



2026

Food & Beverage Salary Guide

Produced by Kinsa Group, Executive Recruiters for the Food and Beverage Industry

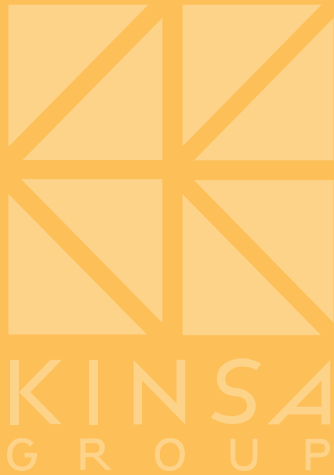


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To supply actionable salary data, outliers have been removed. This data is based on actual interview conversations with food and beverage industry employees across the USA, many of whom were recruited and submitted as candidates for job openings at small and mid-sized Kinsa client employers.

Wondering What To Expect? Insights for 2026

In 2026, careers and hiring in the food and beverage sector will be driven by demographic shifts, technology adoption, and competitive pressures. Success hinges on strategic differentiation, robust workforce development, and innovative employer branding.

4 | Key Trends

01 High Demand for Specialized Skills

Innovative product developers, operations leaders with continuous process improvement expertise, food safety and risk managers, automation experts, and diverse supply chain executives remain scarce. Technical skills gaps and competition from tech/pharma for crossover talent intensify challenges.

02 Strategic Roles Gain Priority

Leadership roles influence innovation, growth and operational resilience. Professionals with deep experience in continuous improvement, global supply chain, food safety and R&D are the most sought after. Hiring and retaining them to drive automation, product development and sustainability must be a core business priority.

03 Succession Planning Critical

Retirement waves create urgent needs for retention of institutional knowledge. Critical roles must be mapped and internal successors identified or hired. Some companies offer flexible work arrangements to attract semi-retired experts as consultants or mentors to bridge the skills or knowledge gap.

04 Best Hiring Experience Wins

Top talent expects role-specific descriptions, competency-based interviews, and tailored value propositions reflecting their unique motivations. Employers customizing their recruitment differentiate themselves in a crowded talent market.

4 | Critical Priorities

01 Retention = Recruitment

Retention of team knowledge and leadership is critical and may outweigh recruitment needs for your operations. Enhancing your onboarding experience, competitive pay, and focusing on an engaging workplace culture will reduce churn and build stable teams.

02 Employer Branding

Authentic storytelling about work at your company and a demonstrated commitment to employee well-being attracts quality candidates. Benefits, paid time off, bonus on shared profits, and flexible work schedules get noticed!

03 Geographic Constraints

Many food and beverage jobs are tied to manufacturing or food service site locations. This may require relocation support and targeted metro recruitment with an understanding that training on skills gaps could be required.

04 Food Trends

Wellness products, better-for-you foods, and experiential food and beverage formats are driving demand for talent in product and process innovation. Does your company align with trends in nutrition supplements, natural, organic, high-protein or plant-based products? Talk about your growth in these areas!

Expert Recruitment Support for the
Food & Beverage Industry

Kinsa Group
Our Network, Your Advantage

How to Use This Salary Data

Over the last two years, Kinsa has collected salary data from more than 6,000 candidate interviews across several categories and skill sets in the food industry. We always share this complimentary salary data with our client employers when launching new recruitment campaigns for their open jobs. We have compiled a confidential summary of that salary data in Kinsa Group's 2026 Food & Beverage Salary Guide in the pages that follow.

Kinsa Group's Salary Guide release for 2026 highlights both salary range and median base salary compensation for several job titles in the food and beverage industry. The data may be used by both employers and job seekers to gauge current market salaries and evaluate pay trends.

Kinsa's Recruiters Advise:

- ▶ Location has a bearing on the salary range offered to attract top performing talent. If the job is located where the cost of living is high, you'll want to be above the median and trending toward the high end of the range. If you need to relocate someone, incentivize that move with a more attractive base salary offer. (See COL Adjustments page 9)
- ▶ Are you hiring a unique talent with specialty skills that are in high demand? You may need to move quickly and bump up the base salary to beat your competition with an irresistible offer.
- ▶ Are you hiring like-for-like or are you willing-to-train? You may be able to offer below the median or even in the low end of the range if you'll consider hiring someone with the skills and experience one-step below your job title, offering them a promotional opportunity with your company.
- ▶ Otherwise, Kinsa recommends that you budget for the Median + 10% range to attract the average candidate.
- ▶ Expect to negotiate. You will likely receive a counter from your candidate of choice; don't get defensive, this is the norm. Most candidates seek at least a 10% increase above their current pay.

Position Title	Low	Median	High
C-Suite Executive			
Chief Executive Officer / CEO	\$150,000	\$300,000	\$475,000
President	\$200,000	\$280,000	\$450,000
Chief Supply Chain Officer	\$180,000	\$280,000	\$400,000
Chief Operating Officer / COO	\$170,000	\$280,000	\$400,000
Chief Commercial Officer	\$165,000	\$250,000	\$450,000
Chief Marketing Officer	\$165,000	\$250,000	\$400,000
Chief Financial Officer / CFO	\$150,000	\$235,000	\$400,000
Chief Human Resources Officer	\$150,000	\$235,000	\$350,000
Board of Directors	\$110,000	\$225,000	\$350,000
Chief Science Officer	\$175,000	\$220,000	\$350,000
General Manager / Managing Director	\$120,000	\$200,000	\$450,000
Founder / Co-Founder / Owner	\$100,000	\$170,000	\$300,000

Accounting / Finance

CFO	\$150,000	\$235,000	\$400,000
Vice President of Finance	\$160,000	\$225,000	\$285,000
Director Finance	\$150,000	\$180,000	\$225,000
Controller	\$130,000	\$160,000	\$200,000
Manager Accounting / Finance	\$100,000	\$135,000	\$150,000
Financial Analyst	\$90,000	\$110,000	\$150,000
Accountant / Senior Accountant	\$80,000	\$100,000	\$120,000

Human Resources

Chief People Officer / VP of HR	\$150,000	\$235,000	\$350,000
Director Human Resources	\$100,000	\$160,000	\$240,000
Human Resources Manager	\$80,000	\$125,000	\$150,000
Recruiter / Talent Acquisition Manager	\$70,000	\$90,000	\$125,000

Position Title	Low	Median	High
Sales / Business Development			
Chief Commercial Officer	\$165,000	\$250,000	\$450,000
Vice President of Sales	\$120,000	\$200,000	\$280,000
General Manager	\$100,000	\$180,000	\$280,000
International Sales Manager / Director	\$100,000	\$160,000	\$275,000
Director of Sales	\$80,000	\$160,000	\$275,000
National Sales Manager / National Accounts	\$90,000	\$150,000	\$250,000
Category Manager	\$90,000	\$150,000	\$180,000
Industrial Sales Manager (B2B Sales)	\$80,000	\$140,000	\$180,000
Demand Planner / Manager / Director	\$90,000	\$130,000	\$200,000
Key Account Manager	\$80,000	\$130,000	\$215,000
Business Development Manager	\$80,000	\$130,000	\$200,000
Regional Sales Manager	\$80,000	\$130,000	\$200,000
Sales Manager	\$80,000	\$120,000	\$235,000
Account Manager	\$80,000	\$120,000	\$190,000
District Sales Manager	\$80,000	\$110,000	\$140,000
Account Executive	\$70,000	\$100,000	\$175,000
Area / Territory Sales Manager	\$70,000	\$100,000	\$140,000
Sales Representative	\$50,000	\$80,000	\$140,000

Marketing

Chief Marketing Officer	\$165,000	\$250,000	\$400,000
Vice President of Marketing	\$140,000	\$200,000	\$275,000
Marketing Director	\$100,000	\$170,000	\$250,000
Brand Manager / Sr Brand Manager	\$90,000	\$150,000	\$210,000
Product Manager	\$100,000	\$150,000	\$200,000
Category Manager	\$90,000	\$150,000	\$180,000
Marketing Manager	\$80,000	\$135,000	\$180,000
Digital Marketing Manager / E-Commerce	\$90,000	\$110,000	\$150,000
Marketing Specialist / Analyst	\$75,000	\$90,000	\$130,000

Position Title	Low	Median	High
Operations / Production			
Chief Operating Officer / COO	\$170,000	\$280,000	\$400,000
Vice President of Operations	\$150,000	\$240,000	\$300,000
Director of Operations	\$100,000	\$180,000	\$260,000
General Manager	\$100,000	\$170,000	\$325,000
Plant Manager	\$100,000	\$160,000	\$250,000
Continuous Improvement Manager / Director	\$90,000	\$140,000	\$220,000
Brewing / Distillery Manager	\$75,000	\$120,000	\$195,000
Production / Operations Manager	\$70,000	\$120,000	\$225,000
Demand Planning Manager / Master Scheduler	\$70,000	\$125,000	\$170,000
Production / Plant Superintendent	\$105,000	\$110,000	\$115,000
Production Supervisor	\$60,000	\$80,000	\$130,000

Food Service / Restaurant

Vice President Operations / COO	\$100,000	\$170,000	\$400,000
Director of Culinary	\$75,000	\$160,000	\$225,000
Director of Operations	\$75,000	\$150,000	\$210,000
General Manager	\$80,000	\$120,000	\$160,000
Area Manager	\$80,000	\$100,000	\$140,000
Food & Beverage Manager / Director	\$70,000	\$100,000	\$180,000
Restaurant Manager	\$50,000	\$90,000	\$150,000
Executive Chef	\$80,000	\$120,000	\$180,000
Chef	\$60,000	\$90,000	\$165,000
Sous Chef	\$60,000	\$75,000	\$80,000

Environmental Health and Safety

Environmental Health & Safety Manager	\$90,000	\$125,000	\$160,000
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Position Title	Low	Median	High
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Supply Chain / Procurement

Chief Supply Chain Officer	\$180,000	\$280,000	\$400,000
Vice President Supply Chain & Purchasing	\$150,000	\$230,000	\$350,000
Procurement Director	\$110,000	\$180,000	\$225,000
Supply Chain Director	\$120,000	\$175,000	\$265,000
Logistics / Transportation Director	\$120,000	\$170,000	\$225,000
Category Manager	\$80,000	\$140,000	\$175,000
Logistics / Transportation Manager	\$100,000	\$130,000	\$150,000
Supply Chain Manager	\$80,000	\$130,000	\$180,000
Demand Planning Manager / Master Scheduler	\$70,000	\$125,000	\$170,000
Purchasing / Sourcing Manager	\$80,000	\$125,000	\$160,000
Warehouse / Distribution Manager	\$80,000	\$120,000	\$200,000
Buyer	\$70,000	\$105,000	\$150,000
Warehouse Supervisor	\$80,000	\$105,000	\$120,000
Inventory / Supply Chain Specialist	\$80,000	\$90,000	\$120,000
Analyst	\$60,000	\$80,000	\$120,000

Quality / Food Safety / Regulatory

VP of Quality / Food Safety	\$160,000	\$200,000	\$300,000
Director Food Safety and Quality	\$90,000	\$160,000	\$260,000
Regulatory Manager / Director	\$100,000	\$140,000	\$200,000
Food Safety Quality Assurance Manager	\$80,000	\$120,000	\$160,000
Quality Engineer	\$80,000	\$115,000	\$160,000
FSQA Auditor	\$75,000	\$90,000	\$140,000
Quality Analyst	\$50,000	\$90,000	\$125,000
Quality Assurance / Control Supervisor	\$60,000	\$85,000	\$115,000
Food Safety Coordinator	\$55,000	\$85,000	\$120,000
Quality Technician	\$50,000	\$60,000	\$70,000
Regulatory Specialist	\$70,000	\$100,000	\$130,000
Quality Specialist	\$70,000	\$95,000	\$140,000
Sanitation Manager	\$80,000	\$100,000	\$145,000
Sanitation Supervisor	\$60,000	\$85,000	\$115,000

Position Title	Low	Median	High
Engineering			
Vice President of Engineering	\$170,000	\$230,000	\$300,000
Director of Engineering	\$170,000	\$200,000	\$250,000
Engineering Manager	\$120,000	\$160,000	\$225,000
Engineering Project Manager	\$100,000	\$150,000	\$225,000
Reliability Engineer / Manager	\$110,000	\$150,000	\$225,000
Project Engineer	\$100,000	\$140,000	\$150,000
Plant Engineer / Mechanical Engineer	\$110,000	\$135,000	\$150,000
Sales Engineer	\$80,000	\$120,000	\$225,000
Process / R&D Engineer	\$80,000	\$120,000	\$170,000
Quality Engineer	\$80,000	\$115,000	\$160,000
Control Systems Engineer	\$100,000	\$135,000	\$160,000
Maintenance			
Maintenance Manager	\$90,000	\$130,000	\$180,000
Maintenance Supervisor	\$90,000	\$110,000	\$140,000
Maintenance Technician	\$60,000	\$100,000	\$120,000
Food Science / Product Development			
Chief Science Officer / Sr VP R&D	\$175,000	\$220,000	\$350,000
Vice President R&D and Innovation	\$130,000	\$200,000	\$280,000
Director of R&D	\$100,000	\$170,000	\$260,000
Principal Scientist	\$130,000	\$170,000	\$250,000
Research & Development Manager	\$80,000	\$135,000	\$180,000
Senior Food Scientist	\$100,000	\$130,000	\$160,000
R&D Project Manager	\$80,000	\$130,000	\$165,000
Food Scientist	\$70,000	\$100,000	\$150,000
Food Technologist	\$70,000	\$90,000	\$130,000
R&D Coordinator / Specialist	\$60,000	\$90,000	\$120,000
Product Development Lab Technician	\$50,000	\$70,000	\$110,000
R&D Intern / Research Assistant	\$50,000	\$70,000	\$90,000

Cost of Living Adjustments

Arkansas	Kansas	Buffalo.....-2%
Bentonville.....-8%	Kansas City.....-9%	Long Island75%
Arizona	Kentucky	Manhattan104%
Phoenix.....6%	Louisville.....-6%	Rochester.....-1%
California	Massachusetts	Ohio
Los Angeles.....49%	Boston.....46%	Cincinnati.....-8%
Modesto.....16%	Maryland	Cleveland.....-7%
Sacramento.....20%	Baltimore.....10%	Oregon
San Francisco.....67%	Maine	Portland.....28%
Colorado	Portland.....15%	Pennsylvania
Denver.....9%	Michigan	Philadelphia3%
Connecticut	Detroit.....-5%	South Dakota
New Haven.....23%	Minnesota	Sioux Falls-8%
District of Columbia	Minneapolis.....-6%	Tennessee
Washington42%	Missouri	Nashville2%
Florida	St. Louis.....-11%	Texas
Miami.....21%	North Carolina	Austin.....-3%
Georgia	Charlotte.....-1%	Dallas2%
Atlanta-4%	Nebraska	Houston.....-6%
Iowa	Omaha.....-5%	Utah
Des Moines.....-13%	New Jersey	Salt Lake City.....5%
Idaho	Newark.....30%	Virginia
Boise.....5%	New Mexico	Richmond5%
Illinois	Albuquerque.....-5%	Washington
Chicago.....15%	Nevada	Seattle45%
Indiana	Las Vegas3%	Yakima.....-8%
Indianapolis.....-5%	New York	Wisconsin
	Brooklyn.....73%	Green Bay-14%
		Milwaukee.....-3%

Other Factors That MUST Be Considered

Base salary is only one factor in a total compensation offer. Job satisfaction, location, work-life balance, supervisor, teammates, and work environment must also be considered.



PAID TIME OFF

Holiday pay, vacation pay, personal and sick days are something every job seeker considers before accepting new employment. Even at entry-level, you should expect to offer at least 3 weeks of paid time off in addition to the 6 major US holidays. Mid-level managers (5-10 years) expect 3 to 4 weeks, and senior managers/directors (10+ years) expect 4 to 5 weeks. VP-level and executives expect 5+ weeks, even if they don't use it all.



BENEFITS

The increase in healthcare costs nationwide has made group medical benefits a significant perk for employers to attract talent. Let candidates know if you cover 80-100% of employee or family premiums. If you do not offer medical insurance, expect to pay an additional monthly stipend to cover private insurance costs to attract talent. 401(k) with an employer match is also part of a typical overall compensation package offer.



REMOTE WORK OPTION / FLEXIBILITY

Roles with work-life balance are important to today's job seeker. Remote and hybrid work will continue to be a part of food and beverage industry career options as the talented professionals you are looking to hire consider flexible schedules more favorably.



BONUS

Offering a bonus, based on company and/or personal performance, is expected with Manager and Executive-level positions as well as for revenue-generating positions like Sales, R&D and Marketing. The more impact a professional has on the bottom line, the higher the bonus percentage expected. An average bonus range you should consider offering is 10% to 30% of base salary. For business development roles, a % of new sales as commission is best practice.



EQUITY

Offering equity in the company is critical for senior-level positions if your company is a start-up, still in its infancy, or private-equity owned. Equity offering varies greatly and may be awarded annually or vested over time. Long-term incentives for public or family-owned businesses are advisable for retention of senior leaders.

Our Network. Your Advantage.

As a nationally recognized food and beverage industry headhunter, Kinsa Group specializes in executive search and the placement of management, director, vice president and chief officer-level professionals throughout North America.

- ▶ Our singular focus on the food and beverage industry ensures faster and more consistent results.
- ▶ We're intentional, candid, and consultative – so you have the data you need to make the best hiring decisions.
- ▶ We offer several search options: Priority, Retained, Contingency, and Contract.



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