



Jeff Noye with a serving of oysters ready for eating. (Sandra Phinney photo)

# Oysters anyone?

by Sandra Phinney

Don't you just love it when you go to a business and the owners' enthusiasm (in general) and passion for their products or services (in particular) just oozes out of every pore? That's how I felt when I met Jeff Noye and Damien Enman, two friends who started Valley Pearl Oysters located in Tyne Valley, Prince Edward Island, back in 2017. The business partners' vision is quite simple: they want people to love oysters as much as they do. And both Noye and Enman have had many years practicing how to do this.

Noye has chaired the Tyne Valley Oyster Festival for more than 14 years, as well as being the driving force behind the Canadian Oyster Shucking Championship. He was also a shucking member of the Canadian team that holds the Guinness World Record for most oysters shucked in one hour – an attempt that he spearheaded. He simply loves shucking, eating, and talking oysters.

Enman has oysters in his blood. As the son of an oyster fisherman he spent his childhood on the water. He knows oysters inside out: from growing, to shucking, to serving. He's also involved with the Tyne Valley Oyster Festival as a member of the organizing committee, and he is a participant in the world of competitive oyster shucking competitions.

When these two aren't working or spending time with their families, you can find them playing music together, fishing – and eating Valley Pearl Oysters. Clearly, they are onto a good thing. Enman says, "We've just begun to scratch the surface of what the oyster industry could mean for P.E.I. So many markets have been left untouched. But as the industry continues to grow, we can look beyond the North American markets and set our sights on getting top quality Malpeque oysters to the rest of the world."

The team and their staff are currently harvesting off a

10-acre lease. "We hope to expand to a 50-acre setup in the near future. Even though we're only in year two of operations," Noye adds, "we've exceeded the potential for the ground that we have."

This past December they opened the Valley Pearl Oyster Bar above the processing plant. Originally they assumed that the bar would only be popular with tourists who would likely appreciate fresh oysters, some fishing tales, and a few tunes played by the hosts and owners.

To their surprise (and delight!) it's been a roaring success with the local community. "They've opened our eyes to that fact that something like this is needed year round. Most nights we are at capacity and we couldn't be more thankful for the support that we've received," says Enman. "It's been humbling to say the least."

So the next time you venture over to Prince Edward Island, be sure to put Pearl Valley Oysters on your list of must-do, must-see places. Even better – sign up for an oyster experience. They plan on taking people out to the oyster beds so you can see first hand how to tong and shuck, right at the shore.



Damien Enman doing one of his favourite things – shucking oysters. (Photo courtesy Valley Pearl Oysters)

