

ECO-LABELED FOOD: HOW ENVIRONMENTALLY-CONSCIOUS CONSUMERS  
PERCEIVE, INTERPRET, AND USE ECO-LABELS AS SIGNALS

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ABSTRACT

This research explores how different characteristics of eco-labels signal environmental qualities of a product to environmentally-conscious consumers and seeks to understand how environmentally-conscious consumers perceive, interpret, and use eco-labels on food products. Signaling theory serves as the theoretical framework for the study. The guiding research questions for this research are: how do environmentally-conscious consumers interpret and use eco-labels on food products? Why do they use them? How do visual and textual aspects act as signals and shape environmentally-conscious consumers' perceptions and interpretations of eco-labels? By seeking out consumers who already pay attention to eco-labels and conducting semi-structured interviews with a photo-elicitation component, the research will seek to better understand how the intended audience for eco-labels (environmentally-conscious consumers) interacts with eco-labeled products.