

A Study of Commercial Law (Economic Law) and Legal Politics Related to the Trade Practice of Adulterated Rice Circulating in the Community

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ABSTRACT

The National Police's Food Crime Investigation Task Force (Satgas) named three suspects in the case of alleged production and circulation of premium rice not meeting quality standards by PT Padi Internasional Makmur (PT PIM), which markets the Sania, Fortune, Sovia, and Siip brands. Suspect determination followed witness, expert, and laboratory examinations revealing violations in production and packaging. Coordinating Minister for Food Affairs Zulkifli Hasan announced the government's plan to remove the premium and medium rice classifications, leaving only ordinary rice and special rice with specific permits like Pandan Wangi, Basmati, and Japonica. This study analyzes the commercial law implications of *oplosan* rice practices and their impact on Indonesia's legal-political food trade system, using normative legal research through law, jurisprudence, and doctrine analysis. Results show *oplosan* rice harms community economics and contribute to poverty, with rice representing 22.03% of urban poverty lines per Central Statistics Agency data. PT PIM's quality control failures included having only one certified officer among 22 employees, violating SNI Premium Rice standards. The suspects face Consumer Protection Law charges with penalties of up to 5 years' imprisonment and Rp 2 billion fines, plus Money Laundering Law penalties up to 20 years and Rp 10 billion fines. The study concludes that *oplosan* rice circulation threatens legal certainty, justice, and community welfare, causing economic instability and eroding public trust in food distribution. These findings highlight challenges in commercial law enforcement and offer policy recommendations to strengthen food trade regulations and consumer protection mechanisms.

Keywords: *Oplosan Rice, Commercial Law, Legal Politics*

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INTRODUCTION

The integrity of the food supply chain and compliance with quality standards are fundamental pillars of consumer protection within the framework of trade law (Azevedo et al., 2023; Manning, 2020; Osato Itohan Oriekhoe et al., 2024; Randeree, 2019; Supian et al., 2019). In the context of staple food commodities such as rice, the intersection between economic law and regulatory enforcement becomes critical, as violations not only breach commercial obligations but also threaten public health and consumer confidence (Kangile et al., 2020; Maertens & Vande Velde, 2017; Muthayya et al., 2014; Rozi et al., 2023; Tirtalistyani et al., 2022). The phenomenon of food counterfeiting and misleading quality standards poses complex legal challenges that require comprehensive analysis through the lens of trade law principles and legal-political mechanisms designed to protect market integrity. This study examines the regulatory landscape governing food quality standards, the legal enforcement mechanisms available to authorities, and the legal implications for commercial entities involved in deceptive trade practices (Abdullah et al., 2023; Asnidar et al., 2023; Farisi et al., 2022; Vignesh & Vaithiyanathan, 2014; Zhu et al., 2019). This analysis is particularly relevant given recent enforcement actions that demonstrate the practical application of commercial law in addressing systematic violations of food quality standards in the marketplace.

The Food Task Force at the Criminal Investigation Agency (Bareskrim) of the National Police named three people as suspects in the case of alleged production and circulation of

premium rice that does not meet quality standards by PT Padi Internasional Makmur (PT PIM), which markets rice products under the brands Sania, Fortune, Sovia, and Siip. The Director of Economic and Special Crimes (Dittipideksus) of the Criminal Investigation Branch of the National Police, Brigadier General Pol Helfi Assegaf, stated that the determination of the suspects was made after a series of investigations by the National Police Food Task Force, including examinations of witnesses, experts, and laboratory test results. "From the results of the investigation, sufficient evidence was found to determine the three suspects responsible for the production and circulation of premium rice that did not comply with the quality standards on the packaging," said Helfi in a press conference at the Criminal Investigation Branch of the National Police Headquarters on Tuesday (5/8/2025).

The three suspects are S as President Director of PT PIM, AI as the head of the factory, and DO as the head of quality control (QC). The disclosure of this case began with a police report number LPA2297-2025 dated July 23, 2025. What is the key to business resilience in Indonesia? This was discussed in Kompas 80 Years of Indonesia. Upon investigation, it was found that four brands of premium rice owned by PT PIM circulating in traditional and modern retail markets did not meet the quality standards stated on the packaging label.

Coordinating Minister for Food Affairs Zulkifli Hasan (Zulhas) said that the government plans to remove the classification of premium and medium rice after the revelation of the *oplosan* rice case. Consequently, there will only be two types of rice: ordinary rice, which was previously divided into medium and premium, and special rice. He explained that special rice is determined based on government permits. For example, Pandan Wangi rice, Basmati rice, and Japonica rice. "Well, the special rice is based on the type that is given permission by the government. Isn't it true that it is indeed the best rice? Of course, there is a certificate issued by the government," he said. In addition, he also asked Perum Bulog to accelerate market operations, especially to distribute Food Supply and Price Stabilization (SPHP) rice. This is done as a solution to the rampant circulation of *oplosan* rice. "It has been decided that Bulog will accelerate market operations. There have been 1.3 million (rice) poured into the market but with strict supervision. It must be that SPHP can be marketed in the form of SPHP, not mixed," said Zulhas in a press conference in Jakarta, Sunday, July 27, 2025.

On the same occasion, the Head of the National Food Agency (Bapanas), Arief Prasetyo Adi, stated that as many as 1.3 million tons of SPHP rice will be disbursed by the government from July to the end of December 2025. He also ensured that there would be no increase in the price of SPHP rice disbursed by the government, which remains at Rp 12,500 per kilogram. "Until the end of the year, 1.3 million tons will be distributed. The price remains Rp 12,500 (per kilogram), nothing has changed," he said. Arief emphasized that retailers must sell rice at prices according to its quality. Medium rice must be sold following the highest retail price (HET) of Rp 12,500 per kilogram, while premium rice has an HET of Rp 14,900 per kilogram. "The price is adjusted to the quality. If it is medium rice, it is Rp 12,500; if premium rice, Rp 14,900," he said.

Meanwhile, President Director of Perum Bulog Ahmad Rizal Ramdhani said that Perum Bulog continues to strive to ensure that the distribution or sale of SPHP rice remains secure. One way is through donations managed by cooperatives owned by the Indonesian National Army (TNI). Rizal revealed that this method can be used to avoid the sale of fake or

oplosan rice. "So TNI cooperatives, TNI units starting from the kodam level, city, then korem, kodim, and even koramil can sell," he said.

The widespread circulation of adulterated rice represents a critical challenge to Indonesia's food security system and commercial law enforcement. This practice not only violates consumer protection principles but also undermines the fundamental pillars of fair trade and economic justice. The urgency of addressing this issue is heightened by its direct correlation with poverty rates and community economic stability, as rice constitutes over 22% of the urban poverty line according to Central Statistics Agency data.

Previous research on food adulteration has primarily focused on health implications and quality control mechanisms, with limited comprehensive analysis of commercial law and legal-political dimensions. Studies by Kuncoro (2010) and Machmud (2016) examined economic development policies but lacked specific focus on food trade violations. Santoso and Susilo (2002) analyzed Indonesia's economic structure, while Saputra (2011) investigated poverty correlations, yet none comprehensively addressed the intersection of commercial law violations with food adulteration practices in the context of legal-political objectives.

This research addresses a significant gap in understanding how commercial law enforcement can effectively combat food adulteration while supporting legal-political goals of certainty, justice, and welfare. The novelty lies in providing a comprehensive legal analysis that bridges commercial law violations with broader legal-political implications, offering both theoretical insights and practical enforcement strategies.

Therefore, this study aims to: (1) analyze the commercial law implications of *oplosan* rice practices and their violations of consumer protection principles, (2) examine how these practices undermine legal-political objectives of legal certainty, justice, and community welfare, and (3) provide recommendations for strengthening legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms. The benefits include contributing to commercial law scholarship, supporting policy development for food trade regulation, and providing guidance for law enforcement agencies in combating similar violations.

METHOD

This study employs normative legal research methods, which focus on analyzing legal norms and regulations relevant to the research topic. The data used in this study are primarily secondary in nature, consisting of laws, regulations, legal precedents, and scholarly legal commentaries that are pertinent to the topic of Commercial Law (Economic Law) and Legal Politics.

Once the relevant legal materials were collected, the data analysis process began with the systematic interpretation of legal texts, focusing on their application to adulterated rice circulation and commercial law violations. This included evaluating the purpose, scope, and application of laws, as well as identifying any inconsistencies or gaps. A comparative legal analysis was also employed, where necessary, to contrast Indonesian laws with international conventions and legal practices from other countries, highlighting differences and suggesting improvements. Finally, the findings were synthesized to propose recommendations for enhancing legal protections against circulation of adulterated rice. This detailed methodological approach ensures that the research is grounded in thorough legal analysis,

enabling readers to understand the steps taken to collect and interpret the data without needing to refer to external sources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

***Oplosan* Rice Analysis is Studied Based on the Perspective of Commercial Law or Economic Law**

According to the author's saving, *Oplosan* Rice Has an Impact on Poverty. This is also strengthened by the Central Statistics Agency. The problem of *oplosan* premium rice is considered to have an effect on the community's economy. The Acting Head of the West Java Central Statistics Agency (BPS) encourages the immediate handling of the problem of *oplosan* rice so that it does not have a significant impact on the community's economy, because there is a correlation with poverty. *Oplosan* rice can have an impact on poverty rates, considering that urban people consume a lot of premium rice called *oplosan* rice.

Then, in the last note, it shows that the poverty rate in urban areas shows an upward trend. There may be a correlation or relationship. This, if handled properly, will be able to improve the poverty level as well. If described in the results of the latest survey conducted, it was recorded that the poverty line for the March 2025 period was IDR 547,752 per capita per month, consisting of a food poverty line of IDR 391,347 and a non-food poverty line of IDR 132,705.

Then, if described, there are a number of commodities that contribute to the poverty line with the largest being rice. In urban areas, on the food poverty line, rice contributed 22.03 percent, followed by filter clove cigarettes 11.12 percent, purebred chicken eggs 5.11 percent, purebred chicken meat 4.93 percent, and ground coffee 3.57 percent. Meanwhile, the highest non-food commodity is housing with 9.74 percent, followed by gasoline at 2.44 percent, electricity at 2.13 percent, education at 1.79 percent and toiletries at 1.32 percent.

The same thing happened in rural areas where rice accounted for 26.78 percent of the poverty line in the food sector. "I hope that there will be more careful and good handling of this issue so that it does not cause turmoil in the community and the economy can be controlled," he said. The issue of *oplosan* rice has emerged in recent days, based on the findings of the Ministry of Agriculture regarding several premium rice circulating in the market that are suspected of being counterfeit or have quality that is not in accordance with its quality claims.

This was known after laboratory tests were carried out in five different locations. The Ministry of Agriculture also stated that the findings showed that products were sold above the highest retail price (HET) which had the potential to harm consumers. The Ministry of Agriculture said 10 out of 212 rogue rice producers had been inspected by the National Police Food Task Force together with the National Police Criminal Investigation Branch as a step to dismantle fraudulent practices and protect consumers.

According to the author, the economic and business impacts of *oplosan* rice include:

1. Risk of consumer losses and declining trust

The biggest loss is actually felt by customers who pay high prices for quality that turns out to be far below expectations.

This sense of disappointment and the impact of fraud has caused a decline in trust in local rice products and can even trigger consumers to switch to imported products that are considered more reliable. On an economic scale, community losses due to *oplosan* rice even

reach nearly Rp 99 trillion every year. Not only that, the reputation of all supply chain players, from farmers, millers, to retailers, is in danger of being tarnished even though most of them run their businesses with full integrity.

2. Domino effect on the food business supply chain

This smuggling practice certainly causes a domino effect that eats away at the supply chain. Countries and producers suffer, honest rice producers often struggle to compete on price, legal distributors and retailers lose customers, and consumer loyalty to brands and stores declines dramatically. On the other hand, the survival of the national food industry is also threatened if farmers and business actors lose motivation to improve the quality of their production.

3. Legal threats and violations of business ethics

All forms of rice adulteration are violations of consumer protection laws and can be subject to severe sanctions, ranging from business closures, large fines, to criminal charges for business actors. Businesses that carry out this practice are not only dealing with economic risks, but also the existence and sustainability of their business in the future. This mode of *oplosan* occurs at critical points in the supply chain, including during milling, distribution, and repackaging. Individuals often manipulate the weight in the packaging (e.g., weigh less than the label), deceive the quality label, or mix several types of rice to be sold as premiums. Manipulation is not only in quantity, but also in the form of branding execution that misleads consumers, making it difficult for them to distinguish between genuine quality and counterfeit results.

According to the author, there are several business strategies to avoid *oplosan* rice that can be an attention for all of us, including:

1. Partner selection and supply chain audit

Business actors must always ensure the purity of the supply chain, by selecting and conducting a thorough audit of partners, both farmers, millers, and distributors. This step is very important to ensure the authenticity and honesty of the goods in circulation¹².

2. Transparency of quality, labels, and consumer education

Business actors are expected to include quality labels clearly and ensure that all packaging and products are tested. There should be no compromise on the honesty of labels and serial numbers. If possible, provide education to consumers about the characteristics of *oplosan* rice must also be intensified so that consumers are more careful in shopping for food products.

3. Utilize technology and monitoring systems

Technology is the latest solution in monitoring the supply chain. The implementation of barcodes, QR codes, or digital tracking allows checking the origin and movement of rice from farmers to buyers. With an integrated ERP system or accounting software, you can automatically monitor stock, goods movement, audit, and change of goods data, so that all transactions and stock are guaranteed to be transparent and well documented.

Business opportunities behind the crisis of trust The increase in consumer awareness due to the case of *oplosan* rice actually presents opportunities for honest business actors. Trust in brands that prioritize quality, transparency, and integrity will soar. In fact, the demand for organic, local, and fair-trade certified rice products is now increasing in line with the crisis of trust in fraudulent rice. Businesses that are able to build supply chain digitization systems,

authentic quality labels, and automated data reports are actually growing more rapidly. Trusted brands will be the main choice of loyal customers, while fraudulent business actors are increasingly isolated from the market.

In the midst of the issue of *oplosan* rice, digital transformation based on accounting software and stock monitoring is a smart solution. Examples of the application of technology such as the Internet of Things (IoT), digital monitoring of the supply chain, and blockchain for data transparency have begun to be adopted by the world's food sector. ERP systems and accounting applications such as Accurate Online allow all transactions to be automatically recorded, optimal stock monitoring, and transparent audit reporting in real time.

Not only strengthening customer trust, but businesses can also make faster, more efficient, and less risk of losing stock. Quick access and full control over the supply chain, from recording orders at the checkout, tracking distribution, to customer loyalty, can all be done directly in one integrated system. By digitizing your control system, you can rebuild credibility, avoid the pitfalls of fraudulent supply chains, and create a healthy and competitive business environment.

The results of laboratory tests show that rice is not in accordance with SNI Premium Rice No. 6128:2020 as stipulated in Ministerial Regulation Number 31 of 2017 and National Food Agency Regulation Number 2 of 2023. What is wrong here is that there is no direction from the Board of Directors of PT PIM to ensure the quality of products according to standards.

However, the company only followed up verbally without any corrective steps. "The fact found is that the Quality Control officer who also conducted lab tests was only one person certified out of a total of 22 employees. According to Quality Control rules, Quality Control must be carried out every 2 hours. In fact, it is only done 1-2 times every day. For their actions, according to the author, the three suspects can be charged with Article 62 in conjunction with Article 8 paragraph (1) letters (a), (e), and (f) of Law Number 8 of 1999 concerning Consumer Protection, with a threat of 5 years in prison and a fine of Rp 2 billion, as well as Law Number 8 of 2010 concerning Money Laundering (TPPU), with a maximum criminal threat of 20 years and a fine of Rp 10 billion.

***Oplosan* Rice Analysis Studied Based on Legal Political Perspective**

The issue of rice smuggling has come to the surface again and has become a wide concern of various circles. This practice not only triggers public unrest but also encourages a serious response from policy makers.

Commission IV of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia even plans to summon the Minister of Agriculture Andi Amran Sulaiman to directly explain his statement regarding the rampant allegations of rice adulteration by businessmen and traders. The government does not seem to be sitting still. The Food Task Force moved quickly to summon parties suspected of being directly involved.

This step should be appreciated as a form of the state's seriousness in maintaining the quality and safety of people's food. Because in fact, rice smuggling is not just a trade violation but a form of denial of justice and humanity. All parties need to understand that this kind of action has a very wide impact. In a larger context, rice processing can be categorized as a violation of consumers' human rights to obtain proper and safe food.

This action caused great losses, both economically and socially, especially for small communities who have been relying on rice as a daily staple. Rice processing is the practice of

mixing rice of various types or different qualities for a specific purpose, usually to make a profit by reducing production costs. For example, mixing premium rice with low-quality rice, or local rice with imported rice. The implications of this practice are very serious.

First, the quality of rice circulating in the community is not guaranteed. Consumers can buy rice at high prices, but get products that are far from expectations. Second, this practice is slowly eroding public trust in the food distribution and trade system. Third, smuggling has an impact on fluctuations in market prices which can be detrimental to farmers and honest business actors. The motivation behind this practice is also quite complex. On the one hand, the perpetrators of the smuggling want to increase profit margins. On the other hand, they also take advantage of the weaknesses of the supervisory system and regulatory loopholes.

There are at least five common reasons that encourage smuggling, namely the desire to make big profits, reduce production costs, increase sales volume, avoid losses from old stocks, and take advantage of the negligence of the supervisory system. However, no matter how many reasons are presented, the impact is still unjustifiable. The losses borne by the community are very large. Rice smuggling is not only a violation of trade ethics, but can lead to health losses, decreased family nutrition, and damage to the country's food economic structure.

Therefore, rice smuggling is actually an inhumane act and must be treated as a serious crime. The Ministry of Agriculture through the Food Task Force is currently investigating the alleged smuggling of SPHP (Food Supply and Price Stabilization) rice which is sold as premium rice. According to Minister Amran's statement, indications were found that some stalls only sold 20 percent of PHP's rice, while the other 80 percent were sold at a higher price. This fact confirms that this culprit practice has been systemic and needs to be dealt with with firm and comprehensive steps. Nevertheless, there is always hope. All parties can take part in preventing the spread of *oplosan* rice.

There are several simple but important steps that the community can take. First, check the quality of the rice before buying. Pay attention to the color, texture, and aroma. Second, choose rice from a trusted source such as a local farmer or a reputable rice store. Furthermore, consumers also need to pay attention to the information labels on rice packaging, including its type, origin, and quality classification. Also make sure that the products purchased have official certifications from credible institutions, such as halal certification or food quality standards from BPOM.

According to the author, try to create a healthy ecosystem. If there is any suspicion of smuggling practices, report them to the authorities immediately. The community's response to this kind of practice is decisive in shaping a healthy and equitable food ecosystem. Another step that is no less important is to support local farmers. Buying directly from farmers or farmer cooperatives helps shorten the distribution chain, ensures the quality of the rice consumed, while improving farmers' welfare. Education to consumers is no less crucial. The public needs to be equipped with knowledge about the characteristics of *oplosan* rice and the risks posed if consuming it continuously.

The Ministry of Agriculture's Food Task Force, of course, already has a strategy and monitoring instruments. However, community collaboration will greatly strengthen these efforts. All parties must not allow this kind of harmful behavior to develop into a habit that is considered commonplace. Strict action, continuous education, and strict supervision are combinations that need to be strengthened. The problem of rice smuggling is a mirror that our

food system is not yet fully protected from fraudulent practices. However, this is also a golden opportunity for us to improve the system.

Starting from upstream, namely farmers and production, to downstream, namely distribution and consumption, everything must be regulated with the principles of justice, openness, and sustainability. Maintaining the integrity of the food system means safeguarding the future of the nation. Because of clean, healthy, and fair food, a strong and competitive generation will be born.

Therefore, the supervision and enforcement of *oplosan* rice is not only the responsibility of the government, but the call of conscience of all as citizens who care about others. Hopefully the steps that are now being taken will be the beginning of a cleaner and fairer rice trading system. Because behind a grain of rice consumed by the family, there is a great responsibility for human dignity.

In addition, we know that one of the main goals of legal politics is to create legal certainty. Legal certainty is important to provide a sense of security for the public, as they can understand what to expect and the consequences of their actions. Legal certainty ensures that the applicable law can provide protection for citizens' rights and ensures that the rules are applied consistently and fairly.

If it is associated with this case of *oplosan* rice, then this activity cannot create legal certainty because it does not provide a sense of security to the community and of course the community will feel worried when making transactions and it is too late to find out that the rice they receive is *oplosan* rice and that will definitely harm it.

Furthermore, another goal of legal politics is to uphold justice. Justice here is not only limited to the enforcement of appropriate laws, but also to how the law reflects the values of justice in society. A just law should provide equal treatment to all individuals, without discrimination. Enforcement of justice also involves punishing the offense committed and providing protection to those who are vulnerable or disadvantaged.

If it is associated with this case of *oplosan* rice, the activity cannot create justice because because the party who receives the counterfeit money will feel disadvantaged and the *oplosan* rice they receive cannot be used as a means of further transactions or in the future.

Legal politics also aims to encourage the prosperity and welfare of the community. The law can be used as a tool to regulate economic and social activities, so that it can create conditions conducive to economic growth and the improvement of social welfare. For example, laws governing taxes, consumer protection, and the environment can help create an environment that supports sustainable and equitable economic growth.

If it is associated with this case of *oplosan* rice, then the activity cannot provide welfare to the community because if the circulation of counterfeit money is high and the community does not know that the *oplosan* rice can add to the poverty line. If described, there are a number of commodities that contribute to the poverty line, with the largest being rice. In urban areas, on the food poverty line, rice contributed 22.03 percent, followed by filter clove cigarettes 11.12 percent, purebred chicken eggs 5.11 percent, purebred chicken meat 4.93 percent, and ground coffee 3.57 percent. Meanwhile, the highest non-food commodity was housing with 9.74 percent, followed by gasoline at 2.44 percent, electricity at 2.13 percent, education at 1.79 percent and toiletries at 1.32 percent.

CONCLUSION

According to the author's analysis, *oplosan* rice significantly impacts poverty levels, supported by Central Statistics Agency data showing rice constitutes 22.03% of the urban poverty line. The PT PIM case reveals systematic quality control failures, with only one certified officer among 22 employees and inadequate testing procedures conducted 1-2 times daily instead of the required 2-hour intervals. These violations warrant charges under Consumer Protection Law Article 62 and 8(1) with penalties of 5 years imprisonment and Rp 2 billion fines, plus Money Laundering Law violations carrying maximum 20-year sentences and Rp 10 billion fines. From a legal-political perspective, *oplosan* rice circulation undermines three fundamental objectives: legal certainty by creating consumer insecurity and transaction risks, justice by disadvantaging consumers who receive substandard products, and community welfare by contributing to poverty rates and economic instability. Future research should focus on developing comprehensive regulatory frameworks that integrate digital monitoring systems, strengthen inter-agency coordination between police, agriculture ministry, and consumer protection agencies, and establish community-based monitoring mechanisms to prevent systematic food adulteration practices.

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