

## **Currant Affairs**

### **October 27, 2023 Edition**

Compiled regularly by Nick Riordan for Alaska Community Action on Toxics and the Alaska Food Policy Council

**\*\*Marks new and updated items in this issue**

### **WORKSHOPS, WEBINARS, & SPECIAL EVENTS**

#### **November 2**

**Growing Pumpkins from Seed to Fruit** is the topic of the next Anchorage Garden Club monthly education meeting. Open to the public. Central Lutheran Church, 7-9pm

#### **November 7**

**Eat Your Weeds** class offered by CES from 12-1 pm in person (Mat-Su) and on Zoom. <https://www.uaf.edu/ces/districts/matsu/>

#### **November 9**

**Wildflower Garden Club monthly meeting** – Summer photo share and luncheon, 10-1

#### **November 9**

**AK Pioneer Fruit Growers Association** monthly membership meeting and BoD elections

#### **November 10**

**The Herb Study Group** meets the second Friday of each month from noon - 1 p.m. for lively discussion and hands-on activities that center around specific herbal topics. These meetings will be held virtually using Zoom and are free and open to the public. Please email [anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com](mailto:anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com) for information on how to join

#### **November 10-12**

**Alaska Food and Farm Festival** will be at the Egan Center in Anchorage. Featuring local and national speakers, networking, and educational opportunities for agricultural producers and food system advocates. Share your food story! Scholarships available <https://www.akfoodpolicycouncil.org/2023-festival-conference>

#### **November 16**

**Invasive bird cherry and their toxicity to moose** class offered by CES from 12-1 pm in person (Mat-Su) and on Zoom. <https://www.uaf.edu/ces/districts/matsu/>

#### **November 20**

**The Western Exploration of Alaska Flora** presented by Carolyn Parker at the next AMGA monthly membership meeting, from 7-8 pm, via Zoom <https://www.alaskamastergardeners.org/>

**\*\*November 21**

**AFMA will host a Food Access Forum once a month** from 11AM - 12:00 PM via ZOOM. We encourage market managers, farmers, and others interested in food access to join in the conversation. Each month we will discuss a Food Access topic. On November 21st we will discuss Food access programs that markets hosted during the 2023 Farmers Market season.

**\*\*December 7**

2023 Growing Season & Food + Farm Festival Debrief hosted by the AFMA from 6-8 pm. This is part of AFMA reboot of the beginning and young farmers virtual socials. Check out website for more details and to register – [alaskafarmersmarkets.org/events](https://alaskafarmersmarkets.org/events) or [register here](#).

**PROGRAM and JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPDATES**

**\*\*2024 Farm to School Grants.** The Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grant Program is designed to increase the availability of local foods in schools and help connect students to the sources of their food through education, taste tests, school gardens, field trips, and local food sourcing for school meals. Grants can launch new farm to school programs or expand existing efforts. Application closes January 12th, 2024. Learn More about this funding opportunity at this link. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rRJubzTbw1C3-0lp74NcEQrLnOGNSJXH/view> AND <https://www.fns.usda.gov/grant/fy24-f2s>

**\*\*Call for Data - Do you operate a Farmers Market, Food Hub, Farm Stand or CSA?** AFMA is collecting Market Data so we can better assist you and your market in the future. Please consider taking 10 Minutes to fill out the 2023 Market Survey. Provide what you can and we will work to create a more supportive environment for Markets across the state. [Click this link to fill out the survey](#) by Friday, DECEMBER 1ST

**\*\*Wildflower Garden Club is offering grants** to individuals, schools, and Non-Profit entities engaged in botanical education like scholarly studies, scientific research projects, or work in the areas of Horticulture, Floriculture, Landscape Design, Forestry, Botany, Agronomy, and Plant Pathology. Go to <https://wildflowergardenclub.org/grants.html> to learn more and apply.

**\*\*Job opportunity at Seeds of Change** – 3 youth staff positions / Participant Coordinator / Agricultural Specialist - Reach out to Sara Renard via email - [srenard@akbh.org](mailto:srenard@akbh.org) for a copy of a detailed job description and job preview.

**\*\*Homer Soil and Water Conservation District** is hiring a Natural Resource Technician for their local Ag program. [Job posting link here](#).

**\*\*The Native American Agriculture Fund** is surveying to learn about issues of food insecurity and hunger in Tribal areas. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NAAF2023>

**\*\*State Division of Agriculture opens Grant program to Assist farmers with High Livestock Feed Costs.** Learn more about the grant program in the video below and at this [link!](#)

**\*\*Alaska Farmers Union** call for new members. This organization advocates for the needs of local growers. More members means a better sense of what those needs are. [Consider signing up here.](#)

**\*\*AgWest Farm Credit financial statement basics webinar series.** AgWest does financial support services for farmers and fishermen in the western states, including Alaska.

**Whole Kids Foundation** funding opportunity for school gardens

**Job opening: Plant ecologist at Alaska Center for Conservation Science** – Are you a plant ecologist with a passion for working across Alaska’s diverse habitats and regions?  
<https://careers.alaska.edu/en-us/job/525667/plant-ecologist-research-professional>

**Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program.** USDA is accepting applications for planning projects and community food projects. Applications from organizations that address food insecurity in rural, tribal, and underserved communities are encouraged.  
<https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/funding-opportunities/community-food-projects-competitive-grants-program>

**ABG is hiring a Facilities Maintenance Associate** this Fall – Great people and organization to join. Check out the [job advertisement](#) and their website for more info.

**The ‘Teaming With Microbes’ podcast series** with Jeff Lowenfels and Jonathan White promotes organic gardening and addresses Alaska and Anchorage specific gardening and yardening issues. Available through the Anchorage Daily News

**Southcentral Alaska Beekeepers Association monthly meetings.** We’re a friendly and diverse group of Alaskans with a common interest: Bees! SABA meets the fourth Monday of each month (except December) at the VFW Post 9785 10527 VFW Rd. Eagle River, AK from 6:30 - 8:30pm. Meeting reminders emailed out each month to members.

**AG Matters** on Palmer’s Big Cabbage Radio has tons of new content. Check out past episodes here - <https://www.radiofreepalmer.org/category/ag-matters/>

**Herb Study Group** - The Herb Study group meets the second Friday of each month from noon - 1 p.m. for lively discussion and hands-on activities that center around specific herbal topics. These meetings will be held virtually using Zoom and are free and open to the public. Please email [anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com](mailto:anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com) for information on how to join

**AFPC's Food Waste Working Group** is compiling a living archive of food waste activity across the state. Take their survey here - <https://www.akfoodpolicycouncil.org/foodwaste>

**Midtown Garden Depot has free garden supplies** for your next project. We also accept donations of materials anytime. Gate is always unlocked, come by at your convenience. 2930 Cheechako Street. Follow the link to the [Midtown](#) Garden Depot webpage. Coordinated by Alaska Community Action on Toxics.

**Treats for your Chickens** available at 3740 Williams Street on Mondays and Thursdays. These are vegetables and fruits collected from a nearby commercial kitchen and made available by ACAT's Yarduopia program. Bring your own container, keep things tidy, and text or call Nick @ 907-717-4392 to get on the group text that lets you know when the bins are full and when they're empty. Leftovers go to our chickens and compost piles.

**Share Waste** is a [handy website](#) for seeing where to drop off food waste to be used by neighbors in personal compost piles, fed to flocks, and used at community gardens. This isn't a 'new' website, but it might be new to you! In my experience, the more people using Share Waste (giving and receiving), the better it will work - <https://sharewaste.com/>

**Yarduopia** (a program of Alaska Community Action on Toxics) is accepting signups for gardeners looking for growing space, landowners offering space, and volunteers offering time to help make it all happen. Reach out to Yarduopia at [garden@akaction.org](mailto:garden@akaction.org) or [their website](#).

**Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage** and the **Alaska School Garden Network** compile a list of public garden projects and volunteer opportunities – [you can view it here](#).

## **FINDING FOOD: FARMERS MARKETS, FOOD PANTRIES, & FOOD HUBS**

**Thriving Greens** sells sprouts, salad greens, and home sprout kits. Check them out on instagram to find their next pop-up sale.

Anchorage soil and water conservation district created an **interactive map of farmers markets in Anchorage**. Check it out! [http://anchoragewcd.org/farmers\\_markets.html](http://anchoragewcd.org/farmers_markets.html)

**Mat-Su Microgreens** provides weekly deliveries of fresh microgreens to your door. Also available at Friday Fling in Palmer - <https://www.matsumicrogreensak.com/>

**The Alaska Farmers Market Association** new **Farmers Market Toolkit** for starting, enhancing, and supporting a farmers' market in your community.

**The Alaska Farmers Market Association's** [Market Directory](#) helps you easily find farmers markets you live near, the address, hours, etc.

**Locally Grown Resource Guide** made by the Mat-Su Cooperative Extension – [Link to PDF](#).

**Local Food Pickups in Anchorage and Valley** - goat milk, duck/chicken eggs, and chicken, turkey, goat, and rabbit meat. Call or text (907)-885-7732 Or (907)-312-6779

**LunaChick Farm** sells sustainably raised animals, eggs, etc with drop-offs on the Kenai Peninsula, Anchorage, and Valley. Learn more about the operation [here](#) or [here](#) or this [entertaining radio interview from 2020](#).

**Whispering Bay Ranch** has **local eggs for sale** in Anchorage on Thursdays, Mat-Su on Mondays. Chicken and Duck. (907) 885-7732

**Arctic Harvest Deliveries** – [a great source of local foods!](#)

**Alaska Food Hub** opened for its 7th season, with pick-ups in Homer, Soldotna, Ninilchik, and Seldovia, with more locations in the works.

**Support Alaska's American Indian Producers** - <https://www.indianagfoods.org/alaska-1> & check out Ag Alaska's list of AK farms - <https://agalaska.org/alaska-farms/>

**Blue Market** carries lots of locally grown and fermented foods throughout the winter. You can find **Happy Mushrooms**, **Common Root** kimchi and curtido, greens from **Seeds of Change** & much more.

**City Farms** is an indoor hydroponics farm in Anchorage. Their veggies can be found at New Sagaya, Natural Pantry, Fred Meyer, and Walmart. <https://www.cityfarmsalaska.com/>

**Local Greens** sell hydroponically grown veggies year-round in Anchorage. [Get a weekly or every-other-week subscription](#), and pickup at Double Shovel Cidery at your convenience

**Far North Fungi** grows and sells fresh and dried mushrooms in Anchorage & teaches fungi cultivation.

**Anchorage Greens** sells direct to consumers through a weekly Green Bag subscription as well as folks who stop by for on-site ala carte purchases. <https://www.anchoragegreens.com/>

**Alaska Sprouts** sells sprouts and microgreens online for pickup in Anchorage - <https://www.alaskasprouts.com/> . Read more about their story in a [2017 issue of Edible Alaska](#)

To **RECEIVE** Currant Affairs, suggest items to **ADD, CHANGE EMAIL ADDRESS** or **UNSUBSCRIBE**, contact Nick Riordan at [garden@akaction.org](mailto:garden@akaction.org).

**What did I forget?? Send along ideas and updates!**