



## Shareholders ask Mondelēz to Address Health Hazards of Nanomaterials in Foods; Mondelēz Blocks As You Sow Proposal

**Oakland, CA – March 14, 2016** – Mondelēz International successfully blocked shareholders from voting on a proposal, submitted by shareholder advocacy group As You Sow, asking the company to assess the risks of using nanoparticles in food due to safety concerns.

Nanoparticles are extremely small particles that can cross cell membranes and travel throughout the body, and into organs, in ways that larger particles cannot. Mondelēz challenged the proposal at the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), alleging that the company does not use nanoparticles and that use of nanoparticles is “ordinary business,” preventing shareholders from requesting information about the risk of these materials.

[The proposal](#) requested the company issue a report disclosing the actions the company is taking to reduce or eliminate the risk of nanoparticles. As You Sow submitted a [similar proposal](#) with The Hershey Company, which did not challenge shareholders’ right to vote on the proposal.

Independent testing commissioned by As You Sow has demonstrated that nano-sized titanium dioxide is being used in Mondelēz’s Dentyne Ice gum. Two studies in 2014 found that all food-grade titanium dioxide products tested contained a significant proportion of nanoparticles ([Peters et al](#); [Yang et al](#)).

“This is a dangerous precedent,” said Danielle Fugere, President of As You Sow. “The SEC failed to recognize nanotechnology as a significant policy issue, despite growing public concern about using nanoparticles in foods before it is proven safe.”

“If Mondelēz was confident in its management of risk and disclosures around nanoparticles, it would have no need to block shareholders from voting on this non-binding proposal,” said Fugere.

While nanoparticles offer new food industry applications, such as whiteness and brightness, their small size may also result in greater toxicity for human health and the environment. [Mounting evidence](#) suggests that some nanoparticles, including titanium dioxide, are toxic in cell cultures and to animals; substantial gaps in knowledge exist about their effect on humans.

Last shareholder season, As You Sow withdrew a similar shareholder proposal at Dunkin’ Brands after the [company agreed to remove titanium dioxide](#) (containing nanoparticles) from its white powdered donuts. Starbucks is planning to remove titanium dioxide from all its products by 2017, and Krispy Kreme is currently in the process of reformulating its products to exclude titanium dioxide and other nanoparticles.

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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](http://www.asyousow.org).