



Cactus Section  
Institute of Food Technologists

*A professional group of IFT members in Arizona seeking to advance the science and technology of food through exchange of knowledge*

A Quarterly Newsletter

February 2014

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Cactus IFT was recognized as a 2011-2012 Section of Excellence. Learn what this means and how we can retain this status.

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## What is a Section of Excellence?

IFT named the Cactus Section the 2011-2012 Section of Excellence. You may have seen recognition highlighted in previous newsletters or on the Cactus Section IFT website; however, if you are new to the organization or missed the announcement, you may be wondering what the award means and how we can continue to maintain our status as a superior section.



Here is the official explanation of the Section of Excellence award:

“This recognition symbolizes your section’s commitment to IFT, your section members, and the food science and technology profession. The section should be a vibrant community of dedicated professionals that embody the spirit of IFT. The events held throughout the year, exemplary volunteers,

dedication to students, and excellence in leadership demonstrate ongoing devotion to ensuring that the section will flourish for years to come.”

While it’s flattering to be presented with the award in the past, we should strive to meet (or exceed) the award expectations as our section continues to grow. By striving to reach these goals, we can continue to represent the characteristics of a Section of Excellence:

- Submit the section Annual Report and Financial Report by the deadline
- Continue to nurture membership stability and growth
- Organize at least three meetings each year
- Keep the section website and newsletter up-to-date
- Demonstrate commitment to future generations of food scientists and their community

If you have any suggestions about how to best meet these goals, please feel free to contact any of the Cactus Section IFT board members. We appreciate your supporting efforts to retain the excellent status of the Cactus Section IFT.

- Gilleen Barkyoumb, Cactus Section IFT member



*Credit: Flickr/IITA Image Library*

## Ancient Seeds For Modern Needs

The Southwest has a long and rich agricultural history. From the time that the first settlers migrated to the region about 4,000 years ago, crops such as corn, beans, squash, and amaranth were staple items of diets. Many of the crops originated from Mexico while Spanish settlers introduced others.

Over time, environmental adaptation and human selection influenced crop diversity and resulted in plants that could flourish in the many different regions of the Southwest including lowland deserts, river valleys, and mountain plateaus. One of the greatest adaptations was the ability to grow without large amounts of water since some civilizations depended solely on rainfall to water crops in the Southwest.

Today, many of our crops around the world are cultivated using the same seeds. Little attention is paid to the importance and ease of using seeds that have been adapted to grow in specific climates or regions. In fact, just ten companies control over 75 percent of the global sales market. Some believe that if farmers grew adapted seeds there would be less of a need for pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, and large amounts of water. Additionally, it would spur genetic diversity in our crops and promise food security for future generations.



*Bill McDorman*

One of those believers is Bill McDorman, the Executive Director of Native Seeds / SEARCH in Tucson, Ariz.—a nonprofit organization that promotes seed conservation. Bill and his crew at Native Seeds / SEARCH are pioneers in a movement to preserve native seeds through many different projects, one being a well-organized seed bank.

What's a seed bank? It serves as a safe repository for seeds to preserve the genetic diversity. Seeds are kept under frozen storage conditions where they remain viable for long periods of time.

By doing this, Native Seeds / SEARCH can provide seeds to farmers if a crop is devastated either by weather or other circumstance. They have almost 2,000 seed variations—mostly comprised of different types of corn, bean, and squash. Native Seeds SEARCH also supports and encourages local growers to use their seed varieties to contribute to the natural selection process.

Another way Native Seeds / SEARCH is trying to preserve native seeds and crops is through their conservation farm. This 160-acre farm is located in Patagonia, Arizona, and serves to support seed diversity and adaptation through natural selection.

If you want get involved in preserving the diversity of crops, Native Seeds / SEARCH allows people to buy seeds for your home garden or farm. Visit [www.nativeseeds.org](http://www.nativeseeds.org) for more information.

By supporting Native Seeds / SEARCH, you are helping to create a more delicious, diverse, and abundant world—one seed at a time.

- Gilleen Barkyoumb, Cactus Section IFT member



*Native Seeds / SEARCH seed bank (Credit: Margaret Roach)*

# Member Spotlight:

## David Despain

There many fantastic members in the Cactus Section IFT that support our Section. Without you, we would not be as successful as we are. We would like to recognize the member behind these newsletters: David Despain. Here are some questions we asked him:



David Despain, Cactus Section IFT Newsletter Committee Chair

### When did you join IFT?

I've been a member since 2009.

### How did you find out about IFT?

I was introduced to IFT by a colleague—who at the time was the Chair of the Cactus Section IFT—and I was asked if I could help produce a newsletter for the Section. Although I am a nutritionist, I decided to accept that task as I was highly interested in food science. I began to come to meetings and create the newsletter. In the process, I loved meeting other IFT members and learning from knowledgeable

speakers at meetings. For instance, I got to know Brian Giannini, Tony DeCastro, Lynn Abarr-Boubelik, and Holly Long. Each of these fine members have served as chairs of the Section and are a true wealth of knowledge.

### Why do stay involved in IFT?

I stay involved because I am as passionate about food as I am about a good story. I love to learn and write about the things I learn through Cactus Section IFT events. I have attended events and written (or edited) pieces about everything including food safety, orange juice manufacturing, product innovation, to wine and chocolate taste testing. What could be boring about that?

Mainly, I believe the reason why I keep going is because of the great people, great topics, and great food. There are always interesting subjects, great conversations, and fantastic chances to network with like-minded and interesting people.

### What do you do professionally?

Professionally, I am a nutritionist and a writer who covers topics about food, nutrition, and health. I am employed by Isagenix as Director of Science Communications. We market a variety of nutritional products including dairy protein shakes, juice drinks, and supplements. My role is to maintain the accuracy of our marketing materials scientifically.

### How has IFT benefited your career?

I have learned quite a bit about food science and technology since joining Cactus Section IFT. My involvement has also led to freelance writing with IFT. You may see my articles in *IFT Live* online and in *Food Technology* magazine. I have written about

topics such as breakfast foods, sodium reduction, fruit technologies, and sauces.

### If you had to choose, what has been your favorite IFT event? Why?

My favorite-ever IFT event would have to be our tour of San Tan Brewery. Being rather new to the world of alcoholic beverages, I found it quite interesting to see how it was all made and how beer could be paired with different foods.

Later on, using some of what I learned, I attempted to brew my own beer—a nut brown ale. It didn't turn out too well, but soon enough I suspect I will get the hang of it.

### Do you enjoy any hobbies? If so, what?

I have quite a lot of hobbies. Besides my new interest in food science and technology, I also really enjoy the outdoors, being surrounded by nature, and learning about the world around me. I have a special interest in agriculture and how it relates to food security in the world.

Being a writer, I also enjoy reading. I try to read several articles on blogs and newspapers daily from my favorite writers. I also have a personal blog where I cover various topics related to food and health at: [www.evolvinghealth.wordpress.com](http://www.evolvinghealth.wordpress.com).

### What would you eat for your last meal?

My grandfather's "ñoquis de papa con salsa bolognesa" (potato gnocchi with bolognese sauce). It's a traditional recipe from Argentina and it's what I grew up on.

## Suppliers' Night Registration

Cactus Section IFT invites you to join us for our annual Suppliers' Night Expo — a fun and unique industry show that features vendors with the latest ingredients and new concepts in the food industry.

This night brings together professionals involved in the science and business of food. Join experts in research & development, product development, quality assurance/control, as well as executive management, marketing, and business development. Vendors come from all aspects of the industry including academia and government.

You don't want to miss this great opportunity to network with professionals and peers in the industry, gain more practical insight, and discover innovative ideas to fit your business needs.

Product demonstrations, samples, door prizes, drawings and more! (See more details about the event on Page 4.)

Visit our website ([www.cactusift.org](http://www.cactusift.org)) to register!



Credit: Flickr/Sean MacEntee

### "Like" Us!

The Cactus IFT Section is now on Facebook! Be sure to "like" our page to stay up-to-date on the latest news and upcoming events!

### Other ways you can stay in touch with the happenings of Cactus IFT:

- Visit our website: [www.cactusift.org](http://www.cactusift.org)
- Follow us on Twitter @CactusIFT
- Connect with us on LinkedIn
- Come to events

# Important Contacts

*Are you interested in membership, sponsorship opportunities, contributing or advertising in this newsletter, or volunteering for Cactus Section IFT? Contact one of our officers on the list below.*

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## Mark your calendars!

- Our annual outing to a Spring Training game will be on Saturday, March 1st: Diamondbacks vs. the Cubs. Seats on the first base side have been reserved for Cactus Section IFT members. Tickets are only \$10! Visit our website or Facebook page for more information.
- You wont want to miss the Annual IFT Food Expo will be in June.

## 2014 Suppliers' Night: Tuesday, April 1st

- Invited attendees include professionals from the food service, dairy, meat, seafood, bakery, nutraceutical and pharmaceutical industries.
- Show Hours: 4:00-7:00 p.m.
- Location: El Zaribah Shrine located at 552 N. 40th St, Phoenix, AZ 85008 (south of 202 loop on 40th St.)

## Section Officers

**Holly Long — Chair**  
**Kim Silva — Chair-Elect**  
**Lorraine Hansen — Treasurer**  
**Victoria Fraizer — Secretary / Student Committee Chair**



## IFT Headquarters

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