



The Division of Agriculture Activities

July 2, 2014

Find us on the web at:
<http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag>

Director's Office

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To add or remove your name from our newsletter list [click here](#).

Questions or Comments?
E-Mail or call 907-761-3864.

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Director's Note

July is a busy month, with schedules ramping up as summer has almost reached its halfway point and production is in full swing. Hopefully the warm days of May will return, intermixed with rain and production will be a bountiful one for Alaska's producers!

Just a quick reminder of the Board of Agriculture and Conservation Meeting scheduled for July 2nd. The board will be hearing public comment on the Mt. McKinley Meat & Sausage. If you have an interest in the plant please plan on participating either by teleconference 1-800-315-6338 pass code at prompt 12211# or by attending in person. The meeting begins at 1:00 at the Division's main office, with public testimony running from 1-2. Written comments can also be submitted to franci.havemeister@alaska.gov. For those interested, the MMM&S survey results have been tallied and are available online at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/MMMS/MMMSurveyResultsLetterJune122014.pdf>.

Alaskan agriculture made the national news several time this past month. The Rodale News ran an article <http://www.rodalenews.com/locavore-states> on how "How Farmer's Market Friendly Is Your State?" The ranking system, known as the Locavore index was based on four measures: the number of farmer's markets, the number of consumer-supported agriculture operations (CSA'S), the number of food hubs, and the percentage of each states school districts with active Farm to School Programs. Alaska ranked 16th out of 51 (District of Columbia was included) which was up from 17th last year.

Another story was ran in The Atlantic (<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/06/flowers-from-alaska/372994/>) which highlighted Alaska's ability to produce a beautiful flower and to fill the seasonal gap in the global market which could elevate peonies to the status of roses, in an elite club of cut flowers that are available all year long.

In local news, the Peninsula Clarion <http://peninsulaclarion.com/news/2014-06-05/elodea-eradication-begins> wrote an article on "Elodea Eradication begins". Eradication efforts are currently underway on two infested lakes on the Kenai. Last summer, 68 lakes were sampled on the Kenai Peninsula and Elodea was found in only three lakes.

On a different note, the Plant Materials Center is surveying all Alaskan agricultural producers interested in future On Farm variety trials. If you are interested in participating – please complete the following survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NDY9PSQ>.

During the 2013 Annual Farm Bureau meeting, a presentation was given by the Department of Transportation (DOT) on issues pertaining to agriculture. The Division of Agriculture has worked with DOT and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and developed the Farm Plate Fact Sheet <http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/FactSheets/FarmVehiclePlates.pdf> to address some of the questions that were raised.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns please give me a call at 761-3867 or send me an email at franci.havemeister@alaska.gov.

Have a safe and happy Independence Day!

~ *Franci Havemeister*

"Freedom has its life in the hearts, the actions, the spirit of men and so it must be daily earned and refreshed - else like a flower cut from its life-giving roots, it will wither and die. ~Dwight D. Eisenhower"

Agriculture Calendar

- **Wed. July 2nd** **Board of Agriculture & Conservation Meeting.**
Division of Agriculture, 1800 Glenn Highway,
Suite 12, Palmer. 1 pm. *Details:* [here](#)

If you have an event that you would like to add to the calendar, please contact [Lora Haralson](#).

ARLF Services

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

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Marketing Section

Anticipated Job Opening in Alaska

The Alaska FFA Association anticipates posting a position this summer for the following: Three-quarter FTE state director/state FFA advisor, one-quarter FTE state FFA foundation director. Once posted, this position will be advertised as staff in the University of Alaska, Fairbanks Cooperative



Extension System. The position is anticipated to have full benefits including university health insurance and state employee retirement. The successful candidate for the anticipated position will have the opportunity to base their office in Anchorage, Fairbanks, or Palmer.

Alaska has new state legislative funding, an active and motivated Team Ag Ed, and six vested ag programs/FFA chapters. The climate is right for visionary leadership in Alaska to grow ag and natural resources education while partnering with dozens of related industry partners and businesses.

Interested parties are encouraged to check this website for the anticipated opening throughout the summer:

<https://www.uakjobs.com/applicants/jsp/shared/frameSet/FrameSet.jsp?time=1402028236661>

2014 Alaska Grown Day Agriculture Pavilion

Once again the Alaska Division of Agriculture is partnering with the Alaska State Fair in Palmer to offer a unique opportunity to our Alaska Grown members. Thursday August 28th is Alaska Grown Day at the Fair; 10 booth spaces will be made available under the Eaves of the Farm Exhibit building at a reduced rate of \$100.

The day will be heavily cross-promoted by both the Alaska State Fair and the Alaska Grown program via social media and other outlets. Historical attendance at the Fair on the second Thursday ranges from 12 – 25,000 people; where else do you have the opportunity to 'reach' that many potential customers in an 8 hour period? What a great opportunity to promote your business, products and services!

Participants in the inaugural 2013 event reported sales activity between zero and \$930 dollars. Most of the vendors highlighted that the time and effort to attend should be considered advertising time, not necessarily sales time. Many fairgoers like to browse, talk, sample, and take point of sale advertising materials, but may not be as inclined to shop as your regular customers at Farmers' Markets and other events.

Rules for the event include:

- There cannot be any prepared food that can be eaten on the spot, except for vegetables and fruits, for sale from your booth. Packaged food such as spices, canned jams, and flour can be sold.
- Each booth space will be provided with a table and two chairs. The booths are under the Eaves of the Farm Exhibit building anywhere there is some coverage, but if you want to bring a tent or canopy it is your responsibility to do so.

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Print, complete, and return the application below or email Amy.Pettit@alaska.gov to request an application.

- Each business will receive two admission passes and one special parking pass to get on grounds, unload and park in the employee lot.
- Each booth must be staffed with produce and personnel, from the opening of the Fair at noon on August 28th until 8pm that evening.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please email Amy Pettit for an application at Amy.Pettit@alaska.gov

The Division of Agriculture will select the 10 booths to participate in the event. Applications are due back to Amy by no later than **July 18th**.

ALASKA STATE FAIR - 2014 Application for AG Day

Please print clearly or type

Company Name _____

Contact Person _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Day Phone _____ Cell _____

E-mail _____

Do you plan to:

Conduct a drawing? Yes ____ No ____ If so, what: _____

Give away samples? Yes ____ No ____ If so, what: _____

Do you need 8'x10' or 10'x10' space. (please circle)

Do you need electricity? Y ____ N ____ Do you need a table and chairs? Y ____ N ____

List in detail all products and services you will be selling, distributing, or exhibiting.

Continue on the back if necessary

Selling: _____

Distributing: _____

Exhibiting: _____

Return to:

Amy Pettit
Amy.pettit@alaska.gov
Fax-907-745-7242

Office use only:

Date: _____ Contract: _____

Returned: _____ Rep: _____

Land Sales & Grazing Leases

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

Dan Proulx 907-374-3716
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Kirk Brown 907-761-3857
Kirk.Brown@alaska.gov

Mt. McKinley Meat & Sausage

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

Frank Huffman 907-745-5232
Frank.Huffman@alaska.gov

Division of Agriculture Welcomes Back Johanna Herron

The Alaska Division of Agriculture is happy to welcome Johanna Herron back as our Alaska Farm to School Coordinator! Since separating from the state last year Johanna has completed her Masters Thesis titled "Feasibility of Farm to School in Alaska" and also spent nine months working for the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets running their Farm to School Grant Program and working with many of the national leaders in Farm to School. She and her family are happy to be home in Alaska, and we are excited to work with her again!



*Welcome home,
Johanna!*



Pest Detection / Inspection Section



ORGANIC CERTIFICATION COST SHARE ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FOR 2014

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has announced that with the passage of the 2014 Farm Bill, monies will again be available for organic certification cost-share assistance for 2014, making certification more accessible for certified producers and handlers.

AMS Administrator Anne Alonzo says "Consumer demand for certified organic products is strong and growing. These investments will help more organic farmers succeed and help grow the economy in rural communities across the country."

Through the National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program, monies will be available to certified organic producers and processors in Alaska for certification-related expenses that were incurred from October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014. Payments will be up to 75 percent of an individual producer's certification costs, up to a maximum of \$750 per certification.

If you incurred organic certification costs during this time period, please contact Barbara Hanson at the Division of Agriculture at (907) 761-3854 or by email at Barb.Hanson@alaska.gov so we can ensure that you receive a cost share reimbursement application when they are distributed in October 2014.

For more information on the Cost Share program and organic certification information, please visit: <http://www.ams.usda.gov>.

Plant Materials Center

<http://plants.alaska.gov/>
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Kimberly Allen 907-745-8735
Kim.Allen@alaska.gov

Lyubo Mahlev 907-745-8782
Lyubomir.Mahlev@alaska.gov

Todd Steinlage 907-745-8138
Todd.Steinlage@alaska.gov

Heather Stewart 907-745-4469
Heather.Stewart@alaska.gov

Plant Materials Center



On-Farm Crop Trials Survey Continues

The Alaska Plant Materials Center is surveying all Alaskan agricultural producers interested in future On-Farm trials for various crop trialing. We are interested in hearing from small and large producers as well as home gardeners. If you are interested in the opportunity to be part of future trials please take the time to fill out the following survey. We will select future trial sites based on the information provided in this survey which is designed to help us match-up both producer and project needs.

Help us, help Alaskan agriculture!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NDY9PSQ>

For additional information please contact: Rob Carter

Robert.Carter@alaska.gov (907) 745-8127

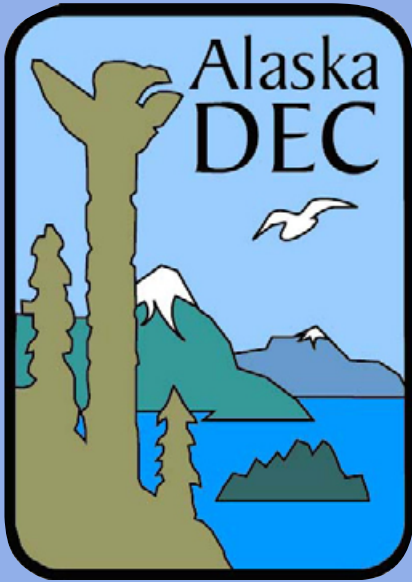


Bacterial Ring Rot of Potato

Bacterial ring rot (caused by *Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *sepedonicus*) is one of the most important diseases of potato, with high losses possible in both field and storage. The disease also results in trade losses, due to zero-tolerance policies. Foliar symptoms can include: wilting of leaves and stems, leaves rolling at edges, interveinal chlorosis (yellowing between veins), and leaf necrosis (death). Infected plants cut near the base and squeezed may show milky bacterial ooze. Tubers cut at the stem-end in cross section, may show a yellow to brown discoloration in the vascular ring, progressing to a “cheesy” rot with separation of the tissues. Symptom development is dependent on variety and environmental conditions. Cool, wet summers and irrigation tend to mask symptom expression.

The bacterium is often spread during seed cutting and planting operations. Handling of infected plants can spread the bacterium to planting and harvesting equipment, trucks, storage surfaces, etc., where the bacterium can survive as dried biofilms for upwards of five years. Management of ring rot includes: rotation of crops, roguing all volunteers, use of certified seed from a limited-generation system, and scrupulous sanitation of all equipment and surfaces. Equipment must be free of organic matter, and cleaned prior to the application of a disinfectant. In the spring of 2014 the Alaska Division of Agriculture began offering ring rot testing for potato producers throughout the state. For more information contact the Alaska Plant Materials Center at 907-745-4469.





Environmental Health

Alaska Department of
Environmental Conservation

Dec.Alaska.gov/eh/
907-269-7501

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Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation: Division of Environmental Health

Public Focus on Local Foods and Care of Livestock

Today consumers living in urban environments are separated from the farm and now want a better understanding of where and how animals are raised. This includes the livestock management system and its practices such as the feeds that are fed, procedures that are performed such as castration and dehorning, and confinement housing versus free range. Farmers and meat processors know that animal welfare is crucial to all stages of production for the good of the animal, to produce safe, wholesome, quality meat and to minimize production cost. So you need a comprehensive farm plan that addresses animal care as well as proper animal health management while still making a profit.

The message is a reminder that some livestock handling practices can ease stress on the animals so they recover faster and continue to eat and grow; the end result is more efficient weight gain and more profit. Take time to re-evaluate how you handle your animals whether it is for routine medical care such as vaccinations, castration or for moving or transporting animals (loading and unloading from a trailer). Proper animal husbandry is good for the animal, but will improve the image of agriculture in Alaska with the consumer at the local markets and increase sales. There's more consumer focus on animal care and food safety; farmers need to be proactive at getting their message to the public about their animal husbandry and health management practices.

So take a look at your farm management plan and compare it to the industry standards. National Chicken Council has published animal welfare guidelines for poultry farmers so they can ensure that poultry have a balanced diet, adequate water, and the proper space to move around and will not experience disease, pain, injury, fear, distress or discomfort. Both the Beef and Pork Checkoff funds have been used to publish guidelines for the care and handling of cattle and swine, which includes information on the food, water and care that are needed to protect the health and well being of livestock. These as well as other resources are free online but if you have any questions contact your veterinarian or local Cooperative Extension Agent, they can review your herd or flock plan and make some suggestions for improving production and profit.

If people want to know how you care for and raise your animals make sure you tell them your story and how your management plans ensures the quality of the products you grow or produce.





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UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

School of Natural Resources and Extension

NEW UAF Veterinarian, Lisa Lunn

Story contributed by Nancy Tarnai

Not long after schools were dismissed for the summer in the Fairbanks North Star Borough, over a dozen teachers went right back to class.

As part of the Agriculture in the Classroom workshop, teachers had some classroom instruction, but also visited muskoxen, reindeer, goats, sheep, chicken and cattle, and learned about qiviut, pasture grazing techniques, community and school gardens and practical classroom experiments like making butter.

Taught by Melissa Sikes of the Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District and Marilyn Krause, a Ryan Middle School teacher, the workshop was held June 3-6. It emphasized not only educating the teachers about agriculture in Alaska but gave them ways to incorporate their new knowledge into classrooms.

"It's really important for kids to know agriculture is a big part of their lives; it's where food comes from," Sikes said. "There are a lot of misconceptions about Alaska."

She hopes the project ultimately leads to more children raising animals and even considering the possibilities of becoming farmers. "We want to inspire kids to see farming as a career," Sikes said.

As for the teachers, Sikes envisions them taking traditional lessons they would teach anyway and adding an agricultural angle to it, be it math, science or art. "The possibilities are endless," she said. On the final day of lessons, Sikes said even though she was tired from all the activities, "it was worth it to see the teachers so excited," she said.

Mari LaBrosse, a teacher at Ryan Middle School and Hunter Elementary School, will now incorporate planting and fibers into her classrooms. "I want to teach healthy eating with food from a garden," she said. She was inspired to teach nutrition and encourage students to do science fair projects on growing plants. "This is important because kids may not have access. Kids love anything to do with food."

Some of the demonstrations were as simple as putting a farm fresh egg in a glass of water and an egg from the supermarket in another glass. The teachers had to decide which one would float. Surprisingly, it was the fresher egg that plummeted to the bottom of the water while the older egg floated. Sikes explained the science behind the concept and gave the teachers sample lesson plans based on the parts of an egg.

Finally, she told the teachers to let the children try a taste test. Sometimes when she visits classrooms, she concludes the lesson by making scrambled eggs. "I love taste testing with the kids," Sikes said.

Passing around sheep fiber, Krause said, "The kids like to see and feel the different textures." In her classrooms, students get to dye, spin and felt wool. "A lot of kids have never seen sheep hair, especially city kids," she said. "They learn how long it takes to make a sweater."

"Teachers are continual learners," substitute teacher Jenny Tse said. "I'm excited

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SCHOOL OF NATURAL RESOURCES
& AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

School of Natural Resources & Agricultural Sciences

to share my passion with the kids.” She enjoyed the Ag in the Classroom seminar so much she wants to take it again next year.

She pointed out that she learned about the peony industry and how to grow this new crop for Alaska, and she learned to card wool.

“You can integrate agriculture into every subject,” Tse said.

Tanana Middle School

science teacher Emily Metzgar said what she learned will help her give students a better understanding of how science has real life applications. “I’ll be able to share what people are doing in Fairbanks agriculturally,” she said. She also got ideas on what subjects she wants to explore on her own and ideas for research projects she intends to pursue.

“It’s good for kids to get better connected to the local area. This involves chemistry, geology, water and soil. It’s going to make it more interesting for kids.”

The workshop was sponsored by FSWCD, Alaska Farm Bureau and Natural Resources Conservation Service. It was hosted by the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Several UAF professors and staff members from the School of Natural Resources and Extension gave lectures, presentations and demonstrations.

For more information, visit

<http://www.agclassroom.org/state/summaries/alaska.cfm>



Teachers who attended the Agriculture in the Classroom workshop in early June got to visit with a kid at Arctic Woods Farm. Marilyn Krause, farmer, teacher and Ag in the Classroom instructor, holds the goat. (UAF photo by Nancy Tarnai)

