

Improving Access to Alaska's Traditional Foods in Institutional and Non-Profit Settings

NANCY FURLLOW PHD, SARAH SHIMER MPH
142ND ANNUAL MEETING- AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2015

University of Alaska Anchorage National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders
University of Alaska Anchorage Institute for Circumpolar Health Studies

This project was supported in part by grant number: P000004031 from the U.S. Administration on Aging, Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. 20201. Grantees undertaking projects under government sponsorship are cautioned to express freely their findings and conclusions. Points of view or opinions do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Administration for Community Living policy.

Presenter Disclosures: Sarah Shimer, MPH and Nancy J Furlow, PhD

(1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

No relationships to disclose

Overview

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ Goals of project
- ▶ Partnership development
- ▶ Deliverables
- ▶ Current status



National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders

- ▶ Funded by a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living under amendments to the Older Americans Act. The NRC works to:
 1. Increase knowledge about the Native aging process
 2. Provide support for elder programs throughout the state, including Title III and Title VI elder meal programs
 3. Improve access to elder programs for Alaska Native elders
- ▶ The NRC became aware of an unmet need for traditional foods through food service programs through monthly Title III and Title VI meetings.

Introduction: Alaska

- ▶ 229 federally recognized tribes
- ▶ Distinct cultural & linguistic regions
- ▶ Transportation challenges
- ▶ High cost of living
- ▶ High level of food insecurity



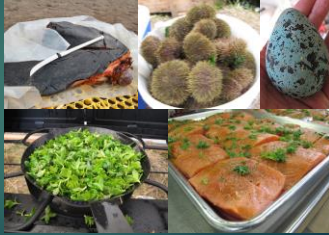
Rural Alaska: High Cost of Living

- ▶ Yogurt: \$7.97
- ▶ Bananas: \$2.58/lb
- ▶ Asparagus: \$7.99/lb
- ▶ Green leaf lettuce: \$6.99 each
- ▶ Green chard: \$6.99 each



Alaska's Traditional Foods

- ▶ Plants, aquatic plants, and berries
- ▶ Game meat
- ▶ Birds
- ▶ Fish
- ▶ Sea mammals
- ▶ Wild bird eggs



Abstract

- ▶ Alaska's traditional foods benefit health
- ▶ Complex regulations intimidate food service providers
- ▶ Many institutions express a desire to serve traditional foods
- ▶ Solution: Clarify food policies and regulations



Getting Started

- ▶ Initial focus on Title III/Title VI senior meal programs
- ▶ Partner with the Alaska Department of Conservation, Food Safety (DEC)
- ▶ Rapid expansion of interest statewide
- ▶ Formation of a traditional foods committee

Beginning a Partnership

- ▶ UAA NRC
- ▶ DEC
- ▶ AK Native Tribal Health Consortium
- ▶ AK Food Policy Council
- ▶ UAA Institute for Circumpolar Health Studies
- ▶ UAA Dpt. of Health Sciences
- ▶ Nana Management Services
- ▶ *Ut uqanaat Inaat: A Place for Elders and Sig'uaq*
- ▶ SPORK
- ▶ Alaska Grown
- ▶ Farm to School Alaska
- ▶ AK Child Nutrition Programs
- ▶ Food Bank of Alaska

Deliverables

- ▶ Crosswalk comparing State and Federal regulations
- ▶ Two posters:
 1. Allowable donations
 2. How to receive, process, and store allowable donations
- ▶ Toolkit:
 - ▶ Detailed descriptions of allowable foods and processing
- ▶ Frequently Asked Questions

Poster 1

- ▶ Target audience
 - ▶ Hunters
 - ▶ Foragers
 - ▶ Fishermen/women
- ▶ Basic list of allowable and prohibited foods
- ▶ Information about how to donate foods



Poster 2

- ▶ Target audience
 - ▶ Food service providers
 - ▶ Kitchen staff
- ▶ Overview of donations, storage, processing, and preparation
- ▶ Links to resources



Toolkit

- ▶ How-to manual for traditional food donations
- ▶ Includes:
 - ▶ Relevant food regulations
 - ▶ Food safety
 - ▶ Allowable foods
 - ▶ Prohibited foods
 - ▶ Meal suggestions



Current Stage

- ▶ Final poster printing October 2015
 - ▶ 1500 sets of posters
 - ▶ Distribution November 2015
- ▶ Toolkit printing November 2015
 - ▶ Distribution December 2015
- ▶ PDF links on NRC, DEC, and partner websites November 2015

Future Plans

- ▶ Develop & offer technical training
- ▶ Assessment & evaluation
- ▶ Seal oil task force
- ▶ Traditional foods hunter/distribution network
- ▶ Grant applications



Poster Links and Contact

- ▶ Dr. Nancy Furlow
 - ▶ njfurlow@uaa.alaska.edu
 - ▶ 907.786.4303
- ▶ Sarah Shimer
 - ▶ sshimer@uaa.alaska.edu
 - ▶ 907.786.6514
- ▶ Posters and Toolkit:
 - ❖ Available online in November 2015
 - ▶ <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/elders/traditionalfoods>
 - ▶ http://dec.alaska.gov/eh/fss/food/traditional_foods.html