

## Fireweed Community Market Report on 2010

In 2010, the market continued to improve the services we offer our members and the community and promote local production through support for our members. To provide focus for the coming years and direction for our funders, in 2011, the board will be engaging in a visioning exercise. We currently have one more year of funding from the Yukon Agriculture branch Growing Forward program to support the office as well as other market projects. Members of the society volunteer in committee work such as the AIAC, attend conferences, continue to support programming such as the Grow a Row campaign, as well as provide support for endeavours such as the Potluck Community Coop and the Whitehorse Food Bank.

Fireweed Community Market members have been invited to make local products available during the Frostbite Music Festival, the Rendezvous Revue, Hockey Day in Canada, the Canadian Orienteering Championships and Dawson City Music Festival. The farm products website created and maintained by the Fireweed Community Market continues to get lots of visitors and plans are underway to add an electronic marketplace to encourage connections and sharing of information between producers and consumers.

Last spring, we entered into a joint project with the Canadian Centre for Community Renewal to fund a project with the goal of strengthening local food system and increasing local food production through an exploration of agricultural expansion models such as membership-based or consumer-led projects, as well as improve links to institutional procurement. Melisa's final report is available from our website.

Thanks to Kaeley, we were able to access WhiteCAP (Whitehorse Community Climate Change Adaptation Project) funding. As a result, new Celebrate Yukon Food - Keeping the Harvest book is underway. We've had great response from our membership with stories, techniques and recipes and are now on our second proofing and editing. We will be launching the book at the Outdoor Market along with a reprinting of the original Celebrate Yukon Food: Seasonal Recipes. We were also able to use the funding to host a number of Homestead Workshops this winter and Kaeley has been busy booking instructors and dates so we will be able to continue those on into the fall.

Although we've been using the kitchen in Shipyards Park more and more for workshops and processing, providing daily food sales needed by the city have continued to be a challenge. This fall, Mental Health Services funded a project to provide the space to Challenge Vocational Alternatives. Since it seemed to be a better fit for Challenge to rent directly from the city than through the Fireweed Community Market, we withdrew from the kitchen as of March 31, 2011. This does mean that we will need to find alternative fundraising in order to continue to offer the same services to our members. A huge thank you to Allan, Joe, and Mallory who joined the board for a whole day of cleaning to get it ready for the transfer.

The Fireweed Community Market currently rents office and retail space in the Frank Slim building in Shipyards Park. The **Yukon Made Store** provides for year round sales for over 20 vendors as well as library space for the Growers of Organic Food Yukon and a home for the Yukon Food Processors Association computer and Genesis database used to create nutrition facts panels for local food processors. Sales in the Yukon Made Store have been steadily increasing.

The **12 Days of Christmas market** was held for the second time in the Old Fire Hall at the end of Main Street this year with 49 vendors participating. Total sales for vendors were up again from last year at over \$132,600 for the twelve days. This project has a budget of almost \$15,000 and was managed by Darren. Other support included Lara: the daily raffle, Sue: advertising, Pam: floor layout and setup, and Georgi: the vendor schedule as well as Joan: accounting, Carolyn and Susan as past organizers passing on their excellent notes, and our staff, Lindsay, Aislinn, Marsha and Megan. Congratulations, all!

The **Outdoor Summer Market** has seen a steady increase in the number of vendors with a really good showing of hot food vendors as well as farmers, artists and craftspeople. We've also had an increase in the number of non-profit organizations participating.

In the outdoor market, we were pleased to have Kaeley join us as the market manager. Her enthusiasm and organizational abilities led to a new tradition of presentations and workshops at every second market culminating in the Celebration of the Harvest held jointly with Yukon Educational Theatre on the last outdoor market day of the season. We're hoping to continue that tradition and are looking for facilitators for the coming season.

Unfortunately, Kaeley won't be able to join us again for the 2011 season, so an ad will be going up shortly on Yuwin.

Our change from the parking lot to the park proper was very well received by almost all of our visitors and vendors. We'll continue to work to address accessibility issues - a chair has been purchased and is available to borrow from the Yukon Made Store. It has been pointed out that driving counter-clockwise around the circle would make it easier to unload a van with a single side door, so that will be the plan for this coming season. We would also like to have vendors set up around the outside of the loop to improve visibility and the community feel and provide place for the public in the central area.

Response to the market has been overwhelmingly good from both vendors and consumers. By continuing to work together and assist new vendors as they get introduced to the market community we can continue to improve the relationships between vendors and with the market consumers.

We look forward to a rewarding 2011 market season!

Simone Rudge & Carolyn Campbell  
Fireweed Community Market Chairs