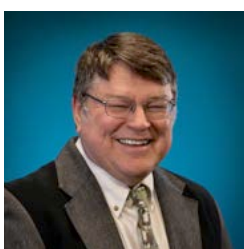




ALASKA DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE NEWSLETTER

Issue 14 | September 2025

Fall harvest is in full swing!



By Director Bryan Scoresby

The Palmer slaughterhouse is currently processing many animals that were sold at the Jr. Livestock auction at the fair. It's great to see the managers working to accommodate all the buyers. The economy is supposed to work this way, with industry and growers working together for a mutually beneficial outcome. Shout out to the management of the slaughterhouse for all they do for our red meat industry. They are making appointments now for slaughter dates.

We have hired a new person for the ARLF loan officer position. She will begin on Monday, October 6, when we will announce the person's identity. She is really excited for this opportunity, and we look forward to having a full-time loan officer again on staff to help all of you and service our existing loan customers.

The PMC completed the potato harvest for all the varieties that we use and preserve. This is the first potato harvest I have been part of since 1982 as a college student in Idaho. Our Deputy Commissioner joined us in the field as we separated the vines, helped the dirt fall through the chains, to preserve the spuds. They will be stored at the PMC in climate-controlled coolers, with the excess given away to the Food Bank and neighbors..

We will be scheduling an open house at the Plant Materials Center (PMC) to show off and demonstrate our new seed cleaning line. We are now in the 8th week of installation. Electricians are on site now running power to each piece of equipment, installing lighting, and making the facility ready for use. The PMC staff are looking forward to operating and cleaning more seeds and showing this equipment off to all of you. The open house will likely be sometime in late November or early December.

Field crops in the spotlight this September



By Mia Kirk

For the Alaska Grown \$5 Challenge, we are highlighting Alaska's field crops, which is the time of year when you can purchase Alaska's beautiful

bounty of crops to enjoy today and to preserve year-round. Don't miss out on your last chance this season to support local farmers' markets and grocery stores that support Alaska Grown!

The Director signed a quarantine for the invasive bird cherry (*Prunus padus*) and chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), effective September 1.

We have been receiving many calls at the Division, so we would like to take this opportunity to clarify a few things. So, what does the quarantine mean? Effective September 1, it is prohibited to sell, import, and transport those trees into and within Alaska. Although this quarantine does not require homeowners to dispose of their trees, resources are available on how to identify and remove them. Please see the publication links on this page by our sister agency at the DNR Division of Forestry Community Forestry Program for more information.



<https://forestry.alaska.gov/Assets/pdfs/community/grants/02%20Prunus%20Fact%20Sheet%208.2.21.pdf>

<https://forestry.alaska.gov/Assets/pdfs/community/publications/This%20Beauty%20is%20a%20Beast%20Prunus%20Padus.pdf>

Moving forward, I hope to contribute further to the newsletter by spotlighting staff and Division programs that serve industries throughout our great state. This month, I thought it would be



Meret Beutler

most appropriate to introduce Meret Beutler, who is part of our inspection team and works with our Certified Seed Potato Producers, providing field inspections for this certification. This certification is required for producers to sell their seed, certifying that they meet Alaska's requirements for pests and diseases.

Did you know that Alaska has 15 Certified Seed Producers that are located in Homer, Haines, Delta Junction, Nenana, Trapper Creek, and Palmer? These producers grow about 80 varieties that are put into winter storage and then, come spring, are sold to Alaska nurseries and greenhouses that are available for you to purchase. Just another way to support the \$5 Challenge and keep unwanted pests and diseases out of Alaska.





PMC looks forward to Seed House improvements



By Casey Dinkel

In standard Alaska fashion, August brought cool temps and rainy weather. However, PMC staff danced around the fall moisture and harvested several varieties of foundation-level barley seed. With limited drying wagons and boxes, we strategically planned our harvesting schedule to match our drying capabilities. That being said, the PMC is currently working on the design for a small grain drying/storage system. This system will consist of several feed-style drying bins that will allow us to store and dry up to six small grain varieties at once. We expect to have this system in place prior to harvest in 2026. Having a larger capacity, modernized drying/storage system will allow the PMC to provide larger quantities and higher quality small grain foundation seed stock.

August also brought major changes to the PMC seed cleaning facility. Construction crews, electricians, and fabricators worked tirelessly to install a new, fully automated and progressive seed cleaning line. From air screen cleaners, indents, disc machines, gravity tables, mezzanines, and elevators, the cleaning line is beginning to take shape. The new cleaning line construction will continue through November with a planned start-up date after Thanksgiving.

Our potato program agronomist, Mickenzie

Maxwell, harvested over 60 varieties of G-Zero disease-free seed potato at the end of August. Thanks to the help of several PMC staff, the G-Zero harvest was a huge success, providing clean tubers to many growers throughout Alaska.

Last but certainly not least, our state invasive species coordinator, Cody Jacobsen, works diligently to conduct final treatments to several water bodies infested with Elodea. Although these treatments will continue, substantial eradication was achieved during the growing season of 2025. PMC staff and I look forward to the remainder of the fall harvest in September as we move closer to winter.

2025 CALENDAR

3 Months At-A-Glance

SEPTEMBER	
6	National Food Bank Day
22	Autumnal Equinox
OCTOBER	
12	National Farmers Day
15	National Mushroom Day
16	World Food Day
18	Alaska Day
26	National Pumpkin Day
31	Halloween
NOVEMBER	
11	Veterans Day
14	National Pickle Day
27	Thanksgiving

