

The background of the slide features a large, faint watermark of the Rutgers University seal. The seal is circular and contains the text "RUTGERS UNIVERSITY" around the perimeter. In the center of the seal, there is a sunburst design with a central figure. The watermark is rendered in a light red color, matching the background.

# RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural  
Experiment Station

## Making the Most of Your IAFP Annual Meeting: Tips for Students and First- Timers

Donald W Schaffner, Ph.D.  
Rutgers University



Scientific conferences can be overwhelming, especially for individuals attending for their first time. With all of the opportunities for learning, networking, and socializing available at IAFP 2012, how can anyone make sense of it all?



International Association for  
**Food Protection**®

## Overview

- Committees and professional development groups
- Social hours
- Informal networking
- Choosing which symposia to attend



ADVANCING FOOD SAFETY WORLDWIDE.

## Committees and PDGs

- Participating in a PDG meeting is a great way to meet people
- PDG's are the lifeblood of IAFP
- Student PDG
- Young Professionals PDG

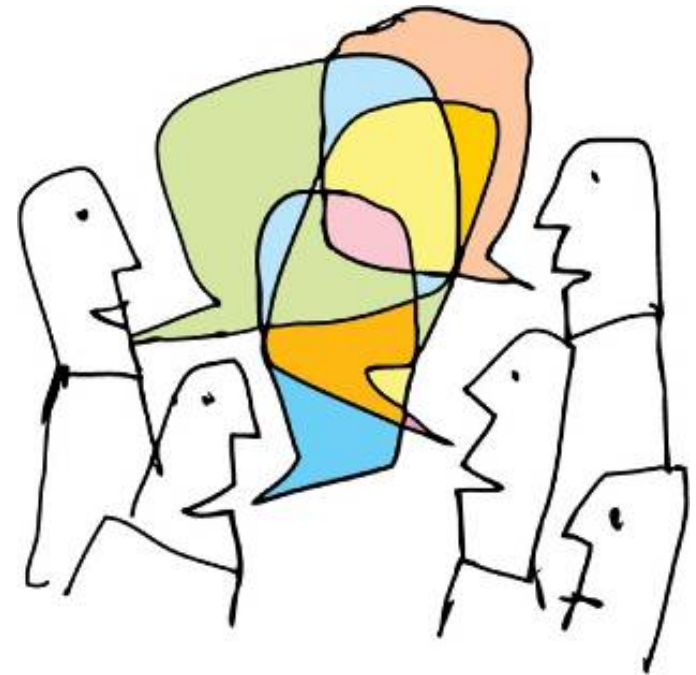


July 22

Meeting	Date	Time	Room
Affiliate Council	07/22/2012	7:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Rotunda
Committee on Control of Foodborne Illness	07/22/2012	8:00 AM - 12:00 PM	553AB
Food Defense PDG	07/22/2012	8:00 AM - 10:00 AM	550B
Food Packaging PDG	07/22/2012	8:00 AM - 10:00 AM	550A
Pre Harvest Food Safety PDG	07/22/2012	8:00 AM - 10:00 AM	556AB
New Media Task Force	07/22/2012	8:30 AM - 10:00 AM	551A
Beverage PDG	07/22/2012	9:00 AM - 11:00 AM	552B
Food Law PDG	07/22/2012	9:00 AM - 11:00 AM	557
Viral and Parasitic Foodborne Disease PDG	07/22/2012	9:00 AM - 11:00 AM	552A
Dairy Quality and Safety PDG	07/22/2012	9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Ballroom C
Developing Food Safety Professionals PDG	07/22/2012	10:00 AM - 12:00 PM	551A
JFP Management Committee	07/22/2012	10:00 AM - 12:00 PM	551B
Meat and Poultry Safety and Quality PDG	07/22/2012	10:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Ballroom B
Retail Food Safety and Quality PDG	07/22/2012	10:00 AM - 12:00 PM	555AB
Constitution and Bylaws Committee	07/22/2012	11:00 AM - 12:00 PM	552B
Student PDG	07/22/2012	12:00 PM - 1:30 PM	Rotunda
3-A Committee on Sanitary Procedures	07/22/2012	1:00 PM - 3:00 PM	550B
Applied Laboratory Methods PDG	07/22/2012	1:00 PM - 3:00 PM	555AB
Food Hygiene and Sanitation PDG	07/22/2012	1:00 PM - 3:00 PM	556AB
Fruit and Vegetable Safety and Quality PDG	07/22/2012	1:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Ballroom B
Seafood Safety and Quality PDG	07/22/2012	1:00 PM - 3:00 PM	552A
Food Chemical Hazards and Food Allergy PDG	07/22/2012	2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	557
FPT Management Committee	07/22/2012	2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	551B
Food Safety Education PDG	07/22/2012	2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	551A
Microbial Modelling and Risk Analysis PDG	07/22/2012	2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Ballroom C
Water Safety and Quality PDG	07/22/2012	2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	552B
Foundation Committee	07/22/2012	3:00 PM - 4:30 PM	552A
Nominating Committee	07/22/2012	3:30 PM - 4:30 PM	550A

## Social hours

- If you drink alcohol, it's best to do so in moderation.
- Mingling tips
  - People love to talk about themselves
  - Prepare a few talking points in case someone asks you about yourself. Or your research.



## Social hours

- Practice a one sentence and a 3-5 sentence summary of your work. Especially if you someone who gets nervous when meeting new people.
- Having a "script" to fall back on will help get you through those first few seconds of handshakes.
- Print up some business cards. **Yes, even as a grad student.**



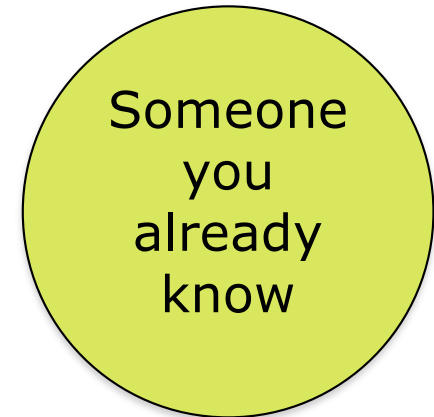
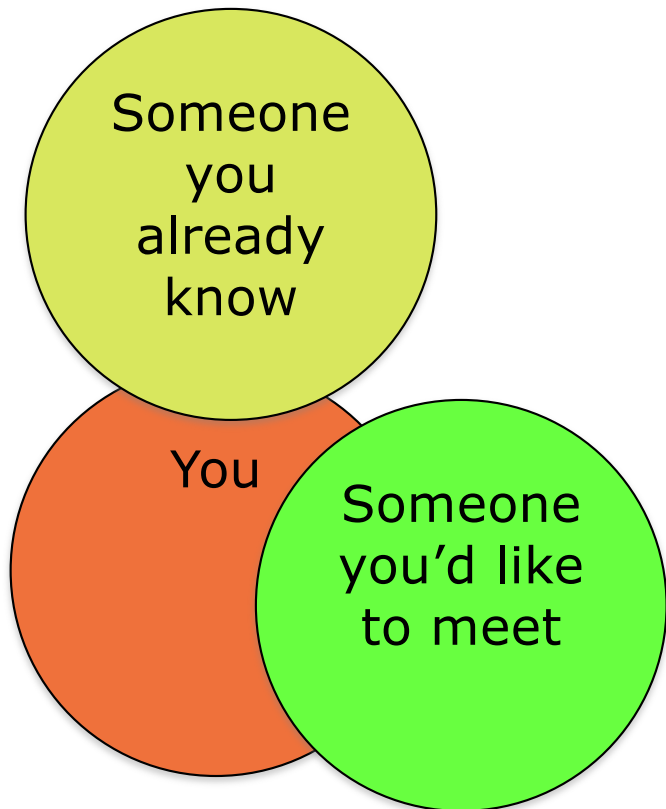
## Informal networking

- Some times the real action is in the hallways
- When someone gives you their business card because they want something sent to them, neatly print what they want on the back of the card before filing it away (trust me).



# Informal networking

- Practice the networking dance





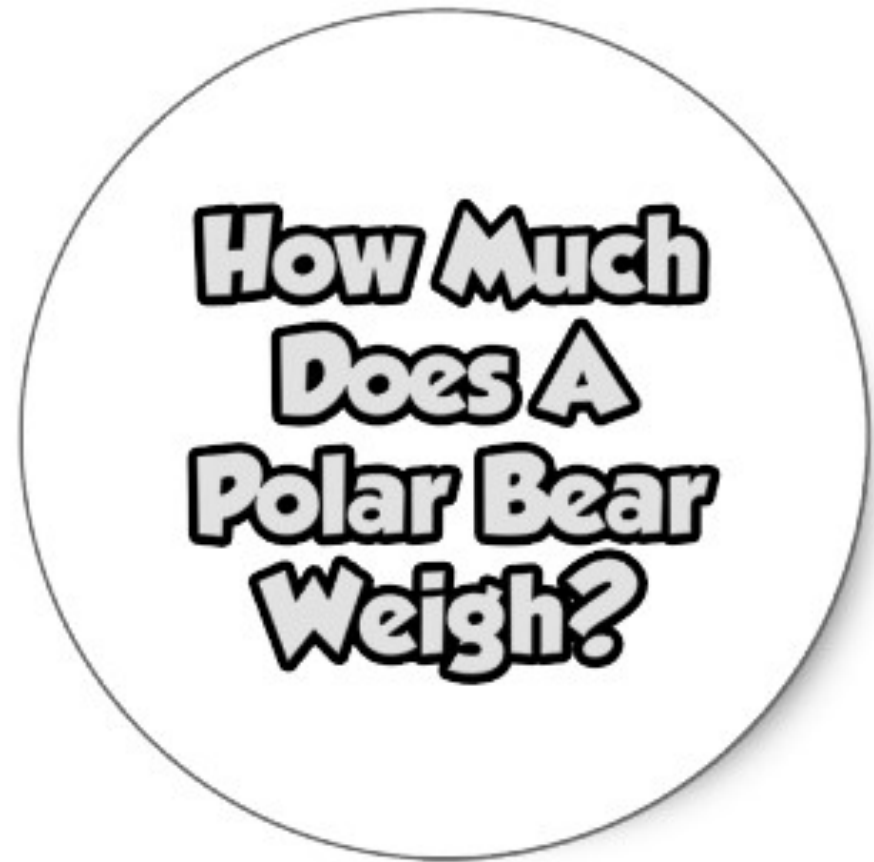
## Practice the networking dance

- “Looks like I need a refill”
- “Excuse me, I see an old friend and I need to say hello”
- “It’s been great chatting, but if you will excuse me”



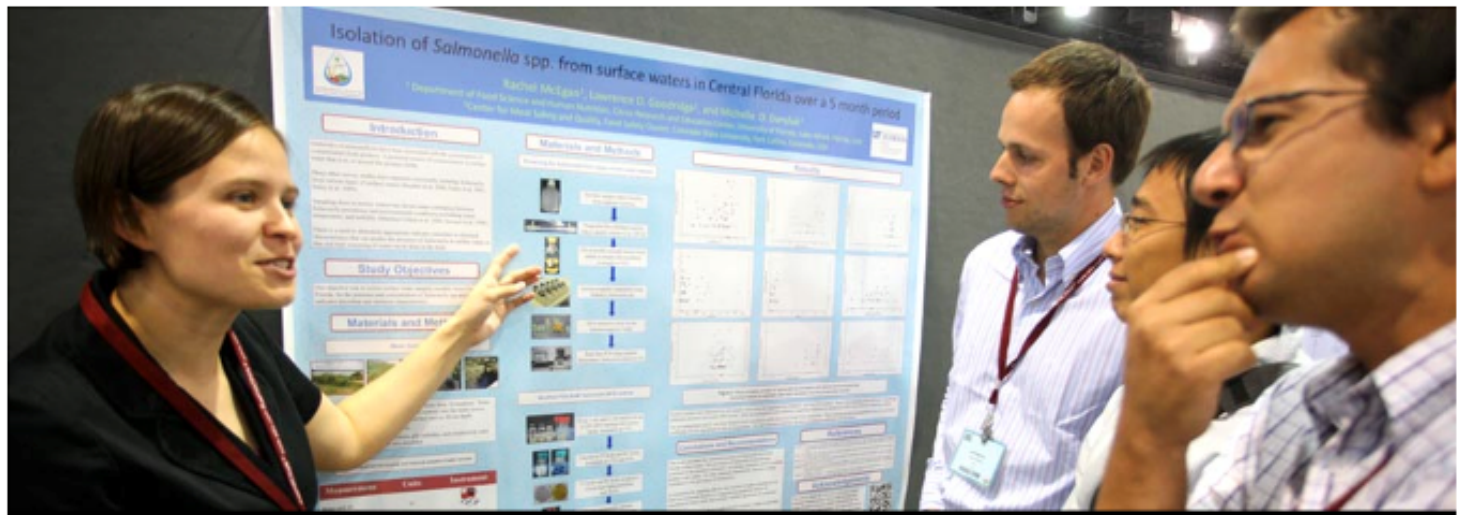
## Informal networking

- If you're alone at a social hour, take the initiative!
- Almost everyone is friendly, and it's easier to break the ice than you think.
- Dress “conference appropriate”.
- You can't lose a job prospect from being a bit formally dressed, but you can from being too informal.



## Which sessions to attend?

- Symposia
  - Good for high level overview and good speakers
- Technical talks
  - Easy way to get quick updates on a topic
- Poster sessions
  - Great opportunity for one-on-one discussions



## Which sessions to attend?

- Plan go to at least one session that is on a topic you are interested in, but don't know a lot about.
- Consider using the session planner
  - <https://iafp.confex.com/iafp/2012/schedule/index.cgi>
- Watch for our iPhone app
  - Currently in review in the app store



# Session engagement

- It's ok to session hop!
  - It's why the times are synchronized
- It's ok to sit up front!
  - That is usually where the seats are
- It's ok to walk out half way through a talk
  - Especially if it's bad talk or the speaker is over time
- Ask a question!
- Make a plan with your advisor... or not.



# Acknowledgements

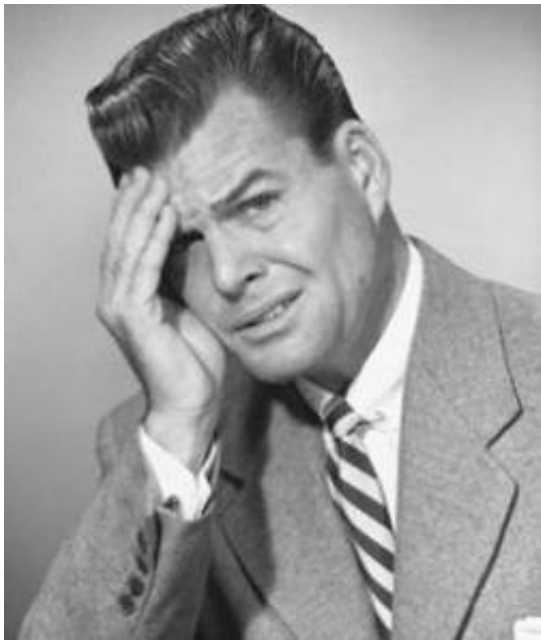
- Ben Chapman
- Michelle Danyluk
- Siobain Duffy
- Wendy Maduff
- Doug Powell
- and a cast of thousands...



# Comments and questions

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Someone  
you  
already  
know