

AHPA Botanical Congress

📅 September 15-16, 2026 📍 Portland, OR



Day 1: Tuesday, September 15

AGENDA

7:45 AM	Check-in & Breakfast		
8:30 AM	Welcome & State of the Garden	Graham Rigby AHPA	
8:55 AM 1h	A Fireside Chat with Dr. Hellen Oketch-Rabah In this opening session, Graham Rigby, President and CEO of AHPA, will speak with Hellen Oketch-Rabah, PhD, Deputy Director of the Office of Dietary Supplement Programs (ODSP) at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), about ODSP's current priorities, leadership transition and new technologies in use at FDA, and how these changes will impact the dietary supplement industry.	Dr. Hellen Oketch-Rabah FDA ODSP	Graham Rigby AHPA - Moderator
10:00 AM 30m	Money & the Marketplace Stay informed on the business forces shaping the botanical products industry in this market trends session with Erika Craft of Nutrition Business Journal. Explore the latest data on consumer demand, category performance, and emerging market dynamics to better understand the opportunities and challenges influencing the botanical marketplace.	Erika Craft Nutrition Business Journal	Amber Bennett AHPA - Moderator
10:45 AM 1h 30m	Pacific Northwest Growers on Supply, Demand & Risk Gain firsthand insights from Pacific Northwest herb growers Matt Dybala of Pacific Botanicals, Dylan Elmer of Oregon's Wild Harvest, Jeff Higley of Oshala Farm, and Danielle Kruse of Trout Lake Farm as they discuss the realities of cultivating botanicals in one of North America's most important growing regions. After brief introductions to their operations, panelists will explore the current supply and demand landscape, production challenges, emerging risks, and other issues shaping the future of domestic botanical cultivation.	Matt Dybala Pacific Botanicals	Danielle Kruse Trout Lake Farm
		Dylan Elmer Oregon's Wild Harvest	Alexis Durham AHPA - Moderator
		Jeff Higley Oshala Farm	
12:15 PM	Lunch		
1:15 PM 40m	Longevity by Design: Personal Story Meets Cellular Science In this session, Bill Rawls of Vital Plan will examine the intersection of personal experience and emerging perspectives on cellular aging. Drawing from his own health journey and the founding of Vital Plan, he will explore the biological mechanisms associated with longevity, discuss recent developments in cellular health, and consider how this evolving area is influencing botanical product development and broader conversations around aging.	Dr. Bill Rawls Vital Plan	Graham Rigby AHPA - Moderator
2:00 PM 1h	From Farm to Formula Led by Women From cultivation to finished product, this session explores the unique role botanicals play in advancing women's health. Komal Baldwa of Waleria HealthTech will discuss how female-led farming operations, responsible supply chains, and clinical science contribute to the development of high-quality botanical ingredients, while Maggie Luther of Biologica will examine the physiological foundations of women's health and the science behind developing evidence-informed botanical formulations.	Komal Baldwa Waleria HealthTech	Graham Rigby AHPA - Moderator
		Dr. Maggie Luther Biologica	
3:15 PM 1h	Global Developments in Botanical Safety As regulatory scrutiny of botanical ingredients continues to evolve worldwide, the botanical products industry remains committed to the ongoing evaluation and advancement of safety. In this session, Dr. Candace Doecker of ToxStrategies and Dr. Rick Kingston of SafetyCall International will examine emerging safety data, global activities among health authorities, and scientific approaches to botanical risk assessment, while discussing how robust evidence can support sound regulatory decision-making and help guard against regulatory overreach.	Dr. Candace Doecker ToxStrategies	Jane Wilson AHPA - Moderator
		Dr. Rick Kingston SafetyCall International	
4:15 PM	Closing & Adjournment	Graham Rigby AHPA	
5:30 PM	Rose City Reception @ Regency Club & Patio Raise a glass to the Pacific Northwest! Join your fellow attendees for a celebratory opening night welcoming you to Portland, the City of Roses.		

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Day 2: Wednesday, September 16

AGENDA

7:45 AM	Check-in & Breakfast		
8:30 AM	Welcome & Announcements	Graham Rigby AHPA	
8:35 AM 1h	Leveraging Science to Differentiate Botanicals Discover how emerging scientific tools are helping distinguish botanical ingredients and finished products in an increasingly competitive marketplace. Dr. Premalatha Balachandran will explore advances in signaling pathways and biomarker discovery technologies, while Dr. Susan Hewlings of Radicle Science will discuss the role of primary clinical research in generating product-specific evidence and supporting scientific differentiation.	Dr. Premalatha Balachandran PleXignal Laboratories Dr. Susan Hewlings Radicle Science Dr. Holly Johnson AHPA – Moderator	
9:40 AM 1h 30m	Regulatory Pressures & Priorities Stay up to date on the regulatory developments shaping the botanical products industry. This roundtable will provide timely insights into federal and state policy priorities, with discussion of current issues that include tariffs, GRAS rulemaking, state regulations, and other emerging developments affecting the marketplace. This session provides a unique combination of trade association and legal regulatory perspectives, featuring Laura Shumow of ASTA, Robert Durkin of Amin Wasserman Gurnani, and Will Woodlee of Kleinfeld Kaplan & Becker.	Laura Shumow ASTA Robert Durkin Amin Wasserman Gurnani Will Woodlee Kleinfeld Kaplan & Becker Robert Marriott AHPA – Moderator	
11:15 AM 1h	Networking Power Hour Spark new connections and catch up with old friends! Mix and mingle with fellow attendees to expand your professional circle, exchange insights, and build lasting industry relationships.	RADICLE[®] SCIENCE Karin VanSlyke AHPA – Host	
12:15 PM	Lunch	informamarkets	
1:15 PM 1h	Tending the Wild: Ethics & Adaptation in Modern Wildcrafting Wildcrafted botanicals play an important role in the global botanical supply chain, making responsible stewardship more important than ever. In this session, a multigenerational Pacific Northwest wildcrafter, Asher Adesse of EarthWays Herbals, and Sarah Vito of FairWild Foundation will explore the ethical, ecological, and economic considerations shaping modern wildcrafting, highlighting both the challenges and opportunities for ensuring sustainable harvests and resilient wild plant populations.	Asher Adesse EarthWays Herbals Sarah Vito FairWild Foundation Alexis Durham AHPA – Moderator	
2:30 PM 1h 15m	Next Generation Ingredient Technologies Explore the emerging technologies that are reshaping botanical ingredient development. Featuring Anthony Pavel of Keller and Heckman, Jacob Lang of Krokos Bio, and Simão Soares of SilicoLife, this session will introduce the science behind cell culture and precision fermentation, examine their potential applications within the botanical products industry, and discuss the evolving regulatory landscape, including recent FDA engagement and considerations for this new class of ingredients.	Jacob Lang Krokos Bio Anthony Pavel Keller and Heckman Simão Soares SilicoLife Graham Rigby AHPA – Moderator	
3:45 PM	Closing & Adjournment	Graham Rigby AHPA	
4:15 PM	Herb Walk @ Hoyt Arboretum Step into the vibrant botanical diversity of the region on a guided herb walk at the Hoyt Arboretum, spanning 190 ridge-top acres and home to 2,300 species of trees and shrubs from six continents. Led by esteemed herbalists Howie Brounstein (Columbines School of Botanical Studies), Missy Rohs (Arctos School of Herbal and Botanical Studies), and Steven Yeager (Mountain Rose Herbs), this unique experience offers the opportunity to learn about local medicinal herbs and their uses while exploring nature firsthand. <i>Transportation provided.</i>	Howie Brounstein Columbines School of Botanical Studies Missy Rohs Arctos School of Herbal and Botanical Studies Steven Yeager Mountain Rose Herbs	



ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE 2026 BOTANICAL CONGRESS PROVIDED BY:

ALKEMIST LABS

APEX COMPLIANCE

MOUNTAIN ROSE HERBS

VERDURE SCIENCES

SPECIAL EVENT CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:

American College of Healthcare Sciences · Banyan Botanicals · Feral Fungi
Herb Pharm · Motherlove Herbal Company · Nuherbs · Oshala Farm · Waleria Health

Agenda subject to change.