A Letter From Alan Reed

Executive Director of Chicagoland Food & Beverage Network

As summer officially comes to a close, I have to say it’s been a spectacular couple of months for the Chicagoland Food and Beverage Network (CFBN). With the help of our incredible members and partners, we were thrilled to hold two successful (and super fun!) networking events in August. At “Hot Networking, and Cool Drinks,” we were excited to welcome over 125 attendees at the beautiful Field Building, located downtown in the Loop. Our second event took place in Geneva, IL at the headquarters of FONA International. It was a genuine pleasure to bring our network to the western suburbs, meet with over 100 registrants, and to have the opportunity to co-host with our wonderful member.
September has been an eventful month for the CFBN team as well. Last week, we (somehow) held two events in one day! Both events were well attended, interactive, and successful in bringing together industry and discussing key topics. On behalf of the entire CFBN team, we want to sincerely thank our members, partners and co-hosts, who make it possible for us to continue to get our message out, build excitement, and grow the industry.

We continue to be humbled by watching the Network flourish. This summer we welcomed many organizations, including: Eli’s Cheesecake, SPINs, Datassential, Dempsey Corporation, Clifford Larson Allen, Sosland Publications, Wichita Packing and JelSert. We’ve also had the pleasure to bring more start-ups onboard, such as TeaSquares, MoonMeals, and Blake’s Seed Based. This is only the beginning, as we expect to be welcoming several new members in the near future.

As we approach the fall season, we're delighted to announce that we are officially a Chicago Innovation Awards finalist! It's a honor to be nominated, along with our members Tiesta Tea and Tyson Foods for the final round of the People's Choice Award. Be sure to cast your vote before October 5 at https://chicagoinnovation.com/peoples-choice-award-voting/

We are honored to continue to grow the food & beverage industry locally through the Chicagoland Food and Beverage Network. We certainly look forward to your guidance and continued support, as we continue to make Chicagoland the Silicon Valley of Food and Beverage.

Best regards.

Alan Reed,

CFBN Executive Director

---

What Are Investors Really Looking For?

Sept. 25, 2018, 4:00p.m. - 7:00p.m.

Perkins Coie, 131 S Dearborn St #1700, Chicago, IL 60603

Raising a round of funding is no easy task. There’s a lot to worry about and a lot to prepare for. Your pitch deck needs editing (again), there’s always one more networking event to attend, and you still need to prepare answers to tricky questions about your business.

You also need to land meetings with investors. The good news is that, attracted by big exits, corporate activity, and new brands, the number of investors backing food & beverage startups has tripled in four years. This includes a wide range of investors, including venture capital funds, private equity firms, corporations, and angel investors. The challenge is knowing what are they looking for in an investment. What can you do to maximize your visibility and desirability? Come for happy hour and learn from our panelists how to increase your chances of landing the next big deal!
Innovation "Bar-Fest": Chicago's Craft Distillery Movement

Oct. 11, 2018, 4:30p.m. - 7:00p.m.

The Mitz, 1019 N. Wolcott Ave., Chicago, IL 60622

We're putting a new twist on the Innovation Breakfast Series this month as we dive into Chicago's craft spirits industry. Join us for craft cocktails and lite bites before the panel!

Our panel will feature three spirits leader: Jenny Solberg Katzman grew Rhine Hall Distillery from a single product to a well composed line of small-batch spirits. Brent Engel of Letherbee Gin and Distillers started with moonshine and now boasts nationwide (and international) distribution. Jordan Tepper of Apologue Spirited Liqueurs built a Benefit Corporation and broke all the rules of traditional liqueurs.

Please note: To take full advantage of the content (and the samples!!!), we're changing up the time and location.

Technology Breakfast: Building a Trusted Brand: Transparency, Traceability, and Blockchain

Oct. 24, 2018, 7:00a.m. - 9:00a.m.

Lockton Companies LLC, 500 W. Monroe, Suite 3400, Chicago, IL 60661

Brand loyalty is the foundation of every successful consumer business. With the advent of the Internet, consumers have gone from making choices from a limited pool of big brands to the era of endless alternatives and abundant information. No longer limited by what is available on local store shelves, consumers are more selective about what they want and how they want it.

Brand honesty and transparency empower the consumer to take control of their buying decisions unlike ever before. When brands make it easy to acquire information about their products, it tells consumers they have nothing to hide while sending the message that they care about the needs and wants of their customers. Trust can’t be bought. It must be earned. Consumers want to understand exactly what they are buying, and rightly deserve the knowledge they seek. Come for breakfast and learn from our speakers on how you can help your customer become the hero of their household.
They will thank you for it.

**People's Choice Awards Finalist**

brought to you by Chicago Innovation

Out of 519 nominees, Chicagoland Food & Beverage Network has been selected as one of the Top 100 Finalists still in the running for the 17th annual Chicago Innovation Awards. The awards celebrate the most innovative new products and services in the Chicagoregion across all organization sizes, sectors and industries. We are now in the "People's Choice" round and would love to have your vote! Click [here](#) to place your vote before **October 5**.

**Exclusive Switchboard Offer**

brought to you by Switchboard Sales

Switchboard enables brands to communicate offers to retailers & distributors in minutes at a fraction of the cost.

Here is what your $300/year/user introductory subscription rate gets you:

- Waive per item fee during the first year
- Waive initial setup fee (administrative roles, security access, product upload, existing retailer database)
- No charge to existing and targeted retailers (2017 database, all channels including independents)
- One group training session included (up to two hours)
- Database uploads included (product images & descriptions, category affiliation, internal users, retailer users, 3rd-party users)
- Customer support included (8am to 5pm Pacific Standard Time)

**WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!**

Our network continues to grow! We are excited to welcome Eli’s Cheesecake, Dempsey Corporation, Wichita Packing, Greenwich Capital Group, TeaSquares, MoonMeals, and Blake’s Seed Based to the CFBN, which includes over 70 corporate members and over 100 individual members (and counting). Thank you for being a part of the Network!
Upcoming Partner Events

SWEETENER SYSTEMS CONFERENCE

October 23, 2018
5:30 PM to 6:30 PM
Hyatt Lodge, 2815 Jorie Blvd., Oak Brook, IL

Global Food Forums will hold its 3rd annual Sweetener Systems Conference, October 23, 2018, at the Hyatt Lodge, McDonalds Campus, Oak Brook, Ill. USA. This technical program will provide insights and actionable information on hot topics related to sweeteners and sugar reduction.

CFBN Members receive a 10% discount on registration for this conference! Check our Member Benefits page for the code.

FOOD NAVIGATOR-USA SUMMIT: FOOD FOR KIDS

November 13, 2018
5:30 PM to 9:00 PM
Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL

Join us for the inaugural FoodNavigator-USA Summit: Food for Kids. Organized by the publishers of FoodNavigator-USA, the number one daily news service for the food and beverage industry, FoodNavigator-USA Summit: Food for Kids focuses on food and nutrition for every life stage.

CFBN Members receive a 25% discount on registration for the Food For Kids event! Check our Member Benefits page for the code.

CLEAN LABEL CONFERENCE

March 25-27, 2019
Time TBD
Westin Hotel, Itasca, IL

Global Food Forums® 6th annual Clean Label Conference in 2019 is an in-person product development event focused on providing practical, how-to formulation advice to R&D and applied product development specialist working in this arena.

CFBN Members receive a 10% discount on registration for this conference! Check our Member Benefits page for the code.

PROTEIN TRENDS & TECHNOLOGIES SEMINAR

May 21-22, 2019
Time TBD
Westin Hotel, 400 Park Blvd, Itasca, IL
Global Food Forums will hold its 3rd annual Sweetener Systems Conference, October 23, 2018, at the Hyatt Lodge, McDonalds Campus, Oak Brook, Ill. USA. This technical program will provide insights and actionable information on hot sugar reduction.

**CFBN Members receive a 10% discount on registration for this conference! Check our Member Benefits page for the code.**

**STAY IN THE KNOW!** Our food & beverage industrywide events calendar is updated regularly.

---

**Check out new opportunities in the Chicagoland area!**

Our members are always looking for talented candidates to fill positions within their organizations. We're here to connect you to those wonderful opportunities. Check out these latest postings from our members!

**International Procurement Specialist**

- Take ownership of product categories assigned
- Become product champion and learn all aspects of the product line
- Become a student of the market for your categories – how are these affected by crop timing, weather, geopolitical relationships and events, a deep understanding of the US marketplace including but not limited to, who we sell to, what sectors of the market we sell into, competitors, suppliers globally
- Active real-time support of all sales activity including specific product campaigns and presentations to your sales team
- Accurate order planning with a mindset of cost savings and quality
- Inventory management – understanding of aging inventory – and assistance in moving and reducing products as needed
- Marketing- work with internal marketing to continuously market our brands to SCT sales team
- Formal reviews will be annually based on your start date.
- Daily, weekly, monthly updates and meetings as scheduled or warranted with no less than one update weekly regarding the markets, inventory, and opportunities regarding the performance of your ITD categories.

Visit this job post [here](#).

**Analyst, Financial 1**

- Prepare and review a variety of complex financial data
- Develop, maintain and distribute ad-hoc reports and financial models as needed
- Evaluate profit and cost efficiencies in various areas of the organization as needed
- Report on and track KPI information from manufacturing facilities
- Prepare spreadsheets, graphs, and charts to help illustrate financial trends
- Collaborate with and otherwise support all functional areas of the company
- Develop tools for improving the forecasting variance reporting process
- Develop cost manufacturing practices at manufacturing facilities
- Provide support as needed to corporate managers
- Prepare monthly financial review material (both internal management as well as BOD)
- Interact with Senior Management including CEO, COO and CFO on all matters pertinent to internal financial reporting
- Build relationships with key people throughout the organization to partner in driving process improvements
- Support company Food Safety efforts through commitment and compliance to SQF standard practices and policies
- Follow plant quality practices including Good Manufacturing Practices, or GMP's

Visit this job post here

---

**Innovation Breakfast: Generations of Leadership**

Our "Generations of Leadership" panel shared fantastic insight from fourth and fifth generation, family-owned Chicago food companies. Jeremy Anderson, CFBN Board Member and Founder of Fifty Gazelles moderated the panel, which featured Dave Miniat, CEO of Miniat Holdings, Dave Gonnella, VP Marketing for Gonnella Baking, and Peter Rose, VP Product Development for Rose Packing Company. Organizations like these are the backbone of Chicagoland’s food & beverage industry, as they make up the majority of the industry, and represent the lion’s share of the employment here in the region.

These mid sized companies (only in Chicagoland would we call companies that are $200 million to $1 billion in annual sales "mid sized"!) have unique issues and challenges as they grow and evolve across generations. Dave Gonnella shared his personal experience, "every generation has to reinvent the company, and it takes guts to escape the comfort zone of what came before." Adding to this sentiment, David Miniat shared that, "years ago, we had more money than ideas. Today we have more ideas than money. They're not all winners, but that's where you want to be."

---

**Solutions Workshop: Hot Topics in Supply Chain Management**

In partnership with the Loyola University Supply & Value Chain Center, and AFN Logistics, CFBN presented Solutions Workshop: Hot Topics in Supply Chain Management on September 13th. The event featured a panel of top supply chain experts from Walgreens, World's Finest Chocolate, AFN, Enjoy Life Foods and Lawson Products. This diverse, dynamic panel, shared key insights and challenges that supply chain professionals are experiencing in the industry.
“Hot Topics” discussed included:

- The “Amazon Effect”: rising expectations based on the growth of Amazon, and overnight services.
- Tariffs: Operating within a whole new (and challenging) environment
- Transportation: especially tight truckload capacity, rising shipping rates, stringent compliance requirements
- Traceability and documentation: especially in regards to FSMA and allergens
- Warehousing and distribution: building a system to support your business by identifying and qualifying a network of providers

While the panel was able to touch on and discuss all of these issues (and more!), it was agreed that each hot topic could also represent an opportunity for a future “deep dive” at an upcoming event.

What do you think? What supply chain topics are you and your company most interested in for the future. Email us at info@chicagolandfood.org and tell us what conversations and topics would deliver the most value for you.

---

**Industry News**

**Theatrical Barton G. Coming to Chicago in November**
Chef Erwin Mallet (formerly of Chicago Firehouse and Webster’s Wine Bar) will head the Chicago kitchen, producing such eye-catching dishes as Thai Sexual Surf N Turf (spicy wings and baked grouper with coconut-pistachio chutney), presented alongside a flower-draped (fake) elephant head. [READ MORE »](#)

**Tyson CEO Tom Hayes to Step Down**
Tyson Foods announced Monday that CEO Tom Hayes will be replaced by Noel White, Tyson's current beef, pork and international group president, at the end of the month, according to a company release. White, who served as Tyson's COO and president of its poultry division from 2013 to 2017, will also serve as company president. [READ MORE »](#)
OUR MISSION
To drive inclusive economic growth in Chicagoland by bringing together the region’s food and beverage industry stakeholders to pursue collaborative opportunities.