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For Immediate Release

Toxicologists Explore Wide Range of Pressing Health Issues at March Annual Meeting

Reston, VA (February 4, 2010)—What role do stem cells play in drug discovery? Are dietary supplements safe? Do they really work? Do vitamins and minerals have any real value as dietary supplements? What environmental–genetic interactions influence diseases in children? Can nano-sized particles travel from the nose to the brain? How can we assess environmental exposures and children’s vulnerability to disease? The Society of Toxicology (SOT) plans to explore these and other issues within the field of toxicology at the 49th Annual Meeting of the Society of Toxicology, March 7–11, 2010, at the Salt Palace Convention Center in Salt Lake City, Utah.

SOT’s Annual Meeting brings together some 6,000 toxicologists from the United States and from 50 other countries, who represent a wide range of fields including medicine, biotechnology, carcinogenesis, epidemiology, public health, food safety, genetic toxicology, immunotoxicology, infusion toxicology, inhalation, *in vitro*, nanotechnology, occupational health, pathology, pharmacokinetics, pharmacology, regulatory, risk assessment, reproductive and developmental toxicology, and veterinary medicine.

The 2010 event will feature 26 symposia, 21 workshops, 10 roundtables and 6 keynote addresses from including internationally acclaimed scientific award winners and two Nobel Laureates. Some of the sessions of interest to the press and public include the following:

Safety of Vitamins and Minerals: Controversies and Perspectives: Consumers are constantly asking whether vitamins and minerals have any real value as dietary supplements. Can vitamin E and selenium lower the prostate cancer risk? Does calcium and vitamin D supplements help protect against bone fractures? Panelists will characterize the current state of science as it relates to the impact of vitamin and mineral supplementation on human health, review the statutory and regulatory perspective on vitamin use and assess the safety analysis of vitamins during this roundtable discussion.

Research Advances and Enduring Health Needs in Children’s Environmental Health Protection: Children may be more vulnerable and susceptible to health impacts of environmental contaminants based upon age-specific factors that increase exposure, developmental processes that are differentially susceptible to disruption and genetic variables. Speakers will discuss the challenges and highlight the opportunities that the National Children’s Study presents as the research examines interactions between key environmental exposures and a range of child prevalent diseases.

Melamine Contamination in Infant Formulas: Lessons Learned: The 2007 pet food contamination caused acute renal failures as a result of the interaction between melamine and cyanuric acid. Then in September 2008, Chinese officials acknowledged that illegal use of melamine, a fraudulent protein substitute, contaminated powdered infant formula that was sold throughout the country and beyond. It is reported that in the Peoples Republic of China alone at least 294,000 infants were affected, of whom six died. Presenters will highlight comparisons between renal failure in pet food and infant formula contamination, dose-response and risk assessment considerations of melamine in infants, the chemistry and analysis of melamine and analogues in food for risk assessment purposes, guidance on levels of health concerns in foods, and regulatory aspects.

The Society of Toxicology is a scientific not-for-profit organization for professionals from around the world who are involved in the study of toxicology. With more than 6,000 members, the Society is creating a safer and healthier world by advancing the science of toxicology. SOT is a forum for novel discoveries and approaches related to toxicology, fosters integration of sub-disciplines that support the evolution of toxicology, and, among other things, increases the impact of toxicology on human health and disease prevention.

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Editor's Note: to see the full program or arrange to attend a session, reporters are invited to visit, "Just for the Media" at the Annual Meetings page, <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/meet/am2009/press.asp>