

Research Article

Determinants of Consumer Engagement and Acceptance of Premium Beef in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand

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Abstract

This research aimed to examine the determinants of consumer engagement and acceptance of premium beef in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand, focusing on perceptual factors including brand reputation, product quality, and production origin. A quantitative research approach was employed using an online questionnaire. The sample consisted of 400 consumers who had purchased or consumed premium beef products in the province. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics, including Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Multiple Regression Analysis. The results revealed that consumers demonstrated high levels of perception, acceptance, and engagement across all factors.

Perception of production origin received the highest mean score, followed by brand reputation and quality. Regression analysis indicated that perceptions of quality and production origin had a statistically significant positive influence on consumer acceptance, with quality being the strongest predictor. Additionally, brand reputation, quality, and production origin all significantly influenced consumer engagement, with quality again exerting the greatest effect. The findings suggest that emphasizing product quality and transparent production origin is essential for enhancing consumer acceptance and engagement. These insights provide valuable implications for entrepreneurs, farmers, and policymakers in strengthening Thailand's premium beef industry.

Keywords: Consumer Engagement, Consumer Perception, Premium Beef, Product Quality, Production Origin

Introduction

The global agri-food market has experienced a substantial transformation driven by increasing consumer awareness of health, food safety, and sustainability. In recent years, consumers have shown a growing preference for high-quality meat products that not only deliver superior sensory attributes but also originate from transparent, ethical, and environmentally responsible production systems. Beef, as one of the most widely consumed animal protein sources worldwide, has been significantly affected by this shift, particularly in the premium and high-quality segments [1,2]. Consumer perception plays a critical role in shaping acceptance and engagement with premium food products.

Prior studies indicate that perceived quality, brand reputation, and production origin are among the most influential factors

affecting consumers' purchasing decisions and post-purchase behaviors, including loyalty and word-of-mouth communication [3,4]. In the context of beef consumption, quality perception often encompasses tenderness, marbling, flavor, and safety, while production origin reflects trust in farming practices, traceability, and regional credibility [5]. These perceptual cues serve as signals that reduce information asymmetry and perceived risk, particularly in high-involvement food products such as premium beef [6].

Thailand has witnessed a steady increase in demand for high-quality and premium beef products, influenced by changing lifestyles, rising income levels, and the expansion of modern retail and online distribution channels. Although imported beef from countries such as Japan, Australia, and New Zealand continues to dominate the premium market, domestic high-

quality beef production has gained increasing attention. Government initiatives and technological advancements have supported Thai farmers in improving breeding, feeding systems, and farm standards, including Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and halal certification, to enhance competitiveness and consumer trust [7].

Nakhon Ratchasima Province represents one of Thailand's most important hubs for high-quality beef production due to its favorable geography, availability of feed resources, and the presence of advanced breeding programs such as Korat Wagyu and Lam Takhong Black cattle. These local breeds have been developed through crossbreeding and biotechnology-driven programs, resulting in improved marbling, tenderness, and nutritional value comparable to imported premium beef. Despite this potential, consumer acceptance and active engagement in supporting domestically produced high-quality beef remain uneven and insufficiently explored from a perception-based perspective.

Existing literature on beef consumption in Thailand has predominantly focused on production efficiency, breeding strategies, and supply-chain development, while empirical studies examining consumer perception as a multidimensional construct influencing both acceptance and engagement are limited. Moreover, few studies have simultaneously investigated acceptance outcomes (e.g., purchase intention and willingness to pay) and participatory behaviors (e.g., advocacy, support for local producers) within a single analytical framework. Understanding these relationships is essential for strengthening the domestic premium beef sector and aligning production strategies with consumer expectations.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of consumer perception factors namely brand reputation, perceived quality, and production origin on consumer acceptance and engagement with high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand. By employing a quantitative approach and multiple regression analysis, this research contributes empirical evidence to the literature on consumer behavior in premium agri-food markets and provides practical insights for producers, marketers, and policymakers seeking to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of Thailand's highquality beef industry.

Research Objectives

- To examine the influence of consumer perception factors, including brand reputation, perceived quality, and production origin, on the acceptance of highquality beef products among consumers in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.
- To investigate the influence of consumer perception factors, including brand reputation, perceived quality, and production origin, on consumer engagement in supporting high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.

Literature Review and Related Research

Consumer Perception in Premium Food Products

Consumer perception refers to the process by which individuals select, organize, and interpret information to form a meaningful understanding of products and brands. In the context of premium food products, perception plays a critical role in reducing uncertainty and shaping purchase decisions, particularly when

product attributes cannot be fully evaluated prior to consumption. Marketing and consumer behavior theories suggest that perceived value, perceived quality, and trust are fundamental drivers of acceptance and post-purchase behavior [8,9].

Previous studies have emphasized that for high-involvement food products such as premium beef, consumers rely heavily on extrinsic cues rather than intrinsic attributes alone. These cues include brand reputation, quality signals, and information regarding production origin, which collectively influence consumer confidence and willingness to purchase [10,11].

Brand Reputation and Consumer Behavior

Brand reputation reflects consumers' overall evaluation of a brand based on accumulated experiences, information, and social influence. A strong brand reputation enhances consumer trust, reduces perceived risk, and positively affects purchase intention and brand loyalty [3,4].

Empirical studies indicate that brand reputation has a significant influence on consumer engagement behaviors, such as word-of-mouth communication, brand advocacy, and long-term support. Ryu and Park (2020) found that consumers who perceive a brand positively are more likely to actively engage with the brand through social interaction and recommendation [12]. Similarly, Park et al. (2022) demonstrated that brand identity and reputation significantly shape perceived value, particularly in premium and luxury product contexts [13].

In the agri-food sector, brand reputation is especially important for encouraging participatory behaviors rather than direct purchase decisions, as consumers may prioritize tangible quality attributes when making final purchasing choices [3].

Perceived Quality and Acceptance of High-Quality Beef

Perceived quality is defined as the consumer's subjective judgment of a product's overall excellence or superiority. In food products, perceived quality often encompasses sensory characteristics, freshness, safety, and nutritional value. Studies consistently confirm that perceived quality is one of the strongest predictors of consumer acceptance and purchase intention [14,15].

Research on meat and beef consumption highlights that attributes such as tenderness, marbling, flavor, and freshness are key indicators of quality that directly influence consumer satisfaction and trust. Beriain et al. (2009) and subsequent studies have emphasized that quality perception significantly affects consumers' willingness to purchase premium beef products [16]. Thai studies have similarly reported that perceived quality positively influences both acceptance and engagement intentions among domestic consumers [17].

Production Origin and Consumer Trust

Production origin refers to consumer perception of where and how a product is produced, including geographic origin, farming practices, and production standards. Country-of-origin and regionalorigin effects have been widely studied and are recognized as powerful extrinsic cues influencing consumer perception, particularly for food products [18]. Several studies have demonstrated that transparent information regarding

production origin enhances consumer trust and acceptance. Chen and Lin (2021) found that production transparency significantly improves consumer confidence, especially in markets where food safety and ethical production are key concerns [19]. In meat consumption contexts, Mancini and Antonioli (2020) confirmed that consumers are more likely to accept premium or alternative meat products when they perceive production origin as credible and trustworthy [20].

In Thailand, consumers increasingly associate domestic high-quality beef from specific regions, such as Nakhon Ratchasima and the northeastern region, with improved production standards and competitiveness comparable to imported beef. This perception strengthens acceptance and reinforces positive attitudes toward locally produced premium beef products.

Consumer Engagement and Participation

Consumer engagement refers to the level of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral involvement that consumers exhibit toward a product or brand. Engagement behaviors include recommending products to others, participating in promotional activities, and supporting brands over the long term. Prior research indicates that engagement is strongly influenced by brand-related perceptions and perceived value [12,21].

In the context of premium food products, engagement is often driven by trust and brand reputation, while acceptance is more closely associated with perceived quality and production origin. This distinction suggests that different perceptual factors play varying roles across stages of consumer decision-making and post-purchase behavior, highlighting the importance of examining acceptance and engagement as separate but related outcomes.

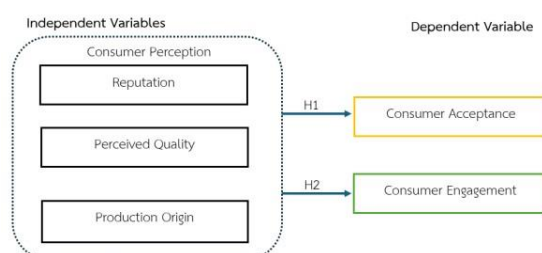


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Research

Research hypotheses, which are tested at the 0.05 level of statistical significance:

H1a: Brand reputation has a positive influence on consumer acceptance of high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.

H1b: Perceived quality has a positive influence on consumer acceptance of high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.

H1c: Production origin has a positive influence on consumer acceptance of high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.

H2a: Brand reputation has a positive influence on consumer engagement with high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.

H2b: Perceived quality has a positive influence on consumer engagement with high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.

H2c: Production origin has a positive influence on consumer engagement with high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.

Research Methods

This research employed a quantitative research design to examine the influence of consumer perception factors on consumer acceptance and engagement with high-quality beef products. A structured questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument, allowing for systematic measurement and statistical analysis of the relationships among variables.

Population and Sample

The population of this research consisted of consumers who had purchased or consumed high-quality beef products and resided in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand. As the exact number

of consumers who regularly consume high-quality beef in the study area is unknown, the sample size was determined using the formula proposed by W.G. Cochran (1953) for estimating sample size in populations of unknown size [22].

The calculation was conducted at a 95% confidence level with a margin of error of $\pm 5\%$, resulting in a minimum required sample size of 400 respondents. This sample size is considered adequate for quantitative analysis and hypothesis testing using multiple regression analysis. Respondents were selected using non-probability convenience sampling, based on their experience in purchasing or consuming high-quality beef products.

Research Instrument

The research instrument was an online questionnaire developed based on a review of relevant literature and the conceptual framework of the study.

The questionnaire was divided into three main sections:

Demographic characteristics of respondents

- Consumer perception factors, including brand reputation, perceived quality, and production origin
- Consumer acceptance and consumer engagement toward high-quality beef products All measurement items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Instrument Development and Validation

The research instrument was developed through a systematic process based on an extensive review of relevant literature, theoretical frameworks, and prior empirical studies related to consumer perception, consumer acceptance, and consumer

engagement in the context of high-quality beef products. The questionnaire items were constructed to ensure alignment with the research objectives and the conceptual framework of the research.

To establish content validity, the draft questionnaire was evaluated by experts in the fields of marketing, consumer behavior, and agricultural economics. The experts assessed the relevance, clarity, and appropriateness of each item using the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC). The results indicated that all items achieved IOC values greater than 0.50, confirming that the instrument demonstrated acceptable content validity.

A pilot test was subsequently conducted with consumers who had experience in purchasing or consuming high-quality beef products and who were not included in the final sample. The pilot test aimed to evaluate the clarity of the questionnaire and to assess the reliability of the measurement scales.

The reliability of the research instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The results indicated that the items measuring consumer perception factors demonstrated Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.86 to 0.89. Specifically, the reliability coefficients were 0.89 for brand reputation, 0.86 for perceived quality, and 0.86 for production origin.

In addition, the items measuring consumer acceptance and consumer engagement exhibited Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.89 to 0.91, with a value of 0.89 for consumer acceptance and 0.91 for consumer engagement.

All Cronbach's alpha values exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating a high level of internal consistency. Therefore, it can be concluded that the questionnaire demonstrated satisfactory reliability and was suitable for use in the main data collection with the target sample.

Data Collection

Primary Data were collected through a structured online questionnaire administered to consumers who had purchased or consumed high-quality beef products and resided in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand. The questionnaire was developed based on the research objectives and conceptual framework and consisted of questions related to demographic characteristics, consumer perception factors (brand reputation, perceived quality, and production origin), consumer acceptance, and consumer engagement.

Prior to data collection, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. Participation was voluntary. A total of 400 valid responses were obtained, which met the required sample size calculated using Cochran's (1953) formula at a 95% confidence level with a margin of error of $\pm 5\%$. The primary data were used for statistical analysis and hypothesis testing.

Secondary Data were collected through a comprehensive review of academic literature, textbooks, research articles, theses, and reputable online sources related to consumer behavior, consumer

perception, high-quality beef products, and food marketing. These secondary sources were used to develop the theoretical foundation of the study, construct the conceptual framework, design the research instrument, and support the interpretation and discussion of the research findings.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using statistical software. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were employed to describe the demographic characteristics of respondents and to summarize overall levels of consumer perception, acceptance, and engagement toward high-quality beef products.

To test the research hypotheses, inferential statistical analyses were conducted. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to examine differences in consumer acceptance and engagement across demographic characteristics. Furthermore, multiple regression analysis was applied to investigate the influence of consumer perception factors namely brand reputation, perceived quality, and production origin on consumer acceptance and consumer engagement. All hypotheses were tested at a statistical significance level of 0.05.

Research Results

General Characteristics of the Respondents

The analysis of the general characteristics of the respondents revealed that the majority of consumers who purchased or consumed high-quality beef products and resided in Nakhon Ratchasima Province were students, accounting for 249 respondents (62.3%). This was followed by private sector employees, with 51 respondents (12.8%), government officers, with 44 respondents (11.0%), self-employed individuals, with 33 respondents (8.2%), farmers, with 16 respondents (4.0%), and respondents in other occupations, totaling 7 respondents (1.7%), respectively.

In terms of educational attainment, the majority of respondents held a bachelor's degree, accounting for 331 respondents (82.8%). This was followed by respondents with an education level below a bachelor's degree, totaling 48 respondents (12.0%), and those with an education level above a bachelor's degree, accounting for 21 respondents (5.3%), respectively. Regarding average monthly income, most respondents reported a net income of less than or equal to 20,000 THB per month, accounting for 271 respondents (67.8%), which represented the largest proportion of the sample. This was followed by respondents with an average monthly income of 20,001–30,000 THB, totaling 66 respondents (16.5%), 30,001–40,000 THB, with 29 respondents (7.2%), more than 50,000 THB, with 19 respondents (4.7%), and 40,001–50,000 THB, with 15 respondents (3.8%), respectively.

Results of Consumer Perception toward High-Quality Beef

The results of the analysis of consumer perception toward high-quality beef are presented in Tables 1–3, which cover three dimensions of perception: brand reputation, perceived quality, and production origin.

As shown in Table 1, the overall level of consumer perception regarding the brand reputation of high-quality beef was at a high level, with an overall average score ($\bar{x}$) of 3.68 and a standard

deviation (S.D.) of 0.80. The highest-rated item was receiving information about high-quality beef from various sources, such as online media, research publications, or personal experience ($\bar{x}$

= 4.02, S.D. = 0.89). This was followed by the ability to assess the competitive potential of Thai high-quality beef compared with imported beef ($\bar{x}$ = 3.70, S.D. = 0.99).

Perceived Brand Reputation Factors of High-Quality Beef	Perception Level		
	$\bar{x}$	S. D	Level
Receiving information about high-quality beef from various sources such as online media, research publications, or personal experience	4.02	0.89	High
Understanding of high-quality beef breeds developed and raised in Thailand	3.56	1.00	High
Confidence in consuming high-quality beef breeds developed in the Northeastern region of Thailand	3.66	1.00	High
Receiving promotional media stimulation to experience consuming high-quality beef in the Northeastern region	3.46	1.11	High
Ability to assess whether high-quality beef produced in Thailand has the potential to compete with imported beef	3.70	0.99	High
Overall	3.68	0.80	High

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Brand Reputation of High-Quality Beef: Mean ($\bar{x}$), Standard Deviation (S.D.), and Perception Level

Regarding perceived quality of High-Quality Beef, the results shown in Table 2 indicate that the overall perception level was also high, with an overall $\bar{x}$ of 3.68 and an S.D. of 0.81. The highest perception was observed for the recognition that

Thai highquality beef has been developed to achieve quality comparable to imported beef ($\bar{x}$ = 3.97, S.D. = 0.89), followed by understanding the slaughtering and processing process that benefits beef quality for consumers ($\bar{x}$ = 3.72, S.D. = 1.00).

Perceived Quality Factors of High-Quality Beef	Perception Level		
	$\bar{x}$	S. D	Level
Understanding of beef breed development to improve quality in Thailand	3.55	1.04	High
Understanding of slaughtering and processing processes beneficial to beef quality for consumers	3.72	1.00	High
Ability to distinguish quality differences between general beef and high-quality beef	3.65	1.02	High
Understanding of price-quality consistency of high-quality beef	3.53	1.19	High
Perception that Thai high-quality beef has been developed to be comparable with imported beef	3.97	0.89	High
Overall	3.68	0.81	High

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of perceived quality of HighQuality Beef: Mean ($\bar{x}$), Standard Deviation (S.D.), and Perception Level

In terms of production origin of High-Quality Beef, as presented in Table 3, the overall perception level was high, with an overall $\bar{x}$ of 3.82 and an S.D. of 0.80, which was the highest among the three perception dimensions. Consumers particularly perceived the northeastern region of Thailand as having strong potential to

serve as a center for highquality beef production ($\bar{x}$ = 3.98, S.D. = 0.92) and believed that Thailand has the potential to become a leading producer of high-quality beef in the global market ($\bar{x}$ = 3.95, S.D. = 0.93).

Perceived Production Origin Factors of High-Quality Beef	Perception Level		
	$\bar{x}$	S. D	Level
Ability to recognize Thailand as a production hub of high-quality beef in the Northeastern region of Asia	3.66	0.97	High
Ability to recognize the Northeastern region as an important area for high-quality beef production in Thailand	3.81	0.96	High
Ability to recognize Nakhon Ratchasima Province as a development center for high-quality beef breeds in the Northeastern region	3.72	1.00	High
Perception that the Northeastern region has potential to become a hub for high-quality beef production	3.98	0.92	High
Belief that Thailand has potential to become a leading producer of high-quality beef in the global market	3.95	0.93	High
Overall	3.82	0.80	High

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of production origin of HighQuality Beef: Mean ($\bar{x}$), Standard Deviation (S.D.), and Perception Level

Inferential Statistical Analysis for Hypothesis Testing

Correlation Analysis a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among the three independent variables representing consumer perception factors: brand reputation, perceived quality, and perceived production origin. The results indicate that all independent variables are significantly correlated with one another at an acceptable level, with correlation coefficients not exceeding 0.80.

These findings suggest that the perception factors are interrelated and mutually supportive, while still maintaining sufficient independence. Therefore, the variables meet the assumptions required for subsequent multiple regression analysis, and no multicollinearity problems were detected. This confirms the suitability of these variables for analyzing their effects on consumer acceptance and consumer engagement with high-quality beef.

Variables	Brand Reputation	Brand Reputation	Brand Reputation
Brand Reputation	1.000	0.732**	0.651**
Sig. (2-tailed)	—	0.000	0.000
Perceived Quality	0.732**	1.000	0.754**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	—	0.000
Production Origin	0.651**	0.754**	1.000
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	—

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Coefficients among Consumer Perception Variables

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Results of Hypothesis Testing (H1a–H1c)

The results of the multiple regression analysis examining the effects of consumer perception factors on the acceptance of high-quality beef are presented in Table 5. The model demonstrates a good explanatory power, with an R^2 value of 0.627 and an adjusted R^2 of 0.624, indicating that approximately 62.7% of the variance in consumer acceptance can be explained by the three perception variables. In addition, the overall regression model was statistically significant ($F = 222.175$, $p < 0.05$).

Regarding H1a, the standardized coefficient (β) for brand reputation was 0.090, indicating a positive relationship with consumer acceptance. The t-value was 1.956, with a p-value of 0.051, which slightly exceeded the 0.05 significance level. Therefore, although brand reputation shows a positive effect on consumer acceptance, this effect was not statistically significant, and H1a was not supported.

In contrast, the results for H1b indicate that perceived quality

had a significant positive influence on consumer acceptance. The standardized coefficient was $\beta = 0.411$, with a t-value of 7.720 and a p-value of 0.000, which is well below the 0.05 significance level. This suggests that higher levels of perceived quality substantially increase consumer acceptance of high-quality beef. Consequently, H1b was supported.

Similarly, H1c was also supported. The standardized coefficient for perceived production origin was $\beta = 0.360$, indicating a positive effect on consumer acceptance. The t-value (7.530) and p-value (0.000) confirm that this relationship is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This finding implies that consumers' favorable perceptions of the production origin significantly enhance their acceptance of high-quality beef.

Overall, the findings reveal that perceived quality and perceived production origin are the most influential factors driving consumer acceptance of high-quality beef, while brand reputation, although positively related, does not exert a statistically significant effect within this model.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	p-value
	B	Std. Error			
Brand Reputation	0.088	0.045	0.090	1.956	0.051
Perceived Quality	0.394	0.051	0.411	7.720	0.000*
Production Origin	0.350	0.046	0.360	7.530	0.000*
$F = 222.175$					
$R \text{ Square} = 0.627$					
$\text{Adjusted } R \text{ Square} = 0.624$					

a. Dependent Variable: consumer acceptance $p < 0.05$

Table 5: Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Consumer Acceptance (H1a–H1c)

Dependent Variable: consumer acceptance $p < 0.05$

Results of Hypothesis Testing (H2a–H2c)

Hypotheses H2a–H2c proposed that brand reputation, perceived quality, and perceived production origin have positive effects on consumer engagement in supporting high-quality beef. The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis, and the results are presented in Table 6.

The results indicate that brand reputation has a positive and statistically significant effect on consumer engagement. The standardized coefficient (β) for brand reputation was 0.239, suggesting that a one-unit increase in consumers' positive perception of brand reputation leads to a 0.239-unit increase in consumer engagement. In addition, the t-value was 4.840, and the p-value was 0.000, which is lower than the 0.05 significance level. Therefore, H2a was supported.

Similarly, perceived quality was found to have a positive and significant influence on consumer engagement. The standardized

coefficient was $\beta = 0.381$, indicating that an increase of one unit in perceived quality results in a 0.381-unit increase in consumer engagement. The t-value (6.668) and pvalue (0.000) further confirm the statistical significance of this relationship at the 0.05 level. Accordingly, H2b was supported.

Furthermore, perceived production origin also showed a positive and statistically significant effect on consumer engagement. The standardized coefficient for this variable was $\beta = 0.216$, implying that a one-unit increase in positive perception of production origin leads to a 0.216-unit increase in consumer engagement. The t-value (4.214) and pvalue (0.000) indicate that this effect is significant at the 0.05 level. Thus, H2c was supported.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that all three perception factors—brand reputation, perceived quality, and perceived production origin—play significant roles in enhancing consumer engagement in supporting high-quality beef, with perceived quality exerting the strongest influence among the three variables.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	p-value
	B	Std. Error			
Brand Reputation	0.088	0.045	0.090	1.956	0.051
Perceived Quality	0.394	0.051	0.411	7.720	0.000*
Production Origin	0.350	0.046	0.360	7.530	0.000*
F = 176.864					
R Square = 0.573					
Adjusted R Square = 0.569					

a. Dependent Variable: consumer engagement $p < 0.05$

Table 6: Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Consumer Engagement (H2a–H2c)

Dependent Variable: consumer engagement $p < 0.05$

Summary of Hypothesis Testing

As shown in Table 7, all proposed hypotheses (H1a–H1c and H2a–H2c) are supported at the 0.05 level of significance. The results indicate that brand reputation, perceived quality, and

production origin have a positive and statistically significant effect on both consumer acceptance and consumer participation in supporting high-quality beef products. These findings confirm the importance of consumer perception factors in influencing supportive attitudes and behaviors toward premium beef.

Research hypotheses	Result
H1a: Brand reputation has a positive influence on consumer acceptance of high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.	Supported (not statistically significant)
H1b: Perceived quality has a positive influence on consumer acceptance of high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.	Supported
H1c: Production origin has a positive influence on consumer acceptance of high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.	Supported
H2a: Brand reputation has a positive influence on consumer engagement with high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.	Supported
H2b: Perceived quality has a positive influence on consumer engagement with high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.	Supported
H2c: Production origin has a positive influence on consumer engagement with high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand.	Supported

Table 7: Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Conclusion and Discussion

This research investigated perceptual factors influencing consumer acceptance and engagement toward high-quality beef products in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Thailand. The study focused on three key perceptual dimensions: brand reputation, perceived quality, and perceived production origin. A quantitative research design was employed, using an online questionnaire administered to 400 consumers who had prior experience purchasing or consuming premium beef products in the study area. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, including multiple regression analysis. The demographic profile of respondents indicates that the majority were students (62.3%), held a bachelor's degree (82.8%), and reported a monthly income of THB 20,000 or below (67.8). This reflects a predominantly young consumer segment with limited purchasing power but a strong interest in high-quality beef consumption. Such characteristics provide important contextual insight into emerging consumer behavior in the premium beef market of Nakhon Ratchasima.

Overall, consumers demonstrated a high level of perception across all three dimensions. Perceived production origin recorded the highest mean score ($\bar{x} = 3.82$), followed by perceived reputation and perceived quality ($\bar{x} = 3.68$). These findings indicate that consumers place particular importance on information related to production sources, especially the recognition of Nakhon Ratchasima and the Northeastern region of Thailand as key areas for high-quality beef production.

Regarding outcome variables, consumer acceptance of high-quality beef was high overall ($\bar{x} = 3.78$), indicating a strong willingness to consume domestically produced premium beef. Consumer engagement was also at a high level ($\bar{x} = 3.56$), particularly in activities related to sharing knowledge and supporting information dissemination about beef quality

attributes. This suggests that consumers are not merely passive buyers but are inclined to actively support and promote high-quality beef products.

Inferential analysis revealed distinct patterns of influence between perceptual factors and the two dependent variables. In terms of consumer acceptance, perceived quality exerted the strongest positive influence ($\beta = 0.411$, $p < 0.001$), followed by perceived production origin ($\beta = 0.360$, $p < 0.001$). Perceived reputation showed a positive but statistically marginal effect ($\beta = 0.090$, $p = 0.051$), indicating that while reputation contributes positively, it plays a less decisive role in immediate acceptance decisions. These findings align with prior studies emphasizing that tangible product attributes, such as meat quality and traceable production sources, are primary determinants of acceptance in premium food products [16,23].

In contrast, all three perceptual factors significantly influenced consumer engagement. Perceived quality again demonstrated the strongest effect ($\beta = 0.381$, $p < 0.001$), followed by perceived reputation ($\beta = 0.239$, $p < 0.001$) and perceived production origin ($\beta = 0.216$, $p < 0.001$). This pattern suggests that while acceptance decisions rely heavily on functional product attributes, engagement behaviors are shaped by both tangible factors and intangible perceptions such as brand reputation. This supports the conceptualization of consumer engagement as a deeper relational behavior that extends beyond transactional decision-making [8].

A critical insight from this research is the differentiated role of perceptual factors across behavioral outcomes. Perceived quality consistently emerged as the most influential factor for both acceptance and engagement, underscoring its central role in the premium beef market. However, perceived reputation, despite its limited influence on acceptance, played a meaningful

role in fostering engagement behaviors such as advocacy and information sharing. This distinction reinforces the argument that reputation functions as a long-term relational asset rather than a direct purchase trigger, consistent with prior findings [8,12].

From a theoretical perspective, these findings contribute to consumer behavior literature by empirically demonstrating that acceptance and engagement are influenced by perceptual factors in structurally different ways. Practically, the results suggest that producers and marketers of high-quality beef should prioritize quality assurance and transparent communication of production origin to drive purchase acceptance, while simultaneously investing in reputation-building strategies to enhance long-term consumer engagement and brand loyalty.

In summary, this research provides robust empirical evidence that perceptual quality and production origin are critical drivers of consumer acceptance, whereas consumer engagement is shaped by a broader combination of quality, reputation, and origin perceptions. These insights offer valuable guidance for strategic marketing and policy development aimed at strengthening the competitiveness of Thailand's high-quality beef industry, particularly in Nakhon Ratchasima Province.

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