

INTERIOR ALASKA FOOD NETWORK

FALL 2018 NEWSLETTER



Southside Market Spotlight

BY JUAN DIEGO AGUILAR, BRITANNY BALTHASER, & SYDNEY VAUGHT

What is the role of a farmers market? More specifically, what is the role of a farmers market in a community like South Fairbanks? Although the answers might seem apparent, each farmers market is different and specific to their community. According to the USDA, there are almost 8,700 farmers markets operating in the US and more than 40 operating in Alaska. This varied grouping of farmers, artisans, and vendors sell more than just veggies and artisanries. Farmers markets offer a space where community members can trade ideas of community, health, food education, and environmental stewardship. For the folks living in and around South Fairbanks, the Southside Community Farmer's Market is also a space to foster a sense of belonging and pride. While standing on 24th and Rickert, it's easy to see that there is a certain light in people's eyes. Their desire for more in their community, as well as their willingness to support and educate one another, shines through. Simply hosting a weekly market goes a long way towards beautifying the neighborhood and empowering folks to be active participants in their food system. Multiple organizations such as Kellogs Kluckers (egg vendor, sweet cakes), Tundra Tonics (apple cider vinegar based tonics, teas),

Bread Line, Inc with their Chef at the Market, The Fairbanks Children's Museum, Noel Wien Public Library, Department of Public Health, and SNAP-Ed Cooperative Extension Services have invested in this community, staffing booths and spending time meeting people at the market. These organizations at the market offer opportunities to help solve some of the socio-economic issues afflicting the community.

Food deserts are defined as parts of the country void of fresh fruit, vegetables, and other healthful whole foods, usually found in impoverished areas. This is largely due to a lack of grocery stores, farmers' markets, and healthy food providers. Although by this definition, the Southside is not a food desert, access to food retailers in this area is limited. For the majority of Southside stakeholders who work to combat food insecurity, the challenges faced are not accurately portrayed. Limited access to food retailers still threatens the livelihood of those who live in South Fairbanks, this makes bitter winters even tougher. The USDA guidelines define 'low access communities' as 33% or >500 (of a census tract) that live a mile or more away from a supermarket or large grocery store (Ver Ploeg, 2017).

For instance, the USDA emphasizes the importance of transportation and uses the verbiage of “supermarkets” and “large grocery stores” to define access. However, it fails to account for specifics in the Fairbanks public transportation system such as certain route restrictions during weekend hours and the heavy winter months. Temperatures in Fairbanks can drop to a bone-chilling -30°F or -40°F in the winter months. According to the Alaska Climate Research Center, average temps in December, January, and February ranged from -10°F >-30° in the 2017-2018 Winter. This, combined with increasing snowfall and snow depth, can make it difficult for even an able-bodied person with reliable transportation to secure food.

With the help of Calypso Farms, the Southside Market has added quality produce in neighborhood kitchens. During Tuesdays of the summer months, the market is an opportunity for the community to meet farmers, improve their diets, and even share recipes and food storage ideas. On top of that, Southside Community Farmer’s Market offers 50% off to those using food stamps. They also accept WIC, SNAP, and Senior Coupons. This makes the market accessible to all budgets and helps everyone stretch their dollars in the best of ways. Access to a local farmers market enhances the community’s relationship with healthy and nutritious food, supporting our underserved community and ensuring the health of generations to come.

*Southside Market is
open Tuesday
4:00-7:00pm on
14th and Rickert
through the summer
months*



The south side of Fairbanks has great potential for growth and community involvement. The farmers market is a great place to start and is actively looking to add more local, small business vendors who are interested in making a little extra money and making a big difference in the community of Fairbanks. If you or anybody you know would like to sell their wares whether it is, produce, honey, eggs, jams/jellies, baked goods, all it takes is a one time \$50 business license to sell at the market. Through tastings, knowledgeable farmers, as well as other community partners, the Southside is improving one carrot and one handshake at a time.

To receive more information regarding the Southside Farmer’s Market, or if you are interested in becoming a vendor for next year contact Calypso Farms & Ecology Center at (907) 451-0691 or calypsoinformation@gmail.com.



IAFN Meetings

The Interior Alaska Food Network is a regional subgroup of the Alaska Food Policy Council. The next IAFN meeting is November 1st at 1pm at the Fairbanks Community Food Bank. These meetings are normally held once a month on the second Thursday of the month. Exceptions were made for November for the Sustainable Agriculture Conference in Anchorage the second week of November.



An action committee work group regularly meets between the monthly meetings, for more information about this group please contact juandiego.fswcd@gmail.com.

Interested in doing more for IAFN? Consider helping create a board to organize and facilitate action items for the network. Details at the November meeting.

Community Involvement

IAFN ACTION SUBCOMMITTEE

We are looking to go about the construction and installation of community pantries scattered across Fairbanks. This is to be modeled after UAF's food pantry which services the university community and is open 5 days a week during regular business hours. The key difference with the community pantries, would be that they are open to the entire Fairbanks community. Operating on a basis of 'Take what you need, leave what you can' it would not need to be managed and could be operational all day. These food caches would ideally be placed in key locations across the city such as the Noel Wien Library, The Door, City Hall, FNSB Borough Building



BREAD LINE, INC NEEDS:

- Coffee
- Creamer
- Paper lunch sacks/plastic grocery bags
- 42-gallon trash bags (3 Mil)
- Pasta
- Bus passes (tying back to the transportation and access bit)
- Winter clothing
- Clorox
- Lysol Toilet Cleaner
- Ziploc Sandwich bags
- Tax-deductible financial donations are always welcome



Bread Line, Inc.
507 Gaffney Rd.
Office: (907) 452-1974



Golden Heart Grown Spotlight

Dart-AM Farms closed off the season on a high note collaborating with Arctic Harvest for an Alaska Grown pumpkin sale! Arctic Harvest kept those purchasing pumpkins warm with Alaska Grown spirits on this festive event in October.

Are you a local business wanting to know more about being Golden Heart Grown? Contact buylocal@investfairbanks.com for more information about this FREE program!



History of Ag in AK

The heaviest cabbage weighed 138.25 lb and was presented at the Alaska State Fair by Scott A. Robb (USA) in Palmer, Alaska, USA, on 31 August 2012.

Upcoming

Check out the 14th Annual Alaska Sustainable Agriculture Conference (Anchorage) this Nov. 4th through the 8th!

Learn more:

To learn more about IAFN come to one of our meetings! We are made up of a wide variety of people that are gathered to share resources and to bring awareness of Interior Alaska Food policies, failures, successes, changes, and opportunities. We hope to facilitate projects in the community that address areas of food security. We are always open to new faces to help with our mission!