

NORTHERN SUN

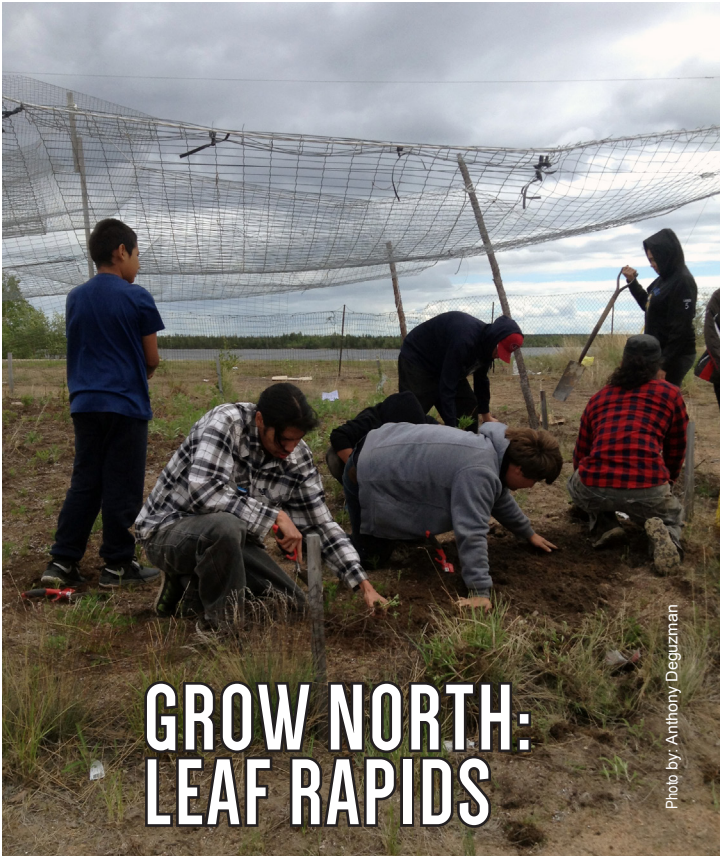


Photo by: Anthony Deguzman

GROW NORTH: LEAF RAPIDS

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Grow North is a self-developing horticulture project; a hub for learning and growing in the North. We are still learning about what is able to grow here in the boreal forest, and while we are learning we are sharing what our learning experiences have taught us. We also aim for each generation of seeds to become much stronger, and adapted to our region and climate change.

This year we have been sharing our growing experience with neighboring communities and have a multitude of small projects to test and learn from. In the Grow North project our current

Look inside to see a few of these projects.



Photo by: Anthony Deguzman

staff is, Chuck Stensgard, Chris Brayley, Brian Trewin, Howard Dumas, and Anthony Deguzman. Like every seed we all start small, full of hope and potential. Howard has been cultivating himself to become adept in being an Earth person so that he can share his growing experiences with others.

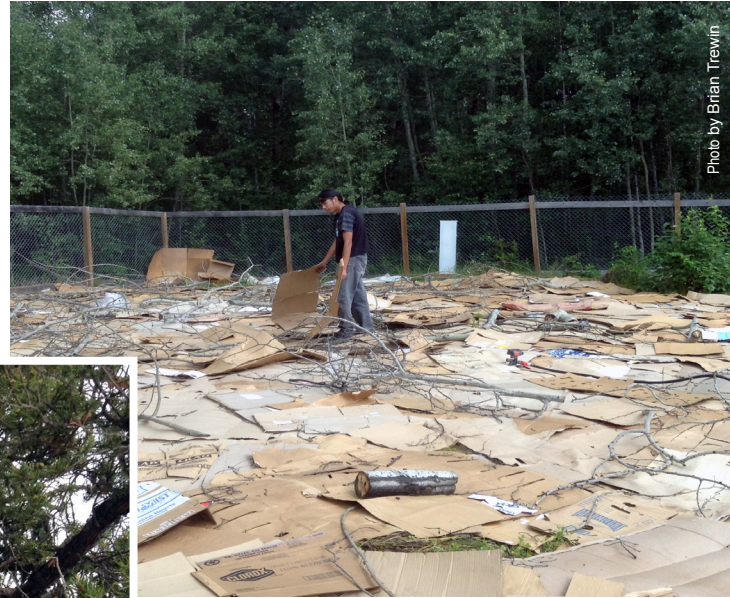
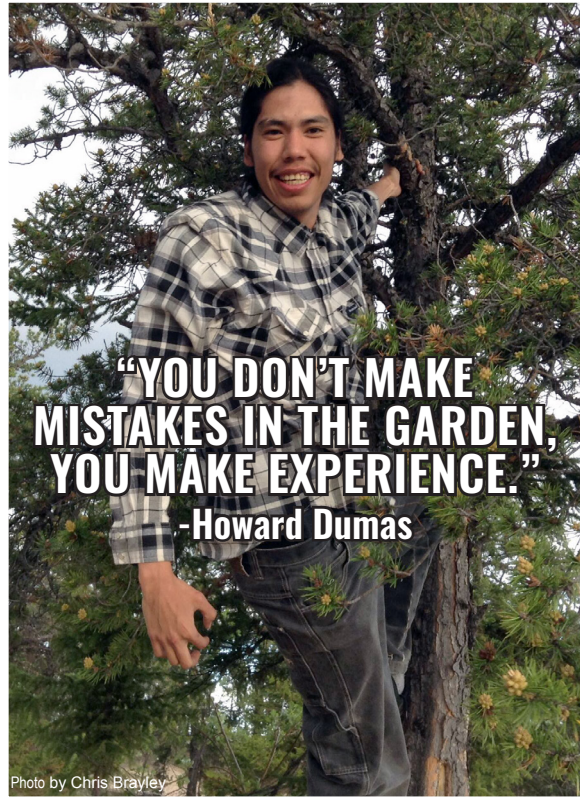


Photo by Brian Trewin



“YOU DON’T MAKE MISTAKES IN THE GARDEN, YOU MAKE EXPERIENCE.”

-Howard Dumas

Photo by Chris Brayley

One day Howard hopes to be able to bring what he learned from gardening back to his community to share what he has learned.

Written by: Brian Trewin



Photo by Brian Trewin

TAKING THE WORLD BY SWARM

Three years ago, Nikki Veurinks, from Meadow Portage, started keeping bees and selling honey to a few people in the community. Her business has now grown into 75 hives and a small storefront on the farm. The local customer list is growing, and Nikki also markets to the Bee Maid Honey Co-op, as well as delivering her product to Dauphin on a regular basis.

For the Veurinks, a large family of 14, the bees save them hundreds of dollars in sugar and honey costs. They have also replaced most of the sugar in their baking with honey.

Nikki has increased her beekeeping skills to include raising queens and splitting hives. She sells ‘splits’ (new hives) to other northern would-be beekeepers. Last year she sold 22 hives. Nikki mentors one of her younger siblings each year on beekeeping and the honey business operation. She also leads NACC beekeeping workshops, with the support of her mentor, Bruce McLean. In 2017, Nikki led 3 workshops for NACC communities, and one for the Bayline Regional Roundtable.

Over-wintering the bees has gone well. Nikki leaves the bees with a honey supply instead of sugar water, which keeps them healthier. The hives are blanketed with snow, so even on the coldest days there is bee activity in the hives. Each spring has a level of anticipation to open up the hives. The goal is to continue to expand the family operations, which also includes growing fresh vegetables, and raising chicken, beef, lamb, goat, and pork.

Written by: Northern Manitoba Food, Culture, and Community Collaborative



“WE ENJOY EVERY PART OF BEEKEEPING. THE HARDEST PART IS WAITING FOR THE SPRING TO COME, AND SEEING HOW THE BEES DID OVER THE WINTER.”

- Nikki Veurink



Photo by Amanda Froese



Photo by Amanda Froese

Photo by Maxine Lam

ON TRACK TOWARDS FOOD

Transportation often influences a person's ability to access good food. This is especially so in the northern Manitoba communities of Thicket Portage, Pikwitonei, Ilford and War Lake First Nation. For a few months during the winter, folks can drive into Thompson by winter roads, but during the remainder of the year a trip requires the train, or boat, and often the additional cost of a taxi. With train schedules that arrives in Thompson one day, but doesn't return to the community till three days later, hotels and accommodations are also added into the cost; suddenly food budgets have to include much more than what feeds the family.

The Bayline Food Buying Cooperative is trying to change all that by putting the community first. Starting in 2012 as an idea to address food insecurity in the communities along the Bayline Railway, the coop saw the first of its deliveries in 2017. Much planning, community meetings, partnership development, and hard work was put into the creation of the coop throughout those 5 years. So, how does it work?

Food orders are placed and paid for by residents from the communities to



Photo by Caroline Sanoffsky

WHAT'S CHALLENGING IS THE TRAIN SYSTEM. IT'S SUCH A LONG WAIT BETWEEN ORDERS, BUT THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO BECAUSE OF WHERE WE ARE LIVING. I WILL KEEP ON DOING AND PUSHING BECAUSE IT IS A GOOD THING.

-Pauline Cordell

Donna Sanoffsky, the Buying Coop Program Coordinator. Once all the custom orders have been received, Donna places one large order at the local store in Wabowden, Lucky Dollar Foods. After the food has been received in Wabowden, Donna sorts out the food orders, packs them into individual tote boxes that are colour-coded for each community, and then sends them off

on the train. With the help of Community Coordinators in each community, the food orders get taken off the train, inspected to make sure the order is correct and still in good condition, and then distributed to whomever order the food. The colour-coded totes get shipped back to Wabowden to await the next order.

SECURITY

The coop has faced a few challenges, including the inconsistent train schedule which makes it difficult to ensure that fresh and frozen foods reach their destination in good condition. Another big challenge is that payment and transferring of money for the orders can be difficult. With no banks in the communities it can be difficult to get money to pay for the orders on time. There has been some navigating around these challenges, but Donna and her fellow community coordinators are up to the tasks. Residents are happy with the buying coop, sharing they are very impressed with the quality and the amount of food that can now be purchased for much less than a trip in to Thompson.

Written by: **Amanda Froese**



Did you know...

- Bayline communities rely on the train system as there are no all-season roads to connect them to the main highways
- A trip to Thompson can cost community members between \$183- \$255+, in addition to grocery costs and time



Photo by Caroline Sanoffsky

Community Food Champion



Kim Izzard

Kim has been involved in good food projects in Misipawistik Cree Nation and Grand Rapids since 2010.

Gardening, grow grapes, preserving harvests, and canning fish keeps Kim busy as she shares her knowledge with community members. She also works with children and youth who love learning and are “absolutely engaged.”

The next project Kim has taken on is getting a greenhouse built at the school to extend their growing season and to get more students involved in growing their own food.

Written by: Amanda Froese

“IT’S ABOUT RAISING AWARENESS AND ACCESSIBILITY OF HEALTHY AND LOCALLY GROWN FOODS, WHICH ARE NOT ALWAYS AN OPTION IN OUR COMMUNITIES”
-Kim Izzard

Photo provided by Kim Izzard

Homemade Granola

YOU’LL NEED:

- 5 cup rolled oats
- 1 cup chopped nuts (almonds, walnuts, etc.)
- 2 cups chopped, dried apricots, dates, prunes and/or raisins
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp salt

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 275 °F
2. Mix all ingredients, except the fruit, together in a big bowl
3. Line baking sheet with parchment paper or tin foil and spread the mixture out
4. Bake in the centre of the oven for 1 hour, stirring every 20 minutes.
5. During the second stir, add in the dried fruit, and continue baking in the oven until light golden. The granola won’t seem crunchy at first, but when it cools down it will be crunchy.
6. Let the mixture cool on the baking sheet for about 15 minutes. Once cool, store in an airtight container for up to a month.

TIP: Enjoy with a scoop of yogurt and fruit, or unsweetened apple sauce.

Soil Development

MATERIAL	HARVEST	USE
1. Decayed Poplar Leaves	Rich soil is formed at the base of poplar stands. Rake back any fresh leaves and harvest this “black gold” with a shovel.	Work into your soil by hand or with a rake., 1 part decayed leaves to 2 parts soil. This adds a lot of valuable nutrients to your garden.
2. Peat Moss	Decayed organic matter found in freshwater wetlands of the North. It’s the black, spongy stuff at the bottom of a bog. You can harvest it using a shovel.	Let the peat dry out. Use your hands to work it into your soil (1 part peat to 3 parts soil). It will loosen up your soil right away, making your garden more workable.
3. Grass and Yard Leaves	Harvest grass clippings and dried leaves from your yard.	Work into your soil to improve texture. Or, rake them on top of your garden (2-4 inches thick) like mulch to protect your soil against erosion.
4. Fish Compost	Mix fish waste with wood chips, bark, grass, etc. (1 part fish to 3 parts carbon source).	Fill an 18 inch tote in your garden with fish compost. Cover with soil. Allow to decompose for 1 year before planting.



FROM THE MEDICINE CABINET:

Oteosakana Cattails



Found along lake shores, river beds, and ponds, cattails can be harvested for the roots, shoots, and head of the plant. The roots and shoots of the plant can be harvested during the summer by cutting off the root just below the surface of the soil. The first 4 inches of the root and shoots can be eaten raw or cooked. The brown head of the cattail can be harvested in the fall once mature. The heads can be cut open and dried. The dried fluffy bits can be applied as a poultice for burns. Keep the heads in a cool, dry place until needed.

Written by: Caroline Sanoffsky

Photo by Amanda Froese



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