TO  PSA Directors; Food, Health and Education Reporters
SUBJECT  Consumer taste-testing of Alaska-made whole-grain crackers
DATE/TIME  June 14, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
LOCATION  UAF Wood Center Carol Brown Ballroom

Alaskans have a chance to put their taste buds to the test and help researchers assess new varieties of barley being developed by University of Alaska Fairbanks agricultural scientists. UAF’s Cooperative Extension Service Food Product Development Program will conduct the consumer taste test for barley varieties June 14 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Wood Center Ballroom on the UAF campus. Pre-registration is not required.

UAF School of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences (SNRAS) is currently developing new, hulless barley varieties that will withstand the heavy winds and rains of a late Alaska summer to improve harvest yield. SNRAS researchers have teamed up with Extension to find out if the new varieties taste the same as the original variety. Flour from an assortment of barley varieties will be used to make crackers for consumer evaluation of flavor and taste. The samples will be prepared in the Extension Food Product Development Kitchen, Alaska’s only state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)-approved testing facility.

UAF’s Extension food product testing currently focuses on ways to increase commercialization of several Alaska-grown products, including applied research on the flavor, juiciness and other attributes of reindeer meat; assessments on which Alaska-grown potato varieties make the best bakers or french fries; and analyzing the antioxidant properties of Alaska’s wild berries.

Extension’s research data and educational outreach efforts support the activities of groups such as the Eskimo reindeer herders and Alaska farmers who rely on research-based information from UAF to help them develop and market products to statewide and national consumers.

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