

THE  
**SPiRiT**  
OF THE RIVERWARDS

## Local Culinary Community Unites for Greensgrow's "A Taste of Kensington"

By Jen Colletta  
May 18, 2017

Some of Kensington's culinary staples will join forces with neighborhood newbies to celebrate the work of Greensgrow Farms.

A Taste of Kensington, a food and spirits festival to be held on June 10th at Philadelphia Brewing Company, will showcase community collaboration, which farm officials say has been at the heart of the organization's operations in the past two decades.

"Greensgrow was founded 20 years ago in Kensington, and the neighborhood has transformed in many ways," said Abby Contract, Greensgrow's special-events coordinator.

Greensgrow too has undergone vast changes since the urban farm opened its doors in 1997 — including the recent passing of Greensgrow co-founder Mary Seton Corboy — but community investment has been vital to the success of both the organization and the neighborhood, Contract said.

"The local community has been very supportive of Mary's work and mission, and Greensgrow has returned the support with mini-grants and neighborhood greening days. It's a positive, two-way street of partnership," Contract said.

A Taste of Kensington will highlight that relationship. The event will feature food and drinks donated from about two dozen local restaurants, breweries and distilleries, with proceeds benefitting the farm. The dishes reflect the diversity of Kensington's evolving culinary scene, including everything from hoagies to gourmet soups to chicken empanadas.

In addition to the individual restaurant's contributions, guests can also sample food cooked in Greensgrow's Community Kitchen. The kitchen, located at St. Michael's Lutheran Church, hosts culinary classes, community events and more, and is home base for food-truck and other mobile chefs.

For A Taste of Kensington, Carolynn Angle, the manager of Community Kitchen who was previously the executive chef at Standard Tap, will create hors d'oeuvres with Greensgrow produce and locally donated products: 100 pounds of meat from Primal Supply Meats as well as Spanish-smoked paprika bacon from 1732 Meats.

"The food is really diverse and runs the gamut to reflect Kensington restaurants, farm-fresh produce and Greensgrow," Contract said about the dishes at A Taste of Kensington.

PBC, which Contract said has been a longtime supporter of Greensgrow, will provide the beer, with cider from Commonwealth Ciders and specialty cocktails by Rowhouse Spirits Distillery. VIP ticket holders will get access to the event an hour early and will be able to sample spirits from Rowhouse, Red Brick Craft Distillery and New Liberty Distillery.

They can also submit early bids for the silent auction.

Contract described the silent-auction items as "Kensington-plus." Donations poured in not only from neighborhood locales like Minnow Lane, Urban Axes, Philadelphia Argentine Tango School and Johnny Brenda's, but also from outside the region.

"We wanted to focus more on behind-the-scenes exclusive experiences," Contract said, noting packages include cooking lessons and private tours of breweries and coffee roasters in the area.

Organizers are hoping for good weather, as PBC has both indoor and outdoor spaces that will be utilized for the event. Music will be provided by DJs Triple Double and Brian Caselli Jordan, and Kensington-based aerialist company Cotton Candy Circus Arts will perform.

"It's going to be a fabulous event," Contract said. "You can relax, eat and enjoy entertainment while supporting Greensgrow. Greensgrow has been a partner in the community for 20 years, and now we're launching into the next 20 years."