



John's face lit up when discussing his orchard, "I like the work; the maintenance and I like to see the people with their families smiling" he explained. What first started out as a pipe dream later became reality when John MacKinnon and his family discovered that their favourite place to go apple picking was up for sale. He had always wanted to work for himself, so taking over Olde Town Orchard was a perfect opportunity that he could not pass up. Having previous experience in a variety of jobs such as power linemen, power engineer, as well as cattle and chicken farmer,

John was new to the apple industry. However, the lack of background knowledge did not slow him down, as he took it all in quickly.

Today, the MacKinnon's pride themselves on producing "quality foods for locals". While their orchard is primarily a U-pick for families to come and enjoy "safe food and a safe place to pick", some of the apples also get sold to Keith Gallant's store in Rustico. In addition, there are plans for a third sales stream involving international export. To keep up with all these ambitions, 2400 trees are currently on their way to the orchard for planting and will be added to the pre-existing 900 trees that call Olde Town Orchard home. Together, the apple trees boast varieties such as MacIntosh, Ginger Gold, Gala, Honey Crisp, Gravenstein, and John's personal favourite, Cortland. All of which are heavily "guarded" by the MacKinnon's dog, Rockit, that will attack any intruder with licks and belly rubs.

Taking over the orchard wasn't always an easy task, and like any other venture, still throws the occasional curve ball. During their first year as owners, the MacKinnon's had to compost all the apples when the previous proprietors did not keep up with the proper maintenance. The second year also proved difficult when 50% of the blossom was lost to frost. But to this, all John had to say was "nobody is going to tell us we aren't going to make it". His determination and a little assistance from the CBDC brought the orchard to where it is today.



"Way easier to deal with than the bank...its more personal than a bank. At the bank you are just a number, the CBDC you're family. Its just a better place to be" John explained. Initially, MacKinnon received the First Time Entrepreneur Loan from the CBDC to help pay for the property itself. Later, he accepted funding through a General Business Loan as well to cover infrastructure costs that were needed to expand his business. In between these larger sums, the CBDC was also able to help John with purchasing new equipment. Knowing his character and believing in his vision, the CBDC was happy to help John carry out his dream of being an entrepreneur. Although Olde Town Orchard is still in the process of growing into a profitable company, the future is looking bright, and John couldn't be happier.