

Nourishing Our Nation: Raising Our Voice in the 2019 Federal Election

When foodservice thrives, so do our communities. A thriving restaurant sector is critical to the well-being of communities across Canada, contributing to jobs, investment, innovation, tourism, charitable causes and spaces for people to come together. Working with Restaurants Canada, the next federal government can help foodservice businesses continue **#NourishingOurNation**.

KEY ISSUE: Labour Shortages

Recruiting and retaining workers is becoming increasingly challenging for restaurants across Canada, and has already become a crisis in some communities. Persistent labour shortages put a damper on investment and growth and place existing businesses at risk if they can't be staffed.

Restaurants Canada is calling on the next federal government to:

- **Establish a national labour force development strategy.** This strategy must recognize the critical role of foodservice as one of Canada's largest employers, the leading source of first-time jobs for youth and a key contributor to every community across the country. Restaurants Canada recommends that this strategy include commitments to:
 - **Develop, support and expand national and regional labour initiatives.** Programs and resources such as Job Bank, the Atlantic Immigration Pilot and the Canada-Saskatchewan Job Grant help Canadians and newcomers learn valuable skills, find employers with immediate staffing needs, and build long-lasting careers. More can be done to help foodservice businesses recruit and retain workers from underrepresented groups, such as women, youth, older Canadians, people with disabilities, members of Indigenous communities and newcomers to Canada.
 - **Boost funding to ensure efficient and effective processing of immigration applications.** More federal investment is needed to reduce wait times and administrative burdens, as well as increase information-sharing between sponsors, applicants and government regulators.
 - **Establish a foodservice stream within the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP).** Similar to the program in place for the agricultural sector, or the Employing Newcomers in Canadian Hotels Pilot Project, this would help ease both seasonal and long-term labour shortages within the foodservice sector.
 - **Reduce the administrative burden on small businesses who use the TFWP.** Small businesses would greatly benefit from extending work permits to two years, reducing the \$1,000 fee, and improving the search parameters of the Job Bank posting requirements.

CANADA'S FOODSERVICE SECTOR AT A GLANCE

- Our country's 98,000 foodservice businesses generate \$89 billion in economic activity each year.
- For every dollar spent in a restaurant, \$1.85 is spent in the rest of Canada's economy.
- With roughly 1.2 million workers, foodservice is the fourth-largest employer in the country.



For more information:

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