As Nashville's population has boomed in recent years, much of the growth has been led by the arrival of newcomers from around the world. A 2014 report from New American Economy found that immigrants accounted for nearly 60% of Nashville's population growth between 2000 and 2012.

Less well-known is the outsize role that immigrants play in Nashville's enviable food and restaurant industry. From farm to table, immigrants are involved in nearly every aspect of the business. As entrepreneurs, they have also significantly expanded the global food offerings around the city, as evidenced by the long and growing list of participating restaurants in the annual InterNASHional Food Crawl, hosted by the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC).

TENNESSEE'S AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

Although they make up just 5% of Tennessee's population, immigrants play a significant role in the production of food across the state of Tennessee. They are nearly 1 in 7 of the state's farmworkers. They represent 16.1% of workers in crop production and 29.6% of workers in agriculture jobs that involve picking crops by hand.

NASHVILLE'S FOOD AND RESTAURANT INDUSTRY

At just 7.8% of Nashville's population, immigrants punch far above their weight in the local food and restaurant industry. As business owners and employees, immigrants represent 16.2% of the food and restaurant industry overall, including:

- 28.1% of business owners and employees in Food Manufacturing
- 16.1% of business owners and employees in Hotels and Restaurants
- 11.8% of business owners and employees in Food Retail
According to the most recent Survey of Business Owners (SBO):

Minority-owned restaurants and hotels employ more than 10,000 Nashvillians and generate more than $671.4 million in sales each year. Asian-owned hotels and restaurants employ 5,855 Nashvillians and generate more than $409.7 million in sales each year, and Hispanic-owned hotels and restaurants employ 2,744 Nashvillians and generate more than $143.4 million in sales each year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restaurants and Hotels</th>
<th>Nashvillians Employed</th>
<th>Annual Sales Generated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minority-Owned</td>
<td>More than 10,000</td>
<td>$671.4M</td>
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