

'Growing it is easy. Getting it harvested, packaged and out the door is the hardest part. It's been amazing though — i'm outside everyday and i love it.'

ANITA DOTSON | Nancanicum fresh farm

more than 100 towering tomatoes plants in late August.

"I quit my regular paycheck job. It was time for a change."

Anita left her job as a dental assistant, a position she held the past 30 years, to commit to farming full time while her husband Bill continues to work as a Tillamook County truck mechanic.

Anita credited Clatsop County District Conservationist Thomas Gherkens of the National Resources Conservation Service Oregon (NRCS) program, a branch of the USDA, with helping get the farm established, including introducing them to programs that aided construction.

NRCS offers a variety of programs to help farmers, ranchers, family forests, Tribes, and conservation partners perform voluntary conservation on private lands, funded through the Farm Bill.

"They help you with your farm and give you money for different things like greenhouses, to help farmers get their crops going," Anita explained.

Farm began with a bee box

Anita and Bill credit one another for giving rise to the farm, but both agree it started with a simple bee box.

"He wanted bees, so I bought him a bee box," Anita said regarding the 2013 gift.

The bees produced a little honey the first year, just enough for Bill to sell a small amount at the end of the season.



LUKE WHITTAKER

Bill Dotson inspects a tomato plant at Necanicum Fresh Farm in late August.

"The first year was mostly about learning," Bill said. "And the success rate wasn't very good."

Still, Anita was inspired by what she witnessed.

"I saw him selling honey and

thought I could sell some vegetables or flowers, so I started selling flowers," she said.

The Dotsons took remnants of a former dog kennel and built a 6x8 foot greenhouse the following summer,

their first official foray into farming.

The following season, aided by Gherkins, they built the first of two 16x50 foot greenhouses, added garden beds and started growing and selling vegetables.

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