

2026 Responses to Recommendations to the Executive Board

COUNCILS

Affiliate

1. The Affiliate Council recommends Karuna Kharel, Delegate from the Nepalese Association for Food Protection be appointed as the next Affiliate Council Secretary.

Board Response: The Board approves the appointment.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

1. Recommend improving food allergen signage at IAFP receptions and events by increasing the font size and visibility of allergen information, ensuring allergen listings are accurate, and using a consistent format for identifying allergens across all food signage.

Board Response: The Board previously addressed DEI Council recommendations regarding allergen labeling signage and agreed to have IAFP staff collaborate with vendors to continue to enhance existing allergen signage.

2. Allowing the DEI Council to develop clear, standardized food allergen labeling instructions for IAFP to provide to caterers and food preparers at convention centers, hotels, and other venues hosting receptions, breakfasts, and related functions during future Annual Meetings.

Board Response: The Board requests DEI Council prepare allergen labeling instructions for Board review by **December 1, 2026**.

3. Including a reference and/or link to the DEI Council's 2023 guidance for submitting symposia, roundtables, and workshops in communications soliciting proposals for the 2027 and future Annual Meetings, including the IAFP proposal submission webpage and emails sent to Members.

Board Response: The Board asks DEI Council to resubmit the guidance document for review and discussion with the Program Committee. Proposal submission guidance should be provided by the Program Committee.

STANDING COMMITTEES

FPT Management

1. Recommend extending Dr. Catherine Cutter's term as Scientific Editor through 2028 as a special circumstance, allowing the incoming Associate Editor to complete a one-year shadowing period before assuming the Scientific Editor role. Following this transition, the Associate Editor position will be advertised.

Board Response: The Board agrees with the recommendation and will bring it to a vote in October.

2. Producing short video summaries, approximately three minutes in length, featuring willing authors discussing their published content and leveraging IAFP's existing video production capabilities to promote *FPT* and its content.

Board Response: The Board approves recommendation and requests the *FPT* Committee identify potential authors to be interviewed at the 2027 Annual Meeting.

JFP Management

1. The *JFP* Management Committee recommends the appointment of Daniel Weller as the Vice Chair

of the committee.

Board Response: The Board approves the appointment.

2. Recommend recruiting a fifth Scientific Co-Editor through a new call for applications to help manage increased submission volume and maintain timely editorial review.

Board Response: The Board agreed to issue a call for a fifth Scientific Editor in Summer 2027, contingent on continued increases in submissions, with the goal of having the new editor in place by January 1, 2028.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Constitution and Bylaws

1. Amending Bylaws Section 2, Item A, to add “Honorary Lifetime Membership” as an additional membership type.

Board Response: The Board approves the recommendation, with the proposed language change to be voted on at the 2027 Virtual Business Meeting.

2. Amending Bylaws to clarify that years of membership are cumulative, even following a lapse in membership. Suggested language: “A lapse in membership of more than ninety (90) days shall result in the suspension of Member benefits until membership is renewed. However, previously accrued years of membership shall remain cumulative, and the Member’s original membership anniversary date shall be retained regardless of the duration of the lapse.”

Board Response: The Board agrees with the recommendation that cumulative years of membership be reflected in the bylaws, with the proposed language change to be voted on at the 2027 Virtual Business Meeting.

3. Nomination of new Members to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee by the President-Elect.

Board Response: The Board will invite Members to join the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

Committee on Control of Foodborne Illness

1. Recommend Melanie Firestone as incoming Vice Chair.

Board Response: The Board approves the appointment.

2. Moving the CCFI meeting to 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, July 18, to be concurrent with other PDG and committee meetings.

Board Response: The Board approves moving CCFI meeting time to 8:30 a.m. Sunday of the Annual Meeting.

Foundation

None.

Membership

1. Recommend providing the Committee with accurate, detailed membership data by October to support analysis of recruitment and retention trends, identify priority areas, and inform effective Committee activities for discussion at the next meeting.

Board Response: The IAFP staff will work with the Membership Committee to provide membership data by October to help identify target areas for improving recruitment and retention.

2. Supporting the dissemination of a membership survey and recruitment of participants for focus groups designed to identify barriers to membership, assess the value and benefits Members receive, and gather feedback from new Members, long-term Members, and individuals who do not renew. The Committee will develop the survey, focus group protocols, and overall methodology.

Board Response: The Board requests the committee submit the survey for Board review prior to distribution. IAFP staff will distribute survey and help with recruitment efforts for the focus groups.

Past President's

None.

Webinar

1. Recommend creating an IAFP-branded slide template for webinar presentations and adding a copyright symbol on these slides.

Board Response: The Board approves the creation of an optional IAFP-branded slide template to be made available for webinar presenters. Adding a copyright symbol is not approved due to legal considerations related to federal funding and open access requirements.

2. Adding the following questions to the webinar presentation submission form: "Have you presented this information at an IAFP Annual Meeting or another meeting?" and "How many webinars have you been involved in during the last year?"

Board Response: The Board approves the addition of these two questions to the webinar submission form.

3. Designating a webinar liaison in each PDG to work with the Webinar Committee to help ensure a balanced range of webinar topics and increase representation from PDGs that are currently underrepresented in webinar programming.

Board Response: The Board approves this as an available, not required, role within each PDG. The Webinar Committee will be responsible for connecting with PDG Chairs and Vice Chairs to encourage the appointment of webinar liaisons and create the necessary processes for the webinar liaison to follow to best connect with the Webinar Committee and submit proposals.

4. Reviewing the Policy on Commercialism developed by Angela Anandappa and consider adapting it as a model for guidelines for webinar organizers.

Board Response: The Board requests the Policy on Commercialism created by Angela Anandappa be submitted for Board review.

5. Adding Betsy Craig to the committee.

Board Response: The Board approves the appointment.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

Advanced Molecular Analytics

1. Recommend Ryan Blaustein as Vice Chair.

Board Response: The Board approves the appointment.

Animal and Pet Food Safety

None

Applied Laboratory Methods

1. Recommend IAFP add an additional parallel track on one or more days of the meeting to allow for additional sessions. This is to accommodate the continued growth in size of the IAFP meeting.

Board Response: The Board rejects the recommendation to add more parallel tracks noting the 12 concurrent sessions are sufficient and additional sessions would increase costs of the meeting. The Board will continue to monitor attendance for future consideration.

2. Implementing a single digital meeting credential that can be added to Apple Wallet or Google Wallet at the IAFP Annual Meeting.

Board Response: Before considering implementation, the Board requests clarification from the committee regarding the specific functionality desired for digital credentials.

Beverages and Acid/Acidified Foods

None.

Dairy Quality and Safety

1. Recommend Kara Brit Mikkelson as Vice Chair and Celina To as Secretary.

Board Response: The Board approves these appointments.

Data Management and Analytics

None.

Developing Food Safety Professionals

1. Recommend Melody Yu as Vice Chair.

Board Response: The Board approves the appointment.

Food Chemical Hazards and Food Allergy

1. Recommend Nakia Smith as Vice Chair.

Board Response: The Board approves the appointment.

2. Expanding the number of parallel conference tracks to accommodate additional content and session opportunities (include Food Allergy and Food Chemical Hazard).

Board Response: The Board rejects the recommendation to add more parallel tracks noting the 12 concurrent sessions are sufficient and additional sessions would increase costs of the meeting. The Board will continue to monitor attendance for future consideration.

3. Increasing PDG representation on the Annual Meeting Program Committee to ensure appropriate evaluation of allergen and chemical hazard topics.

Board Response: The Board encourages PDG members to volunteer for the Program Committee and other opportunities within IAFP to help ensure a balanced program.

4. Developing foundational and introductory educational sessions or webinars to support non-experts and early-career professionals.

Board Response: The Board proposes the committee submit proposals for sessions at the Annual Meeting or submit webinars to the Webinar Committee for consideration.

5. Creating food allergen and chemical hazard awards to recognize achievements in these fields, like existing microbiology-focused awards.

Board Response: The Board reviews proposals for Awards as they are submitted.

Food Defense

None.

Food Fraud Prevention

1. Recommend Fernando Avelleyra as Incoming Vice Chair.

Board Response: The Board approves the appointment.

Food Hygiene and Sanitation

None.

Food Law

1. Recommend Jennifer McEntire as Incoming Vice Chair.

Board Response: The Board approves the appointment.

Food Packaging

1. Recommend Niam Abeysiriwardena as Incoming Chair beginning at the 2026 Annual Meeting for a two-year term.

Board Response: The Board approves the appointment.

Food Safety Assessment, Audit and Inspection

1. Recommend Jose Guerrero to Chair and Taryn Horr as Vice Chair.

Board Response: The Board approves these appointments.

Food Safety Culture

None.

Food Safety Education

1. Recommend Betty Feng as Chair.

Board Response: The Board approves the appointment.

Fruit and Vegetable Safety and Quality

None.

HACCP Utilization and Food Safety Systems

1. Recommend an election to find a new Vice Chair.

Board Response: The Board approves an election.

International Food Protection Issues

1. Exploring ways to better support international attendees who require visas to participate in the Annual Meeting, including providing official letters confirming participation as a speaker and considering earlier review or notification of proposal acceptance when additional time may be

needed to complete lengthy visa application and interview processes.

Board Response: The Board agrees to prioritize assisting international speakers with visa applications by providing letters of invitation following symposium acceptance in November.

Low-Water Activity Foods

1. Recommend Ren Yang as Vice Chair.

Board Response: The Board approves the appointment.

Meat and Poultry Safety and Quality

None.

Modelling and Risk Analysis

1. Recommend rotation of PDG meetings at the Annual Meeting to facilitate increased number of attendees.

Board Response: The Board agrees to rotate all session times, rather than keeping certain times fixed, to ensure fairness across committees.

Physical Hazards and Foreign Material

None.

Plant-Based Alternative Products Quality and Food Safety

1. Recommend Deepa Thiagarajan as Vice Chair.

Board Response: The Board approves the appointment.

2. Starting/beginning the official conference on Saturday (versus Sunday) to ensure individuals are in attendance for PDGs.

Board Response: The Board approves this recommendation to begin implementing a Saturday conference start (versus Sunday) starting with the 2028 Annual Meeting to ensure greater attendance at PDGs. In the interim, the Board will update announcements and communications where possible, noting that the conference logo cannot be changed at this time.

Pre-Harvest Food Safety

None.

Retail and Foodservice

1. Recommend Sarah Kozak-Weaver as incoming Chair, Vanessa Cranford as incoming Vice Chair, and Theresa Belcher as incoming Secretary.

Board Response: The Board approves these appointments.

Sanitary Equipment and Facility Design

1. Recommend recognizing the name change from Sanitary Equipment and Facility Design PDG to Hygienic Equipment and Facility Design PDG.

Board Response: The Board approves the name change and IAFP staff will update it accordingly on the IAFP website.

1. Hosting an election for Vice Chair.

Board Response: The Board approves an election.

Seafood Safety and Quality

None. We would like to thank the Board for establishing the PDG schedule for the 2026 Annual Meeting. The schedule greatly benefited our Members by reducing session conflicts and allowing them to participate in PDGs that had previously overlapped. We appreciate the effort to improve accessibility and engagement.

Student

1. Recommend approval of the 2026-2027 SPDG Executive Board as elected: Aakankshya Dhakal (Chair), Ujjwol Subedi (Vice Chair), Sweta Deb (Secretary), Jaber Ghorbani (Treasurer), Madhuparna Deb (Networking Coordinator), and Daniel Leiva (International Affiliate Representative).

Board Response: The Board approves these appointments.

Viral and Parasitic Foodborne Disease

None.

Water Safety and Quality

None. While the Water Safety and Quality PDG did not have any recommendations during the PDG meeting, consensus is that the IAFP Annual Meeting, webinars, and other services to Members are provided effectively and the Executive Board should keep up the good work.