

INFARMATION

Yukon Agriculture Branch Quarterly Bulletin

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2011 NORTH OF 60° AGRICULTURE BANQUET

With another sold out North of 60° Agriculture Banquet, the support for Yukon agriculture is alive and strong. The success of the event can be contributed to a number of things, including growing support for the agriculture community, increasing demand for local food and all the farmers that get together at the banquet to celebrate Yukon agriculture. The highlight of the event has to be the locally grown dinner. This year's meal included Icy Waters arctic char, Circle D Ranch grass fed beef and Yukon Grain Farm potatoes, carrots, turnips, parsnips and beets.

The event was held on Friday, November 4th at the Westmark Whitehorse Hotel. The evening included a speech from newly re-elected MLA for Lake Laberge, Brad Cathers.

The silent auction made a return to the banquet, with \$1,800 being raised for Whitehorse Spirit Riders 4-H. The Spirit Riders are raising funds towards their annual summer camp and to attend a 4-H event in B.C.

Scott Garvey, machinery editor from Grainews provided some food for thought at the banquet, ahead of his tractor presentation at the conference. Garvey provided his perspective on the ever changing agriculture industry and how tractor makers are seeing unprecedented sales thanks to increased demand and higher prices for agriculture products. Check out Scott's e-Quip blog to find out his thoughts on Yukon. Search "Scott Garvey blog" and in the archive link go to *2011.11.07, Striking agriculture gold in the Yukon.*

The banquet featured a video presentation on "Eating Local – the delicious truth of Yukoners' connection to local food." The video was a project that the Agriculture branch and the government's photography unit took on to investigate what Yukoners are saying about local food. The video featured Yukon farmers and consumers discussing why they produce or eat local. Visit the Agriculture branch website to watch the video.

Every year, the banquet recognizes the Farmers of the Year. Lucy and Jack Vogt of Vogt's Veggies were honoured with the 2011 Farmer of the Year. For more information of the nominees and farmer of the year read the full article on page 4.

Next year is the 25th anniversary of the North of 60° Agriculture Banquet. If you have any suggestion on how to celebrate 25 years, please let us know.



Photo contest winner, Anne Jessup: Basket of vegetables, harvested from Anne's Wolf Creek garden in mid-August.

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MESSAGE FROM THE AGRICULTURE BRANCH

Season's greetings! 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. First and foremost, I would like to welcome back Brad Cathers as Minister of Energy, Mines & Resources. Minister Cathers is well known in the agriculture community as the MLA for the Lake Laberge riding and as a strong supporter of the industry.

Looking back to last March, the Yukon Agricultural Association hosted a workshop with Kent Mullinix of Kwantlen Polytechnic University on developing a viable agri-food system in Yukon. The workshop focussed on developing a sustainable food system for when "cheap oil" runs out and when we will have to be more self-sufficient in local food production. Work on this project will feed into the design of new programs to support industry development under the next Growing Forward Agreement and it has been a good first step towards greater food security in Yukon.

On the industry front, it was a pleasure to walk into the big (and small) grocery stores this fall and see Yukon carrots, cabbage, beets and potatoes prominently displayed and promoted to Yukon consumers. The Fireweed Community Market and the Dawson Farmers Market also drew steady crowds again this year underlining the desire for locally produced foods and the

support we are seeing for a local agriculture industry.

In May, the Census of Agriculture started across the country. Everything from inputs to outputs, trends, demographics and tractors are being counted and this information will help develop future programs in support of a local agriculture industry. If you haven't reported yet and you are producing an agriculture product for sale, please do, as this is the only comprehensive survey of agriculture in Yukon and it only happens once every five years.

Speaking of demographics, a new young farmers group has been formed in Yukon. The farm group recently met in Whitehorse for the first time to discuss issues of

concern and mutual interest to young farmers in the industry. The Yukon group is part of the national Young Farmers Forum, a network that supports young farmers across Canada. If you are under 45 and interested in joining the group, Brad Barton at the Agriculture Branch or Sylvia Gibson at the Yukon Agricultural Association would be happy to get you connected.

Looking forward to next year, there is a new project looking at hydro-kinetic power and irrigation for farms located along major rivers in the territory. The Yukon Irrigation Strategy will be completed and with any luck, we should have a solution for handling livestock processing by-products. Later in the fall, the Agriculture Branch will be celebrating the 25th annual North of 60° Agriculture Conference and Banquet with some special guests and entertainment.

On behalf of all of the staff at the Agriculture Branch, we wish you a festive close to 2011 and all the best in the New Year.

Tony Hill
Director, Agriculture Branch

YUKON AGRICULTURE LAND LINK

Connecting the next generation of farmers to existing agriculture parcels

The Yukon Agriculture Land Link is an opportunity to connect landowners looking for alternative uses for their idle agriculture property and new farmers looking for land to start their agriculture farm enterprise.

The Agriculture Branch is enrolling those interested by collecting the names of land owners and new farmers. As contact information is gathered, the Agriculture Branch will exchange this information. Only those enrolled in the service will have access to the information.

Interested landowners and new farmers can register with the Agriculture Branch, contact information on the last page. For more information on the Yukon Agriculture Land Link visit: www.agriculture.gov.yk.ca.

TOP 10 FOOD COMPANIES: YUKON GRAIN FARM

By Jessica Leeder
Globe and Mail

YUKON GRAIN FARM HAS BECOME THE NORTHERN TERRITORY'S MOST SUCCESSFUL FARMING OPERATION

Long before eating local became fashionable, a determined pair of Alberta transplants began trying to coax food from the Yukon's stubborn, silty soil. Their goal was to fill a void in the region's local market, where the food supply for both farm animals and humans is dominated by southern imports with steep markups.

A decade later, Steve and Bonnie Mackenzie-Grieve's Yukon Grain Farm has become the northern territory's most successful farming operation, selling only locally produced feed grain and potatoes. "We saw there was a market and we tried it," says Steve Mackenzie-Grieve. "We just kind of flew by the seat of our pants."

An early phone call to a Loblaws' grocery rep to ask whether the supermarket would be interested in local tubers jump-started the farm's foray into the potato business; the grocery chain's enthusiasm was enough to convince the couple that it would be worthwhile to invest in storage facilities and plant 30 acres of table potatoes. Grocery clients now account for 90 per cent of YGF's business and represent the most promising area of growth (the Mackenzie-Grieves are also thinking about putting in a carrot storage facility and experimenting with beets); the remaining 10 per cent of revenue comes from the growing number of small-scale farmers who rely on YGF's feed to support their chicken, goat and horse operations.

Success, though, hasn't come without some cold, hard lessons—literally.

The Yukon's harsh climate narrows the growing window to between 70 and 100 days each year (farmers in Canada's south can count on up to 150 days). Harvesting must be done quickly, often in wet conditions that southern farmers wouldn't dream of tackling.

Despite the frosty hurdles, YGF has grown its sales by 5% to 10% annually. "We're fortunate," he says, "because we're supplying a basic need: food. If we were making powerboats or supplying luxury items, I would be concerned. But when you're supplying stuff that people have to have, it's good peace of mind."

Years in business: 11
Days in Yukon growing season: 70 to 100
Distance (in kilometres) north of Whitehorse: 30
Tonnes of potatoes sold each year: 400
Potential customers in Yukon: 30,000
Employees: 3

LESSONS LEARNED

1. Explore new markets. Steve's cold-call to Loblaws was critical to YGF's growth and survival. With a foot firmly planted in Loblaws' door, the couple has an open channel to sell new products as they diversify.
2. Tap into your inner customer. If your product tastes good to you, chances are that customers will feel the same.
3. Embrace the unknown. The Mackenzie-Grieves had no experience in mixing feed when they set out to grow grain. The learning curve was steep, but their reward—higher margins and a broader customer base—was worth it.

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Photo contest winner, Jaime Hanna: Yukon Grain Farm during the beginning of potato harvest.

FARMER OF THE YEAR

Every year, during the North of 60° Agriculture Banquet, the branch has the pleasure of highlighting Yukon farmers and their contribution to the agriculture sector by selecting a recipient for Yukon Farmer of the Year. This year, the branch received five terrific nominations put forward by the industry for the award. The nominations included a variety of new and experienced farmers and market gardeners that have gone that extra mile to provide Yukon Grown food and have become Yukon farm advocates by either promoting local food production, sitting on the board of their respected agriculture groups, and/or promoting research in northern production.

CHRIS WEBB received a nomination for his introduction of humic acid to Yukon gardeners and his generous sharing of knowledge about the product and its benefits. Chris, a relative newcomer to Yukon, is an avid community gardener with a passionate interest in the development of agriculture in the North. Chris is working with Yukon College and providing samples to Yukon producers to further research the use of humic acid to determine its efficacy for increased production.

WARREN & TIANA ZACKUS were nominated this year in recognition of their contributions to the agriculture community. Warren volunteers his time as the president of the Yukon Agricultural Association and Tiana is right there with him as a board member of the association.

Warren is spearheading a three year biochar project together with the Yukon College, Agriculture Branch, Yukon producers and the University of Alaska to investigate the potential of biochar to increase the productivity of Yukon soils for agriculture.

ENRICA NAHDALINI AND PETER ZIMMERMAN received a number of nominations for farmer of the year. Enrica and Peter have developed a relatively new agriculture enterprise in Yukon, the Happy Hen Egg Club. They are in their third year of production at Earth Wisdom Farm and have developed a certified organic community supported agriculture (CSA) operation supplying their members with about 50 dozen eggs a week.

Enrica also sits as an elected chair of Growers of Organic Food Yukon and both her and Peter are strong advocates for locally grown food.

JOHN LENHART has a keen interest in pushing the limits of northern agriculture and northern agricultural research and was nominated by his peers in recognition of his research and production of apples at his homestead in the Klondike River Valley.

John has been working with the University of Saskatchewan for several years now testing apple varieties and cold-hardy rootstocks that may be suitable for hobbyists to try in Yukon. John has been successful enough in his apple production that they are available at the Dawson Farmers' Market at the end of August.

John is also actively selecting and propagating dwarf conifers from the Klondike valley and plans to attend the Western Canada Nursery Growers conference and trade show to see if there is commercial interest for some of the varieties he is working on.

Other contributions include John's work as chair of the Yukon Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) Council and his cooperative association

with Dawson market gardeners at the Gold Show in the spring and the farmers' market throughout the summer.

LUCY AND JACK VOGT, FARMER OF THE YEAR FOR 2011.

Nominators of this year's winner noted Lucy's cheerful and helpful attitude toward other farmers and market participants and point to the letters she has written and the city council meetings that she has attended to share her optimistic perspective on the role of the market in the community.

Lucy and Jack Vogt have been operating Vogt's Veggies from their property at Henderson Corner on the North Klondike Highway for the past 19 years. Per acre this may be the most productive market garden operation in Yukon.

The farm is located in one of the worst frost pockets of Henderson Corner and Lucy has worked very hard to become one of the most knowledgeable and resilient farmers to have ever been a success in such a harsh environment. Lucy's management practices rely on greenhouses, crop covers, temperature alarms and overhead irrigation to battle the elements and grow top quality produce for the Klondike.

Vogt's Veggies have developed their customer base by supplying local chefs with 25 pound bags of pre-washed and trimmed produce. Her household consumers get to pick their own produce from bins containing a wide selection of vegetables picked fresh the same morning. Restaurant chefs, camp cooks and consumers line up every Saturday morning throughout the summer to buy from their booth on the Dawson Farmers' Market.

EQUINE ASSOCIATION OF YUKON EQUINE DENTAL CARE PRESENTATION

The mandate of the Equine Association of Yukon (EAY) as a territorial sport organization is the development of coaches, athletes and officials. The development of the athletes is especially important as it involves a partnership between rider and horse, a partnership that can result in great accomplishments. The care of the horse is a big part of this equation.

EAY endeavors to help educate horse owners when opportunities arise. On September 29, Dr. Dave Bell and Dr. Roxy Bell, equine veterinarians from Wetaskiwin, Alberta, delivered a presentation on equine dental care at the Riding Arena. Dr. Dave Bell showed a power-point presentation, with lots of great photos, outlining common equine dental issues, historical solutions and up-to-date practices. Dr. Roxy Bell showed a video with computer graphics that clearly demonstrated how the horse's jaw and teeth operate in order that the horse is able to be such an efficient grazer.

Attendance was close to forty-five people with many familiar faces as well as many new ones. Also in attendance were local vets and technicians who were able to gain new knowledge from expertise shared by Drs. Dave and Roxy Bell.

EAY would like to note that equine dental care has a long-standing history in Yukon. Cliff Hanna, our local equine dental practitioner, has been taking care of horses' teeth since his initial training in 1990. He went to the World Wide Equine Dental Academy in Nebraska to take part in their program, and has attended several upgrading courses since.

EAY received support for this initiative through the Canada-Yukon Growing Forward Agricultural Training Program and this allowed the presentation to be delivered free of charge to a large number of horse owners. EAY sincerely hopes the equine dental awareness promoted through this presentation will result in horse owners taking

interest in attending the seminars presented by our local equine dentist as well as recognizing dental problems in their horses and taking the appropriate steps.

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Agriwebinar™ is a web-based conference bringing the expertise of today's agricultural leaders that will inform and inspire you from the comfort of your home or office. No travel, no cost, no reason to miss out! Agriwebinar™ is free and anyone can participate as long as they have a computer and an Internet connection. Even computers connected by a dial-up service can participate. To log on or for more information on 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 11, David Irvine, Irvine & Associates: FCC presents, Working with the Ones You Love, The Human Side of Agriculture
- January 16, Elaine Froese, Seeds of Encouragement: Why Farmers Love Carrots, How to change your family dynamics to help founders let go of farm ownership and control.
- January 23, Andrew Campbell, Fresh Air Media: The SmartFarm, How Social Media and Smartphones are Helping Farms
- January 25, Karen Wright, KDW Consulting Services: FCC Presents, Good Record Keeping for Better Decision-making
- January 30, Richar Rober, Chair Canadian Farm Business Management Council: Agriculture Without State Support, The Case for New Zealand Farmers
- February 6, Maria Labrecque Duchesneau, Au coeur des familles agricoles: A Life of Duties & Lessons
- February 13, Kevin Spafford, Legacy By Design, Farm Journal : The Five Keys to Planning Success
- February 27, Colette Label, Director La Coop Federee: Cooperation for Success
- February 29, Jean-Philippe Gervais, Senior Agricultural Economist, FCC: FCC presents, A Canadian Agricultural Economic Outlook

**POTLUCK
COMMUNITY CO-OP**
WORKING TO BECOME PART
OF THE WHITEHORSE FOOD
NETWORK.

There is a limited ability for people in Yukon to consistently purchase organic, local and sustainable food items. The Potluck Community Co-op is motivated to find a solution to this challenge through a food cooperative that will help people in Yukon purchase local and regional foods – organic when possible – and other ethical and fair trade products.

In 2010, the Co-op received funding from the Co-operative Development Initiative to complete a feasibility study. The study, completed by Michael Pealow and Luigi Zanasi, aimed to answer two fundamental questions.

- Can a food co-op work in Whitehorse?
- What are the operational and financial conditions that would make it work?

The feasibility study focused on two possible models: a storefront and a distribution warehouse. A break-even analysis of the two was conducted considering operating costs, the number of members required and the percentage of the market that would need to be captured.

Results of the feasibility study determined: Yes, a food co-op could work in Whitehorse, and a distribution warehouse using donated space had the highest potential for success, the lowest overhead and the lowest risk. To break even it was calculated this would require just under 300 members (2% of Whitehorse households), spending approximately \$3,000 at the Co-op each year. Based on these results and recommendations, the Co-op is

currently planning to open a small distribution warehouse in the fall of 2012. The warehouse is currently envisioned to be something like a two car garage in size with six fridge and freezer units, and a weekly ordering system run by one staff member and volunteers. The Co-op picked this model to ensure long term sustainable growth and quality service.

In preparation for this, the Co-op board of directors has started working on the required policies including a producer purchasing policy; consumer buying policy and membership policy; as well as, a business plan. The Co-op is on the lookout for an appropriate space, equipment and an amazing staff member.

There will be lots of challenges in setting up the Co-op to sell local products, support local farmers and build capacity in the farming industry. At the recent North of 60° Agriculture Conference, the potluck presented this plan to gain input from producers and see how the Co-op can support the industry.

The Co-op is still looking for feedback and so far what they are hearing is:

- Helping farmers plan their crops in advance and letting them know what we will need to sell would be extremely helpful;
- Cold storage is a big challenge; and,
- One of the challenges will be the ability to legally sell local eggs and poultry. Producers do not have the facilities required to meet public health regulations and setting up the required infrastructure is costly.

The Co-op is investigating the challenges of bringing local food to their membership and is looking to work with producers and the Yukon government in finding a solution. The Co-op would appreciate ideas and feedback from producers on what they can do to help make the Co-op a success for local producers as well as consumers. If you would like to give the Co-op some feedback or would like a copy of the Feasibility Study or have any questions please e-mail them at info@potluckcoop.ca



Photo Contest winner, Joan Norberg: I saw how the light appeared through the open doors of the barn, and got my camera. The geese just happened to be positioned in the front doorway. Adding the final touch of the picture.

2011 NORTH OF 60° AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5

This year's conference kicked off with a morning devoted to farm labour. The morning covered a review of Service Canada programs, the Student Training and Employment Program (STEP) and Summer Career Placement. Marius Curteanu, Labour Market Development Officer was also on hand to discuss Yukon's options with the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and Nominee Program.

Yukon farmer and food advocate, Tom Rudge provided information on the World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOFER) program and how to access volunteer workers for your farm and what to expect. The morning was finished off with a presentation from Mark Hill, director of Corporate Services, Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board (WCB). Mark covered what is Workers Compensation and discussed why and how farmers

can access WCB. The WCB presentation identified so many reasons why to register, and for more information just call the WCB office at 867-667-5645, toll free 1-800-661-0443, e-mail worksafe@gov.yk.ca or visit their website at www.wcb.yk.ca

Scott Garvey's presentation "Tractor Shopping, getting it right" went through all the choices you have when buying a tractor. His presentation touched on sub-compact, compact and utility categories and the pros and cons of new versus used. The presentation provided those who were able

to attend the kind of information that will allow them to make better decisions when buying a tractor.

A big thank you must go out to the Potluck Community Co-op, who at the last minute, were able to fill in at the conference. The Potluck Co-op volunteered to fill the space, and introduce who they are, their feasibility study and took the opportunity to engage producers on sourcing local products for their Co-op. For more information go to page 6 of the newsletter.

PREMISE IDENTIFICATION FOR YUKON CATTLE, HOG, SHEEP AND POULTRY PRODUCERS

The Agriculture Branch is engaging livestock producers to assign a unique identifier to their location as part of the National Agriculture and Food Traceability System. Information collected as part of premise identification will be kept strictly confidential and will only be shared with those authorized to assist in the event of an emergency.

The Agriculture Branch is only registering locations where cattle, hogs, sheep and chickens are kept. To register or for more information go to www.agriculture.gov.yk.ca or contact Kevin Bowers at (867) 667-3043.

REMEMBERING A PIONEER

DANNY NOWLAN

Many remember Danny Nowlan who, with his wife Uli, developed and operated the Yukon Wildlife Preserve (then the Yukon Game Farm) on Hotsprings Road. He was well known for raising many species of wildlife and providing homes for orphaned animals. Perhaps he is best remembered for his way with animals and the stories of the animals that Danny and Uli shared their home with is nothing short of legendary. Those who had the pleasure of visiting Danny and Uli reflect back on Chip the beaver who ate the couch, the two wolverines that lived under the front step that school children could pat and the moose calf that walked the laneways with Danny resting its head on his shoulder whenever they stopped.

Danny is remembered for his way with animals, but the agriculture community, also remembers his contribution to game farming. Danny and Uli at one point in time farmed all three of the game farm species permitted in Yukon - Muskoxen, Wood Bison and Elk. Danny helped get other Yukon farmers set up in the elk business and enjoyed years of success selling breeding stock and velvet antler in the days before Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) shut down the velvet market. The Wildlife Preserve also provided support for Yukon agriculture by providing an opportunity for local hay producers.

Farming was only a small part of Danny's activities but his impact on Yukon agriculture is significant. Danny was one of a kind; he will be missed.

**HAINES JUNCTION
AGRICULTURE
SUBDIVISION**
LOTS STILL AVAILABLE

This August, the Agriculture Branch offered five agriculture lots for sale near Haines Junction under the planned agriculture subdivision program. This sale was for Phase 2 of the Haines Junction Agriculture Subdivision development. The lots were offered using a new application process that requires the development of a thorough business plan as part of the detailed Farm Development Plan.

Five applications were received and two of the lots were sold based on sound Farm Development Plans. The other three parcels were not sold because the business plans submitted were lacking information required to make a business case for commercial agriculture. The three remaining lots will be re-advertised and offered again in 2012.

With the increased emphasis on developing economically viable agriculture in Yukon, the move away from the lottery system (which was focused exclusively on developmental minimums) is seen

by the Agriculture Branch as a positive step forward for agriculture land development. However, Phase 2 of the Haines Junction Subdivision development is the first time the planned land disposition process was used in an open land sale and the Agriculture Branch has carefully scrutinized the performance of the new approach.

Of concern was the low number of applications received. Approximately 30 application packages were given out with five applications returned. Feedback from applicants and others who chose not to apply will be reflected in the terms of the next land sale. In particular, the new process needs to be presented in person to prospective applicants to address perceptions that the process is too complex and to define the requirements of a business plan. In this regard, the Agriculture Branch will designate a staff member to provide support and information to prospective applicants.

For more information and updates visit www.agriculture.gov.yk.ca or contact David Murray at david.murray@gov.yk.ca or phone 867-667-3699.

**AGRICULTURE LAND
DEVELOPMENT
GUIDELINES**

Variability in development work between agriculture parcels has been identified as a concern by individuals engaged in agriculture and the public. In order to address this variability and meet the commercial viability objectives of the 2006 Yukon Agriculture Policy, the Agriculture Branch has developed guidelines for Agriculture Land Development in consultation with Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee.

These guidelines interpret the policy by detailing how “clearing, breaking, seeding and in production” (the land development component of the Agreements for Sale) will be assessed prior to the parcel going to title.

The guidelines outline the standards for land development, including the initial clearing of land, the management of lumber, the management of topsoil, initial breaking, and seeding. The guidelines also include the use of shelterbelts. The guidelines are available online, or from the Agriculture Branch office.



Left: Photo Contest, honorable mention, Sharon Kempton, grazing pigs

LOOKING FOR MAPS

The Agriculture Branch frequently receives requests for imagery from farmers. The Yukon Placer Atlas has excellent photo imagery taken in the summers of 2009-2010. This imagery covers the Ibex Valley, Takhini Valley, Lake Laberge and the Southern Lakes.

The Placer Atlas is available online and can be found by searching "Yukon Placer Atlas" with your preferred search engine.

Launch the atlas, read the disclaimer and click the "agree" button on the bottom to open the map. Load the imagery into the application by clicking the button on the top right corner labelled "base information" and chose the "imagery" and "more map layers."

Select your area of interest (i.e. tick 'Land and Agriculture Tenure') to activate the layer on the map. Zoom to the 2009-2010 imagery by scrolling with your mouse or using the sliding scale in the upper left corner of the map.

Click on the orange "I want to ..." button to activate more functionality such as: drawing on the map, measuring area and distance, adding text, identifying existing parcels, getting Lat/Long information and printing your finished map.

Check out the help documentation under the orange "I want to..." tab for more instructions.

In early 2012, the Mining Land Viewer will be updated to the same standard as the Placer Atlas. If you have comments or feedback on the updated placer atlas or suggestions on improving the mining land viewer please contact Kam Davies at 867-456-6100 or email kam.davies@gov.yk.ca

YOUR OPINION IS IN SEASON

Growing Forward 2

2013 - 2018

YOUR OPINION IS IN SEASON...


Has the Growing Forward agriculture funding program been working for you? Is there any changes you would like to see? Or any programs you don't want to see lost?

The federal, provincial and territorial governments are working towards developing the next generation of agriculture funding that will follow when Growing Forward expires in 2013. Growing Forward 2 will build on the successes and lessons learned from the previous frameworks, with a vision for a profitable, innovative, competitive, market-oriented agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products industry. The Growing Forward 2 framework is being designed to help the industry position itself to profit from the opportunities and meet the challenges it will face in 2020.

The Agriculture Branch is currently working with industry representatives to review the current Growing Forward programs, to determine if these initiatives are meeting industry needs, or identifying where there may be gaps. If you have an opinion or idea as to what you feel is important for the industry, contact your association representative or any of the industry advisors sitting on the Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee:


- Fireweed Community Market: Tom Rudge
- Growers of Organic Food Yukon: Cain Vangel
- Yukon Agricultural Association: Warren Zakus & Ralph Mease
- Yukon Game Growers: Wayne Grove

If you are unable to find an industry advisor to share your idea with, you can contact the Agriculture Branch with your thoughts. Agriculture Branch contact information is available on the last page.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS

YUKON YOUNG FARMERS (YYF)

There is a new group in town; Yukon Young Farmers. Tiana Zakus, Cain Vangel, Sheri Heal, Vanessa Falle, Lindsay Dobbin and Brad Barton met in late October to form this new group, a Yukon Chapter of the Canadian Young Farmers Federation and a subcommittee of the Yukon Agricultural Association. The group's vision is to encourage and empower Yukon Young Farmers and to create networks to foster sharing, education and help between young farm families.

This group is open to anyone between the ages of 18-45 who are interested in Yukon agriculture and farming in Yukon. The group has already held its first social, where Yukon young farmers got together to share stories and enjoy pizza at Boston Pizza. The group hopes to meet a few times a year, and the next meetings are already scheduled:

- Evening of February 3, 2012. First AGM, with brainstorming session on who YYF want to be. Followed by a social with eats. Location & time to be determined
- February 29, 2012. Post CYFF meeting to debrief and share learning from attendees of the national CYFF conference and AGM in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Location & time to be determined.

If you would like to become a member, friend the Yukon Young Farmers group on Facebook.com or e-mail brad.barton@gov.yk.ca or admin@yukonag.ca

NEW AGRICULTURE VIDEO

"Eating Local – the delicious truth of Yukoners' connection to local food" is a video project the Agriculture branch and the government's photography unit took on to investigate what Yukoners are saying about local food. The video featured Yukon farmers and consumers discussing

- What does Yukon food mean to you?
- Why eat local?
- What are you looking to buy?
- Why do you farm?
- What do you want to see local food become?

The video is of Yukoners talking about Yukon food, and is approximately 15 minutes in length. The video is available to watch online on the Agriculture Branch website at www.agriculture.gov.yk.ca. Also, if you would like your very own copy, contact the agriculture branch. Contact information available in the bottom right corner.

THANK YOU

Equine Association of Yukon (EAY) would like to thank the people who contributed to making the Equine Dental Care Presentation a success:

- Dr. Dave Bell and Dr. Roxy Bell – equine dental vets and educators
- Janilyn Kooy – co-ordinator and promoter
- John Kooy (Janilyn's dad) – lending a helping hand everywhere
- Heidi Neufeldt - YHRA newsletter producer
- Mary-Jane Warshawski – posting presentation information on Facebook
- Jensen Ranch - use of the upstairs lounge at the Riding Arena

Thanks also go to Joanne Flinn and Isabelle Lefebvre, who each took their own initiative to contact many other horse owners who might have missed hearing about this presentation.

EAY would also like to thank all the owners and enthusiasts who attended this presentation – your support is very much appreciated.

HAPPY RETIREMENT, MARY-LYNN DRUL

For many years Mary-Lynn Drul was the voice on the phone and the person greeting clients at the Agriculture Branch. Marylynn retires after 22 years of public service with the Yukon Government. Thank you for your service to the Agriculture Branch and industry and all the best in retirement.

InFARMation is:

A Yukon government newsletter published by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, Agriculture Branch. 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.

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Visit: Agriculture Branch on the third floor, room 320 of the Elijah Smith Building, 300 Main Street in Whitehorse.