

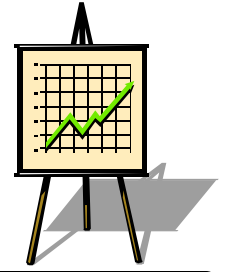


inFARMation

Yukon Agriculture Branch Quarterly Bulletin

Summer 2002

Volume 15 Issue 2



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Message from the Agriculture Branch



The 2001 Census of Agriculture Statistics were released in May of 2002 by Statistics Canada and for the most part the news is good. The Yukon agriculture industry continues to show a positive growth and development trend.

Between 1996 and 2001 the number of farms, value of production, level of investment, and amount of farm equipment all increased significantly in the Yukon. Quite simply, the agriculture industry is making a serious contribution to the Yukon economy. The industry has become a key player in the purchase of goods and services and is consequently instrumental in improving the economy.

The Agriculture Branch appreciates the cooperation you have shown in providing information for the National Census. You will find additional information on the 2001 farm census listed in the body of this newsletter.

On another note, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Yukon are working on developing an Agriculture Policy Framework Agreement (APF). This agreement would replace our existing Risk Management Agreement and would be an important step toward further growth and profitability in our industry. The components of the agreement include risk management, food safety and food quality, renewal, science and innovation, and environment. These are all key areas of industry growth and development as well as providing benefits for Yukoners, as they will promote increased environmental stewardship and more complete food safety and quality assurance.

The real upside of signing the APF is that it will bring significant federal dollars into the territory. However, it is not known what level of funding we can expect or exactly when the signing will take place. It could be as early as the end of June 2002 at the annual meeting of Agriculture Ministers or it could come at a later date. The Agriculture Branch will keep you posted on this important initiative or if you want more details give me a call.

Have a great summer!

Dave Beckman
Director
Agriculture Branch



► 2001 Census of Agriculture Highlights

Results of the 2001 Census of Agriculture were released on May 15, 2002. In the Yukon, the overall trend shows an increase in the number of farms and investment in agriculture since the last census taken in 1996. Considering that the census took place following the 2000 crop year, where close to half of the forage harvest was lost due to heavy rains, it was encouraging to see that gross farm receipts were also up by 18% over 1996.

The production of forages (hay) continues to lead the development of agricultural land for field crops. Forages are produced largely for horses in the territory, both to support the outfitting industry and equestrian riders. Hay from the Yukon is also shipped to nearby markets in Alaska.

Value of Farming

	2001	1996
• Total gross farm receipts	\$4,194,864	\$3,536,098
• Total farm capital	50,206,295	44,852,012

Field Crops

• Total area of field crops	6,872 acres	5,554 acres
• Tame hay	4,686	3,236
• Alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures	637	668
• Oats	1,293	1,320
• Potatoes	30	41
• Vegetables for sale	24	29.9
• Berries for sale	4.4	11.0

Livestock and Poultry

• Total hens and chickens	9,319	6,806
• Broilers	2,154	1,334

• Layers	6,612	4,776
• Turkeys	294	809
• Cattle	192	278
• Pigs	73	264
• Horses (on farms)	818	995
• Elk	108	129
Number of Farms	170	160

While the largest number of reporting farms (59, or 34.7%) was in the category that showed under \$2,499 in total gross receipts, 43 farms had total gross farm receipts between \$10,000 and \$49,999. In addition, one farm had reported receipts over \$500,000, and another between \$250,000 and \$500,000.

38.8% of farms in the Yukon used computers, with the main use being word processing (55), followed by bookkeeping/taxes/payroll (52), and internet (47).

More farms (11 out of 18 vegetable producers) grew more carrots than any other vegetable. Other popular vegetables, in order: lettuces, cabbage and beets. (potatoes are considered field crops).

Sled dogs (for breeding) were reported on 10 farms. (1996: 5). 79 farms reported horses and 35 poultry operations were recorded.

Anyone wanting further information contact Tony Hill or Dave Beckman @ 667-5838.

Tony Hill



► Thoughts on Marketing Horse Quality Hay

The fastest growing segments of the horse industry are horses that are used for sport/competition and recreation. Typical horse owners are women, mid 30's to early 50's; who own one or two horses and generally are well educated. They are keen to learn about their horses and how to take the best care of them. They are willing to spend the money if they can be convinced it will be of benefit to their horse's welfare. Most larger horse producers (i.e. breeders) are more worried about the bottom line.

Horses are not as efficient as cattle at digesting low-quality, mature forages. The horse digests fibre only in the large intestine, so by the time the forage gets to the hindgut, it has bypassed where nutrients are absorbed in the small intestine. Essentially, the horse is "missing out" on the microbial protein that ruminants get from microbial break down in the rumen. We know horses require higher-quality hay than beef cattle and sheep. This means hay that is cut earlier (at heading, before going to seed, or, in the case of alfalfa, at first flower). Harvesting hay at an earlier stage optimizes the amount and availability of protein and energy in the forage for the horse.

Characteristics of Horse-Hay

Horse-Quality hay is hard to define primarily because it is more of a function of what that horse will be used for. For example, while we would use a mixed alfalfa/grass hay to maximize the protein and energy content of hay for a young growing horse, this would be too nutritious for a mature adult horse that isn't being ridden very often. This type of horse would probably get too fat if allowed to eat a high-quality hay free choice. This type of hay could still be fed but in fixed amounts to meet his needs. That means - less total feed and increased amount of time that the horse has nothing in front of him.

We also do not know the minimum recommended level of fibre a horse needs to maintain healthy gut function (either as crude fibre, Acid Detergent Fibre [ADF] or Neutral Detergent Fibre [ENDF]). The only guideline we have is that horses should have a minimum of 1% of their body weight per day as for-

age. When you drop below 1% there is a high risk of the horse developing digestive and systemic problems (i.e. colic, diarrhea, laminitis). Obviously, there are differences in the actual fibre content when a horse is fed a minimum of 1% alfalfa, compared to a minimum of 1% timothy, which makes this a poor recommendation. More research in the area of minimum fibre requirements of horses is needed. The following are some general characteristics of hay for certain classes of horses:

A. Mature, idle horses; horses ridden infrequently; mature horses that need to lose weight:

7% to 8% protein, less than 38% ADF (typically a grass hay).

B. Performance/Competition horses:

8% - 12% protein, less than 36% ADF (less mature grass hay, or mix alfalfa/grass hay).

C. Broodmares (last 3 months of pregnancy) and growing horses (weanlings, yearlings):

14% or higher protein, less than 36% ADE (alfalfa/grass mix hay or straight alfalfa).

Dust and Mold Concerns

Horses have very few hairs in their nasal passages that help them filter or sweep out small particles that are inhaled. This lack of adequate protective mechanisms makes horses more susceptible to respiratory distress, allergies, and infections from dust and mold, compared to other livestock. When horse owners are worried about dust or mold, they have a legitimate concern.

Moisture at baling can play a role in the formation of mold, as can improper storage once baled. Some species of forages (e.g. red clover) have hairy stems that end up becoming dust when they are dried as hay. In the compressed hay market, the re-packaging and handling of the hay creates dust in the final product that could potentially be harmful to horses. As more horses are being housed in smaller areas or inside (as opposed to outside on pasture), the concern for dust is becoming even more evident with horse owners.

Packaging of Hay Products

The majority of horse owners prefer small square bales of hay as opposed to the large round or square

bales. They are more practical for storage at stables, feeding smaller groups of horses housed in different areas, and especially important for the horse owner that only has one or two horses to feed each day. Larger producers may be more flexible, because they have the capacity to feed round bales and large square bales to larger numbers of horses before the bale gets weathered. They are also more likely to have the equipment needed to maneuver these larger sized bales.

Cubed or pelleted hay is also an option of many horse owners. Ease of handling, smaller storage requirements and a more uniform product are advantages to this type of packaging. On the other hand, horses can eat pellets and cubes quicker, which increases risk of choke if they don't chew properly, and also gives them less "chew-time", so they are more likely to chew on wood.

Japan Thoroughbred Farms

Almost all of the hay fed to horses in Japan is imported. Alfalfa typically comes chopped, cubed or pelleted. Timothy is usually in compressed bales. Not as common are imported orchard grass and brome. The biggest complaint these breeders have about the compressed timothy is the dust. Japanese horses are often confined indoors for longer periods of time, so dust is a big concern. The other big difference between the Japanese and North American horse market is the feeding style. In North America we prefer to feed hay and grain. In Japan (and much of Europe), horses receive more of a "smorgasbord" of feeds that make up the diet - one or two forages, combined with a couple of different grains, brans, beet pulp, mineral supplements, etc. Based on the availability of feeds grown in their own country, the Japanese appear to need the forage only for fibre (fill), and the main nutrition comes from the other ingredients, while in North America the main nutrition comes from the forage and we supplement beyond that, if needed.

*Dr. Lori Warren, Provincial Horse Specialist
Alberta Agriculture, Food & Rural Development*

► What Does "Organic" Mean?

In response to the growing demand for a consistent standard for designating these foods as "certified organic," the National Standard of Canada for Organic Agriculture was published in 1999. In order to be labeled organic, foods must meet the following requirements:

- No use of chemical fertilizers or fertilizers that contain human or industrial waste products;
- No use of synthetic pesticides;
- No use of antibiotics or other drugs in livestock feeds, such as the controversial bovine growth hormone in dairy cattle;
- No use of genetically modified material in livestock feed or seeds for crops;
- Manure must be composted before use as a fertilizer to protect soil and water from bacterial contamination; and
- Livestock must be grown under humane conditions (free-range) and must not be fed animal products.

Each organic farm must be inspected yearly to ensure that it meets the regulated standards. Inspectors draw up a report on this inspection for one of about 45 certifying bodies in Canada. Producers or manufacturers that mislabel products as organic are subject to appropriate action taken by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, although the nature of such action is still under debate. Such claims are considered to be misleading and are likely to be interpreted as violations of the Food and Drugs Act and the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act.

Canadian Living April 2000

► Deadheading Lilacs

Deadheading encourages more flowers for either this season or next season, promotes new leaf growth, and improves the overall look of the plant. Use sharp, clean pruning shears or scissors to remove spent blooms, and toss the trimmings onto the compost pile. When deadheading lilacs, dip as close as possible to the spent flower. This cut is necessary to ensure a bounty of flowers for next year-if left to go to seed, the spent flower will drain the bud-producing energy from the bush. When clipping a bouquet, take the blossoms in the interior of the bush to maintain an overall pleasing shape.

► **4-H Yukon** – *Learn to do by doing!*

On the weekend of April 20-21, 2002 I was privileged to join ten other 4-H contestants from all over B.C. in Quesnel for the 4-H Provincial Public Speaking Competition. I was up against the cream of the crop and got to hear some great speeches. Three of my favorites were: “Liar! Liar!”, “My Political Opinion”, and “Teenagers”. I spoke on “The History of the R. C. M. P. in the Yukon”.

On Saturday we took a tour of the Silva Gro tree nursery. This is where they grow the trees to plant in a logged out area. Here they have millions of spruce, pine, and fir saplings in the greenhouses and about nine million in cold storage. Just before lunch we also visited the Pinnacle Pellet plant. Here we learned about the process of pellet manufacturing. After the informative tour we had lunch, cooked on a pellet fired bar-b-q.

Our impromptu topic for the speech we were to be judged on was “4-H, quite possibly the best kept secret going”. However, in the Yukon I do not want 4-H to be “the best kept secret” but instead “the best shared secret”. 4-H is not just about dogs, horses, and llamas; but also about skipping, sewing, computers, and photography. In 4-H there are many travel opportunities, both in and out of the territory. Some of these include dog shows, the Territorial Public Speaking Competition, the PNE, and the Smithers Judging Rally. There is also the opportunity for Junior Leadership projects which count toward a 4-H member’s grade 11/12 credits. I would be more than happy to share more of the 4-H secret with you.

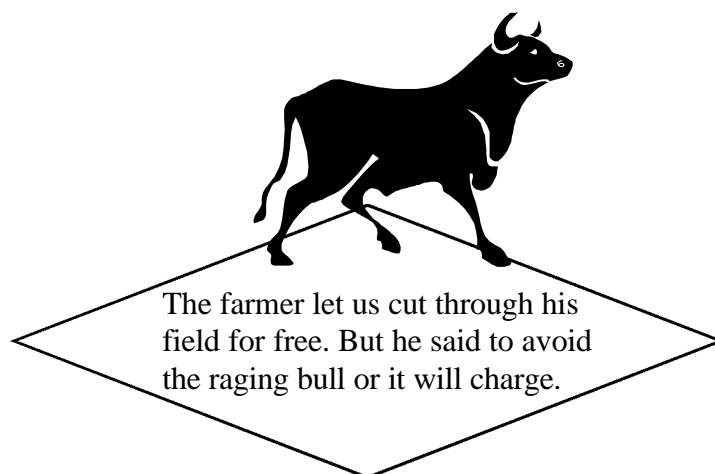
Toby @ 536-2867 or check out 4-H on the web www.bcyh.bc.ca

Toby Reams



► **Agriculture Agreements for Sale Update**

Year	Number of Agreements for Sale	Total Area (ha)
1997	14	203.71
1998	9	223.03
1999	11	590.42
2000	12	377.11
2001	12	291.49
Total	58	1685.76
5 Year Average	11.6	337.15



If you have any questions regarding land dispositions please contact Edward Lee at 667-3022.

► Vinegar Makes a Good Organic Herbicide

Some home gardeners already use vinegar as a herbicide, and some garden stores sell vinegar pesticides. But no one has tested it scientifically until now.

United States Department of Agriculture scientists offer the first scientific evidence that vinegar may be a potent weed killer that is inexpensive and environmentally safe - perfect for organic farmers.

Researchers Jay Radhakrishnan, John Teasdale and Ben Coffman in Beltsville, Maryland, tested vinegar on major weeds - common lamb's quarters, giant fox-tail, velvetleaf, smooth pigweed and Canada thistle - in greenhouse and field studies.

They hand sprayed the weeds with various solutions of vinegar, uniformly coating the leaves. The researchers found that five and ten percent concentrations killed weeds during the first 2 weeks of life. Older plants required higher concentrations of vinegar to kill them. At higher concentrations, vinegar had achieved an 85-100 percent kill rate at all growth stages.

A bottle of household vinegar is about 5 percent concentration. Canada thistle proved the most susceptible. The 5 percent concentration had a 100 percent kill rate of the perennial's top growth. The 20 percent concentration can do this in about 2 hours.

Spot spraying of cornfields with 20 percent vinegar killed 80-100 percent of weeds without harming the corn, but the scientists stress the need for more research.

Spraying vinegar over an entire field becomes quite expensive. But the cost could be reduced by 50 percent or more if vinegar is applied only to local weed infestations, such as may occur in the crop row after cultivation.

The researchers used only vinegar made from fruit or grain to conform with organic standards.

From the United States Department of Agriculture

► Growing Organic

Melanie Robitaille of Toronto has been an organic-food fan for about 18 years - since before most people had even heard the term. Convinced that foods produced without chemicals, pesticides, antibiotics or genetic engineering are healthier, tastier and better all-around, she spent years tracking down organic-produce outlets, then paying a premium price for her choices.

No more, though. With the organic-food industry growing a dramatic 20 per cent each year and generating a whopping \$1 billion annually in retail sales, organic foods are no farther away than your local supermarket.

At Loblaw Companies Limited, for example, new stores are designed with a section for organic foods. Early last summer the company introduced its own line of organic foods, President's Choice Organics, which currently offers about 70 products and will have up to 200 by the end of this year, says Geoff Wilson, vice-president of industry and investor relations for Loblaw. The expanded organic line will include fruits, vegetables and meats as well as juices, eggs, jams, cereals, cookies and flour.

Supermarkets are catering to a growing demand for organic products. A survey conducted in 2000 by Environics International Ltd. found that 18 per cent of Canadians are regular or heavy buyers of organic foods and another 22 per cent are occasional purchasers.

As the demand for organic foods steadily increases, more and more farmers want to be part of this new niche. That's causing a corresponding increase in demand for information on organic growing practices. This past summer the federal government stepped in to help by announcing \$914,700 in funding to help establish the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada (OACC) at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) in Truro, N.S.

On its 32 hectares of land, the NSAC will conduct field trials on organic foods, starting with the growing season that begins this spring. At farms across the country, staff from the OACC will carry out tests to determine the best methods of switching from traditional to organic farming and the suitability of various crop varieties. (Some crops, such as soy and cereals, are more easily adapted to an organic system than small fruits and vegetables.)

In addition, the OACC will offer a number of courses in organic agriculture in collaboration with The University of British Columbia in Vancouver and the University College of the Fraser Valley in British Columbia. Enrollees can learn how to convert to organic farming, how to run an organic dairy, how to compost and how to manage organic field crops.

These courses will be available across the country via the Internet - a great boon to farmers who, by the very nature of their work, can't go to school for weeks or months at a time. The courses can be counted toward a science degree or a certificate in organic agriculture.

Equipping farmers with the know-how to grow and harvest organically will benefit retailers and consumers by providing a wider selection of locally produced items, possibly at lower costs. "Right now, the organic market in Canada is relatively small but growing," says Wilson. "We go to small Canadian manufacturers to purchase our products, but if we can't find what we need, we have to go to Europe or the United States."

The injection of federal funding will also be used to help create a central information resource on organic production. The OACC will catalogue research and make the information available through a Web site. Ralph C. Martin, the director of the OACC, will also carry out market research, tracking the prices of organic foods to help farmers plan their crop choices as they work to meet the growing demand for organic foods.

And it's not only organic foods that are in demand. As municipalities such as Halifax restrict pesticide

use and as other communities find ways to "go green," more and more homeowners and landscaping companies are asking for information on how to take care of lawns and gardens without chemicals. Martin believes the time is ripe for a Web-based course on organic landscaping.

Adapted from Canadian Living April 2002

► Canadian Rural Partnership

Rural Community Development Program Deadlines Approaching

“Supporting local solutions to local challenges”

The Canadian Rural Partnership (CRP) is the key rural policy initiative within the Government of Canada. It coordinates activities among government departments to ensure a comprehensive rural policy approach is pursued and appropriate programming is developed to meet policy objectives. The CRP strives to help develop local solutions to local challenges. Since 1998, over 10,000 rural Canadians have participated in the CRP's Rural Dialogue, ensuring citizens have a voice in policy development. The numerous dialogues and two National Rural Conferences have allowed the Government of Canada to keep in tune with the issues that are important to rural Canadians. Continuing research and analysis on the economic and social climate in rural areas assists in government and community decision making. Rural Teams are now in place in every province and territory to work with representatives from other departments, agencies and levels of government, resulting in a collaborative approach to rural challenges.

Two rural community development programs initiated under the CRP are described below. Deadlines to apply for funding under these programs are fast approaching.

Rural Development Initiative

The Government of Canada's new Rural Development Initiative is a funding program under the Canadian Rural Partnership that provides assistance for community development activities in rural and remote Canada. The overall objective of the Initiative is to help rural and remote communities respond to community development challenges by supporting the development and adoption of long term, sustainable rural development strategies that will strengthen their ability to build local solutions to local challenges. The results of these projects should support community learning, problem solving and shared discov-

ery within the community of what works for rural development. The Initiative also encourages communities that have identified common elements to work together in partnership.

There are two main areas of funding: Community Development (single community proposals maximum \$50,000 and inter-community partnerships maximum \$100,000) and Research (maximum \$50,000).

Applicants for this funding have until October 31, 2002 to submit their applications. All information relating to the program is available by visiting www.rural.gc.ca or by calling the toll-free number **1-877-295-7160**.

Canadian Agricultural Rural Communities Initiative

The Canadian Agricultural Rural Communities Initiative is designed to enhance the viability of agricultural rural communities, particularly those affected by changes in the agricultural sector. Funding of up to 50% of eligible costs is available to individuals and organizations involved with agricultural rural community based projects falling under the following components: Partnership Projects (maximum funding \$60,000); Rural Co-ordination Organizations (maximum funding \$80,000); Workshops, Conferences, and Seminars (maximum funding \$20,000); Socio-Economic Research (maximum funding \$50,000)

All information about CARCI, including application deadlines and submission guidelines, is available by visiting the CARCI web-site at www.agr.gc.ca/carci or by calling the toll-free number **1-877-295-7160**. Information is also available in the enclosed brochure. For more information on the Rural Development Initiative or CARCI, contact:

Valerie Whelan
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
c/o YTG Agriculture Branch K14
P.O. Box 2703 Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6
Tel.: (867) 667-5272 Fax: (867) 393-6222
E-mail: whelanva@em.agr.ca

► Finns Farm Subsidies First, Land Second

In his well-kept yard Sampo Rauma scuffles pebbles with his foot. Behind him stands a large wooden farmhouse hewn from the forest's pine trees that dwarf his home and barns. This is Finland: a clean, majestic, Nordic country with an exotic feel that

comes from its proximity to Russia. In fact, the Russian border is less than 20 km from Rauma's farm.

His family has owned it since 1927 after they fled the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. But a couple of years ago Rauma was close to giving up Finland for most of the year. His plan was to sell his beef cattle, direct drill and combine his barley and oats in Finland over the short summer, then spend the rest of the year cash cropping land in Brazil. He was searching for relief from restrictive European Union (EU) farming regulations and initiative-breaking subsidies.

As a whole, subsidies weaken the farming community's backbone," says Rauma. EU subsidies are tied to land holdings, not yield. As long as you plant and harvest a crop you get a government cheque. "The crop has no value to me, only the land is important." Rauma returned from a recent fact-finding trip to Brazil without a land deed but with enough contacts to start importing 12,000 tonnes a year of soy meal into Finland. He sells it to wholesalers who in turn market it to mills. That business and a renewed vision for his beef feedlot operation has him parked in Finland - for now.

Prior to Finland's joining the EU in 1994, strict trade barriers protected Finnish farmers with oats and barley prices up to 3 times what they make now in the EU. Prices have plummeted and Rauma has come to the same conclusion as a lot of Finnish farmers: the only way to stay solvent is to farm the subsidies.

Last year, his total farm income before expenses was \$925,000. Around \$375,000 of that came in the form of subsidy cheques from the EU. Most crop subsidies he gets are paid out by the acre, not by yield.

The paperwork required to earn these subsidies is mind-boggling. Rauma keeps one year's worth of EU forms in 2 tightly packed 3" binders.

The EU still hasn't accepted Finland's online filing system so farmers are left to fill out forms by hand. Farmer organizations offer volunteer help to farmers confused by the paperwork. EU inspectors come twice a year to check that Rauma hasn't lied about the area planted or the number of bulls in his herd.

When EU bean counters landed in Finland in 1994, they calculated the price Finnish farmers would get for their crops after Finland's substantial trade barriers were dropped. Countries with historically higher yields receive more EU money. But now individual farm yields no longer come into play. In the EU, it's all about land.

Rauma owns 790 acres. That's huge by Finnish standards where only 14% of farms are over 125 acres and the average farm size is 70 acres. He has a 450-head feedlot - the biggest in eastern Finland. He tries to buy as much land as possible but sometimes settles for rented land at \$50 to \$100 per acre per year. Much of Rauma's land was cut from Finland's famous forests and swamps in recent times. At 2.4% of total production of goods and services, forestry accounts for twice as much GDP as agriculture. Energy companies drain the swamps, truck away the peat to burn in power plants, and leave a sandy soil for Rauma. Digging ditches and spreading lime to bring new land up to production quality reduced his pre-subsidy take-home income to almost zero last year. Manure management regulations also put pressure on livestock producers like Rauma to expand their land base.

Virgin land has virtually no weeds. Much of his new ground gets only a spring application of Roundup or MCPA every fourth or fifth year. In Finland, Roundup costs around \$9 per liter. Limiting herbicide applications fits well into Rauma's business plan -not because he wants to earn organic premiums but because he's trying to bottom-out his input costs. "The price I get for grain is less than the cost to grow it," he says. "I make the most money if I direct-drill seed and combine the crop with no other effort in between. I have to harvest to earn the subsidy but all fertilizers are a loss."

No minimum level of fertilizer is needed to earn an EU subsidy, but if you apply too much, you get penalized for environmental reasons. Before he cut application rates, Rauma's fertilizer costs were \$75 per acre in oats and barley. He applied 200 lb/ac. of nitrogen.

Once his virgin land comes into full production,

Rauma figures he'll be self sufficient in feed, even without maxing out his yields. Last year was a good year and his barley and oat yields were 2 tonnes/ac. But yield is not paramount for Rauma because at 6 cents per pound, grain is relatively cheap. Dehulled soy meal at 50% protein costs 18 cents per pound (1.7 Finnish marks/kilo; one mark equals 23.5 cents).

Rauma isn't a stickler for rotation, either. Fields closest to the barn are in grass so they're easier to use for forage production. He stores the first cut in a bunker silo. Cattle graze off the first and second regrowths.

Down the road, Sarmo Hasunen has adopted the same mindset as his neighbor. Talking as he combined a no-till field of hullless oats, he explained how he used to moldboard plow in the spring and cultivate with an S-tine cultivator. He also applied herbicides in-crop, but has now switched to a half-liter/ac. of Roundup pre-plant.

Like Rauma, he's trying to cut costs and figures 30% of his income comes from subsidies. He grows 330 acres of barley and oats which feeds hogs in an all-in-all-out operation with 850-head capacity. The hogs arrive in his barn at 52 pounds and leave at 240 pounds live.

The hog subsidy is a one-time payment of \$35 per head. Market price last summer was about \$1.13 per pound carcass weight. But like Rauma, Hasunen believes the real subsidy money is through farming land. He owns 70 acres and rents 62 acres. EU subsidies are paid equally on rented and owned land. Half his hogs are in what he calls a "Finnish style" slatted-floor barn built in 1987. The slats run along either wall. They take up 25% of the floor which slopes at 2% from the center of the barn to the walls. In a second barn, built in 1997, Hasunen uses thick straw bedding. Hot water pumped through pipes under the straw warms the barn. Mortality in the bedded barn is 1% versus 2% in the slatted-floor barn.

Hasunen spreads liquid manure from a tanker on his oats and barley after emergence. Dry manure from the bedded barn goes on prior to drilling in the spring. He owns a Kongskilde no-till drill and applies

N/P/K starter at planting time - 100 kilograms per hectare (89 lb./ac.) of N, 20 kg of phosphate, and 40 kg of potash.


From Country Guide March 2002

► **Fertilizer Trial on Native Rangeland**

The Yukon Agriculture Branch is conducting a field trial to study the effects of fertilizing native Yukon rangeland. Applying fertilizer will likely increase the overall productivity of native rangeland, but it might also increase the growth of opportunistic weeds at the expense of desirable forage plants. To be practical, fertilizing rangeland should increase the amount of palatable species and the nutritional level of these plants. The results of this research will help determine if fertilizing rangeland is an economically feasible range improvement option for grazing leases.

Patricia Smith is conducting this trial at the Gunnar Nilsson Research Forest near the Takhini River. The research site is a relatively homogeneous grassy hillside, which is a common habitat type found on grazing leases. A randomized block design will be used to compare the grazing capability of unfertilized rangeland to rangeland fertilized with different levels of ammonium nitrate, phosphate and potassium.

The parameters that will be used to compare the areas are total productivity, species composition and the levels of protein, nitrate, phosphorus and potassium in palatable species. The costs and benefits of fertilizing rangeland will be considered. The findings from the first year of this trial will be compiled this fall.



For Sale

Llamas for sale

Four quality llamas available for valuable fibre production, packing, cart-pulling, etc. Easy to handle, transport and maintain. Well-suited to the Yukon's climate. Any reasonable offer will be accepted. Call Gord Allison at 634-2828 on evenings and weekends for more information.

Fence Posts – peeled, sharpened, treated

7' with 3-5" tops

\$4.50 ea

Call Jerry Kruse

McCabe Creek Farm

Minto Channel 2M3458

Partridge Creek Farm

Yukon Grown Whole or Cut Up Chicken

Grade A – \$2.75 pound Utilities – \$2.45 pound

Cut up – \$1.00 extra for each bird

1-867-996-2068 or email: partridgecreek@yknet.ca

► **Did you know...**

That bees are most attracted to blue, yellow and white flowers, and least attracted to red ones?



► **Titanic Tomato Contest**

Whitehorse weigh-in station –
Adorna Flowers and Landscaping
Dawson City weigh-in station –
Blair Fisher at 993.6780

InFARmation is...

A Yukon Government newsletter published by the Agriculture Branch at the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. If you would like to add your name to the newsletter mailing list, contribute a story, idea or comment on an article in this issue, write to:

InFARmation
Department of Energy, Mines and Resources
Agriculture Branch
P.O. Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6



Or, contact Tony Hill at 667-3417. Outside Whitehorse, phone 1-800-661-0408. The Yukon Agriculture Branch is located at 10 Burns Road.