



**Cornell University**  
**Office of the Provost**

**Michael I. Kotlikoff, V.M.D., Ph.D.**  
Provost and Professor of  
Molecular Physiology  
300 Day Hall  
Ithaca, NY 14853-2801  
t. 607.255.2364  
f. 607.255.9924  
provost@cornell.edu

November 5, 2018

Dear Professor Brown and Fellow Signatories,

Thank you for writing to express your concern regarding the findings of Cornell's Institutional Inquiry into allegations of research misconduct by Professor Brian Wansink. This inquiry was undertaken under the standards set by policies of Cornell University, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Research Integrity, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Research Integrity. These policies establish confidentiality as a guidepost to ensure protections for complainants, respondents, and witnesses in research misconduct investigations, and these confidentiality standards are not compatible with public release of a full investigative report, which would, in this case, unfairly identify various complainants and witnesses. Thus, while I understand and am sympathetic to your desire for more transparency in this matter, Cornell is not able, nor would it be appropriate given the confidential testimony therein, to release the "full text of its inquiry." However, I am happy to provide more information regarding the main findings of the investigation and also to let you know of our ongoing efforts in this matter.

As announced in our public statement, Cornell's investigation found that Professor Wansink committed academic misconduct under our policy. The investigating faculty committee found a number of instances of research misconduct that also violated applicable federal regulations. In particular, the committee found by a preponderance of evidence that Professor Wansink's research departed from accepted practices of his research community and that the departure resulted from reckless conduct of research. The practices identified included data falsification, a failure to assure data accuracy and integrity, inappropriate attribution of authorship of research publications, inappropriate research methods, failure to obtain necessary research approvals, and dual publication or submission of research findings.

Cornell is now conducting a Phase II investigation to determine the degree to which any acts of research misconduct may have affected federally (NIH and USDA) funded research projects. We have also interacted with multiple journals and, upon request, have provided the information regarding the existence and integrity of data underlying specific questioned publications. As part of Phase II of the university's investigation, Cornell has required Professor Wansink to collect and submit research data and records for all of his publications since 2005, when he came to the university, so that those records may be examined. We will provide a summary of this Phase II investigation at its conclusion.

Professor Brown and Fellow Signatories  
November 5, 2018  
Page 2

I hope that this summary of the findings of our process and its next phase provides you and your co-signatories with more confidence regarding Cornell's conduct of this research investigation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael Kotlikoff". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael I. Kotlikoff, V.M.D., Ph.D.  
Provost