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# Shared Commercial Kitchen Facilities for Food Entrepreneurs

**Examples From Around the U.S.**

Prepared for Food Business Incubator Needs Assessment  
as part of San Jose Food Works  
by Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAGE)  
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# Topics

1. San Jose Food Works Background
2. Shared Commercial Kitchens
  - i. Incubator Commercial Kitchens
  - ii. Food Truck Commissaries
3. Case Studies

# San Jose Food Works Background

## ***Vision:***

San Jose's spirit of innovation, commitment to resilience, and renowned diversity are expressed in a dynamic food culture of healthy food access for all residents and thriving food businesses, from ethnic grocery stores and neighborhood restaurants, to industrial processing and distribution, to market gardens and farms located in and around the city.

## ***Purpose:***

San Jose Food Works brings together diverse partners to strengthen a connected local food system – production, processing, distribution, retail, restaurants and food service – that advances the City's economy, placemaking, public health, sustainability, and role as a regional center.

# San Jose Food Works Recommendations

1 Conduct a detailed wholesale food market feasibility analysis

2 Support development of food business incubators

3 Support investment in food jobs and growth of existing and new food businesses

4 Promote opportunities to improve quality of life and public health outcomes

5 Advance food as placemaking at city and neighborhood scales

6 Cultivate opportunities for urban and peri-urban food production

7 Connect food systems-related initiatives to each other, and across City, County, and regional agencies and partners

8 Institutionalize food systems planning and implementation in City policies and plans

9 Identify the financial resources and partnership commitments for continued implementation of Food Works and related projects

# Shared Commercial Kitchens



- Food preparation spaces that meet local health and safety code requirements for preparing food for the public (e.g. restaurants, hotels, etc.)
- Offer facilities for rent by multiple food enterprises
- Some also offer technical and financial assistance for food enterprises

# Shared Commercial Kitchens

- **Shared commercial kitchens** provide a wide range of equipment, preparation, and storage space for multiple food enterprises to rent (by the day, week, month, etc.).
- **Incubator commercial kitchens** offer space and support for early stage entrepreneurs, including technical and financial assistance, business planning, product development and marketing.





# Case Studies

- KitchenTown – San Mateo & San Francisco, California
- Eclectic Cookery – San Francisco, California
- La Cocina – San Francisco, California
- Athens Food Venture Center – Athens, Ohio
- Portland Mercado & Micro Mercantes Kitchen – Portland, Oregon
- L.A. Prep Kitchen – Los Angeles, California

# KitchenTown

## San Mateo & San Francisco, California

A food start-up incubator aimed at specialty/artisan food businesses; also houses a cafe that sells prepared food and features incubated business' products. Weekly workshops held at San Francisco location.



<b>Project Of:</b>	KitchenTown (2014), <i>for-profit</i>
<b>Facility Size:</b>	15,000 square feet (total)
<b>Facilities offered:</b>	Kitchen/prep areas, warehouse, dry and freezer storage
<b>Services offered:</b>	Business assistance: regulation, supply chain, packaging, food safety, product development, operations, sales, finance, marketing, distribution, quality, design-thinking
<b># Entrepreneurs per year:</b>	30-35 businesses (kitchen) 500+ businesses (Learning Lab)
<b>Funding Sources:</b>	Private investment
<b>Development cost:</b>	\$1 million

# Eclectic Cookery

## San Francisco, California

A time-shared kitchen service offering food service supplies, equipment as well as support services to entrepreneurs and small operators. Also serves as a commissary for mobile food vendors.



<b>Project Of:</b>	Eclectic Cookery (1984)
<b>Facility Size:</b>	10,000 square feet (total)
<b>Facilities offered:</b>	Central kitchen/prep areas, separate bakery, dry and freezer storage
<b>Services offered:</b>	Hourly and monthly kitchen access, regulatory/compliance assistance, mobile food vendor permitting
<b># Entrepreneurs per year:</b>	30-50 businesses
<b>Funding Sources:</b>	Unkown
<b>Development cost:</b>	Unkown

# La Cocina

## San Francisco, CA

A food business incubator program aimed at helping businesses owned by low-income, women, and/or people of color. They also offer kitchen rental space.



Chronicle / Brant Ward

<b>Project Of:</b>	La Cocina (2005), <i>nonprofit</i>
<b>Facility Size:</b>	4,4000 square feet (total)
<b>Facilities offered:</b>	4 prep stations, dry and freezer storage
<b>Services offered:</b>	Product development, marketing, business planning, operations Kitchen rentals for non-incubated businesses
<b># Entrepreneurs per year:</b>	25-40 businesses
<b>Funding Sources:</b>	40-50% government and individual donations, 10% rent, 40% retail/sales
<b>Development Cost:</b>	\$1.4 million

# Athens Food Venture Center

## Athens, Ohio

The Athens Food Venture Center is a shared kitchen space operated by Appalachian Center for Economic Networks (ACENet), a not-for-profit business incubator offering a range of business planning services for both food and non-food start-up businesses.



<b>Project Of:</b>	Appalachian Center for Economic Networks (ACENet) (1985), <i>nonprofit</i>
<b>Facility Size:</b>	30,000 square feet (total), 7,000 square feet (kitchen)
<b>Facilities offered:</b>	Central kitchen, thermal processing room, warehouse (coolers, freezers, storage, distribution and delivery infrastructure), retail and office space
<b>Services offered:</b>	Business planning, marketing, branding, financial management
<b># Entrepreneurs per year:</b>	50-100 (327 total since inception)
<b>Funding Sources:</b>	State, local, regional, federal and foundation funding
<b>Development cost:</b>	Facility is worth \$1.4 million

# Portland Mercado & Micro Mercantes Kitchen

## Portland, Oregon

A cultural and food hub for showcasing Latino/a culture. It houses an on-site commercial kitchen (Micro Mercantes Kitchen), service and retail businesses, and prepared food retailers in one facility.

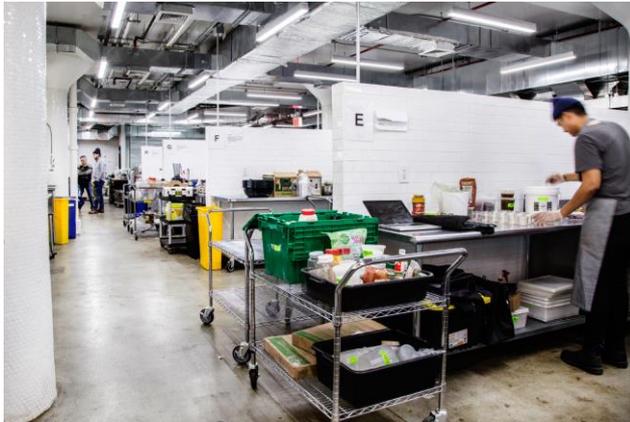


<b>Project Of:</b>	Hacienda Community Development Corporation (2015), <i>nonprofit</i>
<b>Facility Size:</b>	7,000 square feet (total)
<b>Facilities offered:</b>	Central kitchen, thermal processing room, warehouse (coolers, freezers, storage, distribution and delivery infrastructure)
<b>Services offered:</b>	Business and kitchen trainings (bilingual)
<b># Entrepreneurs per year:</b>	44 businesses
<b>Funding Sources:</b>	Federal, local, foundation, and private funding
<b>Development cost:</b>	\$3.2 million

# Brooklyn Foodworks

## Brooklyn, New York

Brooklyn Foodworks aims to support new food entrepreneurs and increase economic development in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood. Members enjoy professional kitchens and a variety of services. Flexible pricing plans and scholarships increase accessibility.



<b>Project Of:</b>	The Foodworks, <i>for-profit</i>
<b>Facility Size:</b>	10,000 square feet (total)
<b>Facilities offered:</b>	Kitchen spaces, fryers, dishwashers, industrial food equipment, cold storage, baking center, coworking space, conference room, private kitchen and event space
<b>Services offered:</b>	Mentorship, branding and business support, dishwashing, linen, garbage and receiving, support team on call
<b># Entrepreneurs per year:</b>	100 businesses
<b>Funding Sources:</b>	Revenue from monthly membership plans
<b>Development Cost:</b>	\$1.3 million

# L.A. Prep Kitchen

## Los Angeles, California

This facility is analogous to a fully-furnished apartment building for existing food businesses. This is not an incubator (they target already existing businesses) but they offer business support and acceleration services through partner organization Food Centricity.



<b>Project Of:</b>	L.A. Prep Kitchen (2015), <i>for-profit</i>
<b>Facility Size:</b>	56,000 square feet (total)
<b>Facilities offered:</b>	Private kitchen spaces, storage, loading docks, offices, classrooms
<b>Services offered:</b>	Assistance with production process, business acceleration services (product ideation, development and testing, marketing, sales, distribution, finance/accounting, legal, purchasing and logistics), sourcing opportunities with buyers
<b># Entrepreneurs per year:</b>	46-50 businesses
<b>Funding Sources:</b>	Revenue is only from rent collected by tenants
<b>Development Cost:</b>	\$18 million

# The Hatchery

## Chicago, Illinois

The Hatchery provides support for early-stage, established food businesses in Chicago. Their workshops and classes are available to members and the public. They are currently upgrading to a new, larger facility in East Garfield Park.



<b>Project Of:</b>	Joint venture between three Chicago nonprofits—Accion Chicago, ICNC, and IFF, <i>nonprofit</i>
<b>Facility Size:</b>	65,000 square feet (total)
<b>Facilities offered:</b>	Shared kitchens, dry/cold storage, loading docks, and meeting/office spaces
<b>Services offered:</b>	Mentoring, class and service discounts, networking events, financing access
<b># Entrepreneurs per year:</b>	75-100 businesses
<b>Funding Sources:</b>	City grants and financing, private donations, membership fees
<b>Development Cost:</b>	\$30 million

# Union Kitchen

## Washington, D.C.

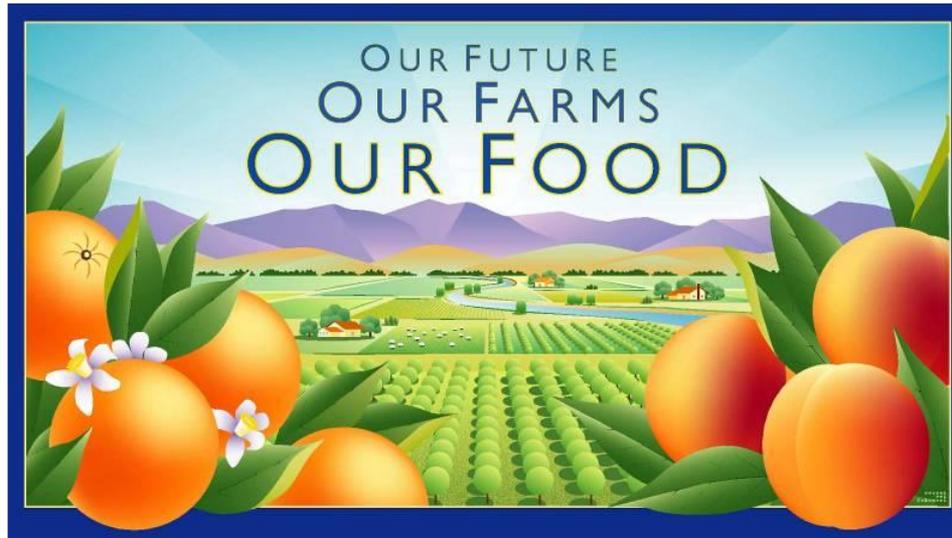
Union Kitchen is an “accelerator” that partners with early-stage established food businesses to promote growth with resources, infrastructure, and networks. Union Kitchen also houses a grocery, restaurant and a distribution facility.



<b>Project Of:</b>	Jonas Singer and Cullen Gilchrist, <i>for-profit</i>
<b>Facility Size:</b>	16,000 square feet (total)
<b>Facilities offered:</b>	Stocked professional commercial kitchen, dry storage, frozen storage, and cold storage, in-house grocery store, distribution facility
<b>Services offered:</b>	In-house design and branding, business support, vending and catering opportunities, funding resources
<b># Entrepreneurs per year:</b>	50 businesses
<b>Funding Sources:</b>	Membership fees and rent
<b>Development Cost:</b>	\$2.25 million

# Other Examples

- The Alameda Kitchen – Oakland, CA
- Commonwealth Kitchen – Dorchester, MA
- Community Kitchen Pittsburgh – Pittsburgh, PA
- Inspiration Kitchens – Chicago, Illinois
- Liberty's Kitchen – New Orleans, LA
- Life's Kitchen – Boise, Idaho



**San Jose Food Works is facilitated by Sustainable  
Agriculture Education (SAGE)**

*SAGE revitalizes agricultural places near cities and fosters  
vital food systems that connect urban and rural communities*

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