



SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE FOR ALASKA



Cooperative Extension Service ■ Tanana District Office ■ P.O. Box 758155 ■ Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-8155 ■ 907-474-1530

Seventh Annual Sustainable Agriculture Conference and Organic Growers School

SET IN FAIRBANKS

By Taylor Maida, UAF Cooperative
Extension Service

The Seventh Annual Sustainable Agriculture Conference and Organic Growers School is scheduled for March 23–24, 2011, at the Fairbanks Princess Riverside Lodge in Fairbanks. A special preconference growers/ranchers school is planned for March 22, featuring a variety of goat and small dairy workshops at the Princess Lodge and a farmstead goat cheese-making workshop at the Hutchison Institute of Technology Kitchen. Everyone is welcome to attend all events — from home gardeners to foodies to commercial growers!

More than 200 attendees from 27 different communities across Alaska have attended the conference in past years. This year's focus on goat and small dairy will feature a panel of national and state speakers discussing issues and considerations of running a small dairy. Each speaker will present a different component of the discussion, including Lorrie Conway of Conway Family Farm, Camas, Wash., Dr. Susan Kerr of Washington State University Klickitat County Extension, Gene Wiseman of the Missouri Department of Agriculture and Dr. Robert Gerlach of the Alaska Division of Environmental Health.

Other topics to be presented by state speakers will be root cellars and extending crop availability, funding opportunities, CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture) around Alaska, updates on agriculture research from around the state, different methods of fertilizing organically, employment strategies, and discussions on small fruit, berries and the rhubarb industry.

Expert dairy goat farmer and cheese maker Lorrie Conway of Conway Family Farm, Camas, Wash., will be the keynote guest speaker. She will share how raising dairy goats and making cheese can be successful on a small family farm. She and her husband Shaun, along with daughters Ashley and Amber, have raised Nubian goats and Leicester sheep on their five acres for more than 15 years. Having built the farm from the ground up themselves, Conway Family Farm is now a Grade A raw milk licensed dairy through

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What's happening . . .

Jan. 26–27 — Alaska Greenhouse and Nursery Conference with Polar Grower Trade Show, Anchorage Hilton, 745-3639, scbrown4@alaska.edu

Jan. 27–28 — Alaska Peony Growers Conference, Anchorage Hilton, 745-3639, scbrown4@alaska.edu

Feb. 15–16 — Alaska Produce Growers Conference, The Train Depot, Palmer, 745-3639, scbrown4@alaska.edu

Feb. 22–April 5 — Fairbanks Master Gardener Class, 474-1530, rlhalvarson@alaska.edu

Feb. 24–26 — 22nd Annual MOSES Organic Farming Conference, LaCrosse, Wis., www.mosesorganic.org/conference

Feb. 26 — Delta Farm Forum, Delta Junction High School, 895-4215, cmroden@alaska.edu

March 8 — Turf Fundamentals for Sports Field Managers, Matanuska Experiment Farm, Palmer, 745-3639, scbrown4@alaska.edu

March 22–24 — Sustainable Agriculture Conference and Organic Growers School, Fairbanks Princess Riverside Lodge, 474-1530, rlhalvarson@alaska.edu

March 25–26 — Alaska State Master Gardener Conference, Wedgewood Resort, Fairbanks

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America's Arctic University

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Seventh Annual Sustainable Agriculture Conference and Organic Growers School

2011 DRAFT AGENDA



Preconference DRAFT Agenda: Growers/Ranchers School: Tuesday, March 22

- 9:00–2:00** **Goat and Small Dairy Workshop**, presented by Lorrie Conway, Conway Family Farm, Camas, Wash., and Dr. Susan Kerr, Washington State University, Klickitat County Extension, all sessions to be held at Fairbanks Princess Riverside Lodge
- › **9:00–9:30** **Stock Selection**, Lorrie Conway and Dr. Susan Kerr
 - › **9:30–10:20** **Feeding Goats**, Lorrie Conway and Dr. Susan Kerr
 - › **10:20–11:40** **Disease of Sheep and Goats**, Dr. Susan Kerr
 - › **11:40–12:25** **Marketing Milk Products**, Lorrie Conway
 - › **12:25–1:00** **Lunch on Site**
 - › **1:00–2:00** **Reproduction and Kidding Practices and Processes**, Dr. Susan Kerr
- 3:00–6:00** **Cheese Making Workshop**, presented by Lorrie Conway and Dr. Susan Kerr at Hutchison Institute of Technology Kitchen

Conference DRAFT Agenda: Wednesday, March 23

7:45–8:15 **Registration**

8:15–8:30 **Welcome**

Growers' Highlights:

- 8:30–9:00** **Developing Soils in Galena with Green Manures**, Paul Apfelbeck, Galena
- 9:00–9:30** **Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) in Homer**, Emily Garrity, Twitter Creek Gardens, Homer
- 9:30–10:15** **Root Cellar in Bethel for Extending Crop Availability**, Tim Meyers, Meyers Farm, Bethel
- 10:15–10:45** **Break and Poster Session**

Funding Programs:

- 10:45–11:15** **Cost-share Programs for Organic Farming and Environmental Incentive Programs (i.e., high tunnels and nutrient management)**, Sunny Castillo, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Fairbanks, and Lloyd Wilhelm, USDA Farm Service Agency, Delta Junction
- 11:15–12:00** **Funding Opportunities and Land Sales through the Alaska Division of Agriculture**, Patricia O'Neil, Alaska Division of Agriculture, Palmer, and Dan Proulx, Alaska Division of Agriculture, Fairbanks
- 12:00–1:00** **Lunch on Site**

Livestock Session:

- 1:00–1:30** **Parasites of Sheep and Goats**, Dr. Susan Kerr, Washington State University, Klickitat County Extension
- 1:30–2:00** **Small-scale Goat Dairy Marketing Cheese**, Lorrie Conway, Conway Family Farm, Camas, Wash.
- 2:00–2:30** **Raw Milk Regulations in Missouri**, Gene Wiseman, Missouri Department of Agriculture
- 2:30–3:00** **Break and Poster Session**
- 3:00–3:30** **State of Alaska Cheese and Meat Regulations**, Dr. Robert Gerlach, Alaska Division of Environmental Health
- 3:30–4:00** **Chicken Tractors and Other Poultry Innovation**, Pam Laker
- 4:00–5:00** **Future of Agriculture and Food Security Panel**, lead by Mike Emers, Alaska Community Agriculture Association
- 5:00** **Closing Remarks, Announcements and Evaluation**



Lorrie Conway, who operates Conway Family Farm with her husband Shaun, is this year's keynote guest speaker at the SARE conference. Conway Family Farm photo

Conference DRAFT Agenda: Thursday, March 24

7:45–8:15 Registration
8:15–8:30 Welcome

Research Updates:

8:30–9:00 **Update on Fish/Hay Composting Project**, Jodie Anderson, UAF School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences, Palmer
9:00–9:30 **Novelty Potato Research**, Jeff Smeenck, UAF School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences, Palmer

Nutrient Management in Organic Settings in Alaska Panel

9:30–10:00 **Organic Fertilizer Research**, Dr. Mingchu Zhang, UAF School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences, Fairbanks
10:00–10:45 **Break and Poster Session**
10:45–11:15 **Using Local Compost Enhanced with Organic Fertilizers**, Susan Willsrud, Calypso Farm and Ecology Center, Ester
11:15–11:45 **Fertilizing Biodynamically**, Susan Kerndt, Demeter's Wild Rose Farm, Fairbanks
11:45–12:00 **Question and Answer**
12:00–1:00 **Lunch on Site**

Miscellaneous:

1:00–1:30 **Rhubarb Industry in Alaska**, Bruce Bush, Bushes Bunches, and Carol Kenley, Alaska Vegetable Farm, Palmer
1:30–2:15 **Root Cellar Panel**, featuring Pete Mayo, Spinach Creek Farm, Fairbanks; Tim Meyers, Meyers Farm, Bethel; and Paul Apfelbeck, Galena
2:15–2:45 **Break and Poster Session**
2:45–3:30 **Small Fruits and Berries for Alaska**, Papa, Papa's Greenhouse, North Pole, and USDA Agricultural Research Service researcher
3:30–4:00 **Alaska Growers School**, Heidi Rader, UAF Cooperative Extension Service
4:00–4:45 **Employment Strategies for Small Alaska Farms**, TBA
5:00 **Closing Remarks, Announcements and Evaluation**

— Agenda subject to change; please check often for updates! —

Information coming soon to www.uaf.edu/ces and <http://aksare.wikispaces.com/>



Meet Murphy, who's all smiles at Conway Family Farm! Conway Family Farm photo


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the state of Washington.

In addition to raising goats and making cheese, the Conways also raise sheep for their wool, which in return also provides them with grass-fed lamb and goat meat year round, raise honeybees, and maintain “you-pick” blueberry and lavender fields.

Lorrie and her family received the 2006 Western Region SARE Patrick Madden Award for Sustainable Agriculture for their efforts in sharing their love of small scale, sustainable agriculture with the public through e-mails, farm visits and tours, phone calls, community events and speaking at conferences. Lorrie holds a bachelor of science degree in business and management, which she combines with her lifetime experience of farming to operate her own business management and accounting practice.

All interested individuals are encouraged to attend this exciting and informative conference, which is sponsored by the Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District, USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Western Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, UAF Cooperative Extension Service and UAF Office of Sustainability.

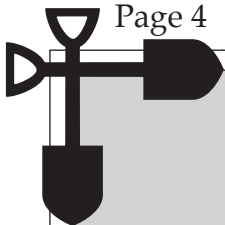
More information on the conference — including agenda updates, accommodations and registration details — will soon be uploaded to www.uaf.edu/ces and <http://aksare.wikispaces.com/> Please check these websites often as plans are underway. Conference contacts are Michele Hébert at 474-2423 or mahebert@alaska.edu, Taylor Maida at 474-2422 or temaida@alaska.edu, and Ronda Halvarson at 474-2450 or rlhalvarson@alaska.edu. 

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SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE FOR ALASKA

“Farmer's Toolbox”

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education: SARE is a program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture that functions through competitive grants conducted cooperatively by farmers, ranchers, researchers and ag professionals to advance farm and ranch systems that are profitable, environmentally sound and good for communities. Western Region SARE includes Alaska, American Samoa, Arizona, California, Colorado, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Micronesia, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

Information: Visit the Western Region SARE website at www.wsare.usu.edu for information on news and events, grants, projects, publications, professional development training and conferences. The host institution, Utah State University, can be reached at 435-797-2257 (phone) or 435-797-3344 (fax), or write to USU Ag Science 305, Logan, Utah, 84322.

Sustainable Agriculture for Alaska Newsletter:

The newsletter is published quarterly – January, April, July and October. To receive it electronically, subscribe to the SARE listserv at <https://lists.uaf.edu:8025/mailman/listinfo/ak-sare-1> and follow directions.

