CONNECTING MILITARY AND BUSINESS

# Agriculture, Food & Beverage Quarterly Industry Forum

By: Trent Ensley, Rick Gilmore

Industry focus: Agriculture, Food & Beverage

Date: October 29th, 2026

# Agenda

- **Welcome & Overview**
- Highlights of procurement opportunities
- Business Spotlight: ENESO4FOOD, Jim White, President
- Government Presentation: North Carolina Department of Agriculture, Sara Lilley, Marketing Specialist III & Flavors of Carolina Event Coordinator
- Question & Answers
- Closing & Next Steps

# Disclaimer

The opinions expressed by participants in this meeting do not necessarily represent the official views or positions of the NC Military Business Center, the North Carolina Community College System, or the State of North Carolina. This meeting and its contents are provided for informational purposes only and do not constitute legal advice. The NC Military Business Center, the North Carolina Community College System, and the State of North Carolina assume no responsibility for any actions taken based on the information provided during this meeting.

# Who We are

The NCMBC is a statewide business development and technology transition entity of the State of North Carolina, embedded in the state's community colleges and headquartered at Fayetteville Technical Community College. It is the only statewide, military-focused economic development organization in the U.S. and the only North Carolina entity solely dedicated to growing the defense economy through existing industry.

# How NCMBC Can Help

- One-on-one business counseling
- Opportunity sourcing and daily email notifications
- Proposal development and solicitation interpretation
- Pre-award capture assistance and teaming support
- Federal agency market intelligence and acquisition forecasts
- Training events, webinars, and contracting workshops



# Mission, Goals, and outcomes

**Mission**: To leverage military and federal business opportunities to expand the economy, grow jobs and improve quality of life

**Goals and Operations**:

1. Increase federal revenues for businesses
2. Support technology transition to federal agencies
3. Support integration of military into workforce
4. Support defense-related business recruitment

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# Opportunity 1:USAREUR-AF Prototype Robotics-as-a-Service Autonomous Kitchen Systems for Forward-Deployed Feeding Operations

**Department of the Army**

- *USAREUR-AF Prototype Robotics-as-a-Service Autonomous Kitchen Systems for Forward-Deployed Feeding Operations*
- *Location: US Army Europe - Africa*
- *Contract Type: Other Transaction Authority*
- *The government seeks to prototype, test, and validate a turnkey RaaS subscription model that provides both a fixed-site indoor autonomous kitchen and a mobile, containerized autonomous kitchen.*
- *This prototype will assess the feasibility of using automated systems to provide continuous, self-service meal access in both garrison and expeditionary settings.*
- *Response Due: 28 Oct @ 5:00 PM EDT*
- *GoColosseum Marketplace Challenge* https://gocolosseum.org

**NCMBC Guidance:**

- Please read the entire challenge, including all attachments, documents, scoring rubric, Q&A, etc. and ensure completion of all required representations and submissions.
- This OTA is not under the Federal Acquisition Regulation.
- Explore opportunities through various consortia

# Opportunity 2: Fort Bragg, NC FFS

**Installation Management Command (IMCOM)**

- *Sources Sought #:  W5168W27RA021*
- *Location: Fort Bragg, NC*
- *Contract Type: NA – No contract will be awarded from this notice*
- *Set-Aside: NA for this Sources Sought Notice*
- *NAICS: 722310 Food Service Contractors PSC: M1FD - OPERATION OF DINING FACILITIES*
- *Response Due: Nov 4, 12:01 PM CST*
- *Sam.gov link*
- *https://sam.gov/workspace/contract/opp/df6acff83f954411826054fb286c3dbe/view*

**NCMBC Guidance:**

- Purpose of RFI is to explore industry capabilities and refine the acquisition strategy regarding food service operations at Fort Bragg, NC.
- Work requires support to installation food service requirements across designated dining facilities. Specific operational categories include: Full Food Service (FFS); Dining Facility Attendant (DFA) Services; Cook Support Services and Remote Site & TDY Feeding Requirements.
- Government will evaluate: Vendor Pool Capabilities; Industry capacity to comply with physical access control, background checks; Industry feedback on transition lead times, potential risk factors, and contract structure; and Market availability of qualified Small Businesses, 8(a), SDVOSBs, WOSBs, and HUBZone firms.
- Deployable / TDY Workforce Readiness (USASOC Operations) Experience your company has deploying qualified cook support personnel on TDY assignments to support government-led tactical or remote site feeding operations: Ensure deployable personnel maintain 100% continuous compliance with heightened security, medical, certification, and specific training standards.

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# Knowing Where Our Food Comes From: Safety, Security, and Transparency

A usable record of where food came from and where each lot went

2011 FSMA law • 2022 Food Traceability Rule




**Jim White**

Co-Founder & President, ENSESO4Food
Apex, NC

**For the people who grow, move, prepare and serve our food**

TRAKKEY

# Food traceability as a national security resource

THE FOUNDATION

## A law creates a common record

FSMA 204 requires covered businesses to record key events for listed foods, whether produced domestically or imported.

**Be ready by July 20, 2028: FDA may begin enforcement then.**

THE OPPORTUNITY

## See exposure across the supply chain

Record source Traceability lot Codes (TLC) and share them across the supply chain to the point where consumers buy or eat the food.

**Identify affected suppliers and locations. Support response and supply continuity.**

**Near-real-time visibility requires digital capture, data sharing and authorized access.**

TRAKKEY

# From source to U.S. tables

## Illustrative shrimp journey: look past processing to the original source







| HARVEST | TRANSFORM | PACK | SHIP | RECEIVE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **CHINA** | **VIETNAM** | **VIETNAM** | **VIETNAM TO U.S.** | **SCHOOL / DFAC** |
| Farm lot CN-101 | CN-101 becomes VN-220 | Output: VN-220 | Ships lot VN-220 | Distributor delivers lot |

**Link processing lot VN-220 back to source lot CN-101.**

TRAKKEY

# Military food operations share the same need



**Commissaries**



**PX food outlets**



**DFACs**



**Mini marts**



**Hospital cafeterias**

## Lot records can support food surveillance and continuity of service

Opportunity: link an illness, inspection or threat signal to supplier, lot and location

TRAKKEY

# FSMA 204: which foods are covered?

- FDA FOOD TRACEABILITY LIST
- Examples of foods on the list
- Leafy greens, herbs, sprouts, tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers and melons
- Fresh-cut fruits and vegetables; tropical tree fruits

**MORE FOODS ON THE LIST**

**Fresh and frozen sea food and shellfish***
**Shell eggs and nut butters**
**Certain soft and semi-soft cheeses**
**Ready-to-eat deli salads**

## Be ready by July 20, 2028: FDA begins enforcement

**Buyer requirements can apply sooner and reach beyond the FDA list.**

Source: FDA Food Traceability List | fda.gov/food/food-safety-modernization-act-fsma/food-traceability-list

# CTEs and KDEs: the events and the data

**CRITICAL TRACKING EVENT (CTE)**

## A key step in the food's journey

Harvest, cool, initial pack, first land-based receiving, ship, receive or transform.

**KEY DATA ELEMENT (KDE)**

## The information recorded at that step

Examples: lot code, product, quantity, date and location. Required details vary by event.

# The FDA has defined a simple and elegant model for tracking food through the supply chain.

# TRAKKEY - Work people already do




**Choose the activity**

Harvest, pack, receive, transform or ship

**Scan or enter lot details**

Link inputs to outputs.
Keep labels with the food.

**Find the record when needed**

**Farm or fishery / Processor / Distributor / Store or kitchen**

TRAKKEY

# Cyclospora: a current lesson in traceability

**20,996**

**confirmed U.S.-acquired cases in the 2026 Cyclospora season**

49 states plus D.C. reported cases.
Another 13,002 confirmed cases need review to determine where they were acquired.

## Where did the food go?

**If this lot reached your kitchen, could you find every delivery and every location still holding it?**

### A traceability question

Search the lot. Follow its shipments.
Use the records to support a targeted hold and confirm each receiving site responds.

CDC, Oct. 23: Season total includes multiple clusters and cases beyond the lettuce outbreak.

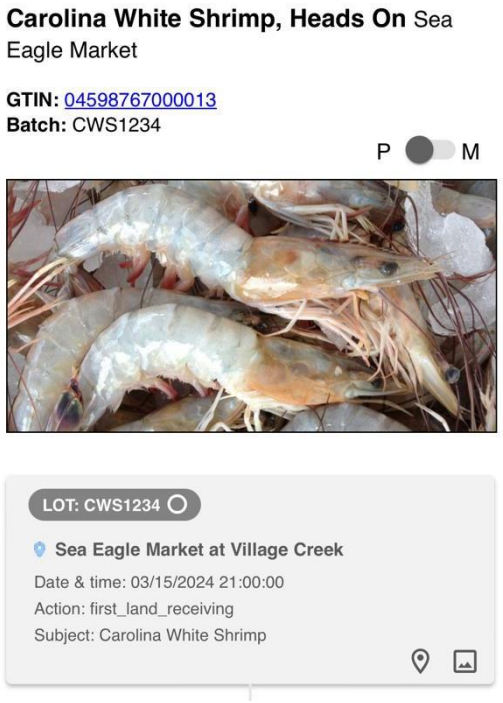
TRAKKEY

# Schools and installations: a shared opportunity

## USDA DoD Fresh connects DLA procurement to school produce

Schools can use USDA Foods entitlement dollars for fresh produce, including available local items.

**TRAKKEY can connect lot records with selected origin information for buyers and the people they serve.**




TRAKKEY origin view

## Proposed pilot

One supplier, one food, one receiving site.
Practice a recall and measure record completeness and time to identify affected deliveries.

Jim White jwhite@ENSESO4Food.com +1 919-348-6639

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# NC Department of Agriculture
# Flavors of Carolina

Sara Lilley

Event Planner / Marketing Specialist III

North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services

# N.C. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES

## Marketing

Commissioner



# Sara Lilley
# Event Planner
# Marketing Specialist III

In February 2025, Sara Lilley joined the NCDA&CS Domestic Market team as a Marketing Specialist III, Event Planner. Her work includes NCDA&CS events, such as **Flavors of Carolina**, Got to Be NC Festival, NC Mountain State Fair, and the NC State Fair. As staff liaison to the NC Specialty Foods Association, Sara also directly works with the NCSFA Board and promote Association Members.










# #1 Industry in N.C.

Agriculture and Agribusiness, including Food, Fiber and Forestry
Account for one-sixth of the State's Income and Employees.

$111.1 Billion Industry,
Nearly 16% of N.C.'s $716 Billion Gross State Product
777,616 Jobs, 16% of N.C.'s Workforce

Data prepared by Mike Walden, Reynolds Distinguished Professor and Extension Economist, NC State's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

# Marketing Division

## AGRIBUSINESS

https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/marketing/agribusiness

## AGRITOURISM

https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/marketing/agritourism

## AQUACULTURE

https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/marketing/aquaculture

## DOMESTIC/RETAIL

https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/marketing/domestic-marketing

## FARMERS MARKETS & AGRICULTURAL CENTERS

https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/marketing/farmers-markets-agricultural-centers

## GRADING SERVICES

https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/marketing/marketing-grading-services

## HORTICULTURE

https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/marketing/horticulture

## INTERNATIONAL

https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/marketing/international

## LIVESTOCK

https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/marketing/livestock

## MARKET NEWS

https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/marketing/market-news

## SEAFOOD

https://www.ncagr.gov/divisions/marketing/seafood




The North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) works to support our state's diverse economy within the agriculture, food, fiber and forestry sectors through services, regulation, legislation, research and market development.

"Got to Be NC" is the official statewide marketing brand and membership program for these key industry sectors, concentrating on our states food and fiber sectors.

It is our mission to provide services that promote and improve agriculture, agribusiness and forests; protect consumers and businesses; and conserve farmland and natural resources for the prosperity of all North Carolinians.

# FLAVORS of Carolina



## WEDNESDAY • FEBRUARY 10, 2027
## 11:00 AM TO 7:00 PM

***North Carolina's Premier Food & Beverage Showcase***

Where the state's best farms, waters, and kitchens connect with top buyers, distributors, and industry leaders.

**REGISTER FOR SHOW FLOOR ACCESS BY JANUARY 31, 2027**

*You must be in the food industry to be eligible for show floor access.*

HOSTED BY THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & CONSUMER SERVICES

GROWN. RAISED. CAUGHT. MADE.

AGRICULTURE got to be NC

# February 10, 2026




## Greensboro Coliseum Complex

# FLAVORS of Carolina












## Featuring North Carolina Products

# CONTACT INFORMATION


## Sara Lilley

Event Planner / Marketing Specialist III

North Carolina Department of
Agriculture & Consumer Services

2 W. Edenton Street, Raleigh, NC 27699

Office - (919) 707-3137

Email – Sara.Lilley@ncagr.gov




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# Questions:

Use the Q&A function or
raise your hand to ask questions

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# Upcoming Forums and Other Events

- Jan 2027 - Quarterly Agriculture, Food and Beverage Industry Forum
- Southeast Region Federal Construction, Infrastructure and Environmental Summit (April 20-22, 2027 Wilmington)
- Federal and Defense Textile and Tactical Equipment Summit (May 25-26, Hickory, NC)
- North Carolina Technology & Innovation Summit (August 11-12, Fayetteville, NC)
- Medical, Biomedical & Biodefense: Support to the Warfighter Symposium (September 22-23, Chapel Hill, NC)

**Visit NCMBC.US for more information**

**Stay connected via LinkedIn and the NCMBC Newsletter**

# Contact the NC Military Business Center



**Trent Ensley**
Trent@ncmbc.us
910-729-2375



**Rick Gilmore**
Gilmorer@ncmbc.us
336-860-8705

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