SWANA, ISRI to host 'MRF Summit' in August

Dive Brief:

- The Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) and the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries (ISRI) will be joint hosts of an inaugural "MRF Summit" at WASTECON in August, the organizations announced Wednesday. The summit will include a specialized "track" for attendees at WASTECON in Nashville, TN to discuss contamination standards, technology and industry policy.
The summit promises to include specialized sessions, keynotes from environmental leaders and networking events. Organizers also said the summit will bring attention to ISRI's Inbound Material Specifications and encourage collaboration in dealing with current industry challenges.

- "With curbside residential recycling upended by China restrictions and contamination, this is expected to host the most spirited debates that have ever occurred in this industry," ISRI President Robin Wiener said in a statement.

**Dive Insight:**

These kind of education summits and conferences can be great opportunities for industry professionals to come together, network and trade ideas. With ongoing challenges presented by China's scrap import restrictions, industry-wide collaboration is seen as increasingly important. SWANA recently convened a "recycling task force" in order to boost domestic markets.

Last year, at WASTECON in Baltimore, China, contamination and developing value along the waste supply stream were all key themes — and appear to be topics that will make a resurgence during the new summit. SWANA CEO David Biderman said his organization is "excited" to host the "timely" event as the industry grapples with China's
stringent standards and changing waste streams.

Much like the summit is poised to do, recent industry conferences and educational opportunities (like webinars) have focused on developing solutions to deal with China's standards and growing new markets in the U.S. The National Recycling Coalition (NRC), for example, recently hosted a webinar where Wiener said there was no "panacea" on the challenges created by China, and that it will take multiple approaches. Pratt Recycling President Myles Cohen said at a recent workshop hosted by the Northeast Recycling Council that local governments need to work more collaboratively with MRFs, rather than chase a high recycling rate.

Later in the year, when the summit is hosted, the industry will almost certainly have more information at its disposal about where new markets for recycled material are developing, how China is responding to imports, and what the U.S. government is attempting to resolve the situation. With new information in hand, professionals at the event will be better suited to develop ideas for facing the changing recycling industry.

**Recommended Reading:**

- [Inaugural MRF Summit to Address Changing Landscape in Recycling](https://swana.org/news/inaugural-mrf-summit-to-address-changing-landscape-in-recycling)
- [SWANA and ISRI Join Forces for Event at WASTECON](https://swana.org/news/swana-and-isri-join-forces-for-event-at-wastecon)
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