

# Decomposing Front-of-Package Nutrition Label Effects for Different Food Categories

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# Decomposing Front-of-Package Nutrition Label Effects for Different Food Categories

## Abstract:

Front-of-package nutrition labelling (FOPNL) is a widely used tool to help consumers make healthier dietary choices. Existing research on the effectiveness of FOPNLs is inconsistent. Despite some progress in reconciling inconclusive results, when and where FOPNLs work well and why remains an open research question. Building on work by Olk et al. (2023), we use reference value theory to analyze the effectiveness of FOPNLs in influencing binary food choices (buy/not buy) that consumers regularly face in real-world shopping environments (e.g., discounters with limited assortments). Using discrete choice experiments, we show that label effects vary between virtue and vice foods. We find that FOPNLs work well for foods that are relatively healthy anyway, but are less effective for unhealthy foods, where they - arguably - should work best. Thus, our findings suggest the need for food type-specific intervention strategies to promote healthier diets.

**Keywords:** *Front-of-package nutrition labels, virtue and vice foods, reference value theory*

**Intended track:** *Public Sector and Non-Profit Marketing*