Company Name : **Empire Premium Food Berhad**
Date : **26 March 2026**
Source : **New Straits Times**

EMPIRE SUSHI CHAIN

Empire Premium Food leverages affordability for expansion

KUALA LUMPUR: As cost pressures intensify in the food and beverage sector, Empire Premium Food Bhd, the operator of the Empire Sushi chain, is doubling down on affordability as a key competitive edge.

Co-founder Nicole Lim said yesterday the company's track record has enabled it to navigate geopolitical disruptions and cost volatility, supported by a flexible menu strategy that helps cushion fluctuations in input costs.

Positioned as a value-for-money brand, Empire Sushi has carved out a niche by offering more affordable options than other sushi chains.

The company's pricing strategy, supported by its grab-and-go model and streamlined operations, allows it to keep costs relatively low while remaining accessible to mass-market consumers, she said after the company's prospectus launch.

She said affordability and consistent product quality have helped the company appeal to a broad customer base as consumers become more selective.

However, she stressed that pricing alone is not sufficient to sustain demand in an increasingly competitive market.

"Consumers are particular about taste. Even at a lower price point, products must meet expectations."

Ahead of its debut on the Main Market of Bursa Malaysia next month, Empire Premium has set its initial public offering (IPO) price at 70 sen per share.

The listing is expected to raise RM152.6 million for the company, while RM96.3 million will go to its co-founders, husband-and-wife team Jordan Tan and Lim, from the sale of existing shares, according to the company's prospectus.

Of the proceeds, RM79.1 million, or 51.8 per cent, will be used to open 56 new outlets, while RM12.6 million (8.3 per cent) will be used to refurbish existing outlets.

Another RM52.1 million (34.1 per cent) has been earmarked for working capital, with the remaining RM8.8 million allocated for IPO-related expenses.

Co-founders Jordan Tan (fifth from left) and Nicole Lim (sixth from left) at Empire Premium Food Bhd's prospectus launch yesterday. PIC FROM PR COMPANY

The IPO comprises 218 million new shares and 145 million existing shares, bringing the total offering to 363 million shares.

Meanwhile, Lim said the company has operated in a challenging cost environment and built resilience through a flexible business model developed over more than a decade.

"We have faced many cost increases over the past 12 years, but our strength is adaptability.

"Every quarter, we review and replace underperforming items with new products to drive demand," she said.

Beyond revenue optimisation, the company places strong emphasis on cost control at the outlet level, maintaining an average wastage rate of about 7.0 per cent.

This is supported by standard operating procedures that regulate production volumes and product display timing throughout the day.

Lim said the company aims to strike a balance between minimising waste and ensuring product availability, particularly during peak periods.

"A lower wastage rate may not necessarily be better if it affects product availability and sales. We aim to balance both revenue and cost efficiency," she said.

Looking ahead, the company has identified workforce development as a key operational challenge as it scales post-listing.

Given the skill-intensive nature of sushi preparation, training and retaining staff will be critical to maintaining quality and consistency as the company expands, Lim said.