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Vietnamese enterprises raise standards to expand export markets

Despite exporting to the US, Europe and other markets, the Viet Enterprise Investment and Trade Promotion Company in Ho Chi Minh City continues to seek new destinations for Vietnamese agricultural products.

Vietnamese enterprises are raising product quality, obtaining international certifications and adopting greener production practices to meet increasingly stringent export requirements and expand their global market reach.

Proactively raising standards

Despite exporting to the US, Europe and other markets, the Viet Enterprise Investment and Trade Promotion Company in Ho Chi Minh City continues to seek new destinations for Vietnamese agricultural products.

Pham The Hoang, assistant to the company's general director, said its products meet US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requirements, with about 50 product codes available across all 50 US states. However, entering markets with different consumer preferences and regulations requires additional certifications, including Halal where applicable.

The Khanh Lam Agriculture and Production Cooperative in Hanoi is targeting the Halal market for its vegetable oils. Its representative Phung Thi Xuan said the cooperative prioritises raw material quality and production processes. Its peanut, sesame and soybean oils have obtained Halal certification, and export procedures are being finalised.

Market expansion is also driving efforts to improve product quality at Ho Chi Minh City-based Bong Lua Food, which produces pasta, noodles and rice vermicelli from white and brown rice, purple sweet potatoes and vegetables. Its products are exported to the US, Australia, Singapore, Cambodia and Taiwan (China), mainly through retail chains, restaurants, hotels and food service providers. The company is exploring opportunities in Halal markets, particularly the United Arab Emirates and Malaysia.

Le Hoang Lan, a company representative, said businesses must comply with Halal regulations and maintain consistent product quality to tap these markets. Tran Van Tan Cuong, CEO of the Vietnam National Halal Company and co-founder of Vietnam Halal Mart JSC, said his company connects Vietnamese enterprises with Halal markets, including Malaysia and the Middle East. Besides supporting Vietnamese firms at overseas trade fairs, the company invites foreign partners to Vietnam to inspect products, assess production capacity and visit factories, enabling buyers to evaluate suppliers before establishing export partnerships, he stated.

Building capacity for sustainable growth

Beyond certifications, green production is becoming increasingly important to export competitiveness.

Le Van Danh, deputy director of the Ho Chi Minh City Department of Industry and Trade, said environmental, sustainability and green export standards had become core requirements of international trade. The European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards are pushing businesses to innovate and pursue higher-value growth.

Enterprises must review their entire production processes, from raw materials and energy consumption to data management and emissions, rather than focusing solely on finished products.

Lam Thuy Ai, chairwoman of the Mekong Business Club in Ho Chi Minh City, said some businesses had begun investing in green production to meet export requirements. New enterprises can reduce future adjustment costs by incorporating green standards into factory design and production processes from the outset.

For established factories, however, the transition requires careful planning, financing and investment in production lines and emissions reduction. Businesses should adopt phased roadmaps suited to their financial capacity while improving operations and maintaining existing certifications, she said.
Alberto Vettoretti, CEO of Ascentium for ASEAN and Hong Kong (China), advised businesses to collect data, assess operations and identify areas for improvement to calculate potential returns and choose appropriate solutions. He recommended gaining experience in Asian markets before targeting more demanding destinations such as the EU.

Huynh Dinh Thai Linh, general director of WTC Becamex Co., Ltd., similarly advised businesses to start with their strongest product lines, fulfil small orders to gain experience and gradually expand supply capacity.

By combining quality products, appropriate certifications and environmental compliance, Vietnamese enterprises can strengthen competitiveness, integrate more deeply into global supply chains and lay the groundwork for sustainable export growth./. VNA

Source: https://vietnamnet.vn/en/vietnamese-enterprises-raise-standards-to-expand-export-markets-2569679.html