

Practical observations on choosing agrodealers, retail and brand management

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Case study

Juma Mwerevu is the marketing manager of High Quality Seeds Company. His company is in the process of recruiting a seed distributor in Embu town. Two entrepreneurs, **Baraka Agrovvet** and **Farmlink Agrovvet** situated in Embu town have sent applications for the coveted distributorship.

The company director requests him to pay a visit to Embu and vet the agrodealers through a checklist. Armed with a camera, map of Embu town and the checklist Mr. Juma makes an impromptu visit to the agrodealers in Embu.

Using the checklist provided, recommend the suitable candidate for the High Quality Seed Company distributorship in Embu town.

Juma Mwerevu starts his day trying to locate Baraka agroveter. Using the map provided by Baraka he wanders all over the town in vain. He easily spots Farmlink agroveter from the bold signage. The shop design is inviting and product display can be seen from outside. Exhausted he tries to ask the locals to refer him to the agroveter but no-one seems to know the premise. However, they advise him to visit Farmlink because they sell quality products and not fake.

Juma decides to take a lunch break in a kiosk nearby next to a hardware store. As he sips his soda, he casually asks the shop owner if he knows Baraka agroveter and the shopkeeper points him towards the hardware store. He then notices small letters written Agro-vet on the wall.

Baraka Agrovvet



Farmlink Agrovet



Juma Mwerevu then calmly walks into the open door assuming it is the agrovet but there is no one on the counter. He knocks on the counter and calls out. A few minutes later, a shabby man dressed in an oily overall walks from the room next to the shop. He introduces himself as Baraka the proprietor of Baraka. As they are shaking hands, a city council van passes by and Baraka ducks under the counter. He confesses to Juma that he has not renewed his trade licence since he opened the shop a year ago.

The shelves are not well arranged and the products are mixed in arrangement. Seeds are stored on the floor together with herbicides some leaking. There is a strong pungent smell in the shop. The shop is dimly lit and one cannot see the products clearly. No customers enter the shop for the 30 minutes Mr. Juma is in the shop.

Mr. Baraka informs Juma that he is a mechanic but opened the agrovet because the profits are good. He informs Juma that farmers are gullible and cannot differentiate real and fake products. He doesn't need training in agriculture, because farmers will buy anyways. However, he confesses that lately business is slow.

Baraka display



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Farmlink display



Juma walks back to Farmlink Agroviet after his chat with Mr. Baraka. He introduces himself to Mrs. Opiyo the Manager of the shop who quickly introduces Juma to her staff. She is very engaging and the atmosphere is very friendly. Customers walk in with ease and the product display is very appealing. A sales manager from a reputable seed company and recommends Farmlink as very strategic partners for seed distribution in the area. He also mentions that he would like to partner with Farmlink in their next demo for the next season.

Juma collects all the documents he requires from Farmlink Agroviet. As he is leaving the shop he notices a suggestion box pinned on the outer wall of the shop. He also encounters the Farmlink Agroviet and salesman who inform him they are from conducting the monthly marketing drive in some of the villages in the county.