

Missouri Economy Indicators

Warehousing and Storage Employment

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Warehousing and storage is an important link in the supply chain, connecting production to markets, allowing goods to be aggregated, held, and distributed. As businesses expand, access to storage and logistics infrastructure can be important factors in growth decisions. The U.S. warehouse and storage industry has experienced strong growth, with jobs expanding by 77% between 2015 and 2020, followed by a slower but still robust growth of 29% between 2020 and 2025. By comparison, overall employment in the U.S. grew just 11% during the latter period. The industry employed nearly 2 million workers in 2025, with most jobs found in large general warehousing and storage facilities operated by national retailers. The industry also includes refrigerated facilities, bulk farm product nonrefrigerated facilities, and other facilities, such as bulk petroleum, lumber, document, and auto salvage storage.

Warehousing Grows in MO With Large General Storage Facilities

Missouri’s warehousing and storage industry grew by 29% over the past five years, matching the national growth rate and reaching an estimated 27,305 jobs across 523 firms in 2025. Large general warehousing facilities led job gains, adding 4,892 jobs between 2020 and 2025, an increase of 26%.

Employment in other warehousing and storage facilities more than doubled during the same period. Smaller refrigerated warehousing businesses offer the highest average wages, reflecting harsher working conditions. Farm product storage facilities are the smallest sector, typically employing fewer than 10 workers.

Warehousing and Storage Trends by Facility Type

Missouri

Warehousing Facility Type	2025 Firms	2025 Jobs	2020-25 % Job Chg.	Avg. Job Earnings
General	373	23,692	26%	\$61,305
Refrigerated	56	1,518	0%	\$70,446
Farm Product	35	325	20%	\$64,203
Other	60	1,769	191%	\$53,451
Total	523	27,305	29%	\$61,339

National

Warehousing Facility Type	2025 Firms	2025 Jobs	2020-25 % Job Chg.	Avg. Job Earnings
General	17,848	1,776,077	31%	\$62,866
Refrigerated	1,811	73,950	10%	\$76,443
Farm Product	911	10,700	-5%	\$72,169
Other	2,777	56,774	10%	\$77,120
Total	23,345	1,917,502	29%	\$63,863

Source: MU Extension graphic using Lightcast data for payroll and self-employed jobs. Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Missouri Warehousing and Storage Employment Density Varies Across the State

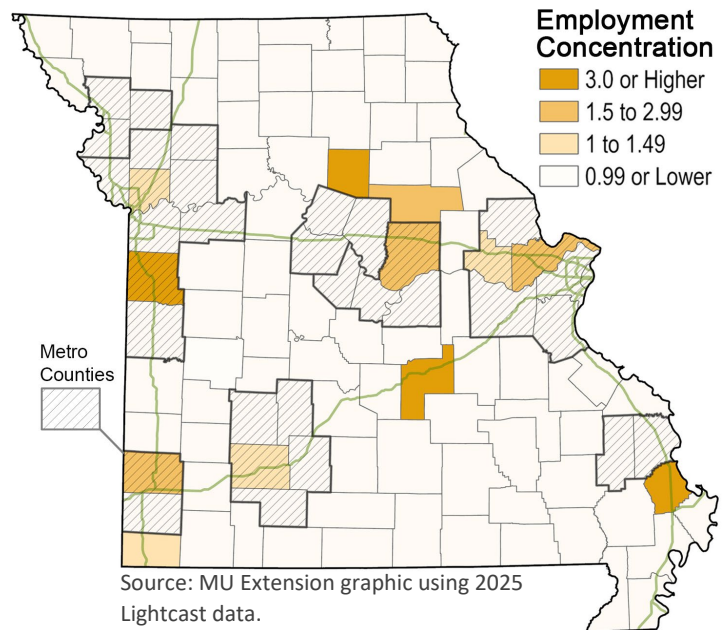
The warehousing and storage industry tends to locate near major urban populations and transportation networks, including railways, waterways, and highways. Nationally, most warehousing employment is found in California and Texas. Missouri’s warehousing and storage industry is smaller than those of its eastern neighbors, which benefit from major UPS and FedEx freight hubs. However, Missouri warehousing employment grew 29% over the past five years, outpacing the combined 17% growth of neighboring states. Average Missouri wages in the industry are also slightly lower than those in border states and the U.S.

Missouri's central location and transportation network provide advantages for the warehousing and storage industry. Kansas City is a major rail and freight hub, the St. Louis region offers access to water transportation, and the I-70 and I-44 corridors serve as major trucking routes.

As a result, warehousing and storage employment is concentrated in specific regions of Missouri. As shown on the map, a county with an employment concentration of 1.5 has a share of warehousing and storage jobs that is 1.5 times the national average. These counties often benefit from access to interstate highways and proximity to large urban markets.

Metro St. Charles County had the state's largest warehousing and storage employment base, with approximately 5,800 jobs, followed by Cass (3,300) and Greene (2,900) counties. Employment concentration was highest in the nonmetro counties of Phelps (4.86) and Randolph (4.47).

Missouri Warehousing and Storage Employment Concentration by County, 2025



Cold Storage and Food Business Capacity

Warehousing and storage capacity influences how products move through supply chains across many industries. Access to dedicated warehousing, particularly refrigerated and frozen storage, can be limited as businesses weight the costs, space requirements, equipment, and labor required to store and distribute products efficiently. For small businesses and food entrepreneurs seeking to scale their operations and access new markets with perishable products, warehousing and logistics can become a critical barrier between production and distribution. A business may be able to increase production for larger customers but lack sufficient storage to manage inventory and meet delivery requirements. Investments in on-site warehousing or cold storage can expand storage capacity but may also introduce additional financing commitments and fixed costs. Contract storage, shared facilities, and third-party logistics services may offer alternatives but come with their own cost and access challenges.

Additional Notes and Resources

- Learn more about Missouri food businesses' journeys to scaling, including the importance of warehousing and storage infrastructure, in MU Extension's [Scaling Local showcase series](#).
- For more insight into freight trends, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration Freight Profile maps show projected freight movement [into, out of, and through Missouri](#).

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