

Manitoba / Saskatchewan

RRN Connection

Rural Remote Northern



Spring 2010

Gardening Grows in Northern Manitoba

by Jim Chlibbyko

Northern Manitobans are raving about food, but the buzz isn't over the newest restaurant - the biggest hit is the humble vegetable patch.

"This is our fourth year doing community gardens," says Diana Delaronde-Colombe, Bayline Regional Roundtable.

The movement is gaining momentum, whether it's through the gardens, raising northern chickens or programs to get freezers into northern houses. Initiatives like the Northern Golden Carrot Awards, granted to people who fortify the northern food movement, are making people more aware.

"We have started over 100 gardens in six communities with more people becoming interested as they see their neighbours getting involved," says Delaronde-Colombe. "Gardening is growing across the North".

The list of participating communities is impressive: Frontier School Division, Four Arrows Regional Health Authority, Bayline Regional Roundtable, Northern Association of Community Councils and Manitoba Food Charter, with funding partners from the Public Health Agency of Canada, Rural Secretariat, Province of Manitoba and Heifer International.

Rural Secretariat

The Rural Secretariat is a focal point for the Government of Canada to work in partnership with Canadians in rural, remote and northern areas to build strong, dynamic communities.

The Rural Secretariat provides: leadership and co-ordination for Canada's Rural Partnership (the key policy framework supporting federal rural policy efforts); facilitates liaison and creation of partnerships around rural issues and priorities; and promotes dialogue between rural stakeholders and the federal government.

The Rural Secretariat works with a broad range of clients and partners, including rural communities, organizations, associations and businesses; Aboriginal peoples; federal, provincial, territorial and local government departments and agencies; and other rural stakeholders in Canada.

www.rural.gc.ca

Toll-free: 1-888-757-8725

Whether it is a famous British chef revitalizing school lunches in England, or American municipalities attempting to ban trans-fats, there's a global push to eat healthier.

There's a good reason for this; the Canadian Diabetes Association says that rates of the disease have climbed 70 per cent in the past decade, and obesity rates across Canada are also rising.

Those trends are also evident in the north, but there are also some unique barriers getting between healthy food and northern people, including transportation and food security.

While some may associate food security with protection, it also refers to the availability of food. As Churchill residents have found out this autumn with the rail line problems, fresh food isn't always a guarantee for northerners. And the winter roads that so many Northerners rely on for that brief winter window may become unreliable due to climate change.

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It's also about affordability. Food in general is subject to inflation, but in the North, rising gas prices are also having an effect. For instance, a four-litre jug of milk in Lac Brochet has been known to cost \$12.99. Now, through efforts from the Bayline Regional Roundtable, new partners are coming on board including Perimeter Airlines, Via Rail, and Calm Air, who offer free or subsidized freight rates for milk, formula and groceries.

For more information, contact:

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Northern Liaison
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Tel: (204) 772-2914
Toll-free: 1-800-731-2638

Mark Your Calendar

2010 Capturing Opportunities

April 22-23, 2010

Brandon, MB

Toll-free: 1-800-933-9863

www.capturingopportunities.ca

New Rural Canadians' Guide to Programs and Services

The Rural Canadians' Guide to Programs and Services is a booklet of Government of Canada programs and services, put together especially for Canadians in rural, remote and northern communities. Whether you're looking for business advice, a cultural exchange or a boating safety program, this handy Guide was designed for you.



In addition to a short description of each program and service, there is also a point of contact where Canadians can go for information by telephone, Internet or both.

To obtain a copy, contact the Rural Secretariat

Toll-free: 1-888-757-8725 or
Email: rca-src@agr.gc.ca

Getting Older Just Got Better!

by Karina Cardona Claros

"Our town could not survive without seniors because events and programs would not be viable if we had to pay for all of the work that they put in"

The message is clear, rural Manitoba is home to an indispensable fortune.

A new report reveals that older adults are considered to be the key contributors to communities throughout the province. A group of researchers at the University of Winnipeg teamed up with the Rural Working Group on Older Manitobans to investigate how older adults engage with their communities in rural and remote areas of the province.

The findings attribute much of our local prosperity with the historical and current participation of seniors in a range of capacities including volunteerism, leadership, fundraising, mentorship and employment.

When asked who the primary volunteers are in their community, respondents cited seniors as essential, irreplaceable, and invaluable members without whom we would not have summer festivals, recreation facilities, a uniquely local heritage or a plethora of other institutions and traditions.

We have come to rely upon what older adults give to our communities as it is delivered with an ethic of collaboration so effortlessly and without any fuss. Yet, the work that they have done, and in many cases continue to do, is truly remarkable.

We often notice what our elders do for us but rarely provide our gratitude. We could be more supportive of our seniors by ensuring that their basic needs are met and that they are able to get to and from their activities and appointments. When these things happen, older adults are able to expand their efforts outward into the broader community.

In honor of the 125th anniversary of the R.M. of Franklin, seniors at the Craft Club built a replica of the historical Senk'iw Swinging Bridge



Photo credit: Mitzi Bordenko of Dominion City

Building Welcoming Communities: A Multi-Sector Regional Collaborative Approach to Rural Immigration

The Rural Development Institute (RDI) recently completed projects exploring the impact of temporary foreign workers on the demographics of Brandon. They also examined the community's ability to absorb and support newcomers. As a result, talks were held and networks were set up to gather information about what constitutes a welcoming community.

This current project will drill deeper into the rural areas of southwestern Manitoba as they too experience an influx of immigrants. Immigration to southwestern Manitoba has increased dramatically within the last few years.

For example, businesses such as Hytech/Springhill Farms in Neepawa have brought in 200 temporary foreign workers to fill labour shortages, 32 Filipino nurses were recruited by the Assiniboine Regional Health Authority and entrepreneurs from other countries are acquiring businesses and agricultural land within the region.

Communities across southwestern Manitoba are beginning the welcoming process of inviting, settling and retaining immigrants. New regional groups are forming as a means of problem solving within this era of immigration.

The goal is to have rural communities to improve the welcoming, invitation, settlement and retaining of immigrants via numerous community groups.

For further information, please visit
www.brandonu.ca/rdi or call (204) 571-8515

Locales where seniors are well integrated to local life observe more community engagement and better intergenerational relationships. This diverse foundation fosters the transference of traditional knowledge and special skills. With the tide turning and the Baby Boomer generation on the rise, it will be important to cultivate a culture of inclusion for people of all ages wanting to ensure sustainable rural livelihoods.

A copy of the report entitled, "Investigating the Social Capital and Capacity of Older Adults in Rural Manitoba" is available by contacting:

Gina Sylvestre, University of Winnipeg
at (204) 982-1146

Grassroots Organization Finds Ways to Co-exist with Plains Bison



Many of us know firsthand the struggles of earning a living as a Saskatchewan farmer-rancher, but imagine sharing your land with a larger herd of free-ranging Plains Bison! This is a way of life for the Sturgeon River Plains Bison Stewards.

Since 1969, the southwest corner of the Prince Albert National Park has been home to Canada's only free-ranging herd of wild bison. The roaming of wild bison was once an occasional occurrence but is now a regular happening as the Park's west side has become home to a growing herd of more than 400 bison.

However, wild bison on private farmland comes with challenges. Not only do large groups of bison cause significant damage to crops and fences, but in some cases, entire fields have been destroyed.

Spring 2006 saw the formation of the Sturgeon River Plains Bison Stewards (SRPBS) when local landowners, stakeholders and interested citizens came together. Funding was provided by various government and non-government organizations, including the Prince Albert Model Forest and the Prince Albert National Park.

SRPBS wanted to create an environment where both the herd and the local landowners could benefit, and as partners in a Prince Albert Model Forest program (PAMF), the group is a good example of a forest community at work.

Landowners who have experienced damage as a result of having bison roaming their properties are eligible to apply for SRPBS funding to help offset the financial impact. The group has initiated several projects, including the fencing of key areas and river crossings and the controlled hazing of bison from sensitive areas.

Along with the University of Laval and the Prince Albert National Park, a new vegetation-monitoring project is currently being launched. Once completed, this project will help SRPBS to advise landowners regarding crop choices with a view to making plant crops less appealing to bison.

This wild herd provides significant economic opportunities for the area, as illustrated by the emergence of eco-tourism businesses, and the SRPBS provides employment as the herd has become the subject of many research projects. The group works with the Saskatchewan Boreal Forest Learning Center on the Sakaw Mostos Project – a learning initiative delivered to schools throughout Saskatchewan highlighting the national significance of this herd. For more information, contact:

Gord Vaadeland, SRPBS Executive Director
Tel: (306) 469-2356 Email: vaadeland@sasktel.net



It's just after lunch on a Monday afternoon and since opening at 10 a.m., Justin Bear has already seen 26 people at the Cyber Café. Young and old, they come. They come because of the free Internet access to look for jobs, to chat with others and to check out different sites.

"For the most part, they're here for educational reasons and really, that was the intent," said Bear of the Ochapowace First Nations. "The main idea behind the project was to expose the First Nations community to computer technology."

The uptake was immediate. Bear explained that as most First Nations communities only have satellite access, the free Cyber Café was an instant hit. The success is due in part to support provided by the Saskatchewan Aboriginal Business Service Network (ABSN), a network focused on opportunities that share knowledge.

Many people talk about the need for economic development in rural Saskatchewan, especially in First Nation and Métis communities. The ABSN plays an important role as they help to further develop established businesses like the Cyber Café.

By working together within a specific community or with a number of communities in joint ventures, community economic development in First Nation and Métis communities is becoming a reality.

ABSN team members provide workshops and training, and help develop alliances and partnerships. They have assisted in establishing two co-operative ventures on Big River First Nation - the Ohpahow Wawesecikiwak Arts Marketing Co-operative and the Whitefish Opportunities Worker Cooperative.

The ABSN team uses a process known as Community Asset Mapping (CAM) which allows participants to identify their strengths; it empowers them to create change.

The team also employs the use of a logic model for community or business development, a step-by-step process that moves projects from idea to implementation and expansion.

For more information, contact:

Emily K. Cherneski
ABSN Project Team Coordinator
Tel: (306) 332-6629 Email: ekc@sasktel.net

Mark Your Calendar!

Bison on the Edge Conference
June 8-10, 2010
Big River, SK
Tel: (306) 469-4882 www.bisonstewards.ca

Small Saskatchewan Towns Continue to Win Big Awards

For the fourth consecutive year, representatives from small towns in Saskatchewan have come home with an award from a big country.

In 2009, the town of Carlyle in south-east Saskatchewan won a bronze award in the 20,000-and-under population category at the International Awards for Livable Communities, held in the Czech Republic. In 2008, the town of Ogema won silver, in 2007 and 2006 the town of St. Walburg came home with a silver and bronze award respectively.

The LivCom Awards were launched internationally in 1997 and are endorsed by the United Nations Environment Program. Ogema also received a gold award in 2008 in the over-all competition for 'best heritage management' practices.

Ogema Mayor Wayne Myren was one representative who made a presentation based on required criteria, including the enhancement of landscape, environmental practices, healthy lifestyles, sustainability, heritage management and future planning.

"(We) had to address how our community relates to all the aspects and we had 40 minutes in which to do so. Judges used both written submissions and then the presentation; (we were) judged on how we fit the criteria," said Myren.

They also won the additional gold award, which was up against all the other participants, not just in the Ogema's original category. In total, there were 300 applications from 50 countries of which only 30 countries made the cut.

"It's quite an honour to come home with gold and silver," said Myren.

"Our whole community is made up of leaders and they all participate. Everybody digs into projects and gets them done. It's a feather in the cap for all to have our community recognized as the most liveable in the world," said Myren. "It's huge! Our community is growing and we have a large number of immigrants coming to our area. In fact, next summer, we're going to have up to 50 individuals from the Philippines. They're moving in slowly and we're integrating them within our community."

These silver and gold awards fit well with Ogema's award for best sustainable development in Canada, awarded two years ago by the Canada Lands Company, a Crown corporation that reports to Parliament via the Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities.

"It's pretty awesome when you get world exposure," added Myren. "There's no better way to market your community!"

This year, the 2010 awards will be held in Chicago, USA on November 4-8.

Visit www.livcomawards.com for more info or call +44 (0)118 946 1680.



2012: International Year of Co-operatives

For many communities, co-operatives have acted as economic glue, helping to maintain the viability of regions and making them more desirable places to live. For centuries, co-operatives have contributed to local economic development, especially in rural and remote areas, where they create jobs and provide essential goods and services.

Now more than ever, the Government of Canada believes that the co-operatives are a practical option to provide services and results for Canadians.

So much so that the federal government recently renewed and improved its commitment to the co-operative model with a \$19.1 million contribution to the Co-operative Development Initiative (CDI).

“Our government fully recognizes the importance of co-operatives and their contribution to Canadian society,” said Minister Blackburn. “The co-operative model is a valuable tool for both urban and rural development, which has proven to be efficient and which contributes greatly to addressing a wide range of personal and community needs, especially in rural and remote communities, where co-operatives create jobs and provide essential goods and services.”

Not only will this investment enable Canadians to establish new co-ops, it will also test the co-operative model by applying it to various scenarios, measuring how the outcomes deal with today's challenges.

The Government of Canada, through the Co-operatives Secretariat, will partner with the co-operative sector to implement an enhanced CDI, made up of three specific components: Advisory Services, Innovative Co-operative Projects, and Research and Knowledge Development.

Since it was established in 2003, the CDI has supported more than 1,500 co-op projects and helped to create over 200 new co-operatives.

To learn more about the Co-operative Development Initiative please visit www.coop.gc.ca or call toll-free, 1-888-757-8725



Canada

Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage

If your community hosts a recurring festival, or plans to celebrate an important local anniversary, event organizers may be eligible for funding under the Government of Canada's Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage Program. This program provides support for activities that engage volunteers and present local artists, artisans and local historical heritage, and that are intended for and open to the general public. It has three components:

Local Festivals: supports local, recurring community events and activities that feature the public presentation of local artists and/or of local heritage.

Community Anniversaries: supports local, non-recurring community events and activities that commemorate the 100th or greater (in increments of 25 years) anniversary of a local historically significant event or person.

Legacy Fund: supports capital projects that demonstrate a clear link to the commemoration of the anniversary (100th or greater, in increments of 25 years) of a significant local historical event or personality.

The next deadline for applications for all program components is **April 30, 2010**.

For more information on eligibility, applications and deadlines for the Building Communities Through Arts and Heritage Program, go to www.pch.gc.ca/communities or call **1-800-661-0585**.



Canadian Heritage
Patrimoine canadien

Canadian Community Information at your Fingertips

The Community Information Database (CID) is an easy-to-use, free, on-line mapping and data tool that provides a detailed statistical overview of Canadian communities.

It incorporates facts and figures from Statistics Canada's 1996, 2001 and 2006 censuses of Population, with more than 700 indicators, such as education, income, population, age, employment rate, immigration and citizenship, language, crime, health and much more!

The CID is a reliable, innovative tool for community groups, private or non-profit organizations, government policy makers, businesses, academics or individuals wanting to make a difference in their community.

The CID allows you to compare your community with other similar-sized communities, research and analyze population changes, create and download maps, tables and charts, and create your own community and regional profiles.

For more information, visit www.cid-bdc.ca or call toll-free at 1-888-757-8725.



Community Information Database
Base de données sur les collectivités

Growing Forward: The New Agricultural Policy Framework

One of the hallmarks of the Growing Forward framework is that it was developed with input from provinces and territories, together with the agriculture and agri-food industry.

Recognizing that one-size-fits-all programs do not adequately address the sector's challenges, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) adopted an innovative approach to ensure regional needs and challenges are effectively managed.

Flexibility is a cornerstone of Growing Forward and bases the relationship between governments on a foundation of partnerships. This flexibility lets the provinces and territories design and deliver the vast majority of cost-shared, non-business risk management (BRM) programs. Funds are targeted to meet the specific needs of the agriculture sector specific to each province and territory.

Governments are investing \$1.3 billion over five years into Growing Forward programs. The funding represents \$330 million more than the Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) and is cost-shared on a 60:40 basis between the Government of Canada and the provincial and territorial governments.

The main outcomes of Growing Forward include: a competitive and innovative sector; a sector that contributes to society's priorities; and a sector that is proactive in managing risks.

To achieve these outcomes, governments are investing in initiatives that promote increased competitiveness and innovation; implement improved food-safety assurance, biosecurity and traceability systems; enhance farm environmental performance; promote Canadian agriculture in global markets and, help producers and processors access these markets; and help farmers move beyond traditional BRM to better manage risks to their businesses.

Learn more about Growing Forward at:
www.agr.gc.ca

For More Information

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www.rural.gc.ca
www.coop.gc.ca

For information on Government of Canada programs and services:
Phone: 1-800-O-Canada (1-800-622-6232)
TTY/TDD: 1-800-465-7735
Web: www.canada.gc.ca
Service Canada Access Centres

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