Alaska Native Traditional Foods Movement

Wednesday, March 24, 2021, 2:00 pm Eastern
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Close Your Eyes
“Let food be thy medicine, and let medicine be thy food.”

- Hippocrates, father of modern medicine
Regulations
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Food Code

- Traditional wild game meat, seafood, plants, and other food donated to an institution or a nonprofit program
  - Includes residential childcare facility with a license from the Department of Health and Human Services, school lunch programs, and senior meal programs
- Food must be whole, gutted, gilled, as quarters or roasts without further processing
- Animal is not diseased
- Food is butchered, dressed, transported, and stored to prevent contamination, undesirable microbial growth, or deterioration
- Prohibited foods
2014 Farm Bill

- The Agriculture Act of 2014 passed the Senate with an overwhelming bipartisan majority of 68-32 on Feb. 4, 2014; signed into law on Feb. 7, 2014
- Included Sec. 4004: Food distribution program on Indian reservations and Sec. 4033: Service of traditional foods in public facilities
- The term “food service program” includes:
  - Food service at residential childcare facilities that have a license from an appropriate state agency
  - Any child nutrition program
  - Food service at hospitals, clinics and, long-term care facilities
  - Senior meal programs
Chapter 18. Indian Health Care

Subchapter VI Miscellaneous – Section 1685
Alaska traditional foods poster and toolkit

• National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders, NMS, ANTHC, AK Food Policy Council, AK DEC, and others
Health Care
Alaska Native Medical Center (ANMC)

- ANMC Food and Nutrition Services team has looked at various ways to implement traditional foods into the patient menu
  - Vendors/procurement, donations, and harvesting
  - ANTHC/APU Spring Creek Farm
ANMC – Thinking Outside of the Box

- Harvesting
  - Spruce Tips
  - Dandelions
  - Salmonberries
  - Blueberries
  - Crowberries
  - Arctic Cranberries
  - Fireweed
  - Rosehips
  - Crab Apples

- Alaska Moose Salvage Program
- Alaska Professional Hunter Association
ANMC – Thinking Outside of the Box

- Vendors/Procurement
  - Reindeer
  - Wild Alaska Salmon
  - Fiddlehead Ferns
  - Beach Asparagus
  - Bones
  - Fish Heads
  - Chaga
  - Bull Kelp
ANMC Traditional Foods Donations
2014–2020

• From the Land
  • Deer 1945 lbs.
  • Moose 3850 lbs.
  • Caribou 1370 lbs.
• From the Sea
  • King Salmon 640 lbs.
  • Salmon Bellies 2600 lbs.
  • Salmon Heads 1300 lbs.
  • Cod 60 lbs.
  • Whitefish 240 lbs.
  • Sheefish 2800 lbs.
  • Hooligan 3400 lbs.
  • Harbor Seal 2100 lbs.

• Plants/Berries
  • Fiddlehead Ferns 73 lbs.
  • Spruce Tips 110 lbs.
  • Dandelions & Buds 62 lbs.
  • Arctic Berries 136 lbs.
  • Tundra Tea 23 gallons
  • Bladder Wrack 13 lbs.
  • Beach Greens 8 gallons
  • Crab Apples 55 gallons

21,086 pounds
Over 10 tons!!
Moose, Caribou & Deer Meat
Herring Eggs
Seal Meat
Wild Alaska King Salmon
Fiddlehead Ferns & Beach Asparagus
Caring During COVID

- **Traditional Tuesday**
  - Seal soup
  - Moose stew
  - Caribou stew
  - Fish head soup
  - Salmon belly and roe soup with bull kelp
- **Fishy Friday**
  - Smoked hooligan, salmon or sheefish
  - Fried hooligan
- **Sweet Treat Saturday**
  - Birch sourdough bread with fireweed jelly
  - Rhubarb bread
  - Crab apple pudding
  - High bush cranberry pudding
  - Blueberry pudding
Long-term Care
Utuqqanaat Inaat (A Place for Elders)

- October 2011: Maniilaq Association opened an 18-bed, long-term care facility
- Elders prefer traditional foods served on a more regular basis
- Maniilaq Hunter Support Program
- DEC and state surveyors
  - Let the tundra be considered the Elders’ garden
  - Any kitchen with a DEC permit can receive traditional game directly
The Siġḷauq

- Traditional foods processing facility
  - An Inupiaq name meaning ice cellar or cold storage
  - Grand opening was July 7, 2015
  - Processed 200 lbs. of muskox in September 2015
  - Beginning of traditional foods offerings on Utuqqanaat Inaat’s menu
Food Assistance Programs
Help Meat The Need

• Food Bank of Alaska welcomes gifts of moose, caribou, deer, and sheep meat, as well as salmon and halibut
• Hunters who would like to donate should:
  • Complete the state of Alaska Transfer of Possession form
  • Deliver the meat to a commercial processor
  • Notify the Food Donation Coordinator at the Food Bank
• Food Bank of Alaska pays for meat to be processed into 1-lb ground meat packages that are easiest for hungry families to use
• Northern Air Cargo will transport meat to Anchorage from rural locations free of charge
Bean’s Cafe

- Over half of the people served are Alaska Native, many are elders
- Rely on food donations
- National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders
  - 2020, Federal grant G0010269
Seal Oil: Alaska’s Condiment
Seal Oil

- Prohibited food in the Alaska Food Code
- Botulism…A Deadly Food Poisoning
- Maniilaq Seal Oil Project
- Brian Himelbloom and Chris Sannito
  - UAF - Kodiak Seafood and Marine Science Center
  - Measured pH, water activity, and water content
- Eric Johnson
  - University of Wisconsin, Department of Bacteriology Botulinum Toxins Laboratory
  - Type E (associated with water environments)
9-STEP SEAL OIL HACCP PLAN

Obtaining the results from Wisconsin’s heat inactivation experiment helped to support the development of a HACCP plan for seal oil. In collaboration with the University of Alaska-Fairbanks Kodiak Seafood and Marine Science Center, serving as the processing authority, an 9-Step HACCP Plan was created. Utilizing the traditional rendering process of seal oil, the proposed HACCP plan introduces a heat treatment step to control for Clostridium botulinum toxin.

The current seal oil HACCP plan proposed involves the following steps:

1. Trimming, Blubber Stripping and Sorting in the Sigluaq
2. 10-14 Day Ambient Temperature Blubber Rendering in Poly Buckets
3. Oil/Cheesecloth Filtering and Straining
4. Oil Heat Treatment 176°F for 10 min
5. Pre-cool oil from 176°F to 70°F within 2 hrs
6. Oil Filling into Clean Mason Jars
7. Labeling/Inspection
8. Cooling of Jars to 38°F within 4 hrs
9. Frozen storage
New Ways to Prepare Traditional Foods
Highbush Cranberry Harvest
Highbush Cranberry Harvest

- Highbush cranberries are shrubs that grow throughout Alaska
- Its leaves turn red in the fall
- Berries can be picked from July to September
- The fruit is red or orange with a flat stone removed after cooking, and the fruit is forced through a strainer or food mill
- The pulp or juice can be used in jams, jellies, or sauces
Cranberries cook in apple cider vinegar and reduce by half

- Cranberries can be picked before the first frost
- It has the best flavor when berries turn red
- Use the stove ventilator, as cooking highbush cranberries in vinegar is caustic

Berry pulp strained by food mill after cooling

- Cheese cloth or a strainer works well, but the food mill is faster

Discarded pulp can be composted

- Per half cup serving, highbush cranberries contain vitamin A - 20% RDA, vitamin C - 25% RDA, dietary fiber - 28% RDA
• Resulting cranberry pulp is ready for barbeque ingredients
• Highbush cranberries are an extremely high source for antioxidants with a score of 174
• Processing does change the score, but it still cannot be compared to commercially grown berries.
**Diced onion**
- Dice as small as possible – Cooking sauce will not break down vegetables
- Finished sauce can be smoothed out in a blender, food processor, or with an immersion blender

**Minced garlic**
- Sauce uses an entire head of garlic
- It may seem like a large amount, but it adds tremendous flavor to the finished sauce
- Mince as finely as possible

**Minced jalapeños**
- Mince as small as possible
- Optional: jalapeno seeds left in sauce will add a lot of heat
- In this recipe all the seeds were left out
Ground cloves, cinnamon, allspice, and black pepper

- 1.5 tablespoons of each spice may seem like a lot, but please do not hold back on measurements
- Barbeque sauce will turn out intensely flavored and will go a long way, especially with wild game meats

Molasses, dark brown sugar, honey, and Liquid Aminos

- The sugar and honey can be reduced, if desired, by a tablespoon at a time; they add to the flavor intensity
- Liquid Aminos are an all-purpose seasoning and soy sauce alternative; Worcestershire sauce can be substituted
Wood Bison

- Wood bison relocated to Shageluk are possibly descendants of the Native Athabascan traditional food source
  - Photos courtesy of Joy Hamilton
Honey Sage Bison Sausage
• Helping Alaska Native Elders live fully in their community of choice
• Library of resources
• Getting resources into the hands of those who need them
• Audience
  • Elders
  • Families
  • Caregivers
• Accessibility
  • Easy to understand
  • ADA-compliant
Development of Resources

- Utilizing digital media
  - Videos
  - Podcasts
  - Infographics
  - And more...
- Cultural sensitivity
- Traditional knowledge
- Experts and faculty research
Alaska Traditional Kitchen

- Recipe “packages”
  - Background/nutrition
  - Recipe
  - Video
  - Podcast
  - Infographic
  - Printable text file
- Website: www.uaa.alaska.edu/elders
Website Development

- Increasing awareness of NRCANE
- Expanding the website
  - New elder care related topics
    - Elder abuse
    - Dementia
  - Modules
  - Scalability
  - Accretion
You Can Do This, Too!!

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Food Safety for First Nations People of Canada:
A Manual for Healthy Practices
“Happiness is healing. Elders need to taste the food they’ve grown up on so they can feel good about themselves again – it’s a healing thing.”

- Frank Wright, Hoonah

*Traditional Food Guide for Alaska Native Cancer Survivors*, 2008
Thank you

Waqaa (Yup’ik)
Ugheli nanghal’aeni (Ahtna Athabascan)

Daneyosh (Upper Kuskokwim)
Tats gwilik (Haida)

Aang (Aleut)
Nakhwal’in shoo ihl’ii (Gwich’in Athabascan)

Yuxudz yuxogh srigisddheyh go ninuxdatl (Deg Xinag Athabascan)

Ts’lm’wii’amhaw (Tsimshian)
Quyana tailuci (Cup’ik)

Paqlagivsiign (Iñupiaq)

Chin’an gu nin yu (Dena’ina Athabascan)

Tsen’-ii, shign’ahdal (Tanana Upper)

Ena neenyo (Koyukon Athabascan)

Cama’i (Alutiiq)
Quyana taaluten (Cup’ik Nunivak Island)

Awa’ahdah aanda’laxsa’a’ch’t (Eyak)

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#TraditionalFoodsHeal
#TraditionalFoodsHealOurPatients