

**Title** Meeting consumer demands through effective supply chain linkages  
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### **Abstract**

**Purpose of review:** The purpose of this review is to highlight the relevance of developing supply chain linkages in post harvest industry sectors such as fresh produce and review the key developments in the field of SCM and buyer supplier relationships.

**Main findings:** SCM initiatives that reduce costs and add value for consumers though more efficient and effective supply chain linkages are increasing in strategic importance across a range of industries including the food industry. The review found that supply chain partnerships are being implemented but progress is generally slow with firms only integrating a limited number of inter-organisational activities and processes. Progress is often hindered by a lack of trust resulting from conflicting strategic agendas and organisational cultures, which has led several researchers to suggest that partnerships are not suitable for all exchange relationships. While research indicates that supply chain partnerships can reduce operating costs, less evidence exists regarding the value created for supply chain members and consumers.

**Limitations:** Research into SCM and supply chain partnerships is conducted by researchers in a wide range of subject areas. To make the review manageable, attention has focused on reviewing research published in a selected number of marketing, SCM, purchasing and logistics journals. While this review is not exhaustive it does enable key themes in supply chain research to be identified.

**Directions for future research:** Theory development is still needed, particularly for the relatively new discipline of SCM where overlapping terminologies and definitions of key concepts have caused confusion amongst researchers and make comparison of studies difficult. It is also evident that most research on implementing SCM and investigating its benefits has focused on single dyadic links. Therefore, frameworks and instruments are needed that enable researchers to better measure the integration of activities and processes along the length of the supply chain and its benefits, particularly in terms of added value for consumers. Research would also benefit from longitudinal studies to better capture the implementation process and model the relationship development process to provide a diagnostic tool for why some relationships succeed and why some are discontinued.