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# EAST BAY **BUSINESS**TIMES

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## Dublin's National Food Laboratory moving to Livermore

East Bay Business Times - by [Jessica Saunders](#)



The National Food Laboratory will begin moving its 115 employees into new quarters in Livermore in January, an updated and larger space to accommodate growing demand for its product testing and marketing services.

The food laboratory, an independent affiliate of the recently merged Grocery Manufacturers Association/Food Product Association, has been located at 6363 Clark Ave., Dublin, for 22 years. But the nondescript, aging building wasn't a good match as the laboratory expanded into new fields including product strategy, marketing and concept development from its roots as a scientific testing and research institution.

The **National Food Laboratory Inc.** found a better fit in two buildings located in Livermore's Tri-Valley Technology Park, including a 30,000-square-foot research and development building, 2441 Constitution Drive, that became redundant when owner Western Flavors and **Fragrances Inc.** was purchased by **FFG Industries Inc.** The Constitution Drive property will house the food laboratory's R&D operations including a pilot plant that can be used to produce various products for testing, while 365 North Canyons Parkway, a 20,000-square-foot Class A office building, will house test kitchens, tasting booths, convention rooms and showrooms.

The 20-year leases were signed at the end of September and take effect Jan. 1, said John Hone, vice president with Cornish & Carey Commercial/ONCOR International's Pleasanton office. Terms were not disclosed.

The owner of 365 North Canyons is the Robison Family Trust, which is currently in escrow with Western Flavors to buy the Constitution Drive property. The deal was unusual because there's not a lot of R&D space like the Western Flavors building available in the local market, Hone said.

The laboratory is growing partly because many manufacturers are downsizing and outsourcing their R&D operations and also due to tighter federal scrutiny after recent outbreaks of E. coli and salmonella, said Jena Roberts, vice president of sales and marketing. She said revenue growth is "robust" although she declined to provide specific figures. The laboratory has more than 700 clients, including household names like Quaker, Kraft and Dole, and the roster has been growing 20 percent to 30 percent annually, Roberts said.

The food laboratory will move into the new buildings in phases beginning in January. Its former headquarters at 6363 Clark Ave. will be sold, Hone said.

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