

Consumers willing to pay more for GM potatoes with food safety benefits

New research from an [Iowa State Univ.](#) economist found consumers were willing to spend more for genetically modified potato products with reduced levels of a chemical compound linked to cancer.

Wallace Huffman, Charles F. Curtiss Distinguished Professor in Agriculture and Life Sciences who contributed to the project, said the find underscores the importance of efforts to educate consumers on the use of biotechnology in the production of healthful food.

“This is a complicated issue so it’s important for consumers to get information on how the technology works and its potential benefits,” Huffman said.

Acrylamide is a chemical compound that studies have linked to the formation of cancer in animals, and the FDA has encouraged Americans to cut back on foods that contain the substance. It accumulates naturally in starchy foods cooked at high temperatures, such as roasted nuts and coffee beans or the crusts of bread. Potato products like French fries and potato chips make up the biggest source of acrylamide consumption in the U.S., Huffman said.

The results of the research showed a willingness among consumers to pay more for genetically modified potato products that reduce the formation of acrylamide than for conventional potatoes. That provides evidence that consumers are willing to pay more for enhanced food safety, even when it’s delivered through biotech methods, Huffman said.

Read full, original article: [People will pay more for safer potatoes](#)