

# NATIONAL SURVEY OF HEALTHCARE CONSUMERS: GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOOD

OCTOBER 2010



THOMSON REUTERS™

# SURVEY OVERVIEW

Each year, the *Thomson Reuters PULSE™ Healthcare Survey* collects information about health-related behavior and attitudes from more than 100,000 U.S. households. This nationally representative telephone survey is conducted in 11 waves (each a standalone market research study) conducted sequentially throughout the year. Many healthcare topics are covered, including use of medical services, health status, insurance coverage, lifestyle, and current issues. The survey is self-funded and the data it generates are used in Thomson Reuters information products for healthcare professionals, particularly strategic planning and marketing managers in hospitals.

The results depicted below represent responses from 3,025 survey participants interviewed from October 1-13, 2010. The survey questions, which address consumer attitudes toward genetically engineered food, were developed in conjunction with National Public Radio. The margin of error is 1.8 percent.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The survey asked respondents about their awareness of and attitudes towards genetically engineered food. Among those polled, only 25% said they completely understood genetic engineering. More than two-thirds of respondents (69%) said they were aware that genetically engineered foods were currently being sold in stores, but 64% said they are unsure if it is safe.

- 93% of respondents said genetically engineered foods should be labeled.
- 60% said they are willing to eat genetically modified vegetables, fruits, and grains. That number dips to 38% for meat and 35% for fish.
- Awareness of genetically engineered foods increased as income and education levels increased. Only 51% of respondents who earn less than \$25,000 said they were aware of genetically engineered foods – compared with 84% of those who earn over \$100,000.
- Older respondents are the most willing to eat genetically engineered food. Only 32% of respondents ages 35-64 said they would eat altered fish, compared to 43% of those 65 and over.

## SURVEY DATA

Responses in **RED** are statistically significant.

**QUESTION 1: On a scale of 1 to 5 – where 1 is “Do Not Understand at All” and 5 is “Understand Completely” – how well do you understand genetically engineered food?**

	<b>1: Not At All</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5: Completely</b>
<b>Age</b>					
<35	18.7%	13.6%	26.4%	20.4%	20.9%
35 - 64	14.0%	10.8%	24.0%	23.6%	27.6%
65+	20.7%	10.4%	26.7%	19.6%	22.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.3%</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>25.1%</b>	<b>22.1%</b>	<b>25.0%</b>
<b>Income</b>					
< \$25k	24.9%	13.2%	24.1%	15.0%	22.8%
\$25k - \$49.9k	17.4%	14.6%	23.9%	23.1%	21.0%
\$50k - \$99.9k	13.5%	9.7%	25.2%	26.0%	25.6%
\$100k+	<b>7.2%</b>	8.7%	28.1%	24.9%	<b>31.1%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.3%</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>25.1%</b>	<b>22.1%</b>	<b>25.0%</b>
<b>Education</b>					
High School or Less	<b>30.2%</b>	13.3%	21.9%	14.0%	20.6%
Some College	16.5%	15.3%	28.0%	18.3%	21.8%
College+	11.5%	8.5%	24.2%	27.5%	28.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.3%</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>25.1%</b>	<b>22.1%</b>	<b>25.0%</b>



**QUESTION 2: What is your opinion regarding the safety of genetically engineered foods? Would you say:**

- 1 Genetically engineered foods are not safe?
- 2 You are unsure of the safety of genetically engineered foods?
- 3 Genetically engineered foods are safe?

	<b>Not Safe</b>	<b>Unsure</b>	<b>Safe</b>
<b>Age</b>			
<35	12.2%	71.9%	15.9%
35 - 64	16.4%	61.9%	21.7%
65+	12.0%	58.3%	<b>29.7%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>64.1%</b>	<b>21.4%</b>

<b>Income</b>			
< \$25k	10.7%	71.1%	18.2%
\$25k - \$49.9k	17.3%	64.9%	17.8%
\$50k - \$99.9k	16.0%	61.4%	22.6%
\$100k+	14.8%	57.2%	28.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>64.1%</b>	<b>21.4%</b>

<b>Education</b>			
High School or Less	13.6%	68.8%	17.6%
Some College	13.5%	71.2%	15.3%
College+	15.3%	58.2%	26.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>64.1%</b>	<b>21.4%</b>

**QUESTION 3: Do you believe that foods should be labeled to indicate that they have been genetically engineered or contain ingredients that have been genetically engineered? (These results represent the percentage of people who answered yes.)**

<b>Age</b>	
<35	94.1%
35 - 64	93.6%
65+	<b>89.7%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>93.1%</b>

<b>Income</b>	
< \$25k	92.5%
\$25k - \$49.9k	<b>96.1%</b>
\$50k - \$99.9k	91.5%
\$100k+	92.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>93.1%</b>

<b>Education</b>	
High School or Less	95.1%
Some College	95.2%
College+	91.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>93.1%</b>



**QUESTION 4: Would you eat the following foods knowing that they have been genetically engineered?**

- 1 Fish
- 2 Meat
- 3 Vegetables, fruits, or grains

	Fish	Meat	Vegetables, Fruits or Grains
<b>Age</b>			
<35	36.2%	40.6%	65.8%
35 - 64	32.3%	35.7%	56.1%
65+	<b>42.6%</b>	43.2%	<b>63.3%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>35.1%</b>	<b>38.3%</b>	<b>59.9%</b>
<b>Income</b>			
< \$25k	38.1%	44.2%	59.8%
\$25k - \$49.9k	30.5%	31.6%	53.8%
\$50k - \$99.9k	35.2%	39.6%	62.2%
\$100k+	37.8%	39.0%	67.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>35.1%</b>	<b>38.3%</b>	<b>59.9%</b>
<b>Education</b>			
High School or Less	35.3%	38.5%	56.3%
Some College	29.2%	36.3%	53.9%
College+	39.0%	39.8%	65.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>35.1%</b>	<b>38.3%</b>	<b>59.9%</b>

**QUESTION 5: Prior to today, did you know that some of the foods available in stores today have been genetically engineered? (These results represent the percentage of people who answered yes.)**

<b>Age</b>	
<35	60.0%
35 - 64	73.9%
65+	68.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>69.2%</b>
<b>Income</b>	
< \$25k	<b>51.3%</b>
\$25k - \$49.9k	68.3%
\$50k - \$99.9k	77.4%
\$100k+	<b>84.3%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>69.2%</b>
<b>Education</b>	
High School or Less	<b>44.7%</b>
Some College	63.3%
College+	<b>81.4%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>69.2%</b>

