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## RESTAURANT SALES UP, JOBS DOWN

Restaurant sales were up 0.8% in January, after falling 1.3% in December, the largest drop in four years, according to the National Restaurant Association. Grocery store sales also rebounded, rising 2.2% after a 2.4% decline in December. Restaurant sales have increased 1.8% since January 2008. But... it's not saving jobs. Restaurants and bars have cut jobs for the past 13 months. In January, restaurants cut 8,700 jobs, bringing the total job loss to 105,000 over 13 months. But jobs are growing in some segments. Snack and nonalcoholic beverage bars such as coffee, donut and ice cream shops saw a 1.9% employment gain. Those workers saw their average workweek decline by 2.5% to 23.6 hours. A 5.8% rise in wages, to an average \$9.48, made up for the lack of hours. Other segments of the restaurant industry also saw work hours decline while wages rose. The Association didn't report whether tips, the bulk of restaurant workers' earnings, had risen or fallen.

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