

Greg Gasman



Harmony Food Co-op is buoyed by an expanding community that prizes healthful eating, consumer choice and local economic development and with the services provided by the SBDC, Harmony Food Co-op finds itself in an entirely different place.

In the last three years, Harmony has experienced tremendous growth in physical size and sales. Working with the SBDC, a thorough analysis determined that the store should be relocated. In 2011, Harmony traded up from a 3,000 square foot location to a 10,000 square foot store. After the relocation sales grew by 40 percent.

The SBDC has long been an engaged Harmony Food Co-op supporter and technical adviser. Several professional business consultants have analyzed Harmony Food Co-op's accounting system, provided instruction on QuickBooks accounting software, completed multiple loan packages totaling several million dollars, and consulted on marketing, budgeting and financial analysis.

Currently the SBDC is working together with Harmony to set up a community kitchen to accommodate additional classes and events as well as workspace for food entrepreneurs to take their products from the kitchen directly to the Harmony Food Co-op. The fully equipped, USDA-certified community kitchen opened this spring.

Gasman added, "None of this could have happened without the support of the SBDC and all the other partners, the board, Harmony Food Co-op staff, and of course, Harmony Food Co-op's member-owners and customers. We're a great example of what can be accomplished with community support."