

Kellogg Foundation grant relocates Musk Ox herd

The Musk Ox Development Corporation, owners of Alaska's domesticated musk ox herd, has received a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

The three-year grant of \$182,500 will help establish a new farm for the herd north of Anchorage. It will also support the Musk Ox Development Corporation's administrative work and fund studies of husbandry and marketing operations.

Since 1964 the musk ox domestication project, with the assistance of a series of grants from the Kellogg Foundation, has worked to establish a textile cottage industry based upon "qiviut" the fine underwool from domesticated arctic musk oxen. The qiviut is spun into yarn and then knitted by hand into hats, scarves and other garments in designs derived from traditional

Native artwork.

Knitted garments are sold by "Oomingmak" Musk Ox Producers' Cooperative, headquartered in Anchorage, to generate income for Natives in many coastal villages where jobs are scarce. More than 150 knitters are currently active in villages scattered along Alaska's west coast.

The musk ox herd previously was located near the town of Unalakleet, in Western Alaska. The herd was airlifted to its new location north of Anchorage several months ago.

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation, established in 1930 to "help people help themselves," has distributed more than \$768 million in support of programs in agriculture, education, and health. Areas of emphasis within those broad fields include adult

continuing education; betterment of health; communitywide, cost-effective health services; a wholesome food supply; and broadening leadership capacity of individuals. In Michigan only,

projects are supported for economic developments and opportunities for youth. The foundation is today among the largest private philanthropic organizations in the nation. It supports

programs in the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean, as well as international fellowship programs in other countries.



Musk Oxen with new crop of calves.

Tundra Times photo