**Food Truck Template**

**A. Core Concept & Brand Identity**

* **Food Truck Name:**
* **Concept & Cuisine:**
  + *(e.g., Gourmet Korean-Mexican Fusion, Artisan Wood-Fired Pizza, Elevated Comfort Food)*
* **Mission Statement:**
  + *(e.g., "To bring restaurant-quality, globally-inspired street food to the heart of the city's bustling neighborhoods and events.")*
* **Target Audience:**
  + *(e.g., Downtown Office Workers, Lunch Crowds, Festival/Event Attendees, Late-Night Bar Crowds)*
* **Price Point:**
  + *(e.g., $$ - Fast-Casual Equivalent)*
* **Unique Selling Proposition (USP):**
  + *(What sets you apart? e.g., Only truck with a custom-built wood-fired oven, hyper-local ingredient focus, famous signature sauce, vegan-only menu.)*
* **Social Media Handles:** [e.g., @YourTruckName on Instagram, TikTok, Facebook]

**B. Permit, Licensing & Location Planning**

**1. Master Permit & License Checklist**

* **Vehicle:** Mobile Food Facility Permit, Vehicle Registration & Insurance.
* **Business:** Business License, Seller's Permit, Federal EIN.
* **Health:** Health Department Permit, Food Handler Cards for all staff.
* **Local:** Fire Department Permit (for propane/gas), Parking Permits for specific zones/cities.

**2. Location Planning Calendar & Strategy**

| Location Type | Pros | Cons | Key Considerations |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Lunch Corridors** (Business Districts) | Consistent weekday traffic, high volume | High competition, limited parking/time | Secure spots in advance. Partner with building management. |
| **Dinner/Weekend Spots** (Breweries, Nightlife) | Higher ticket averages, captive audience | Can be unpredictable, safety | Partner with breweries for recurring spots. |
| **Festivals & Events** | Massive volume, brand exposure | High fees, intense pressure, complex logistics | Apply 6-12 months in advance. Calculate true cost. |
| **Farmer's Markets** | Regular weekly schedule, family-friendly | Often requires seasonal commitment, early setup | Build a loyal customer base. |
| **Private Catering** (Office, Weddings) | High profit, pre-determined revenue | Requires sales effort, custom menus | Create a separate catering menu and pricing. |

* **Quarterly Location Plan Example:**
  + **Q1 (Jan-Mar):** Focus on weekday lunch rotations. Apply for summer festivals.
  + **Q2 (Apr-Jun):** Launch brewery dinner series. Begin farmer's market commitments.
  + **Q3 (Jul-Sep):** Peak festival season. Execute catering events.
  + **Q4 (Oct-Dec):** Holiday office parties. Late-night events.

**C. Commissary Kitchen & Operations Hub**

**1. Commissary Agreement Essentials**  
A commissary is a licensed commercial kitchen where you can park, store food, and prepare ingredients.

* **Required Services:**
  + Refrigerated & Dry Storage Space
  + Access for Vehicle Parking/Overnight Storage
  + Use of Equipment (e.g., Ovens, Sinks, Mixers)
  + Gray Water Disposal and Potable Water Fill-up
  + Trash Disposal Services
* **Cost Structure:** Typically a flat monthly fee ($[Amount]) or a per-day rate.
* **Location:** Must be within a practical driving distance from your primary service areas.

**D. Weather & Contingency Planning**

**1. Weather Decision Matrix**

| Weather Condition | Action Plan | Communication Plan |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Light Rain/Overcast** | **OPERATE.** Use umbrellas, social media to confirm open. | "Rain or shine, we're serving! Grab a warm [Signature Item] today!" |
| **Heavy Rain/High Winds** | **CANCEL/DELAY.** Risk of low sales and safety issues. | "For the safety of our team & customers, we are closed today. See you tomorrow!" |
| **Extreme Heat/Cold** | **OPERATE with adjustments.** Stock more cold drinks/warm beverages. | "It's a scorcher! We're open with extra cold drinks on hand." |
| **Event Cancellation** | **PIVOT.** Have a backup "regular" location on standby. | "Due to event cancellation, find us today at [Backup Location] from 12-2pm!" |

**2. General Contingency Plans**

* **Equipment Failure:** Have contact for an onsite mobile generator/refrigeration repair service.
* **Low Inventory:** List of local suppliers for emergency ingredient runs.
* **No-Show Staff:** Cross-train all staff on all stations. Manager can step in.

**E. Mobile Point-of-Sale (POS) & Technology**

**Comparison of Key Mobile POS Needs:**

| **Feature** | **Why It's Critical for Food Trucks** | **Top Options (e.g., Square, Toast Go, Clover)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Offline Mode** | Processes payments even with poor cell service. | **Essential.** | Square is renowned for this. |
| **Hardware Bundle** | All-in-one terminal with card reader & printer. | Simplifies setup in tight space. | All major providers offer kits. |
| **Transaction Fees** | % per swipe + fixed fee. | Impacts thin margins. Compare rates. | Negotiate based on volume. |
| **Menu Management** | Easy to update items/sold out status on the fly. | Crucial for limited, changing menus. | All have robust apps. |
| **Customer Display** | Shows order total to customer for transparency. | Reduces disputes in noisy environments. | Available as add-on. |
| **Integration** | Links to accounting, scheduling, loyalty. | Streamlines back-office work. | Toast, Square have full ecosystems. |

* **Chosen System:** [e.g., Square]
* **Backup Plan:** [e.g., Keep a manual imprinter (knucklebuster) for true emergencies.]

**F. Event & Catering Opportunity Assessment**

**1. Go/No-Go Event Assessment Checklist**

| Criteria | GO (Profitable & Strategic) | NO-GO (Avoid) |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Fee Structure** | Flat fee < $[e.g., 500] or < [e.g., 15%] of sales. | High percentage (>25%) or unrealistic flat fee. |
| **Expected Attendance** | > [e.g., 2,000] people for a large event. | Vague or unverifiable attendance numbers. |
| **Food Truck Count** | [e.g., 1] truck per [e.g., 1,000] attendees. | Too many trucks for the expected crowd. |
| **Target Audience** | Aligns with your concept (e.g., families, foodies). | Mismatch (e.g., vegan truck at a bacon fest). |
| **Logistics** | Easy load-in/load-out, power/water provided. | Complicated, far away, no vendor support. |

**2. Catering Opportunity Tiers**

* **Office Lunch Drop-off:** Pre-packaged meals. Minimum order: $[e.g., 200].
* **On-Site Catering (Office/Party):** Truck parks on-site. Minimum: $[e.g., 800] + travel fee.
* **Wedding/Private Event:** Custom menu. Requires signed contract and [e.g., 50%] deposit.

**G. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for a Food Truck**

* **Daily Sales Goal:** $[Amount]
* **Average Ticket Price:** $[Amount]
* **Cost of Goods Sold (COGS):** Target [e.g., 28-32%]
* **Covers per Hour (CPH):** During peak, target [e.g., 25-40] CPH.
* **Social Media Engagement:** Track follower growth and post reach weekly.
* **Location Performance:** Track sales by location to identify "A," "B," and "C" spots.

**H. Critical Path to Launch (Food Truck Focus)**

* **Phase 1: Concept & Business Plan** (Complete this template)
* **Phase 2: Legal & Financial**
  + Form Business Entity (LLC)
  + Secure Funding & Business Bank Account
  + Obtain Federal EIN & State Tax ID
  + Secure Vehicle & Liability Insurance
* **Phase 3: The Truck & Commissary**
  + Purchase/Lease Truck or Trailer
  + Build-Out & Kitchen Equipment Installation (Health Dept. Approved)
  + Secure Commissary Kitchen Agreement
  + Pass Health Department Inspection *on the truck*
* **Phase 4: Operations Setup**
  + Acquire All Permits & Licenses (The "Permit Packet")
  + Set up Mobile POS & Technology
  + Establish Supplier Relationships (Food, Paper Goods, Propane)
  + Hire & Train a small, cross-functional team
  + Conduct "Friends & Family" Soft Opening
* **Phase 5: Launch & Marketing**
  + Finalize Grand Opening Week Schedule & Locations
  + Execute Social Media Blitz (Truck Photos, Menu Reveals, Location Teases)
  + Launch!