Kentucky is the birthplace of Bourbon, crafting 95% of the world’s supply. Only the Bluegrass State has the perfect natural mix of climate, corn and pure limestone water necessary for producing the world’s greatest Bourbon.  

Distilling is a $9 billion signature industry in Kentucky, generating more than 22,500 jobs with an annual payroll topping $1.23 billion. There is now at least one distillery in 40 of Kentucky’s 120 counties.

Kentucky has the fifth-highest Bourbon and spirits tax rate in the country, and the state’s distillers by far pay more in federal alcohol tax – $1.8 billion – than any other state. Almost a quarter of all federal alcohol taxes are paid by Kentucky distillers.

Kentucky distillers filled a record 2.6 million barrels in 2021 – fourth year in a row topping 2 million. Bourbon production has increased 475% since 1999.

The tax-assessed value of all aging barrels has catapulted over 200% in the last decade to $5.2 billion while the value of real and tangible property owned by Kentucky distillers has quadrupled in that time to $1.5 billion.

By 2025, Bourbon will be a $9.3 billion industry fueling more than 24,000 jobs with $1.3 billion in payroll and $308 million in annual local and state tax revenue.

Capital investments between 2021-2025 will create 4,565 new jobs, $258 million in payroll and $29 million in tax revenue.

The Kentucky Bourbon Trail® and Kentucky Bourbon Trail Craft Tour® experiences are busier than ever with total attendance exceeding 2.1 million in 2022 - a new record! There are now 42 KBT® distillery destinations across the state, with more on the way.

The KDA created the Kentucky Bourbon Trail® tour in 1999 to give visitors a first-hand experience into crafting the world’s most iconic brands, and the Kentucky Bourbon Trail Craft Tour® in 2012, the first attraction in the country to showcase boutique distilleries.

The KDA, a non-profit trade group founded in 1880, represents 80 members, including 50 distilling companies operating 73 locations in 40 counties across the Commonwealth - the most since the glorious Repeal of Prohibition. The KDA’s ranks have swelled with new distilleries and dozens of industry partner members, all working together to strengthen Kentucky’s rightful place as the one, true, authentic home for Bourbon.