

IMPACT

Matanuska Experiment Farm and
Extension Center

2021 Alaska Women in Agriculture 'virtual' Conference a huge success

Issue

Women represent 47% of the farmers in Alaska. The Alaska Women in Ag 'virtual' Conference, March 20, 2021, brought hundreds of women together via Zoom for a day of connection, networking, information exchange and fun. It featured producers from across the state, which allowed the participants to get to know people from their communities as well as their industry.

Response

The response was overwhelming and registration closed more than two weeks early due to the 300-participant maximum being reached. It was hosted by the Alaska Farmland Trust; Homer Soil & Water Conservation District; Alaska Farm Bureau and the University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service and Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station. Jodie Anderson, director of the Matanuska Experiment Farm and Extension Center near Palmer, served as emcee.

The morning started with a yoga session, followed by a video from four generations of the Kenley Family, who have farmed in Palmer for generations. Dasha Kelly Hamilton provided a powerful spoken word presentation. Three 20-minute Flash Four presentations featured four women individually representing their agricultural regions across the state. Topics were Industry Leaders, Homesteaders and Innovation. Shannon Powers represented youth in agriculture. A Farmers Co-Op panel discussed ways to work together differently.

Two breakout sessions included approximately 40 rooms with a facilitator to allow for networking in various topic or regional groups. Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, recorded a video highlighting the things women in Alaska are doing in agriculture.



Results

Throughout the conference, engagement activities included Zoom polls and questions in chats provided interaction with participants. A video, "Remembering our Roots" was played during lunch and the day ended with giveaways. At one point, 185 people were participating in the Zoom conference; at the end of the conference 160 people were still in attendance. Feedback from participants has been phenomenal.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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