

## **Currant Affairs**

### **March 22, 2024 Edition**

Compiled by Nick Riordan on behalf of Alaska Community Action on Toxics and the Alaska Food Policy Council

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

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

#### **March 22-23**

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

#### **\*\*March 23**

**Community Cafe Anchorage** at the UAA Student Union Cafeteria from 11:30 am – 1:30 pm. Demonstration from Anchor Gardens and a nutrition/cooking demo from SNAP-Ed. In partnership with Every Bite Counts, SNAP, Foundroot, Alaska Farmers Market Association, UAA Health Promotions Team, UAF Cooperative Extension Service, WIC and Food Bank of Alaska.

#### **March 23-24**

**AK Botanical Garden's Spring Garden Conference** will be downtown at the Dena'ina Center this year. Always a great event. <https://www.alaskabg.org/spring-garden-conference-2024>

#### **\*\*March 25**

**Meat to Market** webinar 9:30 – 10:30 am. The conversation will focus on the best marketing practices when bringing your meat to market, whether online, offline, or in person.

#### **March 26**

**Help for Your Ag Project** is the next lunch and learn hosted by Rural Caps Grow Program. High tunnels, soil health, water management, and more! 12-1 pm, registration info should be available on the Grow Program's Facebook closer to the date. <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100076532388913>

#### **\*\*March 26**

**Large Seed Starts: Corn, Pumpkin, and Potting Soil** - Spring Gardening Series hosted by the Kenai Peninsula CES. 11 classes. Start at 5:30 pm. See the full list and Zoom links here - <https://www.uaf.edu/ces/garden/webinars/index.php>

#### **\*\*March 27**

Join Spring Creek Farm for a fun evening of **soil blocking, planting, and seed sharing**. 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Bring a packet of seeds to trade with your new gardening friends and gardening gloves, if desired. Seeding trays, covers, soil and a limited selection of seeds will be provided so that you can take a "ready to grow" tray home. All ages and gardening/farming levels welcome. Questions? Please reach out to Geraldine at [gwalker@alaskapacific.edu](mailto:gwalker@alaskapacific.edu). [Sign up here](#)

### **March 27**

**AFPC Food Waste Committee** at 6 pm – 1 hour working group meeting. All welcome. You can learn more about the group on the Ak Food Policy Councils website - <https://www.akfoodpolicycouncil.org/foodwaste>

### **March 28**

**Efficient Irrigation Systems w/ Experts from Dripworks** is part of the 2024 Know Your Land series offered by the HSWCD, USDA NRCS, and Kachemak Bay Campus. In person in Homer and Zoom. Register online at <https://www.homerswcd.org/>

### **March 30**

**Beekeeping in Alaska taught by Bruce Seppi**, a part of Anchorage Greens new class series at 4:30 pm <https://www.anchoragegreens.com/general-clean>

### **\*\*April 1-21**

**21-DAY RACIAL EQUITY HABIT BUILDING CHALLENGE** hosted by Food Solutions New England will host it's 10th annual 21- Day Racial Equity Habit-Building Challenge. The FSNE 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge is simple! You commit to deepening your understanding of, and willingness to confront, racism for twenty-one consecutive days in April. <https://foodsolutionsne.org/21-day-racial-equity-habit-building-challenge/>

### **\*\*April 2**

**Soil Testing and Interpretation for Garden and Farm** - Spring Gardening Series hosted by the Kenai Peninsula CES. 11 classes. Start at 5:30 pm. See the full list and Zoom links here - <https://www.uaf.edu/ces/garden/webinars/index.php>

### **April 4**

**Cold Climate Gardening** – Anchorage Garden Club monthly meeting at 7 pm at Central Lutheran Church <https://www.alaskagardenclubs.org/anchoragegc>

### **April 6**

**Boyer's Orchard Scion Sale.** More details to come.

### **April 9**

**Fruit Tree Pruning - Live Demo** is the eighth lunch and learn hosted by Rural Caps Grow Program. 12-1 pm, registration info can be found - <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100076532388913> **In Anchorage? You are also welcome to watch in-person** at Boyers Orchard. Community pruning will commence afterward from 1-2 pm

### **\*\*April 9**

**Working with Fertilizers and Compost** - Spring Gardening Series hosted by the Kenai Peninsula CES. 11 classes. Start at 5:30 pm. See the full list and Zoom links here - <https://www.uaf.edu/ces/garden/webinars/index.php>

**April 11**

**Rock Garden Construction** – Wildflower Garden Club monthly meeting – Central Lutheran Church – 10 – noon.

**April 11**

**Garden Soils 101** is part of the 2024 Know Your Land series offered by the HSWCD, USDA NRCS, and Kachemak Bay Campus. In person in Homer and Zoom. Register online at <https://www.homerswcd.org/>

**April 12**

**Herb Study Group** monthly meeting – Herb seedling exchange

**April 13**

**Grafting Workshop** hosted annually by the AK Pioneer Fruit Growers Association is open to members at noon (join the club!) and opens to the public at 1 pm. Ends at 3 pm. There are ungrafted apple trees for sale, a variety of scion wood to choose from, and helpers to show you how to graft your trees. Great event. The moose will really appreciate all your efforts (just kidding; consider a little fencing though haha)

**April 15**

**Soil Conservation and Nutrient Development** is the topic of the March AMGA membership meeting. Jessica Anderson will be presenting in person at the BP Center, starting around 6:30. Check out the club email or website for registration and login info.

**April 16**

**AFMA hosts a Food Access Forum** once a month! We meet 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 different Food Access topic.

**\*\*April 16**

**Warming things up with plastic, glass, and mulch** - Spring Gardening Series hosted by the Kenai Peninsula CES. 11 classes. Start at 5:30 pm. See the full list and Zoom links here - <https://www.uaf.edu/ces/garden/webinars/index.php>

**April 16**

**Backyard Pollinators** class offered through CES in person and online. Join us to learn more about the pollinators in your backyard. We'll cover some of the lifestyles of bees and how to recognize some of our common bees and other pollinators in Alaska. We'll also cover some ways to attract pollinators and how to be good pollinator stewards in your own gardens. Please register in advance for this class using this link: <https://bit.ly/3RPo0XO>

**April 18**

**Boyer's Orchard Pruning workshop** –Thursday from 5-7pm

**April 23**

**How to Plant a Tree** is the ninth and final lunch and learn hosted by Rural Cap's Grow Program. 12-1 pm, registration info can be found -

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100076532388913>

**\*\*April 23**

**Raised Rows, Raised Beds, and How to Make Them** - Spring Gardening Series hosted by the Kenai Peninsula CES. 11 classes. Start at 5:30 pm. See the full list and Zoom links here -

<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/garden/webinars/index.php>

**\*\*April 23**

**Urban Harvest:** Whether you're designing a pollinator garden, or thinking about transforming your lawn, you might be curious about Alaska's hearty native plants. Learn from naturalist Patrick Ryan about the "jewels of the North" and how to incorporate the wildflowers of Alaska into your yard. Free; registration recommended. Materials provided. [More info on museum website.](#)

**April 24**

**AFPC Food Waste Committee**

**6 pm** – 1 hour working group meeting. All welcome. You can learn more about the group on the Ak Food Policy Councils website - <https://www.akfoodpolicycouncil.org/foodwaste>

**April 25**

**Minimize Feed Costs by Optimizing Your Pasture** is part of the 2024 Know Your Land series offered by the HSWCD, USDA NRCS, and Kachemak Bay Campus. In person in Homer and Zoom. Register online at <https://www.homerswcd.org/>

**April 27**

**Midtown Mall Garden Day** – A fun event at the Midtown Mall with many clubs and businesses selling seeds, seedlings and supplies. Alaska Master Gardeners, Anchor Gardens, and much more!

**\*\*April 30**

**Herb Gardening: Inside and Out** - Spring Gardening Series hosted by the Kenai Peninsula CES. 11 classes. Start at 5:30 pm. See the full list and Zoom links here -

<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/garden/webinars/index.php>

**May 2**

**Pruning Snow Crushed Trees & Shrubs** - Anchorage Garden Club monthly meeting -

<https://www.alaskagardenclubs.org/anchoragegc>

## **May 2**

**Boyer's Orchard Grafting workshop**, Thursday from 5-7pm

## **\*\*May 7**

**Seeding Directly into the Garden** - Spring Gardening Series hosted by the Kenai Peninsula CES. 11 classes. Start at 5:30 pm. See the full list and Zoom links here -

<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/garden/webinars/index.php>

## **May 9**

**Spring cleanup of wildflower trail at ABG** – Bring gloves & favorite garden tools. 10–11 am

## **\*\*May 14**

**Planting Potatoes** - Spring Gardening Series hosted by the Kenai Peninsula CES. 11 classes. Start at 5:30 pm. See the full list and Zoom links here -

<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/garden/webinars/index.php>

## **May 20**

**Mushrooms and Fungi** presentation by Gabe DeGange at Far North Fungi – AMGA Monthly membership meeting

## **\*\*May 21**

**Hardening Plants and Transplanting Them into the Garden** - Spring Gardening Series hosted by the Kenai Peninsula CES. 11 classes. Start at 5:30 pm. See the full list and Zoom links here -

<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/garden/webinars/index.php>

## **\*\*May 28**

**Composting: No Time to Waste** - Spring Gardening Series hosted by the Kenai Peninsula CES. 11 classes. Start at 5:30 pm. See the full list and Zoom links here -

<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/garden/webinars/index.php>

## **June 1**

**Wildflower Garden Club Plant sale** – 9 am – 3 pm

## **June 1**

**Anchorage Garden Club Plant Sale**

## **June 6**

**Growing Garlic** - Anchorage Garden Club monthly meeting -

<https://www.alaskagardenclubs.org/anchoragegc>

## **\*\*June 10-13** (sessions in July & August too)

**Calypso Beginning Farmer Training for Rural Communities.** Led by Indigenous farmers in partnership with Calypso Farm in Fairbanks, this hands-on program will teach participants how to grow vegetables in a way that is transferable to village communities. [More info here](#)

June 15

Blossom Festival at Boyers Orchard from 12-4 pm

### **PROGRAM and JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPDATES**

**\*\*Alaska Farm Bureau is seeking applicants for the Executive Director position**

[https://alaskafb.org/wp-content/uploads/ED-Job-Description\\_2024.pdf](https://alaskafb.org/wp-content/uploads/ED-Job-Description_2024.pdf)

**\*\*University of Alaska Fairbanks is hiring an Integrated Pest Management Research**

**Technician** to be located in Palmer or Fairbanks doing work primarily at the two farms. The position will be managing research plots aimed at developing IPM strategies for farmers and invasive species managers. See the job description at the link below and apply soon.

<https://careers.alaska.edu/jobs/search?query=527911>

**New petite market featuring local artisans happening at Organic Oasis** focused on Food & Wellness! This market happens the 1st & 3rd Monday every month through the end of May from 4-7:30pm. Live Music from local artists will also be featured from 5:30-7:30pm every market. Businesses include Pepper Palate, Fanniak Bakery, Roux Bakery, Concoction Breads & Provisions, Bema Roasters, The Happy Mushroom, AyurLife Care blends of chai, herbal teas, medicinal cacao blends, medicated salves and oils, Common Root's specialty probiotic rich ferments, Lovewise Kombucha, Lovely Farms, and Beach Tribe sodas.

**Fairbanks soil and water conservation is hiring for Summer 2024** - <https://fswcd-weeds.squarespace.com/get-involved>

**ABG job opportunities abound!** - <https://www.alaskabg.org/employment>

**Anchorage Parks grants available** – A Neighborhood Forest Grant and a Community Challenge Grant. More info at [AnchorageParkFoundation.org](http://AnchorageParkFoundation.org)

**NFSN seeks a Program Associate to implement Farm to Early Childcare and Education**

(ECE) programming by uniting ECE stakeholders, fostering leaders, and movement building. Responsibilities include resource creation, project implementation and evaluation, networking and facilitation, and partner capacity building. The ideal candidate will have experience in farm to ECE programs, strong presentation, facilitation, and relationship building skills, thrive in a remote work environment, and is passionate about [NFSN's mission](#) and [Call to Action](#). [Find the full job description and apply here\](#)

**Spring Creek Farm summer internships** are open for applications Internships are available from May 1st through October 15, 2024. <https://www.alaskapacific.edu/careers/2024-farm-internship/>

**Anchorage Soil & Water Conservation District is hiring** a Seasonal Technician to support our Native Plants Program. The position will be based in Anchorage and will support native plant propagation, plant salvage, and seed collection.

**Orchards & Food Forests GROW-OFF Grant Program** accepting applications. Proposals due March 14. <https://ruralcap.org/connect/news/orchards-and-food-forests-grow-off-grant-program/>

**Tree Sale Opens Mon Jan 22, 2024.** Order Tree Seedlings. Jump on this quickly before they run out of stock. They are offering birch, larch, spruce, etc. Plant your windbreak & grow carbon-sequester-ers! [CLICK HERE](#) for info

**Growing a Productive and Sustainable Garden** class taught by UAF's Heidi Rader this spring 2024. Read more about the class here <https://itgrowsinalaska.community.uaf.edu/learn/>

**Kodiak Soil and Water Conservation District has a job opening for a Seasonal Invasive Plants Field Technician.** It is posted on our website (<https://www.kodiaksoilandwater.org/jobs>)

**Arbor Day grants** of \$200-500 available to government agencies and non-profit organizations to help celebrate Arbor Day in Alaska. Alaska's official Arbor Day falls on the third Monday of May each year. [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1x5n2UkfTPBwRpY\\_vgABwzv-ERrGHxt6/edit#heading=h.yhyeg715qas5](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1x5n2UkfTPBwRpY_vgABwzv-ERrGHxt6/edit#heading=h.yhyeg715qas5)

**Class list for 2024** offered by Seeds of Soil online and in person out in Palmer. <https://seedsandsoilorganics.com/product-category/alaska-gardening-classes-growing-guides/>

**Job opportunity at UAF working on weed management issues in small grains and cover crops.** All with the goal of continuing to supply certified weed free straw for various uses in Alaska. [Check out the job listing on 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](mailto:anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com) for information on upcoming winter topics and how to join

**Job opportunity at Seeds of Change** – Shift Lead - 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.

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

**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/>

**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 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**

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)



**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**.

**Arctic Harvest Deliveries** – **a great source of local foods!**

**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**

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

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

**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

**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/>

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

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!**