

County Sustainability Group Announces 2023 Ecological Farmer Bursary Winners

-By Don Ross

The County Sustainability Group (CSG) announced the 2023 winners of the County Ecological Farmer awards. One thousand dollars each goes to Hans and Judy Ning of Paper Kite Farm on Mitchell Cross Road, off County Road 17, north east of Milford, and Mike Barnes of Lamb's Quarter's Farm on County Rd 4, west of Picton.

Funds for these awards are raised through the CSG's annual spring rain barrel sales.

Hans and Judy Ning began converting their two-acre lawn at 62 Mitchell's Crossroad into a market garden and permaculture food forest two years ago. While there is

still much work for the food forest left to do, their market garden has grown significantly and has been producing a ton of food that they sell through their CSA and also at the Picton Farmers Market.

They have been members of Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario (EFAO) for two years, and farm using ecological principals, with no need for pesticides, fungicides, or herbicides. The only inputs used are from local sources, such as compost, wood chips, straw, and mushroom blocks to build up the organic matter in the soil, and make compost tea to add microbiology. They do not till the soil, and are

always searching for other methods to improve it.

One of the most important inputs that Paper Kite uses on the farm is Bio-

Char, an ancient indigenous innovation that has the potential to improve agriculture in remarkable ways. They

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Presenting the award are, from the left, Jennifer Ackerman (CSG Member), Hans Ning of Paper Kite Farm and Don Chisholm (CSG Member).—Don Ross photo

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