

Inspiring Commercial Agriculture Conference
October 25-27, 2016
Speaker Biographies

DR. DAN LONGBOAT
DIRECTOR OF INDIGENOUS ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES AT TRENT UNIVERSITY

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Presentations: Indigenous Food Systems & Traditional Values and Practices in Food Systems

Biography: Dr. Dan Longboat is Mohawk from the Six Nations of the Grand River. He is known for his Traditional Haudenosaunee knowledge and has taught Mohawk culture at Trent University in addition to his work in Indigenous Environmental Studies. As part of his Master's Degree research, Dr. Longboat designed and developed Trent's Indigenous Environment Studies Program which uses Indigenous knowledge and western environmental and social sciences to explore environmental issues facing Indigenous People. He was the first Director of Studies of the Ph.D. program. He completed his Ph.D. in Environmental Studies at York University.

WINONA LADUKE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HONOR THE EARTH

Website: honorearth.org

Presentations: Seed Sovereignty & Restoring Stable Local Economies

Biography: Winona LaDuke is an internationally renowned environmental activist working on issues of sustainable development, renewable energy and food systems. She lives and works on the White Earth reservation in northern Minnesota, and is a two time vice presidential candidate with Ralph Nader for the Green Party.

As Program Director of the Honor the Earth, she works nationally and internationally on the issues of climate change, renewable energy, and environmental justice with Indigenous communities. And in her own community, she is the founder of the White Earth Land Recovery Project, one of the largest reservation based non-profit organizations in the country, and a leader in the issues of culturally based sustainable development strategies, renewable energy and food systems. In this work, she also continues national and international work to protect Indigenous plants and heritage foods from patenting and genetic engineering.

In 2007, LaDuke was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame, recognizing her leadership and community commitment. In 1994, LaDuke was nominated by Time magazine as one of America's fifty most promising leaders under forty years of age. She has been awarded the Thomas Merton Award in 1996, Ms. Woman of the Year (with the Indigo Girls in 1997), and the Reebok Human Rights Award, with which in part she began the White Earth Land Recovery Project. The White Earth Land Recovery Project has won many awards- including the prestigious 2003 International Slow Food Award for Biodiversity,

recognizing the organization's work to protect wild rice from patenting and genetic engineering.

A graduate of Harvard and Antioch Universities, she has written extensively on Native American and environmental issues. She is a former board member of Greenpeace USA and is presently an advisory board member for the Trust for Public Lands Native Lands Program as well as a board member of the Christensen Fund. The Author of five books, including *Recovering the Sacred*, *All our Relations* and a novel- *Last Standing Woman*, she is widely recognized for her work on environmental and human rights issues.

CHIEF ERNEST BETSINA
YELLOWKNIVES DENE FIRST NATION, NDILO

Website: www.ykdene.com

Presentation: Dettah and Ndilo Gardens

Biography: Ernest Betsina is the Chief of Ndilo, one of two communities within the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. Born and raised in Ndilo, Ernest went to school from kindergarten to grade nine in Yellowknife. After graduating and joining the work force, he completed a four-year carpentry journeyman certification program in Fort Smith. He was an elected member of the YKDFN band council along with his father for two terms in the late 1990s, and became Chief in June of 2013. Spending time with his family, his two sons and their partners is important for Ernest. He recently has taken up gardening as a hobby and as a way to spend quality time with family and community members.

DR. STEVEN SEEFELDT
STATE HORTICULTURE SPECIALIST AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

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Presentations: Soil, Green-housing and Growing Food North of 60

Biography: Dr. Seefeldt is a horticulture specialist at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. He has multiple degrees in various disciplines including a Ph.D. in Agronomy from the Washington State University, and has worked in many parts of the US as well as abroad.

He was a Weed Scientist with the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Subarctic Agricultural Research Unit in Fairbanks, AK for 8 years. In addition he was a Rangeland Scientist for over 4 years. Dr. Seefeldt has brought new understanding about how plants are measured in rangeland systems, the benefits of rangeland fire in healthy ecosystems, the analyses of dose-response research, herbicide fate in arctic ecosystems, and how to identify and manage invasive plants. In his free time, Dr. Seefeldt gardens, reads, and repairs his house and Volkswagen.

PHIL BAKKER
FOUNDER OF EARTHAPPLES

Website: earthapples.com

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Presentation: All about Potatoes – Advice for Growing Success

Biography: Phil was raised on a potato farm in Alberta and now works in the family potato marketing business. He is a graduate from business management school and the Potato Business School in Emmelord, Netherlands. He is also an ambassador for the Alberta potato industry. His company, EarthApples, specializes in potato varieties for home and garden use and has been supplying seed potatoes to a number of gardeners north of 60 in recent years.

ECOLOGY NORTH WITH ÉCOLE WILLIAM MACDONALD MIDDLE SCHOOL

Website: ecologynorth.ca

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Presentation: School Gardening

Biography: Ecology North is a charitable, non-profit organization based in Yellowknife. Since 1971, the organization has supported sound environmental decision-making for the NWT through programs that focus on five priorities: climate change, environmental education, water, waste reduction, and local food production.

William MacDonald School has recently built a new school garden, working together with a committed crew of parents, teachers and organizations. They have harvested for the first time, and will be learning much more about gardening through inquiry-based learning over the next three years.

JACKIE MILNE

NORTHERN FARM TRAINING INSTITUTE (NFTI)

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Presentation: Restoring Our Food Independence

Biography: Jackie is a Metis born in Saskatoon and raised in Hay River with 20 years of experience of growing food in the North. It started as a way to safely provide for her family, but soon Jackie noticed how interested other people were in what she was doing. NFTI was born after Jackie discovered the depth of learning that Northerners needed. Instead of sending experts into communities, NFTI invests in local people who will become experts for their community by building their capacity through in-depth hands-on learning experiences.

BRITTANY WEVER

OWNER OF SAHTU GARDENS

Website: facebook.com/sahtugardens

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Presentation: Greenhouse Growing – *Trying hard and failing, but only sometimes*

Biography: Ten years ago, Brittany married a farmer from southern Alberta and raised cattle for four years, together, in Bow Island. They also grew sweet corn and tomatoes for roadside stands, and raised chickens and turkeys for meat and eggs. They had a milking cow and learned to make cheese and yogurt on their farm. They have now purchased another commercial farm and greenhouse in Norman Wells, called Sahtu Gardens. Their first year of growing food to sell was a success – selling bedding plants to the community and participating in the first ever Norman Wells Farmer’s Market. They plan to add

chickens to their new farm as well as double their vegetable production. They have two little boys who oversee the entire operation, and plan on staying in Norman Wells for many years to come.