



# MEMORANDUM

Department of Natural Resources

STATE OF ALASKA  
Division of Agriculture

**TO:** Board of Agriculture  
& Conservation

**DATE:** August 6, 2009

**FROM:** Franci Havemeister  
Director

**SUBJECT:** Director's Report  
June 2009

## **Agricultural Revolving Loan Fund (ARLF)**

Staff has been processing 2 loan applications, 1 loan closing, 5 loan disbursements, 1 loan default and 18 paid off loan files.

## **Plant Materials Center**

### **Potato Disease Control Program**

- Provided information to growers about potato diseases.
- Tested virus and bacteria for potato tissue culture clone banks.
- Prepared media and tissue culture for new seed potatoes.
- Inspected greenhouse potatoes for diseases.
- Inspected fields of other potato seed growers.
- Fertilized greenhouse potatoes and applied herbicide on field potatoes.
- Hilled and irrigated field and greenhouse potatoes.

## **Foundation Seed and Conditioning Program**

- Replanted 5 Breeder Blocks plots, which included: 'Service' Big Bluegrass, 'Sourdough' Bluejoint Reedgrass, 'Egan' Sloughgrass, 'Gruening' Alpine Bluegrass, and 'Norcoast' Bering Hairgrass.
- The laborers have continued to keep busy with mowing, spraying, rototilling, and overall upkeep of the fields.
- Native grasses harvested year to date include: Nome Germplasm glaucous bluegrass, Teller Germplasm alpine bluegrass, Lowell Point Germplasm meadow barley, and 'Gruening' Alpine Bluegrass.

## **Invasive Plants and Agricultural Pest Management**

- Provided presentation about Division of Agriculture projects with invasive weeds and agricultural pests at the Cooperative Extension Service Training in Anchorage.
- Attended Western Weed Coordinator Committee Meeting.
- Attended Fish Habitat Restoration Workshop to learn their procedure and develop best management practices for invasive weeds prevention when performing restoration work.
- Developed and aired Public Service Announcements through the Alaska Broadcasters Association addressing invasive weeds.
- Attended Anchorage Cooperative Weed Management Area weeds fair during Alaska Weeds Awareness Week.
- Inventoried Turnagain Arm spotted knapweed with UAF CES, and the Alaska Railroad. Knapweed found at sites was pulled.

### **Certified Seed Laboratory**

- *Seed Laboratory- Testing:* For the month of June the Alaska State Seed Laboratory performed total of 24 tests.
- The Seed Lab also did research and evaluation of the seed inventory for future seed sales and distributions, and evaluation of older seed lots.
- *Seed Laboratory- Workforce Development:* Staff in training participated in an Endophyte Workshop and attended AOSA Annual Meeting in Fort Collins CO.

### **Other PMC Projects:**

- HDR project, germinating, transplanting and raising over 1200 *Plantago* and *Triglochin* seedlings for revegetation planting in Westchester Lagoon. Project completed.
- Chugach National Forest project, transplanting plugs of 5 different collections in the boxes by the greenhouse.
- Ethnobotany Garden excavation of waterworks feature. Gravel and rocks purchased. Underlayment and liner placed in upper pond. Gravel and rocks placed on liner in upper pond. Plants transplanted into garden. Watering and weeding continues.
- Commissioner's report completed and submitted.
- Answered phone calls and e-mails about willows, plant propagation, revegetation needs, etc.

### **Marketing & Development**

- Marketing staff completed a site visit at Glacier Creek Distillery (GCD). GCD has requested approval and been denied for use of the Alaska GROWN logo. A site visit was performed to further discuss qualifications, etc.
- Staff helped facilitate and attended a Kenai Garden Club meeting as a requested guest speaker. The topic was rhubarb production in Alaska and the meeting was well attended. There is interest in the creation of a rhubarb association, similar to the Division launched Peony Association & Farmers Market Association.
- Staff facilitated the monthly Alaska Peony Growers Association (APGA) meeting and furthered the agenda and planning for the upcoming Summer Workshop & Growers Conference, August 2-4<sup>th</sup>.
- Marketing staff continue the development of the Alaska Grown program policy documents. The official U.S. Patent & Trademark Office registration was received.
- Marketing staff participated in the Global Food Alaska (GFA) Trade Show with an information table, partnering with the Western United States Agriculture Trade Association. Staff focused on networking with potential outlets for Alaska Grown products.
- Marketing Staff attended All Things Organic, a three day conference and trade show, to determine the viability of Alaskan livestock producers becoming certified organic.
- Marketing staff compiled and emailed out the Division of Agriculture newsletter.
- Marketing staff wrote and emailed the Fresher by Far newsletter to distributors and chefs. The newsletter is designed to let end users know about what Alaska GROWN products will be coming on to the market in the near future and has been well received by recipients.
- Marketing staff met with representatives from the Mat Su Farm Bureau to discuss their proposed Farm Tour. Staff assisted the group by preparing a brochure, accepting registrations, etc.
- Marketing staff updated the current supply off Alaska GROWN promotional supplies by designing and ordering new Alaska GROWN bumper stickers, and pens. Promotional supplies will be used at public events including fairs, conferences, workshops, trainings, etc.

### **Inspection**

- Staff spoke at a CARRS/Safeway training session on the changes and implementation of the 2009 Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) law.
- Staff completed four COOL audits in Kenai, Cordova, and Anchorage.
- Staff completed two farm visits to inspect for quality in the first harvest of red and green leaf lettuces.
- Inspection staff completed two grocery store visits to check grade standards and qualifications on Alaska GROWN potatoes.
- Staff completed {8} FV 300 and {20} FV 301 inspections in June.
- {1} Shell Egg inspection was completed in June.
- {1} Federal Phyto issued in June.
- Staff completed one Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and two Good Handling Practices (GHP) audits.

### **Regulatory**

- Staff completed three nursery/greenhouse visits to verify phytosanitary certification for "outside" tomato plants. Staff is also compiling a list of garden centers that are selling certified seed potatoes retail due to an increase in consumer demand this year.

### **Northern Region**

- Staff wrote articles for Division newsletter;
- Staff wrote Land management and Northern region portion of Commissioner's report
- Prepared for two week survey of south central region for CAPS
- Staff assisted farmers with information about subdividing agricultural land, including approving preliminary surveys and housing right applications;
- Worked with Division of MLW on conservation easement issues
- Working with ADF&G to help resolve conflict between Bison and Delta area farmers
- Rewriting sale brochure for upcoming auction in response to new DNR policy
- Help draft policy concerning disposal of multi-lot parcels
- Help draft new subdivision application forms