



“Taking care of our land, and our plants and animals, has always been a very strong Alaska Native value to ensure our lands are around for our younger generations.” ~ Marcia Anderson

# CHAP Weekly Update

February 26, 2021

## Food Security and Restoring Health Through Sustainable Food Systems

### What is food security?

Food security means that all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life.

Source: UN Committee on World Food Security



### People who have food security have access to:

- Enough food, and food that is safe and nutritious
  - Food that is culturally appropriate
  - Food that is produced in a sustainable\* way for the environment and the community
- \* *sustainable = being here for a long time*



### What can impact food security?

- Changing climate, environmental stress
- Resources like time, money, or knowledge
- Regulations or not having regulations
- Decreased mobility or independence

### Facts about food in Alaska:

- 90% of food bought in Alaska is imported by plane, trucks, barges
- The cost of food in rural Alaska is high
- Rural stores may have a limited selection and limited fresh food of high quality

#### Alaska Fact:

Almost 105,000 Alaskans are food insecure.

Source: [foodbankofalaska.org](http://foodbankofalaska.org)

### Sustainable Food Supply

#### Food security for everyone

A sustainable food supply is where everyone has access to healthy foods that are nutrient-dense. It is access to cultural foods, whatever culture you might come from.

If you harvest cultural foods, it means access to lands where you can harvest them. It also includes your choice of store-bought food, food grown at home, and food preservation methods like drying and canning.



“A sustainable food supply means a need for education around ethical harvesting and being good stewards of the land. And that is of utmost importance.” ~ Marcia Anderson

#### A sustainable food supply means:

- There is access to healthy food, traditional and store-bought foods.
- There are garden and farmed foods available.
- Food harvesting is done ethically and with conservation of the resource.
- Expert guidance is given by elders as well as by agriculture, forestry, and soil scientists.

“A sustainable food supply ensures we have healthy and affordable food options for the next generation, no matter where we live.” ~ Marcia Anderson

Let us know what you think! aka-CHAPCOVID-19weeklyupdates@anthc.org

Send questions for presenters and each other, and suggest topics for discussion.





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## Locally Grown and Traditional Foods

## Alaska Food Resources

### Benefits of growing and/or harvesting local food:

- Encourages and provides physical activity
- Helps with recovery and healing
- Strengthens connection to community
- Improves mental health and emotional well-being
- Supports connection to culture and tradition
  - ◊ Embraces Native values such as cooperation, hard work, humility, hunter success, respect, sharing, and spirituality
- Provides nutritional value
  - ◊ Wild foods are nutrient-dense, providing vitamins, iron, fiber, low in sugar
  - ◊ This is the opposite of many processed, store-bought foods



### Tips for eating traditional plants

- Combine traditional foods with healthy, store-bought foods.
- Bring traditional food dishes to gatherings and events.
- Preserve berries and greens by freezing, canning or drying.



### Want to begin a more sustainable food path?

- Start small.
- Learn how to harvest safely and ethically from Elders.
- Learn how to preserve harvested food safely.
- Share your harvested food and knowledge with your community and your children.
- Try a small garden and enlarge as you learn.
- Grow traditional plants and other plants you like to eat.

### Want to learn more? So many resources!

#### Attend the Alaska Plants as Food and Medicine Symposium

- Check the [ANTHC website](#), for more information.

#### Food resources during the COVID 19 pandemic

- State of Alaska: [Play Every Day Blog](#)
- [Alaska Public Interest Group](#)
- [Food Bank of Alaska Statewide Resources](#)
- [Food Bank of Alaska COVID-19 Food Resources](#)



#### Resources for gardening, farming and preserving food safely

- [Farm to School Alaska](#)
- [Rural Health Info](#)
- [Tips for Preserving Food Safely](#)



#### Grants to support sustainable food

- [Division of Agriculture, Alaska](#)
- Mini-grants (up to \$5000) available to promote traditional plant harvesting and gardening! [ANTHC's Health Promotion program](#) offers mini-grants and in-person support for tribal regions or communities, wanting to facilitate workshops or a symposium, to promote [traditional plant knowledge and growing your own food](#).

The goal is to inspire local discussion and have sessions taught by people in/from the region, to enhance community wellness, build community resilience, sustain cultural knowledge, and support local food systems.

For more information or to request an application, email [healthpromotion@anthc.org](mailto:healthpromotion@anthc.org) or call 907-729-3634

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## Did You Know?

### The Food Bank of Alaska

- Has 150 partner food pantries and soup kitchens across Alaska
- Distributed more than 7.5 million pounds – 6.2 million meals



Currently one in seven Alaskans, including one in five children, struggle with hunger.

### Stinging Nettles

It is a super food. It is one of the highest nutrient-dense plants on the earth.

- Highest plant source of iron! Excellent source of vitamins, minerals and protein.
- Nettles are one of the first perennials to emerge.
- Nettles are picked when they are less than five inches tall.
- Use gloves when picking to avoid the sting.



## Covid by the Numbers

- Alaska cases as of February 25, 2020: **55,736**
- US cases as of February 25, 2020: **28.4 million**
- Alaska average daily case rate: **19.4 cases per day, per 100,000 people. COVID is still spreading, but slowly.**
- More information at [Coronavirus.dhss.alaska.gov](https://www.coronavirus.dhss.alaska.gov)



## CHA/Ps: Earn CE Credit

You can earn CE credit for attending the COVID-19 CHAP Weekly Update zoom meetings every Tuesday, 12pm to 1pm.

Each week has a corresponding CE certificate found online at: <https://anthc.remote-learner.net>

### Be sure to check out the COVID-19 Related CE Courses:

- COVID-19 Vaccines - 1 CE
- BinaxNOW™ COVID-19 Ag Card - 1 CE
- COVID-19 (Coronavirus) General Information and Testing - 2 CE

## CHA/P on Facebook



Check out news stories, information and accomplishments of Health Aides around the state. See and share photos of our program and people.

Community Health Aide/Practitioner Facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/groups/AlaskaCommunityHealthAidesPractitioners](https://www.facebook.com/groups/AlaskaCommunityHealthAidesPractitioners)

## SAVE THE DATE



### March 2, 2021

Alaska DHSS will provide updates on COVID-19 variants, cases, vaccines, etc., and an overview of COVID infection and treatment in Alaska. Dr. Ohlsen will provide an update on the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

### March 9, 2021

Anne Fleetwood will talk about cholesterol and blood pressure control in people with diabetes.

### Thanks to:

Thanks to Marcia Anderson, MS, RDN, LD for her discussion on food security and the benefits of harvesting and gardening in Alaska.



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