



ALASKA DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE NEWSLETTER

Issue 17 | December 2025

Wishing joy to all this holiday season



By Director Bryan Scoresby

Merry Christmas to all and Happy New Year to each of you. This Christmas season is the most wonderful time of year for many. I hope your family

celebrations include giving and lifting those in need. The joy in giving is a gift that comes back to us and lifts us as well. The tradition of giving gifts brings great joy to both the giver and the receiver. May your Christmas celebration be extra happy this year.

As we look forward to the new year, we must consider the good and bad of the past year. One area of planning is always taxes. From my accounting class years ago, the professor was clear: Evading taxes is illegal, but avoiding taxes is not against the law. Putting taxes off for payment later is often sound financial management. We could make a list of all the taxes we pay, but my focus in this newsletter is on property tax on farmland and farm buildings.

There was a change in the law over the last year or two regarding property tax exemptions for farmland and farm buildings. The old rules for farm exemption required farmers to have at least 10% of their Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) come from agricultural activities. Should a farmer have off-farm income, which is quite common, their



farm AGI would have to be significant. The new rules require filing Schedule F with your income taxes and having at least \$2,500 in sales. When this law changed, many discussions came from this office. I want to express my gratitude to those who helped secure the approval of this new property tax law. There were the usual government officials; legislators; Governor Dunleavy, who signed the bill; the support of farm groups all around the state; and many farmers who testified in favor of the bill.

The Fairbanks North Star Borough, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Kodiak Island Borough, and Matanuska-Susitna Borough all offer reduced or exempt property taxes for those farmers who apply. Application deadlines vary by borough and can be as early as January 15. Plan early to avoid being disappointed.



Buy local. Year-round.



By Mia Kirk

For the Alaska Grown \$5 Challenge this month, we are highlighting Alaska Grown poinsettias. Not only do they add color to your home, but

they also bring cheer during the darkest days of winter this holiday season. I think it was a couple of years ago that I discovered them at my local grocery store in Palmer. They definitely caught my attention with the assortment of colors and sizes, and now I'm asking when they will arrive. If you

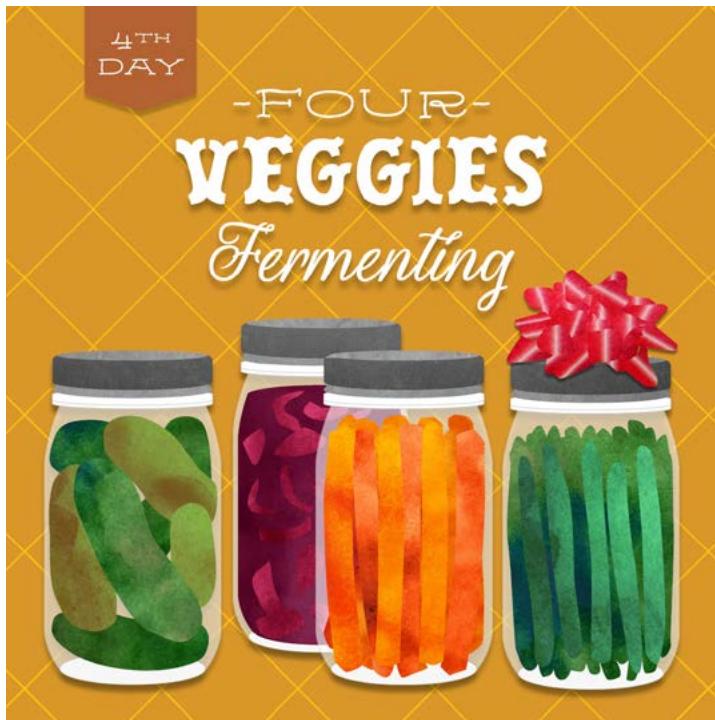
are cruising the aisles at your local grocery store, I would encourage you to seek them out and ask for Alaska Grown! When there is enough customer demand, the stores will supply us with more Alaska Grown products. This is how we continue to support our local producers and get the freshest products that Alaskans deserve, year-round!

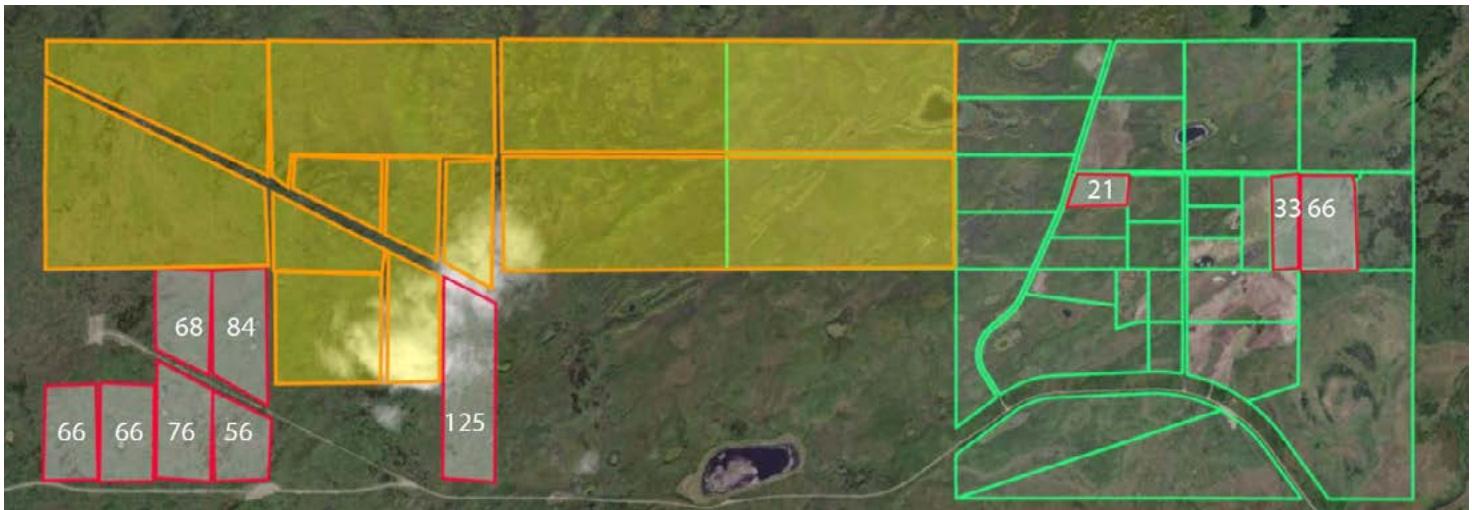
On our Facebook page, we are showcasing the “12 Days of Alaska Grown,” which highlights our favorite Alaska Grown products leading up to Christmas. Whether you seek inspiration for cooking with Alaska Grown products or need some great gift ideas for the holidays, check out our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/dnr.alaskagrown/>.

Alaska FFA gains three chapters

In 2025, the Alaska FFA Association continued to see growth, with over 500 members across the state participating in events related to careers and leadership in agriculture, food, and natural resources-related pathways. In 2025, three new chapters were chartered in Anchorage, where students are excited to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for careers in ocean and marine science. Looking ahead, Alaska FFA is excited to celebrate 50 years in Alaska in 2026.

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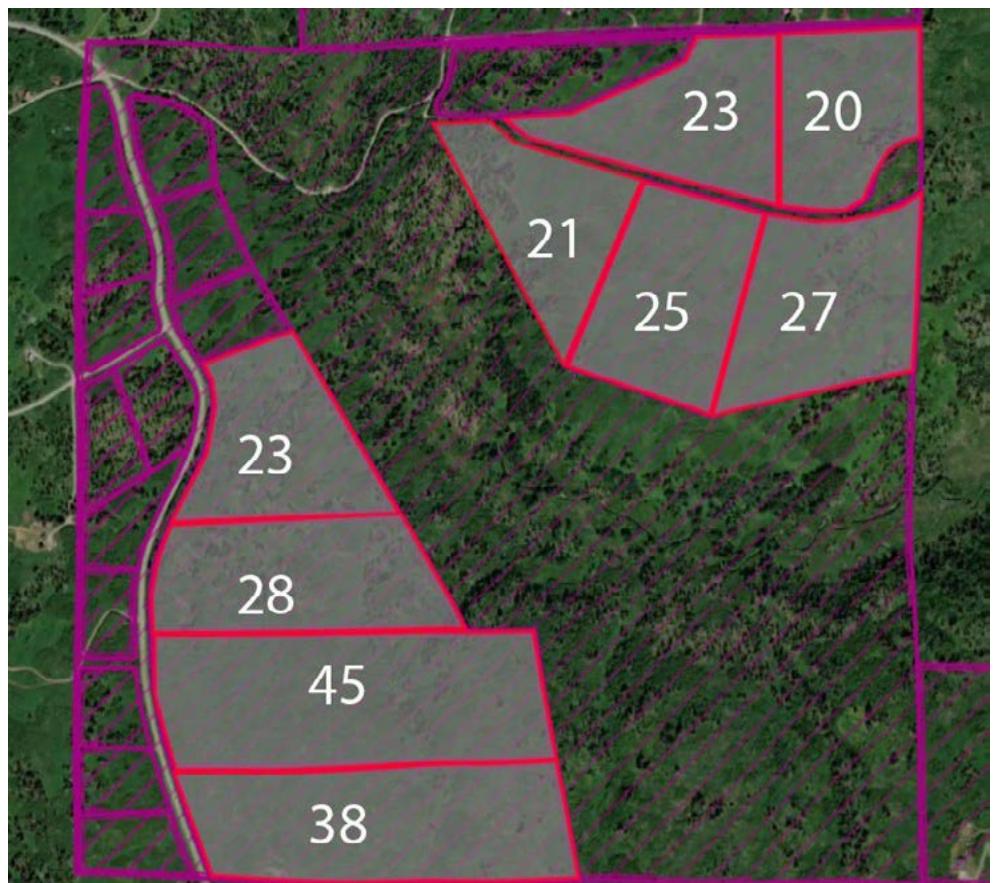
2026 Agricultural Land Auction

As we roll into 2026, we are excited to announce the 2026 Agricultural Land Auction! We have been working with our sister agency at the DNR Division of Mining, Land and Water (DMLW) and will have two land sales in 2026:

- Nenana-Totchaket Agricultural Project Areas Phase 1b and reoffer parcels in Phase 1a - 10 parcels total, ranging from 21 to 125 acre parcels, and
- North Fork Micro Ag Project Area near Anchor Point - 9 parcels, ranging from 20 to 45 acres.

To receive the most up-to-date information on the 2026 Agricultural Land Auction, you can sign up for email notifications at <https://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/landsales/email/>. Specific questions may be sent to Agricultural Land Specialist, Erik M. Johnson at erik.johnson@alaska.gov or by calling 907-761-3863.

The 2026 Nenana-Totchaket Agricultural Auction parcels are pictured above in red outline with grey fill. Proposed 2028 Agricultural Auction parcels are shown above in orange outline with orange fill. 2026 North Fork Micro Agricultural Auction parcels are pictured below in red outline with grey fill.



PMC battles winter weather while Seed House construction nearly complete



By *Casey Dinkel*

November started with a bang, bringing near-zero temperatures and six inches of snow, which provided much-needed snow cover for perennial native grasses planted last spring. Unfortunately, the snowpack did not stick around for long, as temperatures warmed dramatically to over 40 degrees in the second week of November. Due to temperatures above freezing and strong winds, our snowpack quickly melted, leaving the ground exposed to the winter elements. Ponding water from melted snow froze once the temperature dropped back below zero. This ice encapsulation will likely smother portions of our production grass fields that were planted the previous spring. Fortunately, we have accounted for this type of frequent weather scenario that

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usually occurs several times during the winter at the PMC. To combat these warming, melting, and refreezing events, we will overplant and/or plant multiple breeder and foundation blocks to account for winter kill loss. With crossed fingers, we hope to receive more snow for winter insulation and spring soil moisture next growing season.

Construction on our seed-cleaning facility continued, with electricians and mechanical installers working diligently throughout November. With the mechanical room nearly complete, contractors will soon be able to install electrical panels, boilers, and VFD controls. We hope to complete the seed house construction by the end of January 2026. Once construction efforts are complete, PMC staff will undergo a two-week training course covering the entire seed cleaning line, the dust collection system, and operational safety measures.

Last but not least, all PMC staff have been nose-to-the-grindstone as they secure grant funding, report on 2025 field operations, and gear up for next year's growing season. Our field staff have also remained very productive as they fix farm equipment, maintain buildings, and keep the facility grounds plowed and treated with ice melt. With the winter solstice just around the corner, we look forward to the return of daylight and to spring, drawing us closer one day at a time.

2025 CALENDAR

3 Months At-A-Glance

DECEMBER

5 World Soil Day

21 Winter Solstice

25 Christmas Day

JANUARY

1 New Years Day

23 National Pie Day

FEBRUARY

14 Valentine's Day

16 Presidents' Day

21-28 National FFA Week