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185

TRAINING CONTACTS



28

EXTERNAL PARTNERS



17

INTERNAL PARTNERS

Food Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Development, Education, and Evaluation

Business ownership is an important vehicle for wealth creation, especially for members of economically disadvantaged communities. UW-Madison Extension's Community Food Systems Program serves food business entrepreneurs through direct education, networking, and evaluation to improve entrepreneurs' readiness and increase their access to licensing and regulatory information and other entrepreneurs.

The Food Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Development (FEED) Initiative serves food businesses with an emphasis on farm-based food startups and individuals who face barriers to food entrepreneurship. In 2022, FEED programming spanned eight events including a "Food and Farm Business Success" webinar, which covered marketing best practices, strategies for overcoming labor challenges, and collaborative distribution.

FEED programming culminated with a summit for food business startups to learn business fundamentals and build business connections. Summit topics included calculating revenue and building business networks and featured UW-Madison expertise from the Law and Entrepreneurship Clinic and the UW Center for Cooperatives. These events reached 185 participants.

Additionally, Extension works with municipalities to improve programs that compliment food business work. In 2022, Extension helped the City of Madison to evaluate its Healthy Retail Access Program, which provides grants that expand healthy food retail. The city lacked data on the program's impact, so Extension conducted an evaluation to document it.

FEED Initiative Outcomes

Participants shared that these workshops will inform their business planning. One participant said, **“Learning more about collaborative distribution gave me a clearer vision of business expansion options.”** Approximately 80 percent of participants shared that the summit increased their knowledge of business planning and where to find business resources in the future. Additionally, 80 percent of participants shared that they felt connected with a business resource provider.

Healthy Retail Access Program Outcomes

Extension developed a multilingual survey, which can now be used all over Wisconsin. In fact, Extension’s collaboration with the City of Madison has resulted in invitations to submit proposals to evaluate other municipalities’ food projects.



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