Priority Objectives for Cooperative Extension
2007-2011 Strategic Plan

Sustainable Individuals, Families & Communities

Jobs & Workforce Readiness
- Provide training for rural residents that will provide them with the skills to develop small businesses based on Alaska native grown foods.

Emergency Preparedness
- Provide emergency preparedness training for families. The training will teach and demonstrate personal and emergency safety skills that include, but are not limited to food preservation, fire readiness, three-day emergency preparedness kits, family emergency plans, and issues associated with pets.
- In the event of a local emergency, Extension faculty will be prepared to assist their local community, in coordination with the local emergency management office, in their individual areas of expertise. Extension regional and specialist faculty will be prepared to assist local faculty to respond to local emergencies and be a resource to other agencies and organizations in the event of regional and statewide emergencies.

Energy Extension
- Develop and implement a methodology for rural communities to conduct a community energy assessment; to evaluate the availability of renewable energy resources; and assist the community develop an action plan to achieve energy security.
- In cooperation with the Cold Climate Housing Research Center, expand practical housing curricula and cold climate research with the goal of increasing the number of energy efficient residences and commercial buildings in Alaska.

Human Development
- Offer workshops for clientele and their families for transition points across the life span about what to expect, how to cope, and ways to enhance relationships with the goal of increasing individual and family understanding of development and aging and improving individual and family quality of life.
- Provide parent education classes that teach parents about early childhood development to help them prepare their children for pre- and primary school and to reduce the number of referrals to the Office of Children’s Services.
- Partner with organizations that teach child development associates or provide family child care certifications to teach early childhood development topics to help improve the quality and to increase the number of licensed in child care provides.

Financial Management
- Conduct training for individuals recovering from bankruptcy that provides them with the skills to avoid future bankruptcies.
• Teach youth in informal and formal educational settings financial management skills that include, but are not limited to, budgeting, consumer credit, interest rates, and cost of living to prepare them to better manage their current finances and to help prepare them to manager their finances as adults.

• Teach financial management skills for adults that address topics that include, but are not limited to household budgeting, wise use of credit, and reducing consumer debt. These workshops should concentrate on low income clientele.

**Health, Nutrition and Food**

• Provide nutritional workshops for clientele across the age spectrum that focus on how to incorporate indigenous foods (subsistence) into the daily diet. These workshops should include information about how these foods promote health, their nutritional value and where they fit in the food guide pyramid.

• Develop and deliver a comprehensive program for healthy home produce production, preservation and preparation for rural Alaskan residents where fresh fruit and vegetables are not readily available.

**Youth Development**

• Incorporate the Eight Essential Elements of youth development as the foundation of all Extension 4-H and youth development programming.

• Develop summer youth work programs for 15-18 year olds that stress teaching them good work habits.

• Using the 4-H club approach provide entrepreneurial skill training for youth that they can directly apply to start youth-based enterprises.

• Increase the 4-H youth membership retention rate by 25 percent for each age cohort between the ages of 11 and 18 years so that more youth have greater exposure to the benefits that accrue from participation in 4-H.

**Invasive Weeds, Noxious Plants and Pest Management**

• In coordination with university faculty, agencies, organizations and individuals identify priority invasive weeds, noxious plants and pest threats and deliver educational programs to help mitigate these threats.

**Agriculture and Horticulture**

**Urban & Consumer horticulture**

• Generate a set of frequently asked questions (FAQs) about home gardening topics applicable to Alaska to be incorporated into the national eXtension network.

• More thoroughly integrate surface water and groundwater protection topics into Master Gardener training to increase graduates application of these practices into their gardening.

**Food Production**
• Teach gardening in rural Alaskan communities as a means to increase the availability of fresh produce; reduce food expenditures; and as a means to supplement individual’s income.
• Become the primary source of organic production information for Alaska vegetable growers

**Sustainable Agriculture**

• Through educational programming change the nutrient application practices of producers such that they improve the efficiency of their fertilizers application thereby helping to reduce their input costs and protect the environment from nitrate leaching.
• Identify niche agriculture opportunities in rural communities and provide educational programs and information that helps individuals in these communities to capitalize on these opportunities.
• Actively promote sustainable use of forest resources in south central and western Alaska and the Copper River Valley by small land owners that provide them with a direct positive economic return and that protect the quality of life in the region.

**Natural Resource Stewardship**

**Mining**

• Extension will assist communities identify and take advantage of the opportunities associated with mining development to maximize local capture of economic benefits while managing the risk associated with mining development.
• Extension will coordinate with the Alaska Miners Association to develop the Alaska Prospectors Certificate Program. Extension will actively promote and recruit individuals, with special attention to rural Alaskans, to complete the five short courses that comprise the certificate.

**Environmental Quality and Sustainability**

• Provide extension education to secondary processors of forest resources that provide them with the skills to improve their operating efficiency and income.
• Provide educational programming and information in rural communities that teaches people how to identify and mitigate wildfire hazards to their residences and communities.
• Provide septic system education and resources for septic system owners and realtors on how septic systems work and the importance of maintenance to help reduce system failures and the subsequent pollution of the groundwater.
• Assist local watershed groups develop watershed plans and advise them on the implementation of these plans to help protect and maintain riparian systems and the fish and other resources and services these resources provide.
• Coordinate with other university faculty, agencies and organizations and individuals to identify priority water and other environmental quality threats and deliver educational programming to mitigate these threats.