



2026 AAFCO Annual Meeting

Graduate Student Poster Presentation Contest

Call for Abstracts

The Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) is excited to announce the first annual graduate student poster session and contest in conjunction with the [2026 Annual Meeting](#) in San Diego, California, from August 26-28.

We invite submissions from graduate students that focus on **research in animal food, animal nutrition, and/or animal food safety**. Submissions should clearly demonstrate relevance to one or more of these areas.

Eligibility

- Current graduate students and former graduate students who have graduated within the last 6 months may submit abstracts, poster PDFs, and essays for consideration.
- Only graduate students who conducted or were directly involved in conducting the research may submit.
- Work presented at other conferences will be considered so long as the work has not been published in conference proceedings or accepted for publication in a journal.
- Only one abstract may be submitted per student. The student listed in the abstract system as the presenting author is eligible for consideration for monetary support and the stipend.
- Students may not co-submit abstracts.
- If accepted, presenting authors must be present at the 2026 AAFCO Annual Meeting to present their poster.
- If the presenting author of a selected abstract has not registered for the meeting by **August 1, 2026**, the poster may no longer be presented, and the student will no longer be eligible for any monetary support or stipend.
 - Authors of selected abstracts who fail to attend the meeting to present their poster will no longer be eligible for any monetary support or stipend and may be ineligible to present at future AAFCO meetings.



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Submission Guidelines

- Completed submissions must be received via the [abstract portal](#) before 5:00pm Central Time on Friday, May 29, 2026, to be considered. The submission portal will close at this time, and no extensions will be given.
 - When you submit your abstract, you will be given a tracking number and password. Make a note of these; they will allow you to revise your submitted abstract at any time until the deadline.
- Completed submissions must include the abstract, poster PDF, and short essay response. The PDF and essay must be uploaded as documents in the abstract system.
- The presenting author of the abstract is responsible for its content and the quality of the preparation.
- The body of the abstract is limited to 2,800 total keystrokes, including spaces. These limitations will help to ensure that the title, authors, affiliations, and abstract fit on a single page in the conference proceedings.
- Poster presentations should be based on original completed research not previously reported in a research publication. Sound experimental design and interpretation are essential. All data must be in metric units.
- Abstracts may not contain pictures or graphs. Tables are allowed and are included in the total keystroke count.
 - **If your abstract includes a table:** The electronic submission form allows submission of 1 table per abstract (optional), and the content of the table will count towards the 2,800-character limit. The printed abstract width allows for 70 keystrokes per line, including spaces. Tables should be a maximum of 10 columns and 15 rows; keep this in mind when you are formatting tables. Tables that are too wide cannot be formatted properly.
- The objective(s) of the research must be clearly and concisely stated.
- Pertinent materials and methods should be included to define the research project.
- Information in the abstract should only include details to aid in the interpretation or understanding of the results.
- Conclusions should be supported by the results and be clearly stated.
- Posters including proprietary information must be able to disclose sufficient information so that the information can be used by nutritionists or animal health professionals.
 - For example, posters comparing feeding trial A vs. feeding trial B will



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not be accepted unless the feeding trials are specified and defined.

- A short essay (2-page max) submission is required, responding to the following prompt: ***explain how your research is applicable to regulatory authorities (FDA or State), or to the animal food industry, and how it could be used to protect animal or human health or improve the lives of animals.***
- **An abstract is unacceptable if it:**
 - contains grammatical errors or meaningless statements such as “The results will be presented,” or both;
 - presents data without appropriate statistical analyses or measurements of data variability;
 - includes no data or statements relating to the objectives;
 - does not use the metric system;
 - contains typing errors;
 - fails to comply with submission requirements; or
 - presents opinion or speculation with no demonstrated use in a teaching or extension experience.
- The quality of an abstract for presentation is a direct reflection of the reputation of the author(s). If you need clarification of, or additional information on, abstract quality or submission, please contact us at aafco@assochq.org.

Selection

- Submissions will be evaluated by a panel of judges from AAFCO leadership and Kansas State-Olathe faculty prior to abstract acceptance and notification.
- Submissions and presentations will be scored on:
 - Relevance to the AAFCO professional audience
 - Research methods
 - Poster content quality
 - Presenter quality
 - Poster design
 - Poster clarity
 - Research novelty
 - Abstract quality
- Only the top 10 submissions directly and primarily related to animal food, animal nutrition, and/or animal food safety will be selected.
- Submissions must include:



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- Actionable information to regulators or the animal food industry
- Product names or adequate descriptive information, where applicable
- The panel reserves the right to reject any submission for any reason.
- Applicants are expected to be notified of a decision on their submission through the abstract system on or before Friday, June 26th, 2026. An email invitation to present will follow.

Presentation

- Posters must be hung on the indicated board no later than 8:30am Pacific Time on Wednesday, August 26.
- Students will be required to be at their posters during the morning coffee break (as indicated in the program) to present their work to attendees.
- Posters must be removed after 1:00pm Pacific Time on Thursday, August 27.
- AAFCO is not responsible for the printing, hanging, and removal of any posters. AAFCO is not responsible for the posters at any point during the conference.
- Only accepted posters selected by the review committee can be displayed and presented at the 2026 annual meeting.
- The size of the poster boards will be sent with the invitation to present. Push pins will be provided.

Recognition

- Accepted abstracts will be published in the meeting program, and poster PDFs will be published on the AAFCO website.
- The presenting authors of the top 10 selected submissions will be provided travel assistance (up to \$1000.00, reimbursable after the meeting) to attend and present their posters at the annual meeting.
- The presenting authors of the top three submissions (as determined by the initial judges' scores of the submitted abstract, poster, and essay) will further receive a scholarship award and plaque.
 - In addition to presenting their poster, the presenting authors of the top three submissions will be given 10 minutes to present their work to attendees during a 30-minute oral session at AAFCO's Annual Meeting on Wednesday, August 26 (each presenter will have 10 minutes). Stipends for the oral presentation will be distributed as follows:



First Place - \$1,000 stipend and up to \$1,000 in reimbursable travel support

Second Place - \$750 stipend and up to \$1,000 in reimbursable travel support

Third Place - \$500 stipend and up to \$1,000 in reimbursable travel support