



The Central Brooklyn Food Democracy Project

The Central Brooklyn Food Democracy Project advances a culture of healthy food, resilience and cooperative self-determination among long-term residents who are at risk of residential and commercial displacement in Central Brooklyn. In direct response to a pattern and practice of food redlining in Central Brooklyn, **the Brooklyn Movement Center and RiseBoro**, two organizations with decades of experience in building self-determining economies, have partnered to imagine a neighborhood-based food system powered by a new generation of consumer- and worker-owned cooperative food enterprises.

The Project is building an integrated food economy in Central Brooklyn while advancing a culture of healthy food, resilience, and cooperative development. The project strategically positions a new generation of entrepreneurs, workers, and consumers in a neighborhood food system powered by cooperative enterprises.



Incubated by the **Brooklyn Movement Center, the Central Brooklyn Food Coop (The Food Coop)** is a game-changing initiative in one of the most rapidly gentrifying areas in NYC. Set to open in 2021, It has been organizing since 2014 and is the nerve center and engine of the project. As a Black-led retail food cooperative, it will enable thousands of low- and moderate-income residents to nourish themselves with healthy and affordable food. As a consumer-owned coop, each member holds an equity stake in the coop and helps lower operational costs through an investment fee and three hours of monthly labor.



The Food Coop serves as the docking station for the project's interlocking components: the food education curricula/culinary training, and support for existing and new worker-owned food businesses.

RiseBoro will leverage the market base and opportunities generated by the Food Coop to form business relationships and establish at least six micro-enterprises along a food supply/demand value chain that will include food growing, sourcing,

production, warehousing, packing, distribution, and catering, creating at least 35 new jobs. RiseBoro staff are already supporting two worker coops-- a **Community Chef Coop** (still in development, see below) and the **Brooklyn Packers** (since 2015, a food packing and distribution service)--that are poised to do business with the Food Coop.

A group of Community Chefs have served thousands of Central Brooklyn residents and organizations since 2014 and are developing the Food Coop's human capital and food literacy. Their offerings include culinary courses for adults, families, and seniors; as well as one-time cooking demonstrations in order to promote The Food Coop; and they will cater events among the Food Coop community of families, while training members of the Food Coop to lead healthy sustainable lives. The thousands-strong CBFC membership will serve as a base camp for self-renewing food education, advocacy and mobilization.

A Unified Vision of Community Food Sovereignty

Collectively, these project features will be points along a natively established, farm-to-plate food pipeline. The CBFC and the worker coops are democratically run by low- and moderate-income consumer- and worker- owners, respectively. Together, they will give rise to a wholesale/retail eco-system of local food growers, aggregators, transporters, packagers, sellers and educators.



Leaders in the Solidarity Economy

The project is an outgrowth of years of collaboration between the **Brooklyn Movement Center (BMC)** and the team at **RiseBoro Community Partnership**. All three organizations have long track records of successful community organizing, community enterprise start-up, and cooperative frontier building.

BMC is a Black-led community organizing group that builds social justice campaigns, develops a base of member-leaders, and resists gentrification along several different issue fronts, including food sovereignty, police accountability and environmental justice. **RiseBoro** unleashes the potential of communities to thrive, no matter the odds. Since 1973, RB has offered services designed to meet the economic and social needs of communities across NYC. A pioneer in community development, RB reaches across generations—serving over 36,000 individuals a year with innovative programs that support seniors, empower youth, and create healthy neighborhoods.



BMC has been the primary organizer of the food coop, while the RiseBoro team has pioneered several healthy food projects including the successful creation and incubation of a community chef program, three Farmers Markets, a farmshare program, and several worker coops in Bed-Stuy.

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