

# Agripreneurs' Marketing Strategies: A Review of Sustainable Practices, Innovations And Responsible Entrepreneurship



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## Abstract

The present study explores agripreneurs' marketing strategies as a central component of sustainable and responsible agripreneurship. In light of their increased role in agricultural and rural development, the paper reviews the varieties of marketing strategies adopted within the agricultural sector and examines their transformation in the last two decades in response to imperatives of sustainability, technological advances, and market dynamics. This study is based on a systematic review of secondary literature extracted from international peer-reviewed journals, books, doctoral theses, conference proceedings, and institutional reports published over the last 20 years. Collected literature was thematically analyzed using review techniques that focus on sustainable marketing practices, innovation-driven approach, digital transformation, and responsible entrepreneurship. Evidence has shown a strong correlation of agripreneurial marketing strategies with business performance, competitiveness, and sustainability performance. Marketing activities such as green branding, value addition, ethical sourcing, and community-based engagement have dominated recent discussions. Innovation-led approaches, with particular emphasis on digital marketing, e-commerce platforms, and traceability technologies, remain some of the dominant themes in recent empirical studies. The study contributes to existing literature by synthesizing traditional and contemporary marketing approaches and provides directions for future empirical research and policy formulation.

**Keywords:-** Agripreneurs, Marketing Strategies, Sustainable Practices, Innovation, Responsible Entrepreneurship.

## Introduction

The agricultural sector has also witnessed major structural and functional changes over the past two decades, with a shift from subsistence to market, innovation, and agribusiness. In this context, agripreneurs, or agricultural entrepreneurs, have become major stakeholders in rural development, employment, and sustainable economic development. Marketing practices followed by agripreneurs are major determinants of business viability and sustainability.

The conventional marketing system in agriculture was mainly characterized by fragmented channels, low value addition, poor branding, and the involvement of middlemen. However, growing awareness among consumers about food safety, environmental sustainability, and ethical practices has forced agripreneurs to reconsider their marketing practices. The growing importance of sustainable marketing, green branding, digital marketing, and responsible entrepreneurship has brought about a major shift in the marketing practices of agripreneurs.

Concurrently, the development of technology, such as digital marketing platforms, e-commerce platforms, blockchain-based traceability systems, and data-driven decision-making, has further fueled the adoption of innovation in agricultural marketing. These developments are also in line with

the global agendas of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), responsible consumption and production, and rural development.

Despite the increasing application of agripreneurs' marketing strategies, the current body of knowledge

is scattered across various fields of study, including agricultural economics, marketing management, entrepreneurship, and sustainability studies. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to systematically review and integrate the current body of knowledge on agripreneurs' marketing strategies, with a particular emphasis on sustainable practices, innovation-driven strategies, and responsible entrepreneurship.

### 1.1 Concept of Agripreneurship

Agripreneurship is the use of entrepreneurial practices in agricultural production, processing, marketing, and value chain operations. We have pointed out that agripreneurs are distinct from conventional farmers because of their market orientation, risk tolerance, innovation adoption, and value-creation approach. Agripreneurship is a means of diversifying income sources, rural industrialization, and socio-economic empowerment.

### 1.2 Marketing Strategies in Agribusiness

Marketing strategies in agribusiness include product differentiation, pricing, distribution, promotion, and relationship marketing. We have

noted that agripreneurs are increasingly adopting direct marketing, short supply chains, farm branding, and value-added products to improve profitability and minimize the role of middlemen.

### 1.3 Sustainable Marketing Practices

Sustainable marketing is the integration of environmental, social, and economic factors into marketing planning. Literature has identified practices such as organic labeling, eco-labeling, ethical sourcing, fair pricing, waste management, and community engagement as the essential components of sustainable agripreneurial marketing. Empirical research has found that sustainable practices have a positive impact on brand trust, consumer loyalty, and performance.

### 1.4 Innovation and Digital Transformation

Innovation-oriented marketing practices have become more visible with the use of digital innovations. Digital marketing, social media marketing, mobile-based advisory services, e-commerce platforms, and traceability systems help agripreneurs reach a larger market, increase transparency, and connect directly with consumers. Studies have shown that digitalization improves market extension, price extraction, and efficiency.

### 1.5 Responsible Entrepreneurship Perspective

Responsible entrepreneurship is characterized by responsible behavior, stakeholder focus, social responsibility, and environmental responsibility. Agripreneurs using responsible marketing practices are concerned with inclusive growth, farmer-consumer connections, rural employment, and responsible use of resources. Literature indicates that responsible entrepreneurship improves social legitimacy and resilience of agribusiness enterprises.

### Objectives of the Study:-

The objectives are:

- 1) To review agripreneurs' marketing strategies.
- 2) To identify sustainable practices and their impact.
- 3) To examine innovation-driven approaches.
- 4) To analyze responsible entrepreneurship.
- 5) To identify gaps and propose future directions.

### Research Design & Methodology:-

#### Type of Research:

The research is exploratory in nature and conducted purely on the basis of secondary data.

#### Sources of Secondary Data:

The data was collected from research papers, journals, reports, white papers, magazines, proceedings of conferences, and reliable websites.

#### Research Methodology:

A total of 120 research papers from 2005 to 2025 were considered for initial screening to fulfill the objectives of the research in terms of marketing

strategies and models. Among them, 50 relevant and quality publications were chosen for a thorough analysis. The literature was classified into themes based on common areas of research and focus.

1. Sustainability
2. Innovation
3. Digitalization
4. Responsible Entrepreneurship

### Sampling Technique:

About 50 articles were shortlisted on the basis of relevance, findings, and applicability. Snowball sampling technique was also employed to shortlist other relevant research studies from the references of the selected research papers.

### Literature Review

The development of agripreneurial marketing over the last two decades has been characterized by a paradigm shift in terms of sustainability, innovation, digital transformation, and responsible entrepreneurship. The existing literature from 2005 to 2025 indicates that the marketing of agribusiness has shifted from a transactional process to a value-driven, inclusive, and technology-enabled system. This literature review has been synthesized using four thematic dimensions: sustainable practices, innovation, digital transformation, and responsible entrepreneurship.

### 2.1 Sustainable Practices in Agripreneurial Marketing

Sustainable marketing practices have become a strategic imperative in agripreneurial settings because of rising environmental concerns, shifting consumer behavior, and government regulations. The initial work of Klerkx and Leeuwis (2005) focused on agricultural innovation systems that incorporated sustainability through collaborative approaches involving multiple stakeholders. Later, alternative food systems and local branding strategies (Renting et al., 2010; Tregear, 2013) emphasized the significance of proximity, trust, and transparency in sustainable agri-food marketing.

Quality governance and assurance in agri-food supply chain networks were further explored by Trienekens (2009), who suggested that sustainability-focused standards improve market coordination and credibility. Global institutional frameworks outlined by the FAO (2016, 2023) reiterated the significance of sustainable value chain development that addressed environmental sustainability in conjunction with economic viability and social inclusion. Likewise, the OECD (2020) reiterated the importance of aligning sustainability objectives with policy and digital strategies.

In the Indian scenario, Narayanan (2012) and Birthal et al. (2014) have pointed out the structural and market barriers to the adoption of sustainable practices by small farmers. Nevertheless, recent

research indicates that eco-labeling, organic labeling, and sustainable packaging have a substantial impact on consumer trust and willingness to pay (Bhatia & Kumar, 2019; Shukla & Sharma, 2022). Certification-based marketing strategies, including those that conform to GlobalGAP, have been shown to enhance global market entry and brand differentiation (Borsellino et al., 2023).

## 2.2 Innovation-Driven Approaches in Agribusiness Marketing

Innovation has been identified as a driver of improved agripreneurial competitiveness and market integration. The theory of innovation systems formed the basis for understanding the transformation of agricultural marketing (Klerkx & Leeuwis, 2005; Kilelu et al., 2016). The importance of innovation platforms, knowledge networks, and institutional engagement in facilitating agripreneurs to access high-value markets was highlighted.

Value chain inclusivity was identified as a prominent innovation route, especially for smallholder agripreneur integration (Vorley & Proctor, 2006; Devaux et al., 2017). Barrett et al. (2011) showed that innovation in market connections greatly enhances smallholder engagement in modern agri-food systems. The commercialization and diversification patterns in Indian agriculture (Birthal et al., 2014; Pingali et al., 2018) also reflect the growing focus on market-oriented agricultural production and innovative marketing practices.

At the organizational level, agripreneurial competencies were shown to shape innovation adoption and marketing outcomes (Mishra et al., 2017). The agritech startup phenomenon (Singh et al., 2022) and ecosystem studies by KPMG India (2024) suggest that innovation is increasingly integrating technology, branding, and customer engagement.

## 2.3 Digital Transformation of Agricultural Marketing

The digital transformation of agricultural marketing has radically changed the marketing system in terms of increased efficiency, transparency, and inclusivity. Klerkx et al. (2018) introduced the concept of digital agriculture as a paradigm shift that facilitates data-informed decision-making and precision marketing. The use of big data analytics in supply chain management (Gupta & George, 2019) further improved predictive analysis and customer engagement.

In the Indian context, the use of digital platforms such as the electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) improved price discovery and market efficiency (Kapoor & Dwivedi, 2018). The use of e-commerce (Kumar & Ayedee, 2021), direct-to-consumer (D2C) marketing (Agarwal et al., 2021), and social media marketing (Sarkar & Das, 2020) in

agricultural marketing indicates the democratization of agricultural markets. Retail transformation studies (Reardon et al., 2021) demonstrate how the digital integration of retailing transforms the agri-food value chain.

Recent studies indicate the use of artificial intelligence in marketing analytics (Jain & Patel, 2023) and digital branding (Sharma & Singh, 2023), which indicates a shift towards personalized and predictive marketing. The World Economic Forum (2024) further reiterated the strategic relevance of digital transformation in sustainable agri-food systems.

## 2.4 Responsible Entrepreneurship and Inclusive Marketing

Responsible entrepreneurship involves the integration of ethical management, social equity, and environmental sustainability in agribusiness marketing. The concept of inclusive market participation (Vorley & Proctor, 2006; Barrett et al., 2011) emphasized the need for equal opportunities in accessing premium markets. Contract farming research (Meemken & Bellemare, 2020) showed mixed results in terms of social welfare, underlining the need for equitable management practices.

Joint marketing by Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) has been identified as a key responsible entrepreneurship practice in India (Kumar et al., 2019; Meena et al., 2022). Additional institutional support by NABARD (2024) further reinforced FPO-based marketing and rural financial inclusion.

Gender-equitable agripreneurship has been in the limelight, with the UNDP (2023) emphasizing the role of women-owned businesses in rural empowerment. Export market-oriented practices (Singh & Chandra, 2024; IBEF, 2025) suggest that responsible entrepreneurship practices also apply to global competitiveness, where adherence, quality, and sustainability are of prime importance.

International trade views from the WTO (2025) support the need for ethical norms and certification marketing for accessing international markets. Taken together, these studies support the view that responsible entrepreneurship practices strike a balance between profit and social equity, institutional integrity, and sustainable rural development.

### Research Gap:-

The literature review (2005-2025) on sustainable practices, innovation, digital transformation, and responsible entrepreneurship indicates a substantial amount of theoretical and empirical development. Nevertheless, some important research gaps are still to be addressed, especially in the context of Indian agripreneurial marketing.

Though a substantial amount of development has taken place in the literature of agripreneurial marketing, it is important to note that there is a lack

of an integrated framework that investigates the joint impact of sustainable practices, innovation capabilities, digital transformation, and responsible entrepreneurship on marketing performance in the Indian agribusiness context.

#### Discussions:

### 3.1 Evolution of Agripreneurial Marketing

Agripreneurial marketing has undergone a significant transformation in the last two decades. Agricultural marketing was primarily based on commodity marketing through mandis and intermediaries, wherein the farmer did not have any significant bargaining power and relied solely on price-based marketing. Moreover, products were not differentiated, and profit margins were low due to the involvement of middlemen.

Since 2005, there has been a significant change from a 'production-oriented approach' to a 'market-oriented approach.' Agripreneurs have started to focus on 'value creation' rather than 'value increase.' This has been achieved by adopting 'value-added products,' wherein raw materials were converted into 'processed or semi-processed products.' Another important change has been the 'Direct-to-Consumer' approach, wherein agripreneurs were able to establish direct linkages with consumers through 'farmers' markets,' 'online marketing,' and 'subscription services.' Contract farming has also been an important feature, wherein agripreneurs were able to establish 'market linkages,' 'technical support,' and 'price discovery mechanisms.' Another important feature that has emerged in recent times is 'Farmer Producer Organizations,' wherein agripreneurs were able to enhance their 'marketing power.'

### 3.2 Sustainable Marketing Practices

The concept of sustainable marketing has emerged as an important part of agripreneurial marketing strategies, driven by environmental awareness and changing consumer behavior. These sustainable marketing practices include organic certification, eco-labeling, reduction of chemical usage, carbon-neutral farming, and water conservation, which help to establish the image of the product as safe for consumers. Research has shown that consumers are willing to pay premium prices for certified organic products. Green marketing, apart from enhancing price perception, also contributes to long-term trust-building and customer loyalty. So, sustainable marketing fulfills the functions of both marketing and corporate social responsibility.

### 3.3 Innovation-Driven and Digital Transformation

Innovation is an important part of modern agripreneurial marketing. Product innovations include "Ready to Cook" kits and processed agro-products. Similarly, innovations in the form of better

packaging increase the convenience of the products. Cold chain logistics and farm box services help in reducing post-harvest losses, ensuring remunerative prices for the farmers.

Digital transformation has further helped in enhancing market access for agri-products. Social media marketing, online market platforms, farm websites, WhatsApp Business communication, and QR code-based systems are being used for enhancing transparency, branding, price realization, reducing intermediaries, and making the products more competitive.

### 3.4 Responsible Entrepreneurship

The key principles of responsible marketing are fair pricing, rural employment, women's empowerment, and supply chain transparency. Agripreneurs who incorporate social equity and environmental sustainability into their businesses are able to grow sustainably while maintaining ethical credibility.

### 4. Findings / Results:-

The systematic review and thematic synthesis of literature from 2005 to 2025 reveal four major findings related to agripreneurs' marketing strategies within the context of sustainability, digitalization, innovation, and responsible entrepreneurship.

#### 4.1 Sustainability Enhances Competitiveness

The findings of the systematic review confirm that sustainability-oriented marketing enhances agripreneurs' competitiveness. Strategies like green branding, organic certification, eco-labeling, fair sourcing, and sustainable packaging contribute to a better perception and loyalty of consumers. In India, certification by agencies like APEDA and FSSAI not only enhances the export potential of agri-products but also provides legitimacy to sustainable marketing claims. Worldwide, Fairtrade International facilitates farmers to attain premium prices and establish long-term relationships with buyers. Research evidence supports that sustainability-oriented marketing enhances brand equity, premium pricing, long-term savings, and stakeholder relationships, thus leading to better repurchase and profit.

#### 4.2 Digital Transformation Democratizes Markets

Digital transformation reduces entry costs and broadens the scope of agripreneurs' marketing access. Digital platforms like Amazon and Flipkart, along with India's e-NAM initiative, increase profit margins by lowering transaction costs. Social media like Instagram and Facebook enable agripreneurs to establish brand identity and connect with consumers.

#### 4.3 Innovation Improves Transparency

Technologies such as blockchain, IoT, and QR code-based technologies improve transparency in the food supply chain, thereby enhancing food safety. For instance, IBM Food Trust allows for product traceability, monitoring of storage conditions, and minimizes the risk of fraud. Transparency creates trust, especially for high-value segments, thereby moving the focus of the marketing function from claim-based to evidence-based credibility.

#### 4.4 Responsible Entrepreneurship Empowers Communities

Responsible entrepreneurship combines business success with sustainability, gender empowerment, and rural development. National Rural Livelihood Mission, for example, supports women-led enterprises that improve income, financial inclusion, and the resilience of rural communities. Ethical sourcing and storytelling improve the authenticity and emotional connection of the brand.

#### Conclusion and Implications-

The conclusion of this review is that the marketing practices of agripreneurs are being influenced by sustainability, digital transformation, technological innovation, and responsible entrepreneurship. Green practices can improve competitiveness, digital platforms can level the playing field in marketing, innovation can increase transparency, and responsible practices can improve rural empowerment.

##### Theoretical Implications

The results of this review may be theoretically implemented through an integrated conceptual framework for linking sustainability, digitalization, innovation, and responsible entrepreneurship that economic, environmental, and social factors are interrelated in the marketing practices of agripreneurs.

##### Practical Implications

Agripreneurs need to focus on sustainable marketing, digital marketing platforms, and traceability systems to improve competitiveness. Institutions need to improve support structures, digital networks, and training programs to improve rural development.

##### Policy Implications

Digital agriculture, certification schemes, and women-led initiatives can help improve sustainable agricultural marketing and rural economic development.

#### Recommendations:-

The agripreneur can consider paying more attention to sustainable marketing practices such as organic products. These practices can help agripreneurs become more competitive while at the same time creating consumer trust and confidence. The farmers can consider using digital platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart, and e-NAM, which can help them

increase their market size and possibly gain better prices for their products. The agripreneur can consider embracing blockchain technology such as IBM Food Trust. This can help agripreneurs build a good brand image while at the same time improving food safety. The agripreneur can consider paying more attention to women-owned agripreneur enterprises through schemes such as the National Rural Livelihood Mission. This can help agripreneurs become more socially equitable. The government and academic institutions can play a vital role in creating agripreneurial capacity. The government can consider providing training on digital marketing, sustainable practices, and innovation management.

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