



ALASKA DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE NEWSLETTER

Issue 20 | March 2026

Preparing for tax season



By Director Bryan Scoresby

Tax Day, April 15, is less than a month away. One key to successful tax filing is good record-keeping. Receipts and detailed notes for all business income and expenses are handy when calculating totals to include on tax forms. It is not an easy task to organize them into categories, but it does make them much easier to recall and reference for the future. For myself, this is a time to decide record and organization changes for next year's tax season.

Farm business tax returns are much more complicated than personal returns that only have W2's. Any business tax return can be complicated, but farm businesses have their unique challenges. Farmers with crops alone have their own opportunities and difficulties. Adding livestock to the farm business, and additional solutions become the norm for tax filing.

In my early college years, one class was on farm business taxes, specifically Schedule F. My initial unknowing thought was this cannot be that hard. Tax time came in my first year of marriage, and I picked up a 1040 form along with the instruction booklet at the library. With only a couple of W2's,

it was a simple return. Reading each line and filling in information isn't hard work, but it can be frustrating and time-consuming for more advanced business returns. Referring to the instructions adds clarity to some of the more challenging calculations.

Sometimes, a deeper dive into a specific topic will bring up a publication relevant to the topic at hand. Topics such as basis, depreciation, cash, and accrual accounting are individual areas of study. The IRS publishes Publication 225, a "Farmers Tax Guide." This guide addresses general tax information specific to farm business. More detailed information can be found in individual publications, and tax professionals are often used as well. For better or worse, I still do my own taxes.

Farm Bill Update

On March 4, the United States House Committee on Agriculture passed the [Farm, Food, and National Security Act of 2026](#) (the 2026 Farm Bill) by a 34–17 vote. The bill would extend key USDA programs through 2031 and now heads to the full House, then the Senate. However, its outlook is uncertain, as Senate Democrats oppose several provisions—such as limits on state labeling rules and meat sales restrictions—and note it does not address 2025 SNAP cuts. The Farm Bill is typically reauthorized every five years; the last reauthorization occurred in 2018.



Spring brings brighter evenings, a fresh sign the season is turning!



By *Mia Kirk*

As we welcome the return of longer days here in Alaska, many of us are still patiently waiting (and hoping!) for a little more warmth to arrive.

With the extra daylight, I'm gearing up to start my tomato and pepper seeds at home, and I know many of our Alaska Grown producers are already hard at work in their greenhouses. Seeds are being planted now, and they will soon grow into the beautiful crops we look forward to each season.

Cook with Alaska Grown

We at the Division would like to challenge you to "Cook with Alaska Grown"! This initiative, along with the \$5 Challenge, supports our Alaska Grown producers each week and highlights how easy it is to incorporate local products into your everyday meals. This month, our marketing team created a video demonstrating how simple and delicious it can be to juice with Alaska Grown ingredients. The recipe features fresh Alaska Grown carrots and mint, along with other ingredients available at different times of the year. Remember to visit the Alaska Grown

Directory [on our website](#), which is a convenient, year-round resource for finding local products and supporting Alaska's producers.

Honeybee Registration Reminder

Last month, there was a reminder on bee importations for those who distribute packages. This month, we would like to remind beekeepers who receive those packages that they must also register their hives. In addition to registering the packages, hives that have been overwintered also need to be registered annually. See link to register here: [Honeybee Registration 2025.pdf](#)

Alaska Grown Merchandise

You can now order Alaska Grown merchandise online! We frequently receive questions from the public about where to order Alaska Grown merchandise, such as hoodies, T-shirts, and onesies. In response to this, our local merchandiser has created an online platform to order those materials, which is now available on our website at [Alaska Grown – Alaskagift.com](#). A portion of the proceeds supports our marketing program, which is designed to increase consumer awareness and consumption of Alaska agricultural products.



Seed House nears completion at PMC



By Casey Dinkel

As we turn the corner into March, PMC staff and I are champing at the bit for spring to come. PMC staff have taken full advantage of the longer days to complete more work and finalize projects. With the seed house project 99% complete, we are scheduled to conduct on-site training on our new cleaning line, color-sorting line, and dust-collection systems during the second week of April. During this week-long period, we will have representatives from several seed cleaning equipment manufacturers on-site at the PMC. We will also have representatives from West Coast Companies in Oregon to assist with the operation and maintenance of our new cleaning line. This training will enable PMC staff to receive hands-on training in seed cleaning and conditioning of grasses and grains. We anticipate being fully operational by the beginning of May



2026. Our large cleaning facility has been shut down for this renovation and update since August 4, 2025. With the renovation of the seed house taking longer than originally expected, we have built up a large inventory that needs cleaning. Fortunately, the new cleaning line is anticipated to clean seed three to seven times faster than the previous cleaning system. This increased speed and efficiency should

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allow the PMC to process the large backlog of seed inventory quickly.

Our state invasive species coordinator, Cody Jacobsen, has taken advantage of the longer days provided this March. Under clear, cold conditions, Cody and several other PMC staff have been transporting herbicide and fuel to Alexander and Sucker Lakes. This herbicide will be applied throughout June, July, and August of 2026 to eradicate the aquatic invasive Elodea. This treatment is year two of a three-year treatment and has proven very successful thus far. Winter hauling of herbicide and fuel will reduce the cost of summer hauling these products by 50% or more.



The eradication of these watershed systems will be a huge win for Alaska if successfully achieved.

As we move closer to spring PMC staff and I are preparing equipment, purchasing supplies, and working with growers throughout Alaska. We anxiously wait to enter the field to plant crops, conduct surveys, manage invasives, and provide services to Alaska’s agricultural industry. With warmer and sunnier days on the horizon, we wish you and yours a happy spring and summer.

2026 CALENDAR

3 Months At-A-Glance

MARCH

7 National Cereal Day

10-12 Mariculture Conference of Alaska

17 St. Patrick’s Day

20 Spring Equinox

30 Seward’s Day

APRIL

1 National Sourdough Bread Day

14-17 2026 Alaska FFA Convention

20 Earth Day

MAY

4 Drive Your Tractor to Work Day

5 Alaska Agriculture Day

10 Mother’s Day

20 World Bee Day

25 Memorial Day

29 Learn About Composting Day



Markos Sheer of Seagrove poses with fresh Alaskan oysters at this year’s Seafood Expo North America conference in Boston, MA. Sheer promoted Alaskan aquaculture to a national audience, highlighting Seagrove oysters grown in Southeast Alaska’s cold, clean waters for their balanced salinity and crisp flavor, and emphasizing the company’s vertically integrated system that ensures consistency from farm to final destination.