

Can I still eat this? Using Implicit and Explicit Measures to Explore Consumer Behavior towards Food Products with Date Labels

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Abstract

This study investigates implicit and explicit attitudes towards products before and past the expiration date using an Implicit Association Test and an online questionnaire. Moreover, we test whether consumer perception of and behavior towards products past the expiration date can be manipulated by using a priming task. We use a three group between-subjects design where respondents had to recall either a frugal, wasteful or unrelated behavior. Results show that consumers have negative implicit attitudes towards products past the expiration date. Explicit attitudes, i.e., reduced health and safety perceptions and consumers' strategies to determine edibility (i.e., using their own senses vs. relying on expiration dates) predict consumption of expired products. While recalling a frugal behavior does not have a significant effect, recalling a wasteful behavior prior to evaluating products past the expiration date leads to a decrease in perceived safety and healthfulness of expired products.

Subject Areas: *Attitude, Consumer Behaviour, Decision-Making*

Track: Consumer Behaviour