

Kelsey Herrington, co-owner of Two Farmers

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By Mary Pols Staff Writer

Kelsey Herrington, 26, is co-owner of Two Farmers Farm in Scarborough, which she and her boyfriend, Durham native Dominic Pascarelli, established in 2011. This past winter, they were able to quit their day jobs (nannying and working as a personal assistant for Herrington, processing chickens for Pascarelli). “Our dream is to have a little bit of disposable income,” she says.

WHY HER? Because everything in her booth at Portland Farmers’ Market in Monument Square looks so freshly scrubbed and perfectly arranged that we mistook her for an art student. “The way our stand looks is very deliberate,” Herrington says. “It reflects our personal values. We love growing food, and we think it is awesome and beautiful and we want to showcase that aspect of it.”

Additional Photos



Kelsey Herrington in front of her stand at the farmers market in Portland’s Monument Square. John Patriquin/Staff Photographer



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BUT REALLY, WHERE'S THE DIRT? “We spend a lot of time washing the produce,” she says. “So that it is not a hassle for people to start cooking with it or eating it. No one has any time for hassles. They need things to be ready to go.”

WHY SHE FARMS: She grew up in a very “crunchy” kind of place, Vashon island in Puget Sound, where her family had laying hens and grew vegetables, which was an influence. So were the courses she took at Clark University in Massachusetts from professors who were passionate about food systems; that’s where she learned to approach food from a socio-economic perspective. The transformative experience for her was a summer spent working on farms in Ecuador when she was in college. “I became really aware of how hard people were working, how little they were getting paid and what a high-quality product they were producing.”

WINTER HARVEST: The couple started farming on land owned by Pascarelli’s family in Durham. “We basically usurped their gardens,” Herrington says. Their primary crop that winter was spinach, grown in passive solar tunnels using row covers (like protective blankets). Now they farm throughout the year on leased land in Scarborough and live a few miles away, in an apartment. These days, their winter crops include lettuces, Swiss chard, bok choy and arugula, and they have three 96-foot solar tunnels.

HER CUSTOMERS INCLUDE: Restaurants 555 and the Palace Diner in Biddeford, both of which became “clients” via farmers markets. “It’s not like people are banging down our doors, but a farmers market is a great place to meet chefs.” And Two Farmers Farm sells at Jordan’s farm stand in Cape Elizabeth as well.

HOW OFTEN DOES SHE EAT OUT AT PLACES WHERE HER VEGETABLES ARE ON THE MENU? “Usually we’re asleep by 8 o’clock.” (There’s always brunch.)

WHAT’S WITH THAT HIGHLY LITERAL NAME? Over Christmas a few years ago, her family engaged in a lengthy discussion about what the farm’s name should be. Finally her grandmother weighed in: “Why are you making it so complicated? Why not just call it Two Farmers?” And so they tell it like it is.

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