



# THE COASTERS CLUB

**Wherever I Roam, The Coast Is My Home**

November the 20th 2015.

The Coasters club would like me to take you on a virtual tour to meet two of the Coasts Cranberry producers Tony and Marj Allen. My name is Bruce Smith. I am a 4th generation Coaster and I want to show you a product which has the most exciting potential for our Coast.

**If you would like to receive by email further information in relation to how you can obtain Cranberries grown on the Coast just reply with **YES** in the subject line.**

Cranberries could be on for a large scale development as existing growers have identified that the West Coast of the South Island has the right mix of climate and soils ideal for growing cranberries. The soil pH is 4.5 to 5.5 and cranberries require nitrogen fertiliser initially for establishment, but then to encourage fruiting nutrients must be cut back while the plant is flowering. Cranberries are a perennial low shrub or ground cover, with runners which root and send up stems, fruiting laterals and flowers.

**Wait, a cranberry?** That's right, cranberries aren't just **for Thanksgiving** anymore; it turns out that this functional fruit has a lot more to offer than just a tantalizing taste. I'll bet you didn't know that consuming the humble cranberry just might prevent your next cavity or lower your risk for cancer. Cranberries work to boost your mouth health by inhibiting harmful acid production and preventing bad bugs, like *Streptococcus mutans*, from doing harm to your mouth and teeth. As far as fighting cancer is concerned, the cranberry shows promise. Research has found that polyphenolic extracts from cranberries inhibit the growth and proliferation of breast, colon, prostate, lung, and even esophageal tumor cells.



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Meet Marj and Tony Allan they grow Cranberries 🌿🌿🌿 A MUST IN THE PANTRY 🌿🌿🌿



## Meet Marj and Tony Allan Coasters:

Marj and Tony Allan have been local business owners on the West Coast since 2001 when they began Kawhaka Lodge, a fly fishing lodge outside of Hokitika. The team have hosted guests from around the world to enjoy the beautiful area and the comfort of their cosy

lodge. Avid gardeners, they put their ten acre lifestyle block to use as a commercial growing project... and grew **Cranberries**.



Now Tony's no ordinary critter he has done lots of things. For 28 years he went to the States selling fly fishing rods that he had developed with units sold in Europe, the States, and Japan.

Tony was the recipient of Export development awards presented by Prime Minister Jenny Shipley.

Hailing from Christchurch Tony was attracted to the Coast because of his South Island based fishing tour business. After selling his Just Rimu business he ended up with 100 tons of Cyprus pine and decided to build a house on the Coast.

After researching possible crops including blueberries and black currant and receiving advice from port research, the couple learned of the benefits of the newly available cranberry plant to New Zealand growers. Introduced to West Coast growers in recent years, the cranberry has proven to be perfectly suited to the climate and weather conditions of the area.

Tony says when they started obtaining plants was a problem however they had a stroke of luck and met people from Motueka in Horticulture research. They had a complete bed of cranberries and were in the process of throwing them out. Tony made a number of trips to Motueka and loaded his trailer with the cuttings which was to be the start of his own cranberry beds.

Today he is harvesting on a daily basis the start of his crop. They supply fresh cranberries to South Island supermarkets and can't keep up. He exports a pallet a year to Japan and his marketing continues but production of the cranberries is the herby.

The variety being harvested by Tony and Marj produce between 5000 and 7000 kg per ha per year and as the plants get older they produce more in there 80 years plus life span.



Tony inspects yesterday's harvest.



Particularly attractive to the Allans is the high yielding fruit requires little maintenance after the beds are established, and the life of the cranberry beds lasts many generations, providing they are maintained correctly. They hope to see the crop grow in popularity in Westland to become a staple crop, like the grapes of Blenheim.

A real bonus in planting cranberries is they require a low PH of 5.0/6.0 and love the pakahi land that covers many areas of the Coast.

Any fertiliser requirements are small and well below the WCRC limits in the 10 year plan.

There is no cash flow for the first 3 years and a cost of approx \$60,000 per HA to develop the beds. This includes land preparation and irrigation. In the States one staff member looks after 50 acres of cranberries.

When he started he planned 5 experimental plots of approx. 180 square meters. These plants once grown were shifted into beds. Each year the clippings taken from the existing beds doubles the size of the plantings and Tony's next year could see his 1ha become 2 and expand exponentially from there.

Having completed over 100,000 miles sailing around the pacific running a yacht delivery business tony has overcome a number of problems.

He's used to hurdles having sailed in 1972 in a single handed yacht race to Australia. The boat flipped in and he survived 3 weeks in a life raft and is said to be the longest known survivor in the Tasman and he will release his book on the subject within a few months

**The Cranberry grader built in 1923 and still runs without a hitch.**



Currently, Tony has tested all four of the major varieties available in New Zealand in trial beds, and are currently trialling new varieties which will be available in due course to the local market.

The first commercial beds are being established in part of the block, and the propagation operation is humming along to supply plants to both commercial growers and for local gardens.

After going through the trial processes, the Allans are happy to advise others interested in growing cranberries here on the West Coast. They are excited about the opportunity for the West Coast to grow cranberries.



### **Cranberries the Super fruit**

Cranberries have been deemed one of the “super fruits” for their nutrient content and healing abilities. They are packed with antioxidants and Vitamin C. They are used to prevent urinary tract infections, and supply other nutrients of Vitamin A and B, calcium, phosphorus and iron.

The tart berries are used fresh, frozen, and dried forms. These versatile berries are popular used in juices, sauces, smoothies, relishes, restaurant use, dried in snack bars, salads, baked goods and breakfast cereals, and included in vitamin supplements. Their growing popularity in New Zealand adds to the potential already available in the export market.

Tony has worked to improve his knowledge of the industry and on one trip to the States visited a university in the Wisconsin about the size of Canterbury University which has Cranberries as its one subject. He met experts in every aspect of the industry and has an open invitation to attend any aspect of the university.

### **West Coast’s Ideal Environment**

Traditionally imported to New Zealand from North America, producing cranberries domestically provides a fresher crop and can provide an export market to North America during the colder “off season” in the northern hemisphere. The West Coast provides an ideal climate and weather for the commercial production of cranberries, and the fruit has the potential to become a major fruiting industry for the area.

In the USA there are cranberry varieties that produce up to 147,000 pounds of fruit per hectare.



At present with the 3 year old stock Tony is hitting 30,000 per HA.

### **Growing Requirements**

Good access to clean fresh water, River Sand , Flat land ,Ideal soil acidity of 4.5-5.5, Winter chill to set berries

### **Dry or Wet Harvest**

Dry Harvest: uses a machine and hand scoop, not as water intensive; preferred method for fresh fruit

Wet Harvest: floods crop and dislodges berries with water turbulence, fruit collected as it floats atop the water; requires access to plenty of water and water storage; best for fruit used for juice and to process



Tony uses dry harvesting as the land required to wet harvest is 7 times as much as dry.

### **Vision for the future:**

*Tony has a firm vision for the future of Cranberry's on the Coast. It involves a marketing structure similar to the kiwifruit industry being supplied by individual growers.*

*He sees regional investment being a priority driven by demand and strong financial returns.*

*The growth in the industry will also be driven by the incredible health benefits of the cranberry products.*

*It's not the answer by itself for the Coast but it has the potential to grow in the same way the wine industry has improving export earnings for New Zealand. It's a product that can be frozen so delivery can be regulated.*

*Where else is there a product that needs the worst land you can find, where you must lower the PH and which produces the returns per hectare that Cranberry's does he asks.*

What do these innovative Coasters make from the Cranberry crop?

### Cranberry Relish



A mix of cranberry, maple and orange to give it a very unique flavour.

A real favourite with pork, chicken, venison, cheese boards, sandwiches, pate, pizza and more.

### Cranberry Jelly





This is a pure cranberry jelly the perfect complement with cheeses, pate, venison etc.

A real favourite with the men in the kitchen.

### **Smokey Cranberry Sauce / Marinade**



The touch of smoke gives this sauce thoughts of ribs, pork belly or just used as a tangy sauce.

### **Dessert Sauce**



Especially for the sweet tooth in the group, drizzle on pancakes or serve with ice-cream sprinkling with your favourite nuts.

Cranberry Relish Orange



195g

Cranberry Jelly



195g

Cranberry & Apple Jelly



195g

Cranberry & Orange Marmalade



195g

Cranberry Compote



250g

Festive Cranberry Sauce



250g

## LOW SUGAR OPTIONS

Cranberry Relish



195g

Cranberry Jelly



195g

Marj and Tony also pack and distribute Fresh and frozen berries.

If you would like to receive more information of a commercial nature on Cranberries grown on the Coast and the products they are used for you will need to consent to it being sent by email due to current legislation.

*To send a commercial electronic message, you need to be sure that you have consent from the recipient. In addition, section 9(3) of the Act states that a person who contends that a recipient consented to receive a commercial electronic message has the onus of proof in relation to the matter.*

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## Wherever I Roam, The Coast Is My Home

Our aim is to show you just a fraction of what is on offer on the Coast and from there it's all up to you.

Thanks for coming on this virtual tour with me and we can't wait until you return to the Coast to reconnect again and catch up on the amazing things to do, places to visit and the people and like Cranberries the amazing opportunities that exist from Karamea to the Haast.

Bruce Smith

The Coasters Club.

021-922860

**The Coast extends from Karamea to the Haast and incorporates the people of Buller ,Grey and Westland.**

[www.thecoastersclub.co.nz](http://www.thecoastersclub.co.nz)