



Confederation of Indian Industry



Conference on “Showcasing Innovation Across the Food Ecosystem” 7 August 2026, Chennai Trade Centre, Chennai, India

Draft Programme

1000 - 1100 hrs Healthy Snacking and Better-for-You Categories

As consumer preferences continue to shift towards healthier lifestyles, the food industry is witnessing rapid growth in nutritious, functional, and clean-label snacking options. From traditional ingredients and natural formulations to innovative product development and evolving consumption patterns, the "better-for-you" segment presents significant opportunities for food businesses to innovate and differentiate.

This panel will bring together industry leaders from food manufacturing, market research, consumer products, and food services to discuss emerging trends, changing consumer expectations, product innovation, and strategies for building successful healthy snack brands. The session will also explore how businesses can balance nutrition, taste, convenience, and affordability while addressing the growing demand for sustainable and wholesome food choices.

Attendees will gain valuable insights into market opportunities, evolving consumer behaviour, and the future of healthy snacking in India and beyond.

Speakers:

- **Mr Sivaramakrishnan V**, Chairman, CII Trichy zone & Founder & Chief Vision Officer, Sri Velavan Agro
- **Mr Pramod Francis**, Chief Visionary Officer, Perfetto Naturals
- **Mr Prem Soni**, Chief Operating Officer, Ella Foods
- **Mr Rehan Dominic**, Manager – Consumer Products, Casino Air-caterers & Flight Services
- **Mr Bhushan N. Yengade**, Vice President (Market Research) - Council for Promotion, Research & Trade in Traditional Foods

Moderator: Ms Nandita Bapat Avadhoot, EVP & Chief Development Officer, Sapphire Foods India Ltd

1100-1115 hrs Tea Break

1115-1215 hrs Innovation in Food Products through Quick Commerce

Quick commerce is reshaping the food industry by transforming how products are developed, packaged, marketed, and delivered to consumers. As demand for speed, convenience, and personalization continues to grow, food brands are rethinking product innovation to meet evolving consumer expectations while leveraging digital-first retail channels.

This panel will bring together experts from quick commerce, food entrepreneurship, retail, product development, and packaging to discuss how businesses can innovate for the fast-growing on-demand marketplace. The discussion will explore emerging consumer trends, the role of packaging and supply chain agility, opportunities for new product launches, and strategies to build brands that succeed in the quick commerce ecosystem.



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Attendees will gain practical insights into developing market-ready food products, adapting to changing retail dynamics, and unlocking growth opportunities through one of the fastest-evolving channels in the food and grocery sector.

Speakers:

- **Mr Seshu Kumar Tirumala**, Chief Buying and Merchandising Officer, bigbasket
- **Mr V S Aathitiyan**, Founder & CEO, Cookd Ventures Pvt Ltd
- **Mr R Boobalan**, Head – R&D and Product Development, ITC Packaging
- **Ms Shumitha Periyasamy**, Founder & CEO, Food Buddies
- **Mr Vivek Dhawan**, Fresh & Grocery Business Leader

Moderator: *Mr Sundar Raj, Retail industry Consultant*

1215-1315 hrs The Frozen Opportunity: Unlocking Affordable, Nutritious Convenience Foods for Bharat

Frozen foods are emerging as a key enabler of food security, nutrition, and convenience, offering consumers access to safe, high-quality, and affordable food while minimizing wastage. With advancements in cold chain infrastructure, packaging, and food processing technologies, the frozen food ecosystem is well positioned to serve the evolving needs of households, food service businesses, and institutional buyers across Bharat.

This session will bring together policymakers and industry experts from food processing, cold chain, logistics, packaging, and frozen food operations to explore the opportunities and challenges in expanding India's frozen food market. Discussions will focus on strengthening cold chain infrastructure, driving product innovation, ensuring quality and safety, improving accessibility, and creating consumer awareness to accelerate the adoption of frozen foods across diverse markets.

Attendees will gain valuable insights into the role of policy, technology, and industry collaboration in building a resilient frozen food ecosystem and unlocking the next phase of growth for affordable, nutritious convenience foods in India.

Keynote Speaker: **Mr Chiranjiv Choudhary**, IFS, Principal Secretary to Government (Food Processing), Industries and Commerce Department, Govt of Andhra Pradesh

Speakers:

- **Dr Soji Abraham**, Chairman, CII Cold Chain Task Force & CEO, Rinac India
- **Mr Suraj R Nair**, Technical Director, Westman Supply Chain Solutions Pvt Ltd
- **Ms Anushree Dewen**, Head – Marketing, R&D and Packaging, Godrej Foods Ltd
- **Mr Pedro Sinues**, SW Asia Manager, Viscofan
- **Mr Nalin Adhitya V**, Frozen Operation Lead, Vishnukumar Traders Pvt Ltd

Moderator: *Mr Srikanth Subramanian, Vice President – Cold Storage Division, Blue Star Ltd*

1315-1400 hrs Lunch



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1400 -1500 hrs Changing Consumer Habits: The Health, Protein & Affordability Pivot

Consumer preferences are undergoing a significant transformation as health consciousness, protein-rich diets, and value-driven purchasing increasingly influence food choices. Today's consumers are seeking products that deliver superior nutrition, great taste, convenience, and affordability, compelling food businesses to rethink product portfolios, innovation strategies, and market positioning.

This session will bring together policymakers and industry leaders from food processing, research and development, branded foods, and agriculture to examine the evolving dynamics shaping consumer demand. The discussion will explore emerging nutrition trends, the growing emphasis on protein-rich foods, affordable product innovation, and the role of research, technology, and industry collaboration in addressing the needs of diverse consumer segments.

Attendees will gain valuable insights into changing consumption patterns, the opportunities for developing health-focused and value-driven food products, and strategies to remain competitive in an increasingly health-conscious marketplace.

Keynote Speaker: **Dr Sekhar Babu Geddam**, IFS, CEO, AP State Food Processing Society, Govt of Andhra Pradesh

Speakers:

- **Mr Ashu Phakey**, Vice President & Business Head, ITC Ltd
- **Ms Chithra Nair**, Chief Operating Officer, Thinking Forks Consulting Pvt. Ltd
- **Mr Abhishek Goyal**, General Manager, HyFun Foods
- **Mr Parameswaran K**, Business Manager - Prepared Food and Beverages Food & Pharma Hub, Alfa Laval India Private Limited

Moderator: **Mr Alagusundaram K**, Managing Director, Tamil Nadu Food Processing and Agri Export Promotion Corporation (TNAPEX)

1500-1545 hrs From Restaurant to Retail: Star Chefs' Perspectives on Processed Foods

Processed foods are often viewed through the lens of convenience, but evolving consumer expectations and advances in food technology are redefining their role in modern diets. As quality, nutrition, safety, and innovation become central to product development, chefs are increasingly influencing how processed foods are perceived, prepared, and enjoyed by consumers.

In this engaging session, renowned chefs and culinary leaders will share their perspectives on the evolving processed food landscape, addressing common misconceptions while highlighting the importance of ingredient quality, nutrition, taste, and responsible processing. Drawing on their experience across professional kitchens and food innovation, the panel will discuss how processed foods can complement modern lifestyles without compromising on flavour or quality.

Attendees will gain fresh insights into the intersection of culinary expertise, consumer perception, and food innovation, and discover how collaboration between chefs and the food industry can help build greater trust and acceptance of processed food products.

Speakers:

- **Chef Kaushik S**, The Mad Chef India, Eatitude



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- **Chef Vikas Milhoutra**, Area Culinary Director & Executive Chef, Taj Coromandel

Moderator: **Chef Kunal Vasudeva**, Co-Founder & Managing Director, Indian School of Hospitality

1545-1600 hrs Tea Break

1600-1700 hrs Inaugural : Showcasing Innovation Across the Food Ecosystem

The inaugural session will set the stage for Foodpro 2026 by bringing together distinguished policymakers, industry leaders, and key stakeholders to share their vision for the future of India's food processing sector. As the industry embraces innovation, sustainability, digital transformation, and value addition, the session will highlight the collaborative efforts required to strengthen the entire food ecosystem, from farm to factory, retail, and global markets.

The session will feature perspectives from the Government of India, the Government of Tamil Nadu, and leaders from industry, focusing on policy initiatives, investments, technology adoption, MSME development, export competitiveness, and opportunities to accelerate the growth of the food processing sector. It will also underscore the importance of innovation, public-private partnerships, and industry collaboration in building a resilient, inclusive, and globally competitive food ecosystem.

The inaugural session will provide participants with strategic insights into the sector's growth roadmap while officially launching knowledge sharing, business networking, technology showcases, and discussions that will shape the future of food processing in India.

Chief Guest: **Mr Chirag Paswan**, Hon'ble Minister of Food Processing Industries, Government of India

Guests of Honour:

- **Mr R Vinoth**, Minister for Agriculture - Farmers Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu
- **Mr P Mathan Raja**, Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of Tamil Nadu

Speakers:

- **Dr Rajneesh, IAS.**, Additional Secretary and Development Commissioner, Ministry of MSME, Government of India*
- **Mr R Mukundan**, President, CII and Managing Director & CEO, Tata Chemicals Limited
- **Mr Chandrajit Banerjee**, Director General, Confederation of Indian Industry
- **Mr B Thiagarajan**, Chairman, CII Foodpro 2026 and Managing Director, Blue Star India
- **Mr P Ravichandran**, Chairman, CII Southern Region and President – Danfoss India, Danfoss Industries Pvt Ltd
- **Dr Geemon Korah**, Chair, CII SR Taskforce on Agri-Tech, Food Processing & Farm-to-Market Efficiency & Executive Director, Mane Kancor Pvt Ltd

1700 – 1730 hrs Exhibition Inauguration: Exhibition Ribbon Cutting & Visit of Stalls