

WELCOME

AFA FOOD SYSTEMS INSTITUTE

PRELIMINARY ITINERARY

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 2026

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IMPORTANT DATES



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Below you will find dates to keep in mind as we approach the Institute. These dates will (a) help remind you when to send our team important information and (b) give you a heads up when to expect important information to come from AFA.

20

July

REGISTRATION FORM AVAILABLE

AFA will be sending the company's main contact an email with more information on how to register your team.

24

August

REGISTRATION DUE

Only one registration is needed for your organization and all changes must be made before March 16th.

14

September

FINAL COMMUNICATION FROM AFA

AFA will send your team a final communication listing information around how to access the final schedule for your team, speaker resources, Resume Directory, and other helpful tools.

CANCELLATION POLICY



CANCELLATION POLICY

As an engagement and funding partner of AFA, we value your support. For 30 years, partners have invested their dollars in our nonprofit programming to help guide the next generation of agriculture and food leaders. Because we are committed to being good stewards of those dollars, we are continuing our cancellation policy to help direct that funding toward growing the number of students we serve each year.

Our goal for this policy is to work with our partners in establishing deadlines when confirming/making changes regarding your teams' engagement. With the rise of costs associated with in the hospitality industry (AV, caterings, lodging, etc.) this policy will help mitigate the financial risks AFA is liable for regarding cancellations that fall outside the calendar parameters set by third party vendors.

As one of our main contacts for partnership, please help us in making sure this policy is communicated to your team members planning to attend the AFA Leader Institutes.

Adjustments or cancellations to your registration must be made through lexy.mullins@agfuture.org by **August 31.**

August 24:

- Deadline to register/confirm participation at the AFA Leader Institute – this includes speaker roles.

August 31:

- Meals: Last day to cancel team member and receive reimbursement on any meals purchased outside of the complimentary meals provided through the partnership. If a team member cancels after this date, partner will be liable for cost of the meal already purchased.
- Speakers: Last day to cancel team member and replace with another teammate. If a team member is unable to participate in the program following this date - no other team member from your company will be able to participate/replace that individual unless specified by an AFA team member.

AGENDA

Below you will find areas of engagement your team is invited to participate in. Reminder, your team must be registered for Food Systems Institute by [August 24th](#). You have until [August 31st](#) to make any changes (additions or subtractions) to your registration by sending an email to lexy.mullins@agfuture.org.

Please use the form below to keep track of which team members are registered for each activity.

PRE-INSTITUTE

Swag Items

As a partner benefit you will be allowed to send items to hand out to delegates during registration. [Please reach out for shipping instructions.](#)

Please ensure swag items are no larger or heavier than a standard water bottle. We also encourage sending snacks to be included in the handouts!

Commercial Video

You also have the opportunity to submit a 30-60 second video about your company (YouTube link or mp4) to be showed during the Institute breaks and transitions.

[Please upload here.](#)

Double Tree by Hilton

5460 North River Road
Rosemont, IL 60018

We ask that you reserve your own hotel room as we do not have a rooming block available. Thank you!



AGENDA

ALL TIMES BELOW ARE IN CST

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2026

Attire: Business Casual/Logo Apparel

5:00-6:00 PM

Dinner & Discourse - 2-4 team members

You will get to sit with delegates and alumni to have fun conversations over hot takes while eating a fabulous meal. An example could be: which is better, winter or summer?

Ideal Profile: Any

6:00-7:00PM

Alumni Sweets & Social - All alumni

The Alliance Sweet & Social provides an engaging environment for students to build connections with peers and alumni, while learning how AFA can support their professional journey beyond graduation.

Ideal Profile: Any alumni

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2026

Attire: Business Casual/Logo Apparel

9:00 AM- 10:30 A.M; 12:30- 2:00 PM (Two Time Options)

Tours

Your team has the option to host a tour at your location, so students can obtain hands on experience! If your team is interested in providing lunch, you will receive an extra 30 minutes added to your tour time. Please indicate interest here: [2026 AFA Leader Institutes Tour Confirmation Form](#)

5:30-6:30 PM

Careers in the Food Industry - Roundtable Discussion - 1 team member

Discuss career paths and opportunities with a variety of industry professionals sharing their insight and advice. Students will rotate every 12 minutes for four rotations to speak to industry professionals about their careers.

Ideal Profile: HR, Project Manager, Sales, Food Analyst

Additional info needed: Headshot and Biography of team member. Please send to lexy.mullins@agfuture.org



AGENDA

6:30-8:00 PM

Industry & Delegate Networking & Dinner - 2-4 team members

Get to know students and share your knowledge!

Ideal Profile: HR, Management, Sales, Food Analyst.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2026

Attire: Business Professional/Logo Apparel

8:00-9:00 AM

Partner Breakfast - 2-4 team members

Speak with students regarding career opportunities and innovative products and solutions you are bringing to the industry.

Ideal Profile: Executives, HR, Management, Sales, Food Analyst

9:15-10:30 AM

Ted X Executive Session - 1 team member

This session features a short, story-driven talk from industry leaders that explore bold ideas and personal leadership insights, followed by an engaging audience Q&A to inspire action and connection.

Ideal Profile: Executives, Management, High Level Positions

Additional info needed: Headshot and Biography of team member. Please send to lexy.mullins@agfuture.org

10:45-12:45 PM

AgXperience - 1 team member

AgXperience - IFPA Specialty Tasting Session is an interactive, sensory-based learning experience designed to introduce students to specialty produce and the global fresh produce industry. Through a guided tasting, students will explore unfamiliar fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flavor profiles while learning how taste, aroma, texture, seasonality, sourcing, and culinary application influence product value and consumer experience.

Presented in connection with IFPA, the session gives students a practical look at how specialty produce moves through the food systems value chain, from grower and distributor considerations to foodservice, retail, marketing, and consumer education.

Ideal Profile: Project Manager, Sales, Boots on the Ground Positions

