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RESEARCH TENDER CALL



TENDER INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Project Reference No.: 02-2024

Project Title: “Consumer attitudes to novel foods on the island of Ireland”


1. Objective/Knowledge Gap:

The specific objectives are:

- To assess the acceptability of novel foods to consumers
- To examine how consumers understand and interpret the information on the labels for novel foods
- To ascertain whether consumers have concerns about the safety of novel foods
- To examine drivers/ barriers in relation to consumers’ willingness to purchase / consume novel foods

2. Background

Under EU regulations, any food that was not consumed “significantly” prior to May 1997 is considered to be a novel food. This includes new foods, food from new sources, new substances used in food as well as new ways and technologies for producing food. This project will examine consumer attitudes to a range of novel foods on the island of Ireland, and will include foods produced by novel processing methods as well as foods not normally consumed here (e.g insect protein). The project will assess the acceptability of these foods to consumers and will also look at labelling of novel foods and how consumers understand and interpret the information on the label. Concerns regarding the safety of these foods will be examined, along with drivers/ barriers in relation to consumers’ willingness to purchase / consume novel foods. It is anticipated that this project will yield insights which will be helpful

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to regulators and the food industry in understanding consumer concerns in relation to novel foods.

3. Approach

The research will involve a mixed methods approach to achieving the objectives laid out above. The research will include the following elements:

- I. Rapid review of the literature on consumer attitudes to novel foods
- II. Focus groups with consumers
- III. Survey / questionnaire with consumers
- IV. Final report to **safefood**

4. Technical Specification


(a) Scope of research

This research will focus on consumer acceptance of novel foods (according to the EU definition) on the island of Ireland. It will examine understanding of labels, consumer concerns, including food safety concerns, as well as barriers/ drivers relating to purchase and consumption of novel foods.

(b) Literature review

A review of the published literature on consumer attitudes to and understanding of novel foods is required. This should primarily focus on studies carried out in the EU and the UK but studies from outside these jurisdictions may also be included. The review will include peer-reviewed publications and also a full search of the grey literature including government and other organisation reports (to include publications from international centres of excellence).

Detail must be provided regarding how the literature review will be structured.

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(c) Qualitative and quantitative work

Appropriate methodologies to achieve the objectives of the project must be outlined. A full justification and rationale for the proposed methodology and analytical approach will be required. It will be necessary to indicate for all aspects of the project how the proposed data will be collected, analysed and reported. The research should be mixed in nature.

All possibilities and influencing factors with regards to this project must be considered including:

- Appropriate geographical spread
- Participant demographics
- A fifty-fifty split between Ireland and Northern Ireland

(d) Analysis


The contractor will provide explicit details and justification for the chosen methods for quantitative and qualitative analyses.

(e) Data handling and Reporting

- I. After a six-month period, the contractor will submit to **safefood** an interim report detailing progress for each deliverable of the project.
- II. The contractor is responsible for collating all outputs and outcomes and a project final project report will be submitted to **safefood** on completion of the study.
- III. All forms, documentation and electronic files must be retained by the contractor until further notice from **safefood** in case of issues arising after the completion of the research.

(f) Data Processing Agreement

The successful applicant must sign a data processing agreement that will govern the processing of personal data as part of this project. In addition to this **safefood** will require details of data protection and security measures in place.

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(g) Quality assurance

- I. Ethical approval will be an essential component where data collection from participants is involved.
- II. The contractor will use validated methods where applicable and will apply best practice quality controls to approaches.
- III. To ensure transparency and reproducibility, all data sources used in the research must be specified, and all data used must be explicitly specified and justified.
- IV. **safefood** may visit the contractors during the research to assess how the work is being carried out.

5. **Proposed Activities/Deliverables**


This project will involve:

- A literature review of available information on consumer attitudes to novel foods, in the EU, UK and further afield
- Focus groups with consumers to explore attitudes to novel foods, understanding of labelling, food safety concerns and barriers/ drivers for purchasing/ consumption
- Survey / questionnaire of consumers on the island of Ireland to gather data on attitudes to novel foods
- Report detailing the findings and highlighting findings that are of particular relevance to **safefood's** work on food safety and consumer communication
- Recommendations based on the research findings on steps that could be taken by industry, regulators or others to address the concerns of consumers

6. **Evaluation of Tenders**

Quality of the proposal:

- ✓ Anticipated deliverables;
- ✓ Research method and facilities;
- ✓ Value for money;
- ✓ Potential for application;

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- ✓ Work plan, including the overall timeframe.

Quality of Applicants:

- ✓ Experience in subject area;
- ✓ Quality Assurance and Quality Control measures in place.

7. Duration of Project

It is anticipated that the duration of the project will be 12 months. A detailed timescale of research should be submitted by each applicant.

8. Tender Application Forms and Guidelines

The Tender Application Form and associated Guidelines can be downloaded from www.safefood.net/research-tender. They can also be obtained by emailing research@safefood.net, quoting the project reference number **02-2024**. Alternatively, please contact **safefood** as per the details below.

Ms. Gillian Fox
 Research Coordinator
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 7 Eastgate Avenue
 Little Island
 Cork
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The closing date for receipt of applications by **safefood** is no later than **4pm Friday 10th May 2024.**