Food Processing

This cluster refines raw food materials and manufactures downstream food products for end users, such as specialty foods, animal foods, baked goods, beverages, packaged fruits and vegetables, and processed dairy products. The technical report, Metropolitan Chicago’s traded industry clusters, offers extensive data on the characteristics and performance of the Chicago region’s core industrial assets since 2001, available for download at https://cmap.is/Traded-Clusters.

In the Chicago region in 2017, this cluster consisted of

- $8.1 billion total output
- 33,000 jobs
- 700 establishments

Middle-skill workers have greater opportunity than the regional average.

- $26,132 25th wage percentile
- $31,461 50th wage percentile
- $42,091 75th wage percentile

Workers in this cluster tend to be more racially diverse than the regional labor force.

- 61% non-white
- 40% female
- 30% over age 50

Workers in this cluster tend to be more racially diverse than the regional labor force.

In 2016, this cluster generated approximately

- +8% jobs
- +7% total output

Atlanta

- -3% jobs
- +7% total output

Los Angeles

Freight trade geography, by value

- 25% Chicago region
- 31% Midwest
- 32% Rest of U.S.
- 12% Global

Note: Data includes only the Illinois portion of the U.S. Census Bureau combined statistical area. Freight data is not provided for service clusters.

In recent years, the cluster’s competitive position weakened as it became less specialized in the national context.