

Sarobol Krualee 2010: Economic Assessment of Information and Labeling Regulation of GM Soybean Milk in Bangkok. Master of Science (Agricultural Economics), Major Field: Agricultural Economics, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics. Thesis Advisor: Mrs. Orachos Napasintuwong Artachinda, Ph.D. 95 pages.

The introduction of Genetically Modified (GM) food to the market has become a controversial topic in many countries. Several aspects of GM food need to be addressed, particularly consumers acceptance and attitudes toward GM food which is essential information for producers and policy makers. Soybean milk is one of the most popular products among Thai consumers in comparison to other soybean products. On this background, we have investigated the acceptance of GM food using Logit Model. Furthermore, the choice of paying for Non-GM labeling is also conducted using Multinomial Logit Model. The survey data of 340 soybean milk purchasers in Bangkok metropolitan areas are representatives for this study.

The results indicate that consumers acceptance toward GM food is significantly affected by their attitudes towards GM products. Consumers who perceive health hazard and negative environmental effect are more likely not to purchase GM food, whereas those who perceive the benefit of GM food resulting in lower food price are more likely to purchase it. Regarding the impact on the probability of paying for non-GM labeling information on soybean milk, the results indicate that the probability of paying less for non-GM labeling is positively influenced by their lower willingness to pay for GM labeling than without GM labeling, attitudes towards health hazard from GM food consumption and environmental benefit from GM crop production. Furthermore, the probability of paying the same for non-GM labeling as no GM information is positively influenced by perceived benefit from GM crop production, whereas it is negatively influenced by their lower willingness to pay for GM labeling than without GM labeling and their attitude towards health hazard from GM food consumption. Interestingly, the probability of paying higher for soybean milk with non-GM labeling is negatively influenced by attitude towards environmental benefit from GM crop production.

These findings suggest that for GM food producers, lowering price of GM food would promote consumers acceptance on GM products. As for non-GM food producers, the result suggests that it may not be profitable to invest in Non-GM labeling, as it could increase producer's transaction cost, whereas consumers are unwilling to pay more for non-GM information.

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