

**Applied Geography**  
**Call for Papers**  
**The Ever-Changing Food and Beverage Landscape:**  
**Challenges, Opportunities, Equity, and Policy**

**Guest Editors**

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**Introduction**

The theme of the proposed special issue is *The Food and Beverage Industry: Current and Emerging Challenges and Opportunities*. The food and beverage industry plays a critical role in every country. Its value chain expands from manufacturing, packaging, warehousing, transportation, retailing to purchasing and consumption of food and beverages. The industry provides sustenance to people across the globe while also contributing significantly to local, regional, and national economies. For example, the food and beverage sector in the United States employs over 1.8 million people. It is the third largest contributor to manufacturing gross domestic product (National Institute of Standards and Technology 2021).

Meanwhile, the industry has undergone significant transformations over the past several decades, from the popularity of organic food in the early 2000s to the surge of online grocery and food deliveries propelled by the COVID-19 pandemic. These industry-level innovations reflect society's desires and concerns regarding food safety, health, and the environmental footprints of the industry. For instance, estimates suggest that food systems account for over one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions (United Nations 2021). Other social and economic concerns, such as the fragility of the food supply chain and food waste, are also reshaping the industry landscape (e.g., Felix et al. 2020). It is imperative to identify and understand the current and future challenges and opportunities presented in the food and beverage industry to facilitate innovations.

**Objectives and Research Topics**

This special issue explores current and emerging challenges and opportunities facing the food and beverage industry. Challenges, of course, must be overcome, and opportunities must be harnessed. Moreover, what might be conceived of as a challenge to one company or place may represent an opportunity for another company or place. Current and emerging challenges and opportunities in the food and beverage industry include [but are not limited to] high rates of worker turnover, inflation, the rise of e-commerce,

supply chain vulnerability, geo-political instability, environmental sustainability, tracking and tracing of food, changing consumer values and tastes, changing regulatory environments, food safety, food waste, monoculture, and an overreliance on food aggregators (e.g., Grub Hub).

At the industry level, overcoming challenges and taking advantage of opportunities often requires identifying and adopting new technologies or business models. These can include reconfiguring or expanding the value chain, embracing new technologies, pinpointing new markets, finding new ways to serve existing customers, etc. More often than not, these "new ways of doing business" have a geographical dimension. They could change the industry landscape on different scales (e.g., local, regional, national, and international). In addition, these "new ways of doing business" can have differential impacts on sub-populations of a society. For example, increased use of automation along the supply chain can disproportionately affect specific places and groups of the labor force.

With this special issue, we hope to assess the socio-economic implications of changes occurring in the food and beverage industry and, where applicable, identify possible policy prescriptions and pathways that might ameliorate their negative impacts, especially those on disadvantaged populations and communities. We hope this special issue will generate new insights into the challenges and opportunities facing the food and beverage industry by encouraging submissions from scholars across various disciplines, using different methodological approaches, and from diverse geographic contexts (see below).

Possible topics that are part of the special issue include those listed below. However, we welcome submissions on other topics relevant to the special issue theme.

- Changing Geographies and Systems of Production and Consumption
- Alternative Food Systems
- Transportation and Supply Chain Logistics
- Public Policy and the Regulatory Environment
- Environmental and Sustainability Issues
- Changing Consumer Tastes, Preferences and Behaviors.
- Access and Equity
- The Geography of Food Safety and Food Insecurity
- Automation, AI, and Industry 4.0
- Polycrisis (e.g., pandemics, geo-political disturbances, climate change, economic shocks, etc.)

### **Abstract Submission**

We invite submissions from Geographers and scholars working in related fields such as Regional Science, Economics, and other social sciences. We encourage submissions from across the globe to have a special issue that represents as wide a variety of socio-economic-political contexts as possible. We also

hope to receive studies demonstrating the range of geographers' methodological approaches, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. Only manuscripts with an explicit geospatial focus will be considered for this special issue.

All papers should address significant issues pertinent to the themes of this issue and fall within the scope of the Journal of Applied Geography. Criteria for acceptance include originality, contribution, and scientific merit. All manuscripts must be written in English with high scientific writing standards. Acceptance for publication will be based on referees' and editors' recommendations following a standard peer review process.

In the email accompanying your abstract, please state how your proposed submission is consistent with the [Aims and Scope of Applied Geography](#) and why it is a good fit for this special issue. Abstracts (up to 250 words) should be emailed to Neil Reid at [neil.reid@utoledo.edu](mailto:neil.reid@utoledo.edu).

### **Proposed Timeline**

- Submission of abstracts (250-500 words) – March 22, 2024
- Decision on who to invite to make a submission (based on review of abstracts) – March 30, 2024
- First Draft Due – September 30, 2024
- Reviewer Feedback Due – November 15, 2024
- Revised Manuscripts Due – February 15, 2025
- Anticipated SI Publication Date – Late Spring 2025

### **References:**

Felix, Ignacio, Adrian Martin, Vivek Mehta, and Curt Mueller. 2020. US food supply chain: Disruptions and implications from COVID-19. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/consumer-packaged-goods/our-insights/us-food-supply-chain-disruptions-and-implications-from-covid-19>.

National Institute of Standards and Technology 2021. Farm to Factory to Table: The Food and Beverage Manufacturing Industry. <https://www.nist.gov/mep/manufacturing-infographics/food-and-beverage-manufacturing-industry>.

United Nations. 2021. Food systems account for over one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/03/1086822>.