

DEVELOPMENT OF TRADITIONAL SOPULUT MENUS TO ENRICH HOTEL-STANDARD VEGETARIAN MENUS AT CAFÉ POLIMDO

Diane Tangian¹, Hendry M.E. Kumaat², Silvana Wewengkang³, Jemmy Pangemanan⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Politeknik Negeri, Manado

*Corresponding Author(s) Email : dianetangian99@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study aims to develop the traditional food sopulut as a hotel-standard vegetarian menu at Café Polimdo. Sopulut, a traditional dish originating from the Minahasa Tenggara region, is typically made from sago and served in a simple form. Through an innovative approach, this product was developed to meet hotel culinary presentation standards in terms of taste, aesthetics, and nutritional value. The research method involved three stages of product trials involving both culinary and non-culinary respondents, as well as interviews to obtain input and evaluation of the product development. The results showed that sopulut is acceptable as a vegetarian menu with taste and appearance characteristics that align with café and hotel presentation standards. Adjustments were made to the texture, filling, and accompaniments such as sambal to better suit broader consumer preferences. The food cost analysis also indicated that this menu is economically feasible for further development. Thus, sopulut not only serves as a symbol of preserving local culinary heritage but also has strong potential as a modern dish in the culinary industry.

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INTRODUCTION

Geographically, Indonesia is an archipelago with most of its territory covered by oceans. Indonesia is a country blessed with diverse cultures and traditions, and it has a wide variety of culinary delights spread across the country. A person's cultural identity is not only reflected in their art, customs, and traditions, but also through the cuisine of their region. Indonesian cuisine must be used because it is highly symbolic and has a specific meaning for different tastes and energies. One type of Indonesian cuisine that is becoming increasingly rare in the modern era is sopulut. Sopulut is a dish typical of the people of Southeast Sulawesi, North Sulawesi. Sopulut is made from a mixture of various vegetables and sago flour, which is boiled and served. Sopulut is a traditional dish often eaten by the Minahasa people. But where is sopulut now? Does my generation still know about it?



The existence of sopulut cannot be separated from the socio-cultural dynamics of the Southeast Minahasa community. This dish is often served at various traditional ceremonies such as weddings, harvest celebrations, religious rituals, and large family gatherings. Each serving of sopulut is not only a culinary dish, but also a form of respect for ancestral traditions and togetherness within the community. This makes sopulut more than just food; it is a symbol of collectivity, cultural heritage, and local wealth that reflects the local wisdom of the Minahasa people.

However, amid the tide of modernization and globalization, the existence of traditional foods like sopulut is facing challenges. The increasingly practical lifestyle of the community, as well as the dominance of fast food and foreign cuisine, has shifted the younger generation's interest away from traditional foods. Slowly but surely, traditional foods such as sopulut are at risk of being abandoned and forgotten. If there are no concrete efforts to preserve it, it is feared that sopulut will only remain a name, without a trace that can be enjoyed by future generations.

Literature Review

Food processing is the activity of converting raw food ingredients into ready-to-eat food through physical, chemical, or biological processes aimed at improving shelf life, taste, and nutritional value (Izah et al., 2024).

Food processing is the application of cooking technology and techniques to produce food products that are safe for consumption, nutritious, and meet the aesthetic and taste requirements of today's consumers. (Wijayanti, 2023)

Definition of Food Ingredients

Food ingredients are raw or semi-finished materials derived from nature or industry, which are used as the main components in the process of making food and beverages (Kurniawati et al., 2022)

Food ingredients are anything that can be eaten or drunk and used to meet human nutritional needs. Food ingredients can come from various sources, including plants, animals, and other additives. Food ingredients have various types, characteristics, and nutritional values, all of which contribute to individual health and well-being.

Definition of Innovation

(Kneeland et al., 2020) explains that innovation is the process of turning ideas into new products or services that are useful. Innovation is not only about new things, but also how ideas are designed, developed, and implemented so that they can be used and provide value to

companies or society. She emphasizes that the success of innovation depends on three things: understanding market and technology conditions, developing the right strategy, and implementing innovation with a good work system. Innovation can come from within the company (e.g., employee ideas) or from outside (such as collaboration with universities or other companies). Innovation with a good work system. Innovation can originate from within the company (e.g., employee ideas) or from outside (such as collaboration with universities or other companies).

Definition of Cooking Techniques

(Liu et al., 2023) The journal article titled “Influence of Cooking Techniques on Food Quality, Digestibility, and Health Risks Regarding Lipid Oxidation” published in Food Research International in 2023 discusses how various cooking methods affect food quality, digestibility, and potential health risks due to lipid oxidation. The authors explain that cooking techniques such as frying, baking, or stir-frying at high temperatures can enhance the taste and aroma of food through the Maillard reaction, but can also destroy nutrients and trigger the formation of harmful compounds such as free radicals. Conversely, methods such as steaming or boiling are considered safer because they reduce the risk of oxidation, although they can cause the loss of some water-soluble vitamins. In addition, the journal also highlights modern cooking techniques such as sous-vide and air-frying, which are considered more effective in maintaining nutritional quality and food safety. In conclusion, the choice of cooking method greatly determines the final quality of food and its impact on health.

Research Methodology

The research methodology used in this study is qualitative with a descriptive approach. This study aims to explore in-depth information about sopulut preservation, including recipe documentation and product innovation. The data collection techniques used include:

1. Interviews: Conduct interviews with chefs and local communities who have knowledge about sopulut. These interviews aim to obtain information about recipes, preparation methods, and their views on the preservation of sopulut.
2. Observation: Conduct direct observation of the sopulut preparation process in several locations, including households. These observations will help researchers understand the processing techniques and variations that exist.
3. Documentation Study: Collecting and analyzing documents related to sopulut, including existing recipes, articles, and literature discussing traditional foods of Southeast Minahasa.

Result and Discussion

Overview of Research Object

Sopulut is a traditional dish from Southeast Minahasa made from sago flour mixed with various local vegetables such as bracken, gedi leaves, kale, pumpkin, and special spices like basil and yellow leaves. This dish has a chewy texture and distinctive flavor derived from the combination of traditional ingredients.

In several areas of Southeast Minahasa, sopulut is served in various forms and flavors, tailored to local customs. Some add smoked fish, while others add young bananas. Despite the wide variety, the basic principle of sopulut remains the same: a combination of vegetables and sago steamed in a covered pan (Brickell, 2019).

The uniqueness of sopulut lies not only in its taste, but also in its highly traditional production process. This process is typically carried out by housewives or local MSMEs who maintain a traditional heritage passed down from their ancestors. Because it lacks official documentation, knowledge of sopulut still relies on word of mouth and direct practice within families or communities.

In the context of this research, several culinary business actors and local communities were used as the main sources to understand how sopulut is made, served, and how they interpret the existence of this food in everyday life and in a cultural context.

Sopulut Product Innovation by Maintaining Traditional Characteristics

Based on the second problem formulation, namely "What innovations can be made to sopulut products without eliminating their traditional characteristics?", and the research objective which is to "Create innovations in modern and attractive presentation methods without abandoning traditional values", this discussion will outline various innovations that can be applied.

Innovations in sopulut products must consider traditional, distinctive aspects, such as raw materials, flavor, and processing methods. Therefore, innovations focus on modern and attractive presentation methods and product variations that maintain the authentic flavor.

Sopulut

Sopulut is one of the typical foods of the Tonsawang Tribe which is processed from various kinds of vegetables that are usually grown by the Tonsawang tribe themselves, if seen from the processed results this food is similar to Manado Porridge, but what differentiates Manado porridge (Tinutuan) from Sopulut is the way it is mixed or processed until it can be

served. If Manado porridge is processed by cooking it using water like making porridge but sopulut is processed by baking it on a pan.

Sopulut is made from various types of vegetables, namely:

- 1) Sago flour
- 2) Sambiki/ Pumpkin
- 3) Swamp cabbage
- 4) Papaya Leaves
- 5) Gedi Vegetables
- 6) Fern Vegetables
- 7) Balakama/Lengi
- 8) Onion (Onion Stem)
- 9) Food Flavoring
- 10) Coconut oil to taste



Figure 4.1 Sopulut

Source: *sukutoundanouwblogspot.com* (2014)

Tools and materials

Tools and materials.

Table 1. Preparation of tools

No	Tool	Function/Description
1	Pan	Used for frying, sautéing, or cooking food on the stove.
2	Spatula	A tool for stirring, turning, or scooping food while it is being cooked, especially when using a frying pan or Teflon pan.
3	Chopper	An automatic cutting tool used to chop or cut food ingredients such as vegetables, meat or spices quickly and uniformly.
4	Bowl	Used as a container for mixing ingredients, soaking, or holding dough and other foods.

5	Kitchen scale	Tools for accurately weighing food ingredients, whether in grams or ounces, are essential in recipes that require precise measurements.
6	Mold ring	Used to shape food so that it looks neat and uniform, often used in food plating.
7	Stove	A heat source for cooking that uses fuel such as gas or electricity.
8	Gas cylinders	The fuel source for lighting the stove, usually contains LPG gas (<i>liquefied petroleum gas</i>).

Table 2. Ingredients

No	Material	Function/Description
1	Spinach	Provides crunchy texture and nutritional content
2	Gedi leaves	Produces a naturally thick texture
3	Pumpkin (sambiki)	Provides natural sweetness and soft texture
4	Flour sago	The main ingredient, as a binder and dough former
5	Fern vegetables	Wild vegetables add a distinctive aroma and flavor
6	Oil coconut	Used to grease the pan so that the dough doesn't stick.
7	Spice-spice	A mixture of onion stalks, basil, yellow leaves, and seasoning powder for aroma.

Ways of making

Sopulut Ingredients:

- Swamp cabbage
- Gedi vegetables
- Pumpkin
- Fern Vegetables
- Sago flour
- Leek
- Turmeric Leaves
- Basil
- 1 teaspoon salt

Roa chili sauce ingredients:

- 3 Smoked roa fish
- 75 grams of shallots
- 200 grams of tomatoes

- 100 grams of cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 10 grams of granulated sugar

Table 3. Preparation Stages

Step	Process
1	Wash all the vegetable ingredients until clean, then finely chop all the vegetables. Including grated pumpkin until smooth.
2	Then boil the gedi vegetables and cassava leaves separately with salt water for 7-10 minutes then drain.
3	Mix all the pureed vegetables including gedi vegetables and cassava leaves, then add 50 grams of sago flour and also the spices, namely basil, spring onions and turmeric leaves that have been mixed. chop, don't forget to add 15 grams of salt then stir until evenly mixed
4	Heat a pan and grease it with a little coconut oil evenly.
5	Put the dough into the pan, flatten it according to size.
6	Then cook with a little oil and medium heat then cover with a pan lid lined with banana leaves for 15 minutes.
7	Don't forget to turn it over every 7 minutes
8	Lift the sopulut and serve

Table 4. Steps for making sopulut

Step	Process
1	Clean the roa fish, remove the skin, head, tail and bones.
2	Fry the roa fish briefly
3	Puree the roa fish with a blender
4	Blend the chilies with a blender.
5	Thinly slice the shallots and tomatoes
6	Heat the oil then saute the onions until yellow
7	Then add the chilies and stir until well mixed.
8	After that, add the thinly sliced tomatoes and stir until evenly mixed.
9	Finally, add the ground roa fish, then stir until evenly mixed and add 1 tsp of salt and ground palm sugar.

Table 5. Steps for making roa chili sauce Source: Data processed by the research team

Step	Process
1	Wash the spring onions thoroughly, then dry them with kitchen paper so that no water remains (water can cause the oil to explode when frying).
2	Slice the spring onions very thinly lengthwise into matchstick shapes. The thinner it is, the crispier the final result will be.
3	If you want smoother and neater results, you can soak the slices in ice water for 5-10 minutes to twist them nicely, then drain and dry them again.
4	Heat cooking oil in a small skillet. Use medium heat to prevent burning.
5	Add the sliced spring onions little by little into the oil. Heat. Fry until golden brown and crispy.
6	Remove and drain on kitchen paper to remove excess oil.
7	Add ½ tsp salt

Table 3.6 Steps for making Creespy Leks Source: Data processed by the author

Research Trial



Figure 3.2 First trial

Source: Research Team Documentation Results

Food Tester	Rasa	Tekstur	Warna	Aroma	Komentar
Ma'am Silvana	Suka	Kurang suka	Kurang suka	Suka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dari segi penampilan sudah mencapai standart sopulut pada umumnya. • Sambalroateralupedas • Dari visual harus buat lebih menarik lagi.
Ma'am Nelfa	Suka	Kurang suka	Kurang suka	Suka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rasa dan tektur dari sopulut seperti sopulut pada umumnya. • packinganatauvisualnya kurangmenarik
Ma'am Diane Tangian	Suka	Kurang Suka	Suka	Suka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DarisegiTeksturBelum mencapai tingkat kematangan yang baik. • Perubahan ukuran mungkinakanlebih baik
Ma'am Foni	Tidak suka	Tidak Suka	kurang Suka	kurang Suka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rasaterlaluasin. • Visual tidak terlalu menarik. • Teksturdanaromamasih kurang.

Table 3.6 Respondents to the first trial

Aspek	Kategori	Jumlah Responden	Persentase
Rasa	Suka	3	75%
Rasa	Tidak Suka	1	25%
Tekstur	Suka	0	0%
Tekstur	Kurang Suka	3	75%
Tekstur	Tidak Suka	1	25%
Warna/Visual	Suka	1	25%
Warna/Visual	Kurang Suka	2	50%
Warna/Visual	Tidak Suka	1	25%
Aroma	Suka	3	75%
Aroma	Kurang Suka	1	25%

Ringkasan Komentar Responden:

- Penampilan sudah sesuai standar dasar, tetapi masih perlu lebih menarik.
- Rasa sopulut cukup enak, namun terlalu asin.
- Sambal roa dinilai terlalu pedas.
- Tekstur belum matang sempurna.
- Visual dinilai masih kurang menarik.

Table 3.7 Percentage of Respondents to the First Trial

The first trial showed that while the sopulut tasted quite good, there were concerns about excessive saltiness, an undercooked texture, and a plain appearance. Meanwhile, the sambal roa (roa chili sauce) used as a garnish was deemed too spicy and lacked a smooth texture. These findings formed the basis for subsequent improvements.



Figure 3.3 Second trial Source: Research Team Documentation Results

In the second trial, improvements were made by adjusting the proportions of ingredients, particularly pumpkin and sago, and improving the chili sauce processing technique. The resulting sopulut flavor was more balanced, although some respondents noted the pumpkin's sweetness was still dominant. Visually, the presentation began to show improvement, with neater and more attractive packaging.

Sumber: Data Primer, 2025 (diolah)

FoodTester	Rasa	Tekstur	Warna	Aroma	Komentar
Ma'am Silvana	Suka	Kurang suka	Kurang suka	Suka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dari segi penampilan sudah mencapai standart sopulut pada umumnya. • Tekstur Sambal roa terlalu kasar
Ma'am Nelfa	Suka	Kurang suka	Kurang suka	Suka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rasa dan tektur dari sopulut seperti sopulut pada umumnya. • packingan visualnya sudah cukup menarik
Ma'am Diane Tangian	Suka	Kurang Suka	Suka	Suka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dari segi Tekstur mencapai kematangan yang baik. • Rasa terlalu dominan labu
Ma'am Diana Rondonuwu	Kurang suka	Suka	Suka	Suka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rasa terlalu manis dari labu • Rasa dari sopulut sudah mencapai standart. • Tekstur dan aroma sudah dapat.

The second trial of Sopulut was conducted on July 21, 2025, with four respondents. The results were:

- 1) Taste: Most people like it, but some people think it's too sweet because the pumpkin is too dominant.
- 2) Texture: Starting to improve, some people think it's cooked well, but the roa sambal still feels rough.
- 3) Color/Visual: Starting to look interesting, but some people still think it's lacking.
- 4) Aroma: Generally liked, no significant complaints.

Third Trial

Sopulut Ingredients:

- 1) 1 bunch of water spinach
- 2) ½ bunch of gedi vegetables
- 3) 60 grams of pumpkin
- 4) 1 bunch of bracken
- 5) 20 grams of sago flour
- 6) 3 stalks of spring onions
- 7) ½ Turmeric Leaf
- 8) Basil to taste
- 9) 1 teaspoon salt

Creespy Leeks Ingredients:

- 1) 5 stalks of onions
- 2) ½ ml cooking oil
- 3) 1 teaspoon salt

Roa chili sauce ingredients:

- 1) 3 Smoked roa fish
- 2) 75 grams of shallots
- 3) 150 grams of tomatoes
- 4) 80 grams of cayenne pepper
- 5) 1 tablespoon salt
- 6) ½ teaspoon granulated sugar



Image of the third trial Source: Research Team Documentation Results

Sumber: Data Primer, 2025 (diolah)

FoodTester	Rasa	Tekstur	Warna	Aroma	Komentar
Ma'am Silvana	Suka	Suka	Suka	Suka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RASA sudah enak, sudah mencapai standart Sopulut • Penampilan sudah cukup Menarik
Ma'am Nelfa	Suka	Suka	Suka	Suka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tekstur, rasa, warna, dan aroma sudah enak • Penampilan sudah cukup menarik • Packaging sudah rapi
Ma'am Diane Tangian	Suka	Suka	Suka	Suka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rasa dan Tingkat kematangan sudah Pas • Penampilan sudah cukup menarik • Packaging sudah cukup
Ma'am Diana Rondonuwu	Suka	Suka	Suka	Suka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RASA sudah enak • Perpaduan rasa sopulut dan creespy leeks sangat cocok • Plating sudah oke

The third trial was conducted on July 25, 2025, with 4 respondents.

The results obtained were:

- 1) Taste: All respondents liked the taste of sopulut, considered it delicious and up to standard.
- 2) Texture: Just right and cooked, no complaints.
- 3) Color/Visual: Appearance is considered quite attractive, plating is good.
- 4) Aroma: All respondents liked the aroma.
- 5) Additional: The combination with creespy leeks received positive responses and the packaging/presentation was considered neat.

Interview Results

Interview results from the three trials showed that the Sopulut product experienced positive developments over time. In the first trial, respondents considered the Sopulut taste quite good but slightly salty, the texture was not fully cooked, the appearance was less attractive, and the aroma was still not strong. The second trial showed improvements in taste and texture, although there were still notes related to the dominant sweetness of the pumpkin and the texture of the roa chili sauce that was not smooth, while the visual and aroma began to improve. In the third trial, all respondents stated that the Sopulut was delicious, the texture was well cooked, the aroma was fragrant, and the appearance was quite attractive. The innovation of the addition of creespy leeks was also considered appropriate because it was able to strengthen the modern impression of this traditional dish.

Compared to the original Sopulut, which is generally served simply on a traditional plate or container without any special decorations, this innovative Sopulut has been developed to hotel standards with a more attractive, neat, and modern plating. The addition of creespy leeks not only enriches the flavor but also adds aesthetic value to the dish's presentation. This demonstrates that the product has been refined and is ready for wider presentation. As a form of evaluation and validation between the original and innovative Sopulut, I also polled students at the Manado State Polytechnic, with the results shown in the following table.

Tabel 4.7.1 Suara Mahasiswa Sopulut Original

Sumber: Data Primer,2025(diolah)

Kategori	Jumlah Responden	Persentase
Suka	3	30%
Tidak Suka	7	70%
Total	10	100%

Tabel 4.7.2 Suara Mahasiswa Inovasi Sopulut

Sumber: Data Primer,2025 (diolah)

Kategori	Jumlah Responden	Persentase
Suka	8	80%
Tidak Suka	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Food Cost Calculation

According to (Nugroho & Nasionalita, 2020), food cost is the ratio of the cost of ingredients used to prepare a dish to the selling price of that dish. This calculation serves as a control tool in kitchen operations and as a basis for setting selling prices to ensure optimal profits for culinary businesses.

Food costs are generally expressed as a percentage, indicating how much the cost of ingredients is compared to the selling price. According to Nugroho (2020), the formula for calculating food costs is as follows:

$$\text{Food Cost (\%)} = (\text{Food Material Cost} \div \text{Selling Price}) \times 100\%$$

Calculation example:

If the cost of food ingredients for one portion of the menu is **Rp. 5,000** , and the selling price of the menu is **Rp. 15,000** , then: **Food Cost** = $(5,000 + 15,000) \times 100\% = 33.3\%$ Food Cost = $(15,000 + 5,000) \times 100\% = 33.3\%$. This means that **33.3%** of the selling price is used to cover the cost of food ingredients, while the rest is used to cover other operational costs such as labor, utilities, and generate net profit.

Tabel PerhitunganFoodCost
Sumber: Nugroho (2020)

No	BAHAN	QUANTITY	PRICE	UNIT	PRICEUNIT
1	Tepung Sagu	500gr	Rp.26.000	50gr	Rp.1.040
2	Syr Kangkung	1lkt	Rp.5.000	100gr	Rp.5.000
3	Syr Gedi	1lkt	Rp.5.000	75gr	Rp.4.750
4	Syr Pakis	1lkt	Rp.2.000	100gr	Rp.2.000
5	DaunUbi	1lkt	Rp.2.000	75gr	Rp.1.750
6	LabuKuning	1buah	Rp.15.000	150gr	Rp.1.500
7	Batang bawang	4lkt	Rp.8.000	2lkt	Rp.4.000
8	Daun Kunyit	1lmb	Rp.1.000	1/4	Rp.500
9	Kemangi	2lkt	Rp.1.000	2lkt	Rp.1.000
10	Ikan Roa	3ekor	Rp.5.000	3ekor	Rp.5.000
11	Bawang Merah	100gr	Rp.5.000	75gr	Rp.4.750
12	Cabe Rawit	100gr	Rp.10.000	100gr	Rp.10.000
13	Cabe Keriting	100gr	Rp.5.000	50gr	Rp.2.500
14	Tomat	200gr	Rp.15.000	150gr	Rp.12.500
15	Minyak Goreng	1liter	Rp.18.000	100gr	Rp.1.957
16	Gula	200gr	Rp.7.000	2sdm	Rp.100
17	Garam	100gr	Rp.3.000	1sdt	Rp.50
		Total			Rp.58.697

Selling Price Calculation

Standard food cost 35%

Basic food costs Rp.58,697: 10 pieces Rp.5,869 Selling price 35:100 x 5,869 = Rp.2,054
So the selling price per plate: Rp.5,869 + Rp.2,054 = Rp.7,923 rounded to Rp.8,000, So the selling price per piece is Rp.8,000.

Conclusion And Suggestions

This research aims to preserve and develop sopulut, a traditional food typical of Southeast Minahasa, in a more modern and attractive way. Based on the results of trials,

responses from respondents, and interviews with sources familiar with traditional culinary arts, it can be concluded that sopulut has great potential for development. This food not only has cultural value but also has the potential to attract a wide audience.

During the trial process, several areas needed improvement, particularly in terms of taste, texture, and presentation. The addition of modern ingredients like crepest leeks proved to make the dish more appealing and the taste more palatable, without losing its authentic character. After several trials and recipe refinements based on respondent feedback, the most popular version of sopulut was finally achieved.

Culturally, sopulut is an important part of Southeast Minahasa's identity. Through this research, the recipe and method for making it have been documented to ensure it remains preserved. It is hoped that sopulut will become more widely known, not only in its region of origin, but also beyond, even at the national and international levels.

Thus, efforts to preserve and develop sopulut through this research can be a real step towards keeping traditional foods alive and popular today.

Based on the research conducted, sopulut has significant potential to be developed as a traditional food from Southeast Minahasa, worthy of wider recognition. Therefore, it is recommended that sopulut not only be maintained as a home-cooked dish but also actively promoted through local culinary events, traditional food festivals, and even inclusion on menus in restaurants and cafes that promote the Indonesian archipelago.

To make it more appealing to today's audience, sopulut can be developed in various variations, both in terms of flavor and appearance. The use of complementary ingredients, such as creespy leeks, can be continuously modified to enrich the taste experience without altering its original identity. A more modern and aesthetic presentation will also help increase its appeal, especially among young people and tourists.

To ensure its sustainability, sopulut needs to be thoroughly documented—including the recipe, cooking techniques, and cultural values it embodies. This is crucial so that future generations will know and be able to pass on this culinary heritage.

It is hoped that in the future, there will be support from schools, universities, the food industry, and even the local government to make sopulut a regional culinary icon that can compete amidst evolving modern food trends. With this approach, sopulut will not only survive but also develop into a leading culinary product from Southeast Minahasa.

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