



City Center Market

Application Checklist & Getting Started

About the Kitchen

The City Center Market Kitchen is a Shared-use Commercial Kitchen owned/operated by the City of Florence, permitted by SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC), and when applicable, is subject to inspection by the SC Department of Agriculture (SCDA).

What is a shared-use kitchen?

At the most basic level, a shared-use kitchen is a co-working space for food entrepreneurs. Users can rent the commercial kitchen space for hourly time blocks and access existing infrastructure without high start-up costs and overhead to their business. The City Center Market Kitchen is a commissary-style kitchen and its business model is to rent out kitchen time, equipment, and available cold or dry storage to Users. A shared-use kitchen is a place of business for the exclusive purpose of providing commercial space and equipment to multiple Users to commercially prepare or handle approved food products that will be offered wholesale or retail or distributed. To “commercially prepare or handle” includes, but is not limited to, the making, cooking, baking, mixing, processing, packaging, bottling, canning, or storing of food. The City Center Market Kitchen serves as a commercial production space, a packaging facility, and a commissary for food businesses.

What's the difference between a food business User and a food processor?

Food business users of the City Center Market Kitchen are entrepreneurs who manufacture, produce, prepare, assemble, or provide food for ready-to-eat consumption by the public or for retail. These businesses include, but are not limited to caterers, food trucks, mobile food carts, meal preparation, and delivery operations. Food businesses are primarily regulated by SC DHEC.

Food processing users of the Kitchen are entrepreneurs, primarily farmers, who use the facility to process, manufacture, prepare, or repack and sell wholesale only to other businesses. In South Carolina, food processing businesses like these are regulated by the SC Department of Agriculture. The SCDA also has jurisdiction over the proper labeling of food products.

The types of food products your business intends to produce in the City Center Market Kitchen will determine how your business will be regulated, by which authorities, and your fee structure. If your food business conducts interstate commerce, it may also be subject to additional regulatory requirements.

What types of food can I produce in the City Center Market Kitchen?

The City Center Market Kitchen can accommodate the following types of food production, and other approved items on a case-by-case basis:

- Baked Goods (cakes, pies, breads, etc.)
- Acidic foods (vinegars, sauces with a natural PH below 4.6)
- Acidified foods (pickles)
- Jams and jellies
- Product development (creating recipes and formulas for new products)
- To-go foods (special event catering, food trucks, fundraisers, dinners)
- Dry mixes (rubs, beverage mixes, dip mixes)
- Fresh produce processing (cutting greens, packaging)

Getting Started for All City Center Market Kitchen Users

Use the process below to determine your readiness to use the City Center Market Kitchen:

- Develop a business plan for your food-based business. You can arrange for a free two-hour consultation with the Kelley Center for Economic Development (www.fmarion.edu/kelleycenter) or use the free resources offered by SCORE (www.score.org).
- Form your legal business entity (LLC, sole proprietorship, partnership, etc.).
- Register your new business with the SC Secretary of State and obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) if applicable.
- If you intend to sell a retail product, you will also need to obtain SC Retail License from the SC Department of Revenue (SC DOR). This is a one-time fee and application process.
- Visit the City of Florence Planning and Zoning Department located on the 2nd floor of the City Center (324 W. Evans Street, Florence, SC 29501) and obtain zoning for your business. Food Trucks and mobile food carts have special requirements and restrictions with Zoning, so be clear on how your business intends to operate.
- Visit the City of Florence Business License Department located on the 4th floor of the City Center to obtain a business license for your business. If your only sales outlet is the City Center Farmers' Market, your business license requirement is waived. You must have a zoning permit to apply for a business license.
- If you are operating a food truck/enclosed food trailer, you will also need to schedule a fire inspection with the Fire Marshal located on the 4th floor of the City Center.
- Obtain insurance for your food business. To use the City Center Market Kitchen, you will need both general liability insurance and [product liability insurance](#). Both policies need to have a minimum of \$1M in coverage for each incident and must name the City of Florence as additional insured. Generally, South Carolina requires employers with at least four employees to also have workers' compensation insurance. If you meet the threshold to require workers' compensation insurance, you will also need to provide proof of that coverage to the City Center Market staff.
- Schedule a facilities tour with City Center Market staff.

- Complete the training and exam for Food Safety Manager Certification. SC DHEC recognizes several [ANSI-approved courses](#). All “persons in charge” for the business (generally the User and his/her Production Manager) are required to obtain this certification prior to becoming a Kitchen User. All other employees of the business should have, at minimum, the Food Safety Handler Certification.
- Have products tested to determine the need for additional regulatory compliance. This can be done by [Clemson University](#). Examples of foods that may require additional regulatory compliance include canned, jarred, dried, fermented foods, or some baked goods.
- File documentation for appropriate regulatory compliance related to your food products. Agencies requiring documentation on file may include the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA), SC DHEC, or SC Department of Agriculture.
- Apply to be a City Center Market Kitchen User using the online intake form available at www.citycentermarket.com.
- Apply for SC DHEC approval for your use of the Kitchen. This will require that you have at least one employee with Food Safety Manager certification, an employee health policy (the City Center Market Kitchen staff can provide a sample copy), and a probe thermometer.
- Review and sign the Kitchen User Agreement. This agreement is a binding legal document and commitment for use of the Kitchen.
- Schedule an orientation with City Center Market Kitchen staff prior to your first production use. Call 843-665-2047 to set up the orientation.
- Pay the Kitchen deposit based on the fee schedule for your Use of the Kitchen.
- Register for an online Food Corridor account to pay fees and schedule Kitchen time.

Regulatory Information Guide

The following information is provided as a helpful guide to prepare Users for regulatory inspections. Inspections may take place at any time and this checklist is not intended to fully encompass all regulatory authorities nor inspection types. You must always prepare your products in accordance with the law as your license to operate can be revoked.

For All Food Businesses

- A menu of items you are currently preparing in the Kitchen. As your menu develops and changes over time, it is your responsibility to update SC DHEC of those changes. It is also advised to list allergens and have a warning about raw or undercooked food on your menu. Keep a log of where you are sourcing your ingredients and how you store them in addition to a list of any retail outlets currently carrying your products.
- A probe thermometer. You need to know how to calibrate and use this instrument properly.
- An employee health policy and knowledge on how to enforce it
- Food Safety Manager certification for persons in charge and food handler certification for other employees
- Correct tools and equipment to safely prepare your food and store it

- Storage containers, labels, and pens to label stored food with a “use by” date
- Personal protective equipment (hair nets, gloves, aprons, etc.)
- Sanitizer test strips
- Record logs for your food production records (if applicable)

For Packaged Foods and Baked Goods (in addition to All Food Businesses)

- Current copies of:
 - Product liability insurance
 - Process Authority Letter from an approved Food Processing Authority (if applicable)
 - FDA Food Canning Establishment Registration, FDA form 2541 (if applicable)
 - FDA Food Process Filing, FDA Form 2541A for each product (if applicable)
 - Copy of course certificate for Acidified Foods Manufacturing School (if applicable)
 - Label approval from South Carolina Department of Agriculture (if applicable)

For Caterers/Food Trucks/Mobile Food Carts (in addition to All Food Businesses)

- Current copies of:
 - Permit from SC DHEC
 - Product liability insurance
 - City of Florence Business License
 - City of Florence Fire Department Inspection Sticker (annually required for all mobile food units)

Resources

- City Center Market Kitchen [Website](#)
- Food and Drug Administration [Food Code, 2017](#)
- Clemson University [Food 2 Market](#)
- NC State Extension Food Business [Resources](#) and [Acidified Foods Manufacturing School](#)
- SC Department of Revenue [Retail Licensing](#)
- Internal Revenue Service (IRS) [Obtain an EIN](#)
- South Carolina Secretary of State [Business Registration](#)
- SC Department of Agriculture [Food Safety](#)
- SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC) [Food Safety](#)
- The Food Corridor [Food Business Sign Up](#)