What Does Your Annual Meeting Registration Fee Cover?

The most common feedback APS receives from the annual meeting follow-up survey pertains to the cost of registering for the meeting and what the registration fee covers. To help create more transparency, we put together this article to highlight the costs that your registration fee covers for the Plant Health annual meeting.

Many of the things your registration fee pays for are tangible. The foods and beverages offered during the meeting and at various networking events are some of these items. For example, at next year’s meeting in Denver, 1 gallon of coffee will cost $147 (inclusive of taxes and service fees), which translates to $7.35 per 8 ounce cup! A buffet lunch will cost $75 per person (inclusive). Water cooler rental for an entire meeting can cost greater than $1,000. Food and beverage costs are on the rise nationwide, and most venues have a minimum dollar figure that we must spend to avoid additional fees.

The essential tools you use for navigating the meeting are also covered by your registration fee. The program book costs $6 per attendee and the mobile app costs $4 per attendee, prior to adding costs for development and staff time.

Other Indispensable Items Your Registration Fee Pays For:

- Keynote and Plenary Speaker Fees and Travel
- Audiovisual Equipment in Session Rooms
- Name Badges and Lanyards
- Room Set-Up, Including Chairs, Tables, Stages and Podiums
- Registration Desk and Check-in Stations
- Wi-Fi Access
- Poster Boards
- Onsite Team: Audiovisual, Convention Services, Staff, Security Guards, Medical Personnel
- Welcome Reception and Closing Party
- Marketing and Promotion for the Meeting
- Signage
Registration fees also help pay for things you can’t necessarily see but are essential to the success of the conference:

- APS Staff Time - Before, During, and After the Meeting
- Shipping Materials to the Meeting
- Rental of Convention Center and Hotel Space
- Software Systems for Registration and Abstracts

Staying at the contracted APS meeting hotel(s) also helps to keep down costs! Our contracts with the hotels ensure we receive discounts on conference room rental and usage costs, while providing attendees with a discounted room rate. APS is required to hold a certain number of these discounted hotel rooms, and if the rooms are not filled, APS is in attrition and has to pay the hotel a fee for each unused room. An attrition situation greatly impedes the society’s ability to secure competitive hotel and meeting space for future meetings.

Annual meeting expenses are mostly paid for by registration fees and sponsorship income. Be assured that the money you pay to register goes toward your meeting experience as a whole (before, during, and after the conference concludes), and without your continued support, the meeting would not be as successful. The financial success of the meeting also directly relates to the APS operating budget for the following year—giving the association more opportunities to give back to its membership through grants, scholarships, educational opportunities, and so on.

APS staff, APS Council, and the Annual Meeting Board are continually looking for ways to reduce costs and enhance the attendee experience without making large increases to your registration fee.