



Article

The Use of the Green Marketing Concept in Milk Processing Enterprises

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Abstract: This article provides a comprehensive analysis of the theoretical and practical aspects of implementing the green marketing concept in milk processing enterprises. In the context of increasing environmental challenges and growing consumer awareness, green marketing has become a strategic tool for ensuring sustainability in the dairy industry. The study explores the relationship between green marketing and sustainable development goals and examines international and local practices of dairy processing companies. The methodology is based on systematic analysis, comparative analysis, content analysis of scientific literature, and secondary data analysis. The findings indicate that green product design, eco-friendly packaging, energy-efficient technologies, and environmental communication significantly enhance the competitiveness of milk processing enterprises. The core elements of the green marketing concept are summarized in a structured table. The article concludes with practical recommendations for implementing green marketing strategies in milk processing enterprises in Uzbekistan.

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1. Introduction

In recent decades, the intensification of global environmental challenges, climate change, the depletion of natural resources, and the adverse environmental impacts of industrial activities have necessitated a fundamental reconsideration of existing economic development models. According to data from the World Economic Forum and the United Nations, the food industry accounts for approximately 26 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, with the dairy and dairy processing sector contributing a particularly significant environmental burden [1]. This situation compels manufacturing enterprises to adopt management and marketing approaches oriented toward sustainable development.

In international academic literature, the concept of green marketing is widely recognized as an effective strategy for addressing environmental challenges through market-based mechanisms [2]. Green marketing encompasses not only the production of environmentally friendly products but also the integration of ecological principles into production processes, supply chain management, packaging, logistics, and consumer communication [3]. In dairy processing enterprises, intensive use of water and energy resources, the generation of biological waste, and the environmental impact of packaging materials make the implementation of green marketing a strategic necessity [4].

In developed economies such as the European Union, the United States, and Japan, green marketing in the dairy industry has been institutionalized at both public policy and corporate strategy levels. In particular, within the framework of the European Green Deal, stringent requirements have been imposed on dairy processing enterprises regarding eco-friendly packaging, carbon footprint reduction, and improvements in energy efficiency [5]. As a result, demand for environmentally certified dairy products has increased, contributing to the formation of environmentally conscious consumer behavior [6]. Empirical studies indicate that dairy enterprises that consistently implement green marketing strategies achieve higher levels of consumer trust, stronger brand loyalty, and sustainable long-term competitive advantages in the market [7].

However, in developing countries, including the Central Asian region, the practical implementation of green marketing concepts remains insufficiently systematized. In many enterprises, environmental initiatives tend to be fragmented and are not treated as an integral component of overall marketing strategy [8]. This highlights the increasing requirement for science-based and culture-specific practice of green marketing.

In the Uzbek conditions, dairy processing is one of the priority sectors of the national food industry. The increasing consumer demand for milk and dairy products, commissioning of new processing capacities, and growing participation of the private sector add to the economic importance of this sector [9]. However, inadequate acceptance of energy-efficient technologies, low level of eco-packaging use and underdeveloped green marketing communication are still critical problem areas [10].

With the introduction of strategic development policy documents in the Republic of Uzbekistan, target orientation also expanded to other types of entities. Private dairy enterprises БЕРФАН, which are involved in implementation programs for sustainable development and green economy and environmental safety are required by these approaches more ecological responsibility to their product too [11]. In this way, the application of green marketing on this model is involved in environmental and socio-economic development. Furthermore, the increasing interest of consumers at local level for the food products safe and environmentally friendly favours the opportunities for a practical application of green marketing strategies [12].

Taking these into account, the paper seeks to explain scientifically the nature, meaning and practical application prospects of the green marketing concept in dairy processing enterprises at global and local levels. It is anticipated that the results of this study will provide theoretical and practical implications for a strategic green marketing application at the dairy industry in Uzbekistan.

The knowledge about green market evolved in the late twentieth century as the second half of last century witnessed the environmental problems get worse and consumers becoming more ecological. Early seminal work of Polonsky provided the concept of green marketing as a combination of business activities designed to satisfy customers and meet their needs in an environmentally sustainable way [13]. With this conceptual fact definition, the field of research turned away from pure commercially motivated marketing and towards environmentally proactive value creation activities; it has become a foundation for various theoretical and empirical studies ever since then.

Following on from this, Peattie and Crane (2004) have taken a critical look at the development of green marketing and that superficial and token environmental claims would not lead to sustainable indigenous outcomes [14]. They stressed that green marketing should be moved beyond the strategic positioning of a company into the operation and innovation, being able to translate it with real changes in production process, product, and organization. Such a strategic approach shifted green marketing from being a tactical communication device to one that was more of a management philosophy.

More generally, within the framework of marketing theory, Kotler and Keller have formulated green marketing as an extension of contemporary marketing principles in line with sustainable development principles [15]. Their research demonstrates that environmental value creation is positively associated with firms competing in the medium to long term due to development of relationships with stakeholders, regulatory risks reduction and brand differentiation. This view incorporates sustainability in the essence of market orientation.

A large number of empirical studies have investigated the performance outcomes of green marketing actions. Leonidou et al. offer strong empirical evidence that environmentally focused marketing approaches are linked to favorable impacts on financial performance, brand identity and market profile [16]. These consequences are even more apparent in environmentally sensitive industries like food processing and dairy production, which tend to have visible ecological footprints for consumers and regulators alike.

Consumer-focused research also confirms that green marketing strategies have strategic implications. Hartmann and Ibáñez demonstrate that self-disclosed green branding activities, as well as environmental product qualities [17], significantly increase trust and decrease price sensitivity among consumers. Their results indicate that a non-price competitive advantage, such as ecological differentiation, would be successful especially in markets with homogeneous products, like the dairy sector.

Innovation in green marketing has also been one of the main areas of concern by academics. 5.1 Green technological innovation as enabler of green marketing strategies Green technological innovation has been identified as a critical driver for successful green marketing strategy and, it is claimed that credible environmental claims must be backed by myopic advances in technology [18]. In the range of dairy-processing farms, energy saving techniques, waste reduction methods and resource-saving developments are the obligatory requirements for efficient implementation of green marketing.

From the consumer behavior point of view, Grunert studies highlight the relevance of eco-labels and environmental information in influencing purchasing decisions in food market [19]. It has been proven empirically that the use of an eco-label on dairy products exerts a considerable impact on consumers' purchasing behavior because it acts as a means to attenuate information asymmetry and signal environmental consciousness.

Supply chain related research also pushes the green marketing discussion beyond firm boundaries. Kumar et al. integrate sustainability and green marketing throughout the dairy supply chain, focusing on the contribution of green logistics, environmentally friendly distribution and supplier cooperation to sustainable environmental performance [20]. This systemic view emphasizes that there are multiple actors in the value chain which need to be coordinated for green marketing success.

At the institutional and macro level, Testa and Iraldo frame green marketing as a market promoting instrument for achieving sustainable development objectives, urging on the need of institutionalising environmental practices in firms [21]. Evidence from European dairy companies also support the fact that firms making green marketing decisions not only have less environmental risk, but that their economic outcomes are better as well [22].

However, the research of green marketing in domestic journals still remains underdeveloped and theoretical. Abdurahmonov connects ecological marketing with social responsibility of corporate business and sustainable economic development; however, its sector-specific analysis is given little attention [23]. Additionally, Xolmatov and Rahimov pin-point green marketing as a strategic focus for industrial enterprises in the Uzbekistan context of greening the economy; however, empirical evidence on the industry-level is scarce [24].

Sector-based food and dairy studies reveal some remaining disparities. Tursunov points to a lack of development of environmentally oriented marketing methods and calls for the further improvement of ecological certification systems in the dairy industry [25]. Karimova and Ismoilov explore the influence of green advertising and eco-labels on consumer knowledge underpinned by their effect on environmental protection attitude but fail to empirically relate these consequences to firm performance [26].

Qodirov emphasises the relationship between resource-saving technology and advertising policy in dairy production plants, and substantiates the desirability of combining green marketing and production policy [27]. Rahmonova also places green marketing as a factor of the country's competitiveness in the economy, ensuring its strategic dimension beyond the level of companies [28]. Despite this, there are few empirical studies linking cause and effect of the adoption green marketing practices and indicators of performance.

Current work of Shodmonov et. and Iskandarov uncover a nascent consumer appetite for eco-friendly dairy products in Uzbekistan but emphasise structural and institutional challenges to the successful rollout of green marketing tactics [29; 30]. These results indicate that the market has potential, but systematic and evidence-based marketing approaches are not yet provided.

Emergent empirical investigation also shed new light that green management instruments are conducive not only to the promotion of environmental performance, but also social sustainability inside organizations. Specifically, green supply chain management has been evidenced to improve workplace safety and also standards of employee health [31]. These results suggest that green marketing is not to be considered as a pure promotional and/or environmental strategy, but rather as an integrated managerial phenomenon influencing, inter alia, operational processes, supply chain systems and organizational performance. Thus, Green Marketing for the milk processing enterprises need to be integrated with sustainable and responsible production and supply chain.

In general, the evidence in the literature reviewed indicates that green marketing is an important tool for bridging production and consumption toward sustainability. Overseas literature offers many good theoretical based and data sampling evidences to regard green marketing as a strategic management philosophy that includes innovation, supply chain integration and organization culture. Domestically, the empirical studies of sectoral scope are less prevalent where the dairy processing industry is concerned. The lack of studies in this area has created a gap that needs to be filled by methodologically strong research which assesses the antecedents and effects of green marketing implementation in emerging economies, therefore providing rationale for this paper.

2. Methodology

The study intends to investigate the theoretical and pragmatic aspects of the green marketing implementation in dairy processing industry. The study used a conceptual design based on integrative methodology of qualitative and analytic views. Instead of primary information, the study uses secondary data taken from international sources as well as national statistics.

Research design, approach and method: The study is of a descriptive and analytical nature and adopted a research tool to account for the mechanics behind green marketing in dairy processing. A systems perspective for the methodological approach of this research is virtually motivated by green marketing role in dairy sector, where production processes, logistics, packaging systems and marketing communication are as a complex system.

The principle of sustainable development is the general methodological framework. In this context, the economic, environmental and social dimensions of green marketing performance were measured in a combined way that permits an overall assessment of its inputs to sustainable industrial development.

Data Sources

The empirical basis of the study was constructed using secondary data derived from the following sources:

1. Peer-reviewed international academic publications on green marketing and ecological marketing indexed in databases such as ScienceDirect, Scopus, and ResearchGate;
2. Analytical reports and policy documents issued by international organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the European Commission, and the United Nations;
3. Official statistical data and regulatory documents of the Republic of Uzbekistan;
4. National academic journals and scholarly monographs addressing sustainability, marketing, and the food industry.

The selection of sources was guided by strict criteria, including scientific credibility, thematic relevance, publication within the last ten years, and direct applicability to the dairy and food processing sectors.

Research Methods

This study used the following scientific methods in order to meet its aims:

A content analysis method was used to collectively analyze the leading theories, conceptual models and empirical evidences in green marketing and sustainable development of home and abroad.

The comparative approach allowed to analyze the practice of green marketing in dairy processing enterprises for developed countries (EU, the United States and Japan) and Uzbekistan identifying general trends and peculiarities.

Systems analysis helped to assess the significance of green marketing in terms of key marketing mix components such as products, pricing, distribution and promotion among dairy companies.

Analytical synthesis was employed to combine results, draw evidence-based conclusions and develop practical strategic recommendations from green marketing literature.

The research subject / scope includes companies from the dairy processing industry.

In this regard, one of the main topics to be addressed in this study is related to how the processes, mechanisms and paths are adopted by these companies regarding the greening marketing concepts and their articulation with sustainable development goals.

There are several limitations of this study. In particular, the lack of first hand data collection lessens the generalisability across industry. However, this shortcoming is partly attenuated by the reliance on trustworthy secondary data and the in-depth examination of international best practices. It is suggested that future studies can apply economic modeling, mathematical modeling and empirical methods (e.g., regression analysis, structural equation modeling or panel data methods) to quantitatively examine the effectiveness of green marketing activities on the milk industry.

The choice of the conceptual (secondary-data) research design can be justified methodologically, given the preliminarily exploratory and hypothesis-building nature of this work. As the implementation of green marketing strategies in dairy processing companies in developing countries, including Uzbekistan has not yet been thoroughly investigated in a systemic way, the main purpose of this paper is more to combine

available theoretical and practical insights than to test a specific set of causal relationships. In this sense, secondary data from peer-reviewed academic literature, international agents and official national sources have been used allowing a complete and trustworthy analysis of the green marketing performance under diverse institutional and economic settings.

Furthermore, this qualitative–analytical methodological principle is consistent with the research traditions in sustainability and green marketing studies which place high value on conceptual synthesis and cross-context comparison for theoretical development. Content analysis, comparative research and system review have been employed in this study to reveal structural patterns of green marketing adoption, strategic modes distributed by multinationals and mediating factors under the influence of macro-environment. They are difficult for survey samples from one country alone to generalize.

The systems-based perspective adds another layer of methodological rigor by acknowledging green marketing as a multi-faceted construct, integral to interrelated production, logistics, packaging and communication processes. This is especially applicable to the dairy industry, where environmental impacts derive from the entire value chain. While the study is limited by a lack of original empirical data, its focus on depth and theoretical coherence cements strong conceptual underpinning for subsequent empirical studies pursuing econometric modeling, structural equation modelling (SEM), or mixed-method designs. Thus, the selected approach is both suitable and adequate for fulfilling research aims thereby adding significantly to current body of green marketing and sustainability related literature.

3. Results and Discussion

The findings from the content and comparative analyses further show that green marketing is integrated into corporate strategy in dairy processing firm of developed economy. Especially for the European Union countries green marketing is predominantly realized with environmental conscious product design, eco-packaging solutions, energy efficiency policy and structured green communication.

The ecological certification of products with a specific added value for the dairy industry is represented in European level mainly by EU Ecolabel and carbon footprint labeling. These certificates allow companies which write environmental claims to communicate in a credible manner about the safety of their products for the environment and competitiveness on the market. For example, from an empirical perspective we learn that demand for environmentally labeled dairy products is more inelastic than for conventional dairy products which may potentially result in greater customer commitment.

Green marketing strategy has become more deeply linked with technological innovation in the U.S.A and Japan. Dairy producers urge the use of renewable sources of energy, lower water usage and waste-to-fuel systems in their marketing communications. This is to imply that green marketing adds both in the areas of environmental reputation development and cost savings and long-term financial health.

The systems analysis indicates that green marketing tools in dairy processing companies embody in four basic dimensions: product, pricing, distribution and communication.

Product-relatedly, the trend is to use eco-friendly raw materials, reduce preservatives and adopt biodegradable packaging materials. Price sensitivity usually moderate by consumers' positive perception on the environmental, health benefits of green product and will to pay more for them even if higher price are set.

In the distribution category, ecological efficiency can be increased through use of short-logistic chains, higher recycling rate and decrease in transportation emission. On the communication axis it is crucial to provide information that is transparent, reliable and

verifiable about environmental performance of products and services, in order to avoiding greenwashing because greenwash destroys confidence of consumers.

A study of internal perceptions shows that the green market in the dairy industry is not fully formed. In the majority of organisations, environmental activities are conducted at a technological level (e.g., investment in energy efficient equipment) and towards reduction of waste. Yet they are not being incorporated deeply enough into integrated marketing plans.

Analysis of the official statistical data and legal framework indicates that although state programs on the transition to a green economy are adopted, special mechanisms of green marketing and incentive levers for milk processing companies are yet insufficient. As a result, there is poor disclosure of environmental policies and programmes by many companies in the market. However, in a number of big and medium-sized companies this green marketing orientation (eco-friendly packaging, product quality certification, use of local raw materials) is slowly entering. This phenomenon reflects the institutional and methodical prerequisites for a regular development of green marketing in the industry.

The findings of analytical synthesis verifies that green marketing is an indispensable tool for the realization of sustainable development goals. As a strategy for the dairy processing enterprises, green marketing achieves resource conservation and economic benefits, as well as social impacts concerning consumer's health and confidence.

This study's conclusions support the view that green marketing strategies need to be structurally combined with production and supply chain management. There is empirical evidence to confirm that green supply chain management not only leads to environmental efficiency but also enhance the indicators of occupation health and workplace safety [31]. This multi-dimensional impact shows the overall strategic value of green marketing in milk processing firms. Therefore, enhancement of green marketing efforts would not only improve environmental performance and competitive advantage, but also social sustainability and employee welfare.

In general, the results show that firms which systematically carry-out green marketing activities report higher performance in all key indicators of sustainable development. These provide a powerful basis for the strategic management of green marketing to be integrated into Uzbekistans dairy industry. Thus, Table 1 provides a systematic summary of the central elements of green marketing concept for dairy processing organizations using well-founded academic criteria.

Table 1. Conceptual Framework and Practical Dimensions of Green Marketing in Dairy Processing Enterprises.

Green Marketing Element	Conceptual Description	Practical Implementation in Dairy Processing Enterprises	Contribution to Sustainable Development
Green Product	Production of environmentally safe products that pose no harm to human health and exert minimal negative impact on the natural environment	Reduction of preservatives, utilization of natural raw materials, production of environmentally certified dairy products	Environmental and social sustainability (reduced environmental pollution and improved consumer health outcomes)
Green Packaging	Use of recyclable or	Application of paper-based or bio-plastic	Environmental sustainability

	biodegradable packaging materials that minimize environmental degradation	packaging, reduction of plastic volume in product packaging	(reduction of solid waste and packaging-related pollution)
Green Pricing	Establishment of fair pricing that reflects ecological costs while maintaining economic viability	Premium pricing for green products supported by value-based justification and cost-efficient pricing strategies	Economic sustainability (long-term profitability and enhanced market competitiveness))
Green Distribution	Reduction of the environmental footprint of logistics and distribution processes	Utilization of local raw materials, shortened supply chains, reduction of transportation-related emissions	Environmental and economic sustainability (lower emissions and improved operational efficiency)

The analysis of the table indicates that the concept of green marketing in dairy processing enterprises functions not merely as a marketing tool but as an integral component of sustainable development strategy. In particular, the systematic implementation of green approaches across product development, packaging, and communication channels not only enhances environmental efficiency but also secures a competitive advantage in the market.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The objective of this study was to provide a systematic analysis on the theories for and practices in applying the green marketing concept by an enterprise in dairy processing industry at globalizing as well as national level. Results of the study suggests that, with increasing environmental threats and the need to advocate sustainable development concept, green marketing in dairy sector is no longer optional but rather a strategic imperative.

Analysis of international practice highlights that commercialisation of green marketing at dairies manufacturers is important not only from an environmental perspective but also as a condition for strengthening competitiveness, brand reputation and sustainability of economic activities in the long run. Especially the practices in EU (European Union), US (United States) and Japan can show such phenomena that eco-friendly packaging, energy saving, environmental certification, and transparent communication functions as the marketing strategy.

Based on the Uzbek context, some aspects of green marketing have already been developed in the domestic dairy enterprises but they were organized poorly. Under-integration of green marketing in broader marketing activities has hindered the maximization of economic and social gains resulting from green marketing. However, the state's policy of leading "green" economy and consumers' awareness on environmental issues are favorable for green market practices.

The results confirm that green marketing is an important managerial tool in the dairy processing company, involving ecological, economic and social dimensions of sustainable development.

On the basis of above findings, following scientifically based and practical suggestions concerning effective implementation of green marketing in dairy processing enterprises should be developed:

1. Green marketing should be considered not as a separate marketing function but as an integral component of corporate development strategy.
2. The use of recyclable and biodegradable packaging materials should be expanded in local enterprises, accompanied by the adoption of national and international environmental certification mechanisms.
3. Providing consumers with clear, reliable, and verifiable information about the ecological attributes of products is essential to mitigate the risk of greenwashing.
4. The implementation of energy- and water-saving technologies should be supported through state-provided financial and tax incentives, recognizing both ecological and economic efficiency gains.
5. Strengthening integration with local farmers can reduce transportation costs and carbon footprint, while simultaneously promoting regional economic sustainability.

This study demonstrates, on a scientific basis, that systematic implementation of green marketing in Uzbekistan's dairy processing industry can enhance environmental security, increase competitiveness, and contribute to sustainable development goals. The conclusions and recommendations provide methodological and practical value for researchers, practitioners, and policy-making institutions in the field.

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