

YUKON AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION (YAA)

July 2003 PLOWBOY NEWSLETTER

203 – 302 Steele Street, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C5

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President's Message

By Doug Craig

My message is brief as our farmers are presumably working in their fields, officers included, rather than keeping up with the paper tasks which seem to flood in without regard to the season.

One aspect of the Yukon agricultural scene that bears noting is the bulk shipment of fertilizer which drastically reduces the cost to farmers. This is most commendable and a tribute to the CARD program and the initiative of the individuals who put this together.

Of negative impact, but almost inevitable, has been the parching dry weather through May and the first part of June which has retarded germination in those fields lacking irrigation. However, that's farming, especially in a part of the country with not only low precipitation but extreme low precipitation at a critical time.

On the administrative side of the agriculture scene, the YAA executive have held meetings with Agriculture Branch officials and the minister. There is grounds for cautious optimism based on these discussions. We hope for the best in the future, that agriculture will be regarded as an important industry beyond the small band of enthusiasts presently involved.

Office Update

By Debbie Throssell

The last couple of months have been very busy. We now have 82 members registered with the Association. We would like to welcome all the new members. If

there is anything you might need, call the office, or drop in for a coffee when you're in town.

Mark Miller is our summer student. Many of you know Mark from last year. He has been diligently updating the Web sight for us, so take a look at all the new information. Also, we are in the process of changing our Email address. The new address is yukonag@vukonaa.com. (Note the change in our newsletter masthead.) We have it working now, the old one was cancelled June 30, 2003. Drop us a line if you get a chance. If you have Email we can send out information to you ASAP.

The Klondyke Harvest Fair is in full swing with preparations. We have a few volunteers, but if anyone has some extra time, we could still use some help. The Chili booth is being taken care of by Teresa Klejno, Midway by George Green and Elaina Jensen and the Farmer's and Crafter's by Melanie Jensen. There are other areas that still need some workers for them. Volunteer meetings are being held every Wednesday from now until Fair time in the T.C. Richards Boardroom at noon. Bring your lunch and join us.

The weather has been great for getting the gardens growing. All of our potatoes are up, and everything else as well. A few days of sunshine and a few days of rain seems to be the ticket for good gardening. We found that we had some gophers and squirrels eating the roots of our plants in the

greenhouse, so have had to kick them out and board up the holes. I sure hope they find a different home. So, great growing everyone. See you at the next meeting in Mayo. Debbie.

Klondyke Harvest Fair Update

By Barbara Drury

Debbie has been working hard at all the many facets of the Klondyke Harvest Fair, but it is a much bigger job than one person can handle and we need volunteers now to take over various aspects of the fair. "Many hands make light work" is a very true motto that applies in this instance.

The volunteer committee meetings are taking place every Wednesday at noon in the board room at the TC Richards building. There are different aspects of the fair that need to be dealt with, such as Entertainment, the Midway, Farmers and Crafters booths, Advertising, the Bench Show Tent, Admissions, Parking lot supervision, the YAA tent (includes Children's section) etc.

At present George Green and Elaina Jensen are in charge of the Midway, Melanie Jensen is handling the Farmers & Crafters booths, and Barbara Drury is in charge of Entertainment.

The fair is less than one month away! So lets make it a great event, come out and support it, and if possible, volunteer to help with some aspect.

If you are too busy to help before the event, but would like to participate on the days of the fair, please call Debbie at the office so she can put your name down on the volunteer list. We need people the day of the fair to do stuff like helping set up the Bench Show exhibits (in the morning) security in the Bench Show tent (Saturday afternoon and Sunday...just keep an eye on the exhibits), help out with the Dart booth, help out

with the Admissions booth, etc. If you volunteer for 2 hour time slots, then you have plenty of time to enjoy the fair as well.

How's your garden doing?

Remember to **enter your flowers or vegetables** in the Bench Show at the Klondyke Harvest Fair! Registration is 8 am – 10 am August 9th at Rotary Peace Park!

Everyone always loves to look at all the great produce grown by their neighbours and friends! Lets make this the best year ever!

How's your baking and preserves?

Enter those delicious cakes, pies and cookies in the Bench Show at the Klondyke Harvest Fair! And those wonderful jams, jellies, salsas, pickles and other preserves as well!

What about needlework, crochet, knitting, & quilting?

We'd love to see your best efforts on display at the Klondyke Harvest Fair! And so would all your friends and neighbours! Registration for these items is Tuesday – Friday, August 5th – 8th from 10 am – 4 pm at the TC Richards Building.

Abattoir Assessment Update

By Barbara Drury

The Abattoir assessment study, commissioned by the YTG and completed by Malcolm Taggart and Barbara Drury, is now finished and copies are available at the Agriculture Branch.

The purpose of the study was to determine how the Partridge Creek abattoir could be better utilized by southern Yukon red meat producers.

The main obstacle to use was found to be the costs of transportation.

The report recommended that a transportation subsidy would encourage greater use of the abattoir, and that the Agriculture Branch, in conjunction with the YAA and red meat producers, should work out the details of a subsidy.

The report also recommended that "given the apparently strong demand for inspected meat by elk producers" the Agriculture Branch enter into negotiations with Partridge Creek regarding modifying the facility so that it could handle elk.

Dave Andrew (YAA vice-president and beef producer) and Barbara Drury (YAA member, Game Grower Director, beef and elk producer) are presently negotiating with the Agriculture Branch on the design of a transportation subsidy. It is everyone's wish that something concrete is in place for this fall.

The Agriculture Branch is also doing research into how an elk handling facility could be added onto the present (beef) handling facility at Partridge Creek.

Need Assessment for Community Kitchen (CARD Project) Update

By Heidi Marion

I am researching the need for a communally used, certified kitchen. To date, I have contacted 44 potential kitchen users. With the help of people who process or who would like to process food, I developed a questionnaire to gauge need and to pull together information about what features would be most useful in a certified kitchen.

I asked potential users where the best kitchen location would be. One of my ideas is to locate the kitchen in a trailer so that it could be parked outside community centres, band buildings, churches, etc. This would render the kitchen available to almost all Yukoners.

Another idea is to build the kitchen alongside a proposed cold-storage facility. This would enable kitchen users to store large amounts of raw and processed food on site. Some products to be processed are jams and jellies, sauces and spreads, jerky, fish, game and other meat, and prepared meals. There is also interest from festival organizers who need to cater for volunteers and performers.

I have received 15 of 40 questionnaires so far. I'm quite pleased with the response rate, as the questionnaire is very comprehensive in anticipation of the next kitchen project : making it a reality! But first, I will compile responses and find out what needs food processors share.

Are you interested in filling out a questionnaire? Give me a call at 867-821-4003 and I'll send one out to you. Thanks to all who took the time to send in questionnaires! Happy Growing!

Whitehorse Area Cold Storage Facility Study (CARD Project) Update

By Garret Gillespie

The idea of a cold storage facility in the Whitehorse area is not a new one. This study is an attempt to gauge the level of interest and what shape that interest might take.

The project has been moving slowly due to my other commitments, and I expect to finish in December of this year.

So far there appears to be very little interest amongst commercial growers in a cold store for fresh produce and roots. There is, however, a

significant amount of interest amongst urban and suburban home gardeners in a place where they may store a few hundred pounds of potatoes and the like.

It surprised me to find out that people were concerned about the issues of food security and sustainability.

I would be interested to hear from anybody who has got an opinion to offer on a potential cold storage in Whitehorse.

One of the possible manifestations of a cold store may be the formation of a society that will administer the building and organization. Membership will help pay for the running of the facility and will allow the member access to a designated locker area suited to the long-term storage of root crops and short-term storage of cabbages.

Contact me with your ideas at 867-821-4003.

Organic Growers' Group Update

By Heidi Marion of
Wild Blue Yonder Herbs and Vegetables
Since the last YAA newsletter, we organic growers have become a bona fide group. We are now a chapter of Canadian Organic Growers (COG). Our handle is Growers of Organic Food Yukon, or GOOFY. We think it suits!

Our meetings have taken the shape of potlucks at rotating members' farms. Talk has centered on the practical, like trying to remedy soil block ailments and what to do about foxtail barley. A couple of us also got together to order organic fertilizers. We have talked some politics, like trying to keep abreast of national issues in organic agriculture, and trying to get our heads around the APF (Agricultural Policy Framework). And of course, we all love meeting each other's families, being shown each

other's farms, and eating home cooked organic fare.

Our guest speaker at our June 22 meeting was Lindy Pratch. Lindy spent a year as a "WWOOFer" (Willing Worker on Organic Farms) in Spain, France, Australia and New Zealand. Lindy's experience was very broad : from learning propagation methods of lemon trees on the side of a mountain to tending a large kitchen garden at a well appointed B&B. We were fascinated by Lindy's account of the array of farm permutations she encountered on her travels.

We welcome new members. The next GOOFY meeting will be in August at our place near Carcross. For directions and the time and date of the next meeting, visit our chapter on the COG web site www.cog.ca, or call me at 867-821-4003.

News from Mayo

By Norma Mease
Mayo celebrated its 100th birthday officially on June 3rd. The last weekend of June was full of events happening and lots of people around. The weather has been great with lots of sunshine and enough rain at the right times.

Gardens are coming along well. We will again have garden, greenhouse and yard judging the middle of August. Also this year at our annual pig roast which will be held August 31st there will be an Agriculture meeting.

This spring has been great for the birds producing young. Seem to be lots around. Now its haying season. The fellows will be starting on the airport this week.

Special Report from Dawson City

John Lenart's Orchards

By Barbara Drury

I had occasion to see John Lenart July 5th in Dawson, and got caught up on the latest with what is happening in his orchards.

He expects a great crop from his sheltered trees this year, (these being under a plastic snow-covered shelter in winter). These 20 trees (mostly apple with some pear) are loaded with blooms and budding fruit, and he guesses that he will get something like 100 lbs total off of them.

However the unsheltered trees, numbering in the hundreds, got hit this year by several hard frosts in June (-2.5C) while the buds were on. This has knocked their productivity back for this season, but as most of these weren't scheduled for serious crop production until next year anyway it is not as bad as it could be.

These 300 or so trees are made up of some 130 different cultivars, and over the next several years he will be assessing their performance to determine which will be the "keepers" and which the "discards". So far he has noticed that the cultivars from the Prairies seem to wait for heat before they really take off, and up here they can wait for a long time. In contrast the cultivars from the (former) Soviet Union and China don't wait for heat, they just grow. These will no doubt be the ones he concentrates his efforts on.

He feels that he would get similar good results with cultivars from Scandanavia, but has not found a good source as yet.

He is also doing very interesting experiments with conifers and dwarf conifers, but that will be another article for the September newsletter!

Game Growers Update

By Barbara Drury

As some of you are no doubt aware, the Game Growers have been fighting an uphill battle with the Fish and Wildlife Management Board and now the Fish and Game Association with their perception of our industry.

For some reason, both groups do not like game farming and are trying to influence public opinion likewise.

They say they are concerned about disease issues to wildlife, but they never seem interested in hearing about how we've never had disease problems, or how stringent our regulations are regarding importation or disease.

They like to focus in on "hunt farms" and how terrible these might be, although why they are so terrible is never made clear. We are interested in the humane harvest of our animals, and have been harvesting them for meat "behind wire" for the past year with no problems.

We sure appreciate the support of the agriculture community on this, and if you would like to know more, or write a supportive letter to the paper, give one of our directors a call.

Wayne Grove 393-1942
Shirley Ford 633-4342
Barbara Drury 668-1045

CANADIAN ADAPTATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Update

By Deborah Cassidy

To date the CARD Committee has approved forty projects under the Canadian Adaptation & Rural Development Fund. Fourteen projects are still in progress and should be completed by year- end.

The CARD Committee has recently approved the following projects:

- Greenhouse Production of Seedlings
\$4,160.00
Applicant – Victoria Faulkner Centre
- From Seeds to Harvest
\$7,465.00
Applicant – Dawne Mitchell
- Greenthumb Cloning
\$5,800.00
Applicant – Kathy Kruse
- Gardening for Selkirk First Nation
\$10,000.00
Applicant – Selkirk First Nation
- 9th Annual Klondyke Harvest Fair
\$5,000.00
Applicant – Yukon Agricultural Association

Agriculture Environmental Stewardship Initiative (AESI)

Recently Approved:

- Information Gathering & Overview of Existing – Environmental Farm Plans
\$3,375.00

The Canadian Adaptation & Rural Development fund is in the final year. The program has been extended until March 31, 2004. There could possibly be one last Call for Proposals in the fall of 2003.

Yukon Rodeo Association

Schedule of Events 2003:

Fully Sanctioned by Northwest Rodeo Association - full rodeo with full events!

Friday, July 11

Gates Open 5:00 pm
Beer Gardens Open 4:30 pm
Grand Entry 6:00 pm
Main Events & Jr. Events to follow

Saturday, July 12

Gates Open 1:00 pm
Beer Gardens Open 1:30 pm
Grand Entry 2:00 pm
Main Events & Jr. Events to follow
Mutton Busting - (ages 5-8 years only) Intermission
Rodeo Dance featuring "The Swamp Donkeys" 9:00 pm
Tickets are \$10 - hosted at Mt. McIntyre, downstairs.

Sunday, July 13

Gates Open Noon
Beer Gardens Open 12:30 pm
Grand Entry 1:00 pm
Mutton Busting - (ages 5-8 yrs only) Intermission

ADMISSION PRICES:

DAILY RATE	WEEKEND***
ADULTS (16 years and older)	
daily rate :	\$10
Weekend rate :	\$25 ***
YOUTH (7-15 years)	
Daily rate :	\$5
Weekend rate :	\$12 ***
SENIOR (60+ years)	
Daily rate :	\$5
Weekend rate:	\$12 ***
CHILD (6 years and under)	FREE

*****Weekend Passes must be purchased no later than Friday, July 11, 7:00 pm.*****

RODEO DANCE \$10 per person
- Saturday, July 12th, hosted at Mt. McIntyre
- Music by "The Swamp Donkeys, featuring Paul Hewtlet

Advance ticket sales for Rodeo Dance available at:
Jensen's Western Store and The Feed Store - cash only please.

For more information or to volunteer please contact Lisa at 633-4321.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!

By Debbie Throssell

Canadian Agriculture and Food Celebration is soon upon us. We are looking for Food Safety tips from farmers to distribute to the public. Either give us a call, drop a tip in the mail, or email us at yukonag@yukonaa.com. We would love to hear from you. We hope to develop a calendar to put out to the public with the tips on it. So, get them in soon.

CANADIAN FARMER'S RAISE ONE VOICE ON WATER

By Debbie Throssell

Wendy Holm's, an Agrologist from Bowen Island, is lobbying on behalf of Farmers, to have the sovereignty of water and resources returned to Canadians. To date she has 54 organizations behind her in Canada out of just over 200.

Wendy is lobbying to have the water excluded from the NAFTA and FTA agreement. Prior to the signing of the NAFTA, it was agreed that the water of Canada would be excluded from the agreement. At the eleventh hour, it was included against the wishes of Canadians. If you would like to know more about this issue, there is a web site. Go to www.farmertofarmer.ca and catch up on all the issues. This is a starting point for farmers to be heard.

This newsletter is produced bi-monthly.
The next newsletter is due out in September.

Deadlines for submissions is the 7th of every publishing month, as our target date for mailing is the 20th of that month.

Editor: Barbara Drury

Email your copy to drury@yt.sympatico.ca

Phone : (867)668-1045

Free Classifieds

For Sale : Large Industrial type meat grinder, comes with all attachments. Phone Bill 668-1045

For Sale: Hay, square bales and round bales. We deliver. Phone Circle D Ranch 668-1045

For Sale: Beef or elk meat. Beef is by the side, and elk is by the side, or by the 50 or 25 lb. box of mixed cuts. Phone 668-1045 to order.

Remember to get your classified ads in before the next newsletter! Next deadline is September 7th, 2003.

Joke of the Month

Farm Computing Terms

Log on: Making the wood stove hotter

Log off: Don't add wood

Monitor : Keep an eye on the wood stove

Download: Getting the firewood off the pickup

Mega Hertz: When you're not careful downloading (watch the toes!)

Floppy disk: What you get from piling too much wood

RAM: the hydraulic thingy that makes the woodsplitter work

Hard Drive : getting home in the mud season

Prompt: what you wish the mail was

Windows: what to shut when its 30 below

Screen: what you need for mosquito season

Byte: what mosquitos do

Chip: something to munch on

Micro chip: what's left in the bag when the chips are gone

Modem: what you did to the hay fields

Mouse: what eats the grain in the barn

Keyboard : where to hang your keys

Software: plastic eating utensils

Main frame: structural part of the barn roof

The Klondyke Harvest Fair 2003

Registration Information

Registration for the following categories
takes place at the

TC Richards Building at 3rd & Steele on
Tuesday, Aug.5 – Friday, Aug.8

From 10 am – 4 pm

Section IV	Traditional Native Crafts
Section V	Preserved Foods
Section VII	Quilting
Section VIII	Knitting
Section IX	Needlework
Section X	Crocheting
Section XI	Wine, Beer & Liqueurs
Section XII	Advance Registration for Livestock & Poultry
Section XII - B	Advance Registration for Pet Costumes
Section XII - C	Recycled Creations
Section XII - D	Scarecrow Contest

Registration for the following categories
takes place at the

Rotary Peace Park grounds on

Saturday, August 9

From 8 am – 10 am

Section I	Vegetables
Section II	Flowers & Plants
Section III	Farm Produce - Field Crops
Section III	Farm Produce - Other
Section VI	Home Baking
Section XII - A	Livestock & Poultry (final registration)
Section XII - B	Pet Costumes (registration)

Cost of Registration:
Seniors \$2.00 per entry (maximum \$10.00)
Juniors \$1.00 per entry (maximum \$5.00)
Maximum designates the most to be charged for an unlimited number of entries.