



How the Alaska “Food Hub” Network Can Best Move Forward

KEN METER, CROSSROADS RESOURCE CENTER (MINNEAPOLIS)
FOR THE ALASKA FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

February 5, 2024



SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

Six “food hubs” in Alaska collaborated with the Alaska Food Policy Council in a project funded by the USDA Local Foods Promotion Program to explore how to forge a stronger, more resilient network over time. These hubs are located in Kodiak, Homer, Juneau, and Anchorage.

Each hub is relatively small, with 1–3 staff. Collectively they have already made a considerable impact, working with nearly 70 growers and 30 seafood providers while supplying fresh produce and high-quality Alaska-made food items to more than 2,000 customers, region by region. Each hub devotes considerable attention to planning and coordinating food trade in its locale, engaging scores of local residents as volunteers, investors, and supporters. Together, the network has built considerable public presence.

This project focused on bringing stakeholders together to identify common challenges and to develop innovative common solutions for working together to strengthen Alaska’s local foods movement. At this stage of the network’s development, members have prioritized getting better acquainted with each other’s professional work and building stronger mutual trust. This, in turn, will lead to identifying and implementing new collaborations over time.

Clearly, each “food hub” must continue to place a priority on expanding its own base of support in its own locale. The demanding logistical work of delivering food to local customers also takes precedence over network activities. Nonetheless, each hub will be strengthened by participating in a supportive network.

At this stage we recommend the following:

1. Continue to build mutual trust across hubs.

- ▶ Participate in regular meetings.
- ▶ Discuss issues of common concern.
- ▶ Visit each other’s workplaces.

During 2023, regular meetings of the Network helped create a stronger sense of collaboration. This sharing should definitely be continued as resources allow.

New value-network initiatives—which aim at improving collaboration, innovation, and efficiency throughout the food hub network’s activities—should be invited in as appropriate, so the network can add diverse points of view to its membership, and build a stronger presence in shaping community food networks and policies in the future.

2. Explore opportunities to collaborate.

- ▶ Ship shelf-stable food items across the network when practical.
- ▶ Look for other opportunities to trade food across hubs as costs allow.
- ▶ Continue to run joint campaigns (such as the Alaska Grown \$5 Challenge).
- ▶ Coordinate network activities including joint fundraising as mutually agreed.
- ▶ Coordinate to establish favorable local, state, and national policies.
- ▶ Consider launching one common software platform for ordering across sites.

Trading a limited number of specific shelf-stable food items between hubs can be initiated whenever it is practical to do so, given supply limitations, transportation costs, and staffing and recordkeeping requirements. Currently no specific products were prioritized as ready for trade.

Several broader issues constrain growth of the network, including:

- (a) limited arable land suitable for raising food for Alaska consumers;
- (b) limited access to that land;
- (c) the limited number of people currently holding farming and food processing skills;
- (d) the limited number of consumers who prioritize purchasing locally grown foods;
- (e) unpredictable investment and philanthropic funding;
- (f) limited infrastructure such as coolers and freezer space;
- (g) changing weather patterns; and
- (h) limited ability to harvest renewable energy.

This means that the Food Hub Network must address a variety of complex issues in a comprehensive fashion through:

- (a) building supportive networks in each locale and across the state;
- (b) finding more reliable sources of funding that support long-term transformation of the Alaska food system;
- (c) taking strategic action even though some efforts will fall short in the near term because so many issues must be addressed at once; and
- (d) pressing for local, state, and federal policies that will advance the vision held by the Alaska Food Hub Network.

No single vision has emerged from the network about how best to proceed. Some members recommend forming or joining a single nonprofit umbrella organization to pursue joint planning, fundraising, and implementation. Others caution that unique local assets and challenges require more decentralized operation, and that the value of local food trade is still too small to justify significant investment in statewide coordination.

At this time, network members do not see a strong need for integrating software ordering platforms, but a solid foundation for this has been established. Four groups already use a single software package developed by Local Food Marketplace. Other platforms are also available, as noted below.





Contents


- 2 Summary & Recommendations
 - 6 Background
 - 8 Current Context
 - 9 Proposed Next Steps
 - 16 **APPENDIX A**
Reflections on The Interviews
 - 23 **APPENDIX B**
Summary of Interview Responses
 - 23 ▶ *What is most unique about your “food hub”?*
 - 27 ▶ *Where would your “food hub” like to be positioned in 5 years?*
 - 30 ▶ *Areas of Potential Collaboration (combined responses)*
 - 34 ▶ *Main Food Products “Hubs” Can Offer and Those That are Desired*
 - 39 ▶ *Key Obstacles (combined responses)*
 - 41 ▶ *Potential New Network Partners (combined responses)*
 - 42 **APPENDIX C**
Acknowledgments
 - 42 ▶ *Funding Acknowledgement*
 - 43 ▶ *2023 Alaska Food Hub Working Group Participants*
- 



PHOTO CREDIT: Alaska Food Hub

BACKGROUND

The Alaska Food Policy Council received a USDA Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) grant dedicated in part to exploring the possibility of greater collaboration across “food hubs” in Alaska. Guiding questions included how to form a stronger, more resilient network, whether significant opportunities exist for increasing wholesale trade or fostering greater collaboration among hubs, and whether adopting a single software package would be desirable for facilitating record keeping and inter-hub trade.

Crossroads Resource Center was asked to perform this element of the project. To accomplish this task, the following food organizations in Alaska were interviewed in February and March of 2023, and the consultant has attended all of the monthly network meetings held in 2023. This report summarizes findings from the report and suggests next steps to be taken. Early drafts of this document were reviewed by all members of the Network. Their suggestions and comments have now been integrated into the document. We are indebted to members of the network for their close cooperation in the effort.

Note that the term “food hub” is used in quotation marks because not all of the initiatives in the network consider themselves to be food hubs. Moreover, using the term “food hub” can limit consideration of what a given region may require to move forward in building its own community food system. The term could limit planning conversations to focus solely on business profitability or establish expectations for commercial activity that are not suited to a given locale. All members of the network, however, feel comfortable using the term “food hub network” as a short-hand descriptor and a vehicle for coordination.

INTERVIEWS INCLUDED:

Alaska Food Hub
(Homer)



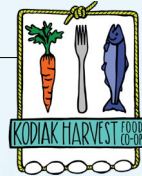
Kodiak Archipelago Leadership
Institute/Qik'rtaq Food Hub



Arctic Harvest Deliveries
(Anchorage)



Kodiak Harvest Food Co-op



Catch 49
(Anchorage)



Salt & Soil Marketplace
(Juneau)



Following are some of the key responses offered during our interviews. We also compiled brief overviews of how each hub was formed, but these are not included here.

In addition, several other emerging efforts were interviewed after this initial set of conversations was completed, to gain an understanding of how these new efforts might best fit into this network. This summary report does not include findings from those interviews, because each is at an early stage and still defining their approaches. Each of these groups has joined the network since these initial interviews were held. These three are listed below:

- ▶ Chaga Cooperative LLC; The Island Hydro/now Fairbanks Food Hub (Fairbanks)
- ▶ Foraged and Found; Ketchikan Agricultural Producers Association (KAPA) (Ketchikan)
- ▶ Four Winds Resource Center (Haines)

Note that comments and reflections are set in italic type.

CURRENT CONTEXT

Considerable collaboration is already underway among several of the “food hubs” in the network. *Especially notable are:*

- ▶ This network held regular monthly meetings in 2023, and attendance has been solid.
- ▶ Network members have collaborated in setting the agenda for the 2023 Alaska Food and Farm Festival.
- ▶ Several network members have visited each other’s sites to learn more about each other’s operations.
- ▶ Catch 49 delivers frozen seafood based on Arctic Harvest Deliveries (AHD) orders.
- ▶ Arctic Harvest Deliveries and Alaska Food Hub exchange information.
- ▶ Alaska Food Hub, Arctic Harvest Deliveries, Kodiak Harvest Co-op, and Salt & Soil Marketplace all carry many of the same statewide commercially available value-added products from Alaska vendors.
- ▶ Kodiak Archipelago Leadership Institute and Kodiak Harvest Co-op share strategic information and activities.

However, increasing sales of Alaska-grown food products by members of the “food hub” network within each locale is severely challenged by several factors:

- ▶ Limited food production
- ▶ Limited value-added processing
- ▶ Lack of skilled farmers and food handlers
- ▶ High transportation costs and lengthy shipping times
- ▶ Limited physical and intellectual infrastructure that would create more efficient and safer in-state food trade (this includes a lack of safe food storage when shipping to remote locations)
- ▶ Discrete consumer interest
- ▶ The need to focus on feeding residents of each hub’s own region

PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

I. Each hub is properly focusing its attention primarily upon local consumers in its own region.

This is the best strategy for ensuring the resilience of each hub, as well as of the network as a whole. Strengthening local support networks in each locale is critical, engaging more donors and volunteers.

In each locale, it is essential to continue:

- ▶ Engaging more consumers who are devoted to supporting local farmers, fishers, and food producers
- ▶ Running local food challenges, such as the Alaska Grown \$5 Challenge or similar campaigns, that foster engagement and make Alaska-grown foods and the network more visible
- ▶ Expanding efforts to host tastings, cooking demonstrations, and farm visits; offering recipe cards; creating other ways to stir up greater consumer interest and attract new volunteers and partners
- ▶ Forming additional partnerships with wellness clinics, soil and water conservation districts, food pantries, Native corporations and villages, beginning farmers, schools, youth groups, and other groups in each locale; partnerships centered around things like produce prescriptions, food box deliveries, and health campaigns
- ▶ Engaging more donors
- ▶ Engaging more volunteers
- ▶ Working with local partners to dedicate additional lands to food production over the long term; building soil fertility by composting and utilizing other regenerative practices
- ▶ Growing new farmers, fishers, and wild harvesters in each region
- ▶ Working with local partners to construct additional cold storage and other infrastructure

Of course, most of the hubs are already engaged in the above activities, so this is not to suggest a significant change of direction. Each local hub will prioritize which strategies can do the most to leverage broader change, encompassing more of these desirable outcomes over time, based on the unique assets and challenges of its own locale. This is long-term work and available resources are limited, but is essential to pursue in order to ensure food security for all Alaskans.

2. The main network priority identified by respondents was to build greater mutual trust and improve coordination among network members.

This will involve fairly soft initial steps:

- ▶ Three new groups have already been added to the network, as listed above.
- ▶ Add other groups as desirable through mutual decisions.
- ▶ Continue sharing information and insights while problem-solving at regular meetings.
- ▶ Visit other hubs so staff can learn more about each other's operations. Staff exchanges may also be valuable. Note: It would be beneficial for staff to visit each other's food hub operations during high season so they can learn more about each other's operations. Off-season visits (winter/shoulder) are an option if summer/fall staffing is limited.
- ▶ Continue to meet in person as possible (at the Alaska Farm and Food Festival and other venues).
- ▶ Continue to keep in frequent electronic contact to discuss operational challenges, to stay abreast of breaking news, to share insights into how best to move forward, to discuss potential policy initiatives, and more.
- ▶ Continue to network with Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to ensure that adequate food safety guidance is generated in collaboration with the hubs, responsive to local concerns, and available to a broad array of stakeholders.
- ▶ Explore statewide collaborations such as the Alaska Grown \$5 Challenge or other local food-challenge campaigns that are carried out in several regions and coordinated statewide.
- ▶ Collaborate on determining "best practices" for integrating wild harvest foods into food hub commerce as appropriate, and under the guidance of local Native leaders in each region. Balance this with subsistence needs and traditional harvesting rights.
- ▶ Consider policy initiatives that could be mounted in partnership with the Alaska Food Policy Council, Alaska Farmers Market Association, Alaska Farm Bureau, the State of Alaska, and other partners.
- ▶ Forge creative innovations around new federal and state programs (e.g. make sure the Local Food Purchasing Assistance program creates lasting food-resilience infrastructure, and that other funds are raised to continue LFPA work if federal funding dries up).
- ▶ Expand Produce Prescription programs, food boxes, increased SNAP and WIC access, and more, ensuring that each program also creates lasting food-resilience infrastructure.

- ▶ Integrate this network’s activity into planning and implementation for the Alaska Regional Food Business Center, ensuring that this program also creates lasting food-resilience infrastructure.
- ▶ Explore creative, lower-cost shipping solutions and make use of any available transportation-cost subsidies.
- ▶ Identify which strategic collaborations would leverage the most beneficial change for strengthening resilience of the network.
- ▶ Co-create a common set of Key Performance Indicators that can be established for “food hubs” in the network, and for the network as a whole.

3. Only limited opportunities exist at this time to expand trade across “hubs.”

As they work together in the future, network members may identify specific products that would lend themselves to expanded trade. **However, any such expansion should be done slowly and deliberately and involve carefully selected items when it is cost effective.** It is critical to balance supply and demand, and consider transportation costs at each step:

- ▶ Easiest items to trade will be shelf-stable food value-added food items.
- ▶ Frozen seafood is next easiest, but requires freezer space.
- ▶ Perishable items are the most difficult to ship.

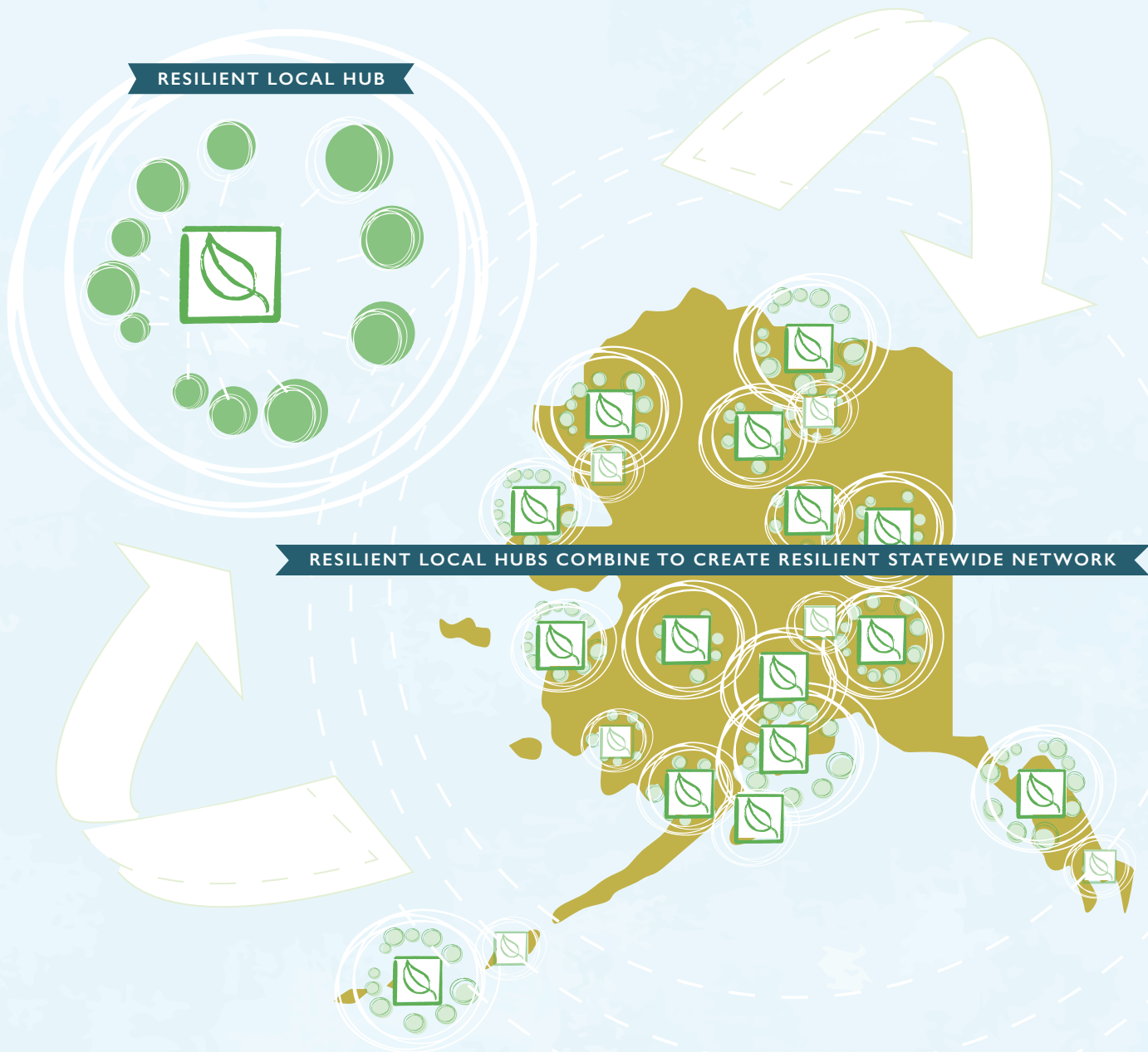
Other factors to consider:

- ▶ Simply increasing sales will not in itself create more resiliency for hubs.
- ▶ Resilience will emerge from a blend of:
 - ▶ Building supportive networks in each hub community
 - ▶ Inter-hub communications and collaborative activity
 - ▶ Inter-hub sales
 - ▶ Enacting supportive public policies at all governmental levels
 - ▶ Expanding to new communities, prioritizing Native villages and remote areas
 - ▶ Reducing social inequities

This will further involve several action steps:

- ▶ Supporting new farmers, especially those who practice no-till, low-till, and regenerative practices
- ▶ Engaging foragers and fishers who pursue a sustainable and mutual reciprocal relationship to the land
- ▶ Fostering farmer-to-farmer relationships, learning sessions, and engagement in research
- ▶ Strengthening hyper-local partnerships in each community

Pursuing these strategies in combination with each other will help create a “virtuous cycle,” as shown below:



4. Growth of individual hubs and the entire network will also depend on winning favorable public policies.

No specific policy priorities have emerged in network discussions so far, but these will be devised by network members and their allies as collaborations deepen. Specific policies allowing “food hubs” to accept SNAP and WIC benefits, and exempting farmland from property taxes, have been discussed.

5. By far the most glaring limiting factor to growth of hubs and wholesale trade through the network is the limited availability of arable land and limited number of people with farming and food processing skills.

Both must be developed over time in partnership with diverse stakeholders such as Alaska Farmland Trust. Meanwhile, underutilized land might also be identified, cataloged, and protected for use in local food production.

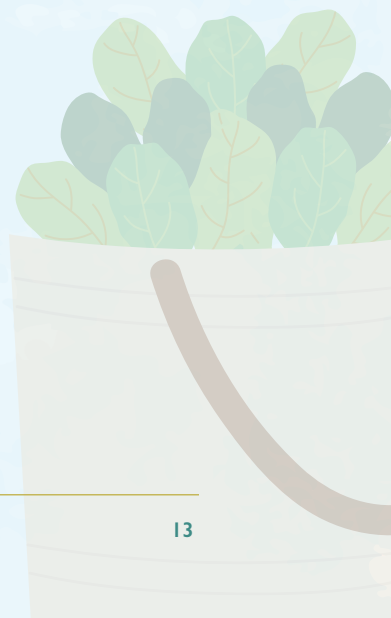
6. Explore the strengths and risks of adopting a single software platform.

Four of the “food hubs” in the network already use **Local Food Marketplace** software for tracking orders and deliveries:

- ▶ Alaska Food Hub
- ▶ Kodiak Archipelago Leadership Institute
- ▶ Arctic Harvest Deliveries
- ▶ Salt & Soil Marketplace

Local Food Marketplace has developed software specifically designed for statewide or regional food hub networks. This may make it a convenient platform to use for financial recordkeeping, inter-hub ordering, documentation, and other uses.

- ▶ Other providers are also available. Open Food Network is an open-source alternative.
- ▶ At minimum, “hubs” should easily be able to trade product data to facilitate joint planning and policy initiatives. Much of this can be accomplished without new software.



7. Over the long term, assemble a joint strategy, including fundraising, for the entire network.

- ▶ **Build greater visibility and financial/investment support for each hub in its own community, and for the network statewide.**
- ▶ **Engage local partners in each community in setting priorities that can be coordinated with the statewide network.**
- ▶ **Explore whether it would be beneficial to integrate all hubs into a single nonprofit sponsor or strategic partnership to more closely align the (currently separate) boards of directors with the network’s mission.**
- ▶ **Expand physical infrastructure at every stage and level from producers to consumers** (villages, farms, fishing docks, processors, airports, etc.) such as:
 - ▶ Expanded (modular) cooler and freezer space
 - ▶ Refrigerated vehicles
 - ▶ Staging areas and loading docks
 - ▶ Lifts
 - ▶ Food processing centers
 - ▶ Commercial kitchens
 - ▶ Demonstration Farms
 - ▶ Others TBD
- ▶ **Allocate participation stipends** for “food hub” staff, fishermen, farmers, and other community stakeholders to be involved in future planning and implementation efforts.
- ▶ **Expand food production in each community.** *Lack of local production is one of the core limitations to growth, and perhaps the most difficult to overcome.*
- ▶ **Expand to new communities and new food hubs** as supportive networks are built.
- ▶ **Work with partners to purchase arable land and hold in trust for permanent use in local food production.**
- ▶ **Adopt one common inventory and ordering software package.** (Or at minimum, devise compatible databases to more easily share information.) One interviewee cautioned; “I’m not sure that everyone understands the considerable time investment that developing a statewide platform would take.”
- ▶ **Enact state and local policies** that advance the strength of both hubs and the network.

FIGURE 1: POTENTIAL FOOD TRADE ITEMS IDENTIFIED IN INTERVIEWS WITH CORE “FOOD HUB” STAFF

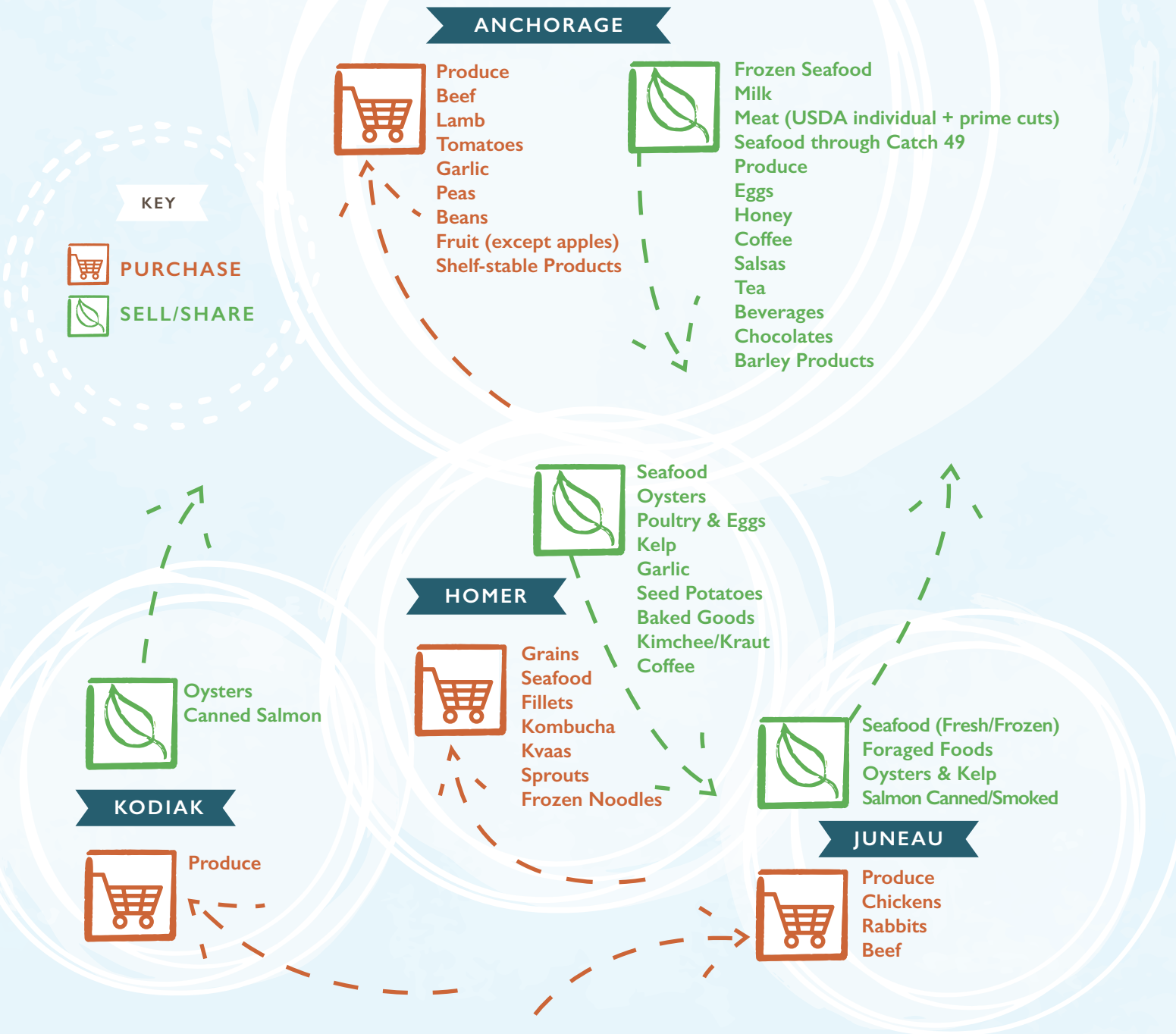


Diagram of potential food items that could be traded among “hubs,” as identified by staff interviews. **Note that this constitutes a “wish list,” not an actual set of products that are ready to ship.** Very few of these items are available in sufficient quantity at this point in time. Additional infrastructure at some “food hubs,” such as cooling and freezer units, would be required to actually begin trading.

Trading limited amounts of specific shelf-stable products would be an interesting place to start, should “food hubs” in the network decide to expand inter-hub trade.



APPENDIX A: REFLECTIONS ON THE INTERVIEWS

Note that in this section, consultant reflections are set in normal, not italic, type.

Production is clearly the largest limiting factor to sales growth. This, in turn, is limited by lack of arable land, changing weather, seasonal limitations, lack of skilled labor, costs of inputs, and time. Moreover, Alaska's farms, fisheries, and wild harvests try to support a population that vastly exceeds the state's current capacity to produce food. This is being addressed in multiple ways:

- ▶ Constructing greenhouse production using both soil and hydroponic platforms
- ▶ Aggregating produce grown in residential gardens
- ▶ Training emerging farmers, gardeners, harvesters, and food processors
- ▶ Fostering traditional crop production (e.g., Tlingit potatoes)
- ▶ Expanding subsistence harvesting that includes kelp
- ▶ Forming partnerships with landowners who hold underutilized arable land
- ▶ Reclaiming public lands
- ▶ Purchasing larger land tracts
- ▶ Importing food from the Pacific Northwest

Additional cooler and freezer storage and other infrastructure will be increasingly necessary as future conditions become more unpredictable.

- ▶ New infrastructure will be needed at all levels and in many contexts, whenever it does not currently exist.
 - ▶ Village food production in both soil and hydroponic containers
 - ▶ Refrigerated vehicles for local and regional deliveries
 - ▶ Cold storage on farms
 - ▶ Cold storage at hubs
 - ▶ Public cold storage
 - ▶ Cold storage at regional airports and other transportation nodes (e.g., ferry, roadway)
 - ▶ Food processing at production sites, hubs, and urban centers
 - ▶ Community kitchens (shared-use kitchens, training kitchens, production kitchens all may have differing food safety requirements)
 - ▶ Food-business incubator kitchens
 - ▶ Meat processing
 - ▶ Seafood processing

- ▶ Invest in a coordinated manner at all levels, from on-farm and neighborhood storage at each “food hub” and across the network.
- ▶ Physical infrastructure can be expanded using grants as well as loans, depending upon the circumstances and context.
- ▶ Supply and demand have to balance at each stage of the process, so modular construction is beneficial so efforts can scale up and down as conditions change.
- ▶ Expanding too rapidly can mean operating costs will outweigh advantages, especially in remote areas with expensive energy.
- ▶ Expanding too slowly can mean missing opportunities and/or inviting competitors.

Expanding processing will be important, in synch with consumer purchasing, investment capital, and labor availability. However, it will be easier to obtain financing and funding to build physical facilities than to increase crop production, so there is a risk of building space that cannot be fully utilized (the former Alaska state-owned meat processing plant is a prime example).

Penetrating more effectively into each local community is both difficult and essential.

- ▶ Transportation and energy costs are already high, and likely to increase. A priority should be placed on expanding food production in each locale as much as humanly possible.
- ▶ Long-distance food deliveries will be increasingly vulnerable to disruption as costs increase, fossil-fuel supplies become more uncertain, and weather changes.
- ▶ Efforts to deliver food to elders, or others who are vulnerable, can help construct networks that support future food activity for the entire population, and support infrastructure investments toward a resilient broader food system.
- ▶ Educational institutions and hospitals could play a key role. Nonprofit hospitals, in particular, are required to devote 5% of their sales to preventive health efforts. These could include:
 - ▶ Subsidizing employee purchases, as South Peninsula Hospital in Homer does
 - ▶ Prescribing fresh produce, especially to those with food-related illness
 - ▶ Convening healthy eating circles that include gut health/cooking classes/exercise

Expanding the statewide network should place a priority on ensuring that each “food hub” can implement its own local vision, complementary to other members of the network.

Integrating software platforms seems desirable—at minimum it will be beneficial to be able to transfer data across platforms. Local Food Marketplace is currently used by four groups. Open Food Network also offers an open-source platform.

- ▶ Square is able to transfer data to/from Local Food Marketplace.
- ▶ Some farmers use other platforms such as Barn2Door or Farmigo, for their own online farm sales (direct to consumer and CSA). Respondents said these cannot easily share data with Local Food Marketplace.

Make use of, and move beyond, “hub-and-spoke” structures. Because of its historical development and prevailing ocean, air, and road transportation routes, the state of Alaska is structured as a “hub-and-spoke” system. This means that “food hubs” can align very naturally with prevailing trade routes. However, “hub-and-spoke” networks tend to be more rigid and hierarchical than dispersed networks. For maximum resilience, this network will want to foster more “horizontal” communication, both within each region, and among “food hubs.” (See *Network Maps* on page 22).

- ▶ Further, it is important to not become locked into a single model for creating “food hubs.” Each organization in this effort very properly reflects the unique assets and quirks of its host community, and each tackles different functions depending on the needs of its constituents. This diversity is essential to long-term resilience.
- ▶ Efforts to form strategic partnerships with larger commercial entities should continue as long as they contribute to building effective networks of support for each community foods effort, and do not place “food hubs” in the role of simply supplying impersonal and extractive economic structures that do not commit to long-term resilience.

Expand engagement of Native and remote communities. KALI’s ability to foster patient conversations to build consensus among Native villages is exemplary, and this approach can be adapted to other regions of the state.

Expand engagement of marginalized communities and those who are currently not in “the choir.” Many of the shelf-stable, value-added food items that can most easily be traded between “hubs” are largely purchased by more prosperous Alaskans. Expanding this trade is crucial for developing a commercial base for Alaska grown foods. However, raw foods, “seconds,” and lightly processed food items (such as barley flour) will be important for lower-income residents.

- ▶ Engaging lower-income residents in multiple ways is also critical for constructing an inclusive food system. For example, hubs could provide resources for learning food growing, processing, cooking, and healthy eating skills. Stipends for participation will be required to ensure sustained engagement.
- ▶ The Local Food Purchasing Assistance Program, recently announced by USDA, can be used to both convey food to lower-income residents and also to build infrastructure that supports a resilient food system over the long haul. Currently, the Alaska Food Hub, Alaska Farmers Market Association, and Salt & Soil Marketplace collaborate on LFPA; KALI also participates independently.
- ▶ Growing food directly in villages and neighborhoods is critical so that people know where their food comes from, who grew it, and how it was grown. This also allows residents to invest in the process of constructing more resilient food systems.
- ▶ Since transportation costs are likely to increase over time, the food delivery model will not serve as a clear long-term answer.

Expand collaborative fundraising. This network of “food hubs” should develop a clear strategic direction before adding new member organizations, but should welcome new member organizations as soon as possible. One unified plan for expanding communications and building new infrastructure at the farm, processor, and “food hub” levels should be written by the Alaska Food Hub Network and its partners so that expansion is complementary across “food hubs.” See Crossroads Resource Center’s 2013 report, “Making Small Farms Into Big Business,” [<http://www.crcworks.org/scfood.pdf>] produced for the State of South Carolina, that shows a map of a potential statewide network. This concept was introduced by CRC to a Town Hall meeting in Juneau covering food security sponsored by the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services in 2014.

OVERALL

The primary hope of those interviewed is to share information more fully, communicate more frequently, and coordinate more effectively. Getting this process underway does not require any additional infrastructure. Integrating software may assist the process. Certainly, adding new physical infrastructure such as coolers and freezers could help boost sales.

The strongest value proposition offered by each “food hub” is primarily the coordination each provides of its own local food network. This is as important as the food products that each handles.

Success in creating a resilient future for Alaskans will depend primarily on building strong and inclusive resident networks in each locale that support community foods activities. Secondly, it also requires fostering trust, communication, and coordination among “food hubs.”

Inter-hub coordination will allow the network to respond to rapidly changing and unpredictable circumstances. The network of hubs literally needs to plan to cope with the unforeseen. Technology will play a role, if it is chosen carefully and helps create resilient networks. If not, technology can also interfere.

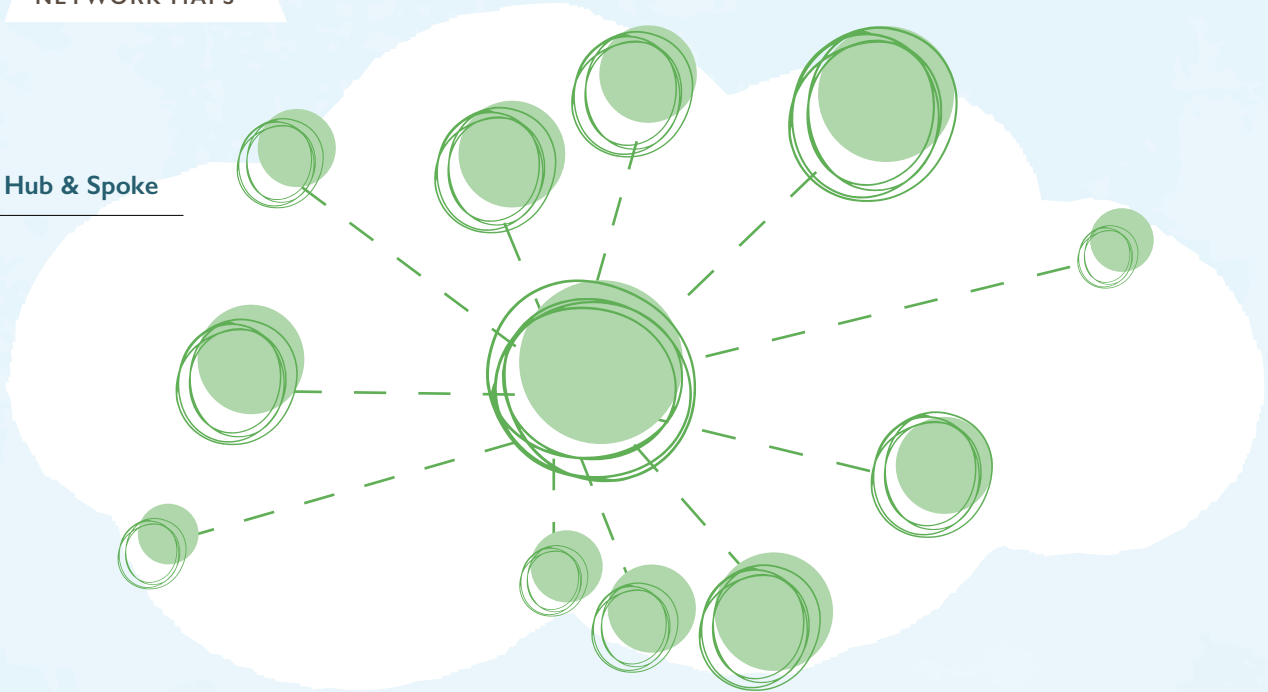
Future success will be based upon a judicious combination of earned income and grants. Neither will be sufficient in itself. Neither is better than the other.



PHOTO CREDIT: Alaska Food Hub

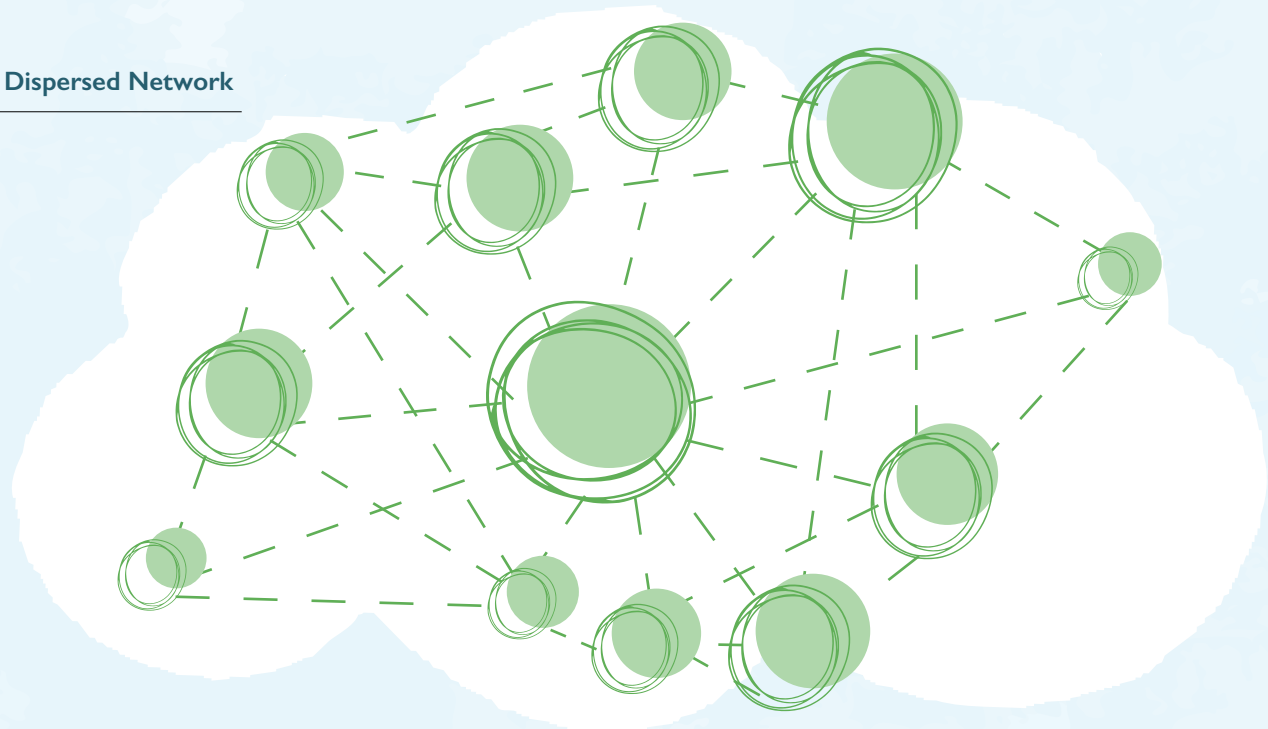
NETWORK MAPS

Hub & Spoke



When all members of the network need to go through one central organization, communications can be very efficient, but can leave some groups isolated.

Dispersed Network



Once sufficient trust has been built among network members, each member of the network can communicate with others while cognizant of how this fits into an agreed-upon common strategy. This allows network members to respond with greater speed and flexibility.



APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW RESPONSES



What is most unique about your “food hub”?

This question was posed because it will be important that—whatever the network decides to do—we build upon these assets, and do nothing that undermines them.

ALASKA FOOD HUB (HOMER)—(UNIQUE ASSETS)

- ▶ We serve a community that is not accessible by road: Seldovia.
- ▶ We also serve Homer, Anchor Point, Ninilchik, and Soldotna.
- ▶ Our location: We operate out of the same space as the food pantry, which has a 24/7 “free fridge” for community members to make donations to and pick up prepared meals.
- ▶ The Homer hospital’s health and wellness fund—a program that incentivizes their employees to purchase healthy local food—has made AKFH purchases reimbursable.
- ▶ Blood, Sweat, & Food Farms in Homer produces poultry and rabbit.
- ▶ Jakolof Bay Oysters produces oysters in Kachemak Bay. Arctic Harvest buys from them.
- ▶ We offer Barnacle Kelp Salsa and Chugach Chocolates.
- ▶ We incubate policies. We worked with Lorinda at DEC to obtain a cottage food variance for three hubs including ours. This allows our online farmers’ markets to represent the producers selling cottage foods (otherwise the makers would have to sell directly to customers). That opened the door for introducing other food bills.

ARCTIC HARVEST DELIVERIES (ANCHORAGE)—(UNIQUE ASSETS)

- ▶ We are the only firm that delivers to wholesale and retail customers.
- ▶ We do take ownership of each food item.
- ▶ We play an active role in marketing for our farmers. Sometimes one will have extra product and they will contact us to see who might want to purchase it.

CATCH 49 (ANCHORAGE)—(UNIQUE ASSETS)

- ▶ Our story: We buy direct from fishermen and local processors, identify fishermen’s name and location, sustainable harvest practices, fair labor practices, we purchase local supplies such as boxes & labels, etc.
- ▶ We are a social enterprise within a nonprofit.

KODIAK ARCHIPELAGO LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE/ QIK'RTAQ FOOD HUB—(UNIQUE ASSETS)



- ▶ We are grounded in our rural and Alaska Native communities.
- ▶ We work as a regional collective through Alutiiq Grown.
- ▶ We serve communities throughout the archipelago, now including Akhiok as well as Kodiak, Port Lions, Ouzinkie, Old Harbor, and Larsen Bay.

KODIAK HARVEST FOOD CO-OP—(UNIQUE ASSETS)



- ▶ Community presence. We can never be a place that has everything someone needs to eat, but we do hope people come here first before they go to Safeway. Their organic section is the size of one of our coolers, so we have better options.
- ▶ Produce box: This is an interesting method for me as a consumer. I couldn't get through an entire box some weeks, but we did create a smaller box option.
- ▶ Canned salmon. This will be expanded. We have a co-branded, labeled product, Kodiak Harvest Sockeye Salmon. Ocean Beauty/Icicle Seafoods (OBI Seafoods) does the packing. They are a huge firm, but they work with us. It is not necessarily a distance-saver, though, because all of the product is shipped to Seattle after packing, where the labels are affixed. Ocean Beauty does not have the staging space here, and they are required to do food safety tests on the cans, which happens in Seattle. There is no inspector here. Given all this, there is no way they can perform these tasks in Kodiak now. There is word that a small processor in Kodiak should be able to start offering pouched seafood products soon, that will not be required to be sent off-island before sale; more information on this is to come.
- ▶ Oyster production in our region. The farmer expects to grow about 3 million oysters in 2023 and 2024. Currently our oysters are larger than the restaurant market in Seattle wants. He grows to a traditional size over 3 years. Seattle wants 2-year oysters that are smaller and sweeter, and customers will pay more for them. We might either have to address customer expectations in Seattle, or ship second-year oysters. There is also a market among restaurants in Anchorage. If we had a statewide network our farmer could sell directly. KHFC would primarily like to be involved in sales to local consumers.

SALT & SOIL MARKETPLACE (JUNEAU)—(UNIQUE ASSETS)

- ▶ We are a marketplace.
- ▶ We are in part a social enterprise, blending for profit and nonprofit capacities.
- ▶ Our ability to flex and adapt. Over the course of our life we have had 5 different locations. We can pivot quickly.
- ▶ Community partnerships. In a small community like this there is not a lot of room for competitiveness. Juneau Greens has growing space and retail sales room that they may let us use.
- ▶ We source products from 11 Southeast communities. We currently only aggregate and distribute from farms in Juneau, and we distribute only from Juneau. We do make one-off deliveries via seaplanes to individuals in other communities. We're trying to build our capacity in both towns. So far the demand has not been adequate to justify deliveries.
- ▶ Most of our growers farm on residential property except for Juneau Greens. One retiree runs a soil farm as a business.
- ▶ We are talking with the City and Borough Parks and Rec to see if we can get some land rezoned. It is currently baseball fields that are underutilized. We would like to be able to have community gardens for growing food there.
- ▶ Berries and kale are grown on one half-acre farm. But that farm has no water, and no fencing, so it is vulnerable.
- ▶ We run a “family-to-family” food box program: Our customers subsidize a “food scholarship” program in which families received credits to shop the marketplace for foods they feel are familial and culturally relevant.



Where would your “food hub” like to be positioned in 5 years?

This section is offered so that members of the network can better support each other to advance local goals in each community as the statewide network is strengthened.

ALASKA FOOD HUB (HOMER)—(FIVE YEARS AHEAD)



- ▶ It would not be bad to be what we already are, but with more certified growers, more diversity. We want to move to a full-time position with benefits, and staff to drive the van for deliveries.
- ▶ I would like to collaborate with one church, to use their commercial kitchen for producers to incubate or expand into value-added products.
- ▶ Expand access to healthy local food in Port Graham and Nanwalek.
- ▶ More purchases made by hospital employees.
- ▶ I’m Interested in “Produce Prescription” programs.
- ▶ I wouldn’t mind to be operated by a standalone nonprofit rather than Cook Inletkeeper (an environmental organization where we are housed).
- ▶ Purchase land that can be used to foster new farmers and create simple, long-term leases that require those new farmers to sell through our food hub. Dream big!
- ▶ My pie-in-the-sky vision is that we create a central kitchen with the capacity to process foods and cold storage so it becomes a community food center. This involves work that is a community organizing piece at times. Test new products.
- ▶ Continue utilizing Local Food Purchasing Assistance program. Strategize how to obtain similar funding should this program terminate.
- ▶ Invest in a chest freezer and/or dedicated refrigerator with DEC permit to hold time/temperature sensitive items.
- ▶ Encourage new farmers in our region and add their products to our offerings.
- ▶ Identify better freight options to keep operational costs as low as possible while increasing logistics capacity.

ARCTIC HARVEST DELIVERIES

(ANCHORAGE)—(FIVE YEARS AHEAD)



- ▶ We would like a little bit of growth, nothing as large as doubling our size.
- ▶ We want more local food options. We have the best quality, but we need more quantity and variety to be able to expand.
- ▶ We hope to deliver to more areas of the state.
- ▶ We tried a pilot project with Alaska Commercial Company (AC) stores (a rural grocery store chain). They served as pick-up site in Nome. Before the pandemic, we didn't have much buy-in from their consumers, only a couple of people per week. They have a warehouse in Anchorage where they aggregate products to be shipped out. Because they have stores in many rural communities, this could be a great way to access those locations.
- ▶ Financial support is a huge priority right now. Our expansion has been very difficult to maintain financially, especially with two back-to-back not-so-great growing seasons.

CATCH 49 (ANCHORAGE)—(FIVE YEARS AHEAD)

- ▶ We are just beginning a strategic planning process.
- ▶ Our goals are not clear at this point.
- ▶ Perhaps add 1–2 staff.
- ▶ Purchase new ordering software.

**KODIAK ARCHIPELAGO LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE/
QIK'RTAQ FOOD HUB**—(FIVE YEARS AHEAD)

- ▶ We would like to transition management to younger leaders.
- ▶ We want to build a stable operating model so we can break even. Our vision is in development now.
- ▶ This may require new physical facilities including storage space.
- ▶ We will need more labor as we expand.
- ▶ Seed growing, saving, and seed school (in collaboration with Native Seed Search in Tucson).

KODIAK HARVEST FOOD CO-OP—(FIVE YEARS AHEAD)



- ▶ We will grow our business organically. We stopped working with consultants who pushed us to get too large in ways that were not appropriate or too rapid for our members. We do our feasibility assessments internally.
- ▶ We certainly could outgrow our current space. It would be great to have a loading dock, more storage capacity, and more wholesale space.
- ▶ We will need a different software system (We now use Square).
- ▶ We want to carry more protein if it is not too complex. There is one beef operation on the Island (of Kodiak), and their sales go up and down. They have a wait list for people to buy a half carcass. So there is some unmet demand.

SALT & SOIL MARKETPLACE (JUNEAU)—(FIVE YEARS AHEAD)



- ▶ We'd like to add service to at least 2-3 other communities on a sustained basis.
- ▶ Diversify our producer base to include more traditional and foraged foods, creating a product base that appeals to a larger, more diversified consumer base.
- ▶ Increase our vendor base by 3 or 4 large-scale vendors which would have significant economic impact on the market. One of our largest winter producers opted out of the Marketplace.
- ▶ To have the ability to add value with produce processing with significant insurance.
- ▶ We are considering branching out to food production.

SUMMARY

Most groups plan for incremental, measured growth or to stay nearly the same. Expanding rapidly could disrupt these hopes. Modular expansion (with the ability to expand, stay the same, or contract as conditions dictate) is often an interesting approach. (For example, build several small coolers rather than one large one, or occupy more space than is currently needed, subleasing this space for now, with the option of taking this over for future expansion or moving into a larger space in concert with that subtenant.)



Areas of Potential Collaboration

COMBINED RESPONSES

The most commonly held goal was to increase information sharing and coordination among the groups currently in the network.



**Priority: share information with each other
(5 respondents listed this as a priority).**

- ▶ Mostly we need information exchange
- ▶ We are mostly one-person operations; we need to keep in contact with each other
- ▶ Share ideas with other hubs
- ▶ Learn from others
- ▶ Learn what each of us is saying to our producers and customers
- ▶ I'm not sure I see much overlap (in food trade) at this time



PHOTO CREDIT: Kodiak Archipelago Leadership Institute, Port Lions Farm Hoop #2



Build an even more effective network.

- ▶ I would like to see a fantastic network of food hubs sharing product back and forth; we would have one statewide branch, and share information about successes and problems; we would not be siloed
- ▶ Get more product from other hubs; we have tons of potatoes, cabbage, and carrots; we need other crops
- ▶ Source more shelf-stable value-added food items from other hubs
- ▶ Establish a common database
- ▶ Integrate software; most of us use Local Food Marketplace, so we could coordinate information through that platform, but not all software can integrate with it
- ▶ We need to show proof of the demand to convince policy makers; for example, we can now track \$7 million of sales at farmers' markets statewide; it would help to be able to have similar data for food hubs
- ▶ A central database on reserve would be good to have, where we could sell Alaska products
- ▶ Build cohesiveness among the hubs
- ▶ Coordinate fundraising
- ▶ Market our hubs and our food items jointly
- ▶ Define what we are doing to the public
- ▶ Promote hubs across the state
- ▶ Hang out with each other and have the ability to become friends
- ▶ Locate or produce a map of commercial kitchens in the state with refrigerator spaces that we could use for our communities
- ▶ Order supplemental products from distant suppliers in a coordinated manner to reduce costs



Expand the presence of each “food hub” in its own region.

- ▶ I would like to network more closely with people in our own region
- ▶ Add more locations in nearby communities
 - ▶ Haines and Klukwan (from Juneau)
 - ▶ Port Graham and Nanwalek (from Homer)
 - ▶ More villages (from Kodiak; Akhiok next)
 - ▶ More towns (from Anchorage)
- ▶ A local church may allow us to use their commercial kitchen
- ▶ Form new partnerships with hospitals
- ▶ We want to expand our base, but not too rapidly
- ▶ Enroll more members
- ▶ Support new farms and emerging farmers
- ▶ There is not enough product [in our region] to sell wholesale; any producers who sell to wholesale buyers act separately
- ▶ How do we expand the market for farmers at the middle level?
- ▶ New coolers and freezer storage
- ▶ More reliable delivery vehicles
- ▶ Expand our physical facilities





Advocate for policy changes.

- ▶ Have all of the food safety permitting located in one place at the state government, especially for food hubs
- ▶ Cottage Food requirements prohibit our small retail storefront from selling cottage food products, except through an online food hub platform; could there be other, safe ways of allowing cottage foods to be sold at a retail level?
- ▶ Expand USDA's Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment (RTCP) so that food hubs are eligible
- ▶ I would like it if we could develop a DEC application or variance for smaller scale value-added producers, not just geared for larger processors
- ▶ Allow more flexibility and create financial incentives for producers who do not have commercial land; for example, offer tax breaks to those who grow and sell produce on their residential properties
- ▶ Current Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy is interested in food security and independence from an investment standpoint; AFPC works to develop new proposals; unified lobbying efforts are important
- ▶ Create a micro-grant program for small-scale emerging farmers and "food hubs" to incrementally increase production and infrastructure
- ▶ Add the fishing industry to the next US Farm Bill; Alaska's US Senators Murkowski and Sullivan and additionally Boozman (Sen—AR) have discussed this possibility
- ▶ Create incentives for fishermen to sell seafood directly to consumers; this may also require additional processing capacity in several regions
- ▶ Create an "insurance fund," managed by the network for itself or by the State of Alaska, that would help indemnify food hubs against low production years or other unforeseen developments

Note that product trading possibilities are fairly discrete at this time, and limited significantly by transportation costs as well as lack of production.



Main food products “hubs” can offer and those that are desired:

*This is a **wish list**. Actually trading some of these products would require additional infrastructure, particularly coolers and freezers, at more “food hub” sites.*

ALASKA FOOD HUB—WISH LIST



PRODUCTS TO OFFER OTHER REGIONS:

- ▶ Jakolof Bay Oysters cultivates oysters from the Bay (they already do pop-ups in Anchorage). These hold higher value so this helps with financials. However, the harvest was low in 2023. Alaska Food Hub currently has limited cooling and distribution infrastructure to expand these sales.
- ▶ Blood, Sweat, & Food Farms sells poultry (turkeys, ducks, geese, eggs) *[custom exempt]*; already sells in Anchorage as a pop-up
- ▶ Blood, Sweat, & Food Farms sells rabbit *[custom exempt]*
- ▶ Blood, Sweat, & Food Farms sells pork *[custom exempt]*
- ▶ Cottage foods (kimchee & kraut from three vendors, bakers, two jam makers)
- ▶ Two Sisters Bakery products
- ▶ K Bay Coffee Roasters (their café is closed)
- ▶ Seed potatoes from Oceanside Farms; they are inspected and tested
- ▶ Synergy Gardens has bountiful garlic in braids
- ▶ Twitter Creek Gardens is making kimchee and kraut, wants to expand
- ▶ Kelp; Kachemak Bay has new permits (note that there is discussion among Native villages about how much kelp should be reserved for subsistence use and ecological balance)

**PRODUCTS DESIRED:**

- ▶ Grains
- ▶ Seafood; people can purchase whole fish but not filleted—no place for certified commercial cutting. We are the halibut capital of the world but I don't know where to buy it except for high-end stores. Handling this would also require us to have cooler space. I am not sure how much people need, because they can fish for themselves and trade with each other.
- ▶ Kombucha
- ▶ Kvass
- ▶ Sprouts
- ▶ Frozen noodles
- ▶ Wild berries (currently arrive delayed, dried, or freeze dried); *any such increase would need to be balanced with subsistence needs and traditional harvesting rights.*

ARCTIC HARVEST DELIVERIES (ANCHORAGE)—WISH LIST**PRODUCTS TO OFFER OTHER REGIONS:**

- ▶ Milk (we no longer wholesale to Three Bears)
- ▶ Meat (individual cuts in packages from USDA certified processor; we ship primal cuts and sometimes whole animals (sides) to restaurants)
- ▶ Seafood—frozen, packaged (fillets, portions, etc.) all bought through Catch 49
- ▶ Produce—our main product line
- ▶ Eggs
- ▶ Other grocery and value added items including honey, coffee, salsas, tea, beverages, chocolates, barley products, etc.

**PRODUCTS DESIRED:**

- ▶ Meat: beef can be a steady supply, but pork comes once in a while; we'd like to have lamb
- ▶ Produce: greens, arugula, tomatoes, garlic, peas, beans, fruit (except apples); we hope we can produce more greens for ourselves in the future

CATCH 49 (ANCHORAGE)—WISH LIST



 **PRODUCTS TO OFFER OTHER REGIONS:**

- ▶ Frozen seafood

 **PRODUCTS DESIRED:**

- ▶ Shelf-stable food items from other hubs

**KODIAK ARCHIPELAGO LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE/
QIK'RTAQ FOOD HUB—WISH LIST**



 **PRODUCTS TO OFFER OTHER REGIONS:**

- ▶ No food items at this time
- ▶ KALI does hold deep experience building trust and accomplishing goals in Native villages; this approach could be adapted in other rural areas

 **PRODUCTS DESIRED:**

- ▶ None at this time, given the cultural landscape of Kodiak

KODIAK HARVEST FOOD CO-OP—WISH LIST



 **PRODUCTS TO OFFER OTHER REGIONS:**

- ▶ Kodiak Harvest Sockeye Salmon
- ▶ Possibly oysters if market demand can be built

 **PRODUCTS DESIRED:**

- ▶ Currently importing most fresh produce from Washington State

SALT & SOIL MARKETPLACE (JUNEAU)—WISH LIST



PRODUCTS TO OFFER OTHER REGIONS:

- ▶ Loads of seafood; frozen fillets of king salmon, coho, halibut, shrimp, rockfish, cod
- ▶ Foraged items should be possible; we're having a deep conversation with Native people regarding traditional foods



PRODUCTS DESIRED:

- ▶ We have no access to protein except seafood; we could use chickens, rabbits, beef
- ▶ More produce
- ▶ No processing, and it is legally difficult to create. There was one processor at Windfall Farm on the Panhandle. They processed turkeys, chickens, and goats. They run their own CSA for their goat milk products only. Personal consumption for all other animals.





Simplest starting points for trade:

- ▶ Shelf-stable value-added products (coffee, chocolates, salsas, tea, honey, kimchee, kraut, canned salmon, and more)
- ▶ Frozen Seafood
- ▶ Fresh Oysters (from Homer and Kodiak)
- ▶ Grains & products (from Delta via Arctic Harvest)
- ▶ Eggs (via Arctic Harvest Deliveries)
- ▶ Garlic (from Homer to Anchorage)
- ▶ Seed potatoes (Homer to other markets)

PHOTO CREDIT: *Catch 49*



Key Obstacles COMBINED RESPONSES

We also asked interviewees to identify the major obstacles they face in their work, both in their communities, and in coordinating with other members of the network. These are grouped loosely by themes.

- ▶ Food production is the limiting factor (5 responses)
- ▶ Time (2 responses)
- ▶ Capacity on lots of different fronts; so many of us are at full capacity, not just because of funding, but we need bigger-ideas projects
- ▶ Coordination requires meeting time and coordinators, and this adds to our financial burdens
- ▶ We need participation stipends
- ▶ The major obstacles are internal; some of this is interpersonal drama
- ▶ I would like to see more collaboration within our own community
- ▶ Money
- ▶ We have stayed away from equity investors
- ▶ The perception that there is competition among the hubs
- ▶ Visions that do not match
- ▶ Lack of unified approach to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs); how to tease out sales tax, promo codes, establish workflow operations for bookkeepers to follow and for paying farmers
- ▶ Important to set clear boundaries that distinguish hubs from each other and make it clear when the network should play a strong role
- ▶ Lack of equal (reciprocal) exchange
- ▶ Lack of a common software package, or data that is incompatible with other hubs
- ▶ Transportation costs make regular shipping very difficult
- ▶ Shipping is the barrier. Cost is an issue, but also timing and logistics. We have to order 1.5 weeks ahead of time from Washington, not for the next day. It takes thoughtful planning, because all this food is perishable. Our goal is to set a strong cut-off time for orders coming from farmers, otherwise our inventory gets off.

- ▶ We initially pushed to sell wholesale, but we didn't have enough capacity. Insurance and liability were both obstacles
- ▶ Local stores could be more supportive; they do have our displays, and our products have a group of loyal supporters
- ▶ Nonprofit “food hubs” are operating under some other nonprofit structure. Sometimes a sponsor holds different priorities. There can also be staff changes at these sponsors that impact the hubs.
- ▶ It costs more to grow a carrot in Southeast than in communities to the north



PHOTO CREDIT: Alaska Food Hub



Potential New Network Partners

COMBINED RESPONSES

Once this network develops a more unified and clear approach for its next steps, it will want to engage new partners as appropriate. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Rather it lists the groups that were mentioned in the interviews.

- ▶ Alaska Farmland Trust
- ▶ Alaska Farmers Market Association
- ▶ Alaska Food Bank
- ▶ Alaska Food Coalition
- ▶ Alaskans Own (a project of the Alaska Line Longline Fishermans Association) CSF (Community Supported Fishery) program
- ▶ Beginning and Young Farmers Network of Alaska
- ▶ Chaga Cooperative LLC (Fairbanks)
- ▶ Fairbanks Food Co-op
- ▶ Fellowship Garden (Sitka)
- ▶ Foraged and Found (Ketchikan)
- ▶ Four Winds Resource Center (Haines and Klukwan)
- ▶ Ketchikan Agricultural Producers Association (KAPA; Ketchikan)
- ▶ Roaming Root (Fairbanks)
- ▶ Sitka Salmon Shares has a seafood distribution program for low-income families and Native elders
- ▶ Sitka Local Foods Network
- ▶ Southeast Alaska Farm Summit
- ▶ Southeast Seafood
- ▶ Sustainable Southeast Partnership



APPENDIX C: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Funding Acknowledgement

Funding for this report, *How the Alaska “Food Hub” Network Can Best Move Forward* was made possible by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service through grant AM22LFPPAK1087—awarded to Alaska Food Policy Council, Project Title *Alaska Food System Research and Knowledge Sharing: Growing Connections for Local Food*. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the USDA.



2023 Alaska Food Hub Working Group Participants

Many thanks to the following participants, who informed this report:

PROJECT ORGANIZERS

- ▶ **Lorinda Lhotka**, Section Manager, Food Safety and Sanitation Program, State of Alaska
- ▶ **Robbi Mixon**, Executive Director, Alaska Food Policy Council
- ▶ **Sundance Visser**, Operations & Finance Director/Food Hub Working Group Coordinator, Alaska Food Policy Council


FOOD HUB PRACTITIONERS

- ▶ **Jennifer Brown**, Foraged and Found/ Ketchikan Agricultural Producers Association
- ▶ **Kyla Byers**, Arctic Harvest Deliveries
- ▶ **Danielle Christiansen**, Kodiak Archipelago Leadership Institute—Qik'rtaq Food Hub
- ▶ **Callen Troy Christensen**, Fairbanks Food Hub
- ▶ **Kyra Harty**, Alaska Food Hub
- ▶ **Tyler Kornelis**, Kodiak Harvest Food Co-op
- ▶ **Max Lyons**, Kodiak Archipelago Leadership Institute—Qik'rtaq Food Hub
- ▶ **Erika Merklin**, Lynn Canal Community Food Web
- ▶ **Katy Rexford**, Alaska Marine Conservation Council—Catch 49
- ▶ **Myra Scholze**, Kodiak Harvest Food Co-op
- ▶ **Meghan Stangeland**, EcoTrust—Salt & Soil Marketplace
- ▶ **Robbie Townsend Vennel**, Kodiak Archipelago Leadership Institute—Qik'rtaq Food Hub
- ▶ **Marissa Wilson**, Alaska Marine Conservation Council—Catch 49



Alaska Food Policy Council

health.
self-reliance.
prosperity.

 (907) 756-3930

 PO Box 173, Homer, AK 99603

 info@alaskafoodpolicycouncil.org

 akfoodpolicycouncil.org

 [akfoodpolicy](https://www.facebook.com/akfoodpolicy)

 [akfoodpolicycouncil](https://www.instagram.com/akfoodpolicycouncil)

 [AKFoodCouncil](https://twitter.com/AKFoodCouncil)

