



# MAKING IT IN MICHIGAN

Conference and Marketplace Trade Show

Wednesday, November 13, 2019 – Lansing Center

## Educational Sessions

### Overview

#### SESSION 1: 8:30am – 9:30am

##### TRACK 1

#### **Selling Your Product to Institutions**

Institutions need safe food, reliably and in bulk. Meeting this demand may be a savvy way to scale your food business. At this session, learn from the experts what a food enterprise needs to know to sell direct to hospitals and schools. The presenters will share what institutional buyers expect when it comes to purchasing products in institutional size packages and common pitfalls for smaller producers.

##### TRACK 2

#### **Common Hurdles as a New Entrepreneur**

There's no need to recreate the wheel. Hear what you need to consider as a new food business directly from a successful food entrepreneur. The speakers will cover innovative ways to test your concept and refine your business plan. Topics will include regulatory compliance, pricing strategy, starting distribution and entering retail.

##### TRACK 3

#### **How to Source Locally Raised Meats & Cheeses**

Consider sourcing local as a means to differentiate your product, using great Michigan tastes. This session will cover how to access high quality meat and cheese ingredients, while supporting local food producers. Our processing experts will explain the costing and supply chain challenges by highlighting national trends and local case studies.

##### TRACK 4

#### **Winning @ Retail – How to Market 'Local'**

If you're growing or producing Michigan food products, you may well dream of seeing your brand sold from grocery shelves and web sites. To help make those dreams a reality, you should understand how to successfully market your local food both to retailers and to their shoppers. Your brand can't get on the shelf without selling to retailers and it can't stay on the shelf without selling to shoppers. Doug Stone will share examples, insights and tips to help you and your local food brand win at retail, based on interviews with key retail executives and food entrepreneurs, and informed by decades of successful food brand marketing experience.



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### SESSION 2: 9:40am – 10:40am

#### TRACK 1

##### **Working with a Retailer – Who, What, Where and How?**

The retail sector can seem opaque to a new food entrepreneur. Attend this session to learn about this industry directly from major retailers. Speakers will detail what is required to put your product into stores and how to be successful once stocked on a crowded, competitive shelf.

#### TRACK 2

##### **Taking the Mystery Out of Lot Coding, UPC's & Shelf Life**

Going wholesale to sell in the retail market, means meeting new requirements. Learn the methods that can commonly trip up food entrepreneurs. Experts will go over how sell-by dates are decided, how to determine and extend shelf life, UPC codes and how to use them, and lot coding.

#### TRACK 3

##### **The Art of Branding Through Your Label**

Labels can sell a product before it is even tasted. Learn how to express your flavor through strong branding. Speakers will highlight common target audiences within the food industry, paired with real examples of targeted marketing campaigns.

#### TRACK 4

##### **Working with a Co-packer: When to Make That Important Decision**

What are the key factors that should be considered in deciding to work with a co-packer? Learn from a panel of co-packing manufactures regarding when, why and how to interact, plus integrate this process into your business.



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#### SESSION 3: 10:50am – 11:50am

##### TRACK 1

#### **Working with a Distributor – When, Why and How?**

Transporting your product to market is a significant logistical and financial cost. In this session, listen to and engage with a variety of Michigan-based food distribution companies. Attendees will leave understanding what is required in order for distributors to deliver your products and how these partnerships can help grow your business.

##### TRACK 2

#### **Food Label Claims: Clearing Up the Confusion**

There are strict requirements on what can – and can't – be written on a food label. In this session, gather the information you need to best market your product, while abiding by the regulations. An overview of the FDA 2016 Nutrition Facts label format and compliance dates will also be discussed.

##### TRACK 3

#### **Consumer Trends in Beverages**

When life gives you lemons, consider entering a dynamic beverage industry. This session will analyze those factors that consumers are looking for when they make beverage purchases. After this session, beverage entrepreneurs will know how to best produce and market to consumer expectations and desires. Both alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages will be analyzed.

##### TRACK 4

#### **Researching the Best Packaging Solution: Where Do I Begin?**

For a first time buyer, packaging *is* the product. Access the renowned MSU School of Packaging to learn how to optimize the marketing impact of the materials you use. What criteria do I need to consider based on my product category? How can this package selection move the product to a better shelf presence? Faculty will use retail food sector examples to highlight trends and recent innovation in the industry. Time will be spent covering packaging attributes, sourcing logistics and tailored marketing messages.