



ALASKA DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE NEWSLETTER

Issue 12 | July 2025

Listening session scheduled for Thursday



By Director Bryan Scoresby

We invite everyone interested to sign up for our Zoom meeting to discuss the formation of a co-op on

Thursday evening. We have invited Barbara Johnson, a guest from the Co-op Development Corporation at UAA, to give a 15-minute presentation on the principles of a co-op. The formation of a co-op in this listening session aims to address and invite all interested individuals to participate. We enter this session with the understanding that forming and operating a co-op is hard work, undertaken by the members to achieve the goals set by the members. The Division of Agriculture is simply inviting and monitoring the session. Co-ops nationwide have experienced both significant successes and notable failures.

Join Zoom Listening Session

<https://zoom.us/j/94575209433?pwd=A2XbzEdAtSv32GhUncNvy4L5YLmXRW.1>

Meeting ID: 945 7520 9433, Passcode: 0LR7bU

Summer is the peak season for farmers' markets. I hope you are all visiting the farmers' market, buying all the produce you need, and getting to know your farmer. The relationship each farmer builds with their customers brings lots of joy to both parties. Our Alaska Grown products are

simply the best.

Farmers all over the state have been and continue to cut hay. We have had excellent hay-cutting weather in south-central. Delta and Fairbanks have experienced less rain and warmer temperatures, resulting in faster haying operations. Homer survived before rain fell on downed hay. The northern region could use more rain to grow hay and help the grain crops fill as they mature with full seed heads. I admire the optimism and faith of a farmer who plants seeds, fertilizes crops, invests many thousands of dollars, and hopes for a crop and a return with a modest profit margin. Irrigation can help mitigate the risk of no rain.

Our ARLF officers, Christy and Gavin, have moved on to other opportunities. We wish them well in their new opportunities. This creates a new opportunity for another loan officer to succeed with our ARLF program. Please look for the posting when we announce the opening in the next couple of weeks. If you know someone with lending skills who would like to serve our agricultural community while working for the State of Alaska, please encourage them to apply.

Lastly, I want to give a shout-out to Adrian and Tarn Coffee for their participation in the Nenana Agriculture Education Day in May. Their efforts made the day a success.



Peonies and a new opportunity for Alaska Grown producers



By Mia Kirk

For the Alaska Grown \$5 Challenge this month we are recognizing peonies, Alaska's most elegant ornamental cut flower. Alaska's late

spring allows peonies to bloom when there are generally fewer peonies available to the market. During this blooming period, from June to August, it becomes possible for you to have peonies in time for your planned summer wedding ceremonies and celebrations. Also, you can easily support this industry with the \$5 Challenge, celebrating yourself or someone you love weekly with a beautiful bouquet of Alaska Grown peonies!

On July 11th, we rolled out a new opportunity for Alaska Grown producers: the 2025 Alaska Grown Retail Assistance Program. This one-time incentive is for official Alaska Grown producers who have expanded their market by selling and delivering bulk fruit and vegetables, leafy greens, and other raw products to retailers that are not prepackaged. While supplies last, eligible producers can request stickers and twist



ties to help ensure that retailers have adequate labeling to promote their Alaska Grown bulk and/or raw product. For more information, please contact dnr.alaskagrown@alaska.gov.

To celebrate July 4th, "Cooking with Alaska Grown" featured Deviled Egg Potato Salad. If you missed it, you can view this and other videos using [this link](#). Again, these cooking videos will explore new recipes utilizing Alaska Grown ingredients. If you're interested in the Deviled Egg Potato Salad recipe or would like to learn more about the Alaska Grown ingredients we used, please refer to the recipe on the following page. Additionally, if you would like to share a recipe that utilizes Alaska Grown products, please email our marketing team at dnr.alaskagrown@alaska.gov.



Cooking with **Alaska Grown**



[Click here to watch: Cooking With Alaska Grown Deviled Egg Potato Salad](#)

Deviled Egg Potato Salad

4 pounds red potatoes from [VanderWeele Farms, LLC](#), chopped and boiled
8 eggs from [Bushes Bunches](#), boiled, peeled and chopped
4 green onions or any local onion from your local Farmers Market, chopped
5 strips of local bacon, chopped and fried until crispy
1 cup mayo
1 cup sour cream
½ cup [Foraged & Found](#) Garlic and Dill Kelp Pickles, chopped with a little juice
¼ cup Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon [Far North Fungi](#) Mushroom Salt
1 teaspoon [Barnacle Foods](#) Everything Kelp Seasoning
Paprika, salt and pepper

To start, mix mayo, sour cream, kelp pickles with juice, and mustard in a bowl. In a separate bowl, combine potatoes, eggs, green onions and bacon, and pour dressing over top of the potato mixture. Season with Mushroom Salt, Everything Kelp Seasoning and the rest of the dry ingredients. Stir salad until ingredients are evenly incorporated. Taste test and adjust seasoning to your preference.

PMC staff poised for harvest, construction



By Casey Dinkel

During June, Plant Materials Center (PMC) staff have worked diligently to maintain field crops. It has been the full-time job of several staff to mow/

till weeds, irrigate crops, and prepare equipment for the first grass seed harvest. Grass and forb seed harvest will start in July and lead into August. Shortly after grasses and forbs are harvested, six different varieties of grain will become mature and ready for combining. Last but not least, potatoes will be dug in mid-to-late September, when the weather allows.

The PMC will welcome the addition of new pivot irrigation next growing season, which will reduce labor costs and greatly improve the water use efficiency at the farm. Currently, traditional wheel lines are being employed, which require a significant amount of labor to move and monitor.

Seed house staff have been working hard in June to clean as much grass seed as possible in preparation for the seed house renovation starting at the beginning of August. Staff have not only been cleaning seed, but in their spare time, they have started removing wall paneling and disconnecting seed cleaning equipment that is no longer needed. The seed house renovations and equipment updates are anticipated to take four months to complete.

Until construction begins in the seed house, staff are working tirelessly to clean as much seed as possible before shutting down. Roughly, 18,000lbs of 'Notran' tufted hairgrass was cleaned during the month of June. Staff in the revegetation and erosion control program planted over 16,000 grass plugs in the field to establish larger foundation-level seed blocks. These seed blocks will be harvested next year and cleaned at the PMC. Once this foundation-level seed is cleaned, it will be sold to commercial farmers throughout the state and bulked up for several

generations of grass seed production that will supply many revegetation projects throughout Alaska.

The industrial hemp program has been collecting data for an on-farm trial that is being conducted in collaboration with the USDA Agricultural Research Service in upstate New York. We are hopeful to find several varieties of industrial hemp that will be well-suited to grow in Alaska's climate. If varieties are found to grow well in Alaska, they may have the potential to be utilized for fiber production. This fiber can be used for various products, including home insulation, concrete additives, hemp seed cooking oil, and more.

Finally, our invasive plant coordinator has been very busy treating and monitoring several water bodies for invasive elodea throughout the state. Treatments have been successful so far this season, with infestations showing signs of dieback. We are hopeful that we are nearing eradication in some treated water bodies. Only time will tell as we continue to fight in the war on the elodea. As we move into July, PMC staff are poised for harvest, construction projects, research trials, weed eradication, seed cleaning, and many other tasks that the farm demands.

2025 CALENDAR

3 Months At-A-Glance

JULY

4 Independence Day

18 National Ice Cream Day

AUGUST

5 National Oyster Day

19 National Potato Day

24 National Waffle Day

SEPTEMBER

1 Labor Day

6 National Food Bank Day

22 Autumnal Equinox