

# **The Government's Role in the Conventionalization of Organic Agriculture in China**

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**Abstract:** Rural sociology studies have undergone a debate over 'conventionalization', a term that refers to the ideological and pragmatic transformations of the organic sector which are believed to make it increasingly resemble the industrialized conventional agriculture sector. Within the conventionalization debate, very few studies systematically examine the role of the government, since it is generally considered as limited in western countries where organic agriculture originated from grassroots movements. However, the government's role cannot be overlooked in China where the government plays an influential and sometimes dominant role, and where the role of civil society is more subdued. This study unveils the multiple roles that central and local governments play in the conventionalization of organic agriculture in China. This study suggests that by facilitating the involvement of food enterprises, consolidating small plots of farmland, and issuing related policies, the Chinese government is playing a controversial role in the conventionalization of organic agriculture.

Keywords: government, conventionalization, organic agriculture, China