



Division of Agriculture Activities

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

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

Questions or Comments? E-Mail me at Patricia.O'Neil@alaska.gov or call 907-761-3858.



Note From the Director

This summer and fall has flown by and it is hard to believe it is November already! This past season has been incredible and I would be hard pressed to remember a summer and fall that would compare.

Last weekend I had the opportunity to attend the annual FFA fund raiser known as Chena Fest. For those of you who have never had the good fortune of attending, this event includes an all Alaskan meal and all Alaskan entertainment. Chena's chefs did a spectacular job with the incredible local product and I heard more than once that the "plates should be bigger" as we made our way through the buffet line. Jeff Werner and the FFA did a great job with the entertainment and once again Tanana Valley's support of the agriculture and their youth was impressive – It was a most enjoyable evening!

Please log on to the Division of Agriculture's website: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag> to review the new rules pertaining to the Alaska Grown Certification Program. This new policy, upon effective date, limits all promotional sales to agriculture non-profits selling "hand to hand".

I hope this newsletter finds you well and winding down from a profitable season.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving,
Franci

Calendar Events—

- November 1st @ 6 PM: ELKS Harvest Dinner, showcasing Alaska Grown produce
- November 13-15: Alaska Farm Bureau Annual Meeting @ the Millennium Hotel, Anchorage
- November 11th: VETERAN'S DAY: State Holiday
- November 26th: THANKSGIVING DAY: Enjoy the day with your family! (State Holiday)

Marketing Section

H1N1 Influenza

We want to remind everyone that when you are discussing the H1N1 flu, that you refer to it as the H1N1, not as the "swine flu." Due to the negative connotation of the term "swine flu" the United States swine industry has suffered great losses. Because agriculture is so important to us and to our nation, we encourage you to refer to the illness as the H1N1.

In an article posted on the USDA website dated October 19th, Agriculture Secretary Vilsack said, "We have fully engaged our trading partners to remind them that several international organizations, including the World Organization

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for Animal Health, have advised that there is no scientific basis to restrict trade in pork and pork products. People cannot get this flu from eating pork or pork products. Pork is safe to eat." Just today, October 29th, China is intending to open their borders back up to U.S. pork products. Vilsack also stated "Several of the gene segments in this 2009-H1N1 flu virus have previously been identified in swine influenza viruses, so it was initially called a swine influenza virus. However, this virus is different from other type A influenzas because of its unique combination of genes."

More information is available at: www.usda.gov/wps/portal/?navid=USDA_H1N1

Grant Ideas Request!

We are again preparing to apply for a Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP) grant. These grants are research based, to help determine necessary information to assist in establishing a market for a product, such as has been done recently for the peony industry. Another FSMIP we did was the "Shelf-stable Red Meat" research project, to determine if there is a market for shelf stable meat, and if so, what it is.

We have begun meeting with industry to develop ideas on what to focus on in our application(s). We can submit more than one FSMIP application and we would like to see what the agricultural industry feels is needed to further develop various markets. These projects *require* industry support and involvement, so we need to hear from you on it! These funds are not limited to a certain type of industry, so please contact us to discuss your ideas. You can contact any of the marketing staff listed on the left regarding this issue.

ARLF Land & Asset Manager

ARLF Over-the-Counter (OTC) Land Sale #09-01

The Division of Agriculture is currently offering the former Matanuska Maid Blow Mold Manufacturing Facility, located at 513 South Valley Way in Palmer, Alaska through an OTC sale offering. Brochures are available at Division of Agriculture offices in Palmer and Fairbanks and available online at www.dnr.alaska.gov/ag/. For additional information regarding the sale, contact Asset Manager Ray Nix in the Palmer office, or by email ray.nix@alaska.gov or by telephone at 907-761-3870.

Inspection Section

Don't Let the Bedbugs Bite

In the past few decades, increased international travel has created a resurgence of bedbug infestations worldwide. Even in Alaska, these pests have been invading homes and hotels in recent years. Being aware of the problem, and taking a few common-sense precautions, can save you from becoming a victim of a bedbug invasion.

Adult bedbugs are reddish-brown, flattened, and oval in shape. They are wingless, and their abdomens appear banded. Adults grow to 1/8th to 1/4 of an inch in length and are visible to the naked eye. Newly hatched nymphs are translucent, light in color and become brown after they moult. After a blood meal, they can be red in color and distended, and look like a different insect altogether.

While bedbugs do not transmit diseases to humans, they do bite, and can cause itchy red welts on their victims. They can hide in the tiniest cracks anywhere in the home, and are able to live for over a year without food. They have also developed resistance to some types of insecticides, so getting rid of them is extremely difficult once they have become established.

Inspection Staff

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Plant Material Center

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How are bedbugs introduced? Bedbug infestations have nothing to do with cleanliness. Travelers often bring bedbugs home in their luggage from infested hotels – and even the finest hotels are not immune. Bedbugs can also be brought home when purchasing used furniture, or even on the clothing of visitors who have been in an infested area.

So, how can you keep the bedbugs out?

Whenever you stay in a hotel, store suitcases on luggage racks or in the bathroom.

- Immediately after check-in, examine the room for bedbugs. Look behind the bed headboard and pull back bedsheets, checking the seams of the mattress for bugs, blood smears, or little black spots (bedbug excrement). Then, examine the box spring as well. If you see any evidence of bugs, ask for another room immediately.
- Check your suitcases when you get home, and vacuum them out.
- Wash all of your clothing in warm water when you get home. If a bed bug has survived in your clothing, a warm water wash should kill it.

While non-chemical eradication methods (vacuuming, steaming, laundering, sealing mattresses in plastic) will be helpful in bed bug control, they are not usually enough to completely eradicate a bed bug population. Therefore, insecticides must normally be used as well. Insecticide treatments in sleeping areas are a potential health risk, so it is very important to use products that can be safely used in bedrooms. And keep in mind that several treatments may be necessary before the entire population of bedbugs, in all their life stages, is killed. It is best to contact a professional pest control operator to assist with extermination.

Bedbugs in a mattress seam



Adult Bedbug



Plant Materials Center (PMC) -

The Second Annual Potato Pageant was held at the Palmer Depot on October 22. Over 60 people attended. Potato music, skits, food, and companionship celebrated this anniversary. This picture shows some of the funky vegetables that were brought to the event.

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The Plant Materials Center recently hired three new professionals. To introduce them, each was asked to say in their own words what they would like for you to know about them.

Andrew Weaver. Job: Working with invasive plants.

I am currently working at the PMC as an invasive plant manager, with the goal of encouraging preventative measures, thereby reducing the need for ecological restoration.

- Raised in Fishhook, near Palmer. Lifelong potato farmer, with 4 years as a small-scale organic grower and farmer’s market vendor.
- Studied in-state at the University of Alaska Fairbanks
 - B.S. degree in Natural Resource Management: High Latitude Agriculture
 - Emphasis in: plant ecology, plant propagation, soil chemistry, Geographic Information Systems, economics
 - Senior thesis: Population Dynamics of Honeybee Colonies in Interior Alaska Apiaries

Justin Fernandez. Job: Working with potatoes.

- Lives in Anchorage, works in Palmer.
- Graduated from Pacific University with a degree in Cellular/Molecular Biology in 2007.
- Previously worked in China, teaching English.
- Likes eating potatoes, looking forward to learning more about them.

Phil Czapl. Job: Revegetation

- Live in Palmer, previously from Gillette, Wyoming.
- Graduated from University of Wyoming with a degree in Rangeland Ecology/Watershed Management in 2008.
- Hobbies – Hiking, Road Biking, 4-wheeling, and Watching Florida Gator Football.



Photo taken at Northern Lights Elk Ranch outside of Palmer, on October 22nd.



Land Sales & Grazing Leases

Land Nominations

Do you know of a piece of vacant land you would like to purchase farm on or would make good farmland for someone else? If it is state land you can nominate it for inclusion in a State Land Sale Program. These land nomination forms, available online at dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/landsale or at any DNR office, usually go to the Division of Mining, Land and Water who researches the land and if acceptable incorporates it into a future land offering. If the land in question is classified as Agriculture the Division of Mining, Land and Water will refer it to the Division of Agriculture to do the research and if suitable prepare it for disposal. This is a benefit to anyone nominating agricultural land because the Division of Agriculture does not operate on a five year plan like the Division of Mining, Land and Water so we can generally act upon the request quicker than land that will be offered as fee simple.

The first thing to do if you have your eye on a piece of property is to determine if it is state land. If you know the Township, Range, and Section you can look check its status using the DNR [Land Records](#) page. In the "Enter Search Text" box type in the meridian (first initial only), township, and range. For example if searching Township 3 South, Range 4 West, Fairbanks Meridian you would enter F3s4w in the text box. This will give you a list of all the status plats for that Township/Range. You can select the status plat where the land is located from the dropdown menu under "Get State Status Plats & HI". Sometime there is only one status plat for the whole township and sometimes there are status plats for individual sections. The land you are interested in can be shown on the plat as an open space, as an individual parcel, or as part of a larger existing parcel. Pre-surveyed parcel will generally have an ADL number assigned to it. What to look for on the plat is a GS (General Selection) number that encompasses the land in question. If there is a GS number related to the land that means, generally, that it is state land. The next important thing to look for is what classification the land has. This would be a CL number and have a label under the CL number saying what the classification is, i.e For (forestry), Agr/stl (Agriculture /settlement), W hb (wildlife Habitat) and others. DNR can only sell land classified either agriculture or settlement in their land disposal programs.

Another way to check if it is state land is to go to the DNR web site and use the [Alaska Mapper](#) application. This is a better way if you do not know the township and range of the land. On the opening page choose the Ownership Map and zoom into the general area of Alaska where the land is located. You will have to navigate until you are zoomed into the area showing the land you are interested in. When you find it you will be able to note the township and range; you will need that for the application. You can click the *Legend* button on the left side of the page to check if the land is state land or use the township/range information in the method discussed above.

If you do not have computer access you can call any DNR Public Information Center at the numbers below and they may be able to look the information up for you.

Once you have determined that it is state land you can fill out the nomination form. The form will ask you to attach a map showing exactly where the land is located, a status plat map works well. It will also ask for any survey information, which you may find on the status plat or by looking at the [Land Records](#) page in "Get State Surveys" drop down menu. You will also want to note any improvements on the land, i.e. house/cabins, storage buildings etc.

The completed form can be submitted to any DNR Public Information Center. If

Land Sales & Grazing Leases

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the land in question is classified Agriculture, the Division of Agriculture will re-search the land to see if it is suitable for disposal. If it is determined that the land is suitable to offer for sale we will follow the same process we do for any other land sale we conduct, which is to write a preliminary decision and ask the public for comments and if no problems arise, we write a best interest finding. After preparing the parcel for sale, e.g. appraisals, title reports, surveys, we will offer the land in the next Agriculture sale. Due to cost effectiveness considerations we do not have sales for individual parcels, which is why we sometimes hold on to a parcel a year or so before offering it for sale, to group it with other parcels for a larger sale.

While the Division of Agriculture may do the research and offer a parcel sooner than MLW it is not a quick process. Due to all the statutory and regulatory factors involved it can take anywhere from three to five years between submitting a nomination and the sale and that is if no major issues come up during the adjudication. It is also important to remember that the person nominating the land for sale has no special rights to the land at the sale. Many times the land is located adjacent to the nominators existing property and that may result in a preference right situation but nominating the land by itself does not grant any rights.

The Division of Agriculture is working hard to find and offer as much agricultural land as possible to the citizens of Alaska and we can use your help in finding that land. If you think a piece of ground looks good for agriculture, please let us know or nominate it for sale.

For more information or to submit a land nomination form please contact one of the following DNR offices or the Division of Agriculture.

Land Sales & Grazing Leases

Dan Proulx—Fairbanks

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Anchorage

DNR Public Information Center

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Anchorage, AK 99501-3557

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Hours: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, M-F

Fairbanks

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(Corner of Univ. & Airport Way)

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DNR Land Information Office

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