



**Annual Scientific Sessions 2026 of the Nutrition Society of Sri Lanka**  
**Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo – 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

Theme: One Health, One Nutrition: Ensuring Optimal Nutrition for People and the Planet

**PROGRAMME**

<b>Day 1: 24<sup>th</sup> January 2026</b>	
<b>TIME</b>	<b>ITEM</b>
7.30 am	Registration
8.00 am	Arrival of the Guests
8.10 am	Formalities of the Opening Ceremony National Anthem Lighting of the Oil Lamp
8.15 am	Welcome Address – President, NSSL
8.20 am	Address by the Chief Guest: Prof. E.M.P. Ekanayake – Vice-Chancellor, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka
8.30 am	Keynote Address: Targeting the Renin–Angiotensin System to Develop Novel Organ-specific Therapies in Nutrition-Linked Liver Diseases: New Horizons for Type 2 Diabetes, MAFLD, Cirrhosis and Hepatocellular Carcinoma Prof. Chandana Herath – Head, Hepatology Research and Liver Cancer Laboratory, Faculty of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences, Monash University, Australia
9.15 am	Presidential Address
9.25 am	Special Appreciation Award to Professor Nihal Wijesinghe by the President
9.45 am	Vote of Thanks – Secretary, NSSL
10.00 am	TEA BREAK
10.30 am – 11.35 am	Symposium 1: Reversing the NCD Tide: Synergising Nutrition and Physical Activity for a Healthier Nation Symposium Chair: Prof. K.K.D.S. Ranaweera – Emeritus Professor/Food Science and Technology, University of Sri Jayewardenepura
10.30 am	Plenary Lecture: From Risk to Resilience: Addressing the Growing Cardiometabolic Burden in a Changing Nation Prof. Mahinda Abeywardena – CSIRO Health and Biosecurity, Adelaide, Australia
10.55 am	Symposium Lecture I: Nutrient Intake Goals and Enabling Food Environments for NCD Prevention: The Evidence Prof. Pulani Lanerolle – Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo
11.15 am	Symposium Lecture II: Reverse the NCD Tide: Optimise Diet and Physical Activity in Children Prof. Pujitha Wickramasinghe – Department of Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo

## Day 1: 24<sup>th</sup> January 2026

TIME	ITEM
11.35 am – 12.40 am	<p><b>Symposium 2: Holistic Perspective in Dietary and Food Behaviour for Enhancing Health Outcomes</b>  <b>Symposium Chair: Prof. Eresha Mendis</b> – Department of Food Science &amp; Technology, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya</p>
11.35 am	<p><b>Plenary Lecture: Nutritional Challenges in Contemporary Sri Lanka: Insights from the BRIGHT National Survey 2024-25</b>  <b>Dr. Derek Headey</b> – Senior Research Fellow in the Poverty, Health and Nutrition Division at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)</p>
12.00 noon	<p><b>Symposium Lecture I: The Power of Movement: Physical Activity as Medicine for Disease Prevention and Control</b>  <b>Prof. Ananda Chandrasekara</b> – Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka</p>
12.20 pm	<p><b>Symposium Lecture II: Chrono-Nutrition and Time-Restricted Eating: Impacts on Cardiometabolic Risk Markers</b>  <b>Prof. Kumari M. Rathnayake</b> – Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka</p>
12.40 pm	<b>Panel Discussion – Symposium 1 &amp; 2</b>
12.55 pm	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>
1.30 pm – 2.30 pm	<p><b>Symposium 3: Beyond Macronutrients: Nutraceuticals, Microbiome Modulation, and Micronutrients in Precision Nutrition</b>  <b>Symposium Chair: Dr. Dhammika Senanayake</b> – Institute of Sports Medicine, Colombo 07</p>
1.30 pm	<p><b>Plenary Lecture: Phytochemicals and Metabolic Health: Mechanistic Pathways and Emerging Therapeutic Potential</b>  <b>Prof. K.K.D.S. Ranaweera</b> – Emeritus Professor/Food Science and Technology, University of Sri Jayewardenepura</p>
1.50 pm	<p><b>Symposium Lecture I: Beyond Calories: Unmasking the Silent Crisis of Micronutrient Deficiencies</b>  <b>Dr. Manoji Gamage</b> – Consultant Nutrition Physician, Nutrition Division, Ministry of Health and Mass Media</p>
2.10 pm	<p><b>Symposium Lecture II: The Low-FODMAP Diet: Evidence-Based Dietary Strategy for Managing Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders</b>  <b>Dr. Geeshani Somaratne</b> – Lecturer, Department of Food Science and Technology, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya</p>
2.30 pm	<b>Panel Discussion</b>
2.45 pm	<p><b>Expert Group Discussion – Rethinking Ultra-Processed Foods: From Dietary Patterns to Metabolic and Microbiome Health</b>  <b>Chair: Prof. Renuka Silva</b> – Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka  <b>Panel: Prof. Prasanna Gunathilake, Prof. K.K.D.S. Ranaweera, Prof. Ananda Chandrasekara</b></p>
3.15 pm	<p><b>Prof. T. W. Wickramanayake Oration: One Health, One Nutrition: Ensuring Optimal Nutrition for Individuals</b>  <b>Prof. Sunil J. Wimalawansa</b> – Professor of Medicine, Endocrinology and Human Nutrition</p>
4.15 pm	<b>Oration Tea</b>
4.30 pm	<b>NSSL Annual General Meeting</b>
7.00 pm	<b>“NutriFeast” Dinner – Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo (7.00 pm – 11.30 pm)</b>

## Day 2: 25<sup>th</sup> January 2026

TIME	ITEM
8.00 am	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 48%;"> <p><b>Oral Presentation Session 1: Mechanistic, Clinical, and Intervention-Focused Research on Cardiometabolic Health and Precision Nutrition (12 Presentations)</b></p> <p><b>Session Judges:</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Prof. Usha Hettiarachchi</b> – Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Medical Sciences, University of Sri Jayewardenepura</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Prof. W.M.A.P. Wanigasekara</b> – Department of Basic Veterinary Science, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science, University of Peradeniya</li> <li><b>2. Dr. Shanthi Gunawardana</b> – Consultant Community Physician; Past President, NSSL</li> </ol> </div> <div style="width: 48%;"> <p><b>Poster Presentation Session 1: Community and Clinical Nutrition: Determinants, Risks, and Health Outcomes (18 Posters)</b></p> <p><b>Session Judges:</b></p> <p><b>Chair: Dr. Darshika Pathiraja</b> – Senior Lecturer, Department of Food Science and Technology, Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Mr. Wilfred Narammala</b> – Former Deputy Director, SLPS</li> <li><b>2. Mrs. Mala Abeygunawardena</b> – Senior Dietitian, Sri Jayewardenepura General Hospital</li> </ol> </div> </div>
10.00 am – 10.55 am	<p><b>Symposium 4: AI-driven Diagnostics and Behaviour Change to Improve Diets and Nutrition in Sri Lanka</b></p> <p><b>Symposium Chair: Prof. Renuka Silva</b> – Chair Professor, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka</p>
10.00 am	<p><b>Plenary Lecture: AI-assisted Diet Monitoring for Adolescent Girls in Sri Lanka: Evidence from Validation Against Conventional Methods</b></p> <p><b>Dr. Thushanthi Perera</b> – Senior Lecturer, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka</p>
10.20 am	<p><b>Symposium Lecture I: Feasibility and Effectiveness of Using Mobile Phone AI-Assisted Dietary Assessment and Nudging to Improve Diets of Female Adolescents in Sri Lanka</b></p> <p><b>Ms. Nilmini Karunaratna</b> – Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka</p>
10.35 am	<p><b>Symposium Lecture II: From Validation to Impact: Leveraging FRANI for Real-World Dietary Assessment and Promoting Food-based Dietary Guidelines Adherence</b></p> <p><b>Prof. Renuka Silva</b> – Chair Professor, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka</p>
10.45 am	<p><b>Symposium Lecture III: Highlights from Other Countries: FRANI App for Accurate, Real-Time Nutrient Insights in LMICs and Beyond</b></p> <p><b>Dr. Aulo Gelli</b> – Senior Research Fellow, International Food Policy Research Institute, Washington DC</p> <p><b>Dr. Phuong Nguyen</b> – Senior Research Fellow, International Food Policy Research Institute, Vietnam)</p>
10.55 am	<p><b>Panel Discussion</b></p>
11.10 am	<p><b>TEA BREAK</b></p>

## Day 2: 25<sup>th</sup> January 2026

TIME	ITEM
11.30 am	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%; background-color: #ADD8E6; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Oral Presentation Session 2: Population-Level, Life-Course, Behavioural, and Policy-Oriented Nutrition Research (13 Presentations)</b></p> <p><b>Session Judges:</b>  <b>Chair: Prof. Indu Waidyatilaka</b> – Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Prof. Kanchana Abeysekera</b> – Department of Agricultural Technology, Faculty of Technology, University of Colombo</li> <li><b>2. Dr. Dhammika Gunaratne</b> – Consultant Community Physician, Department of Public Health, CMC</li> </ol> </div> <div style="width: 45%; background-color: #FFDAB9; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Poster Presentation Session 2: Functional Foods, Bioactive Compounds, Food Innovation, and Safety (18 Posters)</b></p> <p><b>Session Judges:</b>  <b>Chair: Prof. Swarna Wimalasiri</b> – Department of Food Science and Technology, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Peradeniya</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Dr. Haily Seneviratne</b> – Senior Lecturer, Department of Food Science and Technology, Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka</li> <li><b>2. Dr. Isuri Jayawardena</b> – Postdoctoral Scientist (FMR), National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE), France</li> </ol> </div> </div>
1.40 pm	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b>
2.30 pm	<p><b>Nutri-Quiz Competition</b>  <b>Coordinator/Chair: Dr. Thilanka Ranathunga</b> – Head, Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Livestock, Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka</p> <p><b>Contestants:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. P. Mathusha – Department of Food Science and Technology, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka</li> <li>2. W.G.H.I. Adikari – Department of Food Science and Technology, Faculty of Applied Science, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka</li> <li>3. T.A.S.D. Devindi – Department of Nutrition &amp; Dietetics, Faculty of Livestock Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka</li> <li>4. J. Yanooja – Department of Nutrition &amp; Dietetics, Faculty of Livestock Fisheries and Nutrition, Wayamba University of Sri Lanka</li> <li>5. S.S. Nasrin – Faculty of Science, University of Peradeniya</li> </ol> <p><b>Quiz Conductor/Compere: Ms. Shehari Wijesinghe</b></p> <p><b>Judges:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Dr. Disna Kumari</b> – Senior Dietitian, Hemas Hospitals and Health Care, Wattala</li> <li><b>2. Dr. Nipuni Nayanathara Waidyarathna</b> – Senior Lecturer, Department of Pre Clinical Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University</li> <li><b>3. Ms. Manjula Sandamali</b> – Technical Specialist - Nutrition, Scaling Up Nutrition People’s Forum</li> </ol>
<b>Closing Ceremony</b>	
4.30 pm	<b>Awards and Appreciations</b>
5.15 pm	<b>Closing Remarks – Conference Chair</b>
5.30 pm	<b>Vote of Thanks – Conference Coordinator</b>
5.40 pm	<b>Close of the Ceremony</b>