

Adam Hausmann ([00:00:09](#)):

We grow June strawberries, summer raspberries, blueberries, fall raspberries, and day-neutral strawberries.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:00:29](#)):

Today's episode comes to you from Charlotte, Vermont, where we visit with Adam Hausmann and Jessica Sanford of Adam's Berry Farm. Our visit today will be split into two episodes. The first one is a walking tour of his blueberry fields, the strawberry patches and raspberry plantings. We step inside the high tunnels and look at the fruit in there, as well as the barn, which houses a kitchen, farm stand, and packing equipment. This visit had a bit of snow along the treeline, so if you hear a crunch while we're walking, that's why. The next episode we'll highlight how they got started farming and built their farm up over the last 20 years or so, and we get into the why they chose the farming practices that they did.

([00:01:10](#)):

I'm your host, Andy Chamberlin, and I take you behind the scenes with growers who share their strategy for achieving the triple bottom line of sustainability. These interviews unravel how they're building their businesses to balance success across people, profits, and our planet. Before we get started, I'd like to share a review left on Apple Podcasts. This states: "Glad to have stumbled on this podcast. Would love to have a chance to talk with and tour with the host someday at our farm. We're transitioning from a 400 acre wholesale produce farm to direct sales only at our farm store. Many things are proving to be very challenging, but this podcast is very useful. Thanks for all the great ideas and ways to improve." Thanks, Kubecka Farms, for the comment.

([00:01:52](#)):

If this show has impacted you, I'd love to hear it via email or publicly as a review in the podcast app. The Farmer's Share is supported by the Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association and the Ag Engineering program of the University of Vermont Extension. If you enjoy this show and want to help support its programming, you can make a one-time or reoccurring donation on our website by visiting thefarmersshare.com/support.

Adam Hausmann ([00:02:21](#)):

Adam Hausmann.

Jessica Sanford ([00:02:22](#)):

Jessica Sanford.

Adam Hausmann ([00:02:23](#)):

From Adam's Berry Farm. We're located in Charlotte, Vermont in Southern Chittenden County, just south of Burlington, and we have diverse markets from wholesale to pick your own, to farmer's market, to frozen, to value added. Production wise, we are sitting on 57 acres of conserved land through Vermont Land Trust with about 35 under production.

([00:02:56](#)):

Let's see, I guess, yeah, we'll start outside and then we can always poke in the barn on the way back.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:03:04](#)):

Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([00:03:05](#)):

Kind of show you... Obviously it's February and things are stashed away and stuffed and all of that. But yeah, I guess a little background, I first started walking this land in 2010, I guess, after one of the many floods down at the Intervale. It was fall of 2010, and I had been paddling through raspberries again, and was kind of like, what am I doing? I need to get out of here. And had reached out to a landowner that has a lot of land in the area basically, and drove around with him one day and he brought me to all these different properties and then from there kind of was like, okay, this could maybe work. And so started walking this land that winter and I would come out and ski and just the luxury of getting to know the land over a long period.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:04:06](#)):

That's an awesome opportunity.

Adam Hausmann ([00:04:07](#)):

Yeah, it is. And then 2011, we kind of engaged with the Vermont Land Trust and the Farmland Access Program, and 2011 leased the land to start cover cropping it. We hadn't purchased it at that point, but everything was going in that direction and I was willing to take the risk and we didn't cover crop all of it, but we did a good chunk and cover cropped it that summer of 2011, and then Irene happened that year and it was kind of a good affirmation of like, okay, I'm going in the right direction. As far as getting to higher grounds, it's very much a reactionary property. It's up high, it's like drains, it flows.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:04:56](#)):

It was the key factor in the decision.

Adam Hausmann ([00:04:57](#)):

It was, yeah, never going to flood here. Yes, exactly.

Jessica Sanford ([00:05:00](#)):

If we flood here, we're done.

Adam Hausmann ([00:05:01](#)):

Yeah. There's greater issues. That's what I always say. But the whole process of working with the land trust and conservation and land owners, it takes time. From start to end, it was about a two-year process really to get there. And so we didn't close until the end of 2012.

Jessica Sanford ([00:05:29](#)):

In 2013, we were here and at the Intervale, so doing two properties-

Adam Hausmann ([00:05:35](#)):

Which is not recommended at all. Most of everything we moved. We dug a huge chunk of blueberries out. In Hurricane Irene, we'd lost all of our raspberries and all of our strawberries. And so that was easy. We didn't have to think about them in some ways. It was like, okay. But blueberries, we still had a healthy chunk. We had lost, there was a northern swale that we had on our property at the Intervale

that washed out a bunch, but from there we actually dug and relocated our farm here more or less. So that was 2013, so now we're, I guess 11 years as of now on this.

Jessica Sanford ([00:06:27](#)):

Now, I feel like just in the past two years we've started to feel settled like, okay, things are in place, we know what we're doing, we know the land.

Adam Hausmann ([00:06:38](#)):

Yeah, it's home.

Jessica Sanford ([00:06:39](#)):

It's home.

Adam Hausmann ([00:06:39](#)):

It better be the forever farm. As I said, if I had known what I was getting into moving a farm, I wouldn't have done it.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:06:53](#)):

You kind of had to though.

Adam Hausmann ([00:06:56](#)):

Yeah, I mean it-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:06:56](#)):

Everything washed away.

Adam Hausmann ([00:06:56](#)):

We had to. Yeah, exactly. There wasn't a choice. So yeah, let's walk around.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:07:01](#)):

In fact, I've heard several times, you don't feel like the flywheel spinning until you're seven.

Adam Hausmann ([00:07:01](#)):

Yeah.

Jessica Sanford ([00:07:10](#)):

Yeah.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:07:11](#)):

Seven or 10. It's like it takes that long to really turn in a profit and have your systems in, your infrastructure built and-

Adam Hausmann ([00:07:19](#)):

Yeah, and I think for us, we didn't realize, I mean, you realize, but being at the Intervale, how much infrastructure wise was taken care of for you. I mean, there's a land manager, things like that. You didn't have to think about a road, you didn't have to think about homes, irrigation system.

Jessica Sanford ([00:07:34](#)):

Walk-in cooler, bro. You didn't have to deal with it.

Adam Hausmann ([00:07:39](#)):

The relationship was very clear. And also it freed up a lot of time to focus on your business and the growth of your business and your plants and all of that. Where now, after having moved and reestablished here, I'm not sure I would've made it as a young grower if it wasn't down at the Intervale, especially with the investment in perennials and the timeframe that it takes to reestablish the perennials. Truly, it gave me kind of a grace period to get myself established to have the plantings come into production. This side of the field, this eastern side here is basically the plants that we moved here. We moved just shy of, I guess-

Jessica Sanford ([00:08:41](#)):

5,000.

Adam Hausmann ([00:08:41](#)):

... 5,000 plants.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:08:42](#)):

Whoa.

Adam Hausmann ([00:08:42](#)):

It was something.

Jessica Sanford ([00:08:46](#)):

We were very ambitious. We were like, we're going to just dig out the plants and then we'll dig the holes.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:08:46](#)):

Just hand digging?

Jessica Sanford ([00:08:51](#)):

Just hand dig, but that's not what happened.

Adam Hausmann ([00:08:54](#)):

Did not happen. Did not happen at all.

Jessica Sanford ([00:08:54](#)):

Slowly we realized after like three plants, whoa, we're going to need some help.

Adam Hausmann ([00:08:58](#)):

Get some young plants that does by hand.

Jessica Sanford ([00:09:01](#)):

And when we moved here and we're starting to put them in, we had farmers come and be like, "Whoa, you guys, one, you are crazy, and two, you need help." So someone came and volunteered their time to dig holes with their backhoe, and then someone brought over people to help plant them all, like a crew.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:09:18](#)):

[inaudible 00:09:18] one scoop with a backhoe.

Adam Hausmann ([00:09:21](#)):

Yeah, he just, every night would come and like, "Okay, what do you think you're going to get done tomorrow?" He basically just kind of inched his way down the rows here, scooped very quick. That spring was incredibly dry and everyone was freaking out about it. And it was actually great. It started off very dry, and it was great for us as far as being able to move around on the ground and muck and rut everything up. And then the week that we finished, I was stressing because we didn't have irrigation set up and it was so dry and then it started pouring, and it was one of those periods where it poured for a month straight-

Jessica Sanford ([00:09:21](#)):

A month. Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([00:09:21](#)):

And everyone else-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:09:21](#)):

It sounds familiar.

Adam Hausmann ([00:10:05](#)):

Yeah. It was very much like this summer and everyone else was cursing. And I was like, "Yes."

Andy Chamberlin ([00:10:09](#)):

Watered everything nice and thorough.

Adam Hausmann ([00:10:11](#)):

And it made it so we lost maybe 10 plants in the whole move. Nothing really in the big picture.

Jessica Sanford ([00:10:20](#)):

This is also the section that we keep for a pick your own customer. So we try to contain them on this side of the farm and in these varieties, opening different varieties at different times, one when they're ready. But the pick your own, the farm stands over there so they can just flow out over there, and then we rope off the rest of the blueberries.

Adam Hausmann ([00:10:44](#)):

We use chicken.

Jessica Sanford ([00:10:44](#)):

We've used chicken.

Adam Hausmann ([00:10:45](#)):

Like the fencing, want to electrify it some days. But yeah, we finally really, it allows us to be like, "Okay, this section's open..." You work through early, mid, late, and to kind of open up blocks too and be like, okay, we're going to get these five rows picked for three days and then close them off and kind of work through the field that way. And so it allows us to funnel and direct people pretty well.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:11:13](#)):

Just for their safety and keeping them all kind of contained in one area or for plants? What's your reason for that?

Adam Hausmann ([00:11:20](#)):

Because for-

Jessica Sanford ([00:11:21](#)):

To help clear out the harvest. So if we contain them to a certain area, they're sort of in some sense working for us and doing a thorough harvest before we open the next section. And when we open sections, we always want there to be a huge flush of fruit.

Adam Hausmann ([00:11:38](#)):

We want it easy and abundant for people.

Jessica Sanford ([00:11:38](#)):

So if people are just bopping around, we just are trying to curate their experience as well.

Adam Hausmann ([00:11:45](#)):

We'll get basically picked down and then close it down, let it ripen again, and then open up again. Some of it is just to contain people because it doesn't matter with pick your own if you tell people, "Okay, go follow the signs all the way to the field." They're going to go the exact opposite direction. [inaudible 00:12:04] You find people picking all over the farm is the reality of it and under bird netting and you name it.

Jessica Sanford ([00:12:12](#)):

Where else in the world do you climb over fences to get where you need to go? We don't have too much of that, but it's always comical when you find that.

Adam Hausmann ([00:12:26](#)):

So up here we have the blueberries and then we do pick your own flowers and sunflowers up here. So try to keep all of the pick your own area more or less here. It's not fully the case. I mean, we have some

raspberries here that we open up for pick your own. And then we have another section over here and then a smaller section that's shrinking, I guess right now because we just got rid of a couple of rows this fall that were getting tired over there. But we're trying to right now get it down to two sections. And same philosophy of being able to flip- flop, get an area picked out, let it ripen again, open up the other. And so every couple of days-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:12:26](#)):

To keep it easy picking.

Adam Hausmann ([00:13:08](#)):

Yeah, it's recreation for people. Pick your own has changed. It's not the same as it used to be. It's a day out walking around, talking with your friends or family, picking-

Jessica Sanford ([00:13:21](#)):

A few pints.

Adam Hausmann ([00:13:22](#)):

Yeah, a couple of pints. People aren't loading up their freezer.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:13:26](#)):

Something to do with a mouthful.

Jessica Sanford ([00:13:26](#)):

Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([00:13:28](#)):

Yeah.

Jessica Sanford ([00:13:28](#)):

Which has changed. That's changed. Just since being here, we used to have a lot of people that came out and picked huge containers for their freezer and we don't see that as much anymore.

Adam Hausmann ([00:13:40](#)):

But having said that, you see people often multiple times now over the season where it is like, "Oh, it's nice to come out and it's relaxing to pick berries and it's something to do." I don't know if it all adds up as far as the balance of how much people are picking, but it's certainly, there's still the families that come out and are like, "Okay, we need 120 pounds to get through winter. It's X amount of pounds a week." And they are the goal people that are driven. But it's rare now. So, it is what it is. But what it's meant for us is there's less, I guess, emphasis that's been put on pick your own for us, because it's more regular, I would say.

Jessica Sanford ([00:14:36](#)):

The income stream is more regular.

Adam Hausmann ([00:14:38](#)):

Yeah, the reliability of people coming out on be it to pick large quantities or even just weather. There's a lot of variables with pick your own.

Jessica Sanford ([00:14:50](#)):

This year is too smoky, then it was too hot, and then it was too rainy. So that just all impacts traffic. So having the labor to pick that harvest up if we're not having the pick your own customers.

Adam Hausmann ([00:15:06](#)):

But yeah, we have most of our tunnels over here, ponds for irrigation down low, blueberries, blueberries. This is more kind of a mix of pick your own raspberries and freezer raspberries.

Jessica Sanford ([00:15:26](#)):

All of our land is tiled, so the ponds catch all the water that's draining through the tiles and it flows into the pond and then we irrigate from those.

Adam Hausmann ([00:15:37](#)):

It gets intercepted and brought back.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:15:39](#)):

Did you put that in or was that-

Adam Hausmann ([00:15:40](#)):

We did.

Jessica Sanford ([00:15:41](#)):

Yeah, we did the whole farm before we moved here. Knowing that it's your one chance to work on drainage before getting all the plants in the ground because once they're there, they're there.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:15:51](#)):

Right.

Adam Hausmann ([00:15:53](#)):

And with climate change and the way things were going, we felt like it was needed and shifting from very sandy, extremely well-drained soils too. We have more of a stony loam for most of this, but then as we get down, it gets heavier and into the classic Virgenz clay.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:16:18](#)):

Just to aid in the-

Adam Hausmann ([00:16:20](#)):

Yeah. Needing to be able to get on fields sooner and have them dry out in the spring. And just health of perennial plants too. We don't have that same luxury of giving up on plantings. If it's like, "Oh, it's too

wet. It's like disease," we still limp stuff along and try to bring it back. So anything you can do to help out.

[\(00:16:43\)](#):

This field here, this is one big block here of a variety called Draper, and it's kind of one of the early releases from Michigan State has been doing a ton of breeding on blueberries. And it's a variety that... We initially put in that we... We keep on expanding, trying to build up our frozen market. And then as we're doing that, our fresh market keeps on growing and so we keep on eating into what we plant. And so we're not getting enough into the freezer it seems like.

[\(00:17:16\)](#):

But this was a variety that we put in because it has a pretty high Brix content. And so as a frozen berry, the sweetness still really comes through well, it has decent size, it can hang for a really long time on the bush as well, which is nice as far as harvest time. And then it has these super concentrated harvest periods. So we go through... A lot of the older varieties kind of trickle on. And so you maybe have fruit for weeks at a time off of one variety, but it's a little bit here, a little bit there. Whereas this is just like you come out here and it's-

Andy Chamberlin [\(00:17:52\)](#):

It's ready now.

Adam Hausmann [\(00:17:53\)](#):

Yeah, it's blue. And so you can just clear it off and get a ridiculous amount of fruit in kind of a harvest period, and then you let it ripen. This one we often get-

Jessica Sanford [\(00:18:03\)](#):

I think we did three picks this year.

Adam Hausmann [\(00:18:05\)](#):

What's that?

Jessica Sanford [\(00:18:05\)](#):

Three picks.

Adam Hausmann [\(00:18:05\)](#):

Yeah.

Jessica Sanford [\(00:18:06\)](#):

Two big picks, and one sort of smaller.

Adam Hausmann [\(00:18:06\)](#):

Two big and then the cleanup pick basically at the end. But this was the first kind of newer variety that had that focus of the concentrated ripening and also a firmer berry, which is, I have mixed feelings on it all, but its shelf life is incredible on them. Customers like them too. It's odd. I wouldn't think that's what

people want, but when you hear feedback like, "Oh, we don't want the softer fruit, we like the firmer fruit."

Jessica Sanford ([00:18:40](#)):

The crunchiness. It's got a crunch.

Adam Hausmann ([00:18:44](#)):

Yeah, it has a nice crunch. And you're like-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:18:48](#)):

More of a crunch than a pop.

Adam Hausmann ([00:18:48](#)):

Yeah, you're like crunch in a blueberry. Interesting.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:18:49](#)):

As long as the flavor's there, I guess.

Adam Hausmann ([00:18:49](#)):

It's desirable, yeah.

Jessica Sanford ([00:18:49](#)):

The flavor in this one's good. I like this variety.

Adam Hausmann ([00:18:56](#)):

Yeah, if you like these, they get really nice flavor. First pick I think it's still developing. By second pick the flavor's on on these. We've been eating them frozen recently. That's what we have in the house right now and they're great. This was the start of shifting away from some of the older varieties that came out, that everybody has, that came out in the '60s and into this new breeding that's starting to happen. And a lot of people are starting to replace their fields with these varieties.

Jessica Sanford ([00:19:29](#)):

These bush are seven years old.

Adam Hausmann ([00:19:32](#)):

Yeah. This was planted when Wilder was born. Jess goes out here picking rocks and then we went to the hospital that night and then there's a break and then we call it Sena's Field. Our daughter, we planted it right before she was born, so we kind of-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:19:55](#)):

Staying active.

Jessica Sanford ([00:19:56](#)):

Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([00:19:58](#)):

Yes. Jess was extremely active to the end.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:20:00](#)):

So has this landscape fabric been down seven years or replaced that [inaudible 00:20:08].

Adam Hausmann ([00:20:08](#)):

That was down seven years ago and we find that you can get quite a while as far as... Down at the Intervale, I mean, I don't know. We had it there and so that was 12 years and we hadn't replaced it. There's places where you're patching it up and re-stapling and there places there you've sucked up some in the mower and all that. At some point, yes, we'll replace. There's irrigation lines underneath here so we can feed them that way and water them.

Jessica Sanford ([00:20:40](#)):

We use orchard tubing, so it's thicker and then it has the emitter every four feet. So we do about three acres of dune-bearing strawberries and an acre and a half of day-neutrals, I think we're up to.

Adam Hausmann ([00:20:54](#)):

About two acres of dune... Yeah. Two point... I'm thinking in miles here. In row feet it was like, two point... No, it was like 2.4 miles of day-neutrals and it was like three and a half miles of dunes.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:21:14](#)):

[Inaudible 00:21:14] When you're buying the plastic and the drip tape, that's when you're thinking about it.

Adam Hausmann ([00:21:19](#)):

Well, yeah, you start to think about it.

Jessica Sanford ([00:21:21](#)):

And then all our day-neutrals we have under little low tunnels or-

Adam Hausmann ([00:21:24](#)):

Yeah, or the majority of them are under low tunnels.

Jessica Sanford ([00:21:25](#)):

Yeah, I think we're trying to steer that way. All of them are under low tunnels because it makes such a difference in terms of production numbers, poundage coming off the field.

Adam Hausmann ([00:21:36](#)):

We had kind of a split field for a long time or it wasn't fully split, but it was probably two thirds under cover, under low tunnels and then a third out. The fruit quality is completely different. So what was out we were picking to freeze mainly. It took a lot more sorting. I mean some of it would go out to the fresh

market, but a lot just went into the freezer. But then some years it was great and it wasn't that far off from the low tunnels. And then other years, one's a wet year, a cooler year, whatever it might be, you see significant production differences.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:22:14](#)):

Interesting.

Adam Hausmann ([00:22:15](#)):

I feel like every year we add a little or every couple of years we seem to make an investment in more low tunnels and slowly expand that. I think after this year, whatever we have, it's really based more off of our rotation, but I think it will get us to the point where we're trying to reduce the amount of day-neutrals that are in the field and just really get down to a number that's under cover-

Jessica Sanford ([00:22:45](#)):

The ones that aren't covered.

Adam Hausmann ([00:22:46](#)):

Yeah. Sorry, yeah, not under low tunnels. I think we want to get all of our production under low tunnels. It's like guaranteed at that point.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:22:58](#)):

Is there a reason not to put them under low tunnels or do they come at a slightly different time?

Adam Hausmann ([00:23:05](#)):

They come earlier. They're gone, which is nice. Other than the collision of harvest at times can be challenging where you plant them annually. So we try to get them in as early as we can. For us, that's usually first week in May, we get them in and then you start to get a trickle of fruit. You pinch flowers for a period for about four to six weeks, and then we start to see our first trickle. It's usually late July and then August they start to kick it on. But what happens is there's a period where it's like you're still in thick of blueberries. You have early fall raspberries coming on-

Jessica Sanford ([00:23:47](#)):

It's like this trifecta.

Adam Hausmann ([00:23:48](#)):

We have two collision periods where labor wise, harvest wise, it's a challenge.

Jessica Sanford ([00:23:53](#)):

It always works out, but there's the moment in the house we're like, "How are we going to navigate this?"

Andy Chamberlin ([00:23:59](#)):

[inaudible 00:23:59] talk to you in August.

Adam Hausmann ([00:24:02](#)):

Yeah, whenever we start actually, I always say, "I'll see you in November." We have a collision late June, and then we have that August collision, and then we kind of work through those 10-day periods and then it kind of settles down. It doesn't settle down, but it's like a known chaos.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:24:25](#)):

For the day-neutrals, are those bare-root in plastic?

Adam Hausmann ([00:24:28](#)):

Yeah, bare-root in plastic.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:24:30](#)):

And you brought them-

Jessica Sanford ([00:24:30](#)):

No, day-neutrals are plugs. Right?

Adam Hausmann ([00:24:33](#)):

Day-neutrals are not plugs. Junes are mainly plugs now. Day-neutrals are bare-root in plastic. Yes. And then we put the low tunnels on. We try to get it on early. I mean it's like the newer plastic, it's filtering UV light. And you can a lot of times really leave the west side down for a period and it keeps them a little bit [inaudible 00:24:57]. Yeah, it keeps it a little bit cooler. It keeps the wind so they grow. The fruit that's under the low tunnels comes on-

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:25:04]

Adam Hausmann ([00:25:00](#)):

... just the fruit that's under the low tunnels comes on earlier. And it's the plants and the fruits, beautiful, that comes off of it.

([00:25:12](#)):

Again, it's like varieties. It's all these, what I would've probably before we grew them, considered to be really awful varieties that were like-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:25:24](#)):

They crunch.

Jessica Sanford ([00:25:24](#)):

They do crunch.

Adam Hausmann ([00:25:25](#)):

Yeah, exactly. There's nothing like a June strawberry, and the juice melting in your mouth.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:25:32](#)):

Yeah. [inaudible 00:25:32].

Jessica Sanford ([00:25:32](#)):

Customers are like, "Ah."

Adam Hausmann ([00:25:33](#)):

But it's the berries, like the texture of the berries you get in the winter, the Driscoll's and whatnot. But the difference is that these ones are picked ripe, and so they actually have flavor. And so-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:25:50](#)):

Texture's familiar, but the flavor is [inaudible 00:25:53].

Adam Hausmann ([00:25:50](#)):

Yeah.

Jessica Sanford ([00:25:53](#)):

Yeah, the flavor is-

Adam Hausmann ([00:25:53](#)):

And the shelf life's incredible on them, it's like they were bred to be shipped around and all of that. For me, the June strawberries are it as far as flavor and texture and mouthfeel and all that.

([00:26:03](#)):

But customers, it's now about fifty-fifty, I would say. Some people are like, "Oh, we really like the falls more."

Jessica Sanford ([00:26:09](#)):

The fall ones way better than the June ones.

Adam Hausmann ([00:26:12](#)):

I never thought that would happen.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:26:13](#)):

Just to have that burst of sweet in September, can't beat it.

Jessica Sanford ([00:26:15](#)):

Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([00:26:16](#)):

And we pick off until beginning of November with them, so it really stretches it out. And so I think versus the June, it's like a three-week hurrah of like, "Go, go, go."

Andy Chamberlin ([00:26:30](#)):

[inaudible 00:26:30].

Adam Hausmann ([00:26:30](#)):

Yeah. So it's becomes more familiar.

Jessica Sanford ([00:26:31](#)):

It's a better harvest for the crew too. Where it's like June strawberries are like you're in there every day, four to six hours. Where day-neutrals are just a little, they trickle every day.

Adam Hausmann ([00:26:31](#)):

It's not an everyday harvest.

Jessica Sanford ([00:26:46](#)):

It's not an everyday harvest, it's like every two days.

Adam Hausmann ([00:26:48](#)):

Two to three times a week we harvest them, so.

Jessica Sanford ([00:26:50](#)):

So it just seems more manageable for crew, seems to like that better.

Adam Hausmann ([00:26:55](#)):

Yeah, yeah. They love this, yeah.

Jessica Sanford ([00:26:58](#)):

I don't know if they love strawberries in general. They like blueberries.

Adam Hausmann ([00:27:02](#)):

But there's less nuance. With the Junes we're going through, and we're sort as we're harvesting. It's like direct to market A berries, B berries that are maybe seconds that are either cosmetically not perfect or bruised on one side that maybe get frozen or turned into value added products. And then there's what we call the chicken berries, that are just like the chickens will eat them but nobody else will.

Jessica Sanford ([00:27:31](#)):

I feel like by the time we get people trained on June strawberries, strawberry season is over. People are like, "Oh, I finally got them." I'm like, "Well, that's the end."

Andy Chamberlin ([00:27:43](#)):

"Come back next year."

Jessica Sanford ([00:27:44](#)):

"Please come back next year."

Adam Hausmann ([00:27:44](#)):

Yeah. I used to say, if you could get through June strawberry season, as far as harvest crew, the rest of the season's easy. Where else do you get paid to crawl around as an adult on your hands and knees and gather things, and the hunting and gathering?

[\(00:28:06\)](#):

So our property, most of our property's over here. We have 57 acres, and so 50-plus acres are kind of in this vicinity that we see from up here. And then we have a flagpole through the woods here. The woods are neighbor's woods. And then it opens up to a different field over here that we kind of, I guess, negotiated in when we purchased the land that I was trying to get.

[\(00:28:43\)](#):

There's a nice swath of prime soils that is really... In Champlain Valley the ridges are the good soils basically. And also it gives us a different road point access, there's an access off of Spear Street here.

[\(00:29:02\)](#):

So initially you have all these visions of what you're going to do with your property or you're just trying to build it in. But we were like, "Oh, it could be nice to..." If you ever wanted a separate venture or something else on the property, you could have an access point there as well.

Andy Chamberlin [\(00:29:21\)](#):

Yeah. Access is key.

Adam Hausmann [\(00:29:22\)](#):

Yeah, access is key. And it's proven... It's just helpful as far as getting materials over here, and getting sawdust or whatever it might be, if there's a way. It's not getting an 18-wheeler through this narrow wood's path here.

[\(00:29:37\)](#):

So this was our COVID project, I call it. It was like our 2020, not going many places, hunkered down project. We were awarded a supply chain grant, a working lands grant. And with that we ended up doing an expansion of blueberries, and then also investing in packing equipment and a bunch of other efficiencies to take us to that next scale level and bring us into the future a little bit.

[\(00:30:21\)](#):

And here there's, let's see, there's I think 6,643 plants here, if you want to be exact. But they're all-

Andy Chamberlin [\(00:30:34\)](#):

"And three that are sick."

Adam Hausmann [\(00:30:39\)](#):

Yeah, yeah. But they're all-

Jessica Sanford [\(00:30:42\)](#):

It's the newer varieties.

Adam Hausmann [\(00:30:43\)](#):

This feels like the future to me right now. They're all new varieties. Last year was our first real good harvest where it started to come on. We were like, "Okay, this is what it's going to be like."

[\(00:30:55\)](#):

And plants are still, they're decent for three years old or whatever, but they're all designed that they're kind of the same concentrated ripening periods I was talking about. Good size, all really nice size, all kind of firmer for a shelf life.

[\(00:31:17\)](#):

And then all the varieties also can be mechanically harvested, which we're trying to just, as we're investing in new varieties, thinking about that. Really thinking about labor more than anything. And trying to build some sort of security for us in the future if labor is a real challenge, or wet years, or whatever it might be.

Jessica Sanford [\(00:31:39\)](#):

Climate change in general, whether it's too hot or too wet, we are glad to have the ability to mechanically harvest if we need to.

Adam Hausmann [\(00:31:49\)](#):

Yeah. So it's really-

Andy Chamberlin [\(00:31:50\)](#):

And you're building up the frozen markets and stuff too.

Adam Hausmann [\(00:31:54\)](#):

Yes, exactly.

Andy Chamberlin [\(00:31:55\)](#):

So it's less critical.

Jessica Sanford [\(00:31:57\)](#):

Mm-hmm.

Adam Hausmann [\(00:31:57\)](#):

Yeah. I mean, some of it, the whole frozen, was building it up to be year-round so that we could also employ people year-round, and income stream and all of those. Not that like, "Oh, shit, we're running out of money. And it's like strawberry season hasn't started yet." It allows you to have some cushion going in every year.

[\(00:32:17\)](#):

But yeah, I mean, some of it is just presence in the marketplace through the year, and trying to offset some of the fruit that's coming in that's not necessarily local and organic. So it gives people a local and organic option year-round, and that was a big part of the goal.

[\(00:32:37\)](#):

But then just being able to, as this comes into maturity, hire people that are more in the packing side of things. And keep employees around more of the year, that's kind of the goal. It's one of the bigger-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:32:51](#)):

Easier to keep employees if you can have consistent work for them.

Adam Hausmann ([00:32:53](#)):

Yeah, yeah.

Jessica Sanford ([00:32:55](#)):

Yeah. We tend to keep employees maybe two years. And then, just because we are really only employ people June to end of August, there's a few that we keep on a little later and start earlier.

Adam Hausmann ([00:33:06](#)):

Yeah, there's waves.

Jessica Sanford ([00:33:07](#)):

So people move on.

Adam Hausmann ([00:33:11](#)):

We have a crew from May to middle of November, that's like a core crew. And then we have all the summer harvest crew, extra hands, that are the college students and everything that are here June, July, August. They all say, well, they're going to work until their last day of school, and then everybody wants two weeks of vacation before. So it's like I factor in 10th to 15th around of August. And then, "Once we get into classes, I'll be back," and nobody ever shows up.

([00:33:48](#)):

Even with our production and growth, I would say a lot of it has been concentrated on summer as well, and when there's an available extra labor pool. Versus spring and fall when people are either back at school or whatever it might be. So you know you at least always have the college kids and things like that around.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:34:12](#)):

Yeah, that's key too.

Jessica Sanford ([00:34:13](#)):

Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([00:34:15](#)):

Yeah. So I would say we've backed off a little bit on our fall production and spring work, and it's really trying to just meet people where they are a little bit, is how it feels, or meet the labor source. And obviously that might change in the future.

([00:34:32](#)):

And I've seen farming come in and out of vogue-ness over time, where when I first started it was you had incredible applicant pool and you could really pick people that had experience. And then it got to the point, I think when it was, "Great, they're applying, you're hired."

([00:34:53](#)):

And then it's kind of come back now where people have experience, but then it's the shift of how people want to work right now and flex... A lot of more part-timers and things like that. So you're trying to run a business and run a farm, and you're trying to build that in as much as you can, which is not always easy.

[\(00:35:15\)](#):

But so this field has, just circling back, I guess, has five different varieties in it. So kind of blocks from down low towards the road over here is early, and then a mid-ish, a good concentration of mid. And then over here, these Cargoes here, this variety is called Cargo, is a later season variety.

[\(00:35:43\)](#):

And I kind of envisioned that, I guess, most wholesale market will shift this direction and be coming out of this field. And the other field is truly going to become pick your own and kind of freezer clean up fields.

[\(00:36:08\)](#):

But yeah, you can see, I mean, obviously this time of year just the red glow of the blueberries looking out. And we did some experimenting, just because of the amount of pruning that we have out here, we did some late fall pruning here, starting to shape these plants.

[\(00:36:29\)](#):

I mean, these are, what, probably they're three and a half, four feet I would say, probably now getting to that point, guess this is the shift from Cargo to Valor here is the next variety. But trying to shape a little bit for more of just the upright growth, where we're taking out a lot of the low buds down here, and then trying to also keep the crowns a little bit more narrow.

[\(00:36:55\)](#):

And with a lot of the new varieties they're bred for this narrow crown as well, and that's related to the harvester really. It has these catch pans that flip around, and so the narrow crown just means there's less fruit loss potentially here.

[\(00:37:20\)](#):

But yeah, this field is, this was exciting this year, this field coming on. And just the quality of the fruit and the flavor on the fruit, is the first real year where I got a better sense of familiarity of the flavors too. And yeah, it was-

Andy Chamberlin [\(00:37:36\)](#):

Are these five new varieties? Or some of what you've been growing?

Adam Hausmann [\(00:37:40\)](#):

There're three new ones, and then we put some more of the draper, which we had over there, we walked past. There's probably, I forget, if it was like 1,600 drapers or so.

[\(00:37:49\)](#):

And then there's Duke, which is an early variety. That's an older variety, it's still pretty widely grown. It's productive and it's early. And there hasn't been a replacement that's come out for it. It has some flaws with it, but it's the best option for early fruit right now, I would say.

[\(00:38:11\)](#):

It's not my favorite flavor wise, it gets better actually with a little bit of cold storage, the sugar's mature.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:38:19](#)):

Interesting.

Adam Hausmann ([00:38:20](#)):

Yeah. And there's some varieties that are that way.

Jessica Sanford ([00:38:21](#)):

It flowers late, but fruits early.

Adam Hausmann ([00:38:24](#)):

That's very attractive.

Jessica Sanford ([00:38:26](#)):

So it in theory misses any of those cold snaps that we have in early spring.

Adam Hausmann ([00:38:34](#)):

Yeah. And it's grown widely out west, in the northwest, and it's because of their more mild winters and long spring and fall, it's incredibly productive out there per acre. They're getting high teens per pounds per acre, which is incredible. So that does not happen in the northeast.

Jessica Sanford ([00:39:00](#)):

But yeah, I think it was fun to get to taste them all this year. Because you never know what they're going to taste like until they start fruiting, and you're like, "Oh, is this going to be a good one? Is going to be a bad one?"

Andy Chamberlin ([00:39:10](#)):

Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([00:39:11](#)):

Yeah, [inaudible 00:39:11] are a gamble.

Jessica Sanford ([00:39:12](#)):

We do have a few that are not that great, but we have them, so we try to shift those to the frozen where they get a little sweeter in the freezer.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:39:20](#)):

Mm-hmm.

Adam Hausmann ([00:39:20](#)):

But yeah, the blueberries have this longevity, and they take five plus years to really come into production. And then they're productive for 30 years or so, 30, 40 years. And so you're always gambling a little bit on like, "Okay, we're going to have this variety for quite a while, for my life. So I hope I like it." Obviously you can rip stuff out, but-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:39:54](#)):

Yeah, but you don't want to.

Adam Hausmann ([00:39:54](#)):

... you don't want to. Ideally you don't want to, so. But yeah, this has gotten us excited about even future plan things and all of that, where there's-

Jessica Sanford ([00:39:54](#)):

Another 10 of these fields.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:39:54](#)):

Oh, gee.

Adam Hausmann ([00:40:08](#)):

I mean, there's another-

Jessica Sanford ([00:40:10](#)):

There's another five acres over there that we're hoping to acquire.

Adam Hausmann ([00:40:13](#)):

Yeah. Hoping at some point to merge into the farm, where it's kind of been-

Jessica Sanford ([00:40:17](#)):

Yeah. To do another five acres.

Adam Hausmann ([00:40:17](#)):

It's kind come back and forth. But with the thought that especially we just have the system set up now for blueberries here, where you could really just efficiently have a large block here.

Jessica Sanford ([00:40:30](#)):

We were close last year. We started doing field work and-

Adam Hausmann ([00:40:33](#)):

That was two years ago.

Jessica Sanford ([00:40:34](#)):

Two years. Cover cropping. Like, "Okay, we're going to get the plants in," and then it was off the table.

([00:40:41](#)):

We would lease it for strawberries, but there's no water, there's no irrigation out here, and strawberries really got to have that set up. So we're just going to patiently wait.

Adam Hausmann ([00:40:52](#)):

Come on, doggies.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:40:53](#)):

What's your standardized spacing now?

Jessica Sanford ([00:40:57](#)):

Three feet between bushes, and 10 feet between rows.

Adam Hausmann ([00:41:03](#)):

Yeah. And that's becoming the norm. Other places, I mean, even down in New Jersey, people are doing two and a half. They're two and a half feet between bushes, which is really tight. Changes your pruning strategies, but they're really hedging them almost.

([00:41:20](#)):

Out in the northwest it's like three foot, 10 foot on center, three foot between bushes. And they're finding it doesn't impact per acre really increased fertilizer applications or even water wise, things like that. So I mean, I think, as I said last week, it was the difference between, with four foot spacing, it's 1,089 plants per acre versus 1,450 something. I forget whether it was 54 or 59.

Jessica Sanford ([00:42:01](#)):

Yeah. So you're getting more yield per acre.

Adam Hausmann ([00:42:05](#)):

Yeah. And it's your fixed asset of your land, and so you're maximizing kind of the return. And berries are a tricky one, in that they're kind of a high investment and high return, but also they're incredibly laborious and there's a lot of harvest time that goes into them and care that goes into them. So everything you can do to maximize that return.

Jessica Sanford ([00:42:29](#)):

That's why you see this baby row planted here. Because we're like, "Oh, we don't need the row to be that wide. Let's stick one more row of-"

Adam Hausmann ([00:42:36](#)):

I'm like, "That's another-"

Jessica Sanford ([00:42:36](#)):

"One more row in."

Adam Hausmann ([00:42:37](#)):

That's another 160 plants, at 10 pounds a bush. You're like, "Okay." Yeah, you start to kind of looking at little patches all over the farm, on just where can we squeeze this in or that?

Jessica Sanford ([00:42:54](#)):

Hoop houses.

Adam Hausmann ([00:42:58](#)):

Yeah, hoop houses [inaudible 00:42:58] berries.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:43:02](#)):

Oh, yeah. [inaudible 00:43:02].

Jessica Sanford ([00:43:02](#)):

Three summers. Three summer raspberries and two fall. And then the first two are blueberries.

Adam Hausmann ([00:43:10](#)):

Yeah. We've been [inaudible 00:43:18] some blueberries [inaudible 00:43:18] well. We don't repeat any of our [inaudible 00:43:22] manipulating the size to generate soil warmth from heat, in a hyper local market trying to just be a couple weeks ahead. It's kind of also what you can balance [inaudible 00:43:41], as we were talking about.

[NEW_PARAGRAPH]These are summer raspberries. I guess they do a light fall crop, but pretty late. These are Novas all here.

Jessica Sanford ([00:43:52](#)):

We put them in, I think, really to sort of trial the mechanical harvester on raspberries to see if we could do them for beer or jam market. We trialed the mechanical harvester on them this year for the first time, but it was too wet.

Adam Hausmann ([00:44:11](#)):

Yeah, it was just-

Jessica Sanford ([00:44:12](#)):

The leaves. It was such a wet year.

Adam Hausmann ([00:44:15](#)):

... that it was the summer, it was like we're getting so much chafe, and the leaves and matter.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:44:20](#)):

How does that compare to [inaudible 00:44:21]?

Adam Hausmann ([00:44:20](#)):

Out west they're breeding for raspberries for mechanical harvesting, but more for the jam and that kind of market. And we have a decent amount of-

Jessica Sanford ([00:44:30](#)):

Popsicles, sorbet.

Adam Hausmann ([00:44:32](#)):

... brewery counts. Yeah, exactly. And other value-added products. And we're like, "Oh, that's a really efficient way to get it off."

(00:44:38):

And then I found there's a guy in New Hampshire, but he ended up getting a fancy harvester through a grant there, and he's been harvesting his raspberries that way for bakeries and things like that. And so I asked him about varieties, kind of reached out to him, and Cornell, and some other places about varieties that would work well.

(00:45:03):

And for the guy in New Hampshire, this was the one he said was the best for him right now. And so we tried it out, jury's out still. We ended up the last two years, I guess, opening this up, splitting it in half and flip-flopping for pick your own. And then we were picking it as well for just the freezer market.

(00:45:26):

The fruit quality between the high tunnels and field is night and day. So we've gotten really used to the high 20 tunnel quality. But being a wholesale market too, the shelf life is incredible coming out of the high tunnels. And then we have clamshells and your names on it, and you're like, "Okay, do you want your farm name on this berry or this one?" And it becomes really clear.

Jessica Sanford (00:45:58):

But for pick your own it's not an ideal setup, because people don't like really long rows. There's no way to get between the rows. And then it's hard to get people to the bottom of the hill.

Adam Hausmann (00:46:09):

We funnel... We'll change it so people enter this way, and then we'll change the path and have people enter through the bottom. And so it forces them to come up a little bit. Don't know why exactly, but we have a lot on 200 feet.

Jessica Sanford (00:46:22):

Everything's on 200 feet. Except the Spear Street field, that's 230.

Adam Hausmann (00:46:28):

Well, yeah, that was the way that it broke. Well, it's different, the south is 260 something and the north is three.

(00:46:36):

And this whole, what we see here, these blueberries here are all on 200 foot blocks, kind of like row length here. I think it started our strawberries were on that, and so it was like how-

Jessica Sanford (00:46:50):

Everything's that.

Adam Hausmann (00:46:52):

How you're thinking about things.

Andy Chamberlin (00:46:53):

Yeah. It's [inaudible 00:46:55] five lanes end up.

Adam Hausmann ([00:46:54](#)):

Yeah, exactly. And then it's how you think about, "Okay, we need X amount of feet of irrigation or plastic." Just, I'm like, "I know that math."

Jessica Sanford ([00:47:04](#)):

It's also good distance for crew when they're harvesting, where you can see the end goal. Whereas our strawberries rows down there, they're I don't know how many feet, 600 feet, where it's like-

Adam Hausmann ([00:47:17](#)):

Well, there's a break in the middle.

Jessica Sanford ([00:47:18](#)):

Yeah, but you don't really see that. You're like, "Oh my gosh, I have a huge-"

Adam Hausmann ([00:47:22](#)):

Yeah. It's a mental thing, yeah.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:47:23](#)):

You're going along knowing [inaudible 00:47:23]. I get it.

Jessica Sanford ([00:47:23](#)):

It's a mental thing.

Adam Hausmann ([00:47:24](#)):

Yeah. And that's the thing, anything you read about establishing, especially pick your own, is factoring in row length for both customers and crew, so.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:47:36](#)):

Are you using a mower right up to the plastic or a different [inaudible 00:47:39]?

Jessica Sanford ([00:47:39](#)):

Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([00:47:39](#)):

Yeah. So this is all, it's a Blueray sheep fescue that's here. And it's a low mow, no mow grass, basically a clumping fescue. And so it doesn't-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:47:39](#)):

Blueray?

Adam Hausmann ([00:47:53](#)):

Blueray sheep fescue. Actually that one, we weren't able to get that this year, but it was a different sheep fescue that we were able to get this year. I can't remember the name of it.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:48:03](#)):

I mean, you have to go with it [inaudible 00:48:06].

Adam Hausmann ([00:48:05](#)):

Yes, exactly. Exactly.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:48:09](#)):

It pairs nicely, right?

Adam Hausmann ([00:48:10](#)):

But we basically can... We go through, we clean up before pick your own and things like that, of course.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:48:10](#)):

Yeah. But you don't really have to.

Jessica Sanford ([00:48:10](#)):

We don't have to.

Adam Hausmann ([00:48:23](#)):

Yeah. Last year our mower was broken.

Jessica Sanford ([00:48:25](#)):

Broken for the whole year.

Adam Hausmann ([00:48:27](#)):

And we were like [inaudible 00:48:28].

Jessica Sanford ([00:48:27](#)):

So we did one spring row mow, and then we didn't mow again until I think the fall.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:48:32](#)):

Holy moly.

Adam Hausmann ([00:48:32](#)):

It was ridiculous.

Jessica Sanford ([00:48:34](#)):

I mean, it wasn't that bad.

Adam Hausmann ([00:48:36](#)):

I think I went through it with the flail or the brush [inaudible 00:48:39].

Jessica Sanford ([00:48:38](#)):

Yeah. But if we had normal grass it would-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:48:42](#)):

Yeah. Mowing weekly.

Adam Hausmann ([00:48:43](#)):

Yeah, no, exactly. That was when we-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:48:45](#)):

50 acres.

Adam Hausmann ([00:48:46](#)):

Yeah, exactly. I mean, when we moved I felt like I was at the Intervale. We didn't have this, and I felt like I was just mowing all the time. And just in some of it it is like weed control and airflow and all these things, and then it's like customer experience.

([00:49:05](#)):

But yeah, we kind of shifted that way. And then last year we found it, ended up planting... We've always had side discharge mowers, then we got a rear discharge mower, which is also nice as far as not blowing stuff onto plants and fruit and all of that.

([00:49:26](#)):

So yeah, we're figuring it out. But it cuts back on mowing time and all of that, which is significant, and fuel usage, and obviously impact. Mowing has its place, sometimes it's a great way to get this overview of your field and your farm and where-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:49:45](#)):

[inaudible 00:49:45].

Adam Hausmann ([00:49:44](#)):

Yeah, you're kind of just zoning it like a plant. And so from there you're like, "Oh, this plant nutrient-wise needs a little help." Or you notice diseases or whatever it might be. Or just even where you are in the fruiting period and how far away from harvest you are, so-

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:50:04]

Adam Hausmann ([00:50:00](#)):

The fruiting period and how far away from harvest you are. So yeah, it has its place, but you don't want to do it every day.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:50:08](#)):

Yeah, right.

Adam Hausmann ([00:50:10](#)):

So we haven't pruned yet in here. So it feels pretty jungly right now. This is a variety of all of Duke in here, all on three-foot spacing, and super productive coming out of here. This is single wall poly with roll-up size. We leave it open most of the winter, and then usually middle of March end up dropping sides and start manipulating temperature in here a little bit and try to build up some heat in here. And so with that, we get fruit often around the 15th of June, 15th or so of June. And so, it allows you for a period to have blueberries, strawberries, and raspberries really the end of June where we have early season raspberries that are coming out of the tunnels as well. So it's this great, the trifecta berries, people love it at farmer's market, but then even in our wholesale market and things like that, it's just like this add-on. You're coming there already with strawberries and there's like blueberries as well, we have raspberries, and so it just builds your sales and market presence. We initially put in, I guess there are two houses here.

Jessica Sanford ([00:51:45](#)):

Yeah. We put in another variety shed to clear in that house and it just didn't do well in the tunnels. Just super tall, not much flowered-

Adam Hausmann ([00:51:57](#)):

Super late and then barely fruiting.

Jessica Sanford ([00:52:00](#)):

Yeah. Not... Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([00:52:01](#)):

And I talked to the nursery, and they're like, "Oh, yeah, we're dropping that one. We found the same thing." But we put it in because it was four or five days for the Dukes. So we were like, oh, obviously early is good in a local market, and the flavor is nice on it, but it just wasn't productive enough. So we sold those off this year, and they're great for home garden and things like that, but the space inside the tunnels is so valuable and you're trying to maximize your yields in the tunnels. And so, we just wanted to shift to something that would actually pay for itself.

Jessica Sanford ([00:52:42](#)):

Make money.

Adam Hausmann ([00:52:44](#)):

This is house that we ripped stuff out. We actually threw some... We dug up some old strawberries very late last year and put them in here.

Jessica Sanford ([00:52:53](#)):

See what happens.

Adam Hausmann ([00:52:54](#)):

Not sure what's going to happen, but they're in there, I'll tell you in May. And then we get into kind of a raspberry section here. These are all Nova. Actually, this house hasn't been pruned yet. We will come

through, actually, it's probably starting tomorrow is the plan, but come through. And we top everything first, just like you can see a little bit better what you're working with, but we top it to try to get more laterals on the canes. And then also, so there's a harvest box here so that people aren't having to bend and twist. It's like they can just walk down and this is where the fruit is right here.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:53:43](#)):

[inaudible 00:53:43] raspberry and not bend over.

Jessica Sanford ([00:53:43](#)):

Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([00:53:45](#)):

Yeah, yeah. This is where people start to love the blueberries and raspberries, the upright fruit.

Jessica Sanford ([00:53:52](#)):

And then all the trellising we have in here is vineyard trellising, which has worked well for us.

Adam Hausmann ([00:53:56](#)):

Yeah. And we use like a monofilament-

Jessica Sanford ([00:53:57](#)):

It's like a monofilament.

Adam Hausmann ([00:54:00](#)):

... wire that doesn't rub at all and seems to last forever.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:54:03](#)):

Okay. Interesting [inaudible 00:54:04].

Jessica Sanford ([00:54:04](#)):

Yeah. We used to just use twine and just not strong enough.

Adam Hausmann ([00:54:10](#)):

We usually use them between houses, it's like we didn't have enough where we have some of it right now and it doesn't last. I mean, this stuff lasts 20 years or so. So these have been in since 2013. People say productive life is 10 to 15 years. I feel like they're getting-

Jessica Sanford ([00:54:27](#)):

We're trying to figure out their transition plan-

Adam Hausmann ([00:54:30](#)):

Yeah. They're getting tired.

Jessica Sanford ([00:54:30](#)):

... about how not to lose.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:54:32](#)):

About a decade would be easy.

Jessica Sanford ([00:54:33](#)):

Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([00:54:34](#)):

Yeah. But they're starting to get tired a little bit and there's still a lot of fruit that comes off. It's still like a wall of fruit. It's amazing to see. But we're starting to see that. And then even things that you put in a decade ago, certain varieties we're like, "I don't know if I would plant that again." And there's either new varieties or just where your market is. We're starting to think about that, trying to figure out how to phase-

Jessica Sanford ([00:55:05](#)):

Phase out with not-

Adam Hausmann ([00:55:05](#)):

Phase plants.

Jessica Sanford ([00:55:07](#)):

... using production.

Adam Hausmann ([00:55:07](#)):

So it's like one house at a time and we'd like to cover crop it and do some serious mustards and things like that in here to try to just break up disease cycles and you're trying to figure out that, or if you... Because I don't really want to go like we thought of oak for a year, could you grow in pots and then put them in. But it's just so much labor to do all that. And then they become so root-bound also in the pots that it's... The people are growing in pots are just keeping them in pots and it's not... We're soil based. So that's really our focus. So our thought is maybe we'd put up another tunnel and start rotating through and then kind of replanting, phasing some out, and kind of go that route. But yeah, that's where it's tricky with perennials and tunnels, unless you plant something completely different in here. But disease-wise, you'd want to break the cycle if you could.

([00:56:11](#)):

These are all Harnois, Ovaltechs, 200 foot long, 30 foot wide. We like them. I mean, you don't have to think about them. They're like bombers as far as winter goes, this is the first... Last two years they changed and I've told Harnois this, but we have the plastic and then we use some webbing on the outside just for... It's because of the amount of winds that we have here. It's pretty intense at times. And the webbing just lashes bow to bow.

Andy Chamberlin ([00:56:50](#)):

Yeah. Really [inaudible 00:56:51] down, it's a kind of like we do with cat tunnel.

Adam Hausmann ([00:56:53](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. It's kind of-

Andy Chamberlin ([00:56:54](#)):

It keeps tension on it.

Adam Hausmann ([00:56:55](#)):

It keeps tension in it, so really it's been great. They changed something either the manufacturer of the webbing, or the UV stabilization or something on the webbing where the newer stuff is not lasting. And so we're actually using... We used to have a bunch of Haygrove tunnels and we're now starting to use, you see the orange cord there, the whole Haygrove cord that's still UV stabilized, but it just seems to last. And the one tunnel down there that we lost, and whenever that last windstorm was, the cord from Harnois, it all deteriorated after three years or whatever, two years I think it started to come off. Whereas we had stuff that lasted like eight plus years before that. So yeah, so we're trying to just make sure that they're stabilized. What else down here? Well, there's more raspberries, raspberries, raspberries. I guess these are summer Killarney, and then Prelude, and then Amara, and then another house of Prelude for raspberries for us.

Jessica Sanford ([00:58:03](#)):

And Prelude gives us a double-crop. So we get a summer crop and then we get a fall crop off of them as well.

Adam Hausmann ([00:58:09](#)):

Yeah, we double-crop those. And Nova out of this house, you get a double too, it's not as great. The Preludes will come on again in late August, September and go until frost. These, it's like late September beginning October, so it's a shorter double-crop, and so we don't factor it in.

Jessica Sanford ([00:58:29](#)):

It's like a family harvest.

Adam Hausmann ([00:58:32](#)):

Yeah. I mean, we'll pick them if kids will eat them up until Thanksgiving.

Jessica Sanford ([00:58:36](#)):

Our daughter will eat them. Our son, maybe will eat five or six.

Adam Hausmann ([00:58:40](#)):

She's got a problem really, thank God she lives in a berry farm. And then there's a gap here where we had a triple bay. We used to have extra Haygroves up here and then we had a triple bay there. We lost it in a snowstorm a couple years ago. And they had a love-hate relationship with the house. Honestly, it was a lot of square footage for really cheap, which was great. But they're flimsy. They obviously can't handle any snow load. We had just put on new plastic on it, and so we lost the whole thing. So it was kind of a bummer that way. But we had all of our fall raspberries in there for years, and then we were

using perimeter insect netting for spotted wing on it, and so we were able to really lock it down well. And so it was a great house in that sense. And they're cheap.

(00:59:45):

It's a lot of square footage for cheap, and it's basically... We weren't trying to manipulate really temperatures with those houses. They're not as tight. It was really a rain shield more than anything. And that would stretch us another month into the fall. So we've put in some, I guess, down low, kind of closer to those other houses we put in... I guess last spring we put in some new fall raspberries there and had phased out some other ones. I think there's one more variety that will probably if it's starting to get kind of tired that we'll probably phase it out, but we're kind of leaving the space, not exactly sure. And we just grew a little bit of flowers there, some squash and some other things last year. But we might need it for... There's one smaller field of our strawberries, so we might need some of it for strawberry rotation just to make sure we have adequate-

Jessica Sanford (01:00:43):

We have a little bit of a land crunch. So we're trying to [inaudible 01:00:46].

Adam Hausmann (01:00:47):

When we moved here, we thought we'd have plenty of land and now we're like, we're so tight on. We don't have really... Our rotation's getting really tight for strawberries and we're trying to really be deliberate about it. And we've shifted, for June's, more to plugs just because it allows us to cover crop more of the fields a little bit longer. So we're planting them in end of August, so we can still get... It's almost like another year of cover cropping on a field. But we're on a-

Jessica Sanford (01:01:18):

Three-year rotation.

Adam Hausmann (01:01:20):

... three-year rotation, and I'd like it to be a four-year really. But we don't have the land unless we-

Andy Chamberlin (01:01:27):

Yeah, right. You've tied it up and-

Adam Hausmann (01:01:30):

Yeah, it kind of went... Yeah, yeah. And that's like, I like the perennials. The work is done, so not that there's not work related to it.

Jessica Sanford (01:01:37):

I ordered 5,000 more blueberries. I'm like, "What do you mean? We don't have anywhere to put them."

Adam Hausmann (01:01:42):

I want to. I didn't do it. This was also 2020 fall planting. There's Nelson and Calypso and Lasko for late variety. So Nelson, we have a bunch of already. The Calypso and Lasko, we had our first harvest off of them last year and excited by flavor and a lot of other things as far as just modern attributes of the

breeding that's happening. So yeah, we've tied a lot of land. We're probably going to phase out. These are like Elliot's here. These are plants that were just planted right before Hurricane Irene. They've been-

Jessica Sanford ([01:02:34](#)):

They were floating.

Adam Hausmann ([01:02:35](#)):

Yeah. Like floating in pots.

Jessica Sanford ([01:02:37](#)):

[inaudible 01:02:37]

Adam Hausmann ([01:02:37](#)):

Some of them were in pots and they had just never done well here.

Jessica Sanford ([01:02:37](#)):

They never recover.

Adam Hausmann ([01:02:41](#)):

So we're testing out Elliot's a later-season variety. And a lot of people grow it because it's so late. It fruits well into September, but it's a little more acidic flavor-wise.

Jessica Sanford ([01:02:57](#)):

It doesn't always ripen well for us.

Adam Hausmann ([01:02:59](#)):

Yeah, you get a couple-

Jessica Sanford ([01:03:01](#)):

Compared to the newer late season varieties.

Adam Hausmann ([01:03:04](#)):

And it's just the flavor so much better on the newer ones. They really... Yeah, you want to eat it.

Jessica Sanford ([01:03:10](#)):

These are the ones that customers complain about. They're tart.

Adam Hausmann ([01:03:13](#)):

These are tart. Yeah.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:03:16](#)):

You have a really nice property, how it's... Like you said, enough of a hill where it's draining, but it doesn't feel like you're hiking up the hill.

Adam Hausmann ([01:03:23](#)):

Yeah, yeah. It's sloped. It just has a slope and it's like enough airflow, water flow. So it's great that way. This is kind of what we have in summer this becomes more like event space where we have, there's kids music, and yoga, and there's different workshops, and we do some dinners, and a little bit of everything in here. And then winter it gets packed with everything possible. And it's actually not as bad this year. Well, I have a lot of stuff outside still, I'll be honest. But there's a lot in here.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:04:00](#)):

This is the Cadillac of a mulch layer, holy fuck.

Adam Hausmann ([01:04:04](#)):

Yeah, this is one of their demos that we got. It was end of season and it was cheaper than we were due for a new mulch layer. Ours had been welded, kept on breaking, just was like-

Jessica Sanford ([01:04:20](#)):

But this has the road track, which for us being on a hill is really helpful. The old one, I would sit on the back and I'd push one side down with a garden stake being on the hill. So it's neat.

Adam Hausmann ([01:04:35](#)):

Yeah. And this is like... Rain-Flo does these end of season sales on everything where it was half off. And I was like, okay. And we were looking, and so a neighbor bought an old one and we did not look back. It's really nice. You can adjust the crown really easily. You can just crank here so you can get a crown if you want. You can simply go four-inch bed height, eight-inch bed height with minor adjustments, obviously like the road track side of things. But yeah, forms a really nice bed. It really does. It's been great with strawberries, really more than anything. Just like the amount of plastic that we lay. I guess veggie farms lay a lot of plastic too, but it's one of those... The difference of having a well laid bed is huge as far as the production, the ease and the headache of the job also. It can be-

Jessica Sanford ([01:05:34](#)):

A lot less shoveling with this one.

Adam Hausmann ([01:05:36](#)):

Yeah, yeah, exactly. A lot less covering edges, things like that. There's so many little micro adjustments on this that you can really get it dialed in, which is nice. So our crew thanks us for this one. And that's all these so many investments are always crew happiness... Speed, doing the job better, but also what's going to make everyone happier and make the job go quicker as well. What else do we have in here? We have... This is a plastic wrapper, cone spreader, this is a Jacto sprayer. And we use this... We use it somewhat for strawberries. It's a boom. So you can get out pretty far, but I'd like to get a... I'm looking for a better strawberry sprayer right now. There's some down in Pennsylvania right now that are some used ones down there that I might make a trip down for a transplanter. This was my dad's old tractor here in the corner.

Jessica Sanford ([01:06:44](#)):

It does work.

Adam Hausmann ([01:06:47](#)):

It works every couple of years. So we get it going and then it sits there and oozes at other times, newer used mower rear discharge, which is nice. And we had traditional tractor-riding mowers or whatever, and then we went with zero turn for a little bit. But the problem with the zero turn is that they're so wide often that the actual mower was hitting the bushes and knocking fruit off all the time. And so we've kind of shifted to these front-mounted mowers. And the decks, these are six-foot decks, basically.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:07:31](#)):

It keeps the tractor narrow.

Adam Hausmann ([01:07:34](#)):

So, yeah, the tractor's narrow, you can really edge underneath the plant there. And the way that we prune, there's not really knocking off fruit. Maybe a little bit here and there, but it's minimal, basically. So it allows you to really get right along on the edge of our landscape fabric. And we just kind of have a clean line there, so that's that. So these are the Harvy 200 easy pick I think was their old name. This is what Rob Meadows has from the Netherlands. We found a guy down in Georgia that had a bunch of them and was selling them off. And he has a giant... Actually, organic, it's 300 acres of organic blueberries down there. He got them. His H-2A crew wouldn't use them because they-

Jessica Sanford ([01:08:23](#)):

They're paid by piecemeal.

Adam Hausmann ([01:08:26](#)):

They get paid by piecemeal and they couldn't really figure out how to... It's basically four people on this operating it. And so they couldn't figure out how to divvy, and it was creating tension, and it was... Basically, he was like, "They won't use them. So they're sitting here." And so-

Andy Chamberlin ([01:08:42](#)):

You would think even if they took it all and divided it by the four of them or whatever-

Adam Hausmann ([01:08:46](#)):

Totally.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:08:46](#)):

... they would still be way ahead.

Jessica Sanford ([01:08:46](#)):

It's still ahead.

Adam Hausmann ([01:08:50](#)):

It's still ahead. So this is basically the same. It's like you can pull, I don't know how I have it set up right now, but you can...

Jessica Sanford ([01:08:50](#)):

These pushers-

Adam Hausmann ([01:08:56](#)):

You can push these, so these brushes basically go around the bush like that. And then you're on the side here, kind of shaking, getting everything into there.

Jessica Sanford ([01:09:17](#)):

I think we used it once this year. Our crew is trying to figure it out. I don't know what they were doing when they're trying to reconfigure it.

Adam Hausmann ([01:09:26](#)):

They're like... Our crew had an interesting reaction to it too. So I'm curious.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:09:28](#)):

Interesting.

Adam Hausmann ([01:09:29](#)):

Yeah. And some of it was challenge of our trays don't fit exactly in here. So these raspberry trays actually do, so. But then also the pruning you recognize with all these things, it's one thing to find the equipment and be like, "We're going to use this," but you also have to start to integrate all of your other practices into as far as you're planting into it. And we've started to do that more and more with the mechanical harvester. So it's that narrower crown, so you can really get in and out. But yeah, jury's still out on this. Rob told me it took him about three years to figure it out, and then now he really likes it. But he was questioning it too. And we just-

Andy Chamberlin ([01:10:14](#)):

Interesting.

Adam Hausmann ([01:10:15](#)):

We didn't give ourselves the time, honestly.

Jessica Sanford ([01:10:21](#)):

It was a crazy year.

Adam Hausmann ([01:10:22](#)):

And it was that year of you have your plan A, plan B, plan C always. But it seemed like every day it was like, "Which plan is it today?" Because of the rain and just constant pivoting that way. And then this is for pick your own toys, the sandbox toys out. If kids are happy, parents are happy, type of thing.

Jessica Sanford ([01:10:44](#)):

Some people come just to play in the sandbox and get a popsicle.

Adam Hausmann ([01:10:48](#)):

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Popsicles.

Jessica Sanford ([01:10:49](#)):

And they'll pick berries just to play.

Adam Hausmann ([01:10:52](#)):

But we try to set it up so there's seating around for people. And umbrella shade, if you have shade and toys and drinks for the parents, not... Something like that. It's like you got to get the espresso machine or something like that. Really make people happy. So this is our barn kitchen, value-added kitchen. And in here we have popsicle machine, sorbet machine, stove, well it's mainly value-added production. We do packing in here. It's kind of the only insulated space right now in our barn. And so for frozen berries, it's here. I mean, it's like we're getting to the point of frozen berries where we need to find, there's hoppers where you can fill bags really quickly. We do it all with scoops and everything. This is all like a glycol bath right here for the popsicle molds. So it fits. It's like seven molds across here.

Jessica Sanford ([01:11:58](#)):

And then it freezes them in about 30 minutes.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:12:01](#)):

Wow.

Adam Hausmann ([01:12:01](#)):

It goes down to negative 20 Celsius.

Jessica Sanford ([01:12:02](#)):

It's like 150 popsicles every 30 minutes. And then we-

Adam Hausmann ([01:12:08](#)):

Yeah, it's more than that. Yeah, it's in an hour. It's 360, 365 pops an hour, or something like that. And then we do sorbet out of here. And then it's just like the kitchen gear and the three bay-

Jessica Sanford ([01:12:24](#)):

Jam.

Adam Hausmann ([01:12:24](#)):

... and all of that. I guess we do a strawberry. For farmer's market, we have all the pops, and sorbet, and the berries, of course. And then we do a strawberry lemonade as well, so that we do in little mason jars. So yeah, this is kind of our production space, I guess, for all of that. We haven't done jam for a while. The goal is to make jam this year.

Jessica Sanford ([01:12:52](#)):

And maybe get some popsicles going in the winter. Taking them out of the molds and stuff.

Adam Hausmann ([01:12:57](#)):

Yeah, trying to get back.

Jessica Sanford ([01:12:58](#)):

Trying to get ahead.

Adam Hausmann ([01:13:00](#)):

Yeah, trying to just get some stuff done this winter before things get totally going crazy. The winter gets really fast, and then it's like... Then you're like, "Oh, God, we have a ton of pruning to do. I need to really... That's where I should be. And it's bare right now. I should be out pruning versus I can do this when it's snowing, or rainy, or it's raw out. I can hide in the kitchen and do that work." So that's pretty much it.

Jessica Sanford ([01:13:27](#)):

It's nice. It's not ideal space for making popsicles and sorbet because it gets super... Because it's on the south side of the barn intentionally-

Andy Chamberlin ([01:13:36](#)):

With nice windows.

Jessica Sanford ([01:13:37](#)):

With nice windows. So when we-

Adam Hausmann ([01:13:38](#)):

Yeah. I'd like to turn it to like office some days when I'm in the kitchen-

Jessica Sanford ([01:13:41](#)):

So, you know.

Adam Hausmann ([01:13:41](#)):

Move the kitchen to the basement. We set up our farm stand. We have it in early season and late season that it's set up as self-serve where there's a square and cash box. And then during the pick-your-own season from late June through August. It's staffed fully. But so it's kind of goes back and forth where it's like pick-your-own you need... People need assistance, but this is popsicle and sorbet freezer. And then there's another freezer of food and people that we... Food that we like to eat and people we know that we're trying to support their products from different meats to fish to-

Jessica Sanford ([01:14:25](#)):

Cheeses. Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([01:14:26](#)):

And then we have fresh berry, this fresh berry cooler. And then we bring in some greens from Footprint, and there's some things like that. Tomatoes from different people. We grow some, but we, not much.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:14:43](#)):

So that's all like all the veg gets laid out. And then dry goods get laid out.

Adam Hausmann ([01:14:48](#)):

Things that will not expire out here, that's kind of fill. But it's good for a neighborhood market. And then we have a lot of pick-your-own, I don't want to say impulse buys, but there's things to snack on while you're here. Pick-your-own from drinks-

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [01:15:04]

Adam Hausmann ([01:15:00](#)):

But there's things to snack on while you're here at Pick Your Own, from drinks to whatever, little things to keep everyone happy. That's kind of how we have handled that. And now it's just jammed with picnic tables and hand-wash sinks and things like that, whatever, old signs.

Jessica Sanford ([01:15:23](#)):

We keep it open, I think end of May to I think November.

Adam Hausmann ([01:15:28](#)):

Yeah, we went into, I don't know, 10th of November. It was until we stopped harvesting strawberries. So let's see. So this part of the barn has our... This obviously has equipment in it right now.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:15:28](#)):

Yeah.

Jessica Sanford ([01:15:42](#)):

[inaudible 01:15:42], come on.

Adam Hausmann ([01:15:44](#)):

Freezers, fridges, walk-ins down here. This is in the summer, it gets set up where we're more like packing and storing. The packing materials are all down here. This is a freezer cold-plate cart for transporting popsicles and sorbet to farmer's market here. So this we plug in the night before and then it in theory, keeps things cold through farmer's market. We still load up a bunch of ice packs in there because I get nervous about making it through the farmer's market and losing product, basically.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:16:22](#)):

That's critical.

Adam Hausmann ([01:16:23](#)):

And then, yeah, there's another tractor, another sprayer in here. And then this part of the barn. We put this temporary wall here in the winter to kind of create another, because our water goes through here and also to create a semi-warm area. It's not heated, but it stays fairly warm so we put this temporary wall up for winter. It's packed, but this is where our packing equipment is back here. So this area is cleared out in the summertime.

Jessica Sanford ([01:16:49](#)):

The summer.

Adam Hausmann ([01:16:52](#)):

It's, again, jammed with stuff right now. But we have here, this is a BI, which is a company that was out of Michigan forever and was kind of the initial leader in all the blueberry packing equipment. And they went out of business a little while ago. Somehow they imploded. I forget what exactly happened. This is basically a conveyor that moves its way up and then goes under here where there's a fan that's blowing up. So the berries kind of popcorn from there and it helps to remove kind of the stems, leaves, all of that. And that gets shot out into the left into that little hopper, that direction. And then from there we have it set up where they are dropped onto this, which is hidden under all this junk. But this is a sorting table basically. Also, another conveyor.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:17:52](#)):

Oh, okay. Sorting in there, yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([01:17:52](#)):

So it's set up that the fruit drops onto here and then rolls off this way. And then there's a channel here where we drop the soft fruit, and then we have trays down here that collect all the soft fruit. We have just maybe two people on each side and they're just looking. You're just staring at blue and just in the total zone and bruised, soft and pulling out anything funky from there.

([01:18:19](#)):

And then from there it goes... I guess we have some other things that we haven't really been using when we got all the equipment. There's a sizer here. If you want to be like where you have only big fruit or if you're trying to like, some people separate smaller fruit out for frozen and only sell larger fruit for fresh. The same goes with strawberries. We've tried to buck the trend that all fruit has to be big and some of those small fruit is, to me, the most flavorful really. So we don't use the sizer really much, but now they make optical sorters. I'm like, oh my god. It takes soft fruit sorters, green berries, you name it. There's pretty incredible sorters but they're also a small investment, a small, very large investment.

([01:19:20](#)):

And then here, tucked away is our clamshell filler. And this works... It has what's called a de-nester up here where... Are there any clamshells left on there? No?

Jessica Sanford ([01:19:33](#)):

No. The stacks of clamshells get put up there. They come down this line, all the fruit gets dumped in here. It fills them. [inaudible 01:19:44]. And then it sends them down. Shuts the clamshell.

Adam Hausmann ([01:19:47](#)):

Yeah, this basically, the clamshells get opened up, funnel through, filled, closed, and then get shot out here onto a table where we just pack them directly into shipping boxes, and either into the fridge or right into the van. And this whole investment has been a game changer with our scale and also with using the mechanical harvester. But this alone, this is probably my new favorite piece of equipment on the farm really.

Jessica Sanford ([01:20:23](#)):

It saves us a lot of time.

Adam Hausmann ([01:20:25](#)):

It's so much time it saves. It's 90 pints a minute.

Jessica Sanford ([01:20:26](#)):

Pints per minute.

Adam Hausmann ([01:20:28](#)):

So it's just like-

Jessica Sanford ([01:20:29](#)):

One person to do that, like-

Adam Hausmann ([01:20:30](#)):

You can just hear it going and you're like, look at that.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:20:31](#)):

They are flying off the line.

Adam Hausmann ([01:20:32](#)):

Yeah.

Jessica Sanford ([01:20:32](#)):

Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([01:20:33](#)):

Really, it's amazing that way.

Jessica Sanford ([01:20:35](#)):

Yeah, it goes fast.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:20:36](#)):

Nice. You can fill and pack [inaudible 01:20:37].

Adam Hausmann ([01:20:36](#)):

Yeah, pretty much. People are just dumping, dumping trays into here.

Jessica Sanford ([01:20:41](#)):

I think the crew likes to see how fast they can get it going because everyone's like running and like-

Andy Chamberlin ([01:20:46](#)):

[inaudible 01:20:46].

Adam Hausmann ([01:20:46](#)):

Yeah, there's like music going and it's fun. It's great that way. But yeah, this is a guy, McKibbin. He's out Michigan. He has a machine shop there that does a lot of stuff for blueberries, but McKibbin Harvester or he does McKibbin Harvesters, he did all these. And this one's obviously older and been around, but it's what we could afford at the time and it works for us. And I think at some point maybe we'll scale up in a different way, but this buys us a lot of time and it's-

Andy Chamberlin ([01:21:22](#)):

[inaudible 01:21:22] multiplier for sure.

Adam Hausmann ([01:21:23](#)):

Yeah, yeah.

Jessica Sanford ([01:21:24](#)):

The only trouble we had this year is that some of the newer varieties were too big for the hopper, so it would backlog the hopper.

Adam Hausmann ([01:21:32](#)):

Yeah. I know. We had someone-

Jessica Sanford ([01:21:34](#)):

Someone's job was then to shake-

Adam Hausmann ([01:21:35](#)):

Tapping the side of the hopper and it was like [inaudible 01:21:37], but it worked.

Jessica Sanford ([01:21:36](#)):

I was like, "Oh, that's an interesting problem to have."

Andy Chamberlin ([01:21:37](#)):

So it worked better with smaller [inaudible 01:21:42].

Jessica Sanford ([01:21:42](#)):

Yeah.

Adam Hausmann ([01:21:45](#)):

Yeah. So that's really allowed us to handle volumes of fruit that we weren't able to handle before and we get backlogged and our fridge would be filled, or we couldn't get fruit out quick enough. Or even just the packing time just was taking... I wanted people in the field. And it would take a whole afternoon to pack a harvest, and this, we can pack a thousand pints and it's like 20 minutes or something like that. Yeah, so it's freed up time.

([01:22:20](#)):

And also the quality, because we're going through and instead of people either harvesting directly into pints or just harvesting into buckets and quickly filling pints, we're looking at the fruit another time. So

it's getting the stems out, it's getting the leaves out. We're picking out the soft fruit and then packing it. So at the end of the day, it's just a higher quality product.

(01:22:45):

And we've always been very product quality focused and that's something that's kind of distinguished us in the marketplace and we've stuck with that. And this has kind of helped, I guess simplify and expedite it and just helped us maintain that quality.

(01:23:07):

Let's see. I guess if you want to, you can peek at this while we're outside and then...

Andy Chamberlin (01:23:11):

Yeah.

Adam Hausmann (01:23:11):

So this harvester is a pull-behind blueberry harvester. Korvan, it's called. Korvan 930. And Oxbow bought Korvan kind of for the technology a little while ago. So it's now Oxbow makes an Oxbow 930. Pretty much exact same harvester, just looks nicer. Different paint, yellow versus blue paint. Basically it's tow-behind here and then you can offset it so it straddles the rows. And then there's all these dowels here that you can adjust as well based off of the bush and bush height and all of that.

Jessica Sanford (01:24:01):

Well, the whole unit moves up and down.

Adam Hausmann (01:24:04):

Yeah. You can adjust up and down and left and right, and you can really get it dialed in, which is nice because we do have this slope on our field so we can kind of get it so that it's set to our-

Andy Chamberlin (01:24:04):

You can level it.

Adam Hausmann (01:24:14):

Yeah, exactly. Everything gets leveled on it. Exactly. And then how it works is it goes from there, straddling the row, knocks the fruit off. It goes onto these conveyors here, and then these conveyors go back to the rear of the harvester, go through another kind of blower there where it knocks a lot of the leaves off and kind of just the debris matter that might come off with the harvest dowels. And then in the back from there...

Jessica Sanford (01:24:48):

The crew... It only is three people, so driver-

Adam Hausmann (01:24:52):

Driver and two people on each side.

Jessica Sanford (01:24:53):

Two people.

Adam Hausmann ([01:24:56](#)):

So we have harvest trays that are back here and they kind of just collect all the... They basically collect the berries that are coming off of here. And then they get just, so they're filled in.

Jessica Sanford ([01:25:07](#)):

You're just doing your stacks.

Adam Hausmann ([01:25:08](#)):

They're stacked to here. And sometimes end of the row, we'll take off a bunch of full trays and pile them up and then collect them with a truck and bring them back or collect them at the end. And then this is where all kind of the...

Jessica Sanford ([01:25:20](#)):

Leaves and the stems get blown.

Adam Hausmann ([01:25:21](#)):

Everything comes out there. What else about this? As far as these are the catch plates here. Everything's kind of frozen up a little bit.

Jessica Sanford ([01:25:31](#)):

That's what goes around [inaudible 01:25:32] bush.

Adam Hausmann ([01:25:32](#)):

They're designed that they kind of work around the bush and then close back up so it opens, closes, opens, closes there to really minimize the fruit loss. And then you can adjust the angle as well on them. But when we were talking about how we're pruning to try to have a narrow crown and also minimize the lower branches and things like that, a lot of it is thinking about both this harvester and the EC harvester and crew happiness of just like nobody really wants to be down here harvesting. You're harvesting all day. It's tough work. And so you want to have the fruit upright in general.

([01:26:13](#)):

A lot of our pruning techniques are thinking about both of those pieces of machinery right now. It's been a mental game-changer. I don't know if that makes sense.

Jessica Sanford ([01:26:26](#)):

It has saved a lot of labor. After we've done the harvest for the freezer, we go through and we try to get every berry off the bush sort of like it's a way to manage pest and disease. Any fruit that's left on there is a vector for disease. So you can take this down, it's 10 minutes to take this down a row versus-

Adam Hausmann ([01:26:48](#)):

Yeah, you drive down the row, basically.

Jessica Sanford ([01:26:48](#)):

60 man-hours of tedious work that nobody wants to do.

Adam Hausmann ([01:26:54](#)):

Yeah, clean-up harvests are miserable. A big conventional farm would just go out and spray kind of a fungicide, but we don't want to be doing that. And it allows us to again, maximize kind of the returns where it's a clean-up, we freeze it and it's either value-added products or frozen berries. And also just a time-saver as far as crew. We factored it in for a long time and managed it some years better than others I would say, but you know you're going to get the crop off with this.

Jessica Sanford ([01:27:31](#)):

And we got this the year of COVID, so it really helped us. We didn't have Pick Your Own open, so it allowed us to get all of our fruit off the bushes with the same number of crew.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:27:42](#)):

Were you planning to invest in that?

Jessica Sanford ([01:27:42](#)):

No.

Adam Hausmann ([01:27:46](#)):

Looking [inaudible 01:27:46] anyways.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:27:45](#)):

Or was that a pivot strategy?

Jessica Sanford ([01:27:47](#)):

Well, I think we were in Florida and we're like, "Okay, we're going to make these big investments. Eric Rosendale always went for these big investments." And we're like, "We're going to go for it."

Adam Hausmann ([01:27:47](#)):

It was before COVID hit.

Jessica Sanford ([01:27:57](#)):

And then this was before COVID. It's like the year-

Adam Hausmann ([01:28:00](#)):

This is the year to take-

Andy Chamberlin ([01:28:03](#)):

Take a leap.

Adam Hausmann ([01:28:03](#)):

Yeah, take a leap of faith basically.

Jessica Sanford ([01:28:04](#)):

We're like, "Okay, financially, maybe it wasn't the best year."

Adam Hausmann ([01:28:07](#)):

We'll borrow some money. We'll get the farm to the next scale, all these things. And then COVID hit and it was a blessing and a curse.

Jessica Sanford ([01:28:15](#)):

It all worked out.

Adam Hausmann ([01:28:15](#)):

It worked out, but it was like we were counting on the investments, but also our normal income stream and all of that. And eliminating Pick Your Own. We had a newborn in the house, so we didn't have the farm... Did we have the farm stand open?

Jessica Sanford ([01:28:31](#)):

We opened the farm stand that year.

Adam Hausmann ([01:28:33](#)):

I can't remember [inaudible 01:28:33] now.

Jessica Sanford ([01:28:34](#)):

Selfishly it's like, "Oh, we want food security. I don't want to be going anywhere for food."

Adam Hausmann ([01:28:40](#)):

But it was... Yeah. So anyway, but we ended up, this came from down in New Jersey and it's been around the block, but fully functional for our scale and for what we do.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:28:55](#)):

Right. The mileage you're putting on it is likely a lot less than where it came from.

Adam Hausmann ([01:28:58](#)):

Yeah, it's not 100 acres of blueberries per farm type of thing, and running from farm to farm.

Jessica Sanford ([01:29:04](#)):

And then there was a super dry year where we used it. All the fruit was starting to drop, so we were able to... The whole 13 acres, all the fruit needed to be harvested at once, so we were able to lean on this. We didn't have those fresh sales, but we didn't lose that fruit. And last year, we used it the same thing. The fruit was getting soft in some of the varieties, so we were able to utilize this.

Adam Hausmann ([01:29:28](#)):

Because of the moisture last year and then decreased Pick Your Own traffic because of the amount of rain and things like that. We were so grateful last year that we weren't just a pick your own farm

because it rained pretty much straight through blueberry season, but we managed to still harvest our crop as a result.

Jessica Sanford ([01:29:47](#)):

It's opened up a lot of like, wow, this is what we can do. Oh, we could plant... We can expand our plantings knowing that we have this as a-

Adam Hausmann ([01:29:58](#)):

Yeah. I remember the first time using it. I was like, "Oh, I see the light." This is like, you really were like-

Andy Chamberlin ([01:30:06](#)):

Turn the page.

Adam Hausmann ([01:30:06](#)):

Yeah.

Jessica Sanford ([01:30:06](#)):

Yeah.

Andy Chamberlin ([01:30:06](#)):

[inaudible 01:30:06].

Adam Hausmann ([01:30:07](#)):

Yeah. And there are varieties now that are being bred just for this type of harvester, where it's for the freezer market, but then you can play with the RPMs on it. And so people are still doing fresh harvests with them and they don't last as long in the marketplace, but they're doing fresh harvest. And so it really changed how I was starting to think about-

Jessica Sanford ([01:30:26](#)):

Thinking about the farm.

Adam Hausmann ([01:30:28](#)):

The long term as far as the farm and labor and all these things, where it took a huge weight off of me as far as coordinating a crew. And I've always said, "If I can figure out how to harvest this, I know I can find a home for it." I can find either the fresh market or frozen market or whatever it might be. I can sell the product, but the bottleneck has always been like-

Jessica Sanford ([01:30:56](#)):

The harvest and the packing.

Adam Hausmann ([01:30:58](#)):

Every farm wants more people out there, but what you can afford and all of that as far as labor, and this really cuts our harvest costs down drastically, drastically.

[\(01:31:13\)](#):

And then there's other just random pieces of equipment today around, broken frame trucks, mulch [inaudible 01:31:21], cultivators, chisels, whatever. We don't till much. We rely on, we have a sub-soiler, chisel and then try to use more like the field cultivator just as far as soil health. We had an older tiller that didn't work for very well or was just at the end of its life, and recently got a newer one where it has its place as far as laying beds and things like that. You're like, "Oh, that's nice and fluffy and really flips well." And so we lean on it at times. But the lucky thing is for our farm, there's very little soil disturbance because of the perennial. So we have kind the initial disturbance of planting and establishment, but then it really is enabled our soil to heal and to have that kind of a... I think it's allowed us to really work on the soil health moreso I think than that continual tillage and continually opening up soils.

[\(01:32:32\)](#):

When there's a nice quiet time on that. It's like we go from having a lot of people around and both public and even crew on the farm. And it's great and there's a lot of energy around it, but it's also really nice just to settle into winter and yeah.

Andy Chamberlin [\(01:32:53\)](#):

[inaudible 01:32:53] recharge.

Adam Hausmann [\(01:32:53\)](#):

Yeah, I can go out and walk the dogs and I'm not going to run into people. I can be in my own head.

Andy Chamberlin [\(01:33:07\)](#):

And that was the Farmers' Share. I hope you enjoyed this episode with Adam and Jess of Adam's Berry Farm. They're on Facebook and Instagram as well as their website, adamsberryfarm.com. The Farmers' Share is supported by a grant offered by the USDA Specialty Crop Block Program from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. This funding helps to cover some of my time and travel in order to produce these podcasts for the next two and a half years. The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service supports projects that address the needs of US specialty crop growers and strengthens local and regional food systems. I have no doubt that this podcast will meet those needs and help educate growers to support the industry.

[\(01:33:54\)](#):

This show also is supported by the ag engineering program of the University of Vermont extension. If you enjoy the show and want to help support its programming, you can make a one-time or reoccurring donation on our website by visiting thefarmersshare.com/support.

[\(01:34:09\)](#):

We also receive funding from the Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association. The VVBGA is a nonprofit organization funded in 1976 to promote the economic, environmental, and social sustainability of vegetable and berry farming in Vermont. Their membership includes over 400 farms across Vermont and beyond, as well as about 50 businesses and organizations that provide products and services of all types to their members. Benefits to members include access to the VVBGA listserv to buy and sell plants and equipment, share farming information, and tap the vast experience of our growers. Access the Community Accreditation for Produce Safety, also known as CAPS. This program is designed for growers by growers to help you easily meet market and regulatory food safety expectations. You can access the VVBGA Soil Health Platform where you can organize all the soil tests and create and store

your soil amendment plans and records. Access to webinars for growers and the VVBGA annual meeting, an email subscription to the Vermont Vegetable and Berry Newsletter, camaraderie, enhanced communication and fellowship among commercial growers.

[\(01:35:27\)](#):

Memberships are on a per farm, per calendar year basis, and annual dues this year are \$80. These funds pay for the organization's operating costs and support educational programs and research projects. These funds also support projects that address grower needs around ag engineering, high tunnel production, pest management, pollinators, produce safety, and soil health. Become a member today to be a part of and further support the veg and berry industry.

[\(01:35:57\)](#):

You can visit thefarmersshare.com to listen to previous interviews or see photos, videos, or links discussed from the conversation. If you don't want to miss the next episode, enter your email address on our website and you'll get a note in your inbox when the next one comes out. The Farmers' Share has a YouTube channel with videos from several of the farm visits. We're also on Instagram, and that's where you can be reminded about the latest episode or see photos from the visit.

[\(01:36:25\)](#):

Lastly, if you're enjoying the show, I'd love it if you could write a review. In Apple podcast, just click on the show, scroll down to the bottom, and there you can leave five stars in a comment to help encourage new listeners to tune in. I'd also encourage you to share this episode with other grower friends or crew who you think would be inspiring for them. Thanks for listening.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:36:53]