

Central Food Processing Facility

2023 ASSESSMENT

CENTRAL FOOD PROCESSING FACILITY

- Improve nutritional quality of institutional foods
- Reduce reliance on national food service contracts
- Strengthen local food supply chain
- Fortify the District's emergency food preparedness response
- Decrease consumption of ultra-processed foods
- Reduce the carbon footprint of the District's food system

2021: FOODWORKS & CUREATE

This study was conducted over six months with over 60 food system experts throughout 2020, and clearly made a strong case for a Central Food Processing Facility

Central Food Processing Facility For Washington, DC

Impact On The Region, Operational Best Practices, and Facility Infrastructure prepared for DC Office of Planning and the DC Food Policy Council



A central processing facility would promote health equity, the local food economy, and sustainability in the District by:



Enhancing consistency of minimally-processed product for school and other institutional food



Facilitating the purchase of regional product, year-round, by schools and others



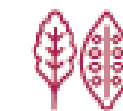
Supporting nutritional standards



Providing space to store and preserve regional food throughout the year



Providing equitable access to regional food



Supporting producers in the region, including small, urban, emerging, and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) farmers, by providing guaranteed access to storage and sales channels



Addressing key infrastructure gaps in the supply chain

APPROACHES TO A CENTRAL FOOD PROCESSING FACILITY

The 2023 study had a much more limited timeline, but with a goal of evaluating specific meal and space needs and defining approaches that meet these four core needs:

- **Increasing purchasing power of District agencies to save costs and create efficiencies**
- **Accelerating production, distribution, and consumption of high quality food**
- **Capacity and infrastructure that builds food resiliency for emergency preparedness**
- **Accelerate the District's social and economic equity goals across the food value chain**



CORE FUNCTIONS



Production Kitchen

Support District agencies that serve food in institutional settings – schools, senior centers and meals on wheels, afterschool settings, summer meals, homeless shelters, youth detention facilities, and the DC jail and justice-related facilities.

Aggregation & Storage

Aggregation and storage of available commodities, as well as for local farm products to support the growth and sustainability of regional farm operations and better connect the District to locally sourced products

Processing

Minimal processing and packing of foods and meals for DC agencies in addition to meal components that are sold to outside customers, such as other organizations and businesses within Washington DC, or outside the city, as space and operations allow.

Education

As food service evolves so does the need for professional development of food service staff. One or multiple facilities can act as a training space, with classrooms, test kitchen(s), and a technology center to support the continuous improvement of institutional meals across the District.

ANALYSIS NUMBERS

45,745,212
meals per year

170,000 sq ft
approx total

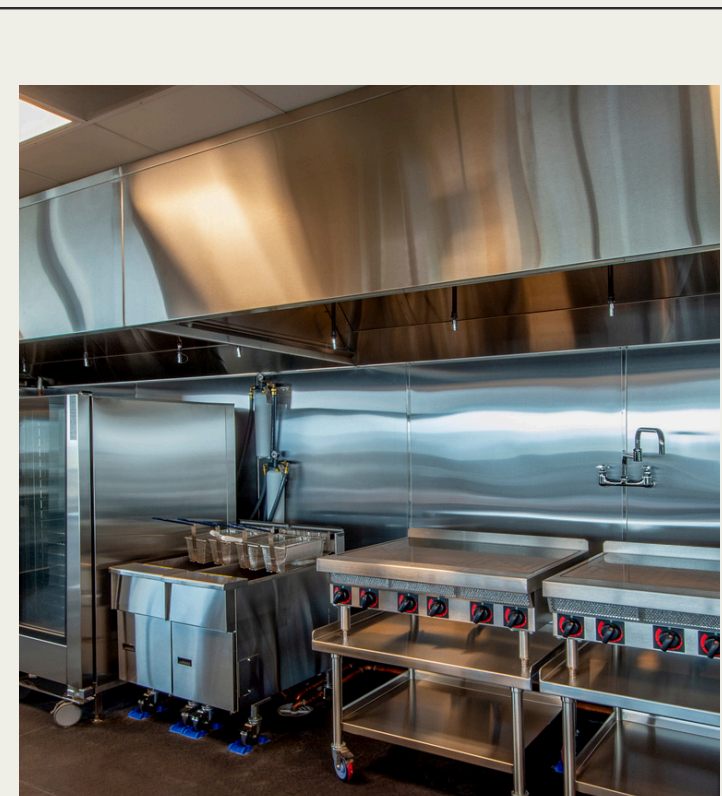
61,650 sq ft
sq ft of kitchen

45,245 sq ft
*sq ft of
warehouse*

9,100 sq ft
*sq ft produce
processing*

10,170 sq ft
*sq ft for protein
processing*

16,400 sq ft
loading dock



CONSIDERING DISTRIBUTED FACILITIES

A distributed model would allow the District more flexibility with respect to each site's particular size, would be more flexible to future changes in the District's food needs, would place sites closer to end users, and would distribute the economic and social benefits of each facility across the city by tailoring each facility to its neighborhood's economic development context and goals. A distributed model also provides flexibility for the District to start small and gather lessons learned as it builds multiple facilities over time.

- 30,000 - 60,000 sq ft could provide one or more elements of a distributed model
- Potential products from one or more facilities
 - Raw vegetables & fruits (washed, cut, bagged)
 - Prepared vegetables
 - Prepared fruits
 - Center-of-plate items
 - Baked goods
 - Dairy production
 - Non-dairy production
 - Grains, beans, rice, and pasta
 - Full meals