

From Farm to Table

The Role of Immigrants in Kansas City's Food Industry



Between 2010 and 2015, immigrants accounted for 17.5% of population growth in the Kansas City metropolitan area, and as of 2017, they accounted for 6.6% of the overall population. With this growth, immigrants are responsible for a significant share of the metro area's economic activity, including more than \$3 billion in consumer spending power and \$1 billion in taxes.

Less well-known is the outsize role that immigrants play in Kansas City's food and restaurant industries. From farm to table, immigrants are involved in nearly every aspect of the business, including in expanding global food offerings around the metro area, from Filipino, to Pakistani, to Thai.

MISSOURI'S AGRICULTURE & FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRIES

Although they make up just **4.2%** of Missouri's population, immigrants play a significant role in food-related industries across the state of Missouri. They are **almost 1 in 10** of the state's restaurant and food service workers. They represent **22.7%** of all bakery workers and **26.9%** of animal processing workers.

Nearly
1 in 10
restaurant and food
service workers in
Missouri are foreign-born.

Immigrant shares of the...



KANSAS' AGRICULTURE & FOOD SERVICE INDUSTRIES

Although they make up just **6.9%** of Kansas' population, immigrants play a significant role in food-related industries across the state of Kansas. They make up **more than 1 in 10** of the state's agricultural workers and more than **64.2%** of all animal processing workers.

More than
1 in 10
agricultural workers in
Kansas are foreign-born.

Immigrant shares of the...



KANSAS CITY METRO AREA'S FOOD AND RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

In 2017, there were **140,875 immigrants** in the Kansas City metro area. Approximately **55.7%** lived in Kansas, while the other **44.3%** lived in Missouri. Overall, immigrants made up **6.6%** of the entire metro area's population.

However, immigrants punch far above their weight in the local food and restaurant industry. As business owners and employees, immigrants represent **14.5%** of the food and restaurant industry overall, including:



As workers, immigrants represent:

27.1%
of chefs and cooks

21.8%
of food prep workers

17.8%
of food service managers

16.2%
of cashiers

10.9%
of waiters and waitresses