



# MASSTOWN MARKET

*“Celebrating 40 years of Excellence!”*



In the beginning there was an empty field and a dream. Now 40 years later, when a tractor was borrowed to turn the first sod, the dream has materialized into a nationally recognized independent market.

Masstown Market has become an important customer of many local farmers and suppliers. From locally grown rhubarb, to berries, maple products or eggs, if it is grown locally, Masstown Market probably has it. In fact, Masstown Market staff scoops more ice-cream than any other single location in Nova Scotia. In addition to offering direct employment to over a hundred people during the busy summer months, local suppliers of locally grown product purchases is in excess of \$1-million annually.

Welcome to beautiful central Nova Scotia, home of the world's highest tides, where majestic eagles and whales travel the Bay of Fundy route. Explore our legendary fossil cliffs and dinosaur finds. Experience miles of rich agricultural land that produces the world's largest crop of wild blueberries, as well as a host of other favourites including strawberries, corn, squash, and carrots. Dairy and beef farms are spread throughout the region, and are important suppliers to the national food basket.

It's little surprise, then, that here is where you'll find Masstown Market. This thriving family business began as a farm-gate operation in the spring of 1969, and has grown to become a local landmark thanks to our tradition of quality foods, great selection, and friendly service. The Jennings family and all our staff welcome you to the Market experience.

Browse our large, bright displays of the finest fruits & vegetables, take in the delights of our 'made from scratch' homestyle bakery, savour our famous chowders and soups, delight in a cool offering of ice cream in 48 flavours from a local dairy, stroll through our unique gift shop and fully stocked garden center, and search out local meat and cheese specialties in our full serve delicatessen.

If you're travelling through the area, our staffed Visitor Information Centre can help with all your inquiries; our Bay of Fundy interpretive displays offer an insight into the natural wonders of the region, our free public Internet access keeps you in touch with home, our ATM offers the convenience of in-store cash withdrawals, and our large clean washrooms are a welcome offering for the travelling public.

Located just west of Truro at Exit #12 on the Trans Canada Highway, we are ideally situated in close proximity to the highway in a fully serviced area offering gas and accommodations. We are a fully accessible, barrier free establishment offering year round service, 7 days a week from 9am to 9pm. Don't miss the Masstown Market experience during your visit to beautiful central Nova Scotia.

## 40 Years of Hands-on & Hard Work!



*“An experience for all”*

Story written by Linda Harrington  
(From the scrapbooks compiled by Priscilla Jennings)

In November of 1965, Eric Jennings ploughed approximately 10 acres of field behind a barn where he hoped he would soon take up roots of his own. On June 5th, 1966 Eric and Priscilla moved to the Wilfred Lambourne farm on the Masstown Road, close to the Debert airport. They used farming equipment belonging to Eric's brother Gerald until they purchased their first tractor in January of 1967.

In 1967, Eric had 17,000 strawberry plants in the ground along with raspberry canes, blueberries and an assortment of vegetables.

In the fall of 1968, Eric and Bert Vanzeumeren purchased a parcel of land in Masstown from John Fraser, with plans to build a Fruit Stand in the spring of 1969.

Priscilla Jennings says that money was tight and she remembers only having her \$350 family allowance benefit to help buy the land.

The plans proceeded and land clearing began immediately. Building construction on the 26' by 40' building was started in June, 1969.

In August of 1969, Bert Vanzeumeren decided to sell off his shares in the Fruit Stand and Eric became the sole proprietor. Mr. Vanzeumeren retained a parcel of land across from the Fruit Stand and later built the Masstown Motel.

Headlines from newspaper clippings throughout the early 70's



*Strawberry picking in the fields, 1969*

report below average crops and prices for strawberry farmers already struggling with increased production costs. The number of growers between Masstown and Great Village had been reduced to seven.

The Fruit Stand, in Masstown, remained open on weekends (Thurs. to Sun.) throughout the winter months. Eric says January was a very cold month, “I used a propane heater, oil stove and electric heater to keep the building warm enough to keep produce from freezing.”

On January 15th, 1972 the Fruit Stand was broken into and a small amount of cash and cigarettes was taken. The thieves were never caught.

Grace Murphy was a full time employee in these early years. Eric spent the months of April and May, 1972 doing renovations to the interior of the Fruit Stand. The storage area was remodeled and shelves for camping supplies were added. The check out counter was enlarged and a penny candy counter was added. A new merchandising freezer was purchased and a screened area was added for fertilizer, seeds and peat moss.

July saw a big increase in business at the Fruit Stand, which now employed Grace Murphy full time and eight others.

“July is the busiest month both on the farm and at the Fruit Stand,” said Eric. “The girls were kept hopping just waiting on customers and keeping shelves stocked with very little time for arranging special displays.”

Things started to slow up into September, once blueberries and corn were harvested. Grace Murphy, Mary Barley, Leona Rushton and Ellen Alexander were now employed at the Fruit Stand while several teenagers took weekend shifts.



*Market as it looked in 1971*

