

# Project Profile for Garhwal/Kumaon Flavored Popcorn Retail in Uttarakhand

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Garhwal/Kumaon Flavored Popcorn Retail venture is a unique value addition initiative that integrates local culinary identity with a universally popular snack—popcorn. Leveraging the rising demand for regional flavors and health-conscious snacking, this retail model introduces traditional Kumaoni and Garhwali spice blends, herbs, and ingredients such as Jakhya, Bhangeera, Timur, Bichhu Booti, and local turmeric into flavored popcorn variants. The venture aims to create a premium, culturally rooted brand that appeals to tourists, students, urban consumers, and local families alike.

This concept is particularly suited to Uttarakhand, where rural entrepreneurship and GI-tagged local ingredients are being increasingly promoted. It capitalizes on the availability of raw Himalayan maize, which can be processed and popped locally. The use of traditional flavoring techniques from Garhwal and Kumaon—such as Bhangeera masala or Bichhu Booti chutney-style powder—gives the popcorn a regional twist while remaining appealing to mass palates. It also creates a sense of pride and familiarity among hill consumers.

The business is scalable through kiosks, small retail outlets, and online/WhatsApp-based delivery formats. It holds potential for strong repeat purchases due to its uniqueness, portability, and attractive price point. The venture integrates elements of food processing, branding, regional identity, and youth-led retail entrepreneurship—creating a high-visibility, low-barrier business that uplifts local agricultural and culinary value chains.

## 2. INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

The Indian snacks industry, valued at over ₹40,000 crore, is one of the fastest-growing FMCG segments, projected to grow at a CAGR of 12–15%. Within this, the ready-to-eat popcorn category has expanded beyond cinema halls into home consumption, retail chains, and e-



commerce platforms. Healthier snacking options—especially those low in oil and with natural ingredients—are seeing increased consumer preference. Popcorn fits well within this shift due to its fiber content, lightness, and adaptability to multiple flavor formats.

While large brands dominate the butter, cheese, and caramel popcorn space, there remains a strong gap in the regional-flavor popcorn segment. Several start-ups have emerged offering peri-peri, tandoori, and Italian herb variants—but none with Himalayan authenticity. This gives Garhwal/Kumaon Flavored Popcorn a clear niche. Additionally, increasing tourist footfall in Uttarakhand, combined with rising urban youth interest in sustainable and artisanal foods, creates a receptive market for this kind of snack innovation.

The business is also aligned with government schemes like ODOP (One District One Product), PMFME (Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro food processing Enterprises), and Vocal for Local campaigns, all of which support innovative agro-based ventures rooted in local identity. Moreover, the popcorn segment has low entry barriers and high retail margins, making it ideal for youth and women entrepreneurs, especially in semi-urban and tourist hotspots.

### **3. PRODUCTS AND APPLICATION**

The venture will offer a range of flavored popcorns inspired by Himalayan herbs and traditional condiments. Core product variants will include Bhangeera Salted Popcorn (nutty roasted flavor), Jakhya-Spiced Popcorn (pungent crunch), Timur Chili Popcorn (spicy-citrus profile), Bichhu Booti Herb Popcorn (medicinal herbal flavor), and Classic Garhwali Turmeric Popcorn (immunity-boosting). All flavors will be developed using natural, locally-sourced powders and oils, ensuring authenticity and health value.

The popcorn will be packaged in 30g and 60g eco-friendly pouches, making them suitable for retail stores, trekking groups, tourism kiosks, and school/college canteens. Seasonal packaging for festivals and pilgrimage circuits (e.g., Char Dham Yatra snack packs) can also be introduced. The lightweight nature and non-messy format of popcorn make it ideal for gifting, takeaway, and impulse purchases. The brand may also expand into combo gift packs or subscription boxes once the retail network is established.



In terms of application, the product targets health-conscious youth, urban families, and tourists looking for culturally immersive but convenient food experiences. It may also be sold to cafés, homestays, and eco-resorts that wish to offer "local snacks with a twist." Because the core flavoring relies on traditional household spices and methods, it also evokes nostalgia and trust among local consumers, increasing its rural and semi-urban demand.

#### **4. DESIRED QUALIFICATION**

This venture can be taken up by individuals with basic entrepreneurial skills, an interest in food processing, and a passion for regional culture and branding. A graduate-level qualification in any field (preferably commerce, hospitality, food technology, or marketing) would be helpful, though not mandatory. More important is the ability to coordinate sourcing, maintain hygiene standards, manage inventory, and build local retail or digital channels.

Candidates with previous experience in hospitality, food business operations, retail franchise management, or community-based enterprise development may find it easier to execute and scale the venture. Women entrepreneurs, SHG members, or youth trained under PMFME, NRLM, or DUY programs can also be suitable operators. A strong sense of quality control, packaging aesthetics, and storytelling will be key to building consumer trust in this niche snack product.

Short-term training in basic food safety, handling, and flavor formulation—available via local KVKs, FICCI, or food entrepreneurship incubation centers—can add significant value. Exposure to food packaging, shelf-life extension methods, and hygiene certifications like FSSAI will further enhance the venture's credibility and compliance readiness.

#### **5. BUSINESS OUTLOOK AND TREND**

The business outlook for locally flavored popcorn is very promising, particularly as consumer preferences move toward healthier and more authentic snack options. Over the next three years, flavored popcorn demand in India is expected to grow at 15–20% CAGR, especially within the gourmet and urban snacking segments. Combining that trend with rising interest in Himalayan ingredients creates a strong tailwind for this venture.



Additionally, the format allows for rapid scaling with minimal infrastructure. The venture can start from a small processing kitchen with a basic popcorn machine and sealing unit and expand to multiple kiosks, partnerships with local cafés, or even regional-level distribution. Tie-ups with tourism boards, Yatra camps, and food festivals also offer unique positioning advantages. Retail partnerships with ODOP stores or Hill Craft Emporiums will further diversify reach.

The broader shift toward Vocal for Local, eco-conscious packaging, and GI-tag storytelling gives this venture more than commercial momentum—it represents a cultural rebranding of Uttarakhand's food legacy. By using local ingredients creatively in a contemporary snack, this initiative bridges tradition and modernity, which is a major trend across all consumer categories in 2025 and beyond.

## 6. MARKET POTENTIAL AND MARKET ISSUES

The potential market for Garhwal/Kumaon Flavored Popcorn includes tourists, local urban residents, trekking groups, students, and wellness retreat clients. With approximately 1.2 crore tourists visiting Uttarakhand annually, including those on pilgrimages and adventure trips, the opportunity to market flavorful, regionally branded popcorn is immense. A small kiosk in a high-footfall location can sell over 200–300 units weekly, even in non-peak seasons.

Urban centers like Dehradun, Nainital, Haldwani, Almora, and Rishikesh have a strong base of students, professionals, and middle-class families who increasingly prefer artisanal, small-batch food products. If the product is priced affordably (₹20–₹60 per pack), it can compete with mass brands while offering superior cultural value. Over time, an online channel—combined with packaging innovation and influencer partnerships—can tap into metro city markets outside Uttarakhand too.

However, the market also presents challenges. Sourcing consistent quality of traditional herbs like Timur or Bichhu Booti may be season-dependent and requires strong backward linkages. Maintaining flavor consistency, shelf-life, and packaging durability in hilly climatic conditions can also be complex. Furthermore, establishing a recognizable brand in the cluttered snack market requires sustained marketing and storytelling—something small ventures must budget for early on.



## 7. RAW MATERIAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The raw materials required for the business include locally sourced popping-grade maize, cooking oil (preferably Himalayan mustard or Bhangeera oil), and a mix of dry spice powders unique to the region. This includes powdered Jakhya, Bhangeera seeds, Timur (Szechuan pepper), turmeric, red chili, and Bichhu Booti. Packaging materials include printed paper/kraft pouches with zipper seals or single-use packs, labels, and promotional tags.

The infrastructure requirement for production includes a medium-sized air popcorn popper, spice mixer/coater, foot sealer machine, weighing scale, and small stainless-steel prep tables. A clean, well-ventilated workspace of around 300 sq ft will be sufficient for initial operations. For retail, a 6x4 ft kiosk setup or countertop shelf within an existing store is adequate. Dry storage space for raw maize and spice powders must be maintained to avoid spoilage.

Electricity, clean water, food-safe working surfaces, and basic utensils must be part of the processing space. In some cases, SHG kitchens or community processing centers can be leveraged, provided they meet hygiene norms. For packaging, local vendors in Haldwani, Rudrapur, or Dehradun can provide low-MOQ biodegradable bags or glass jars. Branding stickers and labels can be printed at local printing presses or through online vendors for cost efficiency.

**Table 1: Raw Materials and Infrastructure**

Item	Specification	Monthly Requirement	Remarks
Popcorn-grade maize	Locally sourced (puffed easily)	80–100 kg	From local farmers or agri mandis
Bhangeera oil	Cold pressed, Himalayan sourced	10–15 liters	Flavour base and frying medium



Item	Specification	Monthly Requirement	Remarks
Jakhya, Timur, Turmeric etc.	Dry powdered/roasted blends	15–20 kg	Sourced via SHGs or forest produce societies
Popcorn popping machine	Electric, 5–10 kg/hr	1 unit	Mid-size air popper or rotating drum type
Sealing & packing equipment	Foot sealer, zipper pouch sealer	1–2 units	Ensures airtight packaging and shelf life
Packaging materials	Kraft pouches, jars, branding tags	1,500–2,000 packs	Zip pouch or stick-pack formats, locally printed

## 8. OPERATIONAL FLOW (WITH FLOWCHART)

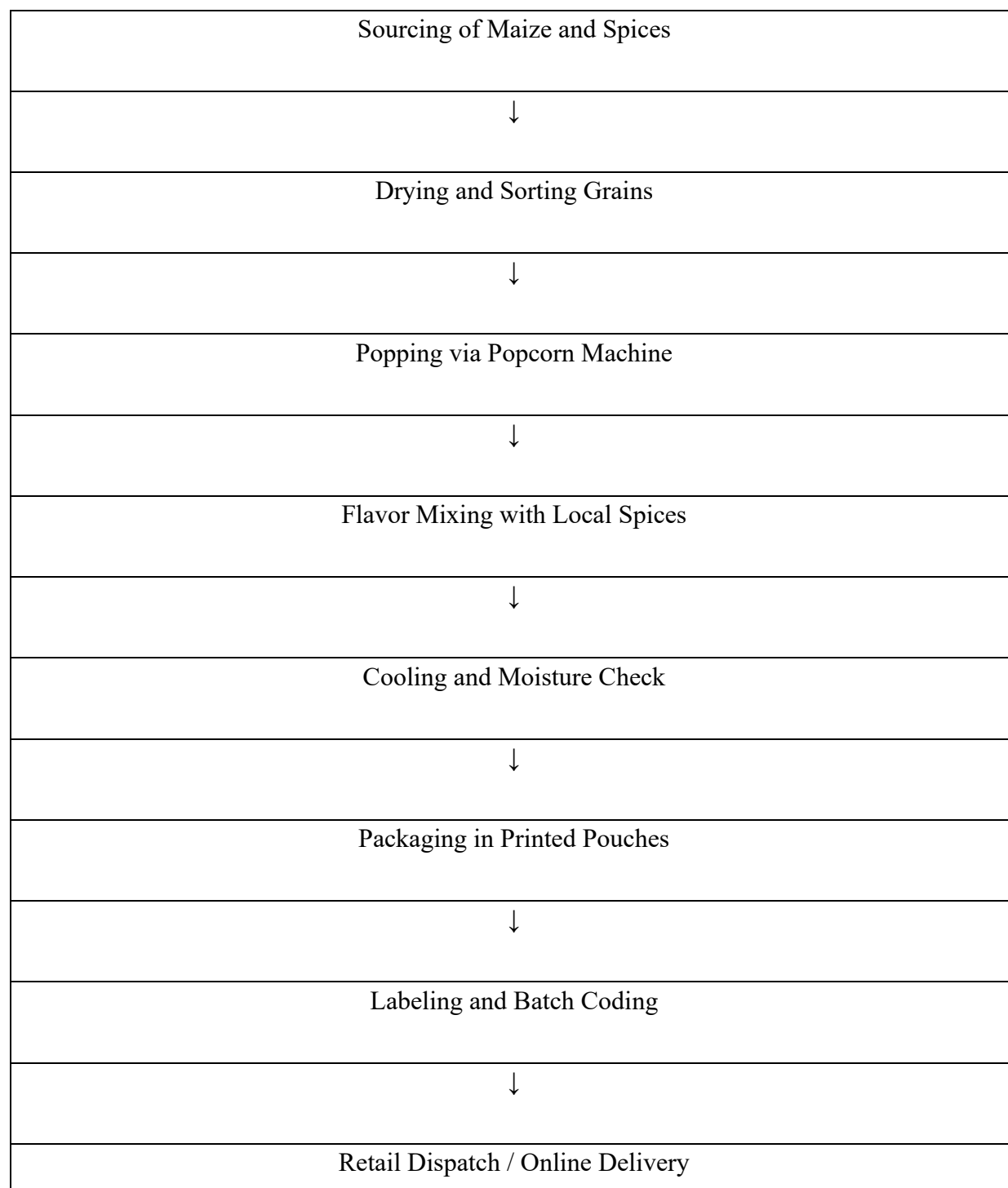
The operational workflow for the flavored popcorn retail unit follows a straightforward batch-processing model integrated with spice mixing and local retail distribution. The process begins with sourcing quality maize grains from local farmers or markets, followed by air-drying if needed to reduce moisture. The grains are then sorted, and a measured batch is loaded into the popcorn machine. Once popped, the corn is immediately transferred to a mixing unit where spice powders and oils are blended uniformly.

The flavored popcorn is allowed to cool before being packed into pre-printed pouches using a manual or foot sealer. Batch codes and labels are affixed. The finished packs are then stored in clean, dry bins and dispatched to either retail counters, kiosks, or online delivery hubs. In case of gift box variants or combo packs, the popcorn pouches are combined with other local snacks and packed into larger kits for tourism fairs or seasonal sales.

Quality checks are done at three stages: post-popping (texture and puffing rate), post-flavoring (evenness of mix), and post-packing (seal strength and labeling). The entire process from maize sorting to packaging can be completed in 3–4 hours for a batch of 15–20 kg, making it suitable for daily or alternate-day production.



### Flowchart: Operational Workflow



## 9. TARGET BENEFICIARIES

The primary beneficiaries of this venture will be young entrepreneurs, women-led SHGs, and small food processing units seeking entry into the packaged food sector. Due to the simple



machinery and low working capital requirements, the business is ideal for rural and semi-urban youth trained under DUY, PMFME, or NRLM livelihood missions. It can also be adopted by educated returnees looking to start culturally rooted snack ventures.

Farmers and spice foragers are secondary beneficiaries. As the demand for locally grown maize and traditional spices like Bhangeera and Timur increases, FPOs and producer SHGs involved in cultivation and harvesting of these crops will benefit from direct buyback linkages. This supports backward integration and strengthens local agri-value chains.

Tourists, urban snack consumers, and local families also benefit from access to authentic, health-friendly snacks that reflect regional pride. Furthermore, institutions like cafés, hostels, school canteens, and retreat centers that adopt the product into their menus indirectly support local economies while diversifying their offerings.

## **10. SUITABLE LOCATIONS**

The most suitable areas to initiate flavored popcorn production and retail units are those with both tourist footfall and proximity to spice or maize supply clusters. Urban centers like Dehradun, Haldwani, Almora, Rishikesh, and Nainital serve as ideal starting points for pilot stores or branded kiosks. These towns offer consistent demand and access to distribution infrastructure.

Tourist-dense areas like Mussoorie, Mukteshwar, Chopta, Kausani, Joshimath, and Haridwar are suitable for smaller, pop-up-style retail units or seasonal festival stalls. These locations attract a steady flow of visitors who are more inclined to purchase regionally branded snack items. Proximity to Char Dham route can also offer massive seasonal retail potential.

Processing units can be located closer to maize- and spice-producing blocks in Rudraprayag, Chamoli, Almora, and Tehri. These rural sites offer affordable space, reliable labor, and low raw material transport costs. Using existing rural kitchens or SHG spaces reduces CAPEX and encourages local ownership of the venture.





## 11. MANPOWER REQUIREMENT

The venture requires a lean yet functional team for both production and sales. At the processing level, 1 Production Supervisor (₹15,000/month) oversees sourcing, machinery handling, and quality control. Two Processing Workers (₹10,000/month) manage popping, mixing, and packing. One part-time Storekeeper/Inventory Handler (₹8,000/month) maintains stock records, inputs, and batch logs.

Each retail point will need 1 Retail Operator (₹9,000–₹12,000/month) trained in POS billing, basic customer service, and hygiene. If online orders or WhatsApp sales are initiated, an E-commerce Assistant (₹10,000/month) may be engaged part-time for packaging, coordination, and dispatch.

Staff can be drawn from SHG networks, local youth skill programs, or rural entrepreneurs supported by FPOs. Cross-training in both production and retail can help the team remain flexible and efficient during peak seasons.

**Table 2: Manpower Requirements**

Role	Quantity	Monthly Salary (₹)	Responsibility
Production Supervisor	1	₹15,000	Oversee processing, batch quality, procurement
Processing Workers	2	₹10,000	Popping, mixing, sealing
Inventory Assistant	1	₹8,000	Stock keeping, dispatch logs
Retail Operators	3	₹9,000 – ₹12,000	Sales at kiosks, customer handling
E-commerce Assistant	1 (PT)	₹10,000	Online orders, packaging, customer queries



## 12. IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

The project can be implemented within a period of 6–8 months from conception to launch. In Months 1–2, the focus will be on finalizing recipes, procuring sample spice blends, and getting FSSAI registration. During this period, the entrepreneur should also shortlist kiosk spaces, set up basic accounts and POS tools, and identify raw material vendors.

Months 3–4 will involve procuring and installing the popcorn machine, foot sealers, and packaging tools. Branding development—logo, packaging designs, labels—and social media account setup also occurs here. Sample testing, gift pack trials, and flavor refinement can be conducted simultaneously with soft-launch feedback.

By Month 5, trial production begins, along with stocking of 2–3 initial retail points. From Month 6 onward, sales channels are scaled, quality monitoring routines are established, and online promotion is intensified. Months 7–8 will focus on festival sales (Raksha Bandhan, Diwali) and establishing rural production–urban retail integration.

**Table 3: Implementation Timeline**

Month	Activities
1–2	Vendor tie-ups, FSSAI license, spice blend trials, branding plan
3–4	Equipment purchase, outlet finalization, training & packaging dev
5	Production trials, pricing, market testing
6–8	Retail launch, festival promotion, inventory & reporting systems

## 13. ESTIMATED PROJECT COST

The total cost of setting up a flavored popcorn production and retail unit ranges between ₹12 to ₹16 lakhs, depending on the scale and number of retail points. Fixed capital includes purchasing the popcorn machine, sealing unit, spice mixing equipment, weighing scales,



utensils, tables, and branding design. Setting up 2–3 kiosks or retail shelves requires interior display material, signage, and a small POS system, costing around ₹2.5–₹3 lakhs.

Working capital for the first four months—covering salaries, raw material purchase (maize, oils, spices), packaging, transportation, and marketing—is estimated at ₹4–₹5 lakhs. Marketing, including digital promotion, product photography, labeling, and trial samplers, will require an additional ₹1.5 lakhs. Expenses can be optimized by using shared SHG kitchen spaces or renting kiosks seasonally in tourism towns.

Initial investment can be recovered within 18–24 months, especially if the venture captures regular footfall from tourism or urban youth segments. Cost efficiency improves with batch production, reusable packaging, and direct sales models.

**Table 4: Estimated Project Cost**

Component	Estimated Cost (₹)	Remarks
Machinery and Equipment	₹3,50,000 – ₹4,00,000	Popcorn machine, sealers, mixers, tables
Retail Setup (2–3 outlets)	₹2,50,000 – ₹3,00,000	Display shelves, signage, branding, counters
Branding & Packaging Design	₹1,50,000	Logo, label design, website/social media setup
Initial Working Capital (4 months)	₹4,00,000 – ₹5,00,000	Salaries, raw material, logistics
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>₹12,00,000 – ₹15,50,000</b>	<b>Inclusive of production, branding, and retail setup</b>



## 14. MEANS OF FINANCE

The project can be financed through a combination of equity, government support schemes, and term loans. Promoters may invest 25–30% of the project cost as margin money (₹3–₹4.5 lakhs). The rest can be arranged via institutional loans under MUDRA, PMFME, or MSME funding windows. SHG collectives or FPOs can access NABARD-linked soft loans or cluster-based financing support.

DUY (Developing Uttarakhand Yuva) and PMFME both offer capital subsidy of 35% for food processing enterprises, which can significantly reduce upfront capital burden. Women-led ventures or SHG federations can also get revolving fund assistance for working capital and retail expansion. Local District Industries Centres (DICs) and Food Processing Incubation Hubs (under MSME) may support with interest-free capital or mentorship for the first 12 months.

Private CSR programs focused on GI-tagged products or youth livelihood ventures may be tapped for initial branding or machine purchase. Seasonal crowdfunding via pre-orders or festival kits may also generate early operating capital.

## 15. REVENUE STREAMS

The primary revenue will come from the sale of flavored popcorn packs across kiosks, shops, and partner cafés. Pricing per 30g–60g pack will range from ₹30 to ₹60 depending on the flavor and location. On average, each retail point can sell 80–150 packs daily, generating ₹2,40,000 to ₹2,70,000 monthly if scaled across three locations.

Secondary revenue will be from combo gift boxes (₹250–₹750) targeted at festivals, tourism seasons, and eco-stores. Sales through WhatsApp business catalog, social media referrals, or tourist souvenir shops also present a steady stream. Institutional orders from hostels, wellness centers, or cafés may offer repeat bulk purchases at a fixed margin.

Over time, an online store or marketplace listing (Amazon Karigar, Flipkart Samarth) can generate urban demand. The venture may also license its flavor blend formulas to other micro-entrepreneurs or offer white-labeled products to local resorts.



**Table 5: Revenue Streams**

Revenue Source	Unit Price (₹)	Monthly Sales Estimate	Monthly Revenue (₹)
Retail Pack Sales (60g)	₹40 – ₹60	6,000 – 9,000 packs	₹2,40,000 – ₹5,40,000
Gift Hampers	₹250 – ₹750	100 – 300 boxes	₹30,000 – ₹1,50,000
Institutional Orders	₹500 – ₹2,000/order	20 – 50 orders	₹25,000 – ₹80,000
Online/E-com Orders	₹100 – ₹500/order	100 – 200 orders	₹15,000 – ₹60,000
<b>Total Revenue (Monthly)</b>	—	—	₹3,10,000 – ₹7,30,000

## 16. PROFITABILITY STREAMS

Profitability in this model is achieved through direct retail margins, bulk sale markups, and seasonal value-added offerings. Retail margins are 30–40% after cost of raw material, labor, and packaging. Higher margins (up to 50%) are possible in gift hampers or festive combo packs. Institutional and repeat orders allow economies of scale in sourcing and batching.

In Year 1, the monthly net profit may be modest—around ₹30,000–₹60,000—as promotional costs, staff training, and small production scale offset earnings. From Year 2 onwards, monthly profits can exceed ₹1 lakh as brand awareness, order consistency, and sales network stabilize. The venture’s lean operating cost structure allows profitability even at moderate sales volumes.



**Table 6: Profitability Estimate**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Monthly Revenue (₹)</b>	<b>Monthly Costs (₹)</b>	<b>Net Profit (₹)</b>	<b>Annual Margin (%)</b>
Year 1	₹3,00,000 – ₹4,00,000	₹2,40,000 – ₹3,60,000	₹30,000 – ₹60,000	12–18%
Year 2	₹5,00,000 – ₹6,50,000	₹3,50,000 – ₹5,00,000	₹1,00,000 – ₹1,50,000	20–25%
Year 3	₹6,50,000 – ₹8,00,000	₹4,50,000 – ₹6,00,000	₹1,50,000 – ₹2,00,000	25–28%

## 17. BREAK-EVEN ANALYSIS

The break-even point for this venture is likely to be achieved between the 18th and 22nd month of operations. Fixed annual costs—machinery depreciation, salaries, rental space, and utilities—are estimated at ₹8–9 lakhs. With gross margins of 30–35% and monthly revenue projections reaching ₹4–5 lakhs by Year 2, the business can recover its full investment by the second year-end.

Break-even can be accelerated by introducing festival kits, expanding kiosk presence in tourism towns, or receiving institutional orders. Support from government schemes, free stall spaces, and branding grants can also bring down time to profitability.



**Table 7: Break-even Snapshot**

Parameter	Estimate
Total Fixed Costs (Annual)	₹8,50,000 – ₹9,00,000
Gross Margin (%)	30–35%
Break-even Revenue Monthly	₹2,80,000 – ₹3,00,000
Time to Break-even	18–22 months

## 18. MARKETING STRATEGIES

Marketing will focus on storytelling, regional pride, and snack health benefits. Initial strategies include placement at ODOP stalls, tourism fairs, and tie-ups with hotels and eco-resorts. Sampling at cafés, homestays, or on trains/buses during pilgrim seasons can help build awareness. Branded displays, attractive pouches, and "Snack Local, Snack Smart" messaging will create consumer recall.

Digital outreach includes Instagram Reels, recipe content, reviews by regional food influencers, and WhatsApp catalog sales. QR codes on packs linking to spice origin stories or farmer interviews can deepen emotional engagement. Loyalty discounts, festive offers, and referral incentives will support repeat buying.

Offline visibility via banners, pop-ups at yoga events, and community-level demos (especially in colleges or hostels) will reinforce brand presence. Co-branding with local musicians, cafés, or folk storytellers may also enhance regional resonance.



## 19. MACHINERY REQUIRED AND VENDOR DETAILS IN UTTARAKHAND

The flavored popcorn retail venture requires a compact, food-safe processing setup that includes a popcorn machine, spice mixing unit, weighing scales, sealers, and labeling tools. For hygienic and consistent production, stainless steel machinery with easy-to-clean surfaces is recommended. The focus is on semi-automatic machines that are affordable and energy-efficient, suited to small-batch artisanal production.

The popcorn popper should have a capacity of at least 5–10 kg/hour and work on electric or LPG power. A spice-coating tumbler or paddle mixer is required for flavor mixing. Foot-operated sealing machines ensure tamper-proof packaging, while digital weighing scales and moisture meters help maintain quality and shelf-life. Manual or semi-automatic labeling machines are used for consistent branding. Basic trays, stainless steel tables, and containers complete the setup.

Several machinery vendors operate in Uttarakhand or offer supply through nearby hubs in Delhi, Haridwar, or Haldwani. These vendors provide installation, training, and maintenance services. Preference should be given to vendors offering GST-compliant invoicing and post-sale support.

**Table 8: Machinery and Vendor Details**

Equipment	Specification	Cost Estimate (₹)	Vendor Name	Location	Contact/Website
Popcorn Machine	Electric/LPG, 10–15 kg/hr	₹50,000 – ₹70,000	Vishwakarma Agro Equipments	Dehradun	+91-9412056680
Spice Mixing Drum	SS304, 10 kg batch	₹25,000 – ₹40,000	HNB Agro Machines	Roorkee	www.hnbagro.com





Equipment	Specification	Cost Estimate (₹)	Vendor Name	Location	Contact/Website
Foot Sealing Machine	12–18 inch seal, manual	₹8,000 – ₹12,000	R.K. Packaging Tools	Haldwani	+91-9759011983
Digital Weighing Scale	1 gm – 10 kg, digital	₹2,000 – ₹4,000	Accurate Weigh India	Rudrapur	<a href="http://www.accurateweigh.com">www.accurateweigh.com</a>
Label Printer (Semi-auto)	Thermal/manual	₹10,000 – ₹15,000	Greenex Exim	Haridwar	<a href="http://www.greenexmachines.com">www.greenexmachines.com</a>
SS Tables & Trays	3x2 ft, food-grade	₹10,000 – ₹15,000	Local fabricator	All towns	Available via local steel workshops

## 20. ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

This venture is inherently environmentally friendly due to its reliance on local produce, minimal processing, and low-energy machinery. Popcorn itself is a sustainable snack—requiring no oil for popping when using air machines—and has low water and carbon footprints compared to fried snacks. The use of locally grown maize reduces the need for long-distance transportation, thereby cutting fuel use and emissions.

Packaging uses biodegradable kraft paper or reusable glass jars where possible, reducing single-use plastic. Waste materials like unpopped kernels or discarded spices are compostable and can be returned to farm soils. The energy requirements of the unit are minimal—limited to one electric machine and sealers—making it ideal for integration with solar energy or inverter-based power.



By promoting indigenous spice cultivation like Bhangeera and Timur, the venture supports agro-biodiversity and discourages monoculture practices. Wild herbs like Bichhu Booti, when responsibly harvested, help preserve forest-based ecosystems. The venture can also run educational campaigns on zero-waste snacking, millet revival, and composting packaging—contributing to environmental literacy.

## 21. FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

As the venture grows, it can diversify into multiple verticals beyond basic flavored popcorn. One immediate opportunity is expansion into millet-based snacks—such as Mandua puff, Jhangora namkeen, or Ragi caramel clusters—offering health-conscious alternatives under the same Himalayan snack brand. These can be co-packaged with the popcorn in wellness snack kits for urban consumers.

Export and online delivery via Amazon or Flipkart are strong next steps. GI-tag promotion of spices like Jakhya or Timur enables the brand to become a cultural ambassador of Uttarakhand's flavor heritage. Collaborations with Ayurveda brands or Himalayan wellness resorts can bring in institutional buyers. The venture can also license its flavors or recipes to other food start-ups.

Franchising is a long-term possibility: branded kiosks or carts at tourist destinations across India offering “Pahadi Popcorn” could replicate the success of local snack franchises. Additionally, training modules on setting up flavored popcorn units can be developed for SHGs and rural youth, turning the brand into a mentor for decentralized food entrepreneurship.



### **Disclaimer**

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