



The Division of Agriculture Activities

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<http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag>

Director of Agriculture
Franci Havemeister
907-761-3867
Franci.Havemeister@alaska.gov

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Questions or Comments?
[E-Mail me](#) or call 907-761-3858.

Director's Note

This week, August 1-7, has been declared national Farmers Market Week by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. USDA announced that the National Farmers Market Directory now includes 6,132 Farmers Markets, which is an increase of 16 percent from last year. Alaska's markets now number 29 and are located state wide, from as far southeast as Petersburg to as far north as Fairbanks. These markets continue to provide fresh product to local residents and offer economic opportunities for producers of all size. For more information go to [Alaska Farmers Markets](#).

Last week a Chinese delegation and Representatives from Idaho's Larson Farms visited the Delta and the Mat-Su area. Alaskan producers are working closely with this group, with the goal of exporting certified seed potatoes to China. Alaska is the only state that is able to meet China's strict import protocol requirements. The seed must be certified as well as undergo testing at the University of Alaska, to assure it meets China's requirements. Larson Farms is continuing to look for available land and/or producers interested in growing certified seed. For more information please contact Bob Bishop, with Larson Farms at 607-865-8844 or call me at 745-7200.

The Division of Agriculture will be conducting a bison crop damage assessment again this season. This assessment is being done at the request of DNR and ADF&G, with the purpose of documenting agricultural damage incurred from the free roaming Delta bison herd. The 2010 Bison Survey will be available on the Division of Agriculture website under "[What's New](#)". If your farm is affected by this bison herd, please fill out the 2010 online survey and notify the Northern Region Office at 328-1950 of any bison damage incurred.

I would like to congratulate the Pyrah Family on being nominated 2010 Farm Family of the Year. This award is sponsored by the Matanuska Valley Federal Credit Union, and was established by the Alaska State Fair in 2000, to honor an Alaska farming family and show appreciation for all the hard working Alaskan's committed to agriculture in the State. Ted and Katie Pyrah began farming the 277 acres in the shadow of Pioneer Peak in 1979. The Pyrahs operate a U-Pick farm as well as grow sod, hay and are currently experimenting with trees. They continue to promote agriculture through their annual Fall Harvest Festival which was started five years ago. Though this festival started quite small, last year over 4000 people attended and had the opportunity to harvest their own vegetables and experience farm life first hand.

The Mat-Su Governor's picnic was held July 23rd at the Alaska State Fair Grounds. This year's event featured Alaska Grown products and was a great opportunity to showcase what you producers do so well. The picnic goers were delighted with the pulled pork sandwiches, hamburgers, baked potatoes, full salad bar, local ice cream and the rhubarb lemonade.

The Governor's cabinet served the attendees with Alaska grown aprons and the Governor and his wife were in full support wearing their red Alaska Grown sweatshirts. The event was pulled together with incredible volunteer help and product from local producers. I would like to thank all the volunteers and the dedicated staff at the Division of Agriculture who worked diligently to showcase our Alaska Grown product.

As always, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns please give the division a call at 745-7200.

Franci



Calendar

- ▶ Tanana Valley State Fair, August 6-15
- ▶ Kenai Peninsula State Fair, August 20-22
- ▶ Kenny Lake Fair, August 13-15
- ▶ Agriculture Celebration Day, August 17 - Palmer Experiment Farm
- ▶ Eat Local Challenge - August 22-28
- ▶ Alaska State Fair, Palmer - August 26-September 6
- ▶ Alaska Teachers Scholarship is due August 31st

Plant Materials Center

http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_pmc.htm

Main Phone: 907-745-4469

Stoney Wright

Manager, Plant Materials Center

Stoney.Wright@alaska.gov

907-745-8105

Peggy Hunt—Agronomist

Peggy.hunt@alaska.gov

745-8721

Gino Graziano—

Gino.Graziano@alaska.gov

745-8127

Land Sales & Grazing Leases

Dan Proulx

907-374-3716

Dan.Proulx@alaska.gov

Erik Johnson

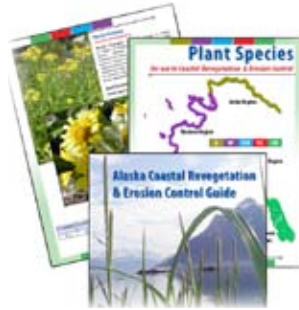
907-761-3863

Erik.Johnson@alaska.gov

Plant Materials Center

Alaska Coastal Revegetation and Erosion Control Guide

The Coastal Revegetation and Erosion Control Guide is an informational resource, created to assist professionals involved in construction or cleanup activities in coastal areas of Alaska. The manual contains species suggestions, descriptions of vegetation communities, and detailed case studies for each region of Alaska. A major focus of the Coastal Revegetation and Erosion Control guide is to encourage the use of native species already adapted to the harsh climate. The manual also includes information on wild harvest, techniques for planting, the protection of fragile coastal resources, and a step-by-step guide to planning a revegetation project. This publication was funded in part by a grant from the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service. The authors are Stoney Wright and Phil Czaplak of the Alaska Plant Materials Center.



Land Sales

The Division of Agriculture held its latest agricultural land auction (# 457) on June 29 in Fairbanks and sold 482 acres of agricultural land. Four parcels did not receive any bids during the auction and are now available in the Initial Over the Counter (IOTC) Lottery. This means that you may put in an IOTC application for any number of the available parcels and if drawn you get to purchase the parcel for the appraised value. There is no bidding; if you are drawn you get to buy the parcel for the established minimum bid.

The four parcels available are:

- ADL 415470 – This is a 22-acre parcel located in the Kobe Agriculture project just west of the Coghill (Rex) bridge in the Interior. The soils are Sawmill Creek loam (class 3) 68% of parcel; Nenana silt loam (class 3) 18% of parcel; and Donnelly-Lupine complex (class 4 and 6) 14% of parcel. This parcel has a 3.5 acre clearing requirement and the purchase price for the IOTC lottery is \$8300. This is Tract “C” of ASLS 91-171, T08S, R09W, Sec. 17, F.M.
- ADL 415462 – This is a 40-acre parcel located in the Kobe Agriculture project. The soils are Nenana-Sawmill complex (class 3) 20% of parcels and Nenana silt loam (class 3) 80% of parcel. This parcel has a 5-acre clearing requirement and the IOTC lottery price is \$13,700. This is Tract “L” of ASLS 91-179, T08S, R09W, Sec. 21, F.M.
- ADL 418836 – This is a 40-acre parcel located west of the Richardson Highway approximately 2 miles south of the Salcha River Bridge. The entire parcel is composed of Koyukuk-Audrey family complex (class 2 and 3) soils. This parcel has a 2.5-acre clearing requirement and the IOTC price is \$24,500. The legal description is SW1/4SW1/4 of Section 27, Township 8 South, Range 9 West; F.M.
- ADL 407096 – This is a 100-acre parcel located next to ADL 418836 west of the Richardson Highway. It has the same soils as ADL 418836. This parcel has a 10-acre clearing requirement and the IOTC price is \$41,400. The legal description is S1/2SE1/4NE1/4, E1/2SE1/4 of Section 28, Township 8 South, Range 9 West; F.M.

You can apply for the IOTC lottery in person at either the Fairbanks DNR Public Information Center or the Fairbanks Division of Agriculture office. You can also apply online [here](#). This site will give you all the information you need to apply and includes maps and information about all the parcels. If you have any questions please call Dan Proulx at (907) 374-3716



Marketing Staff

http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_ms.htm

Amy Pettit

Marketing Administrator

907-761-3864

Amy.Pettit@alaska.gov

Patricia O'Neil

907-761-3858

Patricia.ONeil@alaska.gov

Marketing Section

Alaska Grown Summer Marketing

This summer the marketing section is engaging in some new marketing techniques. Recently, when conducting grocery store visits, I noticed a billboard on a bench, right outside the produce section of Carrs, and it said "Advertise Here!" I thought, that is a great idea. I contacted the gentleman, and now Alaska Grown is being promoted on a bench. This type of advertising creates "top of the mind" awareness and is a visual for people to respond to. Currently there are advertisements in two locations. One is at Carrs on Abbot, and the other is at the Palmer Carrs. Later this summer, when available, an advertisement will be placed at the Carrs on Minnesota and Northern Lights. On average, per week, the signs will be seen by 80,000 consumers! They do foot traffic counts at grocery stores, and some Anchorage stores have the highest number of foot traffic per week in the nation. I learned that this is primarily a result of there being fewer grocery stores in Alaska per neighborhood, than is typical in the Lower 48. The photo is taken of the advertisement in front of the Abbot store. We are testing the waters with this new marketing venue, to see if it affects the consumers' awareness of Alaska Grown, and their purchasing choices.



Additionally, we are heading up a Farmers Market Campaign which will utilize social media, internet and traditional media, such as radio and newspaper. We hope that this will encourage consumers to attend the local market and purchase Alaska Grown products. This campaign should be active in the next couple of weeks.

Our final exceptional campaign is the Eat Local Challenge. This is the third year that we have sponsored the Eat Local Challenge. You may remember seeing the slogan "Join the Club,"... the Eat Local Club, of course! Well this year, a similar message will be brought to the public's eye, challenging everyone to choose local for an entire week, whether it is purchasing food at a farmers market or the grocery store, and eating in a restaurant or at home. This campaign has enjoyed great success in previous years, and we expect this year to be just as good, if not better. The campaign will take place the week of August 22-28. To learn more about the Alaska Grown

Eat Local Challenge and how to participate at www.eatlocalalaskagrown.org. The site will be live later this week.

We will be coordinating a farm tour at Birch Creek Ranch for the date of August 25th. Birch Creek Ranch is just out of Talkeetna, on Mastadon Rd. They have really utilized some innovative technologies to enhance their farming production. Come and see all they have done, and how they farm off the grid, including greenhouse production. If you would like to participate in this farm tour, please contact Patricia at 761-3858.

The UAF Experimental Farm in Palmer is hosting an Alaska Agriculture Appreciation Day on Tuesday, August 17th from 11-4. There will be a farmers market,

hay wagon & pony rides, games and giveaways, live music and much more. Come and celebrate agriculture in Alaska!

Let us know what you hear, see and think of our marketing efforts. We love to hear back from you, as industry members, and the perception you have of our public outreach efforts.



Inspection Staff

http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_is.htm

Barb Hanson

907-761-3854

Barbara.Hanson@alaska.gov

Mia Kirk

907-761-3853

Mia.Kirk@alaska.gov

Inspection Section

What are the Size Requirements for Broccoli Bunches, Crowns and Florets?

The US Grade Standards for Italian Sprouting Broccoli apply to Bunched Broccoli, Broccoli Crowns and Broccoli Florets. What is the difference?

Bunched broccoli are stalks bound together to form a single unit. A single stalk may be considered a bunch if it is approximately as large as other bunches in the lot.

Crowns are the heads of the stalks that have cutoff shortened stems. The main stem is cut back from the portion of the broccoli plant including the stems which are of lengths according to the grade applied, bud clusters and leaves.

Florets are bud clusters closely trimmed from the head, with remaining stalk usually being 1 inch or less. The main stem is cut back considerably and only a single smaller secondary stem remains with the bud cluster.

The US Grade Standards Size Requirements are the following:



US No 1			
Broccoli	Diameter	Length	
		Minimum	Maximum
Bunch	No requirement; may be specified	5 inches UOS*	9 inches UOS*
Crown	No requirement; may be specified	3-1/2 inches UOS*	6 inches UOS*
Floret	Not less than 1 or more than 4 inches	1-1/2 inches UOS*	4-1/2 inches UOS*

The diameter is defined as the average measurement across the bud cluster at the top of the stalk, crown or floret.

The length is defined as the total length of the stalk measured from the base of the stem to the top of the bud cluster.

*Unless otherwise specified

More information may be found on the USDA AMS [website](#).

How Fresh is Your Produce?

When it comes to buying produce, fresh is always best, right? Well, as it turns out, that's not necessarily so. Researchers at Pennsylvania State University and the University of California at Davis have recently reported that fresh produce is often depleted of many of its nutrients during extended transit and storage.

When produce is picked, the plant cells immediately begin the process of oxidative degradation, which causes many vitamins and phytochemicals to become unstable, or unusable by the human body. Data show that fresh produce provides more of certain nutrients only if it is consumed quickly after harvesting.

Some of the findings:

Studies at Penn State show that fresh spinach that was held at 39 degrees for only 8 days loses half of its folate (a B Vitamin) and carotenoids, which are the compounds that help prevent heart disease, cancer, and birth defects. Frozen spinach retains its nutrients longer because of the lower temperatures at which it is kept.

Fresh broccoli was shown to lose about half its carotenoids after just 6 days.

As much as 77% of the Vitamin C in green beans was lost after only 7 days of storage.

Processing can actually increase the levels of some beneficial nutrients, such as beta-carotene and lycopene. Lycopene has been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease and prostate cancer. While a fresh tomato contains about 3.7 milligrams of lycopene, a half cup of canned tomatoes contains 11.8 milligrams.

So - what to do? Nutritionally, your best bet might be to grow your own produce, buy locally-grown, or opt for frozen or canned produce over fresh produce that has been shipped over long distances. Processed foods are blanched before they are frozen or canned. This process stabilizes many of the nutrients by halting enzymatic action. And many commercially canned and frozen foods are packaged within only a few hours of harvest.

Loss of nutrients depends upon the nature of the compound, however. Water-soluble compounds such as Vitamins B and C in fresh produce are lost the most quickly. And while they are depleted somewhat during both the canning process and when blanched prior to freezing, those nutrients then remain fairly stable during storage. Furthermore, *The Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture* reports that fat-soluble compounds such as Vitamins A, E, and carotenoids may actually be increased in certain canned and frozen produce. Because so many variables can affect the nutritional composition of our foods, many nutritionists suggest that we simply include a wide variety and a large amount of fruits and vegetables – fresh, frozen, and canned, in our diet.

Other tips:

Shop at local farmers' markets when possible, and opt for locally-grown produce at the grocery store. Alaska-grown produce is often delivered to the stores the same day it is harvested. By comparison, it takes anywhere from several days to a few weeks for fresh produce to arrive in Alaska from its origins in the Lower-48 or abroad.

Consume stored foods quickly. Refrigerated foods should be kept between 33 and 40 degrees F (colder is best) and eaten as soon as possible. Frozen foods should be kept below 0 degrees F and used within 6 to 12 months, and canned foods should be stored between 50 and 75 degrees, and used within a year.

When cooking vegetables, use the smallest amount of water possible, for as short a time as possible. If you can, opt to use a steamer or a microwave; boiling extracts nutrients.

Bags of frozen produce that have become "clumped together", indicates that the product has been partially thawed and refrozen, which can deplete nutrients. Keep frozen products frozen.

Keep it simple! Eat more fruits and veggies, period. If buying frozen or canned produce makes life easier and increases the likelihood that you'll eat them, by all means, do so. The USDA recommends a minimum serving of 2 cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables a day.

For more information visit the websites below:

http://www.mealtime.org/uploadedFiles/Mealtime/Content/jsfaarticle_partiucdavis_april07.pdf

<http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu/datastorefiles/234-778.pdf>