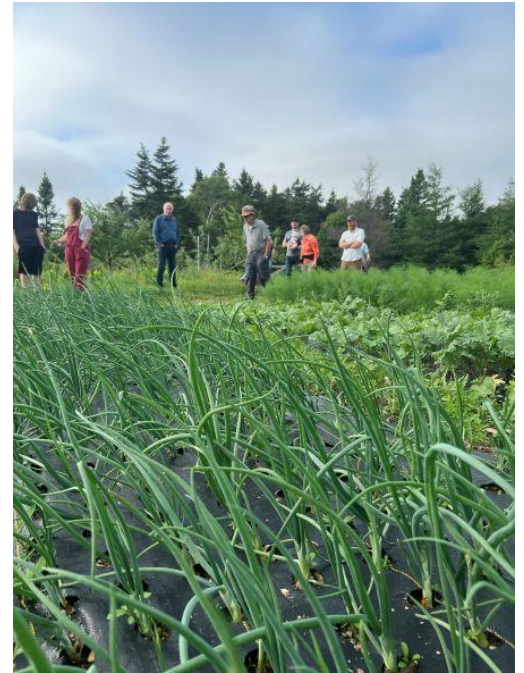


ACORN NL Farm Tour 2022

August 14, 2022

Mike Rabinowitz welcomed a group of 20 to his farm near Portugal Cove, NL. Mike has been growing food on Organic Farm for many years; his gardens are some of the most diverse in the province. Mike toured folks through his high tunnels where he grows tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, basil, and rosemary; and for the first time he'll harvest a successful crop of cantaloupes thanks to the unusually warm weather this summer. It's also been a dry summer but Mike has efficient drip irrigation in all his greenhouses to keep the plants well watered. In the orchard, blackberries and apples are having a bumper crop; Mike claims this year has produced the best tasting berries he can remember. The vegetables are also doing well. Mike uses Sunbelt groundcover, a woven polypropylene weed barrier that is UV stabilized and permeable to air and water, and lasts for several years. After harvesting the vegetables (and storing the Sunbelt), Mike plants fall rye for winter cover. Experimentation is a big part of Organic Farm and Mike's commitment to trying new things is a testament to the range of crops that can be grown in NL.



The next stop was Seed to Spoon Farm (formerly Lien Family Farm) with hosts Sarah Crocker and Adam Grevatt. The couple have been offering a CSA from produce grown on the farm since 2009 and in April of this year, they purchased the farm and have become the new farmers in residence. Sarah also brings farming experience to her position as Program Coordinator with Food First NL, a non-profit working to ensure everyone has access to affordable, healthy, and culturally appropriate food; Adam also works with food as a chef. This first year on the farm has been focused on repairs so CSA production has been scaled back. Even so, this farm shows the diversity that's needed for a CSA with lots of greens like kale, swiss chard and bok choy, tomatoes, beans and squash, to name a few. Seed to Spoon has also offered CSA flowers and seeds. In fact, Sarah has been involved with the Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security dedicated to seed saving; Sarah showed the beets from which she will be collecting seed next year. Sarah and Adam are also experimenting with open pollinated corn which, apparently, makes great tortillas, and eastern European tomato varieties that are showing promise for NL high tunnel production.

The evening finished with a delicious potluck supper and lots of good conversation. A big thank you to our farmer hosts and to everyone who came out for the tour!

