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## **RESEARCH TENDER CALL**

### **TENDER INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

**Project Reference No.: 09-2015**

**Project Title:**

**“Do nutrient and health claims have an impact on the perceived healthiness and the amount of foods/meals eaten by adults on the island of Ireland?”**

#### **1. Objective/Knowledge Gap**


The purpose of this research is gain a greater understanding of the impact of nutrient and health claims used for marketing purposes on food, both packaging and related advertising, commonly consumed on the island of Ireland in terms of:

- (a) How healthy people perceive the food to be;
- (b) The amount of that food they perceive to be an appropriate portion to consume.

#### **2. Background**

Food labels contain a wealth of information for consumers to make informed choices. The content and format is regulated by EU legislation.

Previous **safefood** funded research project found that in an experimental setting, adults perceived foods with claims such as ‘lower in fat’ to be healthier and a rationale to eat a bigger portion (1), even though the standard version and the ‘lower in fat’ versions of the products contained the same number of calories. International research also indicates that these claims may promote a halo effect and actually encourage people to eat larger portion sizes (2, 3).

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With the exception of this small element of the **safefood** funded study little data exists on the impact on these claims on the island of Ireland (IOI). In order to promote healthy eating and most specifically guidance on how to use labelling information it's important to understand current knowledge, attitudes and reported behaviour of nutrient and health claims among adults on IOI.

### **3. Approach**


The approach taken should be a mixed method approach using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. It is expected that the researchers will intentionally integrate or combine these methods to draw on the strengths of each e.g. allow one method to inform the other and allow one method to provide deeper insights into the findings of another. Scenarios that are used in this research need to reflect 'real life' scenarios that consumers on IOI are faced with when choosing foods. The approach taken should address the key objective set out above and seek to provide practical outputs for **safefood**.

### **4. Technical Specification**

- (a) Scope of research
- (b) Qualitative and quantitative work
- (c) Data handling and Reporting
- (d) Quality assurance

#### **(a) Scope of the research**

1. The research will be limited to adults aged 18-64 years and will be representative of:
  - a. Different age ranges;
  - b. Rural and urban;
  - c. Men and women;
  - d. The distribution of socio-economic groups.

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2. The claims and foods chosen to test in research should be ones that consumers are exposed to and eat regularly. The foods chosen should be medium and high energy dense foods as these have the greatest impact on calorie intake.
3. The research should be conducted among adults living in both NI and ROI.

### **(b) Qualitative and quantitative research**


A full justification and rationale for the proposed methodology (including recruitment strategies) 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.

### **(c) Data Handling and Reporting**

1. An interim report (electronic and hardcopy) containing a summary of the findings to date will be submitted to **safefood** at six monthly intervals of the research.
2. The contractor is responsible for collating all results and a final report will be submitted to **safefood** on completion of the study.
3. 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.

### **(d) Quality Assurance**

1. Ethical approval will be an essential component to the approach where human interventions are involved.
2. The contractor will use validated methods where applicable and will apply best practice quality controls to approaches.
3. **safefood** can visit contractors during the course of the survey to assess how the work is being carried out.

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## 5. ***Proposed Activities/Deliverables***

The proposed activities and deliverables will be dependent on the methodology proposed and will include:

- Submission of 6 monthly interim report;
- Submission of a final report to be submitted to **safefood** within the 18 month study period.

## 6. ***Other requirements***

Total costings are to be included in the tender also.

## 7. ***Evaluation of Tenders***

The tenderers will be evaluated as follows:

### **(a)Quality of the proposal:**


- 1) Anticipated deliverables;
- 2) Research method and facilities;
- 3) Value for money;
- 4) Potential for application;
- 5) Work plan, including the overall timeframe.

### **(b)Quality of Applicants:**

- 1) Experience in subject area;
- 2) Quality Assurance and Quality Control measures in place.

## 8. ***Duration of Project***

Estimated duration of the project: Total of 18 months max. A detailed timescale of research should be submitted by each applicant.

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## 9. ***Tender Application Forms and Guidelines***

The Tender Application Form and associated Guidelines can be downloaded from [www.safefood.eu](http://www.safefood.eu). They can also be obtained by emailing [research@safefood.eu](mailto:research@safefood.eu), quoting the project reference number **09-2015**. Alternatively please contact **safefood** as per the details below.

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## **References**

1. Faulkner GP, Pourshahidi LK, Wallace JMW, Kerr MA, McCaffrey TA, Livingstone MBE. Perceived /`healthiness/' of foods can influence consumers/' estimations of energy density and appropriate portion size. *Int J Obes.* 2014;38(1):106-12.
2. Kerr MA, McCann MT, Livingstone MBE. Food and the consumer: could labelling be the answer? *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society.* 2015;74(02):158-63.
3. Sutterlin B, Siegrist M. Simply adding the word "fruit" makes sugar healthier: the misleading effect of symbolic information on the perceived healthiness of food. *Appetite.* 2015;95:252-61.