

YOUR FUTURE IN FOOD

# Renting a Commercial Community Kitchen – a Checklist



If you are planning to sell a food product at a farmers' market, retail or food service markets, and you need a facility to process your product, renting a commercial community kitchen might be a viable option.

Here are some things to consider if you're thinking about renting a community kitchen:

- a. Does this kitchen have the required [Permit to Operate a Food Handling Establishment](https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/protection/docs/fhp.pdf) ([www.manitoba.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/protection/docs/fhp.pdf](https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/protection/food.html)) issued by [Manitoba Health](https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/protection/food.html) (<https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/protection/food.html>)? Is the permit current and is it posted in a visible location in the kitchen?
- b. Is the kitchen available on the days and times you need?
- c. Does this kitchen have the equipment to suit your processing needs? Will the owner/operator of the kitchen provide training on how to use, maintain and clean the equipment?
- d. Determine the cost to rent this facility and ensure you have the financial resources to cover the cost.
- e. Once you have established which community kitchen to use and that it meets with your requirements, contact the Manitoba Public Health Inspector that currently inspects this community kitchen to apply for your own processing permit.
- f. Fill out the permit application form, along with the restricted processing information form and submit both forms to the public health inspector. The type of information required will include:
  - the address of the community kitchen
  - the layout of the facility, including a detailed drawing of the floor plan of the facility indicating its size and where equipment is or will be located (if adding additional equipment)
  - a list of the processes or steps required to produce all your products, including:
    - a pre-operational plan and sanitation plan (including the steps required before you get started in this facility to ensure it is cleaned properly)
    - equipment to be used while processing (e.g., mixer, convection oven, filler)
  - product types:
    - Is the product shelf stable, or does it require temperature control (e.g., refrigeration)?
    - Is the shelf life less than 90 days? If yes, a best before date is required.
  - Provide a list of all the products you will be producing.

- Provide the list of ingredients included in your product. Ingredients must be from an approved source.
  - What types of markets are you planning to sell this product to (retail/food service/farmers' markets)?
  - Where will you be storing your ingredients and finished products? Does this kitchen have the storage capacity you will require (refrigeration, freezing, dry storage)?
  - Provide examples of your packaging and labelling. (Your [food labelling requirements \(https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/food-and-ag-processing/starting-a-food-business/pubs/food-labelling.pdf\)](https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/food-and-ag-processing/starting-a-food-business/pubs/food-labelling.pdf) will vary, depending on the types of markets to which you are selling.)
  - Depending on your process, validation from lab testing may be required to prove the process is safe for producing that product. For example, some products must be thermally processed (e.g., pasteurized) to achieve safety.
  - Depending on the product, you may need to record the pH of product (pH meter may be required), water activity (Aw), time/temperature.
- g. Once all requirements are met, a permit will be issued to produce your products in this kitchen. Inspection for processing your products must be done on an annual basis in order to maintain your permit.
- h. Arrange a rental agreement with the kitchen that suits your schedule and budget. It is recommended to have this agreement in writing. Be aware that most commercial community kitchens will require a damage deposit at the time of renting.
- i. Ensure you have general liability insurance in place to cover you and your workers while working in this kitchen.

Manitoba Agriculture has a current listing of [Commercial Community Kitchens \(https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/food-and-ag-processing/starting-a-food-business/community-kitchens.html\)](https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/food-and-ag-processing/starting-a-food-business/community-kitchens.html) for rent. The kitchen does not have to be on this listing to be an eligible kitchen for rent.

If you are considering making a food product to sell, we encourage you to contact a business development specialist with Manitoba Agriculture to help you navigate the steps.

**For more information:**

Go to [manitoba.ca/agriculture/food-and-ag-processing/](http://manitoba.ca/agriculture/food-and-ag-processing/)

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