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# Integrated Development of Chinese Herbal Medicine Planting and Tourist Commodities: A Case Study of Green Handmade Soap Development in Shandong Province

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**Abstract** Combining current situations of Chinese herbal medicine planting industry in Shandong, in line with existing problems of Chinese herbal medicine planting industry, this paper analyzed development prospect of tourist commodity industry in Shandong Province, and came up with actual selection and recommendations for integrated development of Chinese herbal medicine planting and tourist commodities.

**Key words** Chinese herbal medicine planting industry, Tourist commodity industry, Green handmade soap

## 1 Background

Under the tide of returning to nature, natural medicines become favored for their little side effect. This will provide excellent opportunity for development of Chinese herbal medicine planting industry. Besides, deep development of the economic globalization brings opportunity for development of traditional Chinese medicine industry to a certain extent. With constant progress and development of human society, there is considerable change in people's health concept from simple disease curing to combination of prevention, health care and treatment. Chinese herbal medicines become new medicine source of researching and developing drugs for preventing cancers, ADIS, cardiovascular diseases, and diabetes, etc. Besides, with significant changes in modern human's disease spectrum, traditional Chinese medicines show unique advantages and potential in curing modern diseases, such as cardiovascular diseases, nervous system diseases, metabolic and digestive system diseases, malignant tumor, and immunity disease. Chinese herbal medicines have broad development prospect at health care food, natural spices, and cosmetic product market. At present, the global market demand for Chinese herbal medicines is constantly increasing, and the annual growth rate is about 10%<sup>[1]</sup>. However, at international Chinese prescription market, China's Chinese herbal medicine is not on the cusp, Japan and South Korea also have a large portion. Analyzing both international and domestic market, according to local actual situation and market demand in Shandong Province, it is required to properly develop superior varieties, and integrate development of tourism, to promote deep processing of Chinese herbal medicines. Therefore, the development prospect is optimistic.

Tourist commodities play important role in development of the tourism. At present, domestic researches about tourist commodity development are mainly concentrated on following points: (i) implication of tourist commodities, such as Miao Xueling<sup>[2]</sup> and Chen Shengrong<sup>[3]</sup>; (ii) significance of tourist commodity development, such as Zhao Liming<sup>[3]</sup> and Xin Changshuang<sup>[4]</sup>; (iii) problems and measures for development of tourist commodities, such as Ma Zhiluan and Gaohui<sup>[5]</sup>, and Deng Xiaoming<sup>[6]</sup>. Besides, there are many researches about tourist commodities taking local areas. For example, Li Fengyan, Geng Kuihua, and Yang Yongfu<sup>[7]</sup> studied development of ethnic culture characteristic and tourist commodities in Guangxi, and came up with pertinent recommendations. Fu Sidan and Yao Huiqi<sup>[8]</sup> elaborated understanding of implication of rural tourism, studied significance of developing rural tourist commodities, and came up with feasible measures for developing rural tourist commodities. Now, China is accelerating economic development and promotes social progress. With guidance of Scientific Outlook on Development, it is an essential way to liberate and develop ethnic cultural productivity, promote coordinated development of cultural construction and social construction, for building new socialist countryside and boosting economic development. Shandong Province is rich in resources available for development of tourist commodities, Mashan Town in Changqing District, for instance. Mashan Town is a town in remote mountain area of southwestern Jinan City. It borders upon Taian City. With provincial highway No. 104 and Jinan-Heze Expressway crossing, Mashan has population of 33000 and covers an area of 88 km<sup>2</sup>, mainly mountain areas. Since 2008, the per capita net income of farmers in Mashan Town had realized annual growth rate of 18% (about 1000 yuan). The development of Chinese herbal medicines in Mashan Town can be summarized as "point, area and chain"<sup>[9]</sup>. Such single development mode may bring huge economic benefit, but it is difficult to guarantee long-term sustainable development and realize green GDP growth.

Received: February 3, 2015 Accepted: March 19, 2015

Supported by Student Innovation Project of Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine in 2014 (2014047).

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Therefore, how to realize sustainable development of Chinese herbal medicine in Shandong Province has become an essential problem for speeding cultural construction and dissemination of Chinese herbal medicines and building harmonious society. It is significant to explore development mode of integrating Chinese herbal medicine planting industry and tourist commodities in Shandong Province.

## 2 Analysis of current situations of Chinese herbal medicine planting bases

At present, the enthusiasm of building Chinese herbal medicine planting bases is tremendous, but the enthusiasm for GAP certification is low, and technical strengthen and implementation effort are weak, and the construction of Chinese herbal medicine planting bases is situated in low valley<sup>[10]</sup>. It is urgent to explore integrated development of planting bases and other new industries.

## 3 Analysis of development prospect of tourist commodity industry

Rich natural and cultural tourist resources provide excellent foundation for development of tourism. With development of tourism, appearance of various tourist commodities is an inevitable trend. In this situation, tourist commodities become indispensable things for satisfying leisure and recreation demands of people in tourist activities. In developed countries, income of tourist commodities takes up 40-60% of the entire tourism. China's tourism development starts late, the proportion of tourist commodities in total income of tourism is relatively low, which seriously influences overall development of national and regional tourism. Therefore, developing tourist commodities becomes the key for overall development of national and regional tourism.

However, the existing development of China's tourist commodities is not optimistic, mainly manifested in low operation and management level. At present, there are widespread problems in China's tourist commodities; lack of brand commodities; low level and poor packaging, and low added value; serious similarity of commodities; rough making and low quality; lack of support of related industries; slow upgrade of tourist commodities, and inadequate new product development. These problems seriously impair development of China's tourist commodities, leading to China's tourist commodity development far behind developed countries. These problems are mainly resulted from ineffective planning for operation and management. Thus, it is recommended to improve operation and management, to promote long-term development of China's tourist commodity market.

## 4 Analysis on market demands of green handmade soap

**4.1 Current situation of green handmade soap market** In China, the overall situation of green handmade soap market is not ideal. Since there is still no national access standard, the handmade soap on market is chaotic and the price is relatively, and

some handmade soaps are just placed at corners of supermarket and fail to attract consumers, some handmade green soaps are sold online and fail to make consumers rest assured<sup>[11]</sup>. Many consumers, especially male ones and middle-aged and old consumers, know nothing about handmade soaps. Therefore, the handmade soap market has huge development space and enormous potential consumers.

**4.2 Market prospect** The handmade soap is natural clean product, made of glycerin and plant oil, has skin curing function, and can be made into different products according to different types of skin. The earliest handmade soap appeared in approximately 2500 BC. It is the articles for washing with the longest history. With the development of times, on the basis of original manufacturing process, the handmade soap process has been constantly innovating. Distinctive color and bizarre model bring handmade soap to become first choice of modern people for fashion, health, green and environmental protection. With the rise of people's consumption concept and improvement of consumption level, handmade soap is gradually favored by more and more consumers. Green handmade soap is characterized by advantages in mild property and beautiful appearance, so its market prospect is broad. In Jinan City of Shandong Province, the handmade soap is still at market cultivation period, but more and more enterprises catch this market trend and turn their attention to this field.

**4.3 Industrial competitive edge** The handmade soap is mild to skin and is favorable for environmental protection. Handmade soap is different from chemical cleaning agent. After use, it emits sodium aliphate, which has high biological degradability, is essential composition of bacterial life activities, and will be decomposed into water and CO<sub>2</sub> after contact with water for about 24 hours<sup>[12]</sup>. Therefore, even though the emission flows to fivers and seas, it will not lead to environment pollution and not threaten survival of marine organisms. Apart from the above aspects, handmade soap has following advantages: (i) high quality. Raw materials of handmade soap consist of 100% purity glycerin and purely natural plant oil, and contain moisturizing factor and natural skin care composition. (ii) Novel consumption pattern. Since handmade soap stores often adopt DIY apart from selling handmade soap, it makes consumers experience sense of participation and creation and increases attraction of handmade soap. (iii) Vast consumption groups. Handmade soaps are popular with vast consumption groups from 8 years old children to 80 years old people, especially young people in pursuit of individualized handmade soaps.

## 5 Advantages of Shandong Province in development of green handmade soaps

**5.1 Abundant raw materials** Shandong Province is a large province of Chinese herbal medicine resources and production and an important part of the national Chinese herbal medicine production system. In the whole Shandong Province, there are 1480 kinds of Chinese herbal medicine resources<sup>[14]</sup>, including 1299

plant medicines, accounting for more than 10% of the Chinese herbal medicine resources of the whole country. More than 390 kinds of Chinese herbal medicines are purchased in large volume, including more than 200 kinds of local varieties. At present, more than 70 kinds of Chinese herbal medicines are planted in Shandong Province and nearly 20 kinds of Chinese herbal medicines are planted in Shandong Province on a large scale. The Chinese herbal medicine planting covers an area of about 120000 hm<sup>2</sup>, accounting for 10% of total area of the herbal medicine planting of the whole country. *Lonicera japonica*, *Crataegus*, *Salvia miltiorrhiza*, *Platycodon grandiflorus*, *Scutellaria baicalis*, and *Panax quinquefolius* planting in Shandong have become major cultivation and production area. Superior geographical position, clear distinction of four seasons and complex terrain, as well as rich experience in traditional plant cultivation, bring Chinese herbal medicines of Shandong Province with strong drug effect, pure color and high quality, win excellent reputation, and thus get favored by a lot of pharmacists and Chinese herbal medicine planting enterprises. Therefore, it will boost rapid development of local economy through integrating Chinese herbal medicine planting and tourist commodity industries relying on abundant Chinese herbal medicine resources of Shandong Province.

**5.2 Sufficient potential consumption groups** Jinan City is the place with many colleges and universities. Stimulating consumption enthusiasm of young students will be greatly favorable for the development of green handmade soaps.

**5.3 Technological support** Relevant colleges and universities in Shandong Province can provide technological support and assistance for villages in handmade soaps. Besides, it is able to take full advantage of local Chinese herbal medicine resources of Jinan City, extract plant essence and integrate it into the soap base. In addition, it is recommended to guide local villages to grasp calculation of green handmade soap formula, making, packaging, and storage skills, to provide powerful technological support for making of green handmade soap.

## 6 Significance of Shandong Province in development of green handmade soaps

At present, in the structure of Shandong Province's tourism income, catering and lodging take up a larger portion, while the income from tourist commodities takes up relatively low portion, thus it is necessary to further improve the rural tourism industrial chain. Developing green handmade soap is a method of harmonious development of human and nature. It not only brings direct economic benefits to local villagers and improves farmers' living conditions, but also integrates local Chinese herbal medicine planting and tourist commodities, strengthens combination of handmade soap with tourism industry, promotes optimization of industries, and fully reflects core value of the Scientific Outlook on Development.

## 7 Development direction of the green handmade soap

The overall development trend of soap is changing from traditional product to new type with high compatibility with human body safety and environment-friendly product. From the perspective of green chemicals, biomass resources with plant as major part will be ideal choice for human development<sup>[15]</sup>, and researching and developing natural and environment-friendly soaps will be popular. Specifically, it is recommended to consider following modes. (i) Establishing factories. Shandong Province is rich in raw materials of handmade soaps, and also abundant in labor resources. Thus, the handmade soap production scale is moderate and production place is easy to select. (ii) Opening stores. Opening handmade soap chain stores and operating DIY, combining creativity and practicality does not need large fund input, so it is ideal project for new undertakers. (iii) DIY training. It is recommended to open DIY training store, to provide DIY training for graduates, children, and other feasible training about handmade skills. (iv) Opening online shops. It is feasible to design by oneself, and use moulds available, to make various green handmade soaps, to attract more consumers to purchase.

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