ALASKA DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
NEWSLETTER

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Alaska's fertilizer supplies adequate ahead of growing season

By Director Bryan Scoresby

Reading the news, we discover how world events impact our local economy. One small bit of news was about how much fertilizer passes through the Strait of Hormuz. The Farmers Co-op in Delta and Alaska Mill & Feed in Anchorage are the major resellers of fertilizers in the state. They have imported enough fertilizer to meet in-state demand for this year. There will surely be modest pricing adjustments from last year, but adequate supplies for all of Alaska Agriculture are here.

A Google search shows me where our domestic fertilizer supplies come from. Ammonium nitrate is produced in about 200 industrial chemical plants globally. Key states in the U.S. are Pennsylvania, Missouri, and Wyoming. Other countries are France, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Australia. Urea is made primarily from natural gas and petroleum feedstocks. Key Middle Eastern countries that produce urea fertilizer are Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates. The U.S. also gets urea from Canada, Russia, and Algeria.

Phosphate fertilizer comes from Morocco, China, the United States, and Russia. Morocco has 67% of the global phosphate reserves. Florida and North Carolina produce 90% of U.S. production; the rest comes from Idaho and Utah. Potassium fertilizer comes from Canada, Russia, Belarus, and the United States. The U.S. produces potash mostly in New Mexico and Utah, though we import most of it from Canada.

I want to recognize the efforts our agribusiness firms in Alaska make in acquiring our local supplies. As farmers, we can order from these businesses and schedule a pickup. These companies have anticipated the required volume, purchased the product, arranged transportation, and found solutions to problems we rarely know about, ensuring it is available when the farmer calls. Thank you for the service you provide to our agriculture industry.

Scan this QR code to learn more about where nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium fertilizer is produced in North America.

Eggs in the spotlight, and new grant opportunities available this month

By Mia Kirk

This month, the Division of Agriculture, thanks to our marketing team, hosted a fun and flavorful deviled egg competition! Staff showcased their best recipes using Alaska Grown eggs (both chicken and duck), along with a variety of Alaska Grown toppings including dill, kelp pickles, pickled carrots, and smoked salmon. The competition was tough, but the winner was Erik "Moe" Johnson.

This month, "Cooking with Alaska Grown" also featured Alaska Grown eggs with a delicious egg salad recipe. I had the opportunity to taste the sandwich myself and can honestly say it was one of the best egg salad sandwiches I've ever had. If you missed it on our Facebook page, you can check it out on YouTube at https://youtube.com/shorts/PKJ44XNAZoI?si=xYEPbkxG5RuRfK6O.

Grant Opportunities Available Now

Disaster Relief Program for Peony Producers

Are you a peony producer who experienced crop damage due to unusual weather events occurring

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Lands Specialist, Erik "Moe" Johnson poses with prizes after winning our Deviled Egg Recipe contest.

Grant Opportunities *Continued from page 2*

in calendar years 2023 and 2024? You may be eligible for financial assistance through the Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act. We, at the Division of Agriculture, through the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), will provide cost assistance to Alaska Peony Producers who meet the eligibility criteria for eligible weather events in 2023 and/or 2024 for peony rootstock and their future economic loss.

The application period is open from April 10, 2026, through May 15, 2026. Applications must be complete and received or postmarked no later than May 15, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Alaska Standard Time. For more information, please visit our website at https://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_grants/disaster_relief_program_for_peony_producers.htm.

Specialty Crop Block Grant

The Alaska Division of Agriculture is now accepting applications for the 2026 USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant. Only projects related to specialty crops are eligible. Applicants may include universities, producer groups, extension services, soil and water conservation districts, schools, colleges, and nonprofit organizations. Eligible projects include those focused on enhancing food safety; improving capacity in the specialty crop distribution chain; specialty crop research; developing new and improved varieties; pest and disease control; increasing child and adult nutrition knowledge and consumption of specialty crops; improving efficiency and reducing costs; and sustainability.

The application period is open from April 20, 2026, through May 20, 2026. Applications must be complete and received or postmarked by May 20, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Alaska Standard Time. More information is available on our website at https://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_grants/specialty_crop_block_grant.htm.

Additionally, the Division is seeking input from specialty crop growers, processors, and distributors to help identify this year's top funding priorities. Please complete the Stakeholder Priority Survey https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2026SCBGFundingPriority by 5:00 p.m. on May 8, 2026.

2026 CALENDAR

3 Months At-A-Glance

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
JUNE	
3	National Egg Day
18	Sustainable Gastronomy Day
21	Summer Solstice

PMC prepares for growing season

By Casey Dinkel

April 2026 Newsletter
As many of Alaskans can tell, spring has been slow to arrive as old man winter is relentless in losing his grip. With most nights still below freezing, the ground is refusing to thaw as farmers across Alaska anxiously wait to get into the field. With any luck, we hope to plant our grain here at the PMC by the first week or two of May. However, the weather will have to warm up considerably, chase the frost away, and dry our fields before planting can commence. Once our foundation grain fields are in the ground, our potato fields will follow shortly, with several foundation native grass fields finishing up our spring planting. Until we are able to plant, PMC staff will continue to prepare equipment, stage supplies, and adjust schedules so that we are ready for spring when it finally arrives.

The PMC commercial seed cleaning facility is complete and ready to process foundation grain and native grass seed. During the week of the 20th of April, several staff members and I officially started training our new cleaning line. In this process, we will not only be cleaning several varieties of grass and grain seed, but we will also take a deep dive course on each machine throughout the line. We will learn how to maintain, operate, and fine-tune each machine to ensure our cleaning process is efficient and streamlined. In our new line, we will train on our vibratory scalper, air-screen cleaner, disc machine, indents, gravity table, color sorter, and dust-collection system. Each machine will allow us to fine-tune our seed cleaning process and allow for faster, more efficient cleaning. Once our team is through training, we make final adjustments to the line and begin processing our backlog of commercial seed lots. We anticipate being in full production by the first week in May.

Our greenhouse production Agronomist Jessica Sandvik recently started up one of our production houses in preparation for spring planting. This spring, Jessica will be starting plug trays for roughly 20,000 birch tree plantings, 5,000 grass plugs, and 500 willow, dogwood, and soapberry cuttings. In addition, Jessica will be planting over 500 native forb plugs for service berry, Jacob's ladder, alpine arnica, wild iris, bluebell, and cinquefoil. These plantings will be utilized to establish several smaller foundation blocks, advanced evaluation trials, revegetation sites, and reforestation projects throughout Alaska. As we get closer to spring and warmer temps, our staff here at the PMC is anxious for another fun growing season ahead.