

# A Look at Alaska Agriculture



Capital: Juneau

Population: 698,473

Founded: January 3, 1959 (49<sup>th</sup>)

State Bird: Willow ptarmigan

State Tree: Sitka spruce

State Flower: Forget-me-not

Counties: 16 Boroughs and  
11 Geographical Census Areas

Largest City: Anchorage - 273,700

Nickname: The Last Frontier

Number of Farms: 680

Average Farm Size: 1,294 acres

Total Farmland: 880,000 acres



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## Climate & Soil

- Alaska's temperatures vary widely.
- The coastal areas range in temperature from 60.6°F to 28.9°F, while the inland areas average is more extreme from 72°F to -1.5°F. Average January temperatures range from -8°F in Barrow to 37°F in Valdez; average July temperatures range from 44°F in Barrow to 72°F in Fairbanks.
- Alaska has 318 different soil types.
- Permafrost is more than 2,000 feet deep on Alaska's North Slope.
- The state soil is Tanana, found in the Fairbanks area.
- An estimated 15 million acres of soil in Alaska is suitable for farming.

## Crops & Livestock

- Summer days of nearly constant daylight allow some crops to be nurtured to enormous size. Jumbo crops include a world-record 19 lb. carrot, a 76 lb. rutabaga, and a 127 lb. cabbage!
- Barley was planted on 4,100 acres in 2008, with production for grain at about 99,000 bushels.
- Hay is planted on the most Alaska acreage: 18,000 acres.
- Greenhouse and nursery crops are the fastest-growing segment of Alaska's agricultural industry.
- In 2007, Alaska accounted for over 62 percent of the volume of the commercial seafood harvested in the United States.
- Alaskans rely on the sale of cattle, pigs, sheep, reindeer, milk, wool, antlers and velvet, bison, yak and elk.
- Alaska is the largest state (365 million acres), but fewer than 1 million acres are farmed.

## General

- Alaska's oil production is 14% of the total U.S. production.
- Alaska is one-fifth the size of the contiguous U.S.; 488 times larger than the state of Rhode Island.
- 90% of Alaska is owned by the U.S. Government.
- The Tongass National Forest, at 16.9 million acres, is the largest national forest.
- The state fish of Alaska is the King Salmon. The state animal of Alaska is the moose.
- Alaska is divided into boroughs, instead of counties or parishes. There are 16 organized boroughs and 246 recognized tribal governments.
- Total cash receipts from farm marketing in 2008: nearly \$31.2 million.
- Other world record vegetables:

39 pound turnip	97 pound kohlrabi
106 pound kale	63 pound celery
65 pound cantaloupe	
- Alaska boasts the northernmost (Point Barrow), the easternmost (Pochnoi Point on Semisopchnoi Island in the Aleutians), and the westernmost (Amatignak Island in the Aleutians) points in the United States.
- Alaska has an estimated 100,000 glaciers.
- Of the 20 highest peaks in the United States, 17 are in Alaska. Mount McKinley, the highest peak in North America, is 20,320 ft. above sea level. Denali, the Indian name for the peak, means "The Great One."