

TRADITIONAL  
FOODS ARE  
HEALTHIER  
FOODS

The image features a central text composition on a light gray background. The text is arranged in four lines: 'TRADITIONAL' in a large, green, cursive script; 'FOODS ARE' in a smaller, blue, serif font; 'HEALTHIER' in a large, green, cursive script; and 'FOODS' in a large, blue, serif font. The word 'ARE' is positioned between 'FOODS' and 'HEALTHIER'. The text is surrounded by numerous colorful, stylized floral and leaf-like shapes in shades of green, blue, yellow, orange, red, and purple, creating a vibrant and decorative effect.



## Introduction

Northerners have been nourished by foods from the land and water for thousands of years. The gathering, hunting, preserving and eating of traditional foods is more than just a diet – it's a way of life. A lifestyle that has connected Northerners with the land and sea through celebrated rituals and practices passed down from generation to generation; from caribou hunting grounds to fish, and berry picking camps.

Today, importance is being placed on the returning to a traditional lifestyle and diet.

The nutritional and physical benefits to this include eating a diet low in unhealthy fat and cholesterol, eating more animal sources of protein, eating foods without chemicals and additives, and getting more physical activity by gathering, hunting and preserving traditional foods.

Northerners take comfort in eating traditional foods. The "Traditional Foods are Healthy Foods" colouring book shows the foods that people once grew up with are good for your health. Traditional foods are especially good sources of nutrients like protein, iron, and Vitamin A & B and also low in saturated fat and sugar.

Each region of the NWT relies on different types of animals, fish and plants to provide nutrients needed to live in a harsh environment. See the map provided on each page to see where the animal, fish or plants live in the NWT.

## Why are Traditional Foods Healthy Foods?

- Contributes to physical fitness & good health.
- Keeps people in tune with nature.
- Upholds respect for animal and human life.

- Encourages sharing in the community.
- Is an important part of culture.
- Contributes to children's education.
- Teaches survival skills.
- Provides skills in food preservation and preparation.

Funding for the "Traditional Foods are Healthy Foods" colouring book has been made possible through support from Government of Northwest Territories, Department of Health and Social Services.

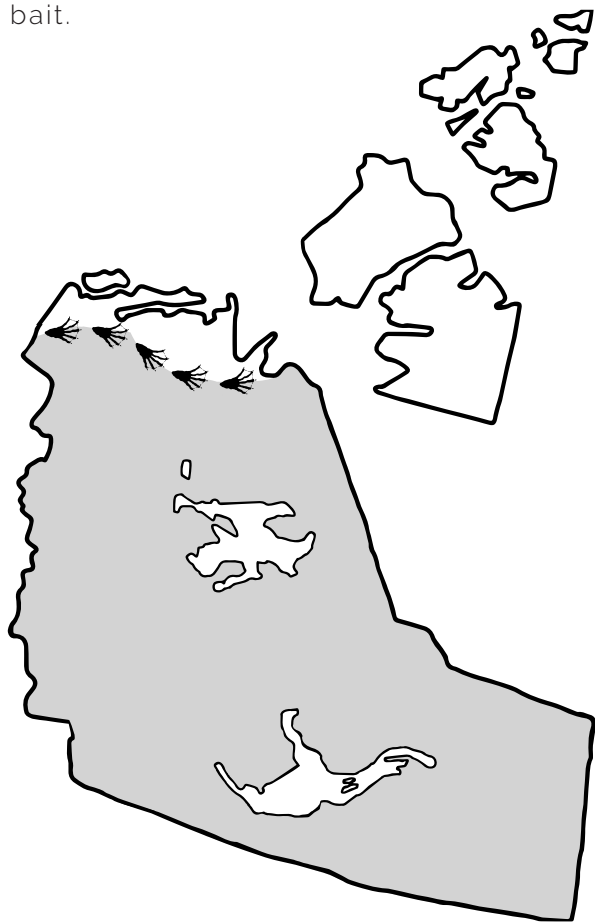


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ADDITIONAL  
FOODS ARE  
HEALTHY  
FOODS

## Beaver is Good for Us!

The beaver is valued because it has the gift of intelligence. It is the Beaver who taught the Dene how to store and ration food. Beaver provides us with many important nutrients such as protein and iron. The hide and bones are used for footwear, mitts, jackets and traditional tools. The beaver is valued for medicinal purposes and used for bait.



## Did you know?

Beaver meat from the shoulder is very tough because of the large logs the beaver carries. Tails are singed or smoked under dry willows and used for snacks, especially when travelling. Smoking or drying helps preserve the meat and increases the amount of nutrients due to moisture loss during the drying process.

Beaver meat is an excellent source of protein. We need protein to build and repair muscles, skin and blood. Protein keeps us healthy.

Beaver liver is an excellent source of Vitamin A. One serving provides all of the Vitamin A we need in a day to stay healthy. Vitamin A is needed for healthy skin, bones and eyes.

Beaver liver is an excellent source of iron and provides twice as much iron as we need in a day. Iron helps to make healthy blood that flows through our bodies, giving us energy to be active and to go strong.

Beaver meat is very low in fat (10%) when compared to beef, pork and chicken (33-55% fat) but the feet and tail contain a lot of fat. Traditional fats are healthier for us.

**Preparation:** Beaver can be roasted,

fried, boiled, dried, or fermented. Its meat is dark red, fine grained, moist and tender, and when properly prepared, it can taste like pork.

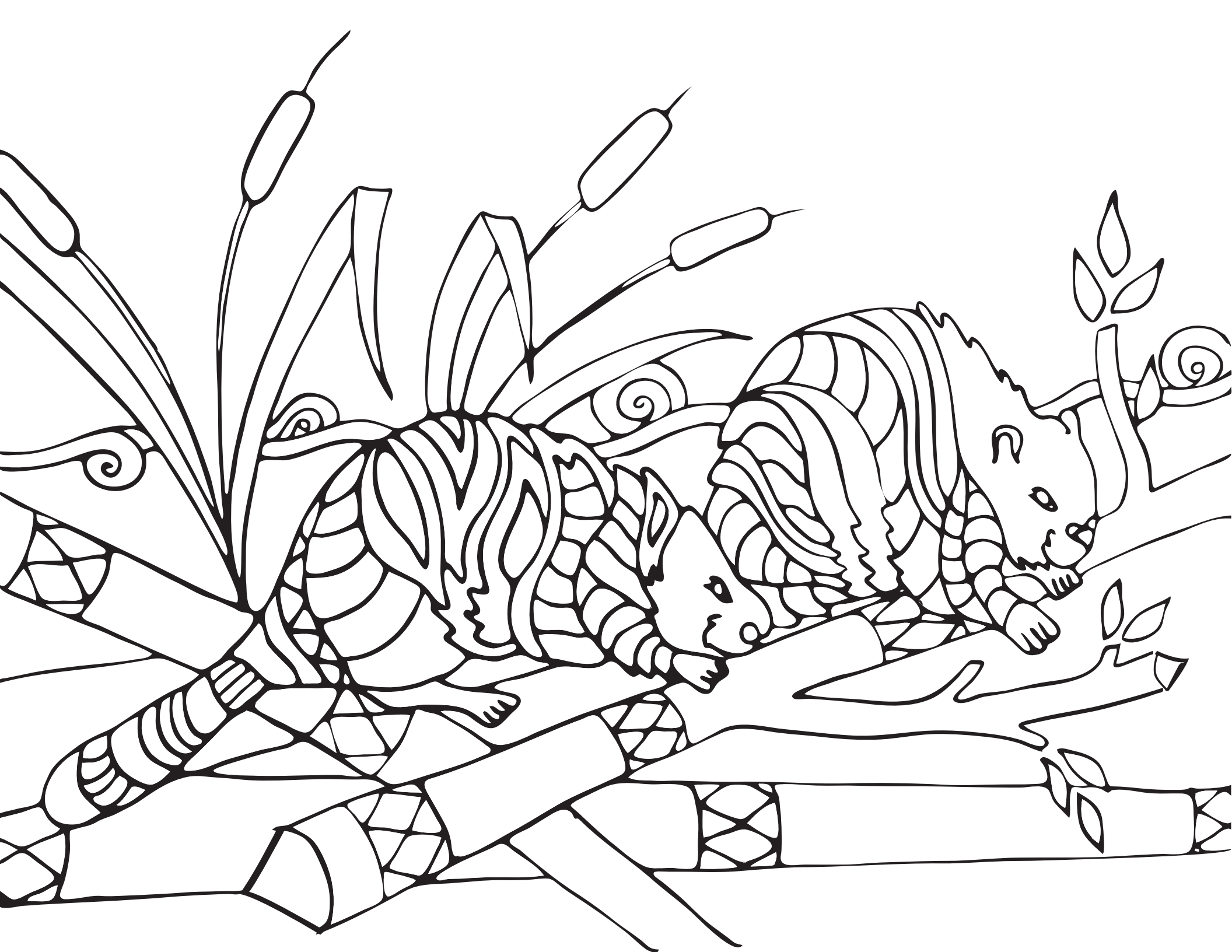
**Fun Fact:** "Beaver tail is excellent! We have it at potlucks. When I go home, I can't get enough of it. Its texture is chewy, rubbery with a good taste, and it is softer than moose nose. To prepare, boil, cool, and peel off the skin after boiling."

- Audrey Armstrong

## Beaver Beef Stew

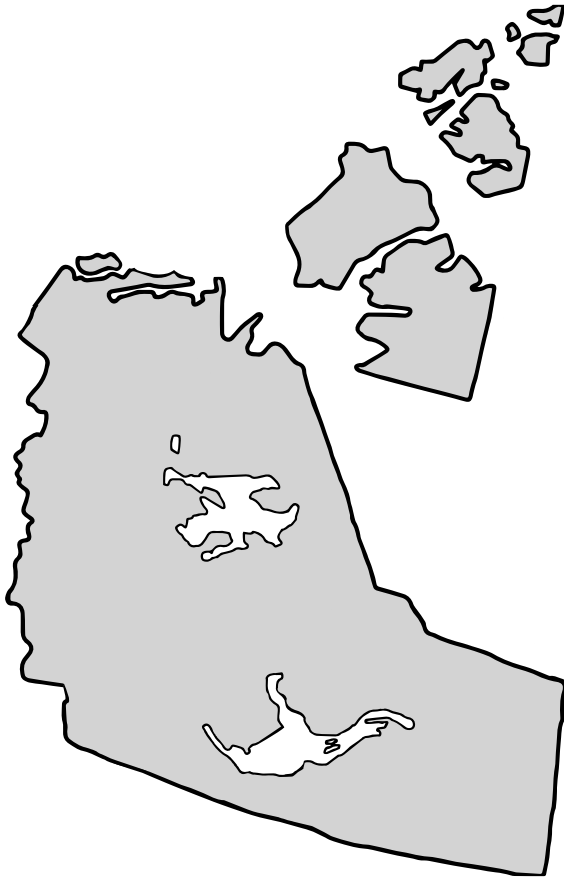
- 3 cups cubed beaver meat from legs
- flour
- salt & pepper
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 2 bay leaves, crushed | 1/4 tsp savory
- carrots, diced | turnip, cubed
- potatoes, cubed | cabbage

**Directions:** In a bowl, season some flour to taste with salt and pepper. Roll the meat in the flour and fry in a little oil in a skilled until browned. Remove meat. Add meat to a large stew pot or crockpot. Add onion celery, bay leaves and savory. Add the veggies in quantities to suit your taste. Add enough water to cover. Cook on low for 5 hours or until veggies are tender. Thicken with corn starch if desired. Serve with bannock.



## Caribou is Good for Us!

Caribou is an important part of our northern diet for Inuit and Dene cultures & has been for generations. Almost all of the parts of the caribou are eaten, including the tongue and bone marrow. A single caribou provides a remarkable array of materials used to provide tools, clothing, shelter and crafts, as well as food. There is no waste of a caribou. In some areas, caribou hunting is



managed to help herds continue to recover and increase in size. For that reason, caribou may not be as available to all northerners as in the past. Check with your local Renewable Resources Offices regarding hunting restrictions in your area.

### Did you know?

Caribou meat is eaten raw, frozen, aged, roasted, dried, or made into jerky, sausage, roasts and steaks. Smoking or drying helps preserve the meat and increase the amount of nutrients due to moisture loss during the drying process. The hides are used for clothing and crafts and to sleep on when out on the land.

Caribou meat eaten raw, frozen, boiled or dried, is an excellent source of protein. Protein keeps us healthy by building and repairing muscles, skin, and blood.

Caribou liver and stomach contents supply Vitamin A. Vitamin A is needed for healthy skin, bones and teeth as well as to help fight sickness.

Most caribou parts are excellent sources of iron. Iron keeps us from getting tired by making healthy blood that flows through our bodies, giving us energy to be active and grown strong.

Caribou stomach meat is low in fat (14%) compared to store-bought meats, such as beef, pork & chicken (35-55%). The types of fats found in traditional animals are also healthier for us as they are usually lower in saturated fat.

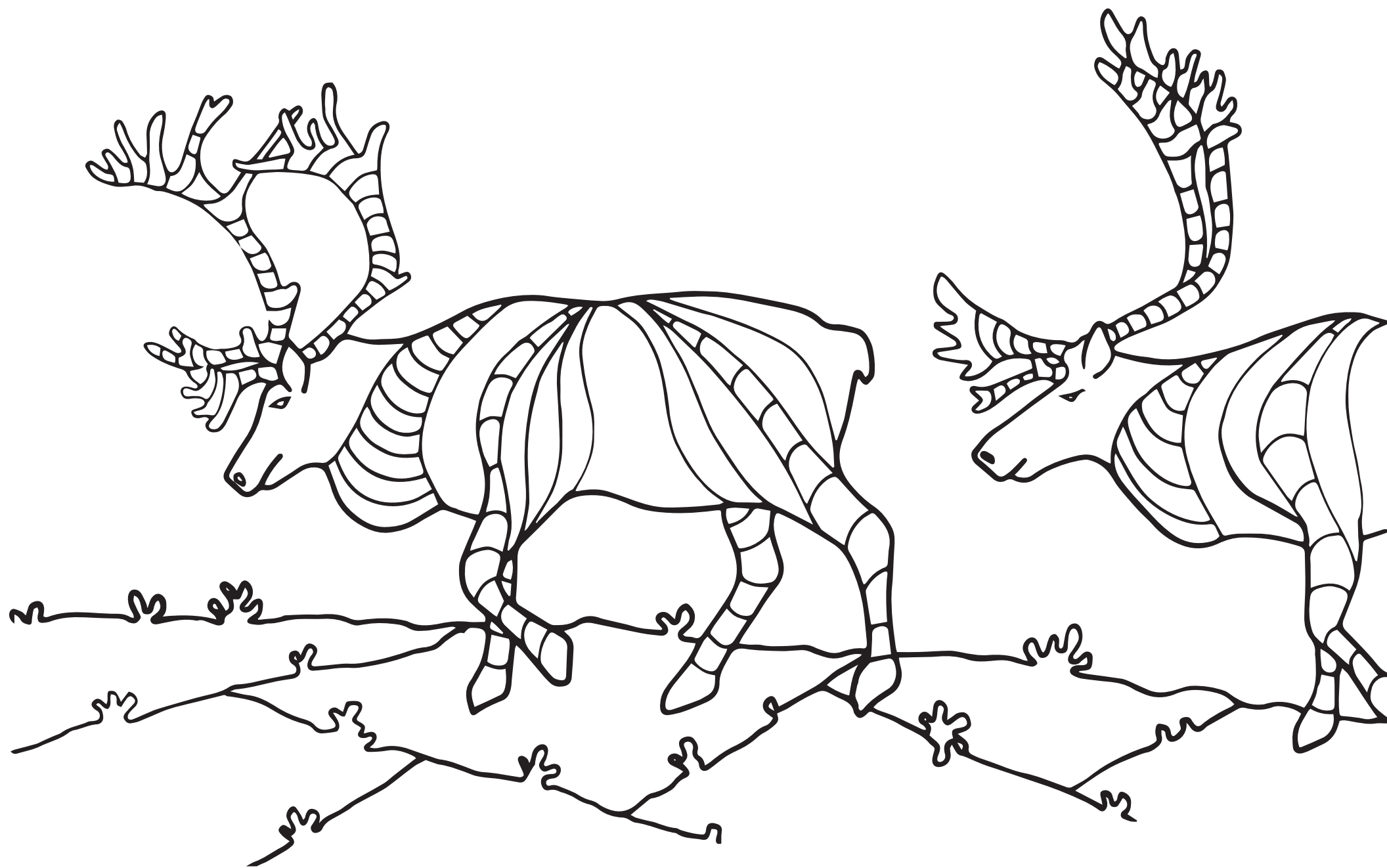
Caribou is an excellent source of B vitamins, which help our bodies use the energy from foods. B vitamins are also important for healthy skin, hair, nerves, muscles and healthy growth and development.

**Fun Fact:** Caribou is the only animal for which there are hunting songs, which came to the hunter as he awakened. It has been said that a caribou would "sing through" a person, either to let them know it was nearby or to reveal a taboo that had been broken.

### Slow Cooker Caribou Roast

- 2 (10.75 oz) cans condensed cream of mushroom soup
- 1 (1 oz) package dry onion soup mix
- 1 1/4 cups water
- 5 1/2 pounds caribou roast

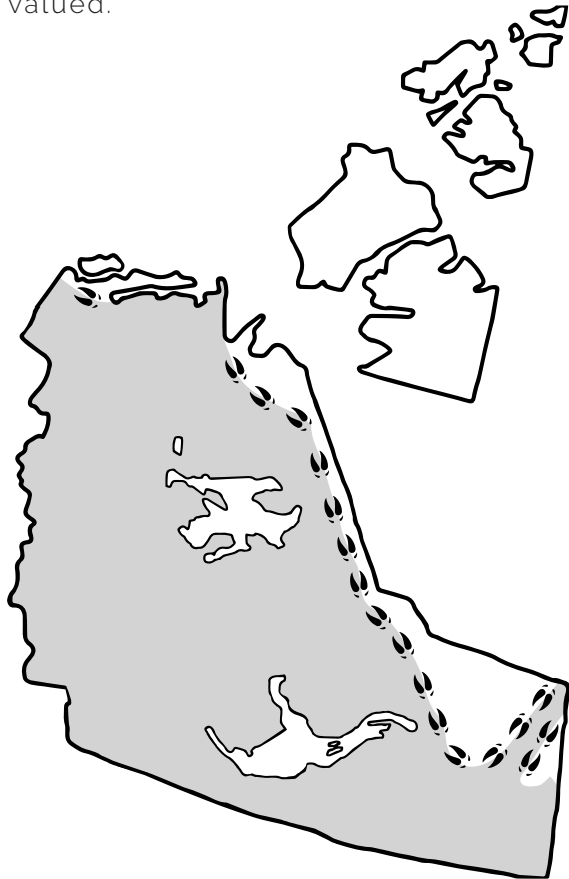
**Directions:** In a slow cooker, mix cream of mushroom soup, dry onion soup mix and water. Place pot roast in slow cooker and coat with soup mixture. Cook on High setting for 3 to 4 hours, or on Low setting for 8 to 9 hours.



## Moose is Good for Us!

Moose is an important food source in northern diets. Moose provides many nutrients which help build and repair body tissues in order to keep us healthy. With a single animal yielding as much as 300kg of meat, moose continues to be a staple food source for many families.

Moose hair tufting is a traditional craft that is unique and highly valued.



Moose hide tanning is the traditional way to prepare hides. Many people work together to complete the process. Brains of the animal, patience and time are required to successfully tan a moose hide.

Tanned moose hide is used to make footwear and clothing. Smoking or drying helps to preserve the animal parts and increases the nutrient content due to moisture loss during the drying process. Smoked or dried meat is great to take travelling and for snacks.

### Did you know?

Moose has the least amount of fat of all local animals. The amount of fat in moose meat is low (1%) when compared to 35-55% for beef, pork or poultry.

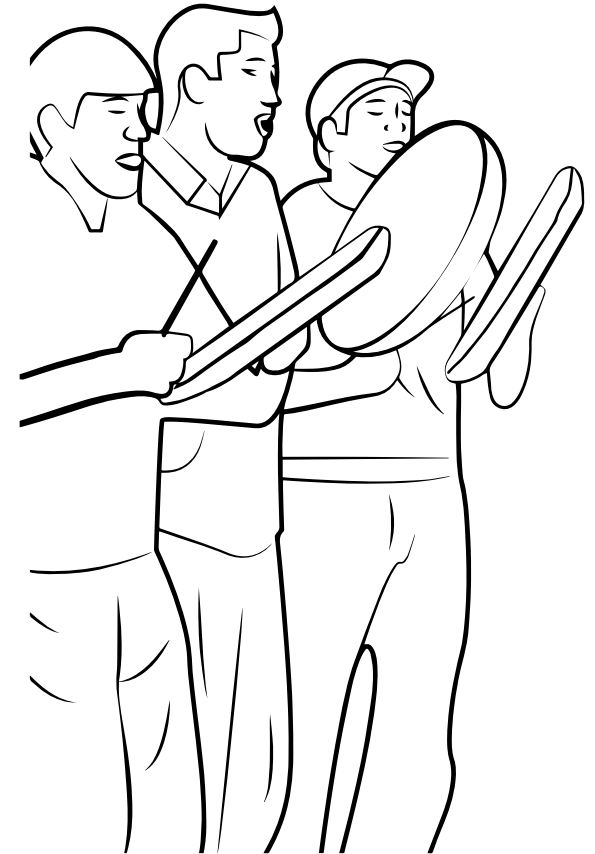
Roasted moose meat is an excellent source of B vitamins, such as niacin and riboflavin. These vitamins help our bodies use energy from foods and are important for healthy skin, hair, nerves and muscles as well as healthy growth and development.

Roast moose meat is also an excellent source of iron. Iron helps make healthy blood that flows through our bodies, giving us energy to be active and to grow strong. Healthy blood keeps us from getting tired.

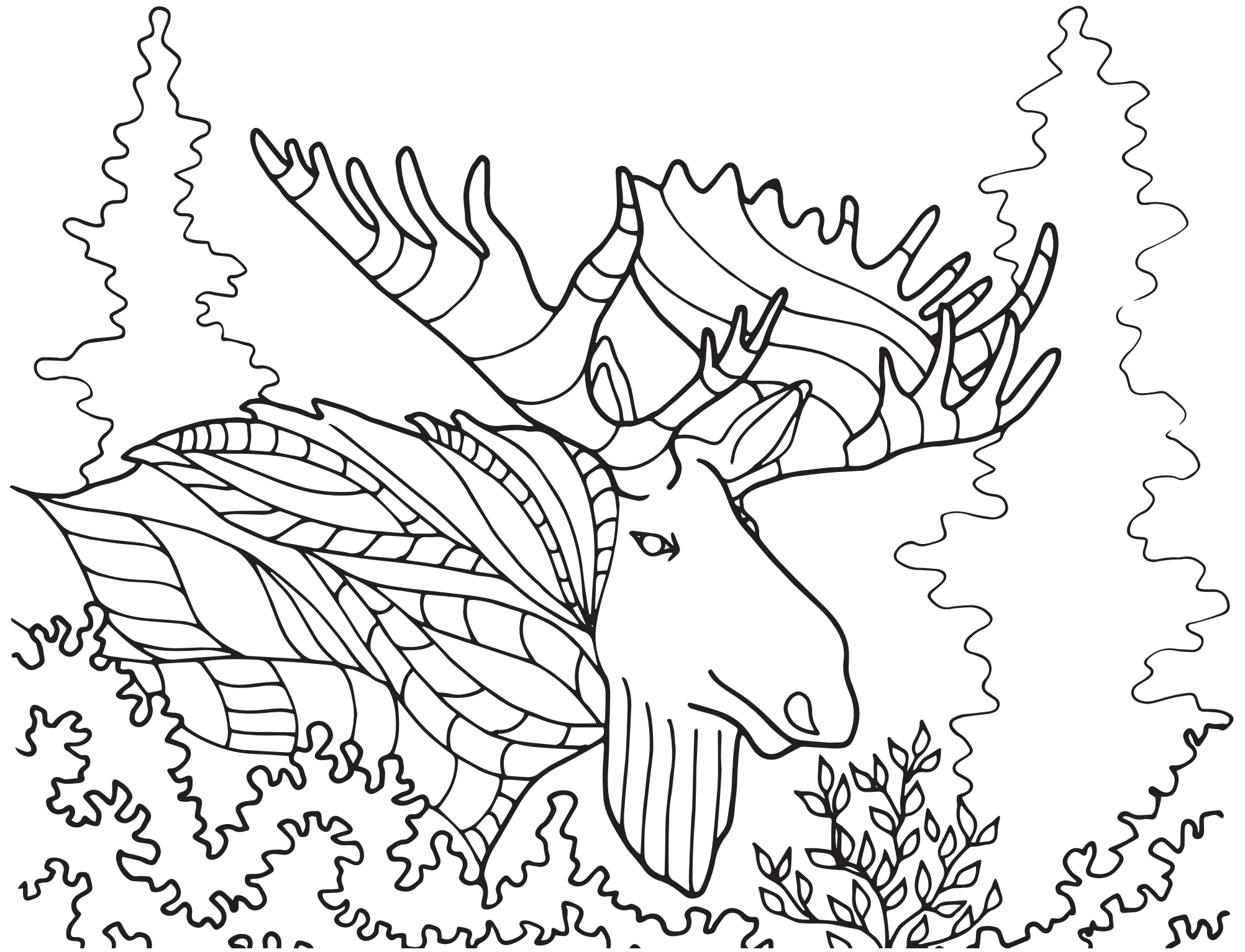
**Preparation:** Moose meat can be eaten raw, frozen, boiled, baked, grilled, fried, or dried.

## Moose Stew Recipe

The moose parts saved for stew are the tongue, nose (shave hair off), and heart. To prepare, boil for 2-3 hours, add macaroni/rice, vegetables (potatoes/carrots, and canned tomatoes).

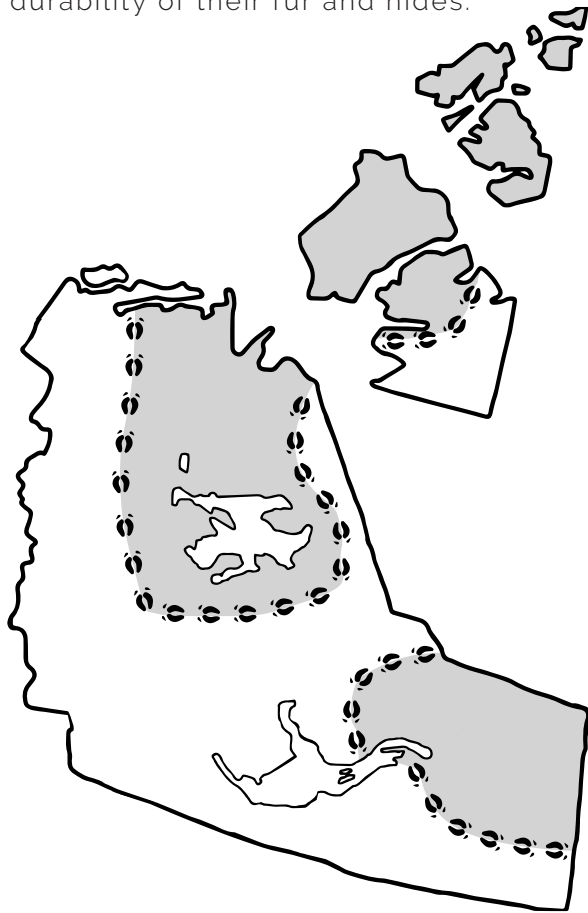






# Muskox is Good for Us!

Muskox have roamed the Canadian Arctic for thousands of years. As survivors of the last ice age, they are perfectly adapted to life in the harsh climates of the Canadian North. Known to the Inuit as "Umingmak" or bearded one, they have been part of the traditional lifestyle for centuries and are prized for their nutritious meat as well as the warmth and durability of their fur and hides.



Muskox are found on Arctic coasts and islands with sightings in the Sahtu and MacKenzie Delta regions. There have been sighting of Muskox as far south as Yellowknife area. Muskox are harvested by a quota system to protect the number of animals. People hunt muskox for food and to use the thick hides for blankets and rugs. The inner wool of qiviut of the muskox is used for weaving and knitting. These woven goods bring high prices because the wool is very soft and warm.

## Did you know?

The deep purple meat from muskox is a gourmet's delight and is a naturally 'organic' alternative to beef. Used for centuries in traditional Inuit cooking, muskox is prized for its lean yet well-marbled meat. Muskox roam free in the Canadian North feeding on natural lichen, grasses and sedges during summer and woody plants during winter. It is their natural diet and pristine habitat that makes them a truly natural food source. Their diet and habitat contributes to the leanness of the meat, the tender texture and the deep, rich flavour.

The parts of a Muskox eaten the most are the meat, fat, bone marrow, tongue, and heart.

Muskox meat is low in fat (17%) compared to beef, pork, or chicken

(35-55%). Traditional animal fats are healthier for us.

Muskox meat is an excellent source of protein. Protein keeps us healthy by building and repairing our muscles, skin and blood.

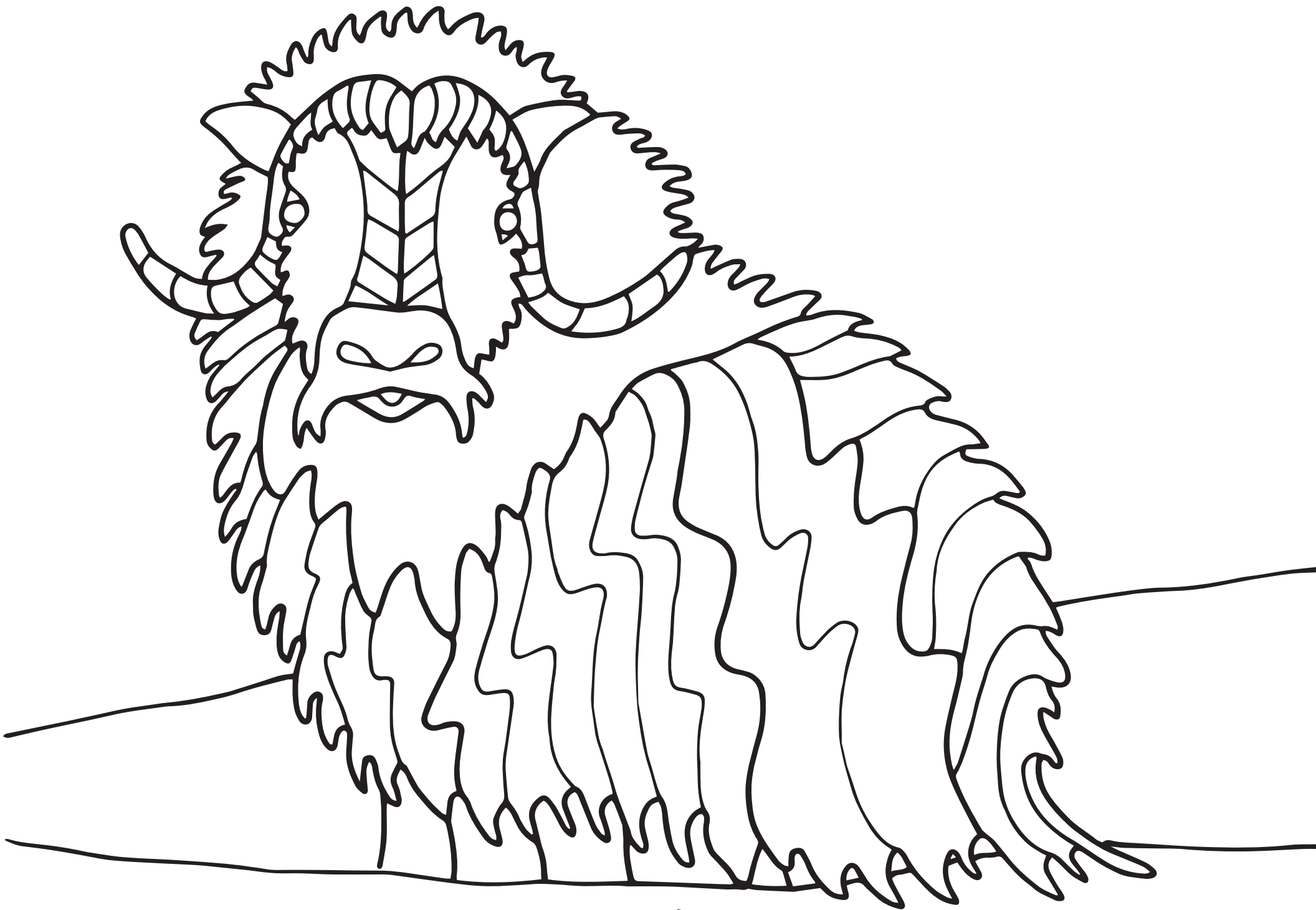
Muskox meat is an excellent source of iron. Iron helps make healthy blood that flows through our bodies, giving us energy to be active and grow strong. Healthy blood keeps us from getting tired.

Muskox meat is an excellent source of B Vitamins. B vitamins are important for growth and healthy skin, hair, nerves and muscles.

Muskox meat is a good source of Vitamin D. Vitamin D helps keep our bones and teeth healthy.

**Preparation:** Muskox can be prepared much like moose: roasted, fried, grilled, boiled, and used in casserole dishes.

**Cooking Instructions:** For steak, roast and loin cuts cook to medium-rare at to preserve the tender texture. Over-cooking can result in tough and chewy meat. For other cuts such as legs and shoulders, braise in liquid either on the stove or in the oven at a low temperature for a long period of time to break down the meat into meltingly tender mouthfuls.



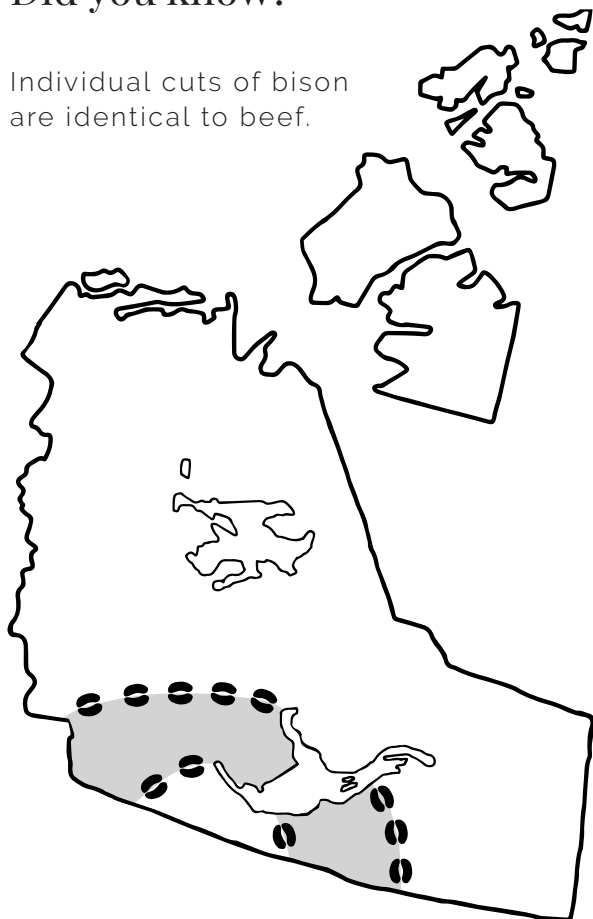


## Bison is Good for Us!

Wood bison are found in three populations in the Northwest Territories: the Mackenzie, Nahanni, and the Slave River Lowlands. Bison meat is a flavourful, tender and lean red meat alternative. Bison meat is similar to fine beef with a slightly sweeter and richer taste!

## Did you know?

Individual cuts of bison are identical to beef.



Bison can appear to be a deeper red due to the fact that bison has lower fat content, thus less marbling than beef.

Bison meat is a nutrient dense food because of the proportion of protein, fat, mineral, and fatty acids to its caloric value.

Bison meat is an excellent source of protein. Each serving contains about 22 grams of protein which is then used in the body to build and repair muscles, skin and blood. Protein also helps fight sickness.

Bison meat contains the "essential fatty acids", omega - 3 and omega - 6 fatty acids. Omega 3 fatty acids help protect against heart disease, prevention for cancer and have been shown to help fend off Alzheimer's disease and reduce the likelihood of heart attacks.

Bison meat is an excellent source of iron. Iron helps make healthy blood that flows through our bodies giving us energy and making us grow. Healthy blood keeps us from getting tired.

## Uses other than food...

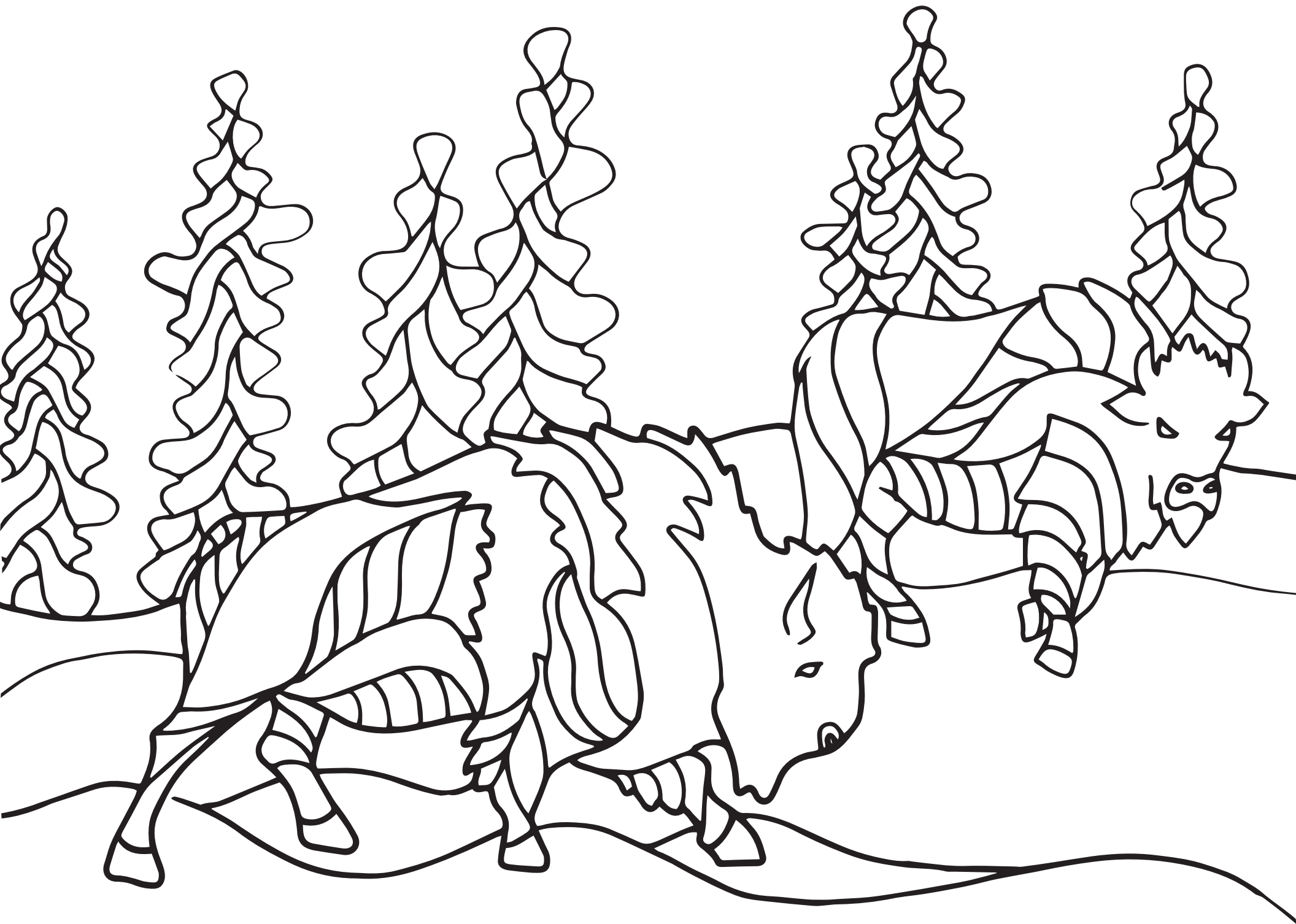
All parts of the bison are used, nothing is wasted. Horns and hoofs were used for spoons and utensils,

intestines as containers, tails as fly swatters, hair woven into ropes or used to stuff pillows, sinews as thread and bowstrings, and droppings as fuel when wood was scarce. Hides were always used to their fullest! A few uses are: tipi covers, bags to carry babies and also used to sit on, sleep on or as clothing.

**Fun Fact:** The woodland bison was hunted by cultures of the far North, although never in summer months because of the overwhelming mosquito population.

## Bison Broth

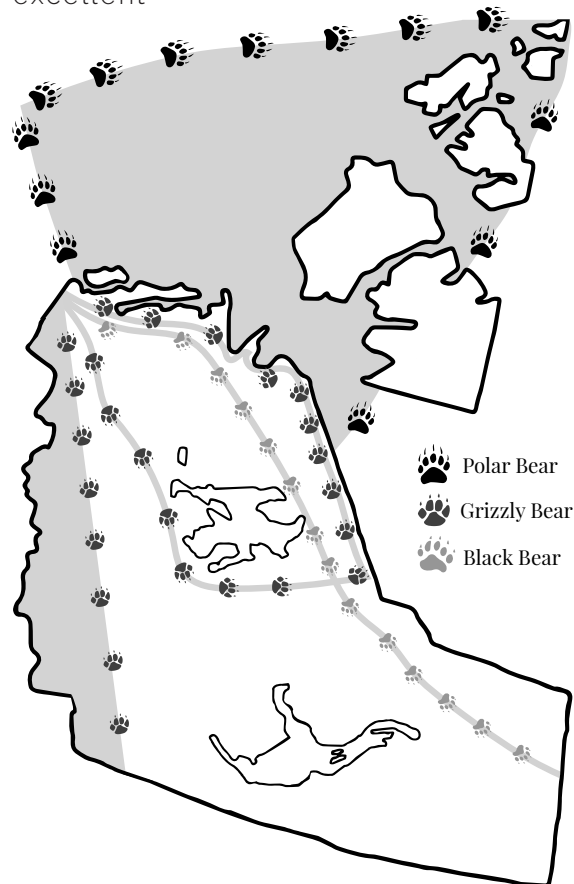
**Directions:** 1. Brown bison bones in the oven for best flavor. (To do so, place the bones in a 350-degree oven, give or take, until brown.) 2. Place bison bones in a crock pot or soup pot. 3. Add vegetable scraps as they are available. 4. Cover bison bones and scraps with water: Set the water level about one-inch above the bones. 5. Add two tablespoons of apple cider vinegar or other culinary vinegar. 6. Cover the pot and set on low (crock pot) or simmer (stove top). 7. Keep the lid slightly ajar as the bison broth warms up to avoid boiling. (Or don't worry about it, but do make sure your liquid does not boil out or you will be left with burned bones.) 8. Strain the bison broth about 24 hours later. 9. Use the fresh bison broth for dinner. (Add the dinner vegetable scraps to the next batch of broth.) 10. Add water to the bones again and make a second batch of broth. (Keep doing this until you are tired of it or your bones have disintegrated.)



## Bear is Good for Us. Did you know?

Black Bear, Grizzly Bear, and Polar Bear cooked meat is an excellent source of protein. We need protein to build and repair our muscles, skin and blood. Protein also helps us fight sickness.

Black Bear, Grizzly Bear, and Polar Bear cooked meat is an excellent



source of iron. Iron helps make healthy blood that flows through our bodies giving us energy and making us grow. Healthy blood keeps us from getting tired.

Black Bear and Grizzly cooked meat is an excellent source of B vitamins. B vitamins help our bodies use energy.

Polar Bear fat is an excellent source of vitamin A. Vitamin A is needed for healthy skin, bones and teeth. It also helps our body fight sickness.

Polar Bear fat is a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, which help protect against heart disease and may help prevent cancer.

**Warning:** Polar bear liver contains toxic levels of Vitamin A and should not be eaten.

**Preparation:** Bear meat is usually eaten baked or boiled and is never eaten raw. Bear meat should always be eaten well-cooked to avoid the disease known as trichinosis. Trichinosis is an infection caused by roundworms, found in raw or under cooked bear meat. (Aging or freezing does not destroy the worms found in bear meat).

## NWT Secret

What do you get when you cross a Grizzly with a Polar Bear? No, really,

we're looking for some consensus. Whether Pizzly, Grolar, or Nanulak, the hybrid has been spotted in the wild in Sachs Harbour & Ulukhaktok. Get yourself up to the High Arctic and you might just secure the third confirmed wild sighting in the world!

## Dutch Oven Bear Steak

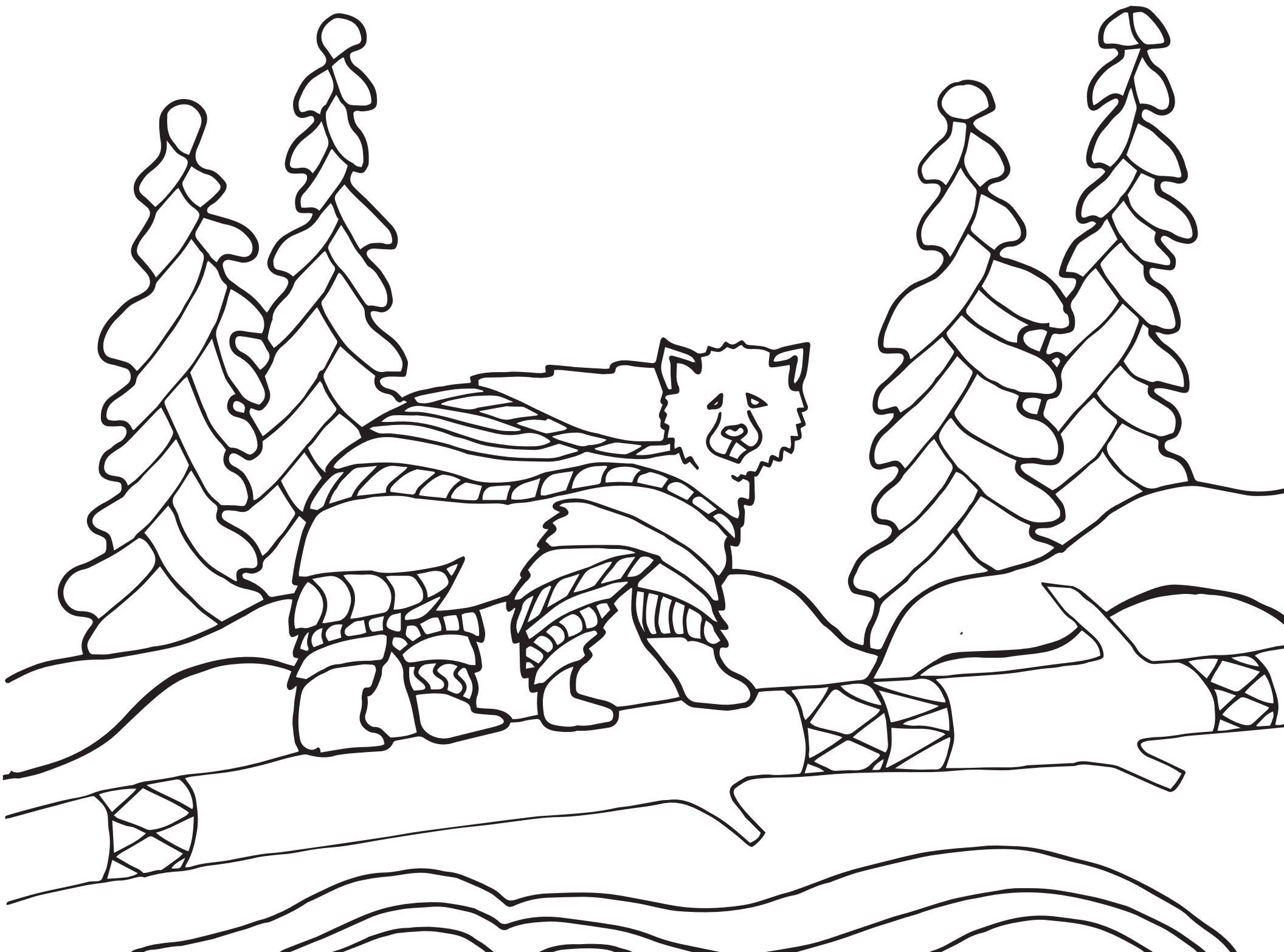
**Ingredients:** Bear steaks, approx.  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 inch thick. Marinate overnight in soy sauce, onion and garlic.

- 1 to 2 cans tomato soup
- 1 can of water
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tbsp. wine vinegar

**Instructions:** Wipe steak dry, then put olive oil in Dutch oven and brown both sides. Add salt and pepper,  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. cinnamon and add marinade and simmer until nice and tender.







## Cross Generation – Passing on Traditional Skills

The inspiration behind this Cross Generation Polar Bear - "Flesh it" illustration comes from an Inuvik grandma and granddaughters, passing on traditional skills. As grandma, Beverly Ann Esau explains "it's a cultural connection with their past"



"Flesh It" means to take all the fat off. In order to clean the polar bear for resale all the fat needs to be cleaned off first, and the skin and feet, the mouth and head. This is very delicate work because it will be sold to a customer. Many times customers will make a rug with the shape of the head. In this particular story it took the family 12 hours to skin the roughly seven foot long bear hide.

In order to clean the hide a tool called an ulu is used. An ulu (as seen in the illustration) is an all-purpose knife traditionally used by Inuit. An ulu is utilized in applications as diverse as skinning and cleaning animals, cutting a child's hair, cutting food and, if necessary, trimming blocks of snow and ice used to build an igloo.

The technique of using an Ulu to flesh a hide is a challenge and requires hours of experience and training. The ulu is never used like a saw, which is something a person new to it would automatically think how it would be used. Instead it is used in a slicing motion, relying on the flexing and flicking of the wrist. If your wrist is locked and not moving, you are using it wrong!

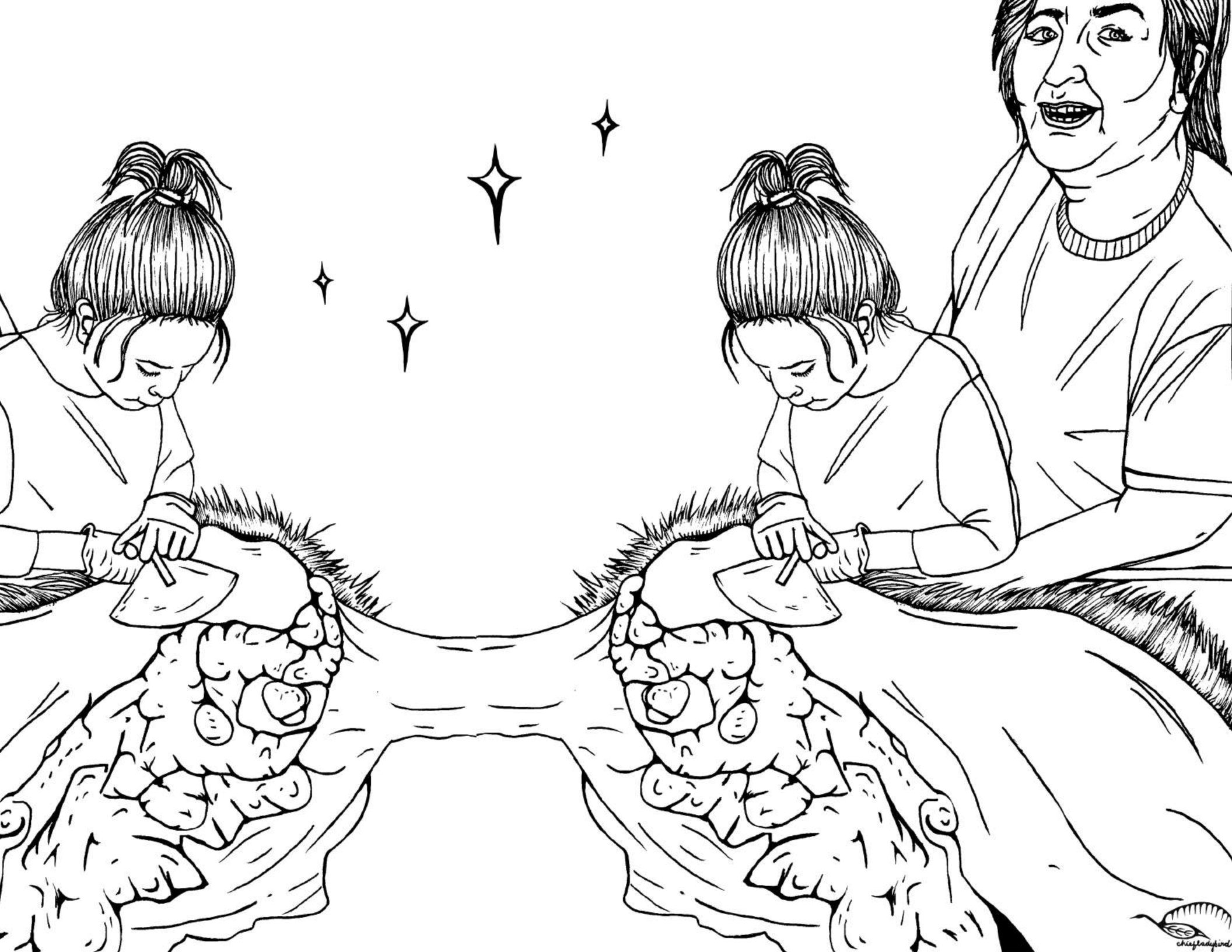
**Fun Fact:** Ulus will go dull pretty fast, but it depends on the type of skin you are working on. For instance I could work on caribou meat without having

to sharpen it at all besides the beginning, but when working on polar bear or seal you sharpen every 10 minutes.

## Passing on Values and Traditions

Grandparents have gained wisdom and knowledge from their years on the earth. When they gain the respect of their communities for what they know they are known as Elders. They are willing to share what they know with others who, regardless of age, are looking for knowledge. Teachings, information on their traditions, culture and values. Grandparents have an important role to play in helping raise the children because they have patience and wisdom as well as the knowledge that the child's parents may not have to pass along to the child.



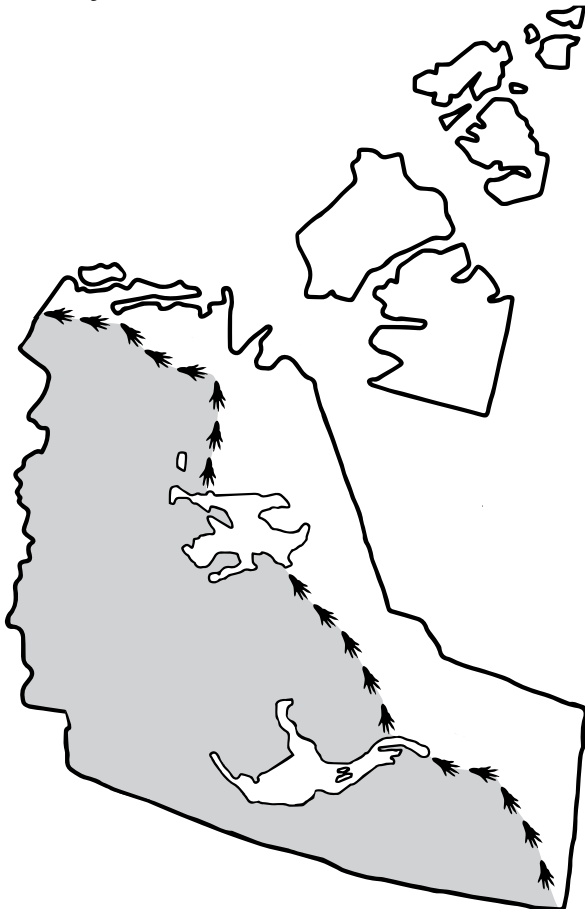




## Muskrat is Good for Us!

The muskrat is appreciated by the Dene as an animal that restores the land after a flood and keeps the rivers and lakes flowing. It is important to pass down knowledge and skills need to hunt, trap, and cook muskrat. The hide is used for clothing and the fur trim for slippers and mitts.

## Did you know?



Muskrat meat is an excellent source of B Vitamins. B vitamins, such as niacin, riboflavin and thiamine, help our bodies use energy from foods. B vitamins are important for growth and healthy skin, hair, nerves, & muscles.

Muskrat meat is an excellent source of protein. We need protein to build and repair our muscles, skin, and blood. Protein keeps us healthy.

Muskrat is an excellent source of iron. Iron helps make healthy blood that flows through our bodies, giving us energy to be active and grow strong. Healthy blood keeps us from getting tired.

Muskrat is a fair source of Vitamin C, which keeps our gums, teeth and skin healthy.

The total amount of fat in muskrat meat is low (17%) compared to beef, pork and chicken (35-55%). Traditional animal fats are healthier for us.

**Fun Fact:** Muskrats mainly eat plants so the flesh is sweet and palatable. Muskrat meat is similar to rabbit, with darker meat!

**Preparation:** Muskrat can be boiled, baked, roasted or smoked. Muskrat tail is smoked to singe off the outer skin. The tender meat found inside is considered a delicacy. Smoking or drying helps preserve the meat and increases the amount of nutrients due

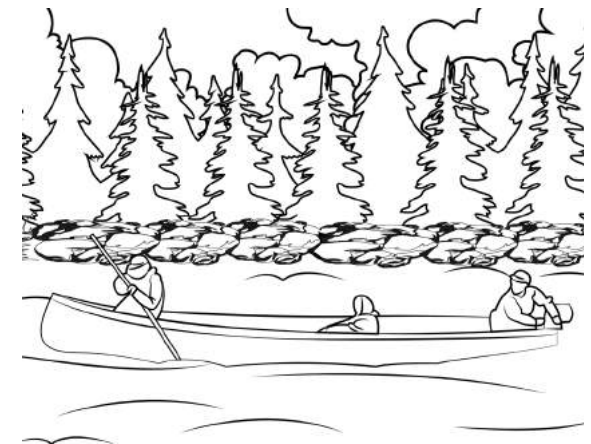
to moisture loss during the drying process. Smoked or dried meat is good to take travelling and for snacks.

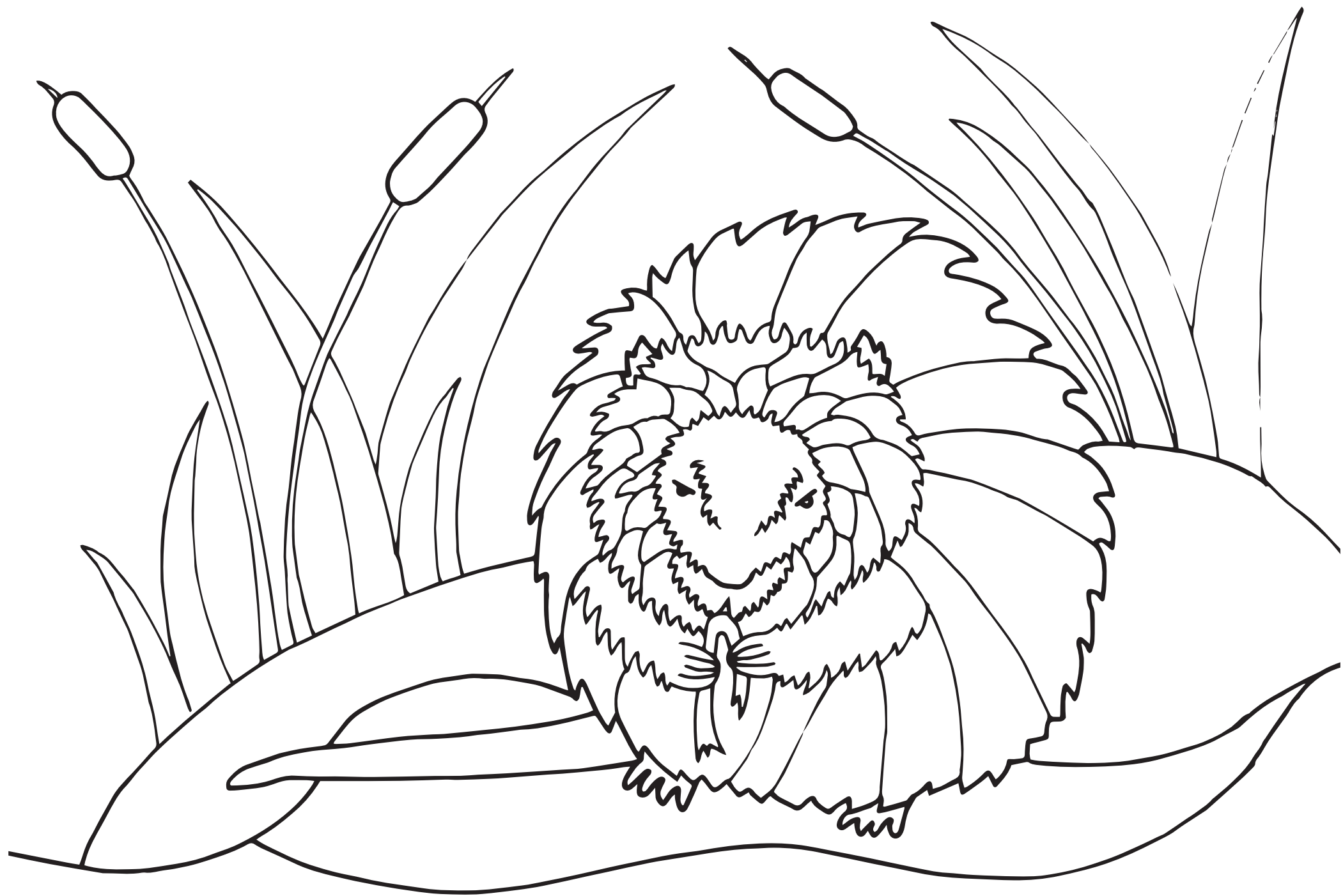
## Baked Muskrat

### Ingredients:

- 3-4 Muskrats, skinned & gutted
- 1/2 onion
- salt & pepper to taste
- garlic powder to taste
- butter

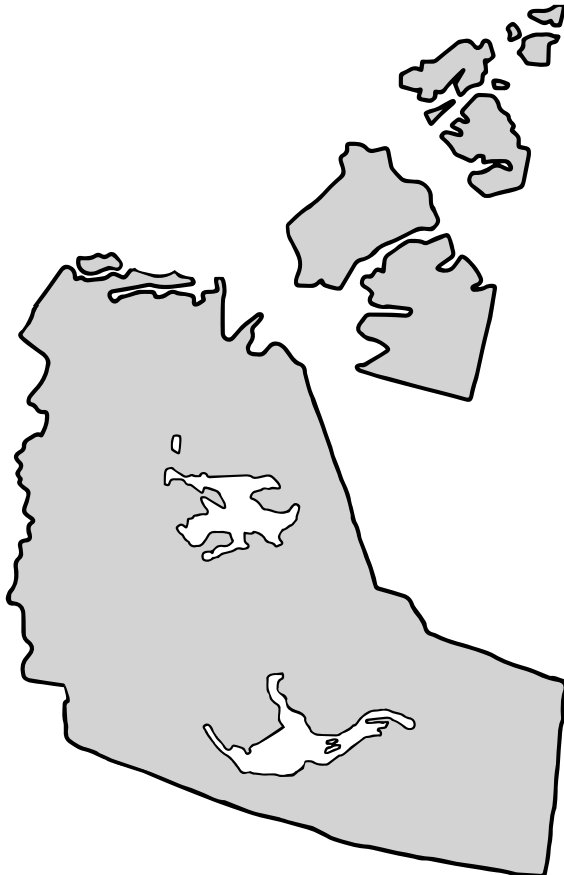
**Instructions:** Place the cleaned muskrat in a baking pan lined with tin foil. Pat with butter, salt, pepper and garlic to taste. Add onion chunks. Bake uncovered until browned and crispy at 350 degrees for 30 minutes to an hour depending on your stove. Serve with baked potatoes and or carrots. They taste like Springtime!





## Rabbit and Hare is Good for Us!

Rabbit is an important traditional food that can be hunted all year round. Numbers of rabbits change over a ten year cycle. People snare and freeze rabbits when there are many available. Rabbit/hare is usually baked, boiled or cooked in stews. The fur is used for clothing, trim for moccasins, mitts and for crafts.



## Did you know?

The fat content in rabbit and hare meat is very low (1%) when compared to beef, pork and poultry (12-20%).

Rabbit and hare meat are excellent sources of protein. Protein also keeps us healthy by building and repairing our muscles, skin and blood.

Rabbit and hare meat are excellent sources of iron. Iron helps make healthy blood that flows through our bodies, giving us energy to be active and to grow strong. Healthy blood keeps us from getting tired.

Rabbit and hare are excellent sources of the B vitamins B12 and niacin. These vitamins help our bodies use energy from food, and are important for growth, healthy skin, hair, nerves and muscles.

**Preparation:** Rabbit and hare is usually baked, boiled or cooked in stews. By preparing foods in traditional ways to avoid too much added sugar, fat and salt. Try rabbit or hare stew with carrots, onions, and potatoes for a tasty meal.

**Fun Fact:** "They have deep, warm fur, but their skin is very fragile and easily torn... In early days they cut the hide spirally to make long strips, which they wove into garments or blankets. The overgrown, furry feet served as

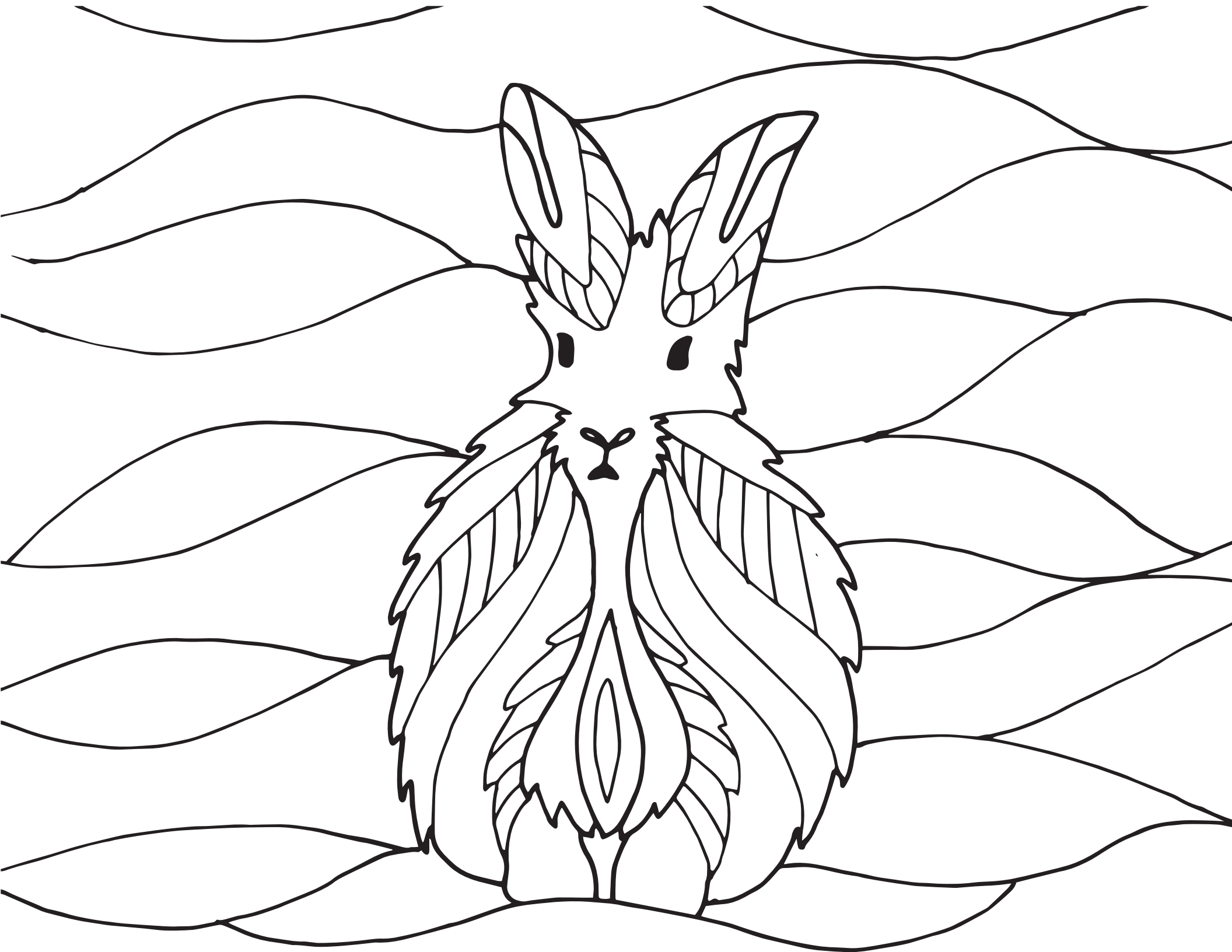
washcloths and dishrags and children also made toy dogs of them"

- Prayers to the Raven

## Traditional Rabbit Stew

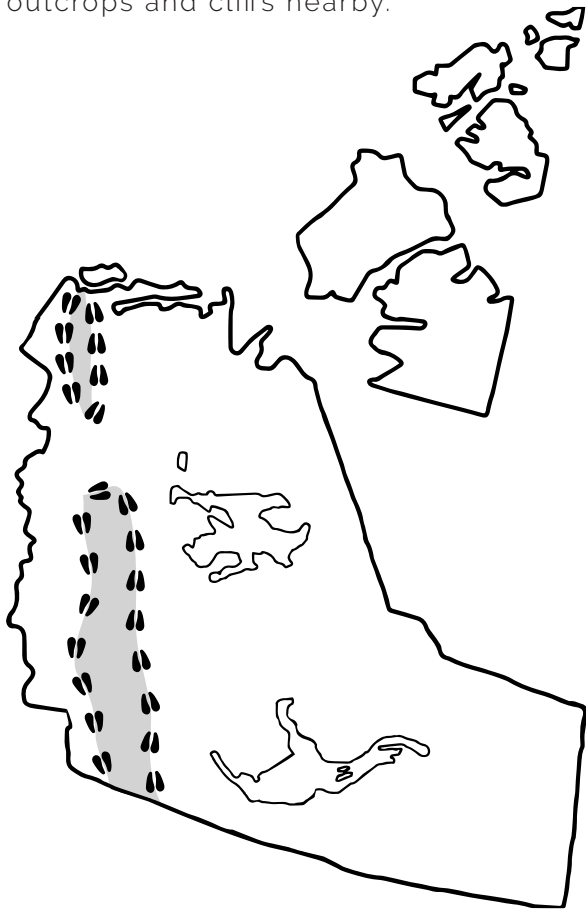
- Cut the rabbit meat into small, bite-sized chunks. Mix together flour, rosemary, oregano, parsley, and salt. Then coat rabbit meat with flour mixture, saving any remaining flour mixture.
- Melt butter in Large stew pot, and add onion. Cook until golden brown, adding an optional pinch of sugar.
- Stir in garlic. Cook together for 2 or more minutes.
- Add floured rabbit meat, and fry until cooked.
- Add cold water and diced vegetables.
- Simmer at least 1 hour, or until vegetables are done.
- Mix 1/2 cup of hot water with remaining flour mixture and add to stew.
- Boil 2 or more minutes until desired thickness is reached..





# Dall Sheep is Good for Us!

Dall sheep challenge the hunters, wildlife watchers, and photographers who pursue them. The sheep too are challenged - by the harsh environment in northwestern Canada. The sheep live mostly above timberline on ridges, dry meadows, and steep mountain slopes in the MacKenzie Mountains and Richardson Mountains. There are always rocky outcrops and cliffs nearby.



The sheep rarely venture far from this rugged terrain, using it to escape predators, including wolves, golden eagles, bears, and humans.

Their cloven hooves with rough pads help them cling to cliff edges and broken ledges. In spring and early summer, dall sheep often visit mineral licks to restore the nutrients they lost during the long winter.

## Did you know?

Dall Sheep is a type of red meat, a term used for the meat of mammals, which is richer in iron than chicken or fish. Many think that there is no better meat. It will be tender and won't be strong, if you care for it properly.

The meat of young sheep, in their first year, is known as lamb, whereas mutton is a term used for the meat of adult sheep.

Being rich in high-quality protein and many vitamins and minerals, lamb can be an excellent component of a healthy diet. The protein content of lean, cooked lamb is usually 25-26%. We need protein to build and repair our muscles, skin and blood.

Lamb meat is a high-quality protein source, containing all of the essential amino acids needed for the body's growth and maintenance. Omega-3

fatty acids help protect against heart disease and may help to prevent cancer.

Lamb contains varying amounts of fat, depending on level of trimming and the animal's diet, age, gender, and feed. The fat content may range from 17-21%.

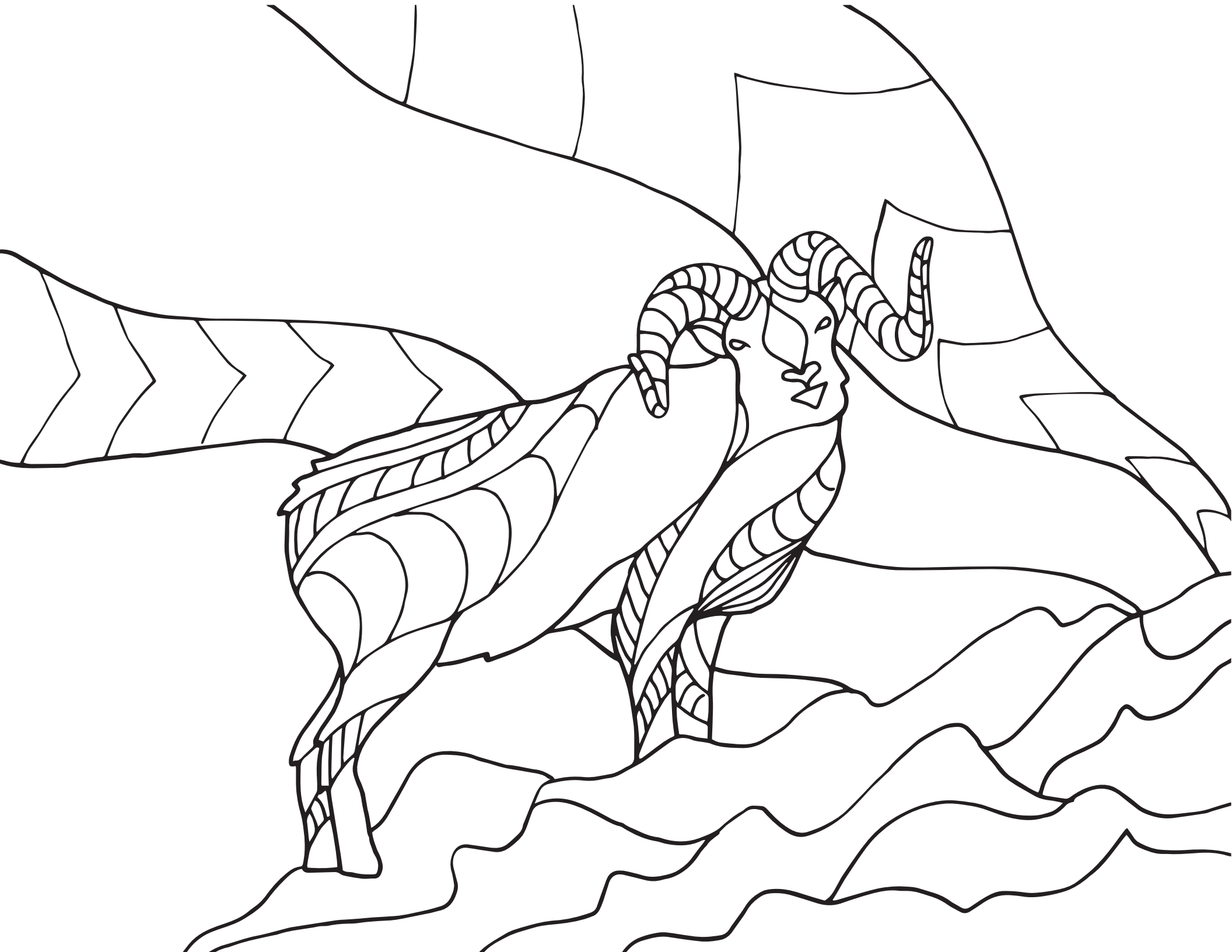
Lamb is a rich source of many vitamins and minerals, including vitamin B12, iron, and zinc.

**Preparation:** Cook it as you would, elk, moose, and venison. It is most often eaten unprocessed, but cured (smoked and salted).

**Uses other than food:** Sheep horns to make dishes and ladles, and knife handles by boiling the horns until soft and then molding and pressing them into desired shapes.

**Bighorn Sheep Fun Fact:** The sheep's horns can weigh up to 30 pounds per set. The sheep themselves can weigh up to 300 pounds.

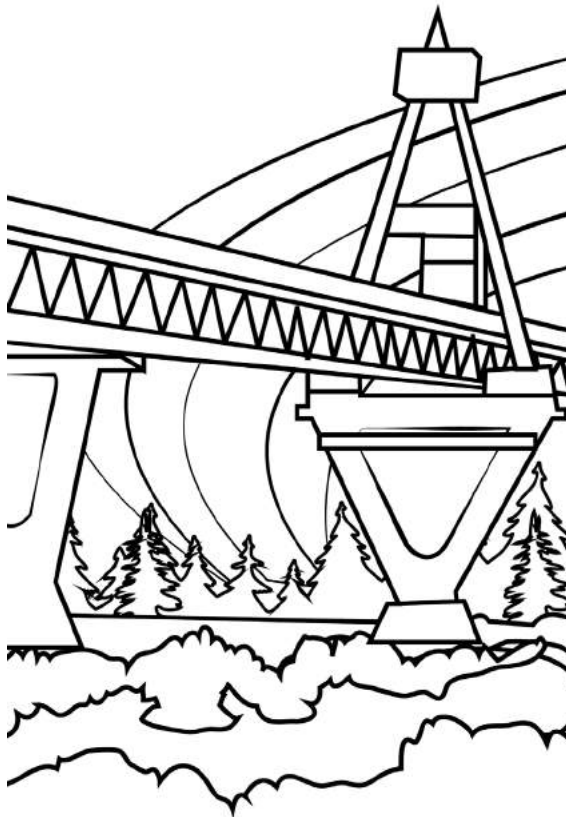




## Lake Trout is Good for Us!

Lake trout have a range of coloring, including green, gray, brown and black with a light coloured belly. Lake trout can be found throughout the Northwest Territories. It can take up to 12 years for this fish to mature. The flesh can have a very light colour but can range to a deep pink.

Lake trout is an excellent source of protein. Protein is needed to build



and repair all parts of the body. It is also a source of healthy fats, called omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3 fats help to keep the heart healthy and are good for brain development. Lake trout is also a source of phosphorus. Phosphorus is important for healthy bones and teeth and it also helps the body to grow.

## Is Lake Trout Safe to Eat?

Yes! Lake trout are safe to eat.

They are also some of the healthiest foods available. The benefits of consuming lake trout are much greater than the risks of contaminant exposure.

However, in certain locations, fish consumption notices have been issued in the past for lake trout. Check the GNWT Health and Social Services website for current consumption notices.

**Preparation:** Trout can be roasted or eaten frozen. They may also be boiled, baked, fried, or made into trout soup. Trout livers can be prepared with blueberries and eaten at any meal for dessert. Trout can be hard to dry when they are fat. They can be half-dried for one to four days, then boiled and eaten with seal oil. Trout may also be stored pickled with blueberries.

## Cheese Stuffed Trout

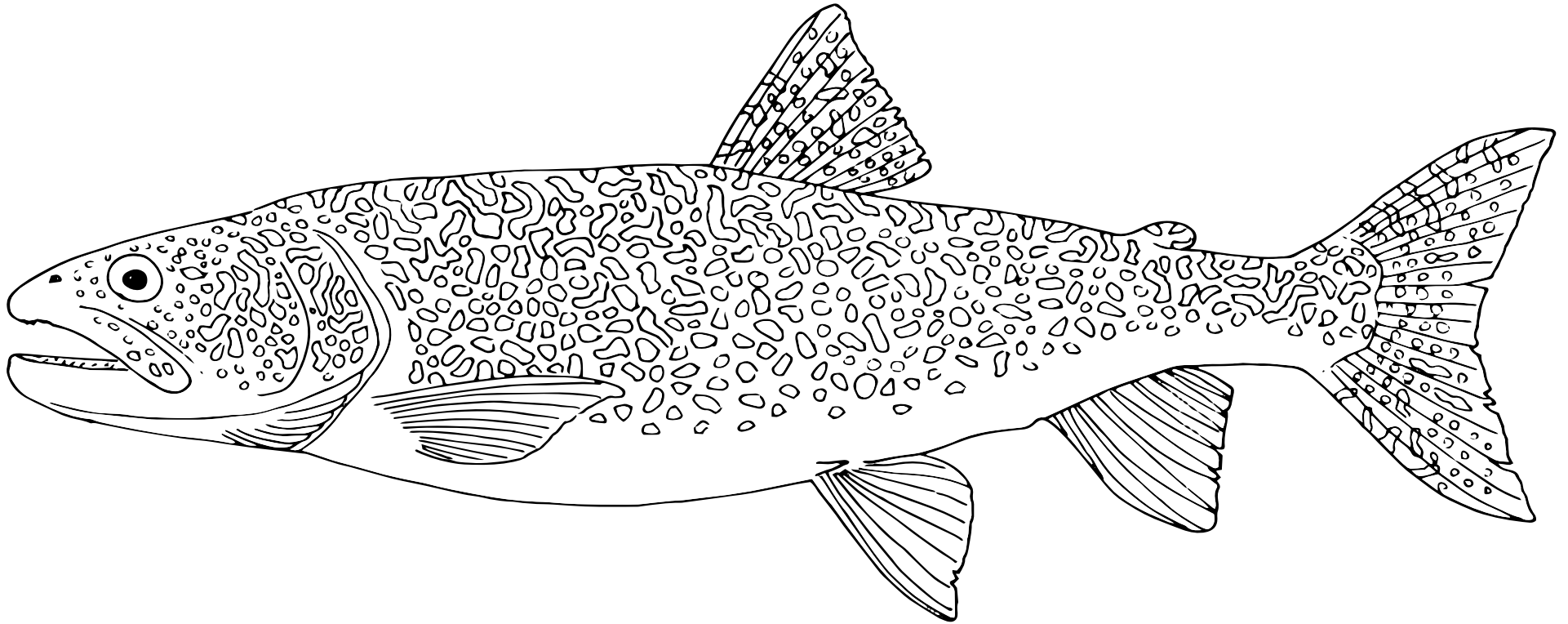
### Ingredients:

- 2 lbs. whole trout
- cleaned ½ cup fresh mushrooms
- sliced ½ cup green onion
- chopped ½ cup green pepper
- chopped 2 tbsp. grated parmesan cheese
- salt and pepper to taste

**Instructions:** In a small bowl, combine mushrooms, green onion, green pepper and parmesan cheese. Spoon into cavity of fish, seasoning with salt and pepper. Securely close cavity with toothpicks or skewer to keep stuffing inside. Place on lightly greased broiler pan. Broil 4-5" from heat, about 5 to 10 minutes on each side, or until fish flakes easy.







## Whitefish is Good for Us!

Lake Whitefish are found throughout mainland Northwest Territories in lakes and rivers. They have a narrow, silver body. Larger fish develop a distinct hump behind their head. Lake Whitefish have a light, sweet flavour. (Whitefish, like most other fish species, often contain some mercury). Mercury is a heavy metal contaminant that can build up in the organs and in the meat. Whitefish eat plankton,



and insects. Whitefish do not eat other fish. Fish that do not eat other fish tend to have lower levels of mercury.

Lake Whitefish is an excellent source of protein. Protein is needed to build and repair all parts of the body. It is also a source of healthy fats, called omega-3 fatty acids, and provides more than most other fish species in the North. These fats help to keep the heart healthy and are good for brain development. Whitefish is also rich in selenium. Selenium helps to protect the body from damage that occurs over time, called oxidative stress. Oxidative stress is unavoidable and is a natural part of how the body works, which is why we need this important mineral.

## Whitefish Eggs

Whitefish eggs are usually harvested by jigging in the open river or by ice fishing in the winter. Salmon or char eggs are used to lure the whitefish, which usually end up stealing the eggs from the "J" hook. You need eggs to get their eggs!

## Food Fact

Only catch enough whitefish to last you through the winter. Use or preserve every part of the fish that is edible. Fish are easy to spoil,

especially the white fish. Take care of the fish as soon as they are caught.

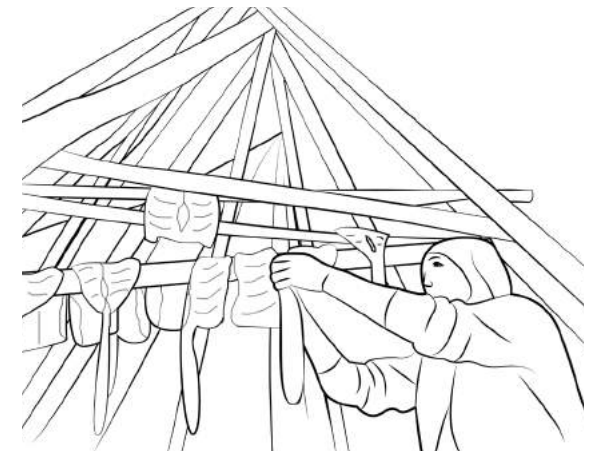
"If we are lazy and idle, food won't come to us".

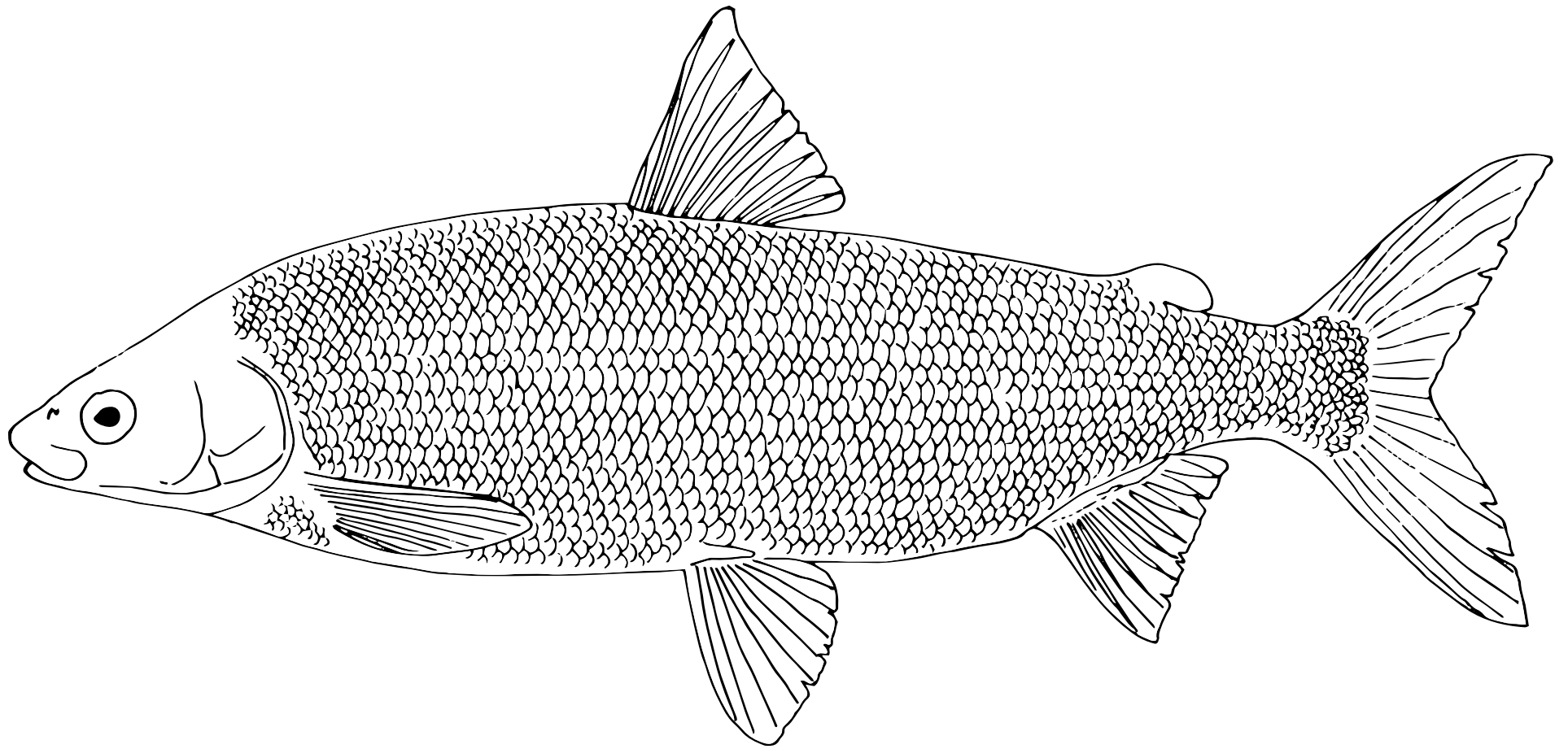
- Elder

## Is Whitefish Safe to Eat?

Yes! Whitefish are safe to eat. They are also some of the healthiest foods available. The benefits of consuming whitefish are much greater than the risks of contaminant exposure.

**Preparation:** Whitefish have delicious, white, flaky, mild tasting flesh. They can be eaten in a wide variety of ways depending on how fat they are; raw, half dried, dried; cooked rare or well done; cooked in most fish recipes, roasted over the fire, eaten frozen, fermented, or boiled whitefish is also used in agutak.



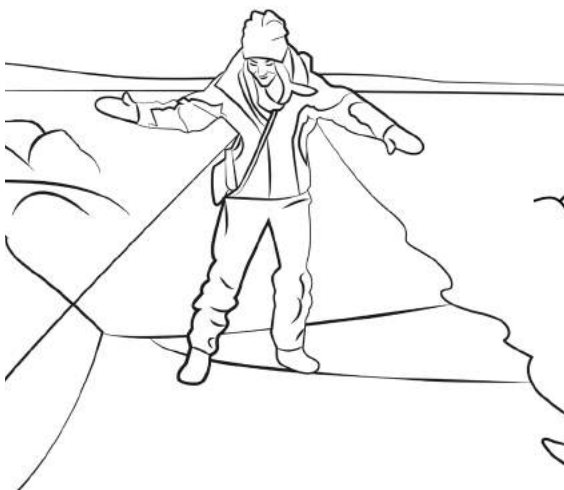


## Fish are Good for Us!

Fish are important and commonly eaten traditional food sources in the north. Many kinds of fish are available in our waters. Fish parts are used for decorative craft designs & medicinal purposes.

Northern Fish include Walleye, Pickerel, Cisco, Tullibee, Loche, Burbot, Pike, Jackfish, Whitefish, Lake Trout, Inconnu, Grayling, Suckers, Coni, Cod, Herring, Sculpin, and Arctic Char.

Although there are slight differences in the nutrients found in fish, they all add important nutrients to our diet. They are excellent sources of protein, calcium and B Vitamins. Fish such as Trout and Arctic Char provide omega-3 fats.



## NWT Secret

The latin name for Arctic Grayling is *Thymallus arcticus*, because a freshly caught fish smells a little like the herb Thyme. Cook it right there on the shore within an hour of catching it for maximum deliciousness.

### Arctic Grayling

Arctic grayling has a dark blue coloring, with pink and purple tones. They are found throughout the NWT, and are commonly found at the mouth of cold rivers. Arctic grayling is also known as bluefish. A relative of trout, Arctic Grayling is a freshwater fish that weighs from one to three pounds. It is a migratory fish that can be found in lakes or medium sized rivers.

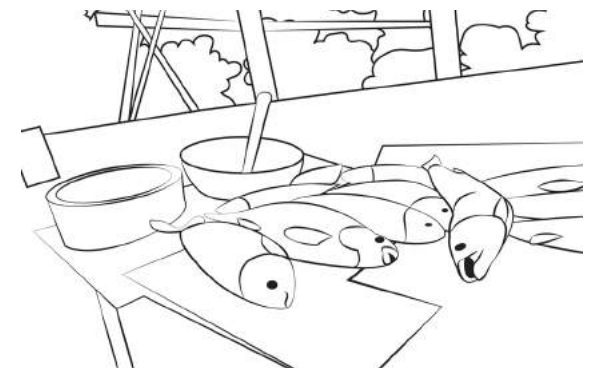
Arctic grayling is an excellent source of protein. Protein is needed to build and repair all parts of the body. Arctic grayling meat is also an excellent source of magnesium and selenium, two minerals that are essential to the body. Magnesium helps the body use the energy that is in food. It is also important for bone health. Selenium helps to protect the body from damage that occurs over time, called oxidative stress. Oxidative stress is unavoidable and is a natural part of how the body works, which is why we need this important mineral.

## Is Arctic Grayling Safe to Eat?

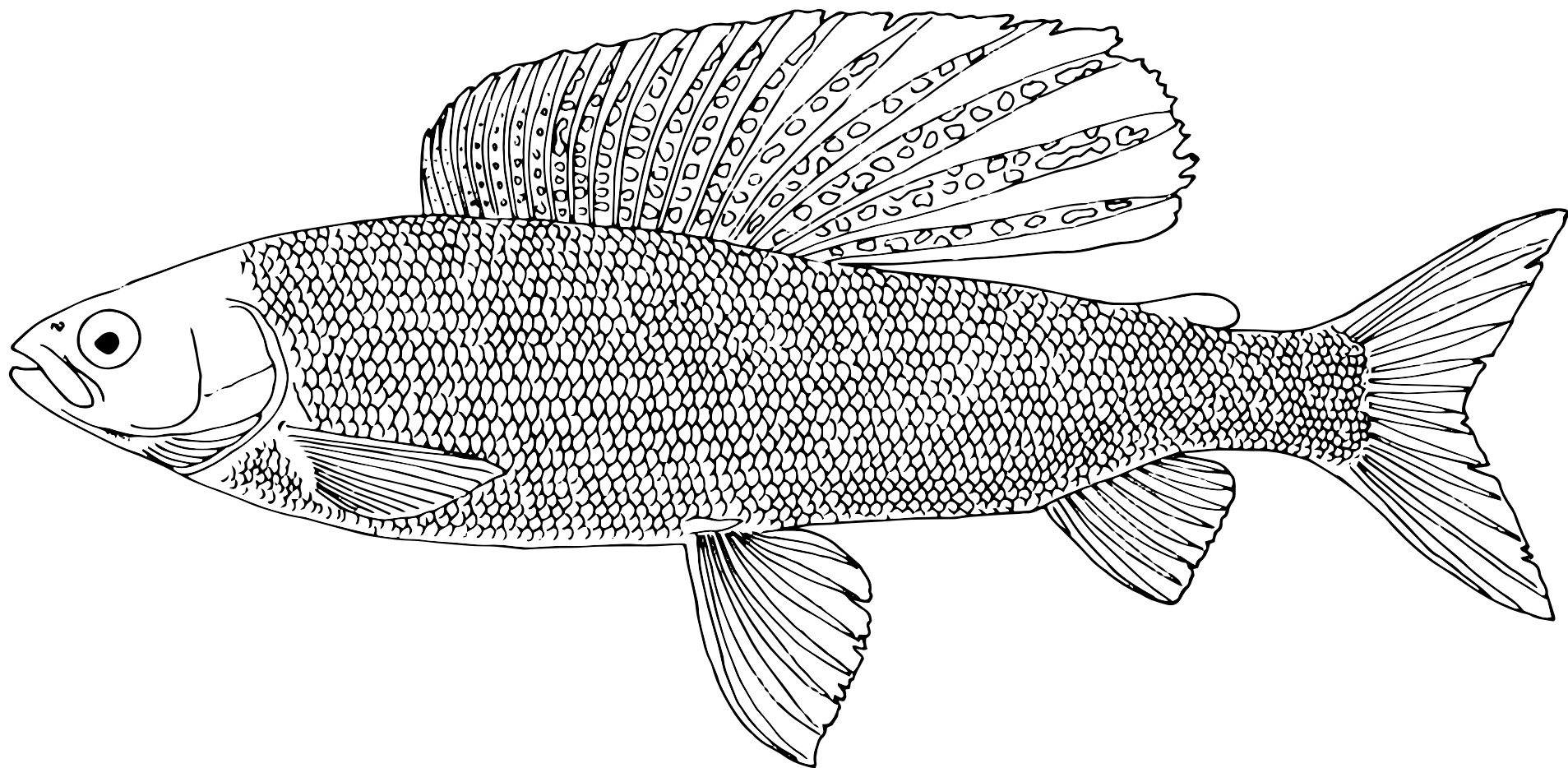
Yes! Arctic grayling is safe to eat. It is also one of the healthiest foods available. The benefits of consuming arctic grayling are much greater than the risks of contaminant exposure. A consumption notice has never been issued by the NWT's Chief Public Health Officer to limit the intake of Arctic grayling.

**Preparation:** Arctic Grayling has an excellent white flaky flesh, usually eaten frozen, dried, or cooked. The grayling does not keep very well after it is caught, so it must be eaten as soon as possible. It is best when broiled or grilled. The skin is very good to eat, too!

**Fun Fact:** Grayling have evolved to meet the needs of life in changing and harsh environments. They can be migratory or can complete their entire life in a short section of lake.

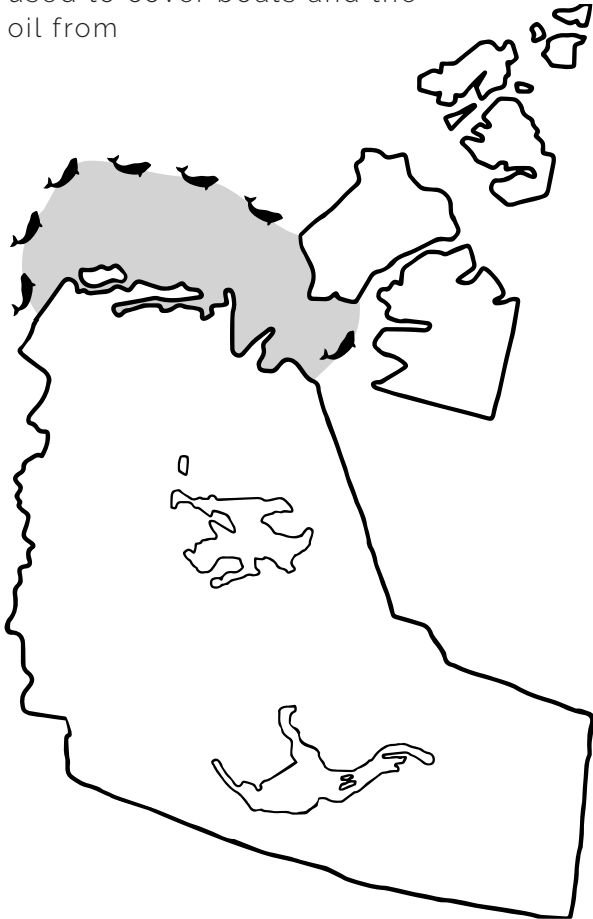






## Beluga & Bowhead Whale is Good for Us!

In Northern cultures food is shared. When a whale is killed the community enjoys a bounty of healthy food from a single animal. Beluga meat, blubber and skin are prepared and eaten in many ways. Aging food is a traditional practice used to develop a desirable flavor. In the past, whale skin was used to cover boats and the oil from



whale blubber was used for fueling lamps.

### Did you Know?

Whale skin, meat, and blubber are eaten raw, aged, dried, cooked or boiled in soups and stews. Many people like the skin – maktaaq or muktuk – best. The skin can be eaten raw, aged or cooked and is also a favorite, as are the cartilage and bones near the flipper. A large beluga can provide up to 44 pounds of meat, 110 pounds of maktaaq and 66 gallons of oil.

Except for the blubber, whale is an excellent source of protein. Protein keeps us healthy by building and repairing muscles, skin and blood.

Dried whale meat is an excellent source of iron, providing all of the iron we need in one day from one serving. Iron helps make healthy blood that flows through our bodies, giving us energy to be active and grow strong. Healthy blood keeps us from getting tired.

Whale liver, skin and blubber are excellent sources of vitamin A. One serving provides more than seven times the amount our bodies need. Vitamin A keeps our skin, bones, and eyes healthy.

We can get important amounts of

vitamin A, C, B and protein from the skin of maktaaq.

**Preparation:** Whale meat can be prepared by pan-broiling the square steaks and serving them sizzling hot. Whale meat is also excellent for soup stock, stews, roasts, and curries. Another way to enjoy whale is to eat the muktuk (the outer covering of the whale), which is traditionally eaten raw or cooked.

### Finest Pickled Muktuk

Boil muktuk for thirty minutes. Rinse well in hot water twice. Use plenty of salt and pepper while boiling.

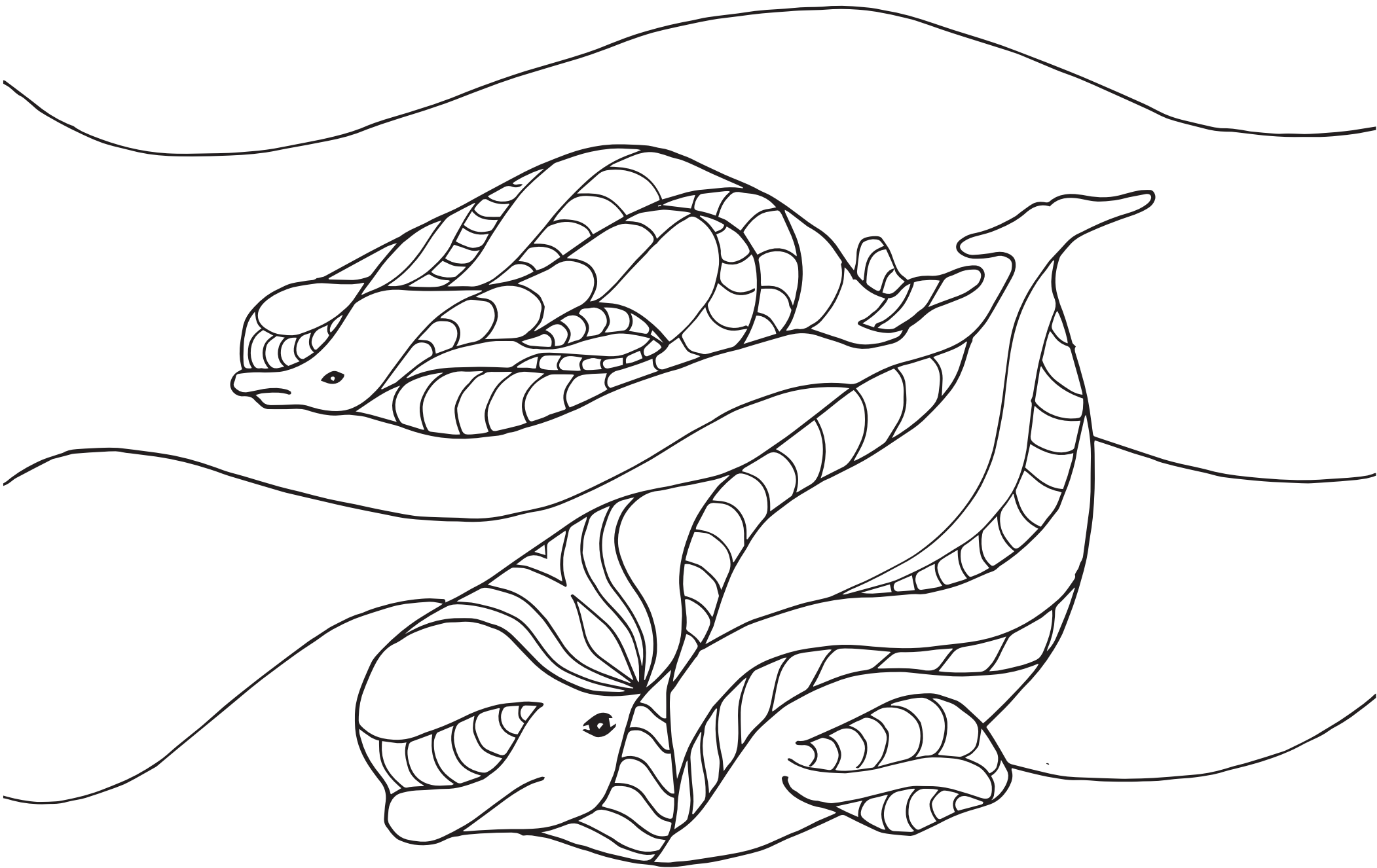
#### Make Brine (4 pints):

- 2 cups white vinegar
- 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups sugar
- 4 bay leaves
- 5 cloves
- 2 teaspoons mustard seed

Let it stand in the refrigerator for one week. Then store in cool place.

- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon allspice
- 1 teaspoon pickling spice

**Instructions:** Bring to a boil for ten minutes, let is cool. Put Muktuk in jars with slices of onion, lemon and orange. Pour brine over the muktuk.



## Traditions of Hunting Beluga & Bowhead Whales

It has been believed by the Native people for many years that animals, just like human beings, have spirits. The belief has always been there that you must treat the animals with respect. I think it has been traditional for every tribe that ever existed in the world to try not to make the animals that you hunt for food suffer. If you were going to kill an animal, make it clean and quick... you do not waste them. You do not play with them. There was a belief that if you played with them, you are insulting the animals, birds, and fish. And a lot of times they think the spirits of those animals, birds and fish will turn around and tell the other animals

"Don't go to that person. He hasn't any respect for us. And the person, the hunter will not be able to catch anything."

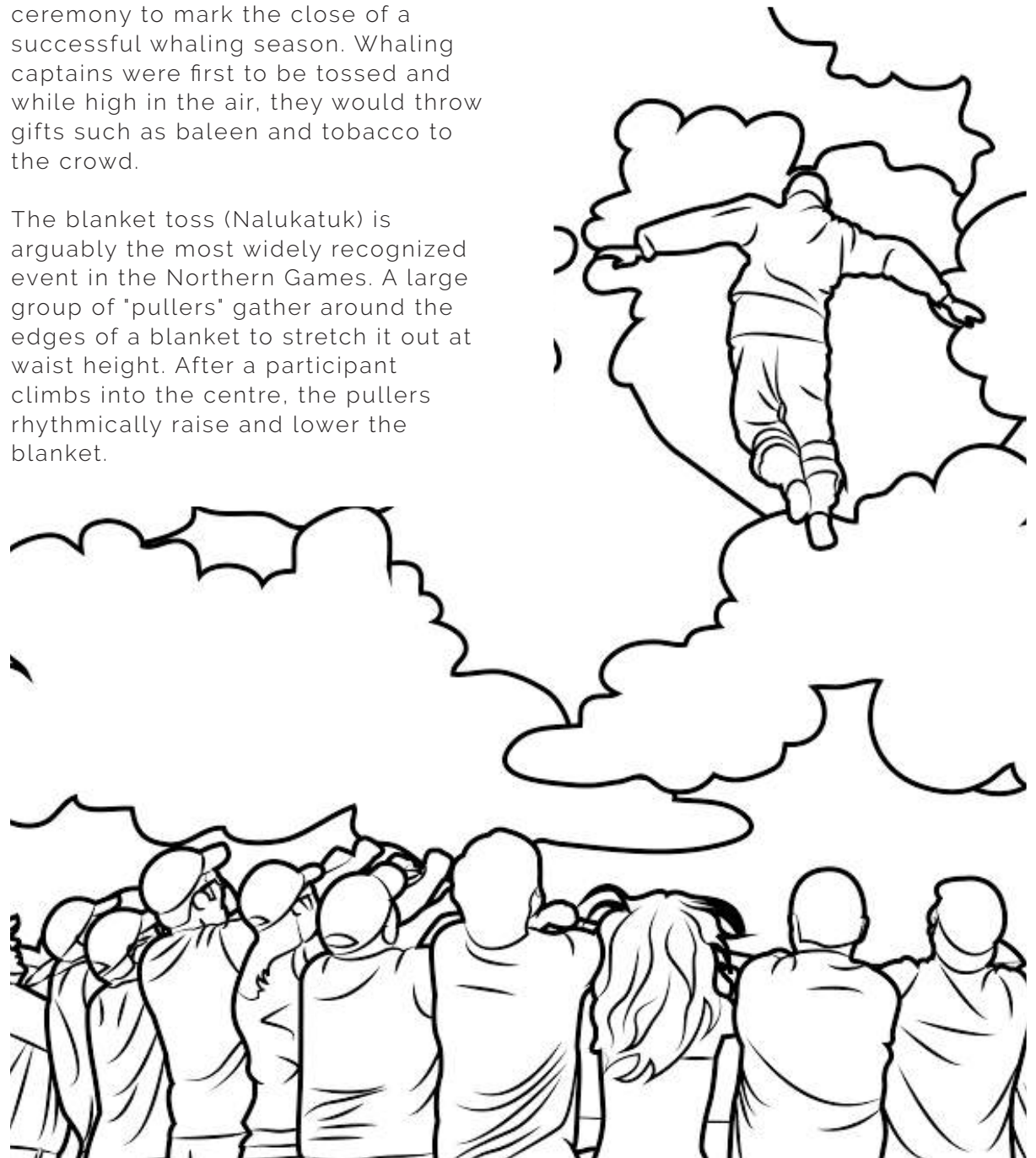
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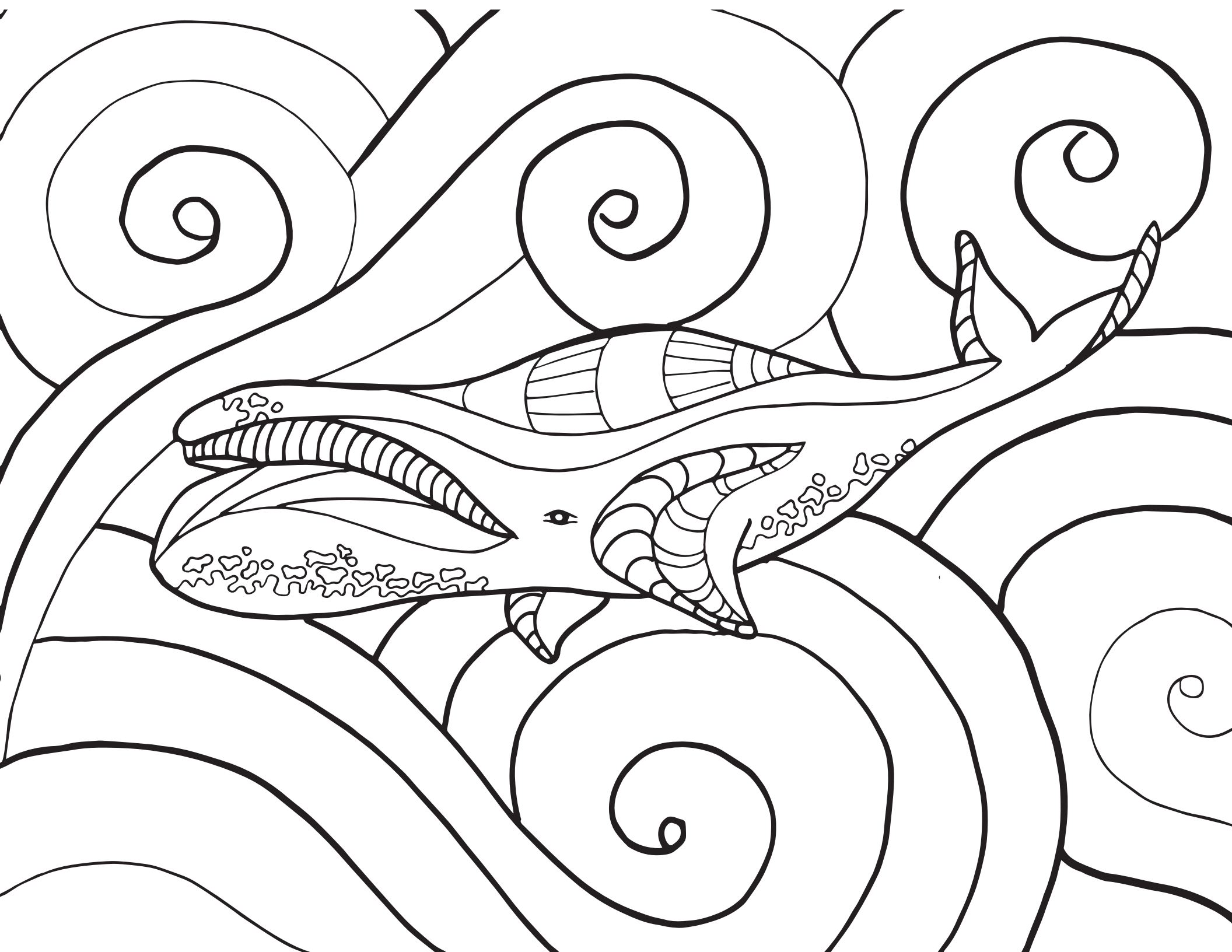
## Origin of the Blanket Toss

The blanket toss originated with Inuit hunters because someone who was tossed into the air could spot caribou, whales or other animals in the distance. Elders also speak of a time when the blanket toss was part of the

ceremony to mark the close of a successful whaling season. Whaling captains were first to be tossed and while high in the air, they would throw gifts such as baleen and tobacco to the crowd.

The blanket toss (Nalukatuk) is arguably the most widely recognized event in the Northern Games. A large group of "pullers" gather around the edges of a blanket to stretch it out at waist height. After a participant climbs into the centre, the pullers rhythmically raise and lower the blanket.

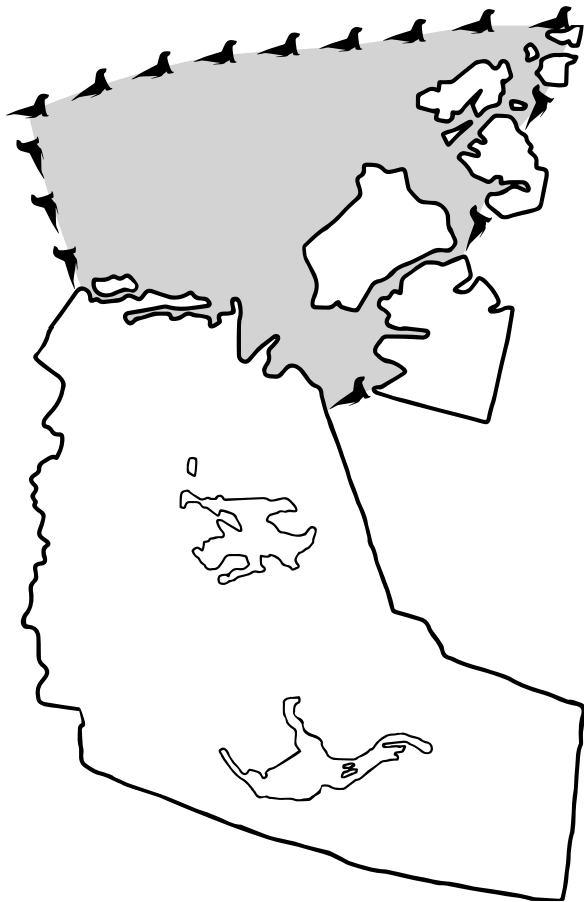






## Seal is Good for Us!

Seal is a major food source of Arctic peoples. Hunting seal is part of a healthy, traditional way of life. Seal oil can be used as a medicine for wounds or other infected areas. The skin and other parts are used to make clothing and footwear such as kamiks. Traditionally, parts of the seal are also used for crafts and fuel oil.



## Did you know?

Inuit and Inuvialuit Elders tell us that the seal is a "special food" because seal keeps us healthy and warm. Almost all seal parts are eaten such as the liver, flippers, blubber, meat and eyes. These parts are eaten raw, frozen, boiled, dried, aged or fermented.

Most parts of the seal are excellent sources of protein. Protein keeps us healthy by building and repairing our muscles, skin and blood.

Seal meat, liver, brains and eyes provide Vitamin D although the amounts vary. Vitamin D helps us have healthy bones and teeth, keeps us strong and healthy and for the prevention of diseases such as rickets and diabetes.

Seal liver provides a variety of nutrients in high quantity and is considered a very valuable food source. Seal liver provides us with five times the Vitamin A, two times the iron and folate, and half of the Vitamin D we need daily.

Seal intestines and liver are fair sources of Vitamin C, which keeps our gums, teeth and skin healthy.

**Tradition Fun Fact:** "I was taught to give my first catch of seal to an elder in the community. I remember being

reluctant, but did it anyway. The elder said to me, "God bless you with many more; God bless you with everything."

- Dan Karman

## Seal Oil

Seal oil that is properly prepared and stored is sweet and has a clear consistency (milky when frozen). Seal oil uses include: added as a flavour in agutak, fish dishes, and soups; used as a dip; and used as a trade item for other traditional foods.

## Recipe

**Preparation:** The meat is dark red-black color. Seal meat can be cooked in any regular meat dish, stewed, fried or eaten plain.

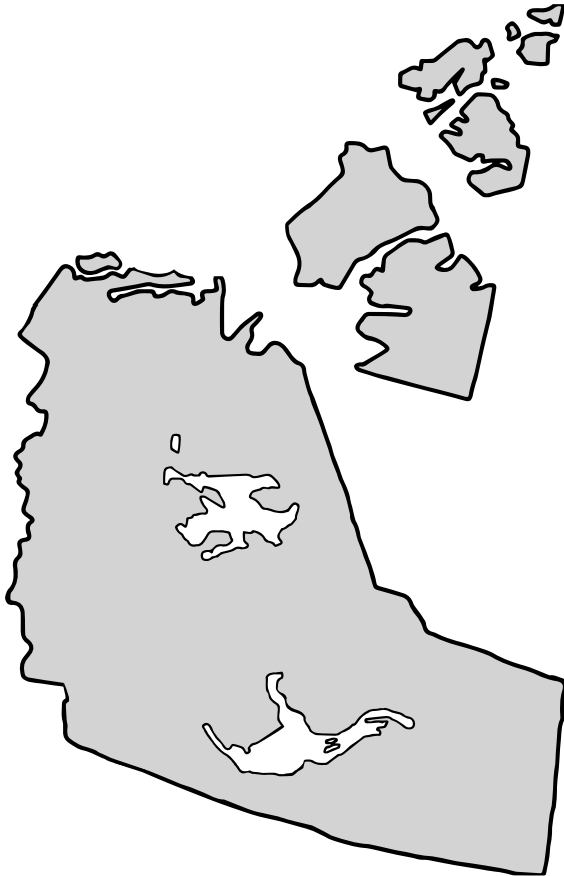
To prepare fur seal slippers, "Lusta" let them ferment in rock salt for a few months. "Lusta" is considered a delicacy and is cut into ½ the size of a pinky nail in order for it to digest well in the system. "Lusta" is dipped in seal oil.





## Duck is Good for Us!

The duck is a migratory bird found in the North from May to September. Duck meat and eggs are an important food source and provide important nutrients for health and growth. Common eiders are year round residents in some arctic locations but most ducks are only available from spring to fall. Northerners freeze



ducks for use during the winter months.

## Did you know?

Duck meat is an excellent source of protein. Protein keeps us healthy by building and repairing our muscles, skin and blood.

Duck meat is an excellent source of iron, providing 50% of the iron we need in a day. Iron helps make healthy blood that flows through our bodies, giving us energy and making us grow. Healthy blood keeps us from getting tired.

Duck eggs are an excellent source of B vitamins such as riboflavin and B12. These B vitamins are important for growth and healthy hair, skin, nerves and muscles.

Duck eggs are a good source of other important nutrients such as protein, iron, vitamin A and folate. They are fair sources of Vitamin D and Omega-3 fats.

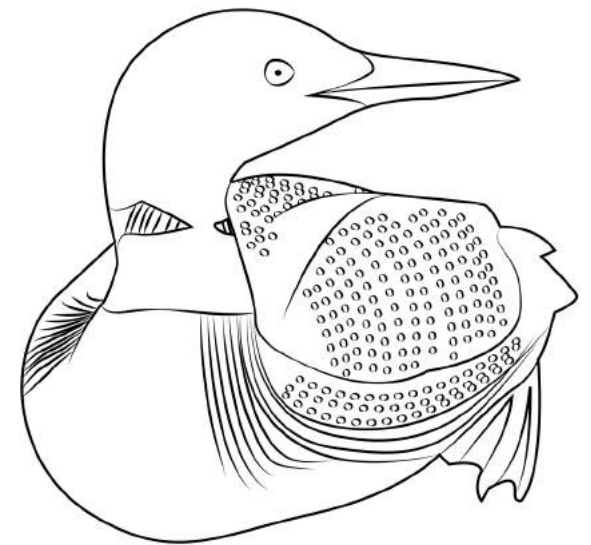
**Preparation:** Duck meat is eaten raw, cooked or dried and is lower in fat (23%) compared to store bought chicken (40%). People enjoy duck meat for its juicy texture and taste. The liver, gizzard, heart and eggs are also eaten.

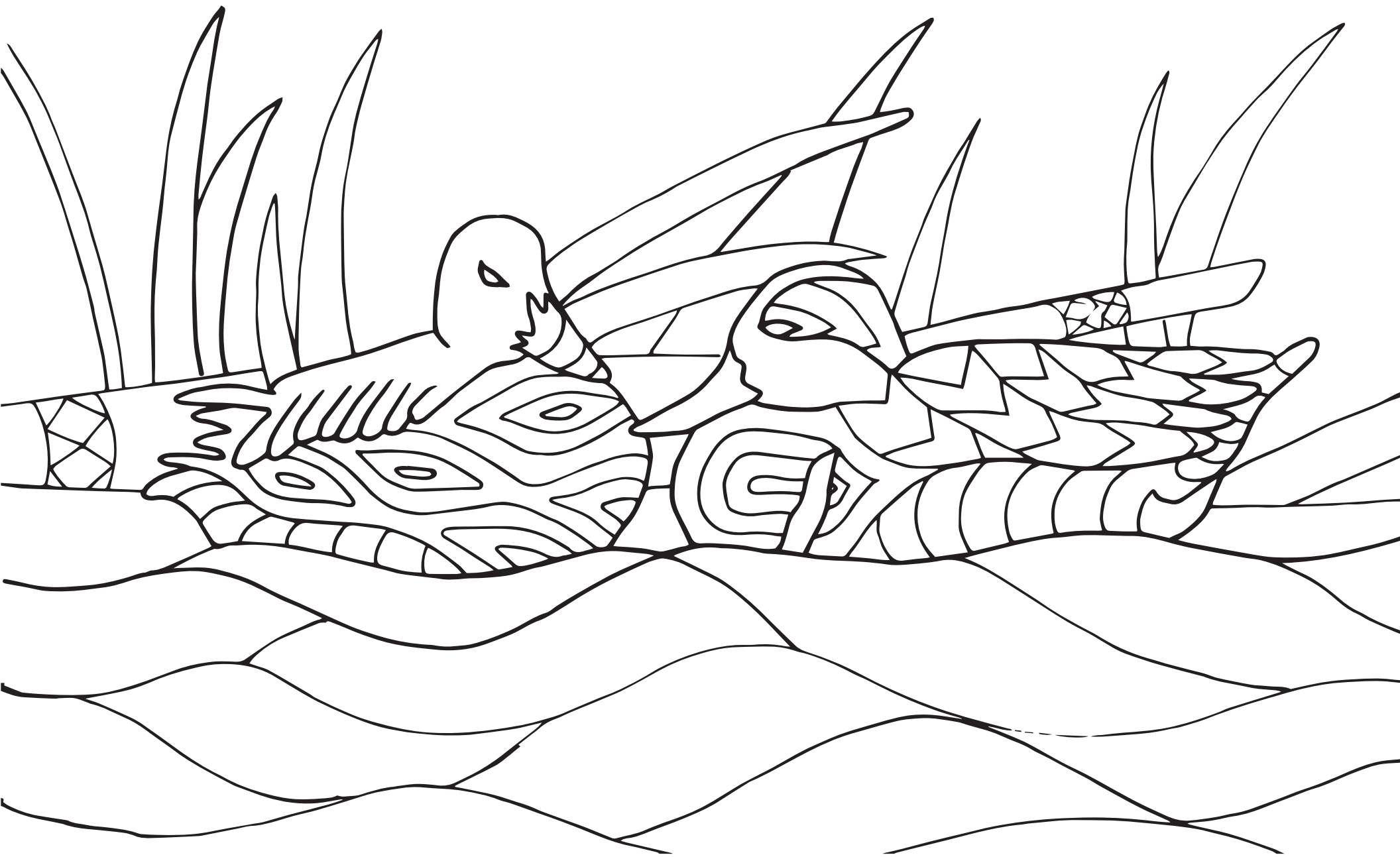
An elder suggests "Boil the duck in soda and salt water for ten minutes, wash it off and proceed with the stuffing and roasting process".

## Duck or Goose Soup

Put water in pot, about  $\frac{3}{4}$  full. Add 2 ducks (or 1 goose) and 2 cups chopped onions. Add some salt and pepper. Boil for a  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour and simmer until tender. Add rice and simmer for another half hour. Add salt and pepper to taste, if needed. Enjoy with sailor boy crackers and butter or jam!

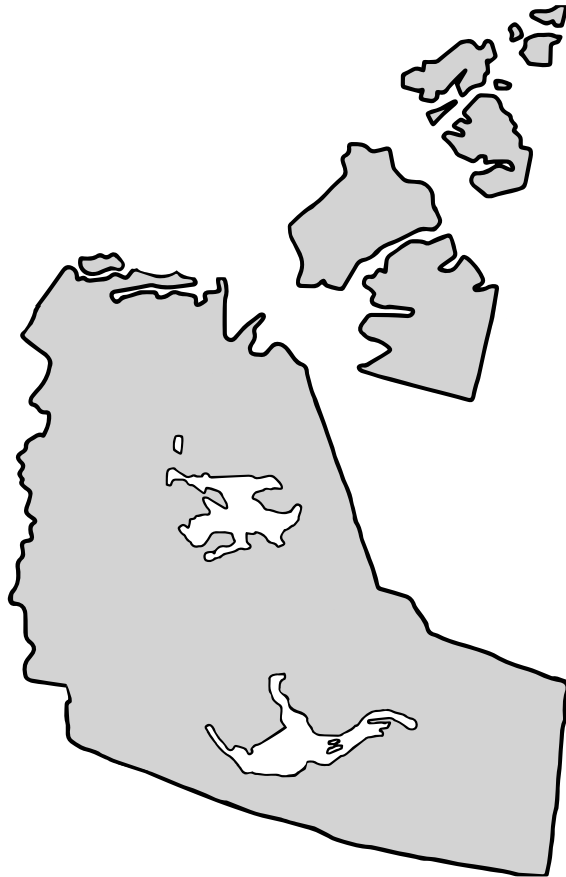
Optional: Curry Powder (about  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon or so sprinkled in) Macaroni can be added instead of rice or with the rice. You can add other veggies, like celery, carrots, etc with the rice.





## Goose is Good for Us!

People enjoy eating goose because it means the arrival of spring! In early May hunters enjoy getting out on the land to shoot geese. The geese are just arriving from the south with plenty of meat and fat on them. Many people try to collect a large number of geese to freeze them for year round use. Goose is usually eaten



boiled or roasted. Many like the taste and juicy texture of goose meat. People collect fat and oil from the goose to use for dry skin and to maintain youthful appearance. It is also put on sores to help them heal.

### Did you know?

Goose meat is an excellent source of protein. Protein keeps us healthy by building and repairing our muscles, skin and blood.

Goose meat is an excellent source of riboflavin and vitamin B-6. These vitamins help our bodies use energy from foods. B Vitamins are important for growth and healthy skin, hair, nerves and muscles.

Goose meat is an excellent source of iron – more than beef, pork or chicken. Iron helps make healthy blood that flows through our bodies, giving us energy to be active and to grow strong. Healthy blood keeps us from getting tired.

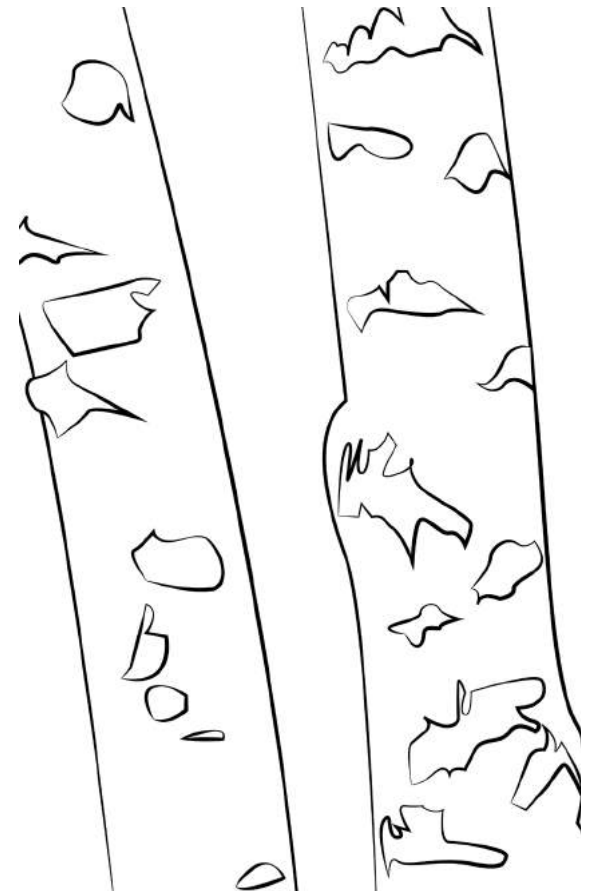
Goose eggs are excellent sources of many nutrients such as protein, iron, omega 3 fats and vitamin A, B and folate, good sources of Vitamin D and fair sources of calcium.

**Preparation:** Goose can be prepared much like chicken: roasted, baked, broiled, grilled, fried, or stewed.

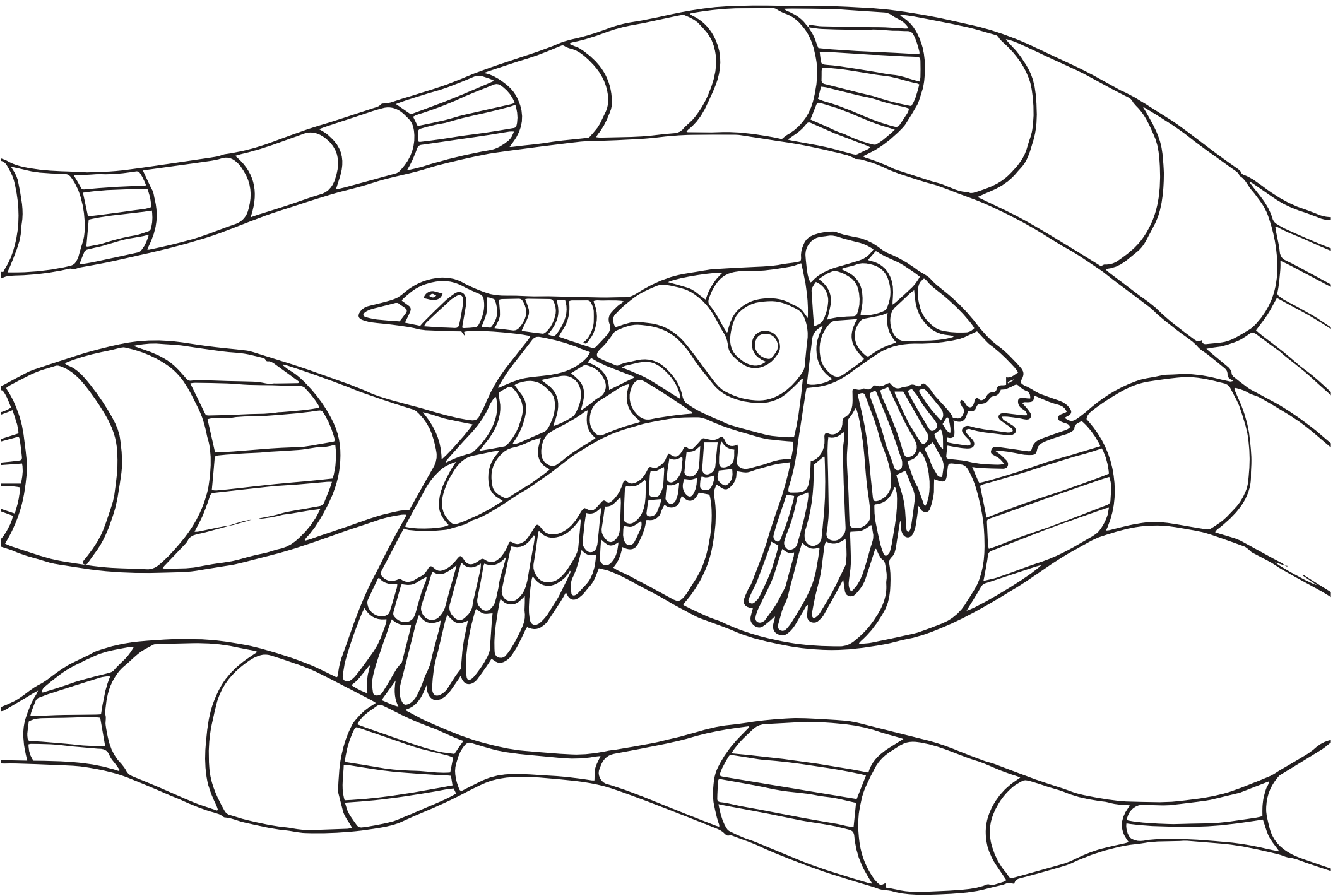
Goose also makes great soups and casseroles. Traditionally they were boiled and eaten with seal oil or made into soup.

### Fun Fact

When geese call very noisily as they fly north in the spring, the weather will then turn warm; when they make little or no sound, it will soon become cold!

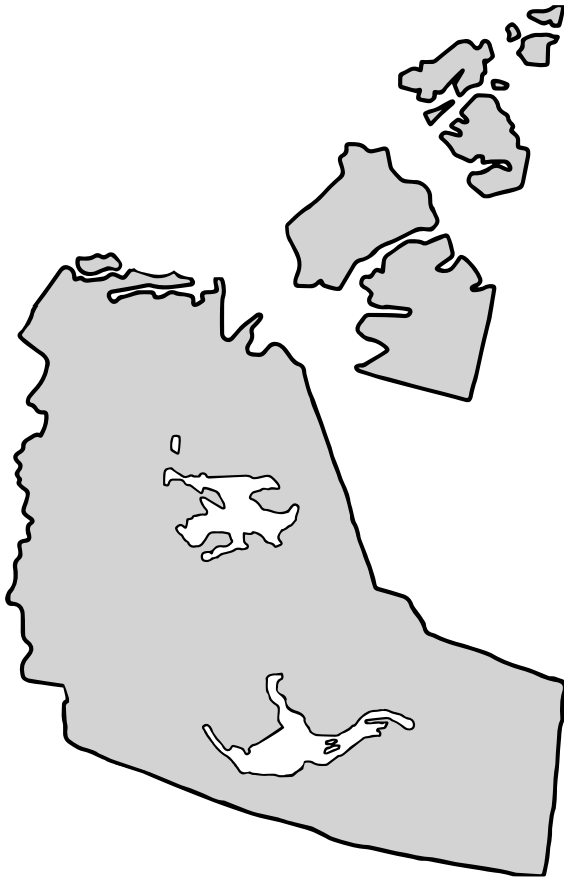






## Ptarmigan & Grouse is Good for Us!

Unlike duck and geese, ptarmigan and grouse live year round in the North. Their feathers change with the season – white when there is snow and darker in the summer. They are known for coming and going. They seldom stay in one area for a long



time. It is said that when a fox is around, ptarmigan move into the hills. Ptarmigan are generally an easy bird to hunt and provide nutrient-rich meat. Northerners like to store them in the freezer for year round use.

### Did you know?

Ptarmigan meat is rich and dark and has much more iron than chicken meat. Ptarmigan is usually eaten baked, fried, boiled or in soups. The parts of the Ptarmigan that are eaten most are the meat, heart, gizzards and liver.

Ptarmigan and grouse meat are excellent sources of protein. Protein keeps us healthy by building and repairing our muscles, skin, and blood as well as helping us fight sickness.

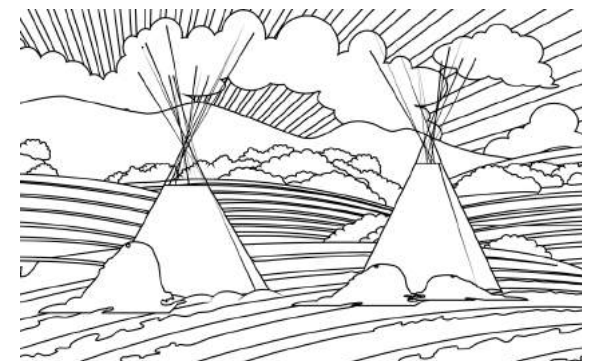
Ptarmigan meat is an excellent source of iron. One serving provides 50% of the iron we need in a day. Grouse meat has less iron than ptarmigan but is still a good source. Iron helps make healthy blood that flows through our bodies giving us energy and making us grow and keeps us from getting tired.

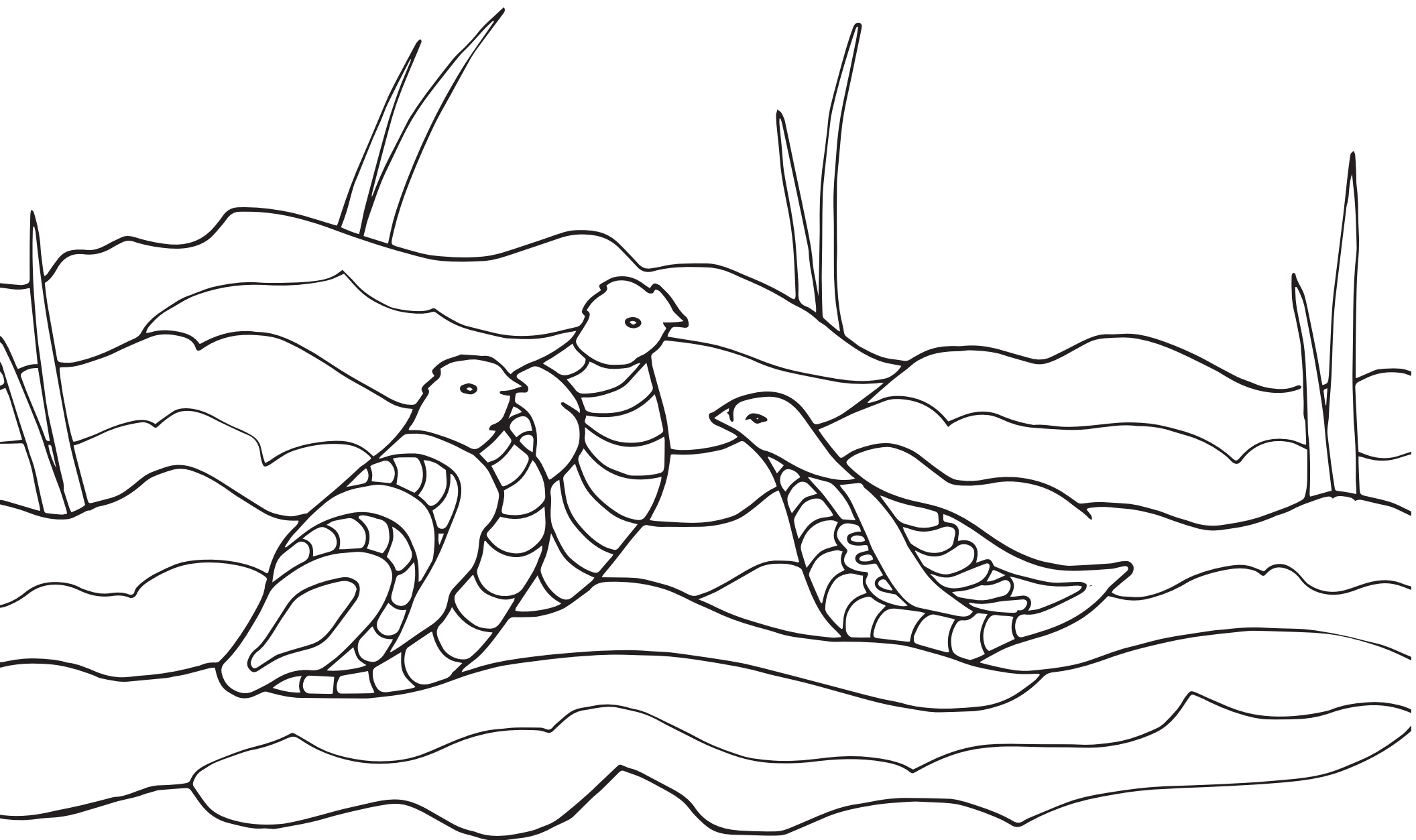
Ptarmigan meat is fair source of Vitamin A. Vitamin A is needed for healthy skin, bones, and eyes. It also helps keep our bodies healthy.

**Fun Fact:** Hunters report that ptarmigans follow caribou, eating in places where caribou pawed through the snow to get to the berries and moss. Ptarmigan feathers are super absorbent and were traditionally used to clean things up, similar to how paper towels are used today!

### Pan-Fried Ptarmigan

Cut the meat off the bones of a ptarmigan. Dip the meat into a beaten egg. Crush 20 or so Ritz or Club crackers in a ziplock bag. Add to the bag: ¼ teaspoon of salt ½ teaspoon of pepper 1-2 teaspoons of granulated garlic. Add the meat to the bag and shake until the meat is coated. Let the meat stand for 10-15 minutes with the coating on it. Then melt 1-2 tablespoons of butter in a frying pan and over medium heat fry the meat on both sides until the meat is cooked and the coating is golden brown. Serve with potatoes or rice and vegetables.





## Berries are Good for Us!

Picking berries is a great outdoor activity that anyone can enjoy from summer to late fall throughout the North. Our long days produce a wide variety of berries: cranberries, crowberries, blueberries, currants, cloudberries, gooseberries, raspberries, strawberries and Saskatoons.



Berries provide many nutrients that we need each day to stay healthy, such as fiber, vitamin C, iron and B vitamins. Fiber helps protect us against some diseases such as cancer.

### Did you know?

Wild northern berries provide vitamin C in different amounts. For example: cloudberries are an excellent source, meaning they provide the most vitamin C, whereas blueberries are a good source and cranberries are a fair source.

The vitamin C in fresh wild berries is higher than store bought berries. Freezing destroys very little vitamin C, so many people freeze berries to use in the winter.

Blackberries or cloudberries may be eaten in a mixture of seal oil and chewed caribou tallow which had been beaten to be like whipped cream and is often referred to as "ice cream".

### Fun Fact

Stories warning of picking berries too early were often told to teach children, newcomers, and greedy people when to pick berries. This would ensure that some berries were left behind for late pickers, or to be

given back to the earth for the next season.

**Fun Fact:** Berries can be eaten or can be frozen or dried for use all winter. Using berries in baking bannock, or jam is very tasty.

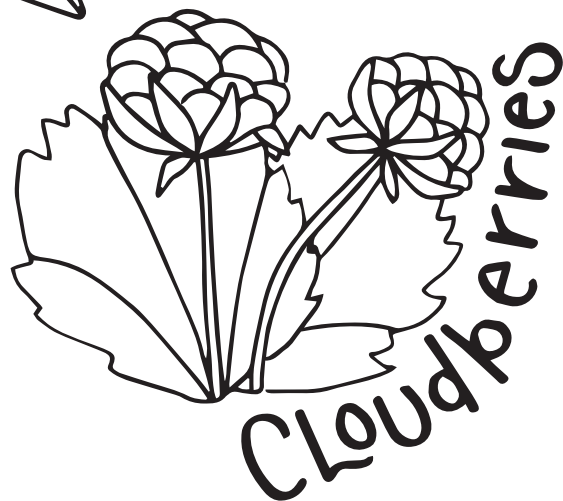
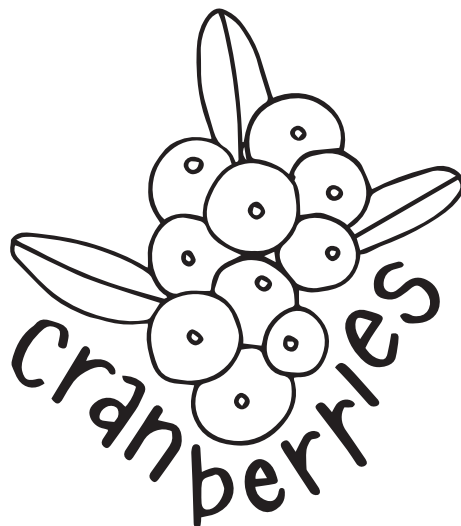
## Akutuq or Eskimo Ice Cream

Each family has a favorite version of Eskimo ice cream. This is a basic recipe with some alternatives. Akutuq is a rich-tasting concoction that resembles frozen froth.

- 1 quart caribou fat, ground well
- 2-4 cups of berries (salmonberries, blueberries, low-bush cranberries)

Grind the caribou fat very fine so it mixes well. Bring to room temperature and add berries. Stir well, and then chill for about two hours. Some use seal oil or Crisco as a substitute for caribou fat. (But it doesn't have the same rich taste!)







## Wild Plants are Good for Us!

Wild greens are gathered during the warm months of the year. Greens for the willow, mountain sorrel and fireweed provide nutrients such as vitamin A, iron, calcium, magnesium and fiber. These nutrients are important for healthy skin, bones, teeth and blood as well as to prevent infection.



## Did you know?

Wild plant greens are excellent sources of vitamin C. This vitamin keeps our gums, teeth and skin healthy. They also help wounds heal and help our bodies fight sickness.

Young, raw Fireweed leaves provide more Vitamin C and Vitamin A than the amounts in more mature plants.

Vitamin C is lost when heated or soaked in water. Eat wild greens fresh, steam them or cook them in small amounts of water to get as much vitamin C as possible.

## Preparation

Wild plant greens are eaten raw, cooked, or added to soups. Some leaves and flowering stems are used in soups as potherbs. When Mountain Sorrel is boiled, it adds a tart flavour to cooking. When eaten raw, Sorrel leaves have a refreshing flavour and are eaten rolled into a ball or as a salad.

## Fun Facts About Wild Plants

- Fireweed leaves are often eaten raw with seal blubber or cooked and eaten like spinach. The flowers can also be eaten raw.

- Seabeach Sandwort is added to boiling seal meat. Because of its high salt content, it adds flavour to boiled meat.

- Plants, such as Labrador Tea, are brewed and steeped for tea and provide a source of vitamins.

- Purple Saxifrage flowers are eaten where berries are not available.

- Tundra Tea is made by pouring boiling water over the leaves and steeping gently. Tundra tea is known to soothe an upset stomach. Also traditional used for heartburn, colds, arthritis, as a wash for sores, and a laxative.



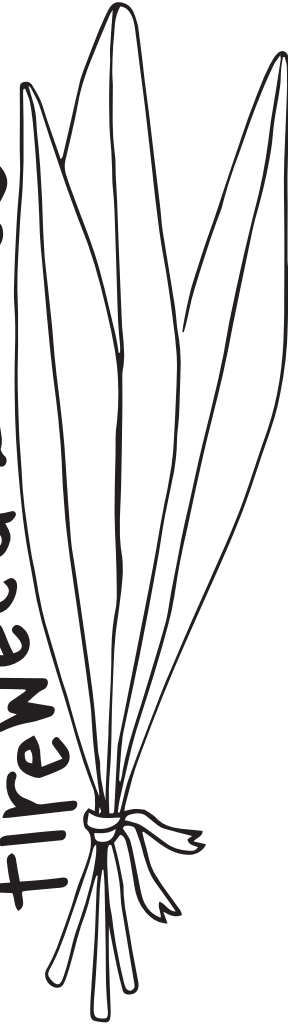
arctic willow



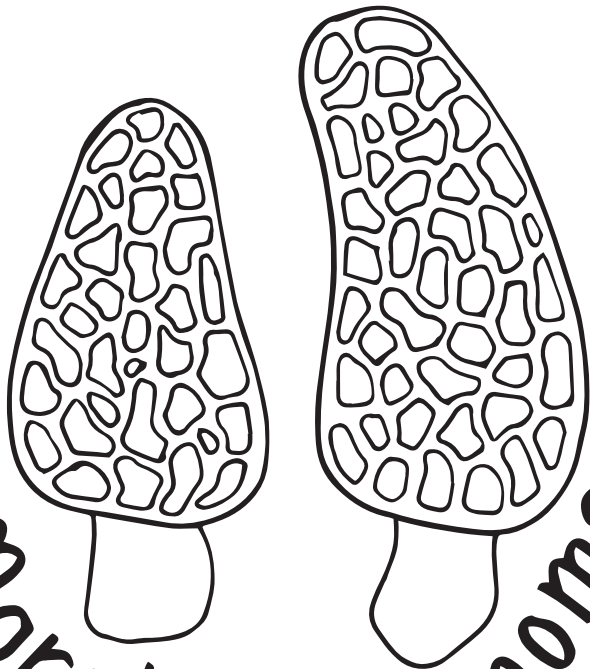
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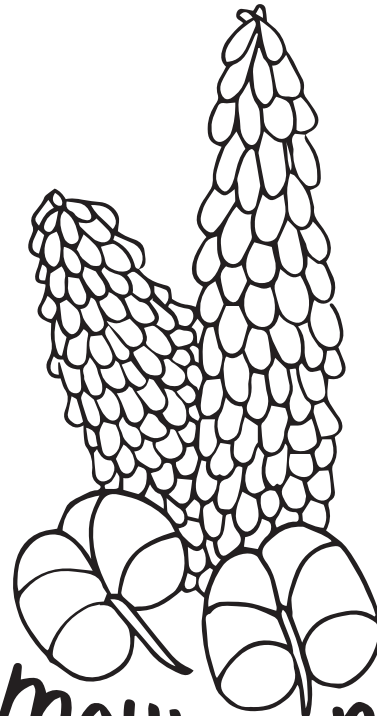
fireweed leaves



Morel mushrooms



mountain  
sorrel



## Fresh Herbs are Good for Us!

Herbs can magically flavor up dishes without resorting to loads of salt, butter, and cheese. Adding a little green to a meal not only makes it prettier and tastier, but can pack some awesome health benefits, too.

**Chives:** This herb, which looks a lot



like the grass in your front lawn, is filled with antioxidants, vitamins A and C, and phytochemicals (which have antioxidant-like benefits).

**Parsley:** This powerful little green gets some brain-boosting clout from quercetin, a chemical found in the herb that helps protect brain cells from free radical damage. Added bonus: Parsley's polyphenols and carotenoids may help protect skin from sun damage. Find it in curly or flat-leafed varieties.

**Mint:** Mint comes in many varieties, but the two most common are peppermint and spearmint. Spearmint is lighter, sweeter, and more palatable, while peppermint has a stronger bite from the menthol in its leaves. These bright green little leaves can aid digestion, and mint tea has been known to soothe upset stomach.

**Dill:** Known as the classic flavoring for pickles (and as Tommy's younger brother on Rugrats), dill is a wispy little herb traditionally used to treat insomnia. Dill may also help protect against age-related cognitive impairment. It's also a staple to flavor classic chicken noodle soup.

**Sage:** Behind its soft, fuzzy leaves, sage hides hordes of antioxidants, including flavonoids and phenolic

acids, which can help lower risk for cardiovascular disease. Sage is also on our list of foods that fight pain!

## Fun Fact

While adding herbs — dried or fresh — to any dish can add healthy vitamins and antioxidants, they may lose nutritional value during the drying process, so stick with fresh if available.

## Preparation - How To's

**Store Fresh.** Rinse herbs with cool water to remove dirt, gently shake off excess moisture, and pat dry with paper towels or a clean dishcloth. Find a medium-sized jar and fill with a few inches of water. Trim the ends of the herb stems so that the bunch fits with the leaves above the jar's edge. Leave them on the counter, or store in the refrigerator, covered loosely with a plastic bag.

**Deep Freeze.** Chop up fresh herbs and pop them into an ice cube tray to freeze for later use.

**Grow your own.** Try growing your own herbs in an indoor herb garden or use a few small planters and an empty windowsill. Then you'll have a fresh, healthy way to give flavor to dishes right at your fingertips.



chives



mint



parsley



sage



dill

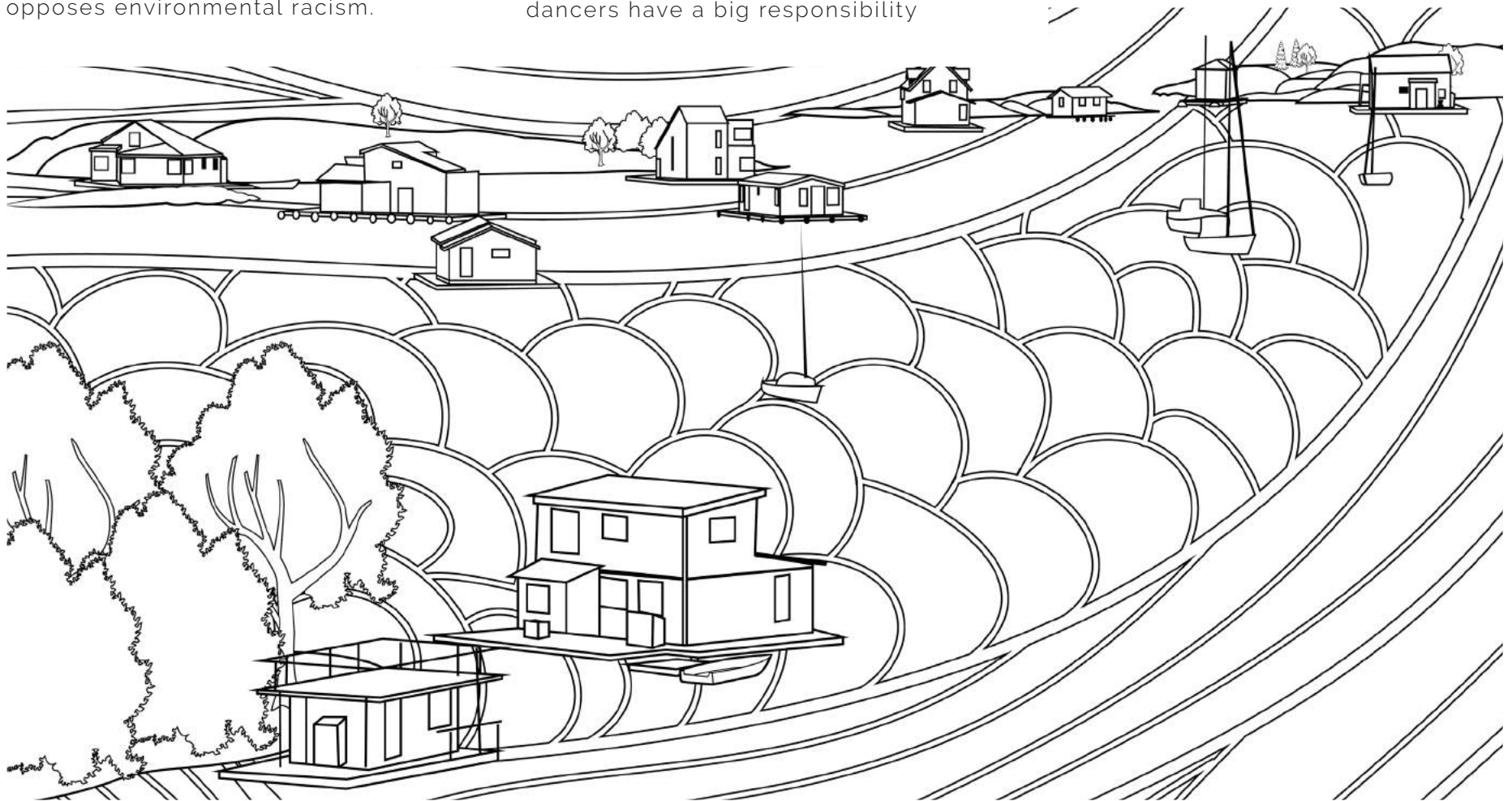


## Water is Life by Chief LadyBird

"Water Is life" is a concept that was born from the Standing Rock movement, where water protectors have been fighting the Dakota Access Pipeline, to protect the water and land from the harmful effects of pipelines. It addresses the need for fair access to clean drinking water and opposes environmental racism.

My illustration responds to this movement through the healing symbolism of a jingle dress. The jingle dress originated in Whitefish Bay First Nation and came to a sick girl's father in a dream after he offered his tobacco to the creator to ask for assistance. While dancing in the dress, the girl was able to overcome her illness and has become a symbol for healing. Jingle dress dancers have a big responsibility

because when they dance at pow wows, people will often offer their tobacco and ask them to dance for a sick relative. In the case of this illustration, she dances for the water, which has been poisoned; she dances for the land, which has been destroyed; and she dances for the people, who have been hurt by capitalism and greed.











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Thank you to the NWT Artists for the artistic contribution to the “Traditional Foods are Healthy Foods” Colouring Book.

Thank you to Nancy King. Nancy King is a First Nations (Potawatomi and Chippewa) artist from Rama First Nation. Her Anishinaabe name is Ogimaakwebnes, which means Chief Lady Bird for her contribution to the “Traditional Foods are Healthy Foods” Colouring Book.

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