

SHARE GROUNDS

CERTIFIED KITCHEN & DISTRIBUTION CENTER

Arkansas Hub and Spoke Model for Food Innovation

How existing rural infrastructure and
University Extension support spark food innovation

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Program Associate



SHARE GROUNDS

CERTIFIED KITCHEN & DISTRIBUTION CENTER

Creating facilities
at Arkansas county
fairgrounds in:

- **Marshall**
- **McCrary**
- **Rison**

Share Grounds facilities offer:

- **Produce Aggregation**
- **Product/Process Development**
- **Value-Added Production**
- **Regulatory Assistance**



Goals

Increase access to and consumption of local foods in Arkansas by expanding utilization and capacity of fairgrounds for aggregation, distribution, and value-added product development

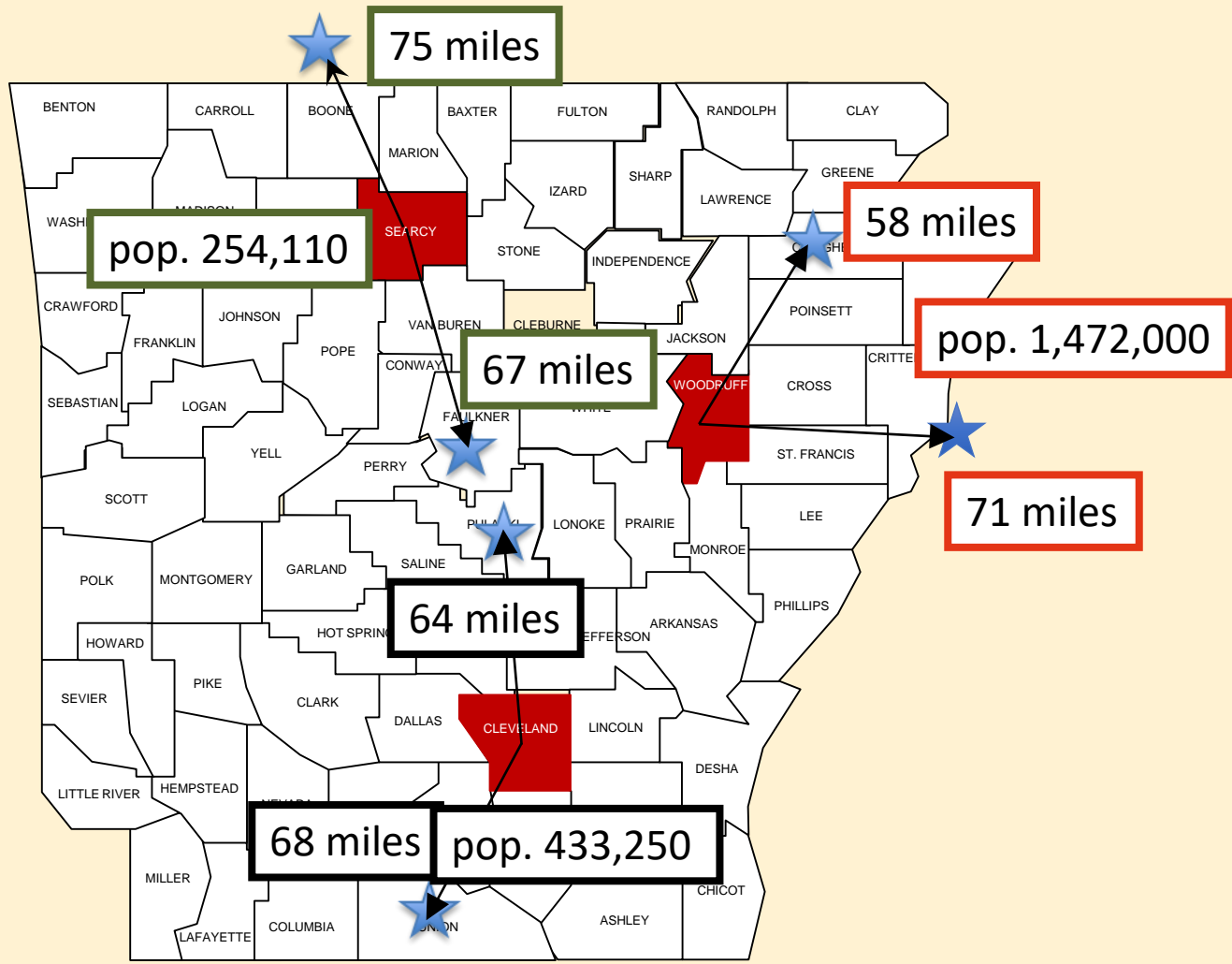
Support local farms

Develop and expand opportunities for value-added food businesses

Foster the growth of regional food economies

Improve access to food in underserved communities and institutions



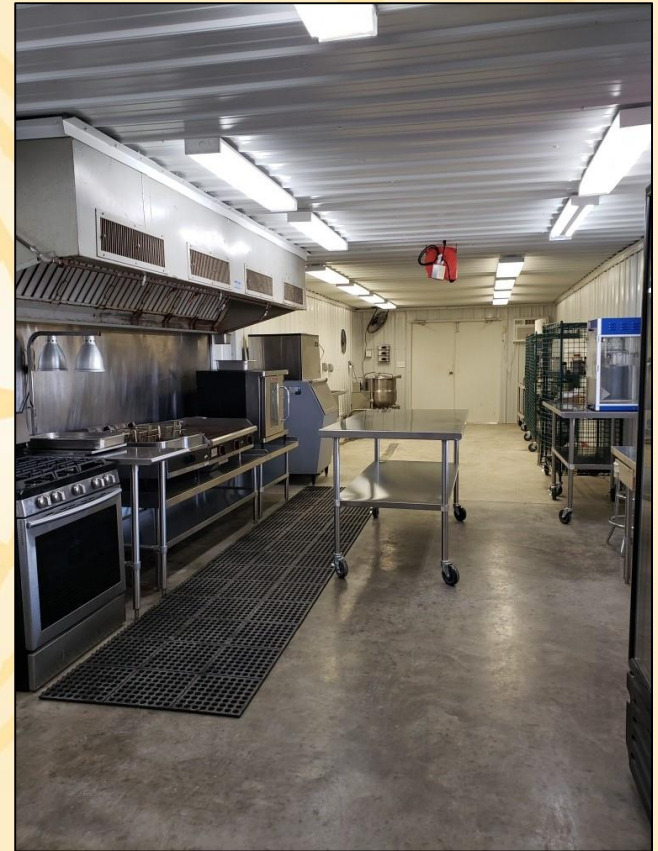


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey: 2013-2017

Cleveland County



BEFORE



AFTER



Searcy County



B
E
F
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E



A
F
T
E
R



Woodruff County (Three Co. Fair)



B
E
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A
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Hub and Spoke Model

Arkansas Food Innovation Center



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Dawn Kelly

Three
County
Fair
Share
Grounds



Valour Taylor Cobbins

Cleveland
County
Share
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**SOUTHERN
EXTENSION
RISK
MANAGEMENT
EDUCATION**

Boosting Rural Economies Through Food Innovation Startup with Mentored Entrepreneurial Support

- Walk through 15 businesses from concept to product
- Student Interns – one-on-one mentoring
- Process and recipe review
- Support for nutrition panels and labeling
- Product testing for safety



Aims

- 15 food businesses in marketplaces
- Arkansas Made branding
- Trend for local retail
 - Local restaurants
 - Small grocers
- Business expansion
 - Potential for successful businesses to move beyond Arkansas borders through market connections with larger buyers (Walmart) and/or moving online (Amazon)



Client Concepts – 20 clients

- Product Types

- Salsa
- Pickle pouches
- Teas/tinctures
- **Commercial honey**
- Seasonings
- Pepper jelly
- Frozen hand pies
- Refrigerated yeast rolls
- Pickled okra
- Caramels and caramel sauce
- Quinoa granola
- Mayhaw jelly
- **Soybean dip**
- **Elderberry gummies**
- “Farmer Protein Bar”
- Freeze dried probiotic snack for kids
- Caponata di melenzane (sicilian caponata sauce)
- **Cricket flour**






Client Intake Process

www.uaex.edu/sharegrounds

1

Review UAEX Resources

To make better informed business decisions, review the following pages:

- [Share Grounds](#) 
- [Cottage Food vs Manufactured Food](#) 
- [How to Start a Food Business in Arkansas](#) 

2

Client Intake Form

Contact your local [Share Grounds Manager](#) to schedule an initial meeting and tour of the facility. Be prepared to discuss your food product and business strategy. During your meeting, you will receive a User Agreement, facility policies and a rental fee chart to review.

3

Market Research

Based on your meeting with the Manager, research retail options for your product and price shop ingredients and packaging for your product. Use these numbers to estimate your start up costs.

COVID-19 adjustment:
Call or Zoom with manager.
Kitchens are opening with strict rules (6' distance, face mask, sanitation, 1 client per day, signed waiver)



Client Intake Process

4

Purchase Insurance

In order to use the Share Grounds Kitchen, you must have product liability insurance in force. [The Food Liability Insurance Program \(FLIP\)](#) provides insurance to small food businesses (~\$300/yr).

5

Trial Run

Schedule a time to run a trial batch of your recipe in the Share Grounds Kitchen. Bring a copy of your Insurance Policy and a signed User Agreement to the facility. This step may require multiple test batches to achieve the right recipe based on taste, quality and food safety.

6

Develop Operational Procedures

With the help of the manager, develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), Sanitation Standard Operation Procedure (SSOP), Recall Plan, Allergen Plan and other operational documentation for your food company.

COVID-19 adjustment:
Zoom with manager for process/recipe review. Test in kitchen with guidelines previously stated.

COVID-19 adjustment:
Call/Zoom with managers. Q&A with experts (UA Food Science) virtually.



Client Intake Process

7

Product Label

Develop a product label. [The Product Labeling Information Guide](#) provides information on mandatory label requirements. For a nominal fee, AFIC can create a Nutrition Facts panel for your product label.

8

Commercial Process Review

Prepare your application for the Arkansas Department of Health, Wholesale/Manufactured Food permit. Review all paperwork and product label(s) with the Share Grounds site manager.

9

ADH Permit

Apply for a food manufacturing permit from the Arkansas Department of Health. Once approved, provide a copy to the Share Grounds Manager.



Other COVID-19 Adjustments

- Online Servsafe
 - All managers are certified
 - Client must be certified to work without supervision
- Video Training
 - Recordings of workshops and webinars



The Outcome



- Economic opportunity in rural communities
- Potential revenue stream for Fair Associations
- Client focus on product development/production
 - Creating a novel product
 - Cold-chain storage
 - Distribution relationships that are built-in
- Strengthening rural – urban linkages through food



For more information: www.uaex.edu/sharegrounds



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