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**“The Impact of Labeling on Consumer Attitudes towards  
Genetically Modified Foods in Taiwan”**

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**ABSTRACT**

Taiwan required processed food containing more than 5% of genetically modified (GM) ingredients must be labeled as GM foods beginning January 1<sup>st</sup> of 2004. With the mandatory labeling, consumers can make the purchasing decisions after reading the labeling. The objectives of this paper are to investigate the consumer acceptance of foods, to assess the effects of the mandatory labeling policy on consumer perception, and to compare the differences in consumer attitude towards GM foods between

surveys in 2003 and 2004.

Two island-wide telephone surveys were conducted in February 2003 and January 2004, which resulted in 1,013 and 1,002 complete responses, respectively. These surveys are part of a research project attempting to provide a global perspective towards GM foods using a multi-country survey in four countries: Japan, Taiwan, Norway and the U.S. There are five parts in the questionnaire: 1) perception of GM foods, 2) knowledge of GM foods, 3) GM food labeling, 4) purchasing preference of three food items (soybean oil, tofu, and salmon), and 5) household demographic information.

Results show that there are no significant differences between 2003 and 2004 in terms of familiarity with GM foods after the implementation of the labeling policy. However, the degree of willingness-to-buy GM foods did increase from 2003 to 2004. In addition, the assessment of the impact of the labeling still needs further study.