

INFORMATION

Yukon Agriculture Branch Quarterly Bulletin

Winter 2008

Volume 21 Issue 4



MESSAGE FROM THE AGRICULTURE BRANCH

Season's greetings! It seems more like mid-season when winter arrives in October but with the turn of winter solstice the future looks brighter. It's been another busy year in the agriculture community and it's a good time to look back over the past year and forward to what's on the horizon.

Starting last winter, the Agriculture branch helped organize two Master Gardener courses. This was the first time we have held more than one course in the same year. The first course was held at the Yukon College campus in Whitehorse and a second course was held in Faro, where 17 local residents graduated with northern gardening expertise. It's been eleven years since the first course was held back in 1997 and it's great to see that it has remained as popular as ever.

Spring seeding started with fairly cool temperatures and then peaked with our warmest weather of the summer... later in May. Maybe it's best not to reflect on the last summer's weather, particularly on the windy Farmer's Market days. On the positive side, dryland farmers had some of their best crops ever, forest fires couldn't get started and many areas had a long frost free fall to size up and mature their crops. Soil moisture should be recharged and as I recall that meant great crops in the year following our last cool, wet summer back in 2000.

Meanwhile, work progressed this fall on implementation of the Yukon Multi-Year Development Plan for agriculture. The Meat Processing Infrastructure Working Group has been meeting regularly, working to identify the bottlenecks and missing links in infrastructure and regulations that need to be solved in order to develop those sectors further. There was also a first meeting of the Yukon Agriculture Research Committee held the day before our annual North of 60° Agriculture Conference. The roundtable discussion ended with a committee of 10 nominated to identify and implement future research projects of interest to Yukon farmers.

Congratulations to Ralph and Norma Mease of Mayo, Farm Family of the Year for 2008. Ralph and Norma have been farming and contributing to the community, Yukon Agricultural Association, fall fairs and the development of the industry for close to 40 years and plan to contribute for years to come.

On behalf of all of us here at the Agriculture Branch, we wish you a festive close to 2008 and all the best in 2009.

Tony Hill
Director, Yukon Agriculture Branch

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ENERGY, MINES
AND RESOURCES
MINISTER BRAD
CATHERS ADDRESSED
THE NORTH OF
60° AGRICULTURE
BANQUET ON
NOVEMBER 1ST IN
WHITEHORSE.
AN EXCERPT FROM HIS SPEECH:

One of the tools we have to assist in developing agriculture in the Yukon is the Canada-Yukon Agriculture Policy Framework Agreement. This agreement has been good for the industry. In the past year alone the agreement has funded the completion of 10 Environmental Farm Plans, redevelopment work to bring 190 acres of farm land back into production, two cooperatively owned 22-tonne fertilizer bins, a new manure spreader that can be rented from Yukon Agricultural Association and training costs for three farm apprentices.

We have also funded a multiple location pre-school gardening program, horse show ribbons for shows in Whitehorse and Watson Lake, booth rental by Dawson farmers wanting to sell their products at the Dawson City Gold Show and the operation of the mobile abattoir.

The national program agreement also provided funding to the Fireweed Community Market Society to assist with tents and a manager for the society's Thursday afternoon markets. The Fireweed Community Market is a keystone venue for Yukon farmers who want to connect directly with consumers and market their products.

In July, Yukon signed the Growing Forward Multilateral Framework Agreement with Canada and the other provinces and territories. The agreement replaces the Agriculture Policy Framework. In this agreement Yukon was able to nearly double the program funding available from the previous agreement. We were also able to negotiate specific exemptions for the territories from spending on national programs that have little benefit in the North. We are now in the process of developing the new programs that will be part of the Growing Forward agreement.

Consultation with industry associations on specific Growing Forward objectives has been taking place over the past few months through the Yukon Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee. I would like to thank all of the people who provided suggestions for improvement through these different groups.

Growing Forward will be Yukon specific, and designed to meet the developing nature of the industry. The agreement will provide farmers and processors with skills training, access to consulting services, assistance to diversify farm operations or add value to their products.

These are the programs required to develop the industry based on Yukon's needs. This includes our desire to fund capital projects and infrastructure that we need to meet food safety requirements that are taken for granted in more established agricultural areas across Canada.

I have been tracking the progress of the government-industry working group that is looking at the next steps needed to further develop the livestock sector in the Yukon. This group is looking at gaps in our processing and food safety infrastructure and will be making recommendations on linking components we have now, such as the mobile abattoir, with the end goal of providing safe, quality meat and poultry products to Yukon consumers. We look forward to these recommendations and toward working together to develop this sector of the agriculture industry.

On the lands side, I have some good news I would like to share. Shortly after becoming Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources I was able to reach an agreement with the Minister of Community Services that will see the Land Planning Branch move to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. Starting April 1st, 2009, the Community Land Planning Branch will join EMR's Lands and Agriculture Branches in the same office. This move is aimed at "one-counter" delivery of the Yukon land program, including community land use planning activities as well as applications for subdivision and rezoning.

The Yukon government is dedicated to continuing its support for agriculture and those engaged in the industry in Yukon. We are committed to working with you to support a healthy agriculture industry.

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FERTILIZERS

SOIL SAMPLING AND FERTILIZER RECOMMENDATIONS: "IT'S NOT ROCKET SCIENCE...IT'S WAY HARDER."

At this year's North of 60° Agriculture Conference, Kent Lamoureux's presentation on fertilizers was informative and passionate. One might ask-how can someone be passionate about fertilizers? If you had the chance to catch Kent's presentation you realize that he loves his work and he has an understanding of soils and amendments that approaches the spiritual plane. His catch phrase through his presentation was: "This is not rocket science...it is way harder." What Kent was trying to explain is that understanding soil tests and determining fertilizer application rates can be very complex due to all the factors that influence the ability of plants to access nutrients. Fertilizer recommendations are influenced by many factors, including soil analysis, wet or dry growing seasons, mobile or non-mobile nutrients, what was last planted, where soil samples were taken,

the topography of the field and the producer's fertilizer choices. Kent's approach to soil fertility and fertilizer recommendations reminds us that it's not just nitrogen we need to focus on. We need to consider some of the other ion players when fertilizing.

BRINGING IT BACK TO EARTH Kent reminded us that we fertilize not just to influence plant yields. Although yields are important, we also want to improve plant health. As a result of controlling plant health, the feed value of a crop is also impacted. In the case of a grass or forage stand, it is easy to understand that the healthier the crop the healthier the livestock will be that feed on the crop. Animals need a supply of nutrients from their feed and a soil analysis can be an early warning tool to let us know when valuable feed nutrients may be missing.

Mineral imbalances and/or deficiencies in the soil will show up in the feed and can result in decreased performance, decreased disease resistance and reproductive failure in animals. There is a wide

range of minerals that can impact animal or plant health. For example, calcium is sometimes low in Yukon soils, resulting in low levels of calcium in forages. Calcium (Ca) is an essential building block for livestock, but its use is influenced by the level of magnesium (Mg) in the diets. High levels of Mg reduce Ca absorption while a deficiency in Mg decreases Ca mobilization into the blood. This is a good example of the complexity of mineral use in animals, and this complexity is also seen in plant use. This is why soil analysis and fertilizer recommendations may just be "harder than rocket science".

Other minerals, such as Copper, Zinc, Iron and Selenium can be supplied through animal feed, and low levels in the soils or abundance of other minerals can cause feed sources to be inadequate in supplying these minerals. Low copper levels in the soil and/or feed can cause a copper deficiency in livestock which can result in anemia, loss of colour in the hair/coat, digestive upset and poor animal performance (growth, lactation and/or reproduction). An important point made by Kent is that feed analysis samples should be taken from the same locations as your soil samples, to further understand your fertilizer impacts on feed values. By evaluating feed and soil analysis and understanding the relationship, a producer can help optimize fertilizer use.

The Agriculture Branch can help with interpreting these results and is also available to facilitate soil and feed testing. Please feel free to contact Agriculture Branch Agrologist Matt Ball or Technician Brad Barton at 867-667-5838, or matthew.ball@gov.yk.ca or brad.barton@gov.yk.ca.

ENERGY, MINES, AND RESOURCES LAND AND MINING VIEWER

Use this interactive online mapping tool to:

- identify land based parcels & find coordinates
- draw your own temporary land parcel
- add data directly from your GPS
- label, save & print your map



emr.gov.yk.ca/mlv_jump.html

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YUKON FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR

The Agriculture Branch received four great nominations for the 2008 Farm Family of the Year Award. From the four candidates, one has won before; another had been a nominee at least once before. There were two new candidates nominated, including a new candidate from the central Yukon.

NOMINEE GRANT DOWDELL & KAREN DIGBY

Grant Dowdell and Karen Digby operate a good sized greenhouse and market garden operation six miles upstream of Dawson on a remote island in the Yukon River. From this remote location Grant has been supplying local restaurants and the Dawson City general store with fresh produce for close to 30 years.

Unlike operations at Dawson's Henderson Corner, where frost is a frequent occurrence at any time throughout the summer, the island has a tremendous micro climate that has enabled Grant to grow green beans and zucchini in his outdoor gardens. Most years he is able to grow sweet corn along the outside of his south facing greenhouse.

One of the nominators categorized this farm as somewhere between "died and gone to heaven" and "utterly blew me away".

In recent years Grant has teamed up with Karen Digby. Karen has brought her expertise in growing flowers and goats to the island. Karen's flower bouquets now grace the hotels in town and her goats bring an excellent source of fertilizer to the farm. Between the goats, crop rotations and plowdown they are reducing the need to add

commercial fertilizers to grow their crops.

Congratulations Grant and Karen on your nomination.

NOMINEE STEVE & BONNIE MACKENZIE

Steve & Bonnie MacKenzie were nominated again this year and seem to be nominated every year. Steve and Bonnie are always deserving of the award for their innovative and thoughtful approach to farming in the Yukon. Trying new techniques and equipment to improve the quality of crops is just part of a typical year on the Yukon Grain Farm.

This year's nomination stood out because of the source of the nomination. In the words of the nominator, the nomination "is submitted for consideration with deep conviction." The nomination was submitted by Reverend David A. Pritchard for Steve and Bonnie's generous support of the Swaziland Educational Trust Society (SETS). Each year, the Mackenzies donate between 500 and 1,600 pounds of

their potato crop to SETS, which then sells the potatoes as a fund raiser to pay the educational costs for children who would otherwise not get an education.

This is a great story recognizing farmers for their generosity. Congratulations to Steve and Bonnie.

NOMINEE MARY AND ROLLAND GIROUARD

The next nomination came from an appreciative customer of Mary and Rolland Girouard's u-pick market garden and greenhouse operation. The nominator cites the Girouard's tireless work ethic and enthusiasm for farming, as some of the reasons they were nominated for this year's award.

The Girouards are big supporters of Yukon agriculture, including Rolland's term as president of the Yukon Agricultural Association back in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and their support of the early farmers' market for many years when its location seemed to move around Whitehorse on a yearly basis.



Minister Brad Cathers presenting Ralph and Norma Mease with the 2008 Farm Family of the Year Award.

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They have both attended agriculture conferences over the years and contributed to many discussions ranging from policy development to a multi-year development plan for Yukon agriculture.

Recently, they have been transitioning their farm towards organic agriculture, trying new methods to improve production and assisting in the operation of the Porter Creek Indoor Garden Center.

Congratulations to Rolland and Mary on their nomination and for the substantial contribution they have made over the years.



FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR FOR 2008: RALPH AND NORMA MEASE

This year's recipients of the 2008 Farm Family of the Year Award are Ralph and Norma Mease. The Meases were also nominated in past years, and this year they received the most nominations of anyone. Similar to the Girouards the nominations are really in recognition of a lifetime of achievement more than what was accomplished in any one year.

Ralph and Norma have been farming outside of Mayo for well over 30 years.

When John Hoyt and Paul Fletcher started the YAA back in 1972, they signed up the Mease family as one of the first members. For many years afterward, Ralph served as president of the Stewart Valley

chapter of the YAA and was active in hosting meetings, organizing garden judging competitions, hosting pig roasts and lobbying for cooperative infrastructure such as grain storage and fertilizer storage bins for their region.

Ralph and Norma have been steady producers over the years, supplying anywhere from 400-700 chickens, fresh vegetables and hay to the central Yukon each year. Ralph currently sits on the Yukon Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee representing the Stewart Valley region.

These are but a few of the Mease's contributions to the Yukon agriculture industry. Congratulations Ralph and Norma Mease, 2008 Farm Family of the Year.

NOTICE TO ALL ORGANIC PRODUCERS

Growers of Organic Food Yukon (a Chapter of Canadian Organic Growers), in collaboration with Organic Federation of Canada (OFC), is currently doing an outreach project in Yukon to promote organic production.

Growers of Organic Food Yukon (GoOFY) wishes to establish consensus that it should represent the Yukon on the OFC. GoOFY's representative, Claire Desmarais, is currently on the OFC board and has been directing the formulation of the Canadian Organic Standards. These standards are now published and will come into effect across Canada by June 2009.

GoOFY would also like to provide information about Canadian standards and organic certification. The group hopes to produce a one day event this spring, where more information will be available in the form of speakers and published material.

GoOFY would like input from growers and processors in the Yukon who are currently using organic methods or interested in transition to organic production.

Please contact Joanne Jackson Johnson at 660-5128 or jjj@northwestel.net if you have input or questions about these issues. For more information on the OFC visit their website at www.organicfederation.ca.

(See related article pg. 7)

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FARM CREDIT CANADA, NO LONGER LENDER OF LAST RESORT FOR CANADIAN FARMERS

Wally Happychuk, Business Development Manager from Farm Credit Canada (FCC), spoke to the 2008 North of 60° Agriculture conference in Whitehorse. The message Wally brought with him was that FCC is a competitive option for providing business and financial solutions to Yukon farm families and agribusiness. FCC is Canada's largest provider of business and financial services to farms and agribusiness.

Wally was also here to get a better understanding of the Yukon agriculture industry and challenges. He was able to develop that understanding through farm visits, meeting with the Yukon Agriculture Branch and meeting with producers at the agriculture conference.

FCC has a number of financing options available. Wally highlighted the three loans listed below as possibly the best options for Yukon producers. There maybe other loan options that fit your business. For the full range of Farm Credit Corporation options, visit the FCC website at www.fcc-fac.ca or contact Wally directly at 1-800-387-3232.

1-2-3 GROW LOAN: MAKE A REAL PROFIT, THEN MAKE A REAL PAYMENT

Use the interest-only payments of the 1-2-3 Grow Loan to manage your cash flow until you see a return on your investment. Instead of making full payments, you can reinvest your money in other areas of your operation.

Features

- You can make interest-only payments for up to five years
- You can choose flexible terms and repayment options

Benefits

- Use improved cash flow to invest in other parts of your business
- Take time to build your business with convenient repayment terms
- Customize the loan to match your business plans

ADVANCER LOAN: FINANCING THAT'S READY WHEN YOU ARE

The FCC Advancer Loan is everything you need: a pre-approved, secured loan that continually re-advances funds as you grow your operation. And you're in charge: you determine when you want loan funds disbursed to your account.

Features

- Pre-approved, open variable
- Ability to continually re-advance funds
- Interest-only payments required with principal payments at your discretion
- Purchase land, buildings, livestock or other property
- Ability to convert, in whole, or in part, to a term loan with a fixed repayment schedule

Benefits

- Reassurance of knowing money is available when you need it
- Re-advancement of funds with no paperwork
- Reduced payments compared to standard loans
- Versatile loan that may handle all your financing needs

ACCELERATOR LOAN: FAST FORWARD YOUR FUTURE

If you're an established farmer who wants to sell your farm and you have someone in mind or you're a new or expanding farmer looking to grow your business the Accelerator Loan can make it happen.

Features

- as low as zero down payment required
- disbursements are made to the seller over time
- the loan is in two portions, one that's the equivalent of a down payment and the other for the balance of the loan
- make as low as interest-only payments on the second portion of the loan and only on the parts that have been disbursed to the seller
- flexible payment options
- management training through FCC AgriSuccess workshops

Benefits for the buyer

- may not need capital for a down payment
- build equity over time because you have seven years to pay back the down payment portion
- sellers are more willing to accept payments over time because FCC guarantees they'll receive the full payment
- save on interest costs because the disbursement period is up to five years
- AgExpert Analyst farm accounting software and on-farm installation at no cost for the buyer

Benefits for the Seller

- no risk because FCC guarantees full payment of the sale proceeds backed by a Payment Schedule Guarantee Letter
- receive payments over time, which may give you tax advantages
- the size of payments made to you can vary and be extended for as long as five years
- help another farmer take over your operation without putting your own money at risk
- a free management workshop to help make the transition easier

Thank-you, Wally for your presentation.

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NATIONAL ORGANIC STANDARDS
PART ONE

BY JOANNE JACKSON JOHNSON,
CHAIR OF GROWERS OF ORGANIC
FOOD YUKON, A CHAPTER OF
CANADIAN ORGANIC GROWERS
(PART 2 WILL APPEAR IN THE SPRING
EDITION)

The new Canadian Organic Standards will be in effect across Canada by June 2009. The new standard resulted from consultations by the Committee on Organic Agriculture. This committee consisted of over forty individuals representing many aspects of organic production, processing, marketing, certification, research and education. The Standards are identified as CAN/CGSB-32310-2006, a Canadian General Standards Board publication. The Organic Federation of Canada is the industry organization that now drives consultation on the standards process. Growers of Organic Food Yukon is a member of this democratically elected board, representing the Yukon. There is one representative from every jurisdiction and one trade representative.

The Organic Production Systems, General Principles and Management Standards make up one volume of the standards. The second volume is the Organic Production Systems Permitted Substances Lists. The Canadian standards draw on the standards used for several years by many third party certification agencies in Canada. These agencies (Certification Bodies) guaranteed the standards for all certified organic produce, livestock and processed products to the present day.

The Organic Standards give consumers assurance that products labeled organic are inspected by a third party and certified using the established standards.

The Standard describes Organic Production as *"a holistic system designed to optimize the productivity and fitness of diverse communities within the agroecosystem, including soil organisms, plants, livestock and people. The principle goal of organic production is to develop enterprises that are sustainable and harmonious with the environment."*

The organic movement consists of producers who have moved away from using conventional methods or had never used them. Two events in the mid-century pointed growers and researchers in the organic direction. "Silent Spring" by Rachel Carson drew attention to the effects of pesticides on birds. The energy crisis of the 1970s led to the necessity for energy conservation. Suddenly, research began to focus on farms that were not dependent on high energy inputs. Studies done in the early 1980s by Washington University also helped kick open the door for future organic research.

Research done in the last decade, has found that organic farming can be as productive as conventional, without the dependence on conventional inputs. With the influx of organic products to market, some misconceptions still remain about organic farming methods. For example:

- organic farms have a size limitation (they must be small)
- organic farming is about not fertilizing
- all farming prior to the widespread use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides was organic

Many organic farms still operate on a smaller scale, but there are also very large organic farms.

Regarding fertilizers, organic farmers use different sources of organic fertilizers and rock powders to amend the soil. Organic farming practices use crop rotations, green manuring, intercropping and recycling of manure from livestock to eliminate the need for chemical fertilizers. This also encourages biodiversity, which results in healthy soils and reduced need for off-farm inputs. Biodiversity in an organic system creates stability and balance, which can eliminate some diseases seen in systems that have little rotation of crops. Without a good rotation of crops, disease can build up in the soil allowing for a catastrophic failure of the crops.

Another good practice is to maintain biological diversity. By relying on multiple crop varieties the great Irish potato famine would not have been so widespread, but at that time most of the potatoes grown in Ireland were of only one genetic variety with no resistant to the fungal disease that wiped out the potato crops. Growing more varieties likely would have reduced the crop damage, as other varieties have more resistance.

As well as these cropping practices, the raising of livestock and the processing of foods are also regulated by the new organic standards.

Joanne Jackson Johnson is currently engaged in a project to promote organic farming and certification requirements. For more information contact Joanne at 867-660-5128 or e-mail: jjj@northwestel.net.

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THE FACTS ABOUT
NITRATE LEVELS IN
FEEDADAPTED FROM ALBERTA
AGRICULTURE FACTSHEET

Nitrates, one form of nitrogen that is taken up by the plant from the soil, are not particularly toxic, while nitrites, converted in the digestive tract of grazing animals, are. This is especially a concern in ruminant animals such as cattle, sheep and goats, where nitrate is converted to nitrite by bacteria in the rumen. In a well functioning system, this nitrite is then changed to ammonia. Excess ammonia is absorbed by the blood and passed in the urine as urea. The problems occur when the balance is disrupted and there is an accumulation of nitrites.

In contrast, monogastric animals such as horses and pigs, convert nitrate to nitrite in the intestine, closer to the end of the digestive tract, where there is less opportunity for the nitrites to be absorbed by the blood. It is this difference in the site of conversion that makes nitrate poisoning of much less concern for monogastric animals than it is with ruminants.

When ruminants consume a high nitrate feed, some of the nitrate cannot be immediately converted to nitrite and finally to ammonia. This causes both nitrate and nitrite to accumulate in the rumen. Nitrate is continually released from the feed being digested in the rumen. The addition of new nitrate into the rumen intensifies the problem.

Nitrate poisoning occurs when the nitrite level in the rumen exceeds the capacity of the microbes to convert it to ammonia. When this happens, nitrate and nitrite are absorbed through the rumen wall into the bloodstream. It is the nitrite that causes toxicity. Individual animals have different levels of tolerance to nitrites.

Chronic nitrate toxicity is a form of nitrate poisoning where the clinical signs of the disease are not observed. It is more common to see a reduction in weight gain, lower milk production, depressed appetite, and a greater susceptibility to infections. These production related problems or losses often go unrecognized, and will occur when nitrate levels are at 0.5 to 1.0 per cent of the feed consumed (on a dry basis).

Chronic nitrate poisoning can cause abortions to occur within the first 100 days of pregnancy because nitrates interfere with the implantation of the egg in the uterus. When implantation does not occur, the fetus dies and is reabsorbed by the cow. During the first trimester of pregnancy, no obvious signs of an abortion are seen. Reproductive problems may also occur due to a nitrate or nitrite induced hormone imbalance, but most are usually not recognized as feed related.

Calves affected by nitrate poisoning during the last three months of gestation are usually born one to four weeks premature, and most appear normal but die within 18 to 24 hours of birth. Newborn calves that survive, but are affected by nitrate poisoning, may have convulsions and seizures.

With acute poisoning the signs of poisoning are observed and the animal is in critical condition. Nitrate is rapidly converted to nitrite in the rumen and is immediately absorbed in large amounts into the bloodstream. Animals can die within a few hours of initial ingestion of a high nitrate feed.

Signs of acute poisoning in cattle are: increased heart rate, muscle tremors, vomiting, weakness, blue-grey mucous membranes, excess saliva and tear production, depression, labored or violent breathing, staggering gait, frequent urination, low body temperature, disorientation and an inability to get up. Animals are often found in a lying position after a short struggle. In most cases of acute poisoning, animals are found dead before any signs of toxicity are observed.

Plants are more prone to nitrate accumulation during initial growth, as much of the nitrate taken up by the plant is used for root and shoot development. At this stage, the roots are able to take up more nitrate than is required and it accumulates in the stems and leaves of the plant. As the plant develops, the leaves of the plant are able to convert more nitrate into plant protein: therefore less "surplus" nitrate is found in the plant as it matures.

Annual forage crops tend to accumulate greater amounts of nitrates than perennial forages. These crops are usually planted into well fertilized, manured or recently plowed grassland or pasture. Annual crops are also harvested at an early stage of development (milk to dough), when nitrate content is highest. Nitrate concentrations vary in different parts of the plant. The highest levels are found in the lower

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stems. Concentrations in the leaves and flowers are lower and the seeds or grain kernels are usually nitrate free.

Specific species can become nitrate accumulators if appropriate conditions exist. The common Yukon crops where we might see accumulation are oat, rye and barley greenfeed.

Soil nitrogen levels greatly influence plant nitrate content. Large applications of nitrogen fertilizer or manure increase soil nitrate and thus the nitrate available to the plant.

Testing of Yukon crops has shown little concern for horse owners. Nitrate levels are almost always below the level of concern for

horses. If you are feeding cattle or goats or pregnant mares then some feeds may be of concern. Cut the suspect feed with grass hay to reduce the nitrates in the feed. As always watch the animals closely for changes in behaviour. If you are concerned about the nitrate levels in the forage you are feeding please contact the Agriculture Branch.

JOIN THE YUKON AGRICULTURE BRANCH FOR AGRIWEBINARS™

Agriwebinar™ is a unique, online conference series hosted by the Canadian Farm Business Management Council. This one-of-a-kind series runs live each Monday at 9 am PST until March 30, 2009. The Agriculture Branch is looking to bring those interested in the series together to view the Agriwebinars™ in a group setting. A conference room has been booked for the month of January in the Elijah Smith building for those interested in participating. Please stop by the Ag. Branch front desk in the Elijah Smith Building, room 320, 300 Main St, Whitehorse, for the room location, or contact the branch at (867) 667-5838 or email: agriculture@gov.yk.ca. The branch will continue to host the event until March 30 if the participation in January is good or a specific topic is requested. Each presentation lasts 60 minutes, with 20 minutes allocated for questions and answers.

Individuals can also access the Agriwebinars™ at home. All you need to do is log on via a dial-up or high-speed Internet connection from your home or office computer. To log on or for more information on events, Agriwebinars™ speakers, presentation topics, dates and time, along with an archive of past conferences, visit www.agriwebinar.com.

Here's what you have to look forward to in the coming months:

- January 5, Angela Santiago, The Little Potato Company, AB: Capturing Value Through Market-Driven Innovation, Our Value Chain Concept
- January 12, Ron Hamilton, Sunworks Farms, AB: Marketing in Organic Agriculture
- January 12, Wolfgang Pfenning, Pfenning's Organic Vegetables Inc., ON: Organic by Tradition and Science
- January 19, Elaine Froese, Seeds of Encouragement, NB: Managing Stubborn Farmers and Their Unsolvable Problems, Identifying Polarities
- January 26, Michel Morisset, Université Laval, QC: Food Crisis: Feed the World in a New Energy and Economic Setting
- February 2, Leony Koelen, Koelen Farms, ON & Russell Friesen Friesen Farms, AB: Outstanding Young Farmer Winner: Ontario & Alberta 2007
- February 9, Raymond Levallois, Université Laval, QC: Personal and Business Life: Looking for Balance
- February 16, Susan Sweeney, Author & Internet Marketing Expert, NB: The Formula for Online Success in the Agricultural Industry
- February 23, Charlie Touchette, Networking Association for Farm Direct Marketing and Agritourism, USA: Recent Revelations, The Best of NAFDMA 2009
- March 2, Bob Friesen, Canadian Federation of Agriculture, ON: Policy Outlook 2009
- March 9, Ted Haney, Canada Beef Export Federation, AB: Canadian Beef Exports: The Global Opportunity
- March 16, Garrett Wright, Everpure Biodiesel Co-op, ON: Developing a Sustainable Biofuel Option for the Benefit of Farmers and Their Communities
- March 23, Cher Brethour, Guelph Food Technology Centre, ON: Emissions Trading in Agriculture, A Canadian Perspective
- March 30, Pierrette Desrosiers, Consultations Pierrette Desrosiers, QC: Having Guts is Profitable!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALASKA GREENHOUSE & NURSERY CONFERENCE DATES

The 2009 Alaska Greenhouse & Nursery Conference will be held January 27 & 28 at the Anchorage Marriott Hotel, downtown. The Polar Grower Trade Show will be held in conjunction with the conference.

For more information contact:

Julie Riley, Horticulture Agent, (907) 786-6300 or
Jeff Smeenck, Commercial Horticulture Specialist
(907) 746-9470

FIREWEED MARKET KITCHEN

The Fireweed Market Kitchen located in Shipyards park is still open and going strong, serving a variety of foods and drinks. Each day offers something different. The kitchen is open from 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Monday to Friday

The kitchen will be open during Rendezvous and will be featuring Yukon bison chili, Yukon grown baked potatoes and fresh baked organic cinnamon buns.

YUKON MADE STORE

Open 11 am to 5 pm Tuesday to Saturday. You can find the work of over 20 local artisans as well as information about the outdoor market, a library for the Growers of Organic Food Yukon and information about the Yukon Food Processors Association production of nutrition facts panels for local products.

InFARMation is:

A Government of Yukon newsletter published by the Agriculture Branch of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. If you would like to add or remove your name from the newsletter mailing list, comment on an article or contribute a story, please feel free to contact us.

InFARMation

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Email: agriculture@gov.yk.ca

Call Agriculture Branch at (867) 667-5838, toll-free outside of Whitehorse at 1-800-661-0408,

or

stop by the Agriculture Branch on the third floor of the Elijah Smith Building in Whitehorse.

Online: www.agriculture.gov.yk.ca

THANK-YOU FROM THE NORTH OF 60° AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE AND BANQUET.

- Annie Avery and her Band for the great entertainment.
- Cliff and Virginia, LaPrairie Bison Ranch, for the delicious roast of bison
- Jonathan Lucas, Icy Waters, for the Fresh Arctic Char.
- Steve & Bonnie MacKenzie, Yukon Grain Farms, for the Yukon gold and new red potatoes.
- Joanne Johnson, McLintock Valley Farm, for the organic carrots.
- Rolland and Mary Girouard, Rivendell Farm, provided the savoury herbs.
- Brian Lendrum and Susan Ross for the fresh goat cheese.
- Mary Lumbers for decorating the room & tables.
- Yukon Horse and Riders Association for hosting the silent auction.
- Enid Tait for donating the beautiful print titled "Rod's Last Harvest" by Libby Dulac. This print raised money for the Rod Tait foundation.
- Thank-you to our auctioneer, Minister Brad Cathers, for running the live auction, and many thanks to the spirited bidders.
- Congratulation Dave and Tracy Andrews on your successful bid on Libby Dulac's print.

THANK-YOU TO ALL OUR CONFERENCE PRESENTERS

- Dr. Surya Acharya, for participating in our Yukon Agriculture Research Committee round table discussion, and for his presentation on Strategies for Overwintering Forages
- Cliff Hanna for his talk on Horse Dentistry in the North
- Kent Lamoureux from Sturgeon Valley Fertilizers for his Fertilizers 101 presentation.
- Kirby Rietze from the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration and his presentation on Irrigation Techniques.
- Wally Happychuk, Business Development Manager with Farm Credit Canada and his introduction to FCC and Farm Finance

Thank-you to all who participated in the research round table discussion on Friday afternoon.

And thanks to all our friends far and near for attending the 21st annual North of 60° Agriculture Conference and Banquet.