

CIFST INTERFACE: Speaker Bios



Martin Bischof, Senior Cocoa Trader, Barry Callebaut Group

Martin has been in the commodity trading industry for 14 years, with work experience in the United Kingdom, Switzerland and the US. His current role is Senior Cocoa Trader at Barry Callebaut USA, where he is responsible for the price risk management and sourcing of cocoa products for the North America business. Before relocating to the US in 2020, Martin was Head of Cocoa Market Research and based at Barry Callebaut's HQ in Zurich, Switzerland. Martin lives in Chicago, Illinois and likes traveling, scuba diving and outdoor activities with family and friends.



Sophie Côté, Client Success Manager, Innova Market Insights

Sophie Côté, Client Success Manager at Innova, has a bachelor's degree in food science and agricultural chemistry. Having previously served as an account manager at renowned ingredient distributors such as IMCD Group and Caldic Canada, Sophie has a proven track record in helping companies innovate in the food and beverage space, managing client accounts and fostering strategic partnerships. Leveraging her industry experience, Sophie is committed to offering Innova's customers a holistic perspective of their market and empowering them to make business decisions with confidence.



Anthony "Tony" Fata, President, Sager Food Products Inc.

Anthony Fata is the President of Sager Food Products, a leading manufacturer and packager of vegetable and olive oils. Based in Montreal, Sager serves most Canadian grocery retailers and many US retailers with a full range of private label vegetable and olive oils ranging from commodity oils such as canola, soya and corn oil, to more specialized products such as olive, coconut, avocado and truffle oils. In addition, the Sager group of companies includes bulk vegetable oil delivery businesses in Montreal, Toronto and South Florida as well as a manufacturer of Asian style sauces that are sold in private label retail channels in both Canada and the US.

Tony also serves as the lead director on the Board of Directors of Saputo Inc., a top 10 global dairy processor with leading market positions in Canada, the USA, Australia, Argentina, and the United Kingdom. He is also the Chair of the Faculty Advisory Board of McGill University's Faculty of Law. Tony has also been very active in other not for profit organizations.

Tony hold BCL and LLB degrees (McGill Faculty of Law) and an MBA (Harvard Business School). He is also a member of the Québec Bar and the Québec chapter of YPO. Prior to joining Sager, he worked in the Investment Banking and M&A Team of CIBC Capital Markets in both Montreal and Toronto. Tony lives in Montreal with his wife Teresa and together they have two sons.



Catherine Houssard, ing., Ph.D., Research officer, Key account manager at CIRAI and Director General at PolyCarbone

With an engineering degree from Institut Agro Dijon, a diploma in corporate social responsibility from ESG-UQÀM and a PhD in industrial engineering from Polytechnique Montréal on eco-efficiency in the dairy sector, Catherine has acquired some thirty years' experience in the agri-food industry. Today, she applies her technical expertise in life cycle analysis and sustainable development to support organizations in their food transition. A member of the Board of the Montreal Food System and a committed citizen, she also regularly appears in the media to accelerate the dissemination of knowledge, influence public policy and encourage more sustainable eating habits within communities.

Photo Credit: Dominik Gravel



Émilie Jacques, Director, Regulatory, Cintech agroalimentaire

Professional Passionate about food and an expert in Canadian regulations, she loves exploring the different interpretations of regulations to ensure the compliance of innovative food products on the market, while helping her customers achieve their differentiation and positioning objectives.

After working in the dairy industry for over 10 years, she now offers her services at Cintech agroalimentaire to customers of all sizes in all food sectors.



Rob Kowal, President, Kriscor & Associates

Rob Kowal, president of Kriscor & Associates, represents leading food ingredient brands like Sensus Frutafit® and Frutalose® Chicory Root inulin, and Post Consumer Brands Cereal Ingredient business.

With over four decades of experience since earning his Food & Pharmaceutical Science diploma, Rob has held key roles in R&D, Sales, and General Management at major firms including Hostess Foods, Firmenich, Kerry Ingredients, and WILD Flavors. He is also a writer, speaker, and co-author of "*Deep Health: Using Artificial Intelligence to Live Longer and Healthier.*"

Rob is Past President of CIFST National (2019-2021), and continues to be active contributor to the food industry, all while pursuing his passions for cycling and promoting health and nutrition.



Alain Picard, Advisor, Community Engagement, GS1 Canada

Alain is an Advisor with the Community Engagement team at GS1 Canada. This new division was created in early 2022 with the main objective of supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs get their products to market quickly and efficiently.

Part of his mandate is to work closely with Trade Associations and Educational Institutions alike.

The goal being to support, educate and familiarize their members with GS1 Global Standards emphasizing the importance of minimizing start up and scale up hurdles along the way. As a previous business owner in Wholesale Packaging & Distribution, he truly enjoys sharing his experience and building relationships which bodes well in this role.



Regis Rehel, President & Chief Executive Officer, Sunbec Food Inc.

Regis Rehel is President of Sunbec Foods, one of the most reputable private-label distributors and packers of sugar and salt in the Canadian market, with nearly 40 years' experience.

The company serves the retail, foodservice, food manufacturer and industrial markets as a distributor for leading national manufacturers and importers of dry ingredients, specializing in sugar, salt and pepper. Sunbec also offers a full logistics service, as well as milling, blending and refining, flavoring and adding flavor to sugar and salt.

Regis has a solid track record in performance improvement and business transformation, working with private, public and private equity companies, accumulating over 10 years' experience in the food sector. He supports worthy causes such as La Tablée des Chefs, Academos and Futurpreneur, which work to develop and support young people.



Cassandra Rouleau, Activation Marketing Manager, Kerry

Every day, Cassandra brings her R&D experience and in-depth knowledge of the Canadian market and consumer to everything she does. Her passion for nutrition and the development of tomorrow's generation has also led her to get involved with La Tablée des chefs as a high school chef trainer.

Kerry has been her home for over 16 years. She is Activation Marketing Manager for the Canadian market. She collaborates with many experts around the world, always on the lookout for solutions to meet consumer demand.



Hank Wang, Technical Director, Howtian

Hank has led the technical development and customer support for Howtian for 7 years. His expertise in the sweetener world helps accelerate development timing, and ensures both product quality and value are integrated early in the formulation process. He has traveled around the globe to train developers how to best formulate with stevia and make the products taste great. Previously, Hank spent over 15 years with Kraft Heinz as a product developer/engineer on multiple applications including powdered, liquid concentrate, ready-to-drink and coffee beverages, as well as cereal/nutrition bars, spray-dried flavors, nuts, powdered and ready-to-eat desserts.