

AFFILIATE VIEW

To provide food safety professionals worldwide with a forum to exchange information on protecting the food supply

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR: Happy New Year!



The recent end-of-year festivities are over, with many taking advantage to look back at our commitments to IAFP and to food safety, along with looking forward to an exciting year of new beginnings, experiences, and learnings.

The year 2025 was highly productive for our Affiliates. In July, IAFP held another excellent Annual Meeting in Cleveland, Ohio, allowing Affiliate members to interact and share knowledge and experiences to support Advancing Food Safety Worldwide[®].

At Sunday's Affiliate Council Meeting, Takiyah Ball, Delegate from the Wisconsin Association for Food Protection, was elected as the 2025 -2026 Affiliate Council Secretary. We welcomed two new Affiliates, Kentucky and Nepal, to the council, and we hope to increase our Affiliate numbers in 2026. Several individual Affiliate meetings were held onsite where members from Africa, Southeast Asia, Korea, China and Chinese in North America, India in North America, Bangladesh in North America,

and Nepal, along with the Latin America group, exchanged experiences and networked among food safety professionals within their respective regions, reconnecting with long-time colleagues and making new friends.

Based on discussions during the Affiliate Council Meeting, an Affiliate Awards Committee was established in September to review, revise, and reissue the Affiliate Awards guidance and documentation for 2026 (and going forward). These updates for the Affiliate Awards will help encourage recognition of our Affiliates' commitment to our organization's values and the wider food safety community. A huge shoutout to Takiyah Ball, Caio Carvalho, Jenny Scott, and Susan Smith for their help with me to redefine and finalize these much-needed updates. The list of Affiliate Awards can be found on the IAFP website under the Affiliate tab.

Please be aware that Affiliate Annual Reports are due to Susan by **March 3, 2026**. Affiliates are reminded that under the IAFP Bylaws, Annual Reports are required to be submitted yearly. Annual Reports help keep IAFP up-

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AFFILIATES ACROSS THE GLOBE

African Continental	Southeast Asia
Argentina	Spain
Australia	Taiwan
Brazil	Turkey
Canada	United Arab Emirates
Alberta British Columbia	United Kingdom
Ontario Quebec	United States
Bangladesh in North America	Arizona Arkansas
Chile	California
China	Capital Area Carolinas
Chinese in North America	Colorado Connecticut
Colombia	Florida Georgia
Hong Kong	Idaho Illinois Indiana
Hungary	Iowa Kansas Kentucky
India in North America	Michigan Minnesota
Japan	Upper Midwest
Korea	Missouri Nebraska
Lebanon	New Jersey New York
Mexico	Ohio Oklahoma
Nepal	Pennsylvania
New Zealand	South Dakota
Portugal	Washington Wisconsin

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dated on your activities, officers, and other important information. Information and documents were sent out to all Affiliate officers a few weeks ago, with reminders emailed up until the deadline. If applying for one or more awards, the updated information is included with Annual Report documents required to submit. Let's ensure you share the great work you are doing! The list of submitted Annual Reports for 2024 activities is available online under the Affiliates tab, in case you wish to review for content.

During our November Affiliate Council Virtual Meeting, we discussed the benefits of IAFP Membership and the challenges the global food system faces in attracting the next generation of scientists, industrialists, and regulators to a career in food safety. To gain more information from our Affiliates, a short survey from IAFP was sent to all Affiliate Delegates in January, asking for views on this complex issue and sharing your thoughts on how we can work together to increase IAFP Membership. Results from this survey will be discussed at our next Affiliate Council Virtual Meeting, Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). Susan will send reminders in advance. Let us know if you have a topic to add to the meeting's agenda.

I believe we're all looking forward to **IAFP 2026** in July in New Orleans, Louisiana (guaranteeing warmer weather than today in Wales, UK). Registration and housing for the meeting are now open on the IAFP website; I look forward to catching up with many of you onsite.

In closing, I wish all of our Affiliate Members the best of health, peace, and prosperity in 2026. Please take care of yourselves and each other!

Helen Taylor

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AFFILIATES IN THE SPOTLIGHT

FEATURING YOUR COMMUNICATIONS WITH IAFP

CONTRIBUTORS

[Associated Illinois Milk, Food and Environmental Sanitarians: Educational Conference Held](#)

Reported by Caio Carvalho, IAFP Invited Speaker

The [Associated Illinois Milk, Food and Environmental Sanitarians \(AIMFES\)](#) held its 2025 Fall Educational Conference September 9–11 in Bloomington. Approximately 30 attendees from industry and regulatory participated.

As part of the IAFP Executive Board Speaker Program, Caio Carvalho was invited to present. He gave an overview of IAFP and its benefits for Members before speaking on "Carrier Plan for Young Food Safety Professionals." His second presentation was on "Cocoa and Low-Acid Dairy Products."

Other topics covered throughout the meeting were on Sensory Evaluations; Microbiological Testing Method Validation; SQF V10 Updates, and Wholesale Product Inspection.

Companies exhibiting included Ecolab, Tate & Lyle, IFF, Hygiena, and Denali, among others.

[New York State Association for Food Protection: 102nd Annual Conference](#)

Reported by Jacob Green, Newsletter Editor

 After years of meetings held in the center of the state, the [New York State Association for Food Protection \(NYSAFP\)](#) moved the locale east to host its 102nd Annual Conference at the Saratoga Springs Holiday Inn, just north of the capital. Held September 9–11, the event attracted approximately 120 members, speakers, and guests. Attendees had the opportunity to take part in eight presentations at the General Session on September 10, and a dealer's choice of more than 12 presentations during breakout sessions on September 11.

Beautiful fall evenings facilitated networking and drinks around the fire each night, offering conference attendees many opportunities to

catch up with long-time colleagues and meet new ones.

NYSAFP was founded in 1923 by Emmett R. Gauhn, alongside pioneering health officials. The Executive Board continually strives to fulfill its mission of offering educational and collaborative opportunities to food safety professionals across the state of New York.

The conference kicked off on the evening of September 9 with an ice cream social hosted by Wells Enterprises and local ice cream favorite Stewart's. During samplings of ice cream flavors, Jacob Green, Wells Enterprises, led an interactive conversation on the biological, chemical, and physical hazards associated with ice cream production, as well as the partnership between dairy plants and New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDAM) inspectors and regulators.

The following day's General Session began with the Presidential Address from NYSAFP President Cynthia James, Cornell University, directly followed by the Keynote Speaker, Katie Howard, Deputy Commissioner of New York State Agriculture and Markets.

Two Cornell University speakers followed, with Kim Bukowski providing an update on "SQF Version 10 and PCQI 2.0," and Dr. Nicole Martin presenting on "Water Quality on Raw or Pasteurized Products."

Morning presentations were followed by brunch and the Annual Business Meeting. Erin Patterson and Ron Crawford, Unleashed Potential, brought the group out of the "brunch haze" with their engaging presentation on "Dealing with a Multigenerational Workforce." Following

was Dr. Manpreet Singh (left), University of Georgia and IAFP President, who discussed "Antimicrobial



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Above left: Cynthia James (left) presents Angela Montalbano with the Emmett R. Gauhn Memorial Award.

Above right: Christopher Lawrence receives the Howard B. Marlatt Memorial Award from Christina Angell.



Above left: Heather Torino presents Casey McCue with the William V. Hickey Memorial Award. Above right: Michael Winkler receives the Dr. Theodore Reich Memorial Award from Leslie Ball.



Above left: Cynthia James presents Amy Rhodes with the Honorary Lifetime Membership Award. Above right: Sara Kelly presents the Paul B. Brooks Memorial Award to Kevin Culm.



Resistance in Foodborne Pathogens.” Dr. Singh’s attendance was sponsored by the IAFP Executive Board Speaker Program.

Next, NYSAFP President-Elect Jeff Van Sice, Upstate Niagara Cooperative, moderated a panel discussion on “Avian Influenza,” featuring Larry Bailey, Walker Farms LLC; Heather Torino, NYSDAM; Dr. Eireann Collens, NYSDAM Division of Animal Industry; and Dr. Diego Diel, Cornell University.

Dr. Michael Ciaramella, Cornell’s Cooperative Extension New York Sea Grant, provided the afternoon’s final presentation on “Seafood Aquaculture.”



Wednesday’s General Session concluded with a live discussion led by the hosts of the “Risk or Not” podcast, Dr. Ben Chapman, North Carolina State University, and Dr. Don Schaffner, Rutgers University.

Each year at the Affiliate’s Annual Conference, the final day is devoted to the popular breakout sessions, where experts split into three specialty groups: Field (dairy farm inspection), Food, and Laboratory. Speakers gave a total of 12 informative presentations pertaining to their respective areas of expertise.

The Field Session led with Chris Elliot, Ecolab, speaking on the “Role and Impact of Water on Milk Quality,” followed by Jonathan Eriksen, Piper Systems, presenting “Choosing the Right Milk Storage System.” Eric Glaude, NYSDAM, spoke on “Milk Hauling and Trailer Washing Requirements.” Casey McCue, NYSDAM

Division of Milk Control and Dairy Sciences, concluded the breakout session with an FDA and NCIMS update.

The Food Session kicked off with a presentation by Rob Halstead, Flexray, entitled “Preventing and Responding to Foreign Material Contamination.” Next, David Nicholas, NYS Department of Health, provided the group with an update on foodborne illness outbreaks and data from the previous year.

After opening her segment with a microbiology song, Dr. Ann Charles Vegdahl, Cornell University, spoke on “Validating the Non-Thermal Technologies HP and UV for Microbial Reduction.” Cornell’s Dr. Bruno Xavier concluded the session with “AI in Food Safety: Hazard or Preventive Control?”

The Laboratory Session opened with two speakers from the NYS Ag and Markets Food Lab. Dr. Maria Ishida presented “Whole Genome Sequencing Overview, Applications, and Trends,” followed by Tom King’s update on the recent issue involving lead in applesauce. Lab Committee Chair Christina Angell, NYSDAM, moderated a panel discussion on “Processing Plant Quality QA/FS Control,” with



Above left: Erin Patterson (left) and Ron Crawford receive the Golden Microscope Award from Cynthia James (middle).



Above right: Outgoing NYSAFP President Jeff Van Sice presents the 2025-2026 gavel to Incoming President Cynthia James.

questions directed to Jason Brown, Stewart’s, and Jacob Green. The Lab Session’s final presentation featured Shari Campbell, HUJA Consulting, speaking on “The Critical Role of ISO.”

During Wednesday evening’s Awards Banquet, several individuals were honored with Association awards. Award recipients are:

Angela Montalbano, NYSDAM – Emmett R. Gauhn Memorial Award
 Christopher Lawrence, Dairy One – Howard B. Marlatt Memorial Award
 Casey McCue, NYSDAM – William V. Hickey Memorial Award
 Michael Winkler, Byrne Dairy – Dr. Theodore Reich Memorial Award
 Kevin Culm, Ecolab – Paul B. Brooks Memorial Award
 Amy Rhodes – Honorary Lifetime Membership Award

The 2025–2026 NYSAFP Executive Board Members include:
 President (5th Year): Cynthia James
 Past President (6th Year): Angela Montalbano
 President-Elect (4th Year): Jeff Van Sice
 Board Member (3rd Year): Heather Torino
 Board Member (2nd Year): Ann Charles Vegdahl
 Board Member (1st Year): Kevin Culm

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Washington Association for Food Protection: 74th Annual Conference Held

Reported by Celina To, Secretary



The **Washington Association for Food Protection (WAFFP)** returned to beautiful Chelan, Washington, September 11–12, 2025, for its 74th Annual Conference, preceded by the Annual Golf Tournament on September 10 at Bear

Mountain. This year's program brought together leaders from industry, academia, and government to explore emerging technologies, regulatory updates, and public health challenges shaping the future of food safety in the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

WAFFP President Kent Dowding opened the meeting by welcoming attendees and recognizing



the four Luedcke Scholarship recipients: Morgiana Rosario Alepuyo, Morgan Pattee, Oscar Wise, and Sherine Ortiz. The conference then began with a notable acknowledgement of the 100-year anniversary of the National Shellfish Sanitation Program, presented by Dani Toepelt, highlighting Washington's critical role in the nation's shellfish safety framework.

Federal and state partners provided several highly anticipated updates, including:

- Dr. Ben-Ghaly Labeed, USDA FSIS, on advancements in whole genome sequencing to support regulatory public health missions;
- Dr. William Shaw, USDA FSIS, with updates on the FSIS laboratory system;

- Dr. Jessica Chen, CDC PulseNet, discussing the continuing evolution of the PulseNet network and future Surveillance capability;
- Will Satak, WSDA, providing updates on regional food safety program activities; and
- Dr. Amber Itle, Washington State veterinarian, presenting a coordinated industry, academic, and regulatory approach to addressing avian influenza.

These sessions underscored the strong national and regional partnerships essential for maintaining a robust food safety system.

The afternoon expanded the conversation into forward-looking solutions. Professor Luyao Ma, Oregon State University, introduced artificial intelligence and how it may reshape the detection of foodborne illness. This was followed by Professor Kali Kniel, University of Delaware and an IAFP Past President, whose session provided an engaging update on global food safety issues surrounding foodborne protozoan parasites. WAFFP thanks IAFP for its support in Dr. Kniel's attendance as part of IAFP's Executive Board Speaker Program.

Student research was highlighted through technical presentations from Bhim Thapa, Washington State University, and Justin Gilleland, Oregon State University, further emphasizing WAFFP's commitment to supporting early-career scientists.



Conference attendees enjoyed the annual "Science and Cocktails" networking event, featuring student posters, industry engagement, and an interactive bingo activity that encouraged conversation and community-building across all sectors of the organization. The popular raffle remained a highlight, helping to support ongoing WAFFP initiatives.

The second day opened with Angela Field, FDA, sharing important updates on the Food Traceability Rule, followed by Nick Thompson, Darigold, presenting on NCIMS developments. Jack Burnett, Vikan, delivered insights into the microbial ecology of *Listeria*; and Meelay Tellier, Washington State Department of Health, shared lessons learned from 2024 foodborne outbreaks across the state.

The conference concluded with a second presentation by Dr. Kniel, which was an in-depth review of enteric viruses affecting frozen berries and other high-risk foods.

Following lunch and the formal "passing of the gavel," members adjourned with renewed energy for the year ahead.

Elected officers include:

President: Kent Dowding
President-Elect: Claire Murphy
Treasurer: Diep Wisniewski
Secretary/Contact: Stephanie Smith
Delegate: Celina To

Upper Midwest Dairy and Industry Association: 80 Attend Annual Meeting

Reported by Patti Schaefer, Secretary



The 2025 Fall Conference for the **Upper Midwest Dairy and Industry Association (UMDIA)** was held September 16–18, in St. Cloud, Minnesota. Eighty members were in attendance. Tehya Demmer was elected as a new Board of Director member.

The following speakers and topics included:

Sara Kvidera, Elanco, "Capturing Income from Carbon Programs";
Lucas Sjostom, Minnesota Milk, "Dairy Policy and FMMO";
Tricia Sheehan, Dairy Management, Inc., "Turning Hard Questions (from Farmers and Consumers) Into Connections";
Nancy Mill, Vinna Human Resources, "Update on Changes to MN Workforce Laws"; and Dr. Nicole Neeser, MN Department of Agriculture, "Department Updates."

MN Ag in the Classroom provided the group with an overview of how they are helping edu-

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cate youth in the state about where their food comes from.

MD Azhar Uddin, University of Wisconsin–River Falls, ended the meeting by sharing his research on the “Changing Landscape of Dairy Farms in WI: Exit and Expansion Dynamics.”

During the meeting, several awards were presented to the following:

President's Award – Ashley Nelson, First District Association

Dairy Service Award – Dr. Nicole Neeser, MN Department of Agriculture

Field Service Award – Deb Wehde, Agropur



Several UMDIA Members received Awards at the September Affiliate Meeting. Top: Dale Heitz presents Ashley Nelson with the President's Award.



Middle: Dale Heitz presents Deb Wehde with the Field Service Award.



Bottom: Brandon Wolf presents Dr. Nicole Neeser with the Dairy Service Award.

Indiana Environmental Health Association: Conference Fosters Collaboration in Environmental and Food Protection

Reported by Tami Barrett, Executive Board Secretary



The Indiana Environmental Health Association (IEHA) held its 74th Annual Fall Educational Conference at the Lawrenceburg Event Center, September 29–October 1, 2025. The three-

day event included training, collaboration, and networking opportunities for environmental and food protection professionals from around the state.

This year's theme was “Navigating Environmental Health in a Changing World.” This was woven into all aspects of the program, including the plenary sessions which focused on emerging public health challenges; climate change and health impacts; ADA compliance; and providing safe and healthy environments for the public we serve. Attendees learned innovative approaches to environmental and food protection, while building cross-sector partnerships and embracing new technologies to better protect community health.

Food protection was a major emphasis of the conference, with breakout sessions on retail food safety updates and best practices in food inspection; food code implementation; and new regulatory tools and resources, as well as an all-day food protection training class. Sessions proved popular, demonstrating the commitment of Indiana public health professionals to providing safe food for Hoosiers in every corner of the state.

In addition to food protection, wastewater, environmental health, and all-hazards preparedness, sessions were offered simultaneously. A field trip to the American Manufacturing Micro-Mound OSS site and an epidemiological readiness exercise added to the opportunities for continuing education during the conference.

Evening activities included several receptions, the Awards Banquet with a Silent Auction, live music, and time devoted toward professional networking.

The conference ended with the closing plenary session, which included *E. coli* source tracking using environmental DNA, and planning for the 2026 Fall Conference. IEHA looks forward to continuing to support and encourage Indiana environmental and food protection professionals. This conference demonstrated Indiana's continued strong public health network and the preparedness of the environmental and food protection community to face emerging environmental and food safety challenges.



Quebec Association for Food Protection: 15 Years of Innovation and Exchange

Reported by Marie-Pascale Gagné, Affiliate Coordinator



To mark its 15th anniversary, the Quebec Association for Food Protection (AQIA) hosted a dynamic symposium September 18–19, 2025, in St. Hyacinthe, with the theme, “Safety and Autonomy: Strategies to Feed a Sustainable Future.” This flagship event brought together more than 115 participants among 18 company booths, 22 scientific posters, and five FLASH presentations (popularized in 180 seconds) by graduate students, reaffirming AQIA's central role as a catalyst for innovation and collaboration in the agri-food sector.

Starting on September 18, participants enjoyed exclusive training sessions offered by the Quebec Institute of Agri-Food Technology (ITAQ), the Affiliate's 2025 implementation partner, followed by an immersive tour of its facilities. The Opening Cocktail Session, which welcomed more than 60 attendees, was an opportunity to highlight the outstanding contributions of dedicated members and to unveil a visual retrospective of AQIA's 15-year journey.

The Annual General Meeting also served to renew the governance and welcome new board members, further strengthening the vitality of the association. In addition to the committee renewed in 2024, new 2025 officers include:

President: Anny Lainesse

Vice President: Pierre-André Roy

Secretary: Delphine Sène

Treasurer: Marie-Hélène Dufresne

Past President: Anne-Marie Masella

Delegate and Honorary Member: Julie Jean

Development Committee Director:

Khaled Abdallah

Board Members: Cyril Roblet, Jean-Philippe Songpadith, André Côté, Catherine Leblanc, and Stéphanie Goulet



Board members of the Quebec Association for Food Protection pose during the Affiliate's symposium held September 18–19, 2025, in St. Hyacinthe.

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Several AQIA Members, speakers, and guests posed for photos at the Affiliate's 15th Symposium.

Top left are: Karine Berger, Julie Jean, Anny Lainesse, and Laurent Bazinet.



Jean-Philippe Luna, Anny Lainesse, Catherine Langevin, and Sylvain Fournaise.



Renee Michaud, Anny Lainesse, and Christine Fermland.



Claude Vallee and Anny Lainesse.

Speakers and topics included:

Tim Jackson, U.S. FDA—"Trends and Challenges in Food Safety Regulations: Strategies for Compliance," speaking virtually as part of the IAFP Executive Board Speaker Program; Claude Vallée, ITAQ—"Overview of Greenhouse Production in Quebec"; Jean-Philippe Luna, E. Gagnon et fils—"The Impact of Workforce on Food Safety"; Catherine Langevin, Bewist—"Food Safety: From Craft Production to Mass Manufacturing in an Unstable Context"; Sylvain Fournaise, Olymel—"Major Food Safety Challenges in a Large Company"; Karine Berger, MAPAQ—"MAPAQ: A Key Ally in Managing Food Risks in Quebec"; Laurent Bazinet, Université Laval—"VITALE Research Chair: Food Safety at the Heart of Eco-Circular Valorization of Agri-Food Industrial By-Products"; Julie Jean, Université Laval—"Recruitment Crisis in Agri-Food: Why Food Science Struggles to Attract in Quebec"; and Sylvain Charlebois—"Retail Under Pressure: Food Safety and Trade in the Era of New Barriers."



Student Scholarships were awarded to the following students (pictured from left with award sponsors): Romain Canuel and Karine Berger; Arthur Arnaout and Renée Michaud; Gwenaëlle Verbrugge and Marie-Hélène Dufresne; Linda Sanka and Delphine Sène; and Amal Mamjoud and Anny Lainesse.

These presentations highlighted concrete solutions to strengthen Quebec's food autonomy while keeping safety at the core of practices. The outcomes were clear: a welcoming and strategic space for exchange, strengthened partnerships, and a shared commitment to innovate for a sustainable future. Most participants expressed their satisfaction and desire for continued discussions.

Student Scholarships

Congratulations to the five students who received awards in the form of scholarships for the quality of their presentations during the symposium:

1st Prize for Best FLASH Oral Presentation (180 seconds): Romain Canuel, supervised by Laurent Bazinet, INAF, Université Laval; scholarship offered by MAPAQ; 2nd Prize for Best FLASH Oral Presentation (180 seconds): Arthur Arnaout, supervised by Julie Jean, INAF, Université Laval; scholarship offered by INAF; 1st Prize for Best Poster Presentation: Gwenaëlle Verbrugge, supervised by Julie Jean, INAF, Université Laval; scholarship offered by LABPLAS; 2nd Prize for Best Poster Presentation: Linda Amayele Sanka, supervised by Julie Jean and Caroline Duchaine, INAF, Université Laval; scholarship offered by Olymel; and Special Announcement—Audience Favorite Poster Award: Amal Mamjoud, supervised by Ismail Fliss, INAF, Université Laval; scholarship offered by AQIA in celebration of its 15th anniversary.

A special thank you to the event organizers, supported by the organizing committee: Catherine Leblanc and the dedicated volunteers from ITAQ, including Martine Légaré, Rachel Aubé, Justin Veilleux, and Fabien Servil

(your enthusiasm and commitment were a tremendous support!); and to Catherine Fontaine-Lavallée (prior to her well-deserved maternity leave!), Andrée Lagacé, Audrey Tremblay, and Marie-Pascale Gagné, symposium coordinators and AQIA coordinator respectively, from INAF, Université Laval.

The 15-year retrospective, speaker presentations, and summaries of the scientific posters are posted on the AQIA website.

Thank you to all of our sponsoring partners for making this festive event possible in celebration of AQIA's special anniversary!

Ontario Food Protection Association: 68th Conference Draws More Than 150

Reported by Ellen Gravi, Delegate



The Ontario Food Protection Association (OFPA) hosted its 68th Annual Food Safety Conference September 30–October 1, 2025, bringing together more than 150 industry leaders, regulators, students, and food safety professionals for two days of engaging presentations, collaborative discussions, and exciting networking opportunities. The Affiliate is exceptionally grateful for its 25 sponsors for their support in making this worthwhile (and sold-out!) event possible.

Day 1: "From Insight to Impact: What a Decade of Culture Change has Taught Us About Safer Food"

The conference's first day offered an engaging lineup of sessions, providing valuable insights into the latest trends, challenges, and solutions in food safety. Dr. Lone Jespersen, Cultivate SA, delivered a keynote presentation on the complexities and possibilities of building a strong food safety culture. She

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outlined four leading indicators that organizations can use to assess and understand their culture maturity. Lone shared four real-world examples from Cultivate SA clients, showcasing how leadership, technology, data, and HR strategies drive meaningful change. She closed by grounding the work in the deeper “why” behind food safety, emphasizing that with committed leadership and consistent effort, culture transformation is achievable.

“Strengthening Food Safety Through Strategic Oversight: Regulatory Insights and Emerging Priorities”

Kevin Urbanic, Director General, CFIA, provided



an overview of current CFIA regulatory activities, inspection practices, and emerging food safety priorities. The session highlighted findings from recent food safety investigations, recall trends, and the importance of strong preventative systems within regulated industries.

“Foreign Material Detection Strategies”

Moderated by Jessica Burke, OFPA Past President, this session brought together industry leaders JP Perrault, Mettler-Toledo



X-Ray Recovery; Gwynne Sitsker, Embassy Ingredients; and Kris Middleton, Alchemy, to explore evolving approaches to foreign material control. The speakers emphasized the foundational role of strong risk assessments, frontline employee engagement, and a robust food safety culture in preventing contamination.

The discussion highlighted current challenges across facilities of different sizes, along with the need for tailored programs, ongoing training, and collaboration with technology partner. Panelists also examined emerging detection technologies, such as targeted X-ray technology, and encouraged industry adoption of modern tools to strengthen product integrity and consumer safety.



“Consumer Demand: Greater Clarity and Standardization in Food Labelling” Michelle Anstey, NSF’s North American Regulatory Consulting team, presented an overview of current customer expectations and regulatory trends shaping food labelling. Drawing on a 2024 survey of 1,000

Canadians, her research found that consumers are seeking greater transparency on allergens, processing methods, sustainability, and nutrition than what current labelling standards require. Michelle also noted sharp increases in consumer engagement with labels, especially among younger shoppers, alongside widespread confusion about technical terms and certification claims. She concluded with recommendations for industry, including clearer allergen identification, standardized terminology, and the use of tools like QR codes to provide deeper, more accessible product information.

“Food Safety Analytics: Doing More with Less”

Moderated by Marin Pavlic, OFPA President, this panel included Rebecca Marshall, Maple Leaf Foods; Bianca Calimlim, Compass Group



Canada; and Stephen Vijayakumar, Sobeys, to discuss practical strategies for strengthening food safety culture across diverse operational settings. The speakers shared insights on elevating frontline engagement, improving

cross-functional communication, and embedding accountability throughout their organizations. They highlighted the value of leadership visibility, simple and consistent messaging, and data-driven performance tracking in driving behavioral change. The session reinforced that advancing food safety culture requires both organizational commitment and everyday actions that empower employees to make safe decisions.

“Life in the Dry: Food Safety and Risk Management Options Associated with Low-Moisture Foods”

Dr. Keith Warriner, University of Guelph’s Department of Food Science, presented a comprehensive look at food safety challenges



associated with low-moisture foods (LMFs), a broad category that includes grains, spices, nuts, teas, dried fruits, and more. He explained that, although low-water activity typically prevents microbial growth, LMFs have been repeatedly linked to foodborne illness outbreaks,

including recent *Salmonella* contamination in pistachios. Dr. Warriner outlined how pathogens adapt to survive in dry environments and reviewed the key organisms of concern for industry. He concluded by discussing emerging risk management approaches, with a particular focus on gas-phase hydroxyl radical treatments that can inactivate pathogens without adding moisture to the product.

“Rapid Rise of Food Insecurity Across Toronto and Canada”

Samantha Cooke and Ian MacGillivray, both from Daily Bread Food Bank, discussed the rapid rise of food insecurity across Toronto and Canada. They highlighted that food bank usage in Toronto has increased fivefold since pre-COVID, with more than 300,000 monthly clients now relying on Daily Bread Food Bank aid, many of whom are working households and individuals with post-secondary educations. Sam and Ian shared striking national trends showing severe food insecurity doubling since 2019, and outlined key drivers, including unaffordable housing, inadequate income

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supports, and precarious employment. The two closed the day with a call to action, emphasizing policy solutions, the importance of reducing food waste, and how a clearer understanding of best-before dates can safely increase donations and support community needs.

Day 2: "Should HACCP Still Be the Backbone of Your Food Safety Program?"

Sam Davidson kicked off the second day with a practical, experience-driven overview of HACCP



grounded in his 35 years in the food industry, beginning with early lessons on foodborne illness and the origins of HACCP as developed by Pillsbury. He traced the evolution of HACCP into a global standard through Codex and highlighted its ongoing importance in building consumer trust, especially amid growing audit expectations under GFSI. Sam also discussed the regulatory landscape, including the impacts of FDA, USDA, and FSMA, underscoring the need for strong preventive controls and well-documented HACCP plans. He closed the session by contrasting older industry practices with modern risk-based approaches, reinforcing the critical role of clear limits, robust documentation, and continuous improvement in today's food safety programs.

"Transitioning from School to Workplace—Practical Advice for Students and Recent Graduates"

Veronica Hislop, Toronto Metropolitan University, offered valuable guidance for students and new graduates transitioning into

the workforce, focusing on the differences between academic environments and

professional expectations. Veronica emphasized treating school like a job, building strong communication skills, gaining early industry experience, and staying curious about diverse career pathways. Once in a role, new

professionals are encouraged to learn company culture, build meaningful relationships, and approach their development with confidence and enjoyment. The session closed with insights on teamwork, adaptability, and networking, underscoring that long-term success comes from continuous learning and active engagement in the workplace.

"Cultivating Food Safety Culture in Your Sanitation Team"

John Boyce, a Vancouver-based independent food safety consultant with 25 years at Trident Seafoods and a unique

early career as a commercial crab fisherman, delivered an engaging presentation on building a strong food safety culture. He introduced Cultivate SA's food safety culture maturity model, outlining key dimensions such as

values, people systems, consistency, risk management, and change leadership. John walked attendees through the stages of cultural maturity and highlighted the essential but often overlooked role of sanitation teams in controlling physical, biological, and chemical hazards. He also explored common risky behaviors and shared tools such as the ABC (Antecedents-Behaviors-Consequences) model to help organizations improve frontline decision-making and reduce food safety risks.

"Data Analytics Workshop—Learn Power Query and Power BI"

Adriano Gaspari, Maple Leaf Foods, expanded on Day 1's panel discussion with a practical session on how food safety teams can advance their analytics capabilities using minimal resources. He broke down the analytics journey, from data collection and cleaning to analysis, visualization, and communication, showing how even small improvements can

reduce errors and uncover meaningful trends. Adriano demonstrated how automating

repetitive tasks can free up time and improve accuracy, emphasizing tools that are already accessible to most teams. A live walkthrough of Excel's Power Query highlighted its value as an easy, low-cost entry point for organizations beginning their food safety analytics journey.

"Creating Engaging Training for Operations"

Nicole Tucker, Skjeldt-Barrett Foods, delivered a practical session on designing engaging and effective training for food manufacturing operators.



She highlighted strategies to make training relevant to daily production activities, emphasizing clear communication and hands-on learning. Nicole also explored ways to make sessions more interactive so employees can easily apply concepts on the floor. Her presentation reinforced that strong, well-designed training is essential for building and sustaining a robust food safety culture.

"Internal Audits and External Audits—The Goal of Always Being Audit-Ready"

Craig Stewart, Food Safety Systems Specialist, Sofina Foods, delivered an informative session on leveraging audits within food safety



management systems. He explained the purpose and value of audits, emphasizing their role in identifying gaps, driving continuous improvement,

and ensuring compliance. Craig highlighted key auditor skills and outlined practical auditing techniques. He concluded by reinforcing the importance of organization-wide audit readiness, stressing cross-functional involvement, consistent communication, and strong senior leadership engagement to maintain a robust and compliant food safety system.

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KEYNOTE: "Rethinking Risk—How Misinterpreting Data Threatens Food Safety"

Mark Carter, President, MC Squared and IAFP Past President, provided an in-depth update on



global IAFP initiatives, Member benefits, and upcoming Annual Meeting plans. He highlighted efforts to make membership more accessible worldwide, expand professional engagement opportunities, and strengthen the value of *IAFP Connect* as a hub for networking and sharing knowledge. Mark also

discussed emerging global food safety challenges; the importance of interpreting microbiological data accurately; and how advances such as PCR and Bayesian thinking are reshaping risk assessment. His presentation emphasized the need for transparent data practices, representative sampling, and critical thinking to improve the reliability of food safety decisions.

"Leveraging Modern Technology for Food Safety Surveillance"

Dr. Lawrence Goodridge, University of Guelph, highlighted the limitations of traditional,



passive foodborne illness surveillance systems and the significant delays that hinder effective outbreak detection and response. He introduced the concept of precision food safety, drawing parallels to precision medicine and

emphasizing the use of emerging technologies such as whole genome sequencing, enhanced environmental monitoring, and internet-based surveillance tools. Larry explored how data streams from social media to platforms can offer earlier signals of illness trends, while cautioning about their reliability and risk. His session underscored the need for proactive, technology-enabled monitoring approaches to

better identify contamination sources, reduce outbreak duration, and protect public health.

The day ended with an awards ceremony announcing the 2025 awards, recognizing outstanding achievements in food safety and commitment to advancing the industry. These individuals exemplify excellence and dedication in promoting food safety and protecting public health.

The Food Safety Professional of the Year Award goes to an individual who has demonstrated exemplary leadership, innovation, and dedi-



cation in the field of food protection. Gwynne Sitsker, (left), Director of Food Safety and Quality, Embassy Ingredients Ltd., was presented this award by OFPA President Marin Pavlic.

A new award, the Young Food Safety Professional of the Year, goes to a food safety professional who finished their education (college/bachelor's degree) within the last five years, and has demonstrated exemplary leadership, innovation, and dedication in the field of food protection. Darshan Gautre, Supplier Quality Auditor, FGF Brands, received this inaugural award.

OFPA's 69th Annual Food Safety Conference is scheduled for September 29–30, 2026, in the Greater Toronto Area.



OFPA Delegate Ellen Gravi and President Marin Pavlic pose with Darshan Gautre (center).

Kansas Environmental Health Association: Pre-Conference Workshop, Meeting, Field Trip Attracts 43 Attendees

Reported by Brian Falk, Treasurer



The Kansas Environmental Health Association (KEHA) held its Annual Conference October 7–9, 2025, at the Homewood Suites in Salina.

The meeting saw 43 attendees and five vendors participate.

The first day comprised a Pre-Conference



Workshop on Trench Safety. Scott Schwinn spoke on the importance of trench safety. Lorraine Lowrey and Brian Bowles, both

with Kansas Rural Water, assisted with the training that finished at the Crisis Center with real trenches and shoring devices to observe.

Day 2 began in class with "Monitoring PFAs" from Anthony Stahl, Urine Collection. Madeline DuBois, Land Institute, covered "Utilization and



Fertilizer Research." A trip to the Jackson Flats Washout Facility followed, where large trucks are washed, before a visit to the

Trigard Concrete factory, where septic tanks are built. That evening, food and drinks were provided by the hotel.



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The following day, Adrienne Miller, KDHE, reviewed changes to Bulletin 4.2., which addresses code to waste water systems in the state. Next, Martha Tasker (left) spoke about the River Renewal in Salina.

The Annual Meeting took place during lunch, followed by coverage of real estate transactions and a presentation from NEHA on Environmental Leadership.

Newly-elected officers include:
 President/Delegate/Contact: Shawn Esterl
 Vice President: Matt Debo
 Second Vice President: Keena Privat
 Past President: Lance Karmann
 Secretary: Carissa McCuen
 Treasurer: Brian Falk
 Special Section Chair: Randy Barton
 Member-at-Large: Kevin Baugh

Iowa Association for Food Protection: Awards Ceremony Held

Reported by Lynne Melchert, Secretary/Treasurer

The Iowa Association for Food Protection (IAFP) held its 2025 Annual Conference on October 15, at Hansen's Dairy in Hudson, Iowa. Thirty-one attendees participated.

Speakers included Mariah Busta, Midwest Dairy; Gaylen Guyer, Lely North America; Steve Shank, Ecolab; and Jurgen Ehler, IDALS Bureau Chief.



IAFP President Carrie Corlett presents Dennis Murphy with the Merle P. Baker Award.



IAFP President Carrie Corlett passes the gavel to incoming 2026 President Ben Moetsch.

Awards were presented to the following during the meeting:

Incoming President: Ben Moetsch
 Merle P. Baker Award: Dennis Murphy

The following are newly-elected officers:

President: Ben Moetsch
 Vice President Pro-Tem: Wade Brunsman
 First Vice President: Teresa Pratt
 Second Vice President: Jessica Knebel
 Past President: Carrie Corlett
 Secretary/Treasurer: Lynne Melchert
 Advisors: Leo Timms, Kate Ehnts, Brian Kraus, and Gail Carpenter

Brazil Association for Food Protection: 1st FoodMicro Latino 2025 Conference Held

Reported by Caio Carvalho, Delegate



The 1st FoodMicro Latino 2025 meeting, organized in part by the [Brazil Association for Food Protection \(BRAFP\)](#), marked its inaugural satellite edition event held outside Europe, in Aracaju, Sergipe, Brazil, October 25–28. With the theme, "Sustainability and Food Safety," the meeting brought together leading researchers, professionals, and students to discuss contemporary challenges in food microbiology, with an emphasis on sustainability and food safety. As part of the 33rd Brazilian Congress

of Microbiology, the event received 560 participants, representing five continents, with 94% from South America. Of these, 44% were professionals; 27% were graduate students; and 15% were undergraduates.

With 46 invited speakers from Brazil, Europe, and the Americas, the program delivered a highly diverse and multidisciplinary scientific agenda. Activities included seven keynote lectures, eight roundtables, four short courses, and a special workshop dedicated to Brazilian artisanal cheeses.

The Scientific and Technical Program included short courses and keynotes on Biofilm Detection and Control; Biomaterials from Microbial Sources; Education and Extension in Food Microbiology; and Biodiversity Exploitation for Starter Cultures and Fermented Foods.



Keynote presentations addressed Micro/Nanoplastics; Pre-Harvest Interventions; Precision Fermentation; Bacteriocins; and Viral Control Technologies.

Roundtables included topics on Chemical Contaminants and Microbial Interactions; Antimicrobial Resistance and Environmental Impacts; Sustainable Food Processing; Safety



of Alternative Foods; Microbiome Manipulation and Environmental Emissions; and Artisinal Cheese Diversity and Regulation.

A total of 277 posters were presented. Six awards—three by ICFMH Award and three from



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BRAFP-recognized outstanding early-career researchers.

Institutional funding in part came from CNPQ, CAPES, FAPESP, FAPEMIG, and CFMV. Private sponsors included Hygiena and Bio-Rad, which supported technical sessions and speaker participation.

The 1st Food-Micro Latino 2025 meeting met its objectives, offering strong scientific content and fostering collaboration. The event successfully expanded the FoodMicro network into Latin America, generating momentum for future editions. The committee recommends maintaining the event as a recurring satellite with regional rotation.



Georgia Association for Food Protection: More Than 50 Attend Fall Meeting

Reported by Faith Critzer, Vice President



The Georgia Association for Food Protection (GAFP) successfully

convened its 2025 Fall Meeting on November 6 at the Georgia Tech GTRI Conference Center. The meeting attracted more than 50 participants from across the food safety community, demonstrating strong engagement from industry professionals, academic researchers, regulatory partners, and students.



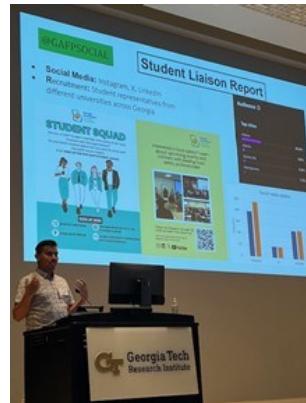
The meeting opened with welcoming remarks and a networking kickoff led by GAFP Vice Chair Vedas Burkeen (left), setting a collaborative tone for the day.

Morning technical sessions addressed timely and pressing food safety challenges. Notably, Ruth Petran (below), Ruth Petran Consulting, LLC and an IAFP Past President, delivered an



in-depth session on hazard analysis and the identification of frequently overlooked risks. Her participation, sponsored by IAFP as part of the Executive Board Speaker Program, brought national level leadership and expertise to the meeting and was a highlight for attendees.

Additional morning presentations explored innovation in poultry processing automation as a strategy to address workforce turnover and occupational injury, as well as FDA's current thinking on revisions to food safety plans under the FSMA Preventive Controls for Human Food (PCHF) rule. These sessions prompted thoughtful discussions and provided practical insights applicable across sectors.



Ruben Vinueza, GAFP Student Liaison and M.S. student at the University of Georgia, provided an update on GAFP social media engagement during the 2025 Fall Meeting.

Following a networking lunch, the GAFP Business Meeting offered organizational updates and an opportunity for member engagement. The afternoon continued with an industry perspective on implementation of the FDA Food Traceability Rule, followed by an interactive scavenger hunt designed to encourage networking among participants.

The meeting also showcased graduate student research through the Jim Ayres Graduate Student Competition. Award-winning presentations addressed pathogen survival in manure-amended Georgia soils and root crops; bioaerosol transfer from commercial poultry operations; and the survival of *Listeria monocytogenes* on pears during long-term cold storage. These presentations highlighted the strength and relevance of emerging food safety research in the region.



Dr. Anna Townsend, Del Monte and GAFP Past President, spoke during the 2025 Fall Meeting about traceability initiatives and proactive steps businesses can take to be compliant.

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Attendees and speakers pose for a photo at the GAFP 2025 Fall Meeting, held November 6, 2025.

Overall, the 2025 GAFP Fall Meeting provided a valuable forum for professional development, networking, knowledge sharing, and recognition of excellence in food safety, reinforcing the Affiliate's commitment to advancing food protection across Georgia and the Southeast. The Association extends its sincere appreciation to all individuals who contributed to the planning and execution of the meeting, with thanks to our members for their strong participation and excellent attendance.

Argentine Food Safety Commission: VI Argentine Food Safety Symposium Draws Approximately 100 Attendees

Reported by Fabiana Guglielmone, President/Delegate



On November 20, 2025, the VI Argentine Food Safety Symposium was held in Gualeguaychú, Entre Ríos State, Argentina. Organized by the [Argentine Food Safety Commission \(CAIA\)](#), the meeting was developed in conjunction with the First Conference on Updates in Food Microbiology.

The scientific program included two conferences and a roundtable discussion where professionals shared their experiences with attendees.



Caio Carvalho (left), Consultant and part of the IAFP Executive Board Speaker Program, opened the symposium with "Environmental Microbiological Monitoring."

The roundtable titled "Beyond Microbiological Hazards" was coordinated by Silvia Rafellini



companies that contributed to the event in different ways.

A total of 80 research papers were selected and presented as posters by their authors. In closing, participants were invited to attend IAFP Latino 2026, organized by CAIA and scheduled for September 28–29, 2026, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. We hope to see many of you there!

African Continental Association for Food Protection: 3rd Food Safety Conference for Africa Held Over Three Days

Reported by Joseph Odumero, President/Delegate



food industry, addressing the topic, "If It Is Not Safe, It Is Not Food. So...?"

Approximately 100 participants from Argentina and other nearby countries took part in the event, demonstrating their interests in the agenda and exchanging information with the speakers.

The symposium was sponsored by prominent educational institutions and local state and government agencies, along with fourteen



The African Continental Association for Food Protection (ACAFP) is geared towards advancing food safety on the African market. Its goal is to connect food safety professionals, policymakers, food value chain actors, and students on the continent of Africa and around the world. Its activities align with the sustainable and safe food production and supply initiatives held on the continent.

The 3rd ACAFP Food Safety Conference for Africa was held November 25–27, 2025, at Ogere Resort, Nigeria, and convened experts and stakeholders across Africa to advance dialogue, research exchange, and multi-sector collaboration on food safety. The meeting's theme was "Enhancing Food Safety Systems for Improved Public Health, Trade Competitiveness, and Economic Growth in Africa."

The three-day event provided a high-level continental platform for:
Sharing scientific insights on food hazards;
Showcasing innovations for detection, processing, packaging, and monitoring;
Examining policy frameworks and institutional coordination;

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Strengthening national and sub-national food control systems;
Addressing infrastructure and capacity gaps; and
Highlighting roles of MSMEs and informal value chains.

The conference included approximately 150–200 participants, representing those from academia, government, development organizations, regulatory agencies, private industry, and research institutions.

Day One opened with a vibrant and energetic atmosphere, setting the tone for discussions on strengthening food safety systems across the continent. Participants explored foundational themes such as governance, system integration, hazard control innovations, and strategic partnerships.

The Opening Session was moderated by Drs. Mojisola Karigidi and Olumodupe Banwo,

beginning with a welcome from Professor Joseph Odumeru, ACAFP President and Delegate. A key feature was the extensive series of goodwill messages from diverse international and domestic organizations, and from key Nigerian regulators including the Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON) and the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. Mark Carter, MC Squared and IAFP Past President, delivered information on the benefits of IAFP Membership.

A series of presentations throughout the day included Mr. Kambire Sansan, who delivered the opening keynote on strengthening food safety systems in Africa, highlighting FAO's global priorities for 2022–2032 and emphasizing the need for integrated, coordinated, and risk-based national food safety systems.

Dr. Titilayo Falade, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, followed with a presentation on food safety interventions across Africa, sharing findings from large EU-funded programs such as FS4Africa, HD4A, and FCI4Africa. She emphasized that food safety is an issue of fairness and justice, particularly within domestic markets where most African consumers purchase food.

Representing BioEasy of China, Ms. Bonnie Zhu presented on innovations in rapid testing for food hazards, showcasing the company's validated test kits for multi-mycotoxins, pathogenic bacteria, veterinary drug residues, pesticides, and vitamins. She emphasized the importance of affordable, reliable, and field-ready diagnostic tools for strengthening national food control systems.

Professor Patrick Njobeh delivered the second keynote, focusing on the persistent and widespread problem of mycotoxin contamination, particularly aflatoxins and ochratoxin A. He stressed the importance of community engagement and continuous public education through mass media, informal markets, and grassroots platforms to reduce exposure to mycotoxins.

Mr. John Atanda spoke on recent developments in Nigeria's food safety governance system, including harmonized food handler guidelines across states; taxation aimed at reducing the intake of high-sugar foods; and the development of front-of-pack labelling (FOPL) to promote healthier consumer choices.

Across the sessions, several key themes emerged, i.e., rapid testing tools must be validated using African food matrices; food safety education should be included in school curricula; regulatory systems continue to face challenges such as overlapping mandates, weak coordination, and insufficient enforcement; laboratory capacity remains limited and testing is expensive; and improved traceability and consumer protection systems are urgently needed.

Day One concluded with a relaxed poolside cocktail session, providing the opportunity for deeper connections, informal meet-and-greet interactions, and strengthening networking across diverse stakeholder groups.



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Day Two continued with Professor Folarin Oguntoyinbo delivering the first keynote on innovative technologies for enhanced food safety and trade, emphasizing that food safety is fundamentally a survival issue rather than just a hygiene matter. He concluded by advocating a multi-layered Food Management System that integrates HACCP, traceability, audits, and continuous compliance monitoring.

Professor Lateef Sanni followed with a keynote address on food safety, nutrition, security, and African-led innovations.

A plenary session was delivered by Professors Saweda Liverpool-Tasie and Adewale Obadina, along with Dr. Itohan Abatan, who all provided research-based insights into MSME food safety practices. They also introduced Codex-aligned hygienic practice guidelines designed to bridge knowledge and resource gaps among MSMEs.

The day's final presentation was delivered by Dr. Rose Omari, who shared findings from a stakeholder mapping study focused on food safety governance. She emphasized the need for harmonized interventions, stronger research funding, and multi-level governance to ensure sustainable improvements.

The afternoon featured technical sessions on Themes 1 and 2 of the conference, providing more focused discussions on priority topics and enabling participants to engage in deeper technical exchanges related to innovation, governance, and system strengthening.

The day concluded with several overarching insights, including the need to build capacity among early-career food safety practitioners; the persistence of collaboration gaps across ministries; the importance of integrating informal actors into national food safety systems; and the continued underdevelopment of data systems and analytics. Funding shortages and sustainability concerns were also identified as recurring challenges to be addressed through coordinated action.

Day Three continued the momentum built over the previous days' sessions, beginning with a full slate of technical presentations under Sub-Themes 3–6. The day showcased extensive scientific contributions from researchers



across Africa, offering insights into food safety systems, nutrition, climate change impacts, consumer behavior, economic dimensions, and emerging technological solutions.

The morning commenced with parallel technical sessions on Food Safety Systems and Nutrition; Climate Change, Environmental Hazards, and Food Safety; Gender and Workforce Development in Food Safety; Consumer Education, Awareness, and Food Safety Culture; and Economics of Food Safety.

The conference also recorded an extensive catalog of additional paper presentations, covering wide-ranging topics such as phytochemical analyses of food products; gender influences on food security; microbial

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contamination in indigenous vegetables; rainfall interactions with food systems; antifungal and antibacterial interventions; soil bioremediation; food security challenges linked to wildlife protection and

tourism; artificial intelligence in food safety; biodegradable packaging development; climate resilience; antibiotic resistance in aquaculture and livestock chains; eco-friendly pest control; and nutritional characterization of local food products. These diverse contributions illustrated the breadth of food safety research across Africa and the commitment of scientists to addressing multi-dimensional challenges.

The afternoon's technical sessions continued across Themes 3–6, enabling more in-depth discussions on consumer education; environmental hazards; innovative processing;



governance; and safety culture. The multi-thematic engagements allowed participants to identify cross-cutting solutions and gaps requiring collaborative action.

After presentations concluded, ACAFP held its Business Meeting, where stakeholders reviewed organizational progress and strategic directions. The meeting also featured a presentation of cash prize awards to four outstanding poster presenters, based on evaluations conducted throughout the conference. This recognition highlighted ACAFP's commitment to encouraging excellence among early-career researchers and strengthening scientific innovation in food safety across Africa.

The closing ceremony formally brought the three-day conference to an end. Closing remarks were delivered by representatives of the Local Organizing Committee, FAO, ACAFP leadership, and government officials.

Dr. Ernest Aubee, representing the ACAFP Board and the Republic of The Gambia, commended participants for their dedication and called for sustained collaboration across countries and institutions.

Featured exhibitors at the conference included BioEasy, China; FS4Africa (Food Safety for Africa Project); RSM2SNF (Research Support Model for Safe and Nutritious Foods); NSPRI (Nigerian Stored Products Research Institute); Etcon Analytical and Environmental Systems; and Inqaba Biotechnical Industries.

ACAFP sincerely thanks our esteemed conference partners including the Federal Ministry of Health, NSPRI, FAO, Nestlé, Fan Milk, and Rite Foods for their generous and vital support.

Wisconsin Association for Food Protection: Lambeau Field Tour Kicks Off Fall Meeting

Reported by Kristen Houck, Secretary



The Wisconsin Association for Food Protection (WAFP) held its 2025 Fall Meeting on December 3 in Green Bay at Food Safety Net Services. A tour of historic Lambeau Field kicked off the meeting on December 2, followed by a networking dinner, with approximately 25 people in attendance.

The meeting's theme was "Emerging Issues in Food Safety: Biological, Chemical, and Physical Hazards."

Wendy White, Georgia Institute of Technology and IAFP Secretary, was the day's first speaker, providing IAFP updates and presenting "Sanitation Troubleshooting." WAFP thanks IAFP for supporting Wendy's attendance as part of its Executive Board Speaker Program.

Other speakers and topics included Brad Bolling, University of Wisconsin–Madison, who spoke on "Natural Food Dye Replacement;" Nicole Martin, Cornell University, who presented "HPAI in Raw Milk;" Adam Brock, WI Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, who provided a department update; and Jack Hurley, FlexXray, who talked about "Physical Contaminants and Detection."

Awards presented and recipients honored were Xingrui Fan, University of Wisconsin–Madison,

WAFP Student Award; and Dave Jelle, Foremost Farms USA, Food Safety Leadership Award.

Updates were provided along with an introduction of the Affiliate's new president. Elected officers are:

President: Leili Afsah-Hejril
1st Vice President: Minto Michael
2nd Vice President: Alex O'Brien
Past President/Delegate: Takiyah Ball
Treasurer: Tyson Villarreal
Secretary/Contact: Kristen Houck

Florida Association for Food Protection: "Talks with Tacos" Luncheon Held

Reported by Kelly Smekens, President



The Florida Association for Food Protection (FAFP) held its 2025 Winter Luncheon, "Talks with Tacos," on December 10 at Coastal Ag Supply in Mulberry, Florida. The holiday-themed gathering drew 28 attendees from both academia and the private sector and provided a relaxing and festive setting for knowledge exchange and professional networking.

Attendees heard three engaging presentations from experts in their fields.



Natalie Dyenson (above), Boar's Head Brand, spoke on "Leadership Lessons: Learnings from More than Three Decades in the Industry." She distilled eight core messages into leadership learning points including (in part) offering solutions, not refusals; finding inspiration in unexpected places; and always follow the science.

Kristina Schoen, Coastal Ag Supply, followed with "Applying and Revising Your Environmental Monitoring Program: Moving Beyond Routine Sampling to Find Real Risk." She

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Kristina Schoen

offered practical guidance on designing a risk-based environmental monitoring plan, including refining sampling locations and frequency.

Dr. Razieh Farzad, University of Florida, closed the presentations with "Microplastics in the Food Systems: Current Understanding and Future Directions." The presentation summarized current evidence on how microplastics enter and move through food supply chains; highlighted analytical and detection challenges; discussed possible food safety and human health concerns; and outlined future research priorities.

After lunch, the FAFP Board invited all luncheon participants to its meeting to review upcoming projects and new business, including planning for the Affiliate's upcoming Annual Education Conference in May 2026, in Crystal River, Florida.

Many thanks to Coastal Ag Supply for hosting and to everyone who attended for making the event a productive and collegial opportunity for advancing food protection in Florida.



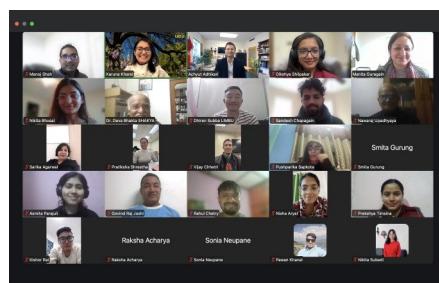
Nepalese Association for Food Protection: Virtual Symposium Held in December

Reported by Karuna Kharel, Delegate



The Nepalese Association for Food Protection (NepAFP) conducted its 1st NepAFP Research Symposium virtually December 10–12, 2025. The meeting drew 118 participants in total over the three-day event.

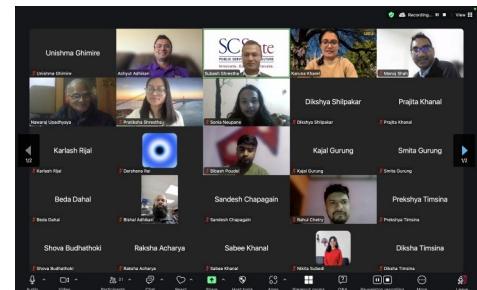
Dr. Don Schaffner, Rutgers University and an IAFP Past President, was one of three keynote speakers. On Day 1, Dr. Schaffner shared groundbreaking insights on scientific efficacy of proper handwashing; quantitative microbial risk assessment of the 2006 leafy greens outbreak; and growth modeling and recent food safety events.



On Day 2, Dr. Joshua Gurtler, USDA-ARS, shared his work on biochar sand filters and their effect on reducing *E. coli* in irrigation water. He also provided valuable insights on the peer-review process for IAFP's *Journal of Food Protection*, along with practical tips on grammar and formatting for scientific writing.

Dr. Joyjit Saha, Kerry Food Protection and Preservation, spoke on Day 3 on food protection, preservation, and novel antimicrobial treatments combatting foodborne pathogens.

A variety of research topics were covered each day including: Alternative proteins and their role in food systems; Biofilms and their impact on food safety; Scientific validation of thermal treatment for food safety; Deep frying practices and oil conditions among local vendors in Nepal; Investigation of meat safety conditions, knowledge, and practices in Nepal; Prevalence and serotyping of *Salmonella* from commercial poultry production in the U.S.; Oil quality degradation study of oil used to prepare sel-



roti; and *Salmonella* prevalence in pastured broilers in the U.S.

Student presentations took place on the closing day. The following students were recipients of Developing Scientist Awards:

From Nepal:

- 1st Place: Preksha Timsina, CCT
- 2nd Place: Bibash Paudel, NCFST
- 3rd Place: Dhiren Subba Limbu, CCT

From USA:

- 1st Place: Sandesh Chapagain, UMES
- 2nd Place: Pratiksha Shrestha, LSU
- 3rd Place: Dikshya Shilpakar, LSU

The Affiliate extends its heartfelt gratitude for the sustained and enthusiastic virtual participation during its 1st NepAFP Research Symposium.

AFFILIATE BRIEF

The **Bangladesh Association for Food Protection in North America (BAFPNA)** recently elected Affiliate officers. They are:

President/Contact: Mohammad Aminul Islam
 Vice President: Arpita Aditya
 Past President: Debabrata Biswas
 Secretary: Md. Ashrafudoulla
 Treasurer: Zajeba Tabashsum
 Delegate: Niamul Kabir

IAFP Creates Award Nomination/Application Process Webinar

Are you considering nominating a worthy candidate or deserving colleague for one of IAFP's many awards? Is your Affiliate applying for one or more of the IAFP Affiliate Awards? Take time to review this webinar, "Navigating IAFP Awards: Requirements, Tips, and Best Practices," to help you through the nomination/application process.

First held in December 2025, this webinar is designed to equip IAFP Members and Affiliate members with the knowledge and tools necessary to successfully apply for awards and recognitions. Through a structured overview of award categories, eligibility requirements, and submission protocols, participants will gain a clear understanding of how to prepare and present strong applications. The session provides step-by-step guidance on setting up an account, submitting electronic materials, and securing impactful letters of recommendation. Emphasis is placed on travel awards, common application challenges, and strategic planning to avoid last-minute submissions. By fostering confidence and clarity, the webinar aims to empower both new and returning applicants to engage fully with the awards process and position themselves for recognition within the IAFP community.

Susan Smith, Affiliate Liaison and Awards Coordinator, and Angela Walla, Texas Tech University and a member of IAFP's Welcome Committee, serve as your hosts for this informative webinar. If you or someone you know is an IAFP Member, access to this webinar is free on the IAFP website. Reminder: IAFP award nominations are due on **February 10, 2026**. Affiliate Award applications are due with your Annual Report on **March 3, 2026**. Contact Susan at ssmith@foodprotection.org with questions.

Navigating IAFP Awards: Requirements, Tips, and Best Practices

Speakers

Angela Walla, Ph.D., Professor, Texas Tech University

Susan Smith, Association Services, IAFP



AFFILIATE NEWS

AFFILIATE ANNUAL REPORTS DUE
TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2026



This serves as a reminder that all Affiliate Annual Reports are due Tuesday, March 3, 2026, for activities that took place during 2025. Periodic

reminders were emailed to all Affiliate officers who have yet to submit a report for their respective Affiliate.

Annual Reports are required to be submitted to the IAFP office to comply with IAFP Bylaws (regardless of previous year activities). These reports serve as valuable information to keep the Association updated on current officers; past and upcoming meetings; websites; etc. All Annual Reports are to be submitted electronically; membership lists are not required. We also encourage applications for one or more Affiliate awards during your submission process. Contact Susan Smith, Affiliate Liaison, with questions.

NEXT AFFILIATE COUNCIL VIRTUAL MEETING
SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 25, 2026

Plan now to attend the next [Affiliate Council Virtual Meeting](#) on Wednesday, March 25, 2026, 12:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). Invitations and agendas will be sent in advance to those who are on *IAFP Connect*. All virtual meetings are recorded and available shortly after on *IAFP Connect*. And mark your calendar for Monday, May 18, 2026, 9:00 a.m. (Eastern Time) for the last Affiliate Council Virtual Meeting prior to the Affiliate Council Meeting during [IAFP 2026](#).

IAFP HEADLINES

REGISTER AND RESERVE YOUR HOTEL
FOR IAFP 2026



Registration is open for [IAFP 2026](#), July 26–29, in New Orleans, Louisiana. Take a few minutes out of your busy day to register for the leading food safety conference taking place in this exciting and colorful city. When registering, select your hotel at the same time among those offering our group rate. Visit the Annual Meeting page on the IAFP website to get started! We look forward to seeing you in The Big Easy!

POPULAR WORKSHOP RETURNS!

IAFP's [Microbial Challenge Testing for Foods Workshop](#) returns April 22–23, 2026, in Des Plaines (Chicago), Illinois. This two-day workshop is intended for food industry professionals, testing lab personnel, and regulators. Seating is limited, so don't wait to register on the IAFP website. Early registration rates end March 25, 2026.



TAKE TIME TO VOTE IN IAFP'S 2026 SECRETARY ELECTION

Voting opens February 2, 2026 for the upcoming IAFP 2026 Secretary Election. Candidates standing for election are Dr. Martin Duplessis, Health Canada, Ontario, Canada; and Dr. Maria Hoffmann, U.S. FDA, Washington, D.C. Profiles of the candidates can be viewed on the home page of the IAFP website. IAFP Members have until March 3, 2026, to cast their vote. The link and passcode will be emailed to Members on February 2.

AFFILIATE CALENDAR

PROMOTE YOUR MEETINGS THROUGH IAFP

Affiliates in Action Fourth Quarter 2025

October

- ◆ Kansas Environmental Health Association
- ◆ Iowa Association for Food Protection
- ◆ Brazil Association for Food Protection

November

- ◆ Georgia Association for Food Protection
- ◆ Argentine Food Safety Commission
- ◆ African Continental Association for Food Protection

December

- ◆ Wisconsin Association for Food Protection
- ◆ Florida Association for Food Protection
- ◆ Nepalese Association for Food Protection (virtual)

January 2026

28: Ohio Association for Food Protection, 2026 Winter Annual Business Meeting, Columbus, Ohio. Contact Connie Freese at cfreese@phdmc.org.

28: United Kingdom Association for Food Protection, 2026 Annual Meeting, Cardiff, UK. Visit zero2five.org.uk/news/.

March 2026

17-19: Idaho Environmental Health Association, 2026 Annual Conference, Boise, Idaho. Visit ieha-idaho.com/index.php.

25-27: Michigan Environmental Health Association, 2026 Annual Business Meeting, Traverse City, Michigan. Visit meha.net/.

April 2026

8: British Columbia Food Protection Association, 2026 Annual General Meeting (virtual). Visit bcfoodprotection.ca/.

29: Upper Midwest Dairy Industry Association, 2026 Spring Meeting, LeSueur, Minnesota. Visit umdia.org/.

To be featured in the next issue of *Affiliate View*, send your news and photos by March 31, 2026, to Susan Smith at ssmith@foodprotection.org.

IAFP Support for Affiliate Meetings

Whether to complement the mission and promotional materials of your Affiliate, or to show your relationship with the International Association for Food Protection, we offer the following supplies for use or distribution at your meetings:

- ◆ IAFP pop-up display. This updated and attractive pop-up display shows attendees that you are affiliated with IAFP.
- ◆ IAFP 2025-2026 Presentation. A PowerPoint slide show with a suggested 15-minute script. This is the same presentation used by members of the IAFP Executive Board when invited to speak at Affiliate meetings.
- ◆ Promotional materials box. Contents include a complimentary IAFP Membership certificate and brochures, current issue of *Affiliate View*, and IAFP Annual Meeting flyers. Additional complimentary resources are available upon your request.

To request these items for your next meeting, call or email Susan Smith at the IAFP Office.



DONATE TO THE SILENT AUCTION

***Proceeds from the Silent Auction
Benefit the IAFP Foundation***

**Support the Foundation by donating an item today.
A few examples of items donated in 2025 include:**

- * Beats Headphones
- * Handmade Quilt
- * Taste of Indiana Gift Bag
- * Ceramic Bowl
- * Caramel Corn
- * Dubai Chocolate
- * Embroidered Hand Towels
- * Stained Glass



(Photos from IAFP 2025)

**To donate an item, complete the Silent Auction
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**For questions email info@foodprotection.org
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As you consider your donation, please keep in mind that most attendees travel by air.

Items under \$10.00 in value may be grouped with other items by the IAFP Staff.

IAFP EXECUTIVE BOARD SPEAKER PROGRAM

FOR AFFILIATES



**Manpreet Singh, Ph.D., University of Georgia
President**

- Managing Risks in Meat & Poultry Processing
- Food Safety Management Systems in Food Processing
- Antimicrobial Resistance of Foodborne Pathogens



**Manan Sharma, Ph.D., U.S. Department of Agriculture/ARS
President-Elect**

- Produce Safety (Irrigation Water, Soil Amendment)
- Bacteriophages and Food Safety
- Detection Methods of Pathogens in Water/Water Filtration



**Pam Wilger, Post Consumer Brands
Vice President**

- Environmental Monitoring
- Dry Industry Microbiology and HACCP
- Sampling, Micro Testing Methods and Lab Management



**Wendy White, Georgia Institute of Technology
Secretary**

- Sanitation Troubleshooting
- Third-Party Auditing
- Recall and/or Crisis Management



**Mark Carter, MC Squared
Past President**

- Method Development and Validation
- Statistical Sampling Plans and Development



**Helen Taylor, Cardiff Metropolitan University
Affiliate Council Chair**

- Food Safety & Quality Management Systems
- HACCP – Food Safety – Auditing
- Food Manufacturing – Small & Medium Enterprises – Auditing



**Takiyah Ball, Ph.D., Sargento Foods, Inc.
Affiliate Council Secretary**

- Food Microbiology
- Tools for Monitoring Emerging Risks
- Career Development for Young Professionals in Industry, Academia, and Government

How It Works

1. IAFP Board Members are available to speak at Affiliate meetings on numerous topics involving food safety.
2. Each Affiliate may request one Executive Board speaker for one Affiliate meeting within a 12-month calendar year.
3. A minimum of 15 minutes should be allowed for the Board Member to deliver information about the International Association for Food Protection in addition to their main subject(s) (see #1).
4. IAFP will pay the Board Member's expense to travel to the Affiliate meeting location.
5. The Affiliate covers local expenses, including meals, lodging, and local transportation for the Board Member.
6. The Board Member makes their own travel reservations and will submit an expense report to the IAFP office within 10 days of completion of their travel to the Affiliate meeting. Any local expense (see #5) will be billed to the Affiliate.
7. A two-month advance notice is required.
8. To invite a Board Member to speak at your Affiliate meeting, contact Susan Smith, IAFP Affiliate Liaison, at +1 515.276.3344; or email ssmith@foodprotection.org. (Please do not contact Board Members directly until approved by IAFP.)

IAFP SPEAKER PROGRAM (EXPANDED)

Caio Carvalho
Consultant

- Food Microbiology
- Career Plan for Young Professionals in Food Safety & Microbiology
- Thermal Process and Aseptic Validations



Jim Dickson, Ph.D.
Iowa State University

- Foodborne Pathogens in Meat: Progress and Challenges
- Interventions to Control Foodborne Pathogens in Meat
- Food Safety Issues with Pet Food
- Process Validation for Food Safety



Kathy Glass, Ph.D.
University of Wisconsin – Madison

- Opportunities and Limitations of Clean Label Antimicrobials
- Validating Formulation Safe RTE Foods
- Intervention Strategies to Control *Listeria monocytogenes* in Ready-to-Eat Foods
- Control of Sporeforming Bacteria During Extended Cooling and Refrigerated Storage
- Efficacy of Nitrate Alternatives to Inhibit the Growth of Bacteria



Kali Kniel, Ph.D.
University of Delaware

- One Health
- Foodborne Viruses
- Foodborne Parasites
- Produce Food Safety Issues



Alejandro Mazzotta, Ph.D.
Chobani, LLC

- Dairy Food Safety and Spoilage
- FSMA and Regulatory Compliance
- Food Safety and Quality Systems



Ruth Petran Ph.D.
Ruth Petran Consulting, LLC

- Sanitation Preventive Controls
- Norovirus Management
- Hazard Analysis



Gale Prince
Consultant

- Human Factor Considerations for Achieving Food Safety Compliance
- Driving Forces for Hygienic Design of Food Equipment
- The Cost of a Product Recall – Should You Budget for It?
- Food Allergens
- A Fifty-Year Food Safety Career Based on a Bar Napkin



Don Schaffner, Ph.D.
Rutgers University

- Understanding and Managing Food Safety Risks
- Quantitative Microbial Risk Assessment of Foods
- Development and Application of Predictive Models for Food Microbiology
- Handwashing, Hand Sanitizers, and Cross-Contamination



Don Zink, Ph.D.
IEH Laboratories & Consulting Group

- Environmental Pathogen Monitoring
- FSMA Implementation – Foreign Supplier Verification and Preventive Controls
- Controlling *Listeria* and *Salmonella*



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foodprotection.org

Future Annual Meetings | Save the Dates!

IAFP 2027, July 18–21, Kansas City, Missouri
IAFP 2028, July 23–26, Charlotte, North Carolina
IAFP 2029, July 22–25, Denver, Colorado

Affiliate View is a quarterly publication for Affiliates of the International Association for Food Protection. Please submit articles, photos, news items, or comments to:

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