

# Increased morbidity, mortality in food system industries

July 1 2015

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Photo: U.S. Department of Agriculture

(HealthDay)—Occupational morbidity and mortality are elevated across food system industries compared with nonfood system industries, according to a study published online May 12 in the *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*.

Kira L. Newman, from the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in Atlanta, and colleagues analyzed 2008 to 2010 Bureau of Labor Statistics data for private industries in various stages of the farm-to-table model (production, processing, distribution and storage, and retail and preparation).

The researchers found that the [morbidity rates](#) were significantly higher for food system industries versus nonfood system industries (rate ratio, 1.62). Compared with the national nonfood occupational mortality rate,

the occupational mortality rate was significantly higher for food system industries (rate ratio, 9.51).

"The farm-to-table model unifies diverse industries into a common chain," the authors write. "In this way, it reshapes our understanding of the burden of 'foodborne' illness to include not just pathogens and toxins that are transmitted to consumers through contaminated food, but also the costs that society bears for occupational injury, illness, and death that occur in the process of producing and delivering food to consumers."

**More information:** [Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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Citation: Increased morbidity, mortality in food system industries (2015, July 1) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-07-morbidity-mortality-food-industries.html>

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