



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



World Health
Organization

**Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on the
Application of Nanotechnologies in the Food and Agriculture Sectors:
Potential Food Safety Implications**
(To be held on 1-5 June 2009, at FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy)

Call for Experts and Call for Information

Background

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have recognized a need for scientific advice on any food safety implications that may arise from the use of nanotechnologies in the food and agriculture sectors through its horizon scanning activities.

FAO and WHO are planning the Joint Expert Meeting to take stock of existing and emerging applications of nanotechnologies in the food and agriculture sectors.

Scope and Objectives of the Meeting are available [here](#).

Call for Experts (Deadline for submission: not later than 9 January 2009)

FAO and WHO are now seeking candidates for a roster of experts who should meet requirements mentioned below to have essential knowledge and experience relevant to the use of nanotechnologies in food and agriculture and to the identification and assessment of potential risks.

Qualification required

General requirements

Candidates for the experts should fulfil the following general requirements:

- Advanced university/college degree in analytical chemistry, organic chemistry, biochemistry, physical chemistry, microbiology, food technology, food science, nutrition, toxicology, agronomy, epidemiology, public health, veterinary science, social sciences, or other relevant fields;
- Scientific publications in peer-reviewed journals, in particular, relevant publications within the last ten years;
- Good knowledge of the English language, written and spoken; and
- Leadership or invited participation in national, regional or international scientific bodies, committees, and other expert advisory bodies pertinent to the scope of the Meeting.

Specific requirements

Candidates should meet one or more of the specific requirements outlined below:

- Good technical and scientific knowledge of nanoscience and nanotechnologies (existing and under development) with application in food and agriculture with at least three years' experience working in this field;
- Toxicologist with at least 10 years' experience in food safety risk assessment and with demonstrated involvement in the toxicological evaluation of nanoparticles, including toxicokinetic properties and interactions with biomolecules;
- At least 10 years' experience in exposure assessment within the food safety risk assessment framework with demonstrated involvement in the application of exposure assessment methodologies to nanoparticles in foods, including long-term exposure assessment; and/or.
- Experience, preferably at least five years', in the evaluation/analysis on perceptions among stakeholders (e.g. consumers, producers and manufactures, research communities, regulatory authorities) for using new technologies including nanotechnology that may impact in particular the food and agriculture sectors, for ensuring transparent and constructive dialogue among stakeholders.

In addition, where necessary, experience in food safety management with demonstrated involvement in the management of potential risks associated with the application of new technologies such as nanotechnologies in the food and agriculture sectors, will be considered.

Process for selection of experts

FAO and WHO place great value on the technical quality and independence of the participating experts as well as to the transparency of its selection process. Both organizations have developed well-defined procedures for selecting experts that promote the excellence and independence of opinions provided.

Each applicant's *curriculum vitae* will be reviewed on the basis of the criteria listed above by a selection panel comprising three or more individuals including at least one independent, internationally recognized external expert appointed by FAO and WHO. Based on the evaluation of the selection panel, highly qualified applicants will be included in an expert roster that will be used by FAO and WHO in selecting experts for Meeting.

In selecting experts FAO and WHO will consider, in addition to scientific and technical excellence, diversity and complementarity of professional backgrounds, balanced representation from geographic regions including developing and developed countries as well as gender balance.

Selected experts may be requested to assist in the preparation of background papers.

Appointment of experts

The experts will be invited to participate only in their individual capacity. Experts shall not represent the government of which he or she is a citizen, or the institution with which he or she is associated. The experts designated to participate in such meetings will not receive any remuneration. However, travel costs, subsistence allowance and other related expenses will be the exclusive responsibility of FAO and WHO.

Applications

Interested applicants should submit their *curriculum vitae* including a detailed description of their education, work experience and a list of peer reviewed publications relevant to the topics indicated above. Do not include reprints in your submission unless specifically requested at a later date. Applicants must have a good working knowledge of English as meetings and correspondence will be in English only.

Before participating in meetings, the selected experts will be required to declare any potential interests associated with the subjects and substances that will be evaluated through completion of a standard form developed by FAO and WHO. They will be asked to indicate in writing any interest (financial and intellectual) on their part or their spouse that may affect their scientific independence as experts including one or more of the following conditions: employment (past or present) by any commercial enterprise or private or civil sector association; a recipient of research or other study grants from such enterprises or associations; or shareholdings in commercial enterprises active in fields related to the subjects and the substances. These declarations will be evaluated and retained by the Joint Secretariats. In addition, a confidentiality undertaking is also to be signed to ensure proper handling of dossiers and proprietary information.

Call for Information (Deadline for submission: not later than 9 January 2009)

FAO/WHO is seeking submissions of published and unpublished technical information to ensure that all relevant information on the use of nanotechnologies in food and agriculture and the potential risks will be considered. The information will form part of the database that will be examined to assure a comprehensive understanding of the technologies, their applications and the potential risks in order to facilitate the development of appropriate and effective recommendations. In particular, FAO/WHO through this call for information would like to raise awareness about the need to make available relevant information that may not be readily available in the public domain.

Confidential and/or unpublished information

FAO and WHO recognize that some of the information and relevant data which is now required may be unpublished or of a confidential nature. With regard to unpublished information and data, this remains the property of the author for subsequent publication by the owner as original material. Unpublished confidential studies that are submitted will be safeguarded in so far as it is possible to do so without compromising the work of FAO and WHO. Specific issues relating to confidentiality should be discussed directly between the information and data owners and FAO/WHO. For these and other issues please contact FAO and WHO at the contacts provided below.

Information requested:

- Current use of nanotechnologies in livestock and crop production, food processing, food packaging and food distribution, including descriptions of the technologies, potential health risks to consumer, benefits to the various stakeholder groups (including the general public);
- On-going research and development on nanotechnologies for use in the food and agriculture sectors that are expected to reach market within the next 10 years including descriptions of the technologies, potential risks, benefits to the various stakeholder groups (including the general public);
- Investigations of nanoparticle migration from food contact materials into foods;
- Purity, particle size distribution and properties of nanoparticulate substances for use in foods and food contact surfaces;
- Available data for a deeper mechanistic understanding of the behaviour of nanoparticles in the body (e.g. toxicokinetics, possible mechanisms of toxicity);
- Information on nano- forms of vitamins and nutrients in relation to their bio-availability, possible interference with the absorption of other nutrients and consideration of safe-limits;

- Available data on interactions of nanoparticles with biomolecules, nutrients and contaminants, and their relevance to human health;
- Available techniques for detecting, characterizing and measuring nanoparticles in foods and food contact materials;
- Risk assessments carried out on nanomaterials for use in foods and food contact surfaces, including case studies and methodologies for assessing human exposure by oral route);
- Information on possible developmental of standardised protocols for the assessment of toxicological profiles of nanoparticles *in vitro* and *in vivo*;
- Information on nano-enabled diagnostic tools in the food (including water) and agriculture sectors;
- Potential needs and priority area for scientific advice in consideration of safety management and regulation at national authorities;
- Reviews, surveys or other information concerning public perceptions of the applications of nanotechnologies to the food and agriculture sectors; and
- Any other relevant information that falls in the scope of the Meeting.

Deadline

Call for experts

Experts' applications should be sent, preferably in electronic means, to the Joint Secretariats by 9 January 2009 to the addresses below. Applications after that date will be evaluated if additional expertise is required and the evaluation and selection will follow the same procedure as described.

Call for information

Information/data should be submitted to the Joint Secretariats by 9 January 2009 to the addresses below, preferably by electronic means, either via e-mail (if not too large) or on CD- ROM).

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