



Building More Value for Every FP&SA Member

2026

FP&SA continues to evolve into a more connected, solutions-focused association for food manufacturers, OEMs, suppliers, and partners across the full food production ecosystem.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Dear FPSA Members,

Thank you for your continued support of FPSA and for the role you play in strengthening our industry. Your time, investment, ideas, and participation are what make the Food Production Solutions Association meaningful. Like many of you, I have benefited for years from FPSA programs, events, and the industry relationships built through this Association. I am grateful for that history, and I am also encouraged by the changes taking place. In order to better serve our members, FPSA has evolved with new events, more relevant webinars, higher-quality research and an online member community, stronger communication, better social media engagement, and a leaner Board structure.

These changes are focused on one clear goal: to increase the value every member receives from FPSA. But that value will not be created by the FPSA staff, the Board, or programs alone. It is created when members like yourself choose to engage by contributing their expertise, inviting colleagues and customers into the conversation, and using FPSA as a platform to strengthen their companies and advance the broader food production industry.

The pages that follow showcase those changes and improvements, and also serve as FPSA's 2026 Annual Report. They highlight what we accomplished together this year in education, research, events, workforce development, and philanthropic initiatives outlining where we are headed next.

01 A broader mission for a changing industry

In 2024, the Food Processing Suppliers Association became the Food Production Solutions Association. With that change, we purposely refocused FPSA on the entire food production community. This strategic shift allows FPSA to bring together the people and companies working on the same practical challenges across food production, creating more opportunities to share expertise and find solutions together. FPSA membership is now inclusive of: food manufacturers; processing and packaging OEMs; suppliers of technology, parts, and service; Associate members who provide business and professional services; consultants; and the agencies, innovators, and other stakeholders shaping the industry.

By bringing these groups together, FPSA creates opportunities for collaboration, intelligence sharing, education, and business growth that are difficult to find elsewhere. This will be especially important as OEMs and Associate members invite food manufacturers into the Association. The entire dynamic changes when we come together in a collaborative, non-sales environment focused on shared challenges and practical solutions.

OUR VISION

FPSA connects the various perspectives of food manufacturers, the companies that support them, and the stakeholders shaping the future. Together, we solve industry challenges, explain emerging technologies and issues, develop future talent, and accelerate industry growth.

02

Education focused on shared industry challenges

In the past year, FPSA has taken a more strategic approach to the issues our members share, regardless of business type or food vertical. Based on member input, we have organized our educational strategy around five core themes that FPSA is focused on developing:

FPSA Core Educational Topics				
Focused learning priorities designed to help members address shared challenges across the food production industry.				
<div>01</div> <div>Career & Leadership</div> <div>Developing leaders and building stronger career pathways.</div>	<div>02</div> <div>Food Safety</div> <div>Sharing practices that protect consumers and strengthen trust.</div>	<div>03</div> <div>Regulatory Developments</div> <div>Helping members understand changing requirements and risks.</div>	<div>04</div> <div>Technology & Innovation</div> <div>Exploring tools, automation, and ideas shaping production.</div>	<div>05</div> <div>Workforce & Human Capital</div> <div>Addressing talent, retention, skills, and workforce readiness.</div>
Built by member input. Developed through FPSA programs. Strengthened by participation.				



A full calendar of free Webinar Wednesday sessions now draws on Councils, Networks, member companies, and invited subject-matter experts. The programming is more consistent and more closely aligned with the issues members must address across food verticals. Members can also host educational webinars that showcase their expertise while remaining focused on useful, non-promotional content.

In September, the Food Safety Network again anchored Food Safety Education Month with a four-part Webinar Wednesday series covering sanitary facility and equipment design; the convergence of food safety, food defense, and cybersecurity; hygienic design and foreign material prevention; and a participant-driven Food Safety Exchange on food safety culture. In total, FPSA hosted 25 webinars in 2026, reaching over 2,000 registrants.

25

webinars hosted in 2026

2,000+

registrants reached

The same priorities guide education at the Food Solutions Exchange (FSX) and will shape some of the educational programming at the new Food Production Solutions Show (FPSS). Two of this year's newest programs came directly out of that member input. Our workforce research, *The Future of Food Manufacturing: Workforce, Technology Adoption & Organizational Readiness*, published in 2025 surfaced leadership development and knowledge transfer as pressing concerns across member companies. In response, FPSA built Cultivate: Leadership Growth Lab, and the Emerging Leaders Program, both created to give the next generation of industry professionals practical leadership and management skills and a peer network that reaches across member organizations. Together they bring the Career and Leadership track to life, developing leaders and building stronger career pathways at a point in their careers when that support makes the most difference. Looking ahead, we are evaluating continuing-education opportunities for Food Industry Technician program graduates so they can keep building their skills throughout their careers.



Learning on your schedule. FPSA Connect, our online member community, gives everyone at a member company a place to ask questions, share practical experience, and connect with peers between events. Every FPSA webinar is also recorded and available on demand in the FPSA Connect Library, so members can learn on their own schedule and share sessions with their teams.

03 Research designed for organizational decisions, not shelves

Before 2025, FPSA's primary industry research product was the annual Global Trends Study. The 2025 Trends Study was 850 pages, and the full report was downloaded fewer than 40 times. This year, it was replaced by the jointly sponsored PMMI/FPSA Processing State of the Industry report, which included an interactive research dashboard. Downloads increased by more than 70%, and the new report attracted well over 100 website views, demonstrating substantially stronger audience engagement than the previous report.

As we go forward, FPSA is moving from a single annual research product to a timelier and more usable research portfolio. You will notice that the number of FPSA research reports—available free to members—is increasing. In 2025, FPSA engaged Cypress Research to produce a Workforce Gap and Solutions report which took a deeper look at the current state of workforce issues. In October of this year, FPSA released The Future of Food Manufacturing: Workforce, Technology Adoption & Organizational Readiness, examining how food manufacturers, OEMs, and solution providers are adopting automation and AI, and how those changes are reshaping workforce needs in hiring, skills, training, and retention.

All FPSA Research reports are free to members at the fpsa.org/connect library.

Our research commitment

Our goal is to produce at least three research reports each year, free to FPSA members. Each report will help members understand and benchmark important issues that affect our industry

04 Investing in people and communities

We should also take a moment to recognize FPSA's long-standing commitment to our member families, the next generation of industry talent, and food security needs across the country. These efforts are possible because members continue to give time, resources, and support beyond their own immediate business interests.

In 2026, FPSA and our members contributed more than \$212,000 through scholarships and charitable giving.

Scholarships

FPFA continues to support the industry's future through scholarships awarded by its Foundation and Councils. In 2026, these programs awarded 18 scholarships with a total value of \$167,200. Eligibility varies by program, with some awards available to family members of employees at FPFA member companies and others focused on specific fields of study.

Program	Awards	Value per award	Total value
FPFA Foundation Career Development Scholarships	5	\$10,000	\$50,000
Emerging Leaders Program Scholarship	5	\$10,000	\$50,000
MISA Foundation Scholarship Fund	6	\$10,000	\$60,000
Tom Imbordino Memorial Dairy Science Scholarship	2	\$3,600	\$7,200
TOTAL	18		\$167,200

Charitable giving

Giving back is a longstanding FPFA tradition. In 2026, Defeat Hunger contributed \$5,000 to a food bank in Palm Springs, California. The initiative is funded through fees from the charity golf tournament held during the annual conference. FPFA Councils also raised funds through silent and live auctions at the conference and collectively donated more than \$40,000 to charities in 2026.



05 More ways to connect, learn, and grow

One of the most visible ways FPSA is changing and growing is in the number of educational opportunities it holds each year. We've been adding new events that align with the needs of our members. The biennial trade show, now reimagined as the Food Production Solutions Show, remains important, but every member should understand that the value of an FPSA membership extends well beyond a floor-space discount. Our expanding event portfolio creates year-round opportunities for education, relationships, and business development at multiple levels within member companies.



GROWING TALENT AT EVERY LEVEL OF THE FOOD INDUSTRY

From the factory floor to the executive suite, FPSA programs meet professionals where they are and help them take the next step.

Scholarships & Awards



Investing in education, recognizing excellence, and developing talent at every level

[Learn more →](#)

Technicians



Building the next generation of food industry technicians.

[Learn more →](#)

Next-Generation Leaders



Leadership training for the next generation.

[Learn more →](#)

New & Future Managers



Management preparation and coaching for new and future managers.

[Learn more →](#)

Senior Leaders



Convening senior food industry leaders to share ideas and understand future challenges and opportunities.

[Learn more →](#)

food production solutions show

[Learn more →](#)

One show for every level

The Food Production Solutions Show reaches professionals at all levels.

This year's FSX, held March 11-13 at The Westin Rancho Mirage Golf Resort & Spa, featured our second open Call for Speakers, which drew a record 59 submissions. The resulting program covered managing growth, navigating crisis, AI and automation, workforce transformation, and the global trade dynamics affecting food production. Attendees responded strongly to the experience. In the post-event survey, 88 percent of respondents rated FSX 2026 a 4 or 5 out of 5, the same share said the meeting met or exceeded their expectations, and 92 percent reported making at least one valuable business connection. The workforce conversation resonated in particular: Jake Hall's (The Manufacturing Millennial) general session on the future of manufacturing was the event attendees named most often as most valuable, and his roundtable session earned the highest rating of any part of the program.

59

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2027 Food
Solutions
Exchange
& Conference

Food Solutions Exchange (FSX)

APRIL 5-7, 2027 | ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

FPSPA's premier executive-level gathering makes its way to The Vinoy Resort & Golf Club with the theme "Solve It Together." FSX brings processors, OEMs, suppliers, and industry partners into one room to tackle the challenges shaping food production. We're encouraging every attendee to bring the person they solve problems with, because the best ideas leave the room with a team ready to act on them.





Food Production Solutions Show

OCTOBER 26–28, 2027 | MCCORMICK PLACE, CHICAGO

With co-owner Messe Frankfurt, FPSA is reimagining the biennial show around the journey of building and scaling a commercial food manufacturing business. The show will continue to feature OEMs while highlighting other processing elements, like test kitchens, contract manufacturers and packagers, distributors, and education on food safety, regulatory compliance, and financing. You can learn more at fpsa.org and our upcoming webinar on February 3, 2027.



Regional Meetings

BRINGING FPSA CLOSER TO MEMBERS

Launched this year, these affordable half day gatherings bring members and prospective members together in a specific region for a topical presentation, a member-facility tour, and informal networking. Meetings were held in Chicago (Frain) and Kansas City (MULTIVAC) this year, and FPSA plans to hold at least two each year going forward.

06 Developing the industry's workforce and future leaders

FPSA is also deepening its commitment to training. Most of you are familiar with the Food Industry Technician Training Program delivered at the Lincoln Technical University campus in Indianapolis, IN. It remains the only hands-on training program focused on factory-floor level workers in the food production industry. Hiring its graduates, supporting the program, and helping shape its future are all ways members can directly strengthen the talent pipeline we all depend on.



Food Industry Technician Program

HANDS-ON TECHNICAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT

For years, the FIT program has prepared people for factory-floor roles at member companies, often as assemblers or service technicians. Many graduates have progressed into training, sales, and other roles. The program is approaching 500 graduates since inception. Following founder David Seckman's retirement this year, Louis Townsend Jr. became Executive Director focused on marketing and demand generation, class recruiting in support of Lincoln Tech, and continued alignment of the curriculum with market needs.



Emerging Leaders Program

A SIX-MONTH HYBRID MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Launched this year, the Emerging Leaders Program is designed for new managers or those preparing to move into a management role. Each cohort begins and ends with an in-person session and meets virtually each month in between. FPSA scholarships help ensure that rising talent from smaller member companies can participate. Cohort 2 is launching in early 2027. Learn more at fpsa.org/emerging-leaders.



"As a result of the emerging leaders program, I'm coaching more and mentoring less. I'm leaving behind the 'hero' syndrome and developing more trust in my team."

Mayron Sardou, Dennis Group, Emerging Leaders Cohort 1



Cultivate: A Leadership Growth Lab

NOVEMBER 5–6, 2026 | LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

In November, FPSA hosted Cultivate: Leadership Growth Lab in Lexington, Kentucky, a two-day, hands-on program that built leadership skills for emerging professionals in food production and manufacturing. Participants used a complimentary DiSC assessment to explore their leadership styles and toured Toyota Motor Manufacturing Kentucky, the largest vehicle manufacturing plant in the world to learn about automation, teamwork and benchmarking operational excellence. Each attendee left with a personal action plan and a peer accountability network.

07 Membership, community, and partnerships

Open houses for every Network and Council

One of the greatest benefits of participating in an FPSA Council or Network is learning directly from peers who face many of the same challenges and opportunities you do. This year, we opened those conversations to more of the industry. Councils and Networks hosted Open Houses, inviting members who don't typically participate, and in some cases prospective members, to join a Hot Topic discussion relevant to their community. This format provided a welcoming entry point and helped strengthen connections and increase awareness of FPSA's programs, volunteer opportunities, and member resources.

Members now call the Hot Topic the "meat" of the meeting, where knowledge sharing becomes collective problem-solving around timely industry challenges. The range of topics shows why:





The Food Safety Network discussed AI's growing role in food safety, food traceability requirements, and industry initiatives focused on practical food safety and hygienic design guidance.



The Design Build Network explored the challenges of aging food manufacturing facilities, the cost of delaying infrastructure investments, and what processors really expect from their design-build partners.



The Beverage Council examined growth in protein and functional beverages, aseptic processing, packaging considerations, and the market trends shaping beverage manufacturing.

The format grew out of the Emerging Professionals Network, which began inviting guest speakers to its meetings. Wendy Bushell of Palermo's Pizza's HR team shared her career journey and challenged each participant to choose one skill to develop and report back to the group. Dave Gregory, Director of Learning & Development at Weber, offered practical advice on leadership and career growth. Most recently, Ben Reeder of ARCO Design/Build spent an hour with the group on networking, relationship-building, overcoming imposter syndrome, and creating meaningful industry connections.

These conversations now continue between meetings in FPSA Connect. Members stay informed about upcoming discussions, access meeting materials and recordings, and keep asking questions of the peers they met around the table. The best ideas don't always come from presentations. Often, they come from conversations with people tackling the same challenges you are.



In its first full year, FPSA Connect strengthened member-to-member engagement by providing dedicated spaces for Councils, Networks, and Core Topic Communities. Members contributed 261 discussion posts and accessed educational resources more than 1,200 times through Resource Library views and downloads. The platform has become a valuable extension of the FPSA member experience, enabling year-round learning and collaboration.

Partnerships

Partnerships extended FPSPA's reach this year. Together with Messe Frankfurt, we are building the new Food Production Solutions Show, launching in October 2027, and with PMMI we delivered the 2026 Processing State of the Industry Report. ITR Economics continues to give members monthly economic insight through the FPSPA Connect Library, along with planning tools like the 2030s Geographic Strategy Workbook. MeatingPlace partnered with us at FSX, presenting the Richard L. Knowlton Award winners during our general session. Lincoln Tech continues to host the Food Industry Technician program, and our first regional meeting in Kansas City came together in partnership with CPA and MULTIVAC opening its facility to host. Industry partners also brought their expertise directly to members through Webinar Wednesday, with sessions hosted alongside Intralox, RecycleMe, Parker Freeze Dry and Workforge just to name a few.

08 A stronger value proposition for every member category

FPSPA's broad membership is a strength, but it becomes a much greater strength when each category is active and visible. The Association's programs, research, and events are intended to create distinct value for food manufacturers, equipment manufacturers, associate members, and consultants while increasing collaboration across every group.



One Association. Every Member Perspective. Shared Industry Value.

The value grows when food manufacturers, OEMs, Associates, and consultants engage together in a collaborative, non-sales environment.

<div>FOOD MANUFACTURERS</div> <div>SOLVE</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connect with OEM and supplier business leaders.• Discover practical ideas in processing, packaging, and automation.• Benchmark with peers facing similar production challenges.• Access research, talent programs, and trusted expertise.</div>	<div>OEMs</div> <div>CONNECT</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the trends and needs of the industry.• Invite food manufacturer customers into higher-level industry conversations.• Build stronger organizations through education, insight, and service.• Develop talent and relationships across the industry.</div>	<div>ASSOCIATES & CONSULTANTS</div> <div>ENABLE</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share practical knowledge, market insight, and specialized services.• Build credibility through useful, non-promotional participation.• Connect food manufacturers and OEMs around shared needs.</div>
<div>How we create value: participate with purpose, engage with industry leaders, and turn shared insight into progress and sustainability for the food production industry.</div>		

09 The next chapter of FPSA depends on us

The Food Production Solutions Association exists to bring the food production industry together, strengthen relationships and collaboration, equip leaders with useful information, and advance safety, operational improvement, and business innovation. I am especially thankful for the leadership, staff, Councils, Networks, and Board members who have helped reposition FPSA for this next phase. They have pivoted the organization with focus and energy, engaged other industry associations, expanded our visibility, and helped make FPSA more relevant to the broader food production community.

The transition has been foundational, but the next chapter cannot be built by FPSA leadership alone. It depends on broader participation from all of us. Please attend a webinar or regional meeting. Send rising leaders to our programs. Share your expertise. Use the research. If you are an OEM or associate member, invite a food manufacturer customer or industry peer into the conversation. Serve on a Council or Network. Connect directly with another member who can help solve a challenge. The more we engage with each other in a collaborative, non-sales environment, the more valuable FPSA becomes for every member company. I am confident FPSA's direction can be meaningful for many organizations that share a common commitment to the advancement, sustainability, and safety of food production.

Thank you again for your continued support of FPSA, its events, and its programs. I appreciate what you have already contributed, and I look forward to working together to build a Food Production Solutions Association that delivers greater value to both current and future members. FPSA is your community—a place to engage, share practical experience, and work together to understand and solve the challenges that shape our industry.

Your 2027 membership renewal invoice will arrive in November. Renewing keeps your entire team connected to everything in this review, and I hope you will continue to be part of what comes next.

I look forward to seeing you at upcoming FPSA and industry events and I welcome your conversations.

Sincerely,

Erik Brainard

Erik Brainard

President and CEO, Anritsu Infivis Inc., Americas Region
Chairman of the Board
Food Production Solutions Association