

Occupations of Opportunity

SPECIALTY AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND BEVERAGE



KEY OCCUPATIONS IN SPECIALTY AGRICULTURE, FOOD & BEVERAGE

Specialty Agriculture, Food, and Beverage is driven by sectors focusing on distinctive North Coast products, rather than bulk commodities that could be grown or produced in many other regions. These products include specialty cheeses (dairy manufacturing), wine and beer (beverage manufacturing), and flowers (greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production). There are also important front-end suppliers for these products included in this industry (e.g., fruit and nut farming, support activities for crop production), and distribution channels (e.g., warehousing and storage; beer, wine, and distilled alcoholic beverage merchant wholesalers).

Strong Career Potential *Figures calculated between 1990 - 2004; firms through 2003.*

- **JOB GROWTH:** 33% (from 4185 to 5547 jobs)
- **FIRM GROWTH:** 11% (from 505 to 564 firms)
- **WAGE GROWTH:** 25% (from \$19,846 to \$24,804)

Employment Opportunities by Wage Level

The occupational pattern in Specialty Agriculture, Food, and Beverage is weighted towards the lower wage level, which represents about two-thirds of the jobs.

64% of Jobs are in the Low Wage Level, including food batch makers, farm workers, food preparation and servers

30% of Jobs are in the Mid Wage Level, including retail salespersons, maintenance & repair workers, truck drivers, office clerks

6% of Jobs are in the Higher Wage Level, including general operations managers, wholesale and manufacturing workers, sales reps

Past & Future Drivers of Growth

Demand for specialties will continue to grow

Future innovations in products, preservation, packaging, flavor, nutritional enhancement, etc.

Growing Redwood Coast "brand" will act as catalyst across the board

Improved transportation will enable more and faster shipment of products

Growing consumer demand for specialty products, especially those with a "local connection"

Growth in organic industry

Product innovation among regional producers

Internet helps regional producers reach customers outside region

