

Date: 3/14/2018

To: Vice President, Cactus.com

From: Matt Vroom

Reference: Task to Research Logistics of New Product

Subject: New Cactus for Sale

Action Required: Approval Needed

Distribution List: Sales Department

After extensive research into which species of cactus would make the ideal new product for Cactus.com, I have determined this to be prickly pear cactus. Located ahead is the logistics and information gathered that would compliment the future sale of the prickly pear cactus. Using this information, the marketing department could immediately begin preparations to inform the public about this addition to our site, pending approval. With the entire sales team aware of this new plant, gauging customer interest will be the next step in introducing this succulent to the product line. The research on the prickly pear cactus presents an opportunity to offer this plant to customers all over America, something that hasn't been widely available to those living near arid environments.

Summary

The prickly pear cactus is the ideal product to add to our collection due to its growing popularity and usefulness. This plant is not only a beautiful addition to any garden but it also bares edible fruit. By offering a plant that not only looks great but provides food, customers gain additional reasons to purchase the cactus. Another important faction of this plant that customers will appreciate is the easy nature in which one takes care of the prickly pear cactus. As long as it receives sunlight and very occasional water, the cactus has the ability to survive in nearly all conditions (Eastern). The maintenance is miniscule compared to other similar plants we offer such as the totem pole cactus which can be fragile. This plant also doesn't need to be sold as a cutting (a method of distribution the roots of a plant) because of the easy access to the full grown cactus.

In terms of supplying this product, prickly pear cacti grow very quick and spread around the area they inhabit. Producing large quantities of this plant is an effortless process and can be replicated for a sizable demand (Grant). Legally, these plants are under no state or national restrictions and unlike certain species that are restricted to their natural ecosystems, prickly pear cacti are readily available and face no prospect of endangerment (Eastern). With laws varying by state and country, the prospect of dealing with

individual rules is bypassed by selling a plant that could be readily available. Cacti.com will be able to fulfill the order requirements with existing infrastructure and by expanding current farm locations.

Logistics

The Prickly Pear Cactus

This plant species is prevalent throughout the United States, Mexico, and South America (which is where the cactus originated from). Due to its ease of spreading, the prickly pear cactus is also found in sections in Northern Africa, Australia, and the Mediterranean (Gale). While this cactus shares biological similarities to other species in the spines that cover its flesh and through the colorful flowers that bloom, it differs due to the red fruits it bears. This fruit can be eaten raw or made into candy among other edible uses. Besides the enticing fruit, the pad of the plant can also be consumed in various dishes. Comparatively, the fruit has been used as a sweet dish while the pad has been incorporated as a vegetable (Gale). Historically, this cactus has been eaten by indigenous peoples of the Americas due to its readily availability and for medicinal reasons as a way to heal cuts, sunburns, and windburns. This plant has also been used to create a waterproof paint that is used on homes and as a method to mark property lines. Some regions of Mexico even feature this cactus as a part of their cow's diet to influence the taste of the cow's milk. In areas where the plant has become an invasive species like Northern Africa, the prickly pear cactus is used as an insect repellent (Gale). Overall, the prickly pear cactus is a versatile plant that can be used as an ingredient, paint, or food for livestock and remains an important aspect of the cultures of the people it grows near.

Appeal to the Customer

From a customer point of view, this succulent offers the perfect balance of accessibility and usefulness. Whether the buyer intends to admire of flowers, complement a garden, or collect the fruit, the prickly pear cactus offers something for everybody. Casual gardeners will also appreciate the simplicity in growing this plant as it requires very little attention. The plant is also so adaptable that suitable environments range from South America to the middle of the United States (Grant). Purchasing wise, Cactus.com will be able to offer very competitive prices to consumers because of the ability to grow large amounts of these plants. This will offer an appealing purchasing option to those who are turned off from the more expensive selections on the website. A large draw of a customer selecting this plant is the amount of

background information that will be provided on the website to assist with growing and maintaining the plant. Because the prickly pear cactus has the ability to spread quickly, the ability to nurture the plant is crucial to a successful garden. While some plants can be a pain to grow well, this cactus is resilient and able to fit into most environments without a hiccup (Eastern). It also represents a great return on investment due to the time it takes to grow. The flowering of this product is a huge draw as well as some plant enthusiasts will appreciate the combination of traditional cactus features with flower components for the spring.

Company Preparations

In order to fulfill customer orders, the company will have to announce the new product after the plant is grown in farms. After several months the plant will be available to ship to purchasers and will be able to survive on its own. Beyond stocking up on prickly pear cacti, the website will also need to be updated to provide information on the plant, its uses, and how to care for it. If valuable information is given to gardeners using this plant, then the customers will be more inclined to further use Cactus.com to buy their plants. As long as the amount of cacti we have covers the order numbers then the company will be able to provide a successful launch. In order to raise awareness for this introduction, an announcement will have to be made on the website and newsletter provided. Announcing the new product on our company's services will improve customer awareness but a budget must be portioned to advertising on other mediums as well. Working with local conservation groups such as the Cactus Conservation Institute and the Cactus and Succulent Plants Specialist Group will provide an opportunity to get the message out while gathering information on correct methods of instructing customers on taking care of their new plants. This workshop will also cover methods of maximizing uses of the cactus including preparing the plant for eating and using it to paint. The more information the customer can gain, the more likely they are to be intrigued and purchase the plant.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the introduction of the prickly pear cactus makes the perfect addition to the line of plants for sale. The popularity will prove successful among customers due to the physical appearance and usefulness of the plant. Not only does the cactus provide edible fruits, another selling point is the painting possibilities of the plant. The president of the Group to Promote Education and Sustainable Development, Margarita Barney de Cruz stated that "the nopal(fruit) has been used to paint churches and convents in rural

Mexico” giving context to the range of uses for this future product (Gale). Customers will also value the chance to purchase a full plant rather than a clipping. With a combined marketing effort, the prickly pear cactus could be Cactus.com’s most popular product.

The measures our gardening department would have to take to cultivate the plant would also be very straightforward. As the plant grows in large batches in nearly every environment, within a few months several hundred plants will be available for sale (Eastern). There are also no rules or regulations on the sale of this plant so no issues will be present during the shipping process. This means that the prickly pear cactus can be ethically and sustainably sourced for distribution.

Recommendation

- Begin planting cacti in farms
- Publish promotional material on website with date of expected sales
- Inform public of steps needed to foster growth of plant
- Organize proper shipping methods for preorders
- Select methods of advertising to spread awareness about this update to the website
- Launch sale and begin shipping

References

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