

**THE NEW RULES OF NETWORKING**

# Entrepreneur®

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THAT MADE  
CHARITY  
PROFITABLE**

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## DIG INTO 2017'S **TOP 200** FOOD-BASED FRANCHISES

by TRACY STAPP HEROLD

**WHILE THE FRANCHISE** model has expanded into almost every type of business imaginable, franchises based around food remain an industry cornerstone. Almost a quarter of the 988 companies that applied for the 2017 Franchise 500 list were food-related. And according to the latest *Economic Impact of Franchised Businesses* report prepared for the International Franchise Association, “quick-service restaurants provided more establishments, jobs, and payroll and generated more output and contributed more to GDP than any other single line of business.” Full-service restaurants and retail food businesses contribute significantly as well.

On the following pages we’ve ranked the top 200 food franchises, divided by category—such as Asian food, frozen desserts, and sandwiches—and then ranked them within their respective categories, so whatever type of food franchise you’re interested in, you can see who comes out on top.

The rankings are based on each company’s performance when run through our Franchise 500 formula, a comprehensive evaluation of more than 150 data points in the areas of costs and fees, size and growth, franchisee support, brand strength, and financial strength and stability. But keep in mind that the list is not intended as a recommendation of any particular franchise. Always do your own research to find the opportunity that’s right for you. That means reading the company’s legal documents, consulting with an attorney and an accountant, talking to as many existing and former franchisees as possible—and, of course, sampling the food!

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## RETAIL FOOD

### 1 EDIBLE ARRANGEMENTS INTERNATIONAL

Sculpted fresh-fruit bouquets

**STARTUP COST**  
\$196.6K–\$327.8K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
1,245 / 8

### 2 BEEF JERKY OUTLET FRANCHISE

Jerky, sausages, specialty foods

**STARTUP COST**  
\$193.8K–\$293.4K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
72 / 2

### 3 THE HONEYBAKED HAM COMPANY & CAFE

Specialty foods, catering, cafés

**STARTUP COST**  
\$291.8K–\$449.1K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
202 / 188

### 4 KILWINS CHOCOLATES FRANCHISE

Chocolates, fudge, ice cream

**STARTUP COST**  
\$386.1K–\$540.6K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
105 / 2

### 5 WATERMILL EXPRESS FRANCHISING

Water and ice vending machines

**STARTUP COST**  
\$456.7K–\$581.7K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
305 / 996

### 6 THE SPICE & TEA EXCHANGE

Spices, teas, related products

**STARTUP COST**  
\$190.5K–\$291.7K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
47 / 1

### 7 ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHOCOLATE FACTORY

Chocolates, confections

**STARTUP COST**  
\$115.6K–\$499.4K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
280 / 4

### 8 WINESTYLES TASTING STATION

Wine, craft beer, food, events, wine and beer club memberships

**STARTUP COST**  
\$229K–\$380.5K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
17 / 2

### 9 HAPPY & HEALTHY PRODUCTS

Frozen fruit bars

**STARTUP COST**  
\$49.7K–\$92.1K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
58 / 0

### 10 FRESH HEALTHY VENDING

Snack and beverage vending machines

**STARTUP COST**  
\$122.5K–\$205.8K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
244 / 0

### 11 DREAM DINNERS

Do-it-yourself meal-assembly sessions

**STARTUP COST**  
\$260.7K–\$448K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
76 / 10

### 12 CHOCOLATE WORKS

Chocolates, candy, parties

**STARTUP COST**  
\$290.5K–\$456.6K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
20 / 1

### 13 DOC POPCORN

Kettle-cooked popcorn

**STARTUP COST**  
\$39.5K–\$355.1K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
115 / 2

### 14 SCHAKOLAD CHOCOLATE FACTORY

European-style chocolates, coffee, gelato

**STARTUP COST**  
\$121.5K–\$153.5K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
22 / 0

### 15 FUZZIWIG'S CANDY FACTORY

Self-serve bulk candy

**STARTUP COST**  
\$184K–\$363.4K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
44 / 3

### 16 ICEBORN

Ice and water vending machines

**STARTUP COST**  
\$271K–\$213.5K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
54 / 111

## SANDWICHES

### 1 JIMMY JOHN'S SANDWICHES

Sandwiches

**STARTUP COST**  
\$325.5K–\$555K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
2,574 / 62

### 2 FIREHOUSE SUBS

Subs

**STARTUP COST**  
\$124.7K–\$1.3M

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
1,022 / 32

### 3 JERSEY MIKE'S SUBS

Subs

**STARTUP COST**  
\$193.2K–\$660.4K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
1,138 / 53

### 4 McALISTER'S DELI

Sandwiches, salads, baked potatoes

**STARTUP COST**  
\$579K–\$1.5M

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
344 / 32

McAlister's Deli is harnessing social media influencers to increase awareness. To highlight National Sandwich Day last year, the company asked select food artists with strong social followings to create sandwich art using ingredients from McAlister's sandwiches. For Valentine's Day, McAlister's had family-oriented influencers talk about its kids-eat-free promotion and gave away a year's worth of free family date nights.

### 5 SUBWAY

Subs, salads

**STARTUP COST**  
\$116.6K–\$263.2K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
44,830 / 0

### 6 CHARLEY'S PHILLY STEAKS

Philly cheesesteaks, fries, lemonade

**STARTUP COST**  
\$162.9K–\$475.9K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
517 / 55

### 7 PENN STATION EAST COAST SUBS

Grilled subs

**STARTUP COST**  
\$313.7K–\$588.9K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
310 / 1

### 8 SCHLOTZSKY'S

Sandwiches, pizza, salads

**STARTUP COST**  
\$503.8K–\$786.98K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
333 / 26

### 9 WHICH WICH SUPERIOR SANDWICHES

Sandwiches

**STARTUP COST**  
\$199.5K–\$488.8K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
399 / 3

### 10 PITA PIT

Pita sandwiches

**STARTUP COST**  
\$211.4K–\$366.5K

**TOTAL UNITS**  
FRANCHISED / CO.-OWNED  
589 / 22



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF McALISTER'S DELI