



# The Division of Agriculture Activities

July 02, 2013

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

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## In This Issue

- [Director's Note](#)
- [Mat-Su 5th Annual Farm Tour](#)
- [Alaska Grown at State Fair](#)
- [Last Year of Farm to School Program](#)
- [Focus on Phytophthora ramorum](#)
- [Ethnobotany Garden Tours](#)
- [Alaska Water System Classification and Use](#)
- [Alaskan Sustainable Livestock Production](#)

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## Director's Note

The year 2013 has definitely been interesting. So far, Alaska has experienced its longest period of seasonal snowfall, one of the coldest months of May on record, and most recently extreme temperatures throughout the state with very little rainfall. Each season has delivered an unexpected surprise, so hopefully fall will follow sort and provide a few additional weeks to the growing season.

This is a busy time of year for everyone, and the Division of Agriculture is no exception. This past week, June 23 – 29, 2013 was declared Invasive Weeds Awareness Week and during this week, a meeting was held to discuss the development of a State Wide Strategy for [Elodea](#). This meeting brought together several state agencies, soil & water districts, and experts in the field. We look forward to continuing the discussion and developing a plan to address elodea in Alaska.

On June 28th, the Governor signed both [House Bill 40](#) and [HCR 001](#) in downtown Palmer. The signing was well attended by legislators, cabinet members and the general public. The City of Palmer hosted the event during its weekly "Friday Fling", Mat-Su Farm Bureau members took time out of their busy day to stage tractors around the stage, and with the combined efforts of everyone it was a great success. Representative Hughes joined the Governor on the stage for the Signing of HB40, which broadens the definition of buildings available for Municipal Tax Farm Deferments. Representative Stoltze joined the Governor as he spoke about HCR01 and the creation of a Sub-Cabinet to address agriculture issues and the barriers producers face. It is an exciting time as agriculture comes more and more to the forefront in Alaska.

Once again, the [Governor's Annual Mat-Su Picnic](#) will feature all Alaska grown. This year's event is scheduled for July 19th from 4-7 pm at the Alaska State Fairgrounds, Raven Hall. If you are in the area and want some great food, fine entertainment, and enjoyable company, please join us and bring your family and friends!



There are several conferences scheduled this summer so be sure to mark them on your calendar. The Pacific Northwest Economic Region Conference [PNWER 2013 Summit](#) will be held July 14-19th in Anchorage. The agenda is full and covers a variety of issues from invasive weeds to the impact of GMO's. One portion of the meeting will cover Cross Border Livestock & Health, so if you are livestock producer or interested in such be sure to attend. Later in the summer the [8th Circumpolar Agriculture Conference](#) is scheduled Sept 29th – Oct 3rd in Girdwood. Register now to guarantee space availability.

As always, if you have any concerns or comments please give me a call at 907-761-3867 or drop me an e-mail at [franci.havemeister@alaska.gov](mailto:franci.havemeister@alaska.gov).

*Have a safe and happy 4th of July!*

*~ Franci Havemeister*

*"Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you'd have preferred to talk."  
~ Doug Larson*

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## Mat-Su Farm Bureau 5th Annual Farm Tour

*Thursday, August 1<sup>st</sup>* is the date for the farm tour hosted by the Mat-Su Farm Bureau. Farms included on the tour will showcase VanderWeele Farms LLC, Havemeister Dairy Farm, Pitchfork Ranch, Pyrah's Pioneer Peak Farm and Rempel's Family Farm. An all Alaska Grown lunch will be provided as well as an Alaska Grown goody bag filled with over \$50 in Market Bucks to spend at local farmers markets. Tickets are \$65 for this all day event. To register please call Margaret Adsit at 907-982-4387 or [akfarmtours@gmail.com](mailto:akfarmtours@gmail.com).

## Marketing Section

### 2013 Alaska Grown Pavilion at the Alaska State Fair

- Have you ever considered applying for a booth at the Alaska State Fair?
- Are you intimidated by the costs?
- Is a 12 day commitment too much for you?
- Here's your chance to try it out at a reduced rate!

### *Thursday August 29th is Alaska Grown Day at the Fair.*

The Division of Agriculture (Division) will sponsor 10 booths for Alaska Grown members to display and sell their products on that day.

If you are interested in participating in this special event, please indicate by filling out the below form:

**Business/Farm Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Person Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Person Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Person E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Alaska Grown Authorization Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Products you would sell/display:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please fax, mail or email your form to:

**Amy Pettit**  
Division of Agriculture  
1800 Glenn Hwy, Ste 12  
Palmer, AK 99645  
FAX: 907-745-7242

If you have any questions about this opportunity, please contact Amy Pettit at [Amy.Pettit@alaska.gov](mailto:Amy.Pettit@alaska.gov) or 907-761-3864.

***Forms are due back to the Division by Wednesday, July 31st, 2013.***

By signing and submitting this form, you agree to the following:

- Since space is limited to 10 booths by our agreement with the Fair, the Division reserves the right to select which businesses/farms will participate in this event.
- 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 fish, flour, etc. 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, where there is some coverage, but if you want to bring a tent or canopy, it is your responsibility to do so.
- 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 product and personnel, from the opening of the Fair at noon on August 29th until 8pm that evening.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Alaska Farm to School Program Update

## Plans For the Farm To School Program's Last Year

The Farm to School Program is a 4 year program with a sunset date of June, 2014. We are entering the final year of the program with some goals that will compliment many state-wide efforts as they relate to the food system and childhood nutrition. Partnering with other state agencies, schools, and universities has been one of the secrets to the success of our program and we want to share with you our plans and partners for this final year.

### Partnership with Cooperative Extension Services, UAF

In 2011 the Alaska Farm to School Program partnered with Cooperative Extension Services, UAF, to do recipe development using local barley flour and recipes from the school food service. This resulted in recipes that incorporate local barley flour and also meet the new school meal regulations for whole grain requirements. The recipe was translated into batch sizes that any school district in Alaska could use and can be found on our webpage at: [http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag\\_SchoolFood.htm](http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_SchoolFood.htm).



Kate Idzorek from CES doing trials with barley rolls at Fairbanks School District Central Kitchen facility.

We are excited to renew this partnership and have plans to develop 6-8 more recipes. Recipes include: vegetable beef stew using local kale, carrots, onions, and game or beef, zucchini and barley breakfast muffin, vegetarian chili, and much more. There are school food advisors that represent both large and small districts. These recipes will compliment the Nutritional Alaskan Foods for Schools reimbursable grant program administered by Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development.

### Teacher Grab Bags

We will be teaming up with some experienced teachers and a university internship to create teacher Grab Bags for schools that have a school garden. These bags would feature a lesson for garden

based education and be available to the teachers to check out and use in schools with school gardens. We hope to make them easy to access and use, clearly labeled as to what standard and grade level they are appropriate for, and if they could be used for an indoor or outdoor lesson.

Thanks to the Department of Health and Social Services, Obesity Prevention and Control Program we will be able to make a set for each school that has a garden on site!

### An Insider's Guide to Alaska School Meals

We will be teaming up with the Department of Early Education and Development, Child Nutrition Programs to make an Alaska guide to school meals. The purpose of this guide is to outline how Alaska schools currently provide meals to their children and how the Farm to School program is working with schools to encourage greater use of fresh local food options and helping make Alaska children make wiser, healthier choices about the food they eat.

### School Garden Census

In 2011 we conducted a state-wide school garden census to see how many schools in the state had garden based education opportunities for students. We found that 20% of the schools in the state, more than 100, had a school garden of some sort. We will be conducting another census when school starts

up for 2013 and look forward to seeing if there was an increase. School gardens offer a great opportunity for hands on agriculture and

nutrition lessons which

can lead to better food choices, a new generation of farmers, and a heightened understanding of seasonal and local foods.



Students from the Galena Interior Learning Academy work on a garden to grow potatoes and carrots.



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## On Farm Food Safety Workshops

We are thrilled to be working with the Division of Agriculture Inspection Team to offer On Farm Food Safety Workshops all over the state. We have just finished hosting one in Homer and Kenai and have plans to hold a workshop in Skagway, Haines, Juneau, and Sitka. Down the road we plan on hosting a workshop in the Bristol Bay region, Bethel, and Kodiak. If your community is interested in having a workshop hosted please contact Johanna Herron or Barb Hanson at the Division of Agriculture; [Johanna.herron@alaska.gov](mailto:Johanna.herron@alaska.gov), [barbara.hanson@alaska.gov](mailto:barbara.hanson@alaska.gov)

These workshops target both large and small growers, farmers' markets, home gardeners, and anyone interested in learning more about ways to grow, handle, and distribute fresh produce in a safe way.

For updates, news, grant opportunities,



Mock food safety audit at Basically Basil farm in Fairbanks.

and announcements join our listserv at:

<http://list.state.ak.us/soalists/akfarmtoschool/jl.htm>

Don't forget to check us out

on facebook at: [www.facebook.com/AlaskaFarmToSchool](http://www.facebook.com/AlaskaFarmToSchool)

For more information about the Alaska Farm-to-School program, or if you have any questions, contact Johanna Herron at [Johanna.herron@alaska.gov](mailto:Johanna.herron@alaska.gov) or (907) 374-3714.

## Pest Detection / Inspection Section

### Focus on *Phytophthora ramorum*, Sudden Oak Death

*Phytophthora ramorum* is a plant pathogen that causes the disease Sudden Oak Death (SOD), also referred to as ramorum leaf blight. Although Oak species do not occur naturally in Alaska, *P. ramorum* infects other plant species that are either sold as nursery stock or occur natively in the state, such as *Rhododendron*, *Viburnum*, *Rosa*, *Rubus*, and *Vaccinium* to name a few. *Rhododendron* is sold and planted in Alaska and appears to do well in the southeast coastal Alaska climate. The host range for *P. ramorum* is relatively broad, with about 25 proven hosts and 72 plants associated with *P. ramorum* having been identified. In 2003 and 2004, the Division and USDA jointly conducted targeted surveys at nurseries and other commercial sites in SE Alaska. Since then, usually while conducting other surveys or nursery visits throughout the state, the Division has opportunistically surveyed for *P. ramorum* and has continued to not find it present in Alaska.

*Phytophthora ramorum* is established in several coastal locations of California and one in Oregon. The likely pathway of the disease outside of these locations is primarily via infected plant material (e.g., nursery stock). Once in an area, it can potentially spread via streams or rivers to new locations.



Photo: E. Chamberlain, USDA APHIS PPQ, Wallingford, CT.

The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) oversees the *P. ramorum* national program with the goal of preventing any infected plants from being moved around the country as well as helping to

prevent any infected nursery / landscape plants from transferring the disease into wild plants known to be susceptible, which for Alaska, would include blueberries, huckleberries, and salmonberries.

If commercial nursery stock is shipped to Alaska from a nursery where *P. ramorum* has been confirmed positive, APHIS responds

## Plant Materials Center

<http://plants.alaska.gov/>

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by working with the Division to follow up via Trace Forward ([http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant\\_health/plant\\_pest\\_info/pram/protocols.shtml#response](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/pram/protocols.shtml#response)) to ensure the nursery stock shipped to Alaska is indeed free from *P. ramorum*. This generally involves communicating with recipients to monitor the plant material in question for signs of *P. ramorum* or having an official sample sent to a diagnostic lab for confirmation.

The disease is difficult to diagnose by visual inspection alone, as it is difficult to differentiate the symptoms of *P. ramorum* to those caused by other plant pathogens. Symptoms include either bark cankers that may kill the host or foliar blights that may serve as a reservoir for the pathogen. Laboratory analysis and DNA testing are required for confirmation. Plants in the following genera are considered highly susceptible to *P. ramorum*: Camellia, Rhododendron, Viburnum, Pieris, and Kalmia (mountain laurel).

If you suspect that trees or plants are infected with *P. ramorum*, please contact the [Division of Agriculture](#) or your local Cooperative Extension Service office nearest your community. For further information on *P. ramorum*, please see the following links. Thank you for helping to keep the North American plant environment healthy.

[Click here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#) for more information on *Phytophthora ramorum*.

[Click here](#) to download more information on Viburnum.

[Click here](#) for photographs of Sudden Oak Death.

[Click here](#) to download the informative 'Stop the Spread' brochure.

[Click here](#) to download the National Pest Alert on *Phytophthora ramorum*.

## Plant Materials Center

### Ethnobotany Teaching Garden Conducts Tours

Summer is the showcase time for the Ethnobotany Teaching Garden at the Plant Materials Center. On Memorial Day Weekend Peggy Hunt presented at "The 2nd Annual Alaskan Plants as Food and Medicine Symposium" in Girdwood, Alaska. Put together by the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, over 300 people from Alaska attended. The mission for the Symposium was "Coming Together to Promote Traditional Plant Knowledge and Ethical Harvesting." This, along with the goal

of promoting "Store Outside Your Door" dovetailed easily with the presentation on Devil's Club and learning which plants can be used in the native plant garden at the PMC.

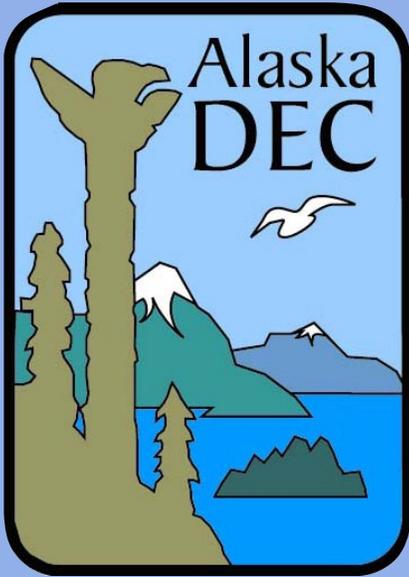
Throughout the summer tours and special topics are scheduled in the Garden. Just



The Ethnobotany Garden at the PMC is in glorious bloom.

this Friday an intertribal group visited for 4 hours to explore uses of native plants. One woman came from Wrangell to attend. Another wrote "Thank You for the tours and that method of touring is something I do like to do for people when from 'out of state' to have as an example of Alaska in a convenient location WITH a live human to be able to have questions answered." She also sent several pictures, one of which is included here.

Please visit the garden! It has signs throughout, so can be a learning experience on your own. If you want a tour, call Peggy at 745-8721 or email [peggy.hunt@alaska.gov](mailto:peggy.hunt@alaska.gov).



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# Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation: Division of Environmental Health

## Alaska Water System Classification and Water Use

Safe, healthy drinking water is an important part of any home and any agricultural business. The design, construction, operations, and monitoring of a drinking water system are crucial to ensure safe drinking water. From an engineering perspective, the design of a water system generally scales up or down with the required water demand. The basic components of the water system are the same. However, since the risk to the population served goes up as the size of the population served goes up, regulatory oversight also increases. The size and use of the system defines the “classification” of the water system, assuming some of the water is used for human consumption. The three basic types of drinking water system “classes” are outlined below. Most agricultural businesses have at least one drinking water system in one of these categories.

1. Private water systems are water systems which have their own source, where each source serves only a single family home or a duplex home. These are not regulated by the State of Alaska Drinking Water Program.

2. A “Class C” public water system is a system that is only regulated by the State of Alaska, and is too small to qualify for federal oversight. A Class C system serves less than 25 people on a daily basis, or any number of people for less than 60 days per year (these days do not have to be consecutive), and is not a private water system. Class C systems are only required to register. Few systems have engineering approval.

3. A federally regulated public water system serves 25 or more people per day, or 15 or more service connections (buildings), for more than 60 days per year (these days do not have to be consecutive). All federally regulated public water systems require engineering plan approval. The engineering requirements are basically the same for all federally regulated public

water systems. However the ongoing water testing requirements vary with the type of federally regulated system. There are 3 subclasses of federally regulated systems; Transient Non-Community, Non-Transient Non-Community, and Community. The sub-classifications are based on whether the same population is using the water every day, and how many days out of the year the water system is operational.

In many agricultural systems, a large portion of the water system flow is often needed for uses other than human consumption, such as livestock or irrigation. Water systems used exclusively for non human needs have no drinking water engineering or compliance requirements. However, the water source for any water use, including livestock and irrigation, should be maintained and kept free from possible contamination risks to protect the water source for all users.

Additionally, if there are multiple water systems in use, there is a potential for a connection between the water systems. If one includes human use and the other does not, it is a “cross connection” and presents a possible health risk to the humans using the system. Cross connections may also occur within a single system that uses water for both human and agricultural uses. A cross connection control program is essential in identifying and managing potential risks in systems with multiple sources and human and agricultural uses.

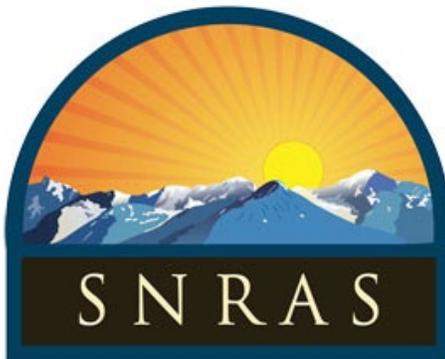
For more information on the drinking water systems please check our website at: <http://dec.alaska.gov/eh/dw/index.htm>.

Cross connection control information is available at: <http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/drinkingwater/pws/crossconnectioncontrol/index.cfm>.





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# UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

## School of Natural Resources & Agricultural Sciences

### Alaskans Work Toward Sustainable Livestock Production

What began as a chance to gather and talk about livestock issues in Alaska has spurred university researchers to work hand in hand with the state's producers.

A new UAF publication, [Sustainable Livestock Production in Alaska](#), captures the highlights of a conference held in Anchorage in October 2011. A followup conference was held a year later.

"Those of us at the university were energized by the response we got from people," Rowell said. "Ours may be a small farm community but the people are full of ideas. It was very positive. Now we just have to find the money to move forward."

When the original conference was held, the purpose was to focus on the red meat system by inviting livestock producers, processors, regulators, policy makers, animal health care practitioners, food safety professionals and researchers for round table discussions. The conference initiated dialog that defined barriers and sought ways to grow a healthy, sustainable livestock system, focusing on production; processing and distribution; and marketing and retail.

"We wanted to see what the bottlenecks

stakeholder input, she added. The goal is to form a steering committee to help define the advisory role of stakeholders, approaches to solicit regional input, means and frequency of communication between the group and the research team, incorporation of new memberships, membership turnover and future recruitment.

"We identified key people and when the funding settles we're going to form a stakeholder group," Rowell said.

When participants at the first conference said grazing practices were a priority for them, a second workshop was held to focus primarily on that. Fiber producers requested an extra day to work on their special concerns. An outcome of that gathering is that Rowell is helping look for possibilities to fund a custom fiber mill.

Another result of the meetings was that SNRAS now has a graduate student studying grazing practices at UAF's Large Animal Research Station. While muskoxen will be the focus of the student's research, her work will include basic principles that will apply to any species.

"We have the capacity and the land base to produce enough meat to feed many more Alaskans but we have not done it. Why not?" the report states.

Thanks to the willingness of farmers and others to meet with university researchers the answers and methods should be defined and addressed.

"The Alaska Division of Agriculture has been a great supporter of

everything we've done," Rowell said. The conference was supported by the National Institute for Food and Agriculture, USDA Award Number 2011-68004-20091.

To obtain a printed version of the report, email Rowell at [jerowell@alaska.edu](mailto:jerowell@alaska.edu).



David Poppe, Nenana Urban Farms, with Dexter cow Clara and her 4-hour-old bull calf on Sept 28, 2011. Photo: School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences, UAF.

were, what was working and solicit suggestions on how to improve," said School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences Assistant Professor Jan Rowell, conference coordinator and author of the recent report.

The new report serves as a key element of