

Do they know? Consumer perception of greenwashing in food

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Abstract

To understand how consumers perceive greenwashing when buying food, this study takes an exploratory stance investigating how skepticism, trust and perceived risk influence Danish consumers' intention to buy sustainable foods. Based on Theory of Planned Behavior, we test a number of hypotheses utilizing questionnaire-data from a representative sample of Danish respondents (n = 1028). Data was analyzed using factor analysis and multiple regression. The analysis showed that the majority of consumers did not understand claims such as “climate neutral” or “CO2-reduced”. Also, many consumers thought they were exposed to greenwashing, when purchasing sustainable food, thereby creating skepticism which affected their purchasing intentions negatively. In addition, positive attitudes, social norms and perceived behavioral control impacted intentions to buy sustainable food positively. This study adds to the literature on greenwashing and consumer perception, while also discussing managerial implications for marketing managers.

Subject Areas: *Attitude, Consumer Behaviour*

Track: Consumer Behaviour