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**“Advancing Food Safety through Sanitary Design”
Showcases Insights and Solutions for Food and Beverage Processors**

*--Attendees from Around the Globe Log on to the Latest
Hixson/BNP “Food Plant of the Future” Webinar--*

(CINCINNATI; March 10, 2010) – If you want to strike fear into the heart of a food or beverage processor, just mention the words “*salmonella*,” “*e-coli*,” or “*listeria monocytogenes*.” When found, these and other microbes, along with allergens and other factors, all have the power to shut down food and beverage facilities and create massive recalls...recalls that come with potential human impact as well as negative financial and brand identity consequences. For example, the peanut butter recall of 2008, in which nearly 3,000 food products were recalled:

- Resulted in nine deaths and 714 illnesses,
- Had a \$1 Billion Dollar impact, and
- Led to a 20% decline in peanut butter consumption.

Yet according to a new “Food Plant of the Future” webinar co-sponsored by Hixson Architecture & Engineering and BNP Publications, there are ways for companies to improve food safety and mitigate potential sources of contamination. In “Advancing Food Safety through Sanitary Design,” Hixson co-presenters Bill Sander, Chris Harmon and Jim Adler discussed three areas that can have a positive impact on food safety:



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- **Zones of Control.** One of the keys to the successful control of both pathogens and allergens is to limit potential exposure using zones of control. Through these, facilities create a controllable environment with multiple barriers against the transfer of physical, chemical or microbial hazards into and across facilities, as well as potential post-process contamination.
- **Control of the Environment.** Controlling the environment is about keeping the facility clean and dry, controlling temperature and humidity and ensuring proper air quality and air balance.
- **Design to Facilitate Food Safety.** The design of a food and beverage plant can play a big part in contributing to food safety. The design should provide flexibility to allow for changes in products and processes, create environments that are cleanable, durable and economical, and offer solutions that reduce the risk of contamination by people and other operations.

During the hour-long webinar, the most well-attended in the series to date, Hixson polled attendees, who represented a wide variety of companies from throughout North America and beyond, on several key issues:

- Respondents overwhelmingly (93.2%) believed that improving Zones of Control would have a moderate to substantial impact on the safety/quality of their finished product.
- An even split of respondents felt that air quality improvements would have moderate impact (43.3%) or substantial impact (43.3%) on the safety/quality of their finished product.
- Most respondents (71%) felt that facility design was the key that would yield the greatest improvement on food safety in their plants, versus establishing zones of control (16%) or controlling the environment (13%).

Nearly 98% of those who have attended the webinar to date (either live or archive) have indicated that they would recommend it to others. For those who were unable to attend

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the live webinar, a link to the archive can be found at www.foodplantofthefuture.com, along with links to the archived versions of previous webinars on increasing productivity using design and building realistic sustainability into food and beverage plants. The next Food Plant of the Future webinar in the series is scheduled for September 9, 2010.

ABOUT HIXSON

Hixson is an architecture, engineering and interior design firm specializing in projects for industrial processing plants, R&D facilities, corporate office environments, and retail projects. Listed as one of the top firms in North America, Hixson delivers insight and advocacy leading to intelligent project execution through 16 integrated technical disciplines. To learn more, visit us on the web at www.hixson-inc.com.

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