



Nonprofit Offers Framework for Assessing Nano Risks in Food Products

Author Unknown December 6, 2011

The framework released Dec. 6 by As You Sow, a San Francisco nonprofit, tells food and food packaging companies what they should ask their suppliers regarding safety of their products. Several food companies assisted in its preparation.

[As You Sow](#), a San Francisco nonprofit, released a document on Dec. 6 that will help food and food packaging companies identify and evaluate nanomaterials in the products. The technology is essentially unregulated and untested for its impact on public health, and some companies may not even be aware they are using products made with nanomaterials, the organization said.

Several food companies, including Kraft, McDonald's, Whole Foods, Yum! Brands, and Pepsi, contributed to the "Sourcing Framework for Food and Food Packaging Products Containing Nanomaterials" document or reviewed it.

"Currently, most food companies do not have processes in place to identify if there are nanomaterials in their products or to confirm the safety of those products," said Amy Galland, Ph.D., research director of As You Sow and co-author of the document. "We are urging the food industry to utilize the precautionary principle and stay ahead of the regulatory curve on this issue."

Her co-author, Michael Passoff, senior strategist at the organization, agreed, saying there is "little transparency regarding safety testing or which food products contain nanomaterials. Companies need to start questioning their suppliers," he said, "on whether or not their products use nanomaterials."

The document was made possible by the support of the CS Fund and the Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation. It will be distributed widely throughout the food and food packaging industry and will be followed by a survey asking those companies to disclose which nanomaterials, if any, are being used in their supply chains.