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## **Applications sought for Farm to Summer Food Service grants**

(Palmer, AK) – Providers of free or reduced-cost summer meals for children and adults are invited to apply for grants to increase the availability and consumption of Alaska Grown specialty crops within their programs.

The new Farm to Summer Food Service Program grants have been developed by the Division of Agriculture's Farm to School Program in coordination with the Department of Education & Early Development's Child Nutrition Programs.

Applications are due by April 15 but grants only will be offered if the Alaska Farm to School Program receives funding to continue operating in the 2016 fiscal year. To apply, go to <http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/FarmToSchool/FinalFTSummerSiteApplication.pdf>.

The Farm to School Program plans to award multiple grants for the creation of projects promoting activities connecting students, teachers, food service staff, community members and parents with specialty crop products grown or produced in Alaska. Specialty crops are defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and horticulture and nursery crops.

Eligible applicants include approved Summer Food Service Program meal sites, resident child care institutions, and child and adult care food programs. Grants may be used for project supplies, recipe development and taste tests, travel costs, site coordinator, and agriculture expert fees.

The purpose of the Farm to Summer Food Service program is to promote healthy food choices, increase understanding and availability of specialty crop production in summer meals, and to encourage a preference for specialty crops grown and harvested in Alaska to youth and Summer Food Service staff.

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