



# The Division of Agriculture Activities

June 01, 2012

Find us on the web at:  
<http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag>

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Questions or Comments?  
[E-Mail](#) or call 907-761-3864.

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## Directors Note

Memorial Day weekend is behind us and on to true summer activities. The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, [Alaska Crop Weather](#) reports the main farm activities over the past week included seeding barley, oats and potatoes, spreading fertilizer, cultivating fields and everyone's favorite – equipment repair. Every year, it seems, the plan is to repair whatever is broken over the long winter months; but spring arrives and unfortunately that chore is never checked off the long "to do" list. If your equipment is beyond repair and in need of replacement, the [Agricultural Revolving Loan Fund](#) (ARLF) is available to help finance farm needs. Currently, the interest rate for equipment is 4%.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Farm Service Agency recently announced that the sign-up period for the [Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program for Geographically Disadvantaged Farm and Ranchers](#) for fiscal year 2012 will begin on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. With input costs continuing to rise, this program specifically benefits Alaska and other areas outside the contiguous United States who are at a competitive disadvantage when they move products to market. USDA reports they will be issuing nearly \$3 million in fiscal year 2011 payments.

Congress appears to be ramping up action on the Farm Bill. The Senate Agriculture Committee filed the '[Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2012](#)' ([S.3240](#)) with the full Senate last Thursday night, meaning the bill could be considered early next month.

Here in Alaska, Governor Sean Parnell has proclaimed June 24-30, 2012 as Alaska Invasive Weeds Awareness Week. Alaska is in a unique position to avoid the enormous costs of widespread invasive plants that are now impacting the other 49 states. In recognition of this opportunity, state, federal, local, private, non-profit organizations and the public are working together to promote invasive weed prevention and management, increase public awareness and help keep our communities and environment free of invasive weeds and agricultural pests for generations to come.

A 'Right to Farm' lawsuit was recently heard in Fairbanks. Superior Court Judge Randy Olson has issued an order in the Lanser V. Riddle Right to Farm Lawsuit (4FA-11-03117CI). The court denied the developer's request for preliminary injunction and also denied the farmer's motion to dismiss. The order leaves the case open for the parties to develop their arguments further at trial. This is the first time Alaska's Right to Farm Act, [AS 09.45.235](#), has been challenged since it was enacted by the Legislature in 1986.

I would like to congratulate Stoney Wright, Manager of the Northern Latitude Plant Materials Center, who recently received the Meritorious Service Award from USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. Stoney was recognized for his over 33 years of service to Alaska and plant material science. He has authored over 139 technical documents benefiting natural resource conservation in Alaska, including the award-winning [Alaska Coastal Re-vegetation and Erosion Control Guide](#).

As always, please give me a call if you have any comments or concerns. You can reach me at [franci.havemeister@alaska.gov](mailto:franci.havemeister@alaska.gov) or (907) 761-3867.

*-Franci Havemeister*

*"Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous and they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interests by the most lasting bands."*

–Thomas Jefferson

## Agriculture Calendar

- ▶ Tue. June 5<sup>th</sup>, 10 am - 3 pm: **Rhodiola Growers School**; Experiment Farm, Palmer  
*Details: [here](#).*
- ▶ Wed. June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1 pm: **Board of Agriculture & Conservation Meeting**; Palmer  
*Phone participants: (800) 315-6338; Passcode: 122#  
Details: [here](#).*
- ▶ Thurs. June 14<sup>th</sup>, 11 am - 1 pm: **Kahiltna Birchworks Harvest Tour**; Talkeetna  
*Details: [here](#).*
- ▶ Tue. June 19<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 - 7:30pm: **Season Extending Greenhouse Class**; Sutton Library.  
*Details: [here](#).*
- ▶ Thurs. June 28<sup>th</sup>, 9 am - 1 pm: **On Farm Food Safety Workshop**; CES office, Fairbanks.  
*Details: [here](#). To register: [email Johanna Herron](mailto:email.Johanna.Herron).*
- ▶ Fri. June 29<sup>th</sup>, 9 am - 1 pm: **On Farm Food Safety, Day 2**; Rosie Creek Farm, Fairbanks.  
*Details: [here](#). To register: [email Johanna Herron](mailto:email.Johanna.Herron).*

*If you have an event that you would like to add to the calendar, please contact [Lora Haralson](#).*



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## Marketing Section

### Agricultural Innovation Grant Recipients Share Knowledge

Interested in Agricultural Innovation Grants from the Division of Agriculture? You have two opportunities this June to hear reports and learn from past Alaska Agriculture Innovation Grant (AAIG) recipients.

On Thursday June 14<sup>th</sup>, learn about Kahiltna Birchworks, a producer of award-winning birch syrup and wild-berry jams. On Tuesday June 19<sup>th</sup>, Chugach Farm will share information about how extending the Alaskan growing season with a greenhouse.

You are also encouraged to check out “[A Brief Guide To Growing Fruit Trees In And Around Haines, Alaska](#)” now available on our website [dnr.alaska.gov/ag/Grants/Fruit-TreeGrowingGuide.pdf](http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/Grants/Fruit-TreeGrowingGuide.pdf). This extensive report is the result of a third AAIG project from 2010.

Be sure to follow Alaska Grown on Facebook (at [facebook.com/dnr.alaskagrown](https://www.facebook.com/dnr.alaskagrown)) for updates.



### 2012 Farm Family of the Year Award Nominations

Remember that the Division of Agriculture is seeking nominations for the 2012 Farm Family of the Year. This award recognizes the efforts of Alaska farmers by honoring one family that epitomizes the spirit of the industry. Nominations are due by the 29<sup>th</sup> of June, and may be emailed to [Amy.Pettit@alaska.gov](mailto:Amy.Pettit@alaska.gov).

The Alaska State Fair established the award to honor an Alaska farming family and show appreciation for all the hard-working Alaskans committed to agriculture and aquaculture in the state. The award is sponsored by the Matanuska Valley Federal Credit Union.

Detailed information about the [2012 award criteria](#) is available on our web site, along with a [list of past recipients](#). The 2011 Farm Family of the Year was the Baker Family, which has owned and operated Gray Owl Farm in Palmer since 1998.

### Last Chance to be in the 2012 Alaska Grown Source Book

This is FINAL CALL for 2012 Source Book Information. You must provide your information to the Division by Friday, June 29<sup>th</sup> in order to have your farm or agriculture business listed in the 2012 Alaska Grown Source Book. Be sure to take advantage of this opportunity to be listed in this free resource.

The Alaska Grown Source Book is the only STATEWIDE listing of Alaska farms, ranches and other agri-businesses. Producers of food and farm products can tell us about your business by going to [dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag\\_AKG2012.htm](http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_AKG2012.htm). You can also contact Kristi Krueger at (907) 761-3858 or [Kristi.Krueger@alaska.gov](mailto:Kristi.Krueger@alaska.gov).

The Division prints a minimum of 5000 copies of the Source Book, for distribution at statewide Agricultural events and fairs, farmer's markets, and at the Division of Agriculture's offices.

## ARLF Services

[http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag\\_arlf.htm](http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_arlf.htm)

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## Alaska Farm-to-School Program Update

### Alaska Agriculture Day Activity Interior roundup

What a great week to celebrate and teach kids about agriculture in Alaska!

- In Fairbanks Tami Seekins at the Fairbanks and Soil Water Conversation District (FSWCD) coordinated and organized four successful events. Amazing!

- Noel Wien Library:** Presentations on raising bees in Alaska & seed planting/germination by FSWCD. Calypso Farm and Ecology Center had a presentation on gardening, 4-H presented about raising livestock in Alaska, and the UAF Cooperative Extension Service talked about worm composting. The presentations were well attended, with approximately 150 participants.
- Farm Tours:** Lillyvale Farm hosted two tours on May 1<sup>st</sup>, with 145 elementary age students attending!
- Classrooms:** Presentations/lessons dealing with Alaskan Agriculture and food production were given in 53 classrooms in Fairbanks, Salcha and Nenana.
- Chamber of Commerce:** At the Alaska Ag Day general membership luncheon, three presenters spoke to the members about the importance of local producers to our economy, food security and quality of health.

- The Farm-to-School Program developed a carrot seed tape activity that was made available for any K-12 class. Find it at [dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag\\_FTS.htm](http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_FTS.htm). 400 students in



Palmer and over 260 students in Fairbanks participated. Students were taught how to make carrot/radish seed tape. Complementary lessons about nutrition and agriculture rounded out the activities.



*Students at Fairbanks Montessori School make carrot seed tape during Alaska Agriculture Day activities, while Alaska Farm-to-School program director Johanna Herron assists.*



For Farm-to-School updates, news, grant opportunities and announcements, join our listserv: [list.state.ak.us/soalists/akfarmtoschool/jl.htm](mailto:list.state.ak.us/soalists/akfarmtoschool/jl.htm).

The FTS facebook page is at [facebook.com/AlaskaFarmToSchool](https://facebook.com/AlaskaFarmToSchool).

### Alaska Farm-to-School Mini Grants

The Alaska Farm-to-School Program received 25 applications for this year's mini-grant announcement and were able to fund 17 of the proposals.

Mini-grants are awarded to school-based projects that connect students, teachers, and food service staff with products grown and produced in Alaska. Projects range from farm tours to cooking with local products. We look forward to hearing more about these initiatives as they develop! We are preparing a report detailing the 2011 farm to school mini-grant awards - watch for it on our site: [dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag\\_FTS.htm](http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_FTS.htm).

### On-Farm Food Safety Workshop

Food safety on the farm is an important topic for Alaskans. Whether your customer is a member of the public at a farmers market, a wholesale distributor or a school food service professional - how your products are handled post-harvest is increasingly relevant to food buyers.

Division of Agriculture staff from the Marketing & Inspection teams are collaborating to offer a free "On-Farm Food Safety Workshop" in Fairbanks, June 28<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup>. For more information, [click here](#). To reserve a seat, contact Johanna Herron at [Johanna.herron@alaska.gov](mailto:Johanna.herron@alaska.gov) or (907) 374-3714.

## Agricultural Land Sales

### DNR Taking bids for June 29<sup>th</sup> Agricultural Land Sale

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land and Water, in cooperation with the Division of Agriculture, is holding a sale of agricultural land by sealed-bid auction from now until June 22<sup>nd</sup>. The sale comprises two tracts in Interior Alaska. These tracts are 650 and 677 acres in size and each will be sold to the highest bidder. The tracts will be subject to 40-acre clearing requirement and agricultural covenants. The minimum bids have been established by fair market value appraisal: \$36,000 to \$36,500 respectively.

**Sale name:** Auction #468

**Bidding period:** May 8th – June 22, 2012

**Opening of bids:** 1 p.m., Friday, June 29, in the larger conference room at:

DNR Northern Region Office  
1300 Airport Way,  
Fairbanks, Alaska, 99709

**Parcel Locations:** Kobe (Near Anderson) just past the Coghill Bridge at milepost 275 Parks Highway at Kobe Road.

Printed copies of the brochure are available at the Anchorage and Fairbanks DNR Public Information Centers and the Division of Agriculture offices in Fairbanks and Palmer. In addition, the brochure is available at locations around Nenana, Healy, Fairbanks, and Delta. Please call 907-374-3716 for those locations. The brochure is also available on-line at [dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/landsale](http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/landsale).

Potential purchasers are encouraged to thoroughly review the sale brochure and personally inspect the parcels prior to the auction. Bidders must include 5% of their bid when submitting a bid for a parcel. Please see [brochure](#) for details.

For more information on bidder qualifications and auction procedures, please see [the brochure](#) or contact any of the DNR Public Information Centers or the Division of Agriculture offices in Fairbanks or Palmer. For additional information concerning any of the parcels, please call the Division of Agriculture Fairbanks office at 907-374-3716 or 907-328-1950.



## Land Sales & Grazing Leases

[http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag\\_sales.htm](http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_sales.htm)

**Dan Proulx**

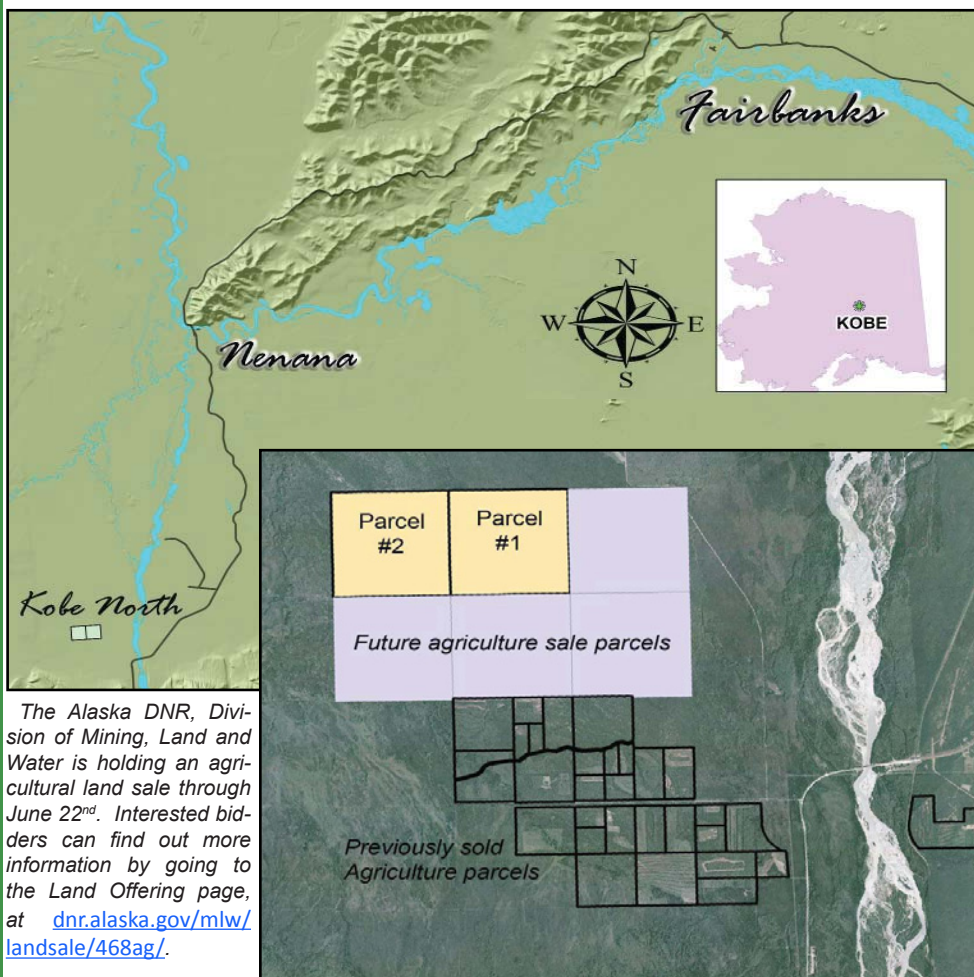
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**Erik Johnson**

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The Alaska DNR, Division of Mining, Land and Water is holding an agricultural land sale through June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Interested bidders can find out more information by going to the Land Offering page, at [dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/landsale/468ag/](http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/landsale/468ag/).

## Pest Detection / Inspection Section

### 2012 Pest Detection Survey Update

Each year, the Alaska Division of Agriculture conducts pest detection surveys with various cooperators throughout the state, to detect and monitor exotic pests of importance to international trade and those pests of state and national concern. These projects are coordinated and funded via cooperative agreements with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) under the guidelines of the Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS) program. The national CAPS program is a partnership among all 50 states and the USDA, which facilitates the detection of plant pests through survey, outreach and educational activities.

The Division began coordinating CAPS survey efforts in 2003, with funding from APHIS. Over the years, we have conducted surveys for invasive weeds, insects, nematodes, snails and slugs, plant diseases and pathogens of particular concern. Most surveys that we conduct are for serious pests that we assume are not present in Alaska. Occasionally, we do have positive detections, indicating that some of these pests are making their way to Alaska.

Usually, and fortunately, our surveys generally yield negative data. This data is extremely important for several reasons. First, negative information is used to help facilitate international trade in plant materials. Additionally, if our surveys discover a serious pest, this early detection would help

us to determine the scope of the problem, and improve our chances of eradicating the pest before it can become established.

During the 2011-2012 survey year, the Division cooperated with APHIS and other partners to conduct surveys of:

- Emerald Ash Borer;
- Gypsy Moth and other forest moths of concern that could potentially be introduced from the lower 48 or Far East countries;
- Nematode vectors of Tobacco Mosaic Virus that could potentially affect peony cut flowers and potatoes;
- Exotic slugs and snails that are likely introduced via potted plants and balled and burlapped trees;
- Giant Hogweed in response to the first in-state discovery of the phototoxic plant growing in Kake, Alaska;
- Spotted Wing *Drosophila* fly, a pest of soft ripening fruit such as blueberries and other berry crops that has extended its range northward along the Pacific Coast but has not been found in Alaska yet; and
- A survey to evaluate high risk pests associated with the movement of firewood being imported into Alaska.

We plan to continue most of these efforts this summer. New projects this year listed under Section 10201 of the Farm Bill, 2012 Spending Plan, include: a project to document Thrips species associated with Alaska Peonies and an enhanced survey to target exotic Asian Lepidoptera pest species that can be potentially introduced at port environs. Not all survey cooperative agreements and details with APHIS have been finalized to date. For more information about 2012 Pest Detection surveys, contact the Division of Agriculture, Inspection Section, at (907) 761-3857.

### Fairbanks Office

907-328-1950

Curtis Knight

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### Mt. McKinley Meat & Sausage

[http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag\\_mmms.htm](http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_mmms.htm)

907-745-5232

Frank Huffman

[Frank.Huffman@alaska.gov](mailto:Frank.Huffman@alaska.gov)



Giant Hogweed was found in Kake, AK in 2010.



Lymtria dispar, Gypsy Moth caterpillar

Photo: Wikimedia.org

## Plant Materials Center

<http://plants.alaska.gov/>

Main Phone: 907-745-4469

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## Plant Materials Center

### Alaska Plant Materials Center Spring Seed Sale Report

The Spring 2012 seed sale from the Alaska Plant Materials Center sold 20 lbs of grass seed to five growers. The varieties sold were 'Gruening' Alpine Bluegrass, Ninilchik Nootka Alkaligrass, 'Nugget' Kentucky Bluegrass and 'Sourdough' Bluejoint Reedgrass.

Two growers purchased 1450 lbs of 'Thual', 'Lidal' and 'Data' Barley. Nine hundred lbs of 'Ingal' and 'Nogal' Wheat was sold to two growers. One grower also purchased 200 lbs of 'Nip' and 'Toral' Oats.

The Plant Materials Center's seed sale makes high quality certified seed available to Alaskan agricultural producers each spring and fall. The next scheduled open request period is September, 2012. Details will be listed on the PMC website, at [plants.alaska.gov](http://plants.alaska.gov).



*Barley from the Alaska Plant Materials Center*

### Weed Free Forage and Gravel Training

The Alaska Division of Agriculture, Plant Materials Center hosted a Weed Free Forage and Gravel training seminar in May, in partnership with the UA Cooperative Extension Service and Alaskan Soil & Water Conservation Districts. The course was held at the Alaska Plant Materials Center in Palmer, but was also available via webinar to online participants.

Twenty-five participants learned about Alaska's voluntary Weed Free Certification programs and the process of becoming qualified to certify fields (forage) and material sites (gravel) as "weed free." The course was taught by Phil Kaspari and Gino Graziano, and covered standards and requirements for Alaska and the Nation, as well as weed identification and field sessions.



*Certified Weed Free Forage Tag*

Those who successfully completed the exam at the end of the class will soon be certified to inspect fields and material sites for both the Weed Free Forage and Gravel Certification Programs.



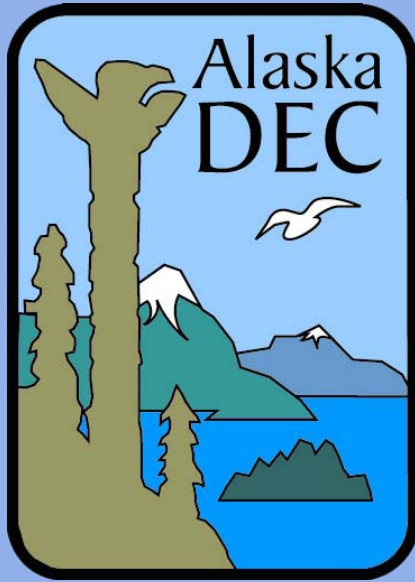
*Weed Free Forage and Gravel Certification training at the Alaska Plant Materials Center*

Further information about Alaska's Weed Free Certification programs is available online, at [plants.alaska.gov/invasives/weed-free.php](http://plants.alaska.gov/invasives/weed-free.php). If you have questions about the program, contact the Invasive Plant Coordinator, Brianne Blackburn, at (907) 745-8785 or [Brianne.Blackburn@alaska.gov](mailto:Brianne.Blackburn@alaska.gov).

### Hay Flats Education Day

The Alaskan's for Palmer Hay Flats Organization held their annual Education Field Day on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Students from Snowshoe Elementary learned about the flora, fauna, resources and the history of the area through activities and instruction from community members, agencies and non-profit groups.

Alaskan's for Palmer Hay Flats invited the PMC to participate. The PMC hosted a table, with the support of the Palmer Soil and Water Conservation District, featuring instructional activities focused on invasive weeds and plant ecology.



## Environmental Health

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# Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation: Division of Environmental Health

## DEC to Host Workshops on Animal Care Standards

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Office of the State Veterinarian will be hosting a third series of public workshops regarding proposed animal care standards. These workshops will help DEC develop animal care standards that provide more detail on what constitutes adequate feeding, watering, and care for common livestock and domestic animals. The public is invited to discuss what they think should be included in animal care standards for Alaska.

The workshops will cover general care standards, humane euthanasia and will also have open forum time for comments on specific animal species. The workshops will be held from 3:30 p.m. until 5 p.m. on June 27 and July 2.

All interested persons are invited to attend by telephone at 1-800-315-6338 (use pass code 8213 when prompted) or in person at the State Environmental Health Laboratory at: 5251 Dr. MLK, Jr. Ave, Anchorage, AK, 99507. Those unable to attend meetings

can submit comments to the Department in writing via mail or [email](#).

No proposed regulations have been formally public noticed for comment at this time. Animal care standards regulations will be proposed and a formal public comment period will be held for the entire regulation package later this year. Questions regarding these workshops can be directed to:

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**Robert Gerlach, VMD**  
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More information on the workshops, minutes from prior meetings and a working draft of the proposed animal care standards are available at: [dec.alaska.gov/eh/vet/AnimalCareWorkshop.html](http://dec.alaska.gov/eh/vet/AnimalCareWorkshop.html).

## A "Heads Up" for Horse Owners and Transporters

A herd of wild horses captured near Haines Junction, Yukon Territory will have to be destroyed; Recent tests have confirmed all five animals have a deadly disease called equine infectious anemia [EIA], which is incurable, say Canadian government officials.

The small herd has been running free for years in the Canyon Creek area west of Whitehorse. But this past winter, they started hanging around the Alaska Highway corridor, where they became a traffic hazard. The ownership of the horses is unknown, and no one has made a claim since their capture in April 2012.

Agriculture supervisor Kevin Bowers said federal regulations leave few options. "It's a disease that there's no cure for, and we have some tough decisions to make about euthanizing those horses as a result of their positive test results," Bowers said. "Unfortunately, [under] the circumstances for permanent quarantine, the horse has to remain on that premise; it has to be secured against infecting other horses and neighbors, notifications [must be given], all those kinds of things," Bowers said.

He said the small Canyon Creek herd was remote enough that it likely did not infect other free-ranging horses in the region. At least a dozen more animals still roam the Takhini Valley west of Whitehorse, Bowers said. He said quarantine was not an option.

Many animals show temporary recovery from the severe stage of EIA and may even appear normal for 2 to 3 weeks before relapsing with similar, but less severe signs.

Control of the disease is based on surveillance testing, identification, and destruction or life-long quarantine of infected animals, mandatory testing of imported horses, and preventing the spread of the virus by controlling insect and mechanical vectors that carry the disease. There are effective mosquito and fly controls for horses, and they should be used, along with fly masks and any other protection for the horse.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) restricts importation of animals and animal products from countries where EIA is known to occur, through Port-of-Entry Inspections done by the Canada Border Services Agency or the CFIA.