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Impact of Product Supply Chain Management Process on Sustainable Gastronomy Tourism

Ürün Tedarik Yönetim Sürecinin Sürdürülebilir Gastronomi Turizmi Üzerine Etkisi

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ABSTRACT

The growing population and globalization have made the structure of food supply chains more complex; this situation has raised various concerns on both the producer and consumer sides regarding food supply, quality, safety, and ethical dimensions. Ensuring food safety and reducing loss and waste are among the most important issues today. In this context, the need to evaluate and improve the sustainability of the food supply chain has become critically important. To achieve sustainability, the food industry must take a holistic approach to environmental, economic, and social factors at every stage of the supply chain, including production, processing, transportation, and consumption. Sustainable food production encompasses not only the efficient use of resources but also appropriate raw material management, waste minimization, and conscious planning in water and energy use. As the Rio Earth Summit stated, unsustainable production and consumption patterns are fundamental causes of global environmental degradation. In recent years, consumers' interest in local products has led businesses to manage their supply chains more environmentally friendly and sustainably. Local food systems offer a more sustainable alternative to global production networks, while green logistics practices contribute to reducing environmental impacts throughout the chain. A well-designed sustainable supply chain can reduce food waste, enhance food safety and reliability, contribute to the welfare of producers, and yield numerous positive outcomes for society. However, poorly managed or flawed chains can exacerbate social and environmental problems. This research emphasizes the importance of sustainability and comprehensively addresses the practical benefits of the food supply chain in terms of gastronomic tourism.

Keywords Sustainable gastronomy tourism, food supply chain, food waste, local food production, green logistics

ÖZET

Artan nüfus ve küreselleşme, gıda tedarik zincirlerinin yapısını daha karmaşık hale getirmiş; bu durum, gıda arzı, kalite, güvenlik ve etik–ahlaki boyutlarda hem üretici hem de tüketici tarafında çeşitli kaygıları gündeme getirmiştir. Özellikle gıda güvenliğinin sağlanması, kayıp ve israfın azaltılması, günümüzün en önemli sorun alanları arasındadır. Bu bağlamda, gıda tedarik zincirinin sürdürülebilirliğini değerlendirme ve geliştirme ihtiyacı kritik bir önem kazanmıştır. Sürdürülebilirliğin sağlanabilmesi için gıda endüstrisinin üretim, işleme, nakliye ve tüketim dâhil olmak üzere tedarik zincirinin her aşamasında çevresel, ekonomik ve sosyal faktörleri bütüncül bir yaklaşımla ele alması gerekmektedir. Sürdürülebilir gıda üretimi yalnızca kaynakların verimli kullanımını değil; aynı zamanda uygun hammadde yönetimini, atıkların en aza indirilmesini ve su ile enerji kullanımında bilinçli planlamayı kapsamaktadır. Rio Dünya Zirvesi'nde de belirtildiği üzere, sürdürülemez üretim ve tüketim modelleri, küresel çevre bozulmasının en temel nedenleri arasında yer almaktadır. Son yıllarda tüketicilerin yerel ürünlere olan ilgisinin artması, işletmeleri tedarik zincirlerini daha çevre dostu ve sürdürülebilir bir şekilde yönetmeye yönlendirmektedir. Yerel gıda sistemleri, küresel ölçekli üretim ağlarına kıyasla daha sürdürülebilir bir alternatif sunmakta; yeşil lojistik uygulamaları ise zincir boyunca çevresel etkilerin azaltılmasına katkı sağlamaktadır. İyi tasarlanmış bir sürdürülebilir tedarik zinciri; gıda israfını azaltabilir, gıda güvenliği ve güvenilirliğini artırabilir, üreticilerin refahına katkıda bulunabilir ve toplum için pek çok olumlu sonuç doğurabilir. Ancak yetersiz veya hatalı yönetilen zincirler ise sosyal ve çevresel sorunları daha da derinleştirebilmektedir. Bu araştırmada, sürdürülebilirliğin önemi vurgulanmakta ve gıda tedarik zincirinin gastronomi turizmi açısından pratik faydaları bütüncül bir şekilde ele alınmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sürdürülebilir gastronomi turizmi, gıda tedarik zinciri, gıda israfı, yerel gıda üretimi, yeşil lojistik.

1. INTRODUCTION

Gastronomic tourism has become essential to sustainable tourism by safeguarding local cultural identity and delivering distinctive food and beverage experiences. (Aydın et al., 2023; Akbaba & Kendirci, 2016). In the context of sustainability, research on the mutually reinforcing relationship between food and culture has grown in importance. However, sustainable gastronomic tourism faces significant obstacles due to the intricate food supply chain structure.

While production pressures hasten environmental degradation and food losses (Muriel et al., 2012), globalization and population growth have exacerbated social and environmental issues throughout the supply chain, from production to consumption (Hurwitz et al., 2010; Ivanov & Webster, 2017). Therefore, sustainable food production and supply chain management are crucial to protecting ecological boundaries and the standard of living for future generations (Yang et al., 2017).

Scholars contend that sustainability must incorporate economic and social aspects, even though many studies focus on environmental practices like resource conservation and waste reduction (Hwang et al., 2016) (Aiking

& Boer, 2004; Niggli, 2015). Accordingly, the socio-cultural aspect of sustainability revolves around using regional goods and preserving culinary traditions (Lehtinen, 2012; Sarı et al., 2021). Findings in this field are still dispersed, which suggests that more thorough and integrated research is required.

Therefore, supply chains built on integrated principles are necessary for sustainable gastronomic tourism. Due to population growth and globalization, the distance between producers, suppliers, and consumers has increased, raising questions about food sustainability, quality, and source (Folkerts & Koehorst, 1998). Losses and waste are made worse by issues with actor coordination (Ivanov & Webster, 2017).

Effective resource management and conscientious consumption habits are prerequisites for sustainable food production (Hwang et al., 2016; Yang et al., 2017). Due to shifting regulations, increased competition, and consumer awareness, businesses are encouraged to implement sustainable supply chain practices per global sustainability goals (Yontar, 2022). Additionally, producers are directed toward regional resources by the growing demand for local flavors, promoting cultural heritage preservation and economic development (Adanalıoğlu et al., 2018). It is acknowledged that local food systems are more sustainable than global ones. Local food systems are recognized as more sustainable alternatives to global models, linked to environmentally friendly product development, green logistics, and waste management (Aydın et al., 2023; Lu et al., 2019).

Environmentally friendly product development, green logistics, and waste management are associated with local food systems, which are acknowledged as more sustainable than global models (Aydın et al., 2023; Lu et al., 2019).

Food and beverage supply systems are critical in cutting waste, guaranteeing food safety, and enhancing accessibility and working conditions. However, environmental and social problems worsen when sustainability goals are unmet (Agarwal, 2018). This study examines the literature on sustainable gastronomic tourism, focusing on current trends, issues, and suggested solutions. It assesses sustainability in terms of quality, dependability, cost, environmental impact, and cultural value, and specifically examines the role of organic, locally produced, and eco-friendly products in gastronomic tourism.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This study was carried out by conducting a thorough literature review to demonstrate how product supply management affects sustainable gastronomic tourism. Using globally indexed databases like Web of Science, Scopus, and Google Scholar, the review covered the years January 2000–June 2025. Keywords were categorized under the following main themes: (i) gastronomic tourism and sustainable gastronomy; (ii) local food production, food waste, and food supply chains; (iii) green procurement and sustainable logistics; and (iv) the use of technology in food systems, such as blockchain and Industry 4.0. Reference lists were reviewed to find more pertinent works, and abstracts and titles were filtered to eliminate studies that were not pertinent. Exclusion criteria included studies that did not directly address the main themes of sustainable gastronomic tourism, food supply chain management, and related sustainability practices; inclusion criteria included peer-reviewed scientific articles, books, book chapters, and institutional reports published by reputable organizations like the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as foundational earlier works that shaped the conceptual framework.

2.1. The Concept and Importance of Sustainability in Gastronomy Tourism

According to Collin (2004), sustainability is the ability to satisfy current needs without endangering the ability of future generations to satisfy their own needs, without causing resource depletion or environmental harm. The delicate balance between sustaining ecological systems and providing for humanity's present needs is at the heart of this idea. However, striking this balance is frequently difficult. Sustainability is now at the forefront of many fields, including gastronomy, due to rapid industrialization, changes in the climate and environment, and population growth. Consuming locally produced food encourages locals to participate in locally driven tourism activities, promoting sustainable tourism growth. The chance for locals to highlight their culinary and cultural traditions makes tourist destinations distinctive and draws more visitors (Ülker Can, Tan, Dağasan, & Gül, 2024). Local food products, in particular, provide tourists with genuine and unforgettable experiences while bolstering the local economy (Akkuş, 2024).

Meeting the nutritional needs of a growing population is still a significant challenge, despite increased efforts to lessen agriculture's environmental impact (e.g., minimizing pollution and using fossil fuels). It is challenging to balance environmental preservation and sustainable food production (Niggli, 2015). In addition to being an idealistic concept, sustainability is essential to maintaining community social balance and protecting natural systems that underpin economic development (Aiking & Boer, 2004). Furthermore, studies reveal that visitors' intention to return to a place is increased by the emotional connection they develop with local flavors, underscoring the significance of emotional value perception in maintaining gastronomic tourism and influencing traveler behavior (Sağlam et al., 2024).

The rising demand for local foods is driven by tourists' desire for authentic experiences, environmental sustainability, and support for local economies (Aslan, Karakuş, & Onat, 2024). Beyond consumer demand, the individual characteristics of employees in the tourism sector also influence sustainability outcomes. Studies indicate that personal traits, such as perfectionism, can affect job performance and, consequently, quality perception and customer satisfaction (Çankaya Altuntaş & Dursun Küçükoğlu, 2024).

Food production and consumption are among the human activities exerting the most significant pressure on natural resources. The food supply chain consumes significant amounts of global energy and water (Aiking & Boer, 2004; Sezer & Dilek, 2017), making sustainability an optional choice and a necessary strategy to preserve ecosystems' regenerative capacity. Otherwise, the continuity of these systems, which are the foundation of social and economic development, could be jeopardized (Güner,2020). When examining the contribution of local food consumption to environmental sustainability, it becomes clear that locally sourced products reduce reliance on long-distance supply chains and help minimize environmental impacts by lowering the carbon footprint (Onat, 2025). Strengthening appreciation for local foods may also encourage sustainable consumption behaviors (Aslan et al.,2024). Sustainability in gastronomy can be examined in three dimensions: physical (production, transportation, storage, processing, consumption, and waste management), socio-cultural, and economic. Since the 2000s, efforts have increasingly aimed to integrate these three dimensions into food supply chain management (Sarı et al., 2021). Local product sourcing is economically advantageous and contributes to preserving cultural heritage and strengthening social bonds. As noted by Lehtinen (2012), the impact of local products extends beyond financial outcomes, supporting traditional values and social solidarity. Alongside this, international food businesses introduce advantages and opportunities for sectoral growth (Saklı, 2024). At the same time, environmental problems arising from traditional farming practices have accelerated the shift toward sustainable farming systems that protect both human health and ecosystems (Ülker Can et al., 2024). Among the most common sustainable agricultural models are organic farming and good agricultural practices, as illustrated in Figure 1, which outlines the stages of the Sustainable Food Cycle. This cycle highlights that food production is a complex and interconnected process rather than a linear one.

Therefore, transitioning from traditional, resource-intensive approaches to regenerative and environmentally friendly practices is essential. Such transformation contributes not only to conserving current resources but also to ensuring their availability for future generations.

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Figure 1. *Sustainable Food Cycle*
Note. Adapted from FAO (2021), Galanakis (2021), and Oguine (2022).

2.2. Sustainable Supply Chain Management

Supply chain management generally encompasses complex processes ranging from procuring production factors to delivering the final product to the end user (Özdemir, 2004, p. 89). Carefully planning, organizing, and executing these processes, focusing on environmental and social considerations, is sustainable supply chain management. Seuring and Müller (2008) further develop this definition and explain sustainable supply chain management as “managing the flow of materials and information while adding value to a product, reducing raw material use in the process, and minimizing pollution and waste.” United Nations Development Programme. (2010) emphasizes that the primary goal is to meet consumer needs using less energy, water, and waste.

For sustainable supply chains to be effectively implemented in food and beverage businesses, the supply phase must primarily be sourced from local producers and businesses. In addition, it is critically important that actors in the chain demonstrate environmental awareness. One of the biggest obstacles to creating a sustainable food supply chain is the high carbon footprint resulting from excessive dependence on road transport (Barreto et al., 2017). This high level of activity based on truck transportation continuously increases emissions and makes sustainability a challenging goal to achieve. Therefore, demand for green logistics practices is growing to reduce environmental degradation. Green logistics refers to comprehensive measures and sustainable policies to reduce the environmental impacts of transportation, storage, and other logistics activities (Bauernhansl et al., 2014).

Figure 2, which summarizes the environmental, economic, and social dimensions of green logistics practices, illustrates the multidimensional benefits of this approach.

Figure 2. *Environmental, economic, and social dimensions of sustainable green logistics systems.*
Note: Adapted from Sustainable logistics [Image], by Casby Go Green, 2010, WordPress **(**https://casbygogreen.files.wordpress.com/2010/02/sustainable-logistics1.jpg)

The EN 16258 international standard is widely used to measure these effects in a scientifically reliable manner. This standard is preferred for calculating the carbon footprint of logistics operations, measuring energy consumption, and assessing greenhouse gas emissions (Wild, 2021; Zschausch & Rosenberger, 2023). Some critical steps to consider for ensuring a robust and sustainable supply chain management in the food and beverage industry are:

- ✓ Establishing short supply chains,
- ✓ Ensuring dematerialization (reducing unnecessary resource use),
- ✓ Focusing on local and collective purchasing,
- ✓ Collaborating with local producers (Bowersox, Closs & Cooper, 2002).

The European Union defines the short food supply chain (SFSC) as a structure involving a limited number of economic actors, promoting cooperation between producers, businesses, and consumers, supporting local economic development, and strengthening social ties between producers and consumers (Popa, 2022; Reina-Usuga et al., 2022). For restaurants, this model means sourcing from small-scale local businesses, contributing to the regional economy, and reducing the environmental burden caused by transportation (Ünal, Çalışkan, 2024).

Figure 3, which explains the fundamental components of green supply chain management, demonstrates that this approach is not limited to logistics alone; it is a comprehensive system that also encompasses green production, purchasing, marketing, and packaging (Smith, 2024). **Figure 3.** *Green supply chain management*

Note. Adapted from Seuring and Müller (2008), Galanakis (2021), and Zimmer et al. (2016).

2.3.Sustainable Supplier Selection and Method Recommendations

- ✓ Increasing consumer awareness in today's business world, particularly regarding ethical and environmental issues, has prioritized sustainable supplier selection for food and beverage businesses. Ensuring that procurement decisions align with these values is no longer an option but a fundamental part of modern business strategy (Bowersox et al., 2002; Galanakis,2021). This strategic requirement goes beyond cost and quality assessments; it comprehensively examines suppliers' environmental footprint, social responsibility practices, and economic sustainability.
- ✓ The primary goal is to collaborate with suppliers that are aligned with the company's sustainability objectives and take concrete steps to enhance the supply chain's resilience. At this point, passive acceptance is not considered sufficient; active participation that advances sustainability practices is expected (Ayers, 2001).
- ✓ Sustainable supplier selection is usually carried out using multi-criteria decision-making methods. This method provides a more balanced result by systematically evaluating quantitative and qualitative factors. The main criteria considered in the process are as follows:
- ✓ Environmental certifications,
- ✓ Waste management policies,
- ✓ Energy efficiency,
- ✓ Working conditions,
- ✓ Community involvement and social responsibility projects,
- ✓ Commitment to fair trade principles (Korkmaz, 2015).

Additionally, the supplier's geographical proximity to the business has become an important criterion today (Rushton, Croucher & Baker, 2014). This can significantly reduce carbon emissions from transportation. Similarly, commitment to using local resources is increasingly prominent in sustainability discussions. However, the reliability of these commitments should not be limited to mere promises; a comprehensive supplier evaluation process is essential to ensure continuous compliance with sustainability standards (Ross, 2002).

In this context, regular audits and continuous performance monitoring have become an inevitable requirement for sustainability to be truly implemented in the field, rather than an option. Otherwise, sustainability claims cannot surpass empty rhetoric (Rushton et al., 2006; Gedik, 2021).

A comprehensive assessment system must be established to ensure continuous compliance with sustainability standards. This system should include regular audits, performance reviews, and strict monitoring of compliance with standards. Such an approach minimizes the risks of unsustainable practices, enhances collaboration, and paves the way for meaningful progress and innovation in the supply chain.

In recent years, integrating blockchain technology into sustainable supplier selection processes has fundamentally transformed transparency and traceability. Thanks to blockchain, businesses can reliably verify their supply and supply chain claims, reducing the risk of misinformation and increasing overall accountability. This technology secures suppliers' sustainability documents with immutable and verifiable records, simplifying the evaluation process, reducing information asymmetry, and strengthening trust throughout the chain (Daugherty et al., 2005). As Figure 4 shows, green supply chain management is a complex framework encompassing reverse logistics, green production, green purchasing, green marketing, and green packaging. This framework is directly related to sustainable supplier selection criteria.

Figure 4. *Sustainable Supplier Selection Criteria*
Note. Adapted from Zimmer et al. (2016).

2.4. Sustainable Purchasing Method Recommendations

Sustainable procurement is one of the fundamental elements of sustainable supply chain management and goes far beyond traditional approaches focused on price or convenience (Gedik, 2021). This approach involves consciously integrating environmental and social factors into every stage of the procurement process. Beyond being a conceptual discourse, sustainable procurement is becoming increasingly vital today, particularly in the context of sustainable gastronomic tourism. Its main objectives are to reduce environmental impacts, promote ethical sourcing, and strengthen local economies.

It is common practice for businesses to collaborate with local markets and source gastronomic products directly from regional suppliers (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2021). This method reduces carbon emissions from transportation, supports community development, and contributes to preserving each region's unique culinary traditions (Işkın, 2021). In summary, sustainable purchasing is a trend and a strategic necessity for building a truly responsible supply chain.

Within the scope of sustainable purchasing, the following also stand out:

- ✓ Prioritizing organic products,
- ✓ Preferring fair trade certified products,
- ✓ Selecting products manufactured using environmentally friendly methods (Peattie & Moutinho, 2002; Enisa, 2010).

However, the circular economy model is also increasingly adopted in purchasing processes. This model is based on reducing, reusing, and recycling resources. It involves preferring minimally packaged products and reusable containers and collaborating with suppliers with robust waste management programs.

The procurement process must be managed meticulously; it encompasses key functions such as planning, demand and order management, inventory control, purchasing, warehouse management, production, and transportation. Proper management of these functions ensures efficiency and sustainability (Aliyeva & Kurgun, 2021; Russell, 2000). The seamless integration and strategic execution of all these functions ensure the uninterrupted flow of products from the supplier to the end consumer, thereby increasing the flexibility and adaptability of the supply chain (Lu et al., 2019).

3. BENEFITS OF A SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY CHAIN

The main advantages of a sustainable supply chain are listed below (Yetim, Yavuz,2024). These benefits contribute holistically to a more resilient and responsible food system by covering environmental, economic, and social dimensions:

- ✓ Reduced Food Waste: Short supply chains and effective inventory management minimize food losses.
- ✓ Economic Gains: More efficient use of resources reduces operating costs and supports economic sustainability.
- ✓ Food Safety and Quality: Local sourcing and transparent processes increase product freshness and reliability.
- ✓ Environmental Protection: Reduces carbon footprint, saves energy and water, and contributes to the conservation of natural resources.
- ✓ Social Responsibility: Promotes fair trade practices, protects employee rights, and empowers local communities.
- ✓ Brand Reputation and Consumer Trust: Sustainable practices strengthen businesses' public image and increase consumer loyalty.
- ✓ Resilience to Crises: Shorter and more transparent supply chains offer a more flexible and resilient crisis structure

4. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

The literature reviewed in this study demonstrates that sustainability in gastronomic tourism cannot be achieved through fragmented or small-scale practices; it requires a holistic approach that integrates environmental, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions (Çilan Akin & Akin, 2023; Aliyeva & Kurgun, 2021; Lehtinen, 2012). Much research has focused on environmental aspects, emphasizing waste reduction, energy and water efficiency, and carbon footprint mitigation (Çetin & Bora, 2022; Hwang et al., 2016; Yang et al., 2017). However, socio-cultural and economic contributions have been relatively overlooked, limiting a complete understanding of the multidimensional impacts of sustainable gastronomic tourism (Aiking & Boer, 2004; Niggli, 2015; Sarı et al., 2021). Supply chain management processes directly shape the sustainability of gastronomic tourism. Local products support regional economic development and strengthen destinations' gastronomic identity and authenticity (Adanalıoğlu et al., 2018; Aydın et al., 2023). Green logistics and sustainable supplier selection are critical in building resilient and responsible food systems while increasing food safety and quality, which are essential for tourist satisfaction (Cunnane, 2017; Lehtinen, 2012). Conversely, the fragmented structure of global supply chains and the lack of coordination among stakeholders contribute to food losses and waste, posing a significant obstacle to sustainable tourism practices (Ivanov & Webster, 2017). In recent years, technological innovations, particularly blockchain applications, have been increasingly highlighted for their ability to improve transparency and traceability, enhance consumer confidence, and reinforce the image of gastronomic destinations (Aydoğdu, Çakır, 2024).

However, questions remain regarding these technologies' cost, scalability, and practical applicability, underscoring the need for further research and pilot implementations in gastronomic contexts. Overall, the findings reveal that sustainable supply chain management in gastronomic tourism contributes not only to environmental protection but also to economic viability, social equity, and the preservation of cultural heritage. By reducing waste, improving food accessibility, and enhancing working conditions, sustainable practices foster a fairer and more efficient food system (Akdağ, Şimşek, 2017). At the same time, they provide destinations with a competitive advantage, promote innovation, and ensure the long-term continuity of local culinary culture (Pérez-López, Alegre, 2012; Yontar, 2022).

In Conclusion, sustainability in gastronomic tourism requires more than isolated or small-scale efforts; it depends on a holistic supply chain transformation. Embedding sustainability into every stage, from purchasing and production to distribution and consumption, ensures the efficient use of resources, minimizes waste, strengthens the authenticity of destinations, and enhances tourist experiences. By aligning environmental responsibility with economic viability and socio-cultural preservation, gastronomic tourism can achieve long-term resilience, competitiveness, and cultural continuity.

Recommendations

Based on this study's findings, several practical and research-oriented recommendations can be made for business operators, policymakers, and scholars in sustainable gastronomic tourism.

- ✓ For business operators: Food and beverage operators in gastronomic tourism should view sustainability as an environmental responsibility and a means of enriching tourist experiences and strengthening destination identity. Integrating local culinary products into menus enhances authenticity and helps differentiate destinations in a competitive tourism market. At the same time, close collaboration with local producers, transparent supplier selection, and green logistics practices can improve operational efficiency and the perceived quality of tourist offerings.
- ✓ For policymakers: Public authorities should design support mechanisms beyond environmental standards, including cultural heritage protection and regional identity building. Certification systems and incentive programs targeting sustainable gastronomic tourism can help align business practices with broader sustainability goals. Encouraging collaboration between producers, suppliers, and tourism stakeholders is essential to reducing fragmentation in supply chains and fostering coordinated action.
- ✓ For future research: Existing studies primarily focus on environmental impacts, yet gastronomic tourism's socio-cultural and experiential dimensions remain underexplored. Future research should investigate how sustainability practices shape tourist satisfaction, destination image, and long-term loyalty. Comparative studies between regions could also clarify how local food systems can be scaled sustainably while preserving authenticity. Finally, the role of digital innovations such as blockchain in reinforcing consumer trust and ensuring supply chain transparency in tourism contexts warrants a deeper, practice-oriented examination.

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