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## THE GOOD DIRT

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### Soils Testing

The FSWCD is offering a new service to our cooperators, soils testing. The District will provide all sample collection expertise and services, sample preparation and submission, and report coordination.

To begin the testing process, contact the Fairbanks District for an appointment, at 479-1213.

A District employee will set up a time to visit with you, where we will identify your testing needs, and collect the appropriate samples.

We will continue taking samples until the ground freezes (approx. mid October), and resume sampling in the spring.

Samples are be shipped to Brookside Laboratories in New Knoxville, Ohio for analysis. The turnaround time for test results is approximately 2-3 days. Results will be sent directly to the District, who will either send the results to Cooperative Extension Service for recommendations or do the recommendations ourselves.

In order for us to provide this service, all testing and service costs will need to be paid by the landowner in advance or at time of scheduled appointment.



**Cost:**  
**\$22.00 per sample**  
**(includes shipping)**

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## FSWCD AT THE TVSF

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### Bucks for Bales Contest

At the 2005 Tanana Valley State Fair, the FSWCD sponsored the Bucks for Bales Contest.

The objective of the contest was to promote quality forage production through out the Tanana Valley.

The hay was visually tested for maturity of the plant at harvest, leafiness, weeds, color/odor, and texture/condition/mold. The hay was also analyzed for moisture content, dry matter, fat, crude protein, digestible protein, fiber, TDN, ENE, NE, digestible energy, Ca, P, K, Mg, Na, S, Mn, Cu, Zn, neutral detergent fiber, and acid detergent fiber.

Cash prizes were awarded to the top three winners. First place was awarded to Nathan Minnema (hay available for purchase at AK Feed); second place went to Coty Mayo (907-479-6363), and a very close third place awarded to Dan Wood (907-457-6352).

Thanks again to all those entered their hay into the Bucks for Bales contest. We look forward to seeing more contestants enter their quality, locally grown hay next year at the TVSF!

### Farm & Garden

Thanks to all who entered their Farm and Garden displays at the Tanana Valley State Fair this year.

There were a total of 8 adult displays, and 2 juvenile displays.

All displays were beautifully crafted; it was obvious that much time and effort was put into each entry.

In the juvenile division, two first places were awarded: Luke Scharfenberg (age 11), and Precious Kreatschman (age 5). These two contestants did an outstanding job!

In the adult division, first place was awarded to Demeter Fasn, second place was awarded to Tom Zimmer, and third place went to Leslye Karvola.



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## NEWS FROM OUR PARTNERS

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***“Earth and sky, woods and fields, lakes and rivers, the mountain and the sea, are excellent schoolmasters, and teach some of us more than we can ever learn from books.” –Sir John Lubbock***

### CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM UPDATE

The Natural Resources Conservation Service has announced the Upper Kenai and Anchorage watersheds have been selected for the 2006 Conservation Security Program. These two watersheds encompass 6,927 acres and have approximately 21 farms.

This program rewards farmers for ongoing high levels of environmental stewardship. CSP helps producers maintain and further their conservation commitment and provides a strong incentive for others to follow their example. Each year addi-

tional watersheds will be added as digitized soil surveys become available. To participate in the program require farmers to keep good records of such items as nutrients, pesticides, and manure applied, as well as grazing records.



### FSA ELECTIONS

On November 4, 2005 ballots will be mailed to eligible voters in LAA3 to elect their county committee member for the Fairbanks Farm Service Agency (North Pole/Eielson Ag Area).

Please cast your vote and return ballots to the FSA office before December 5, 2005. The newly elected member will take office on January 1, 2006.

### LDP

LDP's (Loan Deficiency Payments) are available on small grains, oilseeds and wool & mohair.

Contact the Fairbanks Farm Service Agency at 907-479-6767 Ext/2 for more information.



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**District Facts:** A total of 5 cooperators signed up for our *Weed Cost Share* this year. This number is up from 2004. The WCS program is an incentive program to help cooperators with their weed control. Simply sign up, follow your recommendation and save your receipts! FSWCD will reimburse you up to \$250.00 of your costs. Contact FSWCD at 479-1213 for more information on this and other programs available.

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## FSWCD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ELECTIONS

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The leaves are falling, the wind is cooling and that mean one thing in the interior, change. That's no different in the board room of FSWCD.

FSWCD board of supervisors is made up of 5 volunteer cooperators. This year two seats, seat B & seat C are up for election.

Any cooperator in good standing within the Fairbanks District can run for either seat.

Board members spend approximately 5 hours a month on work for the District.

Would you like to see how things work? Have an opinion on our policies? Want to make a change?



Contact FSWCD at 479-1213, to find out more about becoming a board member today!



### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- **THE HUMAN BODY IS ABOUT 70% WATER.**
- **ROUGHLY THE SAME AMOUNT OF WATER EXISTS ON EARTH TODAY AS WHEN IT FIRST FORMED ON THE PLANET.**



# COOPERATOR SPOTLIGHT

## “Calypso Farm & Ecology Center”



*Fairbanks Soil & water Conservation District cooperators are as diversified as the great Alaskan state they live in. We want you to get to know your partners in conservation. So each newsletter will feature a cooperator or two and could include small and large farm operators, businesses, organizations, backyard gardeners and many more. If you want to be featured or know an interesting story, contact the FSWCD office with your information.*

“Their mission: to encourage local food production and environmental awareness through hands-on education in natural and farming ecosystems.”

Calypso Farm and Ecology Center is a nonprofit, education-based farm in Ester, Alaska. They serve the greater Fairbanks area. Situated on thirty acres of land, the center consists of a small, diversified farm operating within an ecologically rich area.



They work collaboratively with schools and local organizations to provide hands on education and research opportunities in ecology and sustainable agriculture. Calypso is the first such center in the state of Alaska.

During the summer season, Calypso grows a wide variety of organic vegetables, herbs and an array of flowers.

Most of their produce is marketed directly to families through their Community Shared Agriculture (CSA).

Throughout the year, Calypso offers a series of hands-on workshops open to the public. Workshops cover a range of topics such as organic gardening, garden planning, composting, soil fertility, and garden varieties.

The Tanana Valley State Fair also put up a new building, a “Poultry Pavilion,” by Largen Barn. All of the poultry exhibits that were previously displayed in the upstairs of Largen were moved into the Poultry Pavilion. This was cooler for the birds and handicap-accessible for the public. Next year, we will be working on improving the flooring in the Poultry Pavilion.

The Alaska Farm Bureau pitched in again and did a great job running the Market Livestock Auction Barbecue. Jerry Marlow of the Alaska Farm Bureau, donated his time and services as our auctioneer.

Thank you to all of our sponsors and to FSWCD for sponsoring Taste of Alaska Grown, the Giant Cabbage Weigh-In, and the Farm and Garden Awards.

*-Vanessa Spencer*  
Competitive Exhibits Manager, TVSF

***Congratulations to Calypso Farm for being chosen as the 2005 Farm Family of the Year by the Alaska State Fair and agricultural community of Alaska.***

*For more info:*  
Calypso Farm and Ecology Center  
PO Box 106  
Ester, Alaska 99725  
(907 451-0691)  
calypso@mosquitonet.com  
www.calypsofarm.org

Up Coming Events	
The Alaska Farm Bureau meeting, Fairbanks Chapter	Sept. 29
Chenafest, Chena Hot Springs Resort	Oct. 7
AACD Fall Meeting, Wasilla	Oct 13-15
FSWCD Monthly Board meeting, 590 University Ave, Ste B	Oct. 20 5:30p
CNIPM Conference, Fairbanks	Oct 26-27
FSWCD Cooperator Gathering, Location TBA	Nov. 5
Alaska Farm Bureau Ag Expo, Wasilla	Nov. 11-12

**For more information on any of the events listed or to have your event listed, please contact 479-1213**

### FAIR RECAP

The 2005 Tanana Valley State Fair was one of the best attended fairs to date, with an attendance over 129,000 in 9 days.

On August 6 the fair celebrated Alaska Grown Day. Educational activities included potato carving and fake salmon fishing. Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District ran Taste of Alaska Grown again and Calypso Farm joined us with a display about their teen gardening program.

At our annual Giant Cabbage Weigh-In, the first-prize winning cabbage, grown by Margaret Meyer, weighed 54 pounds.

August 9<sup>th</sup>, Dave Isles brought in a pumpkin weighing 752 pounds! The pumpkin had to be weighed on the large livestock scale by Delta Barn.



## FAIRBANKS SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Main Phone: 479-1213 or 374-6966  
Fax: 479-6998  
Email: [fswcd@gci.net](mailto:fswcd@gci.net)

### Staff:

Education & Outreach Coordinator: Joni Scharfenberg  
District Assistant: Jennifer Miller  
Natural Resources Technician: Cassidee Hall  
Temporary Assistant: Angela Murphy

# The Back 40



"Humankind, no matter how sophisticated or technical, owes its entire existence to a few inches of topsoil and the fact that it rains."

Unknown.

 A farmer was milking his cow. He was just starting to get a good rhythm when a bug flew into the barn and started circling his head. Suddenly, the bug flew into the cow's ear. The farmer didn't think much about it, until the bug squirted out into his bucket. It went in one ear and out the udder.

To be a successful farmer one must first know the nature of the soil.: Xenophon, 400 B.C.

An out-of-towner drove his car into a ditch in a desolated area. Luckily, a local farmer came to help with his big strong horse named Buddy.

He hitched Buddy up to the car and yelled, "Pull, Nellie, pull." Buddy didn't move.

Then the farmer hollered, "Pull, Buster, pull." Buddy didn't respond.

Once more the farmer commanded, "Pull, Jennie, pull." Nothing.

Then the farmer nonchalantly said, "Pull, Buddy, pull." And the horse easily dragged the car out of the ditch.

The motorist was most appreciative and very curious. He asked the farmer why he called his horse by the wrong name three times.

The farmer said, "Oh, Buddy is blind, and if he thought he was the only one pulling, he wouldn't even try!"

Do you have a joke, quote or short story that you would like to see on The Back 40, then send it to us at [fswcd@gci.net](mailto:fswcd@gci.net).