



ASHER COHEN

UNASSUMING CHEF, NEW FARMER, & LAND CHAMPION

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away at it”**

A familiar face around town, found every week at the Margaret River Farmers' Market cooking up a breakfast storm for Jindong Free Range Pork and a chef at the popular River Hotel in Margaret River; meet Asher Cohen, our unassuming farmer in Forest Grove. Asher was initially raised in Fremantle however when he was eight years old his parents in partnership with friends bought a 70 acre piece of land in Denmark and it was this, “awesome property”, as Asher describes it, that created a fantastic childhood experience on the land. Asher lived on the property until his late teens when he returned to his hometown of Fremantle to undertake his chef apprenticeship. But it was his wonderful formative years in Denmark that really planted a seed in the back of his mind that he would one day return to the land.

Since qualifying, Asher with his partner Jade moved between Fremantle and Dunsborough. They took some time out to travel around Australia and were inspired by various agricultural pursuits they saw in the eastern states. When they returned from their journey, they really wanted to set down some roots, but to buy a house in the city would mean joining the rat race lifestyle of the city; they knew they needed to make a decision about their future. The outdoor lifestyle and opportunities to work with excellent regional produce in the Margaret River region were very enticing. In 2016, an opportunity arose and Asher and Jade bought their 160 acre property in partnership with Asher's father and partner in Forest Grove.

It's Asher's first time at being a farmer and he and Jade have taken on quite a challenge. Their property, originally part of the soldier settlement block of the 1920's was in a state of disrepair. They had a pasture of weeds and dilapidated fencing throughout, “there is just so much to do” Asher says, “...but I'm just chipping away at it”. Recently Asher installed riparian area fencing with the LBLCDC and another two kilometres of fencing himself. He is also working hard to improve his soil's health to enable good pasture growth so sometime in the near future Jade and he can see their dream of raising pastured Muscovy ducks and chickens to fruition.

Having recently found out that all of his ancestors from his great grandparents back were farmers makes Asher have a clearer understanding of why the life he is pursuing, even though incredibly hard right now, feels so right. He loves this region, and the agricultural opportunities it offers, and looks forward to the time when he can get out and about a little more pursuing his other passion, spear fishing. At this stage in his farming journey Asher works seven days a week on his farm whilst also working as a chef around the Margaret River Region. He knows, “small farming is hard no matter where you are”. I hear determination in his voice and think it's incredible what some people can achieve when they are living their dream. Asher understands it's going to take longer than he and Jade initially thought but I personally am looking forward to seeing Asher with his own farmers' market stand, selling his farm's produce, it's going to be an excellent addition to our local food economy.

Story by Katrina Lombardo Oct 2018



Lower Blackwood Catchment

Land Conservation District Committee

A HEALTHY CATCHMENT STARTS WITH
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

