

Young Growers Visit Terhune Orchards

By Ellie Hollabaugh Vranich, Young Grower Alliance Member

The Young Grower Alliance made their first trip of the year out to Northern New Jersey, where they visited Terhune Orchards. Pam and Gary Mount, as well as their daughter, Tannwen, welcomed the group of 16 young growers who traveled from New York State, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania to visit the farm.

The farm was started back in 1975 when the Mounts grew standard apple trees planted at 35' x 35' spacing, peaches, and pears.



Tannwen and Gary Mount

Over the years, they've grown and diversified their business. Visitors today can find 36 different crops growing with pick-your-own available from Memorial Day through the first of November, a year round farm market, farm animals, greenhouses, and an in-house bakery.

The farm's newest ventures include building New Jersey's first CA storage, as well as the hopes of starting a winery using the wine grapes they planted back in 2006.

If the YGA members learned anything during their trip to the farm, it was that Terhune Orchards has been so successful because they haven't let the rest of the world's advancements in agri-marketing leave them behind. The 36 different crops (some organic, some conventional) they're growing speak to that tenet the Mounts have taken when it comes to farming and direct farm marketing in the 21st century.

Interestingly, I just happened to read through a prior article I had written for the YGA when Ken Guise spoke to our group at SHAP back in 2008. During his



Over 15 young growers attended the tour of Terhune Orchards in early April

presentation, Mr. Guise, too, related adaptability to change as a means to success and survival in this industry, using Darwin's famous quote:

“It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.” –Darwin

Gary summed it up best when he said "I just love farming and trying all kinds of new growing practices." He hasn't been afraid to try new things through his life as an orchardist. He's also not afraid to admit when something he's tried has not worked out. That business philosophy has helped make Terhune Orchards what it is today and will likely continue to be for years to come.

The young growers would like to extend their sincerest thanks to Gary, Pam, and Tannwen Mount for hosting us and giving us such a great tour of their farm. Anyone interested in joining the Young Grower Alliance should contact Sidney Kuhn at sidkuhnorch@gmail.com or Katie Ellis at (717) 334-6271 or kag298@psu.edu.