



From Your President...

Hello Members,
I hope everyone had a great holiday season! To those that process venison, I hope you are starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

I am looking forward to the upcoming convention May 11th -14th. Please fill out your forms and get them sent back in. If you have any questions about the upcoming convention please contact me or Renee.

For new members, please don't be scared of the Processed Meats Competition. This is an opportunity to get feedback and suggestions from some amazing judges with years of experience in the meat industry. There are also some great classes being offered at the convention Thursday, Friday and Saturday. I feel the most beneficial part of the convention is getting the chance to talk with other members about issues your facility may be facing or a chance to share a great idea you had. There will be many opportunities to do so at some of our social events, meals or at Sunday's bull session.

Last but not least is the supplier showcase. If you are on the hunt for a piece of equipment, looking to compare pricing on supplies or in search of seasoning to make your products, this is the place.

I look forward to seeing you all in May!

~Loni Stepniak – PAMP President

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www.pameatprocessors.org

DON'T MISS OUT - CONVENTION 2023

We are happy to welcome everyone to the 82nd Pennsylvania Association of Meat Processors Convention & Supplier Showcase. We have a full weekend planned starting with more classes on Thursday. Check out all we have to offer below and sign up today!!

Thursday, May 11

Pre-convention Workshop

8:45 Business Meeting

9:30 Board Meeting

Session I

11:45 Welcome

Loni Saylor-PAMP President

12:00 Creating Poultry Deli

Meat Products

Jonathan Campbell

1:00 Cutting to Fit Roll Stock

Film – Speaker Andrew Eising,

JVR Industries, Inc.

3:00 Creating Value with

Coated Nettings – Speaker

Kalle USA / Jif-Pak

4:15 Product Check-In

8:00 Presidents Reception

Friday, May 12

Pre-convention Workshop

7:00 Registration and Product

Check-in

Session II

7:45 Welcome

Jonathan Campbell, Penn State

8:00 Concurrent Session I

Group A – Manufacturing

Summer Sausage and Snack

Sticks Louis Muench, Louis

Finer Meats, Cumberland, WI

Glenn Myers, Penn State

Group B – Alternative Bacon
Products Ron Godshall, God-
shall's Quality Meats, Telford,
PA

Group C – Jerky Processing for
Shelf Stability
Jonathan Campbell, Penn State

9:45 Concurrent Session II

Group A – Alternative Bacon
Products

Group B – Jerky Processing for
Shelf Stability

Group C – Manufacturing Sum-
mer Sausage and Snack Sticks

11:15 AAMP Update –
Lobbying Efforts on Alternative
Proteins

12:15 Lunch – (provided by
Holland Brothers Catering)

1:00 Concurrent Session III

Group A – Jerky Processing for
Shelf Stability

Group B – Manufacturing Sum-
mer Sausage and Snack Sticks

Group C – Alternative Bacon
Products

3:00 Ribbon Cutting /Open to
Showcase – Loni Saylor

3:00 Supplier Exhibit &
“People's Choice” Meat Prod-
uct Competition

7:00-10:00 Social / Dinner Drop
-in – Senate Hall (Penn Stater)

Saturday, May 13

Educational Sessions

8:30 Grant Programs for Small
Meat Processors

9:30 Supplier Meeting

10:00-1:00 Supplier Exhibit

12:45 Boxed lunch served
MUST Pre Order

1:00 Generational Transition
Panel – Mike Holland

2:30 Complying with PDA at
Retail – Rodney Schaffer

5:30 Social

6:00 Awards Dinner & Auction

Sunday, May 14

9:00 Bull Session

10:30 Processed Meat Show
Viewing & Discussion with
Available Judges

11:30 Product Removal



CONVENTION REMINDERS



T-Shirts/Hoodies - must be pre-ordered. In order to not have any extras after the convention, there will be NO clothing for sale at the show. It must be pre-ordered or ordered at the show. (Shipping will be added.)

Parking at the Meat Lab - this is the first year we have had to sign up to park. It's easy and no charge to you - simply on to: <http://psu.parkmoblie.it>. Then, 1. Daily Parking Reservations; 2. May 11th PAMP Convention; 3. Filters & access code (top left corner); 4. Enter PAMP 2023 in access code and APPLY. 5. Apply as a guest and it will ask for email, license plate number and you should be done.

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SHARKS, ALLIGATORS, AND REGULATORS, OH MY!

In the wild, different predators have their own unique ways of stalking and killing their prey.

While the techniques and means may differ, the outcome is usually the same.

The less powerful creature will eventually succumb to the strength, suffocating weight, and brutal force of the attacker. When the fight is over, and the last breath is drawn, the victor will typically glow with pride, release a thunderous roar, and begin to search for its next meal.

When we're lucky enough to be in Florida, Jess and I advise our clients from the first floor of our "Funky Fish House." Our home, which (long before we purchased it) was aptly named the "Shark House," sits only minutes from the Gulf of Mexico. Resting quietly on our deck, overlooking miles of Florida mangroves, we routinely see alligators swerving to and from in the canal below, searching for their next lunch or dinner. And, living amongst the alligators, which we recently learned from a friend, are six-foot bull sharks. Four of them, to be exact, were recently spotted and photographed in a nearby marina.

And ... that's why our paddle boards are for sale.

With that said, it also stands as a stark reminder that, whether we are working as food industry professionals, or taking a brief vacation to the Great State of Florida, there is always risk and exposure lurking in the shadows, just under the surface of the water, or right around the corner. In Florida, it's the sharks, alligators, and maybe even pumas. In our food facilities, it's the regulators.

Now that COVID is mostly in the rear-view mirror, like a T-Rex in Jurassic Park, the regulators are continuing to increase the frequency of routine FDA inspections and USDA Food Safety Assessments. In addition to being more frequent, they are also more brutal.

Both agencies are now routinely conducting expansive scorched-earth swab-a-thons in food facilities, hunting and searching for the presence of pathogens like *Listeria* and *Salmonella*. When found, the agencies are forcing companies to expend hundreds of thousands (and, in some cases, millions) of dollars to eliminate these pathogens from food production areas. If the companies are unsuccessful, the agencies will eventually (through Warning Letters or Notices of Suspension) force these companies out of business. Put differently, the more powerful creature will eventually force the company to succumb to its strength, suffocating weight, and brutal force.

So, as we move deeper into 2023, remember to remain diligent and aware. The predators are lurking in the shadows, just under the radar, and/or right around the next corner. Whether they take the shape of sharks, alligators or regulators, please know that their bites will be strong and sharp. Please begin preparing now, and make sure that you have the necessary protections in place. And, when the predators do arrive — and they will — please remember that an ounce of protections does, in fact, equate to a pound of cure.

Sharks, alligators, and regulators, oh my?? Be sure to follow our regulatory inspection checklist and, perhaps, we will be able to say, "sharks, alligators, and regulators, goodbye..."

Reprinted from Shawn Steven's Blog
"Legally Speaking" from meatingplace.com



Who doesn't love a good performance review? I mean, nothing screams exciting like a stuffy room, your boss, and a numerical rating that is supposed to symbolize your performance for an entire year, so fun. Throw in a recession, a pandemic, livestock disease or layoffs and you are really headed to an absolute party. But I would be lying if I said I am not one of the strange breed who looks forward to this time of year. I know. I'm weird, but let me finish.

In my role, I have the distinct pleasure of not only receiving a performance review, but giving them to my team as well. And over the years and throughout the changes to my team and role, my method has evolved. And just when I thought I knew exactly what I was doing, I sat in on a presentation about performance reviews that changed my plans for this year just a touch.

Let's get into things I like to keep in mind during reviews.

Surprises are a bad thing. If you are hearing about or telling someone about something for the very first time in an annual review, it is time to evaluate the communication you have throughout the year. Your people not only want but truly need to hear from you about their work on a regular basis. This keeps your people engaged and apprised, which promotes growth and satisfaction.

Make it measurable. Each of us starts out the year with goals and objectives, but we should also be able to measure progress toward them. I like to use the "SMART Goals" method. That means whenever possible, goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely. It may seem overwhelming to create goals around this concept, there are hundreds of resources online to help. And once you've gotten used to it, reviews and coaching are made much simpler and less ambiguous for everyone.

Invite feedback. We are all in the business of retaining the valued members of every team across our businesses. If performance reviews are a one-way street, there cannot be bilateral growth when walking away from the conversation. No matter which side of the table (or screen) you are on, open yourself to the feedback of others. There is a linear path to success when an individual sees constructive, relevant criticism as a means for improvement. Own it.

Ratings should be based on impact, not personality. This was where some extra pieces fell together for me in the presentation I mentioned before. Too often, we base reviews on the person sitting before us, when that is far too subjective. If we pivot to the impact that person has on their peers, customers, and the business, there can be a more consistent process. If "Attitude" is a metric and Roger comes in every day with a smile- what does that mean for the people that work with Roger? How can that be expressed in terms of business results? I've been chewing on this and absolutely loving how it redefines the thought process slightly.

I want you each to think about all the reviews you have given and/or received. Every company, every manager, does things differently; that's a given. But going into these conversations with a mindset for growth and a strategy to get there is going to change how everyone feels leading up to those meetings and walking away from them.

So tell me, do you love review time? What are your best practices? Give the rest of us some more to chew on as we continue to refine our own processes. And let's not allow this critical time of year pass us by without making it count.

Reprinted from Laura Zinger's Blog
"Omnivorous Options" from meatingplace.com



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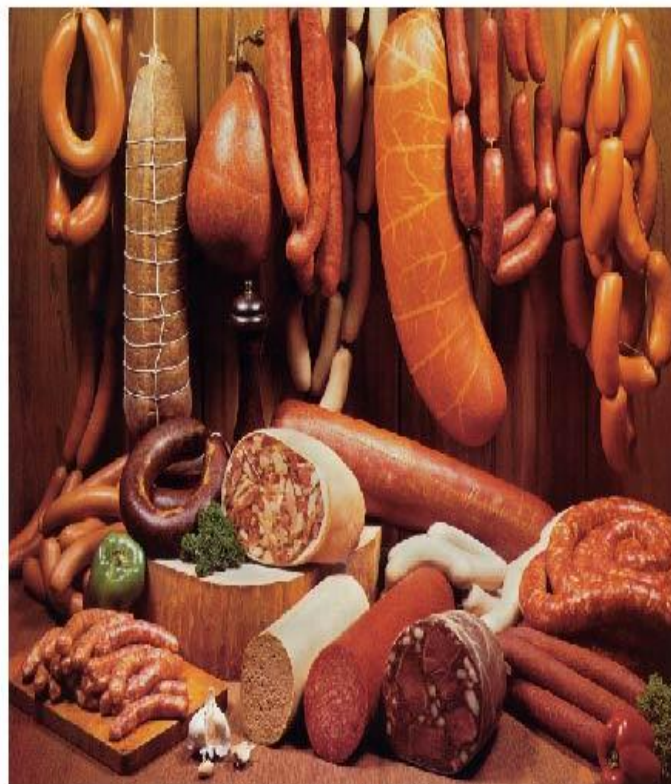
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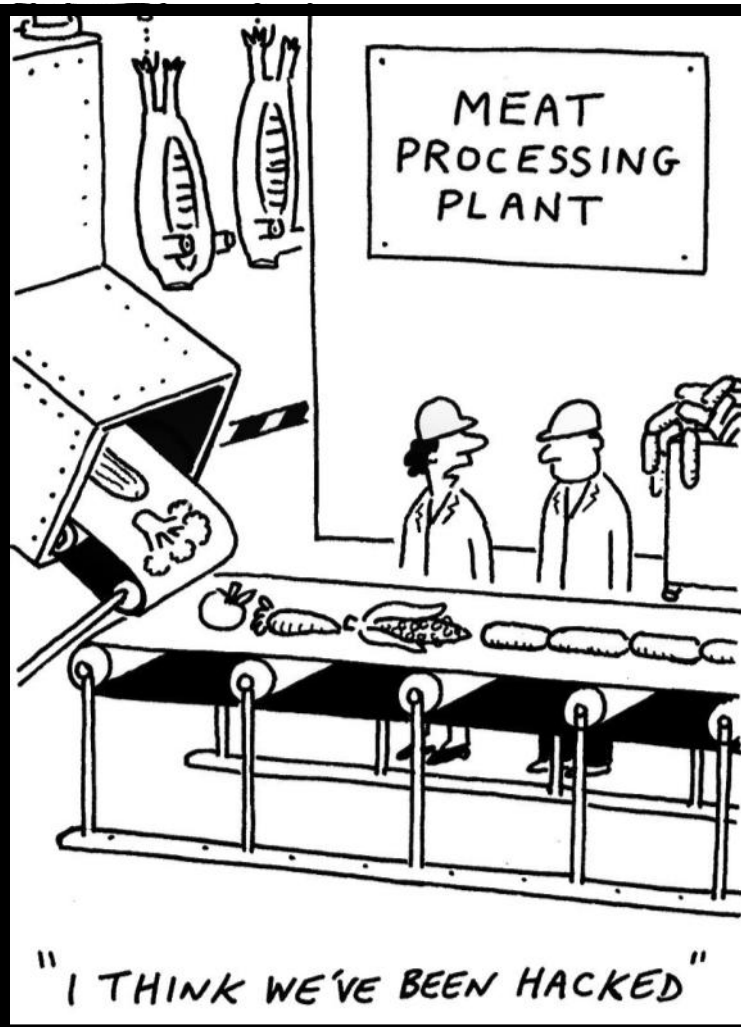
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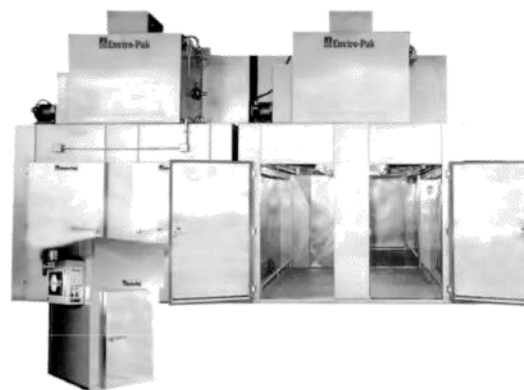
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WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

In the United States, food waste is estimated at between 30-40% of the food supply. Can you believe it? How can all this food simply go to waste to rot in some landfill? The fact remains that there is hunger throughout the world. Right here at home in the USA, people go hungry every day when there is food available to feed them all.

This 30-40% figure, which is based on estimates by USDA's Economic Research Service of 31% food loss at retail and consumer levels, corresponds to nearly 133 billion pounds and \$161 billion worth of food. Food is the single largest category of material placed in municipal landfills and represents wasted nourishment.

We in the meat and poultry industry are especially vulnerable to the food waste issue because we produce and market a perishable product. Peruse your local market and you will find nearly every meat or poultry item with a sell-by or freeze-by or use-by date affixed to it. The waste ensues when some of those meat packages are not sold and routinely discarded at the store level or forgotten in the back of a home refrigerator, generating a penicillin-like experiment of mold.

Let's do some math. Let's say an average of 25% — not the 30 to 40% the USDA estimates — of the meat and poultry we produce is wasted. That means that at least 122 pounds of every beef animal processed in this country will go to waste. How did I arrive at that calculation? Follow me here: Live beef animal equals 1,200 pounds times 63% yield, minus 3.5% shrink, times 67% yielded "take home" meat, times 25% waste, equals 122 pounds. Can that be true, 122 pounds from every one of the 600,000 head of beef cattle slaughtered weekly in the US — or 73 million pounds — will go to a landfill somewhere, generating more methane gas? For sake of example, maybe our problem is much less; say only 10% of beef is wasted — or 49 pounds from each animal, for a total of 29 million pounds per week. That's still nearly 4.5 pounds of wasted beef for every citizen in our country every year.

Sure, I know that there are plenty of other food items that also go to waste either stuck in the back of the refrigerator like lettuce or shriveled old mold-covered vegetables or shrunken apples, but our business is meat and poultry and that is why I am trying to identify and emphasize the scope of our problem.

One of the causes of "our problem" are the "best if used by" statements on every meat or poultry package. What and who determines these arbitrary dates? Usually, it's the company marketing such products that have done shelf life studies of their products to determine when they might "go bad." These time frames often are then "safe sided" to make sure that there will be no litigious consumers who may claim harm if their meat or poultry product is not consumed before the use by time frame.

What's the cure to help eliminate waste from these arbitrary dates? Two that I can think of. First, extend the dates closer to what the company's shelf life studies show rather than pick shorter arbitrary time frames that reflect the worry of the company's attorneys. Second, reformulate the products so that they are more shelf stable at the expense of taste or extending product shelf longevity possibly hurting sales. While that may work for processed meats, how do you reformulate fresh beef or pork or chicken for that matter?



Maybe there is another potential cure to address the hunger problem, and that is having a collection system for meat and poultry products that are nearing their shelf life limits and distribute them to those in need. Or maybe this food waste can be used as feed for cattle, hogs or poultry. Of course, such a collection and distribution system would have to accommodate the "use by" dates, but that can be worked out.

Not our problem, you say? I disagree; food waste is a problem that we can help cure and, at 29 million pounds of beef wasted every week, it is one we are obligated to help solve.

Reprinted from Mack Grave's Blog
"Meat Your Markets" from meatingplace.com

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Quality and travel have become less synonymous. There seems to be a significant decrease in comfort and quality and a significant increase in costs compared to a few years ago when quality mattered over quantity.

During the holidays, I was traveling to Texas to pick up my kids and bring them back to New York to enjoy the snow. I was delayed out of Albany for four hours for incorrect paperwork to allow the plane to fly legally. There were no other flights for four and a half days on any airline out of Albany. We had to rearrange our schedules several times and I never made it to Texas. My kids had to fly by themselves part of the way as unaccompanied minors, which I had to pay extra for, and they were unable to sit in the seats I purchased. In addition, they were the last off the plane, which almost made us miss our connection, except there was a maintenance issue with that plane also. There was a very high cost and no “quality” consideration in my travel over the holidays.

What happened to create all this craziness during the busiest time of the year? We can always blame the huge storm that ripped across the Midwest. But if we dig a little deeper, it seems that the storm may not have been the cause of the crazy, but merely the result of long-term decisions based on financial outcomes instead of decisions based on operational and quality outcomes.

I see these decision patterns too often in our industry, as well. When I started in this industry 25 years ago, many of the business decisions made were based on operational parameters, with a priority on quality. Today, I am going to bet that decisions are based more on financial standing. Is that a bad thing? Not necessarily, unless there is not balance between the two. Purely financial decisions are not in the best interest of any company. Quality, safety, and operations should always be included with financial considerations.

In today's world, many companies are governed by accounting and procurement instead of operations and quality/food safety. How many times do we make decisions based on actual cost of “the product” (ingredient, equipment, antimicrobial, etc.) versus cost benefit of use and quality/safety of the finished product?

We tend to become narrowly focused on profitability, in terms of yield. A great example is yield improvement during carcass chilling. This carcass yield gain is unaccounted for after chilling (not true yield gain) because it is lost during cut up and further processing. Since most of our products are further processed, why are we considering this carcass yield increase important to our business? There is a current disconnect between a short-term numerical yield improvement and long-term functional yield gain.

I have seen many businesses find the balance among operational parameters, safety, quality, and financial/profitability. It can be done. But it takes a team made up of members throughout the entire operation, not just procurement and accounting, involved in making these decisions. There is a science to profitability. When we choose to ignore the science and just use numbers for decision making, we lose sight of what's important — quality, safety, AND profitability.

Reprinted from Christine Alvarado's Blog
“For the Birds” from meatingplace.com



I recently authored a story about a fateful day when my wife and I jumped out of a flaming aircraft. What I didn't write about is what happened the day before. It was a Sunday I will never forget, and a day I learned one of the most important lessons of my life.

Karma is real.

The weather was perfect that weekend. My wife and I had flown our plane from Wisconsin to North Dakota to visit our son James. James graduated from the Air Force Academy and was stationed in Minot, ND flying routine patrols in the UH-1N Twin Huey.

Since this was our first time visiting, James graciously volunteered to give us a tour of the airbase before we headed back to Wisconsin. On Sunday, May 28, 2017, we hopped into James' car, and weaved our way through the Minot airbase toward the airfield and dated Air Force hangar where the Hueys are parked and maintained. As James explained the long history of the legacy hangar where his helicopters were parked, we passed a stunning and technologically glorious building standing proudly just feet from the tarmac. The building was clearly new, constructed of shiny metal, and faced with expansive floor to ceiling windows to showcase its beautiful cylindrical facade.

As we passed this impressive structure, I asked James, “For what purpose was this almost super hero-like building built?” After raising an eyebrow, James replied that the new building was constructed for the airfield fire department. “What!?” I proclaimed. The airport fire department?

Suddenly, images of 20-somethings playing air hockey and video games all day long, at extreme taxpayer expense, filled my mind. “Why is it,” I asked with ire in my voice, “that they get a brand-new building with all the bells and whistles ... when you have to work out of an old hangar that looks like it was constructed in the 1930s?” Feeling more resentment, I continued, “That's bull****; when was the last time any of those kids actually responded to an airplane fire?” “Probably never,” I wrongfully concluded.

Fast forward exactly 24 hours. As Jess and I began accelerating for takeoff in our Cessna 182, Jess smelled something burning. Unfortunately, it was our plane. And, waiting almost magically in their well-appointed airport firehouse, those kids jumped into action when the call came from Magic City Tower: “We have an aircraft on fire.”

Imagine my joy, and my embarrassment when, as Jess and I escaped from, and then watched, our airplane burning on the runway, the lights of the airport fire engines breached the horizon. Rolling down the runway, three florescent yellow fire trucks and their crews arrived within moments, dousing our burning airplane with foam.

Engulfed in shame, I kicked myself for saying the awful things I had said the day before. Had I kept my mouth shut, perhaps our airplane would never have almost exploded.

So, lesson learned. Karma is real. As you fly into the New Year, be sure to treat everyone with kindness and respect. I know we will. And, like you, we look forward to the next 12 months surrounded by such amazing colleagues and friends.

Reprinted from Shawn Steven's Blog
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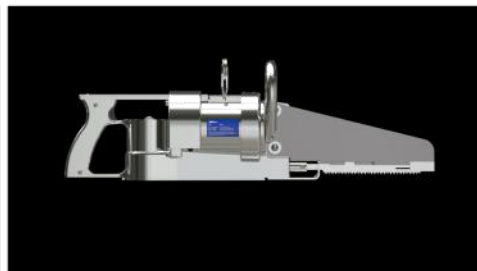
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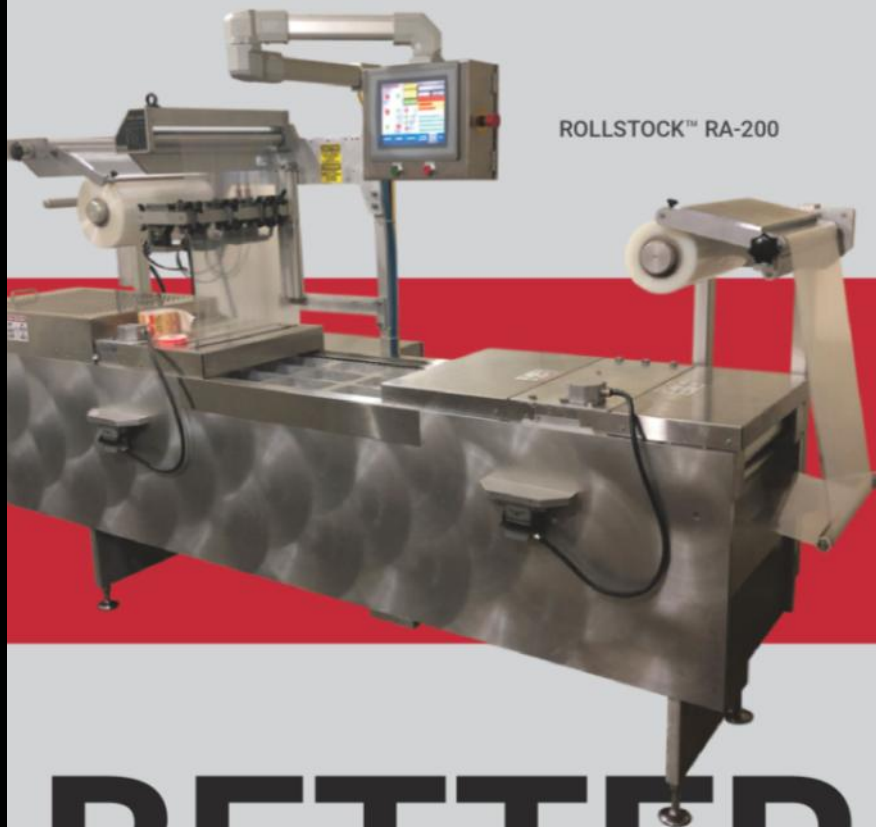


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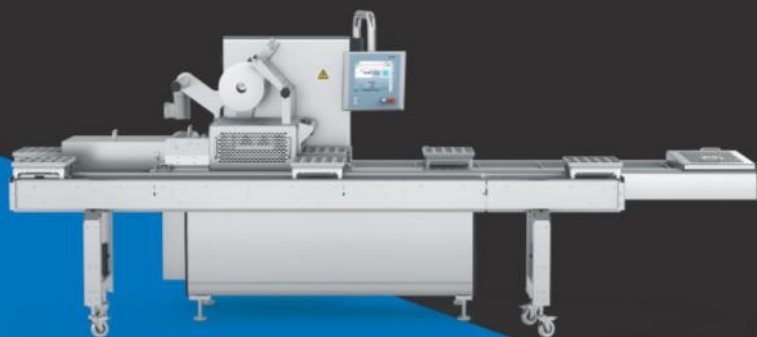
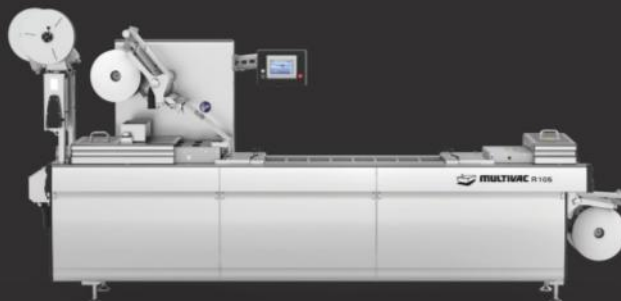
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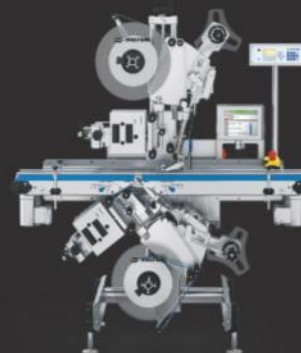
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2023 DUES: Your 2023 dues have been mailed. Thank you to all that have paid for your continued support. Please note all dues must be paid in order to attend convention.

CONVENTION REGISTRATION: Join the fun and attend the 2023 Convention. Registration have been mailed and can also be found on our website.

BOARD MEMBERS: Please consider being on the PAMP Board of Directors. This year we will have several seats open. You can reach out to a current board member or Renee if you are interested.

PRODUCT COMPETITION ENTRY FORM: An entry form and 2023 Rules were mailed in December. Please use this form when registering your items. Please note the check in times on the schedule.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF EDWARD WOODS



Ed was the proprietor of Woods Smoked Meats of Bowling Green, MO. PAMP was honored to have Ed attend our convention last year and share his knowledge and wisdom during our Friday sessions. He spoke on "Creating Grand Champion Products". He was a member of the Cured Meats Hall of Fame and the Meat Industry Hall of Fame. He was also a member of AAMP. He won many state and national awards with his products. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife and family.

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TOP 5 REASONS TO ATTEND AN INDUSTRY CONVENTION

A number of years ago, I was chatting with a friend of mine who works in market research and he turned to me and asked, "This may be a stupid question, but why do people attend conventions?"

It made me pause to think for a moment. As a convention organizer, this is the ultimate question. Even more now when we are tasked with the "new norm", social distancing, an economic scenario like none we have previously experienced. Whether in-person events in or the wave of digital and online events currently, there are many translatable benefits to share. When I first entered the "convention realm", I was oblivious and ignorant to the main answer(s) to this question. That being said, I am a believer that there isn't a definitive answer which applies to everyone 13 years later. As a junior conference organizer, I was not directly taught the fundamental reasons as to why people attend industry events.

I learnt this over time, having witnessed the social and educational benefits which conventions bring to attendees, speakers and sponsors alike. Again, no two events are the same, and one mustn't confuse a conventions with a trade show or other event types. Participant agendas can be completely different in this respect.

This article is to share my personal top 5 reasons as to why people attend conventions, and how conventions can benefit attendees in the modern age we live in, especially given how much free information is readily available to us, and how important our time is.

So what are the main reasons people attend conventions?



1. To network

A big reason for going to conventions is to meet with likeminded people and industry peers. Conventions bring together people from all different geographical areas who share a common discipline or field, and they are a great way to meet new people in your field. At a convention

you will be able to get together with people from a wide range of backgrounds, of whom you may not encounter at your home workplace or institution. As you build your professional network, conventions can become a good place for meeting with people in your field that you haven't connected in a while.

2. To expand your knowledge and find solutions to problems

You will hear a lot about things in your field that will be new to you. These could be new techniques, new types of equipment, unpublished data, or learn from thought-leaders that you may not have previously heard of. You will get to keep onto of the research of some of the biggest names in your field, in addition to some of the newest faces in it. Conventions give you the opportunity to talk to these people one-on-one about what they are working on, and they may even give you advice on how to enhance your own work. You have the opportunity to ask presenters questions about their work and the rationale behind it, which you can't do when reading journal articles.



3. To present your ideas and work to others

This is one of the more obvious reasons for attending conventions: to present your work. It's good practice in talking about what you do with a variety of people from similar, related and/or completely different areas of study. Presenting will make you more confident about the work that you do, and gives you new perspective about your work as people may ask questions that make you think about your project differently. At a convention you have the opportunity to get feedback on your work from people who have never seen it before and may provide new insight.



4. For people to meet you

It may not seem like a notable thing, but conventions are also a good way for people to meet you. Regardless if you are the CEO of a multinational company or a second year grad student, or even presenting for the first time, you may meet someone at a meal, in the exhibit hall or wherever and within a few minutes, you can

make a connection with someone that could dramatically impact your professional career. This is especially important when you are looking for collaborators, jobs ideas, or in some fields you may even be looking for committee members. Conventions are another way to get your name and your work out there as you begin to establish yourself in your field of study, especially if fortunate to be invited as a speaker.

5. Learn beyond your field or interest

This is a two-fold benefit of attending conventions, since not only may you learn things outside your field about other areas of research in your discipline, but convention attendance also have many sessions for professional development and career advice. Chances are, when you go to a convention the attendees are united by a single broad topic but they have many different sub-fields of study, and many projects will be multidisciplinary.



And of course, there are other benefits to attending conventions such as finding a new job, recruiting skilled people for a position, getting out of the office for a few days and use the time to visit a town, etc.

So why attend conventions? We each have our own reasons for attending but my personal opinion is that convention attendance dramatically enhances both your professional and personal development, as well as providing you with tools and skills which you cannot be taught in-house or online. The focused nature of learning at a convention allows you to dig deeper with the understanding of your topic of interest.