

# 2026 NongGathering Korea FESTA & FORUM

## “Agri-Culture Lifestyle Transition: EAT / PLAY / LOVE”

September 10–12, 2026 | Mohanong House, Goesan County, Chungbuk Province, South Korea

### About “NongGathering”

NongGathering is an agri-life network initiative organized by Association Nong, a nonprofit group. The project broadens the concept of agriculture, going beyond production and industry to include life design, regional development, cultural activities, and rebuilding relationships. It brings together farmers, rural practitioners, researchers, planners, public institutions, and international collaborators who seek innovative ways to live, work, learn, and cooperate through agricultural spaces and practices.

### About “Agri-life”

“Agri-life” denotes a lifestyle encompassing living, working, learning, eating, and relationship-building through agricultural settings and practices. The term is deliberately expansive, incorporating broader dimensions than agriculture as mere production, while preserving the Korean concept of nong (농, 農) as both a cultural tradition and a social practice.

## 1. Event Concept

The central idea guiding this event is the transition “From Agriculture to Agri-Life.” Rather than focusing solely on agriculture as a form of production, the event serves as a platform to share diverse ways of living, foster meaningful connections, and collectively explore the next phase of this transition.

By adopting a holistic perspective, the event is structured to reconnect elements that have frequently been addressed in isolation—such as production, policy, rural migration, tourism, and agri-experiences. All these aspects are brought together under the broader theme of agri-life as a comprehensive way of life.

### Integrated FESTA & FORUM Structure

The event will be operated as an integrated FESTA and FORUM. This structure is intended to bring together two dimensions: a framework that explains transition and a field-based experience that allows participants to sense and encounter that transition in practice. By merging theoretical discussions with hands-on experiences, the event creates a space where participants can both understand the concept of transition and directly engage with it.

## 2. Basic Information

Category	Details
Event Title	2026 NongGathering Korea FESTA & FORUM
Forum Theme	Agri-Culture Lifestyle Transition
Dates	Thursday, September 10 – Saturday, September 12, 2026
Core Operating Dates	Thursday, September 10 – Friday, September 11, 2026
Venue	Mohanong House, Goesan County, Chungbuk Province, South Korea
Expected Participants	Approximately 150 participants per day / 300 participants in total, based on invited guests and selected applicants
Supported By	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA); Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS)
Partner Organizations	Ifoam-Organics Asia, Global Alliance of Organic Districts, Young Organics-Global Network

### **3. Rationale**

#### **From Agriculture to Agri-life: A Central Shift**

The central transition addressed by this event is the shift “from agriculture to agri-life.” Rather than viewing agriculture solely as a matter of production, technology, policy, or distribution, the event seeks to focus on the broader context of life within and around the agricultural world. This perspective centers on the experiences, relationships, and cultures of those who are part of rural and agricultural communities.

#### **Rural Areas as Living Spaces**

At this event, rural areas are not seen merely as sites of production. Instead, they are recognized as places where people live, work, form relationships, and create new ways of living. This approach emphasizes the importance of everyday life in shaping the future of these regions.

#### **A Broader Perspective on Transition**

The transition at the heart of this event is not defined solely by technological advances or policy changes. Instead, it is considered through a broader question: how can people live, connect, and continue their lives around agri-based practices? The event invites participants to explore the diverse ways agri-life is lived and to consider how these ways of life can be sustained and strengthened for the future.

### **4. Integrated Structure of FESTA and FORUM**

#### **The Role of the FORUM**

The FORUM serves as a platform to organize the theme of transition through dialogue. It shares perspectives and insights using real-world cases and encourages deeper exploration through questions. By comparing both domestic and international examples, the FORUM examines the directions and challenges of the ongoing transition, using thematic discussions to guide the conversation.

#### **The Role of the FESTA**

The FESTA brings the idea of transition to life by presenting it as lived experience. Through activities such as communal dining, exhibitions, hands-on experiences, and networking opportunities, participants are able to engage with agri-life directly, using their senses and forming connections with others.

#### **A Multidimensional Experience**

In essence, the FORUM provides a space to explain and discuss the concept of transition, while the FESTA allows participants to experience and connect with it. Together, these two pillars present agri-life as a multidimensional way of living, making the transition both understandable and tangible for all involved.

### **5. Three Program Pillars: EAT / PLAY / LOVE**

The event is organized around three pillars: EAT: CULTURE, PLAY: NONG, and LOVE: PEOPLE. These are not only program categories, but also three perspectives for understanding agri-life as a way of life.

#### **5-1. EAT: CULTURE**

This pillar views agri-life as encompassing food, dining practices, food culture, and daily routines. It features 5 regional unique food of Korea - Chungcheong, Gangwon, Gyeongsang, and Jeolla—and introduces rural Korean food cultures, product showcases, and presents lifestyle culture exhibitions.

## 5-2. PLAY: NONG

This pillar links participants with agri-life through physical activity, fieldwork, and direct engagement. Here, "play" means bridging work and life, offering a fresh connection to agriculture.

- Introduction to national agri-based programs
- Hands-on activities featuring agri-content from around the country
- Outdoor events

## 5-3. LOVE: PEOPLE

This pillar recognizes that agri-life is shaped by relationships, trust, collaboration, and interpersonal connections. It emphasizes that the sustainability of agri-life ultimately depends on the bonds formed among individuals.

- Introduction to agriculture-based communities and organizations
- Thematic networking
- Roundtable discussions
- Collaborative linkages

## 6. Forum Plan

### . Day 1 Forum

Day 1 will consist of country case presentations, a panel discussion, and audience Q&A **with expected presence of the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.**

Program	Content	Time
Country Case Studies	1. Japan (local government transition to organic) 2. Italy (Organic Districts) 3. Korea (Korean Agri-Life Model)	15 minutes each
Panel Discussion	Participated by country case study presenters	30 minutes
Q&A	Questions and answers with the audience based on the presentations and panel discussions	20 minutes

### Day 2 Forum

Day 2 will consist of thematic leader talks, in-depth thematic discussions, and an integrated plenary discussion. Participants will be divided into four groups and take part in the sessions through a rotation format.

Program	Content	Time
Thematic Leader Talks	Four thematic leaders / all participants attend	10 minutes each
In-depth Thematic Discussions	Four groups / distributed and rotating sessions	20 minutes per session
Integrated Plenary Discussion	Four thematic leaders + three experts + moderator	90 minutes
Four Themes	Community & Network / Entrepreneurship / Technology (AX·DX) / Ecology & Culture	-

## 7. Expected Outcomes

- **Academic archiving:** Compilation of written records, including reports, papers, and proceedings, to systematically document forum discussions, case studies, key issues, lessons learned, and policy or practice recommendations.
- **Knowledge exchange:** Strengthened sharing of experiences, innovations, and best practices among participants from different sectors and regions.
- **Network linkage:** Establishment of sustained professional connections and communication channels among participants beyond the duration of the event.
- **Follow-up collaboration:** Identification of collaborative themes, joint initiatives, and practical engagement opportunities among practitioners, researchers, institutions, local operators, and policymakers.
- **Policy and institutional dialogue:** Promotion of dialogue between academia, industry, civil society, and government stakeholders to support future policy development and institutional cooperation.
- **Regional and international cooperation:** Expansion of partnerships and exchange opportunities across countries and organizations to encourage long-term cooperation.