

Bans Lifted As Genetically Modified Food Gains Acceptance

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Just over half of Australians aged 14 and over (51%, down 3% in a year) "won't buy genetically modified (GM) food if they can help it", according to the latest Roy Morgan Research Single Source data.

This latest drop in a continuing downward trend of opposition against GM foods coincides with the NSW and Victorian Governments decision to lift the moratoriums on genetically modified canola crops last week.

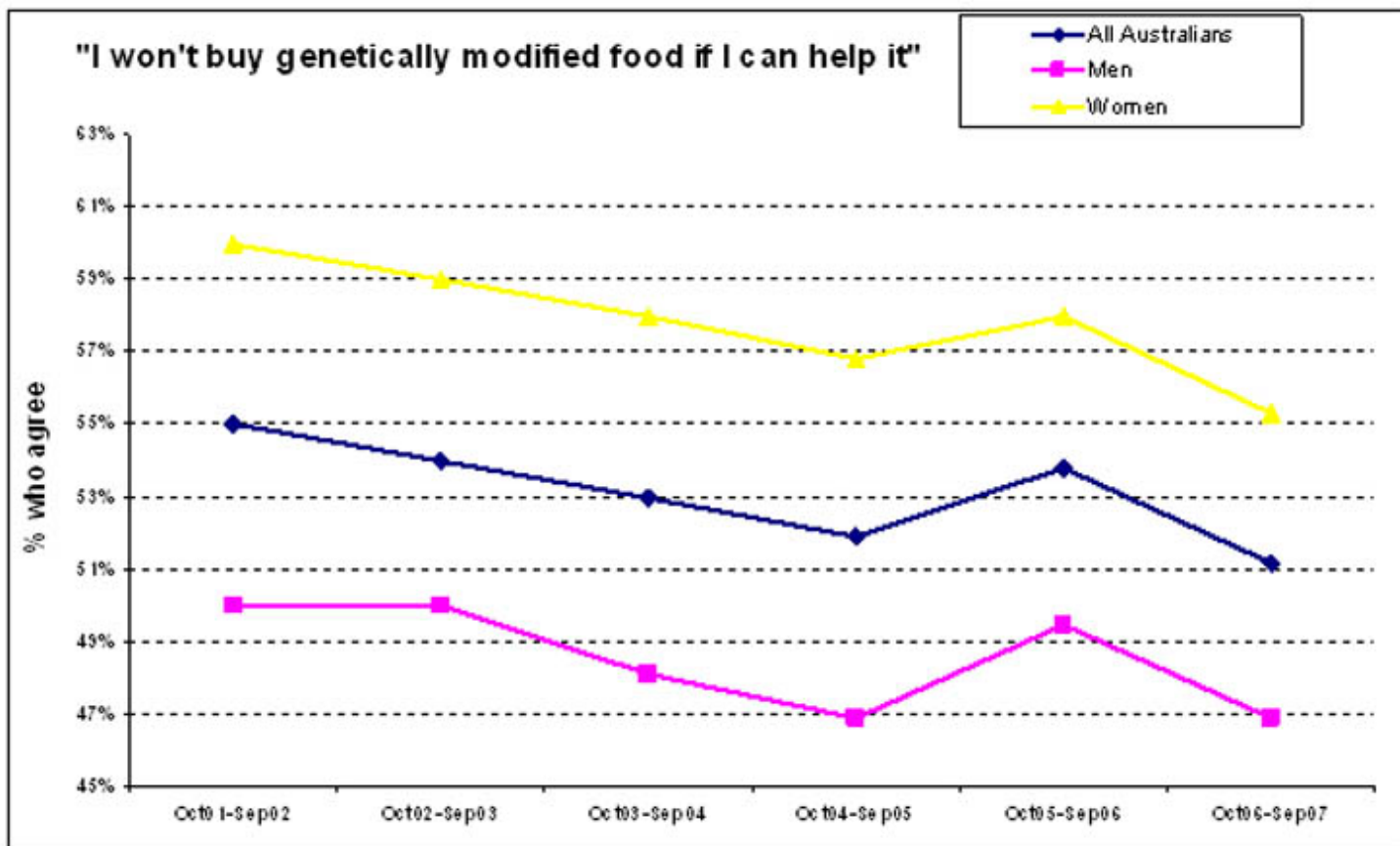
From October 2001 to September 2007, the number of Australians who agree with the statement "I won't buy genetically modified food if I can help it" has dropped steadily from 55% to 51%, with only a brief increase (54%) occurring in late 2005. This spike occurred during visiting US scientist and well-known anti-GM supporter, Dr Charles Benbrook's tour of Australia.

Michele Levine, CEO of Roy Morgan Research, says:

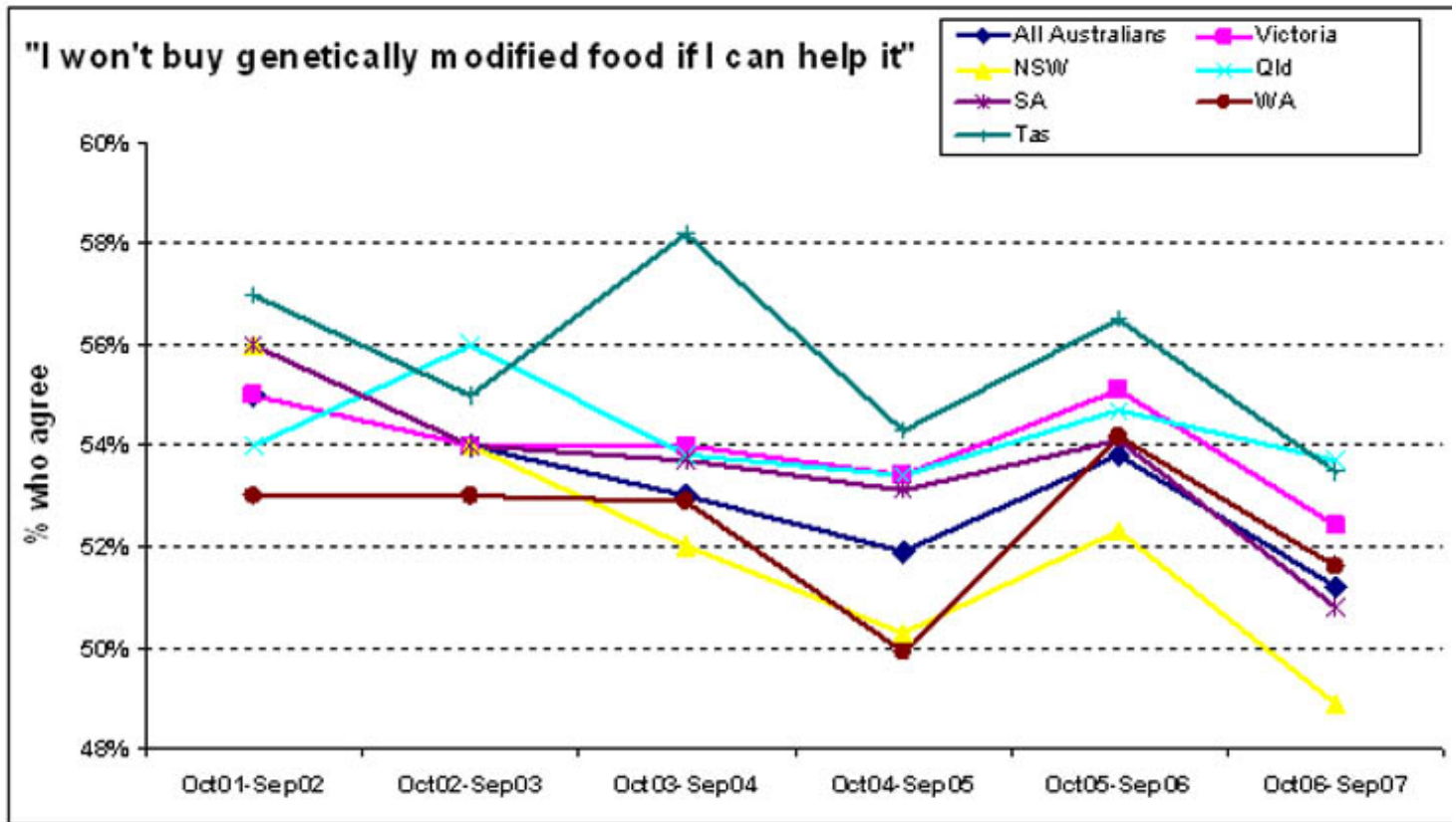
"Over the last six years there has been a gentle trend away from concerns about genetically modified food. There was renewed concern among Australians in late 2005 after Dr Charles Benbrook toured Australia with the message that current genetically modified crop testing is inadequate.

"This spike shows that although attitudes towards genetically modified food are becoming more accepting, the public is still susceptible to negative reports. Given the choice, the majority of Australians still will not buy genetically modified food."

Women (55%) were more likely than men (47%) to avoid buying GM foods.



Across the country, the proportion of Australians who avoided buying GM foods varied by state. Tasmania showed the most opposition towards GM foods over the past six years but for the first time since 2001, Queensland has joined Tasmania with the highest percentage (54%), while NSW had the lowest (49%).



These findings are derived from Roy Morgan Research Single Source data, based on 145,670 Australia-wide interviews between October 2001 and September 2007 with men and women aged 14 years and over.

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