

# Median Starting Salaries Reach \$45,000

Recent food science graduates—tomorrow’s leaders in the food field—report their starting salaries in an exclusive survey by IFT.

Neil H. Mermelstein, Editor



**R**ecent food science graduates received a median starting salary of \$45,000. That was one of the findings of an exclusive survey conducted by the Institute of Food Technologists.

IFT has conducted a biennial salary survey among all its members for many years, but this year IFT decided to focus on starting salaries—the salaries that future leaders in the food field begin their careers with.

With almost 95% of graduating IFT student members having Internet capability, IFT decided to conduct, for the first time, a salary survey via the Internet. This would simplify and speed up responses, compared to the mailed-out questionnaires previously used. The survey was conducted for IFT by Research Results, Inc., Fitchburg, Mass.

In December 2001, the company sent an e-mail message to all former IFT student members in the United States whose e-mail addresses IFT had and who graduated in 2000 or 2001. The message asked them to access a 19-question questionnaire on the Internet. The e-mail message was sent to 632 former students, and those who had not responded by the deadline date were sent a reminder. Of the 632 people who were sent the message, 254 responded, representing a 40% response. Of the respondents, 209 (83%) were employed full-time; 32 (13%) were in graduate school.

## Salary Data

The data presented below and on the next two pages are for full-time employees. The mean is the arithmetic average. The median means that half of the respondents make more than

that amount and half make less. Data are presented for all responses, but the readers should note that the number of respondents (N) for some categories is low.

### Median Salary and Bonuses

The median starting salary, excluding bonus and benefits, for full-time employees was \$45,000, and the range was \$14,000 to \$90,000. Employees received bonuses ranging from 0 to \$13,000, with a median of \$2,000 (data not shown)

	N	Low	High	Mean	Median
All respondents	209	\$19,500	\$90,000	\$45,527	\$45,000

### Salary by Degree

As expected, the higher the degree, the higher was the starting salary.

	N	Low	High	Mean	Median
BS	80	\$19,500	\$58,500	\$38,420	\$38,000
MS	74	20,000	68,000	47,210	50,000
PhD	50	25,500	90,000	54,848	60,000

# Median Starting Salaries Reach \$45,000

## Salary by Sex

There continues to be a disparity in starting salaries between men and women, with men making almost \$6,000 more.

	N	Low	High	Mean	Median
Men	71	\$21,120	\$90,000	\$48,623	\$50,440
Women	136	19,500	72,000	44,014	44,450
<i>Difference (men – women)</i>					5,990

## Salary by Sex and Degree

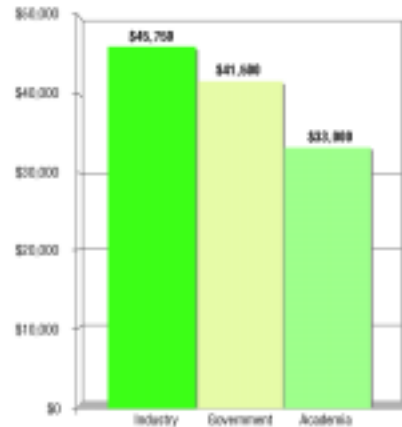
Men with BS and PhD degrees made more than women, but women with MS degree made slightly more than men.

	N	Low	High	Mean	Median
Men	71	\$21,120	\$90,000	\$48,623	\$50,440
BS	19	24,636	58,500	41,036	41,000
MS	22	21,120	65,000	46,596	49,500
PhD	29	28,000	90,000	55,497	60,000
Women	136	19,500	72,000	44,014	44,450
BS	60	19,500	56,000	37,516	36,025
MS	51	20,000	68,000	47,733	50,000
PhD	21	25,500	72,000	53,952	56,000
<i>Difference (men – women)</i>					BS 4,975 MS -500 PhD 4,000

## Salary by Degree and Supervision

Those who supervise others received higher starting salaries than those who don't, and, again, the salary increased within each category by degree earned.

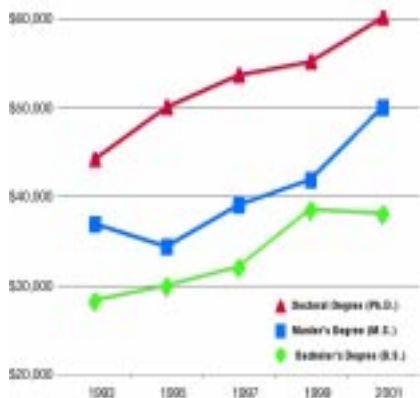
	N	Low	High	Mean	Median
Supervise others	72	\$26,000	\$72,000	\$47,707	\$49,000
BS	18	30,000	50,440	39,930	40,500
MS	22	28,500	68,000	46,616	49,000
PhD	30	26,000	72,000	53,153	55,000
Do not supervise others	131	19,500	90,000	44,250	43,600
BS	58	19,500	58,500	37,627	36,275
MS	51	20,000	65,000	47,391	50,000
PhD	19	25,500	90,000	57,253	64,000



Median starting salaries by type of employer

## Trends

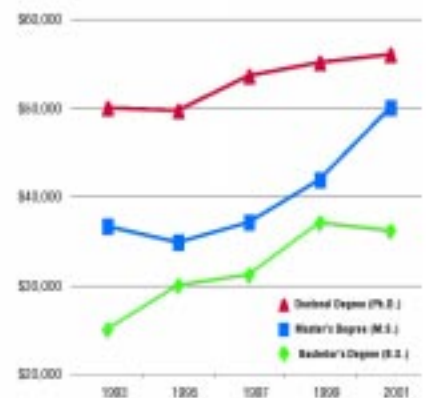
As expected, the median salaries have increased over the years. The charts below compare this year's median starting salaries to those reported in previous salary surveys conducted among all IFT members in the United States.



Median starting salaries by degree for all respondents



Median starting salaries by degree for men



Median starting salaries by degree for women

# Median Starting Salaries Reach \$45,000

Salary by Degree and Location					
Starting salaries were highest in the Middle Atlantic, East North Central, and West South Central regions of the United States.					
	N	Low	High	Mean	Median
<b>New England</b>	14	\$28,500	\$68,000	\$43,482	\$40,600
BS	5	32,500	46,000	40,970	40,600
MS	7	28,500	68,000	43,986	36,400
PhD	2	36,000	60,000	48,000	48,000
<b>Middle Atlantic</b>	35	28,000	70,000	49,523	50,000
BS	17	35,000	56,000	44,961	44,000
MS	12	42,500	65,000	54,496	54,500
PhD	6	28,000	70,000	52,500	60,000
<b>South Atlantic</b>	19	20,000	60,000	40,247	38,000
BS	7	20,000	42,000	32,471	34,500
MS	6	33,000	50,000	41,567	40,000
PhD	6	30,000	60,000	48,000	53,500
<b>East South Central</b>	3	47,000	60,000	53,000	52,000
BS	0	—	—	—	—
MS	1	47,000	47,000	47,000	47,000
PhD	2	52,000	60,000	56,000	56,000
<b>East North Central</b>	52	21,120	73,500	47,933	45,250
BS	17	30,000	58,500	40,321	37,500
MS	16	21,120	65,000	47,036	49,500
PhD	17	25,500	73,500	57,818	65,000
<b>West North Central</b>	32	19,500	69,000	42,832	42,500
BS	11	19,500	45,000	31,358	31,000
MS	13	38,200	52,000	47,439	50,000
PhD	6	26,000	69,000	53,333	63,500
<b>Mountain</b>	5	27,000	65,000	43,220	43,000
BS	2	27,000	28,100	27,550	27,550
MS	2	43,000	53,000	48,000	48,000
PhD	1	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000
<b>West South Central</b>	19	25,500	63,000	44,561	45,000
BS	7	25,500	47,600	32,993	32,000
MS	9	31,000	60,000	48,022	55,000
PhD	3	60,000	63,000	61,167	60,500
<b>California</b>	9	38,000	60,000	46,976	45,000
BS	3	38,000	42,000	40,000	40,000
MS	3	45,000	52,785	48,595	48,000
PhD	2	52,000	60,000	56,000	56,000
<b>Washington and Oregon</b>	6	27,000	90,000	48,250	44,000
BS	3	36,500	48,000	41,500	40,000
MS	1	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000
PhD	2	27,000	90,000	58,500	58,500

Salary by Employer and Degree					
Starting salaries were highest in industry and lowest in academia but increased in each category according to degree earned.					
	N	Low	High	Mean	Median
<b>Industry</b>	166	\$20,000	\$90,000	\$47,068	\$45,750
BS	73	20,000	58,500	39,171	39,000
MS	59	27,000	68,000	49,546	51,000
PhD	29	30,000	90,000	62,928	65,000
<b>Government</b>	6	24,636	52,000	39,773	41,500
BS	2	24,636	27,000	25,818	25,818
MS	2	38,000	45,000	41,500	41,500
PhD	2	52,000	52,000	52,000	52,000
<b>Academia</b>	27	20,000	66,000	38,980	33,000
BS	2	28,000	32,000	30,000	30,000
MS	7	20,000	55,000	34,850	33,000
PhD	18	25,500	66,000	41,583	36,000
<b>Other</b>	8	19,500	65,000	38,978	37,350
BS	2	19,500	35,000	27,250	27,250
MS	5	21,120	54,000	38,464	38,200
PhD	1	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000

Salary by Degree and Job Function					
Research and development workers and consultants received the highest starting salaries.					
	N	Low	High	Mean	Median
<b>Research &amp; Development</b>	144	\$20,000	\$90,000	\$47,192	\$47,500
BS	52	20,000	58,500	39,933	39,800
MS	49	20,000	68,000	48,532	51,000
PhD	39	25,500	90,000	55,908	60,500
<b>Production</b>	12	27,000	53,500	39,258	39,500
BS	8	27,000	47,600	36,200	36,000
MS	4	37,000	53,500	45,375	45,500
<b>Sales &amp; Marketing</b>	2	38,000	55,000	46,500	46,500
MS	2	38,000	55,000	46,500	46,500
<b>Education</b>	10	28,000	66,000	45,695	43,750
BS	1	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000
MS	3	33,000	36,500	35,317	36,450
PhD	6	31,000	66,000	53,833	57,500
<b>Consulting</b>	3	42,500	60,000	52,167	54,000
MS	2	42,500	54,000	48,250	48,250
PhD	1	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
<b>Inspection</b>	3	24,636	35,000	31,145	33,800
BS	3	24636	35000	31,145	33,800
<b>Other</b>	33	19,500	65,000	40,895	40,000
BS	15	19,500	50,440	35,869	35,000
MS	13	21,120	65,000	45,193	45,000
PhD	4	27,000	64,000	44,750	44,000

## Demographic Data

Who are these new employees in the food field? The typical starting employee is most likely a 26-year-old white woman with a degree in food science and technology working in research and development in the food industry. Of the respon-

dents, 80% (71% of men and 84% of women) received their highest degree in food science/technology. The field that received the next highest response was food engineering, with only 4% responding (10% of men and 2% of women).

### Age

The median age of new employees is in the 20s.

	Median age (years)	Range (years)
All respondents	26	22-53
Women	25	22-49
Men	27	22-53
BS respondents	23	22-49
MS respondents	26	24-39
PhD respondents	30	23-53

### Highest Degree

Approximately equal percentages of men earned the three degrees, but a smaller percentage of women earned the PhD.

	Percent (read down)		
	All	Men	Women
BS	39	30	44
MS	39	33	42
PhD	22	37	14

### Sex

Most new employees are female.

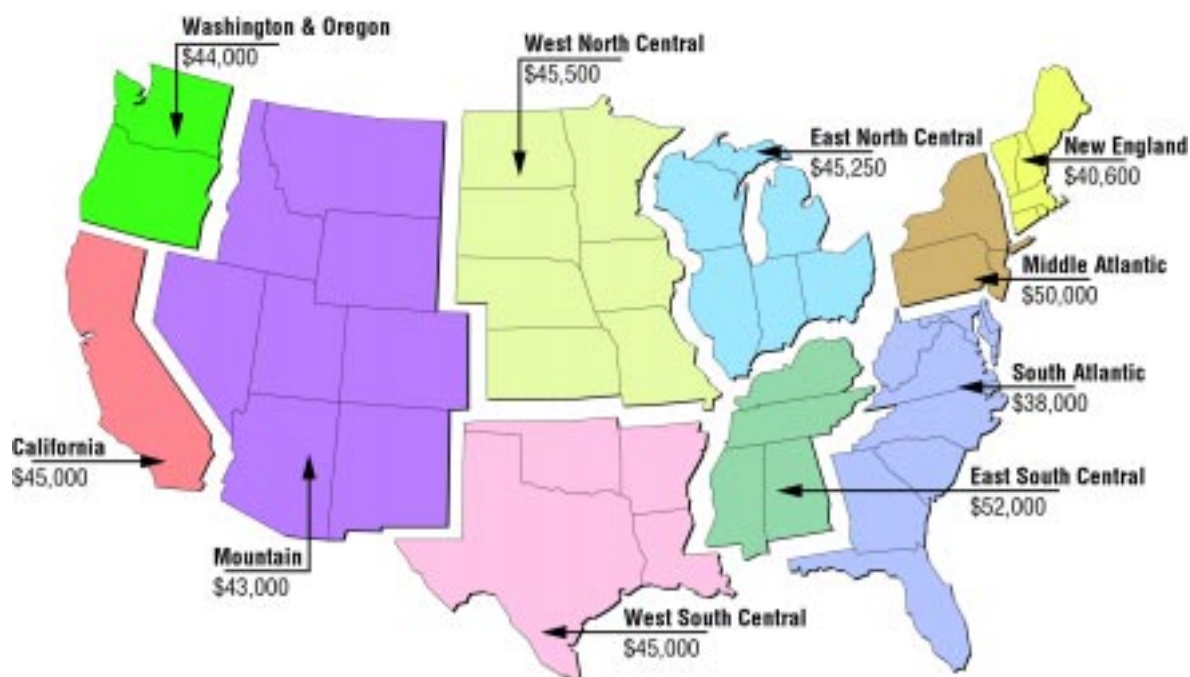
	Percent (read across)	
	Male	Female
All respondents	33	67
BS respondents	26	74
MS respondents	29	71
PhD respondents	57	43

### Ethnicity

Most new employees are white.

	Percent (read down)		
	All	Men	Women
White	70	61	73
Asian/Pacific Islander	19	29	14
Spanish/Hispanic/ Latin American	5	4	6
Black/African-American	2	2	2
Indian/Alaska Native	0	0	1
Other/Mixed	3	4	3

### Median Starting Salary by Location



# Median Starting Salaries Reach \$45,000

Location	
<b>The new employees are located primarily in the northeastern U.S.</b>	
Percent of all respondents	
East North Central	26
Middle Atlantic	17
West North Central	16
South Atlantic	9
West South Central	9
New England	7
California	4
Washington and Oregon	3
Mountain	2
East South Central	1

Job Function			
<b>Most of the recent graduates work in R&amp;D.</b>			
Percent (read down)			
	All	Men	Women
Research & Development	69	68	70
Production	6	9	4
Education	5	6	5
Consulting	1	3	1
Inspection	1	1	1
Sales & Marketing	1	0	1
Other	16	13	17

Supervisory Responsibility	
<b>Fewer than 50% of the recent graduates have supervisory responsibility, and, as might be expected, PhD holders have more supervisory responsibilities than BS and MS holders.</b>	
	Percent
Total respondents	35
Men	48
Women	29
BS	23
MS	30
PhD	61

Benefits	
<b>Most employers provide the basic benefits.</b>	
	Percent
Health insurance	99
Vacation	97
Dental insurance	87
Life insurance	84
401K	84
Sick leave	82
Disability insurance	72
Tuition reimbursement	70
Maternity/paternity/family leave	69
Vision insurance	64
Bonus/performance compensation	64
Relocation expenses	61
Association membership dues	57
Continuing education courses	50
Pension	47
Flex time	43
Fitness facilities/dues	43
Employee assistance program	35
Severance policy	29
Legal assistance	27
Child care	10
Time off to do professional society volunteer work	34
Travel expenses for professional society volunteer work	29
Time off to attend meetings or conferences of professional societies	90
Travel expenses to attend meetings or conferences of professional societies	83

Type of Employer			
<b>Most new employees work in industry.</b>			
Percent (read down)			
	All	Men	Women
Industry	80	74	82
Academia	13	19	11
Government	3	3	3

## Past survey available on the Web

In contrast to this starting salary survey, which was conducted only among recent graduates, the Institute of Food Technologists has conducted a biennial salary survey among *all* IFT members in the United States since 1993. For results of the most recent salary survey, see the April 2000 issue of *Food Technology*, also available on IFT's Web site at [www.ift.org/publications/docshop/ft\\_shop/04-00/04\\_00\\_pdfs/04-00-salary.pdf](http://www.ift.org/publications/docshop/ft_shop/04-00/04_00_pdfs/04-00-salary.pdf). Results of earlier surveys were published in the April 1994, April 1996, and April 1998 issues of *Food Technology*. ●

