

2026 Pet Session

Education & EPPS Programs

ECRM's educational sessions provide EPPS attendees with the opportunity to learn from thought leaders and category experts on a variety of topics aimed at their professional development. These sessions include presentations, moderated panel discussions, special events, workshops, and roundtable discussions focused on category insights and trends, as well as hands-on workshops to help buyers and sellers enhance the effectiveness of their meetings during an EPPS.

Tuesday, May 5, 2026

Store Tours

160 minutes

Tuesday, May 5th | 2:00 PM - 4:40 PM

Join us to tour local Chicago stores during your trip out to the session! Explore how the pet category is merchandised during this self-guided experience, with transportation provided to the following stores:

- Petco
- Pet Paradise Supermarket
- Pet Supplies Plus Des Plaines

Pet Market Outlook 2026: Opportunities in a Challenging Environment

60 minutes

Tuesday, May 5th | 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM



The pet market has been experiencing challenging times lately, but there are still opportunities in the pet food/treats and non-food pet supplies sectors. Drawing on proprietary Packaged Facts survey data, this presentation will examine the market from the pet owners' perspective, looking at shifts in pet ownership and purchase motivators, including value positioning and health and wellness. Other highlights will include omnimarket strategies and retail channel shifts.

Shannon Landry is the Research Director for Packaged Facts Pet, a leading authority on the U.S. pet industry and a division of the Freedonia Group. She has been researching the pet market for nearly two decades, covering a range of topics including pet food and treats, non-food supplies, veterinary services, and non-medical services, with a focus on the U.S. market. Key areas of research include sales and new product trends, consumer purchase patterns, and pet owner sentiments and influences. Landry is a regular presenter at pet industry conferences and is a regular contributor to Pet Food Processing and PETS International journals.

Shannon Landry, Research Director
Packaged Facts Pet

Supplier Spotlight

60 minutes

During the entire week, we'll feature Supplier Spotlights, a showcase where participating suppliers can spotlight one standout product (shelf-stable products or packaging only) for buyers to check out and vote on their favorites. It's free to participate for suppliers, and a great way to spark conversations and get your brand noticed right from day one. Buyers, be sure to stop by to check out and vote on the featured products throughout the reception!

Wednesday, May 6, 2026

Walmart Meet & Greet - Suppliers Only

30 minutes

Wednesday, May 6th | 7:30 AM - 8:00 AM

Grab a coffee and meet Walmart's merchant team. This is an informal opportunity to say hello and introduce yourself.