



# Food Product Innovation: From Concept-to-Shelf Experience

Hosted by the Dames of the Portland Chapter

## How does a woman take a delicious idea from early production to maturity and success?

Over five days, this experience is organized to explore the path of bringing a new product to market, from concept to shelf, in a way that will feel approachable, inspiring, and grounded in the current entrepreneurs' real-life experiences. The Legacy Awardee will meet makers at different stages, tour production facilities of varying scales, visit markets where products live, and learn how branding and marketing shape the success of small food companies. The Awardee will return home with confidence, perspective, and a clearer sense of what is possible for her own path.

The week will feature Oregon-based, women-owned brands led by Dames, such as [Urban Cheesecraft](#), [Marshall's Haute Sauce](#), [Decadent Creations](#) and [Vindulge](#), as well as three businesses owned by past LDEI Portland scholarship recipients: [Pistakio](#), [Tan Tan](#), and [Barreled Bee](#), subject to availability. The Awardee will meet with innovative colleagues, depending on the scheduled week, such as Lisa Herlinger of [Ruby Jewel Ice Cream](#) and Lindsay Gott of [Gateaux Ready to Bake Cakes](#) and Leta Merrill of [Pasta Maia](#) fresh pasta. Each business owner will offer mentorship, and a real-life example of how an artisan food product can come to the market.

The Awardee will end the week with inspiration, a new team of mentors, and clear options for next steps.



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*The ideal candidate for this experience is a woman with 4+ years of career experience in food, beverage, or hospitality who is in the early stages of artisan food production. She may have a recipe, a spark of an idea, or may already be experimenting with an early business concept.*

*Timing: June through October 2026 mutually arranged between Awardee and host chapter*

PORTLAND