

cooking collaborative

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Creative food system engagement

Cooking Collaborative is a series of community cooking events intended to bring students and community members together through an inventive culinary experience that promotes healthy, fresh, and local eating.

The Cooking Collaborative aims to:

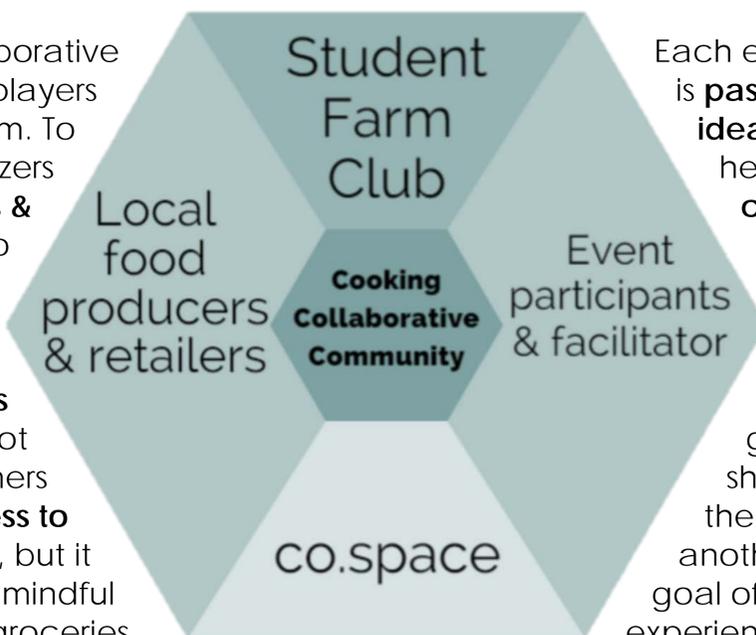
1. Provide students and young professionals with the skills, knowledge, and confidence necessary to cook healthy, whole, and seasonally appropriate meals on a modest budget.
2. Cultivate a community focused on supportive food system engagement by connecting community members, local food producers, and local businesses to one another.

Cooking Collaborative is born out of the vision to educate and engage students on all aspects of a sustainable food system. While much of the Student Farm Initiative's focus has been on food production, the Cooking Collaborative aims to amplify the Sustainable Food System Program by creating an opportunity to learn about food procurement, access, utilization, and consumption.

The planning, organization, and execution of Cooking Collaborative events is entirely student-led. Event coordinators learn **program development skills** in addition to **communication and networking skills**. As an officially recognized Penn State club, the Student Farm Club is connected to a multitude of other sustainability-centric organizations on campus which allows for extended **partnership opportunities and shared resources**.

A primary goal of Cooking Collaborative programming is to support the players involved in the local food system. To achieve this goal, event organizers have partnered with **the Friends & Farmers Cooperative** in order to access local and fresh produce.

Through this partnership, Cooking Collaborative **supports local farmers and empowers participants to do the same**. Not only does the Friends & Farmers Online Market **increase access to fresh, local foods** for students, but it allows students to practice mindful budgeting for groceries.



Each event is led by a volunteer facilitator who is **passionate about sharing creative cooking ideas**. Teaching is not an ability exclusively held by the facilitator in that **participants contribute their own skills, ideas, and knowledge** to enhance the event.

Following each event, organizers send a summary of the Collaborative to participants and stakeholders that includes the original recipes that the group prepared, any additional recipes shared by participants during the course of the evening, and any skills learned from one another. This design truly embodies the Club's goal of creating a **collaborative** cooking experience!

The co.space is a professional cooperative located in State College that is designed to bring changemakers together. As a part of its model, the co.space encourages residents to plan regular community events. Cooking Collaborative arose in part from this encouragement, to **connect university students to the State College community**. By using **food system engagement** as a medium for community connection, students expand their relationships beyond campus to include community members, organizations, businesses, and food producers.

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