

INFARMATION

Yukon Agriculture Branch Quarterly Bulletin

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FARMER OF THE YEAR: WAYNE AND ALISON GROVE, EL DORADO GAME FARM

Each year, the Yukon government recognizes Yukon farmers by presenting the Farmer of the Year award at the North of 60° Banquet. The award helps identify some of Yukon's farmers, farm families and/or farm advocates who have made an outstanding contribution to local agriculture.

Wayne and Alison Grove, operators of the El Dorado Game Farm near Whitehorse, were named the 2013 Farmers of the Year at the North of 60° Agriculture Banquet.



Since acquiring land near the Takhini Hot Springs Road 17 years ago, the Groves and their children, Nicole and David, have turned what was an underdeveloped parcel of agricultural land into one of the largest hay producers in Yukon.

The El Dorado Game Ranch also produces farmed elk for velvet antler and meat for an expanding domestic and culinary tourism market. The Grove family also operates a high end dog boarding facility on their farm, VIP Kennels. Nominators point to the pride the Groves take in producing a quality product and providing good service. Wayne is constantly researching the best ways to improve his land and crops. Anyone who has visited their farm comes away impressed, saying: "It just looks good!"

Wayne also contributes to the betterment of the farm community. A director with the Yukon Agricultural Association and President of the Yukon Game Growers Association, Wayne has represented the Game Growers on the territory's Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee for several years.

The Groves also attribute their success to embracing the latest agricultural research available and adapting it to the challenging needs of Yukon land, soil and growing conditions.

MESSAGE FROM THE AGRICULTURE BRANCH	2
NOMINATIONS FOR FARMER OF THE YEAR	2
NORTH OF 60° AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE AND BANQUET	4
POTLUCK COMMUNITY CO-OP	5
YUKON PRODUCER PROFILE	6
THE CURIOUS GARDENER	7
HASKAP	8
CIRCUMPOLAR AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE	10
CORNER LOT, IBEX UPDATE	11
ANNOUNCEMENTS	12



YUKON NOMINATIONS FOR FARMER OF THE YEAR 2013

The Farmer of the Year award is an opportunity for the Yukon government to recognize Yukon farmers. Although there can only be one Farmer of the Year, the award recognizes all those nominated for their contributions. 2013 had a record number of individual nominations and one honorable mention. The multitudes of nominations highlight the strength of producers within the industry.

MESSAGE FROM THE AGRICULTURE BRANCH

It was a nice fall. October held some great weather through until the end. I don't remember ever having a snow free and warm Halloween. We have certainly been hit with winter now.

This fall, we had another fantastic North of 60 Agriculture Conference with speakers from each side of the continent. There were inspirational presentations by Cedric Macleod from New Brunswick and Jeff Lowenfels from Alaska. We also had a very entertaining presentation by Gene Hachey from the NWT, and an update from Caitlin Dorward on the Yukon Food Systems project. Please see inside page 4 for more details.

Congratulations to Wayne and Alison Grove and their children, Nicole and David, for receiving the Farm Family of the year award. It is a well-deserved award.

This winter, keep your eye on the newspapers and emails for several wintertime workshops on Environmental Farm Planning, Organic Farming, and Community Greenhousing.

Our partnership with Yukon College continues, as they are providing two offerings of the Yukon Master Gardener Program this winter. Check with the College for more details. There are a number of other short gardening-related courses through the College dealing with topics such as composting and landscape design.

Growing Forward 2 continues to offer a wide range of programs and funding and is building on the success of the original program. Since the April 1 launch of Growing Forward 2, more than 60 projects and over \$500,000 have been approved. There are a whole range of projects that can be funded so please stop in to the branch or see our website to learn more.

I look forward to working with many of you over the winter.

Matt Ball
Acting Director

NOMINEE: JOLEEN BILLWILLER, SPRUCE COTTAGE FARM
From Haines Junction, Joleen Billwiller was nominated as the driving force behind the development of a new community market in Haines Junction over the past summer. The nomination cites her passion for growing. Jolene established growing arrangements – and successful gardens – in several places throughout the community. The nomination points to Joleen's energy behind the making of a successful market event in the community. It also identifies the positive impact the event had on the community and for those that participated in it.

NOMINEE: BILL AND BARBARA DRURY, CIRCLE D RANCH.
Bill and Barb Drury were nominated because of their thoughtful and innovative approach to agriculture. The Drurys have been nominated in the past. This year they were cited for the addition of their on-farm meat processing facility which expanded their capacity to produce more of the quality elk and beef they raise. The Drurys also diversified into producing dehydrated kale chips, taking advantage of the consumer trend for healthier snack products.

NOMINEE: BONNIE AND STEVE MACKENZIE GRIEVE, YUKON GRAIN FARM.

Last year's Farmers of the Year Bonnie and Steve MacKenzie Grieve of Yukon Grain Farm were nominated for two different aspects of their farm operation. One part of their nomination simply recognizes that they farm in a challenging environment and that they feed Yukon. "Think about that. This farm feeds more of us than any other."

The second part of their nomination recognized their contribution to "From the Ground Up", a school fundraiser developed by Yukon Health and Social Services. The supply of fresh, local healthy vegetables from Yukon Grain Farm supports the fundraising campaign and promotes healthy eating at school and at home.

NOMINEE: JOHN LENART, KLONDIKE VALLEY NURSERY
From Dawson City, a nomination was put forward for one of the industry's true pioneers. John has, over the years, trialed over 150 selections of apples. He has been working with the University of Saskatchewan on cold hardy dwarfing rootstock and has been successful in bringing 55 apple varieties, and a number of other fruits including pears, to maturity.

John has recently added dwarf conifers from native selections to his nursery. His nomination points out that whenever John sells any of the exotic stock that he cultivates, he spends time with the buyer so that he ensures that their tree is given the best chance of surviving in its new home.

NOMINEE: BART BOUNDS AND KATE MECHAN OF ELEMENTAL FARM

Bart Bounds and Kate Mechan from Elemental Farm received their first nomination this year. The nomination points to their environmental stewardship on their leased land, their interest in trying new plant varieties and their willingness to share what they learn with other farmers. They have also reached out to the community by working with the local Boys and Girls Club and by supplying produce to the Whitehorse Food Bank.

In production for about three years now, Elemental Farm raises poultry and terrific produce. Notably, Bart and Kate do this off-grid, on leased land and following organic practices.

NOMINEE: JERRY AND SHARI HEAL, LITTLE FOX FARM

Another first time nomination was forwarded for Little Fox Farm owned by Jerry and Shari Heal. The nomination identified Little Fox Farm as a family affair. The involvement of their children, Brianna and Riley, in the operation is providing values around local food production and ensures that the skills required to farm are being developed in the next generation. The nomination highlighted how both Jerry and Shari have full-time jobs away from the farm. Like so many Yukon farmers, they work a lot of hours just to be able to farm.

Their customers rave about their eggs, chickens, turkeys and pork. The Heal family also produces berries and vegetables; many of these products are sold through their workplace

HONORABLE MENTION: KATIE ENGLISH, DAWSON CITY COMMUNITY GARDEN

A request for an honorable mention came in for Dawsonite Katie English. Katie, a community local food activist, is the driving force behind many of Dawson's gardening events. She is instrumental in the creation of and is heavily involved in the ongoing operation of the Dawson City Community Garden. Katie has organized "Seedy Saturdays", a seed and plant exchange held in the community over the past few years. She also developed this year's edible forest permaculture project at the gardens.



Farmer of the Year nominees Bart Bounds and Kate Mechan from Elemental Farm

2013 NORTH OF 60° AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE AND BANQUET

The 2013 Agriculture Conference and Banquet held November 1st and 2nd was well attended, thanks to the participation from Yukon's agriculture community. The featured Yukon-grown banquet dinner on Saturday night held this year at the Yukon Convention Centre was once again sold out. The evening had a full agenda, with Energy, Mines and Resources Minister Scott Kent addressing the audience and highlighting the initiatives the Government of Yukon has undertaken to further agriculture in the territory.

The annual banquet is Yukon's opportunity to celebrate agriculture. This year, it shared the evening by commemorating the 100th anniversary of 4-H clubs in Canada. A silent auction was conducted in support of Yukon 4-H clubs and the terrific work that they do with Yukon's future farmers. The evening also concluded with a fun and suspenseful live auction thanks to Russ Tait taking on the family tradition of auctioneering. Between the silent and live auction 4H raised \$2,600.00.

Conference presenter Cedric MacLeod from New Brunswick, provided the keynote address. Cedric shared his farming experiences and addressed farm leadership and the need for Yukon producers to take on a leadership role to foster a strong industry ready for the next generation of producers.

The North of 60° conference presentations exceeded expectations, with a compilation of speakers who entertained and educated. Cedric MacLeod kicked off the conference Friday afternoon

with an Agriculture Business Best Management Practice Workshop. The workshop reminded producers that planning is an important activity and farms with plans can best manage the challenges and successes of their business. To quote one of the many references Cedric shared:

- *A vision without a plan is just a dream*
- *A plan without a vision is drudgery*
- *But a vision with a plan can change the world.*

Defining expectations, measuring, communicating and focusing on core business were just a few of the best management practices Cedric addressed. The workshop identified a list of management improvements Yukon producers will use for their operations. Some of our producers committed to doing the following:

- Developing an inventory management sheet
- Defining a vision and mission
- Re-assessing long term plans
- Expanding relationships and allies
- Revisiting strategic plan
- Defining record keeping and develop a chart of accounts and cost of production
- Establishing weekly farm meetings
- Charging what a product is worth
- Evaluating human resource requirements
- Engaging support for key weakness areas (i.e.: if you don't like bookkeeping, find a bookkeeper).

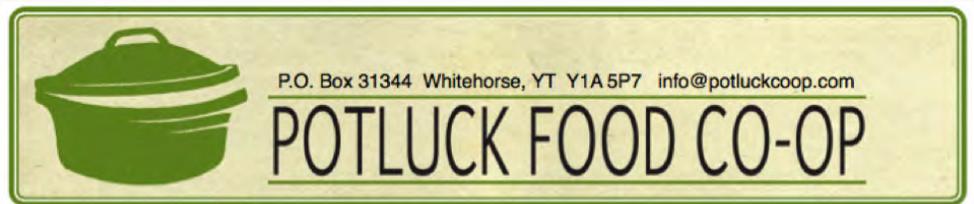
Cedric presented again on Saturday morning by expanding on some of the ideas from Friday. He developed the rationale for producers to start working on documenting processes and controls for their farm operation and documenting it in a Work in Progress Manual.

Next, the conference moved away from business and into community gardening and soil health. Agriculture extension officer Gene Hachey from the Northwest Territories introduced us to the NWT agriculture industry and their efforts to develop the production of local food in the small communities around the territory. The outreach by the NWT government to develop these community gardens is remarkable. The program is about providing the tools for communities to grow their food with guidance and support from NWT government staff. They have managed to develop varying levels of production in 24 communities stretching across the territory. A full report of the NWT program can be found in the NWT Growing Forward Small Scale Foods Program Annual report available online at: www.emr.ca/inFarm11

Jeff Lowenfels, the next presenter, took the audience on his journey of discovery of the soil food web. Jeff's engaging presentation used pictures and humour to illustrate a scientific talk about soil life and how to use knowledge of soil health to create more productive gardens. His talk resulted in a spike in his book sales by those in attendance wanting more. To find out more about the soil food web, you can either buy Jeff's book "Teaming with Microbes (the Organic Gardener's Guide to the Soil Food Web)" or borrow it from the EMR Library located on the third floor of the Elijah Smith Building.

An update of the Yukon Food System by Caitlin Dorward wrapped up the conference presentations. Following her presentation, Kent Mullinix mediated a roundtable discussion on Yukon's agriculture future. Caitlin and Kent, from Kwantlen Polytechnic University, are working on developing a Yukon Food System that addresses the need to increase Yukon's food self-reliance that supports the agriculture sector. Caitlin was soliciting feedback from industry on the Yukon Food System to focus the objectives for the project. For more information on this project, contact the Yukon Agricultural Association (YAA). Phone: 867-668-6864 or Email: admin@yukonag.ca

This year's conference agenda was developed in partnership with the YAA and the Yukon Young Farmers Group. This partnership gave the Agriculture Branch valuable industry input in the development of the agenda. The conference is an opportunity for industry to bring in presenters of interest. The Agriculture Branch looks forward to continuing to work with YAA and other industry groups to develop future North of 60° Agriculture Conferences.



The Potluck Food Co-op officially launched its online retail store November 28th and it has taken its first orders, too! More than 60 members placed their first official orders through the online retail outlet and members picked up their orders at the Co-op's pick-up location on 5th Avenue (between Wood and Jarvis) in Whitehorse. The next opportunity to order food online from the Potluck Food Co-op will start on Jan. 2nd, 2014. Only members can shop through the co-op store. If you haven't purchased your membership yet, you can do so through their website. Go to www.potluckcoop.com for more information. If you have any questions, contact the Retail Manager Karin Voogd at: info@potluckcoop.com or 335-7321 during business hours.

POTLUCK FOOD CO-OP

We Need You!

We are very excited that our membership has reached the point where we can launch our online service. However, in order to provide a full range of food including perishable produce, frozen meat and poultry, eggs and dairy, etc., we need to grow our membership and investments by an additional 35 percent. The larger the membership and the more investments we receive, the more start-up money we will have to buy critical equipment for our business.

www.potluckcoop.com

- 100% Start-up Goal**: Ability to move to a larger retail space if needed.
- 90%**: Purchase refrigerators to offer perishable produce, eggs and dairy.
- 80%**: Purchase freezers to offer frozen meat and poultry.
- 65% Current Membership**: Hire Retail Manager and open online store offering a limited selection of goods.

Attention, Yukon farmers and producers: the Potluck Food Co-op is still looking for local suppliers. At this time, they can only sell pre-packaged foods that do not require cooling or freezing. They are looking for storage crops, preserves, syrups and dry goods.

If you have a product ready for sale and would like it included in their orders, go online to the Potluck Co-op's website. When you get there, read over the attached Producer Information Package under the Resources link of their website: www.potluckcoop.com

YUKON PRODUCER PROFILE

HIGHLIGHTING PRODUCERS AND THEIR AGRI-BUSINESSES

This column is an opportunity to introduce readers to farm operations in Yukon. This segment features Yukon's amazing producers, farm products and how farmers are overcoming some of our climate, production and market obstacles.

AURORA MOUNTAIN FARM

SUSTAINABLE, FUNCTIONAL AND REASONABLE

For most farmers it is about food or feed. For Aurora Mountain Farm, it is no different. But what stands out most about this operation is how much thought they put into their farming practices to determine what is sustainable, functional and reasonable.

Operated by Tom, Simone and Graham Rudge, Aurora Mountain Farm covers 160 acres in the Takhini River valley north of Whitehorse. They are certified organic but not everything they produce meets that certified organic standard. But they are working continuously to meet all the principles and ethics of organic farming.

Aurora Mountain Farm's core business is food. Currently, they raise pigs, beef, goats, eggs, market garden vegetables and nearly 400 chickens a year. They grow as much of their own feed as possible and produce a small amount of cashmere fibre from their goats. They have invested in heritage pigs and birds, including active, problem-free Redbro chickens developed for raising on pasture. They keep various purebred and crossbred Tamworth, Large English black and Berkshire pigs.



Aurora Mountain Farm is an integrated operation working towards developing a zero balance farm system. For Tom, a zero balance farm requires no outside inputs, including fertilizer and feed. They are not at that point yet, but are constantly learning and incrementally heading toward this balance. They purposely select crops that require reduced inputs and are suited to their soils and climates. Their animals are selected because they are good foragers and are easy to keep. And the manure and offal from the animals are an integral component of their compost that provides the nutrients for their gardens and fields.

Beyond being certified organic, the operation itself is organic in that it is a living and evolving system. The farm management decisions are constantly changing, as Tom and Simone learn how all aspects of the farm fit together. Part of their learning involves record keeping to provide feedback to their operation. At the end of the day, their operation has to be reasonable. This means that their records have to show profitability without sacrificing sustainable and functionality. This is quite a challenge. But by using

their years of experience, tracking their operational costs closely and pricing their product effectively, they are aiming towards a balanced operation with a healthy balance sheet.

They have developed a strong customer following that has supported them through cost increases. In 2013, when the price per pound of chicken rose due to a spike in feed costs, their buyers continued to be supportive. Aurora Mountain Farm continues to sell all their birds.

Aurora Mountain Farm developed their clientele through networking, word of mouth and, most importantly, by providing customers with products that they want (local ethically grown food). Tom and Simone market and sell directly to their customers through an email list and in-person sales. As vendors at the Fireweed Community Market, they sell preserves and excess veggies and use the venue to develop their direct sales customer list.

The Rudge family operation is about much more than just farming; it is all about food and community. Both of them are community advocates for food and are involved in many community and national groups including:

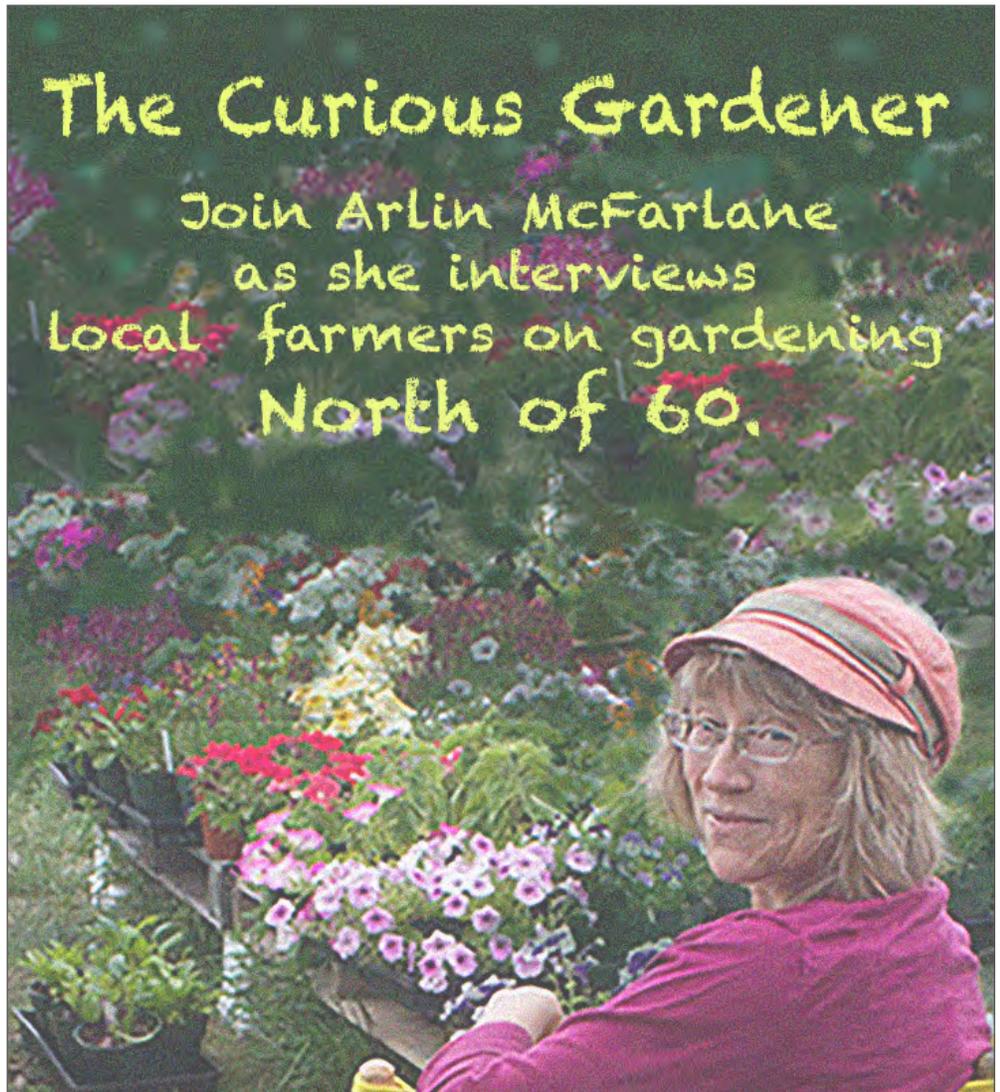
- Food Secure Canada
- Slow Food
- Canadian Biotechnology Action Network
- Growers of Organic Food Yukon
- Fireweed Community Market
- Northern Food Security Network
- Yukon Mobile Poultry Processor

Tom and Simone are active and involved co-operative owners of the Yukon Mobile Poultry Processor trailer and provide support to its users. In 2013, they were out helping other small producers with this equipment on ten different occasions.

Besides being a full-time farmer, Simone is a full-time instructor at Yukon College. Her two jobs support one another because she has been directly involved in the College Greenhouse Project and its "Food Matters" course. Simone is a go-to person at the college for questions about food and agriculture in Yukon.

The couple is so passionate about the food we eat that they have been growing, organizing, educating and advocating for Yukoners. They produce healthy food and invite questions about farming in the north. At their farm, customers are always welcome to take part in harvesting to experience where their food comes from. Take them up on this offer.

Thank you, Tom and Simone, for sharing your operation.



Growers of Organic Food Yukon (GoOFY) with funding from the Canada-Yukon Growing Forward 2 agriculture program, developed a YouTube and local TV gardening series hosted by Arlin McFarlane called The Curious Gardener. The Curious Gardener series highlighted many useful ways to be more successful with gardening and increasing crop yields in the North. The short YouTube videos have raised the profile of organic farming practices in the north and viewers can learn about the garden techniques used north of 60° by Yukon producers.

Filming took place this summer and episodes were aired on Northwestel Cable 9. The Curious Gardener has covered the following topics in relation to gardening in the North: seeding (Susan Ross), transplanting (Susan Ross), composting (Brian Lendrum), soil health (Bart Bounds), 12 season greenhouse (Simone Rudge), companion planting (Scott Snyder), pallet or micro-gardening (Kyle Taylor), backyard chickens (Katherine Alexander), bees (Sue Moody), growing and heating with compost (Sheila Alexandrovich), living mulch (Bart Bounds), pollinating (Enrica Nadalina), soil and the sub-arctic garden (Heidi Marion), tomatillos (Dorine Girouard), seed saving (Barb Drury), and peas (Mary and Rolland Girouard).

The episodes are available online both on YouTube and on the GoOFY website. To find out more, go to www.thecuriousgardener.ca or contact the host Arlin McFarlane by email at: arlin@arlinmcfarlane.com

H A S K A P

IF YOU HAVEN'T HEARD OF HASKAPS, THAT'S GOING TO CHANGE

This past July, Yukon Agricultural Association brought up producer Carl Barber to present on haskap berry production. Carl operates Northern Light Orchards in Birch Hills, Saskatchewan, where he has been growing haskaps since 2008. He has ten acres in production for U-pick and wholesale markets.

This is the second presentation that YAA has hosted discussing haskap production. In the fall of 2011, University of Saskatchewan Ph.D. student James Dawson shared research on northern fruit production that highlighted these berries.

Those of you who have not heard of haskap berries may be wondering why all this attention is being paid to a berry that must be tart, small, hard to pick, and/or not very cold-hardy? Well...they do taste good. Their size and appearance is similar to commercial blueberries. Although the plants try to hide the berries, they are easy to find and pick once you look under the leaves. Best of all, this is an early season cold-hardy fruit producer.

The haskap's popularity has been limited in Canada because it is relatively new to North America. While the berry is commercially grown in Russia and Japan, it has only been in the last ten years that interest has grown in Canada. Much of the interest in Canada has been generated by research being done by the University of Saskatchewan's fruit program and Dr. Bob Bors' group.

Haskaps (*Lonicera caerulea*) also commonly known as blue honeysuckle or honeyberry. They are hybrids but only because the

named cultivars are the result of intentionally (but naturally) crossed and selected varieties of *Lonicera* from different locations. At first glance, the fruit looks like a blueberry because of the similar colour and size, but its oblong shape distinguishes it from commercial blueberries. The flavour is unique. Carl Barber's website describes haskaps as a juicy, sweet/tart berry having a decidedly unique berry taste. That taste can contain hints of wild blueberry, raspberry, grape, plum, black currant, saskatoons, blackberry, elderberry and even rhubarb.

Yukon's enthusiasm for these plants is due in part to the berry's cold hardiness and early fruit maturity. Haskap bushes exhibit cold-hardy vigour and easily survive Yukon winters because it is a circumpolar species. Some varieties will bear fruit the beginning of July.

Haskap also hold nutritional benefits that fit into a healthy diet. They are a good source of antioxidants, flavanoids and vitamin C; all three substances are linked to many health benefits.

Carl's presentation provided the hands-in-the-dirt details you don't get from researching online. His presentation went on to describe his operation from planting, to orchard, to marketing and some of the things he learned along the way.

It took this Saskatchewan producer about five years to develop the orchard from the ground up. He recommends picking a site with as much thought as possible, i.e: consider drainage issues, the site aspect, the prevailing wind direction, availability of water, soil type, weeds and pests.



Variety selection is also very important. Even though this is a new cultivar to Canada, there are a few different varieties to pick from. Some varieties can be sweeter, earlier maturing, higher yielding or easier to pick. The University of Saskatchewan website provides a list of the different cultivars and descriptions. Go to www.fruit.usask.ca and select "buying our plants" on the left hand side of the website for a list of suppliers and berry attributes.

Carl developed his site by removing all competition or completely tilling and working the land for the orchard. Completely working the lands is what he knows works from his experience farming in the prairies, and it eliminates some of the weed issues that may limit success. Northern Lights Orchard started by planting all the root stock into one section and transplanted to the rest of the orchard after two years of developing the stock. This is one of the things Carl learned: if he were to do it again, he would skip transplanting and would, instead, plant the root stock directly into the rows.

Haskaps require cross pollination. This means that pollen has to be transferred from one plant to a different plant of the same species. Good pollinators are genetically

diverse. They are different varieties, with different compatible genes, that are blooming at the same time. For the cultivars coming out of the University of Saskatchewan, Russian varieties of haskaps are good pollinators because they are genetically different from the fruiting varieties being sold in Canada. Your supplier should be able to direct you to a good pollinator variety. With regards to how many pollinators to berry producers, Carl is planting every third row as a pollinator row. If you are growing small scale, a good rule of thumb is to have an 8 to 1 ratio of fruit plants to pollinators. Your pollinators will fruit, but the fruit is usually not as tasty and can be very small.

The varieties Northern Lights Orchard is using include Indigo Gem (915), Tundra, Borealis, Indigo Treat and Berry Smart Blue for cross pollination. Carl was able to express what he liked and disliked about each variety. His favorite so far is the Indigo Gem as it has good plant development and vigor and is a good producer. Overall, the Tundra fruit is better but the plant characteristics are not as good and the plants are not as productive although these cultivars may grow and produce differently in different soils and climates. Researching and experimenting with the varieties available will allow you to find a variety that suits your need. Document the difference you observe between the varieties: when does it pollinate, what yields best, which one is sweeter, firm/soft when ripe, bigger/small, harder/easier to pick. By answering these questions you will find a variety or varieties that work for you.

Plant spacing for Carl's orchards is 3 feet spacing in row, and 13 ft row spacing. The 13 ft spacing allows for enough room to mechanically harvest. Carl quoted an estimate cost of \$4.00 per pound to harvest by hand vs. \$1.00 per pound using mechanical harvest. During planting, Carl found that planting deep resulted in the plants branching near the ground. Therefore, all the berries are lowered to the ground, making harvesting a bit more challenging, especially with mechanical harvests.

If you are looking for root stock, Carl suggests using a commercial supplier. It is important to note that plants that have been vegetatively propagated from stock with a known track are virtually all the same and have known characteristics whereas plants produced from seed will be variable both in plant and fruit characteristics. Carl has gained this knowledge from over 1000 trial seedlings and found difference may or may not develop a plant that is suitable for commercial production.

The berries have very small seeds that are barely perceptible when eating and have a very high juice content (up to 85% when pressed). They are lighter in weight than most berries. Each berry is a result of two flowers. Each flower begins forming a fruit with a skin and then each pair gets wrapped in another skin. This

results in a berry that tends to float in water.

There seems to be little challenge in growing these plants. They are very hardy and will take a lot of neglect. Neglect will reduce yields but from Carl's experience, it is difficult to kill these plants. Haskaps do not sucker and are easy to manage in row. The real challenge is marketing.

Haskaps are new to North America so they will require marketing plans to make the berry more popular with consumers, restaurants and processors. There are many creative ways to market haskaps. It should be easy to get consumers to include this into their diet because they are great eaten fresh, made into jams and preserves, great juiced or in wine. You can dry the juiced berries and eat them as snacks or put the pulp into baking. You can also use them in pancakes, bannock, muffins and other baked goods. For a list of haskap products and recipes, go to Northern Lights Orchards website and click on the "Products or Recipes" icon in the top banner of their webpage: www.northernlightorchards.com.

Carl's presentation was funded through the Canada-Yukon Growing Forward 2 agriculture program.



8TH CIRCUMPOLAR AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE

The 8th Circumpolar Agriculture Conference (CAC) was held at the end of September in Girdwood, Alaska. The University of Alaska (Fairbanks) hosted the event and partnered with the University of the Arctic (UArctic). The resulting partnership integrated discussion on northern food issues and provided an audience for the UArctic Inaugural Northern Food Summit. The Conference investigated advancing food security and sustainable agriculture in the circumpolar north. This shift in the scope of the traditional CAC provided a platform for building an integrated circumpolar vision and for developing a process for sustainable food security in northern communities.

The expansion of the conversation at this conference placed more emphasis on economic development, marketing systems and indigenous food systems. The agenda considered more than production. It ventured into the political and economic climates of the northern circumpolar world for a balanced approach between traditional subsistence natural resource access and agricultural production. This broader scope was a natural fit because food and agriculture are at the center of a much broader conversation into food security and community development. The conference and summit adopted the perspective that food security is a driver in community development and sustainability.



Sitting (L to R): Kirsten Scott, Tony Hill, Caitlin Dorward, Roberta Auston, Mary Jane Johnson, Alice Boland, Bradley Barton
 Standing (L to R): Sandy Johnson, Kam Davies, Kent Mullinix, Norma Kassi, Katie English, Colin Wright, Patrick Johnson, Tiana Zakus, Sylvia Gibson, Valerie Whelan, Philip Boland
 Missing from photo: Fiona Seki Wedge, and Charlie Johnson

The conference was divided into three thematic areas:

- Global Food Policy and Food Safety
- Food Production and Economic Development
- Food Production and Sustainable
 - Session I - Horticulture
 - Session II - Livestock Production

The presentations in all the thematic areas brought new ideas to some of the challenges seen in the circumpolar world. It provided participants with new resources to bring back to their agriculture communities. A review of the Growing Forward 2 evaluation reports from Yukon representatives indicated that each participant took home something valuable.

More information on the conference speakers and the poster presentations is available at: www.uaf.edu/cac. Please feel free to contact the Agriculture Branch to source additional information on any of the topics covered in the conference.

Using Growing Forward 2 funding, 16 Yukoners were able to attend this year's Circumpolar Agriculture Conference. The group attending included representatives from industry, First Nations, agriculture associations, community gardens and governments. A couple of Yukoners presented at the conference:

- Norma Kassi, Director of Indigenous Collaboration from the Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research, spoke about Indigenous Community Food Security in the Yukon Territory.
- Sylvia Gibson and Kirsten Scott of the Yukon Agricultural Association presented on their Association's Initiatives and Projects.

Yukon involvement in the conference also came from the poster presentations. Poster presenters included:

- Bradley Barton, Yukon Agriculture Branch, with a poster on Effect of Potato Spacing on Tuber Size

- Kam Davies, Yukon Agriculture Branch, put up a poster on Effects of Changing Permafrost Conditions on Agricultural Capability Classification in Yukon
- Kent Mullinix, Catlin Dorward and Sylvia Gibson, posted information on Food System Design and Implementation Planning for Yukon
- Alice and Philip Boland, Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation, posted on Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture in Carmacks, Yukon.

The conference energized those attending and the knowledge gained is spreading through our communities. The Agriculture Branch is building on the networking gained from the conference to work on a research plan for expanding Yukon livestock feeding options and sharing knowledge and resources for community gardens here.

THE CORNER L.O.T. (LAND OPPORTUNITIES & TIDBITS)

IBEX UPDATE

The Agriculture Branch has been considering responses received relating to the proposed Ibox Planned Agriculture Land Offering north of the Alaska Highway between Km 1462 and Km 1465. About 20 people attended the September 25th public meeting on the offering. Since then, the Agriculture Branch has received nine email submissions commenting on the subdivision.

Two of the nine emails endorsed the subdivision as a welcome opportunity to expand the agriculture land base. Seven emails expressed a range of concerns with the proposal. Currently, these concerns are being considered by the Yukon government. Two of the responses were opposed to any further agriculture development.

Agriwebinar®

AROUND THE WORLD. CLOSE TO HOME.



Farm Management Canada (FMC) is the only organization devoted exclusively to the development and delivery of advanced business management information, tools and resources to position Canada's farmers for success.

Farm Management Canada's Agriwebinar® series has started!

Farm Management Canada Presents:

- Jan-13, Elaine Froese, Seeds of Encouragement presenting Farm Transition - When Enough is Enough
- Jan-20, Dr. David Kohl, Virginia Polytechnic Institute presenting Agriculture Outlook 2014 and Beyond
- Jan-27, Normand Bourgault, Université du Québec en Outaouais, Marketing Local Products: The Bumpy Road from Farm to Table
- Feb-03, Maureen Geddes, geddesglobal.ca presenting Just like Family: Attracting and Managing the New Agricultural Employee
- Feb-10, Hugh Maynard, Qu'anglo Communications & Consulting, presenting Comprehensive Risk Management – More than insurance
- Feb-24, Andrew Campbell, Fresh Air Media presenting The Mobile Farmer

Farm Credit Canada Presents:

- Jan-8, Rob Hannam, Synthesis Agri-Food Network presenting Creating an Effective Management Action Plan
- Jan-22, Jeff Nonay, Lakeside Dairy Ltd presenting Sustainability in Agriculture – A Look at Practical Opportunities
- Feb-26, Danny Klinefelter, Texas A&M University presenting Peer Advisory Groups for Continuous Management Improvement
- Mar-5, Kevin Hursh, Hursh Consulting & Communications Inc. presenting On-Farm Strategies Gleaned from 10 Years of AgriSuccess
- Mar-19, J.P. Gervais, Farm Credit Canada presenting Economic Outlook for Canadian Agriculture

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www.agriwebinar.com.

The concerns of others ranged from environmental (especially impacts on wildlife and wildlife movement) to the scope of the development and its potential to disrupt the local community. The number of smaller lots proposed were a particular concern of the respondents.

In the New Year, the Agriculture and Land Planning Branches will meet with the Ibox Hamlet Council to consider all the concerns expressed and how best to respond to them. After this meeting, the Agriculture Branch will propose a final concept design for further public consideration by February 2014.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

POULTRY HEALTH WORKSHOPS FOR YUKON FARMERS
The Animal Health Unit and the Agriculture Branch will be hosting two workshops on poultry health for Yukoners who raise poultry. The half-day workshops will be held in both Dawson and Whitehorse in March 2014. Dates will be announced in January.

Registration for the poultry health workshop will be free and the workshops are open to new and experienced poultry owners. Workshops will feature presentations by a poultry veterinarian and local poultry producers. The session will address health topics for layers, meat birds and turkeys including:

- Common disease and health conditions
- Nutrition
- What to consider when ordering birds
- Husbandry tips

We want to hear from you! What are your key questions about poultry health? Email or phone Dr. Jane Harms to share your questions so that they can be addressed by our presenters. Phone 867-667-8663 or email jane.harms@gov.yk.ca

More information on registration, dates, and other details will be available soon on the Agriculture Branch website, www.agriculture.gov.yk.ca

EMR LIBRARY
YOUR ONE STOP SHOP FOR AGRICULTURE INFORMATION

Yukon Energy, Mines and Resources (EMR) Library has agriculture specific newspapers, magazines, books, DVDs and other helpful resources such as reports, air photos and maps.

Some new books at the library include:

- Teaming with Nutrients: the gardener's guide to optimizing plant nutrition by Jeff Lowenfels
- Living with Chickens: everything you need to know to raise your own backyard flock by Jay Rossier
- Grow It, Heal It: natural and effective herbal remedies from your garden or windowsill by Christopher Hobbs and Leslie Gardner

The EMR Library is located on the third floor of the Elijah Smith Building, 300 Main Street, Suite 335, Whitehorse, Yukon. You can contact them by phone at 867-667-3111 or email: emrlibrary@gov.yk.ca. Hours of operation are Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Check them out!

YUKON COLLEGE NORTHERN GARDENING COURSES
Yukon College in partnership with the Yukon Agriculture Branch is offering a suite of gardening courses this winter. The northern gardening courses offered through the College's continuing education include:

- Yukon Master Gardener
- Companion Planting
- Composting
- Container Gardening
- Greenhouse Design
- Landscape Planning and your Landscape Design
- Soil Analysis
- Summer Gardening Mentoring (this is a summertime course)

For more information, go to www.yukon.college.yk.ca and search "Northern Gardening". Or contact the college at 867-668-5200 or email: ce@yukoncollege.yk.ca

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Yukon Valley Farm

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