

AIC Conference 2026

Agri-Food Innovation 2026 - Canada's Unique Advantage for Nation Building
May 26 & 27, 2026 | Sheraton Hotel – Ottawa, ON

Please note that due to changes in the schedules of certain Ministers and Parliamentarians, we are unable to fully confirm a few agenda items at this time. Once final confirmation is received from their offices, the program will be updated accordingly. Should you have any questions regarding the agenda, please do not hesitate to contact us at sbuy@aic.ca.

Day 1 – May 26, 2026	
All sessions to take place in the Rideau Room (2 nd Floor)	
8:00 am	Networking Breakfast
9:00 am	Welcome and Opening Remarks
	Serge Buy, CEO, Agri-Food Innovation Council
9:10 am	Setting the stage – A vision of where agri-food research and innovation should be by 2030 in a world in transition
	Darren Anderson , Co-Founder and CEO, Vive Crop Protection
9:45 am	Agriculture and Food Research in a changing landscape
	Marianne Dandurand , Member of Parliament, Compton-Stanstead; Chair, Liberal Rural Caucus and Member, Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food
10:15 am	Networking Break
10:30 am	Agriculture and food - a catalyst for Canada's economy
	The Honourable Kody Blois , PC, MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister
11:15 am	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada – Science and Technology Branch – An update
	Mr. Andrew Goldstein , Associate Assistant Deputy Minister, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
12:15 pm	Networking Lunch
1:30 pm	Panel – Harvesting Innovation - Solving Workforce Challenges in Agri-Food
	Patience Palmer , Program Manager, Canadian Agri-Food Automation & Intelligence Network
	Issam El Missaoui , Co-Founder & CEO, Yadag
	Phyllis MacCallum , Director - Research & Knowledge Mobilization, Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC)
2:15 pm	From Lab to Market to Global Impact: Connecting Innovation to Power Canada's Agri-Food Trade
	Dr. Al Mussell , Research Lead and Founder, Agri-Food Economic Systems
3:00 pm	Networking Break
3:15 pm	A changing trade environment and expanding markets: impact on Canadian agri-food
	Michael Harvey , Executive Director, Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance
4:00 pm	End of presentations
5:30 – 8:00 pm	Reception (Penthouse Level)

Day 2 – May 27, 2026 All sessions to take place in the Rideau Room (2nd Floor)	
8:00 am	Networking Breakfast
9:00 am	Recap of Day 1
9:15 am	Keynote speech – Agri-Food as a Catalyst for our economy
	TBC
9:45 am	What Global Markets Want: Overcoming Regulatory and Market-Access Barriers in Canada’s Agri-Food Trade Diversification Moderator: Nikita Eriksen-Hamel , Deputy Director of Food Systems Practice, Global Affairs Canada Mike Obrist , Deputy Director, Global Affairs Canada - Trade Commissioner Service Flora Mak , Deputy Director, Food Systems and Nutrition Division, Global Affairs Canada Kyle Kierstead , Acting Deputy Director, Innovation and Growth Policy Division, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada James Achoneftos , Director, Consumer Products Manufacturing Directorate, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
10:45 am	Networking Break
11:00 am	Success Story
11:30 am	Success Story
12:00 pm	Networking Lunch
1:15 pm	Panel - Re-imagining the Agri-Food Science, Technology and Innovation Ecosystem: Connections, Investments and Solutions Tim Warland , Senior Advisor, IoT Products, FABrIC by CMC Microsystems TBC
2:00 pm	Canada’s agriculture and food innovation deficit Dr. Sylvain Charlebois , Professor, Food Distribution and Policy, Faculty of Management, School for Resource and Environmental Studies & Scientific Director, Canadian Agriculture Foresight Institute, Dalhousie University
2:45 pm	Networking Break
3:00 pm	Market diversification - A Case Study: Expectations from the Middle East and North Africa Mazen Chouaib , President & CEO, CLIC Consulting
3:45 pm	Next Policy Framework - Strengthening and Growing Canada's Agri-Food Network Steven Jurgutis , Director General, Policy, Planning and Integration Directorate, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
4:30 pm	Conference Wrap Up