

OFFICE of the **STATE COMPTROLLER**
Special Examination
on Pizza

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INTRODUCTION

As Connecticut's fiscal watchdog, I'm always considering how different policies and industries affect our state's economy.

This report aims to quantify the impact of pizza (or, "apizza," if you will) on Connecticut's economy, including in relation to the rest of the country.

Honestly, though, we're just scratching the surface. The true impact is nearly unquantifiable when we consider the thousands of employees at pizza restaurants who spend their wages in local economies, the pounds of ingredients purchased--many of them locally sourced, money spent on advertising and marketing, and more.

So let this be a jumping off point as we consider just how much being the Pizza Capital of the United States really means to Connecticut -- beyond the bragging rights, of course.

- Sean Scanlon, State Comptroller



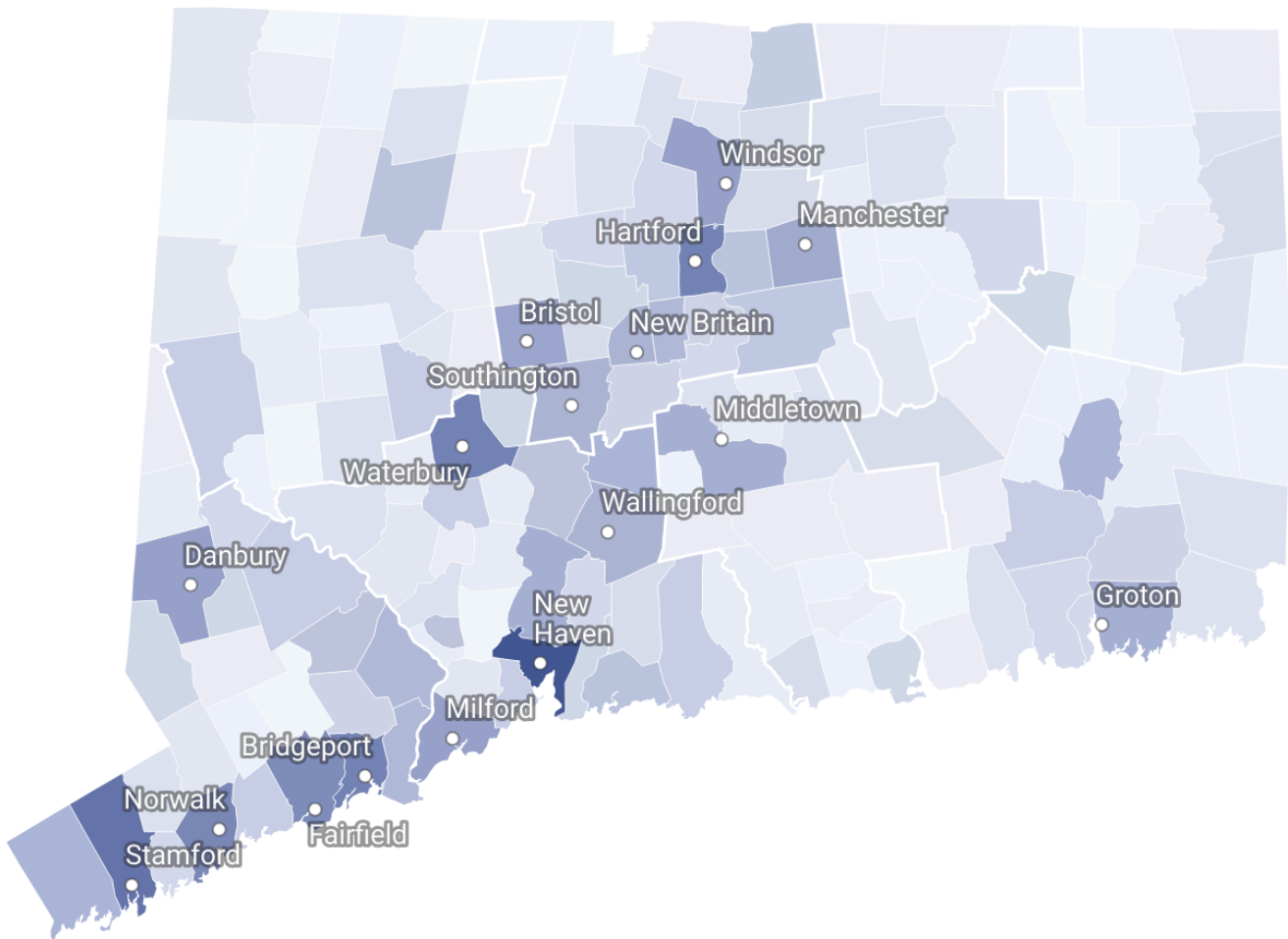
SPECIAL EXAMINATION ON PIZZA

Thanks to pizza's popularity, this delicacy is seen all over menus across different cuisines.

However, for the sake of this report, we've defined a pizza restaurant as a food establishment primarily engaged in the preparation and sale of pizza as a core menu item, excluding venues where food service is secondary to entertainment or other non-dining activities. Essentially, this encompasses any restaurant with a pizza oven, whether it's coal-fired or not.

With this definition in mind, we totaled 1,376 pizza restaurants in Connecticut. Not surprisingly, New Haven leads the way with 63 pizza establishments.

Number of Pizza Restaurants by City/Town



Map: Brandon Young • Created with Datawrapper
[Source](#)



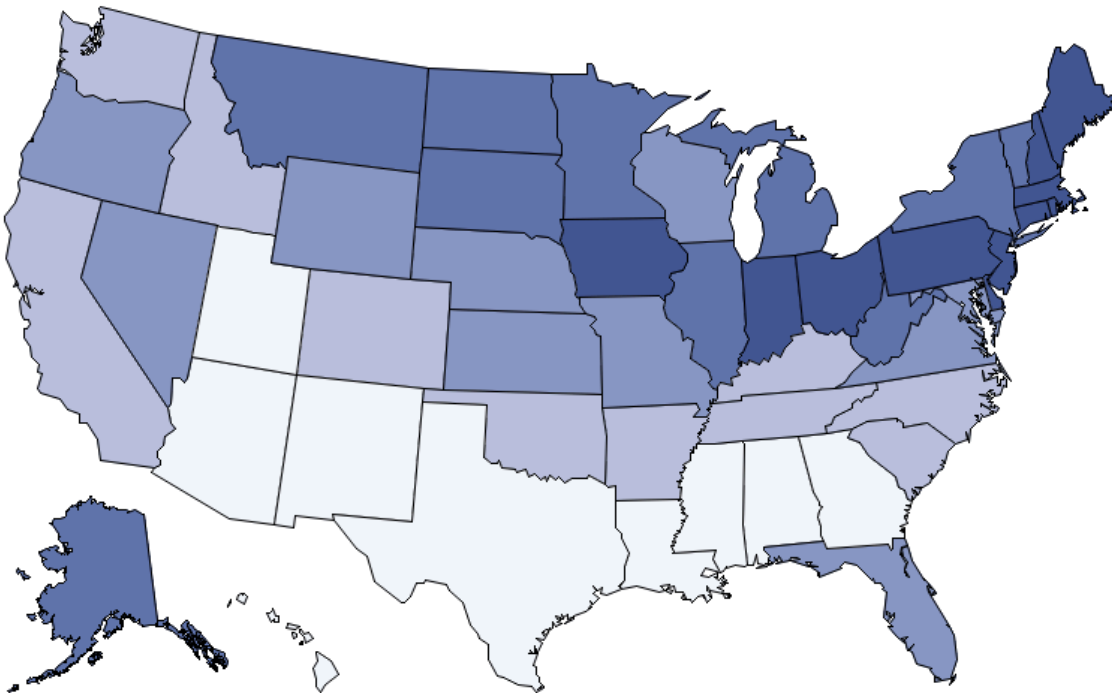
SPECIAL EXAMINATION ON PIZZA

While our population puts us at 29th in the country and our geographic size at 48th, our number of pizza restaurants ranks 23rd in the nation.

Shifting the focus to pizza restaurants per 10,000 people, Connecticut ranks 1st!

State	Number of Pizza Restaurants	Rank	Number of Pizza Restaurants per 10,000 people	Rank
Connecticut	1,376	23rd	3.65	1st
California	7,978	1st	1.64	40th
New York	6,362	2nd	2.54	14th

Pizza Restaurants per 10,000 People



Source



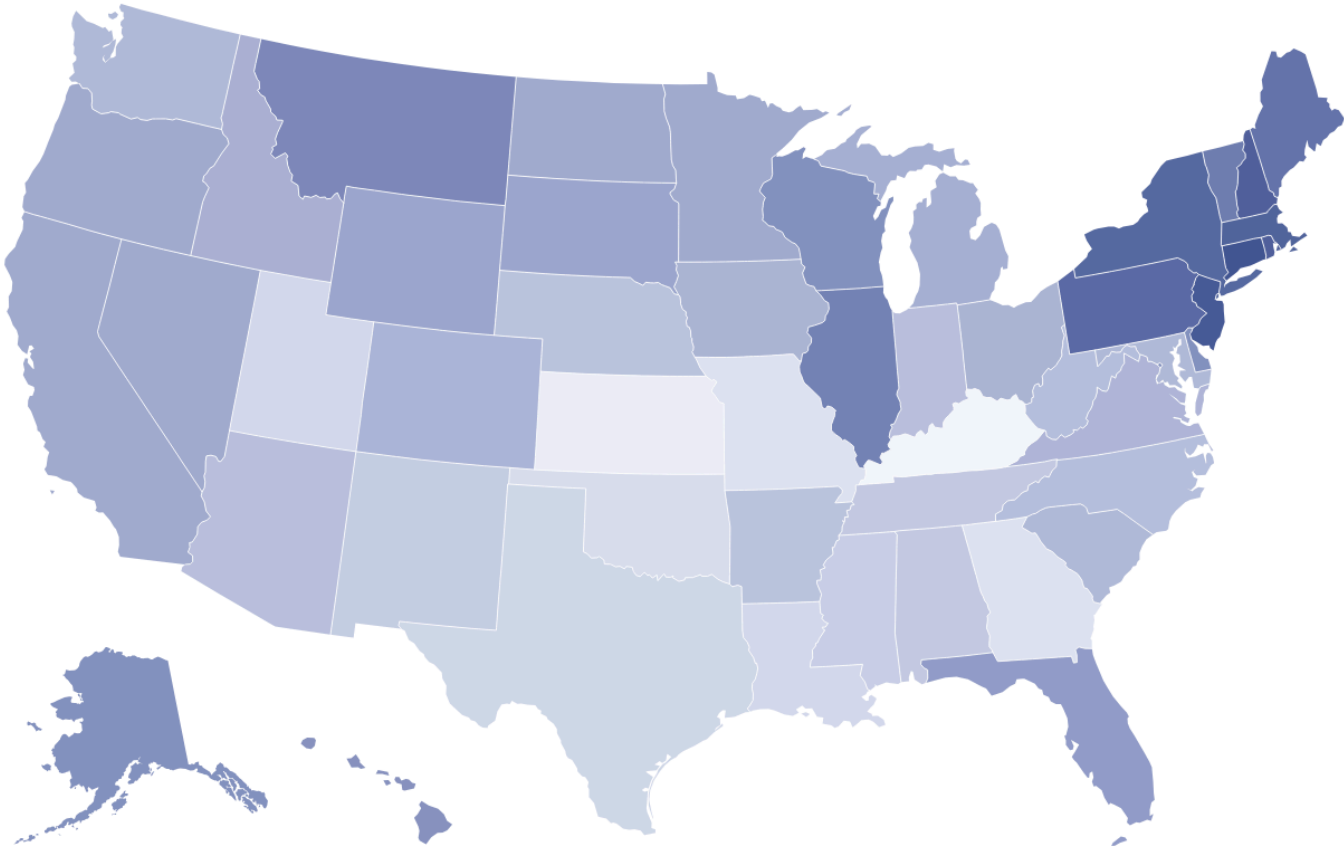
SPECIAL EXAMINATION ON PIZZA

Connecticut is the pizza capital in more ways than one.

Not only does it have the highest density of pizza restaurants in the country, but it also leads the nation in the percentage of family-owned or independent pizzerias. Nearly 80% of Connecticut’s pizza restaurants—1,084 out of 1,376—are independently owned, compared to a national average of just 43%. This deep-rooted tradition of small, locally owned pizzerias sets Connecticut’s pizza apart.

Percent of Pizza Restaurants that are Family-Owned/Independent

Connecticut has the highest percent of family-owned/independent pizza restaurants at 78.78%.



Map: Brandon Young • Source: SmartScrapers • Created with Datawrapper



SPECIAL EXAMINATION ON PIZZA

Unsurprisingly, our proud pizza culture represents more than just a small slice of Connecticut's economy.

Using Average Unit Volumes (AUVs), it's estimated that Connecticut's pizza restaurants generate around \$600 million in annual sales, contributing to an impressive \$3.5 billion in overall economic activity. Among pizza sales, the state collects \$45.66 million in tax revenue.

New Haven, often regarded as the heart of Connecticut's pizza scene, has become a tourism powerhouse, drawing over 2 million visitors each year solely for its famous coal-fired slices. This pizza-driven tourism contributes an additional \$100 million for the local economy, reinforcing the idea that in Connecticut, pizza isn't just food—it's big business.

