

## USDA bioengineered food labels may discourage shoppers from buying GMO-derived foods, study shows

Consumers were more willing to buy unlabeled produce after being shown food tagged as “genetically modified” in a new Cornell study that comes two months before a new federal food-labeling law goes into effect.

The research, “[Signaling Impacts of GMO Labeling on Fruit and Vegetable Demand](#),” published online Oct. 30 in the journal PLOS One.

The study comes as food marketers prepare for a new federal law requiring genetically modified organism disclosure labels on food products beginning Jan. 1, 2020.

“We wanted to learn from consumers what will happen to conventional products when the labeling goes into effect and we start seeing ‘GM’ and ‘non-GM’ labeled produce at the market,” said co-author Miguel Gómez, associate professor at Cornell’s Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management.

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In the study, the Cornell researchers recruited 1,300 consumers, who were shown GM, non-GM and unlabeled opportunities – in random sequences – to purchase apples, as well as other fruits and vegetables.

The paper found that when an unlabeled apple was presented first, the initial consumer demand – willingness to purchase – was 65.2%. But if the unlabeled apple was presented after participants saw an apple with a GM label, the demand for the unlabeled apple jumped to 77.7%.

**Editor’s note: The researchers [also reported](#):**

Another marketing implication of our results is that GM fresh produce growers must ensure that the positive attributes brought by the GM technology (e.g. avoiding rapid browning in apples) offset the negative effect on demand caused by the mandatory GM label.

**Read full, original article: [Fresh produce earns ‘halo effect’ under new GMO-labeling laws](#)**