

## **Currant Affairs**

### **March 9, 2023 Edition**

Compiled regularly by Nick Riordan on behalf of Yarducochia (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 9**

**Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska's** February meeting will be a presentation by Julie Riley entitled, '**Riley's Believe it or Not: Alaska Insects**'. The meeting will be held at Central Lutheran Church from 10 am – Noon.

### **March 9**

**Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association** monthly meeting features a presentation by Zach Miller from Montana State on **Cold Climate Fruit Research**. The programs begin at 7:00 pm on Zoom and are for members only. We welcome new members, and folks can sign up for \$16 at [www.apfga.org](http://www.apfga.org).

### **March 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

### **March 10**

**Seed Starting: Time to Turn Up the Heat** presented by Anchorage Parks and Rec. Did you know our Parks & Recreation Horticulture team starts more than 50,000 plants from seed every year? Learn to start your seeds using the high-efficiency techniques, tools, and timing that our horticulturalists have been cultivating for decades. We will discuss how to adapt our professional growing techniques to your home environment. Participants will receive a 10"x10" plug tray full of soil and seeds. [See the full class line-up here.](#)

### **March 10 & 11**

**ABG Spring Garden Conference** will be held on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Visit the [ABG website for more details](#). A great time with well-organized sessions & wonderful speakers.

### **March 11**

**Seedy Saturdays** is a four-part series of seed exchanges organized by Anchor Gardens this spring. [The third event will be at the Eagle River Library.](#) Time to be announced

### **March 16**

**Optimize Your Pasture. Minimize Feed Costs** is the topic of part 6 of Homer Soil and Water Conservation District's 'Know Your Land' series. Our speaker will share techniques to keep your Alaskan pasture healthy, including strategies to prevent soil compaction, proper grazing, and avoiding poisonous species. Join us in-person at the KPC Kachemak Bay Campus or via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7151014697>

### **March 18**

**Alaska Garden Clubs State Convention** is in Fairbanks this year. 64<sup>th</sup> annual! [Here's the flyer.](#)

### **March 18**

**Seedy Saturdays** is a four-part series of seed exchanges organized by Anchor Gardens this spring. [The fourth event will be at the Mountain View Library.](#) 12-2:30 PM

### **March 20**

**Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage's** March membership meeting will be on **SNAP Tool & Climate Change in Gardening** presented by Nancy Fresco.

### **March 24**

**Alaska Farmers Market Association Summit** is from 8:30 - 4 pm. [Register here.](#)

### **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.](#)

### **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 7-8**

**AMGA Statewide Conference** is fast approaching! [Visit the conference webpage to learn more!](#)

### **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**

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

**\*\*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 22**

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

**\*\*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**

**\*\*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 3<sup>rd</sup> (Tickets for sale starting April 1<sup>st</sup>). 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!

**AK Botanical Garden summer camp registration now open.** Full Day and Half Day options available; Monday – Friday from 8:30am to 4:pm; Full Day 8:30am to\ Noon Half Day (morning only) or 12:30 to 4pm Half Day (afternoon only). Full Day/child/week: Members, \$285 / Non-Members \$300; Half Day/child/week: Members, \$195 / Non-Members \$210. All camps take place in our unique outdoor garden classroom and on 110 acres of boreal forest! Expert staff lead campers through fun, hands-on, science-based environmental education activities. Each unique camp offers a chance for your child to go in depth into the subjects that interest them the most! All camp materials are provided as well as weekly take-home projects. [More Information and Register.](#)

**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](http://calypsofarm.org/indigenous-agriculture)

**AG Matters** on Palmer's Big Cabbage Radio rhas 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](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**

**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](http://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](mailto:garden@akaction.org).