

History of the Institute Of Food Science & Technology of Ireland

A branch of the Institute of Food Science and Technology of the United Kingdom (IFST UK) was established at a meeting held in the Clarence Hotel in Dublin in late 1967. The founders were, at that time, relatively young food scientists and technologists who were imbued with the highest ideals and engaged in Research in the then An Foras Talluntais (now Teagasc); Academia, University College Cork and University College Dublin; Regulation, the City Analyst's Office and Industry mainly represented by practitioners in the primary processing industries such as cereals, dairy, sugar, milk and meat packing and in secondary processing such as beer and soft drinks fruits/vegetables and meat canning. These companies are well known and famous for their national and multinational brands.

The next ten years would prove to be an exciting period with seminars on a variety of topics and many publications seeing the light of day through the dedication and hard work of these scientists. Ireland's accession to the then European Economic Community (EEC) in 1973 would enhance the growing reputation of the Institute as harmonisation of Irish law and EEC Directive and Regulations assumed ever increasing importance in the single market.

As with other organisations, such as trade unions which were, at the time, branches of unions based in the UK it was only a matter of time before these scientists would exert their independence and from being a branch of IFST, IFSTI evolved as a sovereign Irish Institute . Articles and Memorandum of association were granted by Irish Government Ministerial order in 1975. It's first President, Dr Ted Hood being elected in 1976.

The Institute of Food Science and Technology of Ireland, the professional body which represents the interests and concerns of those working in Food Science and Technology in Ireland, continued to grow and evolve and take its rightful place as an adhering body of the International Union of Food Science and technology IUFoST .

In time members of IFSTI would distinguish themselves and gain international recognition. In 1983 a formidable IFSTI team won the sixth IUFoST World Congress which was a great success. In various capacities members of IFSTI would distinguish themselves nationally. A current Honorary Fellow and food Scientist Mr Joe Walshe has held the position of Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Successive IFSTI Presidents would go on to greater things on the international stage. The late Dr Ted Hood would become President of IUFoST; Professor Brian McKenna

would become President of the European Federation of Food Science and Technology (EFFoST) the European section of IUFoST. The writer would become President of AIJN - the European Fruit Juice Association.

IFSTI is a voluntary organisation or society of members for members run by a Council. The Council, which meets on a regular basis, consists of the President, the Vice-President, the Honorary Treasurer, the Honorary Secretary and other members either elected at AGM or co-opted to Council. IFSTI has a sister organisation The Food Science and Technology Trust of Ireland, a charitable organisation, the purpose of which is to assist with the progression of students and where possible come to the aid of members in financial distress.

In the progression of any organisation it is easy to fail to recognise those who have retired or indeed those who have gone to their eternal reward. It is fitting and appropriate that we recognise the contribution of the late Mr Thomas Halpin who steered the Institute through a difficult period.

Some IFSTI Historic Highlights including Seminars, Lectures and Awards

2011 – Labelling Seminar: “Do Labels Inform, Educate or Mislead the Consumer?”

2010 – IFSTI bids for the 2014 IUFoST World Congress and though unsuccessful is invited to bid for the 2016 congress.

2009 – Holds three seminars namely “Reduction/Elimination of Fats in Consumer food products”; “Towards a Sustainable and Innovative Irish Food Industry”; “EU Regulation of Nutritional health Claims – Understanding Functionality and Compliance” and a lecture entitled “Primary production – How safe can it be?”

2008 – IFSTI organises an essay competition in conjunction with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland in memory of the late IFSTI President Ms Ann Westby; and a seminar in conjunction with Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) on “Molecular Gastronomy - Understanding the relationship between the kitchen and the laboratory”

2007 – Invites Prof Stevenson (UK) to present his recent study on food colours at a seminar on “Food Additives & Link with Hyperactivity in Children”.

IFSTI - also signs a Collaborating Societies Agreement with IFST, UK and launches the Food Science Review.

2006 – IFSTI and IFST Northern Ireland jointly host a seminar on “Celtic Food in a Global Economy”.

2005 – IFSTI introduces the IFSTI Presidential medal for the best MSc thesis on a food safety related topic at the Dublin Institute of Technology.

2004 – IFSTI launches the IFSTI Website.

1999 – IFSTI supports an exhibition on “The Science of Food” which was on display in the Long Room, Old Library, Trinity College Dublin in April 1999.

1997 – IFSTI newsletter was replaced by the Food Science Times.

1991 – IFSTI and IFST (NI) hold joint meetings in Belfast and Dublin.

1983 – IFSTI hosts the IUFoST World Congress on the theme “*Development, Welfare and Peace*”- the ultimate objective, the application of science and technology to human needs” in Dublin.

1970’s – These years would prove to be an exciting period with seminars on a variety of topics and many publications.

Rory Ryan

President