

We're all waiting for spring and the snow to go, even the tractors! Photo: Ann-Marie Stockley

YAA AGM INFORMATION

Spring is around the corner & so's the AGM!
When: Saturday April 27, 9:30am to 1:00pm. Lunch and refreshments will be provided.
Where: Meeting Room A, Coast High Country Inn, 405 1 Fourth Avenue, Whitehorse. Please join us!

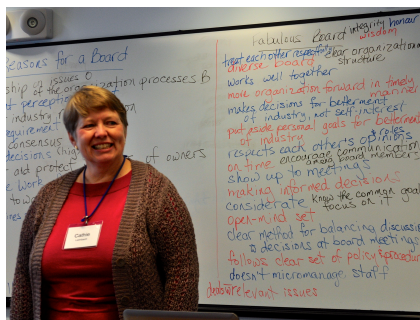


Nominations for YAA executive positions need to be received no later than April 21, 4:00 pm at the YAA office.

Twenty special resolutions relating to bylaw changes will be presented for consideration at the AGM. The YAA's bylaws were last updated in 2007. It became evident during the governance training undertaken by YAA Directors over the past year that the bylaws required revision. These special resolutions present changes that could streamline the organization and ensure efficient functioning. The resolutions have been emailed or mailed to all members and will be voted upon at the AGM.

Only YAA members can vote in elections and on meeting matters. For those whose memberships expired Mar 31 2013, we will accept renewals and new members prior to the start of the AGM. Additionally, memberships can be purchased at the office (cash or cheque only) or online at www.yukonag.ca/membership/default.cfm.

POLICY ADOPTION



Cathie Leimbach presenting board training
 Photo: Kirsten Scott

The YAA Policy Manual was adopted at the March 13 2013 Board Meeting.

This 34-page document represents a significant amount of work from board members, staff and facilitator Cathy Leimbach. Thanks to all!

The need for policies arose out of the 2012 CAAP audit which requested development of Yukon CAAP Council policies. The YAA Board subsequently decided it would be useful for the organization to have its own policies to enable clear and fair action on a range of topics from board performance to equipment rental.

The manual is available from the YAA website. Some work remains to be done on the appendices and procedures.

WRAP-UP: EGG GRADING & ALASKA FLOUR COMPANY PRESENTATIONS

The Agriculture Branch hosted Brad Jones, Program Specialist Eggs, from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency on Saturday March 23 to give a presentation to Yukon egg producers. This included information on egg grading and the physical requirements for creating/building an egg grading facility.

In the afternoon, Yukon Young Farmers hosted Bryce Wrigley from the Alaska Flour Company. Bryce spoke about the similarities between Alaskan and Yukon agriculture (the challenges and opportunities facing both) as well as importance of local food systems and relevant government policy.

The Alaska Flour Company mills Sunshine hullless barley grown on the family farm and Bryce addressed decisions important to consider when starting or expand an agricultural business as well as technical aspects of flour milling. His presentation was inspiring and provided a useful contact for several local farmers.



Harvesting barley in Delta Junction, AK.
 Photo: Bryce Wrigley

SPEAKER SERIES: UPCOMING EVENTS

Haskaps

The YAA is working to bring Carl Barber of Northern Light Orchards in Birch Hills SK (175km north of Saskatoon). Carl has been growing haskaps since 2008 and has 10 acres in production for U-pick, retail and wholesale markets.

Scientifically known as *Lonicera caerulea*, haskap is also commonly known as blue honeysuckle, honeyberry, edible honeysuckle and sweet berry honeysuckle. The flavorful and nutritionally rich berries grow on winter hardy northern temperate zone berry bushes.

Tentative date: late July, possibly Sat 27th. Please let us know if you are interested!



Beekeeping

Interested in bees, honey or mead? Bob Liptrot from the Tugwell Creek Honey Farm and Meadery in Sooke, BC (south Vancouver Island) could answer your questions!

Topics for this may include: control of pests and pathogens, breeding for hygienic behaviour and mite resistance, swarm control, overwintering in cold climates, small scale queen production, honey production and marketing, and predator protection

Bob is also happy to speak to a broader level issues such as colony collapse disorder or sustainable pollination.

Tentative date: early to mid July. Again, please let us know if you are interested!



FARM EQUIPMENT RENTAL FOR 2013

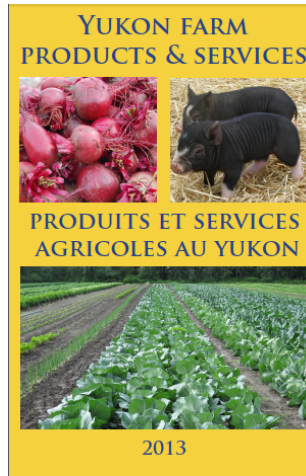
Please book YAA farm equipment and event tents (there is now a trailer to transport the tents) through the YAA office.

Renters can phone the office to make a booking or check the online calendar (at <http://www.yukonag.ca/equipment.cfm>) for equipment availability. Equipment caretakers can still make same-day rentals when the equipment is free and notify the office that these have taken place.

If you want to rent the YAA farm equipment or tents in 2013, please call the office first at (867) 668 6864.

2013 YUKON FARM PRODUCTS GUIDE

A big thank you to all farms, businesses and organizations who participated by listing in the 2013 guide booklet and website. (And staff!) There are 73 farms, 42 businesses and 30 groups in the publication.



Once printed, the booklets will be available through places such as the YAA office, Yukon Made Store, Agriculture Branch, Fireweed Community Market, Dawson City Farmers' Market, other community markets, libraries and post offices or information centres in the communities.

The booklet is currently online at www.yukonfarmproducts.ca

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM & FARM EMPLOYMENT

The YAA has been researching what is involved to develop an agricultural internship program for Yukon farmers. The office has contacted other organizations running similar programs elsewhere in Canada, such as World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF), Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training and Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network. Additionally, Kirsten attended an 'Intro to Health & Safety' workshop for NGOs.

There are significant requirements to create this kind of program. These include negotiating funding, obtaining WCB coverage, selecting applicants and farms to participate, providing safety training, and ensuring farm/intern expectations are fair. The YAA will therefore work towards having a program ready for the 2014 season.

In the mean time, we have an informal list of employers and employees and can assist farmers and workers by exchanging this information. So, let us know if you want to work on a farm this summer or are looking for employees. We'll try to help out! Please also advise if you're interested in participating as a host or intern in the future internship program.

CLASSIFIEDS

Heart Bar Ranch - Gail Reiderer

Weaner pigs available in May. Finished pigs ready in fall.
Call (867) 393 1955

Kerrsdale Heritage Farm - Anja Hoehle

Dawson's very own pork, poultry & egg producer! To participate in Community Supported Agriculture, order for Summer/Fall 2013 by May 20th.

- **Chickens** (Cornish Giants) available Aug. Dressed weight 5-8lbs, \$4.95/lb (+GST), pre-pay \$16.50 each.
- **Turkeys** (reg. white) available from late Sept. Dressed weight 12-18lbs, \$5.45/lb (+GST), pre-pay \$44 each.
- **Pork** (Large Blacks and Yorkshires) available late Aug. Dressed weight 100 - 120lbs, \$6.95/lb (+GST), cut & wrapped, including fresh sausage, pre-pay \$650/ whole pig or \$325/ side.
- **Eggs** from free-run chickens, brown & white, available July. Please pre-order; quantities are limited. Delivery to Dawson once a week. \$8.50/doz (+GST), pay on delivery.

All animals are raised free range on mixed pasture; no growth hormones or chemicals used in meat production.

Call/ text/ msg 867 993 3532 or kerrsdaleheritage@hotmail.com

Horse Manure - Alison Reid

A number of Whitehorse-area horse owners will be happy to provide you with horse manure once their corrals have thawed. For a list of some of them, please contact Alison Reid at areid@northwestel.net. Note that some may charge a fee. Please no drop-ins; be sure to contact them in advance.

Classifieds free to YAA Members. Please join us in helping further agriculture in the Yukon!

YAA MAYO ROAD LAND UPDATE

Two 20' shipping containers were purchased as storage units for the Mayo Road land. These will arrive sometime in late April.

In order to re-fence the land, 9.1 acres of perimeter was cleared by a contractor. The trees were knocked down along the existing fence lines and piled in windrows. The YAA hopes to re-fence over the spring/summer of 2013 and looks forward to developing a usage plan for the land.

Special thanks to YAA Director Mike Blumenschein for his help with matters relating to the land; he always ensures accurate and high-quality work is provided to the Association. Thanks also to President Cain Vangel for organizing shipping the sea cans from BC to YT!

The 8th Circumpolar Agricultural Conference and UArctic Inaugural Food Summit will be held **September 29 – October 3, 2013** at Hotel Alyeska, Girdwood, Alaska.

The conference is advancing food security and sustainable agriculture in the circumpolar north; and building an integrated vision and creating a process for sustainable food security in northern communities.

The conference will consist of invited talks on featured topic followed by formal poster sessions where presenters will provide an overview of the content and purpose of their poster. The discussion generated will continue into a series of breakout sessions organized around the following objectives:

1. Educating world leaders on the critical nature of food supplies in the Circumpolar North;
2. Encouraging the exchange of information, material, and technology of agriculture and rural development in circumpolar areas;
3. Establishing and maintaining relationships with other organizations whose interests are related to the objectives of the Circumpolar Agriculture Association and the thematic network on northern food security of the University of the Arctic, and;
4. Discussing and defining the barriers, challenges, and opportunities of expanding the regional food economy.

Stay tuned for more information on funding opportunities to attend the conference.



Humic acid ('wonder dirt') is a natural soil amendment that has many benefits in agriculture. It is the soluble organic portion of humus (decomposed plant and animal matter) already present in soils. Augmenting humic acid in soils can increase yields and decrease the amounts of fertilizers that are needed, resulting in increased profits for the farmer.

Benefits of Humic Acid in Agriculture

1. Soil modification and improvement:
 - ▶ increases water-holding capacity of soil
 - ▶ increases aeration of soil
 - ▶ improves soil structure and workability
 - ▶ helps plants resist drought
 - ▶ reduces soil erosion
2. Chemical benefits
 - ▶ prevents leaching of water-soluble fertilizers out of the root-zone
 - ▶ promotes conversion of elements to plant-available forms
 - ▶ posses high ion-exchange capacity
 - ▶ increases buffering properties of soil
 - ▶ chelates metal ions
 - ▶ increases uptake of phosphate and other plant nutrients
 - ▶ increases availability of phosphorous and iron in alkaline soils
 - ▶ rich in organic material and minerals essential to plant growth
3. Biological benefits
 - ▶ stimulates plant growth by accelerating cell division, root development and yield of dry matter
 - ▶ increases germination of seed and viability
 - ▶ increases permeability of plant membranes promoting uptake of nutrients
 - ▶ stimulates root respiration
 - ▶ stimulates growth and proliferation of beneficial soil microorganisms
 - ▶ aids in photosynthesis
 - ▶ stimulates plant enzymes
 - ▶ increases vitamin content of plants

(References: *Humic Acids for Agriculture - Product Guide*, Wapaw Bay Resources Inc, Zenon Park, SK, (306) 767-2296)

Anyone interested in learning more about the many uses of humic acid can call Chris at 667 4542 or email at yukonwebb@gmail.com. Healthy soil, healthy plants, healthy profits!

Contact Us

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 Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C5
 Phone: 867 668 6864 Fax: 867 393 3566
 Email: admin@yukonag.ca or
office@yukonag.ca
 Website: www.yukonag.ca

Office Hours: Mon - Fri 11:00am - 3:00pm



Yukon
 Agricultural
 Association



NOTES

THANK YOU TO OUT-GOING BOARD!

The YAA would like to thank the 2012/13 Board of Directors for their work throughout the past year.

This included milestones such as securing the YAA leased land, hiring a second staff member, attending board governance training, developing the YAA Policy Manual, and numerous Growing Forward projects.

We look forward to the ideas and contributions of the new board. Volunteers are also always welcome to participate in activities!

- ▶ **Yukon Young Farmers AGM:** Fri May 10th, 5.30 PM in the TC Richards Building, 302 Steele St Whitehorse. Meeting followed by potluck & brainstorming session.
- ▶ The **YAA membership** year runs Apr 1 - Mar 31. If your membership has expired you're always welcome to re-join at the office (cash or cheque) or online. Thanks for your support!
- ▶ The **local farm products** listing for YAA members on our website blog will be updated weekly again in the coming months. E-mail or phone the office anytime to get YOUR information posted at <http://www.yukonag.ca/Blog/index.cfm> (reminders emails for listings will be sent out). As always, please feel free to share the farm products blog with anyone you think may be interested.
- ▶ Want to be our next **guest columnist?** Contact us with your ideas!
- ▶ Please send in **photos, updates and information** for the gallery section of the website and the Plough Boy quarterly newsletter!