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Agdex 845-30

Opportunities for the Commercial Kitchen

Congratulations on taking the first steps toward turning your commercial kitchen into a revenue source for you and an important asset for your community. This toolkit consists of a series of factsheets covering issues involved in getting your commercial kitchen ready to rent out. If you are already renting out your kitchen, this toolkit may provide a refresher, plus new ideas about ways to reach out to new customers in your area.

Kitchen logistics

A kitchen can appeal to many different potential renters, from families and groups to professional caterers, chefs and food processors. You need a fully stocked, modern kitchen to succeed.

Your kitchen should be in good working order, and you should have the equipment needed to prepare most foods. You may also want smaller specialty equipment in your kitchen – like deep fryers or table-top grills. You will need to stock basic food preparation utensils and wares, and have a variety of serving dishes and table settings on hand.

To make sure your kitchen is stocked for success, refer to the *Kitchen Logistics*, Agdex 845-31, factsheet in this series. The logistics factsheet outlines, in detail, the items you need to stock a commercial kitchen.

*Stock your commercial kitchen
with all the tools clients will need*



Managing risk

Make sure you have the right tools in place to manage risk when renting out your commercial kitchen.

Handling and preparing food in a safe manner are critical in the kitchen, and in certain circumstances, it is not just the responsibility of the renter. Alberta Health Services may require your organization to take special steps to ensure that those in your kitchen follow safe food handling procedures.

Regulations may vary depending on the renter and the type of service they are providing from your kitchen, so make sure you check the “Food safety in the kitchen” section of the factsheet on *Managing Risk*, Agdex 845-32.

Risks related to safe food preparation and insurance need to be managed



You likely have insurance for your overall facility, but did you know that you may require additional coverage for certain rental scenarios in your commercial kitchen? For details, refer to the “Insurance requirements” section of the factsheet on *Managing Risk*.

It is recommended that you formalize a rental agreement on paper, including the rates you will charge, with your renter. This written agreement will allow the person or group renting the kitchen to review and agree to the details of the booking in advance.

To ensure consistency and accuracy in the renting process, consider designating a staff person or volunteer as a dedicated rental co-ordinator.

Identifying your target audience

Once you have the kitchen stocked as well as the legal and regulatory details nailed down, it is time to start thinking about potential customers or users for your commercial kitchen.

You have many opportunities for renting out your commercial kitchen. Your audience could include a local food processor that has outgrown its current production space or one that is just starting out and needs a commercial kitchen, a caterer, a sports team hosting a community fundraiser or a local school or restaurant running cooking classes.

The type of kitchen you have – and the people or groups in your community – may determine some of your target audience/clients. Even so, you may be surprised at how easy it is to discover and reach other kinds of potential renters, thus expanding the value of your kitchen.

The factsheet *Identifying Your Target Audience*, Agdex 845-33, will help you reach out to specific groups for your commercial kitchen.

Marketing your commercial kitchen

To promote your kitchen, you will identify its unique value for different users and find innovative ways to get the word out in your community. The factsheet *Marketing your Commercial Kitchen*, Agdex 845-34, outlines several ways to create a compelling message for your kitchen, with easy (and sometimes free) ways to start promoting the kitchen to potential renters.

With the above tools, you will be well on your way to getting more value out of your commercial kitchen. Many agencies and businesses are already renting out their kitchens and reaping the benefits that come from offering this valuable resource to their communities.

A small investment of time and budget may be all that is needed to take your commercial kitchen to the next level, making it a more profitable enterprise.

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