



## Greetings!

Thank you for taking the time to view our newsletter. It has been a busy summer & we would like to apprise you of some of the happenings.

## Meeting with Deb Schulte, King/Vaughan MP & Chair of Federal Environment Committee

YREA brought up many points of concern to us as they impact climate change including:

- **STRENGTHEN** energy efficiency in building standards, including raising the bar for better housing in the arctic where they build to barely R20. Green, energy conserving features should not be an option but the NORM. In this photo of toilet in Japan, basin is at top of toilet, which is refilled as hands are being washed.

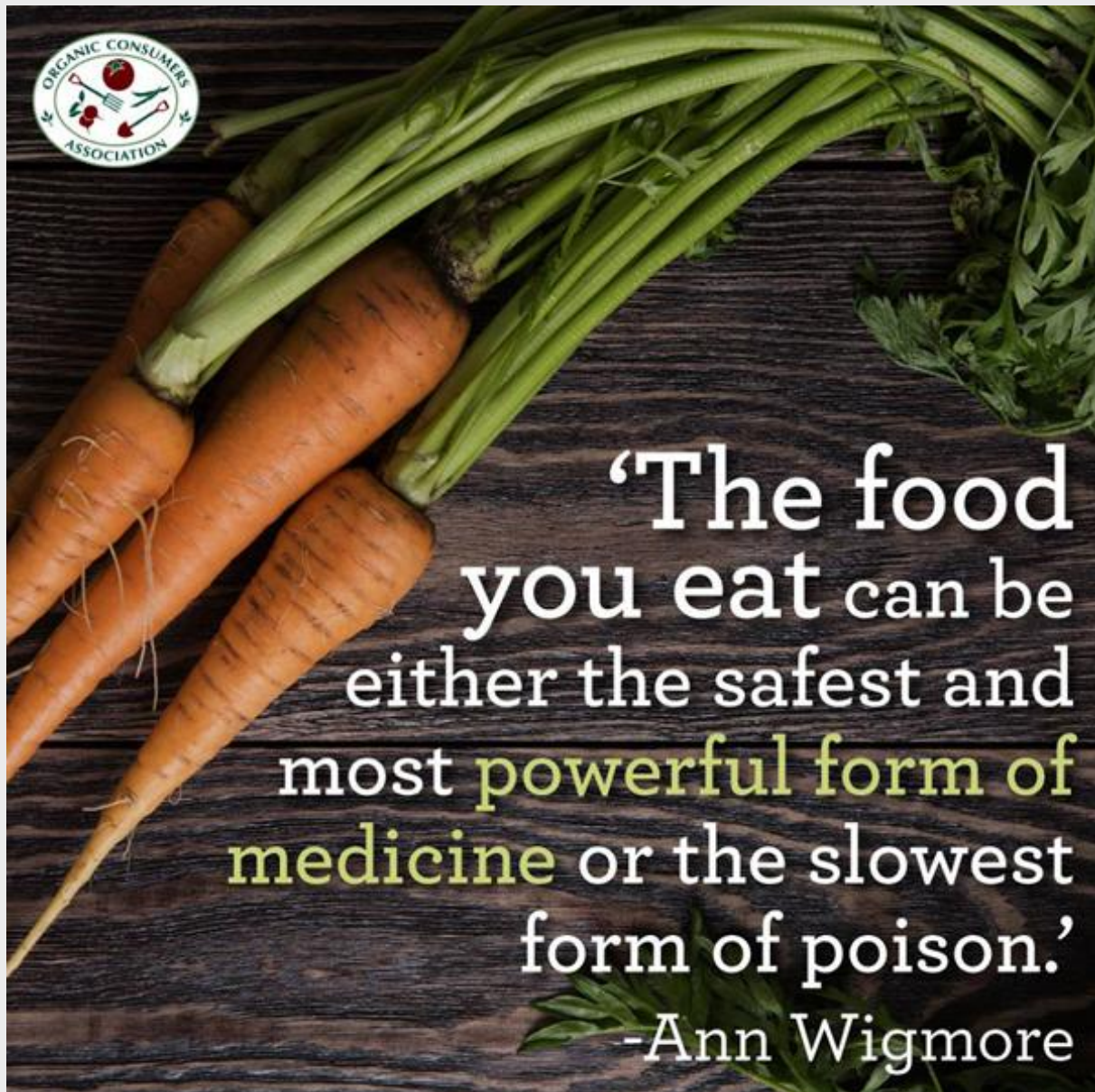


- **BAN DEFORESTATION** Only 8% of our forests in Canada are safeguarded by legislation. We must defend the important role of forests in mitigating climate change and in so doing, protect them.

- **BAN STYROFOAM** food containers. We estimate that over 40 million polystyrene containers generated from York Region annually are landfilled, or worse yet, incinerated because they are not accepted for recycling in our blue box programs.

- **STOP INCINERATION.** Don't listen to the spin doctors, look to countries such as Denmark and Japan that originally embraced incinerators and are now closing them and looking to waste reduction instead. We need to move to ZERO WASTE by **reducing** instead of burning it.

- **PROPER LABELLING OF FOOD, INCLUDING GMO.** How does this fit into climate change action plans? Conventional agriculture, with its use of toxic chemicals & pesticides, is a big emitter of GHG, as is the production of these substances. If our food is properly labeled, people might rethink their choices and support more sustainable agriculture.



‘The food  
you eat can be  
either the safest and  
most powerful form of  
medicine or the slowest  
form of poison.’

-Ann Wigmore

## Hemp is happening in York Region!!!

Murray & Bev York planted 60 acres of industrial hemp on their farm in Queensville. Murray had no problem harvesting his crop, even though farmers are warned that it can be difficult. However, their farm was beset by thousands of blackbirds. What with the birds and a high



proportion of male plants, their seed crop was a big disappointment. Murray is now looking for a buyer for his hemp stalks and will use a portion to build a hemp straw bale chicken house. He says he learned a lot during his first attempt and remains undaunted with plans to plant hemp again next year.

Leevi Hotari planted 40 acres of hemp in King Township and with the help of fellow organic farmer, Mike O'Hara, had a very good seed harvest. Mike dried the seed, as he himself grows a variety of organic grains. Leevi will plow the stalks under, returning abundant nutrients back to the soil.

Industrial hemp farming does have risks - with drought in many parts and most farmers not receiving their licenses until the 3rd week of June - this year has been more trying than usual. However, with a lucrative, 34,000 acres licensed across Canada last year, once the many challenges are overcome, it can be a profitable, sustainable crop.



See the [video](#) by Reuben Stone for hemp info and how it is harvested.

YREA would ultimately like to support the growing of this crop by buying the hemp stalks from farmers, thereby giving them a value added per acre after they sell the seed. We would then use this biomass as one of the feedstocks in our biochar production enterprise.



### Monarchs need Milkweed

Monarch butterflies are in decline. Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) is the only food eaten by Monarch larvae, so consider harvesting some seeds this fall and planting a patch in a sunny or partly sunny location. See [link for how](#) to harvest. If you can't find any growing wild, inquire at a [seed library](#) near you. YREA has provided the main branch of Richmond Hill library with Milkweed seeds. You can also come to the library to learn how to save your own heirloom vegetable seeds through [this workshop](#).

## YREA's BIOCHAR UPDATE



Ornamental Pear with biochar



Ornamental Pear without biochar

2016 was a brutal summer of heat and drought and our urban trees have suffered because of this. However, the trees in our study areas that have been treated with biochar continue to show better soil dynamics, greater moisture retention and healthier general appearance, even under adverse climatic conditions, as the photos above show of a tree treated with biochar (left) and not treated (right).

With this compelling data in hand, we can now move forward with confidence to develop our biochar social enterprise.

SUPPORT OF YREA'S BIOCHAR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH A TAX RECEIPTED CHARITABLE DONATION WILL HELP US PROVIDE A CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION TOOL OF DIRECT BENEFIT TO OUR COMMUNITIES - BUT WE NEED \$850,000 TO MAKE IT HAPPEN. BECOME A DONOR TODAY.



OUR DONOR APPRECIATION EVENING PLANNED FOR NOVEMBER WILL BE ANNOUNCED SOON. HOPE TO HAVE YOU JOIN US AND MEET OUR GREAT GREEN GROUP.