



## **Mushroom Council FY 2026 Program Plan**

### **Overview**

The 2026 Mushroom Council program marks a pivotal moment of enhanced investment and sharpened direction for the industry. Following a year of heightened industry involvement, including a robust Marketing Taskforce, the Council has refined its strategic framework to focus specifically on the “Emerging Consumer” for the next five years. This audience is made up of light and medium mushroom consumers, largely Millennials and Gen Z, who represent the future of fresh mushroom demand. The 2026 integrated program includes investments in Data & Insights, Consumer Marketing, Nutrition Outreach, Trade Marketing and Industry Communications. All planned activities are aligned with the revised strategic framework.

### **Strategic Framework**

#### **Objective**

- Increase fresh mushroom sales by getting Emerging Consumers to place a higher value on mushrooms in their cooking and dining.

#### **Strategies**

- Deliver a compelling, breakthrough message about mushroom benefits.
- Make mushrooms a relevant and everyday essential food for Emerging Consumers.
- Improve consumer experience/quality at shelf and visual appeal.

#### **Measured by**

- Annual lbs shipped
- Household penetration
- Emerging Consumer perception
- Emerging Consumer behavioral change

### **Data & Insights**

The Council’s Data & Insights investments remain foundational, providing research and analysis to guide consumer marketing strategy and equip industry members with timely market intelligence. In 2026, the program will continue quad-week retail reports, as well as special reports and member support as needed. We will add back several reports that rotate every 2-3 years: Co- and cross-purchase data, consumer segmentation data, and foodservice opportunity analysis.

### Data & Insights Budget

Circana data	\$84,000
Quad-week reports/quarterly reports	\$65,000
Member support/white papers/market intel	\$18,000
Co- and cross-purchase research	\$30,000
Consumer segmentation (HML and lost/gained buyer analysis)	\$30,000
Foodservice opportunity analysis	\$40,000
Emerging consumer research	\$20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$287,000</b>

### Consumer Marketing

In 2026, the Council will launch its boldest consumer marketing effort to date. Guided by the new tagline, “It’s Not Magic. It’s Mushrooms.,” the program will showcase mushrooms as an everyday essential for meals that deliver flavor, convenience and wellness. This fully integrated campaign will reach Emerging Consumers through streaming video, podcast advertising, TikTok, Instagram, YouTube, and Instacart. Ambassador partnerships, including celebrity chef Matty Matheson, will bring humor, authenticity, and cultural relevance to mushrooms.

### Consumer Budget

Public relations (earned media outreach, tracking and measurement)	\$275,000
Advertising (content development, media planning and buying, paid media)	\$3,075,000
Owned digital (social, website, blog, e-newsletter)	\$280,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,630,000</b>

### Nutrition Outreach

Following an audit of the Council’s decades of nutrition research, we will continue to pause new research investments and focus on refining existing messages and assets for better impact. We will prioritize mushrooms’ cognitive health benefits, given growing consumer curiosity in the MIND diet, functional foods, and mushrooms’ unique nutrition attributes such as ergothioneine and selenium. The Council will engage dietitians, health influencers, and media outlets with new resources and communications toolkits.

### Nutrition Budget

Nutrition strategy and consulting	\$25,000
Nutrition industry communications (RDs)	\$40,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$65,000</b>

### Trade Marketing

#### Retail Trade Marketing

The Council will expand outreach to retail decision makers in 2026, including providing refreshed handling and merchandising best practices and a suite of turnkey point-of-sales materials. The Council will attend, and

sometimes sponsor, key retail trade shows to network with industry decision makers. We will also invest in trade advertising with produce publications, Instacart digital ads, and in-store advertising via Neptune.

**Retail Budget**

Retailer education and inspiration	\$150,000
Retailer partnerships and promotions (including Instacart and Neptune)	\$175,000
Retail trade events and sponsorships	\$75,000
Retail advertising	\$60,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$460,000</b>

**Foodservice Trade Marketing**

The Council will deepen its engagement with high-volume operators by targeting leading brands such as Chipotle, Panda Express, and Cava for mushroom menu expansion and limited time offers. Continued partnership with the Culinary Institute of America’s Healthy Menus Collaborative will inspire chefs and support menu innovation. A portion of the budget will be reserved for opportunistic ideation and with key targets and cross-promotion of mushroom menu items, similar to the 2025 partnerships with Jason’s Deli, Toppers and Domino’s. The Council will continue to invest in reaching school decision makers, including C&U and K-12 operators, by providing menu inspiration and case studies of successful promotions.

**Foodservice Budget**

Operator education and inspiration	\$150,000
Operator partnerships and promotions	\$275,000
Foodservice trade events and sponsorships	\$70,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$495,000</b>

**Industry Information**

The Council’s industry communications program will deliver timely updates and resources through newsletters, webinars, and industry meetings. Following our recent rebranding, both mushroomcouncil.com and mushroomcouncil.org will be updated with new branding and streamlined content for easier navigation. Industry members will receive campaign assets, shipping and sales reports, and opportunities to engage with Council initiatives throughout the year.

**Industry Information Budget**

Administrative expenses (staff, technology, subscriptions, etc.)	\$318,000
Industry subscriptions and communications (website, digital tools)	\$85,000
Marketing Task Force (TBD meeting expenses)	\$15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$418,000</b>

## Recommended 2026 Budget

	2025 Budget Amend #2 Approved 10/06/2025	2026 Budget Recommended 9/08/2025
<b>Carry Forward - Account 3900:</b>	1,286,366	782,655
<b>Revenue</b>		
<b>Assessments:</b>	0.0055/.0075	0.0075
4005 · Assessments- Domestic	3,816,820	4,866,445
4010 - Assessments - Prior Period	0	0
4015 · Assessments - Imports	1,225,968	1,563,109
5005 - Refunds	-600	-600
<b>Total Assessment Revenue</b>	<b>4,594,265</b>	<b>6,428,954</b>
<b>Other:</b>		
4030 · Interest	10,000	20,000
4035 · Misc. Income (Penalties & Interest)	0	0
5006 · Bad Debt	-50,000	-50,000
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>-40,000</b>	<b>-30,000</b>
<b>Total Carry Forward and Revenue</b>	<b>6,288,554</b>	<b>7,181,609</b>
<b>Administrative</b>		
<b>Office Expenses</b>		
5102 - Computer System	3,000	0
5106 · Equipment & Supplies	3,000	4,000
5107 · Office Rent & Storage	29,200	34,000
5108 · Telephone & Internet	1,500	4,000
5109 - Printing	1,000	0
5110 · Postage/Shipping	2,500	0
5111 - Miscellaneous	1,500	1,500
<b>Total Office Expense</b>	<b>41,700</b>	<b>43,500</b>
<b>Other Operational Expenses</b>		
5131 - Insurance & Bonds	10,000	10,000
5134 · Meeting Expense	35,000	35,000
5136 - Council/Committee Travel	15,000	15,000
5137 · Staff /Other Travel	10,000	10,000
<b>Total Operational Expense</b>	<b>70,000</b>	<b>70,000</b>
<b>Payroll</b>		
5151 · Administrative Wages	255,000	265,000
XXXX – Payroll Expenses & Acct Software	37,600	48,600
<b>Total Payroll Expense</b>	<b>292,600</b>	<b>313,600</b>
<b>Total Administrative Expenditures</b>	<b>404,300</b>	<b>427,100</b>

	<b>2025 Budget Amend #2 Approved 10/06/2025</b>	<b>2026 Budget Recommended 9/08/2025</b>
<b>USDA/Customs/Professional Services</b>		
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5192 - AMS Service User Fees	100,000	100,000
5193 - General Counsel User Fees	2,000	2,000
<b>Total USDA/Customs Expense</b>	<b>102,000</b>	<b>102,000</b>
<b>Professional Services</b>		
5162 - Audit	27,500	29,000
5172 - Accounting	7,000	7,000
5176 - Miscellaneous Professional/Legal	5,000	5,000
5180 - Compliance Audit	50,000	50,000
<b>Total Professional Expense</b>	<b>89,500</b>	<b>91,000</b>
<b>Total USDA/Customs/Prof Expenditures</b>	<b>191,500</b>	<b>193,000</b>
<b>Research &amp; Info Program Elements</b>		
6055 - Econometric Study	0	20,000
6045 - Data & Insights	224,350	287,000
6055 - Trade Marketing	1,046,500	955,000
6063 - Industry Information	419,749	418,000
6075 - Consumer Marketing	2,655,000	3,630,000
6078 - Nutrition Research & Promotion	114,000	65,000
6083 - Food Safety/Production	150,000	150,000
6091 - Promo Related Staff Salaries	255,000	265,000
6094 - Memberships	5,500	0
6096 - Promo Related Staff Expenses	40,000	40,000
<b>Total R&amp;I Program Expenditures</b>	<b>4,910,099</b>	<b>5,830,000</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>5,505,899</b>	<b>6,450,100</b>
<b>Reserve Fund</b>	516,000	516,000
<b>Total Investment</b>	<b>6,021,899</b>	<b>6,966,100</b>
<b>Contingency</b>	266,655	215,509
<b>Estimated Carrying to next year</b>	<b>782,655</b>	<b>731,509</b>