

Continued Entrepreneurial Confidence in Cross-Border Fresh-Fruit Trade: A Literature Review

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Abstract: Entrepreneurs in cross-border fresh-fruit trade operate in a setting where international trade, cold-chain fulfillment, quality loss, platform rules, and working-capital turnover overlap. This review synthesizes entrepreneurship, cross-border e-commerce logistics, food distribution, and institutional-environment studies to explain continued entrepreneurial confidence as calibrated controllability rather than simple optimism. The analysis shows that confidence is shaped by five interacting dimensions: psychological resources, experience and failure learning, social capital, institutional ecosystem, and fresh-product risk. Self-efficacy and passion support persistence, but excessive optimism may create hubris. Social capital and policy support matter only when they reduce operational uncertainty. In fresh-fruit trade, perishability and traceability make confidence depend on process visibility, cold-chain reliability, and accountability. The paper proposes a calibration framework for future research and suggests that continued confidence should be measured as dynamic task-specific judgment rather than a general attitude.

Keywords: cross-border fresh-fruit trade; continued entrepreneurial confidence; entrepreneurial self-efficacy; failure learning; social capital; cold-chain risk

Introduction

Entrepreneurs engaged in cross-border fresh-fruit trade face a form of uncertainty that is more operational and time-sensitive than many ordinary e-commerce settings. Fruit is perishable; quality changes during transportation; customs inspection, quarantine, freight cost, exchange-rate movement, platform traffic, customer complaints, and cash-flow turnover can rapidly transform a promising order into a loss. In this context, continued entrepreneurial confidence does not mean naive optimism. It means the entrepreneur's belief that uncertainty can be understood, controlled, and improved through action.

The original literature on entrepreneurial confidence is often connected with entrepreneurial intention, self-efficacy, optimism, persistence, and risk taking. For cross-border fresh-fruit entrepreneurs, however, the key question is not only whether to start a business. It is whether to continue after delayed customs clearance, spoiled inventory, complaint spikes, price volatility, and seasonal demand fluctuations. Continued confidence is therefore a post-entry judgment about whether the entrepreneur can keep acting after repeated operational shocks.

This paper reviews literature from 2006 to 2026 and reorganizes it into a compact conference framework. The main argument is that continued entrepreneurial confidence is a dynamic calibration process. Psychological resources provide motivation; experience and failure learning correct judgment; social capital reduces uncertainty; institutional support creates external controllability; and fresh-fruit industry risk determines how quickly confidence is tested. The contribution is to move beyond general optimism and treat confidence as task-specific, process-based, and context-dependent.

Related Work

Self-efficacy research provides the psychological foundation. Miao, Qian, and Ma find that entrepreneurial self-efficacy is positively associated with firm performance [2]. Cardon and Kirk show that entrepreneurial passion mediates the relationship between self-efficacy and persistence [3]. These studies suggest that confidence helps entrepreneurs keep investing effort under uncertainty. Yet confidence is not always beneficial. Hayward, Shepherd, and Griffin's hubris theory warns that excessive confidence can lead entrepreneurs to underestimate risk and overcommit resources [1].

Failure-learning research adds a corrective perspective. Ucbasaran et al. show that business failure creates psychological, social, and financial costs and that entrepreneurial reentry depends on how failure is interpreted [4]. For cross-border fresh-fruit trade, this means confidence should be recalibrated after incidents. A loss caused by temperature abuse, a customs delay, or channel mismatch should not simply reduce confidence; it should improve process diagnosis and future decision rules.

Social capital and institutional theory explain external confidence. Stam, Arzlanian, and Elfring show that social capital is associated with small-firm performance, although its value depends on context and quality [5]. Bruton, Ahlstrom, and Li emphasize that institutional environments shape entrepreneurial behavior by defining rules, constraints, and opportunities [6]. In cross-border fresh-fruit trade, social ties and institutional policies matter when they provide reliable supplier information, logistics coordination, customs knowledge, traceability support, and enforceable after-sales responsibility.

The industry context is equally important. Cross-border logistics studies show that demand uncertainty, customs uncertainty, transportation time, return handling, and customer service interact in complex ways [7]. Food-distribution research highlights quality, safety, sustainability, network design, inventory control, and temperature management [8]. Traceability research further shows that visibility over origin, process, and quality can build safety and consumer trust [9]. Together, these streams show why fresh-fruit entrepreneurs need more than psychological confidence: they need verifiable operational control.

Key Contribution

This review contributes a five-dimensional calibration framework for continued entrepreneurial confidence in cross-border fresh-fruit trade. The framework treats confidence as the result of interaction between internal psychological resources and external controllability. It also distinguishes general entrepreneurial self-belief from task-specific confidence in procurement, cold-chain coordination, customs clearance, platform operation, and cash-flow management.

Table 1. Calibration framework for continued entrepreneurial confidence

Dimension	Confidence mechanism	Cross-border fresh-fruit trade implication
Psychological resources	Self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism support continued action but can become overconfidence.	Confidence should be high enough to continue, but bounded enough to avoid hubris and sunk-cost persistence.
Experience and failure learning	Operational incidents recalibrate confidence through attribution, learning, and process correction.	Losses from customs delay, temperature abuse, or platform claims must become process knowledge rather than simple discouragement.
Social capital	Relationships reduce uncertainty when they provide reliable information, logistics access, and market support.	Supplier, cold-chain, customs, and platform ties become supply-chain confidence, not only personal networks.
Institutional ecosystem	Policies matter only when they become usable resources and predictable rules.	Pilot zones, customs facilitation, and traceability systems raise confidence when entrepreneurs can translate them into daily control.
Industry risk	Perishability compresses decision time and makes confidence depend on process visibility.	Cold-chain monitoring, quality traceability, and working-capital discipline are central to continuing confidence.

The framework also clarifies why confidence can rise or fall after the same event. A failed shipment may destroy confidence when the cause is ambiguous and responsibility is unclear. The same failed shipment may strengthen confidence when entrepreneurs identify the cause, adjust packaging, change cold-chain partners, improve traceability, or renegotiate platform service rules. Confidence is therefore not a fixed personal trait but an operationally informed judgment.

Method, Review Synthesis and Results

This article uses a compact integrative review method. The original manuscript's broad literature map was reorganized according to the conference page limit and reference limit. The retained sources were selected for their direct relevance to entrepreneurial self-efficacy and hubris, persistence and failure learning, social capital, institutional environment, cross-border e-commerce logistics, food distribution quality, and traceability. The synthesis produces four core results.

First, psychological confidence must be distinguished from operational controllability. Self-efficacy supports action and persistence [2], [3], but hubris creates the risk of overexpansion and underestimation of loss [1]. In fresh-fruit trade, confidence should be sufficient to continue, but not so inflated that entrepreneurs ignore spoilage probability, cash-flow pressure, or platform complaint costs.

Second, experience improves confidence only when it is converted into learning. Repeated shipments, supplier negotiations, customs handling, and platform operations expose entrepreneurs to practical variation. However, experience can also produce routine blindness. Failure-learning literature suggests that entrepreneurs must interpret losses in a way that identifies controllable and uncontrollable causes [4]. For this industry, useful learning includes recognizing temperature-control deviations, sales-window mismatch, packaging damage, and demand misjudgment.

Third, social capital should be understood as supply-chain confidence. Cross-border fruit entrepreneurs do not benefit merely from having many contacts. They benefit from relationships that reduce uncertainty: stable overseas suppliers, reliable cold-chain providers, customs brokers familiar with port rules, platform contacts who clarify after-sales standards, and peer networks that share market signals. Social capital therefore works when it becomes operational reliability [5].

Fourth, institutional support must become usable resources. Comprehensive pilot zones, customs facilitation, trade policy, traceability systems, and logistics infrastructure increase confidence only when entrepreneurs can translate policy into daily procedures [6], [10]. If policy exists only as a label, but cold-chain warehouses, inspection rules, finance access, and platform accountability remain unclear, confidence will not be sustained.

Discussions

The fresh-fruit attribute changes the logic of entrepreneurial confidence. Ordinary goods can often be stored, discounted, or resold later. Fruit loses value quickly once its selling window is missed. This makes confidence more dependent on process visibility than on market enthusiasm alone. Cold-chain monitoring, traceability, quality inspection, and fast after-sales handling are not auxiliary tools; they are mechanisms through which entrepreneurs decide whether continuing is reasonable [8], [9].

The framework also explains regional and platform differences. Entrepreneurs located near ports, cold-chain clusters, and cross-border e-commerce pilot zones may convert institutional support into stronger external controllability [10]. Entrepreneurs in less developed logistics regions may face similar market demand but lower confidence because customs knowledge, temperature-control capacity, and platform service support are harder to access. Platform rules also shape confidence: traffic allocation, refund standards, complaint handling, and quality-dispute responsibility influence whether entrepreneurs feel the environment is predictable.

Practically, continued entrepreneurial confidence should be built through calibrated support. Entrepreneurs need training not only in motivation, but also in procurement planning, category selection, temperature control, customs-document preparation, platform after-sales rules, and cash-flow risk. Governments and platforms should avoid treating confidence as a purely psychological variable. A confident entrepreneur is not simply someone who believes in success; it is someone who can see enough of the process to judge risk and act responsibly.

Future empirical work should measure confidence dynamically. Cross-sectional questionnaires capture general attitudes, but confidence in this industry changes across procurement season, logistics incidents, sales results, and policy adjustments. Researchers can combine interviews, shipment records, cold-chain data, platform complaint data, and follow-up surveys to examine how confidence declines, recovers, or becomes overconfident. Such designs can better distinguish healthy persistence from risky escalation.

Conclusions

Problem statement addressed: continued entrepreneurial confidence in cross-border fresh-fruit trade is a calibrated judgment of controllability, not simple optimism.

Method used: a compact integrative review synthesized entrepreneurship, cross-border logistics, institutional environment, food distribution, and traceability studies.

Key findings: confidence is shaped by psychological resources, failure learning, social capital, institutional usability, and fresh-product risk.

Application: entrepreneurs, platforms, and policymakers should strengthen process visibility, cold-chain reliability, traceability, after-sales accountability, and policy usability.

Limitations and future work: future studies should use dynamic data, interviews, platform records, and shipment-level evidence to measure confidence before and after operational incidents.

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