

Hidden Heroes - June 9, 2020

Opinion Editorial from Ron Maynard, Chair of Farm & Food Care PEI

The last several months have been some of the most challenging our Island has ever seen. COVID-19 placed strains and challenges on Islanders from all walks of life, industries and organizations, not just here on the Island, but across the country and the world. To the health care workers, public health officials, front line retail and other industry staff – thank you. Each of these businesses, institutions and their staff are doing their part to help keep us safe.

And there is another group we can't forget that looked after us during the recent COVID-19 shut down - our farmers, processors and their staff. At no point during this time did our farms slow down, did our processing facilities close or was our distribution of Island foods stopped. Our farming community stepped up and made sure we continued to have safe and healthy food for Islanders and beyond.

This was no easy task. Farms were challenged to continue their operations under social distancing and stressful times. Processing facilities were required to quickly bring in safety measures to protect staff and the food supply. This required ingenuity, investments and commitments from all involved – owners, management and staff. Our farming community not only made it happen, they went above and beyond including donating food to those in need.

The pandemic has shone a light on who our truly essential workers are. So, let's not forget to thank our hidden heroes - the farmers on the tractors, in the barns and fields. Our farm and processing staff working every day without stop to bring food to our tables.

Please take a moment to acknowledge and thank these people in your community. Now more than ever we can say, *eaten lately, thank a farmer.*