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INAUGURAL EVENT MARKS OFFICIAL OPENING OF INSTITUTE FOR FOOD SAFETY AND HEALTH AT IIT

(BEDFORD PARK, IL) April 6, 2011 – An inaugural launch event will mark the National Center for Food Safety and Technology's (NCFST) transition to a principal operating center within the newly formed Institute for Food Safety and Health (IFSH) at Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT). The IFSH inaugural opening and tour will take place on Monday, April 11, from 10:00 am – noon at IIT's Moffett Campus in Bedford Park, IL.

The reclassification of the long-time food safety, food defense and nutrition research center to institute status, approved by the IIT Executive Committee on December 8, 2010, better reflects the organization's expanded scope of research, expertise and new state-of-the-art facilities available to its food industry members and government partners.

In recent years, NCFST's research portfolio and facilities have expanded to include human clinical nutrition studies, health promoting foods research, a virology program, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-commissioned and certified Biosafety Level 3 (BSL-3) laboratory and pilot plant.

"NCFST will serve as a cornerstone of IFSH," said IFSH Vice President and Director Robert E. Brackett, PhD, "providing a strong, consistent and well-established foundation for the expanded IFSH operating framework. This restructuring strongly positions us to better assist the nation's food companies and regulators with practical, authoritative science-based knowledge, especially in light of new requirements arising from the recent passage of the Food Safety Modernization Act."

NCFST and three other strategically aligned research centers will now operate within the parent IFSH scientific organizational structure to support continued growth, while leveraging NCFST's leading status as the only center where scientists from an entire FDA Division are
co-located with university researchers to work side-by-side on food safety, nutrition and technology research projects. The four IFSH centers:

• The **National Center for Food Safety and Technology** will continue to operate under its long-time cooperative agreement between IIT and FDA, focusing on design and performance of a variety of collaborative and cooperative research projects across several focus areas, including microbiology, chemical constituents, allergens, food processing, packaging, methods validation, and nutrition.

• The **Center for Nutrition Research** supports the work of the Clinical Nutrition Research Center (CNRC), which conducts human nutrition and clinical research to determine the health benefits of foods and food components in a variety of study areas, including nutrient properties and bioavailability, obesity and satiety, diabetes and cancer risk reduction, and infant and child nutrition. The unit also manages projects related to IFSH’s Health Promoting Foods research arm.

• The **Center for Processing Innovation** provides expanded process control and process validation capabilities for applied research through IFSH's GMP processing area, kitchen and pilot plant, BSL-2 processing innovation laboratory, fresh produce processing line, and the newly commissioned BSL-3 laboratory and biocontainment pilot plant. The unit also administers education and training services, and other targeted commercial projects.

• The **Center for Specialty Programs** administers key specialized programs, including customized laboratory proficiency testing services for all stakeholders. This center manages development and oversight of government project contracts with US FDA, USDA, Department of Homeland Security, and other regulatory agencies associated with food protection and nutrition.

In addition, IFSH will continue to offer all graduate degree and professional certificate programs previously administered under NCFST oversight, in cooperation with the IIT Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering and Department of Biological, Chemical, and Physical Sciences.

Brackett will officially introduce the IFSH organizational structure, logo and tagline, "Innovation through Collaboration," to invited stakeholders and the media at the April 11 launch event. Event speakers also include IIT President **John Anderson**, FDA Associate Commissioner for Food Protection **Jeff Farrar**, U.S. Representative **Daniel J. Lipinski**, Illinois Director of Public Health **Damon T. Arnold**, and Executive Vice President of Research, Development and Quality for Kraft Foods **Jean E. Spence**.
A virtual makeover of the institute's website will launch on April 7, featuring additional news and information about IFSH's collaborative and cooperative research activities and capabilities, staff and member partners, and knowledge-building initiatives and opportunities. The new Web address is www.iit.edu/ifsh.

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The Institute for Food Safety and Health (IFSH) is a one-of-a-kind applied food research institute that provides stakeholders in government, industry and academia the opportunity to develop and exchange knowledge and expertise to address key issues in food safety, food defense and nutrition. Powered by a singular combination of in-depth food science expertise and state-of-the-art research capabilities, IFSH's collaborative research model helps stakeholders define and design innovative and practical approaches to solving real-world challenges in food industry operations. Located at the Illinois Institute of Technology's (IIT) Moffett Campus in Bedford Park, IL, IFSH is also home to the FDA CFSAN Division of Food Processing Science and Technology. For more, visit www.iit.edu/ifsh