



Learning: FEED Kitchens Tour Highlights

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This past May I was privileged to take a trip to Madison to see FEED Kitchens at work along with a team of enthusiastic residents involved with the Tribune. Being guided through the buzzing space by Adam Haen, Kitchen Manager, was an action-filled experience. From the capital campaign donor wall to the waste bins, there was knowledge to share and experiences to learn. The tour provided information about the equipment, stories about current and past users of the space, and logistical experience that will be of much use in planning for the Tribune Culinary Kitchen.

The FEED Kitchens feature separate spaces for dishwashing, user storage and multiple kitchens for designated use. While the Tribune space may not provide that large a space there was valuable information shared about how to make the best use of storage, best practices for rental of those spaces and bulk ordering for its users. Additionally, Adam explained the different pieces of equipment, how they are used and how often they are requested. Some highlights included everything from the type of equipment to include, like a large batch trunnion kettle, to the detail of their shared use label maker that provides the State required labels needed to sell products. This detailed approach to viewing each piece of equipment provided us with a logical approach to what would be best to consider providing in the Tribune's Culinary Kitchen in the beginning, as well as how to plan for future expansion.

The highlight of the tour for many of us was to witness the active usage of the kitchen during our visit and to hear the stories of those that have used it over their five years of operation. Currently over 30 enterprises use this space to produce everything from cured meats to hot sauces to cookies and baked goods. The space has empowered so many – by enabling small startup operations to achieve their dream of bringing their products (like barbeque sauce, chocolate delights or coffee) to market; and providing extensive training programs to elevate disadvantaged workers who have a passion for food service. So many people who've utilized this space have come through the experience with an improved positive story!

The logistic information shared by Adam will be an extreme time saver for coordinating the Tribune Culinary Kitchen. Detailed information such as the training curriculum outlines, necessary forms and schedules, as well as vendor information and ordering procedures were all shared with us. The collaborative spirit and information flow continues today, and the offer to contact FEED with future questions is much appreciated.

The FEED Kitchens Tour provided a wealth of knowledge but also ramped up our already enthusiastic vision for the uses of our community's own shared use kitchen. I, personally, cannot wait to look back over five years of usage and see all the lives that have been changed and good that has come from having such a valuable resource in the Tribune space!