



Photo courtesy L. Vogt

The Dawson Farmers' Market is held on Saturday's from 11am to 5pm on Front Street. The market opens in mid-May with the vendors offering a variety of bedding plants, nursery stock, and crafts. As the season progresses, fresh vegetables, herbs, berries, apples, and preserves are also available until the market closes in mid-September.



The Plough Boy

A quarterly newsletter of the Yukon Agricultural Association

March 2015

ACTING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Alan Stannard



This is my last newsletter message as Acting President, as our AGM is scheduled for May 9th. I do request a larger

turnout at the AGM than in past years. As our membership grows, so does the number of people required for a quorum. Without a quorum, we cannot conduct any business. One item on the agenda is reducing the quorum to alleviate this difficulty for future years, but we need you there this year to make this change.

It has been a pleasure to serve the membership, and certainly a time of engaging with many of you and hearing your diverse thoughts. Thank you for your support for our Board over the past term, and best wishes to the new Board members.

UPCOMING EVENTS

YAA's Annual General Meeting & election of the Board of Directors- May 9, 2015 at Coast High Country Inn. Doors open at 9am, meeting to start at 9:30. Lunch will be served to allow for networking.

On the agenda:
Financial statements
Special resolutions (bylaw changes)
Committee Reports
Election of Directors
Address by Minister Kent
Panel discussion relating to the local food strategy.

A big "Thanks" to Krista Roske for her policy expertise.



For catering purposes, please RSVP to 668-6864 by May 1st.

LAND LEASE PROGRESS

A funding application was submitted to CanNor in December to allow YAA to contract a business plan for the proposed facility. It is anticipated that a Request for Proposals will be released in May. This will be an iterative process, with decision points along the way. Who will manage the facility? Which producers are interested in using the facility, and what cost? Can it be run without significant O&M funding from government?

So much work has gone into obtaining the land lease, followed by a conceptual plan, so this next step is necessary to recommend an operation model that had buy-in from the producers. If the application is successful, producers can expect a round of consultations (yes-more consultation). Your assistance will be most appreciated.

YUKON FARM PRODUCTS & SERVICES GUIDE-2015



The updated version is off the press and ready for circulation.

Contact the office if you would like to pick up bulk copies. The

on-line directory will soon be available at: <http://guide.yukonag.ca/>

EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR AG STUDENTS

Farm Management Canada (FMC) and the Canadian Association of Diploma in Agriculture Programs (CADAP) have joined forces to offer an award designed to encourage students to improve their communication and leadership skills through a national competition.

FMC and CADAP are collecting submissions from agricultural students across Canada and will award three winners with scholarships towards furthering their education in agriculture. First place stands to win \$1,500!

The award is designed to help students develop their communication skills by having the opportunity to voice their opinion on a subject related to farm management.

Students are asked to submit a multimedia presentation, a video, a Twitter chat, a blog or a Wiki, responding to the following question:

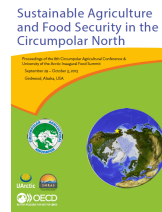
How can the agricultural industry best support young farmers looking to succeed in an ever-competitive and complex global marketplace?

To get all the details and find out how to apply, please visit the FMC website. All applications must be received no later than May 8, 2015.

WORLD FARMERS' ORGANISATION

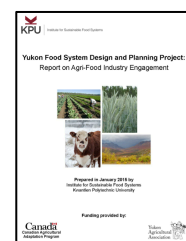
In the January 2015 edition of F@rmletter, CFA President and WFO Board member Ron Bonnett provides an informative article on promoting soil conservation and improvement in Canada. You can subscribe to this e-newsletter through info@wfo-oma.org. Click farmletters to view.

Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in the Circumpolar North



Proceedings of the 8th Circumpolar Agricultural Conference & University of the Arctic Inaugural Food Summit. September 29 – October 3, 2013 in Girdwood, Alaska, USA are available to download from the web site.

The CAAP funded Yukon Food Systems Design and Planning Project Reports are now available on line: <http://yukonag.ca/projects.cfm>



There are four reports to read with local information; do check them out.

YAA AGM
May 9th
Coast High Country Inn
RSVPs appreciated
668-6864

DEVELOPING A LOCAL FOOD STRATEGY

At the North of 60° Agriculture Banquet held in the fall, EMR Minister Scott Kent restated that increasing the production of local food is a priority, and signaled the beginning of research with industry to develop a Yukon local food strategy. The food strategy is the result of the government's platform commitment aimed at "significantly increasing the production and use of local grown vegetables, meats and food products". Motion No. 616 in the Yukon legislature on April 16, 2014 urged YG to investigate the merits of introducing a local food act, modelled on legislation passed in Ontario in 2013.

The Yukon agriculture and agri-food industry and Yukon's consumers will be the main players in this endeavour. YG has several agencies and programs already supporting agriculture and promoting production and consumption of locally grown food. Initial work on developing the strategy has started with input from an expanded Yukon Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee (AIAC) and a survey of producers. Once the draft Strategy is developed, we will use it to consult with other stakeholders and the public. Feedback from this process will inform the final version of a Yukon Local Food Strategy. So stay tuned for your opportunities to contribute.

Want horse manure in the Whitehorse area?

Contact Alison Reid at areid@northwestel.net or 332-5835 for a list of local horse owners who would be happy to supply you.

WHY DID WE DECIDE TO GO GEOTHERMAL?

Ann-Marie Stockley

For many years my husband and I have dreamed of building a home that overlooks our beautiful farm. In 2014 we put that plan into action.

There were so many decisions to make at times it was overwhelming. We originally had planned to put in a wood boiler..... until we started researching geothermal heat options. The concept was not foreign to us, but we really did not know much about the residential applications in Yukon. We spoke to a local engineer and ultimately had Thermal Creek Engineering from Calgary design our system. He used our house plans to design what we would need. He used the research he could find on Yukon geothermal and he did some testing on a residential geothermal system close to our home. Since we had ample room we decided to go with a horizontal field that we placed deep under one of our fields.

The whole system is installed and the cost was not as high as I had originally anticipated. With the cost of cord wood and oil being so high I was able to project that the additional cost of this system will pay off within 5 to 7 years.

The engineering company plans to install monitoring equipment so that he can see how the system performs and to promote more use of this renewable heat source.

YUKON YOUNG FARMERS The Future Looks Fertile for the YYF



The Yukon Young Farmers (YYF) has a new direction to support Yukoners under 45 years old in their pursuits of growing things up here.

We are now focused on hosting three educational events per year, advocating to the government for young farmers' interests, growing our member base, and being in closer contact with our members – all for the overarching goal of filling the market with Yukon-grown products.

The new direction is the result of a strategic planning meeting in November. The board of directors took a hard look at what had not been working – and what had – with the YYF. With frank input from members and Ag Branch guys Matt Ball and Brad Barton, a facilitator guided us to form a solid direction for the future. We owe big thanks to the Canadian Young Farmers Forum for enabling that meeting, and invite you to get in touch with ideas or questions at YukonYoungFarmers@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

YAA membership ended in a strong position at the end of March, with 145 individuals on the list. Four new members from Lower Post just joined for the coming year-welcome to Helene, Shawne, Trisha and Bernice who are “key volunteers for the community garden.” They join out-of-Yukon members from Ontario, Alberta and Manitoba.

2016 NUFFIELD FARMING SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS OPEN

(Innisfail, AB – March 05) The Canadian Nuffield Farming Scholarship Trust is accepting applications for their 2016 program. Applications are due by April 30, 2015 and forms can be downloaded from the Nuffield Canada website at <http://www.nuffield.ca>

Three scholarships of \$15,000 each are available for 2016. Nuffield Farming Scholarships are awarded to enthusiastic individuals, with a passion for agriculture and a desire to expand their knowledge, pursue new ideas and to share their findings with others.

Applicants should be in mid-career, be between the ages of 25 and 45 (recommended only) and must have a minimum of five years agricultural business or farming experience plus the management ability to step away from their current duties.

The Scholar must travel for a minimum of ten weeks, with a leg of at least six consecutive weeks. Scholarships are not for those involved in full-time studies or for the purpose of furthering existing research projects.

NEWSLETTER ITEMS?

Do you have something to share with the membership? YAA is looking for newsletter items! Please contact the office at 668-6864 with your diverse and witty ideas.

DOWNTOWN URBAN GARDENERS SOCIETY

By Randy Lamb

2015 will be the 18th growing season for the Whitehorse community garden, located under the clay cliffs at 7th Avenue & Ray Street in downtown Whitehorse. Our garden has 66 raised beds, which are used by the 70+ members of the Downtown Urban Gardeners Society (DUGS).

As a registered not-for-profit society, our core focus is on food security and organic gardening principles. Our annual membership fee of \$20 covers most of our operating costs but we still welcome donations of manure, compost and planting supplies.

Members of the public and non-profit organizations are welcome to apply for a garden bed by attending our annual garden bed sign-up event, which will be held on Saturday, April 11th between noon - 2 pm at the Whitehorse Food Bank (306 Alexander). Dates of coming events will be posted on our website (<http://dugsyukon.blogspot.ca>).

Stop by this summer and see how much we have grown!



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DR. TEMPLE GRANDIN IN YUKON?



Many of our readers will be familiar with the name Temple Grandin, an American professor of

animal science at Colorado State University, a best-selling author, an autistic activist, and a consultant to the livestock industry on animal behaviour.

Dr. Grandin is known for her work with slaughter plants to reduce animal stress during the slaughter process, resulting in a system that is both more humane and more efficient.

Autism Yukon contacted YAA/YYF this month to advise of an opportunity to have Dr. Grandin address the local agriculture community when she does a speaking tour in early 2016. Yukon Young Farmers is following up on this exciting possibility.

As details become available, we will be sure to share them with you and other agricultural groups and associations to ensure maximum exposure and partnerships. A packed house is guaranteed for this speaker. If you have an interest in this topic, please share the news.

"Nature is cruel, but we don't have to be." Temple Grandin

Image:
https://www.google.ca/?gws_rd=ssl#q=temple+grandin+pictures

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Monday-Friday

CONFERENCES

Alberta Innovates
Conference on Food Innovation
<http://bio.albertainnovates.ca>
May 26 & 27, 2015 in Calgary

Canada's Farm Progress Show
<http://www.myfarmshow.com>
June 17-19, 2015 in Regina

International Conference on
Livestock Nutrition
<http://livestocknutrition.conferenceseries.com>
August 11-12, 2015 in Frankfurt

Canada's Outdoor Farm Show
<http://www.outdoorfarmshow.com>
September 15, 16 and 17, 2015
Woodstock

Alberta Farm Animal Care
<http://www.afac.ab.ca/conferences.html>
Past presentations.

Ag Ex Conference
<http://www.fmc-gac.com/content/agricultural-excellence-conference>
November 25 and 27, 2015
Regina