



# Conference Program

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Time	Location	Sessions	Speakers
8:15 AM	Level 3 Foyer	Arrival	
8:30 AM	Level 3 Foyer	Registration	
9:00 AM	Grand Ballroom	Introduction & Acknowledgement of Country	MC
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Julie Hirsch</b> Founder of Eloments Natural Vitamin Tea, Entrepreneur &amp; Innovator</li></ul>
9:10 AM	Grand Ballroom	Dignitary Address	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Professor Hugh Durrant-Whyte</b> NSW Chief Scientist &amp; Engineer</li></ul>
9:30 AM	Grand Ballroom	Opening - 'Thinking The Unthinkable'	Intro
		In a world of rapid change, we must all learn to embrace the unthinkable. From Black Swans to Black Elephant events, it's time to confront the unpredictable and the uncomfortable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Kat Dunn</b> Founder, Aviatrrix &amp; Food Frontier Board Member</li></ul>
		Led by Nik Gowing, Founder & Co-Director of Thinking the Unthinkable, this session will explore real-world case studies of those who've successfully navigated chaos and uncertainty, offering practical insights on how to thrive in today's VUCA world. Get ready for a bold, forward-thinking session that will reshape how we all approach disruption.	<div>Scorerer of Ideas</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Nik Gowing</b> Founder &amp; Co-Director, Thinking the Unthinkable</li></ul>
10:05 AM	Grand Ballroom	Disruption - Changing The Narrative	Facilitator
		Forget the old playbook. Industry leaders like Cecilia Chang, CBO of Mission Barns, and James Petrie, CEO of Nourish Ingredients and Sonalie Figueiras, Founder of Green Queen, are shaking things up by questioning the assumptions we've lived by and flipping the script on product innovation and consumer connection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Sonalie Figueiras</b> Founder &amp; Editor-in-Chief, Green Queen</li></ul>
		They'll unpack how shifting mindsets and rebellious thinking are sparking cultural behaviour change. Where is product innovation really headed? And in a world hyper-focused on consumer adoption, is climate impact just an afterthought?  Join us for a session that will leave you rethinking what's possible and inspire you to challenge the status quo.	<div>Speakers</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Cecilia Chang</b> CBO, Mission Barns</li><li><b>James Petrie</b> CEO, Nourish Ingredients</li></ul>



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Time	Location	Sessions	Speakers
10:45 AM	Grand Ballroom	<b>Taking Stock</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>
		Nik Gowing takes a moment to check in with the audience, inviting thoughts, feedback, and insights from the day's discussions so far. With roving mics for a quick Q&A, this session is all about connecting and reflecting on what we've covered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Nik Gowing</b> Founder &amp; Co-Director, Thinking the Unthinkable</li></ul>
11:15 AM	Level 3 Foyer	Morning Tea	
11:45 AM	Grand Ballroom	<b>Towards One Table: Bridging Australia's Food Policy Futures</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>
		<p>Join Dr Rohan Nelson, Ben van Delden, and Andrew Henderson for a deep dive into three of Australia's most influential food policy papers: Land of Plenty: Transforming Australia into a Food Superpower, the National Food Security Preparedness Green Paper, and Towards a State of the Food System Report.</p> <p>This session will compare how these distinct frameworks - industry-led growth, national security, and systems-based governance - approach key issues like supply chain resilience and sustainability. We'll explore where they align, where they diverge, and what it would take to build greater coherence in national food policy. The conversation will also ask: why are emerging sectors like alternative proteins still left out - and how can they be meaningfully integrated into future frameworks?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Rohan Nelson</b> Director, Food Systems Horizons CSIRO</li><li><b>Ben van Delden</b> Founder and Managing Director, Delco AgriFood</li><li><b>Andrew Henderson</b> Founder &amp; Principal, AgSecure Senior Fellow, ASPI</li></ul>
11:45 AM	Breakout	<b>Discovery To Real World Application: Advancing Australia's Alternative Protein R&amp;D</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>
		<p>This session will spotlight cutting-edge Australian research shaping the future of alternative proteins. It will explore how early-stage science is being translated into real-world potential through university-industry collaboration, incubators, accelerators and public support. With a focus on breakthrough technologies and the challenges of moving from lab to launch, speakers will share insights into what it takes to unlock the next generation of sustainable food innovation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Dr. Jaclyn Aldenhoven</b> Director, Strategy and Programs - Future Industries. Office of the NSW Chief Scientist &amp; Engineer</li></ul>
			<b>Speakers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Assoc. Prof. Mathieu Pernice</b> Deputy Director, Climate Change Cluster, UTS</li><li><b>Prof. Esteban Marcellin</b> Program Lead, Innovative Ingredients, FaBA – UQ, ARC CoE Synthetic Biology</li></ul>



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Time	Location	Sessions	Speakers
12:30 PM	Grand Ballroom	<b>Software Has Eaten The World...But Will It Eat Food?</b>	<b>Speakers</b>
		<p>Technology is reshaping industries, but are we ready for true disruption in the food sector? This session explores whether we're prepared for a future where technology challenges our most sacred systems.</p> <p>How can individuals, governments, and global change-makers push ourselves to think the unthinkable and spark transformation in the food system? Are cultural beliefs around food limiting bold solutions, and what will it take to shift this mindset?</p> <p>Join Nik Gowing from Thinking the Unthinkable, Cecilia Chang from Mission Barns, and other thought leaders as they explore the discomfort that transformation demands. This session will delve into how technology can move beyond enabling food production to challenge the status quo and drive the future of food.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Nik Gowing</b> – Thinking the Unthinkable</li><li>• <b>Cecilia Chang</b> – Mission Barns</li><li>• <b>James Ryall</b> – Biotech Consultant</li><li>• <b>James Petrie</b> – Nourish Ingredients</li></ul>
12:30 PM	Breakout	<b>Food Manufacturing 2050: Shaping The Future Of Sustainable, Resilient Food Systems</b>	<b>Facilitator</b>
		<p>CSIRO and the Australian Food Innovation Network are leading Food Manufacturing 2050 - a national initiative to collaboratively design an R&amp;D and innovation agenda that reflects the real needs of Australia's food manufacturing sector. This interactive session invites industry stakeholders to shape that agenda through direct input and discussion. Join the conversation on how science, technology, and collaboration can drive a more resilient, low-emissions, and globally competitive food system - and ensure your voice helps guide its future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Dr. Ingrid Appelqvist</b> Food Innovation Centre, Leader Senior Principal Research Scientist CSIRO Agriculture and Food Business Unit</li><li>• <b>Dr. Leif Lundin</b> Chief Research Scientist Food Program Research Director CSIRO Agriculture and Food Business Unit</li></ul>
12:30 PM	Breakout	<b>Plant-Based Dairy Is Booming—What's Next?</b>	<b>Speakers</b>
		<p>From oat-based milks to new dairy alternative formats and functions, plant-based dairy is no longer niche. This session will explore what's driving the category's growth - across consumer demand, ingredient innovation, and product development. With insights from across the value chain, we'll unpack – and taste! –where the category is heading.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Fiona May &amp; Andrew May</b> Co-CEO's - Essantis</li></ul>





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Time	Location	Sessions	Speakers
1:15 PM	Level 3 Foyer & Grand Ballroom	Lunch & Tasting Hall	
1:15 PM	Grand Ballroom	Tasting Hall	
		From oat-based milks to new dairy alternative formats and functions, plant-based dairy is no longer niche. This session will explore what’s driving the category’s growth - across consumer demand, ingredient innovation, and product development. With insights from across the value chain, we’ll unpack – and taste! –where the category is heading.	
2:15 PM	Grand Ballroom	Connecting Cellular To Agriculture - The Biomanufacturing Opportunity For Food	Facilitator
		What if traditional crops could be transformed into a new world of ingredients through biotechnology? This session explores the power of biomanufacturing to reimagine the future of how Australia makes and grows its food. Led by Sam Perkins, CEO of Cellular Agriculture Australia, we’ll look at how these groundbreaking technologies can breathe new life into agriculture, creating new value streams, driving regional economic growth, and partnering with traditional industries to bolster Australia’s food sovereignty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Sam Perkins</b> CEO, Cellular Agriculture Australia</li></ul>
2:15 PM	Breakout	Show Me The Money	Facilitators
		<p>Why are sustainable food companies struggling to secure investment despite growing demand? This session breaks down the current investment landscape–why venture capitalists are pulling back and what it takes to overcome these challenges.</p> <p>We’ll explore funding options, from crowdfunding to traditional venture capital, with success stories that show what’s possible.</p> <p>Amy Carter-James (Raaise), Jim Fader (Eden Brew), and Terry Paule (My Co) will guide you through interactive sessions, offering actionable strategies to unlock the funding your business needs to thrive, while providing plenty of opportunities for you to engage, ask questions, and gain valuable insights directly from the speakers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Amy Carter-James</b> CEO, Raaise</li><li>• <b>Jim Fader</b> CEO, Eden Brew</li><li>• <b>Terry Paule</b> Founder and Executive Director, My Co</li></ul>

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Time	Location	Sessions	Speakers
3:00 PM	Grand Ballroom	Scaling Innovation: Unlocking Sectoral Growth Through Collaboration	Facilitator
		This session will explore how innovation and collaboration drive scale, commercialisation, and ecosystem development. Drawing on real-world insights from agrifood industry and government innovation leaders, it aims to showcase a vision for Australia to build globally competitive, future-focused food industries through strategic value chain partnerships and research-driven growth.	<div><div>James Ryall</div>Biotech Consultant</div> <div>Speakers</div> <div><div>Will Schmitt</div>Director - Innovation Programs, Partnerships &amp; Precincts, Investment NSW</div> <div><div>Crispin Howitt</div>Future Protein Lead, CSIRO</div> <div><div>Mark Baczynski</div>Group Technical Manager, Manildra Group</div>



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Time	Location	Sessions	Speakers
4:40 PM	Grand Ballroom	What Happens Now?	Facilitator
		Today’s unthinkables are tomorrow’s inevitables. Facilitated by Nik Gowing, this session will explore the actions, impact, and courage needed to inspire a growth mindset and shape the future. Speakers from the day will engage directly with the audience in an interactive Q&A session, addressing your thoughts, ideas, and questions on the topics that have emerged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Nik Gowing</b> Founder &amp; Co-Director, Thinking the Unthinkable</li></ul>
5:15 PM	Level 3 Foyer	Network Drinks	

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