

INFARMATION

Yukon Agriculture Branch Quarterly Bulletin

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2015 FARMER OF THE YEAR.

The annual presentation of the Yukon Farmer of the Year provides an opportunity to showcase the work of Yukon farmers and farm families in our community and what they do to support agriculture in the north. The 2015 Farmer of the Year award was presented to Kate Mechan and Bart Bounds of Elemental Farm by EMR Minister Scott Kent at the annual North of 60° Agriculture Banquet, held November 7th at the Westmark, Whitehorse.

Elemental Farm was just one of nine different operations nominated for the Farmer of the Year award from their peers. The number of nominations is a testament to the appreciation Yukoners have for our northern farmers. Each nomination provides a glimpse into what Yukon producers are able to achieve.

The following, in no particular order, is a brief description of each of the farms that were nominated for this year's award, along with one honorable mention.

NOMINATION: OTTO MUHLBACH AND CONNIE HANDWERK, KOKOPELLI FARM

This Sunnydale property was nominated twice. Kokopelli Farm has been in operation for two years, although they may be seen as new comers to farming in the Klondike, they are experienced growers. In the last two years, they have managed to outgrow their 5 acre residential lot and have expanded to farm land beside the golf course to grow organic vegetables for the local market.

Otto & Connie are now one of the main suppliers of fresh market garden vegetables to the community of Dawson. They have just finished putting in an extensive cold storage so that they can provide for the community beyond the growing season.

NOMINATION: DERRICK HASTINGS & KATE ENGLISH

Derrick and Kate have been building a small farm operation at Henderson Corner over the past few years. They follow organic and low impact agriculture management, however their nomination points to their work with community gardens and local food issues that they take on. Their willingness to teach and help others in the agriculture industry stands out.

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Photo: EMR Minister Scott Kent (left) presenting Elemental Farm, Kate Mechan and Bart Bounds with the 2015 Farmer of the Year.

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MESSAGE FROM THE AGRICULTURE BRANCH

Happy New Year! It's been another busy year in the agriculture community and it's a good time to look back over the past year and forward to what's on the horizon.

2015 was a big year for developing local food policy and I'd like to acknowledge some of the initiatives and organizations working on parallel projects throughout the past year. On March 24-25, Yukon College held its fourth annual Research, Innovation and Commercialization workshop. This year's theme was Cold Climate Greenhouses with the commercialization portion dedicated to a panel discussion with a local grocer, hotel catering manager and government food procurement agent talking about what requirements they had to purchase local food products. This conference was useful and informative towards developing a local food strategy.

The second community gardeners' forum was held in Whitehorse in March bringing together growers from most Yukon communities as well as participants from Yellowknife, NWT and Atlin, BC. The workshop helped attendees develop a network of people that exchange information on developing community gardens that meet community needs. Initiatives highlighted at the workshop included the Yukon Kids on the Farm education project, Recreation and Parks Association of Yukon's Healthy Menu Program, Tr'ondek Hwech'in Wellness Farm, Raising Poultry in Old Crow and an update on the Yellowknife Community Garden Collective.

Continuing on this theme, Farmer Roberts Store opened this fall with a focus on providing local foods and enabling local farmers. To this end the store plans to provide on-site egg grading, a vegetable washing and packaging area, an inspected butcher shop and a commercial kitchen that local producers can use to value add products. Cliffside Greenhouse is also opening a Yukon store at a new location operating on a similar idea. Local products, local foods and crafts and the Potluck Food Cooperative store will all be housed together at the new location in Hillcrest.

It seems like everyone is riding the same wave. Local, healthy, affordable, ethical, wellness, community, education, economy, innovation and environment are connecting on local food and it's great to be a part of it.

Another related piece is the increasing use of the mobile abattoir. The addition of a commercial scalding to the unit has made it popular with swine producers and has greatly increased the operating efficiency of the plant. This year the mobile abattoir processed a couple of yaks, sheep, beef, wild boar, pigs, elk and a second trial for processing inspected broilers. The success of the unit has sparked private sector interest in building abattoirs into their operations to capture some of the business generated by local livestock producers.

Lastly but not least, congratulations to the nine nominees for the Yukon Farmer of the Year award. This is the highest number of nominations ever received in a year and a great reflection on all of the amazing things that were going on in the Yukon agriculture industry in 2015.

From all of us here at the Agriculture Branch, all the best in 2016.

Tony Hill
Director, Agriculture branch

NOMINATION: GRANT DOWDELL
AND KAREN DIGBY

Former recipients of the award in 2009, Grant Dowdell and Karen Digby have been farming in Dawson for over 30 years. They have set an incredibly high standard for the Klondike market gardeners. This year Grant & Karen suffered a setback when their production greenhouse caught fire early in the season and wiped out half of their starter plants. Within 24 hours the community rallied behind them and opened a go-fund-me site to cover their losses. The community raised more than enough to re-build and this nomination points to the respect Dawsonites have for Grant and Karen and the market garden vegetables they grow.

NOMINATION: PELLY RIVER
RANCH

The nomination comes in for Dale and his son Ken. Dale is the second generation of Bradley's on the Pelly River Ranch and his son Ken is representing the third. Pelly River Ranch is the longest continuously operating farm in the Yukon and has been operated by the Bradley family since 1954. The Bradley's in 1999 were recognized as Yukon's Farmers of the Century. Many things have changed since the Bradley's started farming this property. The equipment has been updated and they stay in touch through satellite internet and Skype. What is the same and being recognized is that they are still there, producing beef, poultry, eggs and vegetables from their subsistence farm while still operating off grid. With Dale and Ken, the learnings from years of farming in the north are being passed on and that practical know-how of growing in the North can still be seen with a visit to Pelly River Ranch.

NOMINATION: GROWERS OF ORGANIC FOOD YUKON (GOOFY)
The organization of Growers of Organic Food Yukon was nominated for farmer of the year. Many members of this organization have won this award in the past and this nomination recognizes the organization and the membership's willingness to teach and encourage new organic farmers.

Beyond being a voice for organic production in the Yukon, GoOFY initiated the Kids on the Farm school project and are looking at a farmers in the classroom project in the near future.

NOMINATION: FARMER ROBERTS (Robert Ryan, and Simone Rudge)
The nominator points to the huge leap that this new store has made to support local farms, the local economy and providing Yukoners with local food choices year round. Now that they are open, nothing more need be said: what a commitment Robert and Simone have made to supporting local agriculture!

NOMINATION: YVETTE CHOMA.
This first-time nomination for Yvette comes in for showing grit and determination as she carved a farm out of the Yukon wilderness. Yvette Choma has been developing a farm about 5km up the Kluane Wagon Road along 37-Mile Creek. Although she has had a few setbacks along the way, Yvette demonstrated perseverance and is being recognized following her first harvest this fall.

NOMINATION: JACK AND FAYE CABLE
Jack and Faye received three nominations for their important contributions to the Yukon and Yukon agriculture. Jack and Faye Cable recently sold their farm and the timing of this prompted a few from the

community to nominate them for their generosity, stewardship and agriculture accomplishments.

Jack and Faye have always dabbled in growing, and previous to owning an agriculture property grew different varieties of wheat in their front yard in town. They were the first Christmas tree farmers in the Yukon. Along with the trees they also grew potatoes which they often donated to local charities or to the United Church..

Jack was a lawyer, president of Yukon Energy, served as an MLA and became Commissioner of the Yukon. As one nominator put it; "He is an intelligent man with an enquiring mind. Jack in his many roles was always a proud supporter of Yukon agriculture and the farming community. He advocated for agriculture in the territory and the community has been fortunate that he and Faye have been so supportive.

HONORABLE MENTION: SALAD GIRLS CLUB
Debi Wickham and Molly MacDonald, better known as the salad club girls, farmed salad greens for local restaurants. They did this while not having land of their own, and turned to renting/rejuvenating vacant garden space around Dawson and using it for their enterprise. The honorable mention recognizes Debi and Molly for their innovation, determination and great product.

FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR: ELEMENTAL FARM
Kate and Bart were supported by four well deserved nominations. In the words of one nominator: "Not only do they produce great produce, poultry and eggs, they give us options for locally grown, healthy food, they are a true example of what a local farmer should be."

A couple of nominations came from members of Elemental Farm's community supported agriculture (CSA). Their CSA customers were not only impressed with the quality and volume of food they received; they really valued the end of season Can-Can party where they learned about canning and preserving.

Elemental Farm is a regular food educator at the Fireweed Market. They share information on vegetable varieties, seed sources, the time of year when a vegetable is at peak production and how to prepare it.

Bart is recognized as the King of repurposing or "Mac-Gyvering" as indicated by one nominator while another nominations points to Kate's work with the Anti-Poverty Coalition to increase awareness about food insecurity in the Yukon.

Bart and Kate's nominations recognized their generosity as demonstrated each week during the summer market season when they make sure other vendors have fresh produce to take home, and donate left over produce to local organizations like the food bank.

They are contributing members to the agriculture industry, taking time out to attend and provide input at conferences, workshops and this year Kate provided a valuable input to the Local Food Strategy from the perspective of the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition.

Congratulations to all the nominees and to Kate and Bart for their outstanding commitment to the Yukon agriculture community.

YUKON PRODUCER PROFILE

HIGHLIGHTING PRODUCERS AND THEIR AGRI-BUSINESSES

This column is an opportunity to introduce you to Yukon farm operations. This segment features Yukon's amazing producers, farm products and strategies Yukon producers use to overcome some of our climate, production and market obstacles.

POPLAR FLATS FARM, AMOREE AND BERNARD BRIGGS

Amoree and Bernard Briggs operate a small family farm called Poplar Flats Farm, located on the Mayo Road, on the south east corner of the intersection with Burma Road. Poplar Flats is an example of what a self-sufficient, mixed production, Whitehorse small family farm can be. Their approach to operating the farm demonstrates their commitment to family and farming. They are farming to have more quality time with each other and are using the farm to provide for their family.

Bernard bought this property 14 years ago, and at the time it required work to bring it back into production and to make it a home. Over time Bernard has been fixing it up, starting with adding cabins to the property as a source of revenue.



Photo: Bernard and Amoree with their kids McKenzie, Huxley and Kippen hanging out with the cows.

He has also been steadily working the land, bringing the fields back into production and constructing the out buildings and hay shed himself to keep costs down. They have built a beautiful farm and have done it thanks to a lot of sweat equity, bartering, milling their own wood and a clear picture of what they wanted to do. Although they have not developed the operation solely on farm income they have developed the farm to be self-

sufficient and support itself with little off farm income.

The farm is comprised of well built out buildings, including a chicken coop, brooder, greenhouse, hay shed, building for hanging meat and processing, and a shop. They have a 60 x120 ft garden, a small orchard with about a hundred berry plants including apples, raspberries, saskatoons, haskaps, gooseberries, red and black currants and strawberries. They have layers for egg production, and in the summer they raise about 150 meat birds to go along with their beef operation.

They are overwintering 14 animals; 6 cows, 1 bull and 7 steers. This fall they butchered 6 animals from the farm, along with an additional 6 from Pelly River Ranch which they brought on late in the season to help support their farm gate sales, and are wintering two yearlings for spring slaughter. With only 25 acres, they pay a lot of attention to pasture management, and their hay



fields. They hay nine acres with the remainder of the farmed land divided into four different pastures. They have the hay and pasture fields under irrigation with a total of 18 acres seeing irrigation. The pastures are grazed 3 to 4 times a year, rotating the animals through the different fields while at the same time managing the field to prevent over grazing. The fields are also mowed to keep weeds down and are regularly chain harrowed to help spread the fertilizer left behind by the animals.

By having as many animals as they do on 25 acres, pasturing and generating enough hay to over winter the herd, Bernard recognizes he is asking a lot of from his land base. He is working on developing his farming practice to mitigate the impact. As Bernard says, "it has been a learning curve and I want to manage the calories in the field." By managing the calories as Bernard sees it, he is developing an intimate understanding of the nutrient cycle in the land. The results of his learnings you can see by the exceptional condition of his animals and the improving production of his fields.

A portion of their production from the farm goes to feed their family of five, with the remainder being sold farm gate. Their core business is beef, and they sell directly to customers from their email & phone list that has expanded over time with their business. They provide the cutting and wrapping of their animals on farm to allow them to add value to the meat and keep costs on farm. They keep records of their previous orders to boost their relationship with the customers by helping them fine tune their meat order for the following year, depending on what is left in the freezer. They also sell eggs, broilers, and market

garden vegetables directly to their customers, and in the future they will have fruit from their newly developed orchard.

What has worked best for Poplar Flats is patterning the farm after what farms looked like 100 years ago while at the same time incorporating a few modern conveniences like water timers to create an efficient process. For Bernard and Amoree the biggest challenge has been the building process; trying to develop the farm while at the same time prioritizing time for family.

Amoree and Bernard explain their philosophy to the family farm as: "We want to create the balance between having time for family, being sustainable, producing high quality food, and actually making a living. For us, there is a real difference in the way you farm when the farm is your main source of income. Each portion of our operation has to complement the next to be efficient."

The result is they have developed a mixed farm operation with a balanced family and farm life driving their actions. A family farm with this kind of balance provides local food that is raised and grown with care to feed your family.

To contact Poplar Flats and get added to Amoree and Bernard's distribution list, phone them at 667-2067 or email them at poplarflats@gmail.com. If emailing, remember they keep it simple and only check their email once or twice a week.

Thank you Amoree, Bernard and family for sharing your approach to developing a farm that is self-sufficient and provides for your family and community. Operating your small mixed farm to be self-sufficient is inspiring.



Q&A WITH YUKON AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION'S NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Yukon Agricultural Association has a new Executive Director. Jennifer Hall has taken on this role and as a way to get to know her, InFARMation asked Jennifer a few questions.

Q: Hi Jennifer, let's get right into it. When did you start and when was your first meeting?

A: I started with the YAA in early November. However, I did manage to attend the October board meeting, which really helped build momentum for our ambitious November meeting. The board formed two new committees; reviewed work-to-date on a business plan for the YAA's leased land; and tidied up some administrative updates. We accomplished a lot! Through the winter season, we will be very busy focussing on strategic, administrative and governance issues, as well as supporting various events organized by the Yukon Young Farmers.

BTW: YAA's next AGM will be held in May after which things will quieten down in the boardroom and we will turn our attention to outreach initiatives and activities including farm visits.

Q: We hear you are new to the territory. Where have you lived before?

A: I was born and raised in Vancouver but have lived in England as well as China and also in Calgary and in the Kootenays. My husband is from South Africa. My parents grew-up in other countries. Many of our family friends are from or live in other parts of the world. As a result, I feel like a global citizen

- fitting in everywhere and nowhere. But since moving here in July, Yukon has felt like home. I have been overwhelmed by the warm welcome we have received.

Q: Rumor has it your skills are in administration with NGO's which fits well with YAA, but we all want to know how you are tied to agriculture?

A: I was raised in a city but have very fond memories of horseback riding on working ranches in the Chilcotin and helping out on a friend's farm near Duncan, caring for livestock and living with water restrictions. My father grew up in southeastern England during the war years. His greatest career ambition was to become a 'gentleman farmer'. But instead he became an accountant, moved to Vancouver and tended a big garden. Throughout my childhood, every summer my dad would contribute fruit and vegetables to our meals. I grew up appreciating the tremendous effort that is required to produce food for the family dinner table as well as the wider community.

Q: Everyone brings different skills to a job, how do you make work interesting?

A: My artistic personality drives my interest in new ideas and opportunities. I am an insufferable optimist but I have learned that practical realism helps build sustainable systems, especially when working in groups. I have a biology degree and two education degrees and was an at-home mum while I completed my graduate research in science education. My professional experiences have been intertwined into a life of adapting to new places and people. My kids



might tell you that their home life is a strange mash-up of conversations about science and culture, analysis and learning. My insatiable curiosity keeps my life interesting.

Q: Understanding that you have just started, so far, what projects are grabbing your interest and what is going on?

A: The North of 60 Agricultural Conference was a tremendous way to learn about the agricultural topics that are important to the territory. Yukon Young Farmers are getting set for their AGM in January with a special guest speaker, young delegates will be attending the annual Canadian Young Farmers Federation 2016 conference in Vancouver, and we are organizing a special event with Temple Grandin, who will be speaking about agriculture and animal behaviour. This event will be of great interest to 4H members!

We are working very hard to ensure that YAA members have current information about the elk

management plan. In addition, the consulting company, Hart and Associates, are currently conducting stakeholder assessments and market research that will be used in the development of a business plan for YAA's leased land, which is situated on the north Klondike Highway.

I have attended meetings at the Agriculture Branch and with the Food Network.

Farmer Robert's is my favourite meeting place. Simone's lovely teacups and cosies and the warm fireplace make the walk over there very worthwhile!

Q: We have asked you what you are finding interesting so far, at the same time what do you see as the biggest challenges?

A: Farming north of 60 is in itself a challenge. As a result, YAA members have an array of specialized experiences and skills depending on their areas of interest. How can we meet the needs of all YAA members? The YAA's new Outreach Committee and I are tackling this task at the moment. On a daily basis, I try to consider how my work can become more relevant to a wider group. Another challenge we face is to find ways to support long-time members as well as new members. Many YAA members are seasoned stakeholders of Yukon's agricultural community. They have seen many farming projects come and go. Other members are starting out their venture with new enthusiasm and the required energy to break new ground. To balance and blend deep knowledge with untested enthusiasm can be challenging but very rewarding.

Q: How are you planning to meet your members?

A: I love it when the phone rings and I get to talk and learn about a topic that is immediately relevant to a YAA member – bee-keeping, green feed, poultry, funding applications, wildlife... I try to find ways to connect people with the resources that they need. But the best way to meet members is a farm visit! So far, I have visited two farms and will be coordinating more visits once the weather warms up. It helps me to understand and experience issues that are of personal importance to each producer.

Q: As the new Executive Director, What is in store for the YAA members? And are you continuing to keep the Product and Service Guide updated?

A: Memberships will be renewed in March 2016. We will be organizing this in conjunction with news about the YAA's AGM in May. I am always updating the online Yukon Farm Products and Services Guide. Please call me or email me so that I can update the online database with your current information in time for the next growing season. Next year, the YAA will be launching a Facebook page where YAA members can list information about produce that is for sale. We will be sending out friend requests in the spring.

Q: And have there been any changes in the YAA office hours? How do you like to be contacted?

A: I am in the office Monday to Friday, mostly from 8am to 4pm. Call ahead (668-6864) and let me know when I can expect a visit. I will put the kettle on!

Stayed tuned to the YAA newsletter, there will be lots of new information about goings-on, Newsletter is due in late January.

To find out more about YAA go to www.yukonag.ca or email admin@yukonag.ca. The phone number is listed above and you can find the office at 302 Steele St., downtown Whitehorse.



Growing Forward 2

A Canada-Yukon initiative providing funding to Yukon's agriculture, agri-food and agri-products industry

Growing Forward 2 offers programs in the areas of business risk management, business development, food safety training and development, marketing, research and the environment.

Take a look at the *Growing Forward 2* Programming Guide on our website at www.agriculture.gov.yk.ca for funding opportunities. You can also contact the Agriculture Branch for more information or to request a hard copy of the programming guide.

Currently accepting applications

Phone: 867-667-5838

Toll-free: 1-800-661-0408, ext. 5838

Email: agriculture@gov.yk.ca

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OUR NORTHERN FLAVOUR

2015 NORTH OF 60° CONFERENCE

The annual North of 60° Conference was held November 7th and 8th, at the Westmark Whitehorse. The two day conference was very well attended, as seen on Saturday with a full room for many of the talks. This year's conference themed Our Northern Flavour had a mix of presentations covering off a wide range of topics looking at promoting production in the territory.

Dr. John Church kicked off the conference Saturday morning talking about the advantages of pasture raised beef. John is an associate professor at Thompson Rivers University and leads a multidisciplinary research team dedicated to the exploration and invention of innovative practices and technologies in the cattle industry. The root of John's presentation is how pasture raised beef results in an improved fatty acid profile compared to grain finished beef and other meat sources. John discussed the Omega-6 to Omega-3 ratios and how grass fed beef provides a ratio inline to health professional's recommendations of 4:1.

John presented the science of how the fatty acid profile of the meat changes with beef animals raised on pasture. Some of the highlights of his talk were the on farm stories, marketing learnings and other research provided valuable input into beef production. John connected how raising red meat on grass and other feed options impacts the finished product and the health of the animal. John touched base on animal genetics or breeds, marketing opportunities, meeting the demand of your customers, branding, and the value of ethically raised animals.

The beef presentation had everyone thinking about agriculture and the market opportunities of producing local. The remainder of the conference featured Yukon presenters. First up was Animal Health Unit, Program Veterinarian, Dr. Jane Harms. Jane highlighted the Veterinary services program, a pilot project to improve access to veterinary care for Yukoners who raise animals for food. There is more information about this program on the back page of InFARMation.

Yukon Invasive Species Council, also presented in the morning talking about weeds to be on the watch for and how to manage the spread with early detection and rapid response. Andrea Altherr from the Invasive Species Council also talked about how the council can help support local farmers and the walk your field program. You can find out more about the Yukon Invasive Species Council at www.yukoninvasives.com.

The morning session wrapped up with local producer and custom farm operator Gerry Stockley and Agriculture Branch, Agrologist Matthew Ball talking farm layout and planning. Gerry provided his do's and don'ts for developing land, touching base on designing your field, what equipment works best and the techniques that he employs for developing fields. Matt talked about the details in planning your farm, focusing on designing your farm layout to maximize flexibility of use and to allow for soil building opportunities. The presentation also touched based on farm development decisions such as where to locate the house, outbuildings, access roads and fields, along with what to think about when planning.

The afternoon kicked off with Chief Building Inspector Stan Dueck

talking about the requirements for building in the Yukon and where to find information around building codes, how to apply for permits along with building requirements on farm. Following Ken was Agriculture Branch soil technician Kam Davies, who provided valuable information on permafrost and how it can impact agriculture properties and what can be done if you are being impacted by melting permafrost.

The remainder of the afternoon was farmers talking about their operations. Brian Lendrum and Susan Ross of Lendrum Ross Farm talked about their operation and how they have done things over the year. Kate Mechan and Bart Bounds of Elemental farm shared their operation and the challenges they have faced with their growing market garden operation. Jackie McBride Dixon shared her and Scott's farm and how they have grown and what works for them. Hearing Yukon farm stories provided valuable learnings and insight that provide solutions to the challenges of growing north of 60°.

The day finished with new Yukon Farmer Leona Dargis sharing her story about her family farm in North Eastern Alberta and the life challenges she faced on the farm. Leona also shared her thoughts on her next farming challenge with her partner on a property north of Whitehorse. Having local producers and Leona talk about farming was a high point for the weekend and feedback from attendees was extremely positive.

Day 2 of the North of 60 Conference focused on local food and retailing. Agriculture Branch staff looked at what to consider for retailing food, covering off the why it is important and some of the other regulatory considerations to think about when selling food, especially

into the retail chain. Environment Health Regulations, Agriculture Products Act and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency Acts and Regulations were introduced to support those who are looking at retail options. During this presentation the Yukon mobile abattoir was highlighted to promote how it can be used to provide producers an opportunity to enter into the retail chain. The addition of a swine scalding and dehairer to the abattoir is complementing the use of the mobile unit and providing a service that adds to the value of the meat for the next step in the chain.

Agriculture Branch Director Tony Hill provided an update on the local food strategy aimed at encouraging Yukoners to make healthy and local food choices, and to increase the production and use of locally grown vegetables, meat and other food products.

Sunday ended with valuable and candid conversations with retailers who are helping change the landscape of where Yukoners pick up local products. Mark Wykes of Your Independent Grocer, Simon Rudge of Farmer Roberts and Christina Sobol from the Potluck Coop were on hand to answer questions and let farmers know how to distribute products through their operation. All these retail outlets are looking for local product and are open to one on one conversations on how to make this happen. Obviously there is a difference of scale when a producer is looking to supply Independent, vs supplying Farmer Roberts or the Potluck Coop. The message was the same for all outlets - they are open to developing relationships with farmers so that everyone benefits from supplying Yukoners with easier access to local food.

Thank you to all who participated.

THE CORNER LOT (LAND, OPPORTUNITIES AND TIDBITS)

The agriculture land program uses its own distinct vocabulary that may sometimes seem difficult and arbitrary. This Corner Lot tackles a couple of the common misunderstood terms in the land release process.

FARM DEVELOPMENT PLAN VS FARM DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

Farm Development Plan (FDP) makes up part of an agriculture land application and must be approved prior to proceeding with the review of the application. The FDP must specify approved agriculture developments equal to the appraised value of the parcel. The FDP (without the financial tables) will be submitted to the Yukon Environmental and Socioeconomic Assessment Board (YESAB) review of the application. The FDP will, if the application is approved and the parcel released, be transformed into a Farm Development Agreement.

Farm Development Agreement (FDA) makes up part of an agricultural agreement for sale with the Yukon government. It is a summary of the FDP. Each development activity is listed along with a value of how much it will cost to complete. The development activities in the FDA must be completed within the 7-year agreement for sale.

PLANNED LAND APPLICATION VS SPOT LAND APPLICATION

Spot Land application is accepted on lands that are unencumbered by any other use. Spot land applications are for soil-based agriculture projects and the soils must meet the minimum arability requirement. Once the application is accepted and FDP is complete, a review by YESAB will take place. The terms and conditions of the review become part of the Decision Document for the project and are attached to the Agreement for Sale. Before an Agreement for Sale is signed, a legal survey must be registered at the Land Titles office for the parcel.

Agriculture **Planned Land Application Review (APLAR)** is a competitive public process where lands are released in areas designated by Yukon Government for agriculture land sales. Under APLAR there may be multiple applications for the same lot. Agriculture planned land applications are for soil-based and non-soil-based agriculture. Non-soil based agriculture parcels are only available through APLAR.

APLAR areas are subject to YESAB review. YG may also do development work such as road construction and survey. Interested persons have 30 days to apply and applicants have 60 days from the appointed date to submit an FDP. Agriculture Branch will approve the FDP that best meets the specification set out in the application package. The terms and conditions of the Decision Document are part of the application package and become part of the Agreement for Sale. Before an Agreement for Sale is signed, the applicant is required to pay the lot share of development costs incurred by YG.

CATTLE HEALTH WORKSHOPS COMING SPRING 2016

If you raise – or plan to raise – cattle in Yukon, consider attending a free workshop on cattle health in early spring 2016; one workshop will be offered in Whitehorse and one in Dawson City.

Led by a cattle veterinarian, the workshops will address health topics for beef cattle primarily, with some information on dairy cattle. The workshops will cover other topics including:

- Common diseases and health conditions of cattle
- How to recognize signs of disease and how to keep your cattle healthy
- Nutrition and husbandry
- Tips for breeding and raising cattle in Yukon

Staff from the Animal Health Unit and Agriculture Branch are organizing the workshop. The dates will be finalized in January 2016 and posted on the Agriculture Branch website. Stay tuned for more information

VETERINARY SERVICES PROGRAM

The Veterinary Services Program is a pilot project to improve access to veterinary care for Yukoners who raise animals for food. The program reimburses enrolled farmers up to \$1,000 for the duration of the program. The program covers:

- Veterinarian travel costs;
- Professional service and farm call fees; and/or
- Fees for up to three phone consultations with the veterinarian.

Farmers with six or fewer poultry are eligible for \$250 of coverage. Farmers are still responsible for paying fees for testing samples and drugs, vaccines or treatment required for animals.

To enroll you need to fill out and submit an enrollment form to the Animal Health Unit. You must also have or apply for a Premises Identification Number with the Agriculture branch.

For more information go to: www.emr.ca/infarm23 or contact the Animal Health Unit, Phone: 867-667-5600, Email: animalhealth@gov.yk.ca

ELK/ AGRICULTURE CONFLICT HUNT

The Government of Yukon has a process to respond to concerns from Takhini River area farmers about crop and fence damage caused by elk. Department of Environment has developed an Elk/Agriculture conflict hunt intended to train elk to avoid agricultural properties through aversive conditioning, consistent with the Draft Elk Management Plan.

PROCESS FOR LANDOWNERS

- Landowners are to contact Conservation Officer Services Branch (COSB) at 867-667-8005 (or 1-800-661-0525 after hours) with details about their elk complaint, e.g., elk locations, potential hazards, and other relevant information.
- COSB and the Agriculture Branch will investigate the complaint to determine eligibility for a conflict hunt in consideration of the general guidelines listed above.
- COSB will use the Priority List to contact a willing hunter and issue a Wildlife Act permit and the conditions the hunter must abide by to hunt an elk.
- The hunter must complete the hunt in a time frame identified by the conservation officer and as specified on the permit.
- The hunter must remove the carcass (including offal) to ensure carnivores are not attracted to the area, and comply with mandatory reporting and submission requirements.

Learn more about the Elk/Agriculture Conflict Hunt:
www.env.gov.yk.ca/elk

INFARMATION IS:

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