

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CIFST / ICSTA

The Institute arose out of the recommendations of the National Research Council Committee on Food Preservation, formed during World War II. This committee recognized food technology as an identifiable science and saw a future need for trained people in the secondary handling and processing of food in Canada. This recommendation led to universities developing food science programs and indirectly establishing food science as a profession in Canada.

During 1946-47 efforts were made in the Montreal area to develop a Food technology Society. In 1947, a British Columbia Food Technology Association was formed. In 1948, Bill Eva established an independent Food Technologists Association of Montreal. In 1949, the Manitoba Food Technology Association was formed in Winnipeg. These three groups came together at the annual meeting of the Agricultural Institute of Canada in Winnipeg on June 19th, 1951 for the purpose of forming a national association. The Canadian Institute of Food Technologists was formed, by the Montreal and Manitoba groups. The BC group opted out at the last minute. 1952, a Toronto section joined the Institute, and would be the last section to join for the next eight years. By the end of 1952, the Institute had 236 members. The membership fee was \$1.50!

From its inception the Institute sought close relations with the Institute of Food Technologists, the Agricultural Institute of Canada and the Chemical Institute of Canada. It is interesting to note that, in the early years, the Montreal Section held periodic meetings at the Experimental Farm in Ottawa. The dynamic efforts of the Montreal Section were noticed by IFT. It was proposed that the 1957 IFT Annual Conference be held in Montreal. Sadly, limited hotel accommodation made it difficult to arrange for so large a convention.

The first national conference of the Canadian Institute of Food Technology was held in Montreal in June 1958. The Institute's by-laws, seven years in the making were finally accepted at this meeting. These by-laws essentially remained in effect until 1998, when they were rewritten and the Institute reorganized. With the by-laws complete, the Institute was finally able to incorporate, and letters patent were issued to CIFT January 20th 1959.

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In 1958, McGill University and the Montreal Institute of technology offered 12 lectures on food science. This doubled the following year with the addition of 24 lectures and 20 laboratory periods. At this time, the Montreal section was also very active in the community providing speakers to social and consumer groups.

In 1960, the Institute commenced publishing a newsletter. The newsletter was superseded by the first edition of the CIFST Journal in 1968. The newsletter was incorporated into the Journal, which was published four times per year. The Journal was a very successful vehicle for CIFST and undoubtedly contributed to the rapid increase in membership through the 1970's and '80's. Sadly the management of its finances were weak and the management of the Journal was contracted out to Elsevier Science in 1991, and the Institute reverted to a newsletter. The new Journal Food Research International was never popular with the membership, and the Journal was sold to Elsevier in 1999. Recognizing the need for better communication with the membership, CIFST launched their first web site in 1998.

Canadian Institute of Food Science & Technology / L'Institut Canadien de Science et Technologie Alimentaires has in fact had four names over the years:

1951 – Canadian Institute of Food Technologists

1952 – Canadian Association of Food Technologists

1956 – Canadian Institute of Food Technology

1973 – Canadian Institute of Food Science and Technology / Institut Canadien de Science et Technologie Alimentaires.