



chi em Eats

Emporia State University | Emerging

For those in the Emporia, Kansas area looking to eat a traditional Vietnamese meal, Chi Em Eats is the place to visit. Chi Em Eats is a one-of-a-kind eatery offering a blend of unique Asian flavors.

Sharing her passion for food, culture, and cooking, owner Mai Fields designed a menu full of flavorful dishes, including vegan options, where diners can enjoy the relaxing, modern, and contemporary dining space.

Fields and her partners helped fill a need in the Emporia community by opening a restaurant that includes fresh and healthy dishes and provides multiple options for diners on-the-go. The restaurant also promotes sustainable practices such as reusable bags for to-go orders. Fields is very committed to the community and supports local festivities such as The Great American Market, disc golf tournaments, bicycle races and rides, and hosts local live music performances as well as being a host location for the First Friday Art Walk.

The business began to establish itself in 2017, by participating in various events offering some of their cuisine. Before Chi Em Eats officially opened their brick-and-mortar location in 2019, Fields recognized additional outside help would be needed, so she reached out to the Kansas Small Business Development Center for assistance.

Fields worked with Lisa Brumbaugh, Regional Director for the Kansas SBDC at Emporia State University. Through Brumbaugh, Fields had help with business planning, financial projections and assistance with loans and grants during the pandemic.

Fields expressed her gratitude for the Kansas SBDC's help. "Lisa always took the time to visit with me no matter how big or small my inquiries were at any time of the day."

When it comes to advice for any business owner, Fields advises, "Your attention will be needed in every aspect when you first start your business, and you will be stretched thin so take some time to unwind and relax."