

Concerned consumers can easily avoid non-labeled foods with GMOs

The failure of Measure 92 in Oregon's last election, which would have required genetically modified food to be labeled, has left many consumers on their own to find — and perhaps avoid — GMOs.

The variety of terms used in food packaging and labeling and the complexity of trying to decipher what they mean don't make it easy.

For instance, the word "natural" is used on a lot of food packaging, but it is really a marketing term and can mean whatever the company wants. A survey by the Consumer Reports National Research Center in 2014 found that nearly 60 percent of 1,000 people asked looked for the term "natural" when they shopped for food. About two-thirds believed it meant a processed food had no artificial ingredients or genetically modified organisms or pesticides; more than 80 percent believed that it should mean those things, according to the study.

Walk any grocery store aisle and you'll see the term stamped across boxes, cans and bottles on everything from salad dressing to yogurt to cereal.

There has even been some misinformation spreading on the Internet about being able to figure out which produce is GMO by examining the PLU codes, those small bar codes and series of numbers on stickers and packaging of fruit and vegetables.

For consumers who are concerned with avoiding GMOs, arming themselves with knowledge is best.

Cathy Means at the Produce Marketing Association said trying to use PLU codes is meaningless for consumers.

Oregon Tilth executive director Chris Schreiner said looking for an organic label is a better indicator of GMOs.

Read full, original article: [Avoiding GMOs means knowing what labels mean](#)