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York farmers growing to help Sudan

\$90,000 raised for foodgrains project

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
 Staff Writer

Up to 40,000 refugees from the Sudan can finally put 22 years of war behind them and return home to tend to crops on their own land thanks to a group of farmers in York Region.

Many Sudanese families had to flee to neighbouring countries such as Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia while war raged in their country. Others were displaced to the northern part of their own country.

The York Region farmers donated proceeds from their fields last year to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, raising around \$90,000. That amount is matched by the Canadian International Development Agency four to one, for a total of \$450,000. The Canadian Foodgrains Bank is owned by 13 Canadian church agencies, including the Mennonite central committee.

In York Region, there are 18 projects growing various crops to support the foodgrains bank. Churches such as the Community Mennonite Church raise funds to defray the input costs, which include seeds and fertilizers. The farmers donate their work and their land.

The amount raised in York Region last year is about the amount of the budget for a project currently being carried out

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PROVINCIAL BUDGET EARMARKS MONEY TO BRING SPADINA SUBWAY NORTH TO HWY. 7 BIG BUCKS FOR TRANSIT

BY LISA QUEEN
 Staff Writer

If you needed any more incentive to get out of your car on to public transit, look no further than Thursday's provincial budget, elated York Region transportation experts say.

"York Region had a very healthy transit announcement. It's a very good day," said Mary-Frances Turner,

vice-president of the region's rapid transit corporation.

The budget earmarked \$1.2 billion for transportation, including the unprecedented step of extending Toronto's subway into York Region and authorizing the region to design the second phase of its rapid transit program.

"I think (the budget means) a whole new way to look at our future

and a new way to move around. To see infrastructure being a top priority of the government means commuters can look at real answers to congestion," Ms Turner said.

"It comes with sustained commitment to infrastructure that provides alternatives to driving your car."

Officials are trumpeting the \$670 million included in the budget to

extend the Spadina subway to Vaughan's corporate centre at Hwy. 7, a decision that takes the train even farther north than the York University terminal supporters had been hoping for.

"I'm on cloud nine. I couldn't get better news," Vaughan Mayor Michael Di Biase said, adding the

See SUBWAY, page 12.



STAFF PHOTO/BILL ROBERTS

WAIT A MINUTE, HE'S NOT A NAKED LADY

Jim Creegan of international recording artists Barenaked Ladies played music and talked about his favourite books during The Literacy Evening in the music room at Ballantrae Public School Thursday.

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