Development Cooperative


## Startup Food Co-op

# Business Concept Template

This template is designed to assist startup food co-ops with articulating their business concept while in the early stages of their cooperative development. The business concept is essential in more clearly communicating the co-op vision and purpose, guiding strategy, testing feasibility, and validating viability. The goal of the business concept is to identify gaps and address them before launching while spotting opportunities and ways to leverage them as the groundwork is laid for the full business plan. With this outline, organizers can engage and attract stakeholders while planning strategically and embarking upon a targeted market strategy.

This template is designed to promote a shared understanding, early buy-in, feasibility testing, and strategic direction. This document complements but does not replace a full business plan.

**Please complete the sections below thoroughly.**

Submission of a completed Business Concept template is required in order to initiate interest in working with the Development Co+operative and will be followed by a scheduled review and discussion.

## 1. Cooperative Overview:

DESIGNATED CONTACT NAME

PHONE NUMBER

EMAIL

INCORPORATED COOPERATIVE NAME

DATE INCORPORATED

CITY, STATE, ZIP

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

**FCI Stage of Development** (Check one)

- ◯ Stage 1: Convene & Prepare
- ◯ Stage 2: Grow & Plan
- ◯ Stage 3: Connect & Gather
- ◯ Stage 4: Excite & Build
- ◯ Stage 5: Fulfill & Stabilize

**At a high level, what is this co-op and what does it do?**
Provide a brief description. (2-3 sentences)

## 2. Mission Statement

**Why does this co-op exist?**
Write a clear, purpose-driven statement that reflects the cooperative's values, community impact, and long-term intent.

## 3. Value Proposition:

**What problem are you solving, and for whom?**

Describe the unmet need in your community and how your co-op uniquely addresses it.

- Primary problem(s) addressed
- Why existing options fall short
- What makes this co-op different/better

## 4. Target Market

**Who is your ideal customer-owner?**

Describe the primary audience you intend to serve and why they are likely to support and shop at the co-op.

- Primary customer segment(s):
- Key characteristics (income range, household type, values, shopping habits, etc.):
- Geographic focus:
- How this market aligns with cooperative ownership

## 5. Products and Services Overview

**What will the co-op offer?**

In the box below, provide a high-level overview of core products and services (not an exhaustive list).

- Core product categories
- Key services
- How these offerings meet customers' needs and advance the co-op's mission

## 6. Revenue Streams

**How will the co-op generate income?**

Identify primary and secondary sources of revenue.

- Primary revenue streams
- Secondary or future revenue opportunities
- Role of ownership (equity, fees, patronage, etc.)

## 7. High-Level Market Considerations

**What do you know so far about the market environment?**

This section is exploratory and may evolve as formal studies are completed.

- Key competitors or alternatives
- Community demand indicators
- Notable opportunities or gaps in the market

## 8. Key Risks and Challenges

**What challenges should be anticipated early?**

Identify major risks and questions that need further testing or planning.

- Key competitors or alternatives
- Community demand indicators
- Notable opportunities or gaps in the market

## 9. High-Level Financial Snapshot

**What are the big-picture financial assumptions?**

This is not a detailed budget but instead a preliminary overview.

- Estimated startup funding needed:
- Anticipated sources of capital (owners, loans, grants, investors):
- Long-term financial goals (e.g., sustainability, community reinvestment):

## 10. Strategic Purpose of This Concept

**How will this document be used?**

Check all that apply.

- ○ Internal alignment and organizing committee guidance
- ○ Owner recruitment and education
- ○ Early conversations with lenders or funders
- ○ Feasibility testing and refinement
- ○ Foundation for a future business plan
- ○ Other (explain):

## 11. Next Steps

**What needs to happen next to move toward feasibility and execution?**

Identify major risks and questions that need further testing or planning.

- Immediate priorities:
- Information or analysis needed:
- Key stakeholders to engage: