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SPE CERTIFIED® AND UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PARTNER TO EXPAND HEALTHY FOOD OPTIONS

NEW YORK, NY, October 9, 2014 – [The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign](#) and [SPE Certified](#), a unique restaurant and foodservice certification program designed to enhance the nutritional quality of meals, have partnered to expand the university's healthy dining hall menu options to offer students nutrient-dense meals without compromising taste.

SPE Certified's team of culinary nutritionists and chefs, working closely with its counterparts from the University of Illinois, are creating 50 delicious and healthy offerings for students that meet SPE's scientifically-grounded criteria. Premiering this week, students and faculty can expect existing dining hall offerings to reappear with even more nutritious tweaks, in addition to recipes from SPE Certified's extensive culinary database, including ***Salmon Burger Sliders, Chipotle Bean & Barley Chili, Chicken Fried Rice, Whole Wheat Spaghetti Pomodoro, Shrimp Kebab and Linguine with Creamy Cauliflower.***

The University of Illinois dining services serves over one million meals per year through six classic "all-you-care-to-eat" dining halls, five à la carte locations and ten specialty restaurants. The university, which has registered dietitians on staff, already places great emphasis on health and sustainability, and was named one of the top 25 most sustainable universities in the country by the Princeton Review. The university currently sources 25% of their food locally and/or sustainably and obtain 90% of the produce used at their dining halls from their own student-run sustainable farm. Now, students and parents will have the reassurance of the university's commitment to health and sustainability by SPE certification.

Launched in May 2012, SPE, which stands for *Sanitas Per Escam* in Latin (or "Health Through Food"), aims to provide a universal, trusted standard for healthy and delicious dining outside of the home. The SPE seal is a new way for restaurants and foodservice providers to address sustainability and personal health concerns, and importantly to ensure consumer confidence by establishing a recognized standard. SPE Certified has already collaborated with universities such as University of Massachusetts at Amherst, University of California at Davis and St. John's University in New York.

SPE Certified goes beyond the farm-to-table movement of **Sourcing** seasonal and local ingredients, but also incorporates the principles of **Preparing** (using specific cooking techniques that preserve the integrity and nutritional qualities of the ingredients) and **Enhancing** (optimizing nutritional density by combining ingredients that are more powerful when eaten together than alone). This is what sets SPE Certified apart from other culinary certification programs.

“Given the current epidemic of obesity and diet-related diseases, SPE Certified is poised to change the way America eats. We are therefore thrilled to have the University of Illinois join us to positively impact attitudes and healthy in the Midwest,” says Emmanuel Verstraeten, Founder and CEO of SPE Certified.

For more information, please visit www.specertified.com and www.housing.illinois.edu.

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About SPE® Certified:

SPE® Certified is a unique certification and consulting program designed to enhance the nutritional quality of meals, without sacrificing taste. SPE stands for *Sanitas Per Escam* (Latin for “Health Through Food”), and its mission is to provide a universal, trusted standard for healthy and delicious dining outside of the home. SPE Certified’s guidelines combine cutting-edge research with international health standards, validated and updated continuously by world-renowned nutrition experts. SPE Certified works with chefs to develop seasonal, great-tasting dishes that focus on sourcing, thoughtful preparation and an artful approach to combining nutrient-dense ingredients. Buildings have LEED; household products have the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval; food now has SPE Certified. www.SPEcertified.com