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# How to Help Shoppers Plan Their Next Meal

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By: Rick Stein, Vice President, Fresh Foods, Food Marketing Institute

Fifty three percent of dinners are now planned within an hour of eating. Moreover, consumers say they lack the time to plan and the skills to cook ([The Hartman Group](http://www.hartman-group.com/acumenPdfs/meal-erosion-2016-05-05.pdf))



[utm\\_content=stephen@moreginger.com&utm\\_keyword=DEayEPGSJy6ojMpR2iyE&utm\\_source=tailoredmail&utm\\_term=meal+erosion&utm\\_campaign=%5bfirstname%5d%3a%C2](#)  
With trends like these, it is no wonder that “fresh prepared” is one of the fastest evolving and sales driving areas of food retailing. In fact, our [2015 Food Retail Industry Speaks](http://www.fmi.org/research-resources/the-food-industry-speaks-2015) research suggests that fresh prepared food revenue is outpacing total sales in retail. That’s why we’re creating a wide array of opportunities at [FMI Connect](http://www.fmiconnect.net/) for you to learn how to help your shoppers plan their next meal.

The most assured way of fueling and maintaining sales growth is through thoughtful strategic planning. When it comes to the new horizon of fresh prepared trends, this changing environment is filled with uncharted challenges. With this in mind, we'll be releasing important FMI research during FMI Connect that can help you build your fresh prepared roadmap including the *2016 Power of Produce, Top Trends in Fresh* by IRI. Dive even deeper into fresh foods research in the session [Prepared Foods Innovation... Relevant Trends for Every Segment](http://fmi16.mapyourshow.com/7_0/sessions/session-details.cfm?ScheduleID=19) ([http://fmi16.mapyourshow.com/7\\_0/sessions/session-details.cfm?ScheduleID=19](http://fmi16.mapyourshow.com/7_0/sessions/session-details.cfm?ScheduleID=19)) with [DataSentials](http://new.datassential.com/) (<http://new.datassential.com/>) and [Nielsen-Perishables Group](http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/solutions/capabilities/fresh-foods.html) (<http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/solutions/capabilities/fresh-foods.html>) as talk about research on prepared foods innovation. I also invite you to join me at the [Fresh Zone](http://www.fmiconnect.net/2016/experience-innovation/expo/zones) (<http://www.fmiconnect.net/2016/experience-innovation/expo/zones>) where this research and more will be showcased and discussions on relevant topics right on the show floor throughout FMI Connect

In addition to tracking this rapidly evolving landscape closely, FMI has been analyzing the strengths of successful fresh prepared retail operations, and the weaknesses of those who are falling behind. These observations have led to a first-of-its kind thought-leadership event called [Supermarket Chefs](http://www.fmiconnect.net/2016/experience-innovation/supermarket-chefs) (<http://www.fmiconnect.net/2016/experience-innovation/supermarket-chefs>). This two-day educational program within FMI Connect is tailored to leaders of fresh prepared departments. Specifically, it is designed to help attendees bridge the divide between the culinary arts and business brass tacks needed to turn your fresh prepared department into a consistent profit generator. In short:

- Culinary professionals will learn how to better manage people, sales, profit and ensure food safety; and,
- Sales executives will learn how to navigate flavor and menu trends and recognize and enhance rising talent within the supermarket culinary space.

This event is ideal for supermarket chefs at the corporate and/or store levels, culinary professionals operating in grocerant environments, directors/vice presidents/senior vice presidents of deli and fresh prepared food departments, as well as senior marketing professionals. Here's a list of some of the companies who have already signed up for the program:

- Ahold USA
- Albertsons Companies
- Brookshires Grocery Company
- Dorothy Lane Market
- Dot Foods, Inc.
- Giant Eagle, Inc.
- H-E-B
- Hy-Vee Inc.
- Inserra Supermarkets
- Lunds and Byerlys
- Macy's
- Meijer
- Publix Super Markets, Inc.
- Rana Meal Solutions
- Rich Products
- Sam's Club
- Target Corporation
- The Butter Churn
- The Farmery



- Time Inc. Food Studios
- Urban Market
- Wakefern Food Corporation

Seating is limited for this intensely valuable two-day program. So participants must register for this event separately from [FMI Connect](http://www.fmiconnect.net/) (<http://www.fmiconnect.net/>). But registration is free. If your banner doesn't normally send fresh prepared or culinary team members to FMI Connect, this event would be an excellent reason to do so. Visit [www.fmiconnect.net/SupermarketChefs](http://www.fmiconnect.net/SupermarketChefs) (<http://www.fmiconnect.net/SupermarketChefs>) for the full program and more details and if you have questions about the event, please contact [Stephen@moreginger.com](mailto:Stephen@moreginger.com) (<mailto:Stephen@moreginger.com>).

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