

**2019 Tree Sale
Info Within!**

It's not too late to place your orders for our annual Tree & Shrub Sale! See **PAGE 3** for a list of plants and how to purchase them.



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Spring 2019 Newsletter

Agricultural Support

As Alaskans, we know the value of our food: it's our livelihood, our sustenance, and our connection to the land. Whether our food comes from hunting a moose, dip-netting for Reds, picking blueberries or purchasing vegetables at the Tanana Valley Farmer's Market, Alaskans are tied to their food supply more closely than most Americans. This is largely due to our preference for real, fresh food (not shipped from the lower 48), as well as the many excellent food opportunities Alaska provides (hunting, fishing, berry gathering, vegetable production, etc.)

As much as we like to rely on food that is locally grown or harvested, Alaska currently only produces 5% of the total foods that are consumed in the state. This means that the state as a whole is surprisingly food insecure; one major disaster can disrupt 95% of our food supply chain. When a 7.1 magnitude earthquake struck Southcentral Alaska in November, communities all across the state were suddenly disconnected from many out-of-state goods. If we want to

increase the state's food security, now is the time to continue promoting, supporting, and developing local Alaskan agriculture, in all its many forms.

The good news is that agriculture continues to expand in Alaska and our local Fairbanks area. The USDA Agricultural Census released in early April indicates an expanding agricultural sector! Total agricultural product sales have increased to over \$10 million, a 14% increase in the last 5 years for Fairbanks. The number of farms increased to 274 farms, which is a 26% increase. We clearly value our agricultural industry in Alaska. Please continue to support farmers and local agriculture both vocally and with your wallet!

To see the full report of Agricultural Census data, follow this link:

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_1_State_Level/Alaska/

Weed Smackdown at the Fairbanks Dog Park!

FSWCD and Fairbanks Dog Park are partnering to host a community Weed Smackdown event at the South Davis Dog Park on Saturday, June 29th from 11am-1pm. Come learn about problem invasive plants in the Fairbanks area and how to get rid of them! Pull a bag of weeds, grab a hotdog, and earn a chance to win some prizes!





Photograph courtesy of University of Wisconsin-Madison

A bumble bee (*Bombus* sp.) pollinating a wild rose (*Rosa acicularis*). When female bumble bees visit a flower they are not just drinking the nectar, but also collecting pollen in specialized “pollen pockets” on their rear legs. The pollen that they gather is used to rear other young bees back at their nest. Because of this pollen transportation system, bumble bees are especially important pollinators for native plants.

SARE Pollinator Project 2019

Pollination is one of the most important and overlooked aspects of agriculture. Many of our crops are reliant on pollinators (insects, birds, and bats) to create fruit or seeds for us to eat. The heavy bulk of this crop pollination (maybe not surprisingly) is done by our insect friends. Unfortunately, insects can be highly susceptible to environmental changes and some are at risk. Growing pollinator-friendly plants and creating pollinator habitat can help boost their populations, but indoor growing (a common practice for Alaskan farmers) makes pollinator access very difficult.

FSWCD is conducting a three-year SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education) funded Pollinator Project to assess innovative ways that can aide farmers in bolstering insect pollination. This project will use non-lethal blue vane traps (a trap used for monitoring and research of bumblebees) to attract native pollinators into indoor growing spaces with the hopes of increased pollination success and yield of greenhouse crops. We will also monitor insect visitation on farms and experiment with different pollinator habitats to attract pollinators. If successful, this study will increase profits of greenhouse and high tunnel producers by reducing the need to import non-native pollinators, increase pollination success of greenhouse crops, and re-

duce the risk of a catastrophic introductions of invasive pathogens to native populations of bumble bees.

We would also like the help of local farmers for on-field trials. If you would like to assist in the project, or have comments, suggestions, thoughts, or are simply interested in learning more, please contact Brian Atkinson at brian.fswcd@gmail.com.

Want to learn more about supporting pollinators? Follow the links below, or check out a helpful book guide:

- ◆ ***Attracting Native Pollinators: The Xerces Society Guide to Conserving North American Bees and Butterflies and Their Habitat*** by The Xerces Society
- ◆ ***Managing Alternative Pollinators: A Handbook for Beekeepers, Growers, and Conservationists*** by Elaine Evans, Eric Lee-Mäder, and Marla Spivak
- ◆ ***The Bees in Your Backyard: A Guide to North America's Bees*** by Joseph S. Wilson and Messinger Carril, Olivia J.
- ◆ **The Xerces Society:** <https://xerces.org/>
- ◆ **The Bee and Butterfly Habitat Fund:** <https://beeandbutterflyfund.org/>
- ◆ **American Beauty Native Plants:** <https://www.abnativeplants.com/>
- ◆ **Pollinator Partnership:** <http://www.pollinator.org/>

Cooperator *Highlight*



ARCTIC HARVEST farm distillery celebrates its 2nd anniversary! Arctic Harvest is a family owned and operated farm distillery in North Pole, dedicated to creating a quality spirit from ingredients grown on the farm. They do everything on site, from planting and fertilizing the fields, to harvesting and malting the grain, and fermenting and distilling the mash. Arctic Harvest is open year round and offers tours, hiking and skiing trails, and special events. They are located at 4753 Eielson Farm Road, phone number: 460-1414.



2019 FSWCD Tree Sale: Saturday, May 25th 11-4pm At the FSWCD Office at 590 University Avenue

Local vendors will also be present selling a variety of trees, shrubs, and native plants. **Pre-orders for this year's tree sale can be placed Until Friday, May 20th.** Trees are mostly bare root, 6"-36" tall. **ONLINE Ordering Available at www.fswcdtrees.com.** For more details about our plant selection, visit www.fairbankssoilwater.org. All proceeds from sale support Natural Resource Education.

Seeking Volunteers!

FSWCD is seeking volunteers for the tree sale! Volunteers can earn 5 trees/shrubs for their assistance at the tree sale. Older children (10+) are welcome to volunteer as well as adults. Please call 479-1213 x108 or email fswcd.trees@gmail.com to sign up!

Vendors: Please contact us if you are interested in selling your plants as a private vendor at this year's tree sale!

Soil Testing

Soil testing is the easiest way to improve your garden or farm production. For a fee of \$40 per sample, FSWCD will give you a thorough analysis of your soil nutrient levels, pH, organic matter content, and other important characteristics. We provide fertilizer recommendations based on your unique soil chemistry that are tailored to your goals and preferences. For example, we can provide recommendations for organic fertilizers or for soluble products.

For more information about this program, call 479-1213 x108 or visit our website.

Equipment Lending

FSWCD has farm equipment available to be borrowed free of charge by our cooperators:

1. Aerator (tractor pulled)
2. Two herbicide sprayers (both tractor pulled)
3. ATV Mounted herbicide sprayer

For more information call 479-1213 x108.

Weed Cost Share

The Weed Cost Share is a program to help landowners manage their invasive plant or agricultural weed problems through technical assistance and a cost share for incurred expenses. A pest scout will complete a site visit and provide control recommendations. This is a reimbursement program. Call Megan at 479-1213 x104 or email at fswcd.tech@gmail.com.



2019 FSWCD Tree Sale Order Form

Common Name	Price	Qty.	Subtotal
Birch*	\$7		
Golden Currant	\$5		
Hedge Cotoneaster	\$7		
Honeyberry (pair of)**	\$15		
Iris*	\$5		
Lilac	\$5		
Lodgepole Pine*	\$5		Out of stock!
Midwest Crabapple	\$5		
Mock Orange	\$7		
Nanking Cherry	\$7		
Raspberry, Boyne*	\$8		
Raspberry, Kiska*	\$8		Out of stock!
Red Osier Dogwood	\$7		
Saskatoon Serviceberry	\$7		
Siberian Larch*	\$5		
Silverberry	\$7		
Snowberry	\$7		
White Spruce, Seedling*	\$5		
White Spruce, Large*	\$20		

* Grown in Alaska

Order Total: _____

-10% Cooperator _____

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

All tree and shrub sales are final. Credit Card orders can be done either in the office or at www.fswcdtrees.com. Make checks out to: FSWCD. Order form and checks can be mailed to the FSWCD office. Cash and credit card payments will be accepted at the FSWCD office. Pre-orders must be received by **5pm Friday, May 20th.**

**FAIRBANKS
SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT**

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Board of Supervisors

- Randy Scharfenberg, Chair
- Dan Rees, Treasurer
- Amy Tippery, Member
- Karl Benson, Member

We are currently looking for new board members. If you are interested, please call Joni Scharfenberg at 907-978-1727

Free Soil Testing for Chena River Landowners

Landowners along the Chena River or one of its sloughs and tributaries are eligible for free lawn soil testing! This program is funded through USFWS to improve the long term health of the Chena Watershed. FSWCD can visit your property to collect a soil sample from

your lawn (a free fertilizer recommendation will be provided), scout for invasive weeds, and evaluate streambank health. If your streambank could use improvements (erosion control, fish habitat improvements, etc.), there are cost share opportunities available to make these

improvements. We will work collaboratively with landowners to improve streambank health and wildlife habitat while also maintaining your riverfront views and access. To learn more or to set up a visit to your property, call us at 479-1213 x108.

Fairbanks Youth for Habitat Begins!

Fairbanks Youth for Habitat is kicking off it's 10th season beginning May 20, 2019. Thirty two students from seven Fairbanks schools will work in five two-week sessions to support local conservation and restoration efforts. Participants will learn through hands-on experiences and gain valuable exposure to careers in conservation, by working with experts outdoors in the field! This year's projects include building and maintaining green infrastructure, habitat monitoring, and riparian work along the Chena River.



Elodea Eradication Update

Elodea is an invasive aquatic plant that can ruin salmon habitat and hinder boat and floatplane travel. This pervasive plant has made its way to a handful of sloughs and lakes in Interior Alaska since its discovery in Chena Slough in 2010. FSWCD has been working with federal, state, and private partners to curb the spread of elodea and to eradicate it from the Interior. Eradicating elodea is important for the protection of native aquatic ecosystems which Alaskans rely on for fish, wildlife, and other valuable resources.

In 2018, elodea was found in Manley Hot Springs Slough, Bathing Beauty Pond, and Birch Lake. We hope to treat Bathing Beauty Pond this summer, and work on preventing the spread of elodea from Manley Hot Springs Slough and Birch Lake until they can be treated with herbicides.

If you find elodea on your summer adventures, please report it! You can send a photo, and location information to aditi.shenoy@gmail.com or call 907-479-1213 Ext. 104.

So far, we have completed two years (2017-2018) of herbicide treatment in Chena Slough with great success! Only a few small patches of elodea were found in the slough in 2018, and we are working with our local Test the Waters Dive Center to survey the stream bed, making sure that all the elodea is gone! We will conduct the third herbicide treatment in the slough this year.

We also started the process of eradicating elodea in Totchaket Slough, a Tanana River slough near Nenana, in 2018. We hope to see great results this summer!

