

Farming Neighbours in Nova Scotia

Located in the beautiful Annapolis Valley, farming neighbours Jocelyn and Tim of Seven Acres Farm and Andy and Ben Vermeulen of Vermeulen Farms Ltd. are a wonderful example of the diversity of farm size that can be found in Nova Scotia.

Jocelyn Durston and Tim Burns farm together at Seven Acres Farm in Canning. They grow a mix of vegetables, herbs and flowers and make naturally fermented foods like sauerkraut and kimchi. They sell their products through the local Farmers' Market and at their own roadside stand located on the farm.



Jocelyn started the farm in 2015 after moving across the country from British Columbia. She grew up and went to university on the West Coast. Farming intrigued her as she was interested in the environment, plant growth and loved being outdoors. She started working on small farms there before making her way to Nova Scotia.

Jocelyn and Tim are both first-generation farmers. They do everything by hand- from planting to weeding to harvesting, no machines are used. The pair have deep connections to the ecosystem on

their farm. They have been very strategic in farming in a way that supports a diverse ecosystem, to build biodiversity and wildlife habitats, and build soil health.

Just down the road from Jocelyn and Tim is Vermeulen Farms Ltd. Established in 1986 by Andy Vermeulen, the farm has grown to now be 450 acres of vegetable and fruit crops. Andy now farms with his son Ben, and team of over 60 employees.

Andy grew up on a dairy farm and knew he wanted to farm but his focus was on farm to plate. Growing asparagus, celery, salad vegetables, melons, squash, strawberries, and cover crops, the Vermeulen's pack a lot into a growing season!

Learning and trying new technology and ways of doing things is important to the Vermeulen's. Growing strawberries in gutters is something Ben and Andy were the first to trial in Nova Scotia and now they grow 15 acres of strawberries this way.



The Vermeulen's feel it is also important that farming is treated as a business. They have set a vision and mission for their farm and set goals. They are quick to know their numbers. Farming is very much a way of life for them but it's also about building a business and producing high quality food.

Each farm is producing high quality vegetable, fruit, and flower crops and each farm in their own unique way. Nova Scotia has a proud history of agricultural production producing a very wide range of crops, livestock, flowers, Christmas trees, wine, and maple syrup. It's true, no two farms are alike and size doesn't matter. Whether you farm 7 acres or 450, ½ and acre or 2,000- Nova Scotia may be just the place for you.

Garlic Scape Pesto from Seven Acres Farm



Ingredients:

- 10 garlic scapes
- 1/3 cup walnuts
- 2 tbsp nutritional yeast
- ½ lemon, juiced
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- 1/8 tsp ground, black pepper
- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil

Directions:

- Cut the scapes in about 1-inch pieces
- In a food processor, add the scapes, walnuts, nutritional yeast, lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Process by pulsing until the mixture begins to breakdown.
- With the food processor running, slowly add all of the olive oil. Continue to process until all the ingredients are incorporated and broken down, about 30-45 seconds.
- Store in a covered container in the fridge and enjoy within a week. You can also freeze the pesto for later use and enjoyment.
- Pesto can be used in a variety of ways, like the Pesto Pizza above!