



Division of Agriculture Activities

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AK Division of Agriculture Website:
<http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag>

Director of Agriculture -
Franci Havemeister
907-761-3867
Franci.Havemeister@alaska.gov

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Online Directory

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/Marketing/NewFoodFarmProductDirectory.xls>

*Is your farm in the newest directory?
Check online and find out!*

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/>

Don't forget that May 5th is Alaska Agriculture Day! Contact Alaska Ag in the Classroom if you are interested in participating in any school events. More info in the Marketing Section.

Note from the Director

Have you noticed that all Alaskans have a bounce in their step? Both the young and old feel the excitement that spring brings and the eager anticipation of the long summer days ahead!

Several weeks ago I had the opportunity to attend the Annual FFA state Convention awards banquet in Palmer. It was the final event of a three day program, which included both individual and team competition in categories such as ag mechanics, livestock judging, prepared speaking, floriculture, forestry and job interviews. The National FFA Organization was founded in 1928 and currently has 507,763 members and 7,439 chapters located in all 50 states as well as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. It is dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. As part of that mission all members are required to memorize the following creed:

I believe in the future of agriculture, with a faith born not of words but of deeds - achievements won by the present and past generations of agriculturists; in the promise of better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us from the struggles of former years.

I believe that to live and work on a good farm, or to be engaged in other agricultural pursuits, is pleasant as well as challenging; for I know the joys and discomforts of agricultural life and hold an inborn fondness for those associations which, even in hours of discouragement, I cannot deny.

I believe in leadership from ourselves and respect from others. I believe in my own ability to work efficiently and think clearly, with such knowledge and skill as I can secure, and in the ability of progressive agriculturists to serve our own and the public interest in producing and marketing the product of our toil.

I believe in less dependence on begging and more power in bargaining; in the life abundant and enough honest wealth to help make it so--for others as well as myself; in less need for charity and more of it when needed; in being happy myself and playing square with those whose happiness depends upon me.

I believe that American agriculture can and will hold true to the best traditions of our national life and that I can exert an influence in my home and community which will stand solid for my part in that inspiring task.

The creed was written by E. M. Tiffany, and adopted at the 3rd National Convention of the FFA. It was revised at the 38th Convention and the 63rd Convention

The list of FFA Alumni is impressive and crosses many professional fields. A few past alumni include former President Jimmy Carter, country legend Willie Nelson, and Jim Davis, the creator of the Garfield comic strip. I want to thank all the advisors and leaders who continue to educate Alaska's youth on agriculture, and encourage us all to live by the FFA Creed.

Happy Farming!
Franci

Land Sales & Grazing Lease Staff

http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_sales.htm

Fairbanks - Dan Proulx

907-374-3716

Dan.Proulx@alaska.gov

Palmer - Erik Johnson

907-761-3863

Erik.Johnson@alaska.gov

Inspection Staff

http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_is.htm

Barb Hanson

Barbara.Hanson@alaska.gov

907-761-3854

Mia Kirk

Mia.Kirk@alaska.gov

907-761-761-3853

Land Sales and Grazing Leases

Summer is almost here. Do you have big plans for your farm this summer? Are you planning on clearing a new field or digging a new pond? Having thoughts about subdividing your land? Is your State Farm Conservation Plan (SFCP) up to date? The SFCP is used both to assure proper conservation on the property and also to ensure that the regulatory limitations on agricultural parcels are adhered to. Protecting the limited amount of agricultural land in Alaska is important.

What needs to be in the SFCP?

11 AAC 67.180. The farm conservation plan must include:

- (1) a map of the farm showing
 - (A) the planned location of any clearing and breaking of ground;
 - (B) location and size of the farm's real property improvements (if authorized);
 - (C) location of windbreaks, farm ponds, and similar conservation measures and improvements;
- (2) Planned soil conservation measures.

If you need some help getting your plan updated you can go to your local SWCD, the NRCS, or to the Division of Agriculture. Updated plans need to be submitted to your local SWCD and Director Havemeister for approval. If you have any questions please give Erik a call at 761-3863.

Inspection Section - What is Silver Scurf?

Silver Scurf is a fungal disease that primarily affects the skin and therefore the appearance of the potato. Potatoes from any growing area may be affected but it is most often found on potatoes that grow in the northern half of the continent and more frequently on potatoes that have been in storage.

Primary infection occurs in the field and secondary infection occurs in storage which spreads the disease to healthy tubers. The primary disease cycle occurs in the soil which is caused by infected seed. The secondary disease cycle occurs when not stored in an adequate environment. The first symptoms are irregular or circular, brownish spots that may become silvery in color and may coalesce to cover most of the tuber surface as the disease progresses.

The below pictures represent 3 different types of potatoes that are affected with silver scurf. The affected areas may not be so obvious on dry potatoes but when wet, the silvery appearance may become more obvious. In severe cases, the entire surface of the tuber may be affected and begin to shrivel and wrinkle. The best way to control the disease is not to plant infected seed. Washing seed potatoes may be a way to prevent undetected infections. Other effective control methods: do not delay harvest after vine-kill since this could increase the amount of infection in the field, and when storing potatoes maintain a cool, dry storage environment.

En route destination scoring guidelines:

US No 1: Scored when affecting more than 50% of the surface area of the potato

US No 2: Score when its severity causes wrinkling of the skin on more than 50% of the surface.

*Informational Sources: USDA/ AMS/FFV Shipping Point and Market Inspections for Potatoes and USDA/ ARS "Market Diseases of Potatoes"



Russet



White



Red

Marketing:

http://dnr.alaska.gov/aq/aq_ms.htm

Doug Warner

Douglas.Warner@alaska.gov
907-761-3861

Amy Pettit

Amy.Pettit@alaska.gov
907-761-3864

Patricia O'Neil

Patricia.O'Neil@alaska.gov
907-761-3858

For the AAIG application, go to the website above and look under "What's New".



Marketing Services

The Division of Agriculture needs your help!!!

Do you recognize the two bumper stickers below? Do you have an idea for a new bumper sticker?



Do you think the sticker should include images that depict different industries, i.e. livestock, greenhouse, berry production, etc.?

If interested, please note the following specifications:

- The Alaska Grown logo must be included in the design.
- The standard size for bumper stickers is 3" x 11.5."
- The final design will be limited to six colors – including the four colors of the Alaska Grown logo.

If you have ideas, input or a design you would like to submit, please contact Patricia O'Neil at Patricia.O'Neil@alaska.gov or 907-761-3858.

Tuesday, May 5 is Alaska Agriculture Day. Alaska Agriculture Day celebrates the agricultural history of Alaska, as well as its vibrant present and promising future. In classrooms around the state, teachers will focus on the sources of our food on Alaska Ag Day to help students understand why agriculture is important. Contact Alaska AITC at 982-2219 to see if there is an Alaska Ag Day event in your community.

It is the time of year again, where we are looking for "Farm Family of the Year" nominations. For more information on nominating your neighbors for the 2009 Farm Family of the Year award, go to the Division web page.

There has been great interest in our Innovation Grant. We received 32 applications, with over \$133,000 requested in funding. We had a total of \$40,000 to fund these grants, and we funded 11 projects. The grant is very competitive and we were excited to see all the interest in the program. The awarded projects will be announced, when all contracts are signed and returned.

Pest Detection Surveys in Alaska

In the April issue of the newsletter, we listed many of the pest surveys the Division has coordinated through the Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) in Alaska. The 2009 summer field season agenda is turning out to be quite busy. To date, the Alaska CAPS program has been awarded funds from the USDA Animal Plant Health Inspections Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine (APHIS-PPQ) to conduct surveys for gypsy moth and other invasive forest Lepidoptera, terrestrial slugs and snails, Emerald Ash Borer, and nematodes that may vector the Tobacco Rattle Virus. If funding allows, a survey of potato crops for Potato Cyst and Golden Nematode will also be conducted.

During the summer of 2008, the Division of Agriculture participated in the National Potato Cyst Nematode (PCN: *Globodera pallida*) and Golden Nematode (GN: *Globodera rostochiensis*) survey. PCN and GN are roundworms that live on plants of the Solonaceae, or potato, family. The first detection of PCN in the United States occurred in Idaho in 2006. After its confirmation, a national survey was launched to determine if the pest existed in other parts of the country. The objectives of the survey were therefore to confirm the presence or absence of PCN and GN in seed and commercial producing potato fields in Alaska, as well as to determine the scope of the pests, if any, throughout the United States for the purpose of facilitating the marketing of U.S. Potatoes.



The 2008 Alaska PCN Survey was a continuation of the 2007 PCN survey, except that GN was added to the targeted pest list for screening. In 2007, we surveyed potato producing fields that were in production during 2006. In 2008, we surveyed fields that were in potato production during 2007. If the survey is conducted in 2009, we will survey potato fields that were in

production during 2008. The survey in Alaska was voluntary for the growers, and it is important to note that 100% of the farmers in 2008 who were approached and asked to have their fields sampled, agreed to

Fairbanks Office
907-328-1950

Charlie Knight
Charles.Knight@alaska.gov
907-374-3715

Curtis Knight
Curtis.Knight@alaska.gov
907-374-3732

participate in the survey. A big Thank-You goes out to all who participated! The survey was conducted from late June through August. We collected a total of 60 five-pound soil samples from both potato seed (25 samples) and potato table-stock (35 samples) producing fields. A total of 388 acres were surveyed. All of the samples were shipped to a specialized USDA PCN lab facility located in Idaho Falls for analysis. All of the Alaska samples that were collected in 2008 were confirmed negative for PCN and GN.

The first image is of the White Potato Cyst Nematode (*Globodera pallida*), and the second image is of the Yellow Potato Cyst Nematode (*Globodera rostochiensis*). Both Images from: Central Science Laboratory, Harpenden Archive, British Crown, Bugwood.org.

Plant Material Center

http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_pmc.htm

907-745-4469

Stoney Wright

Manager, Plant Materials Center
Stoney.Wright@alaska.gov
Stoney J. Wright: 745-8105

Agronomist

Peggy.hunt@alaska.gov
Peggy Hunt: 745-8721

Plant Material Center - PMC

It is spring here at the PMC. Flocks of geese and sand hill cranes are flying in to land in our fields. The grass is getting greener, buds are swelling on the trees, and small tendrils of weeds are trying to make headway.

As we prepare for the growing season, the yard and gardens are being raked. Plans are designed for where the new crops will go. All of the laborers are back. The machines are oiled and blades sharpened. Many of the seeds for the gardens are in the greenhouse, with new leaves poking up from the soil daily.

The potatoes are still in test tubes, but they are in the new grow lab and making progress. Orders for potatoes, grass, grain, and forbes should be in to us by now.

The mosquitoes are out, chickadees are building their nests, and many days it is warm enough to be outside in a t-shirt. It's spring!!!!

Calendar Events May -We will keep you posted on events we are aware of that are taking place.

- Contact our office in Palmer, to confirm the date and time for the Board of Agriculture & Conservation meeting. Currently it is set for May 28th from 4:30-6:30. 907-745-7200