



IFT | first
ANNUAL EVENT AND EXPO ■ CHICAGO, IL

July 12-15, 2026

RULES AND REGULATIONS

SHOW DATES:

Sunday, July 12 – Wednesday, July 15, 2026

EXHIBIT DATES:

Monday, July 13 – Wednesday, July 15, 2026

LOCATION:

McCormick Place Convention Center, Chicago, IL



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GENERAL INFORMATION

This document includes the 2026 IFT FIRST Annual Event and Expo Exhibit Rules and Regulations. Please share the rules and regulations with your contractor or display builder.

NOTE: Where an exhibitor's display is built beyond the limitations and restrictions as set forth in the contract, The Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) reserves the right to correct display violations by having the exhibitor alter, remove, or rearrange any or all of the display so that it complies with regulations. If the exhibitor is not available to make corrections, then he/she agrees as a part of the contract to grant IFT the authority to make any or all necessary corrections at the exhibitor's expense.

Acceptance

IFT is not obligated to extend application privileges to any company regardless of if the company has exhibited at past IFT meetings.

Amendments

These rules may be amended by IFT at any time, and all amendments shall be equally binding for all parties. It is important to review the terms and conditions and the general information with your on-site booth personnel. IFT asks for full cooperation of exhibitors in adherence to the rules and regulations. Any matters not specifically covered by the rules shall be subject solely to the decision of IFT. If the Rules and Regulations are not followed, it may result in the reduction of IFT priority points or the company's opportunity to exhibit in future IFT Food Expos.

Exhibitors will be bound by the booth configuration rules included in the Exhibitor Service Kit. In the event of any amendment or addition to these Rules and Regulations, notice will be given to exhibitors.

Booth Fees and Payment Policies

Booth fees include the rental of space, booth drape, and company identification sign. Signs, carpet, and back wall/display are required and are the responsibility of the exhibitor. Failure to pay for booth space by contract deposit dates may result in forfeiture or re-assignment of booth space. 2026 booth fees are \$65.00 per sq. foot. Booth corner premiums are \$500 per corner, including island spaces (4 corners)

Contracts for exhibit space must be submitted with a 50% deposit. Final booth payment is due no later than January 30, 2026. After January 30, 2026, unpaid space may be released without notice. Any company with an unpaid balance will have their freight refused onsite and not be allowed to set up until fully paid. If your freight is denied due to your failure to pay your balance on your booth, GES and IFT are not responsible.

Booth Selection

Booth fees include the rental of space, booth drape, and company identification sign. Signs, carpet, and back wall/display are required and are the responsibility of the exhibitor. Failure to pay for booth space by contract deposit dates may result in forfeiture or re-assignment of booth space. 2026 booth fees are \$65.00 per sq. foot. Booth corner premiums are \$500 per corner, including island spaces (4 corners)

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Conditions and Rules

Exhibit Rules and Regulations are part of the contract between the exhibitor and IFT. IFT shall have the authority to interpret and enforce these Rules and Regulations. All matters not covered by these Rules and Regulations are subject to the decision of IFT.

General

IFT reserves the right to rearrange the floor plan and/or relocate any exhibit at any time.

IFT FIRST 2026 Exhibit Hall Hours are:

- Monday, July 13 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, July 14 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, July 15 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Intellectual Property

Exhibitors' intellectual property, including the protection of trademarks, copyrights, patents, exclusive distribution rights, and other such valuable business assets, are to be recognized and adhered to by all exhibitors, trade guests, and attendees. This extends to photographing other booths on the expo floor. Violations of exhibitors' intellectual property and exclusive distribution contract rights shall be brought to the attention of IFT by completing a detailed IFT Intellectual Property Complaint form, which can be obtained on-site at any floor manager. Violators' exhibiting privileges may be suspended for the duration of the show. Violations also may be brought to the attention of the IFT Office of Presidents for further review and action which, may include suspension and termination of event privileges.

Priority Point System

PURPOSE OF PRIORITY POINTS:

Priority points are used to determine the location of booths on the show floor. The IFT Priority Points Program is designed to reward those exhibitors that participate and exhibit in the IFT food expo annually by granting priority points to those companies. Booth selection is conducted onsite during the meeting; exhibitors are scheduled in priority point order (from the greatest to the least amount of points) to select exhibit space for the next IFT food expo.

HOW PRIORITY POINTS ARE EARNED:

Priority points are earned in the following ways:

- Booth size reserved at the IFT food expo (booth space priority points) for the last five (5) calendar years.
- Expenditures made in the fiscal year (global spend priority points) for the last five (5) calendar years.
- Exhibiting at the IFT food expo (loyalty priority points) for the last five (5) calendar years.
- Exhibitors will receive priority points based on booking hotels within the IFT Block (hotel priority points) for the last five (5) calendar years, beginning with 2022.

All points are added together to form a five (5) year total, which is then used in calculating points.

Booth Space Priority Points - Each exhibitor is given one (1) priority point per 100 square feet (10'x10') booth each year exhibited for the last five (5) calendar years.

Global spend priority points - IIFT rewards points based on your company's total expenditures. Your company will receive one (1) point for each \$5,000 of investment per year that it has worked with IFT. The total expenditure figure will take into account revenue on our books as of April 30 of the current year and will be determined based on the promotional opportunities listed below. Global spend priority points will not include registration fees, or Division/Section-related expenditures. Points are calculated for the last five (5) calendar years. Sponsorships (i.e., Annual Meeting)

1. Sponsorships (i.e., Annual Meeting)
2. Advertising (display, online, digital, etc.)
3. Membership – all active members as of April 30 of the current year. Please note: The membership number is based on members who identified the exhibiting company name as their company of employment in their member profile.
4. Subscriptions (i.e., *Food Technology Magazine*)
5. IFT Foundation donations
6. Booking within IFT FIRST's housing block through Maritz

Loyalty priority points - Every company that exhibits will receive five (5) loyalty points per year. Points are calculated for the last five (5) calendar years. A maximum of 25 points will be awarded.

Housing priority points - Every company that books 14 rooms and under within the IFT housing block will receive (1) loyalty point per year. Every company that books 15 rooms or more within the IFT Housing block will receive (3) loyalty points per year. Points are calculated for the last (5) calendar years. A maximum of 15 points will be rewarded.

PRIORITY POINTS WILL NOT BE GRANTED IN THE FOLLOWING CASES:

- Booth space received via a trade
- Companies that participate as a shared exhibitor
- Pavilion organizers

SPECIAL CASES:

This section will address how priority points will be calculated for mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, and joint ventures.

Mergers

This is defined as one company becoming part of another company. Neither company has lost its identity and both companies continue to exhibit separately at the IFT food expo.

In the case of a merger, the two companies must provide proof of the acquisition such as a press release or contract. Each company must complete a booth space contract and pay the 50% deposit at the time of booth selection. The company with the most priority points will prevail. The company with the most priority points would select all booth spaces needed. Additional points earned by each company will be added to their individual priority point balance. Both companies will be able to have a separate listing in the IFT Program & Expo Directory.

Acquisitions

This is defined as one company purchasing another company. The company being purchased no longer exists as a separate entity nor exhibits separately as a company.

In the case of an acquisition, the two companies must provide proof of the acquisition such as a press release or contract. The higher amount of priority points will be given to the parent company. Points will not be combined. The parent company can now select exhibit space at the new priority point level. The parent company will be able to have one listing in the IFT Program & Expo Directory.

Divestiture

This is defined as one company separating from another company. The company is now a company and operates as an entirely separate entity with no connections to the original company. Both companies will continue to exhibit at the IFT food expo separately.

In the case of a divestiture, the two companies must provide proof of the divestiture such as a press release or contract. IFT will make appropriate decisions on a case by case for company changes that fall under divestiture.

Joint Venture

This is defined as two businesses joining under a contractual agreement to conduct a specific business enterprise with both parties sharing profits and losses. The venture is for one specific project only as is for one year only. Neither company has lost its identity; and both companies continue to exhibit at the IFT food expo.

In the case of a joint venture, the two companies must provide proof of the acquisition such as a press release or contract. In addition, they must select booth space next to each other. Each company must complete a booth space contract and pay the 50% deposit at the time of booth selection. The company with the most priority points will prevail. Both companies will be able to select their exhibit space at the same time. Additional points earned by each company will be added to their individual priority point balance. Both companies will be able to have a separate listing in the IFT Program & Expo Directory.

ENFORCEMENT OF PRIORITY POINT POLICY

The Institute of Food Technologists reserves the right to alter the IFT Priority Point Policy at any time. IFT has the right to enforce any and all portions of the Priority Point Policy as it determines appropriate. In interpreting the Priority Point Policy, the final decisions on any issue rest with IFT.

Priority Point Tracking

IFT tracks priority points through Personify. We work with Surrender to make sure that the information is accurate. Once we confirm the accuracy, we provide a list of current points to Spargo, who will use the information to assign booth selection times.

COVID SAFETY GUIDELINES

IFT reserves the right to update COVID Safety Guidelines as Federal, State, and Local requirements change. COVID Safety Guidelines will be published and posted online. You are encouraged to check the website regularly for updates.

SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY

Service animals must be individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding individuals who are blind, alerting individuals who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, assisting during a seizure, reminding an individual with a mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming an individual during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties.

Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or task a service animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. **Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals.**

Service animals are welcome to accompany people with disabilities in all public areas of IFT FIRST. They must remain harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using them. In that case, the individual must maintain control of the service animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls.

BOOTH DISPLAY REGULATIONS

IFT follows the guidelines established by the International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE). If your exhibit plans are not defined by the IAEE examples, contact the IFT Exhibit Manager for clarification. The IFT Exhibits Manager will not approve unsafe exhibit construction or designs which encroach upon aisles or other exhibit areas or obstruct the visibility of other exhibitors.

Carpet is required in all booth spaces. The entire area of the contracted booth space must be covered by carpet or comparable flooring material.

All exhibits must be in compliance with local, state, and federal statutes, ordinances, rules, orders, and regulations that are in force or applicable during the IFT food expo, including, without limitation, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992, as amended. For details on accessibility services and accommodations, [please review McCormick Place's ADA compliance information](#). This resource provides guidance on available services, facility access, and support for attendees with disabilities.

Standard Linear Booth

One or more standard 10'x10' units in a straight line. Acceptable back wall, flooring, and signage required. 4' sidewalls are permitted but not required.

Height

The maximum height of 8ft (2.44m) is allowed only in the rear half of the booth space, with a 4ft (1.22m) height restriction imposed on all materials in the remaining space forward to the aisle. If this limit is not adhered to, it is the right of the IFT Exhibits Manager, at the exhibitor's expense, to have your booth altered to fit the height. **Hanging signs above a linear booth are not permitted and are only permitted in island booths 400 sq. ft. or larger.**

Endcap and Peninsula Booths: Endcap and Peninsula booths are not allowed.

Intent

Regardless of the number of Linear Booths utilized, e.g., 10ft by 20ft (3.05m by 6.10m), 10ft by 30ft (3.05m by 9.14m), 10ft by 40ft (3.05m by 12.19m), etc. display materials should be arranged in such a manner so as not to obstruct the general view of neighboring exhibitors.

Island Booth

Exhibit with one or more display levels that are 20ft by 20ft or larger with aisles on all four sides.

Exhibit fixtures, components, and identification signs will be permitted to a maximum height of 20ft to the top of the booth structure or hanging sign. If this limit is not adhered to, it is the right of the IFT Exhibits Manager, at the exhibitor's expense, to have your booth altered to fit the height. For booths of 1000 sq. ft. or more, there is no maximum height for hanging signs need. Height

Exhibit fixtures, components, and identification signs will be permitted to a maximum height of 20ft to the top of the booth structure or hanging sign. If this limit is not adhered to, it is the right of the IFT Exhibits Manager, at the exhibitor's expense, to have your booth altered to fit the height. For booths of 1000 sq. ft. or more, there is no maximum height for hanging signs need.

Intent

The entire cubic content of the space may be used up to the maximum allowable height of 20ft.

Island Booth Designs

To ensure that all island booths adhere to the IAEE and IFT regulations, all island booths must submit a booth layout indicating dimensions along with a completed Island Design Approval Form each year to the IFT Exhibit Manager for approval by Friday, April 10, 2026, even if you are using the same booth in the previous year and approval was granted for the previous year. Photographs are not acceptable. Failure to provide diagrams by the deadline date may result in the company being denied set-up onsite, forfeiture of booth space, or access to exhibitor conference badges.

Hanging Materials

Hanging signs and/or booth structures are allowed in island spaces only and for booths under 1000 sq. ft. may not exceed 20 feet to the top of the sign or structure. If this limit is exceeded, IFT will have your booth altered to fit the height at your expense. For linear booths, hanging signs are not permitted.

Hanging Truss

Exhibitors may use hanging truss systems for additional lighting or video projection with pre-approval from IFT. Lighting and/or video projection may only project into the booth of the exhibitor utilizing the lighting or video projection. Reflecting into public space or neighboring exhibit space is not allowed. Exhibitors must submit a written request to IFT to use a truss system or video projection each year. Exhibitors that do not receive approval will be refused access to hang signage or truss from the ceiling. The top of the hanging truss, for booths under 1000 sq. ft. may not exceed the 20 feet height limitation.

Arial Rigging

Labor required to assemble and hang signs (included but not limited to truss, hanging signs, banners, and lights) must be assembled/attached, installed, and removed by GES. All hanging signs requiring electrical must be in working order and in accordance with the National Electrical Code. If any hanging sign supports over 250 pounds, notify GES immediately for special authorization. Any non-GES supplied chain hoists will require current yearly maintenance records. Truss and motor plot must be included with your signage. Truss & Motors are not allowed in Low Ceiling Area. Please refer to GES's Hanging Sign Instructions, Rules, and Regulations for complete requirements.

Canopies, Ceilings, Umbrellas

Canopies, including ceilings, umbrellas, and canopy frames, can be either decorative or functional such as to shade computer monitors from ambient light or to allow for hanging products. Canopies for Linear Booths should comply with requirements.

Linear Booths

The bottom of the canopy should not be lower than 7ft (2.13m) from the floor within 5ft (1.52m) of any aisle. Canopy supports should be no wider than three inches 3in (.08m). The height to the top of the canopy cannot exceed 8ft. Fire and safety regulations strictly govern the use of canopies, ceilings, and other similar coverings. If this limit is not adhered to, it is the right of the IFT, at the exhibitor's expense, to have your booth altered to fit the height.

Island Booths

The bottom of the canopy should not be lower than 7ft (2.13m) from the floor within 5ft (1.52m) of any aisle. The height to the top of the canopy cannot exceed 20ft. Fire and safety regulations in many facilities strictly govern the use of canopies, ceilings, and other similar coverings. If this limit is not adhered to, it is the right of the IFT, at the exhibitor's expense, to have your booth altered to fit the height.

Fire Marshal Approval

Multi-Level Exhibits/Covered Booth Restrictions: A multi-story exhibit is a booth where the display fixture includes two or more levels. Exhibits with a ceiling or second level will be required to comply with the IFT height limit of 20' to the top of the structure or hanging sign. If this limit is not adhered to, it is the right of the IFT, at the exhibitor's expense, to have your booth altered to fit the height. Please review [McCormick Place Convention Center Regulations](#) for a full list of requirements.

Send stamped blueprints to IFT FIRST Exhibits Team for review by the Fire Safety Manager before Friday, April 10, 2026, to allow sufficient time for any needed corrections. Plans must indicate that the booth is multi-storied or covered with a ceiling. No multi-level exhibit shall be greater than two levels. All multi-level exhibits must have a UL-approved battery-powered smoke detector within the exhibit area on each level per 500 square feet that emits alarms audible outside the enclosed or covered area. All multi-level exhibits with closed sides must have electric-powered ventilation for the 1st and 2nd level producing a minimum of 1200 cfms. All multi-level

exhibits shall have 4A:10BC fire extinguishers as per NFPA 10 guidelines. All exhibits must adhere to NFPA 101 Section 8-7.5.3 and all other applicable codes and standards relative to exhibits. Booth plans must specify the maximum number of occupants and must have a structural engineer's stamp certifying the maximum load capacity. Be sure that plans show dimensions and an isometric rendering of your exhibit. In addition, all areas requiring sprinkler protection must be highlighted. If plans are not provided on time, it may cause delays or disapproval of your booth to occur during the pre-show fire review. The Fire Safety Manager can answer any questions or provide a set of fire code information.

Structural Integrity

Multi-level exhibits, regardless if someone will be occupying the upper area or not, must have drawings available for inspection by McCormick Place Convention Center's Fire Safety Manager during the time the exhibit is being erected, exhibited, and dismantled at show site. The rendering must include a signature or stamp of a reviewing structural engineer indicating that the structure is properly engineered for its proposed use and a signature of an authorized official of the exhibit building company indicating that the structure is built in compliance with the details and specifications set forth on the drawings. Signs must also be posted indicating the maximum number of people the structure will accommodate.

Balloons

Mylar, helium-filled balloons, or any other helium-filled objects are prohibited due to their effect on the fire detection systems.

Booth Appearance

No portion of an exhibit structure, vehicle, or carpeting, including easels, signs, etc., may extend beyond the assigned floor space. Exposed parts of any display must be finished and not be objectionable to other exhibitors or to IFT. IFT shall, at the exhibitor's expense, order GES to provide end cap drapes to cover any unfinished parts. Booth number identification stickers will be placed in front of each booth. All booth dividers must be finished on both sides unless the neighboring exhibitor agrees to decorate the area exposed to his booth.

Drones

The use of drones within the exhibit hall, and other spaces in McCormick Place, is forbidden without the expressed written permission of the IFT FIRST exhibits team.

Care of Building & Equipment

Painting of any kind within McCormick Place Convention Center is strictly prohibited. Nothing may be glued, taped, tacked, nailed, or in any way affixed to any interior or exterior surface of McCormick Place Convention Center unless sold a sponsorship by IFT. Drilling into McCormick Place Convention Center concrete floor is prohibited. Anything in connection with or necessary for the protection of the building, equipment, or furniture, will be at the expense of the exhibitor. Exhibitors will be held responsible for any damage to persons or property caused by reason of their exhibits, employees, agents, or servants.

Liability of Exhibits and Merchandise

The exhibit space located in the McCormick Place Convention Center and all common areas are leased to IFT by McCormick Place Convention Center and this agreement is subject to all the terms of the lease from the McCormick Place Convention Center to IFT. Neither IFT nor the McCormick Place Convention Center nor their respective agents or employees shall be liable to the exhibitor or any other person for any loss, damage, or injury, whether to person or property, sustained by the exhibitor or any other person, whether or not the negligence of other conduct of IFT or the McCormick Place Convention Center or their respective agents or employees causes or contributes to such loss, damage, or injury. The exhibitor agrees to defend, protect, indemnify and hold harmless the IFT and the McCormick Place Convention Center from all liability, loss, damage, or expense, including reasonable attorneys' fees, and from all claims for loss, damages or injury which may be incident to arise from, or in any way connected with the exhibitor's use or occupation of exhibit space, whether or not the negligence or other conduct of IFT or the McCormick Place Convention Center or their respective agents or employees causes or contributes to such liability, loss, damage, expense or injury.

Exhibitors are liable for any damage to floors, walls, or columns of the exhibit building. No cement or paste is to be used for fastening floor covering. Tape used to secure carpets, linoleum, or tile should have a cloth rather than a paper binding to facilitate its complete removal from the floor. IFT will hold the exhibitor responsible for removal of all tape placed on the exhibit floor. At the conclusion of the exhibition, building management will inspect the exhibit floor and meeting rooms. Any exhibitor not complying with the above regulations will be invoiced for the labor required to clean the floor. Exhibitors should apprise their EACs of this responsibility.

Cleaning

Exhibitors are responsible for keeping their booths neatly arranged to maintain the appearance of the exhibit. Exhibitors desiring booth vacuuming or porter service during the expo may find more information in the Exhibitor Service Kit. Cleaning services are provided exclusively through GES and will be billed directly to the exhibitor at the prevailing rate.

Exhibitors generating trash from sampling (i.e., foodstuffs, compostable materials, cardboard) are not permitted to use the public trash bins placed throughout the exhibit hall. Because of this, exhibitors will be required to do one of the following:

- A. Order porter/garbage service to remove trash from your booth on a regular schedule each day of the event.
- B. Use the trash & recycling bins provided in the cleanup stations.

Columns

To prevent the obstruction of column doors, nothing may be placed within the 42" clearance area. Exhibitors are not allowed to attach signage or any other materials, even within booths, on a column.

Floor Covering

Exhibits must have an acceptable floor covering that covers the full area of the contracted booth space. Unacceptable coverings include paper, foam core, or cardboard. Carpet may be ordered by IFT for exhibit booths that do not have acceptable floor coverings, and the exhibitor will be responsible for charges.

Fire Cabinets

Equipment is strategically located throughout the building and must be kept clear and unobstructed at all times. Exhibitors shall make certain that fire hose cabinets, alarms, and extinguishers within their booths are visible and accessible at all times. Please review floor plan for exact locations of fire hose cabinets/racks and fire extinguishers.

Fire & Safety

Exhibits or portions thereof must comply with McCormick Place Convention Center Exhibitor Policies contained in the IFT Resource Center. All combustible materials used in exhibit construction must be treated with an effective flame-retardant. Only non-combustible materials or fire-retardant wood may be used for exhibits, scenery, or props. All curtains, drapes, carpet, carpet padding, and decorative materials must be treated with a flame-retardant. McCormick Place Convention Center rigorously enforces this regulation and may field flame test any questionable materials.

Utility Services

If an exhibitor requires utility services and there is a utility port within the booth space assigned, it must be used. Only if access is not available within the booth space will an exhibitor be able to use utility ports from the aisles. This is for the safety of attendees.

Violations to Display Regulations

Companies with displays that do not conform to the rules and regulations will face a first violation notice and loss of the current year's priority points. Booths not in compliance before 9:00 a.m. on Monday, July 14, 2025, are subject to be removed from the floor at the exhibitor's expense.

INSTALL/DISMANTLE REGULATIONS

Installation

The date of installation is dependent upon the exhibitor's targeted move-in date. Any requests for earlier installation must be directed to the Official Service Contractor.

Note: Wednesday, July 8, 2026, is the earliest day for move-in; no requests before this date will be granted. Every exhibitor will be assigned a targeted move-in time for their exhibit structure to facilitate installation at the event. The targeted move-in map with utility port locations is in the IFT Exhibitor Service Kit. Installation may begin once freight is delivered to the exhibit area.

Please refer to the Exhibitor Service Kit for more detailed instructions on freight availability and move-in procedures. Installation of an exhibit must not interfere with the move-in of the expo. It is the exhibitor's responsibility not to impede another person's set-up and must relocate materials on request.

Booth Set-Up Deadline

To ensure that the expo is clean at opening, exhibitors must have their crates labeled and their exhibits/products completely set by 4:30 p.m., Sunday, July 12, 2026. Exhibit space not occupied by 9:00 a.m. on Monday, July 13, 2026, may be reassigned by IFT without refund of the rental paid or the Service Contractor may force the set-up, and all expenses will be the exhibitor's responsibility. Failure to adhere to the above requirements will cause forfeiture of space. No space refunds will be made and IFT will have the right to use the space.

Booth Staging

In addition to equipment and furniture placed within a booth space, exhibitors may stage the following items:

- Boxed or loose product, materials, or literature.
- Fiber cases used to ship pop-up displays.
- Personal items such as small luggage, purses, briefcases, or coats.

The following restrictions must be observed when staging these items:

- The amount of product, materials or literature that may be staged within a booth space must not exceed a one-day supply.
- Items may be placed either in a display case, on a counter, on a shelving unit, in a closet, on a table, under a table, or stacked neatly within the booth space.
- Items that are placed under a table must not protrude outside the table dimensions.
- Items that are stacked must not create a tripping hazard or hamper easy movement within the booth space.
- Items may not be placed on or within six inches of floor ports, electrical wiring, or cabling.
- Pallets, empty crates, empty cartons, and empty boxes may not be stored in the booth space.
- Staging items will not be allowed behind the back wall of the booth and behind the drape within the booth.

Cleaning

All booth components must be within the exhibitor's space. Cleaning may be ordered through GES. Aisle areas and booth exits must be free from obstructions. Empty boxes must be removed from the exhibit hall prior to the show opening and cannot be returned prior to the conclusion of IFT FIRST.

Empty Crates

All shipments (display and product) must be in the exhibit space and unpacked with crates ready for storage by 4:30 p.m., Sunday, July 12, 2026. All cartons, crates, packing materials necessary for repacking must be

labeled with “empty” stickers and removed from the expo floor. Crates not tagged by this time will be removed and placed into storage by IFT at the exhibitor’s risk. All unwanted containers and refuse should be placed in the aisle directly in front of the exhibit for removal. Neither IFT nor GES will assume liability for the exhibitor’s empty crates or boxes, or their contents. Storage of any kind is forbidden inside the display area, behind the back drapes, or beyond the display wall and will be removed by IFT, its representatives, or the Fire Marshal.

The Fire Marshal at McCormick Place has stated that the following restrictions must be observed when staging these additional items:

- Pallets, empty crates, cartons and boxes may not be stored in the booth space.
- The amount of product, materials or literature that may be staged within a booth space must not exceed a one-day supply.
- Items may be placed either in a display case, on a counter, on a shelving unit, in a closet, on a table, under a table or stacked neatly within the booth space.
- Items that are placed under a table must not protrude outside the table dimensions.
- Items that are stacked must not create a tripping hazard or hamper easy movement within the booth space.
- Items may not be placed on or within six inches of floor ports, electrical wiring or cabling items may not be placed behind drape within the booth.
- Staging will not be allowed behind the back wall of the booth and behind the drape within the booth.

Extended Work and Late Authorization Forms

Exhibitors or their representatives working past 4:30 p.m. during move-in or move-out must complete an Authorization Form which may be obtained from any Floor Manager on the exhibit floor. The following rules apply past 4:30 p.m.

- Personnel found in an unauthorized or unattended booth will be removed from the hall.
- No one will be allowed to work before 7:00 a.m. or past 10:00 p.m. unless approved by IFT.
- Once personnel exit the expo floor, they will not be allowed re-entry until the next working day.
- Exhibitors are required to wear the Exhibitor badge in plain view while on the expo floor.
- Exhibitor-Appointed Contractors (EACs) must register in advance of the meeting for a nominal fee, via the GES service kit. EACS registration process must be completed 30 days prior to IFT FIRST. EACS will not have access to the exhibit until all registrations fees are paid and an approved Certificate of Insurance is on file. EACs will be required to wear a daily wristband each day of move-in and move-out
- No smoking or vaping is allowed on the exhibit floor.
- All personnel are required to follow all safety rules as set forth by IFT and McCormick Place Convention Center.
- All bags, toolboxes, cartons, etc. removed from the expo floor are subject to inspection.
- Exhibitor or Contractor Supervisors are responsible for the conduct of their personnel.

Freight Delivery

The GES Advance Warehouse will open on June 10, 2025. Direct freight will begin being received to McCormick Place at 8:00 a.m., Thursday, July 10, 2025. As a targeted freight delivery event, any shipments delivered to the GES Advance Warehouse will be delivered to your booth prior to your targeted date and time. GES will begin receiving refrigerated, frozen, and dry storage starting Friday, July 11, 2025, at 12:30 p.m.

Labor Jurisdictions

Please refer to the GES Exhibitor Service Manual and McCormick Place Event Planning Guide for information.

Material Handling

Exhibitors may hand-carry their own materials into the exhibit facility. Exhibitors carrying in their equipment and displays must use a freight gate. Loading and unloading through the lobby is prohibited. GES will control access to the loading docks to provide for a safe and orderly move-in/move-out.

No Freight Aisles

To expedite the movement of crates during move-in and move-out and to conform to Chicago Ordinances, certain aisles have been designated as “No freight, fire and safety aisle.” Any exhibitor placing crates or freight in these aisles may have it removed immediately by IFT at the expense of the exhibitor. Please refer to the online Freight Target Floor Plans for specification of “no freight aisles.”

Dismantling

With respect and safety to fellow exhibitors, no display may be dismantled, or packing, started before 4:01 p.m., on Wednesday, July 15, 2026. Your team should make travel plans accordingly.

IFT doesn't allow exhibitors to start moving out (dismantle of their booth) prior to the close of the show. If you are observed dismantling your booth early at 2026 IFT FIRST, you will be given a written warning. If you are observed tearing down early, and a second time at 2027 IFT FIRST you will be assessed a \$2,000 violation fee that must be paid before participation in a future event. Continued violations may result in being barred from exhibiting at future events.

Trash: Sampling & Excess

Exhibitors are required to return their booth space in the same manner it was received. Exhibitors are to arrange with their Exhibitor-Appointed Contractor to remove all trash from their booth after dismantling. This includes carpet, tape, padding, promotional materials, and display components.

Exhibitors generating trash from sampling (i.e., foodstuffs, compostable materials, cardboard) are not permitted to use the public trash bins placed throughout the exhibit hall. Because of this, exhibitors will be required to do one of the following:

- A.** For booths 400 sq. ft. or larger, it is a requirement to order porter/garbage service to remove trash from your booth on a regular schedule each day of the event.
- B.** For booths under 400sq. ft. can use the trash & recycling bins provided in the cleanup stations, or order porter service.

If exhibitors need assistance with trash removal, please arrange for porter/garbage service with the Exhibitor Service Desk. Trash that cannot be removed with a broom and shovel will be considered “excess trash” and IFT or the exhibitor will be charged for this service.

Transportation Companies

Exhibitors will be responsible for making all arrangements with transportation companies for the prompt pick-up of their shipments. The official contractor will be forced to use the designated show carrier if no carrier has been designated by the exhibitor or the carriers have not checked in by 10:00 a.m. on Friday, July 10, 2026. It is the exhibitor's responsibility to call that preferred carrier and to make sure that the shipment is moved out of the building by the designated date and time.

LIABILITY/INSURANCE/SAFETY

Certificate of Insurance

EACs and Exhibitors are required to have insurance coverage. EACs must provide a certificate of insurance showing coverage from Wednesday July 8, 2026, through Friday July 17, 2028, naming the McCormick Place Convention Center, The Institute of Food Technologists, GES, and SPARGO, Inc. as additional insured. This insurance must be in force during the lease dates of the event naming The Institute of Food Technologists as the certificate holder. Minimum liability is \$1 million per occurrence, combined single limit, for bodily injury &

property damage. Workers Compensation as required by Illinois statutes shall also be shown on insurance certificate.

Exhibitor Insurance

Insurance must be obtained at the exhibitor's own cost and expense. IFT and its agents and employees assume no risk, and by the acceptance of this agreement the exhibitor and their agents expressly release them of and from any and all liability for damage, injury or loss to any person or goods, from any cause whatsoever. All property shipped to and from the exhibition halls by the exhibitor for installation or display is the sole responsibility of the exhibitor. Exhibitors must obtain adequate insurance coverage, at their own expense, for property loss or damage and liability for personal injury.

Children

In the interest of safety and injury prevention, children under 18 years of age will not be permitted on the exhibit floor during move-in and move-out. Children under the age of 18 are not allowed in the IFT FIRST food expo during show days. **No exceptions.**

Music, Photographs & Other Copyrighted Material

Each exhibitor is responsible for obtaining all necessary licenses and permits to use music, photographs or other copyrighted material in the exhibitor's booth or display. No exhibitor will be permitted to play, broadcast or have performed any music or use any other copyrighted materials, such as photographs or other artistic works, without having copyrights. If we are informed that an exhibitor does not have copyrights for the music or photographs being displayed then satisfactory proof will have to be provided to IFT that the exhibitor has, or does not need, a license to use such music or copyrighted material. IFT reserves the right to remove from the exhibit hall all or any part of any booth or display which incorporates music, photographs, or other copyrighted material for which the exhibitor fails to produce proof of all required licenses. The exhibitor shall remain liable for, and shall indemnify and hold IFT, their agents and employees, harmless from all loss, cost, claims, causes of action, suits, damages, liability, expenses, and costs, including reasonable attorney's fees arising from or out of any violation or infringement (or claims) by exhibitor, exhibitor's agents, employees of any patent, copyright or trade secret rights or privileges.

Responsibility of Property

IFT will provide perimeter guard service during the hours the exhibit area is closed. However, exhibitors are solely and fully responsible for their own exhibit structure, merchandise, and exhibit material. Exhibitors should insure their exhibit against loss, theft, or damage from any cause whatsoever. All property of an exhibitor is understood to remain in their care, custody, and control in transit to or from or within the confines of the exhibit hall. Exhibitors are encouraged to hire booth security guards and should insure their property at their own cost and expense. Exhibitors desiring to insure their exhibit, merchandise and display materials against damage, theft, fire, etc. must do so at their own expense. IFT suggests that exhibitors contact their insurance brokers who can secure an exhibit rider policy which will provide all risk insurance covering exhibit property while absent from home premises for exhibition purposes.

Safety

Standing on chairs, tables or other rental furniture is prohibited. IFT and GES are not responsible for injuries or falls caused by the improper use of furniture. If assistance is required in assembling your booth, please order labor on the Display Labor order form and the necessary ladders and tools will be provided.

Alcoholic Beverages and Food Samples and Sizes

Sponsoring organizations of Expositions and Trade Shows and their Exhibitors may distribute SAMPLES of food and beverage products upon written authorization and adherence to all of the conditions outlined below. All other samples, not manufactured by the exhibiting company and food gifts (packaged or bulk) must be purchased through OVG 360. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR FOOD INDUSTRY SHOWS

1. Items dispensed are limited to products Manufactured, Processed or Distributed by exhibiting companies. If

they are not Manufactured, Processed or Distributed by the company then you are not able to provide samples of food and beverage unless they are purchased through OVG 360.

2. If you do Manufacture, Process, or Distribute the items they are to be a SAMPLE SIZE and must be dispensed and distributed in accordance to Local and State Health Codes:

Non-Alcoholic Beverages can be a maximum of 8oz. Sample Size, served in plastic cups. No cans or bottles will be permitted.

Food items are limited to “bite size”, not to exceed 6oz. portions

Vendors MUST submit proof of having \$1,000,000.00 liability insurance naming OVG 360, and the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority as additional insured and are responsible for State and Local laws pertaining to the distribution of alcohol.

3. If your company Manufactures, Processes or Distributes Alcoholic Beverages and this product is related to the purpose of the show then you are able to serve SAMPLE SIZES, and it must be dispensed and distributed in accordance to Local and State Health Codes:

Vendors MUST submit proof of having \$1,000,000.00 liability insurance naming OVG 360, and the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority as additional insured and are responsible for State and Local laws pertaining to the distribution of alcohol.

Sample portions must be under the following limits:

- Beer 2 oz.
- Wine / wine coolers / spirit coolers 1 oz.
- Liquor / liqueurs 0.25 oz.

Note: Alcohol cannot be served prior to 11:00 a.m. on Sundays, per City of Chicago ordinance. All alcohol must be served in plastic, disposable cups. No cans or bottles will be permitted.

Distribution of alcoholic products must be monitored and overseen by a OVG 360 staff bartender in compliance with Illinois Liquor Laws

4. Vendors are responsible for all booth rental fees, electrical, plumbing, drayage, and all other McCormick Place Services

If you do manufacture, process, or distribute the items they must be dispensed and distributed in accordance to Local and State Health Codes:

Other forms of alcohol, and products containing other forms of alcohol, may also be served, but ONLY if they are part of demonstrating the application or functionality of your product. Samples of alcohol limited in duration to ONLY (1) day of 2026 IFT FIRST. Sample sizes are as indicated below:

- (1/2) ounce distilled spirits having 23% per volume
- 2 ounces of beer or wine

You must submit to IFT what alcohol will be served and what exhibitor ingredient is being used to demonstrate. As an exhibitor, you are responsible for the conduct of those consuming your beer, wine, and/or liquor. You are also responsible for upholding all local liquor laws as they pertain to timing of service, age, and conduct, as well as for following the rules of the McCormick Place Convention Center. To protect both yourself and your company, please familiarize yourself with these rules prior to joining us in Chicago. OVG 360 bartenders are required to dispense alcohol in compliance with Illinois liquor laws. Refer to the OVG 360 Alcoholic Beverage Sampling Policy & Guidelines for complete information and regulations.

Sampling of products containing CBD or Cannabis is prohibited.

Booth Promotional Plans, Demonstrations, and/or Presentations

Exhibitors are encouraged to design displays that will permit those attending the exhibit to participate as fully as possible. Only promotions that are pertinent to the product, company, or reason for exhibiting are permitted. The rights and privileges of an exhibitor shall not be infringed upon by any other exhibitor. All booth activities should be submitted to IFT for approval.

- Use of other exhibitor's products for demonstration/presentation purposes is not permitted.
- Demonstrations/presentations must be organized within the exhibitor's space so as not to interfere with any aisle traffic. Should spectators or samplers interfere with the traffic flow in the aisle or overflow into neighboring exhibits, IFT will request the demonstration or sampling be eliminated. Demonstrations/presentations must be a minimum of five feet (5') into the booth, does not obstruct the aisles, and does not prevent access to nearby booths. Activity that results in the obstruction of aisles or prevents ready access to nearby exhibitors' booths will result in a loss of exhibitor priority points after the first warning. If you intend to conduct an activity that will attract large numbers of attendees, you must purchase enough booth space and orient your booth structures to ensure the crowd can be accommodated within your booth space.
- Demonstrators, characters, or attention-getting activities must remain within the exhibit space.
- Devices must be safe to participants and neighboring exhibitors, must not interfere with traffic flow in the aisles or traffic into neighboring exhibits, must not obstruct the view of adjacent displays.
- Prohibited are attention-getting devices employing loud amplification and models in abbreviated and/or suggestive costumes. Booths with speakers, PA systems or other sound producing devices, must position those sound devices to direct sound inward (to be contained within the booth) rather than outward (toward aisles and other exhibitor booths). The decibel level must not exceed 85 dBA as stated in Section 29 of Federal OSHA Regulation 1910.95, applicable to trade shows. Decibel readers may be used to monitor all sound projection equipment. If the level exceeds the maximum level allowed, the Exhibitor will be required to adjust the decibel level accordingly. Refer to OSHA at www.osha.gov for more information.
- The use of flashing signs, revolving flasher lights, or other lighting effects that cause beams of light or reflections interfering with other exhibitors is prohibited.
- Interviews, demonstrations, distribution of literature, etc., must be combined inside the exhibitor's booth.
- All product demonstrations involving moving and potentially hazardous machines, displays or parts must have hazard barriers to prevent accidental injury to spectators. Demonstrations must be supervised, and the demonstration must be stopped in an emergency.

Canvassing Outside the Booth/Suit-casing

Canvassing, solicitation of business, the use of advertising materials or signs by firms other than exhibitors is prohibited. Distribution of items is limited to within the exhibitor's booth. Exhibitor shall not distribute, or permit to be distributed, any advertising matter, literature, souvenir items or promotional materials in or about the exhibit areas or on any part of the premises of the Facility except from its own allotted exhibit space. Exhibitors shall not post or exhibit any signs, advertisements, show bills, lithograph posters or cards of any description on any part of the premises of the Facility, except within the Exhibitor's booth space or sponsored areas as agreed upon by IFT. Items cannot be affixed to walls, columns, carpet, concrete, or pavement, nor can anything be projected on space or areas beyond Exhibitor's booth space without written permission.

Conduct of Exhibits

IFT may decline or prohibit an exhibit or portion thereof which, in the opinion of IFT is not proper, or in character of the exhibition. IFT may prohibit or remove exhibits, products, displays or devices which are not in keeping with the product display policy or rules and regulations of the IFT. IFT may restrict, prohibit, or evict exhibits due to excessive noise, acts, odors, costumes, gimmicks, method of operation, materials, or for any reason, become objectionable, or detract from the character of the exhibition or for any reason. This provision applies to persons, things, conduct, printed matter, or anything. In the event of restriction or eviction, IFT is

not liable for exhibit expenses. Failure to comply with IFT & McCormick Place Convention Center Place's regulations will result in the exhibitor being barred from future IFT food expos.

Contests, Games, Raffles & Lotteries

Raffles, drawings, etc. may be conducted within the confines of the exhibitor's own booth as permitted by state and local laws. IFT is not responsible for promotion of raffles, drawings, or winner announcements.

Cooking

No substantial odors should be emitted when cooking. Cooking in McCormick Place Convention Center is permitted on a limited basis. Cooking or heating appliances must be powered electrically or by natural gas. Stoves and heaters must be UL-approved and be adequately ventilated. Combustibles may not be placed near any heat-producing appliances. A UL-approved, 2.5-pound ABC-type fire extinguisher is required in exhibits. Cooking appliances must be isolated from spectators by a minimum of four feet or a barrier between the appliances and the spectators. No overnight cooking is allowed. No open flame lighting devices may be used in McCormick Place Convention Center. **The following items are fire-hazardous and prohibited in the McCormick Place Convention Center:** All heavier-than-air gases (propane, butane) or Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), Untreated Christmas trees, cut evergreens or similar trees, Fireplace logs and similar materials, Charcoal, Untreated mulch and Spanish moss and Hay/straw. Exhaust fumes are required to be vented up towards the ceiling and not out into another exhibitor's booth.

Giveaways

Giveaways are allowed; however, glitter and adhesive-back (stick-on) decals are prohibited and may not be distributed or used for any purpose with the McCormick Place Convention Center. Distribution of balloons is prohibited.

Sound Level

Exhibitor's sound level shall not intrude and violate the rights of any adjacent exhibit areas. The decibel level must not exceed 85 dBA as stated in Section 29 of Federal OSHA Regulation 1910.95, applicable to trade shows. IFT reserves the right to determine when sound constitutes interference with others and must be discontinued. Products producing sound must also comply with the preceding guidelines.

ADDITIONAL RULES and REGULATIONS

Admission

Entrance to the exhibit area is by IFT name badge only. During non-show hours, appropriate badge identification is required. **After show opening, no one, including temporary booth personnel and contractors, will be admitted to the exhibit area without the required IFT name badge identification.** Exhibitors will be allowed in the exhibit hall 3 hours prior to the opening and must leave immediately at the close of the exhibit each day.

Character of the Exhibit

Exhibits may consist of machinery, equipment, services, materials, and products relating to Food Science and Technology. IFT reserves the right to accept or reject exhibitors not fitting the profile for the IFT FIRST expo.

Competitor Placement

IFT will attempt to accommodate requests of competitor placement; however, there is no guarantee that competitor's booths may not be placed near or next to each other.

We strongly urge exhibitors to review the floor plan prior to the event at the IFT web site (ift.org) as no booth location changes will be accommodated on-site due to competitor placement. Competition placement is not in effect for the Pavilions.

Exhibitor Appointed & Other Contractors (EAC)

Exhibitors utilizing the services of any contractor other than those appointed by IFT must notify IFT in writing 30 days prior to the exposition. These companies include, but are not limited to, an EAC, sound and lighting firms, production or promotion firms, or any person or firm providing direct services to exhibitors. Exhibitors using contractors other than the official IFT contractors for labor, supervision or any other service must submit an Exhibitor-Appointed Contractor Request. Only requests from exhibitors (not EACs) will be considered. Exhibitor Appointed Contractors may not use carts on the Expo floor. Contractors are required to wear a wristband during installation and dismantle. Workers without correct credentials will not be allowed to enter the facility. Solicitation of other exhibitors is strictly prohibited.

All EAC/Non-Official Contractors must also be authorized to work in McCormick Place as an “event contractor. “EAC’s are required to adhere to the McCormick Place Building Entry Exit Procedures. For more information, please visit the McCormick Place website: mccormickplace.com/event-contractors/event-contractors-info/

Exhibitor Entry

On show days, exhibitors will be allowed to enter the show floor up to 3 hours prior to the opening of the expo (7:00 a.m.), Monday - Wednesday. Exhibitors may stay on the show floor until 7:00 p.m., 2 hours after the show closes Monday – Tuesday. On the last day of the show, Wednesday, exhibitors may stay on the show floor until 10:00 p.m. for move-out. *Hours subject to change.

Exhibitor Code of Conduct

- Outside activities or meetings in direct competition of an official IFT event by any food industry company are strictly prohibited.
- Companies are responsible for their hotel arrangements, reservations, and cancellations.
- Exhibiting companies that cancel their booth space and want to attend the expo will have their hotel meeting rooms, McCormick Place Convention Center meeting rooms and Exhibitor badges cancelled by IFT. Employees of the exhibiting company will be required to register as expo only participants.
- Unauthorized photography of any exhibit or product is prohibited.
- Be considerate of other exhibitors. You should not enter other exhibitors’ display area uninvited or when unattended.
- Interference with, or disruption of, another exhibitor’s personnel or legitimate activities is prohibited.
- Exhibitors are not permitted to behave in a manner which, in the sole discretion of IFT, is objectionable. You must comply with all rules established by IFT. If you have any questions concerning your exhibit or activities within your booth, please contact the IFT Exhibit Manager.
- Exhibitors and their company representatives must wear their official IFT identification badges at all times while on the food expo floor and in meeting rooms. These badges are issued for protection and identification and must not be loaned or given to other persons. Avoid discarding your badges in common areas or facility receptacles. This will help prevent unauthorized attendees from assuming your identity. Badges should not be accepted or worn if they do not accurately represent the exhibitor’s identity or company. Badges must be obtained through the IFT’s authorized registration company only. Unauthorized badges will be confiscated; violators may be barred from the premises.
- Exhibitors are not permitted to dismantle their exhibits or begin packing before 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday. If observed tearing down early, the exhibitor may be subject to a series of substantial fees and/or other penalties.
- Exhibitors are prohibited from registering their own company personnel for complimentary trade show passes through the Customer Invite Program. In addition, exhibitors are prohibited from inviting other exhibiting companies’ employees to the expo using the Customer Invite Program or adding those individuals to their company badge allotments. Any exhibitor in violation may be subject to booth space cancellation.
- An exhibitor’s booth must be staffed at all times while the exhibit hall is open.

Freight Hold

IFT will hold freight for ANY outstanding booth balance owed. Freight will be released when the outstanding balance is paid.

Gratuities/Contractor

GES, IFT's service contractor, requests that exhibitors not tip its employees including cash, merchandise, or other special consideration for services rendered. Exhibitors should not give coffee breaks other than mid-morning and mid-afternoon when union employees receive a fifteen-minute paid break. Attempts to solicit a gratuity by an employee for any service should be reported immediately to the GES Service Desk. Craftsmen at all levels are instructed to refrain from expressing any grievances or directly challenging the practices of any exhibitor. All questions regarding these practices must be directed to a GES management representative. McCormick Place Convention Center has a strict "no tipping" rule.

Housing/Hospitality Suites

Housing requests will be assigned by the IFT Housing Bureau, ConferenceDirect, on a "first come, first-served" basis. Hospitality suites are available to companies that exhibit at the IFT food expo. Requests for suites are made through the IFT Housing Bureau. Hospitality functions cannot conflict with IFT annual event hours. Please refer to the Housing & Exhibitor Badge section on the Exhibitor Only site for detailed information and forms.

In-Booth Receptions

If you hold a press event, meeting, or reception at your booth prior to the opening, during or after expo hours, with booth staff or non-exhibitor personnel who do not have an exhibitor badge, you will need to make arrangements in advance for security purposes. The following information must be submitted before the expo to IFT.

- Send an e-mail to the IFT Exhibit Manager requesting the type of meeting you will be holding within the booth.
- Please state the exhibiting company and booth number.
- State the start and end time, along with the date of the meeting.
- Due to security reasons, meetings cannot be held any earlier than 8:00 a.m. or end no later than one hour after the close of the Expo.
- All invited guests must be wearing an official IFT badge to gain access to the hall and must stay in your booth and not wander the hall.
- As a reminder the guests cannot spill into the aisles during the party; they must remain within the confines of the booth.
- Access to the floor before the Food expo opens or after it closes will be denied unless IFT receives a written request and has approved the activity.
- IFT may require you to hire a security guard to monitor surrounding booths and products.
- At the close of the reception/function, the security guards will politely escort the attendees out of the hall and the lights in the hall will be adjusted to 50%.
- In the rules and regulations, we do have a policy regarding alcohol refreshments. The alcohol being served must abide by this policy.

Intellectual Property

Exhibitors' intellectual property, including the protection of trademarks, copyrights, patents, exclusive distribution rights and other such valuable business assets are to be recognized and adhered to by all exhibitors, guests, and attendees.

Meetings/Sales Meetings

Only those companies with contracted exhibit space may utilize function space for company sponsored meetings, events, or hospitalities. It is the responsibility of the exhibitor to ensure that all company personnel or third-party agents that are involved in meeting arrangements are aware of and adhere to IFT rules and regulations. IFT does not endorse exhibitor functions and does not consider them a part of the education program. Activities that include 2025 IFT FIRST attendees may only be scheduled during times that do not conflict with official IFT functions. Events that only include staff of the exhibiting company cannot include IFT's meeting attendees unless the individual is an employee of the company holding the event. There are no date or time restrictions for company/staff events.

Saturday, July 11	7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.	<i>Approval required*</i>
Sunday, July 12	7:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.	<i>Approval required*</i>
	6:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.	<i>No functions of any kind</i>
	10:00 – 12:00 p.m.	<i>Approval required*</i>
Monday, July 13	7:00 – 9:30 a.m.	<i>Approval required*</i>
	9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	<i>No functions of any kind</i>
	5:00 – 10:00 p.m.	<i>Approval required*</i>
Tuesday, July 14	7:00 – 9:30 a.m.	<i>Approval required*</i>
	9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	<i>No functions of any kind</i>
	4:00 – 10:00 p.m.	<i>Approval required*</i>
Wednesday, July 15	7:00 – 9:30 a.m.	<i>Approval required*</i>
	9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	<i>No functions of any kind</i>
	4:00 – 10:00 p.m.	<i>Approval required*</i>
Thursday, July 16	7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	<i>Approval required*</i>

**Exhibiting companies may hold staff, sales, broker, and other non-customer functions during this time.*

Hours subject to change.

Exhibitors should contact the hotels within the IFT block directly for meeting and event space.

Exhibitors may reserve Exhibitor Meeting Rooms, available for show days only. They are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Forms are located within the Exhibitor Service Kit.

Non-Exhibiting Companies

Anyone observed soliciting in the aisles, lunch, or other public areas, or in an exhibitor's booth will be asked to leave immediately. Additional penalties may be incurred. Please report violations you observe to Show Management.

Non-exhibiting companies are prohibited from conducting any meetings during 2026 IFT FIRST period, including move-in, show days and move-out. Violators may be suspended from exhibiting or attending future IFT Shows.

Organizers

Show organizers and their clients are restricted to booth space in IFT-created pavilions. Organizers are not allowed to represent any companies on the main show floor outside of the pavilion. Companies on the main

show floor found to be represented by an organizer may be moved to an IFT established pavilion or cancelled from the show floor at the discretion of IFT, without refund.

Photography

Only those professional photographers approved by the IFT will be allowed on the show floor. Any individual is prohibited from taking photographs or electronic images of exhibit displays or their contents without the permission of the exhibitor involved. Exhibitors may take single-camera shoots within their booths. Violators will be escorted off the exhibit floor and will forfeit their credentials and/or digital images. Violators will not be allowed re-entry.

Restriction from Exhibiting

All exhibitors must be in good financial standings with the Institute of Food Technologists, including opportunities such as advertising, sponsorships, etc., to exhibit and set up their booth. If IFT deems a company in poor financial standing, IFT may restrict the company from exhibiting or setting their booth and apply additional fees to their outstanding balance with IFT.

Companies that no-show the IFT Food Expo will not be eligible to participate in future meetings.

Transfer of Booth Space

Exhibitors may not transfer space assigned and booth space payment obligations from their company, or any part thereof, to another company.

Shared Booth Space

Any exhibitor with a 10x20 booth (200 square foot) or larger, can have shared company information (contact info, company description, etc.) listed in IFT marketing pieces; separate from the contracted company. To be eligible as a shared company, the shared company must be a division of the contracted exhibitor or have a partnership with the contracted exhibitor. The contracted exhibitor will need to provide IFT with proof of the partnership. Only one company is allowed per 10'x10'. Shared exhibitors do not receive exhibit space, or global spend priority points. Exhibitor points are non-transferable from the contracted exhibitor to any shared exhibitors. To take advantage of the shared booth space, the contracting company must complete the “**Shared Exhibitor Form**” available in the Exhibitor Service Kit. The cost is \$300 per shared exhibitor. Shared companies are required to have a valid domain name, website, and contact email, which must match the shared company’s name. Free web site accounts will not be recognized for web site names and email addresses. All shared booth payments must be made by the contracting company.

Subletting

Transferring of exhibit space is prohibited. Exhibitors may not sublet any portion of their booth spaces. Companies may share booth space; however, sharing space with another company requires that company to be legally affiliated. In addition, the contracting company must complete a Shared Exhibitor Form and be approved by IFT. Any exhibiting company found to be sharing or subletting its space contrary to these rules will be suspended from one or more future events. The company improperly sharing or subletting the space will be removed from 2026 IFT FIRST and may be barred from future events at the discretion of IFT.

Use of Event Logo

Exhibitors are encouraged to use the 2026 IFT FIRST logo in their marketing materials provided they follow the Usage Guidelines. Exhibitor must send the IFT Exhibits Manager, via email, the piece/website in which the logo is being used prior to production. IFT has the final decision on logo usage. Exhibitors are prohibited from using the IFT corporate logo.

Videotaping and Filming

Videotaping at 2026 IFT FIRST is permitted with the following provisions:

- A videotaping schedule (shot requirements/production schedule) must be submitted to Dennis Van Milligen, IFT’s Media Relations Specialist, a minimum of one week prior to the start of the event; last-minute requests cannot be accommodated due to staffing restrictions

- IFT reserves the right to decline videotaping privileges after reviewing the schedule
- Video crews must be escorted by an IFT staff member while on the show floor
- Release forms are required from all parties that are videotaped; you are responsible for supplying your own releases

The following activities are NOT permitted to be videotaped/filmed:

- Scientific Sessions
- Research Poster Presentations
- General Sessions and Featured Lecturers
- IFTSA Competition Presentations

Cancellation

Please refer to the Contract for the full cancellation policy. Companies that cancel exhibit space cannot retain exhibitor housing booked through the exhibitor housing and registration site. In addition, exhibitor badges will also be forfeited.

Specialty Pavilions

- Organic Pavilion – Companies must be organic certified.
- Food Safety - Companies must have lab instruments, research labs or products directly related to food safety.
- START UP Pavilion

START UP Pavilion

The START UP Pavilion exhibitors are provided with a turnkey “kiosk.” Details on what is provided with the purchase of the START UP Pavilion kiosk is included in the contract/agreement. While START UPs do have the ability to provide food samples from their kiosk, sampling is limited. Refrigeration and storage in your kiosk is not available due to space limitations. Sampling should be limited to pre-packaged food items. Cooking is not permitted. Storage is limited to underneath the 4’ counter height table provided. Additional storage options are available from the General Service Contractor. All marketing material/sampling must be confined to the top of kiosk’s table. Alternate/additional furniture, displays, pop-up banners etc. are not permitted with kiosks.

Enforcement of Rules and Regulations/Violations Policy

It is the exhibitor’s responsibility to ensure that all rules and regulations are followed. Violations may warrant a loss of the exhibitor’s priority points. Remedy for violations at the show are as follows.

- **1st Violation - Loss of current year priority points**
- **2nd Violation - Loss of one half of accrued priority points**
- **3rd Violation - Loss of remainder of priority points**
- **4th Violation - One-year suspension of exhibiting privileges**

Examples of violations include, but are not limited to, aisle blockage, booth configuration violations and misuse of exhibitor badges.

Violation of any of these IFT Exhibitor Rules and Regulations by the exhibitor or its employees or agents may, at the option of IFT, result in forfeit of the exhibitor’s right to occupy exhibit space, and such exhibitor shall forfeit to IFT all monies paid or due. Upon evidence of violation, IFT may take possession of the space occupied by the exhibitor and remove all persons and goods. The exhibitor shall pay all expenses and damages that IFT may incur through the enforcement of this rule.

IFT’s Floor Managers, along with IFT’s Exhibit Manager are responsible for supervision of the exhibition, including routine exhibit violation monitoring during installation, exhibition and dismantle.

Identification of a rule violation will result in verbal notification from the floor manager. If the violation is not immediately cured, this will be considered a 1st Violation, with a loss of the current year priority points, including global spend. IFT Exhibits Manager will provide a violation notification to exhibitor representatives, explaining the nature of the violation. If the violation is not corrected after receipt of the written notification, the matter will be considered a 2nd Violation, resulting in a loss of one half of accrued priority points, including global spend.

IFT will determine the next steps if violations are not corrected after the written notification/2nd Violation as outlined in the Enforcement of Rules and Regulations/Violations Policy.

Exhibitors should contact IFT's Exhibit Manager with questions about violations of the IFT Rules and Regulations.