



The Division of Agriculture Activities

April 3, 2014

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

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To add or remove your name from our newsletter list [click here](#).

Questions or Comments?
E-Mail or call 907-761-3864.

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Director's Note

The Board of Agriculture and Conservation (BAC) is looking for a few good people to serve. Are you interested in serving or know someone who might be? If so, please give me a call or you can submit your application online at <http://gov.alaska.gov/parnell/services/boards-commissions.html> and remember..... travel costs are paid by the State.

The legislative session continues to move quickly, with several hearings held over the past month which directly impact agriculture. House Bill 238, which increases the Alaska Product Preference from 7%-12% passed out of committee yesterday and is headed to Finance. House Bill 207, which originally created a new board, has been reworked several times, with the latest amendments proposed March 14, 2014. The new amendments include Legislative Finding and Intent language which in part prohibits the use of the Agricultural Revolving Loan Fund to operate Mt. McKinley Meat & Sausage (MMM&S) after June 30, 2014 and requires the board to develop a plan to create a facility in the Mat-Su Borough to be operated as a USDA slaughter facility.

At the BAC meeting, held March 27th, 2014, HB 207's new amendments were a topic of discussion. The BAC listened to public comments from producer, Todd Pettit and processor, Nate Burris. MMM&S Plant Manager, Frank Huffman also was in attendance and answered questions from the Board. The Board requested the Division to schedule a meeting with all stake holders to further the discussion, with the goal of developing a transition plan to move the slaughter facility from state ownership into the private sector. This meeting has not been scheduled as of yet, but stay tuned for further information.

As we transition from winter to spring, the Plant Materials Center management continues to adjust as senior managers retire. It is with regret that I announce the upcoming retirement of Bill Campbell. Bill has been the champion of Alaska's potato industry since February of 1984. Over the past 30 years, he has worked diligently to address disease issues within the state, provide on farm assistance, and has become known nationally and internationally for his expertise. I would like to thank him for his years of service, his dedication to the industry, and to wish him well in his new endeavors!



Bill Campbell opening the 2014 Potato Symposium Meeting

As always, take the time to read through the newsletter, mark your calendars for upcoming events such as conferences and grant deadlines, and if you have any questions or concerns please give me a call at 761-3867 or franci.havemeister@alaska.gov.

~ *Franci Havemeister*

Springtime is the land awakening. The March winds are the morning yawn. ~Quoted by Lewis Grizzard in Kathy Sue Loudermilk, I Love You

ARLF Services

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

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Agriculture Calendar

- **Thur. April 10th** **Winter Conservation Series.** Tree Care, Maintenance & Pruning. Palmer. 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. *Details:* [here](#)
- **Wed. April 16th** **Walking the Red Road.** Native Plant Study. Plant Materials Center, 5310 S. Bodenbug Spur, Palmer. 11:00 a.m. - 1 p.m. *Details:* [here](#)
- **Sat. April 26th** **Kenai Peninsula Ag Forum.** The Real Dirt on Kenai Peninsula Agriculture! Lands End Resort. Homer. 9:00 a.m. - 4 p.m. *Details:* [here](#)

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

Marketing Section

We are now accepting applications for the

**2014-2015
Alaska Grown Sourcebook!**

Deadline: April 15th

The Source Book is the 'go to guide' for finding Alaska Grown products; the Division will print and distribute over 5,000 copies and has spent hours upgrading the online version of the tool.

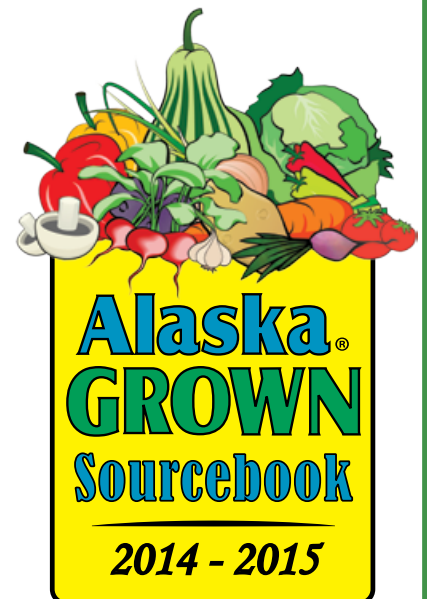
Don't forget this is **FREE ADVERTISING** for you and your farm business, so click the link that applies to you below and submit your information. Remember that we **CAN NOT** include your data unless you respond to the information request each year. If your farm business was included in 2012, we cannot automatically include you in 2014 - we need your permission each time.

Also, just because you signed up to be a member of the Alaska Grown program, **DOES NOT** mean your information will be included in the 2014 Book. **Again, you must respond to the new request for information each time.**

Help us help you! Our goal is to include 270 farms!

Complete the [farmer and vendor application](#) here.

Complete the [agriculture services application](#) here.



Marketing Staff

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

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On-Farm Food Safety Workshops

Dear Alaskan Growers and Grower Advocates-

The State of Alaska Division of Agriculture is now offering **FREE On-Farm Food Safety Workshops** for produce growers statewide. These free workshops focus on growing, harvesting, storing, and transporting food safely, and are designed for produce growers of all types who are interested in learning more about providing safe food to their customers.

The workshops consist of a Power Point presentation highlighting common food safety risks, tips for improving food safety at your farm or garden, and a mock food safety audit of a farm or garden when possible, to assist growers in assessing and addressing food safety issues that commonly occur. We will also provide information about marketing your produce to schools and institutions, and details about the Nutritional Alaskan Foods for Schools grant program, which was created to assist Alaskan school districts in providing fresh local foods for their schools. All attendees will receive a copy of the "Wholesale Success" manual, created by the small farmer advocacy group familyfarmed.org, which contains a wealth of information about growing, harvesting, storing and marketing your produce. The workshop and mock-audit last about 4 hours, are free to attendees, and have been very well received in the nine communities in which they were held last year.

If your community would be interested in sponsoring a workshop, please contact me at the Alaska Division of Agriculture. We ask for an attendance commitment from at least five specialty crop food growers before scheduling a workshop.

Thank you!

Barbara Hanson • Agricultural Inspector • State of Alaska Division of Agriculture
1800 Glenn Hwy #12 • Palmer AK 99645
Ph: (907) 761-3854 • Fax: (907) 745-7254

Chef at the Market

Chef at the Market is accepting applications for summer demonstrations! **Applications are due by April 30, 2014.** The summer CATM season will run until September 30, 2014. Go to the following link for instructions on how to apply: http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_grants.htm

The "Chef at the Market" program began in 2011 to help Alaskans learn new ways to prepare fresh Alaska Grown specialty crops*. As the chefs entered the markets, this program turned into much more. Chefs have created relationships with local food vendors and consumers, helping bring local produce to family homes and local restaurants. In the summer 2013, the program boasted six Alaska chefs performing a combined total of 27 demonstrations at nine local farmers markets and special events. To find out more information about "Chef at the Market" demonstrations and how to apply, contact Jacquelyn Schade at Jacquelyn.schade@alaska.gov or (907)761-3858.

**Specialty crops are defined by the Specialty Crop Competitiveness Act of 2004 and the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 as: Fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture). Eligible plants must be intensively cultivated and used by people for food, medicinal purposes, and/or aesthetic gratification to be considered specialty crops.*



Land Sales & Grazing Leases

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

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Nutritional Alaskan Foods in School (NAFS) Grant

The Division of Agriculture wants to make sure that all producers are aware of the Nutritional Alaskan Foods in Schools (NAFS) grant program and what it means. School districts throughout Alaska have funding available specifically for sourcing Alaska Grown and harvested (seafood) products through the NAFS money. Many school districts have had difficulty sourcing products that they can incorporate into their school meal programs. Some school districts are buying directly from producers while others are utilizing local produce merchandisers, such as Quality Sales, Ditomaso's, FSA, or Charlies Produce to help them source qualifying products.

If you intend to grow products specifically for the school lunch program, there are a few considerations. Some buyers have food safety requirements. Have you gone through the On-Farm Food Safety Workshop that the Division offers, referenced in the article on page 3? It is a great way to familiarize yourself with the different food safety audits that some buyers might require. Find more information at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/FarmToSchool/OnFarmFoodSafetyWorkshops.pdf>

To date, a wide variety of Alaska Grown products have been bought with the NAFS money including:

- Lettuce
- Potatoes
- Carrots
- Cabbage
- Milk
- Eggs
- Meats such as hamburger, sausage, roast cuts
- Jams, jellies, honeys
- Zucchini
- Tomatoes
- Cucumbers

If you'd like assistance in finding the School Food Service Professional in a school district near you or want to talk more about the potential opportunities with this funding, please contact Marketing Manager Amy Pettit at Amy.Pettit@alaska.gov or 907-761-3864.

Fun Farm Facts



- Mature turkeys have more than 3,500 feathers.
- There are 47 different breeds of sheep in the U.S.
- Pork is the most widely eaten meat in the world.
- The average person consumes 584 pounds of dairy products a year.
- Elevators in the Statue of Liberty use a soybean-based hydraulic fluid.
- Like snowflakes, no two cows have exactly the same pattern of spots.
- The longest recorded flight of a chicken is 13 seconds.
- Twenty-nine cuts of beef meet government guidelines for lean.
- Raising beef cattle is the single largest segment of American agriculture.
- There are 350 squirts in a gallon of milk.
- Cows must give birth to a calf in order to produce milk.
- Agriculture employs more than 24 million American workers (17% of the U.S. work force).
- Today's American farmer feeds about 155 people worldwide. In 1960, that number was 25.8.
- Cows are herbivores, so they only have teeth on the bottom.
- 160 degrees Fahrenheit is the correct cooking temperature to ensure safe and savory ground beef.
- 1 pound of wool can make 10 miles of yarn. There are 150 yards (450 feet) of wool yarn in a baseball.
- Soybeans are an important ingredient for the production of crayons. In fact, one acre of soybeans can produce 82,368 crayons.
- The average dairy cow produces seven gallons of milk a day, 2,100 pounds of milk a month, and 46,000 glasses of milk a year.
- Turkeys originated in North and Central America, and evidence indicates that they have been around for more than 10 million years.
- The heaviest turkey ever raised weighed 86 pounds, about the size of an average third-grader.

Fun Farm Facts provided by: <http://www.farmersfeedus.org/fun-farm-facts/>

Inspection Staff

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

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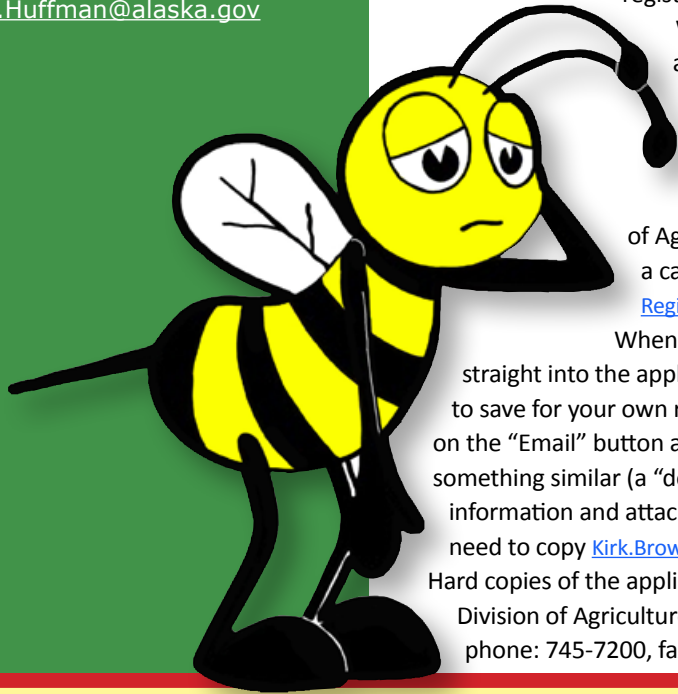
Kirk.Brown@alaska.gov

Mt. McKinley Meat & Sausage

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

Frank Huffman 907-745-5232

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NAFDMA: Farmers Inspired

Do you currently have an agritourism component to your operation? Are you interested in learning more about agritourism opportunities? Would you like ideas on how to increase your marketing/social networking for your farm? Or, do you just have questions and want to talk to a fellow farmer? If so, then the North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association (NAFDMA) may be a good fit for you.

NAFDMA membership ranges from farmers to extension agents to industry suppliers to government officials and so much more. Their mission statement is to "Advance the prosperity of its members and the farm direct marketing industry through networking, participation, education, and innovation." And that is exactly what they do. Division of Agriculture staff, Jacquelyn Schade, represented Alaska at the 29th Annual NAFDMA Convention held in Kansas City in January. People came from all over the United States, Canada and the UK to share ideas, hear guest speakers on a variety of topics and have round table discussions to try and find that next big thing.

NAFDMA wants everyone to know that they are not alone! There are others just like them who deal with all the trials and tribulations of owning and operating a farm.

To learn more, visit their website at <http://www.farmersinspired.com/> or contact Jacquelyn Schade at Jacquelyn.schade@alaska.gov or (907)761-3858 to learn more about her experience with NAFDMA.

Pest Detection / Inspection Section

Alaska Bee Registration

Spring is here and it is time to start thinking about Bee hives and honey. In accordance with Alaska Law AS 03.47.030 & 11 ACC 35.010 – 35.020) "ALL" Bees must be registered in the State of Alaska.

Why is it important to register your bees? This information allows the Division to respond in-case of an outbreak of Foulbrood or any other bee related diseases. If an outbreak or suspicion of a diseased hive is reported, the Division will take a sample and have it tested.

The registration form is now available [online](#) at the Division of Agriculture website. Under the "Programs" title you will see a category titled "Inspection Services", there you will find "[Bee Registration](#)" to directly access the application.

When you open the application online, you can type your information straight into the application. When you have completed the form, click "Save As" to save for your own records. If you choose to email the document in, simply click on the "Email" button at the top of the application, and if you are using Outlook or something similar (a "desktop application"), it will automatically fill out the necessary information and attach your application. If you are using "Internet Email" you will need to copy Kirk.Brown@alaska.gov into the "To" line, and attach your application. Hard copies of the application are also available and accepted at the Division at: Division of Agriculture, 1800 Glenn Highway, Suite 12, Palmer, AK 99645, phone: 745-7200, fax: 745-7254. Feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

PMC Spring Seed Sale for Commercial Growers

The sale for Foundation and Natural Selection grasses, forbs, and grains is scheduled from **April 14 - 25, 2014**. Seeds that will be available for sale will be posted on the [Division of Agriculture](#) and the [Plant Materials Center](#) web pages on April 14.

Please [e-mail](#) or call Peggy Hunt for more information, 745-8721.

Plant Materials Center

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

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Plant Materials Center

PMC Hosts 2014 Potato Symposium

On Saturday, March 22, 2014 the Alaska Plant Materials Center hosted the 2014 Potato Symposium. Speakers from around the country attended as well as participated online. The subject ranged from viruses and bacterial infections to seed certification and export opportunities. A group discussion closed the meeting.

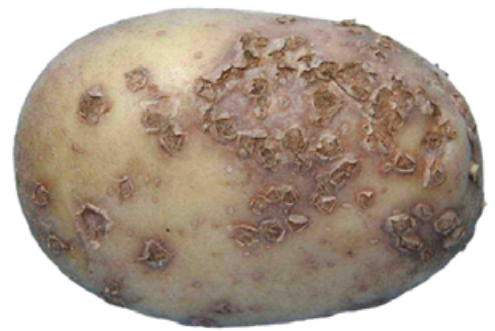
Topics discussed were as follows:

- "Potato Virus Y, Challenges of Control"
- Presented by Dr. Stewart Gray, Cornell University
- "Bacterial Ring Rot, the Recurring Problem, What is being Done"
- Presented by Dr. Phil Nolte, University of Idaho
- "Seed Certification, and International Perspective"
- Presented by William Schrage, Direcotr North Dakota State Seed Potato Program
- "Seed Potato Export, the NEU Spud Seed Potato Export Opportunity"
- Presented by Keith Esplin, Executive Director NEU Seed Cooperative

For a video of this meeting please visit the Plant Materials Center website at plants.alaska.gov or [download the meeting here](#) (304M file, stable internet connection required).



Bill Campbell, Plant Materials Center, kicks off the 2014 Potato Symposium.

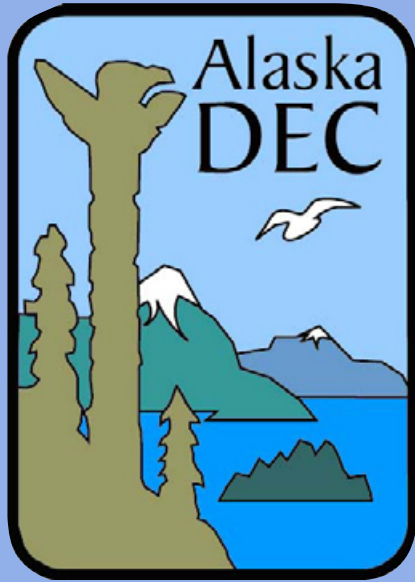


Powdery scab on a potato.

Tuesday, April 22nd is

EarthDay





Environmental Health

Alaska Department of
Environmental Conservation

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Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation: Division of Environmental Health

Herd Health Issues - Coronavirus

Last month's article focused on Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea virus (PEDv) which is a coronavirus. Over the last several weeks there have been other livestock disease outbreaks that have been traced to other corona viruses. Agriculture officials in Ontario announced two weeks ago the first confirmed cases of a new type of coronavirus in pigs. This virus doesn't spread to humans or pose a food safety threat; the illness in pigs is similar to other swine diseases that are caused by coronaviruses: PEDv and transmissible gastroenteritis (TGE). The disease was first identified in Ohio and was called swine deltacoronavirus (SDCV) and later found to be the cause of severe gastroenteritis on several farms across the state.

The Canadian Animal Health Officials worked closely with the USDA and had samples from the Ontario farms tested at Ontario's Animal Health Laboratory and at the US Department of Agriculture National Animal Disease Center in Ames, IA to confirm the diagnosis. Although the SDCV causes vomiting and diarrhea in all age-groups of pigs the mortality rates from the disease appear to be lower. This incident illustrates that advances in animal diagnostics allow new viruses to be detected and identified so that there can be a better understanding of disease outbreaks and hopefully a more rapid response to prevent further spread and impact on farmers.

There are numerous coronaviruses that can infect humans, other mammals, and birds; therefore it's not surprising to find an additional coronavirus in swine. The next story involves a newly identified Equine enteric coronavirus. The Animal Health Diagnostic Center at the School of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University is seeing an increase in cases of a relatively newly recognized illness in horses. Equine enteric coronavirus was occasionally diagnosed in horses but there has been significant rise in the Northeast and it seems to be most prevalent during the colder months (December thru May). Now cases are being diagnosed in several states including New York, Missouri, South Carolina, Connecticut, and Vermont due to the increased movement of horses across the country.

Equine enteric coronavirus is most often diagnosed in adult horses and may be considered on the differential list for a horse whenever you see a fever (usually less than or equal to 104.0) accompanied by anorexia and lethargy. It is transmitted by the fecal oral route and signs usually tend to resolve in 1-4 days although animals can continue shedding for several weeks. The disease is easily spread and causes disease in 20 to 60% of the animals exposed but fortunately mortality rates are low. This is a gastrointestinal disease of horses that does not cause and respiratory illness that may be seen with the cattle coronavirus that commonly causes enteric and respiratory disease.

Just as for any infectious/contagious disease or parasite you can reduce the risk to your animals by having an animal health management plan and follow general biosecurity guidelines. Keep any ill animals separated from the rest of the herd, use standard/routine sanitation procedures for visitors to your farm and at shows or fairs. Finally keep any new or visiting animals separate and watch them closely for any signs of illness prior to mixing them with your livestock.

Cornell has published a fact sheet with more details regarding Equine Enteric Coronavirus; https://ahdc.vet.cornell.edu/docs/Equine_Coronavirus.pdf

FDA Announces New Reporting Tool for Livestock Animal Food Problems
Center for Veterinary Medicine Update

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced the availability of a new website for the public to report problems related to livestock animal food. The Livestock Food Reporting portal will accept reports about foods made for species considered to be livestock, including but not limited to, horses, cattle, swine, poultry and fish. FDA encourages anyone with concerns about animal feed to file a report, including veterinarians and livestock producers. This new online portal provides an additional means for consumers to register complaints, and FDA's District Office consumer complaint coordinators will continue to accept reports via phone.

The Livestock Food Reporting portal is the latest addition to the Safety Reporting Portal, an online system designed to streamline the process of reporting product safety issues to the FDA and the National Institutes of Health. Manufacturers, distributors, retailers and public health officials at the federal, state and local level should continue to use the Reportable Food section of the Safety Reporting Portal. The Portal can be found here: <http://www.safetyreporting.hhs.gov/>.



SCHOOL OF NATURAL RESOURCES
& AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES

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UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

School of Natural Resources and Extension

Pre-veterinary Medicine Track Soon to be Available

Story contributed by Nancy Tarnai

Alaska students now have the option to study a pre-veterinary medicine track in their home state. The University of Alaska Fairbanks School of Natural Resources and Extension (SNRE) has added a pre-veterinary track for undergraduate students. The program will emphasize agriculture and natural resources.

"Pre-vet is the pipeline for our success," said Dr. Todd O'Hara, coordinator of pre-vet and veterinary student affairs at the UAF Department of Veterinary Medicine, College of Natural Science and Mathematics. "This will get the appropriate students into the pipeline and properly prepared for study in veterinary medicine."

Colorado State University (CSU), UAF's partner in professional veterinary medicine, sees animal science and sustainable agriculture in a positive light, O'Hara said.

"If we offer the pre-vet track in agriculture and natural resources, students will have a good chance of getting into CSU. Students who show no intention of studying food animals or large animals are going to get dinged. Food animals and equine areas are underserved by veterinarians in Alaska and nationwide."

"We're looking at what CSU requires," said Milan Shipka, professor of animal science. "This will add 14 credits to our degree program. Our program in the natural resources management degree is currently the only track specifically labeled pre-veterinary medicine."

A new three-credit course, introduction to sustainable agriculture, will be added. Other courses, such as animal science and sustainable livestock production will be part of the course offering.

Dr. Arleigh Reynolds, associate dean of the UAF Department of Veterinary Medicine, explained that the One Health Initiative, a movement to forge collaborations between physicians, osteopaths, veterinarians, dentists, nurses and other scientific health and environmental related disciplines, is important to CSU leaders. "The profession is adjusting," Reynolds said. "Veterinarians will be more involved in human health. CSU sees tying with Alaska a way to address that diversity."

Reynolds said his vision is to focus on rural Alaska. "For this program to serve Alaska we have to produce vets who will fill the needs in Alaska and there is a huge veterinary need in villages."

An added bonus for SNRE's pre-veterinary medicine track is the school's Matanuska Experiment Farm in Palmer where cattle are raised and researched. "We want to get students down there," Reynolds said. "There are a lot of opportunities there; it's the agricultural center of the state and it's a good place to bring students from Anchorage and Fairbanks to experience agriculture. We haven't defined anything yet but we look forward to working closely with SNRE and taking advantage of things we have in the state already."

SNRE Interim Dean Stephen Sparrow said he is excited about the opportunities the new track will offer students. "We recognized a need and now we can begin to prepare students for veterinary school and eventually for careers and service in Alaska communities," he said.

Students should contact Professor Shipka, 907-474-7429 or Martha Westphal, SNRE enrollment and administrative coordinator, 907-474-5276.

And...Natural Resources Degree Evolves

The Natural Resources Management degree which is offered through the UAF School of Natural Resources and Extension will be revised and streamlined beginning fall 2014. The revised degree is designed to teach students environmental decision-making with an emphasis on concepts aimed at sustainable resource management in Alaska and elsewhere so they can become leaders in environmental stewardship and responsibly develop natural resources.

"We work to promote an understanding of the natural environment and its resources through scientific research, education and programs to restore and preserve the integrity of natural areas," said SNRE Interim Dean Stephen Sparrow. "Our students get their boots dirty; in addition to classroom work, there are ample opportunities to study in the field."

SNRE students are attracted to outdoor study and work.

Previous to this change, the NRM degree offered concentrations in High Latitude Agriculture, Forest Sciences and Humans and the Environment. The revised degree will provide for a pre-veterinary medicine track to prepare students to apply for acceptance to a veterinary medicine school. The faculty plan to develop minors to complement the major.

The school prepares students to become leaders as resource managers, academic researchers and professionals in government agencies, non-governmental organizations, industry and communities.

If interested in learning more about the NRM degree, contact Martha Westphal, enrollment and recruitment coordinator, 907-474-5276 or mmwestphal@alaska.edu.

