



Executive Order 136: Establishing the Department of Agriculture

What does Executive Order 136 do?

Executive Order (EO) 136 establishes a new Department of Agriculture in Alaska's executive branch of government. The current Division of Agriculture is one of seven divisions within the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The EO would extract the division, including its 37 positions (PCNs) and its programs and funding (\$7.3 million in the Fiscal Year 2026 Governor's Budget) from DNR, and move the division to the new Department of Agriculture. The EO does not alter the statutory responsibilities and authorities related to agriculture.

Why do we need a Department of Agriculture?

A Department of Agriculture with a dedicated commissioner would champion agriculture locally, in the state Capitol, and nationally to increase food security for Alaska and to drive growth in the state's agricultural economic sector. That will result in economic development and diversification, as well as local jobs and healthier, more available food products. The increased focus on agriculture and food security is expected to drive real gains in these important areas, and to reduce the state's dependency on distant food imports. A focused, cabinet-level commissioner would carry the authority of the Governor as they advocate for policies and resources at the federal level and for broader market access in-state. A stand-alone Department of Agriculture was the top recommendation of both Governor Dunleavy and the Legislature's task forces on food security.

How much will this cost?

The Department of Agriculture will be established at no cost. Instead of creating new positions, DNR will reclassify two vacant positions and transfer those positions and funding to the Department of Agriculture, and three positions at the Division of Agriculture will be reclassified. These five positions will form the new leadership structure and administrative services unit for the new department. DNR will continue providing staff support for the administrative functions (for example, accounting and some information technology services). Any incremental cost resulting from the reclassifications will be absorbed by the new department. A Statement of Cost is attached via email.

What will the new department do?

The new department will carry on with the important work the Division of Agriculture does today, while the commissioner puts real horsepower behind advocacy and developing new initiatives to support producers and increase food security, and strategic partnerships.

The commissioner will develop a strategic plan to advance food security for Alaskans and develop the agricultural economic sector. In particular, the two state food security task forces developed multiple recommendations the new department would address. DNR anticipates the new commissioner will work closely with Alaska's agricultural producers, processors, and markets to facilitate connections that get more Alaska grown products to consumers; to forge strong, strategic

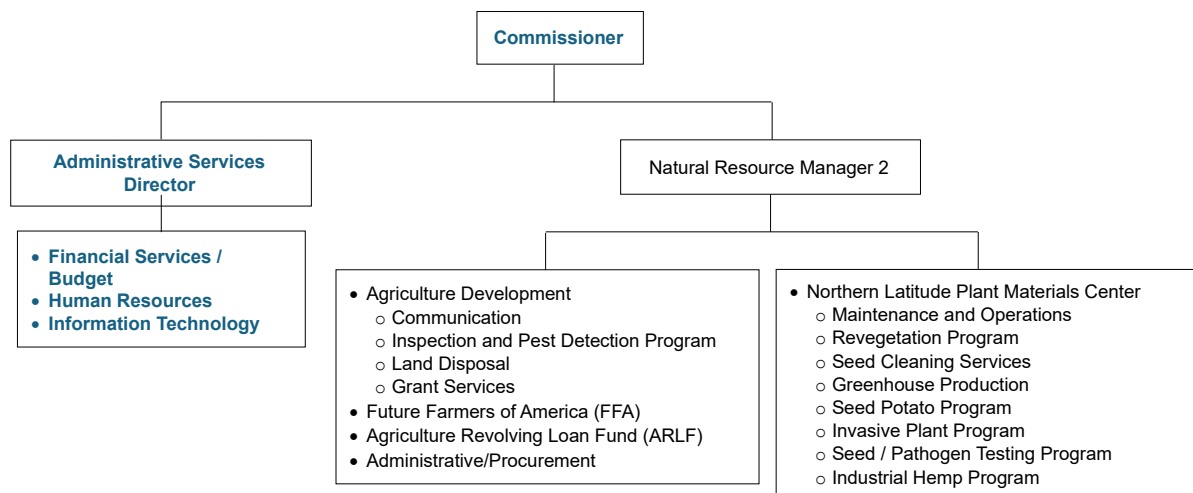
alignment with stakeholders and Alaska agriculture entities; and to resolve long-standing roadblocks to greater agricultural activity across the state.

The new department will also continue the important work that the Division of Agriculture is doing today under DNR. This work includes offerings inspections and services so producers can get their goods to markets; administering a loan program; managing the Alaska Grown trademark and promotional program; administering federal grants to Alaska communities, organizations and individuals, including the popular Micro-Grants for Food Security; seed research, production, and cleaning; and revegetation and erosion control consultation.

How will the Department of Agriculture be structured?

The Department of Agriculture will be responsibly structured with basic leadership managing the existing agriculture programs, as shown in the following organizational chart.

Department of Agriculture – Organizational Chart



- Current Division of Agriculture (37 PCNs - 32 permanent full-time, five permanent part-time) will migrate to the Department of Agriculture (**black**)
- DNR will transfer two vacant PCNs and funding to the Department of Agriculture; these positions will be reclassified to an Administrative Operations Manager 1 and a Microcomputer/Network Technician 2 (**blue**)
- The existing Division of Agriculture's Director will be reclassified as the Commissioner for the new Department of Agriculture (**blue**)
- Two vacant PCNs within the Division of Agriculture will be reclassified as a Human Resource Consultant 3 and an Administrative Services Director for the new Department of Agriculture (**blue**)
- DNR will continue to provide support staff for the Administrative Services functions (accounting, budgeting, data processing, and information technology programming)