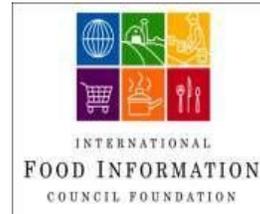


## **International Food Information Council Foundation**

### **Front-of-Pack Labeling Consumer Research Project**

#### **Supported by a Grant from GMA**



GMA provided a grant to the International Food Information Council Foundation to support a consumer research project designed to test consumer comprehension, ease of understanding and interpretation of varying amounts of nutrition information presented in a uniform format on the front-of-pack.

#### **Methods**

A nationally representative survey of nearly 7,400 primary grocery shoppers was conducted via web panel in the Fall of 2010.

The survey tested three different front-of-pack formats against a control (no front-of-pack information): calories-only, calories plus 3 nutrients to limit (saturated fat, sodium, total sugars) and calories plus 3 nutrients to limit plus up to 3 nutrients to encourage (protein, iron, calcium, vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin D fiber or folate). Additional information was made accessible to study participants. If they accessed the information, it featured the Nutrition Facts Panel.

The front-of-pack symbols were tested on four different product categories: dry ready-to-eat breakfast cereal, frozen entrees, savory snacks and salad dressing. Each product category had three different products that were ranked based on their nutrient content.

#### **Findings**

The study found that in general, increasing the amount of nutrition information on the front of package served to strengthen consumers' comprehension and comfort levels with the information provided.

For all respondents, the inclusion of positive nutrient information on front-of pack maintained and often increased consumer comprehension of all nutrients, ease of understanding and ability to interpret the nutrition information provided relative to those respondents who were presented with the calories plus three nutrients to limit format.

Consumers were more frequently able to accurately find and state nutritional content when the relevant information appeared on the front of the package.

Consumers agreed that increasing the amount of nutrition information on the front-of-pack helped them to better understand the different nutritional values for products, was helpful in making an informed decision, and should be included on more food products.

When the data were analyzed by socio-economic indicators such as income, education level and race/ethnicity, only education level had any consistent and significant impact on consumer comprehension and comfort with the information provided. Higher levels of formal education were positively associated with expressed ease of understanding and comprehension of nutrition information.

Across all education levels, those with more front-of-pack information presented to them demonstrated higher comprehension; with the greatest improvement in comprehension amongst those with the lowest educational attainment.