

60 per cent of restaurants could close permanently in next three months, warns Canadian Chamber

OTTAWA – August 26, 2020 – More than 60 per cent of Canada's restaurants risk having to close their doors permanently by November, according to government data.

The Canadian Survey on Business Conditions (CSBC), produced by Statistics Canada with support from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, found that 29% of accommodation and food service businesses cannot operate at all with social distancing measures in effect. A further 31% will only be able to remain operational for up to 90 days with distancing measures in effect. In other words, up to 60% of the industry could fail within three months.

These figures are even more troubling when you consider the jobs already lost. When COVID hit, 83% of businesses in the accommodation and food services industries temporarily closed and two-thirds were forced to lay off some staff, including almost a quarter that were forced to lay off all their staff. According to Restaurants Canada, the food service industry lost 800,000 jobs.

While the economy is now slowly beginning to recover, to date the federal government has not offered help tailored to the needs of the hardest hit industries like food services, which will take a long time to recover. That's why the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and 15 food service businesses, representing more than 60 brands, is today launching the 'Our Restaurants' campaign.

"We need to act now. Across Canada, our restaurants are where we meet for business or pleasure, where we got our first job and where our families spend a night out. Simply put, our restaurants are cornerstones in our communities," said Hon. Perrin Beatty, President and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. "The 'Our Restaurants' campaign underscores the urgent need for Canadians – both the public and our governments – to come together to support these businesses in their time of need."

The campaign puts a spotlight on the current situation faced by Canada's restaurants amidst COVID-19: high costs, fewer customers, and government programs ill-equipped for the unique, long-term challenges faced by the industry.

Our Restaurants is a campaign led by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and supported by:

- Arterra Wines Canada
- Benny & Co.
- Boston Pizza
- CWB Franchise Finance
- Firkin Group of Pubs
- Foodtastic
- Gordon Food Service
- Molson Coors Beverage Company

- Northland Restaurant Group
- Paramount Fine Foods
- Pizza Pizza
- Restaurants Canada
- Service Inspired Restaurants (SIR Corp)
- St. Louis Bar and Grill Restaurants
- Sysco Canada

Together these companies represent more than 60 of the best known restaurant brands across Canada and the whole of the food services industry.

“We can all make a difference. Canadians need to observe safety measures while also starting to resume our normal lives, including being able to go out for a meal. Everyone also needs to remind their elected representatives of the importance of our restaurants in our lives,” concluded Beatty.

The campaign is national, bilingual, includes paid advertising, and the launch of the website OurRestaurants.ca (NosRestaurants.ca in French). It is highlighted by [this advertisement](#).

Additional Quotes:

“Through the ‘Our Restaurants’ campaign Boston Pizza stands with our fellow competitors big and small in highlighting the critical and urgent support needed to sustain the restaurant industry and the many Canadians it employs through the debilitating impacts of the pandemic.”

- Jim Treliving
Chairman and Founder
Boston Pizza

“The Firkin Group of Pubs stands in solidarity with restaurants across the country, in supporting the ‘Our Restaurants’ campaign, in bringing awareness to the plight of our suffering industry, and the continued call for sustained government support, to ensure our survival, which is crucial to the overall Canadian economy.”

- Larry Isaacs
President
The Firkin Group of Pubs

“As co-chair of the Chamber’s national committee on foodservice, we have come together to raise our voice concerning the looming threat of widespread restaurant closures. This would not only have disastrous impacts on employment, but on all sectors supporting restaurant operations, including food and beverage distributors and other businesses within the supply chain, right through to Canadian farmers. We welcome the additional voice of the Chamber to encourage Canadians to support their local restaurants so that foodservice businesses can continue contributing to Canada’s recovery.”

- David Lefebvre
Vice President, Federal and Quebec

“We are proud to be a part of the ‘Our Restaurants’ campaign. We strive each and every day to provide the safest possible environment for our guests and our team members. Operating at 50% capacity in a business that has very low profit margins at the best of times is extremely difficult if not impossible. We need support from all levels of government to help us through these difficult times particularly in regards to occupancy costs. We ask for your support to lobby our government representatives to get immediate action. We want to be here in the future to serve you.”

- Paul J. Bognar

*President and Chief Operating Officer
Service Inspired Restaurants*

About the Canadian Chamber of Commerce – Because Business Matters

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce helps build the businesses that support our families, our communities and our country. We do this by influencing government policy, by providing essential business services and by connecting businesses to information they can use, to opportunities for growth and to a network of local chambers, businesses, decision-makers and peers from across the country, in every sector of the economy and at all levels of government, as well as internationally. We are unapologetic in our support for business and the vital role it plays in building and sustaining our great nation.

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Restaurants



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