The town of Unicoi Tennessee, located in the county of the same name, is nestled in the North Indian Creek Valley and surrounded by the Cherokee National Forest. Unicoi holds a population of about 3,600 and is part of the Johnson City Metropolitan Statistical Area. With an Interstate and several state routes cutting across the town, Unicoi is only minutes away from the North Carolina border.

Unicoi is currently in the process of finishing development of a community kitchen just off of Interstate 26 near the southern end of town. Mountain Harvest Kitchen (MHK) is slated to be a certified commercial kitchen with the purpose of supporting regional and local food businesses, start ups, and education. Available for rent 24/7, the 4,000sqft building will consist of two industrial food processing areas, a research lab, storage space, and receiving room for deliveries and shipments. MHK will be the only community kitchen of its kind within a 50 mile radius, and will be leveraged to support food producers and growers in the surrounding areas of Tennessee, Virginia, and North Carolina. MHK is partially funded through a grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration.

What makes MHK particularly unique, is it’s intentional purpose of supporting regional and local food start-ups. Branding the Kitchen as a ‘food business incubator’, Unicoi hopes that MHK will support food entrepreneurs across the region, offer low overhead costs, create new jobs, and encourage healthier food options.

To support this endeavor, MHK is overseen by a volunteer board of directors, and intentionally partners with nearby universities. The Kitchen is co-managed with East Tennessee State University Innovation Laboratory, which provides business assistance to MHK clients. Further, MHK has support from the University of Tennessee Agriculture Department, and the Local UT Extension services that help clients develop safe food processing techniques. MHK is expected to open Spring 2017, and more information can be found in the MHK Marketing Packet available on the MHK website.

### Mountain Harvest Kitchen Quick Facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4,000 Square Foot Facility</th>
<th>Two Food Processing Areas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Rentals</td>
<td>Wet and Dry Food Preparation Areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prepping, Cooking &amp; Baking, Packaging</td>
<td>Specialty Food Accommodations &amp; Supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fridge, Freezer, Dry Storage Including Pallet Rack</td>
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The Mountain Harvest Kitchen utilizes a tri-focused approach, covering three distinct target markets. These markets were specifically chosen as a result of data from stakeholder meetings and an online residents survey.

**Food Business Incubator**

- Business Support & Networking
- Reduction in Startup Costs
- Training and Technical Support
- Expansion Opportunities

**Community Access**

- Food Safety Instruction
- High Interest Food Programs including nutrition information
- Individual Processing of Produce

**Local & Regional Food Processing**

- Certified Commercial Kitchen Support
- Business Growth
- 24/7 Processing Space and Equipment Rental