

# Science Atlantic Nutrition and Foods Division Annual Conference Program 2025

*Amplifying Student Research in Nutrition and Food Sciences since 2017*

The Science Atlantic Nutrition and Foods Division Annual Conference (SANFCon) brings together budding scientists with people established in nutrition and food sciences in the Atlantic provinces. The conference is a place to practice, pitch, and engage in mentorship while exchanging new ideas, research, and practical solutions to problems in the field.

*This year's conference theme is Nutrition and Food as Medicine, and it is exclusively online.*

## Conference Goals and Objectives

To co-develop opportunities for students, with students, to grow professionally, through presenting, feedback exchange, networking, and practicing technical science communication. To explore the concept of 'nutrition and food as medicine' through the lens of traditional and Western science.

Evidence demonstrates the relationship between balanced nutrition and food bioactives in the reduction of incidence of oxidative stress- and chronic inflammation-regulated chronic disease. Now, urgent collaborative actions by community, industry, academia, and government are required to re-introduce sustainable, affordable, and safe food, while promoting food security and sovereignty. The Indigenous knowledge of food as medicine encompasses a wealth of traditions, practices, and philosophies rooted in deep connections to the land, water, and other elements. Our esteemed keynote speaker will kick off the conference with a talk exploring these ways of knowing, including Etuaptmumk, or two-eyed seeing or the gift of multiple perspectives, stressing the commitment scientists must make to understanding and applying the various calls to action, including but not limited to UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

We believe that the SANFCon is a venue for bringing together the next generation of nutrition and food professionals to engage in co-learning and co-developing strategies with their mentors, teachers, and community for the prevention and treatment of chronic disease.

Together, we are stronger. Thank you, wela'liq, merci, SANFCon Co-Chairs 2025:

*Vasantha Rupasinghe, PhD, P.Ag., FCIFST, Faculty of Agriculture, Dalhousie University*

*Irene Ogada, RD, PhD, Faculty of Professional Studies, Mount Saint Vincent University*

*Shannan Grant, RD, MSc, PhD, Faculty of Arts and Science, Mount Saint Vincent University, and Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University*

## Registration and Attendance

If you have received this program, you are officially registered for SANFCon. There are, however, a few more steps to complete before you can attend online.

### For all attendees:

Everyone is kindly requested to keep their video and microphone always muted, unless they are presenting or participating in the Q&A. When wanting to ask a question, please type in the chat or use “hands up”. The moderator of your session will assist.

**To access conference day 1**, you must click on the following link, and fill in the requested information. <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/4fd83598-7430-46e0-aa71-dfdcf7824c57@60b81999-0b7f-412d-92a3-e17d8ae9e3e0>. This information will be kept confidential and only used to send an email to you, that will put a calendar invite and meeting link in your calendar. This email will come from a Dalhousie University email address. Please complete this action at least 2 days before the talk.

If you experience difficulties in this process, please email [vrupasinghe@Dal.Ca](mailto:vrupasinghe@Dal.Ca).

**To access conference day 2**, you can [click here](#) or the link below to enter the conference room. Alternatively, please check your email inbox for the invitation from the MS Team.

[https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting\\_ODJiOTk1YzMtMTAyZi00YjgxLTljOTMtYTRhNTZmNGFlNmU3%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2260b81999-0b7f-412d-92a3-e17d8ae9e3e0%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2272760551-22bc-4c2d-81e0-57bcd42b925f%22%7d](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_ODJiOTk1YzMtMTAyZi00YjgxLTljOTMtYTRhNTZmNGFlNmU3%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2260b81999-0b7f-412d-92a3-e17d8ae9e3e0%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2272760551-22bc-4c2d-81e0-57bcd42b925f%22%7d)

### For all people presenting:

SANF Conference Co-chair, Shannan Grant, will offer an online presentation practice session on March 27, 2025, Thursday at 7 pm AST. If you have not received an invitation from MS Teams, please [click here](#) or this link: [https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting\\_YjlhZTc4ZmEtYjk2Yi00MTc3LTkwMjAtYzlkNDg3NzNlZGly%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2260b81999-0b7f-412d-92a3-e17d8ae9e3e0%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2272760551-22bc-4c2d-81e0-57bcd42b925f%22%7d](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_YjlhZTc4ZmEtYjk2Yi00MTc3LTkwMjAtYzlkNDg3NzNlZGly%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%2260b81999-0b7f-412d-92a3-e17d8ae9e3e0%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2272760551-22bc-4c2d-81e0-57bcd42b925f%22%7d).

## Student Presentations

**3-Minute Poster Presentations:** Poster sessions showcase students' research and collaborations while challenging them to be concise and clear while presenting their work. Students must aim to ‘hook’ their audience. That is, capture their interest to learn more. **All student presenters are required to submit the 1-2 slide(s) to [Cindy.Yu@dal.ca](mailto:Cindy.Yu@dal.ca) by Wednesday, March 26, 2025, at 7 pm AST.**

**Oral Presentations:** Students will be given 10 minutes to present their research using visual aids (e.g. MS PowerPoint). After every 4-5 student presentation, a 10-minute question period will follow.

Presentation abstracts/summaries can be found in the Science Atlantic Nutrition and Foods Conference Abstract Booklet.

## Keynote and Guest Speakers' Presentations

The conference features respected speakers and knowledge keepers. Already experienced, these speakers will model public speaking, while sharing their work, aiming to challenge students to expand their knowledge and perspective. Presentation abstracts/summaries and speaker biographies can be found in the Science Atlantic Nutrition and Foods Conference Abstract Booklet.

**Keynote and Opening Speaker:** Tuma Young

**Mijipjewey na Pisun (Food as Medicine): Food Security, Land and Indigenous Rights as a Foundation**

Affiliation: Unama'kik College Institute and Department of Political Science & Indigenous Studies, Cape Breton University, Sydney, NS

**Guest Lecture 1:** Thomas Pulinilkunnil

**Amino Acid signalling and metabolism in health and disease**

Affiliation: Dalhousie University, Faculty of Medicine, Dept. of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology; Dept of Physiology and Biophysics, Co-Lead (DalCREW; Dalhousie Cardiac Research Excellence Wave)

**Guest Lecture 2:** Petra Kienesberger

**Bioactive lipid metabolism and signalling in metabolic disease**

Affiliation: Dalhousie University, Faculty of Medicine, Dept. of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology

**Keynote and Closing Speaker:** David Ma

**Diet and Health: From omega-3 lipids for cancer prevention, from experimental models to families dietary intervention**

Affiliation: Department of Human Health and Nutrition Sciences, University of Guelph

## Conference Schedule

### Day 1, March 28 (Friday), 2025

7:00 to 7:05 pm: Opening Remarks and Land Acknowledgement (Cathy Leblanc and Shannan Grant, Two-Eyed Seeing Program, Mount Saint Vincent University)

7:05 to 8:05 pm: Keynote Talk "Mijipjewey na Pisun (Food as Medicine): Food security, land and Indigenous rights as a foundation" (Tuma Young, Cape Breton University)

### Day 2, March 29 (Saturday), 2025

**9:00 am to 9:05 am:** Opening Remarks and Land Acknowledgement (Jennifer Taylor, University of Prince Edward Island)

**9:05 am – 9:35 am:** Guest Lecture 1 (Thomas Pulinilkunnil, Dalhousie University)

**9:35 am – 10:40 am:** Session A – Oral Presentations (10 minutes per speaker)

#### Order of Session A Presentations:

1. Matthew Code, Acadia University (Abstract # 10)
2. Ella Smith, Memorial University (Abstract # 18)
3. Emily Dolan, Acadia University (Abstract # 8)
4. Wasitha de Wass Thilakarathna, Dalhousie University (Abstract # 6)

*\*10 minutes for questions*

**10:40 – 10:50 am:** BREAK (10 min)

**10:50 am – 12:30 pm:** Session B – Oral Presentations (10 minutes per speaker)

#### Order of Session B Presentations:

1. Adar Buxton, Memorial University (Abstract # 13)
2. Kavindya Samarakoon, Dalhousie University (Abstract # 3)
3. Laura Gosine, Mount Saint Vincent University (Abstract # 35)
4. Chandrika Chaturvedi, Dalhousie University (Abstract # 7)

*\*10 minutes for questions*

5. Abderrahmane Meziane, Université de Moncton (Abstract # 36)
6. Sabrina Dahmani, Université de Moncton (Abstract # 15)
7. Morgan Ledrew, Memorial University (Abstract # 16)

8. Hanna Gedif, Dalhousie University (Abstract # 31)

*\*10 minutes for questions*

**12:30 pm – 1:00 pm:** Lunch BREAK

**1:00 pm to 1:30 pm:** Guest Lecture 2 (Petra Kienesberger, Dalhousie University)

**1:30 pm to 2:40 pm:** Session C – Oral Presentations (10 minutes per speaker)

Order of Session C Presentations:

1. Dinushi Kaushalya Gamage, Dalhousie University (Abstract # 4)
2. Jessica O’Flaherty, Mount Saint Vincent University (Abstract # 1)
3. Thilini Kumarasinghe, Dalhousie University (Abstract # 5)
4. Amarasena Sathya, Memorial University (Abstract # 11)
5. Madumani Amararathna, Dalhousie University (Abstract # 2)

*\*12 minutes for questions*

**2:40-2:50 pm** BREAK

**2:50 pm to 4:00 pm:** Session D: Three-Minute Poster Presentations

Order of presentations (Abstract Number): 9, 12, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 37, 38, 39.

**4:00 pm to 5:00 pm:** Keynote Presentation 2 (David Ma, University of Guelph)

**5:00 pm – 5:30 pm:** Awards Ceremony and Closing Remarks

## Awards and Recognition

All attendees will receive a certificate of attendance from the Science Atlantic Nutrition and Foods Division. In addition, the conference closes with an award ceremony to honor excellent and outstanding contributions to the conference and the field. The awards consist of a cash prize and a letter of commendation. Both oral and poster presentations are eligible. Awards recognize science communication and research potential, among other factors noted below:

### 1. General Undergraduate Awards

These awards are presented to undergraduate students who have demonstrated outstanding research and presentation skills. The contribution may be applied or fundamental in nature and must advance science or improve the human condition. The awards consist of a cash prize and a certificate. Both oral

and poster presentations are eligible. Assessed criteria include: Abstract format and content (e.g. statement of problem, objective, and principal findings), presentation (e.g. visual aids, flow, organization), scientific merit (e.g. research design, innovative approach, interpretation of the data), question period, and potential to contribute to research.

1st Place: \$300, 2nd Place: \$200, 3rd Place: \$100

## 2. General Graduate Awards

These awards are presented to graduate students who have demonstrated outstanding research and presentation skills. The contribution may be applied or fundamental in nature and must advance science or improve the human condition. The awards consist of a cash prize and a certificate. Both oral and poster presentations are eligible. Assessed criteria include: Abstract format and content (e.g. statement of problem, objective, and principal findings), presentation (e.g. visual aids, flow, organization), scientific merit (e.g. research design, innovative approach, interpretation of the data), question period, and potential to contribute to research.

1st Place: \$300, 2nd Place: \$200, 3rd Place: \$100

## 3. Science Communication Award

The Science Atlantic Science Communication Award is offered at each of the annual Science Atlantic-sponsored student conferences (e.g. ChemCon, SANFC). This prize is awarded to the student who is best able to communicate a science topic during the conference. The award consists of a cash prize (\$200), a letter of commendation, and an opportunity to work collaboratively with the Atlantic Student Research Journal team to write and publish an article about their research. Assessment criteria include: Abstract format and content (e.g. statement of problem, objective, and principal findings), presentation (e.g. visual aids, flow, organization), scientific merit (e.g. research design, innovative approach, interpretation of the data), question period, and potential to contribute to research.

## 4. French Oral Presentation Award

A French speaking student that has demonstrated outstanding research and presentation skills with receive this award of \$ 200. The contribution may be applied or fundamental and must advance science or improve the human condition. The awards consist of a cash prize and a certificate. Both oral and poster presentations are eligible. Assessed criteria include: Abstract format and content (e.g. statement of problem, objective, and principal findings), presentation (e.g. visual aids, flow, organization), scientific merit (e.g. research design, innovative approach, interpretation of the data), question period, and potential to contribute to research.

## 5. Three Minute Poster Presentations (3MPP) Award

Students will have a maximum of three minutes to present their research. The presentation must engage the audience and use one static PowerPoint slide as a visual aid. The poster presentation should include details of your design, methods, results and where it fits in the existing literature.

3MPP award: 1st Place: \$250, 2nd Place: \$150, 3rd Place: \$100

**Please note:** The SANF Conference Committee determines the judging committee membership. The judging committee has the right to withhold an award in any competition. If there are fewer than three students eligible to compete for this award at any conference, the award may not be disbursed. The decision of the judges is final.

## Future Directions

Looking ahead, the Science Atlantic Nutrition and Foods Division Annual Conference aims to keep evolving to meet the needs of its growing community. Future conferences will focus on new trends, advanced technologies, and global challenges in nutrition and food sciences. For us to keep learning and growing, your feedback is important to us. Within 1-2 weeks, we will email you a confidential, electronic questionnaire, seeking your feedback.

**Please note:** The presentation summaries (or abstracts) are found in a file separate from the program, called 'abstract booklet'. There, you can find presentation authors, supervisors, abstract number, speaker email etc. You can use this information, if you wish to follow-up with student speakers regarding their talk, with questions.

