

Global Foresight, Inc. 2006 Report on Industry Trends

Culinary Arts

The field of culinary arts is a robust one, offering a variety of working conditions and career opportunities, from cooks at restaurants to personal chefs. Chefs, cooks and food preparation workers held nearly 3.1 million jobs in 2004; nearly two-thirds of whom were employed in restaurants and other food services and drinking places. The industry has experienced increased growth over the last decade as Americans eat more meals outside of the home than ever before. While the growth of the industry will remain stable over the next decade, it will face challenges as issues such as the rise of obesity and the impact of genetically modified foods begin to percolate in the public debate.

Employment Outlook

Job openings for chefs, cooks, and food preparation workers are expected to be plentiful through 2014; however, competition should be keen for jobs in the top kitchens of higher end restaurants. While job growth will create new positions, primarily due to the expansion of family-casual dining, the overwhelming majority of job openings will stem from the need to replace workers who leave this large occupational group. Employment growth will be spurred by increases in population, household income, and leisure time that will allow people to more often dine out and take vacations. In addition, the large number of two-income households will lead more families to opt for the convenience of dining out.

(Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Trends and Emerging Issues

Macro Trends

- Americans have more disposable income than ever before; baby boomers in particular baby boomers' annual spending power is estimated at \$1.1 trillion per year.
- The health care funding crisis has increased the public's attention on health and diet.
- Obesity is on the rise on the U.S.; the number of obese adults has doubled since 1990 and tripled in children.
- The organic food market has grown at a rate of nearly 20 percent per year for the last seven years.
- Dining out is increasingly viewed as an entertainment; restaurants are responding by creating interactive experiences such as personalized menus.
- Pharmaceutical and food companies are using biotechnology to create new strains of "functional foods" (i.e., a genetically modified cauliflower which is orange in color and has 25% more beta carotene than traditional cauliflower)

Market Trends

- The restaurant industry employs an estimated 12.5 million people, making it the nation's largest employer outside of government.
- The restaurant industry provides work for more than 9 percent of those employed in the United States.
- The average household expenditure for food away from home in 2004 was \$2,434, or \$974 per person.
- There is a growing consumer desire for healthier, made-from-scratch meals without sacrificing the convenience of pre-packaged prepared foods or fast-food dining.
- The fast food industry is responding: Subway has more branches in the US than McDonald's.

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- A new niche has developed: “meal assembly centers” (such as the Supper Shop) allow customers to prepare a month’s worth of restaurant-quality meals. There are now over 700 such businesses nationwide.
- Restaurants face increased regulations and legislation: In September 2006 the New York City Board of Health voted to prohibit the city’s restaurants from serving food that contains more than a minute amount of artificial trans fats.

Forecasts

- Congress will create a national “fat tax”; taxing both businesses and consumers who develop or engage in unhealthy lifestyle choices
- Restaurants will offer increasingly customized services and experiences, such as maintaining databases of dietary needs for individual customers and creating meals based on a customer’s unique health profile
- Advances in fabrication and materials technology will create a revolution in food delivery systems, such as edible papers and food-replicator devices

Resources

Associations:

[National Restaurant Association](#)
[Institute of Food Technologists](#)

Reports and Articles:

“America’s Changing Appetite: Food Consumption and Spending to 2020”
<http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/FoodReview/May2002/frvol25i1a.pdf>

Bureau of Labor Statistics
www.bls.gov