



ALASKA DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE NEWSLETTER

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Alaska's growing season in full swing despite weather challenges



By Director Bryan Scoresby

Rain, rain, and more rain for growers here in South Central. Few hay farmers have been able to harvest the

first crop due to very narrow weather windows. Focusing on the weather forecast for future sunny and dry days is a serious management tool helping farmers plan field activities. Vegetable farmers work in the rain to harvest for market day. Livestock growers must take care of their stock regardless of the weather. Hay and grain farmers need some dry-down days to produce an acceptable crop. One thing I really like about farmers and Alaskans is their willingness to help each other when in need. A friend was in the hospital for five days and could not get his hay harvested. A mutual friend and I helped him get his 20 acres tilled, raked, baled, and wrapped while he was incapacitated.

Farmers' markets are in full swing, and local vegetable products are in the grocery stores now. This gives all of our friends and us the opportunity to practice the \$5.00 (or more) per week spending on Alaska Grown products. This challenge is a year-round promotion. Products are available year-round at the retail grocery

store. We currently have staff performing on-farm audits and inspections required by the stores, making our local products eligible for retail sales. Most of us never see this side of the food chain.

We celebrated America 250 with a potluck lunch at the Plant Materials Center (PMC) on June 30. Our picnic was mostly made with Alaska Grown products. We took some time to reflect on the birth of this nation and the 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. America was founded on the truth that all people are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, among them are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. These truths have guided our nation through challenge after challenge. They remind us to keep going, keep building, keep improving, and that we can help build a more perfect union that is indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

We also recognized Doug Warner for 41 years of service at the Division of Agriculture. Doug was one of the creators of the AK Grown logo in the mid 1980's. We continue to use the Alaska Grown logo everywhere to promote our farmers' products. The Alaska Grown logo is recognizable everywhere, pointing buyers to in-state products.



Celebrating the 4th of July and America's 250



By Mia Kirk

I hope you all enjoyed a wonderful Fourth of July and America 250 celebration and that Alaska Grown ingredients made it into your holiday potluck dishes! Here at the Alaska Division of Agriculture, our Marketing team planned a "Cooking with Alaska Grown" potluck featuring Alaska Grown hamburgers to celebrate America's 250th birthday alongside the 40th anniversary of Alaska Grown.

We also took time to recognize Doug Warner, the original creator of the Alaska Grown logo, who officially retired after 41 years of service. Doug first retired nearly a decade ago but graciously continued supporting our team on an as needed basis. I had the privilege of being hired by Doug in 2007, and I'm deeply grateful for his guidance over the past 19 years and his unwavering commitment to Alaska agriculture. Please join us in wishing him all the best in his retirement!

Our "Cooking with Alaska Grown" series has been busy this spring and early summer, leading up to America's potluck. Earlier monthly features included Egg Salad Sandwiches and Twice Baked Potatoes in April; Lion's Mane Steaks and

Mushroom Risotto in May; and Honey Rhubarb Ice Pops and Beet and Turnip Gratin in June. If you'd like to explore any of these Alaska Grown recipes, you can find them on our [YouTube channel](#).

Last month, we announced that the 2026 Agricultural Land Sale is now open. If you are interested in the nine available North Fork Road parcels located in the Anchor Point area, we invite you to join us for an Ag Field Day on Friday, August 14, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. during the Ninilchik Fair (intersection of North Fork Road and Lescher Road). Loan Officer Channcie Alfred and Land Specialist Erik Johnson will be on-site to answer questions and provide information about the land sale process, soils and parcel characteristics, financing options, and loan programs.

Alaska Grown merchandise is available online!

As shared in a previous newsletter, this is a reminder that you can purchase authorized Alaska Grown apparel, including hoodies, t shirts, and onesies, at our official website, www.alaskagift.com. A portion of every purchase directly supports the Alaska Grown Program, which promotes greater consumer awareness and consumption of Alaska's agricultural products.

Field maintenance top priority while construction projects continue in July



By Casey Dinkel

Staff at the PMC have been working hard in the field during the month of July. Most of our field duties consist of field maintenance such as

hand weeding, spraying, cultivating, and mowing. Weed control is the top priority this time of year, as we want to ensure our foundation grass and grain fields are as clean as possible. This will ensure that the PMC is providing high-quality, clean seed to Alaskan farmers. Additionally, we have been weeding and hilling our field maintenance potatoes. These maintenance blocks are utilized as a backup stock in the event that our tissue culture plantlets are destroyed. This allows the PMC to have several backup stocks for the 175 varieties that we maintain.

Construction projects continued throughout the PMC during July. The installation of an irrigation well for our center pivot was completed in mid-July. This well will supply a one-fourth-mile-long center pivot irrigation system that is equipped with (VRI) Variable Rate Irrigation technology. This technology will allow the PMC to control each low-pressure nozzle independently of the others. The pivot can also be controlled remotely from a desktop or mobile application. With these features, the PMC will be able to cut water to fallow areas while increasing watering efficiency and accuracy across all production fields. Additionally, water-soluble fertilizers can also be applied through this pivot system. Final construction of the seed house office, tool room, and rest room started in late July and is expected to be completed by the end of September. The completion of this area will allow our full-time



seed-cleaning Agronomist and labor staff to be housed near the seed-cleaning facility and primary duty station.

As we navigate this cool, rainy summer, the staff and I are looking forward to a bountiful harvest of grasses, grains, and potatoes. With fingers crossed, we hope to receive warmer, sunny weather for the remainder of this summer and fall.

2026 CALENDAR

3 Months At-A-Glance

JULY

4 Independence Day

5 America's Potluck

19 National Ice Cream Day

AUGUST

5 National Oyster Day

14 Ag Field Day-North Fork Road

19 National Potato Day

21-7 Alaska State Fair

24 National Waffle Day

SEPTEMBER

4 National Food Bank Day

7 Labor Day

22 Autumnal Equinox



Growing a Lasting Legacy

The Division of Agriculture held a special potluck this month celebrating two important milestones: America's 250th anniversary and the 40th anniversary of the Alaska Grown logo—the second-oldest state-branded logo in America. The gathering also honored Doug Warner, the original creator of the Alaska Grown logo, as he prepares to retire this year. We are grateful for Doug's lasting contribution to Alaska agriculture and the enduring legacy he leaves behind. Thank you, Doug, for creating a symbol that has united, promoted, and celebrated Alaska Grown products for generations.

