

Wednesday August 7, 2013

For immediate release

**ALUS farmers recognized for Environmental Excellence.**

Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) would like to congratulate ALUS farmers Bryan and Cathy Gilvesy of YU Ranch who recently received a Minister’s award for Environmental Excellence, which recognizes outstanding achievement, leadership and innovation in environmental protection.

**“Smart farming practices help the environment**

Y U Ranch is a small-scale Longhorn cattle farm in Tillsonburg that’s using smart farming practices to improve the environment, at the same time it’s improving the quality of its beef, and helping the local economy.

The ranch feeds its cattle for 8 months of the year with native prairie tallgrass grown on the farm. This grass is hardy and drought-resistant, and doesn’t need chemical fertilizers to thrive. It helps the environment by providing a natural habitat and food for birds. Its deep root systems help build and retain nutrients and water in the soil, and prevent run-off to a local stream.

This is the first time that native prairie tallgrass is being used to feed cattle on a commercial scale in North America. By farming with native grass, Y U Ranch has been able to stop using chemical fertilizers and pesticides. The result is cleaner air, cleaner water, and a healthier food source for cattle.

Y U Ranch’s innovative farming practice was developed with the Norfolk Alternative Land Use Services program. The Norfolk program is a community-based, farmer-led, farmer-driven initiative that encourages farmers to use native plants to improve the environment.”

Learn more about [**Y U Ranch**](http://www.yuranch.com/).

<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/about/EnvironmentalExcellence/STDPROD_109060#6>

Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) is a voluntary, incentive-based program that recognizes the important role farmers and ranchers play producing food and maintaining a healthy environment.

To learn more about ALUS go to [www.alus.ca](http://www.alus.ca/)

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