

Cooperative Extension Service Program Highlights in the North/Northwest:



The north/northwest region is represented by the Cooperative Extension district office in Nome, as well as publication points in Unalakleet and Kotzebue. The Nome office serves a population of over 20,000. This region is subsistence-oriented. In recent years, Extension has focused on home, health, family and youth development.

- Extension's energy and housing specialist helped the region address high home-heating costs with three **cold-climate home-building techniques** and **retrofitting classes** taught to 40 residents of Unalakleet and Nome. He also participated in an energy summit in **Kotzebue** sponsored by NANA Regional Corp.
- Residents and agencies serving families in the Bering Strait region expressed a desire for **parenting classes**. The Nome Extension agent led efforts to explore different resources. A collaboration with Tlingit and Haida providers led to a training for the Nome Community Center and Kawerak, Inc. family services. The trainees offered parenting classes in Nome this fall, and if it is successful there, the program will expand to the Bering Strait region. The agent also is working with three school districts to support or teach **early childhood education classes** to high school students from Nome, Kotzebue and the Bering Strait School District.
- With the high cost of importing food to rural areas, Alaska **gardening classes** have become increasingly popular. An Extension agent boned up on rural gardening challenges before offering a workshop to 18 residents in Unalakleet this spring. One challenge is the high cost of imported fertilizer, so he investigated local sources, including moose and reindeer dung, to supplement fish-based fertilizers.
- Extension's livestock specialist met with the Kawarek Reindeer Herders Association to talk about his research on **reindeer reproduction** and proposed additional outreach to the herders.
- A new nutrition educator in Nome started work in September and is helping residents through the federally funded **Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program**. A series of classes will cover the basics of food budgeting, nutrition, comparison shopping, menu planning and meal preparation.

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Cooperative Extension Service Program Highlights in **Southcentral**:



The southcentral region is represented by three Cooperative Extension district offices located in Anchorage, Palmer and Soldotna. These districts serve a combined population of over 300,000 covering over 50,000 square miles. Extension programming in the southcentral region must meet a wide variety of clientele interest, ranging from the agricultural communities of the Mat-Su Valley to the fishing communities of the Kodiak Borough.

- High energy prices remain a major concern to Alaskans. Extension's energy and housing specialist led a dozen workshops about **retrofitting homes, cold-climate homebuilding techniques and solar design** attended by more than 260 residents of Palmer, Anchorage, Kenai and Kodiak.
- More than 4,500 youth in the Palmer, Anchorage and Kenai districts participated in **4-H** clubs and camps, after-school 4-H activities, special interest classes and service projects. Volunteers in the **4-H Anchorage Pillow Patrol** event sewed 700 pillowcases for foster children.
- As grocery bills have risen, interest in home gardening has also increased. An agent trained **52 Master Gardeners** in Anchorage and 14 were trained in Palmer. Hundreds of gardeners also attended **composting, organic gardening and greenhouse classes** in Anchorage, Palmer, Homer and Soldotna.
- The Kenai Peninsula boasts some of the best fishing in the world and tourists and locals alike depend on Extension's expertise with food preservation. Kenai District Extension tested nearly 300 pressure canner gauges. In addition to teaching numerous **food preservation workshops**, agents developed a **DVD series** to reach more clients. Agents and staff also created interactive online resources this year.
- Extension has led efforts to raise awareness about the threat of invasive species. An invasive plants instructor in Anchorage helped develop a **Cooperative Weed Management Area** at a local park, which led to Citizen Weeds Warriors, a program to control the spread of invasive and noxious weeds in Anchorage parklands.
- The GPS is used extensively by hikers, hunters, snowmachiners and mushers, as well as emergency response organizations. An agent has taught **basic and intermediate GPS** to State Troopers, the Civil Air Patrol, and other emergency responders, as well as individuals. More than 400 residents of Palmer, Big Lake, Soldotna, and Willow attended 12 workshops during the past year.

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Cooperative Extension Service Program Highlights in the Southeast:



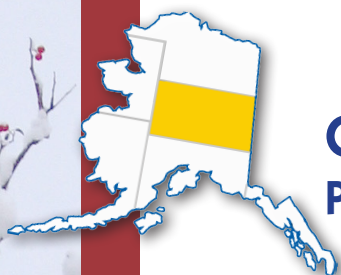
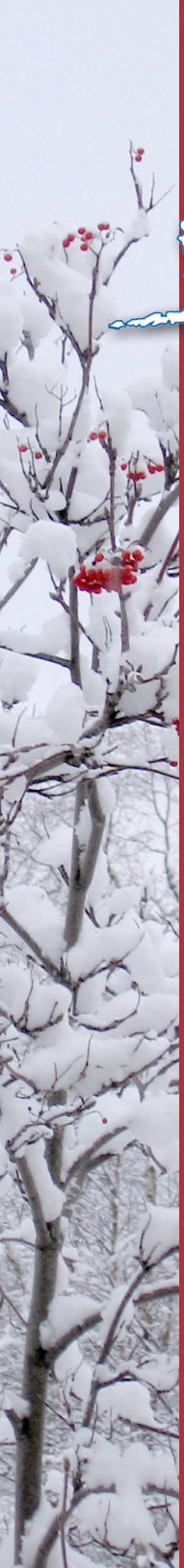
The southeast region is represented by three Cooperative Extension district offices located in Juneau, Sitka and Thorne Bay. These districts serve a combined population of over 60,000 covering over a 50,000 square mile archipelago. As all southeast towns and villages are located off of the road system, agents must travel by ferry or air. Programming centers on subsistence gardening, horticulture business opportunities, secondary processing of forest resources, natural resource education and leadership development.

- Avalanches interrupted Juneau's hydroelectric power supply this spring, and electricity rates more than tripled as the community relied on diesel generators for two months. Extension acted swiftly to provide resources and information about **reducing energy consumption**. Help included publications, radio interviews and programs with Extension's energy specialist and local Extension workshops.
- **Extension's presence in Southeast** has expanded with the addition of two agents. An agent in Juneau is supporting youth development, Master Gardener and local growing programs throughout the region. Another agent, who was stationed in Sitka until 2000, will return to the community in January 2009. His programming will include forest resources, renewable energy, home gardening, native plant cultivation and community development.
- Interest in eating local foods continues to grow. Juneau District **food preservation classes** include kelp and seaweed, fish, berries and home-grown vegetables. Integrated into the classes is information on food safety and nutrition. Community programs also were offered in Craig, Gustavus, Haines, Ketchikan, Klukwan, Thorne Bay, Wrangell and Yakutat.
- Extension and the Institute of Social and Economic Research worked with local **sawmill operators on Prince of Wales Island** to help them consider whether to form a biomass cooperative to market sawmill waste products.
- Twenty women from Juneau and Sitka received training to lead **StrongWomen** programs in their communities. The program promotes better balance, strength and bone density among older women.
- As the cost of importing food increases, interest in home gardening has grown. Extension agents taught a five-week **Master Gardeners** class to 20 eager participants in Juneau this spring and another 17 were trained in Haines. Additionally, new community gardens are being designed, built and supported by local residents.

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Cooperative Extension Service Program Highlights in the Interior:



The interior region is represented by two Cooperative Extension district offices located in Fairbanks and Delta Junction.

The interior region covers over 130,000 square miles and serves a population of over 100,000. Many of the villages and towns serviced in the Interior are inaccessible by road. Interior region clientele are very diverse, including 4-H leaders, youth groups, homemaker clubs, private and commercial horticulture, commercial agriculture, local government, military personnel and subsistence families.

- High home energy prices continue to affect area residents, and Extension's energy and housing specialist has responded with a new course about **retrofitting existing homes** and additional classes in **cold climate home-building techniques** and **solar design**. More than 400 residents attended workshops offered in Fairbanks, Delta and Glennallen.
- As grocery costs increase, interest in home food preservation has grown. In addition to offering numerous food preservation workshops, Extension agents developed a **DVD series** to reach more clients. The series covers canning basics, pickling and canning fish and game in cans and jars — and more topics are planned. Agents and staff also developed interactive online resources this year.
- **ATV training** is seldom provided in rural communities, so Kenny Lake 4-H teens decided to do something about it. A team of adults and teens offered rider training, safety demonstrations, workshops and school presentations in Kenny Lake, Glennallen and Fairbanks — and the program will expand to Bethel later this year with the help of a USDA grant. Copper River Valley and Bethel area youth also may attend a **summer skills camp** offered in July 2009.
- More than 2,300 kids ages 6-18 participated in **4-H clubs** in the Interior; special interest classes such as robotics and cake making, and day and overnight camps offered in Fairbanks and Delta.
- Gardening classes continue to be popular in the Interior — 110 residents attended **Master Gardener** and gardening classes in Fairbanks and at Eielson Air Force Base — and 500 participated in gardening and seed starting workshops in Nenana, Nulato, Galena, Fort Yukon, Dot Lake, Tok, Tetlin, Takotna, Nikolai and Stevens Village. Other rural residents participated in an online version of the Master Gardener course.

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Cooperative Extension Service Program Highlights in the **West**:



The western region is represented by the Cooperative Extension district office located in Bethel. The Bethel district covers over 180,000 square miles. Bethel is the trading and governmental hub of the Kuskokwim Delta and serves 46 villages in the area. The region is subsistence-oriented, and Extension programming focuses on safe food handling and preservation, gardening and economic development.

- Extension has a **new agent** in Bethel. Rural areas continue to struggle with high grocery costs, so the agent will help residents with food preservation and sustainable farming education. He helped residents address high energy costs through workshops on **weatherization, cold-climate building techniques and solar design** in November. Nearly 100 residents attended the workshops taught by Extension's energy and housing specialist.
- Three hundred Bethel area youth from kindergarten through high school participate in **4-H clubs**, after-school 4-H activities, special interest classes and day camps.
- Residents of western Alaska continue to weigh the potential benefits and impacts of proposed large mining projects. **Mining Extension** invited a group of elders and leaders from the region to tour two sizable mining developments in the Interior. Members of the intensive, three-day tour viewed conditions at the Fort Knox and Pogo gold mines and the safety and environmental controls taken. The idea was to not to convince members of the tour — just to give them unbiased information to take back to their communities.
- A team of adults and 4-H teens have offered **ATV rider trainings, safety demonstrations, educational workshops and school presentations** in Interior communities and the program will expand to Bethel later this year with the help of a U.S. Department of Agriculture grant. Youth from Bethel and the Copper River Valley areas may attend a summer skills camp in July 2009.
- The Kuskokwim River watershed has limited capacity for solid waste management, so Extension worked with the **Kuskokwim Watershed Council** on solid waste back-haul of hazardous waste out of the region.

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