

QCS Annual Conference to Explore AI, the Future of Food and Beverage Industry Innovation

Food and beverage professionals invited to connect, learn, and lead October 18–20 in Plano, Texas

LISLE, IL, UNITED STATES, September 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- QCS Purchasing Cooperative invites food and beverage professionals from its members and supply partner companies to attend the 2026 QCS Annual Conference, taking place October 18–20 in Plano, Texas.

The annual conference will bring together leaders from food and beverage manufacturing, procurement, packaging, operations, and supplier organizations for three days of education, collaboration, innovation, and meaningful industry connections.

This year's program will explore many of the trends reshaping the food and beverage industry, including artificial intelligence, shifting consumer preferences, ingredient innovation, sustainable packaging, and the future of food production.

"Food and beverage companies are navigating rapid changes in technology, consumer expectations, and their operations," said Ken Klug, President and CEO of QCS Purchasing Cooperative. "The QCS Annual Conference gives industry professionals an opportunity to step away from the day-to-day, learn from one another, and have the conversations that can help prepare their organizations for what comes next."

The conference will open with a keynote presentation by Dan Chuparkoff, an internationally recognized speaker on artificial intelligence, innovation, and organizational change.



The graphic is a press release announcement for the QCS Annual Conference. It features the QCS Purchasing Cooperative logo in the top left corner. A blue banner with the text "PRESS RELEASE" is positioned to the right of the logo. Below the banner is a large graphic of the state of Texas, with the word "PLANO" written in large, bold, red letters across the middle. Above "PLANO" is the text "ANNUAL CONFERENCE" in blue. Below "PLANO" is the text "VALUE IN PARTNERSHIP" in blue, followed by the QCS logo. The background of the graphic is light blue.

QCS Purchasing Cooperative invites food and beverage professionals from its members and supply partner companies to attend the 2026 QCS Annual Conference, taking place October 18–20 in Plano, Texas.

Chuparkoff will share practical insights into how leaders can understand and apply emerging technology within their organizations. He will also moderate an AI panel discussion following the opening general session, bringing together industry perspectives on the opportunities, challenges, and real-world implications of artificial intelligence.

Conference programming will feature discussions to help attendees better understand the forces shaping food and beverage manufacturing and procurement.

Educational highlights include:

- The Future of Food, exploring emerging market forces, consumer expectations, and innovations shaping the next generation of food and beverage products.
- Recycled Plastics, examining packaging sustainability, material availability, and the opportunities and challenges associated with greater use of recycled content.
- Natural Colors, addressing changing consumer preferences, ingredient reformulation, and the growing demand for recognizable, naturally derived ingredients.
- Additional sessions focus on leadership, operations, procurement, and strategies to help companies navigate a changing business environment.

“QCS brings together leaders with a wide range of experience across the food and beverage industry,” Klug said. “That diversity fosters an environment where attendees can exchange ideas, learn what others are doing successfully, and identify opportunities they might not discover on their own.”

In addition to educational programming, the QCS Annual Conference offers opportunities to build relationships with industry peers, category experts, and supply partners.

Attendees will also participate in Taste of Texas, a group networking event at Legacy Hall in Plano. The event will blend regional food and beverage experiences with interactive activities that encourage conversation, creativity, and new connections.

Whether attendees are focused on emerging technology, product innovation, sustainable operations, procurement strategy, or professional growth, the conference offers practical insights and access to peers facing many of the same challenges and opportunities.

Registration and additional conference information are available at: qcspurchasing.com

About QCS Purchasing Cooperative

QCS Purchasing Cooperative is a member-owned buying group that serves food and beverage production companies. With deep category expertise and a network of more than 200 national suppliers, QCS provides strategic sourcing, operational solutions, and value-added services across packaging, fleet and logistics, plant operations, and more. Visit qcspurchasing.com for more information.

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