

Beat: Health

GMO Labeling - The Great Debate in UNITED STATES

Genetically modified organisms in food

PARIS - NEW YORK, 26.05.2016, 06:47 Time

USPA NEWS - The presence and labeling of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in our food has been hotly debated by consumers, manufacturers, scientists, and governments alike. A new Harris Poll reveals consumers' awareness of and perspectives on GMO labeling....

The presence and labeling of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in our food has been hotly debated by consumers, manufacturers, scientists, and governments alike. A new Harris Poll reveals consumers' awareness of and perspectives on GMO labeling. Nearly six in 10 Americans (58%) say they're familiar with the GMO debate, with 15% very familiar and 43% somewhat familiar.

The GMO debate has led to many questions on the topic. Are GMOs bad for us ? Should labeling be mandatory on food that contains them ? A majority of consumers believe there are simply too many unknowns about their long term impact. Given these unknowns, the debate evokes strong emotions, making the more scientific industry position harder to convey.

Recent state ballot initiatives in support of GMO labeling have created a patchwork of laws and challenges for food manufacturers, however, supporters believe enforcement of regulations should come from the federal government.

These are some of the results of The Harris Poll of 2,015 U.S. adults surveyed online between April 29 and May 3, 2016 :

- What's behind consumers' concerns :

Most Americans say labeling products containing GMOs is a health and safety issue (81%), not an environmental one (19%). Additionally, the real worry is the unknown : the majority (58%) agreed that because there have been no long term studies, we simply don't know the impact on human health, pesticide use, or growth of super weeds/superbugs.

- GMO labeling receives strong support :

Overall, 75% are in support of GMO labeling legislation and 78% of supporters feel it should be mandated by the federal government as opposed to the state government. When looking specifically at GMO labeling, a large majority (80%) agree that there should be mandatory GMO labeling as consumers have a right to know what is in their food or whether it has been altered or changed in some way that is not natural and could impact consumer health.

Source : The Harris Poll

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Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-8072/gmo-labeling-the-great-debate-in-united-states.html>

Editorial office and responsibility:

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