



# Slow Food

CHARLESTON  
2017 IMPACT REPORT



## The Year in Review

2017 brought growth in programming, membership, and visibility to the Charleston chapter of Slow Food, a Bra, Italy based 501(C)3 working to advance the international mission of Good, Clean, and Fair food for all. A subsidiary of Slow Food USA, Slow Food Charleston's volunteers work to implement national and international campaigns, grow national membership, and produce and execute programming that is unique to the Lowcountry foodshed. With an active board of thirteen volunteers, a paid membership base of nearly one hundred individuals, families, and businesses, and an online audience of over five thousand across platforms, the chapter proudly reviews a year packed with events and explorations below, including: the second Snail Awards celebration, three SnailBlazer Grant recipients, a truly one-of-a-kind Tiny Tastemaker summer camp collaboration, a multitude of Slow Sips happy hours, potlucks, and pop-ups, a new partnership with the MUSC Urban Farm to grow Ark of Taste ingredients, and a weeklong celebration of The Ark of Taste, which launched an ambitious fundraiser to bring back the Lemon Cling Peach.

## 2017 Snail Awards

This year brought about the second annual Snail Awards. The *nearly* zero-waste celebration, made possible with compostable plates and trays provided by Whole Foods, an up-for-anything guest list, the Wild Olive for accepting our compost collection, and a board member willing to sort through refuse and wash the shibori dyed reusable napkins, was presented with the support of chefs Bob Cook, John Lewis, David Schuttenberg, and Air Casebier, with desserts by Wich Cream and beverages provided by Curated Selections, Grassroots Wine Distributors, High Wire Distilling, and Tradesman Brewing.

Preceding the awards ceremony and celebration at The American Theater on April 13, there was significant research and work completed. A committee worked to thoroughly research nominees and Dame Nathalie Dupree was selected as the 2017 Legend honoree to be recipient of the Carolina Gold trophy and to guide the community leaders of the selection committee in the discussion of vetting finalists and selecting winners.

The Snail Awards selection committee came together at One80 Place, the Charleston community's housing shelter and community kitchen and learned about their RISE and food rescue programs. The Slow Food Charleston Board served in the One80 Place community kitchen in January of 2017 and were happy to return and share what was learned with the selection committee. Finalists were presented by board members to:

- Nathalie Dupree, Author and Advocate
- Celeste Albers, Green Grocer Farm & 2016 *Provider* recipient
- Craig Deihl, formerly Cyress/AMS & 2016 *Artist in Food* recipient
- Scott Blackwell, High Wire Distilling & 2016 *Artist in Beverage* winner
- Stephanie Burt, writer and producer of The Southern Fork
- Jed Portman, former editor Garden & Gun
- Katie Hajjar, General Manager Patrick Properties
- Vanessa Driscoll Bialobreski, Farm to Table Event Co. & Slow Food Columbia
- Kristian Niemi, Bourbon Restaurant, Farm to Table Event Co. & Slow Food Columbia

Winners were selected over a St. Patrick's Day themed luncheon, prepared by RISE participants with *entirely* rescued food. A lively discussion ensued weighing in on the values of the finalists' (long term) commitment to their work, risk taking and investing in Good, Clean, and Fair when stakes are high, and finalists overall impact and reach within the Charleston community. Slow Food Charleston learned a great deal from the research phase, selection process, presentation of the winners, and celebratory event and look forward to the 2018 Snail Awards, which will be held on May 6, 2018 at the Magnolia Community Garden.



**Slow Food**  
CHARLESTON

*Congratulations*  
TO THE 2017 SLOW FOOD CHARLESTON  
**SNAIL AWARDS WINNERS**

*Activist:* LOWCOUNTRY STREET GROCERY  
*Provider:* ABUNDANT SEAFOOD  
*Artist in Food:* THE GLASS ONION  
*Artist in Beverage:* COAST BREWING  
*Place:* MIDDLETON PLACE  
*SnailBlazer:* SPADE & CLOVER GARDENS

**THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:**  
Patrick Properties Hospitality Group, Limehouse Produce,  
Le Creuset, The Culinary Institute of Charleston,  
Lowcountry Local First, Charleston Magazine, Ooh! Events

**SNAILAWARDSCHS.COM**

### **Snailblazer Grant Program**

Established in 2015 by long serving board members Carole Addlestone and Dena Davis, the Snailblazer Grant program distributes micro-grants, totaling no more than \$1000, to people and projects advancing Slow Food's mission of Good, Clean, and Fair food for all. The three recipients of SnailBlazer Grants in 2017 were Jim Martin of Compost in My Shoe, Brannon Greene in the form of a scholarship to Lowcountry Local First's Growing New Farmers program, and the Snail Awards SnailBlazer winner John Warren of Spade and Clover Gardens.

In the cases of Martin and Warren, by partially underwriting the labor and material costs of new crops and processes, Slow Food Charleston is actively investing in and making an impact in our local foodshed. Warren recounts the majority of grant funding being applied towards labor. For a process that does not guarantee a predictable outcome, labor often makes risky projects cost prohibitive. To diminish that risk, even partially, encourages growth - literally and figuratively.

The Slow Food Charleston SnailBlazer Scholarship, offered to a Growing New Farmers participant, was selected by a committee comprised of Lowcountry Local First's Director of Sustainable Agriculture Brian Wheat and Slow Food Charleston Co-Chairs Becky Burke and Carrie Larson. Participants applied through a separate process. Points of consideration were (1) financial need, (2) previous experience supporting the food community, and (3) desire to make a future impact in *local* foodways. This \$1000 scholarship effectively cut program costs in half for Greene, reducing the potential financial strain of transitioning to a new employment field and taking time away from earning to invest in education and personal growth. SnailBlazer Grants will continue in 2018, largely due to the support of the Addlestone Foundation, in both the form of scholarship and the Snail Awards SnailBlazer award. Additional grants are distributed on a rolling basis as funding is available.

### **Tiny Tastemakers**

Tiny Tastemakers, Slow Food Charleston's unique youth programming initiative, was founded in 2015 by board Co-Chair Carrie Larson with a series of farmer's market pop-ups focused on Taste Education. 2017 brought about the second annual Tiny Tastemakers weeklong summer camp, this year presented in partnership with The Charleston Pour House, a music venue and restaurant, and Heal with HeARTS, a not-for-profit focused on visual and performing arts. The weeklong camp held a full roster of twenty campers with ages ranging from four to fourteen. Each day was centered around different themes: Lowcountry Waterways, Plants and Pollinators, Cultures and People of Charleston, The Visual and Performing Arts, and Field Day Fun.

In 2018 the Tiny Tastemaker initiative will return to its roots in Taste Education with farmers market pop-ups and casual, hands-on learning opportunities. Slow Food believes that by understanding where food comes from, how it was produced and by whom, consumers will learn how to combine pleasure and responsibility in daily choices and appreciate the cultural and social importance of food.

### **Slow Sips happy hours, Potlucks, and Pop-Ups**

Shortly after the opening of Avondale's new Charlestowne Fermentory, Slow Food Charleston constituents gathered for an annual meeting and potluck. The day was well attended and Slow Food Charleston is looking forward to continuing the tradition of an annual potluck in early 2018.

Stems and Skins hosted a Slow Sips fringe event during Charleston Wine + Food Festival featuring salume, tinned seafood and bites from Wild Olive. Coined "Salty Ass Wines and Tinned Seafood," the late night happy hour menu consisted of coastal Mediterranean wines and seafood pairings and was paired with a \$500 donation to the chapter by Matt and Angie Tunstall and Justin Croxall to continue the educational programming and efforts to advance Good, Clean, and Fair.

Monarch Wine Merchants opened their doors for a Slow Wine tasting on a Slow Food USA "Give What You Can Day". These infrequent days are ones in which individuals or families can join or renew their membership for any amount. Membership is a vital thread in the Slow Food network and this event served as a successful expression of how our chapter can

support that mission. Alongside some beautiful wine selections, Root Baking Co. donated bread that was enjoyed with a kindly donated cheese spread from Counter Cheese Caves. Slow Food Charleston effectively doubled their current membership base at this gathering.

The new Edmund's Oast Exchange hosted Slow Food Charleston in November for a casual pop-up to talk about the upcoming Ark of Taste Week during a Chanin Wine Co. special tasting. Board volunteers enjoyed a few Sonoma Coast wines synonymous with Slow Wine and spoke of the busy year end events.

With a 'return to our roots' in 2018, Slow Food Charleston will continue the grassroots efforts of growing the membership base, supporting local producers and small businesses, and using the casual Slow Sips model to support programming that advances Good, Clean, and Fair food for all.

### **The Ark of Taste**

The MUSC Urban Farm of the Medical University of South Carolina's Office of Health promotion came together with Slow Food Charleston over the summer of 2017 to plant Slow Food USA's Ark of Taste school garden campaign kit. Over the last six months the partnership has led to a garden bed dedicated to growing Ark of Taste ingredients, involvement in the Urban Farm's volunteer "Work and Learn" sessions, and a presence in the Urban Farm's Five Year Anniversary celebrations. Farm Manager Carmen Ketron, with the enthusiastic support of Director of Health Promotion Dr. Susan Johnson and Wellness Program Coordinator Suzan Whelan, has made Slow Food a visible part of the Urban Farm. Slow Food Charleston is making plans to plant again in early spring and will continue to make the MUSC Urban Farm a central part of Ark of Taste programming.

Ark of Taste Week was a first time initiative for Slow Food Charleston. From December 2-10, 16 local restaurants featured menu items or cocktails that included an Ark of Taste ingredient and generously donated a portion of the proceeds from the sale of that item to Slow Food. The goal of this weeklong fundraiser was to raise awareness and funds for The Ark of Taste and the week also consisted of various educational events. The week kicked off with a "Work and Learn" at MUSC Urban Farm and later that evening the chapter participated as the non-profit partner for the Virgil Kaine Ginger Harvest at Spade and Clover Gardens. Additionally, the chapter hosted a crawl to many of the participating downtown restaurants to bolster social media and promote the week-long fundraiser. The crawl began at Goat, Sheep, Cow North where a 300lb. Slow Food Emmentaler was cracked into and enjoyed. Crawlers moved south on the peninsula ending at regular Slow Food supporter HUSK. The week culminated in a sold out Ark of Taste Producer Luncheon at The Watch at The Restoration hotel featuring a menu full of Geechie Boy Mill items and Ark of Taste produce grown at the MUSC Urban Farm. A panel of local Ark of Taste producers, Greg Johnsman of Geechie Boy Mill, Nat Bradford of Bradford Family Farms and Ann Marshall of High Wire Distillery, was moderated by Dr. David Shields, Ark of Taste Chair for the South. The 3rd Annual Ark of Taste Dinner was hosted by Michael Toscano of Le Farfalle and featured Chef Missy Robbins of Lilia, Mike Rojas of Urbani Truffles and wines from The Piedmont Guy.

Restaurants that supported the weeklong fundraiser, driving awareness and raising funds for the Ark of Taste were Indigo Road's Indaco, The Macintosh, and Oak; Neighborhood

Dining Groups Minero, McCrady's Tavern, and HUSK; Wild Olive and The Obstinate Daughter; Goat, Sheep, Cow; The Glass Onion; Basic Kitchen; 492; 5 Church; Circa 1886; The Lot; and Edmund's Oast. The restaurants together raised more than \$1000 in support of Slow Food Charleston's Lemon Cling Peach Project. Virgil Kaine's \$500 donation (10% of ticket sales) at their Ginger Harvest Festival will also be applied to the Lemon Cling Peach fund.

Other sponsors and supporters, instrumental to the success of the first annual Ark of Taste Week were Anson Mills, Dr. David Shields for his commitment and support, MUSC Urban Farm for the donation of produce and hosting our Ark of Taste bed, Geechie Boy Mill, Root Baking Co., and The Restoration Hotel as luncheon hosts and homebase to our visiting chefs. Sunday's Ark of Taste Celebration at Le Farfalle was generously supported by Michael and Caitlin Toscano and guests Missy Robbins and Mike Rojas, Barrier Island Oysters, Limehouse Produce, Grassroots Wine Distributors, Goat, Sheep, Cow, International Gourmet Foods (IGF), Holy City Hogs,

Media coverage of Ark of Taste Week spanned a special holiday podcast segment with Southern Fork featuring the Ark of Taste, an inclusion in Charleston Magazine with Le Farfalle, an event feature on Missy Robbins, a calendar inclusion, and a feature on the Lemon Cling Peach at The Post and Courier, and an event spotlight in the Charleston City Paper. In many instances information was also shared bloggers and local media. The reach of each of these platforms is significant and in addition to these audiences, it can be estimated that over 1000 people ate or drank a featured menu item in a Charleston restaurant that included an ingredient from the Ark of Taste list. Overall, the assessment by chapter leaders is that significantly more people know about the Ark of Taste and the work of Slow Food Charleston than was the case just a few months ago.



Growing the Ark of Taste, in conversation and in the field, is in an important step in supporting the food traditions and the ingredients of historical and cultural significance to our Lowcountry foodshed. The Ark of Taste supports ingredients such as Traditional Cane Syrup, Carolina Gold Rice, Sea Island Red Peas, Jimmy Red Corn, and Ossabaw Island Hogs, along with locally nominated Seashore Black Rye and, pending approval, The Lemon Cling Peach.

In an effort to support the Ark of Taste beyond conversation, Slow Food Charleston, at the suggestion of Dr. David Shields, is working with farm partner Greg Johnsman of Geechie Boy Mill to plant an orchard of the Lemon Cling(stone) Peach. The favored peach of the 1800's was renowned for its taste, value in preservation and use in brandy. With the help of Albermarle Ciderworks and Countryside Nurseries in Virginia to graft and grow the trees, Slow Food Charleston aspires to plant 30 or more trees throughout the Lowcountry by 2019.

## **2018 Plans and Goals**

The year ahead includes the continuation of existing programming and supporting the Lowcountry foodshed from the farming communities of the barrier islands to the ingredient driven restaurants of the Holy City and beyond. January 2018 brought shifts in leadership including Board Co-Chair Becky Burke advancing to the role of South Carolina Governor, succeeding Carole Addlestone. Slow Food Charleston will be led by Carrie Larson, who has served as Board Co-Chair for nearly two years. With a focus on service to the Charleston community, Larson has already implemented changes to encourage inclusivity including expanding Tiny Tastemaker programming to serve a greater number of youth and transitioning the annual Snail Awards to a free community event that will be held at the Magnolia Community Garden on Sunday, May 6.

For more information on Slow Food Charleston, please email [carolynmlarson@gmail.com](mailto:carolynmlarson@gmail.com) or visit [slowfoodcharleston.org](http://slowfoodcharleston.org)