

Spike Gjerde's group, bagel maker, pie shop among B-More Kitchen's first tenants



Eben Altmann, left, and Jonathan Fishman are partners in B-More Kitchen, a community kitchen where entrepreneurs can incubate their food businesses. (Barbara Haddock Taylor / Baltimore Sun)



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A look at the first food businesses -- including Spike Gjerde's group -- moving into B-more Kitchen.

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B-more Kitchen, an incubator for small-scale food producers coming to York Road this summer, has signed its first handful of tenants — a varied group of veterans in Baltimore's restaurant industry and start-ups alike.

At full capacity, B-more Kitchen will have room for 50 to 60 members. The first manufacturers that have signed on to move into the shared space include restaurateur **Spike Gjerde's** Foodshed group, Bottoms Up Bagels,

Happiest Little Baker, Pie Time, Trisha's Almond Toffee and Wholesome Nibbles.

The 10,000-square-foot commercial kitchen, which will provide shared production space for a monthly fee, is under construction and on track to open this summer. In addition to kitchen equipment, B-more Kitchen members will have access to storage space, meeting rooms, distributors and catering opportunities.

The building includes an event space upstairs, and owner Jonathan Fishman is partnering with Union Kitchen, a similar concept in Washington, D.C.

B-more Kitchen is housed in a former Chevrolet dealership at 5604 York Road. Eben Altmann, the incubator's general manager, said he expects construction to be complete by June, with the space move-in-ready by July.

Hex Ferments, a local maker of kimchi, kombucha and sauerkraut, will have a separate space on the second floor — apart from the communal kitchen — and is moving in before other tenants.

Those joining the incubator space say moving their production to B-more Kitchen will allow them to scale their businesses in ways they couldn't before.

New Jersey natives Michelle Bond and Joan Kanner are expecting to quintuple their operation when they relocate their bagel business, Bottoms Up Bagels, to B-More Kitchen this summer. They have been baking in multiple commercial kitchens, and the time spent moving from place to place takes away from time they could be making bagels. Consolidating their production to one space will be a "game-changer," Bond said.

"Being nomadic makes us less efficient," Kanner said.

Bottoms Up Bagels currently produces up to 300 bagels a day. They estimate they'll be able to do at least five times that amount in the new space — additional volume they hope to market to local coffee shops.

Max Reim, the sole baker behind Pie Time, also sees B-more Kitchen as a place to grow, especially during the winter. For the past year, Pie Time has relied on farmers' markets during the warmer months for the majority of its business. He's added new markets, including the Baltimore Farmers' Market and Bazaar this year, and hopes B-more Kitchen will lead to more wholesale clients.

"The biggest, most exciting thing about B-more Kitchen is the idea of being able to grow in one space," Reim said.

Now a one-man operation, Reim said he hopes to ultimately hire more help for Pie Time. Bond and Kanner said adding employees is a goal they share.

They ultimately hope to open their own brick-and-mortar locations. Reim envisions an espresso bar serving third-wave coffee alongside sweet and savory pies. He'd originally planned to bring that concept to [Cross Street Market](#) in Federal Hill a few years ago, but those plans fell through.

"Pie Time has been my back-up plan," he said.

B-more Kitchen provides a different opportunity for Gjerde's Foodshed, a larger, more established group. Gjerde said the space will consolidate its canning and baking operations, which he said the group may eventually relocate.

Other early tenants for B-more Kitchen include Happiest Little Baker, which provides monthly subscription boxes of baking supplies and recipes for families to make together; local toffee producer Trisha's Almond Toffee; and Wholesome Nibbles, maker of vegan superfood snacks that are dairy-free and gluten-free.

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