

Currant Affairs

December 6, 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

December 7

Fresh Holiday Wreaths and Centerpieces hosted by the Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska at 10 am at Dimond Greenhouses in Anchorage.

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 or [register here](#).

****December 7**

SWS' Trash IS Treasure four-part webinar series starts this Thursday at 7 pm with a discussion on composting in Anchorage. Other topics include Re:Made, Grizzly Lumber, and an Anchorage Green Team. You can read about the topics and speakers and register at [the SWS website](#).

December 9

Overwintering Honeybees in Alaska via Zoom from 10 am – 4 pm. More information and registration can be found at www.HappyCreekFarmAlaska.com

****December 14**

Sierra Club Winter Party starting at 6 pm in the Akela Space downtown. Visit the event's Facebook page for more information <https://fb.me/e/60a5FXg3A>

December 14

Apples and cider Making with David Takush hosted by the Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association. Membership meetings are at 7 pm. Join the club to get the Zoom link.

****December 21**

Trash to Treasure webinar series hosted by Solid Waste Services. The series goals are to educate about and encourage circular economies in Anchorage and Alaska. Part 2 will be a presentation by Kelli Toth from SWS. 7 pm via Zoom. You can read about the series and register at [the SWS website](#).

****December 21**

Trash to Treasure webinar series hosted by Solid Waste Services. The series goals are to educate about and encourage circular economies in Anchorage and Alaska. Part 3 will be a presentation by Jenny Forner from re:Made who will discuss the exciting world of repurposing and the "Less Waste Movement". 7 pm via Zoom. You can read about the series and register at [the SWS website](#).

****December 22**

Common Root pop up sale at Blue Market from 11-7 pm. Hyper-local Probiotic Goods + Herbal Goods. Krauts, Kimchi, and other fermented foods as well as balms, salves, and chaga chai! Great minimalist gifts for your people :)

****January 4**

Winter Gardening: Microgreens and Herb Gardening, In person from 2-3 pm, offered by the Cooperative Extension Service. In the winter months, we all miss the freshness of our local farmers markets from the summer, but what can we do? We have ideas for you! Join Theresa and Ann as we share ideas and instructions on how to easily grow your own microgreens and herbs inside your home. We will meet in the Blue Room which is located on the first floor of Kerttula Hall, take an immediate left as you enter the building. Registration: <https://bit.ly/49dxgvG>

January 11

Growing Apricots with Ilona Farr hosted by the Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association. Membership meetings are at 7 pm. Join the club to get the Zoom link.

****January 8**

"Eastern Beringian grasslands: an endangered ecosystem" presented by Bruce Bennett at the next AK Native Plant Society meeting via Zoom from 7-9 pm.

****January 11**

Trash to Treasure webinar series hosted by Solid Waste Services. The series goals are to educate about and encourage circular economies in Anchorage and Alaska. Part 4 will be a presentation by Patrick Simpson from Grizzly Wood who will discuss his latest venture turning post-industrial and post-consumer plastic into recycled plastic lumber "Grizzly Wood". 7 pm via Zoom. You can read about the series and register at [the SWS website](#).

****January 13**

Alaska Food Coop Are you interested in starting a statewide multi-stakeholder cooperative focused on storage and distribution of local food? If so, please attend our next community conversation Saturday January 13, 2024 at 11:30 am. Visit their website for the zoom link and more info - <https://alaskafoodcoop.com/>

January 24

Advanced Seed Starting class at 6 pm offered by Seeds and Soil Farm in Palmer at the Annex, 247 S Alaska Street. More info and registration on their website <https://seedsandsoilorganics.com/product/advanced-seed-starting/>

January 25

Trash to Treasure webinar series hosted by Solid Waste Services. The series goals are to educate about and encourage circular economies in Anchorage and Alaska. Part 3 will be a presentation by Patrick from Alaska Plastic Recovery. 7 pm in person and via Zoom. More info to come.

****February 5**

"Willows" presented by Cam Webb at the next AK Native Plant Society meeting via Zoom from 7-9 pm.

February 8

Soil Health in Orchards with Tianna DuPont hosted by the Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association. Membership meetings are at 7 pm. Join the club to get the Zoom link.

****March 4**

"St. Isidore Farm: an Alaska Native Seed Company" presented by Sarah Jansen at the next AK Native Plant Society meeting via Zoom from 7-9 pm.

March 14

Geneva Rootstock with Gennaro Fazio hosted by the Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association. Membership meetings are at 7 pm. Join the club to get the Zoom link.

March 22-23

AK Farmers Market Association Summit and Annual Meeting will take place on Friday, March 22nd and Saturday, March 23rd via Zoom. Save the date. More info coming soon <https://alaskafarmersmarkets.org/event/afma-summit-and-annual-meeting/>

PROGRAM and JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPDATES

****The 131 School of Composting's Compost Operator Training** registration is open for their annual January-February online course. Special treat - This year's class features instruction from the owner of Juneau Composts!

****Pollinator Steward Certification** registration is open for their 2024 course! [Their website.](#)

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. Meetings are held virtually using Zoom and in person and are free and open to the public. Please email

anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com for information on upcoming winter topics and how to join

The Anchorage Soil and Water Conservation District is looking for two new staff. They are hiring an [Urban Agricultural Program Lead](#) and an [Administrative Assistant](#)

King Tech High School is in the planning stages for a **Sustainable Food and Renewable Energy Student Learning Center**. One of the goals of this space is to integrate a variety of existing (and some new) programs at King Tech. If you'd like to participate in discussions about how this project moves forward and share your thoughts on workforce needs in our city and state that King Tech could help meet, reach out to King Tech to learn more.

ABG's Brighter Winter Nights began December 1st – More info on their website <https://www.alaskabg.org/upcoming-events-workshops>

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 – Shift Lead - Reach out to Sara Renard via email - srenard@akbh.org for a copy of a detailed job description and job preview.

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.

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>

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 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 is closed for the winter. We’ll be back open in Spring, when we’ll have lots of 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 Yarducochia 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/>

Yarducochia (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 Yarducochia at 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

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.

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