

Currant Affairs

May 23, 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

May 23

Pest Barriers and Trap Crops at 12 pm. Curious about ways to stop pests from invading your garden? UAF IPM technician, Joey Slowik, will discuss methods of planning a garden with pests in mind. He'll talk about where those pests come from and go over some methods to slow their movement like barriers and trap crops. This class will focus on bug/slug content rather than plants. Room 208 of Kerttula Hall at the UAF Matanuska Experiment Farm and via Zoom for those unable to attend in person. To Register <https://alaska.zoom.us/j/89981712570>

****May 23**

ACAT's Tuesday night **Compost Workshop** at the Midtown Garden Depot (2930 Cheechako Street). Bring your organics, we'll incorporate it into a compost pile together, and you'll be helping us make the compost we share for free. Bring food waste, pesticide-free yard waste, that sort of stuff. Call or email if you have questions – 717-4392 garden@akaction.org

May 24

APU Spring Creek Farm's annual seedling sale will take place on Wednesday, May 24 from noon-5:00 pm. Come get all the plants you need for a successful garden and help support Spring Creek Farm's programs!

****May 24**

Meeting for the **New Matanuska Community Farmer's Market** from 12-1 pm in person and Zoom. [Website](#).

****May 24**

Wild About Chives cooking class [via Zoom](#) hosted by Rural Cap's Grow Program and partners.

May 24

Landscaping for the Birds at 12 pm. Join Bird Treatment Learning Center volunteer and bird biologist Lisa Pajot and local landscape architect, M. Elise Huggins, as they present the birds most likely to visit your Southcentral Alaska yard and what you can do to protect, encourage and attract them. Lisa will review bird habitat requirements and what makes a great place that

will attract and support our local bird population. Register in advance for this free class:
<https://bit.ly/LandscapingforBirds>

May 24

Urban Harvest: Foraging Forest Walk from 6-8pm. Walk into the urban forests of Anchorage with wild foods and edible plants in mind. Learn about the nutritional properties of spruce tips and other prevalent plants as you gather some for your home use on this guided walk. Discuss ethical harvest practices as you delve into what Anchorage area forests have to offer your home kitchen. Free. Registration recommended for communication. [Visit the website here.](#)

****May 24**

Midtown Garden Depot (coordinated by ACAT) will be staffed weekly on Wednesday nights from 6 – 7 pm. It's the idea time to visit if you need a hand loading or unloading garden supplies, want to chat in person, or want to chip in with keeping the Depot looking ship shape.

May 25

Anchorage Audubon will start giving away 10,000 white spruce seedlings in an attempt to offset the bird habitat and landscaping losses due to the Spruce Bark Beetle, in Anchorage, All the information about the Free Trees is now on a new website. [CLICK HERE](#) for all the details.

****May 28**

Midtown Community Garden gatherings are every Sunday from 10 am -1 pm.

****May 28**

Spenard Community Garden gatherings are every Sunday from 2-5 pm. This is a chance to help maintain the garden adjacent to the Lutheran Social Services' food pantry on West 33rd in Spenard. We'll be planting, watering, weeding, and harvesting together throughout the summer. Join in the fun. [Updates and info on our Facebook page.](#)

****May 30**

Container Potato Growing class in person at the Mat-Su Experimental Farm. [Website.](#)

****May 30**

ACAT's Tuesday night **Compost Workshop** at the Midtown Garden Depot (2930 Cheechako Street) with . Bring your organics, we'll incorporate it into a compost pile together, and you'll be helping us make the compost we share for free. Bring food waste, pesticide-free yard waste, that sort of stuff. Call or email if you have questions – 717-4392 garden@akaction.org

June 1

Join **Anchorage Public Library** for our **Growing Together gardening program series Part 2.** In June we will be covering Garden Infrastructure including this month's craft of making your

own mini trellises for the pea plants we started in May. To-go packets available at all APL locations for the duration of the month or as long as supplies last.

****June 2**

Stickleback Farm Volunteer Workdays – This is the first of a summer-long series every Friday and Monday from 12 – 4 pm.

June 3

Anchorage Garden Club Plant Sale from 9 am – 4 pm. See Facebook page for details

June 3

Wildflower Garden Club Plant Sale from 9 am – 3 pm. Location TBA

June 3

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

June 4

Seedling Exchange at the Midtown Garden Depot. 2-5 pm. Bring your seedlings More details to come.

****June 5**

Stickleback Farm Volunteer Workdays – Part of a summer-long series every Friday and Monday from 12 – 4 pm.

****June 6**

ACAT's Tuesday night **Compost Workshop** at the Midtown Garden Depot (2930 Cheechako Street). Bring your organics, we'll incorporate it into a compost pile together, and you'll be helping us make the compost we share for free. Bring food waste, pesticide-free yard waste, that sort of stuff. Call or email if you have questions – 717-4392 garden@akaction.org

****June 9**

Stickleback Farm Volunteer Workdays – Part of a summer-long series every Friday and Monday from 12 – 4 pm.

June 12

ABG's What's in Bloom Walking Tour from 6-7 pm. Make the most of our short growing season and learn to identify Alaskan plants and find out what's blooming in our collections with one of our monthly walks in the Garden. Each month will highlight the different flowering plants in the surrounding boreal forest and highlight plants in our collections chosen for hardiness & differing bloom times https://www.flipcause.com/secure/cause_pdetails/MTC5MjM3

June 20

Research on Managing Weeds and Pests. Come to the UAF Matanuska Experiment Farm and visit the fields with Invasive Plants guru, Gino Graziano, as he shares the research he's working on regarding managing weeds and pests in Alaska. This class will be held outside, so please dress appropriately for the weather. ***This class is in person only - You Must Register to Attend*** Click on the link to register. <https://forms.gle/yhoVrZaqYTbPedp4A>

June 30

Grow North Farm's Markets first market with food trucks starts Thursday, June 30

**July 16-19

Alaska Peony Retreat - <https://alaskaafb.org/event/alaska-peony-retreat/>

**July 17

ABG's What's in Bloom Walking Tour from 6-7 pm. Make the most of our short growing season and learn to identify Alaskan plants and find out what's blooming in our collections with one of our monthly walks in the Garden. Each month will highlight the different flowering plants in the surrounding boreal forest and highlight plants in our collections chosen for hardiness & differing bloom times https://www.flipcause.com/secure/cause_pdetails/MTC5MjM5

PROGRAM and JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPDATES

Garden Tour season is upon us. Check out your favorite garden clubs' websites and newsletters to learn more about what amazing spaces and generous hosts we'll be treated to this summer. I know AMGA's tours are typically Monday from 6-7 pm. See you out there!

****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>

****Stickleback Farm Volunteer Workdays** - a summer-long, Friday and Monday from 12-4 pm

Midtown and Spenard Community Gardens weekly workdays at 10-1 and 2-5 pm respectively. Follow the links to the [Midtown](#) and [Spenard Garden](#) Facebook pages

Midtown Garden Depot has weekly composting workshops on Tuesdays 6-7pm. This is an opportunity to bring your compostable organics, learn how to compost them, and take home a great soil amendment. The **Depot also has regular 'office hours'** on Wednesday from 6-7 pm. Come chat, figure out how the Depot works in person, lend a hand, and get help loading and unloading materials.

Highland Mountain Correctional Facility plant sale is coming up in Eagle River

May is Alaska Native Plant Month! There is a whole slew of events and workshops planned to celebrate the first Alaska Native Plant Month. [Check out the calendar of events at the AKNPS website.](#)

CSA sign ups and Farmers markets are opening soon. Keep your eye out. These fresh local foods are how I learned to love vegetables as a kid. The quality is impressive. Enjoy the season!

Healthy and Equitable communities grant program for Alaska through the USDA.

Third annual Veg Fest to your calendar. Scheduled for Saturday, September 23 from 10 am – 4 pm at the Performing Arts Center

Tim's Plants, Produce and Worms will be **selling a variety of berry plants** from his place on Wednesday evenings and Saturday midday from April 26th through most of May. Times, location, varieties, and prices will be posted on Facebook in Marketplace, Alaska Farm and Food, Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers, and Tim's Plants, Produce and Worms as well as on Craigslist in Farm and Garden. Sorry, no website.

Treats for your Chickens available at 3740 Williams Street on Monday's and Thursday's. These are vegetables and fruits collected from a nearby commercial kitchen and made available by ACAT's Yarducopia 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.

Friends of Boyers Orchard will be opening their '[Sponsor-A-Tree](#)' for sign-ups soon. Check their website and pick out a tree you'd like to learn to take care of and harvest from this summer. I think sign ups open June 3.

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

Mountain View & Girdwood libraries have seed libraries available, and the Anchorage Loussac Library will have seed starting kits available starting May 1st.

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.](#)

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](#).

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 **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.

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