

rca

RESEARCH CHEFS
ASSOCIATION



**2026
Sponsorship**

www.culinology.org

There's a very **unique energy** that the **RCA cultivates** as the foremost trade organization for those of us developing food and food ingredients who include culinary perspectives in their processes...



Jerry McDonald
Executive Vice President - Culinary
MiDAS Foods International



Corporate Partnerships and Year-Round Sponsor Opportunities

RCA is back, and better than ever! Now is the time to become part of our growing community of Culinologists® through a Corporate Partnership!

Corporate Partnership provides a wide range of opportunities to demonstrate leadership, highlight your brand, and drive innovation within the RCA community. Custom-built packages, combine your choice of benefits to best deliver on your marketing and business development goals. ***RCA, no doubt, brings partners a strong Return on Relationship (ROR)***, and being a Corporate Partner means year-round relationship-building with research chefs, product developers, food scientists, technologists, and other leaders in Culinology, the intersection of food science and the culinary arts. Our partnerships emphasize the relational – rather than transactional – benefits of RCA, embedding your team members and your brand within this tight-knit community.

Corporate Partnerships generally begin at \$10,000 annually and can include year-round benefits; however, we can develop smaller packages or provide opportunities to sponsor individual items. RCA is excited to work to advance brands at a wide range of price points!



Key Data

RCA ROR



16,000

Culinology.org sees nearly 16,000 views each month, with the home page – where corporate partners are recognized – receiving the most traffic.

9,000

RCA's social media audience includes 9,000 followers on LinkedIn.

1,400

Sponsor branded e-blasts in 2024-25 averaged 47% open rate (approx. 1,400 recipients) and 8.4% click through rate (approx. 400 users).

4/5

Four out of five posts in the online RCA Community receive interaction from fellow members.

2026

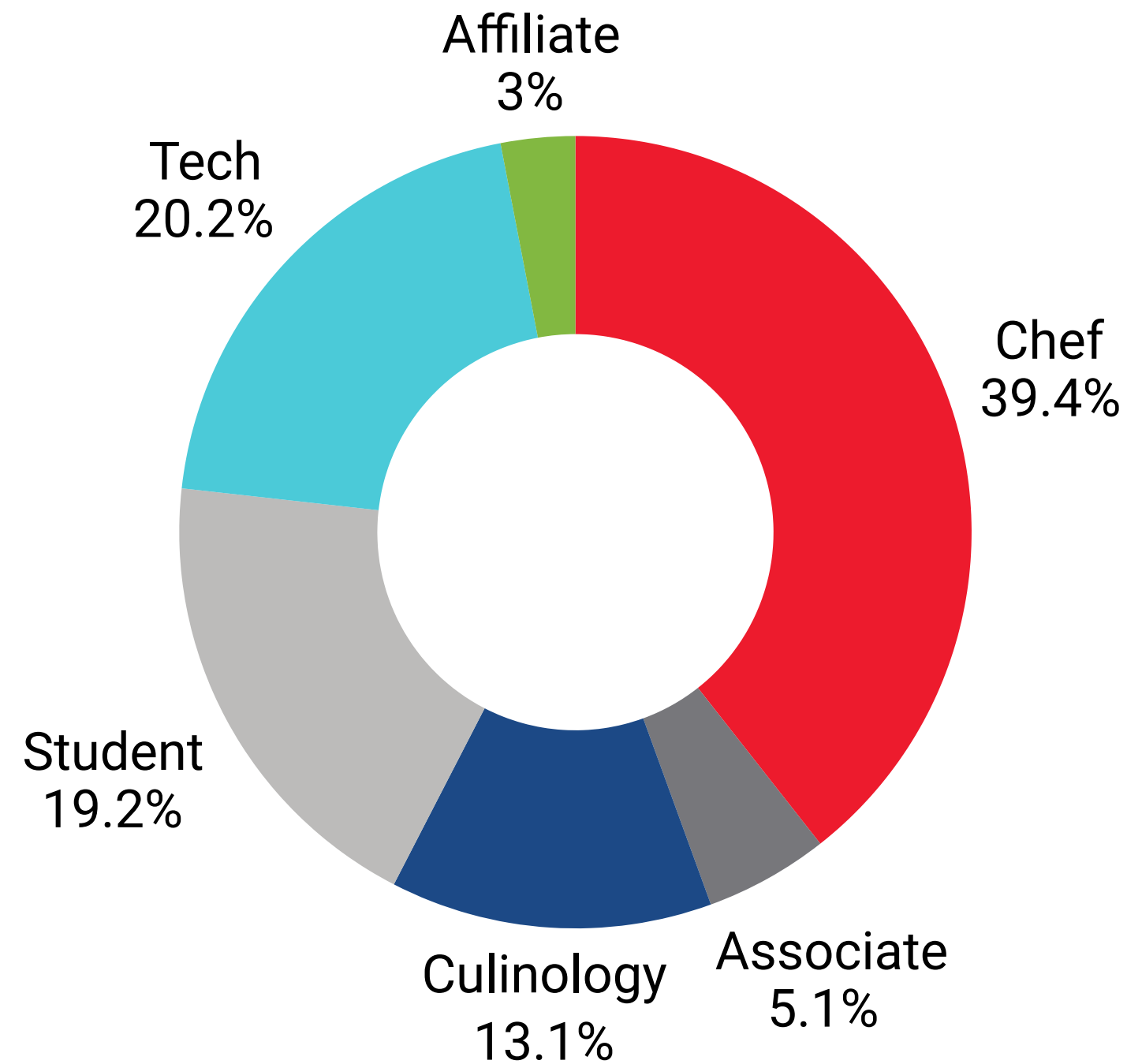
YOUR year to make the most of RCA Corporate Partnership!



Your Corporate Partnership package could include:

- RCA membership (in the appropriate category) for your employees - with access to the online community
- Co-sponsorship and co-branding of RCA Regional Events (in-person or online)
 - Sponsor one region or all!
 - Promotional emails for regional events are shared across all of RCA's contact list, as well as targeted messaging to the specific region—with an open rate over 51% and a click-through rate of 11.9%
- Social media posts promoting regional events receive an average of 345 impressions each!
- 2026 Annual Conference sponsorship activations and/or exhibit booth(s) (more detail included in the full conference prospectus!)
- Your company logo featured on RCA's Culinology.org website and/or specific website features branded with your company information
- Your company featured in RCA social media posts
 - Sponsored social media posts receive an average of 403 impressions each.
- Branded e-blasts, videos, or other thought leadership material
- Co-sponsorship of RCA's James Beard House event
 - These intimate events include a small group of high profile chef leaders. They represent key brands in the industry like PepsiCo, MiDAS Foods International, and King's Hawaiian.
 - eBlasts promoting the event and highlighting sponsors enjoyed an average open rate of 51% and a click through rate of 11.8%
 - The James Beard House events are a hit on social media – posts promoting the event see an average of 495 impressions each.
- CRC® and/or CCS® qualified continuing education offerings presented by your company
- Postings on the RCA job board for both jobs and internships!
- Branded surveys and research products
- Student and Accredited Culinology® Program engagement with our higher education partners
- Scholarship opportunities

RCA Membership

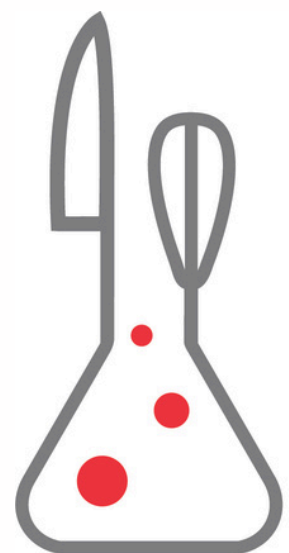


**Nearly 900
Current Members**

The most common role is research
and development

Demonstrate industry leadership and invest in the future of Culinology® by engaging with RCA members.

Contact the RCA staff today to craft your perfect sponsorship package for 2026!



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Annual Conference

www.culinology.org





The RCA Annual Conference and Culinology® Expo provides an in-person venue for research chefs, food scientists, and other diverse food-industry professionals to learn, network, and collaborate. RCA is the premier source of global and inclusive culinary and technical information for the food industry, and the Annual Conference is where it all comes together to shape the future of food research and development.

The 2026 RCA Annual Conference and Culinology Expo will be held March 10-12, 2026, at the Westin in Westminster, Colo. Join us to celebrate 30 years of food science innovation, culinary leadership, and driving the future of food!

Letter from the President

30 Years of Culinology!

We are thrilled to celebrate the Research Chefs Association's 30th anniversary in 2026. We continue to reinvent the RCA of the future and remember that members have always benefitted from being part of a dynamic, forward-thinking community. This year marks an incredible opportunity to reflect on and appreciate all that Culinologists, research chefs, food scientists, and research and development professionals have done to build the RCA and challenge ourselves to reach new heights in food safety, sustainable development, and flavor innovation.

As companies and professionals working in food product development and innovation, YOU are an essential part of the future of the RCA. Let's start this exciting journey together at the 2026 Culinology Expo. The 2026 Conference and Expo will feature not only the tried-and-true opportunities to engage with the RCA community, but also cutting-edge information and innovative flavors that provide a window into what is coming for the food industry.

Participating as a sponsor and exhibitor will elevate your brand among RCA's creative and industry-leading community, help drive new sales opportunities in this new environment and expand access to decision makers with buying power. If your company wants to be a part of the next phase of global food chain development, RCA 2026 is a can't miss event...See you in Colorado!

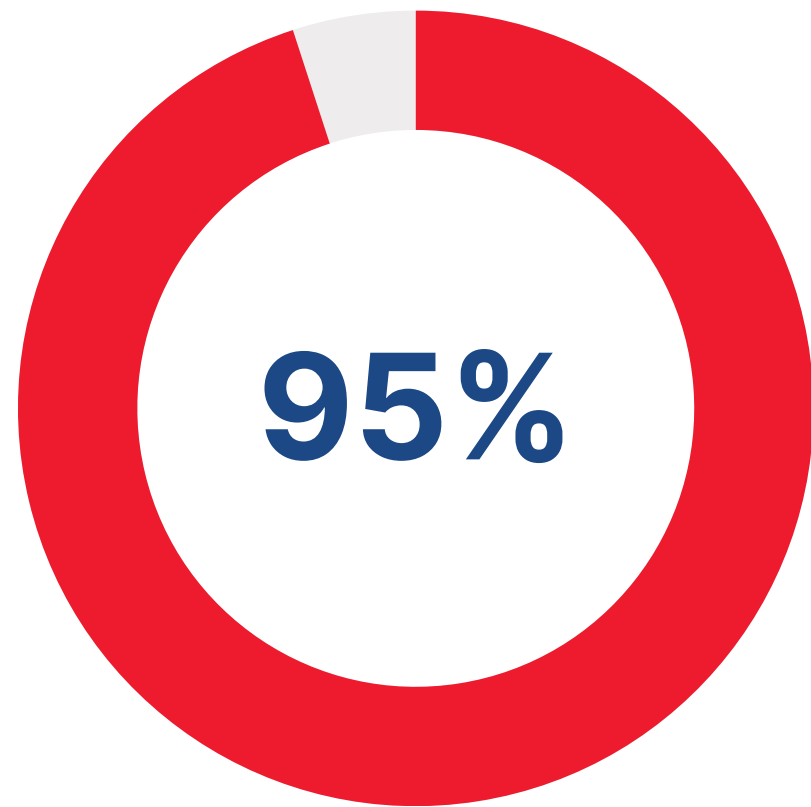


Jeff Crace

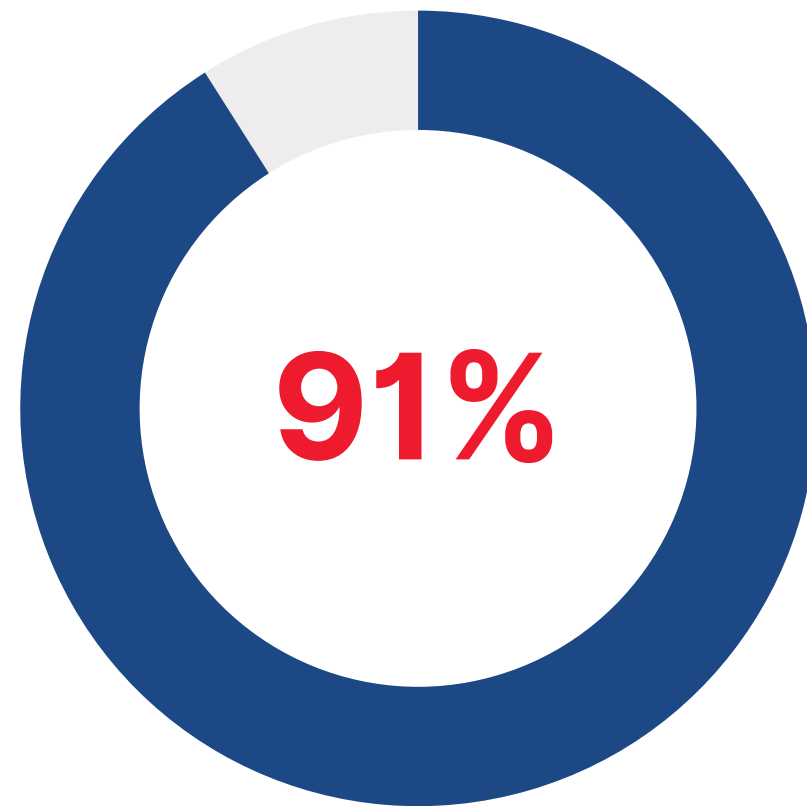
RCA President
Chief Executive Officer, California Garlic
Company

PS – Act fast – the 2024 and 2025 shows were SOLD OUT. You'll want to claim your 2026 spot early!

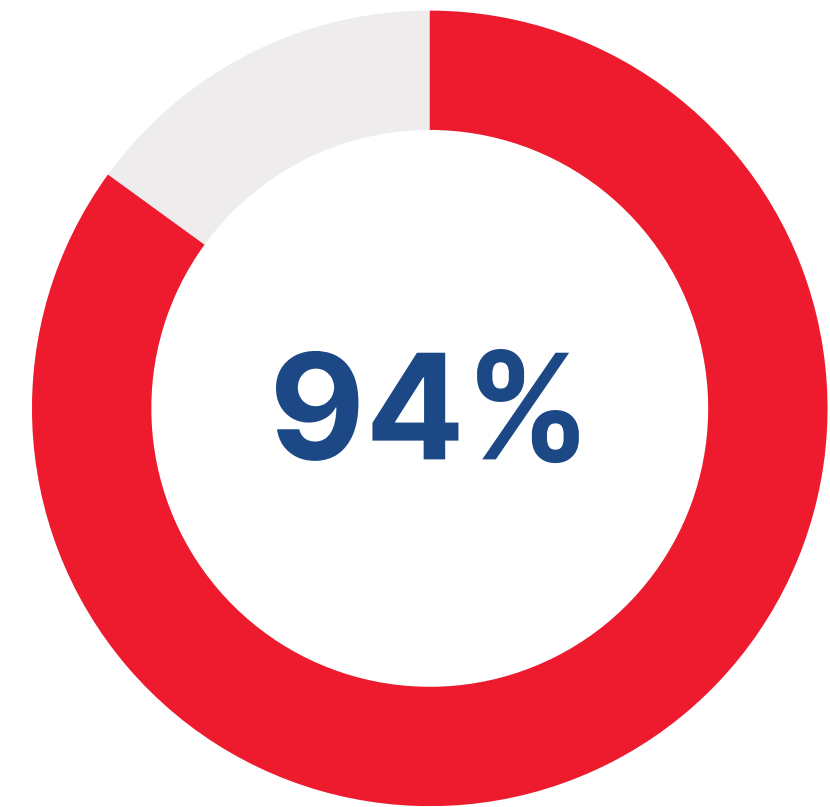
Expo stats



95% of 2024 exhibitors would recommend the RCA Culinology Expo to a friend or colleague.



91% of RCA Annual Conference participants are likely to do business with one of the 2025 Conference Exhibitors in the coming year.



94% of conference participants spend at least one hour in the Expo Hall, with most spending 2-4 hours total.

What Our Exhibitors and Sponsors Say



“

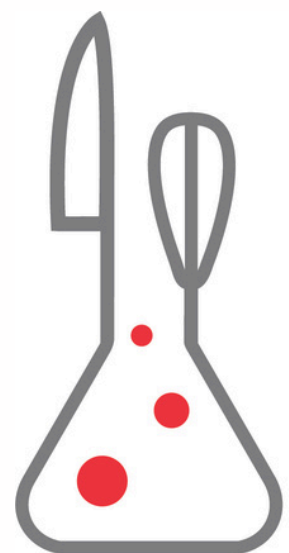
RCA comprises of a wonderful group of industry folks genuinely looking to learn and connect.

“

RCA expo is a boutique exhibition that attracts the curious minds who wants to learn and explore and better their product development. The vibe of this expo is similar to other RCA [activities], very encouraging and warm.

“

Always a great conference; enjoyed the networking opportunities and education sessions. Our booth at the expo was busy the entire time, as well!



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Culinology Expo

www.culinology.org



Culinology Expo

March 11, 2026
1:00pm-5:00pm
(Schedule subject to change)



10x10 Booth (pipe and drape) includes:

- One 6-foot table, two chairs, and wastebasket
- Two booth staff passes (for day of tradeshow only - can be upgraded to full conference registrations)
- Company listing in RCA Conference marketing materials (website, printed programs, mobile app, etc.)
- pre- and post-conference attendee lists (includes contact name, title and company – ***note that email and phone are not included***). The pre-conference list will be shared approximately two weeks prior to the event.

Early Bird Rate - \$2,500 (by Oct. 1, 2025)

Regular Rate - \$3,000 (after Oct. 1, 2025)

Upgrade comp passes to full conference - ask us how!
Purchase additional booth staff/expo-only passes for \$295 each

Additional Info:

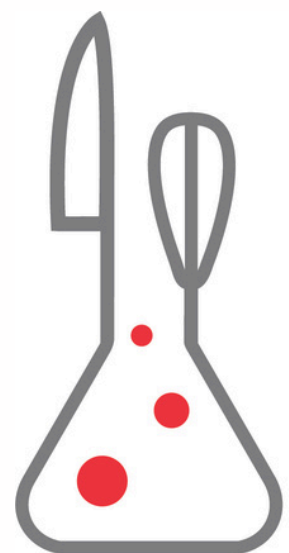
- Cooking demonstrations and food offerings are permitted; see [terms and conditions](#).
- All exhibitors are invited to participate in the attendee-voted Product Innovation Showcase and provide branded items to be included in attendee bags (no additional fee).
- Additional furnishings and/or power will be ordered directly from the event venue and the general services contractor at the exhibitor's expense. The exhibitor kit will be provided to all confirmed exhibiting companies in early 2026. All shipping must be through the official RCA decorator or additional fees will apply; see [terms and conditions](#).
- Note that booth selection will be made first-come, first-served. Exhibiting companies will be permitted to select their booth space in the order received.



Always a great turn out and great conversations had during the expo. [It's] great meeting new members and potential customers and having further conversations with relationships we have already built...
the energy behind the expo is truly amazing.



Nick Landry
Summit Hill Foods



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Event & Activity Sponsorships

www.culinology.org



Events and Activities

Add value to your exhibit experience with an Annual Conference sponsorship! All 2026 RCA Conference sponsors will be featured on the RCA website, in the conference app, and on signage/displays onsite at the conference. All sponsors will receive the pre- and post-conference attendee lists (including contact name, title, and company). The preconference list will be shared approximately two weeks prior to the event. Additional benefits are outlined for specific sponsorship options.

www.culinology.org





**Awards Luncheon Sponsor
(March 12 – Exclusive!)
\$10,000**

New for 2026!



**VIP Meet & Greet
(Exclusive!) \$7,500**

Celebrate the 30th Anniversary by sponsoring the Awards Luncheon. The sponsor has the opportunity to select the Emcee for the awards presentation and cement your company's role in supporting excellence in the field. You will also be featured in all signage, promotions and communications around the luncheon, and receive three complimentary full conference registrations (including tickets to the luncheon itself).

Get your employees, key customers, and other stakeholders up close and personal with one of the 2026 RCA Keynotes with this exclusive opportunity. The sponsorship includes a 45-minute, private invite-only event, with food and beverage, for up to twenty attendees. The package also includes two complimentary full conference registrations.



**Opening Reception Sponsor
(March 10 – up to two) \$5,000**

The Opening Reception sets the tone for the 2026 RCA Conference. Sponsors will be recognized throughout the reception space, will be thanked in the plenary session, and will have the opportunity to collaborate with the RCA team on menu selections. Sponsors at this level receive one complimentary full conference registration.



**Keynote Session Sponsor
(up to three) \$5,000**

Sponsor the keynote session and see your brand featured in the general session room among all attendees. A representative from your company will be invited to do introduce the keynote speaker in recognition of your support for RCA. Sponsors at this level receive one complimentary full conference registration.



**Breakout Session Sponsor
(various available) \$3,500**

Sponsored breakout sessions provide the opportunity for your company or brand to provide a thought leadership presentation on a topic relevant to RCA members, including a live demonstration and/or sampling session if appropriate. Sponsors at this level receive two full conference registrations.

Important: Sessions must meet RCA's educational standards; sales presentations are NOT PERMITTED.

- Session title, description, and learning outcomes must be submitted to and approved in advance by the RCA Conference Planning Committee.
- Session content should reflect the CRC®/CCS® Body of Knowledge and be reflective of the unique discipline of Culinology.
- Presenter(s) should be culinary professionals or research and development staff, not marketing or sales professionals.

***Note that Breakout Session Sponsorships are only available until the program is set in early October**

Student Competition



\$5,000

Student Competition Presenting Sponsor (Exclusive!)

Nothing has more impact on the future of RCA and the food industry than the students emerging from Culinology programs! Sponsor the 2026 student culinary competition and show your dedication to the development of tomorrow's Culinologists. Included in the sponsorship is dedicated messaging featuring your brand in all competition announcements/communications, the ability to decide on a required ingredient (so all competitor dishes include YOUR food), and one complimentary full-conference registration.

**In Kind
+ \$250**

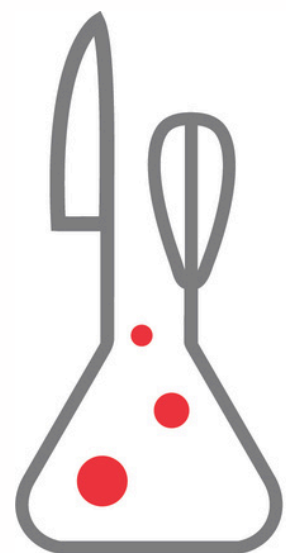
Student Competition Ingredient Sponsor

The Student Competition will require in-kind sponsorships for ingredients to be used in competitive dishes. Reach out to RCA if you are interested in becoming an Ingredient Sponsor for the 2026 student competition. A sponsor fee of \$250, plus provision of sufficient product for competitors' use, is required. Full details of the competition will be released in Fall 2025.

**\$670
per
student**

Student Registration Sponsor

You can also support students by becoming a Registration Sponsor – allow a culinary student to attend the 2026 Annual Conference! Each sponsored student will receive a full-conference registration and a travel stipend of \$500. They will also be provided with information about your company and any career or internship opportunities you wish to provide. (Your company will receive the name, email, and school name of your sponsored student.)



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Branding Sponsorships

www.culinology.org



Let RCA members know you are supporting the RCA community!

All 2026 RCA Conference sponsors will be featured on the RCA website, in the conference app, and on signage/displays onsite at the conference. You can maximize the value of your conference participation with a branded sponsorship.

Agenda Sponsor \$5,000 (exclusive)

Highlight your brand every time participants check the agenda – whether on their phone in the app or on the printed agenda at-a-glance. Your logo will appear on the app’s main navigation throughout the event and on the front of the 2026 pocket program. This sponsorship also includes one complimentary full-conference registration.



Promotional Signage & Experiences \$1,000-\$5,000

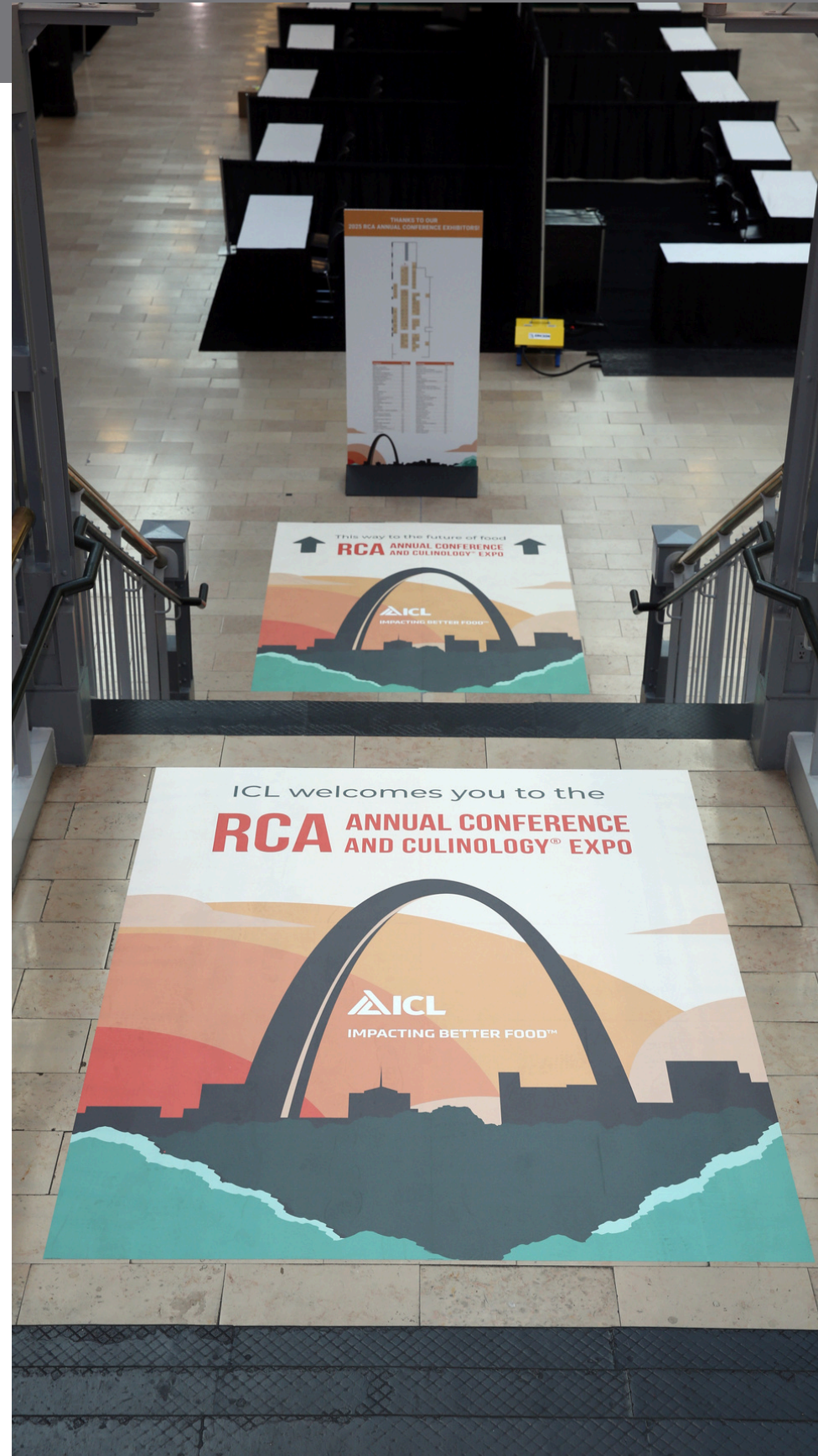
Feature your brand on signage in a custom package created to match your marketing and branding goals. Examples from 2025 include digital signage, meter-boards, directional signage, elevator clings, and floor clings. Promotional experience ideas include a branded photo booth/backdrop, networking lounge with furniture, specially designed lighting, and more. Opportunities are limited only by imagination (and your desired budget)!

Name Badge Holders \$5,500 (Exclusive)

Everyone at the RCA Annual Conference wears a name badge, since being together and meeting new people is always one of the biggest draws. Feature your brand on the full-color, designed name badge holders with this unique sponsorship opportunity. This sponsorship also includes one complimentary full-conference registration.

Lanyards \$5,000 (exclusive)

Feature your brand around the neck of all participants with the lanyard sponsorship. You'll get to select from RCA's menu of fabric and print colors (one each) for the lanyards to match your unique, custom brand and feel. This sponsorship also includes one complimentary full-conference registration.





**Tote Bags
\$6,000**

Everyone needs a tote bag! Feature your brand on the event bag provided to all attendees. RCA will select a high-quality, canvas tote bag with your screen-printed company logo, add goodies, and provide to all conference attendees. This sponsorship also includes one complimentary full-conference registration.



**Promotional E-Blast
and Social Media
Post Package \$1,250**

Help drive traffic to your booth, promote a new product, gain member input, or share your industry updates with the RCA community through a promotional e-blast and social media package. Your entirely customized, pre- or post-event message will be shared by RCA with our network of members and stakeholders via e-blast and an associated social media post. You create the message and graphic, and our team will handle the rest!



Get Creative!

Custom sponsorship packages are always available, so get ready to revolutionize and reinvent your brand at RCA. Please reach out to us to discuss your ideas for innovative, new and creative ways to feature your company at the 2024 RCA Conference! info@culinology.org.

Important Details

Schedule

Pre-Sale/First Right of Refusal for 2025 Exhibitors and Sponsors
Through August 21, 2025

Open Date: Annual Conference Sponsor and Exhibitor Purchasing
August 21, 2025

Last day to cancel Exhibit Registration and receive a refund (minus the administrative fee)
December 4, 2025

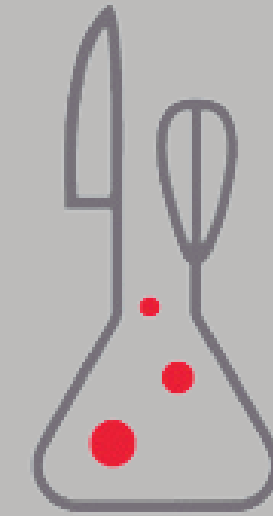
Close Date: Sponsor and Exhibitor Purchases
February 9, 2026

Expo Schedule

Load-In – March 11 – 8:00am – 12:00pm
Tradeshow Hours: March 11 – 1:00pm – 5:00pm
Load Out – March 11 – 5:00pm – 8:00pm

Terms and
Conditions

Thank You for supporting RCA!



Contact Us



859-514-9191



info@culinology.org



www.culinology.org