



2026 WLA Fall Educational Conference

Agenda

Madison Marriott West Middleton, WI

September 2, 2026

7:30 - 8:00 AM	Registration and Continental Breakfast Buffet
8:00 – 8:15 AM	Welcome <i>Kelsey Kotecki, 2026 WLA 1st Vice President-Conference Chair</i>
8:15 – 9:15 AM	Keynote Speaker- Importance of Business Ethics <i>Gale Beard, Masters Gallery</i>
9:15 – 10:00 AM	Troubleshooter's Toolbox: Tools that every quality technician should have at their disposal <i>Alex O'Brien, Center for Dairy Research</i>
10:00 –10:30 AM	Supplier Networking - Break
10:30 – 10:45 AM	Product Spotlight- Listeria Right Now, Neogen Food Safety
10:45 – 11:45 AM	From Data Entry to Decision-Making: Operationalizing Lab Data with a Modern LIMS <i>Logan Cline, QBench</i>
11:45 – 12:30 PM	Lunch & Supplier Networking
12:30 – 1:00 PM	WLA Business Meeting/Board Introductions/Open Board Positions
1:00 - 1:45 PM	Auditing <i>Shelly Ritschard, Grande Cheese</i>
1:45 –2:30 PM	Auditing Panel <i>Shelly Ritschard, Grande Cheese; Alex O'Brien, Center for Dairy Research; Charlie Mack, Prairie Farms; Sabina C. V. Alexander, QualiTru</i>
2:30 – 3:00 PM	Supplier Networking – Break
3:00 –3:45 PM	Bio-mapping – What is it and how can it be used as a processing tool <i>John Handley, Ph. D., OSI</i>
3:45 –4:30 PM	Servant Leadership <i>Tom Thibodeau</i>
4:30 PM	Adjourned – Prepare for Evening Activities
5:00 – 6:30 PM	Dinner/Awards Presentation
7:00- 11:00 PM	Evening Activity- Cosmic Bowling at Spare Time



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September 3, 2026

8:00 – 9:00 AM	Registration & Plated Breakfast
9:00 –10:00 AM	Keynote Speaker The Voice in the Lab: Leading Through Self-Doubt & Impostor Phenomenon <i>Nicholas Reising</i>
10:00 – 10:45 AM	Lactics and Their Role in Spoilage <i>Grant Hedblom, Neogen</i>
10:45– 11:00 AM	Break
11:00 –11:45 AM	NCIMS/ DATCP Update & Falsification of Records <i>Adam Brock, WDATCP</i>
11:45 AM – 12:00 PM	Product Spotlight- QualiTru
12:00 – 12:45 PM	Lunch- Voting results
12:45 – 1:30 PM	Building Psychological Safety <i>Andy Freeburg, Chippewa Valley Technical College</i>
1:30 – 2:15 PM	Break
2:15 – 3:00 PM	From Food Safety Compliance to Food Safety Culture <i>Sabina C. V. Alexander, QualiTru</i>
3:00 PM	Closing Remarks & Dismissal <i>Kelsey Kotecki, WLA 1st Vice President-Conference Chair</i>