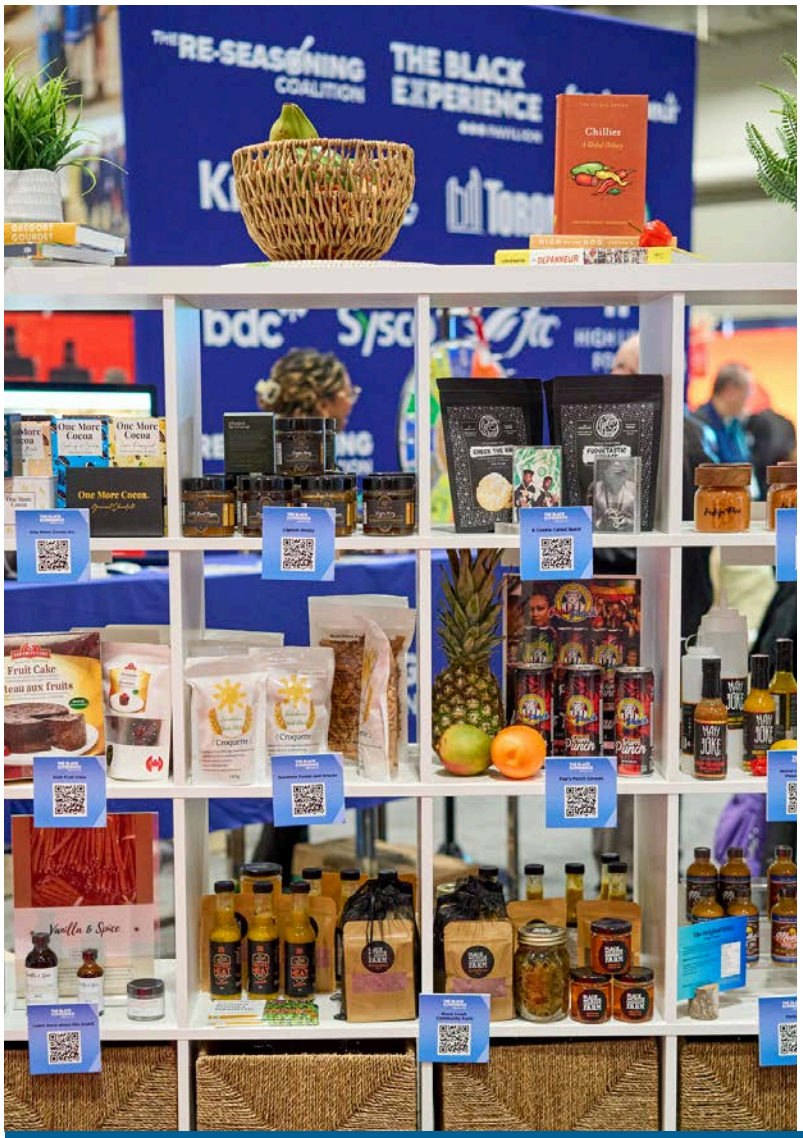
THE BLACK EXPERIENCE PAVILION

2025 IMPACT REPORT



THE RE-SEASONING COALITION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Black Experience Pavilion is a unique, highly valuable business development opportunity connecting Black food business owners to buyers, distributors, and key decision makers in Canada's foodservice industry. Conceptualized by The Re-Seasoning Coalition (TRSC) and developed in collaboration with Foodpreneur Lab, the Pavilion was launched in 2024 at the Restaurants Canada Show to dismantle barriers to the Black community's success in the industry.

Hosted at the Enercare Centre in Toronto from April 7-9th, the 2025 Pavilion was focused on executing three key objectives:

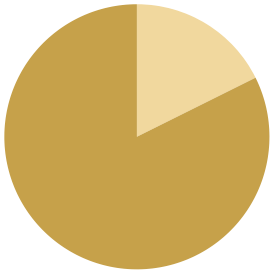
- **Spearheading economic sustainability for Black food entrepreneurs**
- **Highlighting brand commitments to equity**
- **Combatting job inequality through targeted programming**

Across our Multicultural Marketplace, Demo Kitchen, and Black Talent Networking Session touchpoints, TRSC featured 35 businesses and generated 93 new business connections, while supporting 15 interviews between Black jobseekers and foodservice & hospitality brands. Highlights included a visit from Chef José Andrés of World Central Kitchen and broadcast promotions on CP24 on April 8th.

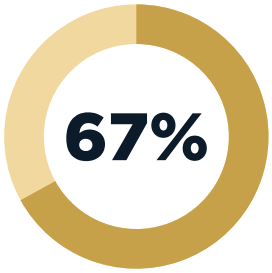
"It's light years different from last year; everyone's energy level was way up. Thank you for investing in us."

BY THE NUMBERS

27,000
RC Show attendees



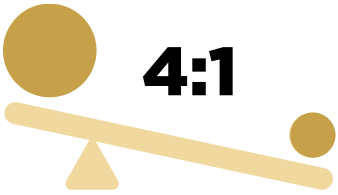
35 featured businesses
83% RETURNING



women owned businesses

93 business connections
24 LEADS, 69 NEW RELATIONSHIPS

23.7K
social media impressions



multiplier effect
FROM PUBLIC SECTOR INVESTMENT

key brands engaged

SWEAT AND TONIC
Gordon FOOD SERVICE
M&M FOOD MARKET
MLSE
VIA
DOORDASH

OUR 2025 IMPACT

A CATALYST FOR INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION

For a triumphant second year, the Black Experience Pavilion successfully de-mystified products from the Black diaspora while highlighting traditional ingredients and spotlighting new market opportunities to a crowd of largely non-Black decision-makers at the Restaurants Canada Show.

Key to the success of the exhibit is the multidimensional space we curate to drive attendee interaction and product knowledge. Our Pavilion featured:

- ***A Multipurpose Marketplace:*** a scannable showcase connecting Black-owned products and their creators directly with buyers and distributors
- ***The Pavilion Demo Kitchen:*** an interactive stage for individual and group demos to introduce new and innovative products to the foodservice market
- ***Our Black Talent Networking Session:*** strategic employment programming tied to our mission, addressing a lack of Black representation in the industry

The sleek and interactive 30x40ft. Pavilion attracted investor interest in the featured food businesses and provided a platform for evolution, as 8 business owners who volunteered in 2024 were invited to showcase their products as foodservice-ready entrepreneurs in 2025.

This year, we focused on closing entrepreneur knowledge gaps related to selling in a foodservice-specific environment with a 4-week Investment Readiness Masterclass led by funding advisor Allison Gibson. This learning enrichment programming enhanced critical business skills including goal setting, lead generation, financial planning, and pitch development. The Masterclass also

"I felt a sense of pride and accomplishment at seeing my products on display and people enjoying the samples I had prepared. I also felt a sense of belonging as I stood amongst my peers."

built community among business owners of diverse backgrounds, products, and levels of success, creating mentorship opportunities that continued on the Show floor.

In addition to addressing real industry challenges while fostering inclusive growth, the 2025 Black Experience Pavilion realized notable success across multiple impact areas:

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT EXCELLENCE
- Equipped 21 business owners with 4-week investment readiness, achieving 9.7/10 NPS from participants
- Accomplished a 3:1 connection ratio in a busy tradeshow environment
- Attracted interest from major brands including Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, Gordon Foodservice, VIA Rail, and M&M Foods

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PROGRAMMING
- Connected 48 Black jobseekers with 16 foodservice & hospitality brand reps
- Facilitated 15 soft interviews during the networking session
- Achieved outstanding satisfaction ratings: 9.5/10 NPS from participating brands and 9.2/10 NPS from jobseekers

MEDIA REACH AND RECOGNITION
- Featured on CP24 broadcast, amplifying reach across the GTA
- Generated significant industry interest, including Chef José Andrés of World Central Kitchen and from Gordon Foodservice, The Rosé Picnic, and Grocery Innovations Canada who requested versions of our Pavilion at their events

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

The Black Experience Pavilion is more than an event – it's a transformative approach to reimagining a sector where everyone can reach their highest potential. Our strategic, data-driven approach to partnership development has ensured that every dollar invested in TRSC generates tangible returns that power community development, economic sustainability, and industry resilience.

As we continue to disrupt the system and innovate for good, we invite you to re-affirm your efforts to partner with us in creating an ecosystem where equity in food entrepreneurship is celebrated, supported, and empowered.

STORIES OF CHANGE

"INVALUABLE EXPERIENCES AND CONNECTIONS"

"I was kind of nervous at first, but while being there I felt confident in what my business offers, and it was great seeing others who had interest in what we have. Being a part of the kitchen demos cemented in my mind and emotions that I can do this. Having the experience alongside chef Philman helped the demos to go smoothly and gave good structure to the segments. I also better understand the importance of having a team with you. I was able to spread word about my company faster because I brought several friends along with me, so even when I was volunteering or busy in the pavilion I had people who would come by and mention that someone has told them about the company. Overall the Black Experience Pavilion is something that I am grateful for being able to be a part of and I look forward to being a part in the future and helping any way I can as I believe that it can really help to advance black entrepreneurs in the CPG space and offers invaluable experiences and connections."

"THINK BIGGER"

"The Pavilion experience helped with clarifying our positioning and where we can grow. Emotionally, it was uplifting—seeing people genuinely enjoy my creations reignited my passion. Spiritually, it reminded me that food connects people in meaningful ways and intellectually, it challenged me to think bigger and to continue to innovate."

"TRANSFORMATIVE"

"The transformative growth witnessed in returning participants from this year's Black Experience Pavilion compared to last year exemplifies not only emotional and social advancement but also substantial business development. The profound success of the 2025 Pavilion signals a shift towards a food sector in Canada driven by equity, culture, and innovation."

"PERSPECTIVE"

"The first year was more absorbing as much as I could while making sure I survive the show as it was overwhelming. This year I had more time to actually observe the show, and with that came the perspective that I should probably work on bulk packaging (like a 10kg or 20kg of chin chin bag) for the food service sector."

"IMPACT ON INCLUSION"

"Participating in the Black Experience Pavilion gave Sysco colleagues, customers, and vendors a first-hand look at opportunities to uplift and engage Back Canadians in the foodservice industry, including ways they can participate in systems change. Particularly, participating in the Black talent networking session and sponsoring product demos has contributed to strengthening Sysco's impact on inclusion in the marketplace."

"REWARDING"

"Participating in the Black Talent Networking Session was an incredibly rewarding experience. The event created a welcoming and vibrant space for authentic connections, allowing us to engage with talented professionals who are often overlooked in traditional recruitment spaces. The intentionality behind the programming, the energy of the participants, and the genuine conversations made a lasting impact."

"PEP IN MY STEP"

"The pavilion layout was really great...and allowed for people to interact with our sampling station. Being in places like this allows me to reflect on the taste and quality of our products. It gave me an extra pep in my step to want to go and create more products."

"MARKET FEEDBACK"

"The Pavilion offered valuable industry insight and direct market feedback that helped clarify growth opportunities for Kadija Dine. It highlighted the demand for culturally rooted products in broader markets and reinforced the importance of strategic partnerships and product positioning."

THANK YOU

FOR BEING PART OF THE
BLACK EXPERIENCE PAVILION.
YOU'RE IN GOOD COMPANY.

TORONTO

Kraft Heinz

HIGH LINER FOODS

fcc

bdc

Sysco