

Study concludes consumers would not view GMO label as warning

There is an economic and political battle taking place in America over the labeling of genetically modified (GM) foods. As an applied economist who studies the economics of information and consumer choice, I wondered what the evidence was regarding the labels-as-warnings argument.

It turned out that there is scant, if any scientific evidence to show that GM food labels will act as warning labels. Surveys of people in Vermont show that people are unlikely to see GMO labels as an indicator of a dangerous or inferior product. And for some people, the label can actually build trust in the technology.

In the U.S., there have been only two published studies about whether GM labels will serve as warning labels. Neither study provides strong evidence that GM labels will signal a warning to consumers.

A 2014 study on GMO labeling [concluded](#), “any (negative) signaling effects, should they exist, are likely to be small.” Another in 2008 [found](#) that labels are likely to affect consumers’ views toward GM-labeled food with the caveat that their results are based on consumer beliefs that a labeling law is in effect, not whether they support such a law or the existence of a law.

In Vermont, where a GM labeling law will go into effect in July 2016, we have been collecting information from citizens for over 15 years about their attitudes, beliefs and intentions toward GM technology and products derived from it.

Overall, we found that supporting labeling (including after Vermont’s labeling law was passed) has no direct impact on opposition to GM foods. This conclusion is not what I had expected and runs counter to the reasoning behind the introduction of The Safe and Accurate Food Labeling bill.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Study: GM food labels do not act as a warning to consumers](#)