



Conduct a SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis can help you gain insights and think of possible solutions to existing or potential problems – either for an existing business or a new venture. For a SWOT analysis to work well, every member of your team should be involved.

Strengths:

Strengths are considered mostly internal. For example, what do you and your family, employees, or partners bring to the business? Where are your areas of expertise, and where do you have connections?

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses are also generally considered internal and are the factors you will need to address to run a successful business. For a start-up business, an example might be a lack of experience in certain areas. Or perhaps you don't have a lot of startup capital.

Opportunities

Opportunities are considered mostly external. What opportunities are available for your business? You may be able to take advantage of low interest loans for new farms. Is there demand for your crops in your region? Are there others you could partner with who are in a similar line of work?

Threats

Threats are also considered mostly external. Threats from outside of your business will directly affect you, but you may have very little control over them. If you are starting a new business, there may be local regulations that negatively impact your business, such as lease and permit restrictions. Unforeseen competition or bad weather are other examples. These are things you can't control, but you can plan for.

More Resources

[USDA Risk Management Agency Activity](#)
[SWOT example from Runamuk Acres Organic Farm](#)

Example

This SWOT analysis was prepared by a small team of graduate students who were looking to start a kelp and shellfish CSF in New Haven, CT. Conduct your own SWOT on the next page.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Branding, marketing, and consumer education experience • Unique model (no one else is doing this in our region) • Very high-quality product • Sustainable eco-friendly product • Supply chain traceability • Low-carbon footprint • Supporting coastal communities • Home delivery model is popular • Some key stakeholders are supportive • Have access to processing space	• Cold supply chain challenge • Labor intensive model - will need employees • High overhead of rental warehouse • Transport inefficiencies • Repetitive product line • Time-consuming operations • Unreliable species supply • The product goes bad quickly • Lack of support by regulators • Transportation and processing needs have a high carbon footprint • Hard to demonstrate environmental benefits
Opportunities	Threats
• Cultural interest in eating better (healthier, sustainable) • B2B – Restaurants • Could benefit from environmental subsidy plans • Environmental sustainability is point of consumer interest • Opportunities for grants, funding, impact investors, etc. • Delivery company partnerships • Broad support of coastal economies and small businesses	• Climate change threatening the stock of species and availability (weather/seasonal changes) • Other seafood sellers could move adopt our model • Vibrio and parasites, food safety concerns • Coastal land disputes • Shellfish business is well established - hard to break in • People are apprehensive to eat seaweed and shellfish at home • Resistance to the high price of food • Home delivery food kits could adopt shellfish line • Liability of sickness and injury from our products

Your Turn!

Fill out the table for your own farm business.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	Threats