

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: MRA-24/25-46903



International Comparison of Chestnut Management

The purpose of this project is to understand stakeholder perspectives on the current social, political, economic, cultural and ecological challenges that owners and managers of chestnut trees and forest groves face in three different global sites where chestnut forest ecosystems continue to thrive: Spain, China and the UK.

You are being invited to participate in this project because you have self-identified as having experience owning or managing Chestnut trees in the UK.

If you choose to take part in the project you will be asked to rank a series of statements about governance, cultural identity, use of fire in management, market conditions, etc. of Chestnuts in your location along a scale of preferences. Participation will take place online. As part of participation, you will be asked to provide your perspective or opinion on the importance and relevance of the statements we provide.

Participation is completely voluntary. You should only take part if you want to and choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Once you have read this information sheet, please contact us if you have any questions that will help you make a decision about taking part.

We do not foresee any risks to your taking part in this research. By contributing your perspectives, you will help improve understanding about how Chestnuts are managed around the world, how this varies between regions, and offer insights into possible important factors to consider in future management. We aim to publish the results of the research and would be willing to share and discuss the results with you.

Your data will be processed under the terms of UK data protection law (including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018). Your responses will be anonymous beyond the research team, and it will not be possible to identify you in any research outputs.

Data collection will be conducted via the University of Wisconsin's [Q-Tip online tool](#). Responses to the Q Method questionnaire will remain on the Q-Tip server (outside the EU). Q-TIP is designed to protect user data and maintain a high degree of confidentiality. Each Q-TIP researcher has their own secure login, and not even the Q-TIP Administrator can access data from their account. Participants do not enter any personal data in taking the survey aside their email address if they are happy to be contacted for subsequent discussion (entirely optional).

Response data will subsequently be securely stored for a maximum of five years on the Q-Tip server and King's College London data systems. King's College London has a responsibility to keep information collected about you safe and secure, and to ensure the integrity of research data. Specialist teams within King's College London continually assess and ensure that data is held in the most appropriate and secure way.

If you would like more information about how your data will be processed under the terms of UK data protection laws, please visit the link below:

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/support/research-ethics/kings-college-london-statement-on-use-of-personal-data-in-research>

You are free to withdraw at any point of the project, without having to give a reason. Withdrawing from the project will not affect you in any way. You can withdraw your data from the project up until 1 July 2025, after which withdrawal of your data will no longer be possible as data will be incorporated into analyses and publications. If you choose to withdraw from the project, we will not retain the information you have given thus far.

The results of the project will be summarised in public facing news stories and peer-reviewed academic publications. Anonymised data may be made available for research transparency.

If you have any questions or require more information about this project, please contact me using the following contact details:

Dr James Millington, james.millington@kcl.ac.uk, 020 7848 2604

If this project does harm you in any way or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the project, you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

The Chair, College Research Ethics Committee, rec@kcl.ac.uk

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research.