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National Restaurant Association Show 2021 canceled because of COVID-19

Annual convention was scheduled for May 22-25 in Chicago, which is under limits on gathering size

Ron Ruggless, Senior Editor, Nation's Restaurant News / Restaurant Hospitality

February 26, 2021

1 Min Read Organizers canceled the 2021 National Restaurant Association Show because of the pandemic. The show was last held in 2019. Ron Ruggless

Organizers of the National Restaurant Association Show on Friday announced the cancellation of the 2021 convention, which was scheduled for May 22-25 at McCormick Place in Chicago.

“We look forward to serving the foodservice community year-round through online resources and are committed to planning a 2022 Show focused on fueling recovery,” said Tom Cindric, president of Winsight Exhibitions, in a statement.

Organizers said the state of Illinois, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, had ordered restrictions on gatherings of 50 or more people until early June.

“While this order could be modified prior to expiration, McCormick Place has indicated their ability to re-open for large events is currently prohibited by the state regulation and they do not anticipate changes prior to June that would allow an event of this size and scope to occur in May,” organizers said. “Therefore, show organizers regret to announce the cancellation of the 2021 National Restaurant Association Show due to the unavailability of the facility.”

Related: National Restaurant Association cancels 2020 show

The 2020 show was also canceled because of coronavirus uncertainty. The last show was in 2019, when the National Restaurant Association celebrated the gathering’s 100 th year.

“While we can’t do business or learn together in-person just yet, we are dedicated to helping our industry through this exceptionally challenging time,” Cindric said. “And when we reunite next year, May 21-24, 2022, it will be in an environment unlike anything any of us have ever experienced—an environment filled with renewed energy and unmatched connection as the restaurant community seeks new products, concepts, innovation, and thought leadership to reimagine foodservice.”

Organizers said information about transferring current registration fees and hotel cancelations, as well as other information, is available at the show’s website, www.nationalrestaurantshow.com.

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About the Author

Ron Ruggless

Senior Editor, Nation’s Restaurant News / Restaurant Hospitality

Ron Ruggless serves as a senior editor for Informa Connect’s Nation’s Restaurant News (NRN.com) and Restaurant Hospitality (Restaurant-Hospitality.com) online and print platforms. He joined NRN in 1992 after working 10 years in various roles at the Dallas Times Herald newspaper, including restaurant critic, assistant business editor, food editor and lifestyle editor. He also edited several printings of the Zagat Dining Guide for Dallas-Fort Worth, and his articles and photographs have appeared in Food & Wine, Food Network and Self magazines.

Ron Ruggless' areas of expertise include foodservice mergers, acquisitions, operations, supply chain, research and development and marketing.

Ron Ruggless is a frequent moderator and panelist at industry events ranging from the Multi-Unit Foodservice Operators (MUFISO) conference to RestaurantSpaces, the Council of Hospitality and Restaurant Trainers, the National Restaurant Association's Marketing Executives Group, local restaurant associations and the Horeca Professional Expo in Madrid, Spain.

Ron Ruggless' experience:

Regional and Senior Editor, Informa Connect's Nation's Restaurant News and Restaurant Hospitality (1992 to present)

Features Editor – Dallas Times Herald (1989-1991)

Restaurant Critic and Food Editor – Dallas Times Herald (1987-1988)

Editing Roles – Dallas Times Herald (1982-1987)

Editing Roles – Charlotte (N.C.) Observer (1980-1982)

Editing Roles – Omaha (Neb.) World-Herald (1978-1980)

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