

Yukon Food System Design and Planning Project

Update for North of 60 Conference, 2013
Caitlin Dorward (ISFS Research Associate)



Institute for Sustainable Food Systems



Yukon Food System Design and Planning Project

Presentation Outline

1. Project Overview – what, who, and why?
2. Methodology – how?
3. Progress and current work
 - Community Engagement
 - Yukon Farmer Survey -
 - Food System Objectives -

Questions

Panel discussion



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Food System Design and Planning: What?

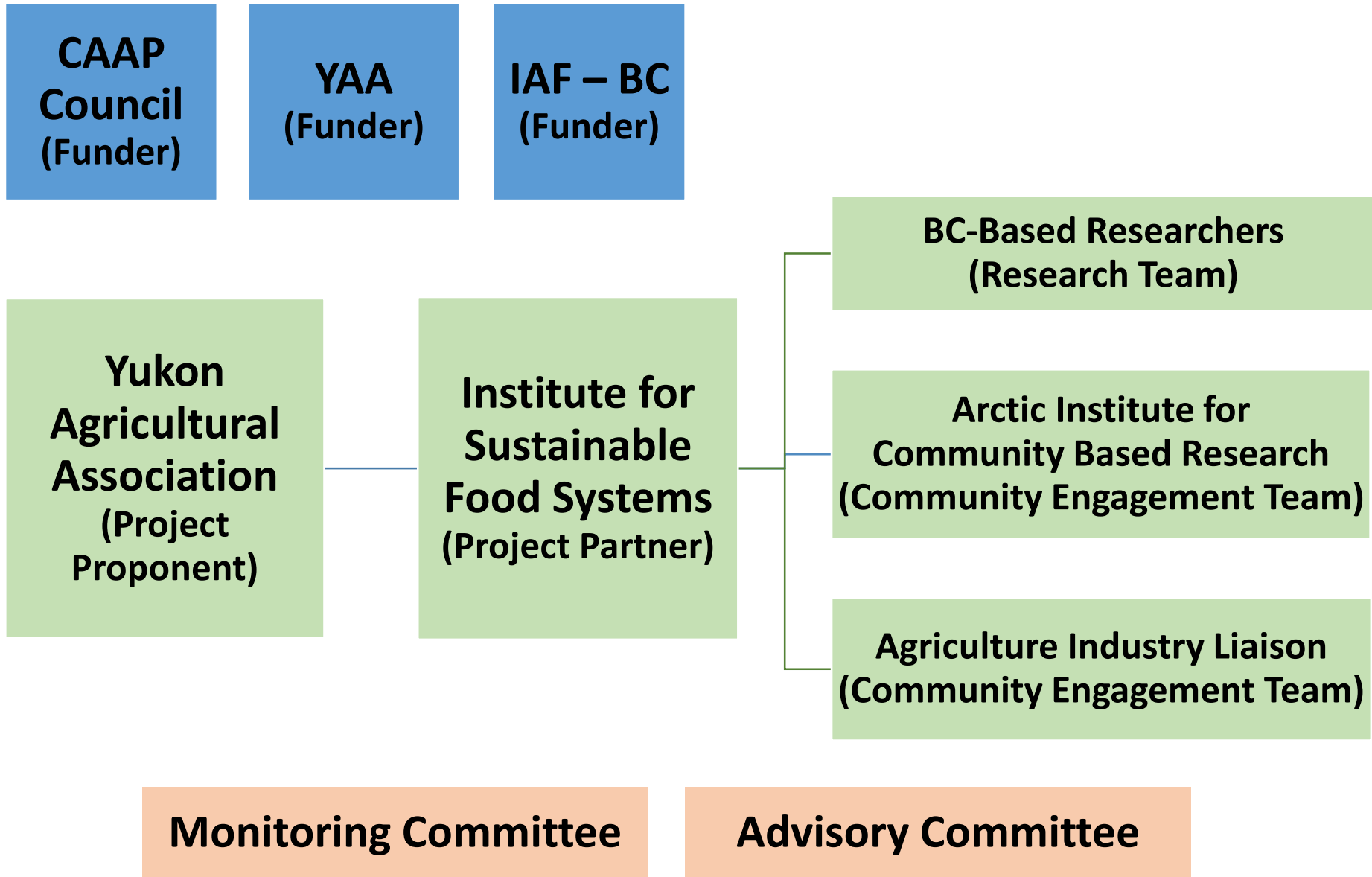
- Three-year, community-based project to develop
 - A **design** for a future Yukon food system that improves food self-reliance, strengthens agriculture, and stimulates regional economic development, and
 - A **plan** for its implementation
- “Vision and roadmap” for Yukon’s food system future



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Food System Design and Planning: Who?




Food System Design and Planning: Who?

A Little About Me...

- Research Associate at Institute for Sustainable Food Systems
- Based in Vancouver, family ties to the Yukon

Northern Agriculturists

Agriculture Library



FRED & CHRIS DORWARD
Whitehorse, Yukon

Fred and Chris moved to the Yukon in the summer of 1980 and resided in the Hillcrest area of Whitehorse until the Spring of 1987 when they moved to Mile 5.2 Mayo Road (Klondike Highway). Fred held a management position in placer mining, and operated an electrical consulting business, while Chris took employment as a registered nurse. Their lot in Hillcrest did not provide Fred with adequate

these. He plants 70 square feet of each, in 35-foot long rows. Both are planted in the fall just before or slightly after the first fall frost. The latest date of sowing has been October 15th. Sometimes Fred plants additional experimental rows for grain trials. In the following year, they have often harvested an ice cream pail of wheat which they grind into whole wheat flour, while quinoa and amaranth have been grown for table

Food System Design and Planning: Why?

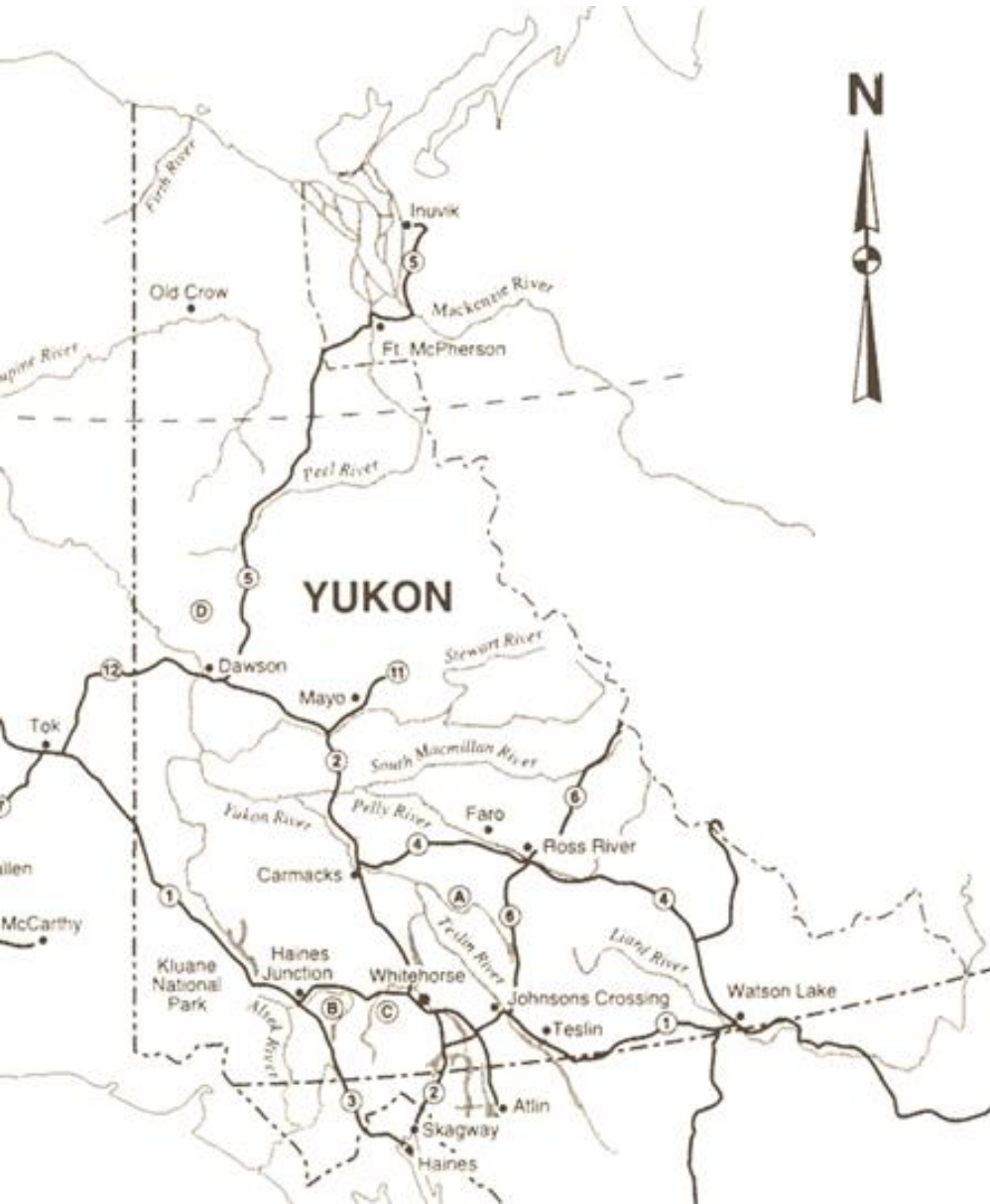
Less than 2% of Yukoners' food budget spent on Yukon-grown food (Canadian Centre for Community Renewal, 2010)

Reliance on imports leaves the Yukon vulnerable and prevents income from circulating within the local economy.



June 2012

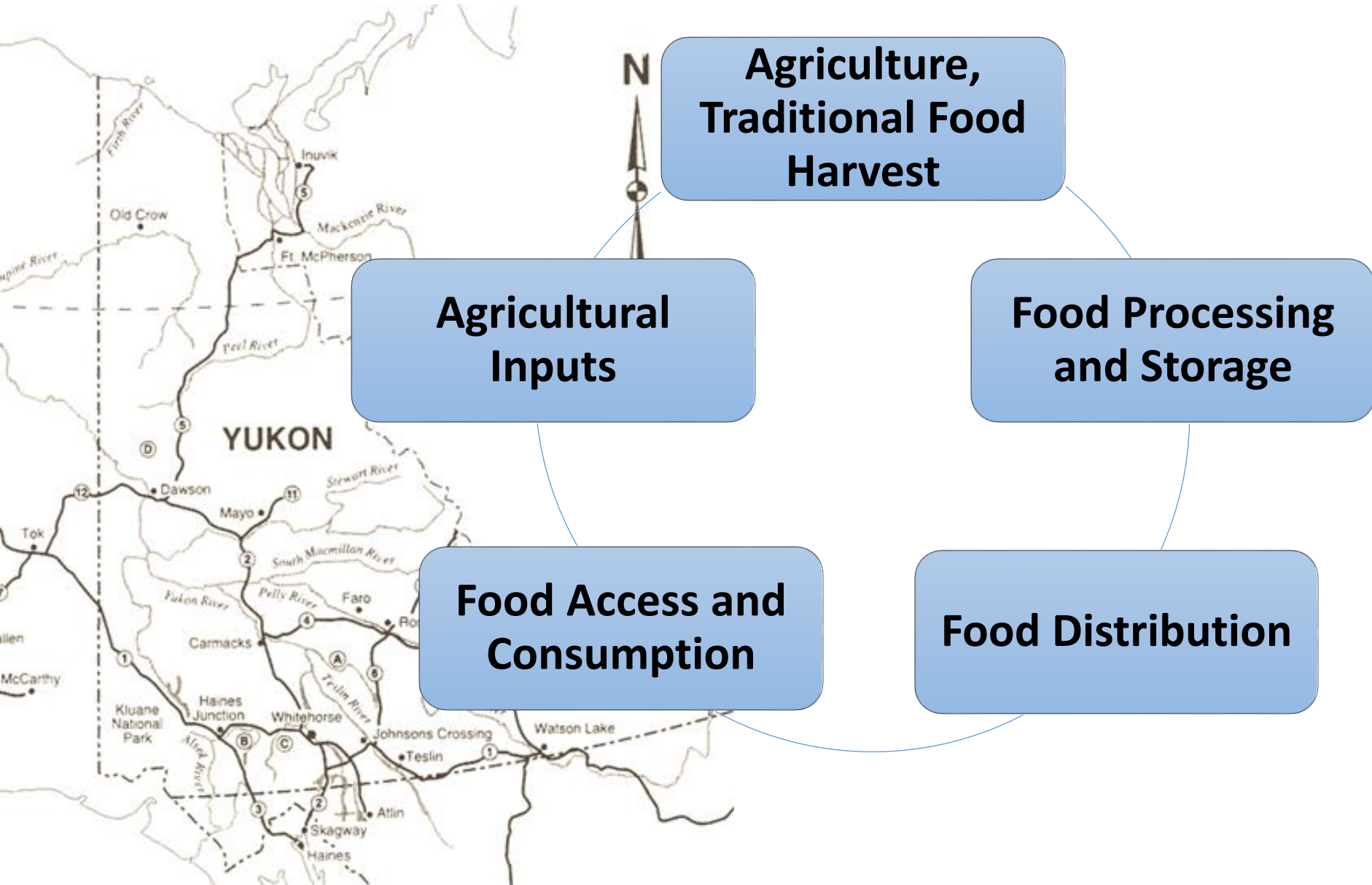
Food System Design and Planning: Why?



Evidence that re-localized food systems can...

- improve public health,
- strengthen communities,
- support environmental and economic goals

Food System Design and Planning: How?



Food System Design and Planning: How?

- **Year One, 2013: Baseline Assessment**

What does the Yukon food system look like today?

- **Year Two, 2014: Food System Design**

What could the Yukon food system look like in the future (2030 - 2050)?

What is the potential of that system in terms of economic, environmental, and social indicators?

- **Year Three, 2015: Implementation Planning**

How do we build the future food system that we want for the Yukon?



Food System Design and Planning: How?

Ongoing consultation and engagement of Yukoners:

- Farmers,
- Agri-food businesses
- Government (YG, First Nations, Municipal)
- Non-profit sector
- Residents, eaters (anyone!)

**1. Baseline
Assessment**

**2. Food System
Design**

**3. Implementation
Planning**

Community Consultation & Engagement



Community Engagement: Progress To Date

- Focus Groups and Interviews in Dawson, Carcross, Tagish, Mayo
- Building working relationships with government & industry
- Research Agreements with 5 First Nations



Community Engagement: Outcomes

By hosting a forum to discuss food system issues we are able to begin...

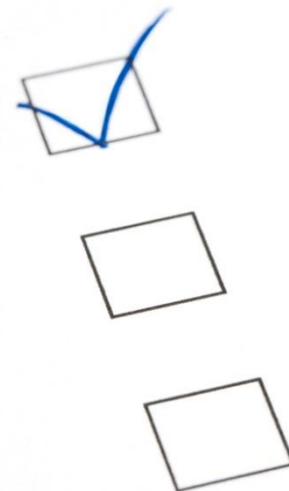
- Facilitating relationships between diverse actors in the Yukon's food system
- Addressing Yukon residents' desire for more direct connection with agriculture and "where food comes from" and
- Building capacity within Yukon communities to engage in agriculture and the development of the food system

Food System Design and Planning: How?

Year One, 2013: Baseline Assessment

Data Collection - Yukon Farmer Survey

- Quantity of food produced in Yukon today
- Capacity & interest of current farms for expansion
- Management practices of Yukon Farms



Food System Design and Planning: How?

Year One, 2013: Baseline Assessment

Data Collection – Expert Farmer Interviews

- Begin this winter
- More in-depth than the survey
- Visit your farm
- Data will be used to develop production budgets that can be used by Yukon Farmers

Food System Design and Planning: How?

Yukon Food System Objectives:

Describe what a future food system should be and achieve.

Draft Food System Objectives developed by research team.

Need Yukoners to “vet” these.

Yukon Food System Design and Planning Project

We're soliciting your feedback on Draft "Food System Objectives" that have been identified by the research team. After hearing more about these Objectives in today's presentation, please share your thoughts using this form. Questions to consider:

Do these reflect what you would have chosen as Food System Objectives for the Yukon?
Is it realistic that we can achieve them in the future?
Have we missed anything? What Food System Objectives would you add to the list?

Definitions of Terms: "Food System Objectives" describe what we want our food system to be and do. By "Food System", we mean agriculture in addition to Traditional food harvesting, food processing and storage, food distribution, food access and consumption, and agricultural inputs.

Food System Objectives	Comments
Increase Territorial self-reliance in agricultural foods	
Sustain Traditional food harvest	
Increase biodiversity	
Minimize non-renewable energy inputs and optimize energy efficiency	

Continued on the next page!

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Yukon Food System Objectives

Please share your thoughts... questions to consider:

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Food System Objectives and Indicators

Objective 1: Increase Territorial self-reliance in agricultural foods.

Identify opportunities and strategies to...

- Expand the agriculture sector
- Connect agriculture with post-production infrastructure and markets



Food System Objectives and Indicators

Objective 2: Sustain Traditional food harvest

50% of rural Yukoners and
20% of Whitehorse residents
hunt, fish, or pick berries.

(Yukon Health and Social Services, 2012)

Identify strategies to sustain
knowledge and traditions
around wild food harvesting.



Food System Objectives and Indicators

Objective 3: Increase biodiversity.

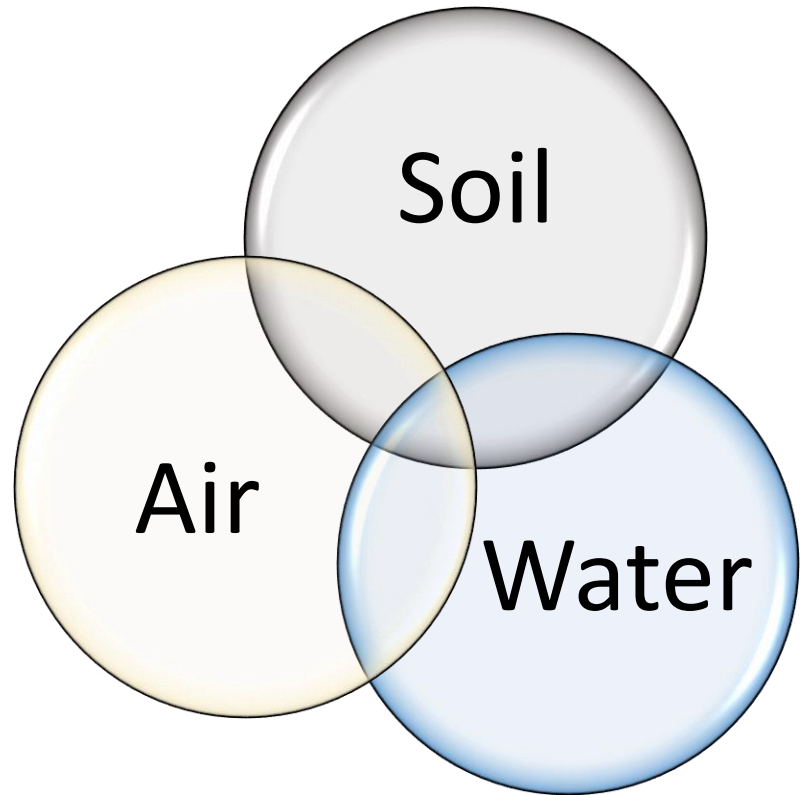
- Agricultural biodiversity - range of crops grown
- Traditional food biodiversity and agriculture-habitat interface
 - Sensitive areas
 - Management strategies



Food System Objectives and Indicators

Objective 4: Minimize external inputs and optimize soil, water, and air quality.

- Protect and sustain the basis of crop production
- Mitigate the potential for environmental degradation associated with increased farming



Food System Objectives and Indicators

Objective 5: Minimize non-renewable energy inputs and optimize energy efficiency.

Objective 6: Reduce and remove greenhouse gas emissions.

- Currently, it takes an average of 5 units of input energy to produce every 1 unit of food energy
- Agriculture and the food system accounts for 50% of greenhouse gas emissions
 - Low hanging fruit to address GHGs and climate change

Food System Objectives and Indicators

Objective 7: Contribute to the local economy.

- Yukoners spend \$100 million/year on food
 - 2% spent on Yukon-grown (\$2 million)
- Opportunity to create a significantly larger economic sector and retain more of the “local food dollar”

Food System Objectives and Indicators

Objective 8: Improve the economic viability of farms and ancillary businesses.

Agriculture's challenge everywhere.

- Identify market opportunities
- Develop strategies to build value chains:
 - production → value added processing & storage
→ distribution → sales
 - Identify mechanisms for farmers to capture more of the value of what's produced

Food System Objectives and Indicators

Objective 9: Create jobs.

- Identify strategies to improve return to management and reduce reliance on off-farm income
- Creation of good entry-level jobs
 - Strategies to attract and train new farmers

Yukon Food System Objectives

Please share your thoughts... questions to consider:

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**Thank you! For more information or to
take the Farmer Survey, contact us:**

www.yukonfoodsystem.com

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