**Social Implications and Best Practices for Responsible Innovation of Nanotechnology in Food and Agriculture**

Researchers funded by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) - a federal agency within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) - are looking for potential participants for a study seeking to identify and evaluate practices of responsible innovation (RI) related to the use of nanotechnology in agricultural and food (agrifood) sectors. This study will examine what RI means to a diversity of stakeholders, including industry actors and consumers, and will identify RI best practices that can help ensure the sustainability of nano-agrifood technologies.

Researchers at NC State and RTI International are looking for approximately 30 study participants who work at companies that use nanotechnology or engineered nanomaterials in food and agriculture[[1]](#footnote-1). Participants from a diversity of sectors within the food production continuum are desired, including those with knowledge of crop and animal production (e.g., nanoparticles used as nano-fertilizers, nano-pesticides, or used in targeted drug delivery in livestock), and those involved with new product development and food formulation (e.g., nanoparticles used as food ingredients or food additives).

By taking part in this study, participants will have the unique opportunity to: 1) inform policy discussions on the barriers, incentives, and best practices for RI on nanotechnology in agrifood companies, 2) ascertain new information on stakeholder perceptions and concerns regarding RI and the use of nanotechnology in agrifood products, and 3) obtain critical insights on existing RI practices across a broad range of agrifood companies.

Industry participants will be asked to participate in two short surveys and two 30-60 minute phone or web-conference interviews - *all confidential* - over a one year period. The first survey and interview will examine what RI means to agrifood companies using nanotechnology and elucidate the incentives and barriers to RI in agrifood sectors. The second survey and interview will explore industry participant reactions to emergent study findings on the perceptions and concerns other stakeholders hold towards RI and nanotechnology.

If you would be willing to participate in this study or know of potential participants for this study, please contact Drs. Adam Kokotovich (akokoto@ncsu.edu) and Khara Grieger (kdgriege@ncsu.edu). Potential participants will be reviewed and then provided with further project details and an official invitation to participate.

1. Note: Nanotechnology is defined as the field of nanoscale science, engineering, and technology that develops, engineers, or controls materials on the scale of approx. 1-100nm. At this scale, materials often exhibit physical, chemical, and biological properties that can lead to new or novel behavior. For more information and guidance on nanotechnology and engineered nanomaterials, see FDA guidance and USDA’s nanotechnology program: [www.fda.gov/science-research/nanotechnology-programs-fda/nanotechnology-guidance-documents](http://www.fda.gov/science-research/nanotechnology-programs-fda/nanotechnology-guidance-documents); <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/nanotechnology-program>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)