2026 CAFE Convention Schedule

Halifax Marriott Harbourfront • 1919 Upper Water Street, Halifax, NS
All times are local to Halifax. Updated November 6, 2026.

Tuesday, November 10, 2026

Time	Session and details	Location
9:00 AM– 1:00 PM	**C.A.F.E. Board Meeting** Meeting of the C.A.F.E. Board of Directors.	Acadia A
1:00 PM– 7:00 PM	**Convention Registration & Information Desk** Check in, collect your delegate bag, and pick up event information.	Coat Check

Wednesday, November 11, 2026

Time	Session and details	Location
7:00 AM–10:00 AM	**Convention Registration & Information Desk** Check in, collect your delegate bag, and pick up event information.	Coat Check
7:30 AM– 9:00 AM	**Breakfast in Plenary** Breakfast served in the plenary room.	Nova Scotia BCD
9:00 a.m.– 10:00 a.m.	**Keynote – Canada's Food and Agriculture Outlook: Trends Shaping Fairs,** Communities and Consumers **Moderator / introducer:** Linda Sicoli **Speakers:** Dr. Sylvain Charlebois	Nova Scotia BCD
10:30 AM–11:00 AM	**Load Buses** Upper Water Street in front of the hotel.	Hotel entrance
11:15 AM– 4:45 PM	**Off-Site Valley Tour** Boxed lunches on board; Luckett Vineyards tour and tasting, followed by the outdoor Oulton Farm tour and ox-pull demonstration. Return around 4:45 p.m.	Off-Site
5:00 PM–7:00 PM	**Convention Registration & Information Desk**	Coat Check
6:30 PM	**Cocktails**	Nova Scotia BCD
6:30 PM–7:00 PM	**CAFE Cup**	Nova Scotia BCD
6:30 PM onward	**Silent Auction** Silent Auction is open at intervals throughout the Convention. Stop in to place your bid! Silent Auction will be closed to bids on Friday at 12:00 pm!	Nova Scotia BCD
7:00 PM– 10:00 PM	**Dinner & Showcases** Dinner served in the plenary room with live showcase performances.	Nova Scotia BCD
10:00 PM– 11:59 PM	**Hospitality Suite** Informal networking and refreshments.	Hospitality Suite

Thursday, November 12, 2026

Time	Session and details	Location
7:30 AM– 8:30 AM	**Breakfast in Plenary** Breakfast served in the plenary room.	Nova Scotia BCD
8:00 AM– 7:00 PM	**Convention Registration & Information Desk** Check in and pick up event information.	Coat Check
8:00 AM– 8:00 PM	**Quiet Room**	Nova Scotia A
8:30 AM–10:00 AM	**Keynote – Youth Voices in Agriculture** **Moderator / introducer:** Linda Sicoli introduces Kayla Graham to moderate **Speakers:** Mira Dewar; Zachary Best; Sophie Heighton; Hayley Cox	Nova Scotia BCD
10:00 AM–10:30 AM	**Coffee Break** Refreshment break.	Nova Scotia BCD
10:00 AM– 4:30 PM	**Tradeshow** Tradeshow booths open in the hall.	Nova Scotia Foyer
10:30 a.m.– 11:30 a.m.	**From Community Tradition to Tourism Infrastructure: Positioning Fairs as** Destination Drivers **Moderator / introducer:** Dan Kemppainen **Speakers:** Brian White; Bruce Murphy; Agamani Chakrabarty	Halifax A
10:30 a.m.– 11:30 a.m.	**Strengthening Governance in Volunteer-Led Fairs and Exhibitions** **Moderator / introducer:** Liz Vintinner **Speakers:** Angus Mackinnon; Kathryn Cosgrove; Kara Chisholm	Halifax B
10:30 a.m.– 11:30 a.m.	**Turning Economic Impact Data into Policy, Funding and Advocacy** **Moderator / introducer:** Allison Wright **Speakers:** David Grindle, IAFE	Halifax C
11:30 AM– 1:00 PM	**Lunch & Showcases** Lunch served in the plenary room with live showcase performances.	Nova Scotia BCD
1:00 p.m.– 2:00 p.m.	**Beyond Fair Week: Maximizing Year-Round Fairground Use and Community Value** **Moderator / introducer:** Judy McFaul **Speakers:** Sylvia Layzell; Bruce Mackenzie; Sheri Donovan	Halifax A

Time	Session and details	Location
1:00 p.m.– 2:00 p.m.	**The Future of Fairs: Using Technology to Enhance Operations and Guest Experience** **Moderator / introducer:** Jason Au **Speakers:** Hany Mikail; Olid Ahmed; Robert Newcombe	Halifax B
1:00 p.m.– 2:00 p.m.	**Presentation – Beyond the Gates: Growing Your Fair Through Tourism Partnerships** **Moderator / introducer:** Kalyn Van Horne **Speakers:** Christina Watts, Tourism Prince George	Halifax C
2:00 PM– 2:30 PM	**Coffee Break** Refreshment break.	Nova Scotia BCD
2:30 p.m.– 3:30 p.m.	**Growing the Next Generation: Youth Leadership and Engagement Through Fairs** **Moderator / introducer:** Reg Ash **Speakers:** Mira Dewar, 4-H; Kathryn Cosgrove; Brian Casey	Halifax A
2:30 p.m.– 3:30 p.m.	**Building Sustainable Revenue: Fundraising, Partnerships and Proven Ideas** **Moderator / introducer:** Jane Matthews **Speakers:** Erin Roberts; Amy Heise; Emily Boucher	Halifax B
2:30 p.m.– 3:30 p.m.	**Live Entertainment at Your Fair: Strategy, Programming and Return on Investment** **Moderator / introducer:** Jessica Fodor **Speakers:** Jason Au; James Simpson; Krista Grear	Halifax C
3:30 PM– 4:00 PM	**Coffee Break** Refreshment break.	Nova Scotia BCD
4:00 p.m.– 5:00 p.m.	**Reimagining Agricultural Identity: Agritourism, Local Food and New Audience Connections** **Moderator / introducer:** Dale Buhler **Speakers:** Leann Grosvold, Elann Consulting; Jennifer Manual, Food Art Nature; Gwyn Bellefontaine, Middle Musquodoboit Agricultural Society	Halifax A
4:00 p.m.– 5:00 p.m.	**Presentation – Beyond Admission: Curating Memorable Guest Experiences** **Moderator / introducer:** Allison Wright **Speakers:** Neil Christopher, Calgary Stampede	Halifax B
4:00 p.m.– 5:00 p.m.	**Building the Fair Workforce: Recruitment, Retention and Skills** **Moderator / introducer:** Christie Kerr **Speakers:** Faye Potter; Heather Killen; Tracy Isenor	Halifax C

Time	Session and details	Location
5:15 PM– 6:15 PM	**Service Member Meeting**	Nova Scotia A
6:30 PM– 10:00 PM	**National Awards Dinner with Live Auction & 50/50** National Awards Dinner featuring the silent auction, live auction, 50/50 draw and live showcase performances. Cocktails from 6:00 PM.	Nova Scotia BCD
10:00 PM– 11:59 PM	**Hospitality Suite** Informal networking and refreshments.	Hospitality Suite

Friday, November 13, 2026

Time	Session and details	Location
7:30 AM– 8:30 AM	**AGM Sign In** Sign in for the Annual General Meeting and collect voting cards.	Nova Scotia Foyer
7:30 AM– 8:30 AM	**Breakfast in Plenary** Breakfast served in the plenary room.	Nova Scotia BCD
7:30 AM–Noon	**Convention Registration & Information Desk** Check in and pick up event information.	Registration Desk
8:00 AM– 4:00 PM	**Quiet Room** Unavailable from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. during the Fair Managers Meeting.	Nova Scotia A
8:30 AM– 9:30 AM	**C.A.F.E. Annual General Meeting** C.A.F.E. Annual General Meeting.	Nova Scotia BCD
9:30 AM– 10:00 AM	**C.A.F.E. Board Meeting** Meeting of the C.A.F.E. Board of Directors.	Maritime Suite
10:00 AM– 10:30 AM	**Coffee Break** Refreshment break.	Nova Scotia BCD
10:30 AM–11:25 AM	**Event Marketing in 2026: Trends, Tools and Audience Growth** **Moderator / introducer:** Jane Matthews **Speakers:** Will Yang; Rae Tretiuk; Amy Warner; Lynda Franc	Halifax A
10:30 AM–11:25 AM	**CAFE Leadership Forum: Open Q&A** **Moderator / introducer:** Kalyn Van Horne **Speakers:** Allison Wright; Reg Ash; Judy McFaul	Halifax B
10:30 AM–11:25 AM	**Presentation – Beyond Government Funding: Building Corporate Sponsorships That** Drive Revenue and Impact **Moderator / introducer:** Dale Buhler **Speakers:** Erin Roberts	Halifax C
11:35 AM–12:30 PM	**Leading Across Generations: Mentorship, Technology and Team Success** **Moderator / introducer:** Liz Vintinner **Speakers:** Rae Tretiuk; Ally Bauchman; Allan Melvin	Halifax A

Time	Session and details	Location
11:35 AM–12:30 PM	**Presentation – Navigating the Regulatory Landscape: Compliance, Accessibility,** Safety and Vendor Operations **Moderator / introducer:** Rachel Farr **Speakers:** Lynn Hood	Halifax B
11:35 AM–12:30 PM	**Peer-Exchange Roundtables – Showcasing Regional Uniqueness** **Moderator / introducer:** Dan Kemppainen	Halifax C
12:30 PM– 2:00 PM	**Lunch & Showcases** Lunch served in the plenary room with live showcase performances.	Nova Scotia BCD
1:00 PM– 2:00 PM	**Fair Managers Meeting: An Open Peer Discussion for Fair Managers and Staff.** Fairs across Canada hold monthly meetings to support the planning and execution of fairs. Grab your lunch and join us for an open discussion on a variety of topics. This meeting is for Fair Management only. If you would like to join future meetings online, please email mquan@exploredmonton.com with your name, company, title, and email address.	Nova Scotia A
2:00 p.m.– 3:00 p.m.	**Ready for the Unexpected: Emergency Response, Climate Resilience and Business** Continuity **Moderator / introducer:** Sheri Donovan **Speakers:** Leah Murphy; Kalyn Van Horne; Johnathon Donovan	Halifax A
2:00 p.m.– 3:00 p.m.	**Tradition, Relevance and the Modern Fair** **Moderator / introducer:** Allison Wright **Speakers:** Rod Tate, Tatex	Halifax B
2:00 p.m.– 3:00 p.m.	**Peer-Exchange Roundtables – Program Evaluation** **Moderator / introducer:** Reg Ash	Halifax C
3:00 PM– 3:30 PM	**Coffee Break** Refreshment break.	Nova Scotia BCD
3:30 p.m.– 4:30 p.m.	**Closing Keynote – The Journey** **Moderator / introducer:** Linda Sicoli **Speakers:** Morgan Toney	Nova Scotia BCD
4:30 PM– 5:00 PM	**Convention Closes** Formal close of the 2026 convention.	Nova Scotia BCD