

# Food Chicago

*A candy manufacturer increased productivity of workers by 30%.*

*A cheesecake manufacturer reduced rejects from 4% to 1% resulting in savings of \$500,000.*

How did they do this? By participating in programs of the Candy Institute/Food Chicago...a coalition of food companies, unions, government, and communities that understand the importance of the food industry to the Chicago region. Food Chicago finds innovative answers and resources to solving common problems.

***"The City's partnership with the Candy Institute/Food Chicago will strengthen our food manufacturing sector. Food Chicago is the kind of public/private partnership that is good for our local companies and our local communities."***

—Mayor Richard Daley

## Food Chicago's Mission and History

Food Chicago's mission is to make food companies in the Chicago region more profitable and competitive through workforce training, modernization, networking, and advocating for innovative public policy. Food Chicago was initiated by the Center for Labor and Community Research (CLCR), a non-profit consulting and research organization that specializes in developing innovative approaches to retain industry with the support of foundations, government, and stakeholders of the industry.

Food Chicago's forerunner is the Candy Institute. The Candy Institute was created in 1996 by local leaders as a *proactive* response to a crisis that threatened a large Chicago candy company employing 3,700 residents. The Institute's research identified 100 candy companies in the Chicago area, employing 13,000 workers, and contributing \$4 billion to the local economy—branding Chicago the “Candy Capital of the World”. As a result of the Candy Institute's programs, Chicago area candy companies have seen:

- Impressive improvements in their profitability;
- Increased productivity;
- Improved labor/management relations; and
- Effective support from City government.

***“Training has very effectively made us more efficient. This past year of training facilitated by the Candy Institute has resulted in approximately \$500,000 in savings.”***

—Jolene Worthington, V.P. of Operations, Eli's Cheesecakes

***“We participated in English as a Second Language and Lean Manufacturing training with the Candy Institute and their partners. The result has been a***

***30% improvement in productivity and a more skilled and efficient workforce.  
Before these improvements we contemplated moving out of the country.”***

—Jim Martuarno, World Class Manufacturing Director,  
American Licorice

The expansion of the Candy Institute to Food Chicago enables us to embrace the much broader food industry and implement specialized programs on a larger scale. Food Chicago’s research has determined that food manufacturing in the Chicago metropolitan area is a significant industry that includes 900 food-manufacturing companies, employs 57,000 workers, and contributes \$17 billion to the local economy.

Dr. Peter Rogers, former CEO of Brach Candy Company and former President of Nabisco Brands, will chair and lead the Food Chicago Advisory Committee.

***“Food Chicago can assist food manufacturing companies in the development of innovative business practices and focused training programs—both are critical for success in the food processing industry.”***

—Dr. Peter Rogers, former CEO of Brach Candy Co.

## **Food Chicago Services**

- **Increasing Company Profitability through Workforce Development:** Food Chicago’s workforce development programs include courses such as vocational English as a second language, lean manufacturing training, food handling and sanitation, and many others. Companies that have participated in these training programs have seen a significant return on their training investments in terms of increased worker productivity, increased use of advanced technology for improved performance, and the reduction of waste and rework.
- **Providing Technical and Consulting Assistance:** Food Chicago has a network of excellent consultants available to assist you with all aspects of business development including marketing, financial management, technology, labor/management relations, and networking.
- **Creating a Business Innovation and Training Center:** Food Chicago and its partners are establishing a licensed shared-use kitchen, where companies can test recipes and manufacturing techniques. The kitchen will serve as an innovation center for the broader food industry in the region—assisting companies to grow in profitability and employment. The U.S. Economic Development Administration, Cook County, and the City of Chicago are providing important assistance.
- **Developing Research-Based Policy and Program:** We collect and analyze data to identify trends in the economy and needs in the community, and we use this research to develop Food Chicago’s programs.

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