Journal of Applied Business and Technology

Besagood MSME: An Innovative Product Made from Sago as an Alternative to Replace Rice as a Staple Food

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Article History
Received
29 September 2025
Received in revised form
7 December 2025
Accepted
4 January 2026
Published Online
31 January 2026

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Abstract
This research was conducted to determine the development of sago MSMEs in Indonesia, especially in Meranti. This study used qualitative research methods by interviewing a student at the University of Riau (Muhammad Agung Islamy and Bagus Duhan Irfandy) who has a Sago MSME in Meranti Besagood, Mrs. Praptini is the owner of the Sagu Kite MSME, and Mr. Miftahulaid is the secretary of the Meranti Islands Trade and Industry Department. Besagood has established due to the concerns of Besagood founder Muhammad Agung Islamy and Co-Founder, Bagus Duhan Irfandy, about the price of sago which at that time was not competitive on the market. Since 2020, they have started to innovate to produce products that can be more competitive in the market. This year, Besagood launched two new products, namely SeSaMe (Seblak Sago Meranti), MiGuMek (Sago Mie Nyemek) and SaguNasDuk (Sago Nasi Uduk) which are instant products that are available in Pekanbaru shops such as the airport or other souvenir shops. Besagood products received appreciation from the tourism and creative economy ministry when they attended the tourism and creative economy ministry activities in October at Ciputra Mall.

Keywords: Food; Sago; MSMEs; Meranti Islands; Besagood
DOI: https://doi.org/10.35145/h2xvbt05
SDGs: Decent Work and Economic Growth (8); Responsible Consumption and Production (12); Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (9); Zero Hunger (2); Partnerships for the Goals (17)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Food is one of the fundamental necessities of life, and its availability is crucial for human survival. In Indonesia, particularly in Riau Province, the staple food is rice. As the population grows, rice consumption continues to increase. According to Law Number 18 of 2012 on Food, Article 1 paragraph 1, explains about that food is anything that comes from biological sources of agricultural, plantation, forestry, fishery, livestock, aquatic and water products, whether processed or unprocessed, which is intended as food or drink for human consumption, including food additives, food raw materials, and other materials used in the process of preparing, processing and making food or drink (Asmarania, Ma'muna, Nurcayahia, & Asis, 2025).

According to the General Chair of the Asosiasi Bank Benih dan Teknologi Tani Indonesia (AB2TI) Dwi Andreas Santosa, "the current growth rate of rice production in Indonesia is not able to keep up with the rate of population increase." (Emeria, 2022).

For this reason, to overcome the rice crisis, it is necessary to have a solution to deal with this problem, including by producing new food products so that they do not only rely on rice. One of the natural resources that can be utilized is sago. Its sago flour is processed into a staple food other than rice and is a raw material in the liquid sugar industry, animal feed, and even textiles. Despite all its benefits, sago faces challenges in its utilization, such as limited knowledge, skills, and technology (Nursalam et al., 2023).

In Indonesia, around 77 commodities have the potential to serve as alternatives to rice, with sago standing out as one of the most promising options for further development. To ensure the competitiveness of the sago agroindustry, several strategies are essential, including innovative packaging and labeling, efficient production and marketing, improved seeding guidance, professional industry management, sustainable land use and pricing policies, as well as strengthened partnership programs. (Purbaningsih et al., 2023). According to the

Ministry of Agriculture (Kementerian Pertanian), Indonesian Sago Production in 2021 is expected to reach 381,065 tons, a 4.2% increase from 365,665 tons the previous year. Based on data from Ministry of Agriculture (Kementerian Pertanian), Indonesian sago plantations covered 206.150 hectares in 2021, which was marginally more than the 200.518 hectares the year before (Resdati, Yusuf, Siti, Sidiq, & Bahagiana, 2024).

Ministry of Agriculture (2018), said that Indonesia has a sago area of more than four million hectares and because of this, Indonesia is the largest sago producer in the world (Hardison & Angga, 2020). There are diffrent on the sago processing system in eastern Indonesia, where farmers generally process sago directly into ready-to-use products. In Riau Province, however, farmers sell sago directly to processing factories (Nurul, Afiza, & Novitasari, 2023).

A mature sago palm, or rumbia, grows to 8 to 17 meters. Some rumbia trees can grows to 30 meters, depending on the species and growing conditions. A single sago palm can produce approximately 150-300 kg of sago starch. In one sago palm can produce approximately 150-300 kg of sago starch. Sago has health benefits, including increased energy due to its high carbohydrate content. The prebiotics in sago promote healthy cells in the intestines and lungs. Furthermore, it improves circulation and blood vessels around the intestines and lungs. Sago contains fiber and the mineral phosphorus, which are beneficial in lowering blood glucose levels (Sofia et al., 2023).

Meranti Islands Regency is not a land of wild forests. Some farmers own less than 20 hectares of land (Syamsuadi, Hartati, Trisnawati, & Arisandi, 2020). The Meranti Islands are one of the areas for developing national food security because they are the largest sago producer in Indonesia with an area of sago plantations of around 44,657 ha or 2.98 percent of the national sago plantation area. Based on Presidential Regulation No. 22 of 2009, article 1 section 2, the Policy on Accelerating Diversification of Food Consumption Based on Local Resources as referred to in paragraph (1) serves as a reference for Regional Governments in planning, implementing, evaluating, and controlling the Acceleration of Diversification of Food Consumption Based on Local Resources (Wiwik Swastiwi, 2021). This should be followed up by the Regional Government, especially Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD), to utilize sago in the implementation of the Local Resource-Based Food Consumption Diversification program. For the Meranti Islands, which has local resources from sago farming, which produces abundant yields. Sago is planted only once, as it can be harvested sustainably after 12 years. This makes its cultivation easier, as it doesn't require fertilizers or pesticides, unlike modern agriculture. Based on its potential benefits and cultivation, sago has the potential to diversify food production (Bovita, 2025).

Quoting from the Ministry of Agriculture, the people of Riau have long used sago as an alternative staple source to be processed into traditional foods, such as sago cendol, sepolet, gedegob, and others. Sago is not only as a substitute for rice, but sago can also be processed into noodles, bread, and fructose syrup (Aulia & Safira, 2022). Not only traditional food, sago can also be developed and processed into very interesting products, such as sago noodles, sago biscuits, sago seblak, and various interesting and contemporary food preparations. This instant sago noodle product has the potential for a wider market due to its longer shelf life and ease of consumption (Pratama, Maryam, & Andiyono, 2025). Sago can be processed into sago crackers. Sago crackers are thin, deep-fried crackers with a dry, hard texture, similar to most crackers (Oktari, Jamalludin, & Mashadi, 2020).

Quoting from Mr. Miftahulaid as the Secretary of the Dinas Perindustrian dan Perdagangan (DISPERINDAG) in Meranti Islands, sago is a local resource from Meranti Islands. Papuans come to Meranti Islands to learn about processing sago based products.

Currently, there are many MSMEs or micro, small and medium enterprises in Riau that make various kinds of preparations from sago. One of them is the Besagood MSME which makes more contemporary seblak preparations such as Seblak sago and Nasi Uduk Sago.

Formulation of the Problem

1. What is the background to the formation of the Besagood MSME?
2. What obstacles might occur in the process of sustaining Besagood MSMEs?
3. Have Besagood MSMEs received appreciation from the government?
4. When and where is production carried out? And how much is the production output?
5. What do local residents think about Besagood which has innovated sago in?
6. What plans or goals does Besagood want to achieve?

Research Purposes

1. Know the background to the formation of Besagood MSMEs.
2. Know the obstacles that occur in the Besagood MSME process.
3. Find out about the appreciation that Besagood has received from the government.
4. Know the production quantity and production time

5. Find out the views and opinions of local residents about the new innovation
6. Find out Besagood's plans for the future.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Type of Research

In this research the author uses descriptive observation type through qualitative study techniques. Qualitative observation is a plan that reveals the social atmosphere by depicting the truth as it is real, organized in conversation based on a method of accumulating and analyzing meaningful data received from official conditions.

Data Type

The type of data used by the author to contain these observations is as follows:

1. Primary data. Data obtained precisely from respondents as the target of observation takes the form of a meaningful explanation of the events that form the research. These include: questions and answers and written notes.
2. Secondary data. Secondary data is data that we have not attempted to combine ourselves because of observations, for example from statistical bureaus, magazines, facts or other publications such as taken from various sources, laws and regulations, books, journals, and previous observations related to the problem being studied.

Data collection techniques

The author carries out data accumulation by submitting a collection of precise conversations with sources who have served as illustrations on the topic of observation.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Background to the Formation of Besagood MSMEs

Besagood was founded at the end of 2019, motivated by the concerns of the founder of Besagood. Besagood is came from a family business. At the beginning 2019. Muhammad Agung Islamy, and Co-Founder, Bagus Duhan Irfandy, about the very less competitive price of sago in the market at that time.

At the beginning of 2020, they started their innovation by creating a product that could be more competitive on the market. The name Besagood has the meaning of wanting to make sago more dignified and more widely known locally, nationally and internationally.

The student of university competition program for student entrepreneurship and PKM (Program Kreativitas Mahasiswa) activities were launched in 2021, Pimnas (Pekan Ilmiah Mahasiswa Nasional) 34 University of North Sumatra (USU) raised two sago themes. Two brothers, Agung and Bagus won silver medals. This coincided with funding for the student entrepreneurship program, business competition, product branding capital, product research, including sago seblak and sago sugar, the result of the Univercity of Riau competition. Besagood branding began in 2023.

Figure 1. Besagood outlet at one of the events in Netherlands.
Source: Besagood on Instagram, 2023

Besagood participated in exhibition activities in the Amsterdam, Netherlands in 22-23th November 2022. Now, Besagood has a website to view all information related to Besagood and the products. The website is https://besagood.com/.

Obstacles in the Development Process of Besagood MSMEs

The obstacles experienced in this SME process are quite complex, if we look at the types, the obstacles experienced by Besagood are quite diverse, such as production constraints, managerial constraints, marketing and promotion constraints, and distribution constraints.

One of the currently growing Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) is Besagood. The easiest marketing technique for MSMEs is digital marketing because it is more cost-effective and has a broad reach. A digital marketing system is a promotional and market discovery activity using online digital media, utilizing various social media platforms. Interactions between producers, market intermediaries, and potential customers can be facilitated by digital marketing, an interactive and integrated marketing system (Asriani, Herdhiansyah, Rizka, & Rismawan, 2022).

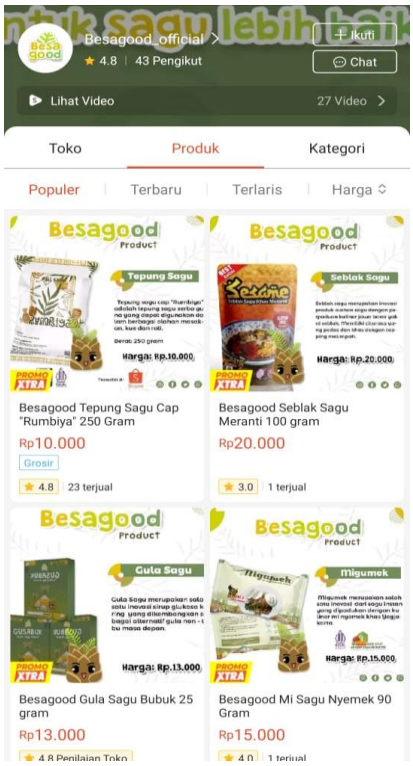

Fig. 2. Besagood Store on E-Commerce on Shopee
Source: Besagoo Store on Shopee, 2025

All Besagood products are available for purchase through e-commerce and shipped throughout Indonesia. This is done to expand the promotional and marketing reach of the product so that everyone can enjoy the deliciousness of this sago-based product, sourced from the local resources of the Meranti Islands.

Figure 3. Besagood Instagram account
Source: Besagoo on Instagram, 2025

On the Besagood Instagram account, there are Besagood activities that Besagood participates in, product promotions, discount announcement, new product announcement, and challenges created by Besagood to celebrate special days.

These obstacles can be overcome by complementing each other, helping each other and working together and the most important thing is openness, communication and honesty.

In Pekanbaru, Besagood supplies products to the Malika lapan shop on Jalan Hr Soebrantas and the Riau Malay traditional institution, but is more dominant in outlets and MSMEs in Selat Panjang, Meranti Islands Regency, such as Sago Kite Meranti and the DISPERINDAG (Dinas Perindustrian dan Perdagangan) outlet of Meranti Islands Regency.

Quoting from Mrs. Praptini as the owner of Sago Kite, there are Gula Sagu products from Besagood that are supplied to her MSME.

Appreciation Received from the Government

The sago production developed by Besagood has received attention from various groups. Besagood products received appreciation from the tourism and creative economy ministry when they attended the tourism and creative economy ministry activities “Apresiasi Kreasi Indonesia” in 16 -18 September, 2022 at Ciputra Mall.

Local food is defined as food that is made and modified according to local potential and resources as well as local culture. Local food is also a basic human right for every individual to receive it according to established standards (Naldi & Chastine, 2024). In this case, Meranti Island has local food made from sago as the main ingredient. Food products made from sago are the identity and characteristic of the Meranti Islands, the variations made must have many types so as not to be boring and follow consumer tastes. Besagood comes with various creative food products using sago as raw material, for their creativity, innovation and product benefits, they are worthy of receiving appreciation from the tourism and creative economy ministry.

The Ministry of Industry provides assistance to PT Sagu Martabat Sejati and national industrial facilities such as SIINas (Sistem Informasi Industri Nasional). In Several export training programs from the Ministry, such as the Indonesian Trading Company (PPI), provide mentoring, product activity and business standards, BPOM food quality, and provide support, including global standard facilities, halal licensing, and BPOM distribution permits.

Developing the food industry by utilizing the potential of sago as a traditional food is a strategic step to develop the economy as a whole (Hasbi & Sari, 2020).

Figure 4. Besagood won a gold medal at the WICO event in Seoul, South Korea.
Source: Instagram Besagood, 2024

Besagood owners Muhammad Agung Islamy and Bagus Duhan Irfandy once again brought honor to their region and Indonesia on the international stage by winning a gold medal at the World Invention Creativity Olympic (WICO). The competition, held in Seoul, South Korea, drew approximately 2,000 participants from 25 countries from July 23-24, 2024 (Besagood, 2024).

Quantity and Production Time

Production is carried out weekly and production are carried out on weekends because the workers are still in the family. So, there are 4 workers or what is called a family collaboration.

The capacity or production output per month can reach approximately 400-500 pcs of product. The results of this study has differences from the results of the study conducted by Nursalam, Helviani, Agusriyadin, Ansharullah, Azhar Bafadal, Tamrin, Annisah Amaliah, Taswin, Aminah Sagista, Fikram, and Sain in 2023 titled Empowerment of Local Sago Food Processing Communities Through Increasing Production, Hygiene and Marketing in Woitombo Village, Mowewe District, East Kolaka Regency it was found that to produce sago flour into sago starch, a machine with a capacity of 1 ton per hour was used to increase production and the quality products. Besagood Production volumes increase ahead of Chinese New Year and Eid al-Fitr.

Opinions of Neighborhood Citizens About the Latest Sagu Innovation

In Meranti itself, there are 3 superior MSMEs that are partnered with the regional government to collaborate with other regional governments. So actually, to be self-employed is a new breakthrough because there are 2 superior businesses which are both headed by young people. Of course, local residents welcome the innovations of young people, with the existence of these MSMEs, they can at least open up jobs for local residents, even though it could be said to be quite small.

According to research by the Ministry of Agriculture (2020), improving skills in local food processing can increase farmers' incomes by up to 30%. This demonstrates that technology transfer focuses not only on production but also on the economic aspects of the community. With increased incomes, communities will be better able to meet their daily needs and invest in education and health (Nursalam et al., 2024).

Community involvement in this product involves workers from the Maini Darul Aman village, especially Sungai Kulu and Temangau hamlets. This product is produced in Maini hamlet, West Tebing subdistrict, Meranti Islands Regency.

Besagood MSME Plans in the Future

This year Besagood has launched 2 new products, namely SeSaMe (Seblak Sago Meranti) and SaguNasDuk (Sago Nasi Uduk) which are instant products that are already available in Pekanbaru shopping places such as at the airport or other souvenir shops. Besagood also wants to launch one product new one which is still kept secret.

The hope of the Co-founder of Besagood himself is that he hopes that Besagood products can be more widely known and can open an outlet in Pekanbaru.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The sagulicius MSME program which has been running since 2020, which aims to innovate sago and promote sago on the market, is going quite well. However, the limitations of developing MSMEs are quite complex due to production limitations, management limitations, marketing limitations and promotions.

With the existence of 3 superior SMEs who also collaborate with the local government to make products This is getting better for the future and the Sagulicius program also has a positive influence on local residents by opening up new job opportunities. For recommendations, there needs to be a government policy to provide a standard price for sago so that it can protect MSME Sago products.

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