
Farming in the North



Partnering Research and Industry for Alaska

Overview Alaska Agriculture

Scott Mugrage
Mugrage Hay & Cattle

Ken Hoffman
Mat-Su Microgreens

Rita Jo Shoultz
Alaska Perfect Peony



Brief Look - Pre Statehood Events

1700s: Russians had small agriculture colonies around the state

1867: U.S. purchased Alaska

1888: Holy Cross missionary producing most of their food needs

1898: AK homestead act (not super successful due to survey requirement); Funding approved for experiment stations and Charles Georgeson came to AK

1906: Forest Homestead Act - allowing some areas in national forests to be homesteaded

1919: Pilgrim Hot Springs orphanage farming

1920s: Alaska Railroad campaigns in midwest for farmers to come to Alaska

1922: Alaska Agricultural College and school of Mines opens

1934: Matanuska Colony



Benefits and Challenges to Northern Climates

Cooler Soil Temperatures

Long summer daylight hours

Long, cold, dark winters

Lighter Parasite/Pest Loads

Geothermal

Clean environment/virgin soils

Limited information/knowledge

Rich with Resources

Lack of Infrastructure

Distance from States – access to markets

Late frost days – benefit & challenge

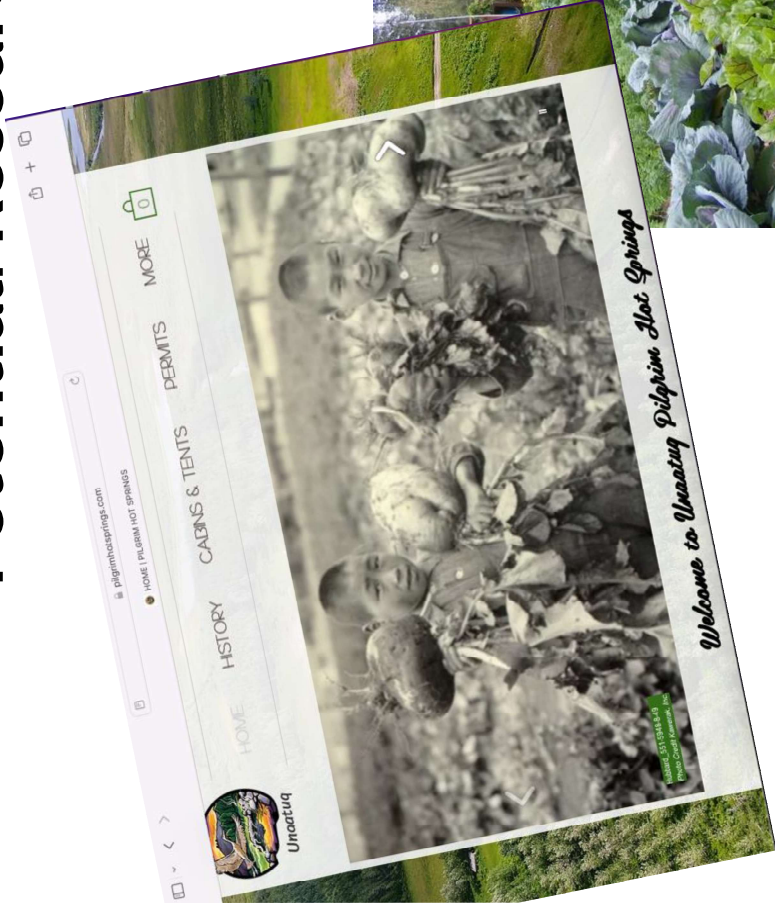


Production - What We Grow

Livestock	Onions	Peonies
Potatoes	Garlic	Herbs
Carrots	Leeks	Cabbage
Greens	Micro-greens	Kale
Squash	Tomatoes	Bok Choy
Peas	Cucumbers	Celery
Green Beans	Peppers	Asparagus
Radishes	Tomatillos	Berries
Beets	Grains	Apples
Broccoli	Hay	Kohlrabi
Cauliflower	Dahlias	
Tulips	Eggplant	



Potential: Research & Industry Working Together



Snapshot of Alaska Agriculture

Data from USDA Census of Agriculture

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>1982</u>
Number of Farms	1173	609	570
Cropland Harvested	31,315	31,824	25,694
Value of Crops Sold	\$39,693,000	\$20,543,000	\$6,010,000
Beef Cattle	8,113	5408	2994
Farming Principal Occupation	928	370	231

Scott Mugrage

Mugrage Hay & Cattle
Delta Junction







Ken Hoffman

Mat-Su Microgreens
Palmer









Rita Jo Shoultz

Alaska Perfect Peony
Homer



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KNOWLEDGE
COST
LABOR







Infrastructure

Irrigation







- Agritourism



Betsy Lawer, Chair, CEO, President First National Bank

Wedding Planning





The Crew