

Alaska Diversified Livestock Association
8850 North Simineo Circle
Palmer, Alaska 99645
Website: www.adlainc.blogspot.com
January 31, 2011

Dear Legislature and Governor's Office,

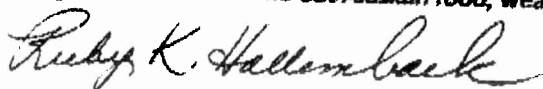
Please note that I was directed in our last Alaska Diversified Livestock Association meeting to write a letter of support in creating an Alaska Department of Agriculture. From our territorial history, it was apparent that Alaska form a department for agriculture. It was created under the territorial constitution. Things changed along the lines of this department when statehood was developed. This was an unfortunate step and we would like to see us reinstate a Department of Agriculture to supply resources for Alaskans for food, fiber and fuel using the truest renewable resources, farm products. Why is this change important you might ask. In Alaska in 1987 there were 1026732 acres of agriculture land in production. In 2007 there were 881585 acres of land in production, a decrease of 15% or > 145,000 acres. When looking at the agriculture we produce here as compared to the rest of the United States we rank 50th in almost all areas. (<http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/>) This is not because of lack of producible land, lack of water or acceptable growing season. There needs to be a change in the political outlook for agriculture in Alaska.

The Alaska Diversified Livestock Association has been in creation since 2001 when we felt it was imperative to form such a group to bring unity and a voice from livestock producers such as ourselves. We are encouraged with the public's interest in Alaska in regards to eating locally, alternative energy projects and Alaskan-made fiber. Our businesses are thriving although the prices of fuel have drastically affected our profit. The cost of fertilizer and fuel are challenging aspects of our raising feed for our livestock. However, we have faith and preserver. We continue to be a strong organization and meet twice annually to discuss our livestock business needs.

When asked what the legislature and Governor's Office can do for Alaskan agriculture, our answer is: "The same thing you do for oil, gas, fisheries, and other resources in our land. We want to sit at the table with and conduct business about our product and available food, fiber and fuel for all Alaskans. We simply want a seat. We want a cabinet level seat. We don't want to be a division under a department. Nearly every state in the union has a cabinet level department or agency. With our unique geographical location, it is paramount that we return to the original Department of Agriculture that was in our first State Constitution in 1945."

Should you need further information from us, feel free to contact us anytime. Thank you for supporting Alaskan agriculture.

Regards to all of us who eat Alaskan food, wear Alaskan fiber and fuel with Alaskan products,



Ruby Hollembaek, President, ADLA, Inc.