



Food & Drink

The West Midlands is recognised the world over as a premier location for food and drink manufacture thanks, in part, to the global success of local-born brands such as **Cadbury** and **Bass**. Our region is also the location of choice for many of this sectors leading brands such as, **Muller, Florette**, Groupe Danone, Sun Valley, Heinz, Nestle and **PepsiCo**. Attracted by our **unique central location**, ideal for food logistics and distribution, all major food retailers also have distribution centres operating out of the region.

The West Midland's food and drink sector includes some 2,600 regional businesses and employs approximately 66,000 people directly, with a further 100,000 or more in the wider supply chain.

Food and drink employment in the West Midlands is forecast to grow by approximately 2.5% until 2012.

These suppliers, producers and farmers are responsible for around 9% of food and drink output for the country. The region is a nationally recognised centre for the manufacture of dairy products, leaders in secondary meat processing operations, fruit processing and bakery processors. Our products and produce are of the highest quality with meat, poultry, vegetables and dairy delivered throughout the UK and exported extensively to Europe and the wider World.

Sector Strengths:

- * **Food Manufacturing** – The West Midlands Region is home to 10% of England's and 7% of the UK's food and drink manufacturing enterprises. Food manufacturers in the West Midlands Region are leading the way in **multicultural cuisine** with more than **130 manufacturers** producing Chinese, Indian and Afro-Caribbean food (source: PERA Food & Drink Report). West Bromwich based, **East End Foods**, is one of the **largest importers of Indian foods into the UK** (responsible for over 16% of the total UK spice imports) (*Mintel Report July 2003*)
- * **Drinks Manufacturing** – Drinks manufacturing in the West Midlands accounts for 22% of all employees in this sector across the whole of the UK. The region is particularly strong in the manufacture of alcoholic beverages. Burton-on-Trent is the **UK's home of brewing**, all British malt production is carried out in Staffordshire and **Herefordshire**, the location of **HP Bulmer**, is **world renowned** for its cider production
- * **Logistics & Distribution** – the regions unique location at the centre of the UK's road and rail network makes it an attractive proposition for a number of major food retailers. **Unilever** recently opened a 4,000m² distribution centre in Cannock to handle all of its ambient food. The 37-bay, 30m-high depot broke new ground in food warehousing with 12 automated storage and retrieval cranes, automated cross-docking, paperless picking, advance shipment notification capabilities and a state-of-the-art warehouse management system

Business Support:

For food and drink producers and manufacturers based in the West Midlands Region, there are many excellent sector – dedicated resources available. From food and drink incubation units created specifically for emerging enterprises in Staffordshire to industry networking groups the infrastructure your business needs to develop is here.

- * **West Midlands Food Partnership (WMFP)** – established to ensure that the principal delivery bodies and agencies in the food and drink sector deliver the most cohesive and sustainable package of services possible to food and drink processors and producers
- * **Food & Drink Information Centre (FDIC)** – The FDIC delivers a specialist service for food and drink businesses including consultative and specialist sector support



- * **Heart of England Fine Foods (HEFF)** – the regional food group for the West Midlands representing local food producers since 1998. HEFF have been working with local producers establishing contacts and building relationships with food retailers, wholesalers and food-service companies
- * **International Agriculture & Technology Centre (IATC)** – IATC in Warwickshire offers support and advice to UK companies in the agriculture and related technologies sector looking for new market opportunities across the globe
- * **Shrewsbury Food Enterprise Centre** – Based out of the Shropshire Food Enterprise Park, the Food Enterprise Centre provides accommodation, support infrastructure and research facilities needed to establish and support small and medium sized business in the food and drink sector

Sector Research & Development

- * Food & drink businesses located in the West Midlands Region can access the facilities and sector support services of major research centres including; **ADAS Research**, the **Henry Doubleday Research Association** (HDRA) and the **Campden and Chorleywood Food Research Association** (CCFRA)
- * The largest team of horticultural R&D scientists in the world, are based at the **Warwickshire Horticultural Research International** (HRI)

If you'd like to speak to a sector specialist about the West Midlands Region as a potential location for your business, call the Inward Investment Team at Advantage West Midlands on +44 (0) 121 380 3500 or email info@investwm.org

To request a copy of the latest West Midlands business brochure, email marketing@advantagewm.co.uk