

Stony Brook creates test kitchen at Calverton

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[Stony Brook University's](#) business incubator in Calverton is growing.

The 15,680-square-foot home to fledgling technology firms is preparing to open a new 8,400-square foot addition to serve as the facility's agriculture consumer science center that will allow agricultural producers and other upstarts to produce new food lines for distribution.

Monique Gablenz, director of the [Calverton Business Incubator](#) and Agriculture Consumer Science Center, said the new facility will feature both kitchen-based equipment and laboratories for ideal product development processes.

The entire cost of the new addition, which is expected to be completed in June, is \$3.5 million. Stony Brook received an economic development assistance grant from New York state to cover the cost.

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"The whole idea is that some farmers grow asparagus, but maybe they want to produce pickled asparagus for distribution," Gablenz said. "Or perhaps they want to create a pie, jam or cookies. They can produce them on the small scale here, and eventually graduate out of this facility or find a distributor."

When creating a product for distribution, the state requires the producer first be licensed and then perform product development from a commercial kitchen. The new facility in Calverton would fill the commercial kitchen requirement, while also providing assistance in securing the required licensing from the state.

The facility will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week once it is completed, and several potential producers will be able to use the facility at any time. The kitchen was designed by Holtsville-based food producer [J.Kings Food Service Professionals](#).

The Agriculture Consumer Science Center has already garnered interest from agriculturalists on the East End and local members of the [Small Scale Food Producers Association](#), Goblenz said.

And Gablenz said it's not just producers who could benefit from using the facility. She talking with East End hospitals and care facilities about bringing in nutritionists to the Agriculture Food Science Center to teach how to prepare food for specialized diets, such as for individuals with diabetes or life-threatening obesity.

Stony Brook has invited officials from the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to a workshop at the facility on March 21 to discuss licensing and provide further details.

Those interested in attending or potentially setting up shop in the new Calverton center should email [Gablenz](#).