AOAC International Midwest Section Annual Meeting & Exposition

June 8-10, 2026

Courtyard by Marriott Conference Center

Lafayette, IN

Final Schedule with Abstracts

Monday • June 8, 2026

AFTERNOON

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM: Vendor Exhibit Setup

12:00 – 5:00 PM: Guest Check-In and Registration (Lobby)

3:00 – 5:00 PM: Vendor Exhibits Open

3:30 – 4:00 PM: Section Board Meeting (Ballroom ABC)

4:00 – 6:00 PM: Vendor Mixer (Lobby)

6:00 – 6:30 PM: Keynote Presentation (Ballroom ABC): Don Lamb – Director of the Indiana State Department of Agriculture

The State of the Agricultural Industry in Indiana

6:30 – 8:00 PM: Dinner (Ballroom ABC)

Tuesday • June 9, 2026

MORNING

7:30 – 9:00 AM: Breakfast (Ballroom ABC)

8:00 – 9:00 AM: Guest Check-In and Registration (Lobby)

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Vendor Exhibits Open

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Morning Breakout Sessions

1. Updates in Agricultural, Nutrient and Microbiology Analysis (Ballroom ABC)
2. Mycotoxins in Novel Foods (Ballroom DE)
3. Chemical Contaminants (PFAS, Mycotoxins, Metals, etc…) (Wabash)

AFTERNOON

12:00 – 1:00 PM: Lunch (Ballroom ABC)

1:00 – 1:30 PM: Keynote Presentation (Ballroom ABC): Dr. Camila Nicolli – Research Assistant Professor, Purdue University Department of Botany and Plant Pathology.

From Pre-Harvest Challenges to Food Safety: The Financial Impact of Mycotoxin Contamination

1:30 – 2:00 PM: Guest Check-In and Registration (Lobby)

1:30 – 5:00 PM: Vendor Exhibits Open

2:00 – 5:00 PM: Afternoon Breakout Sessions

1. Updates in Agricultural, Nutrient and Microbiology Testing (Ballroom ABC)
2. Challenges in the Analysis of Infant Formula and its Ingredients (Ballroom DE)

4:00 – 6:00 PM: Vendor Mixer (Lobby)

6:00 – 6:30 PM: Keynote Presentation (Ballroom ABC): Darryl Sullivan – Chief Science Officer Eurofins Scientific and Past President of AOAC International

50 years of Food Testing

6:30 – 8:00 PM: Dinner (Ballroom ABC)

Wednesday • June 10, 2026

MORNING

7:30 – 9:00 AM: Breakfast (Ballroom ABC)

8:00 – 9:00 AM: Guest Check-In and Registration (Lobby)

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Vendor Exhibits Open

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM: Morning Breakout Sessions

1. Dietary Fiber (Ballroom ABC)
2. Risk Communications: Navigating Misinformation in Science and Industry (Ballroom DE)

AFTERNOON

12:00 – 1:00 PM: Lunch (Ballroom ABC)

1:00 – 1:30 PM: Keynote Presentation (Ballroom ABC): Trish Dunn – Feed Administrator for the Office of Indiana State Chemist

What's Cooking with RLTS?

1:30 – 2:00 PM: Guest Check-In and Registration (Lobby)

1:30 – 5:00 PM: Vendor Exhibits Open

2:00 – 5:00 PM: Afternoon Breakout Sessions

1. Dietary Fiber (Ballroom ABC)

5:00 PM: Meeting Adjourned – Thank you for Attending

AOAC Midwest Section Presentation Abstracts

Tuesday • June 9, 2026 – Morning Session

Mycotoxins in Novel Foods

9:00 – 11:00 am: Mycotoxin Community Discussion

Donna Houchins – Romer Labs and Luke Gray - Neogen

Updates in Agricultural, Nutrient and Microbiology Analysis – Brian Sculd, Chair

9:00 – 9:30 am: Bridging the Gap Between Microbiology and Toxicology: LC-MS/MS Strategies for the Quantitation of Cereulide in Food Matrices.

Brian Schuld – Merieux NutriSciences

While Bacillus cereus is a common foodborne pathogen, it is a heat-stable emetic toxin, cereulide, represents a distinct toxicological threat that persists after microbial inactivation. The critical nature of this emerging contaminant was underscored by major 2025–2026 global infant formula recalls, where investigations identified contaminated arachidonic acid (ARA) oil as the primary source—often in the absence of viable bacteria. Because traditional microbiological assays cannot quantify this potent dodecadepsipeptide, advanced chemical analysis is essential to ensure the safety of vulnerable populations. This study presents a robust, high-sensitivity LC-MS/MS method for the quantitation of cereulide across complex matrices, including infant formula, ARA powder/oil, and dairy products.

Aligned with recent EFSA guidance and the established Acute Reference Dose (ARfD), the method achieves a state-of-the-art Limit of Quantitation (LOQ) of 0.05 µg/kg. Validation demonstrated exceptional precision and accuracy: repeatability was < 9%, reproducibility was < 12%, and spike recoveries at the LOQ level ranged from 87% to 103%, with an expanded uncertainty (k=2) of ≤ 33%. By providing a reliable analytical framework for specialized ingredients like ARA oil—central to recent safety crises but historically excluded from routine screening—this research addresses a vital gap in food surveillance. These findings provide the analytical rigor necessary for proactive risk assessment and support the enforcement of more stringent regulatory thresholds within the global food supply chain.

9:30 – 10:00 am: Dave Rings – CEM

Challenges and Solutions for Trace Element Determination in High-Fat Food Matrices

The complex and varied nature of food matrices presents significant analytical challenges, particularly when detecting environmental contaminants such as trace elements. Among the most concerning are the "big four" toxic heavy metals—arsenic, cadmium, lead, and mercury—which are well documented for their harmful effects on human health. Beyond these heavy metals, there are other elements of importance to human health such as, but not limited to, aluminum, cobalt, and nickel. As a result, monitoring a variety of elements in food products remains essential for meeting regulatory and safety guidelines. The detection of these elements at the low levels required adds another layer of difficulty to both the sample preparation and analysis process. In addition, the complexity of some food matrices, such as high-fat foods, makes breaking down the matrix to achieve these levels very challenging. Effective trace element analysis requires a sample preparation method that is reliable, reproducible, and robust, while also being adaptable to a wide variety of food types. In this study, trace element concentrations are measured across a range of high-fat food matrices, including standard reference materials, achieving good recovery and reproducibility. The adaptability of this method is further explored by evaluating a larger sample size and a higher temperature than traditionally used for these high-fat foods. The analysis is performed using ICP-MS following microwave digestion, which offers a fast, efficient, and straightforward approach for detecting trace elements in challenging food samples.

10:00 – 10:30 am: Christopher Conklin – Agilent

I have a number, is it a result?

When creating a new method or setting up a new instrument, how do you know that the number you are getting is a usable result and not just a random number? Using ICP-OES data as a reference, we'll look at approaches you can take to gain extra confidence in the results your lab is generating. We'll discuss a variety of checks and what aspect of data quality they test to help you decide what makes the most sense for your application.

10:30 – 10:45 am – Break

10:45 – 11:15 am: Simplifying Multi-Element ICP-MS Analysis Using Enhanced Helium Collision and Advanced Reaction Cell Modes

Jeffery Sayen – Agilent

Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (ICP-MS) remains a cornerstone technique for trace elemental analysis; however, conventional collision/reaction cell (CRC) strategies often require element-specific gas selection, extensive method development, and frequent gas switching to mitigate

spectral interferences. These requirements add complexity, consume instrument time, and can limit analytical throughput. In this work, we evaluate an enhanced helium collision cell mode designed for broad, multi-element applicability. Results demonstrate effective interference removal across a wide range of elements, including those traditionally considered challenging, while maintaining analytical sensitivity and precision. The ability to operate under a single, universal collision mode significantly reduces method complexity and improves reproducibility, particularly for routine, high-throughput laboratories. In addition, we introduce an advanced CRC reaction mode that provides comparable interference control for difficult analytes while offering a safer, more sustainable, and cost-effective alternative to conventional reactive gases. Experimental data show that this approach achieves analytical performance similar to established methods, further reducing infrastructure demands and operational risk. Together, the enhanced helium collision mode and the advanced reaction mode represent a practical evolution in ICP-MS operation, enabling simplified workflows, improved laboratory efficiency, and broader accessibility to high-quality elemental analysis.

11:15 – 11:45 am: Ricky Chomicz – CEM

Rapid Oil Analysis of DDGs to Support Animal Feed Nutritional Quality

As the ethanol production process continues to develop, the recovery and utilization of co-products have become increasingly important. The ability to accurately and rapidly analyze the percent oil content in these co-products is critical. Distiller's dried grains (DDGs) are high-value co-products in which percent oil is a crucial nutrient component and has a direct impact on their use as animal feed. Low oil values can negatively affect the final feed product, including reduced milk production in dairy cows and lower meat quality in swine. The majority of United States ethanol plants now extract corn oil prior to manufacturing DDGS, resulting in reduced oil content that may influence energy value, nutrient profile, and digestibility across different animal species. The use of a microwave and infrared solids analyzer with a rapid oil analyzer can provide results on DDGS in just a few minutes. In this study, the percent solids and oil of DDGS were determined in approximately five minutes with excellent accuracy and precision. Together, these systems provide a safe, efficient, and accurate approach for rapid determination of percent solids and oil in DDGS.

Chemical Contaminants

9:00 – 9:30 am: PFAS & Nitrosamines: From A Well-Known Contamination to an Emerging Risk

E. DeDomincis - Merieux NutriSciences

Starting from Eu, the attention to PFAs contamination is currently well established in the globe. Description of the origin of PFAs and the path to food contamination, starting from the environment then water and finally feed & food. The current dimension of the contamination viewed from the global alerts system and from the single lab positive findings.
Looking at the future, nitrosamines contamination can be considered as a potential risk for human health. The path of this contamination is quite peculiar, starting from the pharma is now becoming relevant in the food industry. EFSA is actively evaluating the contamination of nitrosamines in food.

9:30 – 10:00 am: Update Mineral Oil Analytic - From Complexity to Clarity

Eileen Schulz - Merieux NutriSciences

As unresolved complex mixtures, petroleum hydrocarbons pose a unique challenge not only to toxicologists, but also to analytical scientists. Since mineral oil contamination migrating from cardboard packaging into food was first reported in 1995, substantial progress has been made in toxicological understanding, analytical methodology, and awareness of contamination sources. In parallel, the demands placed on analytical methods have increased considerably. Particular attention has been directed towards mineral oil aromatic hydrocarbons (MOAH), especially 3–7 ring MOAH, whose toxicological relevance has been increasingly emphasized by EFSA. In September 2023, EFSA published the "Update of the risk assessment of mineral oil hydrocarbons in food," further underlining the importance of this contaminant group. From January 1st, 2027, legally binding limits for MOAH in food will enter into force within the European Union. Edible oils and fats are among the food categories at highest risk for mineral oil contamination, while simultaneously representing some of the most analytically challenging matrices. Naturally occurring compounds such as squalene, carotenoids, and other terpenic structures can cause significant interferences and must be efficiently removed prior to MOAH quantification by LC-GC-FID. Epoxidation represents a critical step in eliminating these biogenic interferences. Furthermore, chromatographic interpretation remains a key aspect of the analysis and, in complex cases, may require additional investigation using comprehensive two-dimensional gas chromatography (GC×GC). In 2025, the DTU National Food Institute published the guidance document "Analysis of MOSH and MOAH in Food by GC×GC – Guidance on Analysis, Interpretation and Data Reporting." This document establishes methodological standards for a technically demanding analytical procedure requiring a high level of expertise, thereby improving result comparability and strengthening the scientific basis for risk assessment. During this talk, the latest improvements of the analysis procedure will be and the advantages of GCxGC technology to evaluate the toxicological relevant MOAH fraction will be addressed.

Tuesday • June 9, 2026 – Afternoon Session

Updates in Agricultural, Nutrient and Microbiology Analysis – Brian Sculd, Chair

2:00 – 2:30 pm: Lab Legends: Mastering High Volume Operations and Knowing When to Call for Backup

Emily Moss – Nestle Quality Assurance

In today's fast-paced laboratory environment, managing high volume operations efficiently is crucial for success. This presentation shares practical tips and strategies to help lab professionals optimize workflows, boost productivity, and maintain quality. Attendees will learn how to identify potential bottlenecks, implement effective time management techniques, and organize their workspace to maximize efficiency. Furthermore, we will cover troubleshooting techniques for when things go wrong and highlight when it's time to ask for help. Join us to unlock the secrets of thriving in high volume labs and ensure your operations run smoothly, even during peak demand.

2:30 – 3:00 pm: Agricultural Microbiology Solutions: Bruker MALDI Biotyper®

Canlon Bruer – Bruker

The Bruker MALDI Biotyper® enables rapid, accurate microbial ID using proteomic fingerprinting. This presentation highlights its value in agricultural microbiology - improving QC, reducing costs, supporting regulatory compliance, and enabling custom libraries for environmental and proprietary strains.

3:00 – 3:30 pm: Agricultural Microbiology Solutions: Bruker IR Biotyper®

Canlon Bruer – Bruker

The Bruker IR Biotyper® enables rapid, same-day strain typing using FT-IR spectroscopy for outbreak tracking, source identification, and QC. Combined with the Bruker MALDI Biotyper®, it delivers comprehensive microbial insight from species ID to strain-level differentiation.

3:30 – 3:45 pm – Break

3:45 – 4:15 pm: One Format to Rule Them All: A Look at The New Streamlined PTM Certificate

R. Lucas Gray - Neogen

The official record of a Performance Tested Method is a PTM Certificate from the AOAC Research Institute- but just what do those certificates contain? The AOAC-RI is completing an effort to standardize and streamline all PTM certificates to make the scope clear and the supporting data visible without being overwhelming. This session will review the changes to the PTM certificate format, show how supporting information is presented, and examine ways in which method developers can best align documentation to PTM claims.

4:15 – 4:45 pm: What Role Does Accurate Mass Spectrometry Play in Food Testing?

Amanda Souza - Sciex

Nominal mass-based triple quadrupole systems are predominantly used for residue and contaminant testing in food due to their robust performance against complex matrices and high sensitivity in meeting regulatory limits, but newer accurate mass systems, equipped with technological innovations, are closing in on the sensitivity gap with nominal mass systems. High-resolution mass spectrometry (HRMS) provides greater selectivity, improving low-level detection and quantitation, especially in the presence of co-eluting interferences and noisy baselines that are often present in complex food matrices. Different acquisition strategies, such as data dependent acquisition (DDA) and data independent acquisition (DIA), enable screening of known and unknown compounds without a priori knowledge. Here, we present an overview of different HRMS workflows, including high selectivity MRMHR-based quantitation of PFAS in food, suspect and unknown drug screening of dietary supplements and the use of orthogonal electron activated dissociation (EAD) fragmentation to complement identification through diagnostic ion screening.

Challenges in the Analysis of Infant Formula and its Ingredients – Andrew Savage, Ujwal Patil, Chairs

2:00 – 2:30 pm: Quantitative Determination of Cereulide Toxin in Infant Formula and Ingredients Using LC–MS/MS.

Adam DeWilde – Eurofins

Recent cases of cereulide toxin contamination in infant formula have underscored the need for monitoring of ingredients and finished products to ensure the safety of foods intended for vulnerable

populations. The cereulide toxin, a heat-stable dodecadepsipeptide produced by certain strains of Bacillus cereus, is responsible for emetic food poisoning and can cause sever gastrointestinal symptoms, mitochondrial dysfunction, liver failure, and, in rare cases, death, particularly in infants and young children. In response to the need for testing, an analytical method for the quantification of cereulide using liquid chromatography coupled with tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS) was developed and validated. This method was modified from the ISO 18465:2017 for quantitative determination of emetic toxin (cereulide) using LC-MS/MS. The method was later adapted to meet the European Food Safety Authority acute reference dose limits for infants by implementing QuEChERS sample preparation workflow. This work supports the implementation of a validated LC–MS/MS approach for cereulide analysis in infant nutrition products and ingredients. The method met validation benchmarks for all evaluated matrices, demonstrating mean recoveries within 70–120% and precision better than 20% relative standard deviation (RSD). Quantification was based on the use of stable isotope labeled internal standards to correct for matrix effects. Cereulide identity was confirmed using retention time matching and qualifier to quantifier multiple reaction monitoring (MRM) peak area ratios. The method strengthens analytical preparedness for risk assessment, and regulatory compliance considering increased scrutiny following recent contamination events.

2:30 – 3:00 pm: Setup and Validation of a Sensitive, Robust and High-Throughput LC-MS/MS Method for Determination of Thirty Priority PFAS in Infant Formula and Related Ingredients.

Michael Buhrman – Eurofins

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are man-made chemicals that have been widely used in various industries and products. Due to the potential adverse health effects and environmental persistence, there are growing concerns about the widespread exposure to the public. Given their persistence, resistance to degradation, and tendency to accumulate in biological systems, dietary intake is considered a significant contributor to overall human exposure. This underscores the importance of sensitive and reliable analytical methods capable of detecting PFAS at trace levels, in order to support risk assessment, regulatory compliance, and monitoring efforts. A wide range of analytical methodologies is currently available for the testing of food matrices including infant formulae and their ingredients; however, ongoing regulatory developments continue to drive the need for improved performance. In particular, the progressive lowering of maximum limits places greater demands on analytical workflows. As a result, methods that were previously considered fit-for-purpose may no longer provide the required sensitivity, selectivity, or robustness. In this study, an LC-MS/MS method was setup and validated in routine food analysis lab for low-level detection of 30 priority PFAS in powdered and ready-to-eat infant formulae and selected ingredients. Samples were extracted using a modified QuEChERS workflow followed by further extract clean-up on Agilent Technologies enhanced matrix removal (EMR) PFAS II SPE past-through cartridges. Instrumental analysis was performed using Agilent 1290 Infinity II fitted with PFC-free kit and coupled to 6495D triple quadrupole mass spectrometer. Large volume injections were implemented along with a feed injection port to achieve the required sensitivity while maintaining acceptable peak shape for early eluting analytes. The method validation data generated in this study support the acceptable performance of the method compliant with the AOAC Standard Method Performance Requirements (SMPRs®) 2023.003.

3:00 – 3:30 pm: Protein Quality Estimations for Plant-Based Enteral Formulas

Philip Haselberger – Abbott Nutrition

Protein quality evaluation requires determination of amino acid (AA) composition, digestibility correction, and application of amino acid reference patterns. Pea protein–based formulas present a

relevant analytical case due to formulation complexity, sulfur amino acid (SAA) supplementation, and increasing use. The objective is to characterize protein quality of pea protein–based formulas using AA data, protein digestibility-corrected AA score (PDCAAS), and digestible indispensable AA score (DIAAS), emphasizing methodological inputs and reference pattern selection.

3:30 – 3:45 pm – Break

3:45 – 4:15 pm: AOAC Official Method 2021.02: Challenges in the Quantification of Beta-Galactooligosaccharides by UPLC

Christian Searcy – Nestle Quality Assurance

Beta-galactooligosaccharides (GOS) are an important additive in infant formula, performing some of the functions of the diverse oligosaccharides naturally found in human milk. GOS are prebiotics and are low molecular weight dietary fiber that help promote the growth of healthy gut bacteria like Bifidobacterium. The official method, AOAC-2021.01, for the determination of GOS in infant formula by UPLC is a method that offers a solution to quantify GOS accurately in any infant formula product, without having to know the specific ingredients in a formula. At Nestle Quality Assurance Center in Dublin, Ohio, we have used an in-house method for some time, with a plan to move to the AOAC official method. Upon examining updating to the AOAC method, however, we have met several difficulties. The AOAC method time is longer in sample preparation, as well as in data analysis and review, resulting in a challenge to keep costs consistent for customers. Additionally, the AOAC method has a more limited matrix scope, creating an additional hurdle for implementation when raw materials are required to be analyzed. We will take a look at AOAC-2021.01 and challenge if anything could be improved to increase its scope and competitive value.

Wednesday • June 10, 2026 – Morning Session

Dietary Fiber – James Bartos, Chair

9:00 – 9:30 am: What's Driving the Fiber Frenzy?

Trish Dunn – Office of Indiana State Chemist

This presentation will explore the factors that sparked the interest in dietary fiber, and discuss its emergence as a regulatory and analytical priority, along with the broader impact on feed manufacturers, laboratories, and regulators.

9:30 – 10:00 am: How Automation Redefines TDF Testing in Food and Pet Food

Marleen Van Aardt – Ankom Technologies

Dietary fiber analysis is notoriously labor-intensive, often leaving lab technicians stuck filtering sticky samples for hours to meet regulatory labeling standards. Traditional manual methods are slow, prone to human error, and struggle with complex matrices. This presentation explores an automated solution: the ANKOM TDF Dietary Fiber Analyzer. By replacing glassware and manual transfers with automated fluidics and robust filter bag technology, this system eliminates the traditional bottlenecks of enzymatic digestion, incubation, and filtration. We will dive into real-world applications across diverse human food

and pet food matrices, demonstrating how automation drastically cuts hands-on labor, improves repeatability, and accelerates turnaround times in high-throughput testing environments.

10:00 – 10:30 am: Determining the Nitrogen Content in Dietary Fiber Using Kjeldahl Digestion and Distillation

Makawitage A Bandaranayake – Office of Indiana State Chemist

Total dietary fiber (TDF) plays a critical role in human and pet food health, contributing to the prevention of chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and obesity. Accurate quantification of dietary fiber in food/feed matrices is therefore essential for both nutritional evaluation and food quality assessment. This study focuses on the determination of protein in the dietary fiber residue using Kjeldahl digestion and distillation. AOAC method 991.43 using an ANKOMTM Dietary Fiber Analyzer was employed to obtain dietary fiber residue following enzymatic digestion and filtration. However, in addition to dietary fiber, the residue also contains residual protein and minerals/ash. To achieve accurate dietary fiber quantification, the Kjeldahl method was applied to determine the protein content within the residue. The Kjeldahl procedure involves three key stages: digestion, distillation, and titration. During digestion, organic nitrogen present in the sample is converted into ammonium sulfate using concentrated sulfuric acid in the presence of a catalyst. In the subsequent distillation step, ammonium ions are converted into ammonia gas through the addition of a strong base and are collected and quantified by titration. This presentation will focus on the Kjeldahl digestion and distillation using a Xylem/Gerhardt KJELDATHERM digestion block and VAPODEST distillation system. Modification of the "traditional" digestion was required given the need to digest the filter bag and plastic liner. These modifications improved digestion efficiency and ensured accurate nitrogen recovery, leading to more reliable determination of total dietary fiber. This integrated approach using AOAC Method 991.43 on an ANKOM Dietary Fiber Analyzer and Kjeldahl analysis improves the reliability of total dietary fiber calculations by ensuring complete recovery and correction of non-fiber components.

10:30 – 10:45 am – Break

10:45 – 11:15 am: Determination of Residual Protein (Nitrogen) in Dietary Fiber Residue Following Kjeldahl Digestion and Distillation Using an External Auto-titrator

James Bartos – Office of Indiana State Chemist

Determination of dietary fiber in foods and feeds is a complex process requiring several steps. The food/feed product requires the removal of fat followed by "digestion" with different enzymes and heat that help breakdown the carbohydrates and proteins. Both manual and semi-automated (e.g., ANKOM) digestion methods exist for capturing the dietary fiber residue. The residue remaining by filtration after "digestion" requires removal of any nitrogen/protein and ash/minerals to accurately calculate the dietary fiber content. Kjeldahl Nitrogen is the preferred method of determining nitrogen/protein because the amount and size of material remaining after digestion makes determination by combustion challenging. A presentation on performing the Kjeldahl digestion and distillation will precede this presentation. This presentation will focus on using an external automated titrator for the determination of the Nitrogen content in the filtered dietary fiber residue. Some of the benefits and drawbacks of using an external titration unit, as compared to a distillation unit that incorporates a automated titration, will be provided. The rationale, process, and final calculations will also be presented.

11:15 – 11:45 am: Next-Generation Muffle Furnace for Fast Ash Determination in Feed and Pet Food Applications

Ricky Chomicz – CEM

Ash content in animal feeds and pet foods is a critical parameter that must be controlled to maintain proper formulation and avoid digestive issues in animals. Ash content correlates closely with bone content, which has traditionally been measured using chemical titration; however, rapid alternatives such as ash analysis offer comparable results in significantly less time. Explored in this study is a next-generation muffle furnace that analyzes ash content in both raw ingredients and finished products in approximately 30 minutes, without the use of chemical reagents. This energy-efficient technology rapidly heats the furnace, providing exceptional temperature control with fast ramp times. Utilizing this NextGen muffle furnace enables rapid adjustments to reduce out-of-specification products and improve process control in feed and pet food production.

Risk Communication: Navigating Misinformation in Science and Industry – Marielle Weintraub, Chair

9:00 – 9:05 am: **Marielle Weintraub, Ph.D. – Eurofins-FCT, Madison WI**

Welcome & Topic overview

9:05 – 9:40 am: **A picture may be worth a thousand words, but let's not forget that words really matter**

Dave Swain – Vision Tech Management

Looking at the world of information and misinformation in the agricultural industry. We will look at the agricultural industry and the misinformation that is implied, inferred and said. Not only from those outside agriculture, but what is coming from agriculture.

9:40 – 10:15 am: **Dietary Supplement Quality: Addressing Misconceptions Through Established Methods and Sound Testing Strategies**

David Riggs – Eurofins SF Analytical

The rapid proliferation of misinformation related to food ingredients and dietary supplements—driven by digital media, influencers, and selective use of scientific data—has created significant challenges for industry, regulators, and consumers. This 40-minute interactive session will examine practical approaches for addressing misinformation through the application of science-based risk communication and standardized analytical frameworks. This presentation will highlight the regulatory context governing communication, including FDA risk communication principles, FTC requirements for substantiation of claims, and alignment with internationally recognized standards such as Codex Alimentarius. Specific attention will be given to how misinterpretation or misuse of analytical testing data contributes to consumer confusion regarding product safety, ingredient risk, and quality. Case studies will be used to illustrate common areas of misinformation, including ingredient safety (e.g., acceptable daily intakes and exposure thresholds) and dietary supplement efficacy claims. The session will emphasize the importance of applying validated methods, compendial references, and robust testing strategies to support transparent, defensible communication.

10:15 – 10:25am: Q&A with Dave Swain & David Riggs

10:30 – 10:45 am – Break

10:45 – 11:15 am: What is Expertise? A public perspective

Russell Kleiner – Purdue University

With seemingly limitless voices and overnight experts rampant, how do you break through the noise? We will investigate credibility, the modern media landscape, and what public health can teach us about this moment.

11:15 – 11:50am: Facts, Fear, and the Feed: Responding to Food and Supplement Misinformation with Science and Context

Blake Ebersole – NaturPro Scientific LLC

False or misleading claims about foods and dietary supplements often start with something real. An information gap is identified by a marketer. A lab may find a problem or fail a product. An ingredient may raise a safety question. But misinformation grows when these real concerns are removed from context and turned into simple, alarming messages on social media. The way people get information has changed. Many consumers now learn about food ingredients, supplements, contaminants, and safety through TikTok videos, Instagram posts, podcasts, and short online clips. These messages are required to grab attention quickly. Claims such as “this ingredient is toxic” or “your supplement is fake” can spread before people have time to ask what was actually tested, what was found, or whether the claim is supported by evidence. Scientists cannot expect consumers to put all the pieces together on their own. We have testing to tell us what's in a product. We have public health experts to explain whether a finding represents a meaningful risk. But science communicators must then make this information clear and useful for people outside the laboratory. This presentation will use recent food and supplement examples to show how real findings can turn into exaggerated stories. It will explain why scientists must bridge the gap between science and the layperson through a few proven methods. One, is to first acknowledge what is true before correcting what is misleading. It will also discuss how good science communicators respond to viral health claims by speaking directly to the audiences seeing them online. As chemists, we can sometimes explain a mystery we don't understand with "van der Waals forces" or "hydrogen bonding". But fear, confusion, and distrust cannot be solved that way. They require clear communication built for the feed without giving up the science, or the truth.

11:50 – Noon: Panel Discussion and Open Group Q&A

Wednesday • June 10, 2026 – Afternoon Session

Dietary Fiber – James Bartos, Chair

2:00 – 2:30 pm: Update on AOAC Dietary Fiber & Other Carbohydrates (DFC) Program

David Ellingson – Eurofins

The Dietary Fiber & Other Carbohydrates (DFC) Program addresses challenges in fiber analysis arising from evolving scientific understanding and regulatory definitions. While numerous analytical methods

exist, inconsistencies in detection, terminology, and application persist. This program aims to clarify method selection, provide guidance for various matrices, and resolve analytical gaps, ultimately improving the accuracy and consistency of dietary fiber measurement. The intent of this approach is to provide higher level guidance for individuals who may be less familiar with the technical details of dietary fiber analysis. A guidance document was created by subject matter experts across various demographics representing industry, academia, and government to capture a consensus approach for selecting methods from available AOAC Official Method of Analysis for testing dietary fiber in food and/or ingredients. The main tool created for this guidance document is a decision tree to assist the end user through a series of questions to determine the recommended method of analysis. The guidance document also includes supporting information for the decision tree in the form of regulatory definitions, acronyms and definitions, AOAC Official Methods of Analysis for individual non-digestible carbohydrates the tree may refer to, and a table for further explanations and/or logic around the questions posed and direction of the pathways in the decision tree. An update will be provided to share some of the draft documents and where the working group is currently en route to publication.

2:30 – 3:00 pm: Operational challenges and continuous improvement strategies in Dietary Fiber Analysis

Shabnam Zulfa Jaleel – Nestle Quality Assurance

Dietary Fiber analysis remains one of the more operationally challenging areas in food analytical laboratories due to method complexity, matrix variability, analyst dependency and evolving regulatory expectations. At Nestle, routine implementation of AOAC fiber methods across diverse product categories revealed recurring challenges associated with method execution, reproducibility, instrument variability, enzyme performance, sample preparation and result interpretation. These challenges were amplified by increasing testing volumes. The symposium presentation will discuss key operational and technical challenges encountered while running enzymatic -gravimetric integrated total dietary fiber methods (AOAC 991.43, AOAC 2017.16 & AOAC 2022.01) in a high -throughput laboratory environment. Specific focus will be placed on sources of analytical variability, common failure modes, troubleshooting approaches, and the impact of product matrix characteristics on method performance. This presentation will also highlight actions implemented to improve robustness and consistency, including enhanced analyst training, standardized trouble shooting workflows and improved equipment qualification practices. Results from these initiatives demonstrated measurable improvements in repeatability, reduction in method deviations, improved first pass success rates and increased laboratory efficiency. This session aims to provide practical, experience-based insights that may support other laboratories facing similar challenges while encouraging collaborative discussion around improving reliability and operational efficiency in dietary fiber testing.