“Mobilizing Cuisine: The Development, Institutionalization, and Politicization of the Gourmet Food Truck Industry” by Nicole Esparza, Gabriel Rossman, and Ed Walker.

The gourmet food truck industry has grown rapidly and spread geographically since the first trucks opened in Los Angeles in late 2008. There are now several thousand gourmet food trucks nationwide. Studying these trucks not only lets us observe in real-time the birth of a new industry, but see how it organizes itself. In many cities trucks have formed local trade associations to coordinate club goods and negotiate regulations around such issues as parking. The industry is heavily reliant on Twitter which makes activity in the field uniquely observable.

To this end, we have collected over a million tweets from food trucks and used them both to identify political activity (e.g., tweeting links to petitions) and build a social network of connections between the trucks.