

**It's our 35<sup>th</sup> year!**

Incredibly, it was 35 years ago this past March that Bill and Julie purchased some forest land on Kendall Hill Road in Sterling and, “with a '70 Ford pickup, a chain saw, lopping shears, a shovel, a bucket of small seedlings... and a heck of a lot of determination”, the farm you see today began to take shape.

Bill began working on the farm while still teaching Conservation, Environmental Science and other classes at Quabbin Regional High School. He practiced at the farm what he preached at the school. The farm is full of trees and shrubs that are sources of food and cover for local wildlife. There are many oak trees on the farm that have produced a bumper crop of acorns this year. Deer, turkey, squirrels and other species will be feeding on those acorns all fall and into the winter. He has also encouraged wildlife by saving or planting crab apple, flowering dogwood, and other trees, as well as blueberries and grass. To attract our feathered friends, there are many bird boxes, as well as winter berry, grapes, white birch, poplar, hickory and partridge berry.

This attempt to preserve and enhance the plant and animal species found on the farm does come at a price, however. The large oaks, pines, birches and maples you see compete with our Christmas trees for sunlight, water and nutrients. And the critters do some damage, as well. If you look closely around the edges of some of the tree plantations, you will see some deer rubs – trees that have been damaged by male deer rubbing their antlers against the branches of our young trees. This frequently makes the tree unsalable, and may sometimes kill the tree.

We have been attempting to increase our tree production during the last few years. We have reduced the amount of space between the trees, we are constantly cutting trees along the borders of the plantations to allow more sunlight and speed up growth, and we continue to plant more than our customers cut each year. This year was our best year ever with more than 2,500 trees planted in the fields!

This year brings a few changes to the farm. First and foremost, we will open the Carriage House Shop early this year, on November 8 and every weekend going forward from 10AM to 4 PM. So stop by and let us help you decorate for the holidays!

Another big change is that we will now be accepting Visa, Mastercard and Discover credit cards. We hope our customers will appreciate this new convenience.

And finally, as always, please find us and like us on Facebook at [Facebook.com/EvergreenFarmSterling](https://www.facebook.com/EvergreenFarmSterling) and check out our new and growing web site [www.EvergreenFarmSterling.com](http://www.EvergreenFarmSterling.com).

Thanks for your patronage for the last 35 years and Merry Christmas to all!

Bill, Julie and Family and staff