

Sam Schmaedeka

Rochester, MN • 952-715-2728 • sschmaedeka@gmail.com
[linkedin.com/in/samschmaedeka](https://www.linkedin.com/in/samschmaedeka) • samschmaedeka.com

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Self-taught software engineer turned technical advisor with 3+ years building data infrastructure, internal tooling, and customer-facing features at an early-stage food-tech startup. Started hands-on building data pipelines, designing PostgreSQL schemas, and developing React interfaces. Grew into advising the founding team on product planning, prioritization, and technical strategy. Skilled at translating complex systems into practical solutions for both technical and non-technical stakeholders.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Technical Advisor • CooksAtlas (Food-Tech Startup) | Remote Jan 2025 – May 2026

- **Advised the founding team** on product planning, prioritization, and internal tooling in an agile early-stage startup environment, setting technical direction across a peak 4-engineer team while owning frontend development and data research.
- **Cut multiple days of manual research** from the data workflow by designing an 8-phase LLM-assisted naming pipeline that generated canonical names for all 1,900+ ingredients ahead of human review.
- **Eliminated manual ingredient entry** by building a rerunnable Rust seed task that loaded 1,900+ ingredients into PostgreSQL in a single pass and pulled in only new records on later runs, replacing a slow chunk-by-chunk import.
- **Reduced ingestion and deploy time** for recurring USDA data refreshes by building a CI/CD pipeline in GitHub Actions that processed only new and changed records instead of the full dataset.
- **Shipped the platform's notification system** (snackbars, toasts, and stackable alerts) plus 10+ reusable UI components such as recipe stats cards, bylines, creator avatars, and step indicators, all in React, Next.js, and TypeScript.

Software Engineer • CooksAtlas (Food-Tech Startup) | Remote Mar 2023 – Jan 2025

- **Reached 95%+ accuracy in automated dietary-restriction tagging** by designing a 3-tier ingredient hierarchy that consolidated 10,000 USDA ingredients from 195 raw categories down to 29 mid-level and 17 top-level categories, validated through random-sample testing.
- **Converted just under 13,000 raw USDA records into 1,900+ production-ready ingredients** at 98%+ accuracy by building a Python standardization pipeline across 3 federal datasets in 8 to 10 days, work estimated at weeks to months by hand.
- **Standardized recipe and ingredient tagging** by extracting 333 culinary preparation and method terms from 10,000 ingredient names with a custom Python script, then attaching a definition to each to double as in-app user education.
- **Designed the foundational PostgreSQL schema** that became the backbone of the product, providing a robust starting point the engineering team built on and expanded as it matured.
- **Built a produce seasonality tool** covering 180+ items across all 50 U.S. states, featured as a recurring demo at in-person investor and customer events to showcase the platform's data depth.

Bartender / Bar Manager Workshop Food Hall | Rochester, MN Nov 2021 – Present

- **Built lasting relationships** with repeat customers through consistent, personable service, driving strong retention and sales.
- **Developed signature cocktails** added to the permanent menu that became reliable recurring sellers, ranking among top staff in sales and engagement.
- **Coordinated daily** across kitchen, management, and front-of-house to sustain service quality during high-volume shifts.

TECHNICAL SKILLS & TOOLS

Languages & Databases: Python, Rust, SQL, PostgreSQL, JavaScript, HTML/CSS, Ruby

Frontend: React, Next.js, TypeScript

AI & Automation: LLM / Anthropic API integration, workflow automation, prompt engineering

Data & Infrastructure: ETL & data transformation, data cleaning & normalization, relational DB design, data modeling, API ingestion

DevOps & Tooling: Git/GitHub, Docker, CI/CD, Linux/Bash, REST APIs

Advisory & Collaboration: Technical advisory & solution support, stakeholder communication, cross-functional collaboration, customer onboarding & adoption

Productivity: Google Workspace, Microsoft Office, Notion, Slack, Figma, Linear

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Coursework in Biotechnology: *Minnesota State University, Mankato, MN · 2016–2018*

The Rust Programming Language: *Brown University Interactive Edition · 2025*

SQL Gold Certification: TestDome