



**O'BRIEN FARM**

EST. 1818

**OURS TO GROW**

**Fostering Community Engagement and Social  
Cohesion through Urban Agriculture and the  
Maintenance of Green Spaces**

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## What is O'Brien Farm?

- 200 year old Irish family farm on the side of a small mountain in St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada
- 31 acre dairy and pasture managed by 4 generations-last family member died in 2008

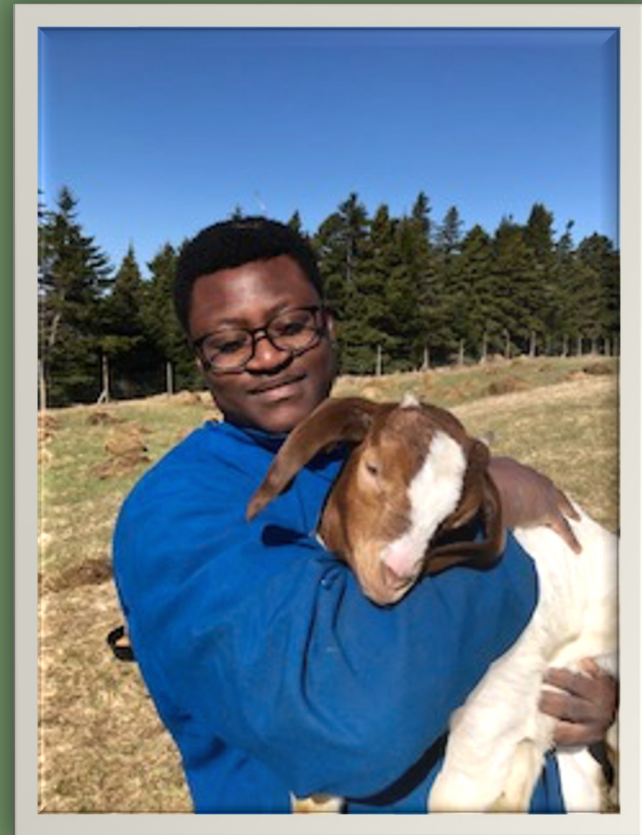






# What Makes O'Brien Farm Unique in 2023?

- Non-Profit Charitable Organization
- New Found Farmers-Agribusiness Incubation Program
- Partner with Cloudberry Forest School
- Adult education and historic interpretation
- Community Gardens
- School to Farm Program



# Unique Proposition-Community Demographics

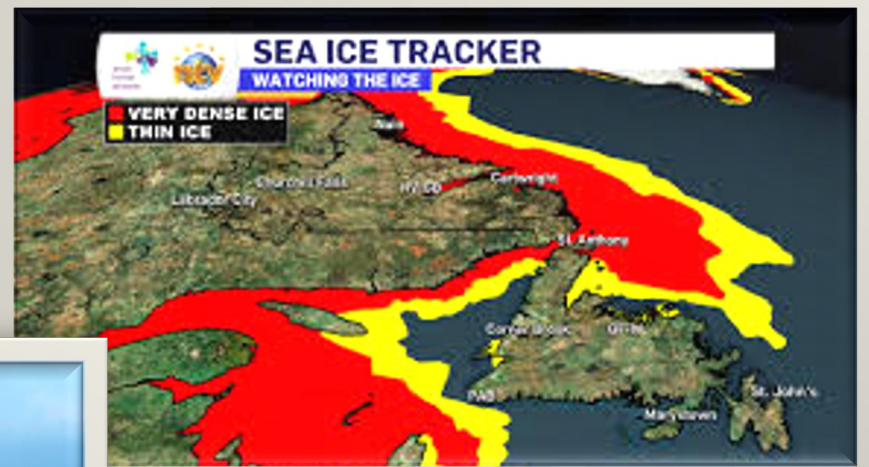
- Non-Profit Charitable Organization - Well educated philanthropists and community leaders
- New Found Farmers-Agribusiness Incubation Program - Young idealists
- Partner with Cloudberry Forest School - Parents and Young Children looking for education options
- Adult education and historic interpretation - Multi-generation/middle income
- Community Gardens - Multi-generation/middle income
- School to Farm Program - Low income/junior high/non-academic





# What are the Social Cohesion challenges in St. John's, Newfoundland?

- Average age is 45 and 23% of population is over age 65<sub>1</sub>
  - Social Isolation is major issue - technology programs have NOT improved outcomes
- LEAST food secure province in Canada<sub>2</sub>
  - 90% of fresh food is imported into Newfoundland
  - Winter ocean ice and storms can close the 3 shipping ports
  - Community reliance for transport, storage, soil, seed, etc.
- Unhealthiest Province with highest per capita health spending<sub>3</sub>
  - Heart Disease, Diabetes, Stroke largest \$\$



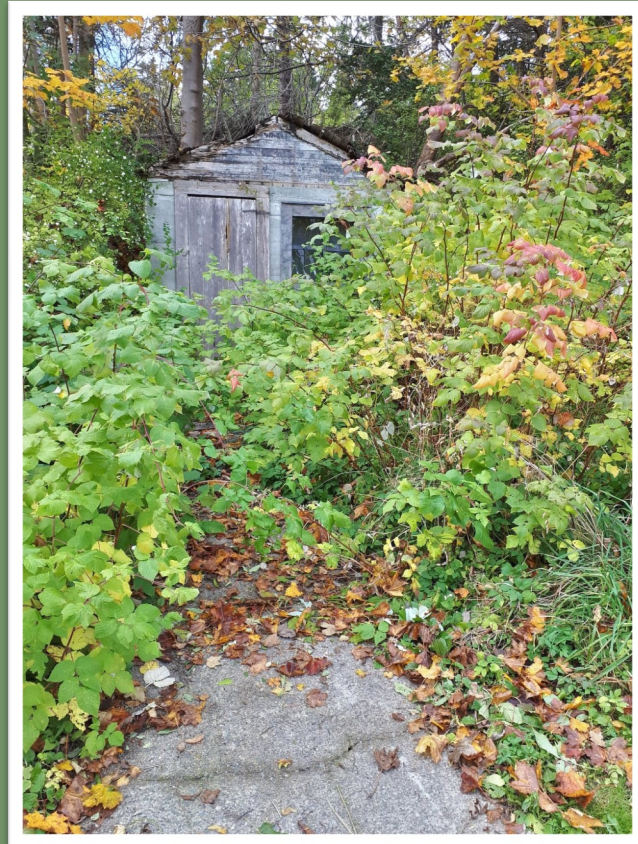


# What O'Brien Farm is doing to bridge these Challenges?

- Multigenerational programs
  - Education and Interpretation programs (history, art, culture, food, ecosystem)
  - Cloudberry Forest School - improving experiences and options for preschoolers and parents
  - School to Farm Program - improving experiences for non-academic students
  - Developing senior programs involving gardening and food preparation
- Farm Incubation Program
  - New generation of small farmers to decentralize food production and sales
- Outdoor Experiences
  - Year-round access to trails, activities, and guided experiences

# Challenges of facilitating social cohesion programs

- Confirmation Bias
- Continuity
- \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
  - Staff, maintenance, liability





# O'Brien Farm's goals for the future of our community

- Increased access to a variety of locally grown foods, products, and sales outlets
- Financial sustainability for growers, producers, and diverse sales outlets
- Increased usage of the farm and other community/green spaces by the entire demographic spectrum
- Increased use of Community Urban Farms as a way to increase healthy living activities to improve local health outcomes





# References

1. [https://stats.gov.nl.ca/Statistics/Topics/population/PDF/PopAgeSex\\_M.PDF](https://stats.gov.nl.ca/Statistics/Topics/population/PDF/PopAgeSex_M.PDF)
2. <https://www.foodfirstnl.ca/rcr-archive/2014/11/good-food-challenge-2014-90-of-newfoundland-labradors-fresh-vegetables-are-grown-outside-the-province>
3. [https://healthaccordnl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/10\\_Year\\_Health\\_Accord\\_overview.pdf](https://healthaccordnl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/10_Year_Health_Accord_overview.pdf)