

Science majors less skeptical of GMOs than other undergraduates? Yes, but not by much

For the past few years, I've been fortunate to supervise a number of students working on their undergraduate thesis in the College of Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan (USask) Today's blog is a summary of Jackson Wiebe's 2018 undergraduate thesis, looking at USask undergrad knowledge of biotech.

[Editor's note: [Stuart Smyth](#) is a professor in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of Saskatchewan.]

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Jackson's research question was to assess whether students in science oriented undergraduate programs would have views that were more accepting of biotech than the views held by students in non-science oriented programs. His hypothesis was that students taking a core of science classes would have a greater likelihood of supporting biotechnology than students taking non-science courses. In total, Jackson surveyed 711 undergraduate students, of which 541 were enrolled in science programs and 170 from non-science programs.

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Based on this survey, undergraduate students at the U of S enrolled in science-based education programs have a slightly higher acceptance for GM products, although they only have marginally more knowledge.

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Science oriented students may be more familiar with the process about what is required to make a GMO, although this is unlikely as knowledge did not seem to be significantly higher when asked which crops grown in Canada are GM.

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