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# The influence of Information Exposure and Beliefs about Technology on the Acceptance of Novel Food Technologies: a Conjoint study of Farmed Prawns

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Consumers appear to be cautious about accepting novel technologies applied to foods because of the perceived additional risks and lack of benefits. Novel technologies with purported benefits for prawn farming were tested at four locations around Australia on 459 prawn consumers. Half of the participants (Information group) received additional information describing some potential issues with farming prawns that the novel technologies sought to address. A conjoint study was undertaken with additional responses to questions on perceived risks, benefits, need, unnaturalness and safety of the technologies (beliefs). Information exposure effect was also tested by an open question at the end of the task.

The information exposure produced only a moderate effect; however this did not segment participants. Participants were segmented by the sum of their beliefs. Those, (mostly male), classified with positive beliefs (12%), placed on average, less importance upon technology but an equal importance on cost and size of the product. For those, (mostly female), classified with negative beliefs (16%), technology was of greater average importance, with a greater range of (dis)utilities across the technologies. All participants favoured regular prawns to those treated with novel technologies although one technology (triploidy) did receive positive utilities possibly related to information that triploidy is sometimes "found in nature" and results in larger prawns. Generally, addressing information deficit (awareness of farming issues) did not overcome aversion to novel technologies applied to a food.