



Workshop Agenda

From Field to Suite: Building Local Supply Chains for Hospitality

Date: September 3, 2025

Location: GSU Armstrong Campus, Savannah, Georgia

Hosted by: Georgia Center of Innovation in partnership with Savannah Harbor Innovation Partnership (SHIP)

8:30 A.M. – 9 A.M. | Check-in and Networking

Join us for coffee, light refreshments, and networking with peers before the event begins.

9 A.M. – 9:10 A.M. | Welcome and Opening Remarks

Brief welcome from the Georgia Center of Innovation and SHIP and overview of today's workshop. Sessions will focus on building sustainable local food supply chains for hospitality venues, sharing actionable tools for procurement, marketing, and logistics, and fostering new partnerships through meaningful networking.

9:10 A.M. – 10 A.M. | Why Local Matters: Economic Impact and Guest Experience

Explore how local sourcing drives economic growth, strengthens brand authenticity, supports sustainability, and creates meaningful guest experiences that differentiate hospitality businesses.

Speaker:

Sarah Anne Rhodes – Regional Tourism Marketing Manager, Explore Georgia, Georgia Department of Economic Development

10 A.M. – 11 A.M. | Marketing Local: Turning Ingredients into Stories

Learn how to communicate the value of local ingredients through storytelling, menus, websites, and in-room materials.

Speakers:

Sarah Cook, Director of Business Development, Georgia Department of Agriculture – Georgia Grown
Caitlyn Anderson, Business Development and Marketing – Georgia Grown Distribution Center

11 A.M. – 12 P.M. | Getting it There: Distribution and Supply Chain Realities

Gain insight into the logistics of getting local products from farms to hospitality venues.

Speaker:

Dan Remar – Assistant Professor, Hospitality and Food Industry Management Program, University of Georgia

12 P.M. – 1 P.M. | Lunch

1 P.M. – 2 P.M. | Case Studies in Action: Georgia Success Stories

Explore real-world examples of how local businesses have successfully built supply chains connecting farms to hospitality.

Panelists:

Laura Solomon – Owner, Tybee Oyster Company

Chef Opie Crooks and Chef/Partner Brandon Carter – Common Thread

Cedric Berry – Third Generation Farmer/Owner, Berry Family Farms

2 P.M. – 2:30 P.M. | Facilitated Networking and Closing Session

Closing remarks, next-step resources, and opportunity to connect with new contacts and collaborators.

Reception to follow hosted by Common Thread

Please note this agenda is subject to change as details are finalized.