



Developing a Network of Small, Community-Based Farms in the Kodiak Archipelago- Successes and Challenges

2020 Alaska Sustainable Agriculture Conference
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Kodiak Archipelago Leadership Institute



Map courtesy of the Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak

KALI- Current Projects



1. Kodiak Archipelago Rural Regional Leadership Forum
2. Support of village and tribal farms— since 2014
3. Mariculture- since 2019
4. Hydroponics – currently developing



The Forum- meeting since 2005

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- Focuses on sustainability of Kodiak's rural communities
- Purpose to provide place for rural communities to develop their voice and identify the rural regional agenda
- About 50-60 invited rural community, municipal, and tribal leadership participate who met 2-3 times a year for multiple days
- Invited forum partners support forum identified goals and initiatives





The Vision

Healthy, locally
available produce

Food Security

Jobs

Value Added
products

Economic
Development

Education

Keeping money in
the community

The issue:

- Healthy fresh produce and eggs not really available
- What you can get to the villages is expensive and often old
- Community Planning sessions discussed how everyone used to garden, have cows and chickens, but much of that traditional knowledge has not been used now for at least one generation.

KALI's Involvement in Agriculture Came Directly out of the Forum



Forum requested informational workshops on agriculture in 2013

Community Leadership requested KALI assistance in establishing food production

KALI awarded 3 year ANA grant to establish pilot farms in 4 villages in 2015

KALI awarded USDA funds in 2018 to expand technical training footprint to all Kodiak communities



Small Tribes of the Kodiak Archipelago- Economic Stability through Food Security



- 3-Year project started October 2015 and ended September 2018
- Four participating communities
 - Larsen Bay
 - Old Harbor
 - Ouzinkie
 - Port Lions
- Three primary objectives
 - Training, Pilot Farms and Business Plans
- Region wide project team
- 1 50% FTE Project Director



TABLE OF KEY PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINES			
Key Activity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Agriculture Technical Training Program			
Teleconferences and Webinars	Bi-monthly beginning in January	Bi-monthly	Monthly
Fall and Early Winter Symposia	February	October February	October February
Summer Field School	Summer		
Technical Resources	Technical Advisors, Site Visits, Google Site, Google Docs Resource Library		
Develop Pilot Farms			
Crops that can grow without protection	Site Preparation Initial Farm Plans	Soil Preparation: March -April First Year Planting: March – September Update Farm Plans	Soil Preparation: March -April 2 nd Year Planting: March – September Update Farm Plans
Hoop Houses	Site Preparation	First Year Harvest	Second Year Harvest
Eggs	Order coop hoops, purchase chickens	Egg production	Egg production
Tribal Farmers Markets	Financial and sales systems established	First Year Sales	Fully Established
Regional Agriculture Economic Development Plan			
Business Planning Workshops	Held in conjunction with Early Winter Symposia-February	Held in Conjunction with October Symposia	Held in Conjunction with October Symposia
Regional Agriculture Development Plan	Phase I: Key Research- Markets	Phase II: Crops and Cost of Production	Phase III: Regional and Tribal Strategies

Project Success supported by:



Strong Regional team- established partnerships developed through the Forum

Extraordinary Community Support

Small Cities
and Tribes

Community
Volunteers

Dedicated Experienced
Individuals

Dr. Casey
Matney

Bells Flats
Poultry

Ocean-
side
Farms

Anton
Larsen
Island
Farm

Kodiak
Soil &
Water
Conservat
ion
District



Major Challenges along the way



Developing farms while learning to farm



Very limited regional technical resources



Logistics including poor internet connectivity



Long Term Sustainability



Fall 2015 through Spring 2017 – Two Goals



Egg Production on
Line



Construction of Poultry
Yards and Coops



Chicks shipped to farms



Egg sales begin

Farms Ready for
First Plantings



Sites prepared including
utility hookups



Hoop Houses Raised



Soil and Beds Prepared



Initial Farm Layout
Plans

Egg Production came on line as planned for three reasons:

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1. **We had good technical expertise and support in the region.**
2. Villages had experienced carpenters who designed and built the poultry yards, and coops.
3. Community members were anxious for egg sales to come on line.



Egg Production and Poultry- Spring 2017

Old Harbor Eggs



Port Lions Turkeys



Sites were prepared with major community contributions - Nov 2015 through Summer 2016



- Land provided by a community's city or tribe
- Often utilities provided free of charge or at reduced rate by cities.
- City and Tribes donated many thousands of dollars of heavy equipment and operator time to prep sites, haul in soil, and other assistance.
- Utility hooks-ups were site specific and each community had to work out how to support utility hookups.
- The regional team spirit was nothing short of AMAZING!



Spruce Island Farms, Ouzinkie- Beginnings



Port Lions – Beginnings

Clearing the lot



Drone's eye view



Marlene Kenoyer Gardens - Beginnings



Late Fall 2016

Potato Towers



Nuniaq Community Gardens - Beginnings



Developing the Site



2016 Potato Fields



Hoop Houses installed- big success!

-Late summer 2016



- Led by Guy Bartleson from Port Lions, the team worked together over several months to identify vendors, place orders, and overcome and coordinate delivery logistics.
- 2 Rimol Gothic style hoop houses were purchased and delivered to each site through Kenai Feed and Supply within budget!
- Kenai Feed and Supply travelled to Kodiak after delivery and we held a “Hoop House” raising in Ouzinkie that allowed everyone to train up together.

***Many thanks to Kenai Feed and Supply Owners
Rupert Grint and Sarah Donchi for their
excellent support and service.***



Many Thanks to Kenai Feed and Supply for all their assistance



**Loading landing craft in Kodiak for
Old Harbor delivery
– August 2016**



**Hoop House Raising Training in
Ouzinkie - Sept 2016**



Soil and Beds Prepared- biggest challenge of the first 18 months



- Beginning farmers struggled with balancing two priorities
 - Required Construction
 - Soil Building
- No experience with soil testing, reading soil sample reports, and building soil – training was provided through symposiums and webinars but it wasn't taking
- Scheduled additional soil building and compost workshops in late fall of 2016 with Midge Short, owner of Anton Larsen Island Farm
- Farms started to successfully integrate training in soil building during the middle of the second year

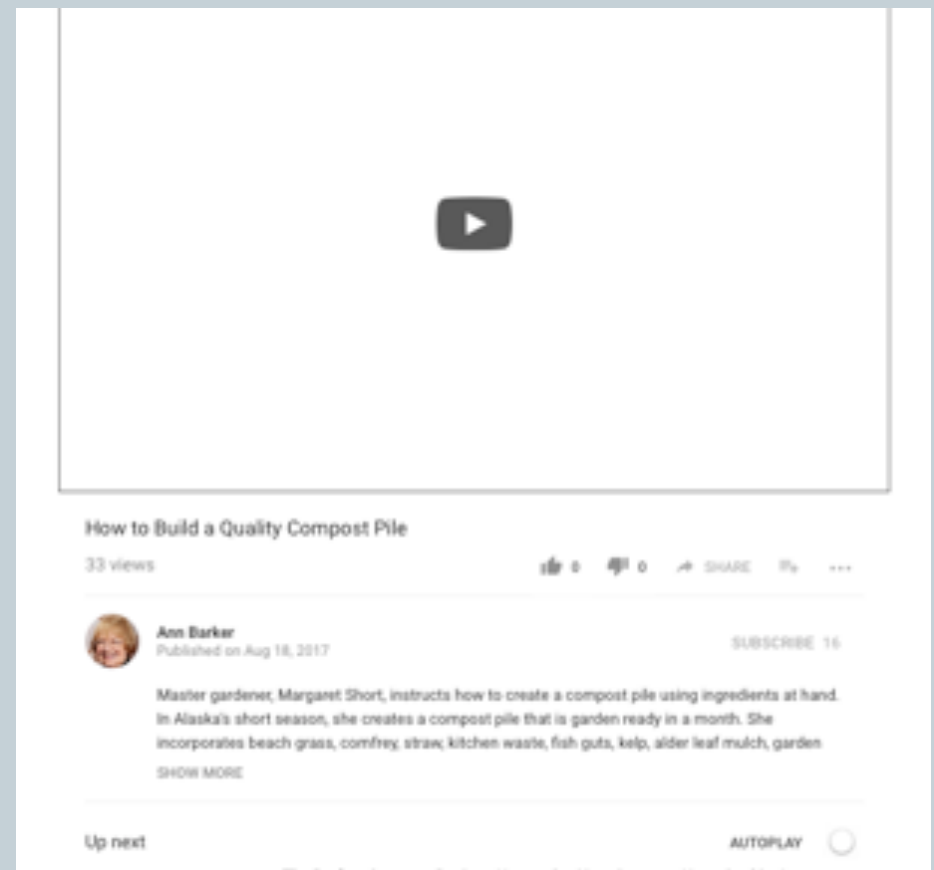


Year 1- Begin Soil Building

Alutiiq Week in Larsen Bay- Digging Beach Peat!



Building Compost at Anton Larsen Bay Farm



Initial Farm Plans Developed

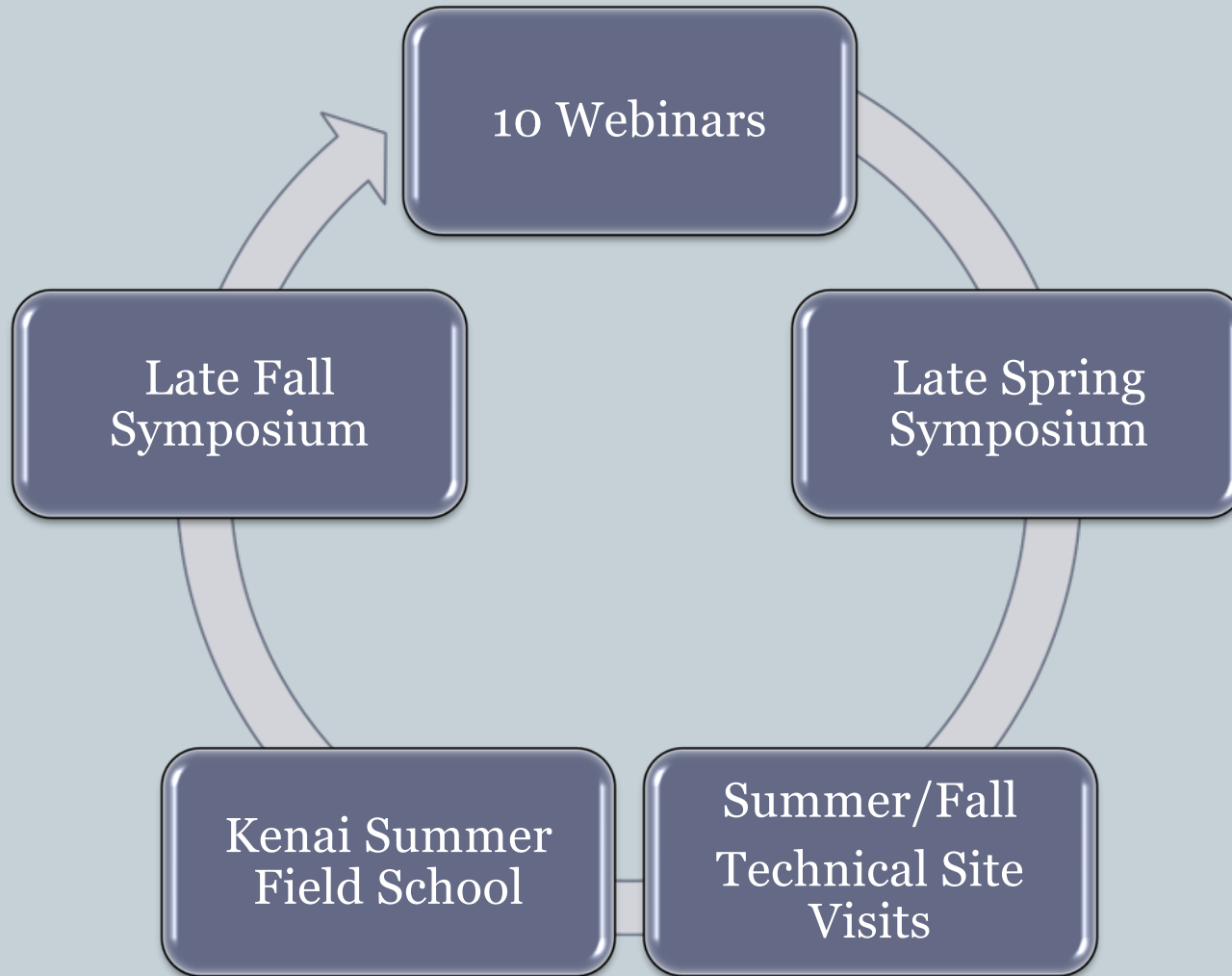


- Three Day Symposium/Workshop in November 2016
- Reviewed varieties that do well in Kodiak, succession plantings, and seed starting
- Farming teams developed draft layout plans for review.
- Farms presented on their layouts to Kodiak Master Gardeners
- Progress on layouts reviewed on site during summer technical site visits.



Technical Training running in tandem with farm start-ups

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Dr. Casey Matney

UAF Cooperative
Extension Service

Lead Technical Partner
for KALI agriculture
projects

Based in Kenai (no
extension agent in
Kodiak)

Developed the technical
training program for
the project





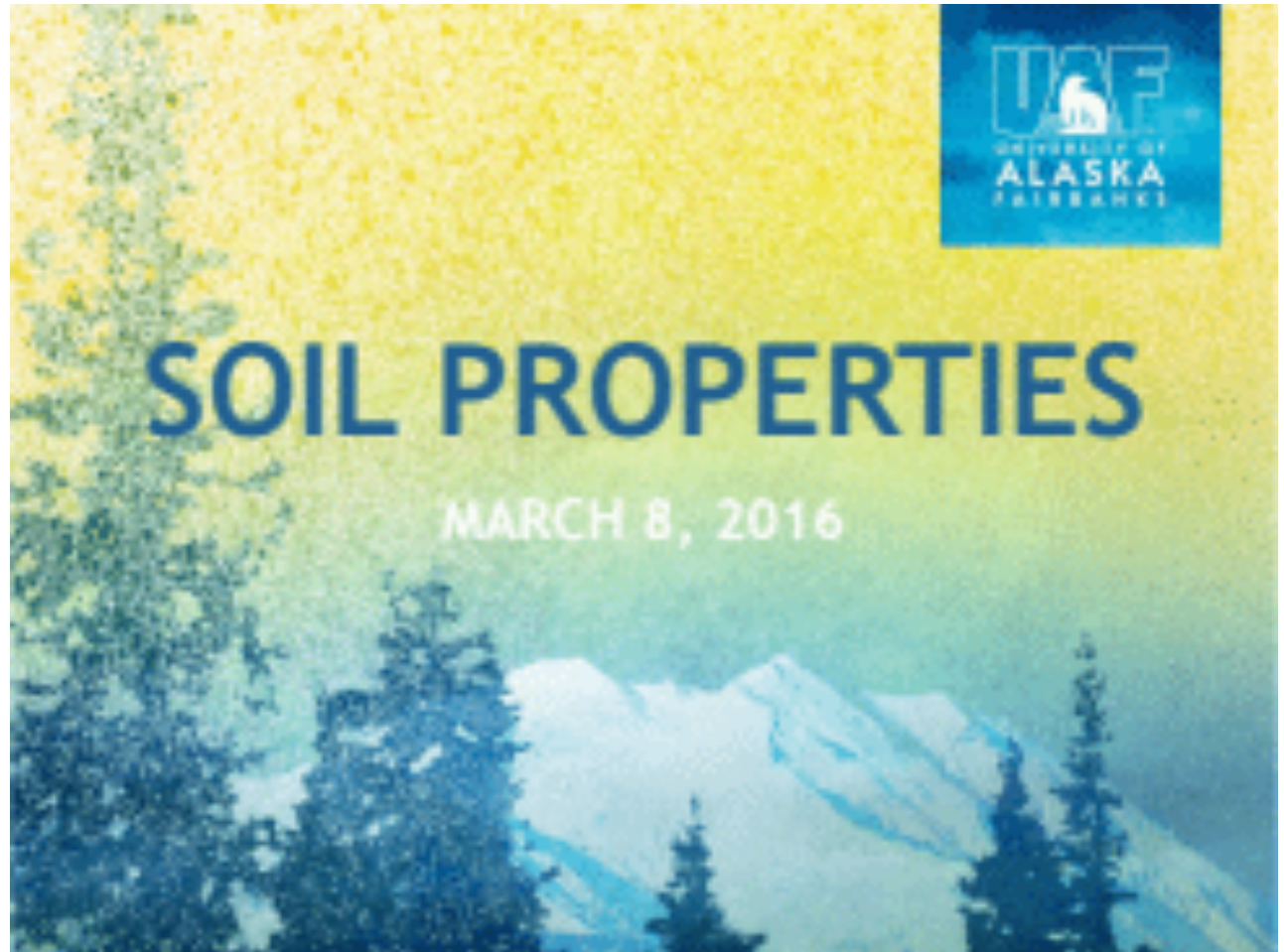
Training Teleconferences

Supported through UAF CES and Casey Matney

Village internet would not support webinars.

Loaded training power points on drop box and then held teleconferences to review.

Worked to get across basic information- site visits and workshops supported hands on learning.



Kenai Summer Field School –

Organized and led by Casey Matney, PhD

The Kenai Peninsula has very well-established local food production including several farmers' markets.

The Farming Teams were able to spend time with successful farmers





2016 Kenai Summer Field School

Alaska Berries

Arena Acres

Jackson Gardens and Nurseries

Kenai Feed and Supply

Oceanside Farms

Perfect Peony

Rupert Scribner Farm and Ranch



Introduced us to a new technical partner- Oceanside Farms



**Kenai Summer Field
School**

Don and Donna Rae - 2016





Oceanside Farms

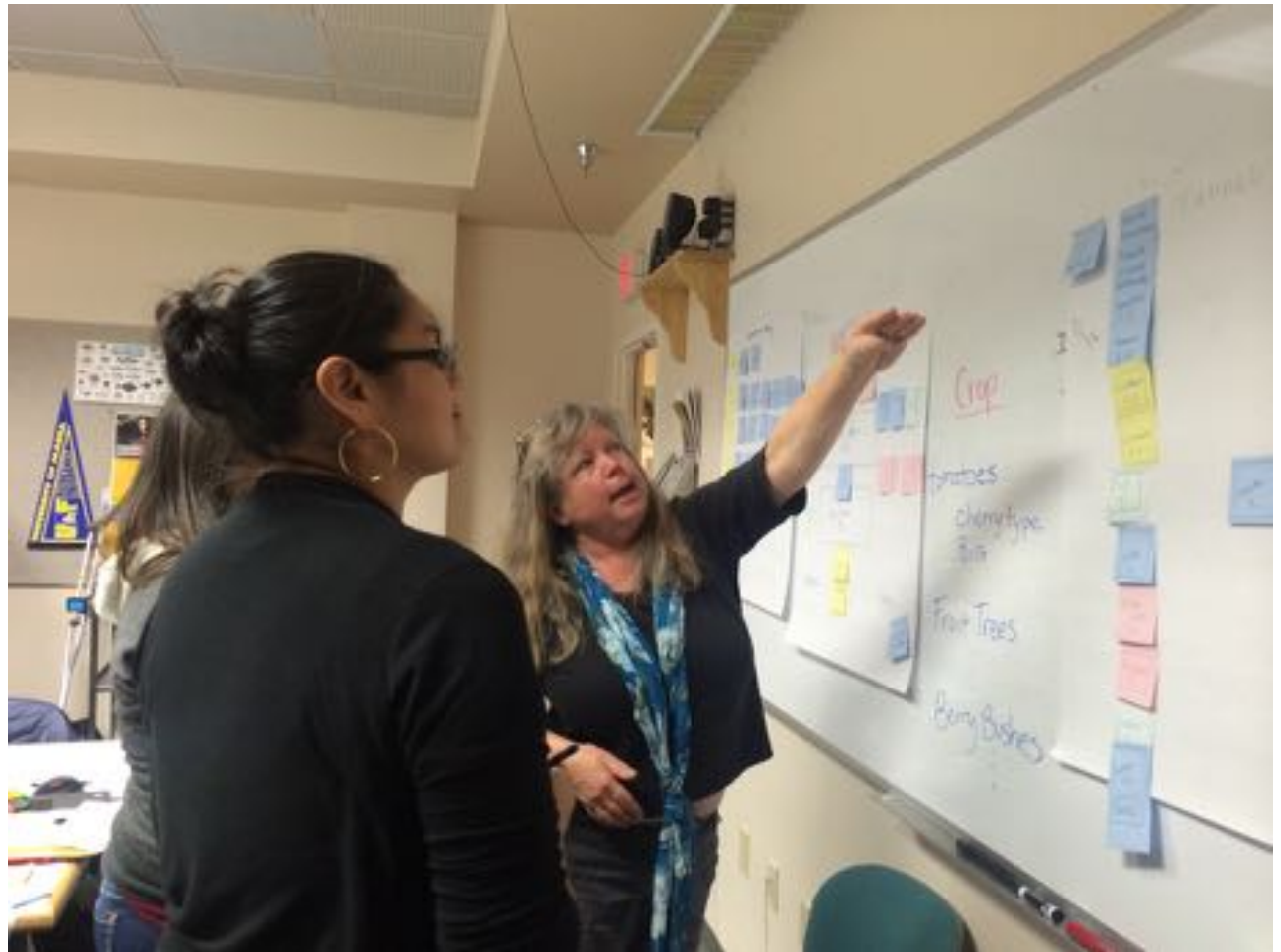
Support KALI technical
training through

Workshops

Kodiak Symposiums

Technical Site Visits

Farm Business
Planning



How beginning farmers ranked training methodologies after first 18 months

Most Effective: Hands On Learning

Kenai Summer Field School

Compost workshops

Technical Site Visits

Effective: Face to Face Symposiums

Assist with Learning

Very effective for meeting agency personnel

Somewhat Effective: Web and Teleconference Based Training

Method ok for providing basic information in support of hands on learning

Poor rural connectivity further reduces effectiveness



Planning for sustainability very Challenging



- Jeff Curry with the Alaska Region of USDA assists KALI and the farms in business planning
- The Farms' Mission and Vision Statements reflect a focus on community as well as financial sustainability, but not necessarily financial return.
- Tribally owned farms currently do not fit well into the USDA Farm loan programs because of their unique ownership structure
- KALI is working to bring small scale hydroponics to the four farms to provide for some year-round production and cash flow
- Tribes are considering forming a regional Tribal Conservation District in support of rural and tribal agriculture, mariculture and fisheries



The Farms' Mission Statements

**Marlene Kenoyer
Gardens
Larsen Bay**

Putting our community first by providing quality product at a fair price to promote healthy living through food sustainability.

**Nuniaq Gardens
Old Harbor**

Nuniaq Farm provides generational growers, fresh produce, and honest prices with a sustainable lifestyle.

Port Lions Farm

To maintain a viable, self-sustaining farm that provides economic opportunity and produces nutritional natural grown food for the local community, using renewable resources through both traditional and modern-day practices.

**Spruce Island
Farm
Ouzinkie**

Spruce Island Farm provides affordable, organic, and healthy foods to our community while fostering sustainability through the generations

Spruce Island Farms



**Vickie Novak, Herman
Anderson and Daniel Rich**



**Dan Clarion and Elijah
Jackson**



Spruce Island Farms



Summer 2019



Summer 2019



Spruce Island Farms

Strawberry Skiff



Potato Fields (dug from the old runway)



Marlene Kenoyer Gardens

Named by the students of Larsen Bay School in honor of a cherished Elder

Students raised money for the sign

Marlene's Hands are holding the plant on the sign



Marlene Kenoyer Gardens



**Sam Kenoyer with Midge
Short**



Tiffany Brown



Marlene Kenoyer Gardens



Sam in Hoop House



Current Focus

- High tunnels
- Potato towers
- Berries
- Bees
- Beginning sales to commercial lodges
- Experimenting with haskap berries

Marlene Kenoyer Gardens- Honey Bees!

**School Kids Painted Bee
Box Panels**



**Tiffany as Head Bee
Keeper**



Port Lions Farm

Port Lions Team



Port Lions Farm



Wednesday Farmers Market



Current Focus

- Two high tunnels
- Planned egg production to sell to Dig Afognak Camp
- Outside growing areas for berries and crops
- Fruit trees
- Selling through tribe's farmers market

Nuniaq Community Gardens

Old Harbor Team 2016



**Summer 2018 – OHNC
Intern Kailey Shugak**



Nuniaq Gardens, Old Harbor 2019
Providing Health, Organic and Fresh Produce for our Elders

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Technical Training expanded in Oct 2018



- In October 2018 KALI was awarded the first of two USDA 2501 program grants to expand the technical training program to include all tribes in the archipelago and interested Kodiak residents.
- The 2501 Program specifically supports disadvantaged populations of new farmers and ranchers.
- The annual project training cycle incorporated what we learned from the first three years under the ANA grant.
- Under the USDA 2501 Program grants, participation has grown to include members of 8 tribes from 7 villages and the City of Kodiak and several individuals beginning small farms in Kodiak.





2501 Project Current Cycle of Technical Support



Intensive Workshops:

Soil Building, Farm Layout and Succession Planning, Seed Start School and Marketing

Summer Technical Site Visits

On site business
planning support

Produce Safety and
Farm Safety Plan
Training

Webinars on core
topics in snyc with
workshop schedule

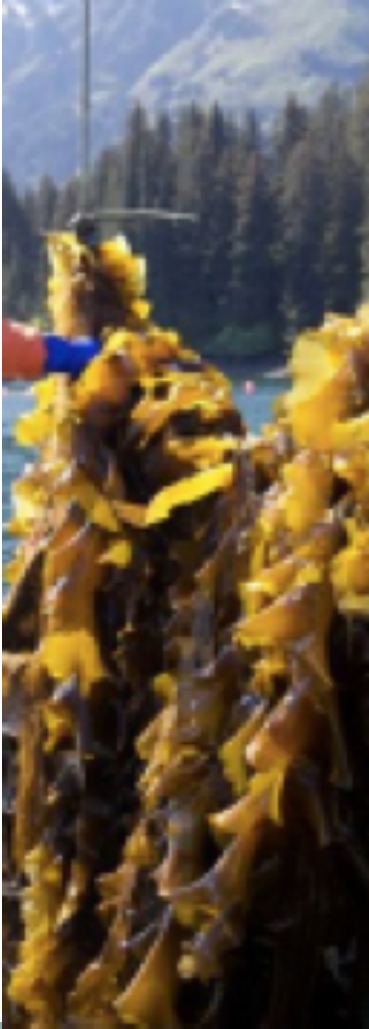
Year End
Conference



MARICULTURE SUPPORT



- Regional Mariculture Conference with statewide attendance – September 2019
- Technical Assistance for rural communities and tribes.
 - Technical Assistance provided by Tamsen Peeples, former Alaska Coordinator for Blue Evolution
 - Assistance so far has been provided to 4 rural communities in:
 - ✦ Selecting an aquatic plant site
 - ✦ Permit application workshop and technical assistance to complete the application
 - ✦ Technical assistance in preparing a business plan



KALI Future Plans Include



- Continue to build the network of support for beginning farmers with the Kodiak Soil and Water Conservation District and possible establishment of tribal conservation districts
- Possible support of hydroponics for year-round food production
- Continue to support Mariculture as an economic development opportunity.





**MANY
THANKS TO
OUR PROJECT
PARTNERS
WHOSE
DONATIONS
SUPPORTED
INTERNS,
HEAVY
EQUIPMENT
USAGE,
PROJECT
ADMINI-
STRATION,
AND
SUPPLIES**

- **US HHS ANA Program**
- **USDA 2501 Program**
- **State Wide**
 - UAF CES
 - Alaska Grown Program
 - USDA- Alaska Regional Office
- **Regional**
 - Kodiak Soil and Water Conservation District
 - Kodiak Island Housing Authority
 - Kodiak Harvest Food Coop
 - Kodiak Area Native Association SYETP Program
 - Koniag, Inc.
- **Larsen Bay**
 - City of Larsen Bay
 - Native Village of Larsen Bay
- **Old Harbor**
 - Alutiiq Village of Old Harbor
 - City of Old Harbor
 - Old Harbor Alliance
 - Old Harbor Native Corporation
- **Ouzinkie**
 - City of Ouzinkie
 - Native Village of Ouzinkie
 - Ouzinkie Native Corporation
 - Spruce Island Development Corporation
- **Port Lions**
 - Afognak Native Corporation
 - City of Port Lions
 - Kodiak Electric Association
 - Native Village of Port Lions
- **Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak**

Questions?

Kodiak Archipelago Leadership Institute

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