

## Mandatory genetically engineered food labels could reduce consumer fears, opposition to biotechnology, food scientists claim

*Science Advances* (the open-access version of *Science Magazine*) just published [a paper](#) I co-authored with Jane Kolodinsky from the University of Vermont.

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Several years ago, I was decidedly in the camp that thought imposition of mandatory labels would cause people to be *more* concerned about GMOs because it would signal that something was unsafe about the technology. ... A few years ago, Marco Costanigro and I put this hypothesis to the test in [a paper published by Food Policy](#), and we found little evidence ... that the label *per se* neither increased or decreased aversion to GMOs.

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Then, last summer ... I saw Jane present a paper based on survey data she collected in Vermont before and after mandatory labels went into place there. Her data suggested opposition to GMOs fell at faster rate after mandatory labels were in place. Despite my findings in *Food Policy*, I remained dubious and Jane and I went back and forth a bit on the robustness of her findings.

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Our article in *Science Advances* has the result:

Difference-in-difference estimates of opposition to GE food before and after mandatory labeling show that the labeling policy led to a 19% reduction in opposition to GE food.

Our result does NOT suggest people will suddenly support GMOs once mandatory labels are in place. Rather, our findings suggest that people will be somewhat less opposed than they were prior to labels. ... [L]abels *per se* may in fact reduce opposition.

**Read full, original article:** [GMO LABELS – NOT AS BAD AS I THOUGHT](#)