

NORTH HOLLOW



BERRY FARM
STOWE, VERMONT



Bringing a Blueberry Farm Back to Life

Kerry Sedutto & Kevin Komer
January 28, 2025



Overgrown Foreclosure Property



- Purchased Oct. 2020
- 3,000 misc. overgrown blueberries estimated to be over 40 years old
- House & Barn neglected for 5+ years
- 15.1 Acre Farm

Our Team

Kerry- Full time farm & mom

- Mowing, trimming, weeding, fertilizing, mulching, pruning and all day-to-day activities
- Primary Picker
- Plantings and business development
- Retail management & accounting

Kevin- Full time job managing two golf courses

- Spraying & fertilizing
- Plant health
- Heavy equipment operator

Austin- 5 Years old

- Chief equipment washer and troublemaker
- Quality control blueberry taster

Tony- Retired part time in the summer months

- Mowing, pruning and bringing the berries back to life
- Jack of all trades





Before 2020



After Fall 2024



Primary goals for bringing bushes back to life:

- **Pruning, pruning & pruning**
- **Soil Tests**
- **Light**
- **Fertilizer**
- **Native Pollinators**





Year 1 - Fall 2020

- Gain control of the property
- Determine the blueberry inventory
- Brush hogged 5+ years of brush between rows
- Thinned out rows and removed any unnecessary trees that prevented light and growth to the berries
- Enhanced work roads around property
- Heavy pruning
- Weeded between bushes



Year 2 -2021

- Built cottage for additional rental income
- Continued to prune and weed between rows
- Fertilized rows
- Bought a shed for pick your own honor system retail space
- Surplus of berry and started our partnership with Salvations farms
- Fall of 2021 mowed to the ground sample section of rows per recommendations for pruning efficacy and plant growth





Rejuvenation

Mow them down!

- Over 3,000 mature overgrown bushes, pruning 100% wasn't feasible
- Selective old growth rows were cut to the ground based upon Cornell's feedback
- Bushes now have 3 years of growth



Year 3 - 2022

- Continued endless pruning
- Pollinator conference- created the kickoff to flowers at North Hollow Berry Farm
- Continued to remove unnecessary trees
- Began to research & experiment with weed control under bushes
- Planted multiple perennial pollinator gardens & flowering shrubs surrounding the property
- Removed unwanted stumps and rocks causing equipment issues





Pollinators

- Hosted a bee conference
- Planted perianal flower mix
- Flowering shrubs
- Annual cut flowers

Spraying

Game Changer...

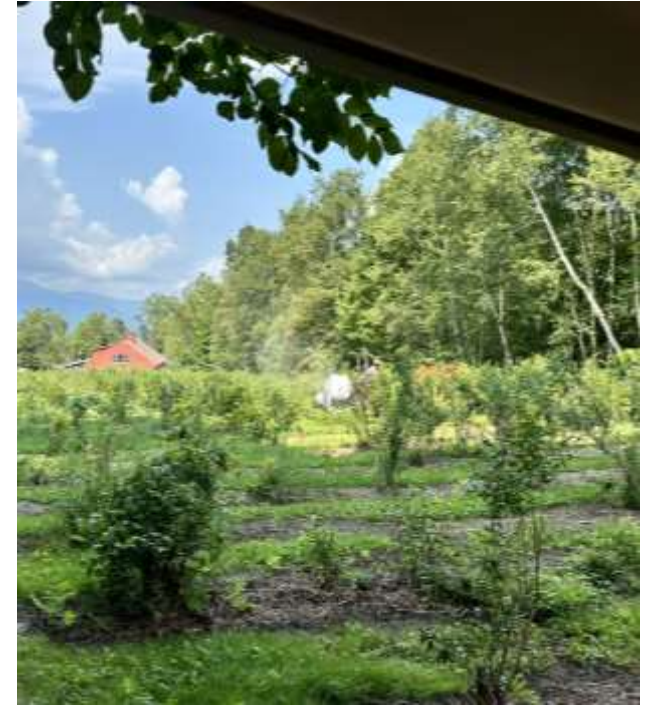
- Efficient and effective

Invested in the following equipment:

- Jacto Battery Backpack sprayer
- Waterec Inc 3-point hitch sprayer

Spraying for:

- SWD, Mummy berry
- Weed control





Year 4 - 2023

- Continued pruning
- Fertilizer focused
- Removed unwanted rocks & stumps
- Purchased a tree spade & moved over 200 bushes in the fall to enhance mowing & maintenance efficiency
- Added chickens for insect control & fertilizer
- Added onto barn for equipment storage
- Test Planted area of pumpkins, dahlias sunflowers and apples
- Planted over 3K tulip and daffodil bulbs
- Worked with local daycare and summer camp for children to experience pick your own





Tree Spade Swantech Industries - Canada

Why?

- Efficiency for mowing and spraying
- Reduced spray waste
- Consolidate rows and eliminated random plants
- Insect control





Year 5 - 2024

- Focused on picking experience
- Added new product lines: cut flower bouquets & pumpkins
- Continued to move bushes in the spring
- Added new blueberry bushes
- Added apple trees
- Clean up Flood x2 June & July
- Hosted a stop on the Stowe Garden Tour
- Hosted our first 200-person wedding in the fall
- Removed the lower field barn





Introduced New Blueberry Bushes

- Purchased from:
DeGrandcamp Farm, MI
- New plants:
 - Nelson
 - Patriot
 - Polaris
 - Toro



Floods of 2024

June & July



Giving Back & Community Involvement

- Salvation Farms weekly in season gleans since 2021
- Jam for the Land with Stowe Cider and Stowe Land Trust
- Local Preschool & Summer Camps





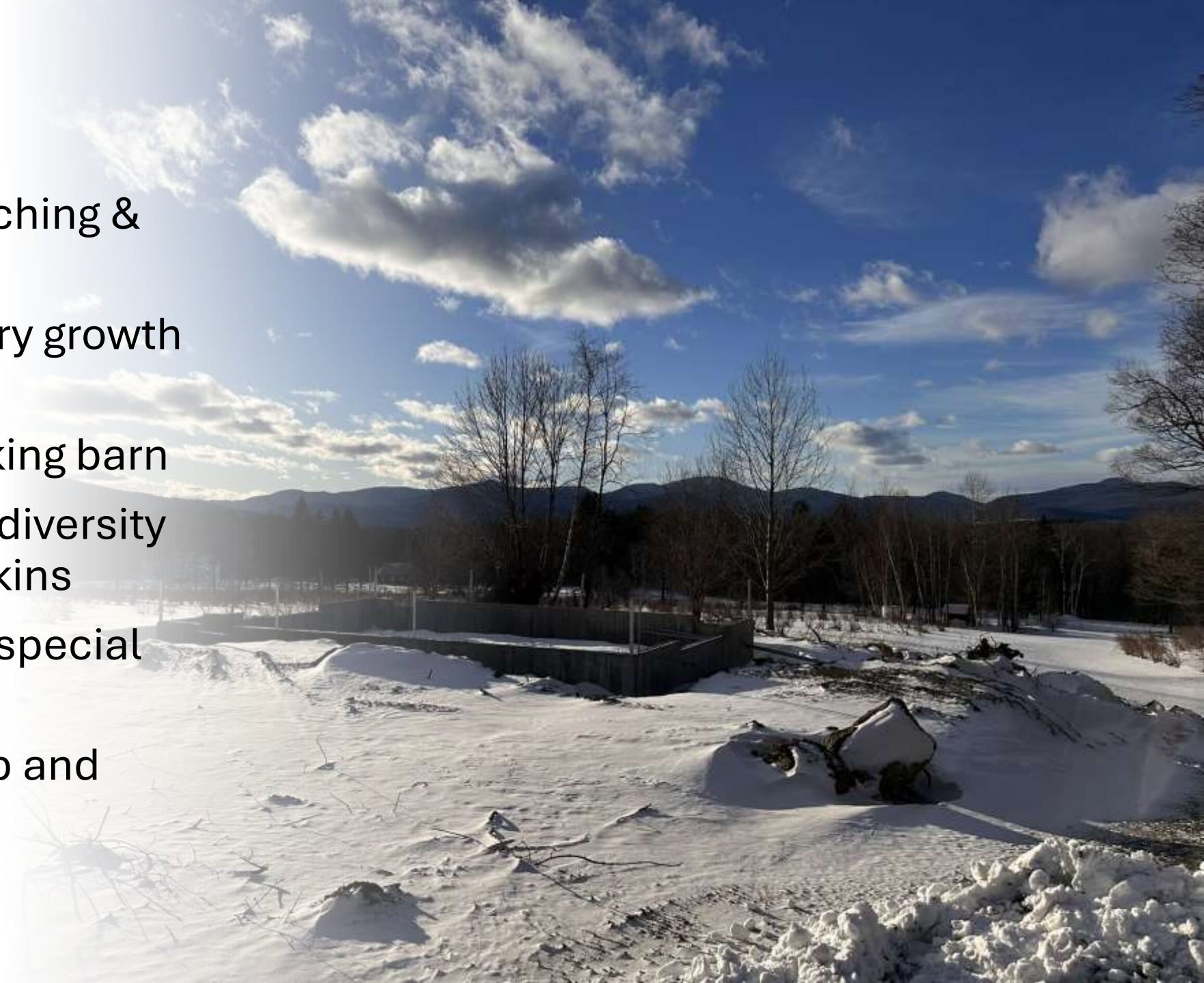
Weddings & Special Events:

Focused on:

- Flowers gardens & weeding
- Field mowing
- Clean & perfect setting
- Provided additional revenue and diversification

2025+ Goals

- Maintain pruning, mulching & spraying
- Continue new blueberry growth succession planting
- Complete build of picking barn
- Continue product mix diversity of cut flowers & pumpkins
- Focus on marketing & special events
- Develop plan for sheep and chickens
- Irrigation





Thank you