

Currant Affairs

March 24, 2023 Edition

Compiled regularly by Nick Riordan on behalf of Yarducopia (a program 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 24

Fertilizer Fundamentals: What's Up with NPK – hosted by Anchorage Parks and Rec. Fertilizer is plant food. Just like us, plants need a healthy, balanced diet to thrive. Learn which nutrients your plants need and how to deliver them in a way that fits your budget and your schedule. Learn the difference between compost and fertilizer, and how to use the two together to make your garden bloom and boom. Registration and a complete list of classes at [their website](#).

****March 29**

Plant Relatives and Children's Well-Being (hosted by RurAL CAP and Alaska Tribes Extension Program) - Join Meda DeWitt for a conversation about our plant relatives and children's well-being. [Register here](#). Wednesday, March 29 from 12-1 pm

****March 30**

Chicken University. Join UAF Cooperative Extension Service Ag/Hort. Agent, Steve Brown, IN PERSON at the Alaska State Fairgrounds Rebarcek Agricultural Park to learn about keeping a backyard flock. This class will enable a novice to start their first flock. Breed selection, incubation, nutrition, coop design, disease management, cold weather tips and even chicken psychology will be covered. [Follow this link to register](#).

March 31

AARP Gardening series: Starting Seeds - Join AARP Alaska and Glenna Gannon from the Cooperative Extension from 10-11 am for a [live online demonstration of seed planting](#) and the basic materials you'll need to start your own seeds. Glenna will share information on timing and light needs as well as best practices for growing and transplanting healthy plant starts for your garden.

****April 6**

Healthy Soils = Healthy Planet is the topic of discussion for the Cooperative Extension's next talk. [Tune in via Zoom](#) -

April 6

How to Create a Low-Cost Water Feature is the topic of the next Anchorage Garden Club meeting. Usual time and place (7 pm at Central Lutheran Church)

****April 7**

AARP Gardening series: Weed Management - Join AARP Alaska and Gino Graziano from the Cooperative Extension Service who will share information on how to manage weeds in a variety of settings, the difference between weeds and invasive plants as well as the role that gardeners have in preventing the spread of invasive species. Let's get rid of those pesky weeds! [Register](#)

****April 7-8**

AMGA Statewide Conference is fast approaching! [Visit the conference webpage to learn more!](#) This conference is held in Anchorage once every four years, so don't miss out.

April 11

Anchorage Museum's Urban Harvest series: Weeds vs Invasive Plants starts at 6 pm. [Event details and registration info can be found here.](#)

April 13

Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska's regular monthly meeting for April is **Growing Arctic Garlic presented by Deb Blaylock**. Usual time and place (10 am at Central Lutheran Church)

****April 14**

AARP Gardening series: Vegetable Gardening - Join AARP Alaska and Steve Brown from the Cooperative Extension Service in this workshop to learn how growing bountiful veggies is very easy if you know the tips of the far North. This presentation will show you the secrets behind planning, planting, season extension, fertilization and pest control. [Register](#)

April 14

Container Gardening class hosted by Anchorage parks and rec staff. Registration and a complete list of classes at [their website](#).

April 17

Tree Care for the Homeowner will be the topic of the April AMGA members meeting. Guest speaker Luis Lemus, 7-8 pm.

April 18

Backyard Pollinators is the topic of discussion for the Cooperative Extensions next talk, presented by Alex Wenninger, UAF CES IPM Technician. Join to learn more about the pollinators in your backyard. We'll cover some of the lifestyles of bees as well as 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. ***Zoom Only - You Must Register*** To Register: <https://alaska.zoom.us/j/86534513877>

****April 20**

Composting Basics - Put on by the Cooperative Extension, this class covers the basics of composting to allow you and your family, neighborhood, or community a chance to make a great soil amendment from garbage and how this helps the landfill. This class will be held in person at the UAF Matanuska Experiment Farm and Extension Center in room 208 of Kerttula Hall as well as via Zoom. Please feel free to bring your lunch if you'll be joining us at the farm. Please register through this link <https://alaska.zoom.us/j/83209051977>

****April 21**

AARP Gardening series: Soil Basics - Join AARP Alaska and Leif Albertson from the Cooperative Extension Service who will share his secrets to great soil for gardening. Soil is crucial for plant growth, but soil science can feel intimidating for new gardeners. In this presentation on soil basics, Leif will break down some of the mystery and magic that is happening in the ground around us and share simple things gardeners can do to optimize plant growth. [Register](#)

****April 22**

Garden Day at the Midtown Mall with the Anchorage Garden Club.

****April 28**

AARP Gardening series: Smart Solutions for Reducing Gardening Aches and Pains - Join AARP Alaska and Art Nash from the Cooperative Extension Service to learn about ways to make gardening easier as we age. Art will share a variety of tools and ideas to help us garden when we have issues bending, kneeling, lifting, or even moving around to garden. He is an expert in Universal Design principles and adaptive modifications for gardening. This class will share ideas and resources for you to try or share with others who want to keep on growing. This class will share ideas and resources for you to try or share with others who want to keep on growing. [Register](#)

****April 28**

Tree Care for the Homeowner class hosted by Anchorage parks and rec staff. Registration and a complete list of classes at [their website](#).

****April 30**

Beyond Compost: Other Ways to Build Healthy Soil (an Ak Mill and Feed class series) taught by the wonderful Ellen Vande Visse. Sure to be entertaining and enlightening.

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

PROGRAM and JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPDATES

****ABG Learning CSA is open for registration** - <https://www.alaskabg.org/guidedgardeningcsa>

Spring Creek Farm is hiring a part-time youth agriculture education coordinator for this summer! [Click here for more info.](#) They are also still hiring for a paid Farm Intern and Assistant Production Manager. SC farm places a strong emphasis on Community Based Agriculture, and these positions support their CSA program and other veggie production venues. Both include housing on the farm, and opportunities to learn more about sustainable agriculture in Alaska. Visit the APU website to learn more and to apply for these positions:
<https://www.alaskapacific.edu/careers/>

Boyers Orchard Blossom Festival 12-4 pm on June 3rd (Tickets for sale starting April 1st). There'll be live music, local vendors, & trees and shrubs for sale. Get this in your calendar and consider sponsoring a tree this year!

RurAL CAP's GROW Program & UAF Tribes Extension are hosting Amy Pettit of the USDA Farm Service Agency, Tikaan Galbreath of the Intertribal Agriculture Council, and Laurie Stewart of the Tyonek Tribal Conservation District to learn **how you can leverage local funding with federal dollars for Tribal Food Security projects**. Topics include: What are the most utilized programs in Alaska? What are some key considerations when evaluating the applicability of a grant to your program? What are underutilized opportunities that are a good fit for Alaska? How can federal funds be used to support subsistence? What are some tips for Tribes to fulfill match requirements on federal grants?

Catholic Social Services is hiring a **Summer Associate to help support their Refugee Enterprise & Agriculture Program**. [More information about this amazing program and the job can be found here.](#)

Party in the Garden! Registration is open for the Alaska Master Gardeners annual statewide conference on April 7-8 in Anchorage. Registration and all the info [can be found here](#).

Alaska Food Policy Council published their [2022 Annual Report](#) and [Food Security Action Plan & Executive Summary](#). Check these out!

Alaska Botanical Garden is hiring a handful of summer positions – [Check out the list here.](#)

Calypso Farm (near Fairbanks) is hiring a **Summer Farm Educator** for ages: 16 and up for May 30 to August 11 (with the possibility to extend). [Learn More & Apply!](#) *Please note: applications will be reviewed as they are received, so we encourage you to apply early!

Calypso Farm (near Fairbanks) will be hosting a 'Beginning Farmer Training Program' this summer (June 12-14 / July 17-19 / August 7-9). Led by Indigenous farmers in partnership with the farmers at Calypso, this hands-on program will teach participants how to grow vegetables in a way that is transferable to village communities. Visit calypsofarm.org/indigenous-agriculture

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/>

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/>

Harvest of Hope Garden at the Lutheran Church of Hope is run by Don Bladow, producing thousands of pounds of fresh produce each summer distributed by the Lutheran Social Services Food Pantry. Learn more at Don's [blogspot for the garden](#).

Urban Harvest (a program of Anchorage Museum) often has food and garden-themed topics in their class lineup – [Check out their list here](#).

Yarducopia (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 Yarducopia 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

The Alaska Farmers Market Association launched a [New Farmers Market Toolkit](#) for starting, enhancing, and supporting a farmers' market in your community. Well done AFMA!

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

A List of Anchorage Food Pantries can be found at [AnchorageFood.org](#) (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.