

Centre canadien
pour l'intégrité
alimentaire



Canadian
Centre for
Food Integrity

Monthly News & Updates

When Trust Is Tested, Leadership Matters



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PUBLIC TRUST
SUMMIT**

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Approaching!**

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Public trust in Canada's food system is facing growing scrutiny. How can leaders respond? Join industry leaders, experts and changemakers at the 2026 CCFI Public Trust Summit, October 6–7 at The Westin Toronto Airport Hotel, as we explore how to build and maintain trust in an increasingly complex environment.

Under the theme "**Trust Under Pressure: Leading in an Era of Scrutiny**," the Summit will examine the pressures shaping public trust, the risks of declining trust, and practical strategies to strengthen confidence in Canada's food system. Don't miss this opportunity to connect with peers and gain actionable insights for your organization.

Group Discount: Save \$100 per person when you register a group of five or more. Contact toni@foodintegrity.ca for details.

Hotel Reminder: Book your room by **September 14** to take advantage of the special Summit rate (subject to availability).

[Register Now](#)

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Seeing Canada's Food System Differently



We're getting ready to launch the next phase of *Canada's Food System*, and it feels like a good moment to remember why this initiative exists in the first place.

Canada's Food System began with a request from the sector; organizations from across the food system asked CCFI to steward something bigger than any one organization, commodity, or sector could build on its own: a shared initiative that could elevate Canada's food system in the minds of Canadians and strengthen understanding of the contribution it makes to our country. That request became *Canada's Food System*.

Today, the initiative brings together organizations from across the food system around that shared ambition, with CCFI stewarding the work and helping to bring the collective vision to life, and now, we're getting ready for the next phase.

This next phase is about helping Canadians look at familiar things a little differently. We all know the food on our plates. We know the grocery store, the restaurant meal, the family dinner, and the products we buy every week. What we do not always see is everything that has to happen behind those familiar moments.

We want Canadians to see the connections. To recognize that food does not appear in isolation, and that behind every product, meal, and choice is a much larger system of people, businesses, knowledge, standards, infrastructure, science, and innovation working together. We also want to broaden the way Canadians think about the food system itself. It is not only about producing food. It supports jobs and communities, contributes to our economy, advances science and innovation, helps protect food safety, and plays an important role in Canada's resilience.

That's the opportunity in this next phase: to take what Canadians already know and help them see what sits behind it, what connects to it, and why it matters.

That is precisely why the sector asked for something collective in the first place, and why continued participation from across the system matters.

As we prepare to launch this next phase, we're excited to see the vision the sector asked us to help create continue to grow.

This is something the food system is building together, and CCFI is proud to steward that work.

Connecting Leaders Across Canada's Food System



On August 27, CCFI hosted a Prairie Partner Dinner in Calgary, bringing together a select group of leaders from across Canada's agriculture and food sector for an evening of conversation, connection and reflection.

Designed as an intimate and informal gathering, the dinner created space for meaningful dialogue about the future of Canada's food system and its role as essential national economic infrastructure. Guests had the opportunity to exchange perspectives, strengthen relationships and explore the opportunities and challenges facing Canada's food system.

The evening also featured an engaging keynote from economist and author Todd Hirsch, who shared insights on the economic forces shaping Canada and sparked further discussion among guests.

The dinner was a strong reflection of the value of bringing people together in a more personal setting. The thoughtful conversations and connections throughout the evening reinforced the importance of collaboration across Canada's food system, and the role that trusted relationships can play in building a stronger future.

CCFI is grateful to everyone who joined us and contributed to such a productive and engaging evening.

Interested in joining us at a future event? Let us know, and we'll be happy to keep you informed about upcoming opportunities to connect with CCFI and fellow food system leaders.

Welcome, Purity-IQ!

We're pleased to welcome Purity-IQ as a new CCFI member!

Based in Guelph, Ontario, Purity-IQ is a Canadian company specializing in product authenticity and verification. Using science-based testing and advanced technologies, the company helps verify the identity, purity and consistency of ingredients and finished products, while detecting potential adulteration, substitution and dilution.

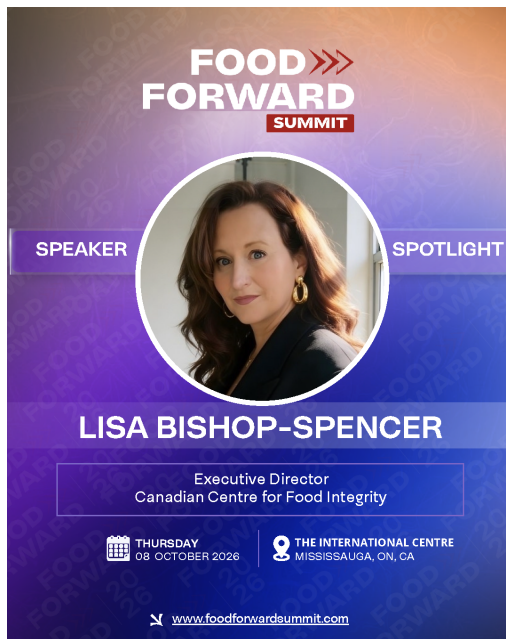
By helping businesses better understand what's in their products and supporting greater transparency across the supply chain, Purity-IQ contributes to building confidence in the food and products Canadians rely on.



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We're excited to have Purity-IQ join the CCFI community and look forward to connecting and collaborating in the months ahead!

Food Forward Summit 2026



CCFI's Executive Director, Lisa Bishop-Spencer, will be speaking at **Food Forward Summit 2026**, Canada's premier food systems innovation platform.

Taking place immediately following CCFI's Public Trust Summit in Toronto, this year's summit will convene more than 2,000 participants, 60+ speakers, 150+ exhibitors and international delegations to explore the innovations, partnerships, investment opportunities and policy discussions shaping the future of food.

Food Forward connects industry, investors, buyers, policymakers and innovators to accelerate the adoption and scale of breakthrough solutions across the blue and green economy. Designed to break silos across the food ecosystem, the summit creates a national platform where industry, government, academia, investors, producers and community leaders come together to strengthen collaboration, unlock new opportunities and advance Canada's food future.

As a CCFI community partner, you can receive **50% off registration** with the community code **LISA50**.

Learn more: www.foodforwardsummit.com

The Danger of Assuming We Know What People Think

One of the risks of working in the food system is that we know so much about it. We spend our days immersed in issues, terminology, policies, debates, and conversations that most Canadians only come across occasionally, if at all. That can make it really easy to assume people know what we're talking about, understand the context, or care about the same things we do. I include myself in that.

My social media feeds certainly don't help. If you looked at my algorithm, you'd probably think everyone in Canada is talking about food, agriculture, farming, food policy, and the food system all day long. They're not.

Of the roughly 33 million conversations happening online in Canada at any given time, only about three per cent are about food. That small percentage covers talk about agriculture and food-system issues, but it also includes someone posting a picture of the sourdough they made, sharing what they had for dinner, or reviewing their latest restaurant find.

What a reality check! An issue that feels huge to those of us inside the food system may barely register with most Canadians. Something we assume everyone understands may not have crossed their radar at all.

When we assume people already know the issue, we start the conversation in entirely the wrong place. Our instinct is often to explain. We gather the facts, sharpen the message, and try to make our case more clearly, but sometimes we're answering a question no one is actually asking.

If we misunderstand what people know, what they care about, or what's driving their reaction, that can affect more than our communications. We often put our energy into the wrong

response, make decisions based on assumptions that don't reflect public expectations, or miss something that matters to people for reasons we hadn't considered.

Probably, the better place to start is with curiosity. What does someone actually know about this? What do they think is happening? What are they worried about? What information are they using to form that view? And what would help them understand the issue differently? Those questions can take us somewhere much more useful than simply asking, "How do we communicate this better?"

They're also a good reminder that public opinion is rarely as simple as 'informed vs uninformed', 'supportive vs opposed'. People bring their own experiences, values, priorities, and expectations to how they see an issue.

That's one of the things I value most about the work we do at CCFI. We get the chance to listen across the food system and to Canadians themselves, and sometimes the most useful insights are the ones that don't confirm what we expected.

They're the ones that remind us there's a very different view from outside our own bubble, and those are usually the moments that make me rethink the issue.

Lisa Bishop-Spencer

Executive Director, CCFI



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