

# THE PLOUGHBOY NEWSLETTER



**New rollover plough at the Takhini farm of Fritz and Nana Lehnherr set up and ready for field work this spring.** Its unique design allows for back and forth ploughing. It is expected to be of particular benefit in turning over old compacted and root bound hay fields, while deep burying weed seeds, smoothing field irregularities and leaving an easily worked surface, The plough was recently acquired by the YAA through the Growing Forward program. It is available for rent by any Yukon farmer. Call the YAA office for details. For more information on the design and performance of this implement, come into the YAA office and pick up a brochure, or check the net at <http://www.kuhnnorthamerica.com/us/online-services-literature.html>.

*February is  
Heart Month!*

## **... NOW FOR A NOTE FROM THE 'IT'LL NEVER HAPPEN TO ME' DEPT....**

As many of you may know, heart health recently became much more meaningful and personal to me. On December 17, Doctors at the Mazenkowski Heart Centre in Edmonton informed me I had a 90% blockage in one of my coronary arteries. They installed a stent (a small metal tube) to keep the artery open, and prescribed rest and several drugs to aid my recovery. The odd thing is, I had no significant indicators, such as a family history of heart trouble, or smoking or bad diet, so, even after two short episodes of difficulty catching my breath some two weeks earlier, I still didn't really suspect I had a cardiac problem. It took two more episodes, including a very severe one which woke me from my sleep at 5 AM the morning of Dec 12, to convince me that something was seriously wrong. Even then, I was all too ready to pass it off as soon as I started feeling better again. As a friend later explained and admonished me, the biggest symptom I overlooked was DENIAL which is, perhaps, the strongest indicator of all. But thank God (the last incident really improved my prayer life), and our great medical staff, I am still here to tell you 'February is Heart Month!' Do check out the Heart and Stroke Foundation website at [www.heartandstroke.bc.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.bc.ca), and learn to recognize the danger signs as well as how to maintain and improve your heart health. ...- Rick (Note, I am now back in the YAA office)

**HUSBANDS, WHEN LIFE WITH YOUR WIFE IS CONTENTIOUS, YOU CAN TAKE CONTROL OF THE SITUATION BY JUST GIVING HER A HUG AND SAYING THOSE THREE SIMPLE WORDS THAT MEN DON'T LIKE TO SAY, BUT EVERY WIFE WANTS TO HEAR.....**

..... **I WAS WRONG.** - **THERE, NOW WAS THAT SO HARD....., GOOD LUCK FELLAS.**

# The invaders are coming

Article for the Newsletter of the Yukon Agricultural Association  
Andrea Altherr, Coordinator, Yukon Invasive Species Council, January 2010

## Invasive plants affect us all

Often mistaken for wildflowers, invasive plants are spreading through our ecosystems at an alarming rate. As native plants are replaced by invasives, biodiversity declines and habitats change. These impacts are like a ripple on a pond - affecting wildlife, ecosystem functions, natural resources, agriculture and recreation. **And why should we care?** Invasive plants are spread primarily by human activity.

Invasive plants can create large economic losses by reducing crop quality and pasture land palatability, and by increasing costs for weed control. Grasslands are particularly susceptible to invasive plants. Some invasive plants are toxic to livestock and humans and may cause liver damage or fatal nerve disorders. Others have thorns, prickles or awns that cause serious irritation of the skin, eyes, mouth and ears.

## What species are of concern in the Yukon?

The Yukon has less than two dozens invasive plant species; this is little compared to neighboring jurisdictions. In the Yukon we still have a good chance to battle existing infestations and to avoid the spread of new invaders. Some of the species of concern to Yukon agriculture are: Narrowleaf hawksbeard, shepherd's purse and common chickweed.

### What are invasive plants?

Invasive plants are plants, which spread easily when introduced outside of their natural distribution and which have negative impacts on humans, animals or ecosystems. Invasive plants have the capacity to establish quickly and easily on new or disturbed sites.

**Narrowleaf hawksbeard** (*Crepis tectorum*) is primarily a weed of cultivated fields, pastures, roadsides, and waste areas. It poses a problem in forage crops. Narrowleaf hawksbeard is found throughout Yukon along all the major highways.

Unlike the similar dandelion, this annual plant grows a single, sometimes branched stem from a small taproot that is easily pulled. The normally 20 to 60 cm high plant has alternate leaves that get smaller toward the top. Basal leaves are stalked and toothed; stem leaves are stalkless and mostly linear.



Photo: B.Bennett

The numerous flowers are yellow. Each plant produces more than 49,000 seeds which colonize open areas and disturbed sites easily.

**How can you control narrowleaf hawksbeard?** The plants are easily pulled up by hand. But be aware that they will continue to mature after being pulled. Narrowleaf hawksbeard is a productive seed producer that once established is hard to remove. Good tillage will control this weed on cultivated land. Where possible, infested fields should be tilled in the fall because of plants which lie over winter are difficult to control. Use of herbicides can be an effective method. Depending on a number of factors it is best done either by fall or spring application.

**Shepherd's purse** (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*) is found as a common weed growing in disturbed areas, gardens, farmland, roadsides, and old homesites.

Shepherd's purse is an erect annual to biennial plant, growing 10-50 cm in height from a small taproot. Stems are simple to branched. The leaves form a basal rosette. The flowers are small and white to pink in color. Flowers appear on slender spreading stalks from May to July and form round clusters. Fruit pods are triangular to heart-shaped, resembling a purse of a shepherd. Each pod produces up to 20 very small seeds. Shepherd's purse reproduces entirely by seeds and colonizes open ground and may inhibit the establishment of native species.

**How can you control shepherd's purse?** Plants can be easily pulled by hand.



Photo: J.Fenneman

**Common chickweed** (*Stellaria media*) is found as a common garden weed which is growing also along roadsides and waste places.



Jennifer Anderson @ USDA-NRCS

Common chickweed is an annual to winter annual plant with branching and often trailing stems 10-60 cm long; a single line of white hairs grows on one side of the stem and leaf stalks. The leaves are opposite, broadly oval, and pointed. The white star-shaped flowers are small; the 5 petals are deeply cleft.

Each plant produces approximately 15,000 seeds.

**How can you control common chickweed?** Small populations can be controlled by hand-pulling best before gone to seed. All plant fragments should be removed or deeply buried in the soil, since plant shoots have the ability to re-root, if partially covered by soil. Common chickweed can be controlled by a variety of chemicals; however, it is resistant to a number of commonly used herbicides.

To learn more about these species go to: [www.agf.gov.bc.ca/cropprot/weedguid/weedguid.htm](http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/cropprot/weedguid/weedguid.htm)

**The hawkweeds are coming**

Native hawkweeds (*Hieracium* sp) are a common sight in alpine meadows. **Invasive hawkweeds** were discovered in the area of Watson Lake in 2009. Hawkweeds are very invasive due to their spread by seed initially and then local population expansion by stolons (above-ground runners which will develop roots and new plants). Once established, hawkweed rosettes and seedlings can form a solid mat excluding desired species. Hawkweeds thrive on low productivity soils and are found in mountain meadows, deforested areas, high alpine hillsides, along roads and waterways, and in lawns. Hawkweeds are palatable species, fairly high in nutrients; so many grazing animals will eat them. However, they can become mono-cultures and choke out other more wanted forage species. Identification can be challenging.



Photo: L. Wilson



Photo: B. Stewart

In general all the invasive hawkweeds are much more robust than the natives with the exception of umbellate hawkweed which is distinguished by leafy stems.

**How can you control hawkweeds?** Dig out rosettes and their shallow roots in new, small infestations. Take care not to spread any of the vegetative parts of the plant as re-growth from roots and stolons can occur. Although mowing removes flower stems and may prevent seed set, it should be used with caution as it encourages enhanced vegetative spread.

**What can we do?**

- Learn how to identify invasive, non-native plants that can potentially cause problems.
- Dispose of non-native plants (weeds) carefully.
- Clean farm equipment so it's free of seeds and plant parts.
- Avoid importing and using weedy hay for livestock feed; examine the fields your hay comes from and make sure there are few weeds.
- Avoid planting species for soil enhancement that are known to cause problems in the Yukon (e.g. sweetclover). Use less aggressive species.
- If invasive plants are established in your fields, mow them before they flower to avoid seed production.
- Minimize disturbance of soil to prevent creating seedbeds for invasive plants.
- Please report any sightings of invasive species in pastures (especially new ones) to the Yukon Government Agriculture Branch as soon as possible.



Photo: G. Brunner

Vegetation trapped in heavy equipment. By cleaning your equipment you can help avoid the spread of invasive plants.

**Disposal of invasive plants**

- All invasive plant parts should be placed in a clear plastic bag and left in the sun to kill the seed because many plants (e.g. thistles, knapweed and daisies) continue to produce seed even after pulling or dead-heading.
- Bring the bags to the landfill, where they should be buried shortly after being dropped off.
- Burning in your garden is not the best solution: Some plant seeds (e.g. spotted knapweed) will only be killed in an incinerator.
- Do not "recycle" garden debris into a public park or natural area.
- Avoid composting invasive plants, as they can quickly re-establish themselves.

More information is available: [www.yukoninvasives.com](http://www.yukoninvasives.com)

[www.environmentyukon.gov.yk.ca/wildlifebiodiversity/invasivespecies.php](http://www.environmentyukon.gov.yk.ca/wildlifebiodiversity/invasivespecies.php)

References used to compile this article:

[www.invasiveplantcouncilbc.ca](http://www.invasiveplantcouncilbc.ca), [www.akweeds.uaa.alaska.edu](http://www.akweeds.uaa.alaska.edu)  
[www.environmentyukon.gov.yk.ca/wildlifebiodiversity/invasivespecies](http://www.environmentyukon.gov.yk.ca/wildlifebiodiversity/invasivespecies)

**Report any sightings:**  
 Email: [agriculture@gov.yk.ca](mailto:agriculture@gov.yk.ca)  
 Phone: 867-667-5838

## Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP)

Food safety has become a major public issue. It has already resulted in tightening of the regulations governing the handling of food in many jurisdictions. If you are involved in handling or processing food for public consumption, don't miss the opportunity to take the HACCP training course scheduled for this February 25-26 and 27-28 at the Yukon College in Whitehorse.

This internationally recognized Food Safety System will expose Yukon producers and processors to food safety system design and development. Upon successfully completing the course, participants will obtain a certificate of completion and will be able to apply this training to their own particular food production system.

Cost of these workshops is \$25 per session for each of the two sessions (Prerequisite to HACCP and HACCP Plan Development)

For additional information, or to register, call Kevin Bowers at the Agriculture Branch office or at 867-667-3043. [kevin.bowers@gov.yk.ca](mailto:kevin.bowers@gov.yk.ca).

## Plan to attend the 2010 Yukon Agricultural Association AGM

All welcome. Mark your calendars and plan to come out for the YAA AGM scheduled for May 1 at the Whitehorse Westmark Hotel. Why not also take a few moments now to think about nominating a candidate for election to our Board of Directors, or even volunteering to let your own name stand. Agriculture and food is everybody's business. Join us. Memberships are just \$10 - available at the door or by calling the office.

**HOMEGROWN: A Documentary on Urban Agriculture...** "HOMEGROWN", follows the Der-vaes family who run a small farm in the heart of urban Pasadena, California. While "living off the grid", they harvest over 6,000 pounds of produce on less than a quarter of an acre, make their own bio diesel, power their computers with the help of solar panels, and maintain a website that gets 4,000 hits a day.

The film is an intimate human portrait of what it's like to live like "Little House on the Prairie" in the 21st Century. See the movie trailer: <http://www.homegrown-film.com/trailer.html>

### FOR SALE

Two parcels of Agricultural Land  
15 acres and 160 acres

Fenced and partially cleared

**For more info: Property  
Guys # 143170 & 0007858.**

or, call

**667-7844 or Email**

**[raftera@northwestel.net](mailto:raftera@northwestel.net)**

The [Alaska Greenhouse and Nursery Conference](#) will be held Feb. 25-26 in Juneau. Topics will include slugs and snails, low maintenance landscape design, propagating native plants, new varieties for 2010 and more. registration form and agenda [www.uaf.edu/ces](http://www.uaf.edu/ces)

**Square Dancing Ya Gotta See - check it out at**  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WxyzS0vCME>

(Thanks to Art Taylor for pointing it out)

## Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP)

The agricultural sector is constantly changing and farming is an unpredictable business. In order to be competitive there is a need for more flexibility and the capacity to address new issues as they emerge.

The Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP) is a five-year (2009-2014), \$163 million Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) initiative. This federal program encourages farmers, processors, distributors, and retailers to work together to find innovative solutions to common concerns and to explore new market opportunities.

CAAP's objective is to help the agricultural sector adapt and remain competitive. Eligible projects could be in the areas of traceability, environment, climate change, capacity development, pests and diseases, and more.

Project proposals must meet program principles and criteria. Eligible recipients may include industry organizations and associations, cooperatives, marketing boards, aboriginal groups, for-profit companies and individual producers.

### Regional or Multi-regional proposals

On behalf of AAFC, Industry Councils across Canada deliver CAAP regionally. This grassroots delivery provides greater responsibility and accountability to industry in responding to the needs and issues of the agriculture and agri-food industry in each region. In Yukon, the delivery agent is the Yukon Agricultural Association (YAA).

**For more information on CAAP, call the YAA at 867.668.6864 or Email us at [admin@yukonag.ca](mailto:admin@yukonag.ca). You may also visit AAFC's website at [www.agr.gc.ca/caap](http://www.agr.gc.ca/caap) for info in French as well as English, or, call toll-free at 1-877-290-2188.**



Agriculture and  
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Agroalimentaire Canada

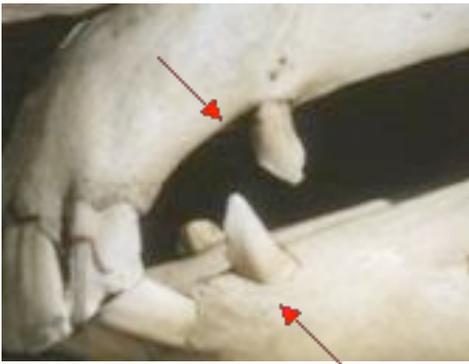
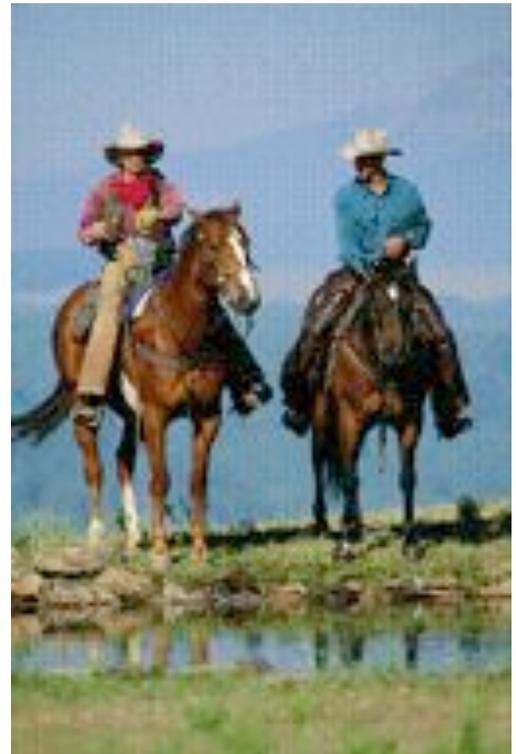
# Horse Dentistry

## WOLF TOOTH OR CANINE ?

No two teeth in the horse's mouth are more misunderstood than the canine tooth and the wolf tooth. Some of the confusion horse people have with these two teeth comes from the fact that they share some common traits.

- They both are located in the same part of the horse's mouth.
- Not all horses have them.
- Both can create problems for the horse, although in different ways.

Despite these similarities the canine tooth and wolf tooth are distinctly different. As a horse person, learning the details about these two teeth will give you a definite advantage. And the horses you work with and own will benefit a bunch!



Mature Canines

### Let me show you why.

To start let's look at the canine. The canine tooth is a male fighting tooth. It's main function for the horse is to do damage to his opponent in a fight. There are normally four of them. Two are located in the upper jaw and two in the lower jaw. They are found in the interdental space of the mouth. This is the part of the mouth between the incisors and molars also called the bars of the mouth.

The canines are usually about an inch (2.5cm) or so behind the corner incisors. The bottom two on the lower jaw tend to get quite long and sharp. They are deeply rooted teeth and very strong.

### Female horses don't usually have canine teeth.

However, some of the girls didn't read the book! If a mare does have canines they usually occur only on the bottom jaw and are very small. They are also commonly placed quite close to the incisors.

The canines start to appear in a stallion or gelding's mouth at about 4 ½ years of age. By 5 years old they will be mature. This fact can be a handy clue to what a horse's age is. If he is a male and does not have canines he will be less than 4 years old. If he has mature canines you will know he is at least 5 years old.



Long lower canine

As we mentioned, the **lower canines often get long and sharp**. This creates potential for a couple of problems. First there is the chance of cutting his tongue on these teeth. The other difficulty is usually related to bit interference.

The mature lower canine often is higher than the lower incisors in front of it. When the horse opens his mouth to allow the bit to come in it will clear the lower incisors but sometimes hit the higher canine tooth behind them. This striking the canine with a bit doesn't have to happen very often before the horse will start getting nervous about the bit going in and out of his mouth. **To prevent this problem developing** it is a good idea to have your equine dentist trim and round off the lower canines. This will accomplish two things. The shorter tooth will be much less likely to be struck by a bit. And it will no longer be sharp so he will not cut himself or another horse with it.

**Now the wolf tooth is quite a different character.** It is a small tooth often about the size of the end of a pencil. It is usually located just in front of the first molar. The most outstanding feature of the wolf tooth is that it is very unpredictable!

They can occur in either a male or female horse. There can be four of them, one on each arcade, but that is rare. They most commonly occur on the top jaw and sometimes there is only one.



Upper wolf tooth

They normally will be positioned close to the first molar. They may be pointed out at an angle or tipped in toward the tongue. Sometimes they grow out sideways or parallel to the jawbone. They may not actually come through the gum at all. These are called blind wolf teeth.

**As you can see, wolf teeth are unpredictable and troublesome.**

About 12-15% of horses will develop one or more wolf teeth. If they are going to have wolf teeth they will appear in the first year of the horse's life. If a horse does not have any wolf teeth by the time it is 2 years old he will not get any.



Some extracted wolf teeth

A wolf tooth has a small simple root that makes it relatively easy to extract. Removing wolf teeth is usually a good idea.

**Here's why.**

When a bit is properly placed in a horse's mouth it folds a corner of the soft tissue of the mouth in behind it. This fold of

skin normally comes up against the smooth shoulder of the first molar. No problem. Enter the wolf tooth, which is often pointed and sharp. As soon as the rider makes contact with the bit this fold of soft skin is pushed against the sharp wolf tooth and pinches the horse.

**The pain caused by a wolf tooth in this way can create a lot of behavior problems.**



A horse may become reluctant to give properly to the bit on the side where the wolf tooth is located.

- In race horses lugging away from or into the rail is often a result of a wolf tooth.
- A barrel horse may tend to blow his turns one way.
- A dressage horse may not flex well on one side because of a wolf tooth.

These and other similar problems can be solved or prevented by removing the wolf tooth. It is a good idea to have any horse you work with checked for wolf teeth. Taking care of this detail can make a huge difference for both you and the horse.

The canine or wolf tooth can cause your horse trouble. Having problems caused by these teeth solved or prevented is the mark of a savvy horse owner.

**Your horse will be grateful that you helped him.**

Have fun with all your horse adventures.

*Cliff Hanna*

**Cliff Hanna** practices equine dentistry in northwestern Canada. His main focus has become providing hands-on knowledge to the individual horse enthusiast. Cliff holds equine dental awareness seminars, writes articles for horse magazines and online horse websites. He is also author of the horse owner's dentistry handbook, **“Look A Gift Horse In The Mouth”** and **“How To Age A Horse By His Teeth”**.

Contact Cliff at: [www.TheHorseDentistryHandbook.com](http://www.TheHorseDentistryHandbook.com)  
[www.AgeingHorseTeeth.com](http://www.AgeingHorseTeeth.com)



**Are your livestock thirsty?**

Through **Growing Forward**, the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon are providing funding for projects that will supply water for livestock, such as building a dugout or drilling a well.

Contact the Agriculture Branch for more information or to request your copy of the programming guide.

Phone: (867) 667-5838  
Toll-free: 1-800-661-0408, ext. 5838  
[www.agriculture.gov.yk.ca](http://www.agriculture.gov.yk.ca)

**Growing Forward**  
Securing water sources for agriculture

**Canada**  
Government

**Yukon**  
Government

Did you know....

### March is Nutrition Month!

Nutrition Month takes place during March and each year has a different nutrition-related theme. This year's theme is "Celebrate food... from field to table". The goal of this year's theme is to convey information to the Canadian public about:

- farming and agricultural practices
- food processing, and, · food labeling

In conjunction with this theme and ongoing efforts to encourage healthy eating and local food security, a Plant a Row - Grow a Row campaign is being launched in Whitehorse this gardening season!

Plant an extra row in your in your garden this spring and donate the harvest to people in need. All types of fresh produce will be greatly appreciated, just wipe the dirt off your produce and take it down to the Whitehorse Food Bank during the drop-off times.

Whitehorse Food Bank, 306 Alexander Street

867 393-2265, Drop-off times:

Monday & Wednesday 12-4pm; Tuesday & Thursday 9-10am

More information about this year's Nutrition Month theme can be found at:

[http://www.dietitians.ca/public/content/eat\\_well\\_live\\_well/english/nutritionmonth/about.asp](http://www.dietitians.ca/public/content/eat_well_live_well/english/nutritionmonth/about.asp)

### Floating Row Covers

Growing vegetables in the Yukon can be a challenge. A short growing season, frequent frosts, erratic weather, birds, squirrels and insects challenge us constantly through the summer.

One product that can solve many of these problems is floating row cover. This product is made of a light-weight woven synthetic material that allows air, light and water through while providing a greenhouse effect for crops growing beneath it. The covers hold heat and moisture to hasten germination and harvest, raise CO<sub>2</sub> levels increasing yields, reduce the drying effect of wind, and provide several degrees of frost protection. Row covers provide a physical barrier to prevent insects from damaging crops such as turnips, radishes, broccoli and cauliflower.

Row covers can be used early in the growing season to get cool season crops off to an early start. They work by trapping the sun's heat and warming the soil an extra 1 to 3 degrees.

The material floats on top of the plants as they grow. The edges are secured down with soil. Use row covers on cool-season crops during the early part of the growing season. Remove the covers after four to six weeks.

There are a variety of weights and fabrics available that provide a range of frost protection while still maintaining good light transmission. Floating row covers come under a range of trade names such as Remay or Agribon. They are available in rolls five to 12 feet wide and in various lengths. The material is reusable for a few years if handled carefully to prevent tears.