Q. How do I request a conference session at the show?

Those with an interest to reserve space at the show are invited to complete the interest form. The form is the first step to communicate your interest as a potential show participant.

Q. I would like to present, but I’m not sure what would be a valuable session for attendees. Are there suggestions for collaboration about topics?

For those who would like to collaborate to offer conference sessions, it may be useful to network with service providers in agriculture, or businesses who offer similar expertise. This approach is helpful because it offers a variety of expertise and information during a set period of time at popular event, well attended by supporters and businesses in Maine agriculture.

Topic areas can range from business ‘speed-dating’ for available services, to product pitches, and updates about best practices, technical assistance, and marketing for Maine agriculture. Importantly, shared networking sessions and round tables about various production topics, opportunities and challenges are valuable for a variety of attendees and hosts. Finally, current events and topics are also important to share during the conference session of this event.

Q. When are conference sessions scheduled? How much time can I request for my session(s)?

Typically, conference sessions are a minimum of 60 minutes. This can be extended to request multiple sessions. For example, a half-day session up to four hours, or a full day session up to eight hours. It is possible to request multiple days.

Q. How do I plan early if I don’t know my specific time slot until after I’m awarded conference space?

There are some parameters, and known information; event dates and times are published on the show webpage. Initial invitations to presenters and attendees can and should flag event days and times as potential placeholders, while they develop their agendas. There are typically more than 100 conference sessions with unique features, but the same objective to provide value to attendees. Conference space and time slots are assigned by the Department.

Typical time frame of conference sessions:

- 9 a.m. to Noon; 1 p.m. to close.
- Midday break, approx. 60 minutes—this is to encourage attendees to visit the exhibit show floor.
- Tuesday Show hours are 9-5.
- Wednesday Show hours are 9-6.
- Thursday Show hours are 9-3.

The show typically occurs the week before MLK day. Check the website for updates.
Tips to prepare for a conference session at the Maine Ag Trades Show

Q. Who attends the show?

The Maine Ag Trades Show is the primary networking event in Maine agriculture each year. It is a place for many in agriculture to plan the year ahead and receive updates. The show attracts farmers, land owners, and other stewards of Maine’s working landscapes. Additionally, it attracts agricultural supporters who work or volunteer in agriculture and natural resources sectors that span private and public, and formal and informal volunteers. Because the show is open to the public, the general public with an interest in agriculture, or those seeking to increase their familiarity with agriculture also attend. The estimated attendance varies, year-to-year, and day-to-day. The approximate attendance is 3-5,000 during the event.

Q. I want to get the most of the free event promotions, how can I do that?

- Plan early to brainstorm an agenda and/or topic description(s).
- A rule of thumb is for the detailed description and the conference agenda should be 90-percent prepared by August 1.
- Final deadline to be in print promotions is October 1.

Here are examples of ways to include your information in the printed promotions and conference descriptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program description type</th>
<th>Who might choose to use this?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete agenda with specific topics</td>
<td>For those who have a set schedule that unlikely to change, and prioritize being included in print promotions. It may contain full details, with important advance sign-up information, prefer to be included in print promotions. They may offer meetings that are half, full or multi-day, and/or have keynote activities they want to promote.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tentative agenda, with a note and instructions about how to obtain updates</td>
<td>For those who are comfortable submitting tentative information to be included in print promotions, and can meet the deadline. They are comfortable including instructions about how to find the most current schedule between the print deadline and show. Typically, this conference host has a social media account or webpage to direct for more info.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General description</td>
<td>For those who are comfortable submitting a general description of 1-3 sentences about a meeting, or group. Typically, those who have recurring producer meetings select this option.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q. I need to make a change to my program description, and the print deadline passed. How can I make a change?

If the deadline to submit print information passed, it is unlikely there will be a chance to accommodate the request to change the description in printed materials.

Q. How can I request a different room setup than the default setup?

The default room setup is theater style, with A/V table, and head table—but you may need something different. You can input this information into the interest form. If there is a specific setup that is not available, you should connect with show management to explore a different setup. You may need to create a diagram and submit it for approval. The deadline to submit a diagram is October 1.

Q. If my conference sessions need audio/visual items such as a projector, screen, microphone, etc., what sort of preparations should I make? What is available?

If awarded space, you will be able to request A/V amenities. The deadline is October 1. All rooms are capable of A/V hookups with a screen, projector, and table microphone. There is a fee for these amenities. Computers are not available. You are welcome to bring your own computer(s). The available display ports for on site projectors include VGA, and HDMI adapters. If your device is not compatible with these options, you will need to bring your own adapter and connectors for compatibility.

NOTE: If your conference session is in coordination with a Department presentation, and you are not a Department employee, but you will use Departmental computer, you need to email the presentation materials in advance. External devices cannot be used with Departmental devices. Suggested deadline to email PowerPoint information to Department contacts is December 1.

Q. I would like to place a food and/or beverage order for my conference session, and feature Maine ingredients. How can I do that?

Food and beverage orders are made directly with the venue, and the request deadline is December 1.

In most instances, encouraging and requesting specific purveyors and businesses begins with reaching out to the venue to be added to their procurement database.

If you have a particular vendor you would like to patronize, you can check to see if they already do business with the venue. If they do not currently do business with the venue, or use a distributor who does business with the venue, the local purveyor can provide a completed W-9 form, with available products and price points to the venue. It’s recommended they initially provide this information directly to the venue 7 months prior to the show.
Q. Can I limit attendance to my conference session?

In an effort to build upon the networking and information sharing opportunities, the event as a whole, is open to the public, and free to attend. There are no tickets to the show, which is sponsored by the Department and run by the Bureau of Agriculture. Areas open to the public include the trades show exhibits in the auditorium, and many conference sessions.

There are space limitations based upon the assigned room within the venue.

Conference session organizers can request potential attendees to pre-register, pay for programmatic support of the, or meet certain pre-requisites for technical training.

Q. Where can I find important dates?

Important dates and deadlines are published on the show webpage. The show webpage is: www.maine.gov/dacf/agtradesshow. Look for the icon, that says, ‘important dates and deadlines’.

Q. I have an idea to pitch about the show, how can I do that?

The interest form is the best tool to pitch an idea. Read more about the interest form, and access the online form to pitch an idea: https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/MEDACF/bulletins/2745af2

Q. What happens if I am not awarded a spot? Is there a wait list?

If you are not listed on the announcement for Exhibitors or Conference session awardees, and you completed the interest form, you will be added to the wait list. The interest form automatically adds all interested parties to the wait list. It does not require additional steps from an interested party after they submit the interest form. If there is additional space, and show management receives adequate notice, show management will contact those on the wait list about an opportunity.

The show is a popular event, and there are logistical constraints, which unfortunately means that even if you submit an interest form, the Department does not guarantee it will be able to accommodate all interested parties, and/or all request(s) of interested parties.

Q. Where can I find more information about the show?

Learn more and stay updated about Maine Ag Trades show news and events by visiting the show webpage and subscribing to the newsletter. Bookmark: www.maine.gov/dacf/agtradesshow.