



Dunkin' Donuts to Remove Nanomaterials from Powdered Donuts

As You Sow Withdraws Shareholder Proposal on Nanomaterials Use Following Dunkin's Commitment

OAKLAND, CA – March 5, 2015 – Dunkin' Brands, the parent company of the Dunkin' Donuts chain, [has agreed to remove titanium dioxide](#), a whitening agent that is commonly a source of nanomaterials, from all powdered sugar used to make the company's donuts. As a result of this progress, the advocacy group As You Sow has withdrawn a [shareholder proposal](#) asking Dunkin' to assess and reduce the risks of using nanomaterials in its food products.

In 2013, [As You Sow commissioned independent laboratory tests](#) of Dunkin's white powdered donuts, finding they contained titanium dioxide nanomaterials. Nanomaterials – substances engineered to have extremely small dimensions – offer new food industry applications. However, the small size of nanomaterials may also result in greater toxicity for human health and the environment. Insufficient safety information exists regarding these manufactured particles, especially for use in foods; preliminary studies show that nanomaterials can cause DNA and chromosomal damage, organ damage, inflammation, brain damage, and genital malformations, among other harms.

"This is a groundbreaking decision. Dunkin' has demonstrated strong industry leadership by removing this potentially harmful ingredient from its donuts," said Danielle Fugere, President and Chief Counsel of As You Sow. "Engineered nanomaterials are beginning to enter the food supply, despite not being proven safe for consumption. Dunkin' has made a decision to protect its customers and its bottom line by avoiding use of an unproven and potentially harmful ingredient."

"The pressure is on Dunkin's competitors to follow suit," commented Austin Wilson, Environmental Health Program Manager at As You Sow. "[Peer-reviewed research](#) on titanium dioxide nanoparticles has found that they may damage human cells and DNA. Investors expect companies to take a precautionary approach to health and safety."

The FDA, which does not regulate nanomaterials in food, [warns that it is not aware](#) of any food ingredient on the nanometer scale for which there is available data to determine that its use is generally recognized as safe. Asbestos, also a nanomaterial, was used before its harms were fully understood, leading to a costly health crisis.

Last year, the same shareholder proposal [received 18.7% support](#) at Dunkin's annual meeting. As You Sow has previously published research on nanomaterials in food, including [Slipping Through the Cracks: An Issue Brief on Nanomaterials in Foods](#).

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As You Sow is a nonprofit organization that promotes environmental and social corporate responsibility through shareholder advocacy, coalition building, and innovative legal strategies. For more information visit www.asyousow.org.