

ALASKA GROWN

Farmer Profile



Rempel Family Farm: Carrots Make for Orange Alaska Legacy

PALMER— Mark Rempel owes his post-secondary education to carrots. After all, carrot sales are what his father, Dietrich Rempel, used to make the money necessary to put Mark through college.

The Rempels' agricultural roots run deep— Mark's grandfather originally moved to Palmer in 1944 after emigrating from Russia, and began farming on the Springer system. That farm was sold in 1953, but Mark's father couldn't stay

away from farming. In 1960, he purchased 135 acres of land from the federal government for \$5 an acre. Two years later, Rempel Family Farm was established.

Mark Rempel used his father's hard-earned carrot cash to become a high school teacher until he took over the family farm in 1990. Having a vast knowledge of different chemicals, Rempel was careful about his growing practices and in 1992 began farming

organically. The farm is now certified USDA Organic.

Rempel grows more than 70 varieties of organic vegetables and sells to restaurants, grocery stores and farmers markets in Anchorage. He believes there are important benefits in growing and eating organic food.

Rempel's organic fertilizer of choice is Alaska fishbone meal. "Every water soluble mineral in the world is in the ocean," Rempel said, "so it's in the fish."

Appropriately, Rempel's favorite vegetables are carrots. "I know them well," Rempel said. Laughing, he added, "I think I grow the best carrots."



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Division of Agriculture
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