



# ALASKA DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE NEWSLETTER

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## Agriculture activities abound in May



*By Director Bryan Scoresby*

Spring is in full swing with farmers in the field, crops being planted, and animals out to pasture. The optimism of

a farmer is always impressive. A lot of planning, logistics, finances, labor resources, and equipment are in place. Then seeds or live plants are planted in the ground, with the hope of a harvest.

We continually seek opportunities to promote your agricultural products to the retail sector. We welcome all ideas for promoting our industry. Our marketing team put together an all-Alaska Grown dinner meal video, which is posted on social media and YouTube. Encourage all your family and friends to spend \$5.00 per week or more on Alaska Grown products.

Staff participated in Drive Your Tractor to Work Day, and we celebrated Alaska Agriculture Day at the Plant Materials Center with an Alaska Grown luncheon. Alaska Grown beef burgers, potato salad, Dutch oven potatoes, potato chips, and black gold brownies. You really can eat mostly Alaska Grown foods if you look for them.

I want to express my appreciation for the talents of all our staff. Our auditing and inspection team,

our loan officers, our marketing team, the FFA advisor, our seed cleaning group, our agronomic knowledge, seed production and cleaning services, and lab services are all here to help you. Our sole purpose is to help you achieve greater success.

### **49th Alaska State FFA Convention a huge success**

240 members and friends of the Alaska FFA Association came together to participate in the 49th Alaska State FFA Convention. The week began with the Alaska FFA Day of Service, where students packed 50,000 dry meals to be donated to the Mat-Su Food Bank and the Food Bank of Alaska, benefiting communities statewide. The convention was four days packed full of competitive Career and Leadership Development Events (CDEs & LDEs). These events encompass a range of disciplines, including Veterinary Science, Environmental and Natural Resources, Extemporaneous Public Speaking, and Agriscience Fair, where students showcase the skills they have learned that will apply to their future careers. The winners of these events will advance to the National FFA Convention in October. Students also participated in twelve different workshops and tours of local agriculture, food, and natural resources businesses, giving them insight and examples for their future pursuits in agriculture and natural resources.

# Spring brings opportunities to support local



By Mia Kirk

For the Alaska Grown \$5 Challenge this month, we are recognizing Alaska's farmers' markets as they open, marking the official start of the season.

According to the 2024-2025 Edible Alaska's Alaska Farmers Market Directory, there are 65 markets, food hubs, CSAs, and farm stands statewide. Please visit the Alaska Farmers Market Association's (AFMA) website at <https://alaskafarmersmarkets.org/> to locate a market near you! What a great way to support farmers weekly in the \$5 Challenge by visiting your local markets!

It was mentioned in the February issue that another way to support the \$5 Challenge is to seek out restaurants that feature Alaska



Grown products on their menus. We created window clings and decals with the new Alaska Grown Restaurant Recognition logo, and the promotional materials are now available for use. If you are a restaurant owner or know of a restaurant with Alaska Grown products on the menu that may be interested in the Alaska Grown Restaurant Recognition program, please email [dnr.alaskagrown@alaska.gov](mailto:dnr.alaskagrown@alaska.gov).

This year, we recognized Alaska Agriculture Day (the first Tuesday of May) with a "Cooking with Alaska Grown" pilot video. We hope this will be the first of many cooking videos that explore new recipes using Alaska Grown ingredients. This episode focused on a potato and ham bake prepared by Director Scoresby and Grants Administrator Chiddix. Thank you to Allen & Peterson Cooking and Appliance Center in Anchorage for allowing us to use their kitchen. You can watch the video at <https://youtu.be/lnOmWOWzypM?si=RqeJiyTfCxLonOti>.

It is the time of year to nominate the 2026 Farm Family of the Year! We, at the Alaska Division of Agriculture in partnership with the Alaska State Fair, invite the public to submit nominations for the 26th Annual Farm Family of the Year award! Since 2000, this award has honored hardworking Alaskan Farm families. Don't delay, nominate a farm family by June 13th at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2025FarmFamily>. The winning Farm Family of the Year will be presented with the award at this year's Alaska State Fair Director's Reception in Palmer, Alaska.



# PMC prepped for planting and production



By Casey Dinkel

With the fields free of snow in April, staff at the Alaska Plant Materials Center (PMC) were able to prepare the ground for spring planting.

Equipment operators plowed, disked, and cultipacked roughly 77 acres. Staff also delineated this ground for planting of foundation grains, grasses, and potatoes. This field layout is essential for maintaining minimum isolation distances between similar species of grains and grass. It is also important to rotate potato fields to reduce the potential for disease transmission. We currently rotate potatoes on a five-year cycle at the PMC.

Staff in the seed cleaning facility have been diligently processing seed in preparation for renovations set to take place this July and August. Seed cleaning has been operating on twelve-hour days, five days a week, instead of being temporarily shut down from August through October for renovations. The PMC seed cleaning facility processed roughly 20,000 lbs of native grass seed and treated 8,000 lbs of grain seed during April. Greenhouse production is in full swing

with hundreds of native forbs, grasses, and sedges ready for transplanting. Most of these plugs will be utilized for revegetation projects with the Alaska Department of Fish & Game and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. In addition to these projects, several hundred plugs were grown for the PMC to establish new breeder blocks.

Our state invasive species coordinator has been preparing to head out into the field to treat several water bodies contaminated with the aquatic invasive species elodea. Our invasive coordinator will also assist with the treatment of Crescent Lake this summer, in addition to other duties. This will be the first treatment of Crescent Lake since elodea was initially found several years ago. Lastly, all of us at the PMC have hit the ground running this spring and look forward to a productive and exciting field season.

## 2025 CALENDAR

3 Months At-A-Glance

### MAY

- 5** Drive Your Tractor to Work Day
- 6** Alaska Agriculture Day
- 11** Mother's Day
- 20** BAC Meeting
- 20** World Bee Day
- 24** Nenana Ag Expo
- 26** Memorial Day
- 29** Learn About Composting Day

### JUNE

- 3** National Egg Day
- 15** Father's Day
- 18** Sustainable Gastronomy Day
- 21** Summer Solstice

### JULY

- 4** Independence Day
- 18** National Ice Cream Day



### It is time to register your bees!

Did you know that Bee registration plays a vital role in disease prevention within apiaries? The information provided in the registration is solely used to locate neighboring apiaries for notification purposes in the event of positive findings, thereby enhancing disease prevention efforts without compromising privacy. [Honeybee Registration 2025.pdf](#)

