



Food Protection and Defense Institute

A Homeland Security Center of Excellence

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National Center for Food Protection and Defense announces a name change as its work to protect the food supply continues to expand around the globe

Food Protection and Defense Institute name better reflects the expanding scope and scale of work done by the internationally recognized organization that is focused on research, education, and innovative solutions

Saint Paul – An internationally recognized food protection organization announced last week that it has changed its name from the *National Center for Food Protection and Defense* to the *Food Protection and Defense Institute*. The Institute was originally created through a grant from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and is based on the Saint Paul campus of the University of Minnesota. Their founding focus was to identify ways to mitigate threats to the food system from intentional contamination. The decision to change the name reflects ongoing growth by the organization and continued expansion of key partnerships in the global food marketplace.

"Our beginnings as a small research consortium have expanded over the years into an agile organization that is able to provide a multitude of food protection needs," said Amy Kircher, DrPH, Director of the Food Protection and Defense Institute. "Over time the production of our food supply has become increasingly complex. Our role and work has expanded to deal with the challenges associated with providing a safe, abundant food supply for all."

Launched in 2004 as a Homeland Security Center of Excellence, the Institute has a strong team of experts focused on identifying and mitigating issues in the food supply. While continuing to conduct critical research, the Institute has expanded its efforts into four distinct product lines: Research, Education and Training, Information Technology, and Service Delivery. When integrated, this product line expertise allows transition of their research and education into innovative solutions and a well-trained workforce that meet the needs of today's food sector.

Since the Institute's inception over a decade ago, the food marketplace has dramatically changed both in terms of how much more globally connected the sourcing and manufacturing of food is as well as other issues related to how to bring best food production practices to areas of the world that continue to struggle with infrastructure and sanitation issues. The Institute and its leadership have been able to expand their role in helping companies improve food supply chains while also being part of the broader policy work related to food protection and defense. These changes helped drive the need to change the name as well as other strategic work.

"The challenge of food protection is not one that can only be borne by only one organization, it has to be a responsibility of both government and private companies in the industry, she said. "We're all in this together. The role of the Institute is to bring to the table state-of-art research and an understanding of domestic and global issues thus assuring a safer food supply.

More than 150 experts from academia, private sector research organizations, professional organizations, state and federal government agencies, and the food industry are currently involved in research work, including many of the nation's leading universities. Research is conducted across a wide range of disciplines that include epidemiology, risk assessment, economics, education, and supply chain management. In addition, the Institute has gathered an "Industry Work Group" composed of food industry leaders who provide feedback with essential real-world expertise, guidance, and feedback.

About the Food Protection and Defense Institute: Located on the University of Minnesota campus, the Food Protection and Defense Institute takes a comprehensive, farm-to-table view of the food system, encompassing all aspects from primary production through transportation and food processing to retail and food service. To learn more please visit <http://foodprotection.umn.edu/>.

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