FORT WORTH®

IFTPS

ANNUAL MEETING

MARCH 1-4, 2027

CONFERENCE AGENDA

SPEAKERS, SESSIONS AND MORE



MARCH 1-4, 2027 • FORT WORTH, TEXAS

AGENDA AT A GLANCE

IFTPS 2027 Annual Meeting | Fort Worth, Texas

• March 1–4, 2027 •

MONDAY, MARCH 1

Welcome to Fort Worth

1:00 pm	Past Presidents Meeting & Luncheon (Invitation Only)
3:00 pm	Interactive Packaging Workshop: Join us for the first ever interactive workshop. ***Be sure to register for this additional session on line.***
5:00 pm	First-Time Attendee Session
6:00 pm	Welcome Reception

TUESDAY, MARCH 2

8:30 am	Welcome / Annual Business Meeting
9:15 am	On the Shoulders of Giants: Our IFTPS Legacy, Current Challenges, and Future Opportunities Legacy – Tim Haley, PhD
10:00 am	Stumbo Student Presentations
10:45 am	Break & Poster Session
11:15 am	From Recalls to Reddit: Navigating Food Safety Risk in a Noisy World - Benjamin Chapman, PhD
Noon	Lunch / Student Meeting
1:00 pm	Rapid Microbiological Methods for Spoilage Investigation & Prevention
1:45 pm	Post Process Contamination
2:30 pm	Break & Poster Session
3:00 pm	FEELING THE HEAT: When Thermophiles Challenge the Product and Process After Processing
3:45 pm	Troubleshooting Sterility
4:45 pm	Field Trip - optional with registration

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3

Technical Sessions & Committees

8:30 am	Pouch Seal Integrity; Process Authority Lessons
10:00 am	Break & Poster Session
10:45 am	Retort Recall / Regulatory Case Studies
11:30 am	Lunch Sponsored by Bush Bros.
1:00 pm	Microbiology Committee
2:00 pm	In-Container Committee
3:00 pm	Aseptic Committee
4:00 pm	Document Committee
5:00 pm	Vendor Cocktail Reception

THURSDAY, MARCH 4

Technical, Regulatory & Closing

8:30 am	Aseptic Processing Bio-validation
9:15 am	Process Authority in Commercialization
10:15 am	Continuous-Flow Thermal Processing
11:00 am	Microbiology Roundtable
12:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm	FDA Update: Glenn Black
2:30 pm	Break & Poster Session
2:45 pm	FDA Update: Dan Geffen
4:00 pm	Closing

Schedule subject to change

Agenda

1:00 pm
1st Annual Past President Meeting & Luncheon (by invitation)

3:00 pm
Interactive Packaging Workshop - $150.00 per person - additional ticket required

Double Seam Evaluation course provides training to develop and enhance skills necessary to properly evaluate the integrity of double seams and their importance to food can safety. The class covers seam formation, essential measurements and possible can seam/end defects. Dr. Scott Whiteside from Clemson University will join the Silgan Technical Service team to share case studies of poor seams he has seen in industry and their effects. After the training, participants can also conduct manual seam teardowns under instructor supervision.

5:00 pm
First-Time Attendee Session

6:00 pm
Welcome Reception



Tuesday • March 2, 2027

7:30 - 8:30 - Breakfast

8:30–9:15 - Welcome / Annual Business Meeting



9:15–10:00 - On the Shoulders of Giants: Our IFTPS Legacy, Current Challenges, and Future Opportunities Legacy – Tim Haley, PhD - In October 1981, a small group of thermal processing specialists from government and industry gathered in Crystal City, Virginia, for a conference hosted by Central Analytical Laboratories (now TechniCAL) to examine the responsibilities of process authorities. The gathering demonstrated the need for an independent professional organization that would foster collaboration, facilitate the exchange of technical knowledge, and provide a forum for addressing challenges in thermal processing. That vision led to the incorporation of the Institute for Thermal Processing Specialists (IFTPS) in 1982 under the leadership of Gerald Bee.

Over the ensuing 45 years, IFTPS has evolved in response to advances in technology, changing regulatory expectations, and the evolving needs of its members. Through its published guidelines, technical conferences, and professional networking, the Institute has facilitated the exchange of knowledge in thermal processing science and engineering while extending its reach to an international community of specialists.

This Legacy Keynote honors the people whose vision and contributions shaped the Institute, celebrates the legacy they helped establish, explores current challenges, and considers opportunities that lie ahead.

10:00–10:45 - Stumbo Student Presentations

10:45–11:15 - Break / Poster Session



11:15–12:00 - From Recalls to Reddit: Navigating Food Safety Risk in a Noisy World - Benjamin Chapman, PhD - Food safety decisions are shaped by organizational culture, scientific evidence, media coverage, and an increasingly complex information environment. From recalls and outbreaks to viral social media claims, food safety professionals must navigate uncertainty, misinformation, and public perceptions of risk. This seminar will explore the intersection of food safety culture, risk communication, and the challenges of separating evidence from chatter. Drawing on examples from food production, retail, foodservice, and popular media, we'll examine practical tools for evaluating and communicating risk. Using examples from the Risky or Not? podcast, we'll walk through a decision-making framework for assessing everyday food safety questions and developing actionable recommendations.

12:00 - Lunch

Tuesday • March 2, 2027



1:00–1:45 - Rapid Microbiological Methods for Spoilage Investigation, and Prevention – Erdogan Ceylan, Merieux NutriSciences. Microbiological methods enable faster detection and identification of pathogens and spoilage microorganisms. This presentation explores their applications in contamination investigations, root-cause analysis, process validation, and preventive strategies to improve food safety, product quality, and microbial control.

1:45–2:30 - Post Process Contamination – Ashley Maners, Red Gold Tomatoes. This presentation explores Red Gold's transition from hot fill and hold processing to non-aseptic cold fill operations, highlighting the challenges of preventing post-process contamination and economic spoilage. Attendees will learn how Red Gold uses innovative monitoring technologies, including digital environmental mapping, PCR, and metagenomics, along with product challenge studies to assess contamination risks. The session will share key findings from recent research, lessons learned, and ongoing efforts to improve contamination prevention in cold fill processing.

2:30–3:00 - Break / Poster Session





3:00–3:45 - FEELING THE HEAT: When Thermophiles Challenge the Product and Process After Processing - George Afari & Johanna Ramirez, Coca-Cola. What happens when a commercially sterile product leaves the controlled environment of the processing facility and starts to feel the heat? Conventional thermal processes for low- and high-acid foods are designed to control the most thermally resistant pathogen of concern and spoilage organisms capable of growing under anticipated distribution and storage conditions. But the microbial story does not necessarily end when the product leaves the retort, tunnel pasteurizer, or UHT/aseptic process. Hot-vending applications, distribution into warmer climates, temperature excursions during transportation, and extended storage in warm warehouses can create conditions where thermophilic spoilage organisms become an important part of the risk equation.

Under these conditions, organisms that may not normally drive process design can become relevant when surviving spores encounter temperatures favorable for germination and growth. Suddenly, the question is not simply "Was the scheduled process adequate?" but also "Adequate for what happens next?"
This session will follow the product beyond the processing facility and explore an end-to-end approach for assessing and managing thermophilic spoilage risk. We will examine the interplay among organism heat resistance, growth characteristics, ingredient-specific organism prevalence, product formulation, thermal-process lethality, and post-process time-temperature exposure, and consider how these factors can inform decisions around process design, product formulation, distribution, and storage controls.
The goal is to challenge microbiologists, and food safety/quality experts to think beyond the process itself and consider the entire product journey, ensuring that the controls designed into a product remain effective wherever the supply chain takes it.

3:45–4:30 - Troubleshooting Sterility - Maria Serry - HP Hood

4:45 - Afternoon Field Trip - Registration Required

★ Wednesday • March 3, 2027 ★

7:30 - 8:30 - Breakfast



8:30–9:15 - In-Line Airborne Ultrasound for Retort Pouch Seal Integrity: From Endpoint Inspection to Process Control – Oliver Stauffer, PTI. This presentation shows how pairing in-line airborne ultrasound with an effective QRM framework targets seal defects most likely to compromise sterility in critical retort packaging.



9:15–10:00 - Misadventures in Thermal Process Testing-Listen and Learn– William Smialek. Using personal experiences and those of a few other contributors, this presentation will review several planning, procedural, equipment and judgmental mishaps during lab or field conduction of heat penetration and temperature distribution tests. Putting aside personal pride and embarrassment, the presentation will make an effort to not only illustrate those various unexpected situations, but to also use those as learning opportunities. In turn, outlining proper planning, customer familiarity, product/package and packing line knowledge and good communication with the customer may aid in minimizing any "misadventures".

10:00–10:45 - Break / Poster Session



10:45–11:30 - Case Studies of Low-Acid Canned Foods Retort Goods Recalls / Regulatory Action – Christopher Lopez, TechniCAL. Learn from recalls in the Low-Acid Canned Foods history, the response, and the correction

11:30 - Lunch sponsored by Bush Bros.

Committee Meetings

1:00 – Microbiology
2:00 – In Container
3:00 – Aseptic
4:00 – Document

5:00 - Vendor Cocktail Reception

Thursday • March 4, 2027

7:30 - 8:30 - Breakfast

8:30–9:15 - Evaluation and Bio-validation of Aseptic Processing Systems – Mark Deniston, IEH.



Governing regulations and pre-installation review of systems will be addressed. Post installation review and testing will be discussed including important points of Installation Qualification (IQ) and Operational Qualification (OQ) activities used to properly evaluate instruments, control systems and equipment. Examples will be given of issues found during IQ and OQ activities for systems. Inoculated pack testing of systems will be discussed including test design and data evaluation. Temperature distribution testing of aseptic tanks will be addressed including data evaluation and bio-validation of aseptic tank filters. FDA filing for systems will be briefly discussed with a presentation summary provided.

9:15–10:00 - Beyond the Scheduled Process: The Role of the Process Authority in Commercialization – Topher Liao, SunOpta.



This presentation shows how pairing in-line airborne ultrasound with an effective QRM framework targets seal defects most likely to compromise sterility in critical retort packaging.

10:00–10:15 - Break and Poster Session

10:15–11:00 - From Conservative Assumptions to More Precise Control of Continuous Flow Thermal Processing for Liquid Food and Beverage Products – Yi Wang, PhD, Campden BRI



Practical validation of continuous flow thermal processes can reveal discrepancies between manufacturers' operating experience and conservative validation outcomes. This presentation examines three oversimplified conservative assumptions commonly applied in validation: uniform temperature throughout the holding tube, exclusion of lethality contributions during heating and cooling, and treatment of flow as laminar at Reynolds numbers below 4,000. Using practical examples, the presentation will demonstrate how computational fluid dynamics (CFD) modelling, supported by experimental studies, can refine these assumptions and inform a more accurate approach to lethality calculation. A later goal of this study is to propose a revised calculation method incorporating improved correction factors. The presentation will also explore how additional temperature, flow rate, and pressure measurements, combined with the proposed method, could improve critical control point (CCP) monitoring and enable more precise control of operating conditions. The aim is to help liquid food and beverage manufacturers optimize continuous flow thermal processes while maintaining food safety and reducing product losses, processing time, energy consumption, and operating costs. A real manufacturer case study will be presented to demonstrate the practical benefits of the approach, including opportunities to increase production flow rate and reduce processing temperature while continuing to meet the required food safety targets.

11:00–12:00 - Aseptic Roundtable

12:00 - Lunch





1:00 - 2:30 - FDA Update – Glenn Black

2:30–2:45 - Break and Poster Session

2:45–4:00 - FDA Update – Dan Geffen

4:00 - Closing