

Sustainable Marketing of Organic Products: A Comprehensive Literature Review

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Abstract:

This study investigates how sustainable marketing influences consumers' decisions to buy organic products in India, focusing on Tamil Nadu. It emphasizes the importance of eco-friendly production, ethical sourcing, transparent communication, and credible certifications in building consumer trust. Government programs such as NPOP, PKVY, and NMNF play a key role in promoting organic farming and supporting farmers. Research shows that sustainability-focused strategies, including green labelling and value-based messaging, positively shape consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviour. Challenges like high prices, limited consumer awareness, and fragmented supply chains are also considered. Marketing strategies that leverage digital platforms, ethical branding, and consumer education are highlighted as effective approaches. Overall, adopting sustainable marketing practices is essential for growing the organic product market, encouraging responsible consumption, and fostering long-term consumer loyalty.

Keywords: Sustainable Marketing, Organic Products, Consumer Purchase Decision, Eco-Friendly, Environment

Introduction

In recent years, increasing awareness about environmental issues, food safety, and personal health has significantly influenced consumer preferences. This trend has led to the adoption of sustainable marketing, which integrates ecological, social, and economic concerns into business and marketing strategies. Sustainable marketing emphasizes eco-friendly production, ethical consumption, and long-term benefits for consumers, making it particularly important for the organic products sector. Organic products promote environmentally responsible farming practices, reduce chemical usage, and support healthier lifestyles. Effective marketing of these products requires highlighting their benefits while ensuring trust and credibility through certifications, labels, and transparent communication. Globally, the organic

food market is expanding due to increasing consumer awareness, lifestyle changes, and stricter environmental regulations. Research shows that consumer choices in organic products are largely influenced by perceptions of health benefits, food safety, and environmental responsibility. In India, challenges such as higher prices, limited awareness, fragmented supply chains, and doubts about product authenticity make it harder to promote organic products effectively. Marketers must therefore focus on making organic products accessible, affordable, and trustworthy.

In Tamil Nadu, demand for organic products is gradually increasing, supported by initiatives like the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) and Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY). Despite this, the market is still developing compared to international standards due to uneven distribution, lack of consumer trust, and low awareness. Districts such as Coimbatore, Erode, and the Nilgiris are emerging as major centers for organic production, supported by organizations such as the Tamil Nadu Organic Certification Department (TNOCD) and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU). Consumer purchasing decisions in Tamil Nadu are influenced by factors such as price, product availability, perceived quality, and trust in certification labels. Urban consumers increasingly use online platforms and organized retail to access organic products, while rural and semi-urban areas face challenges in awareness and availability. To strengthen sustainable marketing in the state, strategies should focus on: (1) building consumer trust through credible labeling, (2) improving product accessibility via retail and digital channels, and (3) educating consumers on the long-term benefits of organic products. Clear communication of sustainability values through branding, storytelling, and packaging can help bridge trust gaps and encourage repeat purchases. This study reviews the literature on sustainable marketing of organic products in Tamil Nadu and its impact on consumer purchase decisions. The findings aim to provide insights for marketers, policymakers, and researchers to promote responsible consumption and strengthen the organic product market in the region.

Government Policies to Promote Organic Farming in India

The Government of India has introduced several key initiatives to promote organic farming and support sustainable agriculture. The National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP), started in 2000, provides guidelines for organic farming, processing, and certification. It ensures that both domestic and exported organic products meet international quality standards and regulates labeling to build consumer trust. In 2015, the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) was launched to promote cluster-based organic farming, especially for small and marginal farmers. This scheme provides financial

assistance, training, and support for certification, helping farmers adopt sustainable farming practices. In the same year, the Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER) was introduced to strengthen the organic product value chain in North-Eastern states. It offers support for infrastructure, training, certification, and marketing of high-quality organic produce. More recently, the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF), launched in 2024, focuses on chemical-free farming for one crore farmers and plans to set up 10,000 Bio-Input Resource Centers. The mission aims to improve soil health, reduce input costs, restore ecosystems, and make farming more resilient to climate change.

Additionally, the Promotion of Organic Farming Bill, 2024 was introduced in the Lok Sabha to further encourage organic farming, reduce reliance on chemical fertilizers, and raise awareness about their health impacts. Together, these policies provide a strong framework for developing organic agriculture in India. They aim to increase farmers' income, improve soil fertility, and promote environmentally sustainable practices. Financial support, subsidies, and certification assistance help farmers adopt organic methods. Market development programs connect farmers with domestic and international buyers, while training ensures they maintain organic standards. Regulatory oversight under NPOP guarantees product quality and strengthens consumer confidence. These policies also encourage research in organic seeds, bio-fertilizers, and eco-friendly pest management. By combining new programs with existing schemes, the government seeks to expand their reach and effectiveness. Overall, these initiatives highlight India's commitment to sustainable agriculture, environmental protection, and healthy, chemical-free food. They also aim to make India a global leader in organic farming while supporting farmers economically.

Elements Required for Organic Vision 2025

- **Promote One Certification Standard:** A single, trustworthy certification system should be adopted. Both domestic and international consumers expect organic products to be free from pesticides, harmful chemicals, and GMOs, produced sustainably, and fairly traded with farmers. Multiple standards can lead to confusion, increase costs, and waste valuable financial and human resources, ultimately affecting farmers.
- **Skill India:** Rural youth should be trained in organic farming as part of the Skill India mission. The All India Organic Industries (AIOI) can take responsibility for implementing these programs.
- **Financial Support to Farmers:** Current subsidies and support for organic farmers are limited. Farmers should receive financial assistance equivalent

to conventional fertilizer subsidies to help produce on-farm organic inputs, purchase biofertilizers and biopesticides, cover certification costs, and obtain other cultivation tools. This can be facilitated through mechanisms like JAM (Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, Mobile).

- **Technology Mission for Organic Agriculture:** Research conducted through existing institutions is insufficient and fragmented. ICAR should establish a dedicated division led by a Deputy Director General to focus on developing suitable technologies including seed varieties, agronomy, plant protection, and post-harvest techniques. Funding should prioritize practical research rather than infrastructure, and R&D should be monitored by user-focused bodies.
- **Organic Food Parks:** Organic products require specialized storage and processing infrastructure to prevent contamination. District-level decentralized storage and processing units, along with a few central Organic Food Processing Parks, can help achieve sector goals. Liberal grants should be provided, and associations can form Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) to implement these parks, starting with a central park for the North East Region.
- **Organic Farming Zones:** States should be encouraged to establish organic farming zones and adopt model policies that provide extension services, infrastructure, and financial assistance to farmers.
- **Testing & Monitoring Infrastructure:** There is a need for 2–3 internationally-standard labs on a public-private partnership (PPP) model, coupled with a regular testing and monitoring system to ensure the quality of organic produce.
- **Organic Certification & Promotion Board:** A board consisting of senior officials from relevant ministries, industry representatives, and farmer associations should be formed to promote and develop organic farming in the country.

Significance of Organic Products in India

Organic products in India consist of agricultural and processed items that are produced without using synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), or chemical additives. These products are cultivated using natural farming methods such as composting, crop rotation, biological pest control, and maintaining soil fertility with organic inputs. India produces a wide variety of organic products, including cereals like rice, wheat, and millets; pulses such as lentils, chickpeas, and green gram; fruits such as

mangoes, bananas, papayas, and apples; and vegetables including tomatoes, cucumbers, and leafy greens. The country is also renowned for organic spices and herbs such as turmeric, ginger, garlic, coriander, and cardamom, along with beverages like tea and coffee. Additionally, processed organic products like jams, pickles, juices, organic honey, and dairy products are increasingly popular, alongside non-food items such as organic cotton, wool, and cosmetics. Major organic-producing states include Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim which is India's first fully organic state and several North-Eastern states. To maintain quality and credibility, organic products are certified under the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP), which follows international standards.

The domestic organic market is expanding rapidly, driven by growing health awareness, rising disposable incomes, and demand for chemical-free products. India also exports organic items to international markets, including the USA, Europe, Japan, and the Middle East. Despite this growth, challenges such as fragmented supply chains, high certification costs, and limited consumer awareness remain. Government programs like the Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER), and the National Mission on Natural Farming (NMNF) provide farmers with training, financial assistance, marketing support, and certification guidance. Organic products are significant because they promote human health by reducing chemical exposure, support environmental sustainability, improve soil fertility, conserve biodiversity, and increase farmers' incomes through premium pricing. Overall, organic products in India reflect a growing shift toward sustainable, safe, and eco-friendly agriculture, benefiting both consumers and farmers.

Literature and Hypothesis Development

Sustainable marketing strategies for organic products emphasize transparency, eco-certification, and value-driven communication to foster consumer trust and loyalty. Highlighting health, environmental, and ethical benefits through storytelling and brand authenticity resonates with health-conscious and environmentally aware consumers (Accamma, 2025; Bartels & Hoogendam, 2011). Leveraging certifications and transparent labeling reassures buyers about product quality and authenticity, addressing skepticism and justifying premium prices (Accamma, 2025; Melović et al., 2020). Direct-to-consumer sales, digital marketing, and local market presence increase accessibility and engagement, especially in regions with limited awareness (Ravi Kumar & Shaheeda Banu, 2025; Attri & Bairagi, 2023). Creative promotional strategies, such as educational campaigns, social media

engagement, and analytic visualizations, effectively communicate organic benefits and foster trust (Mathaisel & Comm, 2020; Attri & Bairagi, 2023). Green marketing strategies that integrate environmental, social, and economic dimensions such as eco-friendly packaging and responsible sourcing enhance competitiveness and sustainability (Aceleanu, 2016; Kar & Harichandan, 2022). Collaborative efforts among producers, NGOs, and government agencies foster innovation and market access, as seen in organic cotton and agri-food initiatives (Duarte et al., 2022). Addressing barriers like price sensitivity and limited product availability requires targeted interventions, including price promotions and improved distribution channels (Melović et al., 2020; Ravi Kumar & Shaheeda Banu, 2025). Social identity and positive brand attitudes can be leveraged to influence buying behaviors, making branding and community-building essential (Bartels & Hoogendam, 2011). Integrating management and marketing strategies with entrepreneurship and innovation supports long-term sector growth (Chiangnangamet al., 2024). Aligning sustainability marketing with international standards and market positioning strengthens reputation and competitive advantage for organic brands (Puma-Flores & Rosa-Díaz, 2024). Sustainable marketing integrates environmental, social, and economic considerations into business practices, emphasizing the promotion of products that are eco-friendly, socially responsible, and economically viable. This approach not only addresses ecological concerns but also aligns with consumer values, thereby influencing their purchase decisions. Dhingra and Rani (2024) found that sustainable marketing strategies such as eco-labeling, green packaging, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) enhance consumer trust and brand loyalty, leading to positive purchase intentions. Gong et al. (2023) highlighted the role of CSR in strengthening the relationship between brand image and sustainable purchase intentions, demonstrating that eco-friendly practices are integral to fostering consumer engagement. Additionally, studies indicate that consumers are increasingly willing to pay a premium for products that reflect their environmental and ethical values; for example, McKinsey & Company (2023) reported that over 60% of consumers were willing to pay more for products with sustainable packaging. Further research supports these findings. For instance, Zhang (2020) reviewed 97 empirical studies and identified that individual factors (such as environmental knowledge and values), product attributes, and social influences significantly affect green purchase behavior. Similarly, Proserpio (2025) found that investing in sustainability programs influences purchase behavior, particularly among consumers who value sustainability. Moreover, Qalati et al. (2024) observed that digital marketing strategies focusing on sustainability can inspire sustainable consumer behaviors, fostering a reciprocal influence between businesses and consumers. However, Elmor

(2024) cautioned that many consumers neglect the environmental impact of products when making purchase decisions, indicating a need for more effective communication of sustainability efforts.

Based on this discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Adoption of sustainable marketing practices positively influences consumer purchase decisions for organic products in Tamil Nadu.

Research Methods

This study follows a conceptual research design to investigate the effect of sustainable marketing practices on consumer purchase decisions for organic products. The research relies on secondary sources, including academic journals, research articles, government reports, and market studies. This approach allows for a thorough review and critical analysis of existing studies, helping to identify trends, relationships, and knowledge gaps regarding the influence of sustainable marketing on consumer decisions. In the study, sustainable marketing practices are treated as the independent variable, while consumer purchase decisions are the dependent variable. The review focuses on strategies such as eco-labeling, green packaging, ethical sourcing, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and transparent communication, and examines how these strategies affect consumer purchase decisions. By synthesizing the literature, the study highlights the direct relationship between sustainable marketing practices and consumer purchase decisions, offering a framework to understand the impact of sustainability-driven marketing strategies on consumer behavior in the organic product.

Empirical Evidence from Past Studies

S. No	Author(s)	Year / Location	Detailed Findings / Results
1	Neiba& N. Tejmani Singh	2024 – Manipur, India	Green advertising, eco-labeling, and word-of-mouth marketing significantly boost organic purchase intentions. Environmental consciousness strengthens this relationship, while perceived authenticity in green claims enhances consumer trust.

2	Mishra, Stephen & Noel	2023 – Prayagraj, India	The study found a strong connection between green marketing mix variables and consumer purchase behavior. Quality and health benefits increase purchase intention, but high prices act as a barrier. Accessibility and promotions strengthen green consumer trust.
4	Garg, Narwal & Kumar	2024 – India	Health awareness, product trust, and functional value drive organic food purchase intention. Social norms and product knowledge further enhance willingness to buy. Marketers should focus on credibility, transparency, and authenticity to build consumer trust.
5	Vedprakash, Bhutani, Uppal, Jain & Bansal	2024 – India	Startups practicing sustainability through eco-friendly messaging and ethical sourcing recorded higher consumer trust and purchase intention. Brand trust mediates the link between sustainable practices and consumer loyalty.
6	Fernandes, Sathish & Shrivastava	2024 – India & USA	Sustainable habits significantly impact purchase intentions in both countries. U.S. consumers show stronger alignment between intentions and actions, while Indian consumers are more price sensitive. Awareness programs can narrow this gap.
8	Saxena, Tawde, Manu & Gupta	2025 – India	Moral norms, environmental concern, and perceived behavioral control are strong predictors of eco-friendly purchase intention. Ethical marketing and value-based messaging increase consumer commitment.
9	Sharief & Panghal	2024 – India	Consumers' awareness and moral responsibility positively affect their attitudes toward sustainability-labeled products. Income and trust moderate the link between attitudes and behavior. Label clarity improves confidence in sustainable products.

10	Kumar	2025 – India	Environmental awareness, perceived product quality, and brand trust ($\beta = 0.55\text{--}0.70$) are strong predictors of green purchasing. Authenticity in communication and visible CSR activities increase repeat purchases.
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Summary of Findings

The findings indicate that all the literature review supports the proposed hypotheses, indicating that sustainable marketing activities strongly influence consumers' purchasing decision toward organic. Sustainable marketing practices have a clear and positive effect on consumer purchase decisions for organic products. Consumers are more inclined to buy when marketing emphasizes environmentally responsible production, ethical sourcing, transparency, and trustworthy communication, which foster confidence in the brand. Factors such as product quality, health benefits, environmental awareness, moral values, and brand credibility strongly influence buying behavior. Clear labeling, reliable information, and consistent sustainability messaging further strengthen consumer trust, while pricing and affordability also play a role in decision-making. Marketing that communicates sustainability effectively not only appeals to environmentally conscious consumers but also builds emotional connections with the brand. Ethical and value-driven campaigns encourage more responsible and informed purchasing. Demonstrating genuine commitment through initiatives like corporate social responsibility reinforces loyalty and promotes repeat purchases. Education and awareness about sustainable products enhance the effectiveness of green marketing. Overall, integrating sustainability into marketing through green messaging, certifications, ethical branding, and transparent communication supports informed, confident, and repeat purchase behavior, showing that these strategies are essential in shaping consumer choices and increasing adoption of organic products.

Practical Implications of the Study

- Focus marketing on eco-friendly production, ethical practices, and transparency to build consumer trust.
- Educate consumers about the health, environmental, and ethical benefits of organic products to promote informed decisions.
- Provide clear and trustworthy certifications or eco-labels to assure product authenticity and quality.
- Develop pricing and distribution strategies to make organic products more accessible and affordable.

- Utilize digital channels, e-commerce, and social media to reach and engage environmentally conscious consumers.
- Strengthen brand loyalty through ethical branding, storytelling, and corporate social responsibility initiatives.
- Support policy measures and awareness programs that encourage organic product adoption.
- Align marketing practices with sustainability goals to demonstrate commitment to social and environmental responsibility.
- Highlight the combination of quality, health benefits, and sustainability in product positioning.
- Encourage long-term responsible purchasing by promoting sustainable consumer behaviour.

Conclusion

Sustainable marketing practices are essential in influencing consumer purchases decision for organic products. They foster trust, strengthen emotional connections, and promote customer loyalty. Focusing on transparency, ethical operations, and eco-friendly initiatives helps shape positive consumer behaviour while supporting environmental goals. Providing clear information, consumer education, and reliable certifications ensures confidence in product decisions. Ethical branding and purposeful messaging increase engagement and enhance the perceived value of products. These practices connect consumer values with product offerings, encouraging responsible purchasing. By promoting sustainability, brands can build credibility and a competitive advantage. Effective green marketing also supports repeat purchases and long-term consumer relationships. Integrating sustainability into marketing strategies contributes to overall market growth. Ultimately, such approaches help increase the adoption of organic products and foster a more environmentally conscious society.

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