



Yukon Agricultural Association

Surplus wealth is a sacred trust which its possessor is bound to administer in his lifetime for the good of the community." --**Andrew Carnegie, Scottish-American industrialist, entrepreneur and philanthropist**

The Christmas Spirit - all year round

The above quote from Industrialist, Andrew Carnegie, is a sentiment to which Ebenezer Scrooge would once, no doubt, have dourly responded, "Bah, Humbug!" But, afterwards,..., after the visitation of the three spirits and his change of heart, there is equally no doubt Scrooge would have agreed with Carnegie, and considered his words well to live by, and all the more so during the Christmas Season.

But what is surplus wealth? For that matter, what is wealth? When we think of wealth, most of us probably first think of money, and to be sure, financial health and security are measures of wealth, but are there not other measures too?

Think of Scrooge. Was he truly wealthy while he lived his miserly life alone with all his money, thinking of nothing but how to make more of it, and thinking of no one but himself? Or was his wealth greater when he had a change of heart and became a charitable man showing kindness to employees and servants, and restoring his relationship with his family? Was he not wealthier by far when he personally delivered a large goose to the Cratchet family, offered them assistance regarding the care of their ailing son, and was received with gladness into their home? Did he not suddenly find more joy in his generosity towards others and in doing good for his community than he had previously had in making money and living only for himself?

How about us? What are our measures of wealth? To be sure, we need money to pay for our daily needs and responsibilities, plan for our futures and have a contingency for the unexpected curves life can throw at us. But think for a moment of all the other ways in which we may consider ourselves wealthy. You can make your own list, but may I suggest including our community associations, clubs and organizations, and their members who give so generously of their time and talents, if not also their treasure.

They provide a social network and a service, not only for their members, but also for the good of the community at large. Certainly, I like to think of our own Association as part of the wealth of our community. I think if we were not here, and if other community organizations were not here, we would all be the poorer for it. I am thankful for all of them, and I am thankful for the members and leaders who make them go. Thank you, and keep up the good work.

Merry Christmas.

The YAA Board of Directors offers best wishes to you and yours for a blessed holiday season and a prosperous year to come.

- Rick Tone, Exec Director, YAA/CAAP Council





**How many people
does it take to
slaughter a Turkey?**

Approximately eleven. At least when the Turkey is organic, local and alive only two days before Thanksgiving. One turkey might be handled by an adept man or woman but the Vangel-Murphy family needed a proper band of Turkey helpers to handle a large rafter of Thanksgiving birds. (150)

I only moved to Whitehorse a few weeks ago. I am the typical new immigrant to Whitehorse - relatively young, urban, love the outdoors, and slightly starry-eyed about the possibilities of Northern country living. Feeling disconnected from land, food and almost anything I have purchased in my previous home city, I wanted to "be truly thankful" for the food on my plate at this year's thanksgiving dinner. Through a family member, I found out about the next turkey slaughter opportunity at a local Whitehorse farm. Even more compelling was the cooperative nature of this get-together. The local machinery required for the small-scale turkey abattoir operation is jointly owned by several family farms, each having reared their own flock of turkeys for several months. However, the process still requires several hands-on-deck to make sure the job is done quickly and cleanly.

I felt I might be the weakest link in this group of adept bird-handlers. The slaughter begins in the cold of the early morning (no snow this year was a cause for good cheer and celebration from the regular volunteers) and people pick their stations quickly; slaughtering, plucking, eviscerating. Some took pity on me looking a little lost and promptly stationed me at the pin-feather plucking table where I might do little harm. I was not sure when

the live turkey's were going to look like something that I would recognize as a Thanksgiving bird- mainly the fleshy ball I purchased from the grocery store last year. The old-timers laughed at me when I finished plucking my first bird and proudly declared, "Now that looks like a real Turkey". From there, the day sped by in a well-oiled system concluding the organic abattoir circuit this year. I did my best but struggled with the "Tom" feathers which were hard to pull out from under the skin. After five hours working on these birds and only two-thirds of the flock "de-feathered", I seemed to be the only one who was a little worse for wear. These hearty folk worked fast, efficiently and with better conversation than would be inspired by, I imagine, an industrial process. While I took pride in a good day's work I was further impressed by the additional sweat required to get the job done; Cain and Michelle, with the assistance of one other hearty neighbor, continued to process the last third of the birds on their own until 4 AM the next morning until each one was ready for sale the next day. At the Thanksgiving dinner table my family commented on taste of the bird and most were convinced this turkey was different than the store bought kind from last year. One skeptical "why bother with getting your hands dirty" relative suggested there was no difference. For her I could list many other benefits besides taste: nutritional value, community building, self-education, a hormone and antibiotic free bird, supporting local farms and animal husbandry. The most important value in this bird was the realization that I am not a farmer. It's hard to be a farmer, and maybe I should continue to be part of the process I continue to count on and expect each Thanksgiving.

- MARLON DAVIS



Seeking Mushroom Advice

Is there anyone who has tried cultivating mushrooms in Yukon? I've found 7 potential gourmet mushroom species I will try. I was thinking if other folk are doing it or have tried it I should find out and see if they have any advice to share. I have a lot of good logs from opening up the land here at Birch Camp and so am looking into using some as mushroom growing logs. Many species of gourmet and medicinal mushrooms can be cultivated on logs. Write to me at uncleberwym@yukonbirch.ca

Thanks

Berwyn Larsen

Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP)

CAAP is an Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) program intended to help farmers and the agricultural industry at large seize opportunities, respond to new and emerging issues and pathfind and pilot solutions to new and ongoing challenges in order to adapt and remain competitive.

In Yukon, CAAP is managed by the Yukon Agricultural Association under an agreement with AAFC. The YAA has, in turn, set up an independent CAAP Council to adjudicate project proposals, and decide on their eligibility and the amount of funding support which may be made available out of the contributions AAFC has provided for this purpose.

Anyone at any level of Yukon's agriculture and food industry, from farm to retail, is eligible to propose a project and receive funding provided the project meets the program criteria. Application forms and/or further information may be obtained by calling Rick at the YAA-CAAP Council office at 867.668-6864, or by sending an Email to admin@yukonag.ca. AAFC may also be called toll free at 1.877.290.2188, or their web site may be visited at www.agr.gc.ca/caap. AAFC's representative in Yukon, may also be contacted at 667-5272 or by Email at Valerie.A.Whelan@agr.gc.ca.

If you have an idea to propose, and need help developing it, or completing an application, contact us. The deadline for the next proposal intake is January 20.



Photo: Vanessa Falle with Jean-Pierre Blackburn, Minister of Veteran's Affairs & Minister of State (Agriculture)
Vanessa Falle and Tiana Zakus recently represented Yukon at a Young Farmers of the Future Conference in Ottawa along with young farmer representatives from the other provinces and territories across Canada.

Meat inspection pilot

December 21, 2010

Paperwork is now available for provincially-inspected meat processors to apply to take part in pilot projects aimed at freeing up interprovincial trade in meat.

Provincial packers and processors interested in taking part are asked to apply by Jan. 7, 2011 in their respective provinces. Information about this project, including how to apply and to whom in participating jurisdictions -- all 10 provinces and the Yukon Territory -- is available online.

Current federal meat inspection legislation blocks provincially-inspected meat plants from selling meat in Canada beyond the borders of a plant's home province. Federally-inspected plants may ship meat anywhere within Canada as well as for export.

The idea of allowing provincially-inspected plants to sell their products in other provinces has been discussed for years but until now hasn't gained much traction.

"The interprovincial sale of meat is inhibited by standards that vary between the provinces and territories and we want to change that," Manitoba's agriculture minister Stan Struthers said in a separate release Monday, encouraging provincial-grade packers to apply for the pilot projects.

"Lessons learned from this pilot project will help us develop better food-safety requirements that maintain high standards and at the same time allow businesses to expand their markets, benefiting the local economy."

Source: albertafarmerexpress

Whew, is it getting hot in here, or...

CLIMATE PROSPERITY

The Economic Risks and Opportunities of Climate Change for Canada

Climate change and Canada's response to it have profound economic implications for our nation's future. There are risks but there are also opportunities. We need to position ourselves to compete and prosper in an increasingly carbon-constrained global economy. Ensuring Canada is well-prepared to adapt and prosper as part of this new reality is the focus of a comprehensive policy research initiative by the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE), called **Climate Prosperity**.

[Degrees of Change: Climate Warming and the Stakes for Canada](#), is the second of what will be seven volumes devoted to the Climate Prosperity initiative.

If you have something to say about a report you've read, a challenge we're tackling, or the way we work, we want to hear from you. You can send us your comments via our [feedback form](#) or [contact a member of our staff](#). Also, National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy, 344 Slater Street, Suite 200, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1R 7Y3 Telephone: 613-992-7189; Fax: 613-992-7385; E-mail: admin@nrtee-trnee.ca, Web: www.nrtee-trnee.ca

(Lets not kid ourselves. Agriculture is in this equation too. Check out what the National Round Table is doing at the links above, and if you have some thoughts on the matters at hand, be sure to let them know. Thanks to Chad Gubala for bringing this to our attention. - Rick)

Membership and Leadership

Those are two ships which I hope you will consider boarding. The YAA tries to represent the broad interests of Yukon's farmers, agriculture industry and to some extent, other landholders. In fact, as I like to say, given that Food Is Everybody's Business, in a way, we represent everyone. No, we are not perfect, but who is? So, join us. Membership is only \$10, or take out a multi-year membership @\$10 x No. of years. (multi year helps my admin work a lot). Pls also consider volunteering for leadership. In Feb, I will be asking for nominations to present at our AGM in April. Why not let your name stand as a Director? Be it as passenger or crew, you are welcome. ALL ABOARD!

Hey, Soil Geeks - Great word: microherd

"Microherd" hasn't made it into any of the mainstream dictionaries yet, but soil geeks and those with obsessive compost disorder will know immediately what it means. The word is becoming a popular way to describe the collection of micro-organisms in the soil and in the compost heap that break down organic material, keeping things healthy and productive.



We like the idea on a couple of levels. First, if you think of how organics get broken down (often by micro-organisms digesting and pooping out material), the concept is obviously related to raising cattle, chickens and pigs.

Second, the word herd makes us think of animal husbandry. You need to take care of the microherd in your compost pile. It's a reminder to make sure your microherd has enough moisture (sometimes you need to add water to your compost), warmth (keep your composter in a sunny area) and exercise (stir it up from time to time). (Thx to Joanne Johnson, - ref taken from 'Local Gardener', - see link below.

<https://www.localgardener.net/pages.php?lang=en&page=articles&action=view&vid=76->