



March 24, 25 2015

# Working Together to Grow More 2: Community Gardeners & Economic Development Gathering

Whitehorse, Yukon



Arctic Institute of  
Community-Based Research  
*For Northern Health and Well-Being*

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*The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the funding agencies.*



## Executive Summary

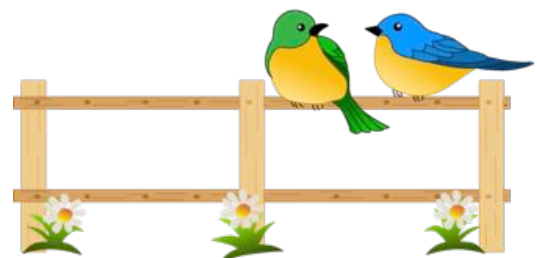
On March 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> 2015, the Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research in partnership with Yukon Government-Agriculture Branch, Community Development Fund, Public Health Agency of Canada, Recreation & Parks Association of the Yukon, Growers of Organic Foods Yukon, and others hosted a community garden and economic development gathering called *Working Together to Grow More 2: Community Gardeners & Economic Development Gathering 2015*. Altogether, 55 participants registered and attended the gathering, including most communities from across the Yukon, as well as representatives from Atlin British Columbia, and from the Northwest Territories.

This gathering was an opportunity to bring Yukon growers and others together to build relationships, network and share their learnings and challenges with each other, while also having opportunity to benefit from experts in growing, building capacity for community economic development, and engaging with others who are growers and leaders for food security in their community. Participants left equipped with new resources, inspiration, and a network of people they can call on while undertaking the important activities of running a successful community garden.



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## Introduction

With changing climate and environmental conditions and the increasing costs of store-bought food, food security is of increasing concern in Yukon and the northern regions of Canada. To that end, the Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research has been working with communities to develop locally based food security strategies. It is evident that communities want clear plans that they can build from, which include being more self-sufficient by increasing local food production, building community gardens, increasing animal husbandry, and building micro enterprises. Community gardens are important in many ways. They contribute to local self-sufficiency and community food security; they provide access to local healthy foods that can prevent diabetes and other chronic diseases; they contribute to the development of capacity in local farming; they provide healthy options to offset the high costs of food in grocery stores; they facilitate connections between food and community members, particularly between Elders and youth; they promote community health, and they can provide economic opportunities for communities. Territorial support for these initiatives is very important for long-term sustainability of Yukon food systems and food security.

Before 2014 when the first *Working Together to Grow More Community Gardener Gathering* was held, community gardeners in Yukon did not have much opportunity to network, share ideas and learn from each other. Last year's gathering stimulated a lot of discussion among growers and potential community gardeners; provided them with opportunities for support; and gave them a forum to share ideas, challenges, and experiences. On March 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> 2015, the Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research in partnership with Yukon Government-Agriculture Branch, Community Development Fund, Public Health Agency of Canada, Recreation & Parks Association of the Yukon, Growers of Organic Foods Yukon, and others hosted a second gathering, *Working Together to Grow More 2: Community Gardeners & Economic Development Gathering 2015*. Altogether, 55 participants registered and attended the workshop, including most communities from across the Yukon, and also participants from Atlin British Columbia and the Northwest Territories.

The purpose of the gathering was to bring together like-minded people passionate about growing with people knowledgeable about economic development to develop partnerships, strengthen relationships, and facilitate opportunities that are locally relevant and will contribute to strengthening the Yukon's economy.

## Overall Workshop Objectives:

-  To bring together community gardeners from across the Territory to share successes, challenges and provide opportunities to learn from each other.
-  To develop a platform for ongoing discussions and networking opportunities between growers in the Yukon and elsewhere.
-  To facilitate opportunities for gardeners and community economic development officers to develop partnerships and capacity to work together on local economic development, community health, and community self-sufficiency.
-  To strengthen community capacity to ensure the sustainable production of nutritious, locally grown food.
-  To introduce concepts of and steps towards social enterprise and local economic development through local food production (community gardens).



March 24<sup>th</sup> 2015

## Welcome & Opening Remarks

The gathering began with an opening prayer by Norma Kassi, Director of Indigenous Collaboration and Co-founder of the Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research. She read the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address to set the stage for the two days. This was followed by a warm welcome from Jody Butler Walker, Executive Director and Co-founder of the Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research. She introduced the facilitator for the two days, Kate Mechan from Elemental Farms. Kate started the day with a dynamic icebreaker.

*How was 2014 for you?*  
*What worked well?*  
*What were the successes?*

## Community Engagement

- 🍏 Exponential growth in community involvement!
  - More volunteers
  - More kids interested
- 🍏 Increased consumer awareness and uptake-People were buying more!
- 🍏 Increased demand for locally grown foods.
- 🍏 Prenatal program developed a cookbook.
- 🍏 Integrated programming and skills development.
- 🍏 Greater community connection and more people interested.
- 🍏 Once individuals experience a garden, they want to have one for themselves.

## Youth Involvement

- 🍏 Accessed *Youth Investment Fund* to hire three youth.
- 🍏 Added activities to encourage youth and children to get involved.
- 🍏 School groups out on the farms and gardens.
- 🍏 Children and youth learning.



## Personal Growth & Wellness

- 🍏 Stayed perseverant and determined.
- 🍏 Received mentorship from a master gardener.
- 🍏 Sense of well-being and worth.
- 🍏 Connected to inner spirit.
- 🍏 Relaxation.
- 🍏 Felt good out in the garden.
- 🍏 Eating good food.
- 🍏 Good exercise.

## Production

- 🍏 Started poultry and pork farming.
- 🍏 Used caribou hair as fertilizer in raised beds.
- 🍏 Tried Hugelkultur beds.
- 🍏 Good growing season with good yields.
- 🍏 Climate changes were helpful for growing.
- 🍏 Abundant water.
- 🍏 Used salmon as fertilizer/compost.
- 🍏 Compost program.
- 🍏 Worms in the soil and started vermicomposting.

## Expansion

- 🍏 Accessed more land.
- 🍏 Built more boxes.
- 🍏 Put a terrarium in the middle of the community garden.
- 🍏 More farmer's markets.
- 🍏 Discovered new funding opportunities and accessed.





# How was 2014 for you? What were the challenges?

## Community Engagement

- 🍅 Getting people involved in greenhouse and gardens.
- 🍅 Volunteers.
- 🍅 People raiding gardens and vandalism.
- 🍅 Getting Yukoners to recognize the importance of food security.

*Could address by:*

- 🍅 Increasing communication and awareness using posters, collages, face-to-face communication, phone calls, photos.

## Youth Involvement

- 🍅 Lack of youth engagement with community garden.

*Could address by:*

- 🍅 Adding a fire pit, sports, music, sandbox, and other activities to engage youth and children.
- 🍅 Door prizes.
- 🍅 Work with the local school and teachers.
- 🍅 Encourage parent involvement.

## Production

- 🍅 Lack of storage.
- 🍅 Processing and preservation.
- 🍅 Lack of available land, access to land, expensive land.
- 🍅 Limited access to funding.
- 🍅 High shipping costs.
- 🍅 High costs for growing and production.
- 🍅 Learning how to balance fertilizer.
- 🍅 Poor soil fertility.
- 🍅 Weeding.
- 🍅 What to do with produce when there is too much.
- 🍅 How to recycle materials.

- 🍅 Insufficient local feed.
- 🍅 Planning.

## Capacity

- 🍅 Job insecurity, low income.
- 🍅 Having suitable workers in the community.
- 🍅 Lack of growing knowledge.
- 🍅 Need more agricultural education.
  - High-school, post-secondary options.
  - Nutrition education.
  - Consumer education.
  - Organic outreach person at the Yukon Government-Agriculture Branch.
  - Culturally appropriate training.
  - Develop local food education including traditional foods (holistic).
- 🍅 Time, patience.
- 🍅 True collaboration.
- 🍅 Knowledge on when to harvest healthy plants.
- 🍅 Knowledge on how to build a greenhouse.
- 🍅 Disconnect between funders and gardens for skills programs, timing with the growing season.

## Weather Conditions

- 🍅 Cold weather.
- 🍅 Too hot, too much sun.
- 🍅 Too much water.

## Pests

- 🍅 Animals in the garden: gophers, rabbits, mice, dogs, squirrels, bears, crows, voles, moles, cats, moose, fox.
- 🍅 Weeds: foxtail, horsetail, chickweed, violas/Johnny jump-ups, raspberries, invasive species.
- 🍅 Insect pests, aphids.

*Could address by:*

- 🍅 Bears do not like dogs.
- 🍅 Mice bucket trap (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSk79YcuIRQ>)

## How do people describe your garden?

Awesome!

Give me  
some!

I love your  
plants!

Can I look?

Looks good.

Beautiful.

The smell is  
nice.

Inspirational.

Love to  
work there.

Can I have  
some  
vegetables?

# Community Presentations

## Yukon Kids on the Farm

Susan Ross, Growers of Organic Foods Yukon/ Lendrum-Ross Farm

Susan Ross shared her experiences with the program “Kids on the Farm”. The program is geared for school-aged children from kindergarten to Grade 8. It is a benefit to the teachers and the students to participate as they get to experience hands-on what farming is like in the Yukon and learn about where their food comes from. Many kids have never been on a farm before.



The participating class and farm receive a subsidy to rent a school bus and compensate the farmer for their time. The teacher and the farmer together determine what the learning objectives for the day are; this can be a wide range of teachings. For example, children can learn about soil science, composting, rumen bacteria and experience through tasting, seeing, and touching. In 2015, 11 farms participated. Visit the website for more information on how to participate and for previous year evaluations and statistics.

While the program currently caters to Whitehorse students, there is opportunity to reach out to nearby communities.

<http://kidsonthefarm.yukonfood.com/>



## Yellowknife Community Garden Collective

Jennifer Broadbridge, Ecology North/ Yellowknife Community Garden Collective



The Yellowknife Community Garden Collective has over 200 gardening members with six different locations throughout the City. All members who are a part of the Collective are required to donate 25% of their plot to local food security organizations, such as the food bank. In 2014, approximately 1,235lbs of food were donated. In addition to raised garden beds, the Yellowknife Collective also has an orchard, which they are currently experimenting with a berry project. They are using drip irrigation to grow

haskaps, raspberries, and Saskatoon berries. The Collective also runs workshops such as seed starting, tomato planning and seed sharing for the community. The Collective participates in a school mentorship program with local organization Ecology North. Weledeh School donates growing space and Grade 3-6 students learn how to grow food with experienced growers. When the kids are out of school for the summer, the Collective volunteers to maintain the garden beds. It can be challenging to coordinate gardeners to take care of the children's gardens, but different events are held to encourage bringing families, gardeners and the students together.

## Enhancing Local Food Skills in Northern Communities: N'Dilo and Dettah Community Garden Programs

Lone Sorensen, Northern Roots

Lone shared her experiences working in two First Nation communities in the Northwest Territories, N'Dilo and Dettah. She discussed the differences in growing seasons and conditions as compared to Yukon. The first program that Lone discussed was the Sacred Circle project and local leadership program, "Spirit Garden Teachings". Lone talked about the garden mentorship programs in N'Dilo and Dettah. For a community garden to be successful, the community has to recognize its importance, and have the



necessary support, capacity and expertise to run it. N'Dilo had a large event-a Fall Harvest Fair in 2014. This was a huge success and they plan to do again and potentially expand next year. Through a school gardening program, over 700 students and teachers have participated in growing throughout the Northwest Territories. They created a mobile, edible wall, which was used as a teaching tool in the classroom. Lone talked about the many ways and techniques that can be used to successfully grow food in the North. Using a technique call Hugelkultur, caribou hair was found to be a great fertilizer and an innovative way to integrate culture into gardening. Caribou hair is a slow releaser of Nitrogen. Lone ended her presentation with the assertion that a combination of hunters and gardeners will lead to community food security and self-sufficiency in the North.

<http://www.northern-roots.ca/>

## **RPAY Healthy Menu and RHEAL Programs**

Adrienne Marsh, Recreation & Parks Association of the Yukon

Adrienne talked about RPAY's Healthy Living Menu, which communities and organizations can apply to for different trainings and workshops. She also discussed the Rural Healthy Eating and Active Living Leader program and encouraged people to considered becoming involved. RPAY provided all the gathering participants with garden gloves and had a wide range of resources available.

<http://www.rpaymenu.org/>





## Local Food Preparation Demonstration

Kim Neufeld & Brenda Dion, Yukon Government-Health & Social Services' Health Promotion Unit

Dietitian, Kim Neufeld and Health Promotion Coordinator Brenda Dion from Yukon Government-Health Promotion gave a tasty demonstration over the lunch hour on how to prepare foods that are grown in the garden. They shared recipes and had ideas for preparing beets and kale in a variety of healthy ways.





## Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Teaching & Working Farm

Chris Hawkins, Yukon Research Centre



Chris Hawkins discussed a new initiative that the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in are working in partnership on with the Yukon Research Centre. They are developing a new teaching and working farm across from the Dawson airport. The intent is to produce sustainable foods such as meats and vegetables year-round for Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in citizens; integrating cultural practices and growing Indigenous plants and medicines. The farm will be an "on-the-land" classroom and will include educational programming and research activities, through the support of Yukon

College and the Yukon Research Centre. The farm is currently testing an agridome for year-round production of vegetables. The Yukon Research Centre has found that the agridome can reduce the costs of vegetables by 40% for fly-in communities. For more information on the agridome, check out CBC North's news item:

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/yukon-inventor-opens-the-door-to-year-round-growing-1.3009597>

## Small-Scale Livestock

Bradley Barton and Kevin Bowers, Yukon Government-Agriculture Branch

Brad Barton and Kevin Bowers talked about small-scale livestock and considerations for raising poultry and/or swine. It is important to research what you need, how many you want to raise, what care is required, the costs involved, the potential challenges, and when and how you slaughter. Cornish Giant and Red Rock Cross are common chicken breeds for the Yukon. They are both egg and meat producers.

The Internet and YouTube can be useful teaching tools when wanting to start animal farming. Brad shared a short clip on raising chickens.

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/food/small-farms/livestock/poultry/>



## Raising Poultry in Old Crow

Megan Williams

Megan Williams shared her experiences raising poultry in the remote fly-in community of Old Crow. She talked about the high costs and poor quality of store foods and discussed how the community greatly relies on hunting and a subsistent diet. Her family decided to try raising chickens to have higher quality eggs and meat, and to see if it was economically feasible. Raising domestic animals in Old Crow is not new. Chickens, turkeys, pigs and rabbits were successfully raised in the past.



After experimenting with one rooster, they decided to raise hens only. The hens were kept safe from predators with dogs and a fence, which included a top screen. During the winter months, Megan found that the hens generated a lot of the heat that they needed. They also used a radiant heater and a light bulb for 14 hours of daylight.

Major challenges that Megan and her family faced included high costs for electricity and for feed. The freight for feed was very expensive. The final cost for a dozen eggs was \$10. After trying it for a few years, Megan and her family decided that raising chickens in Old Crow is fun and can be successful, but is not an enterprise that can be considered economically feasible.



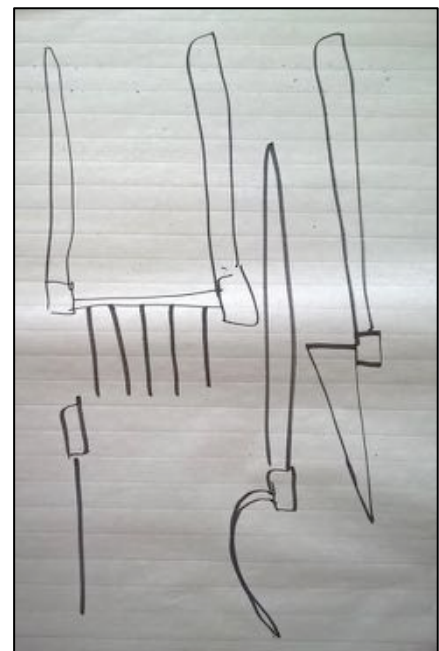
# Soil Health & Soil Management

## Bart Bounds, Elemental Farms

Bart Bounds shared his expertise with participants on building soil health and the importance of having fertile, healthy soil. Participants asked a variety of questions, which Bart answered and shared additional resources (See Appendix A).

Here are some of the highlights from the discussion:

- 🌱 Four things for great soil: Aeration, compost, rotation, and mineral balance.
- 🌱 In Yukon, it is important to have layers of clay, silt, and sand.
- 🌱 Keep soil covered to protect the layers and soil structure.
- 🌱 Keep soil moist and aerated.
- 🌱 Add organic matter (compost, leaves, etc.)
- 🌱 Organic matter prevents leaching of nutrients from the soil and allows slow release of nutrients.
- 🌱 Green manures are plants that you grow to increase nutrients in your soil. Clover, peas, beans add nitrogen to the soil. Cut them back when flowering to send the nitrogen back to the soil. Winter rye, grasses, and buckwheat are phosphorus sources.
- 🌱 Let soil dry out in the spring before tilling. It can lead to hardpan if too wet.
- 🌱 Add mulch once the soil is warmed up.
- 🌱 Minimize tilling.
- 🌱 Calcium is important for soil health and microorganisms. Powder egg shells for a calcium source.
- 🌱 Calcium and magnesium will lead to a cement effect if it is out of balance.
- 🌱 Compacted soil, poorly draining soil will become anaerobic (will kill the good bacteria and microorganisms).
- 🌱 Use a broad fork for tilling. It lifts and breaks up the soil without turning it over, which is great for



Broad fork

aeration.

- 🌱 Coltsfoot, docks, horsetail, plantain, sedges, willows are indication of poorly draining soil.
- 🌱 A diversity of microorganisms is key to good soil.
- 🌱 Soil should have balanced nutrients.
- 🌱 Soil should have a pH of about 6.5-7.
- 🌱 Peat is good for reducing basic soil to a more neutral pH.
- 🌱 Temperature affects microbes. They are inactive when it is cold. Use floating row covers to heat the soil.
- 🌱 Can use raised beds or heaped beds to increase soil temperatures.
- 🌱 For best results in a northern environment, grow cold tolerant varieties of plants.
- 🌱 Upper leaves of plants include stationary nutrients such as calcium, iron, copper.
- 🌱 Lower leaves of plants contain mobile nutrients such as nitrogen, potassium, phosphorus, zinc.
- 🌱 Factors that can affect growth: soil nutrient deficiency, temperature, weather, soil pH, aeration and drainage of soil.
- 🌱 Try to get soil amendments locally. i.e. wood ash, rotted leaves, rock powders, borax.

If you are experiencing:

- 🌱 Wither tip, it is likely a copper deficiency.
- 🌱 Hollow heart in beets, it is likely a boron deficiency.
- 🌱 Sweet soil or bitter soil is a basic pH; sour soil is acidic.



March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015

## Opening Remarks

### Kluane Community Food Security Strategy

Chief Mathieya Alatini, Kluane First Nation



Chief Alatini spoke about the Kluane First Nation “Nourishing Our Future” food security project, which they completed in 2014. She shared her vision for the community; a self-sufficient food secure community, who produce their own foods and maintain cultural traditions and values. The project had 12 recommendations for a food security action plan. These recommendations included increasing traditional sharing practices, organizing

community hunts and fishing, encouraging gardening and developing a community garden or greenhouse, encouraging more agricultural activities including raising animals, and others. Kluane First Nation did a feasibility study for a greenhouse that will be heated using geothermal energy. Chief Alatini hopes to build an aquaponic component and farm tilapia fish as well.

## Community Presentations

### Community Economic Development Strategy (Whitehorse)

Jordan Stackhouse, City of Whitehorse

Jordan Stackhouse shared his background of living in Hay River and being a part of the Northern Farm Training Institute’s development. He is very interested in building local capacity to increase agriculture within Whitehorse. Jordan discussed how the Whitehorse Official Community Plan will be updated and renewed in 2017, of which he is working to

include encouraging agriculture within City limits. Jordan discussed in detail, the City's community economic development strategy that is currently being drafted and invited the participants to share their perspectives and feedback.

For more information:

<http://www.city.whitehorse.yk.ca/index.aspx?page=706>



## Ecology North Growing Activities in Northwest Territories

Craig Scott, Ecology North



Craig Scott discussed some of the initiatives that Ecology North, which is based in Yellowknife, is doing related to food production. He talked about the various community gardens that are across the Northwest Territories and how there is a growing interest in gardening, greenhouses, and agriculture. There are various food security-related organizations in the territory, including Food Rescue, Yellowknife Community Garden Collective, Territorial Farmers

Association, Northern Farm Training Institute, Aurora Research Institute, Yellowknife Farmers Market, and more. Ecology North has been a part of the Weledeh School garden education program, Local Food Learning and Leadership program, teaching about agriculture in schools, the N'Dilo Fall Harvest Fair, and community-based agricultural workshops.

There are various tools and resources on Ecology North's website related to northern growing and agriculture.

[www.ecologynorth.ca](http://www.ecologynorth.ca)





## Business Planning for Yukon Agriculture

Sylvia Gibson, Earth Share Solutions

Sylvia Gibson shared her experiences of business planning. A business plan is an overarching, guiding document of a vision for a business. A key message was to keep the business efficient and enjoyable and to make sure that the plan makes sense. It is important to develop a business plan in order effectively manage time and money, both of which can be limiting resources. The pillars for a successful business are based on values, the team, the vision, record keeping, and marketing and communication. The owner's values should be reflected throughout the business structure. A business plan is an evolving document that is usually written for a 5 year time period and is continually evaluated. Once this visioning document is in place, it is time to develop a strategic plan—the “how” of how the business will be run.

Sylvia discussed how there is funding through the Yukon Government-Agriculture Branch to go through a business planning process.

[www.earthsharesolutions.ca](http://www.earthsharesolutions.ca)

## Seed Saving and Homesteading

Sheila Alexandrovich, Wheaton River Garden

Sheila Alexandrovich shared her story of building a homestead, Wheaton River Garden in the Mount Lorne area. She follows a Community Shared Agriculture model where customers pre-pay for a share of the produce from a season. On her homestead, Sheila raises sheep, chickens, geese, rabbits, and horses, in addition to the gardens. Sheila described how for the Yukon, it is important to stay small and to concentrate on growing food for our neighbours and ourselves; and it is not

necessary to have big operations. Sheila shared some of her experience with the *Kids on the Farm* initiative and working with the community of gardeners in Mount Lorne. She offers workshops on food preservation, felting, and seed saving.

Sheila shared some of her expertise on seed saving and had some examples for participants to see. Here are some of the points that came from her talk about saving seeds:





- 🐝 The easiest seeds to save are potatoes, onions, mustards, spinach, tomatoes, peppers, arugula, and rhubarb (perennial).
- 🐝 Take the last plant that bolts for your seeds, not the first one.
- 🐝 Take the seeds from the fruit that ripen first (tomatoes, peppers).
- 🐝 Save heritage seeds.
- 🐝 Grow food you like to eat, save seeds you want to grow again.
- 🐝 If it is a hot year, you will get more seeds.
- 🐝 Leave the pods on until they dry in the fall, put in a paper bag and shake the seeds off.
- 🐝 Label and store your seeds in a cool, dark place.
- 🐝 Make sprouts in the winter when you have a lot of seeds. Can also use as a viability test.
- 🐝 Use a germination testing kit to check the viability of seeds. Keep 10 seeds damp under a dish on a saucer and see if they sprout. From this you can get a germination rate.
- 🐝 Denali Seed Company in Alaska is a good place to get northern-hardy varieties.
- 🐝 The more that is grown in the Yukon, the hardier the species will get. It makes sense to save and use seeds that will do well here. This could also extend the growing season.



## Yukon Local Food Strategy







### Bradley Barton, Yukon Government-Agriculture Branch

Brad Barton talked about how food production and supporting the development of Yukon's agricultural industry and community is a priority of the Agriculture Branch. The Branch wants to support Yukoners in growing more food, diversifying the foods that are grown, making production affordable and sustainable, increasing the availability of local food, and supporting the growing of fresher, healthier foods. Yukon Government is currently












developing a Yukon Local Food Strategy. Brad discussed how there are many reasons why a strategy is important. They are currently in the process of drafting the strategy and plan to go to the public for consultation in the summer. The intent of the strategy is to make Yukoners more food secure, to encourage them to make healthy and local food choices, and to support local food producers. In the draft strategy there are five priority areas: Consumption, Production, Processing, Distribution, Access and Availability, with a foundational component of Education. The participants were asked to share their ideas and feedback on what they would like to see in a Yukon local food strategy. Here is a summary of their ideas.

### *What do you want to see in a Yukon Food Strategy?*

-  Something that creates a sustainable food system long into the future.
-  Stronger relationship with First Nations and the food policy strategy.
-  Ongoing community-based evaluations (food security) across Yukon.
-  Better Agriculture Branch support for “small scale” production.
-  Networks for trading and sharing between Yukon communities’ successful crops.
-  Would like to see no Genetically Modified vegetables. Make the Yukon Monsanto free!

### *Skills & Education*

-  Easy-to-use application process for skills training.
-  More focus/education on composting.
-  Importance of growing soil (education/funding).
-  Seed saving education.
-  Food strategy booklet/outline. Easy basic information on how to start- “Yukon Gardening for Dummies” type.
-  Hands-on agricultural workshops for beginners.
-  Education resources for community gardeners (What to grow, when, how, cost, soil, “How to” guide).
-  Where does education of youth fit in?
-  Education about nutrition, loss of nutritional value of store food.

### *Funding*

-  Long-term economic incentives for young farmers.

- 🐞 More information on funding. Is the funding different in BC compared to Yukon?
- 🐞 Funding for skills training, capacity enhancement.
- 🐞 How to get funding.
- 🐞 How to develop partnerships: local, municipal, and First Nation governments to find funding for a commercial shredder (grow own soil).
- 🐞 Travel subsidy for feed to communities.
- 🐞 Would like to see funding more for community.

### Access

- 🐞 Access to soil.
- 🐞 Soil improvement.
- 🐞 Local food distribution channels opened, facilitated, encouraged to local restaurants and caterers.
- 🐞 Mandate that stores must provide useable waste for people, animal farmers, compost.
- 🐞 Dawson City central food processing, root cellar facility with available equipment for livestock processing.
- 🐞 Taking back existing (un-used) agriculture land and dispersing is back to farmers.
- 🐞 Access to locally grown veggies year-round (i.e. carrots, turnip, parsnips).
- 🐞 Commit land-to-land Agriculture Trust-small holdings, community gardens, tiny house opportunities.



# Composting 101

Tom Rudge, Growers of Organic Foods Yukon, Fireweed Community Market Society

Many participants at the Gathering had questions about compost. Tom Rudge shared his expertise and answered questions related to building successful compost.

Here are some of the highlights:

- 🍏 The equation for compost is 1lb Nitrogen to 30lbs Carbon, plus air and moisture.
- 🍏 60°C will rid your pile of compost from harmful pathogens and weed seeds.
- 🍏 Feed the bugs so they can eat and generate heat in the compost pile.
- 🍏 If you have more flies or maggots than you want, add carbon.
- 🍏 Sources of carbon: shredded newspaper, woodchips, leaves, grass clippings.
- 🍏 If the temperature is too low, add moisture.
- 🍏 After three days, roll it/ mix it and bring it up to 60°C. Do this three times.
- 🍏 Bones are a good source of phosphorus.
- 🍏 Fish is a great fertilizer.
- 🍏 Birch and poplar leaves make great mulch that speeds up the breakdown of compost and can be layered in it.
- 🍏 Add a little soil to the compost every year.
- 🍏 Options for composting include starting small with indoor/household composting, vermicomposting, to large-scale community composts.
- 🍏 Community composts can be made using pallets. Someone has to turn it every so often to aerate the compost.

In your compost:

- 🍏 No processed foods
- 🍏 Fruit, vegetables
- 🍏 Eggshells, coffee grounds
- 🍏 Boiled bones
- 🍏 Small amounts of bread/starch



## Holistic Management Planning & Enterprise Budget Building

Kate Mechan and Bart Bounds, Elemental Farms

Kate spoke about the various components of agriculture that need to be considered when making a budget. She emphasized the importance of thinking about long-term and investment, which may result in some greater upfront costs.

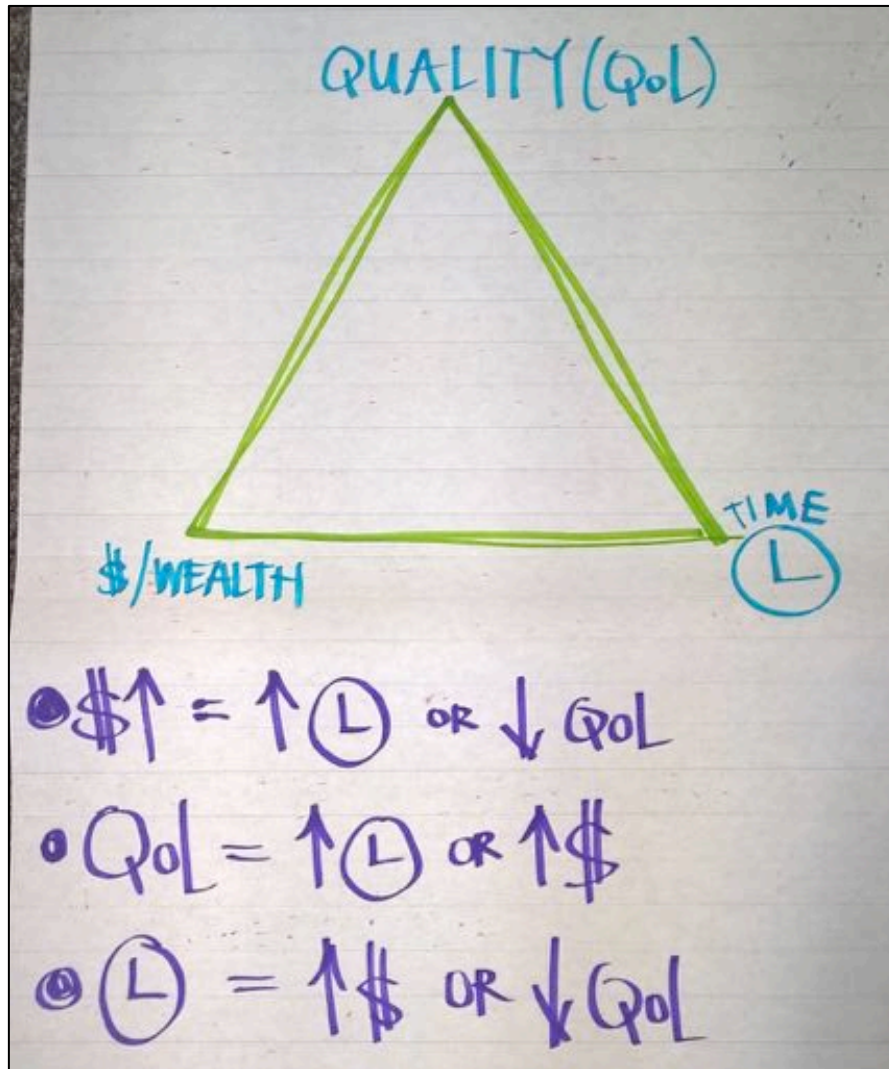
Components to consider when budgeting include:

- 🍅 Seed-bulk versus individual packets.
- 🍅 Soil-Fertilizer and amendments.
- 🍅 Tools: Hand tools, rototillers, tractors.
- 🍅 Environment: Row covers, greenhouse.
- 🍅 Infrastructure: Fence, toolshed, irrigation.
- 🍅 Labour: Grower/farmer, manager, employees, volunteers.
- 🍅 Processing/Storage: Cold room, kitchen, cut and wrap, abattoir.
- 🍅 Marketing.
- 🍅 Office/Admin: Grants, bookkeeper.
- 🍅 O & M: Utilities, repairs, ongoing maintenance.
- 🍅 Transport Costs: Shipping, fuel.
- 🍅 Insurance (Liability).
- 🍅 Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Model.
- 🍅 Training or education.

Other points to consider:

- 🍅 Buy seeds in bulk and share with growing community.
- 🍅 Seeds generally have a lifespan of 1-2 years, but some last for many years. Store seeds in a cool, dark area to increase their longevity.
- 🍅 It is important to have a contingency plan. Things happen. For example, plant double the seeds in case something happens to your crop. Grow and sell extra starter plants back to the community.
- 🍅 Overestimate costs on everything.
- 🍅 Consider following a CSA model where customers support you by pre-paying for the product at the beginning of the season.
- 🍅 Develop an annual and monthly budget. Determine when you need money most.

Kate and Bart shared a tool that they use when budgeting and planning their farming season. Participants worked through the tool as well.



What is your goal for the season?

- If the goal is to make more money, then it will require more time and/or you will have a lower quality product.
- If the goal is high quality product, then it will require more time and/or more investment.
- If the goal is to save time, then it will cost more money and/or you will have a lower quality product.



## Other Useful Pointers

- 🌱 Ants do not like cinnamon or cornmeal.
- 🌱 Yarrow prevents mosquitoes.
- 🌱 Hugelkultur is rotting wood mixed with organic matter that has a garden growing on top (layered gardening).
- 🌱 Calcium for tomatoes-blend egg shells in your blender.
- 🌱 Used powdered milk for tomato transplants.
- 🌱 Nasturtiums and cucumbers love and help each other.
- 🌱 Tomatoes, marigold and basil love and help each other.
- 🌱 Too get big, strong rhubarb, chop the root up and cut into smaller pieces (once the root is big and only producing thin stems).
- 🌱 Mayo has a seed library with over 250 varieties available. The Energy Mines & Resources library in Whitehorse has also started a seed library.





## Next Steps: Where do we go from here?

All participants were keen to have another gathering next year. They found it very valuable to have the opportunity to meet face-to-face, share their ideas, challenges, and experiences with each other.








- 🐝 It was suggested that the location of the gathering be rotated and there be opportunity to visit local community gardens or farms.
- 🐝 The participants want to have the opportunity to learn and experience hands-on from each other.
- 🐝 A harvest fair and/or a potluck event to feature locally produced foods during the gathering was suggested.
- 🐝 The participants said that they wanted to keep connected. The best way they thought was through the sharing of a contact list and Facebook.
- 🐝 The participants would like to see opportunities for mentorship between communities and each other.
- 🐝 It was suggested that collaboration and cooperation be used as an incentive to host another workshop-to highlight success stories based on results of building connections from the gathering.
- 🐝 The participants suggested forming a buyers club for bulk seeds, soil, and other resources.
- 🐝 Wild harvesting and wild crafting, wild medicines and medicines in the garden, alternative economies (sharing) were topics of interest for the next gathering.



## Conclusions

Over the two days spent together sharing and learning from each other, participants were highly engaged and left the gathering inspired and energized to start the 2015 growing season. The opportunity to network, share expertise, experiences, and challenges with each other has begun to build the foundation for lifelong relationships. People left the conference with resources and the knowledge that there are others who they can call on for support while they work to make their communities more food secure and self-sufficient. Evaluations from both days highly rated the gathering and participants acknowledged their gratitude for having the opportunity to attend and highlighted the value and importance of it. They were excited for future gatherings and shared ideas for different topics and approaches.

The gathering had local, territorial, and regional benefits. Successful outcomes included:

-  Built on and followed through with recommendations from the 2014 community garden gathering.
-  Furthered the rationale for growing food in Yukon (and other northern) communities.
-  Provided resources and support to develop community gardens into local economic initiatives and social enterprises.
-  Identified tools for increasing the amount of food grown in communities.
-  Identified best management practices/strategies for building and maintaining community gardens (including developing the champions, experts and growers for community gardens).
-  Promoted building local youth capacity to participate in growing in the communities.
-  Built relationships and strengthened the network of community gardeners in Yukon, as well as with other growers in Northwest Territories and Atlin, British Columbia.



## Appendix A: Resource List

### Books

- Start a Community Food Garden: The Essential Handbook. *By LaManda Joy*
- Secrets to Great Soil: A Grower's Guide to Composting, Mulching, and Creating Healthy, Fertile Soil for Your Garden and Lawn. *By Elizabeth P. Stell*
- The Organic Farmer's Business Handbook: A Complete Guide to Managing Finances, Crops, and Staff – and Making a Profit. *By Richard Wiswall*
- The New Organic Grower. *By Elliot Coleman*
- Carrots Love Tomatoes: Secrets of Companion Planting for Successful Gardening. *By Louise Riotte*
- The Market Gardener: A Successful Growers Handbook for Small-scale Organic Farming. *By Jean-Martin Fortier*
- The Year Round Vegetable Gardener. *By Nikki Jabbour*
- Let It Rot! The Gardener's Guide to Composting. *By Stu Campbell*
- The Rodale Book of Composting. *By Rodale International*
- Storey's Guide to Raising Chickens. 3rd Edition.
- Storey's Guide to Raising Pigs.

### Websites

- Can You Dig It! <http://cydi.ca>
- Compost Education Centre <http://compost.bc.ca>
- Yukon Food <http://yukonfood.com>

**TO JOIN FOOD NETWORK YUKON, PLEASE EMAIL [yapcprojects@gmail.com](mailto:yapcprojects@gmail.com)**

## Appendix B: Participant List and Contact Information

Community	Invitees	Organization	Email Contact	Phone #
Atlin	Louise Gordon	Taku River Tlingit First Nation	<a href="mailto:louise.atlin@gmail.com">louise.atlin@gmail.com</a>	
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	Linda Johnston	Taku River Tlingit First Nation		250-651-2128
	Raymond Ward	Taku River Tlingit First Nation		
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	Chief Mathieya Alatini	Kluane First Nation	<a href="mailto:chief@kfn.ca">chief@kfn.ca</a>	
Carcross	Fiona Seki Wedge	Carcross-Tagish First Nation Garden Project Coordinator	<a href="mailto:fionasekiw@gmail.com">fionasekiw@gmail.com</a>	867-399-3125; 867-821-4251
Tagish	Moya van Delft	Tagish Community Market Society	<a href="mailto:moyavandelft6@gmail.com">moyavandelft6@gmail.com</a>	
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Faro	Rose Fulton	Campbell Region Economic Development Organization	<a href="mailto:credononprofit@gmail.com">credononprofit@gmail.com</a>	
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	Brittany Pearson	YG-Economic Development	<a href="mailto:Brittany.pearson@gov.yk.ca">Brittany.pearson@gov.yk.ca</a>	
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	Jessica Dutton	Aurora Research Institute (Fort Smith, NT)	<a href="mailto:jdutton@auroracollege.nt.ca">jdutton@auroracollege.nt.ca</a>	
Resource Tables	Heather Sweeny	YG-Energy Mines & Resources Library	<a href="mailto:emrlibrary@gov.yk.ca">emrlibrary@gov.yk.ca</a>	
	Adrienne Marsh	Recreation & Parks Association of the Yukon	<a href="mailto:adrienne@rpay.ca">adrienne@rpay.ca</a>	
	Roslyn Woodcock	Potluck Community Co-Op	<a href="mailto:info@potluckcoop.ca">info@potluckcoop.ca</a>	