organic manure, maintaining the soil fertility, and decreasing the negative effects of the chemical fertilizer on the earth and coffee beans. Since the damages of the pests and diseases are getting more and more intense, Mr. Sa decided to visit the professors and researchers of the Yunnan Agricultural University and the Coffee Research Center of the Academy of Agricultural Sciences, seeking for the solving methods. Finally, he planted several camphor trees which contained wood phenol that could fight against pests and reduce diseases with its germ-killing effect. What a ecological agricultural plantation! It was like a paradise, and the birth of the hope.

With the time fleeting, in the third year the fragrance of coffee filled the whole mountain. During this period, Mr. Sa not only invested millions of property, but also established 2 primary processing plants and a series of deep processing equipment. Qixiang's processing ability reached 200 tons per year, covering 40 square kilometers. Qixiang not only processed coffee beans from its own plantation, but also provided OEM processing service for other farmers who had no processing equipment. Selecting beans, dense treatment, water scrubbing, peeling, baking, grinding, packaging. every step contributed to the production of tons of brown coffee beans into the packages of the specialty coffee powders in the exquisite gift boxes with the assistance of advanced facilities.

1.3 Qixiang: The Establishment of its Own Brand

1.3.1 Helpless Compromise---Working for Nestle and Starbucks

Since Qixiang already had high-quality beans, the question was how to make a profit.

Local coffee beans in Yunnan were mostly purchased by Nestle, Starbucks and other large companies who had a famous brand and long history in coffee industry. When Mr. Lanjun Sa bought land to plant coffee beans, he had already decided to establish own brand instead of only growing coffee beans for large companies. But when the company actually entered the selling process, Mr. Sa discovered that things were not as easy as he had imagined.

As a new and small-size comer, although Qixiang owned high-quality organic coffee beans, if it could not win the trust of distributors and consumers, everything

would be in vain. In November 2013, the first batch of coffee was ripe. From September to November, president Sa was looking for buyers, but only sold 25 tons in two months, which was not even one tenth of the total amount of the coffee beans. Until December 2013, coffee cherries were all ripe. 2013 is the year that witnessed the downturn of the international coffee market and the "price winter" spread to Yunnan was even worse. International coffee companies purchased coffee beans in Pu'er at only 12.34 yuan per kilogram. Most of the local coffee farmers only were able to cover the cost. In the face of piles of coffee beans and the increasingly serious capital shortage, Mr. Sa was sleepless all night. Two months later, in February 2014, he gritted his teeth and sold the rest of high-quality coffee beans to Nestle and other companies at a low price. Since Qixiang had adopted organic and ecological production method, the unit output of coffee beans was below the standard production level while the cost of per kilogram coffee was up to 17 yuan. The company was not profitable as expected but had a eight hundred thousand deficit.

1.3.2 Building its Own Brand

"In the past when I operated coal business, I was rolling in money. But now, with coffee trees grew across the mountain, what can I do to create a new frontier for my career?" said by president Sa. As an ambitious entrepreneur, he still believed in himself and the prospect of the coffee industry. "Once Qixiang could survive the beginning difficulties, it would have a bright future."

The first problem to be solved was to make Qixiang Coffee a well-known brand. President Sa speed up this process. In March 2014, Pu'er Xinfeng Agricultural Development Co., Ltd. was finally established with a registered capital of 10 million yuan and its flagship product - Qixiang coffee had also completed the trademark registration at the same time.

Now that the brand had been established, the next step was to reform the company's organizational structure so that the various departments can perform their duties. So president Sa divided the company into three main sectors: planting department, processing department and sales department. Each department had a department manager who would be responsible for the daily operation and a contact person to ensure the timely information dissemination among three departments.

The third step was to focus on the coffee production so as to make the process more standardized and induce the advanced technology. Through organizing the employees in planting and processing department to visit local experienced coffee farmers, other coffee companies and the professors in the coffee industry, the company learnt a lot from their experiences and knowledge which helped to acquire good reputation. On November 17, 2014, Qixiang coffee plantation was committed as "national characteristics industry demonstration base" by the National Green Industry Promotion Committee. It participated in the third "Pu'er Coffee Beans Contest" with its coffee beans and won the "Green Bean Sorting Fine Grade Certificate" on January 20. In March 2015, Qixiang obtained the "Organic Coffee Conversion Certificate". In the same year, Pu'er Xinfeng Agricultural Development Co., Ltd. participated in China International Exhibition in which Qixiang coffee won the Gold Award in the "Fifteenth in 2015 (Beijing) Organic Food and Green Food Expo". In October 2016 Qixiang coffee was assessed by the national quality supervision and obtained "Protected Eco-origin Product by China" certification. These honors were the affirmation of Qixiang's arduous efforts.

1.4 Positioning in the Market

1.4.1 Price war with instant coffee

After establishing the brand, the focus of Qixiang returns to finding buyers. The market in Southwest China is dominated by instant coffee, so Qixiang decided to grab the market share from the instant coffee. However, coffee powders were less convenient than instant coffee for coffee powders were required to be coked in coffee machine, which put Qixiang at a great disadvantage. Unwillingly, Qixiang chose to lower the price, opening a price war against instant coffee. At the beginning, Qixiang's mellow coffee taste and low price positioning of nearly no profit helped it to leverage southwest market, with the market share increasing. However, although the sales increased, golden days didn't last long because Qixiang company didn't make a profit and was losing everyday. In contrast, the previous well-known instant coffee brands gradually increased their market shares with the help of strong consumer stickiness and low production costs. From a face-to-face interview with consumers, Qixiang learned that consumers bought Qixiang coffee just because of

curiosity and low price. Once the coffee returned to higher price, the current consumers were likely to return to instant coffee.

1.4.2 Concentrating on the organic bean Market

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1.4.3 Opening cafes to contact with consumer

When everything is on track, Mr. Sa began to design a new blueprint for his coffee. A coffee company, if did not go to the consumer side, could never really get close to customers or get the sweetest fruit! On November 20, 2015, Qixiang cooperated with students from Yunnan University of Finance and Economics to open a joint cafe at college. By doing so, Qixiang not only impressed college students, one of the most potential groups to consume coffee, but also receives positive judgments from the society. Soon afterwards, Mr. Sa was visited by several cafe owners asking for franchise. Why not? It could not only develop new marketing channels for Qixiang, but also enhance its market awareness. By the end of 2015, five Qixiang cafes had been run in Yunnan. This "self-run" plus "franchise" model helped Qixiang to get closer to customers.

1.5 The Belt and Road Initiative: Riding on the Express Train

Although the revenue growth of Qixiang coffee was steady in 2015, Mr. Sa considered that the pace of growth was meeting the bottleneck, which is out of his expectation. Through Investigating the causes, Mr. Sa found that the problem lies in the demand for organic coffee in current Chinese market is not great enough. On the one hand, people do not have a clear understanding of the importance of organic products so that they are unwilling to pay a higher price for the organic coffee which is inconvenient and more expensive in their mind. On the other hand, at present, the high-end consumers prefer other more famous organic coffee companies than Qixiang Coffee.

In face of this dilemma, an idea occurred to Mr. Sa—taking advantage of export opportunity. It was easier said than done. If the plan was implemented, the company would need to not only bear the risks but also spend plenty of time and money on export. More importantly, the most troublesome thing is undoubtedly the lack of suitable channel for such a small and micro company to export.

A platform called "Food Tesco" attracted Mr. Sa's attention when he was thinking sorrowfully over how to search a suitable export channel.

"Food Tesco", a cross-border e-commerce platform built by Yunnan local e-commerce, was established to offer a platform for more than 1,000 enterprises, including large and medium sized enterprises and to release information about sales and demands in order to respond to the Belt and Road Initiative and offer a platform for Yunnan plateau characteristic agriculture to go abroad. Meanwhile, "Food Tesco" also provided a good channel for counterparts from Southeast Asia and other countries to trade with Yunnan enterprises.

This is the first time that Mr. Sa was benefited from the Belt and Road Initiative practically. In the past, in Mr. Sa's mind, the policies are merely slogans for their small businesses, and cannot solve the pressing need. But now he wonders if he can use this policy to find new markets and opportunities for their coffee, further making the brand "Qixiang" known by more people at home and abroad.

The second opportunity brought by the Belt and Road Initiative is the South Asia Expo. As is mentioned in "The vision and action of promoting the construction of the Silk Road economic zone and the 21st century Maritime Silk Road" which is jointly issued by National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of

Foreign Affairs and National Ministry of Commerce, the South Asia Expo aims at assisting China to play the constructive role in the Belt and Road Initiative. This policy makes the South Asia Expo that was found in 2012 an increasingly important business platform for businessmen along the Belt and Road Initiative. In 2015, Mr. Sa brought his high-quality coffee beans and coffee powder to Yunnan Coffee Trade Center with more than ten ethnic minority baristas, showing and sharing Qixiang coffee drinks. Many people didn't know Pu'er coffee before, not to speak of Qixiang coffee. However, through participating in the South Asia Expo, they became familiar with Qixiang coffee and had a basic understanding about the organic coffee. In addition to South Asia Expo, Qixiang coffee also participated in the China-Arab States Expos and was awarded a silver medal.

The third opportunity brought by The Belt and Road Initiative was the operation of Kunming - Europe CHINARAILWAY Express, which shortened the transport cycle from Yunnan to Europe by half. Benefiting from this train, the export volume of Yunnan coffee and coffee products (including roasted coffee, instant coffee powder) was over 10 tons in 2016 and the cargo value was about \$472 million, with year on year growth of 50% and 15%. On December 29, 2016, Yunnan International Coffee Trading Center was established in Pu'er, giving Yunnan coffee industry an important window to the world. Thus, small and medium enterprises no longer need worry about expensive shipping cost and high risk when transporting coffee to Europe and Central Asia. Through the high-speed and safe rail transport, products could be shipped to Central Asia and Eastern Europe and other countries which have huge demand for coffee.

In order to seize the national strategic opportunity of "The Belt and Road Initiative", Yunnan government also introduced various policies aiming at building Yunnan the global coffee warehousing and trading center. In line with its target, Yunnan International Coffee Exchange was set up in Pu'er on 29th December, 2016, creating an important exchanging window for the internationalization Yunnan coffee industry.

Secondly, Yunnan made full use of its geographic advantages since it was adjacent to three countries——west borders of Myanmar, south neighbors of Laos and Vietnam. Through signing reciprocally alternative coffee planting agreement with Lao government, Yunnan gradually improves its infrastructure construction of coffee raw material cultivation base and initial processing base, which made it

possible for Yunnan to address the technology development of coffee processing dilemma and planting problems.

Thirdly, through the coffee trade, Yunnan government was strive to build the coffee industry circle of Southeast Asia which is based on “Yunnan - Laos - Vietnam” and forms a trade-based industrial development pattern mainly centering on high value-added products and brand.

This golden opportunity made Mr. Sa excited. He had a plan that he faintly wanted to put it into practice. As Per capita coffee consumption in Europe was the highest in the world, for a long time Europe has been the largest import area of coffee beans and baked coffee products. Consequently, the European people had a high level of coffee consumption and have certain requirements to the taste and quality. Central Asia market was a coffee market to be developed. The current coffee in middle east are mainly average coffee beans and products imported from Southeast Asian that are more affordable while the organic and ecological coffee market targeted at the high-end crowd was still a market blank gap.

Mr. Lanjun Sa, who was born a Moslem, always had a kind of intimacy with the Central Asian region. Therefore, Qixiang Coffee obtained the halal certification by the Islamic association of Pu'er, Yunnan province. All of these formed a unique advantage for Qixiang to enter Central Asian market. Although the export of primary products was risky and the investment return period was long, he still wanted to have a try.

The business vision of Qixiang coffee is "firstly focusing on the market in Pu'er, then going out of Yunnan, next radiating the domestic market, and finally bracing international market". On March 5, 2017, in the Fifth Session of the Twelfth National People's Congress, Premier Li Keqiang made the government work report which pointed out that it was essential to steadily carry on the establishment of the Belt and Road Initiative. According to his report, to build the Belt and Road Initiative, China should insist on co-operation on discussion with neighboring countries, so as to acquire complementary advantages. Focusing on the market in Pu'er, then going out of Yunnan, and next radiating the domestic market, the company closely kept up with the trend of the times in order to truly achieve this goal. After that, the company is now attempting to establish its own brand advantage step by step and has received recognition from the global market, the business vision of global expansion will then come into reality. It is convincing that more and more

people in the international community can taste Qixiang coffee through the arduous efforts of Mr. Sa and his staff.

2 Case Study

2.1 Objectives of Case Teaching

Applied Courses

International Business Theory and Strategy, Strategic Management, Marketing Management, Value Chain Management.

Objects

This case is designed mainly for Masters of International Business, MBA and EMBA students, and other undergraduate or graduate students.

Purposes

Use the Corporate strategies to decide the basic goals and tasks of enterprises, and to help the managers to make short plans and allocate necessary resources to achieve these goals (Chandler Jr A D, 1962). Choice of global strategy is an important chapter of "International Business Theory and Strategy". Meanwhile, value chain and brand management influences the value of agricultural products and satisfaction of customers' needs. This case study analyzes the problems and challenges Qixiang had experienced in its process of running local coffee business, and the advantages and feasibility for it to export in the context of The Belt and Road Initiative in three aspects:

- The organic and ecological production chain
- Brand management
- Export to the international market

The authors hope this thesis will give students some ideas on how to study a company by analyzing its value chain, brand management, and practices. Also, it is necessary for students to improve their critical thinking and problem solving abilities. These students are expected to finish the following tasks after reading:

(1) To understand the concepts of the organic and ecological agricultural industry chain, brand management, brand marketing strategy, global strategy and The Belt and Road Initiative;

(2) To analyze the significance of brand management on enhancing the competitive advantages of an enterprise; master the theory of the global strategy selection for an enterprise;

(3) To think about the opportunities The Belt and Road Initiative had brought and will bring to Qixiang Coffee, and the feasibility for Qixiang to export to European and Central Asian market.

2.2 Questions

1. What is organic and ecological industry chain and its advantages compared with conventional agricultural industry chain? What is Qixiang's organic and ecological industry chain?

2. What is the brand marketing strategy? What is the brand marketing strategy of Qixiang?

3. What are global strategy choices? What can a company do to carry out the international management? And what are Qixiang's international management conditions?

4. Under the influence of "The Belt and Road Initiative", Qixiang Coffee decided to export products to European market and regard the Central Asian market as a potential market. Please use theoretical knowledge to analyze whether its developmental strategy is feasible?

2.3 Analysis Framework

Corporate strategy determines the general goals, important principles, business, social responsibility and the employees of an enterprise. Ansoff (1965) proposed that while making strategies, a company should decide the nature of the characteristics of the products, technology that constitutes the products and market share of the products. Finally it should clarify the inner link between current products and market and future products and to control the developing direction of the company and strengthen the internal management.

This case investigates Qixiang Coffee's strategic perspective under the context of The Belt and Road Initiative and introduces theoretical knowledge like production chain, brand marketing strategies, global operation and 3C's model. In addition, it

examines opportunities and challenges Qixiang faces which are brought by its organic and ecological production chain, brand management, and The Belt and Road Initiative. Finally, the thesis will lay special stress on analyzing the feasibility for Qixiang to export to European and Central Asian markets. Table 1 illustrates the analysis framework in details and step by step.

Table 1: Analysis Framework

Theoretical Basis	Case scenarios	Aims
1. The concept and advantages of the organic and ecological agricultural industry chain	The organic and ecological industry chain of Qixiang Coffee ¹	To build up the basic knowledge about the coffee industry and the core competence of Qixiang and lay a foundation for subsequent analysis;
2.Brand management	Brand marketing strategy of Qixiang Coffee	To learn what is important for brand management;
3. Global strategy and requirements for global operation	Qixiang's Global strategy and competence for global operation	To investigate the pattern the company chooses and competence for global operation;
4. 3C's model	The feasibility of Qixiang Coffee to export to European and Central Asian markets	To examine the feasibility of a company's export strategy and competitiveness;
Conclusion: Under The Belt and Road Initiative, Qixiang Coffee is making an overall optimizing development and maximal profit through its organic and ecological industry chain, brand management, and export strategy (see figure 1).		

¹ Qixiang Coffee is the core business of Pu'er Xinfeng Agricultural Co., Ltd., and operates as an independent company. In the paper, we use Qixiang or Qixiang Coffee to represent the company, and Qixiang coffee to represent the product of the company. Pu'er Xinfeng Agricultural Co., Ltd. would be mentioned as less as possible for fear of confusion.

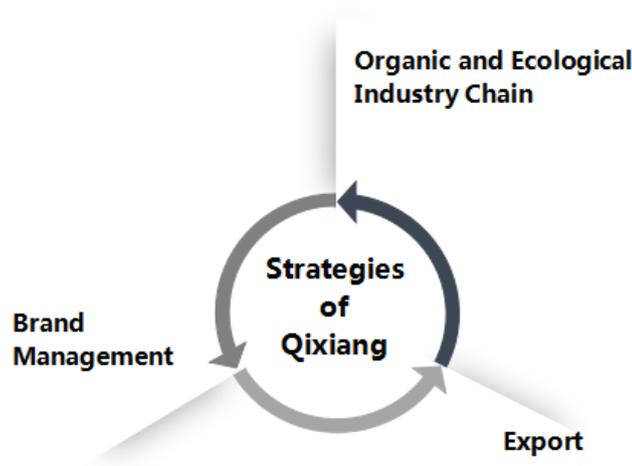


Figure 1: Strategy of Qixiang Coffee under the Belt and Road Initiative

2.4 Case Analysis

2.4.1 The Organic and Ecological Industry Chain

What is organic and ecological industry chain and its advantages compared with conventional agricultural industry chain? What is Qixiang's organic and ecological industry chain?

(1) Theoretical Basis

① Agricultural Industry Chain

Agricultural industry chain is one special form of industry chain which refers to the links among farming, processing and selling processes of farm products. Agricultural industry chain is market-oriented which takes farm product itself as its core competitiveness. It improves the utilization efficiency and participation efficiency of resources and chains (like research, production and processing) through the integration of the product chain, technical chain, organizational chain, capital chain as well as value chain so that this product can to a maximum extent obtain the product value increment at the end of value terminal.



Figure 2: The Structure of the Conventional Agriculture Industry Chain

② The Organic and Ecological Agricultural Industry Chain

The organic and ecological agriculture is a high and modern agriculture which emphasizes the importance of ecological condition, food safety, food nutrition, consumer's health and reasonable profit distribution in the supply chain. It requires the producers to make good use of resources and their advantages in every link (like production, processing, transformation, storage, sales and exportation), following organic and ecological principles.

Compared with the conventional agricultural chain, the organic and ecological agricultural industry chain has several benefits as follow:

Eco-friendly. Different from the conventional agriculture, the organic and ecological agriculture stresses that producers should not use pesticide chemicals, chemical fertilizer, or food additives. The production of transgenic species and products is also forbidden. In recent years, the food safety problems has been emerging one after another; the ecological agriculture can greatly satisfy consumers' increasing demand for healthy food.

Environment-friendly. The high outcome of the conventional agriculture is at the expense of high energy consumption and the great devastation to the natural environment, which definitely destroys sustainable development. The organic and ecological agriculture aims at making a balance between production and ecology so as to achieve ecologically sustainable development.

Operation Standardization. The organic and ecological agriculture industry chain has a series of standard criterions in the process of production, processing and selling, providing some basic evidences for inspection, certification and supervision. These criterions could not only regulate producers' behaviors which help to create trust between the producers and consumers, but also increase the products' intrinsic value and the brand awareness.

(2) Case Analysis

Qixiang Coffee is the core business run by Pu'er Xinfeng Agricultural Development Co., Ltd in 2009 to forge the diversified agricultural brand that includes key primary products (organic coffee, organic fruits) and other additional items (stockbreeding, tourism) through the combination of planting, production, processing and selling.

Since Qixiang coffee is Qixiang Coffee's major product, this analysis will mainly discuss about Qixiang coffee's organic and ecological industry chain. From the perspective of industry relationship, coffee industry chain consists of product chain, technical chain, organizational chain, capital chain and value chain. The product chain is the carrier of other chains while the technical chain, organizational chain and capital chain are the foundation of the industry chain. The analysis of value chain management is based on this carrier and foundation.

① Product Chain

Qixiang coffee has the complete industry chain, including planting, production, processing and sales; consequently every chain closely combines and works efficiently. The products of Qixiang vary from coffee beans to caffeinated drinks, which indicate a long industry chain and multiple numbers of processing links. It is obvious that there is a big appreciation space for Qixiang.

i. Product Chain in Production

Qixiang coffee beans get in a per-mu yield of 200 kg (0.2 Tons), two-fifths of which are directly sold as primary products. Since the principle of Qixiang coffee is "To Focus on the Organic Agriculture and To Make Health Coffee", it aims at creating a green plantation that follow the principle of ecologically sustainable development. Qixiang has larger original investment in prophase and longer return term on investment compared with other coffee plantations because of its ecological concept. But the benefit is also oblivious: promising development and less planting insect-borne diseases. In the production link, Qixiang should firstly increase the volume of coffee production per unit by improving the planting management and introducing more advantages technique. Secondly, as the only coffee plantation that

has been awarded the national certificate of original natural products protection, it has advantage in developing the tourism in the future.

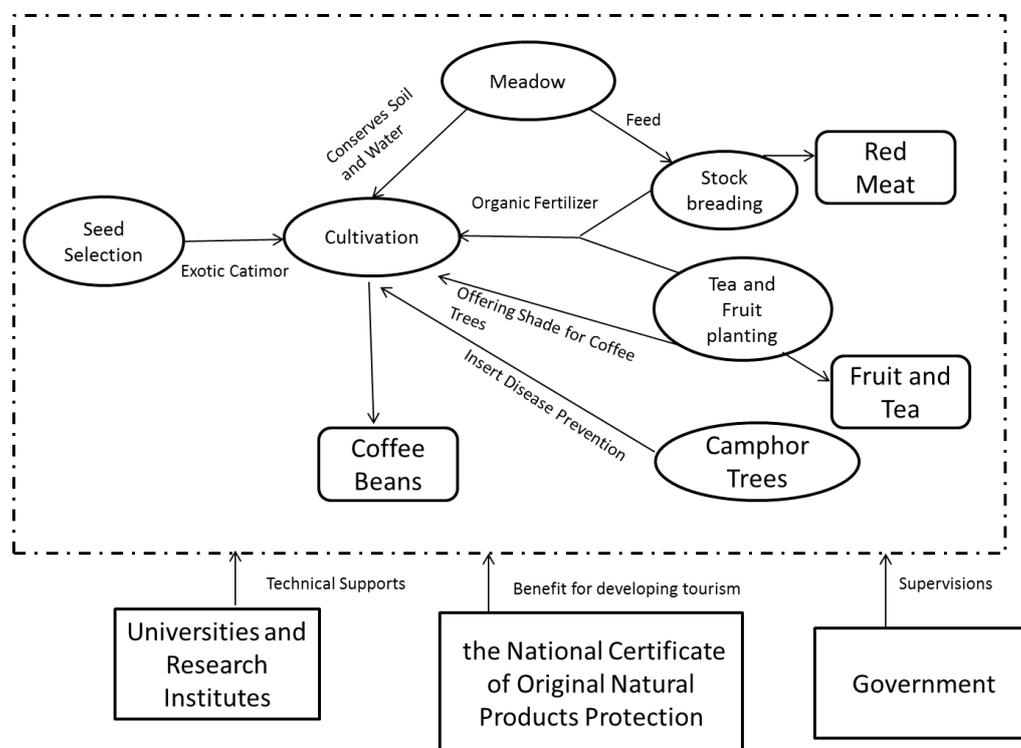


Figure 3: The Organic and Ecological Agricultural Operation Model of Qixiang

ii. Product Chain in Processing

The processing of coffee beans is divided into two stages, primary processing and deep processing. Qixiang owns 2 primary processing plants and 40 square kilometers machining area with an annual processing capacity of 200 tons / year. It also has a series of equipment for deep processing. At the first processing stage, Qixiang mainly adopts advanced wet processing method to assure the quality and flavor of its coffee. At the deep processing stage, roasting is adopted as the main method. Qixiang also works as an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) for local farmers. The coffee products of Qixiang is consisting of coffee beans, coffee powder, processing coffee on order and coffee drink, the separate output proportion is about: 4:3:2:1.

Since the processing competence of Qixiang has been acknowledged, expanding the market demand becomes the first priority. The coffee plantations in China are most scattered small-scale farming, so Qixiang on the one hand is supposed to look for more farmers who need OEM processing to expand the cooperation channel. On the other hand, it could adjust the taste or processing procedure of coffee products to

satisfy its major customers. Afterwards, Qixiang deepens its industry chains and launches coffee products (e.g. coffee drink, coffee powder, drip bag coffee) according to the market feedback.

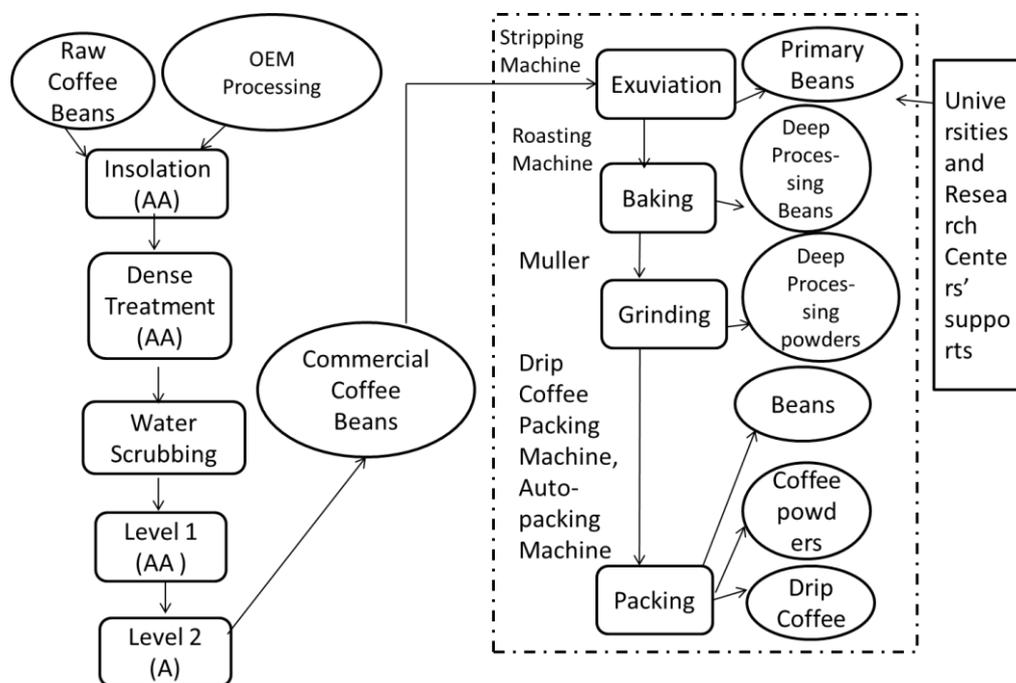


Figure 4: Qixiang's Operation Mode and Products

iii. Product Chain in Selling

Qixiang's present online sales volume accounts for about 60% of all its sales, which mainly contains sales from 1688 website (a Chinese wholesale network run by Alibaba) and other online sales channels like WeChat mall and Taobao online platform. In the offline situation, Qixiang actively participates in trade fairs at home and abroad, and cooperate with local coffee distributors to expand the market and increase the brand awareness. In the meantime, Qixiang also joins many certification activities and international competitions for certifications and medals which can earn reputation for its coffee in the field. In the meantime, Qixiang is intended to expand the selling channel for the end-consumers. Now Qixiang has cooperated with the Yunnan University of Finance and Economics and established its own cafe inside the university and 4 franchises in Yunnan province. The operation of the cafe, although in small scale, still represents Qixiang's strong desire for an entire industry chain and the improvement of products' additional value.

② Technical Chain

For the reason that the output of the organic and ecological primary products is relatively less than that of the standardized production (0.25 tons per mu), Qixiang on the one hand insists on increasing the unit area coffee output, on the other hand it also enhances coffee products development and is making efforts to increase the additional value.

Coffee seeds carefully chosen by Qixiang is exotic Catimor coffee seeds which assures the quality and output of its coffee beans. Unlike other single planting companies, Qixiang makes full use of the bio-organic fertilizer made by fruit peels, cow-dung and sheep-dung which can better preserve soil fertility. Meanwhile, Qixiang also plants nut trees and fruit trees, developing diversified farm products and providing shelter for shade-requiring coffee trees. Moreover, camphor trees have been planted to fight against physical pests. This measure could both protect the environment and ecological equilibrium as well as the health of consumers.

In the processing link, Qixiang introduces advanced facilities and use mechanical degumming techniques to lower the costs to the maximum limit. Besides, Qixiang looks for technical talents and has signed a long-term technical service agreement with Yunnan Agricultural University and the Coffee Research Center of the Academy of Agricultural Sciences for their technical supports. Technological developments of processing can upgrade the quantity and quality of coffee beans and coffee powders while enhancing the entire industry chain.

③ Organizational Chain

The individuals or organizations that have the right to dispose or use or provide the third-party services in the product chains are all constituent parts of an organizational chain. Since Qixiang's business includes planting, processing and selling, its organizational chain is comparable longer and will contact with more market participants.

Qixiang's organization form is "company+base" which is a model indicating the company runs both the cultivation of coffee and the production and selling processes. This model can decrease the low-efficiency problems caused by farmer's self-operation which lacks in systematic management. In the meantime, it would also reduce contradictions between the company and farmers as well as unnecessary transaction costs. The company organizational structure of Qixiang's is consisting of

planting department, processing department and sales department. The sales department is responsible for the expansion of business online and offline, and then informs the processing department of the in time change of products and volume. The planting department decides the coffee species and planting scale by analyzing the supply and demand information of the previous year. From what has been discussed above, it is obvious that Qixiang values the planting and processing departments, but does badly in department specializing on the market and the advertisement, and thus the company is not competent enough to exactly carry out its brand strategy. Also, the company was conservative for business across borders for lack of experiences and experts in the past. The other defects of its organizational chain is that there is no special department to run its own cafes and the chain stores, suggesting that Qixiang didn't pay much attention to the final consumers and has no powerful and systematic control of the franchises and its own shops.

Meanwhile, from the perspective of the external cooperation, Qixiang mainly cooperates with mechanical equipment suppliers, farmers who need its OEM processing service, coffee processing talents and professors as well as the local government and regulators in the processing process. In the sales process, the cooperation partners are the distributors, exhibition organizer, advertisers, online platform operators and other services providers. In the process of cafe operation, the cooperation partners are franchisers, real estate manufacturers and Decoration Company and material suppliers that are related to the establishing and operating cafes. Meanwhile, the company also needs to have long term cooperation with the third party administrators like accountancy firms and logistics carriers.

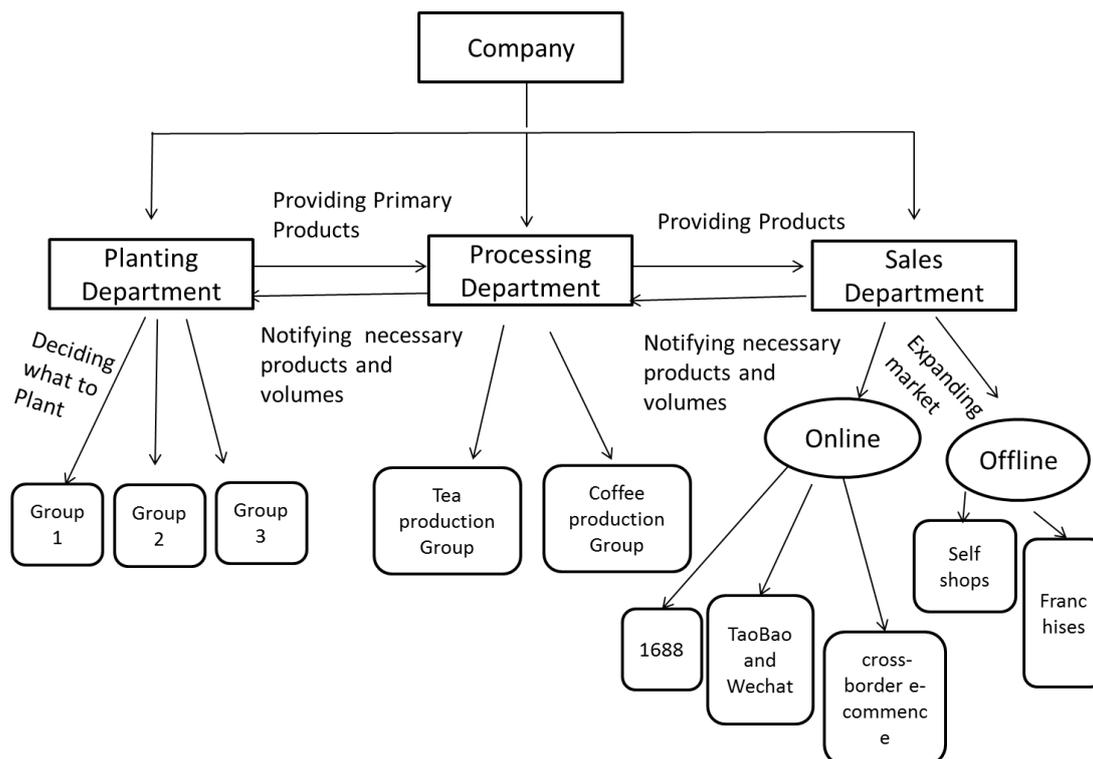


Figure 5: Qixiang's Internal Organizational Structure

④ Capital Chain

Capital sources in the coffee industry normally contain the national budget funds, bank loans, foreign capital, public offering and self-financing from the farmers. At present, Qixiang, as an independent company, inevitably has capital flow pressure since the previous investment takes up too much cash so that the company has not enough capital for further advertisement and market expansion. Consequently, Qixiang is applying for national agricultural subsidies for ecological-oriented companies. Moreover, Pu'er Xinfeng has already been listed on the Shanghai Stock Exchange, which indicates its attempts to seek finance on the stock market.

⑤ Value Chain

According to the agricultural industry chain and collaborative management theory of U-shaped value chain, the planting and processing sectors are at the bottom of the industry chain, and the additional value increases when moving to other sectors. In the strategy and brand promotion sector, the value chain reaches the highest level.

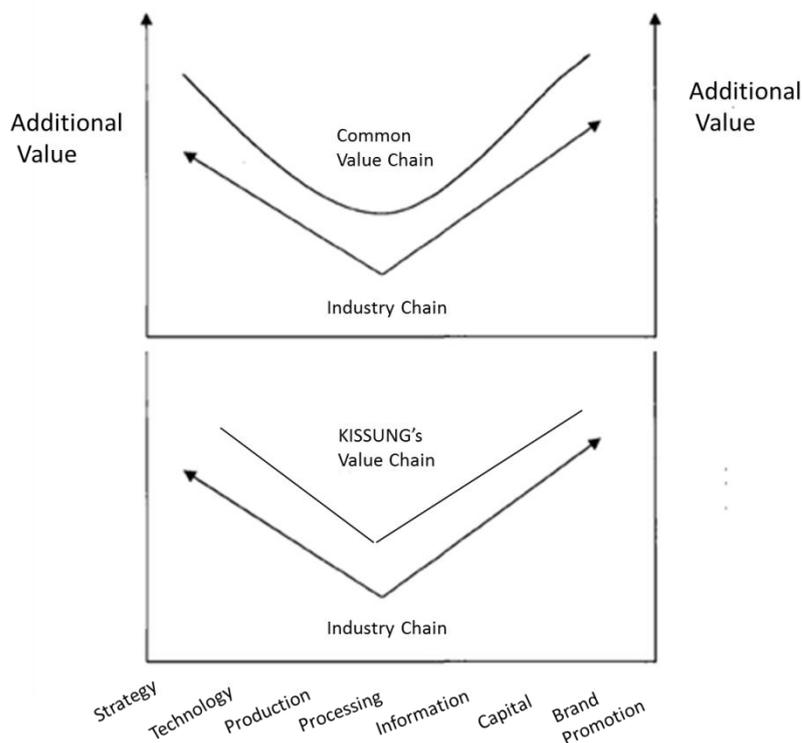


Figure 6: The Comparison Between Agriculture Industry Chain and The Common Value Chain and KISSNG's Value Chain

Qixiang properly controls the entire value chain which greatly enhances the additional value of coffee beans. For the production and processing process, advanced production techniques and mechanical equipment are applied, and a strict quality control system is introduced, so the added value is higher than other companies. For information and capital links, the industry chain of Qixiang has mostly been internalized, therefore, the information transmission is fast and effective, and the cash cost and opportunity cost has been greatly reduced. The brand promotion link doesn't achieve the expected high value, because the brand awareness of Qixiang has not reach an ideal condition, especially at the consumer side. Qixiang fails to receive ideal brand effect, and it is a gap that should be filled. Table 2 compares Qixiang's coffee products at different processing stages, showing that the value of the primary coffee beans are far less than that of coffee powders and other coffee products. In recent years, Qixiang has been trying to further promote its brand awareness, like the establishment of its own cafes, increasing the additional value of its coffee products.

Table 2: Unit Price of Qixiang's Coffee Product in 2016

	Common Coffee Beans	Competitive Coffee Beans	Competitive Coffee powders	Coffee drink
Sales unit price (¥) /1 kg	44	160	600	1710

2.4.2 Brand Promotion Strategy

What is the brand marketing strategy? What is the brand marketing strategy of Qixiang?

(1) Theoretical Basis

① Brand

The brand is a set of specific characteristics, benefits and services that the seller provides to the buyer in the long term. It is also an intangible asset that generates premium and added value for its owner. Its carrier can be a name, term, symbol, mark, or combination of values and designs used to distinguish it from other competitors' products or services. The added value of a brand comes from consumers' impression of the carrier.

② Marketing Mix

The marketing mix (also known as the 4 Ps) is a foundation concept in marketing. The marketing mix has been defined as the "set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market. Thus the marketing mix refers to four broad levels of marketing decision, namely: product, price, promotion, and place.

Product refers to what the business offers for sale and may include products or services. Product decisions include the quality, features, benefits, style, design, branding, packaging, services, warranties, guarantees, life cycles, investments and returns.

Price refers to decisions surrounding list pricing, discount pricing, special offer pricing, credit payment or credit terms. Price refers to the total cost to customer to

acquire the product, and may involve both monetary and psychological costs such as the time and effort expended in acquisition.

Place is defined as the direct or indirect channels to market, geographical distribution, territorial coverage, retail outlet, market location, catalogues, inventory, logistics and order fulfillment. Place refers either to the physical location where a business carries out business or the distribution channels used to reach markets. Place may refer to a retail outlet, but increasingly refers to virtual stores such as a mail order catalogue, a telephone call center or a website.

Promotion refers to the marketing communication used to make the offer known to potential customers and persuade them to investigate it further. Promotion elements include advertising, public relations, direct selling and sales promotions. Product Strategy mainly refers to the firm providing a variety of tangible and intangible products to meet the demands of consumer to achieve its marketing goals. It includes the combination and utilization of controllable factors such as variety, specification, style, quality, packaging, characteristics, trademarks, brands and various service measures related to the product.

(2) Case Analysis

The organic and ecological industry chain, the Yunnan Arabica coffee and the halal trademark are Qixiang's eye-catching features which are reflected in the product, pricing, distribution, promotion strategies of Qixiang. This brand marketing strategy has helped the Qixiang to open the domestic coffee market, and is also applicable for new markets along The Belt and Road.

① Product Strategy

Qixiang produces a variety of coffee products including coffee beans, coffee powders, OEM processing coffee, and coffee drinks. The price of these coffee products differs from each other, which meets the needs of different consumers and maximizes Qixiang's profit. It's worth mentioning that Qixiang coffee can also be provided to Muslims as it has obtained the halal certificate.

There are three reasons to explain Qixiang's choice of not producing instant coffee. Firstly, the instant coffee contains too many additives, which runs counter to the healthful and organic concept of Qixiang coffee. Secondly, China's instant coffee market has already reached saturation and the brand competition, especially the

foreign brand competition is fierce. Those famous brands have obtained pricing advantages through large-scale production and global division of labor to, and have good reputation and a relatively fixed client base. But the output of Qixiang coffee is limited and per unit output of high cost in order to ensure product quality, which makes it difficult for Qixiang coffee to win in the instant coffee competition. Thirdly, the demand of the instant coffee drops; the growth rate of instant coffee is less than that of grinding coffee. The report from British Mintel company shows that during the past five years, the share of instant coffee market fell from 80.7% in 2009 to 71.8% in 2014, and will continue to drop. According to Mintel's prediction, by 2019, the share of instant coffee market will drop to 66%. With the consumer's spending habits changing, more and more people prefers coffee beans and drinks at cafes rather than instant coffee.

② Pricing Strategy

In terms of pricing, compared with coffee beans with the inferior quality costing only ten yuan or even less per kilogram, the price of Qixiang coffee is significantly higher. In organic specialty bean industry, Qixiang coffee is more affordable compared with coffee beans which cost hundreds or thousands per kilogram. In summary, Qixiang's products are mid-priced in the coffee market, and is low-priced in the organic specialty coffee industry.

Qixiang produces green coffee beans and baked beans, and beans of the same quality have similar price. Beans are divided into broken beans, commercial beans, Exchange Grade A, Exchange Grade AA with blue label, Exchange Grade AA with black label, Specialty Grade AAA. And the price from 32 to 196 yuan per kilogram can be shown in table 3. Sales of green beans sold by kilogram, baked beans sold by the pound, a pound is equal to 0.907 kilogram.

Table 3 The Prices of Qixiang's Coffee Beans

Grading	Broken beans	Commercial beans	Exchange Grade A	Exchange Grade AA with blue label	Exchange Grade AA with black label	Specialty Grade AAA
Yuan	32	44	52	68	92	196

/1kg

Qixiang produces coffee powders including coffee powders in large package and drip bag coffee. Coffee powders in large package need to be filtered or boiled in coffee machines, so those coffee powders can be sold to cafes or high-end individuals, pricing from 150 yuan to 600 yuan per kilogram. The drip bag coffee is produced by placing ground coffee powders in a small non-woven bag. People only need to brewed it with boiling water. So the drip bag coffee is much more convenient than coffee powders in large package which requires coffee machines. The drip bag coffee of Qixiang is packaged in boxes, divided into red label, blue label and black label, pricing from 460 yuan per kilogram to 720 yuan per kilogram. One box contains 10 small bags, each of which weighs 10 grams. Besides, the OEM service for drip bag coffee OEM is 1.2 yuan per bag.

Table 4: The prices of Qixiang's Drip Bag Coffee

Drip coffee	Red label	Blue label	Black label
Yuan/100g (10 bags)	46	56	72

③ Placing Strategy

The marketing channels of Qixiang are consisted of online and offline channels. Offline marketing channels include selling coffee beans or coffee powder to cafes, participating in various trade fairs for clients, selling coffee drinks at its own cafe inside the university and 4 franchises (Qixiang gives franchise rights to some cafe named Qixiang Coffee, charge franchisees tens of thousands yuan and in return provides them with coffee beans). Online sales are account for 60% of total sales. A half of online sales are from 1688, which is also one third of total sales. At the same time, there are Taobao, WeChat and other online marketing channels. Qixiang

cooperates with ZTO Express and STO Express (two logistics companies in China). In 2015, Qixiang stationed Yimin Food Tesco, a cross-border e-commerce platform, taking the first step of doing business abroad.

④ Promotion Strategy

As for promotion, Qixiang advertises on website, bus, road-side billboards, local media and other channels, focusing on its organic and ecological coffee brand. What's more, Qixiang actively participates in trade fairs, competitions, rating activities and certificate application for business opportunities. Table 5 shows the record of trade fairs, competitions, ratings activities, certificate application participated by Qixiang. In 2015, Qixiang signed an agreement with the Tropical Science Department of Yunnan Agricultural University to be selected as students practice base. In November 2015, Qixiang cooperated with students from Yunnan University of Finance and Economics to open a joint cafe at college. By doing so, Qixiang not only supports entrepreneurial students, but also receives positive judgments from the society.

Table 5: Record of Fairs, Competitions, Rating Activities, Certificate Applications of Qixiang

Time	Record
Nov. 2014	Qixiang planting base was awarded as the "national special industry demonstration base" by the National Green Industry Promotion Committee
Jan. 2015	Qixiang obtained the "qualification certificate of coffee beans" in the third Pu'er green coffee bean competition, in line with SACC specialty grading.
2 nd Mar. 2015	Qixiang gained the "conversion organic" certificate from Beijing Zhongan Authentication center, with the certificate number of 028OP1500057.
12 th Jun. 2015	Qixiang participated in the South Asia Expo and the 23 rd Kunming Import and Trade Fair.
12 th Sep. 2015	Qixiang participated in the China - Arab Expo.

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6 th Nov. 2015	Qixiang coffee participated in the China International Exhibition, and won the Gold Award of " organic and green food Expo" in (Beijing).
Jan. 2016	Pu'er Xinfeng Agricultural Co., Ltd. was identified as "Middle and Small High-tech Company in Yunnan Province " with the identification number of zxr2015030358.
Oct. 2016	Qixiang successfully passed the assessment from General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China(AQSIQ), and was given "Protected Eco-origin Product by China" certification, becoming the first of Chinese coffee company to obtain this certification.

In terms of price promotions, Qixiang gives bulk purchasing and repurchasing customers discounts and free samples to increase brand loyalty of customers (see Table 6 and Table 7).

Table 6: Wholesale Prices of Qixiang's Coffee Beans

Grading	Broken beans	Com merci al beans	Excha nge Grade A	Exchange Grade AA with blue label	Exchange Grade AA with black label	Specia lty Grade AAA
Retail:Yuan/kg	32	44	52	68	92	196
Wholesale: Yuan/kg	28	40	40	60	68	156

Table 7: Wholesale Prices of Qixiang's Drip Bag Coffee

Drip coffee	Red label	Blue label	Black label
Yuan/100g (10 bags)	46	56	72
Wholesale: Yuan/100g (10 bags)	24	26	36

2.4.3 International Strategy

What are global strategy choices? What can a company do to carry out the international management? And what are Qixiang's international management conditions?

(1) Theoretical Basis

① Global Strategy Choice

The Integration-Responsiveness Framework is the most popular framework for studying international strategy in multinational firms. It is proposed in the 1980s, exploring the impact of the external environment on the evolution of TNCs. The IR framework shows that multinational companies often face two types of pressure when undertaking business activities: global integration pressure and local response pressure. The integration of the international market and the pursuit of producing efficiently have contributed to the global integration of creative activities. On the one hand, consumers pursue differentiated products. On the other hand, providing standardized products is conducive for enterprises to share fixed costs and achieve economies of scale, which can reduce the cost of producing. Global integration pressure comes from the pressure of reducing costs. The pressure for homogeneous goods industry to reduce the cost of producing is very large. As these products often meet the general needs of different regions in which consumers' taste and preferences are very similar. Producers expand the scale of production in order to reduce costs and regard low prices as competitiveness. The sources of local response pressure are multifaceted, which include the consumers' different taste and preferences, the differences between infrastructure and traditional practices, the distribution channel differences and the requirements of the host Government.

The IR framework reflects the industry situation shows what strategy a company should choose. According to the differences between the global integration pressure and the local response pressure, the available strategies are: international strategy; global standardization strategy; localization strategy and transnational strategy (see figure 7).

① International strategy

Companies that adopt international strategies are often faced with lower global integration pressure and lower local response pressure. They produce products for the domestic market, and then change their products to the rest of the world. These companies often provide products that meet the general needs, without strong competitors or cost reduction pressure.

② Global standardization strategy

Companies that adopt a global standardization strategy emphasize a reduction in cost through economies of scale, learning effects, and cost savings to increase profitability, which is a global low-cost strategy in nature. This strategy is suitable when global integration pressure is high while local response pressure is low.

③ Localization strategy

Localization strategy emphasizes that companies in different countries can provide consumers with the goods that satisfy their tastes and preferences by changing the company's products or services in order to increase profits. When market preferences of consumers in different regions are very different and the pressure of cost reduction is small, companies can consider taking this strategy.

④ Transactional strategy

Enterprises taking cross-border strategy are trying to achieve low-cost advantage and product differentiation advantages and transfer core competencies. Through economies of scale and learning effects they can obtain low cost; through providing differentiated products to different markets they can deal with local differences; through the innovation between the subsidiaries in the company's global operations network they can transfer core competitiveness.



Figure 7: Global Strategy

② International Management

International management refers to the activity that enterprises take global strategy and make extensive use of domestic and foreign resources, set up institutions abroad and engaged in one or several economic areas. There are two main models Chinese enterprises can adopt to enter the international market: Gradual growth model and leap-forward model.

Gradual growth model refers to a long process that the enterprises doing business from domestic to foreign countries. The expansion of most of the enterprises follows the general rule of "from the near to the far, from the familiar to the unfamiliar". The geographical order of market expansion is usually the local market - the regional market - the national market - overseas neighboring markets - the global market.

The representative theory of the transnational business process research is the internationalization model of Uppsala (see figure 8 and 9). The model emphasizes that enterprises should continue to acquire, integrate and utilize the relevant knowledge of foreign markets in the process of transnational operation so that enterprises can enter into the new market of "psychological distance". The model shows that transnational operation is a gradual growth process and its process can be divided into five stages representing the continuous improvement of transnational business. At the first stage, companies do not export; at the second stage companies export occasionally and infrequently; at the third stage, companies export through an independent agency frequently; at the fourth stage, the enterprise establishes their own overseas sales subsidiaries; at the last stage, enterprises have overseas production entities and get engaged in overseas production.

The leap-forward model refers to the process of multinational operation under permitted conditions. Companies may directly enter into the advanced stage at which they directly invest into the international market in order to achieve the growth of transnational business. Qixiang is taking the Gradual growth model and is currently involved in the international trade stage.

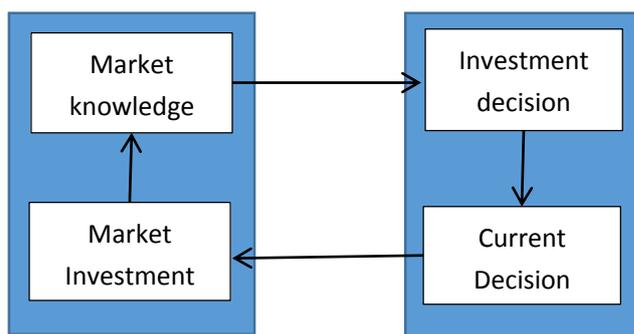


Figure 8: Internationalization Model of Uppsala

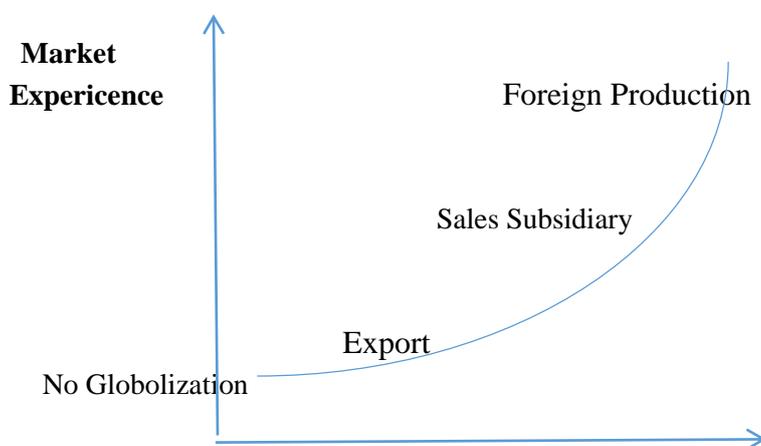


Figure 9: Process of Uppsala Model

(2) Case Analysis

① Global Strategic Options

In the context of The Belt and Road Initiative, if Qixiang wants to carry out international business, it should adopt an international strategy first. The main products for Qixiang to export are organic coffee beans and organic coffee powders. There are a number of large coffee enterprises in coffee markets, but in organic coffee industry, there are still no leading enterprises. So Qixiang is faced with low global integration and low local response pressure. It can focus on product development functions in Yunnan, China, and then change the product according to demands of other regions (in packaging, production specifications, etc.), and then it can carry out manufacturing, selling, marketing and other activities in other countries.

② International Management Conditions

If the local enterprises want to carry out international operations, generally several basic requirements should be met. Firstly, the company's products or services must have the potential of becoming the core competitiveness of enterprises; secondly, the enterprise is willing to engage in international business; thirdly, the entrepreneur has an international perspective; last but not least, the company should establish an international strategy.

Firstly, the production of Pu'er organic and ecological coffee and its original eco-organic industry chain are Qixiang's advantages. Pu'er coffee has good reputation at home and abroad. Product processing, packaging and other processes all need organic certification, which adds the cost of farmers. While most farmers in Yunnan do not want or cannot afford certification fees, Qixiang's organic coffee certification is its stepping-stone for entering into the international high-quality coffee market. At the same time, unlike other companies that only grow or purchase coffee, Qixiang has a complete chain of producing, processing and selling. It can maintain the quality of the final product while maintaining high efficiency at the same time.

Secondly, Qixiang is willing to engage in international business. Vision of Qixiang is "firstly focusing on the market in Pu'er, then going out of Yunnan, next radiating the domestic market, and finally bracing international market". 2015 is the the first year to implement The Belt and Road Initiative, and in order to catch the international express, Qixiang joined the Yunnan local cross-border e-commerce platform Shiyigou, trying to use the business platform to sell products abroad.

Thirdly, Lanjun Sa, the leader of Qixiang, has an international perspective. Before the introduction of The Belt and Road Initiative, Mr. Sa has been aware that modern people have higher demands on high quality food after meeting basic needs, but most agricultural products have low degree of distinction. If Qixiang puts "organic and ecological coffee" as its own product label, it will be able to enhance brand recognition of Qixiang and seize the high-end consumer groups who have desire for healthful and safe products. However, the current high-end consumers market in China is not big enough. According to Li Jiazhen and other scholars in the "Pu'er City organic coffee development SWOT analysis", it shows that 83.2% of consumers in Yunnan do not know what organic coffee is, and the ordinary consumers refuse to accept the high prices of organic coffee. Therefore, opening up the foreign market has become another way.

At the same time, Qixiang is not a large company, the overall production scale is limited, so its current international development strategy is using organic coffee certification as its unique advantage, and putting coffee beans and coffee powders as the main export products into Central Asia and Europe. Qixiang will Sell products at first, and if it can successfully open the market, then it would consider to cooperate with local companies abroad to broaden sales channels and increase brand awareness. Besides, Qixiang is aimed at using reputation gained from foreign countries to attract domestic buyers and increase domestic sales.

2.4.4 The Feasibility Analysis for Qixiang to Export to European and Central Asian Markets

Under the influence of "The Belt and Road Initiative", Qixiang Coffee decided to export products to European market and regard the Central Asian market as a potential market. Please use theoretical knowledge to analyze whether its developmental strategy is feasible?

(1) Theoretical Basis

The 3C's Model, which is a business model, is proposed by Kenichi Ohmae, a leader in strategic research in Japan. It rose that there are three necessary key factors contributing to success:

- A. The Corporation
- B. The Customer
- C. The Competition

Figure 10 shows the combination of 3C's Model and the general analysis framework of this part. A successful company does not have to excel in every function. If it can gain a decisive edge in one key function, it will eventually be able to improve its other functions which are now on an average level. The second key factor - the customer, is the foundation of any strategy according to Ohmae. Only through seizing the needs of customers, can a company defeat its rivals. If the customers' demands differ from what the company can provide, the company will encounter poor sales. Also, there is a need to consider the third key factor - the competition. The competing strategy of the enterprise can be achieved by pursuing

competitive advantages in functional areas such as procurement, design, manufacturing, sales and service. In conclusion, a good strategy model can help the company to coordinate relationships between the three parties and predict the future development and so as to grasp opportunities in the market.

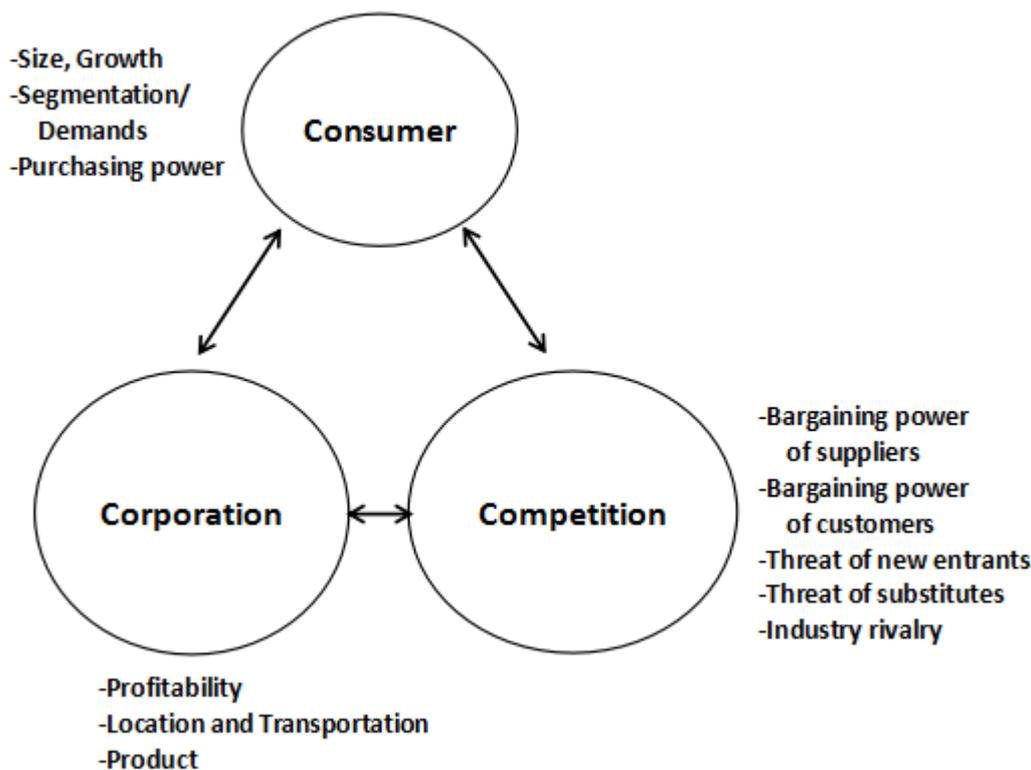


Figure 10: Framework of 3C's model

Michael Porter's Five Forces Model was proposed in the early 1980s. It is a framework for analyzing the levels of competition within an industry and business strategy development. It studies five forces that determine the competitive intensity and the attractiveness of an industry. The five forces are: the bargaining power of suppliers, the bargaining power of customers, the threat of new entrants, the threat of substitutes and the industry rivalry.

(2) Case Analysis

Pu'er Xinfeng Agricultural Development Co., Ltd is a diversified agricultural company running coffee planting, processing, and selling business. In August 2009, it obtained 3900 mu (260 acres) of land use rights, of which the term was 50 years. After 5 years' construction and cultivation, it has already grown 2600 mu (173.33

acres) coffee trees. The company is currently in its early stage of management and brand promotion, and hasn't recouped its investment yet. Currently, it focuses on the domestic market and has just begun to participate in export trade. But with the sales stabilizing and the profit growing, the company is no longer satisfied with present achievement. International operation will no longer be Qixiang's dream. The company is no longer satisfied with present achievements and decides internationalization as its next crucial step to gain competitive advantages and new markets. What's more, it will be a strategic step for Qixiang to gain more competitive advantages.

On March 28, 2015, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce jointly issued the *"Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road"*. Agricultural cooperation is a focus in The Belt and Road Initiative. China's Ministry of Agriculture is taking the lead in formulating the "Vision and Actions on Agricultural Cooperation under the Framework of The Belt and Road Initiative", which provides policy supports for agricultural development (especially for ecological agricultural development) for many countries along the way.

Taking Qixiang's current situation, target exporting groups, exporting competitors into account, this analysis would reveal that it is feasible for the company to export to the European market, and to regard the Central Asia as a potential market under the influence of The Belt and Road Initiative.

① Analysis of the Corporation

i. Profitability Analysis

Qixiang Coffee is operating in good condition and having strong profitability, which can support the company to export overseas. In 2016, sales of Qixiang Coffee grew month by month (As shown in Figure 11), mostly benefited from the increase of brand awareness, expansion of sales channels, and the extension of value chain(such as OEM processing business and cafes). The initial investment of Qixiang Coffee is 20 million yuan, and the land usage term is 50 years. Thus there is a 0.4 million fixed cost every year. In 2016, the operating cost and the fixed cost adds up to 1.3 million yuan, which is the total cost of 2016. The income is 4.8 million yuan and the profit of 2016 is 3.5 million yuan. It is expected that the Qixiang can recover the total investment in 2019 and achieve positive net profit. On July 23, 2015, Pu'er Xinfeng Agricultural Development Co., Ltd., which owns Qixiang Coffee and regard Qixiang

Coffee as its core business, was successfully listed on Shanghai Stock Exchange. Therefore, Qixiang Coffee was then expected to obtain equity financing and debt financing and the shares of Qixiang was expected to get the premium. It will increase employee incentives and shareholder added-value and finally raise Qixiang Coffee's reputation as well as its profitability.

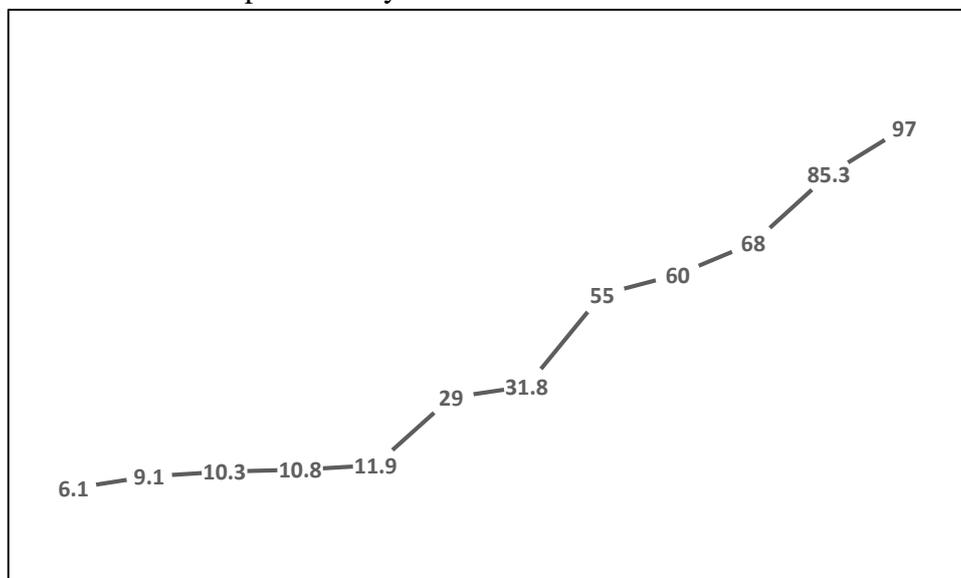


Figure 11: Monthly Sales of Qixiang Coffee in 2016 (Million Yuan)

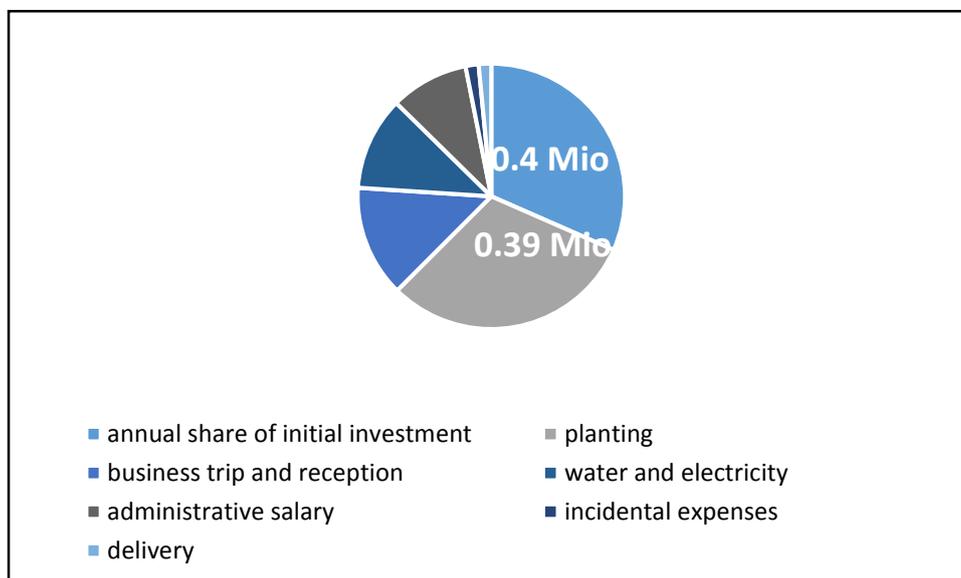


Figure 12: Proportion of Cost of Qixiang Coffee in 2016

ii. Analysis of Location and Transportation Condition

Yunnan is in the southern part of ancient Silk Road, near the border of Southeast Asia, South Asia and Central Asia, and is close to the Pacific Ocean and the Indian Ocean. Its unique geographical advantage gives it strategic importance in The Belt

and Road Initiative. Qixiang Coffee is located by the side of 214 national highway, Manzhongtian Village, Simao District, Pu'er City, Yunnan Province, with convenient transportation.

Soon after the implementation of The Belt and Road Initiative, the government invested heavily on the construction of the Kunming-Europe CHINARAILWAY Express in order to build a global coffee warehousing and trading center in Yunnan. It starts from Kunming, Yunnan, to the west of Alataw Pass, Central Asia, and finally arriving in Europe. (As is shown in Figure 13) The whole trip only takes 15 days, which largely reduces the cost of transportation. In the past, coffee beans can only be shipped to Europe. This trip at least took 1 month on the way and more than 3 months for enterprises and customers to go through the complete business process, including receiving orders from the customers, shipping the coffee beans, and waiting for the reception of products and payment. The traditional ocean shipping process resulted in more than cash flow difficulties. In contrast, Kunming-Europe CHINARAILWAY Express realizes cash flow in half a month.

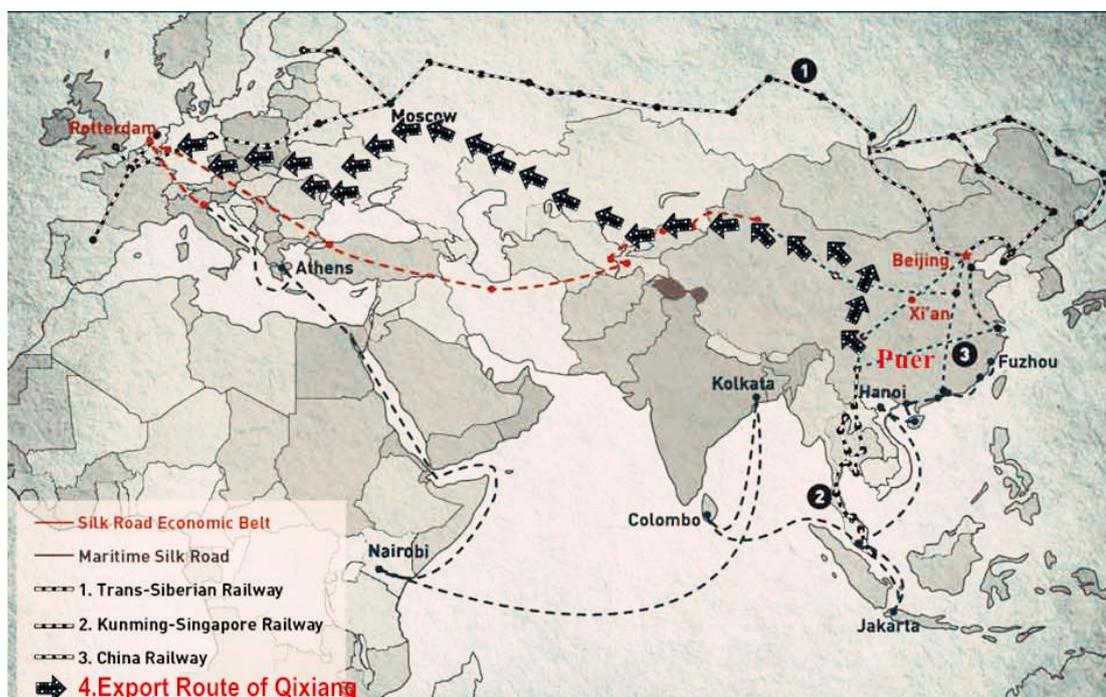


Figure 13: Export Route of Qixiang Coffee

① Analysis of Products

The products of Qixiang Coffee include self-planted coffee beans, self-processed coffee powder, OEM coffee, coffee drinks in cafes. However, the profit margin of

coffee powder is much higher than that of coffee beans. So it will be better for Qixiang to export coffee powder to European and Central Asian markets, promoting its organic, healthful, high quality, and delicious features, to meet the needs of consumers in Europe and Central Asia. At the same time, with the help of The Belt and Road Initiative, the Yunnan government is intended to build a "Yunnan - Laos - Vietnam" Southeast Asian coffee industry circle. Qixiang Coffee can take this opportunity to introduce advanced technology and talents from Southeast Asia, where people have rich coffee production and selling experiences.

② Analysis of Target Customers

Europe has the largest consumption of coffee per capita in the world and a very long coffee drinking culture. It has long been the largest importer of coffee beans and baked coffee products. According to the survey from the World Coffee Organization, Europe's annual consumption of coffee beans hovered around 300 million tons from 2012 to 2016. While Europe is not on the Coffee Belt, its import demand for coffee beans is huge. Finland, Austria, Sweden and Germany are in the top four of per capita coffee consumption in Europe. Since the terminal of Kunming-Europe CHINARAILWAY Express is Hamburg, Germany, coffee beans and products of Yunnan can be sold directly in Germany.

In Europe, the target consumer group of coffee is large with strong purchasing power, covering all ages. There are mainly four types of coffee in European market, including instant coffee, brewed ground coffee powder, capsulized coffee and grinding coffee. The competitions between low-end coffee producers are fierce which are labeled as 1-3 euros / 10 bags in every supermarket. In European countries, the average selling price of processed coffee products is \$ 11.9 per kilogram. However, the import price of these coffee beans is only \$ 2.6 per kilogram. It is clear the price of processed coffee products is 5 times that of green coffee beans. Currently, Qixiang can offer drip bag coffee and specialty coffee beans to the market. Qixiang should adhere to its organic and ecological coffee strategy which enables them to avoid low-price competition in the European market. Therefore, Qixiang can focus on exporting finished drip bag coffee, which will make the greatest marginal profit and exactly meets European consumers' demand for organic and eco-friendly food.

The Central Asian market is a potential coffee consuming market. People in Central Asian are most Muslims, among whom the alcohol is forbidden while coffee

is considered an acceptable drink. So coffee is prevalent in Central Asia. Since most of the Central Asian countries do not produce coffee because of the geographical limitation, it is necessary for them to import a large amount of coffee beans and coffee products. Coffee producers from Southeast Asia are the largest exporters of the Central Asian for their low price and delicious taste. In the past, the transportation process costs a lot since their coffee products have to be transported to Middle East ports by ship and then transferred to the Central Asian market by land. Consumer groups in Central Asia are mainly the youth. Compared with the European consumers, the purchasing power of Central Asian consumers is weak, but has larger room for growth. Similarly, Qixiang should also avoid low-price competition in the Central Asian market and target at high-end buyers according to its organic and ecological strategy. Since Mr. Sa was born in a Muslim family and also obtained a Islamism halal certificate for Qixiang Coffee, Qixiang Coffee can get closer to Central Asian consumers psychologically and win the identity from local consumers and distributors. Furthermore, it is easier for the Central Asian distributors to communicate and make business negotiations with a Chinese CEO who has the same belief with them.

③ Competition Analysis

Competition Analysis of Coffee Industry (Porter's Five Forces Model)

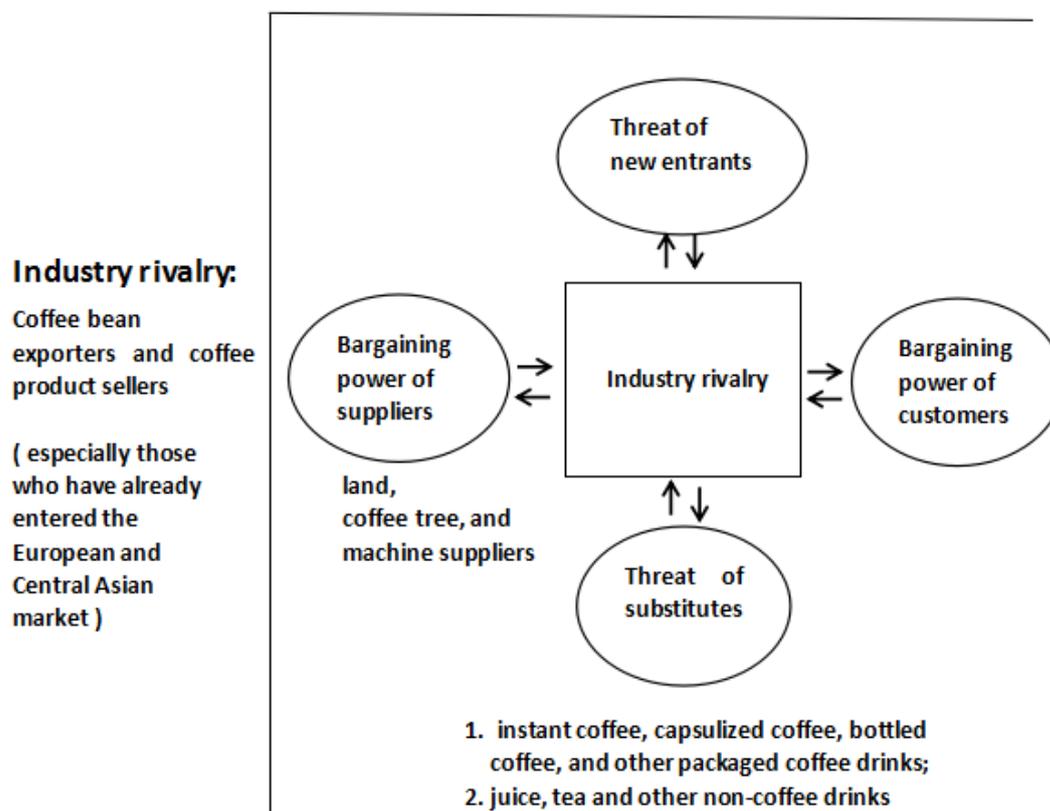


Figure 14: Competition Analysis of Coffee Industry

If Qixiang Coffee exports coffee to Europe and Central Asia, its biggest rivals will be coffee exporters from South America, Southeast Asia, Africa and other countries on the Coffee Belt, including Brazil, Indonesia, Ethiopia, the Philippines, Mexico, Vietnam, India, Colombia and so on. Through the analysis of the five forces of coffee industry (see figure 14), it is clear that although Qixiang Coffee has limitations in some aspects, in general, there is a certain profit potential in the European and Central Asian markets for Qixiang Coffee. And it is feasible for Qixiang Coffee to export in Europe and Central Asia.

i. The Bargaining Power of Suppliers

Since Qixiang Coffee has a complete industry chain consisting growth, processing and sale. So its suppliers include not only the land providers, but the coffee tree and machine suppliers. Among them, the land supplier is the government who monopolizes the market and thus has a strong bargaining power. But as Qixiang has

already gained a land use right of 50 years, Qixiang can hardly be affected by the land supplier's strong bargaining power for a long time. For Qixiang, there are many potential coffee seed providers and machine suppliers and coffee machine has a high degree of standardization. Consequently, Qixiang has the initiative since the bargaining power of suppliers is not strong.

ii. The bargaining power of customers

As a large amount of enterprises export high-quality and diversified coffee to the European market and the coffee consumption has reached saturation, consumption growth slowed down, only to maintain about 10%. Therefore, Coffee buyers in Europe have strong bargaining power. Owing to Qixiang's pricing strategy, its coffee products are much cheaper than other organic coffee sellers', so it still has obvious price advantages when exporting to the European market. In contrast, there are fewer coffee exporters in the Central Asian market, so the bargaining power of coffee buyers will be weaker. If the bargaining power of a company is determined by many factors, the bargaining power of customers will be weak. As the bargaining power of coffee buyers is determined by too many factors like brand, taste, planting and processing conditions, so the bargaining power of coffee buyers will be reduced.

iii. The threat of new entrants

The main threat from the new entrants is the entry of other coffee brands. For the European market, due to the relatively saturated coffee market and fierce price competition, sellers of ordinary coffee beans would hardly rush in due to the lower profit margins. But specialty coffee enterprises such as Qixiang Coffee may enter and compete with other high-priced specialty coffee companies. Therefore, the volume of potential competitors in European market is large. On the contrary, the fast-growing Central Asian market is attractive for a lot of coffee exporters. But the instability of the political, economic environment, the landlocked location of Central Asia as well as the unique social culture and religious beliefs would be entrance barriers to new firms.

For Qixiang, thanks to the unique geographic location, transportation and favorable policies carried by The Belt and Road Initiative, the trade environment between China and Central Asia is greatly eased, which also create an opportunity for Qixiang's entrance. At the same time, in view of the strict requirements on geographical environment for coffee planting, the huge time cost (coffee tree needs 3 to 5 years of cultivation) and the great cost of initial investment (land, coffee trees,

machinery and labor costs investment), the new entrants (coffee maker) can be limited to a certain scale in the near future.

iv. The Threat of Substitutes

In terms of the threat of substitutes, Qixiang Coffee refuses to produce instant coffee because of its organic and ecological production concept. Its coffee products only cover self-planted coffee beans and self-processed coffee powder or other forms of products.

So the substitutes are divided into two categories. Substitutes in the first category are instant coffee, capsulized coffee, bottled coffee, and other packaged coffee drinks. Substitutes in the second category are juice, tea and other non-coffee drinks. The first category, which can be regarded as other coffee products will certainly cause some consumption reductions. For the second category that is non-coffee drinks, first of all, it has little conflict with coffee consumption, because it has already formed relatively fixed consumer groups and consumption scenarios. Secondly, different consumers have different taste preferences, people who want to drink coffee will not easily turn to other drinks and therefore its impact on Qixiang coffee is not great.

v. The Threat of The Industry Rivalry

The biggest challenge of Qixiang comes from the industry rivalry, including threat from other coffee bean exporters and coffee product sellers in Europe and Central Asia.

Most of coffee beans exporters are from developing countries which have great coffee varieties and ideal geographical conditions for growing coffee. Several of those exporters have adopted large-scale planting, of which per unit area yield costs less than Qixiang. In addition, they have a stable customer base and have already been known to the local market. Moreover, there are a huge number of local European coffee companies. They sell specify coffee products in high-end restaurants or cheap capsulized coffee in the supermarket, covering almost all of consumers' need. They are Costa Coffee from British, Illy and Lavazza from Italy, Tchibo and Dallmayr (specialty coffee company founded in 1700) from Germany, Nestle from Switzerland and so on. In Central Asia, consumers prefer local companies due to the common cultural and religious traditions, drinking habits and other factors.

In order to be a successor in the fierce competition, Qixiang must make full use of its five advantages. The first advantage is its transport advantage, using the Kunming-Europe CHINARAILWAY Express to reduce the cost of transportation.

The second advantage is The Belt and Road Initiative and other preferential national policies as well as supports from Yunnan Inspection and Quarantine Bureau. The third advantage is its organic and ecological industry chain together with its brand. The fourth advantage is its willingness to introduce advanced coffee planting, picking and processing technology which would lead to high yield and high quality coffee and its willingness to establish a technical quality system and an independent pricing system in line with international standards. The fifth advantage is the halal certificate which makes it possible to enter Central Asia. The Belt and Road Initiative covers nearly 30 Islamic countries, including Iran, Iraq and Pakistan and so on. Those Islamic countries have unique eating and drinking habits. They only eat halal food. Qixiang Coffee has obtained an Islamism halal certificate from the authority in Pu'er, favorable act to open the Islamic countries market. Driven by The Belt and Road Initiative, Qixiang Coffee must seize the opportunity, focus on the potential market, enhance the brand, and thus make itself a successful company.

3 The Background Information

3.1 Introduction of the Belt and Road Initiative

2100 years ago, Zhang Qian had twice visited the Western Regions and his route, stretching from the east to west and connecting the Europe and Asia, is now known as the "Silk Road". The "Silk Road" and "Maritime Silk Road" which arisen from Qin and Han Dynasties, had offered a platform for people in Ancient China and Eurasian countries to trade and communicate, promoting civilization exchanges and friendly communication between the East and the West. After 2100 years, in order to strengthen regional cooperation and promote world economic development, President Xi Jinping put forward the Belt and Road strategic concept in 2013 during the visit to Central Asia and Southeast Asian countries while the global economy is slowly recovering. The Belt and Road refers to the Silk Road economic zone and the 21st century Maritime Silk Road. The government had released a document named "The vision and action to promote the construction of the Silk Road economic zone and the 21st century Maritime Silk Road" in 2015 to make a concrete guidance of the implementation of this strategic policy.

The purpose of putting forward the Belt and Road Initiative is to make full use of the bilateral and multilateral mechanisms between China and related countries, and to take advantages of the existing and effective regional cooperation platform. The Belt and Road Initiative aims at recording the historical symbols of the ancient Silk Road under the method of "peaceful development" so to develop the economic cooperative partnership with countries along the Belt and Road and create interests for the community.

The scope the Belt and Road Initiative covers is so wide that it runs through the Asian-African-European continents. One end is the active developing East-Asian Economic Circle, and the other end is the developed and mature European Economic circle. The development of the relationships between those countries has enormous potential. The main scope of The "Silk Road Economic Zone" contains China, Central Asia, Russia, Europe (The Baltic Sea).The "Silk Road Economic Zone" and "Maritime Silk Road Economic Zone" involve a total of 65 countries and regions, including 11 countries from Asia, 18 countries from Western Asia, 8 countries from South Asia, 5 countries from Central Asia, 7 Countries from CIS and 16 countries from Central and Eastern Europe.

3.2 Yunnan's strategic role in national coffee industry development

Yunnan, surrounded by East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and the Atlantic and Indian Ocean, is located in the ancient southern Silk Road. Its unique location advantages make it a very important province in the Belt and Road Initiative. As far as the location, Yunnan is in the cross position of the Silk Road economic zone and the 21st century Maritime Silk Road. In addition, Yunnan is the only province that can both connect Southeast Asia and South Asia at the same time as well as the Europe and Africa through the Middle East. Yunnan is the geographic center of Asia and Kunming, the capital of Yunnan, is the center of the 5 hour aviation circle. Also, Kunming is the junction of new Eurasian Continental Bridge which traverses the north and the south, the east and west.

With the assistance of the unique location advantage and the Belt and Road Initiative, the development of the local coffee industry, particularly in Pu'er City, is increasingly more quickly than before. Pu'er, is not only known as the "Chinese tea city", but also the "China's coffee capital", is greatly influenced by its coffee

industry. "Coffee" has become one of the characteristics of Pu'er plateau agriculture and an important pillar industry in the construction of national green economic demonstration area. The cultivation of Pu'er coffee began in the late 19th century. In 1988, industrialization of agriculture development in Yunnan province had started. In recent years, the *Coffea Arabica* specie in Pu'er was classified as the "Top Quality Product" by the international coffee organization for its excellent intrinsic quality.

The implementation of the Belt and Road Initiative offers good opportunities for the development of Yunnan coffee industry. As China's largest coffee production areas, the Yunnan government hopes that it can take good advantage of the Belt and Road Initiative to break the existing pattern of coffee cultivation and production from the perspective of regional layout. According its blueprint, excellent coffee enterprises in Yunnan will join together to create the great image of 'Yunnan coffee' through the investment from the government.

The Belt and Road Initiative will endow Yunnan coffee industry the following opportunities.

① In order to make full use of the policy, the Yunnan government has taken the advantages of its superior geographical advantages (bordering on Burma, Laos and Vietnam) to sign an alternative coffee planting agreement with the Laos government. This agreement involves the cultivation of coffee trees and the establishment of primary process facilities, aiming at dealing with the problems of coffee cultivation and processing technology.

② Through coffee business, the Yunnan government strives to build the Southeast Asian coffee industry circle which is mainly consisting of Yunnan, Laos and Vietnam, impacting on the neighboring countries like Kampuchea, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Philippines.

③ The construction of Kunming-Europe CHINARAILWAY Express makes it possible for Yunnan coffee more available to the Central Asia and Europe.

3.3 Kunming-Europe CHINARAILWAY Express

Kunming-Europe CHINARAILWAY Express is an international coffee freight train built by Kunming Railway Bureau and Dehong Hougu Coffee Co., Ltd. This train passes by some major domestic cities such as Chengdu, Baoji, Lanzhou, Alataw Pass, and some foreign countries, such as Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus,

Poland, Germany and ultimately reached Rotterdam, Holland as shown in Table 8. The operational process of this railway is relatively simple, in which Kunming Railway Bureau is responsible for packing, the coffee enterprises in Yunnan province for providing supply, and the branch of China Railway Container Co., Ltd in Kunming for the transport.

In the past, Yunnan coffee can be transported only by sea, through the Malacca Strait and the Mediterranean, in order to reach the Europe. It takes nearly 30 days to reach the Europe, and may takes more than 40days in bad weather conditions. However, with the assistance of Kunming-Europe CHINARAILWAY Express, since July, 2015, commodities can be transported from Yunnan to Central Asia and Europe in merely 15 days.

Table 8: the Details of "Yunnan—Xinjiang—Europe" Kunming - Europe Block Train

Appellation	Point of origin	Route	Mileage (km)	Runtime (day)
"Yunnan—Xinjiang—Europe" Kunming - Europe block train	Wangjiaying Railway Container Center Station in Kunming (Yunnan)	Wangjiaying Railway Container Center Station in Kunming (Yunnan)→Chengdu (Sichuan) → Baoji (Shaanxi) → Lanzhou (Gansu) → Urumqi (Xinjiang) → Alashankou → Dorschke (Kazakh) → Astana (Kazakh) → Petro Pavlovsk (Russia) → Yakarta (Russia) → Moscow (Russia) → Minsk (Belarus) → Brest (Belarus) → Warsaw (Poland) → Rhodes (Poland) → Hamburg (Germany) → Rotterdam (Netherlands)	10956	12-14

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