



LACTÓPOLIS



International Forum on the Future
of Cheese, Dairy Systems
and Food Innovation

CÓRDOBA, SPAIN
13 - 14 NOVEMBER 2026

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME



01. ABOUT THE FORUM

02. PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

03. PROGRAMME · FRIDAY 13th NOVEMBER

04. PROGRAMME · SATURDAY 14th NOVEMBER

An international forum to drive
the future of cheese, dairy,
and food.

 10.00 am - 08.00 pm

 MAIN STAGE
CEFC - CÓRDOBA



2 DAY
PROGRAMME



+30
INTERNATIONAL
SPEAKERS



12
COUNTRIES
REPRESENTED



SCIENCE
BUSINESS
INSTITUTIONS
GASTRONOMY



INNOVATION
SUSTAINABILITY
HEALTH

A WORLD THAT NEEDS TO RENEW THE DIALOGUE

We are living through a pivotal moment for the future of food.

Never before has humanity possessed so much scientific knowledge about food while simultaneously facing so many questions about how to feed a constantly growing population in a healthy, sustainable, and responsible way.

Nutrition, public health, climate change, the sustainability of production systems, animal welfare, the preservation of rural areas, technological innovation, and food security are all part of the same global conversation today.

In this context, dairy products represent far more than just an economic sector.

They constitute an essential source of nutrition for millions of people, sustain rural communities across five continents, preserve unique landscapes and livestock breeds, drive scientific and technological innovation, and form part of the cultural and gastronomic heritage of hundreds of countries.

However, the future of the dairy sector cannot be built solely in laboratories, nor exclusively on farms, in processing plants, or within government agencies.

The future requires dialogue.

It requires spaces where scientific knowledge can meet those responsible for turning it into decisions, investments, public policies, and opportunities for future generations.

Lactópolis was born from this conviction.



WHY WAS LACTÓPOLIS CREATED?

For decades, the dairy sector has demonstrated an extraordinary capacity for innovation.

Science has developed new production technologies, deepened our understanding of the nutritional quality of milk and dairy products, driven advances in genetics, microbiology, sustainability, animal welfare, and food safety, and enabled the sector to address many of the major challenges it faces.

At the same time, thousands of producers, cooperatives, companies, and institutions have helped transform that research into applied innovation.

However, one challenge remains unresolved.

How can we ensure that this knowledge reaches the decision-makers?

How can we facilitate dialogue among researchers, business leaders, dairy farmers, distributors, public authorities, chefs, communicators, and consumers?

How can we build a shared vision regarding the role dairy products will play in the future of nutrition?

Answering these questions is the very reason for Lactópolis's existence.

It represents a new initiative—a further step forward—within the major gathering of experts, stakeholders, and producers (the key players in the value chain across all sectors) that convenes around the International Cheese Festival.



CÓRDOBA: A MEETING POINT FOR KNOWLEDGE

Throughout history, certain cities have distinguished themselves through their ability to bring cultures together, share knowledge, and generate new ways of understanding the world.

Córdoba was one of them.

For centuries, it served as an international hub for thought, coexistence, and the exchange of ideas across diverse cultural traditions.

Today, that spirit of connection inspires a new initiative.

The International Cheese Festival once again transforms Córdoba into a place where knowledge travels, is shared, and looks toward the future.

In this light, Córdoba becomes more than just the host of a festival; it becomes an international arena for dialogue among science, innovation, business, culture, and society.



A UNIQUE GLOBAL ECOSYSTEM

The International Cheese Festival is not conceived as a mere succession of independent activities.

Its value lies in the integration of three complementary dimensions that, together, offer a comprehensive view of the dairy sector's present and future.

WORLD CHEESE AWARDS

It represents excellence.

Over 5,000 cheeses from five continents will be evaluated by around 300 international judges from more than 50 countries.

It is not merely a competition.

It is the world's greatest celebration of the diversity, quality, and cultural richness of cheese.

Each cheese tells a story of terroir, tradition, innovation, and knowledge passed down from generation to generation.



3rd DAIRY AND CHEESE INNOVATION FORUM

It represents knowledge.

It brings together some of the most prestigious international scientists and researchers to present the advancements that will shape the future of the sector.

It is the space where ideas are born—ideas that will transform production, nutrition, sustainability, technology, and applied innovation.

This is where knowledge is generated.



LACTÓPOLIS

It represents leadership and action.

It is the place where that knowledge moves beyond the scientific realm to meet the people who must turn it into decisions.



FRIDAY NOVEMBER 13th

10.00 **WELCOME**

10.15 **1st SESSION**
Cheese and the 21st Century Consumer

11.00 **2nd SESSION**
A global perspective for
understanding the future and mission
of cheese in the new era of dairy.
A world of opportunities.

16.00 **3rd SESSION**
Only people are capable of building
a scenario for humanity. The role of
cheese, international strategies.

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 14th

09.30 **WELCOME**

10.00 **4th SESSION**
Cheese expertise and flavors—from
Córdoba, Andalusia, to the world.

12.00 **5th SESSION**
Working methodologies using cheese
as inspiration.

14.00 **SIGNING OF THE LACTÓPOLIS MANIFEST
CÓRDOBA 2026**

1st SESSION: CHEESE AND THE 21st CENTURY CONSUMER

10.00 WELCOME

Javier Roza

President of INLAC (Interprofessional Dairy Organization)

10.15 KEYNOTE LECTURE

Cheese in a healthy and sustainable diet

Rosaura Leis

President of the Spanish Nutrition Foundation

10.30 PANEL DISCUSSION

From farm to market: How to create value across the cheese supply chain?

MODERATOR - Javier Fontecha

Research Scientist at CIAL-CSIC

Jose Luis Martín Master Cheesemaker

Silvia Pelaez Quesos y Besos Cheese Factory

Alba Montiel Cabra Livestock Farm

Antonio Larrea COVAP Cooperative

Felipe Medina ASEDAS Distribution

10.55 PANEL DISCUSSION CLOSING

D. José Miguel Herrero

Director General for Food at MAPA (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food)

2nd SESSION: A global perspective to understand the future and mission of cheese in the new era of dairy. A world of opportunities.

11.00	INTRODUCTION	Luisa Villegas CEO of the Cheese Institute and Director of the International Cheese Festival
11.05	KEYNOTE LECTURE "European dairy products with designation of origin: future prospects."	Diego Canga Deputy Director-General for Agriculture and Director for Outreach, Research and Geographical Indications at the European Commission
11.30	BUFFALO LIVESTOCK The buffalo, an answer from the Americas to the world: high-value dairy production for the continent's future food supply, moving towards territorial harmony.	Alba Lucía Suarez Secretary General of the American Buffalo Breeders Federation and Executive Director of the Colombian Buffalo Breeders Association
11.45	CAMEL MILK Pending confirmation	Pending confirmation Pending confirmation
12.00	SHEEP MILK A Competitive Advantage for Spain on the Global Stage	Sergio Vargas Blanco Dairy Procurement Manager at Entrepinares Group
12.15	GOAT MILK If we are producing the best goat milk in the world, we need to get organized.	Jorge Puerto CEO of the Collection Center (El Gazul Cheese Factory)
12.30	COOPERATIVE MILK The continuity of livestock production: a global strategic challenge	Emilio de León CEO of Livestock Production at COVAP
12.45	ZEBU MILK Breed variants adapted to different conditions, aiming for special milks for special cheeses—a future of renewed proposals.	Camila Almeida Owner of Hacienda Silvania (Brazil)
13.00	COW MILK From livestock farming to cheesemaking: a new expression of Andean cheese made from Brown Swiss milk produced at an altitude of 3,900 meters.	Joaquin Zerraga Owner of Hacienda Tiracomilla (Peru)
13.15	PANEL DISCUSSION Global dairy production. A universe of opportunities to build intercontinental expertise.	Moderator - Luisa Villegas CEO of the Cheese Institute and Director of the International Cheese Festival
14.00	PANEL DISCUSSION CLOSING	

3rdSESSION: Only people are capable of building a scenario for humanity.

16.00	INTRODUCTION	Georgina Yescas CEO of Lactography and International Missions Coordinator for the Festival
16.10	THE CLOUD Who lives in the cloud? The importance of people and their knowledge in building a viable food future.	Gessica Chies Sales Director INFOR
16.30	INDIA The importance of yak milk in the development of cheeses that stimulate the regional economy in remote communities.	Namrata Founder and Director of Käse Artisan Cheese, Chennai, India
16.50	USA How do you find interesting projects in the cheese world to sell at Whole Foods, and what does this represent for the companies involved?	Cathy Strange Whole Foods Market Ambassador of Food Culture
17.10	COLOMBIA Emotional Traceability: The Origin of Cheese as an Economic Model and Gastronomic Experience for Nourishing Our Authentic Memory.	Yelixa Carrascal Director of Proquexo, Specialist in Cheese Culture and Gastronomic Development
17.30	SWITZERLAND "From territory to value creation: the Swiss model, a benchmark for national coordination"	Nicola Polinelli Director of Swiss Cheese Marketing Iberia
17.50	MEXICO From Spanish production to the Mexican market: how to design successful cheese marketing projects for the international market.	Natalia Zamora Comercialization Project Manager & Business Developer Comercial Hispania
18.10	CANADA - CANARY ISLANDS Creating global cheese projects through trust	Nick Tsioros CEO of Olimpic Cheese Toronto Rafael Domínguez CEO of Chacón e Hijos
18.30	ALGERIA Traditional Algerian cheeses: a little-known heritage in the heart of the Mediterranean.	Laeticia Sellah Producer and international expert. Award for best cheese production in Algeria, 2024.
18.50	UNITED KINGDOM How to Make Spanish Artisan Cheese a Success in New Markets: Our Experience and Insights	Monika Linton Co-founder of Brindisa and Brindisa Kitchens and Director of Food, Creative & Innovation 2024
19.10	PANEL DISCUSSION	Moderator - Georgina Yescas CEO of Lactography and International Missions Coordinator for the Festival
19.40	PANEL DISCUSSION CLOSING	

4th: KNOWLEDGE & FLAVOURS OF CHEESE FROM CORDOBA – ANDALUSIA, TO THE WORLD

09.30 WELCOME

Manuel Hidalgo Prieto

Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Córdoba

Manuel Rich Ruiz

Vice-Rectorate for Health, Culture and Well-being at the University of Córdoba.

Cristina del Toro Navero

Director. General Direction for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of the Regional Government of Andalusia.

Antonio Oropesa de Cáceres

President of the Royal Sevillian Academy of Veterinary Sciences

10.00 KEYNOTE LECTURE

Ancient Rome and the history of cheese: from Roman cheesemaking tradition to contemporary gastronomic culture.

Almudena Villegas

Historian from the University of Córdoba

10.45 PANEL DISCUSSION

Cheese as cultural, gastronomic, and economic heritage: challenges and opportunities for the conservation of native breeds and sustainable rural development.

MODERATOR - Antonio Oropesa de Cáceres

President of the Royal Sevillian Academy of Veterinary Sciences.

Leonor Algarra

Deputy Director General for Livestock Production Inputs at the Directorate General for Agricultural Production and Markets (MAPA)

Manuel Luque

Managing Director of RFEAGAS

Almudena Villegas

Historian from the University of Córdoba

Roberto Gallego

Executive Secretary of AGRAMA

Manuela Hernandez

General Director of CICAP Technology Centre

11.45 PANEL DISCUSSION CLOSING



UNIVERSIDAD
DE
CÓRDOBA



FACULTAD DE
VETERINARIA
UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA



Aula de la Veterinaria y la Agroalimentación



SESIÓN 5: WORKING METHODOLOGIES USING CHEESE AS INSPIRATION

12.30 **RIO GRANDE DO SUL PRESENTATION**

Romano Escapin

General Director of the Secretariat of State for Rural Development of Brazil

12.45 **INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION**

Yasna Molina

Owner of the Finca Villaseca Agrotourism Project in Chile

13.00 **TRAINING, RESEARCH AND
TRANSPARENCY**

The commitment of the Government of Andalusia, through IFAPA,
to the dairy sector since 1988.

Angel Luís López

Specialist Technician at the Andalusian Institute for Agricultural Research and Training (IFAPA)

13.15 **NEW WAYS OF COLLABORATING**

Pending Confirmation

13.30 **END OF THE SESSION**

14.00
**READING AND SIGNING OF THE
LACTÓPOLIS — CÓRDOBA 2026
MANIFESTO**