



# Eco Farm Day

Saturday February 24, 2024  
Samedi le 24 février, 2024

[ecofarmday.ca](http://ecofarmday.ca)

## Eco Farm Day 2024 Speakers



### Dan Brisebois - Tourne-Sol co-operative farm

Dan Brisebois is a founding farmer at Tourne-Sol co-operative farm in Les Cèdres, Quebec. Tourne-Sol grows organic seeds for an online seed store and a wholesale rack program; and grows organic vegetables for 500 weekly veggie baskets. Dan's thoughts are split between farm spreadsheets and seeds. On the spreadsheet front, Dan runs the Farmer Spreadsheet Academy to help farmers learn tools and tricks to be better farm managers. He is also co-author of *Crop Planning for Organic Vegetable Grower*. On the seed front, Dan is the host of the Seed Growers podcast and blogs about farming and seeds at [www.danbrisebois.com](http://www.danbrisebois.com).



### Jacob Morin - Le Paysan Gourmand

Graduating from McGill's Farm Management program in 2011, my dream has always been to take over the family farm. Beginning in 2016, my wife, Rose, and I slowly built our cattle herd (mainly Angus) and developed our market garden. During this time I worked off the farm as a store manager at Premier Choix Agricole, a division of the Canadian Cooperative Wool Growers, where I had the chance to meet many people across the industry. Since 2019, I have taken over management of a family farm where we run 80 cow/calf pairs, using alternative year round grazing, and direct market 99% of our livestock, as breeding bulls, bred heifers and 100% grass-finished beef. We also market 40 forest raised hogs, 9500 square feet of greenhouses, and a one-acre market garden selling baskets and fresh produce directly to local restaurants.



### Victor Drury - Cattle Farmer

I am a second generation beef farmer in the Gatineau Hills, outside the town of Wakefield, Quebec. I live on the farm with my wife and 3 young children, where I run a commercial Red Angus cow-calf operation. We calve in the spring and background to a year of age. The cattle are rotationally grazed through the summer, and in the winter fed hay and haylage. Our farm does not use any chemicals, implants, hormones, or synthetic fertilizers. Our calving season runs from April through the end of May. The Angus breeding allows us to house the cattle outdoors year round and the ease of calving means we calve on pasture with minimal supervision. In 2017, I was fortunate to be able to purchase the farm neighbouring my parents and now manage both my cattle and my parent's herd. In 2018, we were certified by Meyers Natural Angus and in 2022, certified VBP+, which has allowed us to sell live calves in two different markets. For the last 3 years we have been able to sell all cattle privately, instead of using the sale-barns in Eastern Ontario, allowing us a higher control over the sale price of the cattle.



### **Kim Maloney - Brylee Farm**

Brylee Farm located in Thurso Quebec. Kim is the 5th generation at Brylee farm producing grass fed beef and lamb. They are passionate about using our animals to better the land and producing the highest quality meats for their customers. Kim is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the farm, as well as marketing and meat sales. They market all of their meat directly to the customer, selling from their farm store and at 2 online marketplaces. Using social media as their main form of marketing, they see a major impact of interacting with the customers and posting online daily



### **Rod Ewing - Innisdale Farm and Forest**

Rod Ewing took over Innisdale Farm and Forest in 1996. He began transitioning to certified organic in 2006, and became fully certified in 2009. The farm is 300 acres, comprising arable land, a mature woodlot and numerous plantations. The Rigaud River flows through the centre of the farm. The farm operation is based on a 6 yr crop rotation plan comprising Soybeans, Spring Wheat, Fall Rye, Buckwheat, Oats or Barley and Red Clover.



### **Paul Desrosiers - Ferme Desrosiers**

Paul DesRosiers is an Organic Cash Crop Grower from St-Albert, Ontario. He grows around 1,200 acres of cash crops, all certified organic. He started to transition to organic in 2019, initially transitioning 75 % of his land, then transitioned the rest of his land to certified organic in the next few years. In 2023 he hosted a tour of his farm for COG-OSO. Tour participants were fascinated by his innovative machinery for weed control in row crops.



### **Sun Shan - Chi Garden**

Sun Shan, originally from Beijing, China, now resides in Ottawa as an urban farmer and educator. Together with her partner Li Bo, she established Chi Garden, blending her extensive background—spanning over two decades in biomedical research, conservation biology, non-profit leadership, sustainability education, and as a cultural/community interpreter—into this venture. Chi Garden is not just a small ecological farm known for its diverse vegetables and herbs but also a hub for community dialogue on food and the preservation of traditions, especially those involving plant-based fermentation. An active member of the National Farmers Union (NFU) and its BIPOC group, Sun Shan also plays a pivotal role in the East Asia Earth Village, fostering connections and collaborations among East Asian diaspora producers and creators. For the last nine years, she has contributed her expertise as a board member to the [Chinese Canadian Agricultural Development Council](#) in Canada and the [Shan Shui Conservation Center](#) in China, and has previously served on the board of [Pacific Environment](#) in the US.



### **Hannah Hunter - Farmhouse Foods**

Hannah Hunter is one of the founding members of Agricola Cooperative Farm, a workers' co-op growing organic vegetables and cut flowers in Papineauville, QC. She is also Chair of the Board for Farmhouse Food Cooperative, a producers' co-op offering home-delivered, whole-diet harvest boxes to the Ottawa/Gatineau area.



### **Josh Suppan - Fat Chance Farm**

Little did Josh know that in landing his first job at the ripe young age of 13, he would be foreshadowing his future career path. The only place that would hire him? A peach, plum, and kiwi farm in Niagara on the lake. At the time this was just a way to earn some extra spending money and pass the summer hours outside. Fast forward to the summer of 2009 in the Okanagan valley of BC where Josh spent the summer and fall picking, thinning, packing, and tractoring on a unique and innovative fruit farm. The experience inspired Josh to set his sights once again on agriculture. While much of his experience comes from cultivating fruit, he has spent many seasons on vegetable farms ranging from small-scale organic to large-scale conventional operations. He has a passion for raising animals and in some parts he is known as a chicken whisperer. His hands are always dirty, whether it's from soil, tractor grease, or cake batter.



### **Paul Slomp - Grazing Days**

Paul has loved working with cattle and soils since his early days on his family's farm first in the Netherlands, and then in Rimbey, Alberta. His love mathematics and science led him to study civil engineering. The diverse puzzles found on ecological farms brought him to work with diverse smallholder farmers in Sub-Saharan Africa and later in the local food sovereignty movement back in Canada. When he isn't with the herd moving fences or engineering a new winch system for feeding whey to the pigs, you can find Paul planning new play structures with two very excited young farm kids.



### **Randi Townsend - Ferme Plaine Lune**

Randi began her interest in sustainable agriculture in 2007 while working for the Ontario Public Interest Group and participating in local activism in her hometown of St.Catharines. Her experiences learning about and adding to conversations around environmentalism, conservation, feminism and social change, lead her to a summer trip of farm immersion as a WWOOFER on Salt Spring Island, B.C. That summer opened her eyes to the possibilities of sustainable, communal living and to the joy and satisfaction of growing food! She then went on to intern on Vancouver Island with the lovely women at Saanich Organics, where she furthered her knowledge and experience growing organically. She spent the next couple of years working as a baker (her other passion), and on other organic farms including a season with Brad Wright and Leela Ramachandran of Bluegrass Farm and two years running Barefoot Gardens (alongside Sarah Lawrence of Beat Greens Garden) at the Just Food Startup Farm. Before finally purchasing our lovely farm in Bristol, QC, she worked with the amazingly talented folks at Cedar Down Farm in Grey county, co-managing 6.5 acres for a 200 family CSA.



### **Abbi Spencer - Ferme Réservoir**

In 2018, the first year of Ferme Réservoir, Abbi and her husband, Tom, started by growing vegetables primarily for their winter CSA. Since then, more summer production, a farm move and new storage facilities have added to the farm's capacity. Before starting her own farm, Abbi worked in BC and Québec on other organic vegetable farms.





### **Jess Weatherhead - Roots and Shoots**

Jess has been farming for her entire life. Driving tractors, plucking chickens, and showing cows were part of a rich, rural childhood that established an appreciation for fresh air, bare feet and close food. Jess floats around the farm, helping out and filling in where needed, supporting the awesome farm managers that have taken over the majority of daily management tasks. She also finds time to occasionally paint. Check out her art here: [Jess' art](#). Jessica graduated from St. Stephen's University in 2008 with a degree in History and Literature.



### **Robin Turner - Roots and Shoots**

Robin spent his twenties travelling in Asia and teaching English before finally deciding to return to University to study environmental science. While at UBC he was forcefully exposed to core agriculture curriculum, which made him realise that food is the main way humanity explores its connection with the natural environment. He got a job on a farm that summer. Two years after that he got his first taste of organic vegetable farming, and has never looked back. Robin has worked on and managed organic vegetable farms in Montreal, Boston, and Ottawa since 2004. He holds a degree in Sustainable Agriculture from the University of British Columbia.



### **Alberto Suarez - Nature's Apprentice Farm**

Alberto grew up helping his grandparents in their gardens in Asturias (NW Spain), where he developed a deep fascination for Nature. This fascination led him to a career in Biology. While working in Academia for years, he realised the huge impact that agriculture has on biodiversity. Tired of a desk job and bureaucracy, in 2019 he decided to start Nature's Apprentice Farm (in Pakenham, ON) and try growing food while learning from, supporting and participating in natural processes. Some winters, Alberto gets to teach courses at Carleton University, Algonquin College and Gaia College. Alberto enjoys whitewater canoeing, playing basketball and pickleball, rock climbing, and cross country skiing.



### **Odette Menard - MAPAQ**

Odette Ménard is an agricultural engineer from Ste-Hyacinthe in Quebec who has become the first woman to be admitted on the Conservation Hall of Fame on the Soil Conservation Council of Canada. Over the years, Ms. Ménard has had a major role in the promotion of soil conservation in Quebec, having participated in many councils, associations, and clubs focused on soil health, and was a Nuffield Canada Scholar in 2022.



### **Richard Williams - Ferme Lève-tôt**

Richard Williams is the co-owner of Ferme Lève-tôt in Low, QC. Founded in 2010, the farm grows certified organic vegetables for a 160-share CSA and a thriving farmers' market. In 2015 we bought our first team of horses and began transitioning to draft animal power. We use the horses for much of the primary tillage, cultivation and cover crop management, with a mix of antique and modern equipment.

