

Public concerned more about GMOs created with ‘foreign’ versus ‘apple-to-apple’ gene transfer

In a study recently published in the journal [Appetite](#), colleagues and I examined why some people reject GM technology.

Specifically, we examined attitudes in the EU to two different types of genetic modifications made to apples. Both involve the introduction of genes to make them resistant to mildew and scab. The first is a gene that exists naturally in wild/crab apples. This is an example of what is called “cisgenesis”. In the second one the gene is from another species such as a bacterium or animal, and is an example of “transgenesis”.

Our data is based on a Eurobarometer survey carried out in 2010 of 15,650 people from around the EU. In general people seem to be more hesitant about transgenesis, than cisgenesis (apple to apple gene transfer). Thus 57.1 percent of respondents wished to see cisgenesis encouraged compared to just 31.4 percent for transgenesis.

More educated people tend to be more approving as do men and the more prosperous, while older people tend to be more wary. Finally, for both technologies studying science, or having a father who studied science, impacted favourably on attitudes.

If from the outset cisgenesis had been separately labelled, then it is possible the EU would have been quicker to give the green light to cisgenesis.

On the other hand treating them all as one and the same increases the possibility that the green light will eventually be given to all GM products, cisgenesis and transgenesis alike. It is an example of the dangers of placing disparate technologies in a single basket and saying: take it or leave it.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Revealed: why GM food is so hard to sell to a wary public](#)