

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**AGRICULTURE PACKAGING
DESIGN IN CHINA:
A STUDY OF FORM AND MEANING
TOWARDS THE CONSTRUCTION
OF NATIONAL IDENTITY**

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ABSTRACT

In the context of deepening globalization, national identity has increasingly become a significant field of interdisciplinary research. It is widely recognized as a key factor influencing not only a country's cultural cohesion and social stability but also its ability to project a strong and consistent image on the international stage.. This study takes Chinese agricultural packaging design as the starting point to explore its form and significance in the construction of national identity. Specifically, it is guided by three interrelated research questions: What are the historical foundations and conceptual evolution of Chinese national identity? In what ways do specific visual and material design elements in agricultural packaging embody national symbols and cultural narratives? And how does packaging design contribute to shaping and promoting the image of Chinese agriculture within domestic and global contexts? Methodologically, this research employs a mixed qualitative approach, combining comprehensive literature review, content analysis, visual semiotics, and case studies. The empirical component includes an in-depth analysis of 100 agricultural packaging samples across categories such as rice, tea, and meat, alongside qualitative interviews with 20 participants from diverse professional and social backgrounds. The findings reveal that agricultural packaging design in China transcends its functional role as a marketing tool, serving also as a cultural and symbolic medium. It reinforces narratives of heritage, tradition, and modernity, supporting the broader project of cultural continuity and nation branding. This study contributes to the academic discourse on design and national identity by highlighting how packaging can operate as a vehicle for cultural expression and identity construction. It also offers practical insights for designers, policymakers, and stakeholders involved in cultural and agricultural branding strategies.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

When people discuss the packaging of agricultural products, most people will focus on the design and practicality of packaging from the aspect of product protection and marketing. The regional, cultural, and national identity behind the packaging is rarely discussed. According to Zhang Liqin (2019), the packaging design of agricultural products should not only focus on product protection and marketing, but also deeply study the regional, cultural and national identity behind the packaging to maximize its value and function. Therefore, the packaging design of agricultural products should be studied from multiple perspectives, especially in the multidimensional dissemination of excellent national culture in the market circulation of agricultural products. This is with the aim of strengthening the self-confidence of regional culture, realizing the creative transformation and developing excellent local culture.

This study aims to explore how Chinese agricultural packaging design expresses and constructs national identity through elements such as visual symbols and how this identity influences consumer perceptions and attitudes towards products. Through in-depth analysis, the study found that agricultural packaging design conveys national cultural information through images, text, and colors. This builds national identity and enhances product value and market competitiveness. Therefore, by analyzing this field, one can gain a deeper understanding of China's modernization process, as well as political, cultural and social developments.

This study aims to explore the role of agricultural packaging design in constructing Chinese national identity through a multidisciplinary lens. The research has three key objectives: (1) to examine the historical evolution and conceptual foundations of Chinese national identity, (2) to analyze specific visual forms and cultural meanings in agricultural packaging design that reflect national identity, and (3) to investigate how packaging design contributes to the construction and communication of China's national agricultural image. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to both academic discourse and practical design applications,