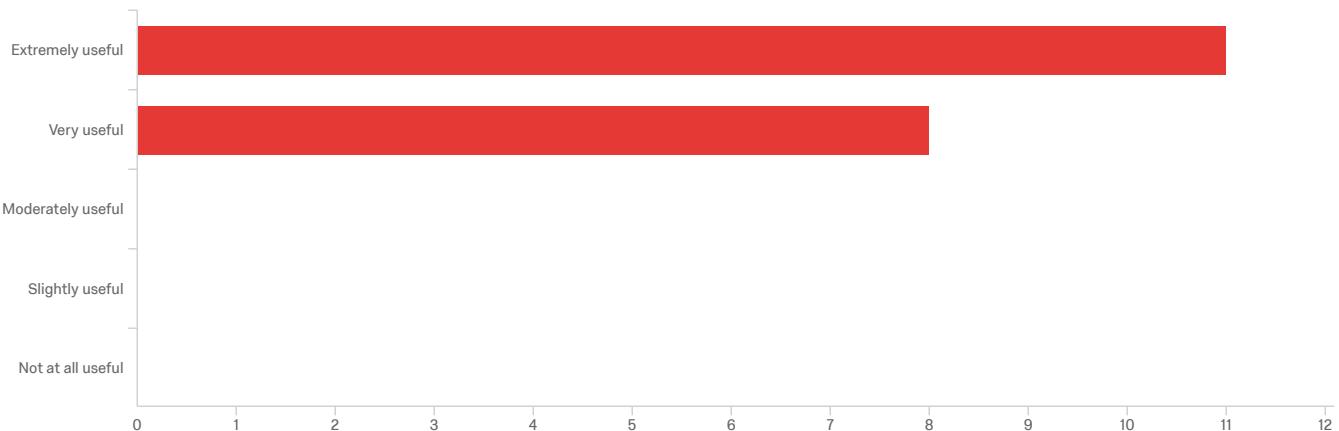


Economic Viability of Shared Use Kitchens

Shared-Kitchen Tour Evaluation

March 29, 2018 NC SARE R&E Grant Number LNC15-374

Q2 - Please indicate if this tour was useful to your work.



#	Field	Choice Count
2	Very useful	42.11% 8
4	Slightly useful	0.00% 0
5	Not at all useful	0.00% 0
3	Moderately useful	0.00% 0
1	Extremely useful	57.89% 11
		19

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Q3 - Briefly describe why you decided to attend the shared-use kitchen tour.

Briefly describe why you decided to attend the shared-use kitchen tour.

To learn best practices for running a shared kitchen.

I wanted to see what commercial kitchens that are successful are doing, etc.

To gather information on how other shared kitchens effectively build community with their members.

I'm in the process of opening a commercial kitchen in Minneapolis. I found value in meeting others who are involved with kitchens and learning from the 3 kitchens we visited. The operational intelligence was invaluable.

Interested to see what others are doing compared to what we have available locally.

Have had inquiries about such kitchens and there are none in our community.

Personal interest in local food systems, interest in bringing information back to my office and work community

The shared-use kitchen concept has direct application to the long-term vision in Marion County called "Purdue Extension CityLAB."

To get information about shared-use kitchens that I can share with other CWC's in our region and also business leaders in Vigo County.

Our Extension office has a commercial kitchen that isn't regularly used during the week. This was insightful into possibilities for our kitchen.

I attended the tour in order to actually see the kitchens. As a graduate student who works on the survey of this project, it was really useful!

To gain information.

I run a shared kitchen and wanted to see how people deal with a shared environment.

We run a shared kitchen and wanted to learn from others

To better serve and direct commercial vegetable and fruit producers on the cost-effective idea of shared-use kitchens for value-added products.

My community partners I work with are interested in opening one.

Look for processing opportunities for Indiana and Illinois fish farmers

I teach the ServSafe Certification Class on a monthly basis and I often have class participants that are interested in starting a small business in the food industry. Many share their interest in owning a food truck or opening a booth at a farmer's market. I attended the "shared-kitchen tour" hoping to gain knowledge to guide this group a bit better and to connect with a network of people that could act as a reference for these students.

local interest in starting such a kitchen in one community

Q4 - Briefly describe how you will use what you learned on the tour for your work.

Briefly describe how you will use what you learned on the tour for your wor...

I will implement new process at CookSpring.

An incubator kitchen is a component of a proposal our Extension office is moving forward.

To be able to effectively build community within a shared kitchen, it will be necessary to create a system in which the members can communicate with one another outside of the kitchen.

My learnings will help shape how I operationalize my kitchen.

Not sure yet.

As a resource person for a group from our local food summit.

Will share information with fellow farmers and with my community partners in Lawrence County

The content, shared-use kitchen designs and features, and the contacts are all going to be very useful as planning for "CityLAB" evolves.

I am interested in bringing community members together to brainstorm starting a shared-use kitchen in Vigo County.

I will meet with our building and grounds committee, share what I observed and learned, and help them make future decisions on the possibilities for our building. Some of my clients have expressed interest in starting part time business of food prep and this could be a possibility for them.

I will use what I learned as a basic knowledge while I work on the kitchen survey analysis.

The information will inform my future work.

We are currently reviewing our pricing structure for storage. We need to update and improve our marketing with pictures of people in them to show community.

We'll adopt some new storage options as well as consider the benefits of putting everything in the kitchen on wheels.

I will use it in consultations with commercial vegetable and fruit producers, providing better insight into one way to pursue value-added products.

I suggested that for the needs of my community partners - we would be better off working using a church kitchen for the next few years instead of trying to open a commercial kitchen. Our kitchen is needed for educational purposes and the amount of time and money going into a commercial kitchen is not sustainable for us (at this time).

Share information learned with the aquaculture industry

The tours provided a way for me to connect with those organizing shared kitchen projects. Hopefully, I can use the knowledge gained to assist folks hoping to start a small business in the food industry or assist them in getting connected with a network of people that can share their expertise in this area.

share with local groups interested in such a kitchen share words of advise and caution learned at the meeting

Q7 - After learning from and talking to shared-use kitchen owners/managers, what do you think is their role in a local food system?

After learning from and talking to shared-use kitchen owners/managers, what...

Making it affordable to make dreams a reality.

I think they serve diverse roles, depending on the owners/managers philosophy (community-based; mission-based; or entrepreneurial) and business style.

It is important for the owners or managers to create a system that makes it more convenient for the members to use locally grown food sources.

They play a major role in creating a sustainable local food economy. They are advocates, educators and help make critical kitchens across the local food system.

The ability for a small start up to have access to a commercial kitchen for a nominal fee is important for getting small businesses off the ground.

Helping to make connections

Business incubation, resource providers and managers, organizers of local food system development

Owners/managers work to understand the needs of food providers in their service area and then construct shared-use kitchens to meet those needs and provide resources to food providers to help them be more effective in their food system roles. Owner/managers serve as connectors and facilitators of food production processes in their service area.

Working with distributors on promoting and placing locally made foods into local businesses.

They are the ones who bring vision to the possibilities of adding food resources to the community. They set the guidelines and keep participants active in the process. They give insight and professional guidance to the process.

To empower racial minorities and women, boost local economy.

Help local entrepreneurs to use local quality ingredients for their products.

They provide a critical resource to ease the financial burden of starting culinary businesses.

My impression is that they are tremendous risk-takers with the goal to recoup their investments and make someone else successful. A rare breed. I noticed that most start-ups involve grant money. The resulting kitchen is a way for them to start and grow local food businesses.

It's their job to make sure the facility is used appropriately. Ex: making sure it's cleaned properly, making sure that the renter uses the time they paid for, playing mediator between kitchen users, accommodating renters.

They provide a service to add value

The kitchen managers seem to be the "connectors" in terms of how they work to bring the awareness of local foods to those using their shared-kitchens. Taking into consideration the shared-kitchen in Flint, Michigan - Sean, the kitchen manager, talked about walking people through the steps of starting a business. He talked about the importance of having a business model and provided kitchen users with the names of those that would assist in coming up with a solid model. He talked about the importance of having those using the kitchen have the opportunity to sell their goods in the indoor farmers market. This is where the community is exposed to the idea of supporting local foods and local producers. Kitchen managers seem to be passionate about the idea of bringing local foods, the community, and small businesses together for the greater good.

they assist in the development of quality food products to local consumers, restaurants and vendors

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Q8 - What key characteristic, personality trait or management style of a kitchen

owner/manager is critical for kitchen management? (please use words or short phrases,
separated by commas)

What key characteristic, personality trait or management style of a kitchen...

flexible, detail, energetic, passionate

They must have a good business sense understanding markets, ROI, customers, placement of services, etc.

passionate, managerial, detailed, outgoing, and marketing knowledge,

Committed Engaged Willing to educate & advocate for their makers Visionary with the ability to manage details Active participant in the local food community

patience, flexibility, commitment

Business sense, visioning, mentoring

Welcoming, flexible, organized, positive, outgoing, imaginative, action oriented

Visionary, passionate, flexible, creative, persistent, problem-solver, collaborative, patient, risk-taker, evaluative

Flexible, dreamer, trusting, easily accessible, open minded, helpful, understanding.

strong, open-minded, persistent, wise, creative, insightful, net-workers,

energetic, positive

flexible, passion, emphatic, self starter,

Flexibility, friendliness, structure, creativity

Fair, even handed with all, flexible, good communicator, organized

I believe there are two. 1) knowledge of how a kitchen operates and what equipment is needed. 2) a firm commitment to making sure others aren't taking advantage of the facility such as having food dropped off when the renter isn't there.

managing people

Kitchen managers were passionate, knowledgeable, creative, involved, open to new ideas, tech savvy, easy going, organized, have vision, and are completely engaged in their work.

flexible but firm management style organized record keepers know the state and local laws

Q9 - What community partners seem to be important for shared-use kitchens?

What community partners seem to be important for shared-use kitchens?

Small Business Development Center Board of Health City Government

Community partners are very critical to shared-use kitchens (this is a different business model than an incubator kitchen)... Again, it all comes down to the vision, mission, purpose of the commercial kitchen. Please be aware that commercial kitchen does not = incubator kitchen does not = shared use kitchen.

local farmers, individuals who are willing to back the kitchens financially, and individuals who are knowledgeable in maintenance.

Universities Farm Organizations and farm advocates Farmers Markets Food Entrepreneur Groups Media Retailers Copackers Local distributors

so many

Health department, growers guild, business development group

Prepared food entrepreneurs, local farmers, customers, grocery chains, health departments, investors, community development groups

Urban food farmers and producers, food system outlets, food equipment providers, funders, neighborhood residents

Health Dept., community business leaders,

investors, government entities, food vendors, food providers (farmers, produce source), advisers from community

CSA, SBA

Small Business Development Center, Board of Health, City Leaders

Business consulting (ISBDC), Department of Health, small loan providers, referral sources throughout town

County health department, state licensing agencies

If it's a non-profit they need a funder first. After that, they need a kitchen manager who can get more clients while running things smoothly. Getting the neighborhood on board seems to matter too (river forest and art house).

In the early stages of building the shared use kitchen, an entity that is willing to provide financial support is needed. Local food growers are important. Community support is imperative. Local universities, non-profit agencies, big business, local school corporations, and community members would all be effective partners.

city/town officials loan officers

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Q10 - Kitchen owners/managers wear many hats. Can you list a few 'hats' that you observed?

Kitchen owners/managers wear many hats. Can you list a few 'hats' that you...

scheduler cleaner marketing financing

Entrepreneurs; networkers; connectors; innovators; managers; schedulers; fund development; marketing; business analysis, etc.

entrepreneur, manager of schedules, marketer, and advocate for members.

Visionary Advocate Educator Mentor Kitchen Manager Networker Champion for their makers and the local food economy

they all have small staffs so everyone seems to be involved in almost everything that goes on.

Liason, business manager, inspector, marketer, educator

fundraisers, facilitators, mentors

Mentor, facilitator, conflict manager, collaborator, leader, process manager

Entrepreneur, financial wizard, mother figure, scheduler, human resource guru.

CEO, supervisor, scheduler, provider, advisor

dreamer, mother, realist

Maintenance, Cleaning, Invoicing, Scheduling, Marketing

Janitor, babysitter, accountant, repairperson, marketer, grantwriter

Compliance officer, scheduler, negotiator, sanitation Nazi, manager, human relations, marketer, communicator, visionary

As I said before, I think that they are required to be mediator between clients (think garlic and pastries in the same refrigerator). They also have to schedule appropriate times for clients kitchen use, they have to purchase appropriate kitchen equipment.

Service providers, human resource managers, entrepreneurs

organizer businessman chef connector networker manager scheduler janitor publicist web page developer payment collector community member

cook cleaning person creative idea person safety minded

Q11 - What common issues did you hear from kitchen owners/managers about managing the kitchen/users/community?

What common issues did you hear from kitchen owners/managers about managing...

General rules and processes

People are people and not get bogged down in their stuff. It's a business in the end. Also, a human touch helps when interacting with clients!

scheduling is difficult, the managers must be involved in the day to day operations of the kitchens, and it's important for the members to be connected with one another.

Limited storage - especially refrigerated storage Managing the complexities of food safety, licensing and regulatory requirements Managing the day-to-day maintenance and operations required to be successful

Everything from helping those just starting out and learning the basics to those who need help with packaging, marketing, labeling, distribution, etc.

Scheduling, marketing, standard setting, communication

It sounded to me like there were surprisingly few and mostly minor issues-- towel overuse, etc.

Relevancy, marketing, equipment needs, scheduling, time restraints, funding streams

Clean up, and funding.

funding, physical locations, operations, health department, getting product to retailers

funding, issues with clients

Cleaning of a shared space, scheduling of a shared space, business plans

cleanliness, sharing, scheduling

Cleaning after use, minor theft, extreme capital investment, grants

In both of the working kitchens, their clients would order supplies that they had delivered to the facility. In both cases, they told no one and were not there to store it in the appropriate place.

They have different business models

Some mentioned that kitchen users are documenting that they use the kitchen yet use their homes to prepare food and don't use the shared kitchen
Scheduling issues Issues with the fryer (mixed tastes - savory/sweet) Cost for the use of kitchen space (dry goods/cooler/freezer) Getting the word out (bringing more people in to use the shared-kitchens) When is a person ready to go out on their own?

managing people

Q13 - If you were asked by a potential food entrepreneur about using a shared-use kitchen, what would you tell them?

If you were asked by a potential food entrepreneur about using a shared-use...

It's the cheapest way to try your dream.

Yes, it's a good idea, if you understand what you are getting and what it costs.

Go for it, using a shared kitchen space allows for you to take minimal risks while starting up your business.

Do it, assuming the food entrepreneur had done their due diligence and understood what it was going to take to be a successful food entrepreneur.

Do your homework, understand what the rules are and go for it.

Be sure to know your needs and the offerings available

It is a great starting point!

Find one that is conveniently located to their entrepreneurial outreach and service area. Check for solid management practices and a strong support system connected to kitchen members. Research equipment variety and upkeep. Ask about the history and success rate of the kitchen.

I think it is an outstanding idea! The food industry is so fickle. You may have what you think is a great idea but when you get it into production you find out differently. This is a great way to give it a trial run without all the up front overhead of investing in a commercial kitchen.

Have you done your homework about your products viability? Have you counted the cost of production? Are you aware of the health department requirements? Do you have a Safe Serve certificate? Do you know how much time it will take to produce your product?

Contact the kitchen owner/manager to see if it is the good fit for your business.

It's a great place to start your business without much risk.

Come to mine!

It's a good way to get started and grow your business without inordinate initial capital outlay

it's a great idea. You can start your business without having to invest in your own kitchen. You also don't have to deal with the health department.

Know what you are looking for because kitchens are different

I'd first guide them to the shared kitchens in my area. I'd let them know that they will have to be ServSafe Certified and they will need to have a license to operate. It would be nice if I could bring several people together to introduce, guide, connect, etc.

give it a try but stay informed

Q14 - How would you go about connecting kitchen owners, managers or users to local farmers to source food from the region?

How would you go about connecting kitchen owners, managers or users to local...

Personal relationships Food Hub

Just sharing on Facebook... Networking at farmer's markets, etc.

I would encourage the kitchen managers to seek out individuals at the Purdue Extension, who have connections with the farmers, to connect the managers and the farmers.

There needs to be more networks and on-line communities to share knowledge and best practices.

Indiana Grown, open houses, farmers markets

Use growers guild, connect with Extension Office

Share some contact information. Introduce relevant farmers personally.

Compile food product consumer needs and communicate those to local farmers. Survey farmer production details to communicate to kitchen owners, managers and users.

I would link those using the kitchen with the local farmers. The local farmers could advertise what they had available at the kitchen, and could order thru the kitchen manager.

Begin meeting with community market managers, learn about the markets they host, what the guidelines are for sales at their markets, network with providers and markets

I think it would be great if we can connect them. One way could be introducing kitchens at farmers' market.

Our region is starting on a food hub. Until then I've been talking to farmers or business that want to partner with our kitchen.

TBD: it's tough to make enough time to make connections. We currently allow farmers to advertise their products on our corkboards, and that's led to a few relationships

I plan to explore possible expanded use of fairgrounds kitchen as shared use kitchen to local producers associated with farmers market

At this point I would just make the introduction and let them work out the details

Introducing them to the kitchen managers

Having an ANR Educator in our office, I would make sure to connect with her and bring her to the table. Our CD Educator would be a great resource as well. Picking up the phone and connecting people is the best way I know how to bring people together.

not sure yet

Q15 - What sort of events, activities or engagement are important for a shared-use kitchen?

What sort of events, activities or engagement are important for a shared-use...

Member meetings

Depends on the community being served. Socializing seems to be a key component (human factor) that helps develop community.

member gatherings and encouragement of one another

It is important to provide affordable access to kitchen space. But just as important is to help entrepreneurs build the required strategic, financial and operational skills needed to successfully run a food business. I believe this is a huge opportunity and what is lacking in most kitchens today.

The more the better to connect all the constituents who make them successful.

Regular member gatherings (meetings), regular communication

It depends on the kitchen. The one we visited in Indianapolis seemed to mostly just be a space and resource provider, not an event or engagement connector. The other two we visited had activities to connect kitchen users to each other and to the outside community-- both neighborhood customers and regional food buyers, etc.

Member and farmer connecting events, member education, member collaboration-building events, kitchen marketing events

Be aware of personal needs, how much time you will need, how it will interact with other kitchen users.

It maybe important for kitchens to gain constant active users. Event/activities to gain active clients of kitchens maybe useful.

food education, healthy eating, serv-safe, culinary experiences, high quality food

A sense of community & trust. Members come and go, but having a small core group is important.

Marketing is a challenge for everyone. Connecting at Farmers Markets may be a good option.

Can't think of a thing to say here!

Their services need to be publicized widely

Catering, food trucks, shared spaces (indoor and outdoor farmer's markets). We saw a fermentation operation, a pastry chef, a sandwich shop, and a food truck owner preparing food to provide in their communities.

Q16 - Please add any additional thoughts, insights or information you would like to share.

Please add any additional thoughts, insights or information you would like...

Great tour. Learned from each site we visited and thank you for showing three different models.

Great program. Love to see more in the future! Thanks!

Appreciated how different each of the three were

Great trip! Thank you for arranging!!

Loved the tour. Each kitchen was so different, it was great to see all of them and the different ways they are helping their communities.

it was very informative and brought a greater awareness to how much goes into shared use of a kitchen. The 24/7 concept won't work for all kitchen sites.

Very well put together tour. The bus was great for networking. Every place we went was a little different but had a lot of the same problems. Was wondering if shared kitchen that have been doing this for 10 years plus, have the same problems as the ones doing it for 2 years?

Thank you!

I want to thank you for the opportunity. I enjoyed seeing first hand some of the successes and difficulties of running a shared-use kitchen. I am certainly more knowledgeable in this area and feel that I could certainly guide those wanting to know more about shared-use kitchens and connect them to resources that would help inform and support their interests.

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End of Report