



Shared-Use Food and Beverage Processing Facilities in B.C.

Business Plan Guidebook

Part I: A Step-by-Step Guide



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The Business Plan Guidebook was created by the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries as a starting point for organizations that are interested in establishing shared-use food and beverage processing facilities in B.C. The guidebook provides a high-level overview of the B.C. food and beverage processing sector, business planning considerations for a *shared-use processing facility* in B.C., a business plan template for a shared-use facility and additional resources.

1.2 Terminology

This guidebook uses the term *shared-use processing facility* to refer to any commercial infrastructure with value-added food or beverage manufacturing equipment that is accessed by multiple food and beverage businesses. The food industry uses many terms similar to *shared-use processing facility* – such as commissary kitchens, incubator kitchens and food incubators – and these variations reflect the ongoing evolution of innovative facility models. Definitions also tend to vary by jurisdiction and regional needs. Overall, shared-use processing facilities tend to focus on supporting local food production and processing activities and offering food and beverage small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs) access to facilities and equipment without the associated high start-up costs of acquiring a facility and equipment as an individual business.

The table presented below introduces a range of food processing facility models (but is not exhaustive).

FACILITY DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA OF SHARED USE PROCESSING FACILITY		OTHER ELEMENTS						
	Shared-Use Commercial Food Production Space	Specialized Processing Equipment	Basic Food Preparation Space	Office / Instruction Space	Testing / Product Development Services	Advanced Research & Development Services	Packaging, Bottling, & Labelling Services	Business Development Services	Aggregation & Distribution Services
<p>Shared-Use Processing Facility / Commissary / Commercial Kitchen Provincially- or federally-inspected facility with professional food preparation space and value-added food processing equipment, primarily for commercial production purposes.</p>	✓	✓	✓	*	*		*		
<p>Community Kitchen A standard kitchen with equipment and supplies, generally found at community centres, neighbourhood houses or churches. These kitchens are normally available to community groups or catering businesses at reduced rates. They may be accessed by small business, but their primary purpose is for serving social and community objectives.</p>	*		✓						
<p>Incubator / Accelerator Kitchen A commercial kitchen with business development services for food business start-ups. Typically for limited-time use, before a business is able to move into its own facility.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	*			✓	*

* Indicates elements that are generally (but not always) offered by the facility. Facility Description Criteria of Shared-Use Processing

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<p>Food Business Accelerator A short-term business program including networking opportunities, entrepreneurial training and industry support services for food business start-ups. Some programs have a competitive selection process. May be offered within or separate from a shared-use processing facility.</p>				*				✓	
<p>Processing Centre / Co-Packer Private sector facility with equipment to process and package food and beverage products for other businesses.</p>							✓		*
<p>Regional Food Processing and Innovation Hub (according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries BC Food Hub Network program) A shared-use processing facility for small- to medium-sized food and beverage producers and processors that integrates food processing and innovation activities and services.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	*	✓	✓	*

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	Shared-Use Commercial Food Production Space	Specialized Processing Equipment	Basic Food Preparation Space	Office / Instruction Space	Testing / Product Development Services	Advanced Research & Development Services	Packaging, Bottling, & Labelling Services	Business Development Services	Aggregation & Distribution Services
<p>Food Innovation / Development Centre A large-scale commercial kitchen or processing facility offering technical expertise, business support and advanced laboratory testing and research and development (R&D) services. Typically has greater emphasis on R&D services than providing access to space for day-to-day production. Generally owned by or in partnership with government or academia.</p>	*	✓	*	*	✓	✓	*	*	
<p>Food Hub (according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture) A regional food hub is a business or organization that actively manages the aggregation, distribution, and marketing of source-identified food products primarily from local and regional producers to strengthen their ability to satisfy wholesale, retail, and institutional demand.</p>	*	*	*					*	✓

* Indicates elements that are generally (but not always) offered by the facility. Facility Description Criteria of Shared-Use Processing

1.3 Examples of Shared-Use Processing Facilities and Food Innovation Centres

The following are examples of shared-use processing facilities in B.C. and other Canadian provinces:

BC Food Hub Network Shared-Use Processing Facilities

- [Commissary Connect](#), Vancouver, B.C.: Commissary Connect is a leader in people-focused, professionally-run, shared-use commercial kitchen spaces. The facility offers its member businesses 24/7 access to shared-use processing facilities, technology, and equipment to assist with the booking and billing of equipment and business advisory and product development services. Commissary Connect's Laurel Street facility in South Vancouver is the Pilot and Demonstration Food Hub of the BC Food Hub Network.
- [Plenty & Grace Food Hub & Innovation Centre](#), Surrey, B.C.: Plenty & Grace is a shared-use, commercial manufacturing space focused on the processing of local B.C. fruits, vegetables, tree nuts and herbs for value-added production. In addition to offering shared-use food processing space, Plenty & Grace offers services including co-packing, food business consulting, lab services, B.C. ingredient sourcing, and product distribution support.
- [The Dock+](#), Port Alberni, B.C.: The Dock+ is a shared-use food processing facility that provides businesses affordable access to processing space and specialized equipment. The Dock+ is comprised of a shared-use commercial kitchen, offering space for processing agricultural commodities or seafood processing, including services such as smoking, blast freezing, and cold storage space.
- [Sprout Kitchen](#), Quesnel, B.C. (launching 2021): Sprout Kitchen will offer space and support for existing and emerging food entrepreneurs in the North Cariboo Region. Sprout Kitchen will provide businesses with access to infrastructure and services including processing and testing equipment, food business advisory services, product development services, analytic services, applied research opportunities, and education and training related to food processing and food safety.
- [Zest Commercial Food Hub](#), Salmon Arm, B.C. (launching 2021): The Zest Food Hub, led by the Salmon Arm Economic Development Society, will offer food and agriculture businesses in the Shuswap Region access to shared food and beverage processing space, equipment, and services.
- [Cowichan Valley Food Hub](#), Cowichan Valley, B.C. (launching 2021): The Cowichan Valley Food Hub, led by the Cowichan Green Community Society, will offer a commercial teaching kitchen, processing kitchen, and aggregation space to local food producers and processors.
- [Thompson-Nicola Food Hub](#), Kamloops, B.C. (launching 2021): The Thompson-Nicola Food Hub, led by the Kamloops Food Policy Council, will help local businesses in Kamloops access shared commercial kitchens and a training centre for food and beverage processing.
- [Capital Region Food Hub](#), Victoria, B.C. (launching 2021): The Capital Region Food Hub, led by the Victoria Community Food Hub Society, will offer a shared processing and packaging facility, and aggregation space to local processors and producers.

- [Fraser Valley Artisan Food Hub](#), Abbotsford, B.C. (launching 2021): The Fraser Valley Food Hub, led by the Mission Community Skills Centre Society, will offer shared kitchen space for food processing and commercial production, and customized training programs for the food sector.
- [Centre for Seafood Innovation](#), Bowser, B.C. (launching 2021): The Centre for Seafood Innovation, led by Vancouver Island University, will offer seafood producers and processors commercial test kitchen space, laboratories, and event and training space. The centre will offer services including applied R&D, product development, regulatory coordination and consulting, food safety testing, and training and education to the seafood sector.
- [Kootenay Boundary Food Hub](#), Rock Creek and Greenwood, B.C. (launching 2021): The Kootenay Boundary Food Hub, led by the West Boundary Community Services Co-op Association, will offer a co-packing and processing kitchen to meat producers in Rock Creek, and a bakery test kitchen to processors in Greenwood.
- [Central Kootenay Food Hub](#), Creston, B.C. (launching 2021): The Central Kootenay Food Hub, led by Fields Forward, will offer co-packing space, shared-use food packaging space, storage facilities, and wet and dry processing equipment to local producers and processors.
- [The Alberta Food Processing Development Centre](#), Leduc, Alberta: The Alberta Food Processing Development Centre is a modern, fully-equipped, pilot plant and product development laboratory facility staffed with experienced food scientists, engineers and technologists who work with entrepreneurs to develop and fine-tune their products.
- [The Kitchen Collective](#), Hamilton, Ontario: The Kitchen Collective is a non-profit, affordable commercial kitchen and culinary incubator designed to give aspiring entrepreneurs a boost in the industry as well as a collaborative space in which to launch their business and learn from each other. As a co-operative, the Kitchen Collective is owned and operated by its members, allowing the services provided to remain in line with the needs of its membership.
- [BIO|FOOD|TECH](#), Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island: BIO|FOOD|TECH provides professional technical services to the food and bioprocessing industries from concept, to pilot, to market through three integrated business divisions: food technology, bioscience technology, and lab services.

In addition to the shared-use processing facilities and food innovation centres mentioned above, there are many other examples located across Canada and in other countries that can serve as models and resources to inform the development of new initiatives.

Other Shared-Use Processing Facilities

- [BC Beverage Technology Access Centre](#), Penticton, B.C.: Okanagan College's BC Beverage Technology Access Centre is a new federally-funded technology access centre that will provide services to the wine, beer, spirits, cider, and beverage industries through new and existing product development, testing, and technology. It will also offer market/

2.0 Planning Your Shared-Use Processing Facility

A critical component of developing shared-use processing facilities is conducting feasibility studies. This early scoping activity will help you to tailor your business to meet client needs, identify opportunities, and assess financial feasibility. Undertaking this thorough market assessment may reaffirm your business idea or help you identify adaptations for your business to better meet the needs of your target market. If your findings indicate that a *shared-use processing facility* in your region would be in demand, financially sustainable and logistically sound, the next step is to develop a business plan.

Prior to establishing a feasibility study, an online search and engagement with regional food and agriculture organizations is recommended, to see if previous feasibility studies or similar projects have been completed for shared-use processing facilities or related industry supports in your area. Consulting these reports can reveal insights relevant to your study and can save you time and money. For example, in 2019, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries conducted a [food and beverage processing industry survey](#) to identify the needs, challenges and opportunities of B.C. food and beverage processors. *Appendix A* provides a summary of the top interests of both the overall sector and B.C. regions that were identified by the survey that your business may want to consider during the market assessment process.

2.1 Feasibility Study

A feasibility study for a *shared-use processing facility* generally consists of an assessment of the needs of local food producers and processors (target clients) in the areas of processing, food safety, training and education, research, business development support, facilities, storage and equipment. *Appendix B* provides a feasibility study template. A feasibility study may also consist of a broader market assessment, considering the demand or market opportunities for the types of processed products that would be produced at the *shared-use processing facility*, helping to inform the type of processing and equipment to focus on and/or which clients to engage. The market assessment can also inform the financial viability of a *shared-use processing facility* at the proposed location.

Hiring a consultant to conduct your feasibility study is recommended to establish an objective view on the viability of your business; however, in-house assessments are possible when funding constraints exist. The creation of an advisory body, comprised of industry and project stakeholders, is a mechanism that can provide guidance to the development of the business. *Section 4.1* offers examples of business planning consultants and *Section 4.3* includes additional business planning resources.

Prior to completing your feasibility study, it is suggested that you review the business plan outline in *Section 3*, which includes guiding questions that you may wish to consider during the development of your feasibility study.

If your *shared-use processing facility* model is determined to be viable, a business plan can be established for your facility using the outline in *Section 3*. Your feasibility study will form the basis of your business plan report and information from the feasibility study is often transferrable to the business plan.

2.2 Business Plan

As with the feasibility study process, engaging with industry and collecting feedback from potential clients is valuable for the business planning process. Advice from industry experts can be sought during business plan development or for review of the completed business plan. Unlike feasibility studies, business plans are generally completed in-house but may also be written with assistance from a business planning consultant.

For developing your business plan, see the 'Shared-Use Food and Beverage Processing Facilities in B.C. Business Planning Guidebook – Part II: Business Plan Template' for a usable business plan template. Instructions on how to complete the business plan template and additional guiding questions that are specific to shared-use processing facilities are provided in *Section 3* of this guidebook.

In addition to this guidebook's business plan template, it may be helpful to familiarize yourself with other business plan templates available online for additional ideas on content and layout. As reports vary, it is recommended to review online business planning resources and information that are most relevant to your *shared-use processing facility* concept and that meet the criteria of your report's audience (e.g., banks, investors, funding agencies).

3.0 Business Plan Outline

The following business plan outline includes instructions on how to complete the business plan template (see the 'Shared-Use Food and Beverage Processing Facilities in B.C. Business Planning Guidebook – Part II: Business Plan Template') and guiding questions related to general business considerations and those unique to shared-use processing facilities in B.C.

Executive Summary

What to include here:

A brief summary of the contents of the business plan, which can be written after completing the other sections of the plan. What to include here:

- What are key takeaways from each section of this report?

Business Overview

Business Description

What to include here:

- Why are you interested in developing a *shared-use processing facility*?
- Within which city/region will your facility be located?
- Who are your target clients (e.g., any type of food and beverage business, a specific sub-sector of food and beverage processing, caterers, bakers, food trucks, others)?

Mission, Vision and Values

What to include here:

- What is your mission statement?
- What is your vision and what are your values?
- Will your *shared-use processing facility* generate social benefit(s) (e.g., food security, food literacy, training and skills development)?
- How will your *shared-use processing facility* model align with your mission, vision and values?

Ownership, Governance and Management Team

What to include here:

- What will be the legal structure of the facility (e.g., sole proprietorship, general partnership, corporation, cooperative, non-profit organization, social enterprise)? Consider the structure that best suits your objectives (e.g., social, financial or both), your activities, and your expected sources of funding/income. If you are not sure which structure is best suited to your facility, a lawyer or accountant can advise from a legal and financial perspective. Information is also available online on [business structures](#), societies (not-for-profit corporations) and [different structures for social purposes](#).
- Who will own the operation? What makes them qualified?
- Who will manage the operation? What makes them qualified?
- Is it important to have a Board of Directors and/or an advisory group? If yes, what are the roles and responsibilities of the members and what will the selection process, service term and compensation (if applicable) be for the members?

Market Research

Industry Overview and Trends

What to include here:

- Who is part of the industry and how large is the industry?
- What are the current trends in the industry and what is the industry outlook?

Regional Overview and Market Trends

What to include here:

- What are the main production and processing activities occurring in the region?
- What are the current trends for the region and what is the outlook for the region? Are there emerging markets or niche product opportunities?
- Are there geographic features or limitations for the region (e.g., proximity to ports, rural setting, primary agricultural commodities)?

Needs Assessment and Gap Analysis

What to include here:

- What infrastructure, equipment and services are not currently offered in your region? Identify needs that are not being met by existing industry supports and conduct research on why these needs are not being met.
- If suitable infrastructure, equipment, and services are offered but underutilized, determine what barriers or challenges prospective clients are facing. Are existing supports too expensive? Are there regulations limiting the availability of these resources?
- Which gaps will you fill and how?

Note: *Appendix C* provides examples of shared-use processing facility spaces, equipment and services for which you may wish to assess demand during your market research.

Target Market and Clients

What to include here:

- Will your facility serve all types of food and beverage processors, or will it focus on a specific sub-sector or commodity area (e.g., seafood sector, berry processing)? Focusing on a segment of the sector may allow for the establishment of more specialized support and the ability to afford and house specialized equipment, however, it may also result in having a smaller client base. Describe who your target clients are (e.g., type of business, company size, location) and their existing level of demand for processing infrastructure, equipment and services.
- Will you have anchor tenants? Anchor tenants are permanent or long-term users of a facility. Anchor tenants can contribute to the success of a *shared-use processing facility* by providing regular rental income, helping to determine equipment needs and facility design during the construction phase of the facility (if the anchor tenants are confirmed in advance) and providing mentorship to other clients.
- What are your prospective client's target market channels (e.g., farmers' markets, catering and events, food trucks, independent retailers, national retailers, public institutions, export markets)? Note that the market channels of your prospective clients have implications for food safety requirements and the facility scale/production capacity your facility will need to meet.
- Will you offer an on-site retail market for food processors to sell directly to consumers? Describe your targeted retail audience and their needs.
- Will you offer training and workshops? Describe your target audience and their needs.

Competitor Analysis

What to include here:

- Who are your direct and indirect competitors? What do they offer and what will you offer?
- What is your positioning strategy? In other words, what will you do to differentiate your facility from others? Identify infrastructure, equipment and services already available to your target clients and determine ways to differentiate your business.

Facilities, Equipment and Services

What to include here:

- For what purpose(s) do your target clients need your facility? What type of physical space and design would best support the targeted activities?
- Is there seasonality to the type of processing that would occur in your facility? If yes, how will revenue be generated off-season?
- What are the components of your facility and its services that will generate revenue?

Location

What to include here:

- Will you operate a single facility or multiple facilities? If multiple, will each location offer the same or different equipment and services?
- Will your facility be established within existing infrastructure or require the development of new infrastructure? What construction and renovations will be required?

- Is your facility location accessible to clients? Consider how far potential clients are willing to travel to access your facility. Is the location accessible to market channels/distribution routes?
- Will your facility adhere to local government by-laws/zoning?

Equipment and Suppliers

What to include here:

- What equipment and supplies will you include at your facility to support clients' needs, processing activities and other market opportunities?
- Will you own all of the equipment or will you have anchor tenants who purchase and install their own equipment? If anchor tenants invest in equipment, will it be available for other businesses to use?
- Will you purchase (new or used) equipment or lease equipment?
- How much will your equipment and supplies cost?
- Will any of the equipment be mobile and available for use off-site?
- Will you require an in-house food testing lab or equipment for offering food safety and/or product research and development services?
- How often will your facility's equipment be serviced, and where?

Food Safety Requirements

What to include here:

- What food safety requirements are needed for the proposed processing activities and target buyers of the food? The facility must be inspected and permitted by either the provincial Health Authority for your region or by the Canadian Food and Inspection Agency (CFIA).
- In addition to the inspection of and permit for the facility itself, the individual businesses operating within the facility will require food safety plans and may require third party food safety certifications, such as Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), if selling to retail chains, institutions or export markets.
 - » Having a food safety plan can provide a number of benefits. Businesses that are following a food safety plan program and receive a high audit and inspection score can secure a reduced rate for recall insurance. Recall insurance is not covered under general business insurance but may be added at an additional cost. In addition, businesses who follow a food safety plan program can be looked at more favourably by banks for business loans.
- What Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are required for all clients of the facility to follow to meet food safety regulations/standards within the shared space? Shared-use processing facilities provide space to multiple businesses within a single facility and therefore require protocol that is shared across clients, as well as food safety plans for each individual client.
- Are there any additional regulatory requirements to be considered (e.g., allergen-free, certified organic)?

- See Table 1 below for an overview of regulatory and industry requirements. It is recommended that you contact your Environmental Health Officer (EHO) through your local health authority early-on during the business planning process to confirm the necessary regulatory and industry requirements for your facility.

TABLE 1. OVERVIEW OF POTENTIAL REGULATORY AND INDUSTRY REQUIREMENTS	
Potential Regulatory and Industry Requirements	Examples of When Required
Regional Health Authority License to Operate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All food processing facilities require, at a minimum, approval by a Health Authority to operate (with the exception of meat, seafood and milk processing facilities, as they require provincial/federal approval). • The following Health Authorities in B.C. provide information on food establishment operating permits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fraser Health • Interior Health • Island Health • Northern Health • Vancouver Coastal Health • Additional food safety information is available from the following Health Authorities in B.C.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial Health Services Authority • First Nations Health Authority • Resources on writing food safety and sanitation plans are available on the Government of B.C. website. • Information on provincial food safety legislation is available on the BC Laws website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.C. Food Safety Act • B.C. Food Premises Regulation
Safe Food for Canadians Regulations , administered by the CFIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Food for Canadians Regulations primarily apply to food that is imported, exported and traded inter-provincially. Some requirements may also apply to certain foods sold intra-provincially. See the CFIA's online Regulations Toolkit for full details.
HACCP or similar third-party food safety certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HACCP or similar third-party certifications are industry standards required by certain buyers/markets, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutions/food service organizations • Distributors • Large retailers • Inter-provincial markets • Export markets • HACCP is also a set of principles employed in food safety plans.
ISO Lab Accreditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third party accreditation for food testing labs may be required to meet certain food safety regulations or industry standards.

Floor Plan

What to include here:

- How will you design your facility to maximize space and best support your activities? Shared-use processing facilities can be designed in many ways (e.g., clients may use the same space/equipment at different times, dedicated client stations can be created, or separate rooms outside the production areas can be created for additional purposes such as testing and research). Consider exploring existing facility designs by visiting other shared-use processing facilities in-person or virtually, or by conducting research online.
- What will your floor plan for the facility look like? When developing a floor plan, consider your potential clients and the possible challenges of cross contamination, workflow and demand for space and equipment and how to minimize potential risks. Consider engaging a food processing consultant and/or engineer to aid in the facility design.
- How will your design account for food safety requirements (e.g., hand washing stations, bathrooms, HVAC system, etc.)? Consult with your Environmental Health Officer at your regional Health Authority or use the [HealthLinkBC](#) Directory to connect with resources and assistance.
- How will indoor and outdoor spaces be designed? Consider loading docks and transportation vehicles.
- How much storage space is needed (e.g., dry, cold and freezer storage)? What are the needs of your clients?

Operations Plan

Operational Staff

What to include here:

- What are the staff positions required for operating the facility?
- What are the key roles and responsibilities of each staff person?
- What qualifications will be required for each staff person?
- What are the training requirements for each staff person? Food safety knowledge is a regulated requirement in B.C. It is recommended that requirements for staff training are determined during the business planning process and included as a continual operating expense. Consult with your Environmental Health Officer at your regional Health Authority or use the [HealthLinkBC](#) Directory to connect with resources and assistance to determine staff training requirements.
- What are the anticipated salaries (or salary range) of each staff person? What would be included in each staff person's benefits package?

Partnerships

What to include here:

- Are there organizations that offer complimentary services or programs in your region (e.g., post-secondary institutions, culinary colleges, academic departments, business development organizations, industry organizations, First Nation organizations, economic development groups, local governments, other shared-use processing facilities, food testing labs, business accelerator programs)? Is there an opportunity to build

partnerships with these organizations to expand the reach of your proposed services/client offerings?

- Will your partnerships be long-term or project-based?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of each partner?
- Are potential partners interested in investing in your business?

Client and Company Policies and Procedures

What to include here:

- If your facility’s capacity is outweighed by demand, how will you select your clients? How will you handle interested clients that are competing businesses?
- How will you handle clients’ proprietary business information?
- Will you require clients to graduate after using the facility for a certain period of time (e.g., an incubator-oriented model) or will they be able to access your facility for an unlimited period of time?
- What policies and procedures will you implement for your clients to follow and what resources will be available for your clients to access (e.g., cleaning and food safety procedures, scheduling and billing systems)?

Marketing and Sales Strategies

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis will help you to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to provide an overview of your strategic

business situation. The analysis may reveal areas for your business to build on, resolve, expand, or avoid and can help to determine important business management decisions and direction.

What to include here:

- What are your facility’s internal strengths?
- What are your facility’s internal weaknesses?
- What external opportunities can you leverage?
- What are the external threats to your facility’s success?

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
NEED CONTENT	NEED CONTENT
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
NEED CONTENT	NEED CONTENT

Pricing Strategy

What to include here:

- How much are prospective clients willing to pay for desired space, equipment and services?
- At what frequency will your clients require access to space, equipment and services (e.g., daily, occasional use, one-time product development consultations)?
- How much are your competitors charging?
- What will you charge and what is the anticipated demand for your space, equipment and services?

Marketing and Promotions Strategy

What to include here:

- How will you find clients?
- How will clients find you? Consider industry directories and raise your business profile by adding your business to directories such as [BC Food Connection](#).
- Which marketing channels will allow you to best reach your target clients (e.g., social media, web media, printed materials, radio, networking events)?
- How much funding and time will you allocate to each marketing channel?

Financial Plan

Start Up and Overhead Costs

What to include here:

- What are the major costs of starting up your *shared-use processing facility* (e.g., building, renovations, equipment, consulting, labour)?
- What are the major and total recurring costs that your operations will incur (e.g., rent, utilities, wages, building and equipment maintenance, permits, supplies, cleaning services, disposal and waste management services, security)?

Revenue Streams

What to include here:

- How much will you charge for your space, equipment and services and what fee structure will you use (e.g., hourly/weekly/monthly/yearly or per-use rates)?
- Will you charge clients using a sliding scale (e.g., based on the use of the space

or equipment during a certain time of the day or size and/or business model of your client's business)?

- Will you offer bundle discounts to clients if they access more of your equipment and/or facility?
- Will you offer services or programs at a fee?
- Does your chosen legal structure enable you to seek the investments, grants and loans that you may require?

Sources of Funding

What to include here:

- Which financial supports will you access for start-up and operational costs (e.g., business loans, grants, crowdfunding, in-kind donations)? *Section 4.2* offers an overview of funding and financing opportunities relevant to shared-use processing facilities in B.C. Developing a *shared-use processing facility* requires strong capital investment and significant financial planning. Exploring a range of revenue and fundraising opportunities to support financial viability is recommended.
- How much funding are you eligible for? What criteria do you have to meet and which processes do you have to follow to secure the funding?

Pro-Forma Financial Statements

What to include here:

- Can the facility be self-sustaining within a reasonable amount of time? When will break even/profits begin to occur?
- What specific costs and revenues do you anticipate for your facility?
- Will your facility generate adequate cash flow?

Projected Four-Year Income Statement

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4
REVENUES				
Facility Rentals				
Equipment Rentals				
Services				
Donations/Grants				
Other				
Gross Profit				
EXPENSES				
Rent/Mortgage				
Renovation Fees				
Equipment				
Salaries and Wages				
Office Supplies				
Phone, Internet				
Permits, Certifications				
Insurance				
Marketing				
Other				
Total Expenses				
NET PROFIT				

Pro-Forma Balance Sheet [Year 1]

ASSETS		LIABILITIES	
Current Assets		Current Liabilities	
Cash		Loans	
Accounts Receivable		Accounts Payable	
Prepaid Expenses		Accruals	
Supplies		Wages Payable	
Other		Other	
Investments		Long-term Liabilities	
Land		Term Debt	
Building		Other	
Equipment and Machinery		Total Liabilities	
Less: Accumulated Depreciation		SHAREHOLDER'S EQUITY	
Other		Common Shares	
Other Assets		Retained Earnings	
		Contributed Surplus	
Total Assets		Total Liabilities and S/H Equity	

Implementation Plan

What to include here:

- Will your operations launch all at once or in a phased approach?
- Are there successful businesses that have implemented a model similar to yours? What has made them successful?
- What is the timing required to build your facility and obtain health, safety and building permits and certifications, including the time required to prepare for and conduct inspections and receive approvals?

PHASE/PROJECT/ACTION	LEAD	DEADLINE/ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

Timeline

PHASE/ PROJECT/ ACTION	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH
Activity 1									
Activity 2									
Activity 3									
Activity 4									

Performance Strategies

What to include here:

- What are your main goals and key strategies for the *shared-use processing facility* during the next one to three years?
- What performance strategies will you implement and what performance metrics will you use to determine the facility's success?

Risks and Mitigation Strategies

What to include here:

- What are the anticipated risks for your facility?
- What mitigation strategies can be identified for each risk?

Exit Strategy

What to include here:

- What are your long-term plans for the *shared-use processing facility* (e.g., going public, expanding to additional locations, selling your business)?
- How will you position your operation to meet these plans?

Conclusion

What to include here:

- What are the key takeaways of your business plan?
- Restate your funding or financial requirement and its importance.

4.0 Additional Resources

4.1 Business Planning Consultants

The following consultants are experienced in developing shared-use food and beverage processing facility-related feasibility studies and business plans for B.C. entities:

- [Tapestry Evaluation and Strategy](#)
- [Sustainability Ventures](#)
- [Greenchain Consulting](#)
- [Farm|Food|Drink](#)
- [Urban Food Strategies](#)

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries' [B.C. Agri-Business Planning Program](#) and [B.C. LEAN for Food Processors Program](#) also outline a list of qualified business consultants that may be relevant to your business planning project.

4.2 Funding Opportunities

Many industry associations, private organizations and federal, provincial and municipal governments offer a variety of business grants and loans. Below is a non-exhaustive list of funding programs that may be of interest for your *shared-use processing facility* for either start-up, operational or project-based financing. Please consult the resource directly for a complete list of current opportunities, eligibility and application periods.

FUNDING RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION
B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries	Programs for the agriculture, seafood and processing sectors. Grant programs include support for business planning, Indigenous communities and food safety. Available at: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs
Investment Agriculture Foundation of B.C.	Non-profit organization administering federally- and provincially-funded programs for agriculture and food sectors in B.C. Available at: https://iafbc.ca/home/funding-opportunities/
Innovate BC	A variety of funding opportunities for innovative research and technology-related projects in the province. Available at: https://innovatebc.ca/what-we-offer/get-funding/
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	Federal programs and services for agriculture and food businesses. Available at: https://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/agricultural-programs-and-services
Canadian Agricultural Partnership	Federally-funded activities and programs to support growth in the agriculture, seafood and food processing sectors. Available at: https://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/about-our-department/key-departmental-initiatives/canadian-agricultural-partnership/canadian-agricultural-partnership-federal-activities-and-programs
Local Food Infrastructure Fund (AAFC)	The Local Food Infrastructure Fund (LFIF) is a five-year, \$50 million initiative ending March 31, 2024. The program is part of the Government of Canada's Food Policy, which is Canada's roadmap for a healthier and more sustainable food system. The LFIF objective is to strengthen food systems and to facilitate access to safe and nutritious food for at-risk populations. https://www.agr.gc.ca/eng/agricultural-programs-and-services/local-food-infrastructure-fund/?id=1560701480448
Investment Readiness Program	Funded by the Government of Canada, the Investment Readiness Program (IRP) supports social purpose organizations as they contribute to solving pressing social, cultural and environmental challenges across Canada. The IRP's goal is to help social purpose organizations build their capacity to participate in Canada's growing social finance market. https://www.communityfoundations.ca/initiatives/the-investment-readiness-fund/
Regional and First Nations Economic Development Trusts	Regional organizations that support social and economic development initiatives, including through funding opportunities, that may include opportunities for shared-use food processing initiatives or other community-based food initiatives. List of regional trusts is available at: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/economic-development/support-organizations-community-partners/economic-development-organizations
Community Futures	Business resources and small business loans for entrepreneurs in communities across B.C. Find your local Community Futures office at: https://www.communityfutures.ca/network-map

Additional funding opportunities may be available through industry associations, private foundations and financial institutions.

4.3 Suggested Resources

Below are some resources relevant to planning a *shared-use processing facility* in B.C. We suggest browsing these resources as a next

step in planning your facility. The B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries is not affiliated with each resource listed below and does not assume responsibility for the content presented in each resource.

RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION
Shared-Use Food Processing	
Shared Kitchen Toolkit: A Practical Guide to Planning, Launching and Managing a Shared-Use Commercial Kitchen	A Shared Kitchen Toolkit developed by The Food Corridor and Fruition Planning and Management. This comprehensive, 166-page toolkit is based in the U.S., although most information is transferrable to the B.C. context. Available at: https://www.thefoodcorridor.com/resources/
The Shared-Use Kitchen Planning Toolkit	A Shared-Use Kitchen Planning Toolkit developed by the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture in collaboration with Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. Although some details are specific to Iowa, most information is transferrable to the B.C. context. Many sample documents are provided such as client applications and rental agreement contracts. The toolkit includes a sample operations budget and template, but keep in mind that the values are based on U.S. markets and are presented in USD. Available at: https://www.leopold.iastate.edu/files/pubs-and-papers/2014-09-shared-use-kitchen-planning-toolkit.pdf
General Food Processing	
B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries' Food and Beverage Processing Webpage	This webpage directs to a variety of resources related to business planning, business management and sector guidance. The webpage also directs readers to information on the B.C. food and beverage processing sector, including key industry associations and statistics that can help with conducting a market assessment. Available at: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/business-market-development/food-beverage-processing
B.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Food Safety in Processing	Food processing businesses in British Columbia are required to implement formal food safety plans to ensure their products are safe for consumption. This page provides information on requirements and resources for implementing good manufacturing practices and building and maintaining a strong food safety culture in a processing facility. Available at: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/food-safety/food-safety-processing
Operating Permits – Regional Health Authorities	This page provides information on applying for a health operating permit, which all food service businesses in B.C. must have. These are issued by health authorities and a link to each of the regional Health Authorities that administer operating permits is provided. It is recommended that an Environmental Health Officer be contacted early on when planning for the development of a food processing facility. Available at: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/employment-business/business/managing-a-business/starting-a-business/starting-a-restaurant-in-bc/permits-licences/health-operating-permit
Small-Scale Food Processors Association	An association providing a diversity of resources for small-scale food processors in B.C. Available at: https://www.ssfpa.net/

RESOURCE	DESCRIPTION
BC Food and Beverage Association	An association providing a diversity of resources for food and beverage processors in B.C. Available at: https://www.bcfpa.ca/
Food Processing Skills Canada	Provides resources for food processing sector skills development and training and labour market analysis, as well as funding support, e-learning and certification. Available at: https://fpsc-ctac.com/
Post-Farm Food Safety Program	The Post-Farm Food Safety (PFFS) Program provides funding for activities such as identifying and documenting food safety risks, implementing food safety activities, attaining food safety improvement services, upgrading facilities and equipment, and achieving third-party HACCP based audits. Available at: http://bcpostfarmfoodsafety.com/
Business Advisory	
AgriService BC	AgriService BC offers a variety of tools and guides for agriculture and food businesses. The <i>Running an Agrifood or Farm Business</i> webpage directs readers to relevant business information such as financial management, human resources and risk management. Available at: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriservice-bc/agriservice-bc-food-processors
B.C. Small Business Branch	Information on provincial government programs and services for small businesses is available at www.gov.bc.ca/smallbusiness and a guide for starting a small business in B.C. is available at www.gov.bc.ca/startingasmallbusiness
Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC)	The Business Development Bank of Canada offers tips, advisory support and business start-up guides for Canadian entrepreneurs. Available at: www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/start-buy-business
Small Business BC	Small Business BC helps British Columbia's entrepreneurs grow successful and sustainable businesses through expert business advisors, educational services, easy-to-use free resources and engaging community events. Available at: https://smallbusinessbc.ca/

Appendix A: 2019 B.C. Food and Beverage Industry Survey Results

Below is a summary of the top interests of the food and beverage production and processing sector in B.C. – both in general and specific regions of B.C. – as identified by the 2019 B.C. food and beverage industry survey conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries.

- Top Interests of the B.C. Food and Beverage Production and Processing Sector:

- » Financing and Funding Support

- Access to financial programs/funding support
- Simpler financing options
- Assistance with funding applications

- » Networking

- Networking events
- Connections to food distributors, food scientists and other supply chain stakeholders

- » Co-Packing Services

- » Consultation Services

- Small business mentorship/coaching
- Understanding regulations, cross border sales, distribution and marketing
- Assistance related to intellectual property (legal assistance)

- » Top Interests of the South Coast Region Food and Beverage Production and Processing Sector:

- » Processing technology training
- » Food/health and safety training
- » Business development services
- » Product or production consultation services

- Top Interests of the Vancouver Island/Coast Region Food and Beverage Production and Processing Sector:

- » Processing technology training
- » Food/health and safety training
- » Business development services
- » Product or production consultation services

- Top Interests of the Okanagan Region Food and Beverage Production and Processing Sector:

- » Business development services
- » Product or production consultation services
- » Research and development services or facilities

- Top Interests of the Food and Beverage Production and Processing Sector in Other Regions*:

- » Processing technology training
- » Food/health and safety training
- » Food handling and/or storage services
- » Leased, rented or shared equipment and/or technology

*The 'Other Region' primarily represents the Kootenay, Thompson-Nicola, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast, Omineca-Skeena and Peace regional areas.

Appendix B: Feasibility Study Template

Contents

1.0	Executive Summary
2.0	Introduction
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2.2	Lead Organization and/or Project Manager(s) Leading the Study
3.0	Methodology
3.1	Project Timeline
3.2	Project Funding
3.3	Environmental Scan
3.4	Industry/Client Engagement Process
4.0	Findings
4.1	Overview of the Regional Agriculture and Food Sector
4.2	Existing Infrastructure and Services in the Region
4.3	Related Studies in the Region
4.4	Regional Industry/Target Client Needs and Opportunities
4.5	Proposed Facility Model
4.6	Financial Projections
5.0	Recommendations
5.1	Vision and Opportunities for the Shared-Use Processing Facility
5.2	Governance Structure
5.3	Potential Facility Locations
5.4	Potential Challenges and Opportunities

5.5 Suggested Next Steps

6.0 Conclusion

Appendices

1.0 Executive Summary

What to include here:

- A brief summary of the contents of the feasibility study, which can be written after completing the other sections of the study.
- What are key takeaways from each section of this report?

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Purpose of Study

What to include here:

- Why is the feasibility study being conducted?
- What outcome(s) are you trying to achieve by conducting the feasibility study?

2.2 Lead Organization and/or Project Manager(s) Leading the Study

What to include here:

- Who is the lead organization and/or who is/are the project manager(s) leading the feasibility study?
- Describe the lead organization and/or the project manager(s) and provide a brief overview of their qualifications.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Project Timeline

What to include here:

- What is the timeline for completing the feasibility study (i.e., identify each activity to be completed, the start and end dates for each activity, and a breakdown of the hours required for each activity)?

3.2 Project Funding

What to include here:

- How is the development of the feasibility study being funded (i.e., funding from financial institutions, grants, organizations, individuals, etc.)?
- 3.3 Environmental Scan
- What to include here:
- How will you identify the existing production and processing activities occurring in the region?
- How will you identify existing agriculture and food sector infrastructure and services that exist in the region?
- How will you identify the current trends in the agriculture and food sector that exist in the region?

Note: Identify the region within which you will be searching for this information (e.g., within the Metro Vancouver Regional District, etc.).

3.4 Industry/Client Engagement Process

What to include here:

- How will you engage with industry or clients relevant to the *shared-use processing facility* project (e.g., online surveys, interviews, town-halls, focus groups, etc.)?

4.0 Findings

4.1 Overview of the Regional Agriculture and Food Sector

What to include here:

- What are the main production and processing activities occurring in the region?
- What are the current trends for the region and what is the outlook for the region? Are there emerging markets or niche product opportunities?
- Are there geographic features or limitations for the region (e.g., proximity to ports, rural setting, primary agricultural commodities)?

4.2 Existing Infrastructure and Services in the Region

What to include here:

- What infrastructure, equipment and services are currently offered in your region? What infrastructure, equipment and services are not currently offered in your region? Identify needs that are not being met by existing industry supports and conduct research on why these needs are not being met.

- If suitable infrastructure, equipment, and services are offered but underutilized, determine what barriers or challenges prospective clients are facing. Are existing supports too expensive? Are there regulations limiting the availability of these resources?

Note: *Appendix C* provides examples of shared-use processing facility spaces, equipment and services for which you may wish to assess demand during your market research.

4.3 Related Studies in the Region

What to include here:

- What other studies or similar work have been completed for the region in the past 3-5 years? Are you able to access those reports? Is the information within those reports still relevant today?
- Is there relevant information to your feasibility study that you can draw on from the reports to help inform your work?

4.4 Regional Industry/ Target Client Needs and Opportunities

What to include here:

- Who is part of the industry and how large is the industry?
- What are the current trends in the industry and what is the industry outlook?
- What are the current key gaps/top needs of the sector in the region (e.g., infrastructure, equipment, services, etc.)?

4.5 Proposed Facility Model

What to include here:

- Are you considering one model for a *shared-use processing facility*, or multiple models?
- What infrastructure and equipment do you propose to include for your facility model(s)?
- What services do you propose to include for your facility model(s)?
- What partnerships do you propose to develop for your facility model(s)?

4.6 Financial Projections

What to include here:

- Can the facility be self-sustaining within a reasonable amount of time? When will break even/profits begin to occur?
- What are the anticipated revenues and expenses for the *shared-use processing facility*?
- Will the facility generate adequate cash flow?

Projected Four-Year Income Statement

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4
REVENUES				
Facility Rentals				
Equipment Rentals				
Services				
Donations/Grants				
Other				
Gross Profit				
EXPENSES				
Rent/Mortgage				
Renovation Fees				
Equipment				
Salaries and Wages				
Office Supplies				
Phone, Internet				
Permits, Certifications				
Insurance				
Marketing				
Other				
Total Expenses				
NET PROFIT				

Pro-Forma Balance Sheet [Year 1]

ASSETS		LIABILITIES	
Current Assets		Current Liabilities	
Cash		Loans	
Accounts Receivable		Accounts Payable	
Prepaid Expenses		Accruals	
Supplies		Wages Payable	
Other		Other	
Investments		Long-term Liabilities	
Land		Term Debt	
Building		Other	
Equipment and Machinery		Total Liabilities	
Less: Accumulated Depreciation		SHAREHOLDER'S EQUITY	
Other		Common Shares	
Other Assets		Retained Earnings	
		Contributed Surplus	
Total Assets		Total Liabilities and S/H Equity	

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 Vision and Opportunities for the Shared-Use Processing Facility

What to include here:

- What is your vision for the *shared-use processing facility*?
- Will your *shared-use processing facility* generate social benefit(s) (e.g., food security, food literacy, training and skills development)?
- How will your *shared-use processing facility* model align with your vision?

5.2 Governance Structure

What to include here:

- What options are there for ownership of the *shared-use processing facility*? If owned by an individual or an organization, what makes the individual or organization qualified?
- What options are there for management of the *shared-use processing facility*? If managed by an individual or organization, what makes the individual or organization qualified?
- Is it important to establish a Board of Directors and/or an advisory group? If yes, what will the potential roles and responsibilities of the members be, and will the members be compensated for serving on the Board of Directors and/or the advisory group?

5.3 Potential Facility Locations

What to include here:

- Will a single facility or multiple facilities be developed? What are the potential locations to consider for the facility/ies? If considering multiple facilities, will each location offer the same or different equipment and services?
- Will the facility/ies be established within existing infrastructure or require the development of new infrastructure? What construction and renovations will be required?
- Is/are the facility location(s) accessible to clients? Consider how far potential clients are willing to travel to access the facility. Is/are the location(s) accessible to market channels/distribution routes?
- Will your facility/ies adhere to local government by-laws/zoning?

5.4 Potential Challenges and Opportunities

What to include here:

- What challenges exist/are anticipated with developing a *shared-use processing facility*?
- What opportunities exist/are anticipated with developing a *shared-use processing facility*?
- What are the strengths of the *shared-use processing facility* model(s) you have proposed?
- What are the weaknesses of the *shared-use processing facility* model(s) you have proposed?

5.5 Suggested Next Steps

What to include here:

- What are the next steps for the *shared-use processing facility* project (i.e., develop a business plan, no longer pursue development of the project, continue to engage with potential project partners and stakeholders, etc.)?

6.0 Conclusion

What to include here:

- What are the key takeaways of your feasibility study?

Appendix C: Example Shared-Use Processing Facility Spaces, Equipment and Services

Please note that the following table is not exhaustive, nor does every *shared-use processing facility* incorporate all the types of space, equipment and services listed below. The table is intended to provide a starting point for consideration in your shared-use facility planning process.

GENERAL FACILITY FEATURES	SPECIFIC EXAMPLES
Food Preparation Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial kitchen • Cold/dry food preparation counters/stations • Hot/wet food preparation counters/stations
Food Processing Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-use room with processing equipment • Commodity-specific processing areas (e.g., smoking room, fermentation room, meat processing room, seafood product preparation) • Commercial production line areas
Food Preparation Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ovens • Stovetops • Kettles • Meat grinder • Sausage stuffer • Blenders and mixers • Baking equipment
Food Processing Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry processing (e.g., dehydration equipment, blenders, milling equipment, drying/cooling equipment) • Wet processing (e.g., kettles, pasteurizers, cold pressing, mixers, cryogenic freezers, flash freezing, processing vats) • Meat processing (e.g., forming equipment, band saws, tenderizers, presses, grinders, smoking) • Benchttop processing (e.g., noodle/pasta machine, grills/fryers, mixers, bowl cutters) • Batter and breading (e.g., breading applicators, batter applicators, ovens, freezers) • Baking (e.g., convection ovens, rotating rack ovens, dough preparation machines, mixers, sheeters) • Seasoning (e.g., seasoning equipment, spray and coating equipment, tumblers) • Novel equipment (e.g., agitation thermal processing equipment, high pressure homogenizer, 3-D printer)

GENERAL FACILITY FEATURES	SPECIFIC EXAMPLES
Product Packaging Area, Equipment and Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vacuum sealer • Heated-sealed pouch • Package sealers • Machine pasteurizer • Bottling and capping equipment
Food Testing Laboratories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microbiology lab (e.g., for shelf-life, food safety) • Chemistry lab (e.g., for analytics, testing ingredients) • Laboratory equipment (e.g., microscopes, centrifuges, digestion/distillation systems, moisture analyzers) • Food quality lab (e.g., for analysis of quality attributes of food and beverage products such as water activity, pH, texture)
Storage and Product Handling Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry storage • Cold storage • Freezer storage • Other temperature-controlled storage • Truck access and cross-docking space/area for receiving and aggregating product
Office and Training Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boardroom • Classroom • Kitchen classroom
Rentals (Facility and Equipment) and Booking Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile and on-site equipment rentals • Storage rentals • Facility rentals • Online booking system (e.g., website, mobile application) • Digital catalogue/library of equipment
Laboratory Services (Product Research and Development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical consultation (food scientists) • Concept ideation, analysis and development • Prototype design and demonstration • Interim processing and product packaging • Quality control/quality assurance • Product analysis (e.g., sensory evaluation, nutrient analysis, allergen testing) • Improve existing products (e.g., shelf life extension, reformulation) • Develop new products • Enter new product categories
Commercialization Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance with scaling production • Assist with ingredient sourcing, co-packing referrals and packaging recommendations • Regulatory requirement and labelling assistance

GENERAL FACILITY FEATURES	SPECIFIC EXAMPLES
Business Development Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business mentorship, accelerator and incubator services • Funding access support/investor engagement • Business-to-business (B2B) networking • Market intelligence/analysis • Domestic and/or export market access assistance • Wrap-around business supports • Support transition into private production facility (e.g., ownership, lease, co-packing) • Value chain coordination • Pathfinding services
Food Processing and Food Safety Training and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HACCP/food safety plan development • Workshops on food safety • Food safety compliance verification • Training on food processing methods and technologies • Pathfinding services
Retail and Distribution Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-commerce • Pop-up events • On-site market • Refrigerated transportation services • Value chain coordination services