



## **SPRINGH FARMS**

### **GROWING BUSINESS AND VEGETABLES AS A SPECIALTY OPERATOR**

Many of us are working long days, but a day in the life of Shane Singh shows just how hard growers based in the Holland Marsh are working during the key growing seasons to bring consumers in Ontario fresh produce. A normal day for him begins by driving to the Food Terminal in Toronto at 1:45 am, and doesn't stop until he is eating dinner at 10:30 pm. Twenty-hour days from July to October are not unusual for this second-generation grower at Springh Farms.

His family has been growing on the Marsh since 1979, starting out with just five acres. Since then, their business has grown as other farm families have left farming; following trend of consolidation in agriculture across Canada.

Now growing on 40 acres, Shane is still considered a smaller grower. To remain competitive, he's carved out a niche for himself by hand picking and grading everything for his customers. Positioning his business as a specialty operator, he can be hyper responsive to orders. Springh Farms delivers next day to the terminal and he is often able to pick and deliver to local customers same day. In fact, his produce can be found on local store shelves within three hours of being picked! This provides excellent quality, fresh produce that tastes great and lasts longer; valued by both retailers and their customers.



Shane has also actively responded to market opportunities by expanding the variety of greens his company grows to appeal to a higher end, and a diversified population. To support his clientele, during a visit to his operations you will discover lettuces you are familiar with like romaine, iceberg and Boston, but also more unusual varieties such as red and green oak leaf lettuce, and herbs, swiss chard, Bok choy and dandelion greens. In total, the family run farm grows approximately 25 different vegetables and herbs. Leafy greens do well in this high percentage organic soil. Shane commented, "It's a waste of land to plant pumpkins and cucumbers here."

Many varieties start early in the greenhouse before being transferred to the field, to give him a head start on competitors. In addition to growing a wide variety of vegetables, he has also broadened his customer base selling to retailers, foodservice and direct to consumers via farm stands and CSA box programs. A new farm stand on site is also being developed for the 2020 season. Plans are to have it open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays to supply the local community directly.

He sells to markets in Toronto and the local area, also further afield through the Ontario Food Terminal. Learn more about Springh Farms on Instagram at @springhfarms