

Kona Coffee Farmers Celebrate 1st Anniversary

New Kona Earth owners Steve and Joanie Wynn are celebrating their first year as Kona coffee farmers.

HOLUALOA, HI, USA, August 12, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Kona Earth](#) is a single-estate Kona coffee farm located on Hawaii's Big Island. New owners [Steve and Joanie Wynn](#) are celebrating their first year as Kona coffee farmers and reflect on what they've learned about growing this world-renowned specialty coffee.

The husband and wife team's new life adventure as farmers began in early 2021. With the pandemic raging and life so uncertain, Steve and Joanie took a moment to pause. They'd had a remarkable 25-year run with their Emmy award-winning production company Bayside Entertainment, but they felt ready for a new challenge.



Steve and Joanie Wynn take the reigns of Kona Earth

“

It's been quite a whirlwind. We've learned so much and are working harder than we have in years.”

Joanie Wynn

Steve Wynn commented, “I'm in my sixties and have had an incredible career, traveling the world to cover fascinating stories. But I felt like the best days of that business were behind us, and I was itching for a new adventure.”

The couple had dreamed of making Hawaii their home but weren't ready to retire. When they found Kona Earth, a 26-acre Kona coffee farm in the heart of the famed Kona coffee belt, they knew they had discovered their next adventure.

A Year of Firsts

Though the couple was well into what some might consider retirement age, they welcomed their year of “firsts” as Kona coffee farmers. After securing the deal to purchase the farm, they put

wheels in motion to make a move from their home in the Seattle area. This involved months of planning and a 45-foot cargo container to transport their belongings across the Pacific Ocean.

The couple arrived in Kona in late June and hit-the-ground running, starting immediately to take over farm operations from previous owner Gary Strawn. Their John Deere 4720 tractor arrived via container in July, and Steve took on farming duties; pruning, mowing, weeding & learning the particulars of Kona coffee production. Steve's family had owned a Gewürztraminer vineyard in Sonoma, so he wasn't a stranger to the rigors of farm life. Still, it was a lot to learn in a short time.

In addition to working the fields, the couple began readying the farm for harvest season. They made some sizable equipment purchases to improve farm processes, including a commercial dryer, water filtration system, sprayer, fertilizer spreader, and updated pump for the pulper.



Steve and Joanie Wynn during Kona Earth harvest



Steve and Joanie Wynn Celebrate First Year as Kona coffee farmers

Meanwhile, Joanie was busy getting business operations underway. She set up the e-commerce website so that they could sell their coffee direct to consumers. She set up social media channels, joined professional Hawaii coffee associations, and learned everything she could about the Kona coffee farming business.

Pick, Pulp, Repeat

At 2000 feet, Kona Earth is considered a high-elevation coffee farm. Its harvest began in mid-September and continues throughout early March – with multiple rounds of picking throughout that window of time. Teams of pickers arrived each morning, picking throughout the day, then dropping off their colossal burlap bags of cherry in the late afternoons. Steve and Joanie stayed late into the evenings, pulping the fruit and laying it out on the large drying deck before heading off to bed.

Kona Earth E-Commerce Store Goes Live

Black Friday 2021 became Kona Earth's official launch day as their e-commerce store went live. The online store offers three grades of [100% Kona coffee](#); Classic (Estate), Premium (Extra Fancy), and Peaberry. Joanie added Kona coffee gift bundles to attract holiday shoppers looking for unique coffee gifts. December was busy with order fulfillment as Joanie and Steve began to sell their single-estate Kona coffee direct to coffee lovers everywhere.

In January, Steve and Joanie harvested Kona cacao pods from their property and added gourmet chocolate to their offerings. Their cacao is processed locally & hand poured into delicious, 75% dark chocolate bars. Kona Earth chocolate has become a customer favorite.

Looking Ahead

With harvest behind them, there was still much to do on the farm in the Spring: pruning, fertilizing, weed and pest control, suckering, and topping. Each tree gets love and attention, preparing it for next year's harvest. Far from being a quiet time, this is perhaps the most critical time on the farm and takes concerted planning, effort, and consideration.

The rainy season had begun in earnest, meaning almost daily afternoon downpours. The rain is essential for coffee trees but makes getting farm work done challenging. The upside is that rainy afternoons gave the Wynns time to take on projects at the house, including painting the exterior, refurbishing the interior, and preparing for farm tours in the Fall.

As June rolls around again, Steve and Joanie celebrated their first year as Kona coffee farmers. Coincidentally, their 25th wedding anniversary occurred the same month. Though their first year was a flurry of activity and learning for the newbie coffee farmers, they embraced their new life and dug in with complete commitment. As Joanie stated, "It's been quite a whirlwind. We've learned so much and are working harder than we have in years. But we're incredibly engaged and excited about this new life chapter and look forward to growing Kona Earth in the years to come."

The Wynns will remember 2022 as a year of fresh starts and new adventures as Kona coffee farmers.

Joanie Wynn
Kona Earth
+1 415-602-6259
[email us here](#)

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