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# Kenai Peninsula Food Hub: Pilot Project, Planning and Execution



Saturday, February 27, 2016  
2016 Alaska Food Policy Council Festival and Conference



# Cook Inletkeeper





# Cook Inletkeeper



Clean water

Healthy salmon

Engaged Alaskans

Clean energy

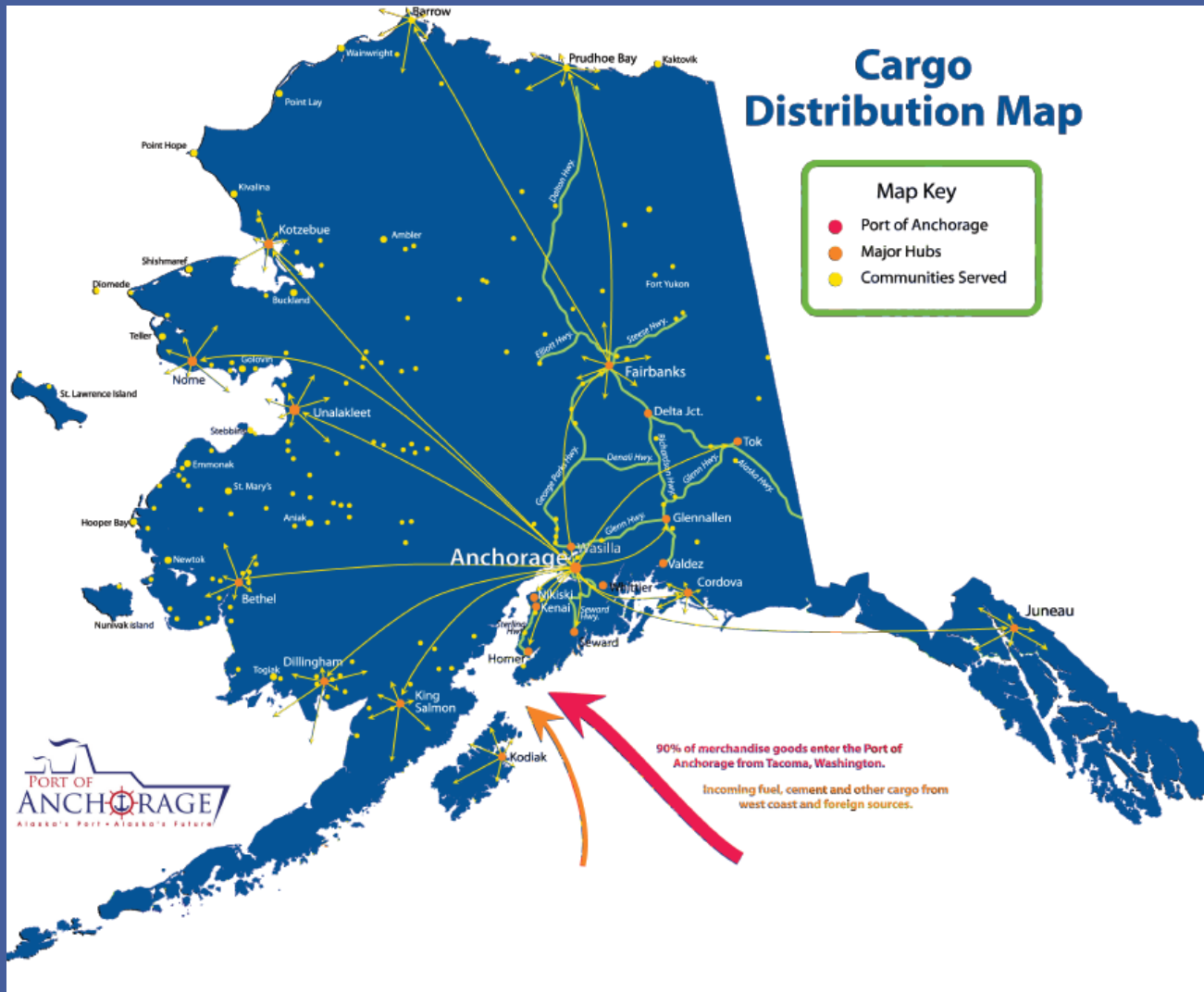
Strong communities....

**Food Security!**





# Food Miles

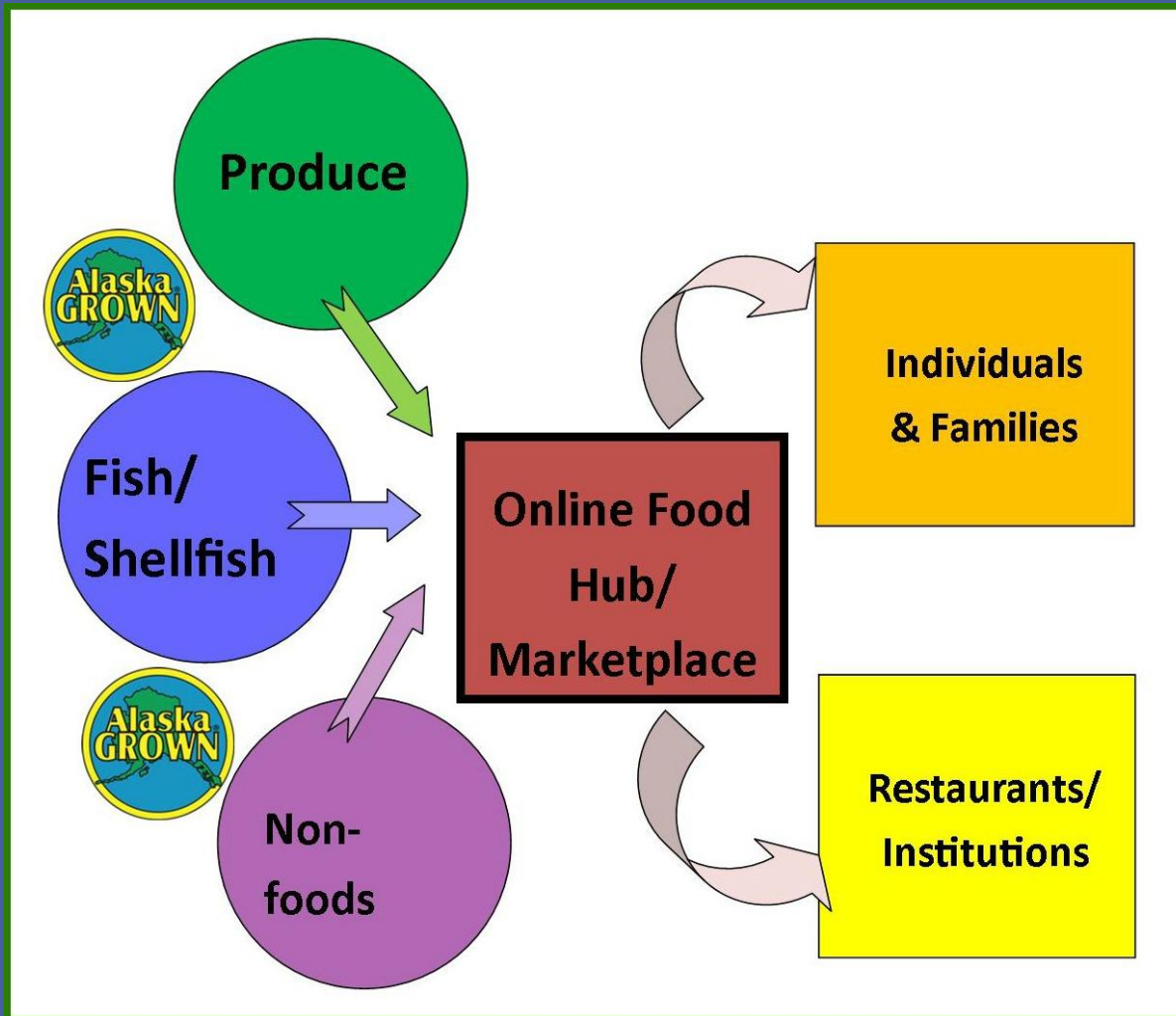


Direct farmer sales rose 32% in Alaska between 2007-2012!

Over \$4million in high tunnel grants from USDA to Alaskans



# What is a Food Hub?





# Food Hubs

- Third-party business
- Aggregation of products
- Ease of shopping
- Marketing & sales
- Education/Collaboration
- Building community
- Alaska- Kenai (2012 Pilot), Fairbanks





# Who?

## Producers

- Farmers – large and small scale
- Fishermen
- Value-added products
- Shellfish growers
- Non-food products

## Customers

- Individual Buyers
- Institutions (hospital, senior centers, schools)
- Wholesale (restaurants, grocery stores)
- Possible expansion throughout Kenai Peninsula





# Community Impacts



## Economic

- Increased revenue that stays in the community
- 95% of our food is imported=\$1.9 billion spent on food from Outside



## Social

- Strengthens information/support networks



## Environmental

- Reduces food miles and carbon footprint
- Raises awareness & engagement





# USDA Grant: LFPP

*The Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) offers grant funds with a 25% match to support the development and expansion of local and regional food business enterprises to increase domestic consumption of, and access to, locally and regionally produced agricultural products, and to develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets.*



Two types of project applications:  
planning grants and implementation grants



# USDA Grant: LFPP

***“Know Your Food, Know Your Farmer”***

- Local Food Promotion Program
- \$11.9 million awarded
- 160 projects nationwide
- Three in Alaska





## “Expanding local food markets and access through an online food hub on the Lower Kenai Peninsula, Alaska”

**GOAL:** Improve and stabilize local food systems by increasing marketing opportunities for local producers and expanding access to and purchasing of local foods on the Lower Kenai Peninsula.

*\*We've expanded to include Kenai/Soldatna Area- Why? How?*



Photos: G.Grobarek, R. Mixon, M. Reveil



# Grant Objectives:

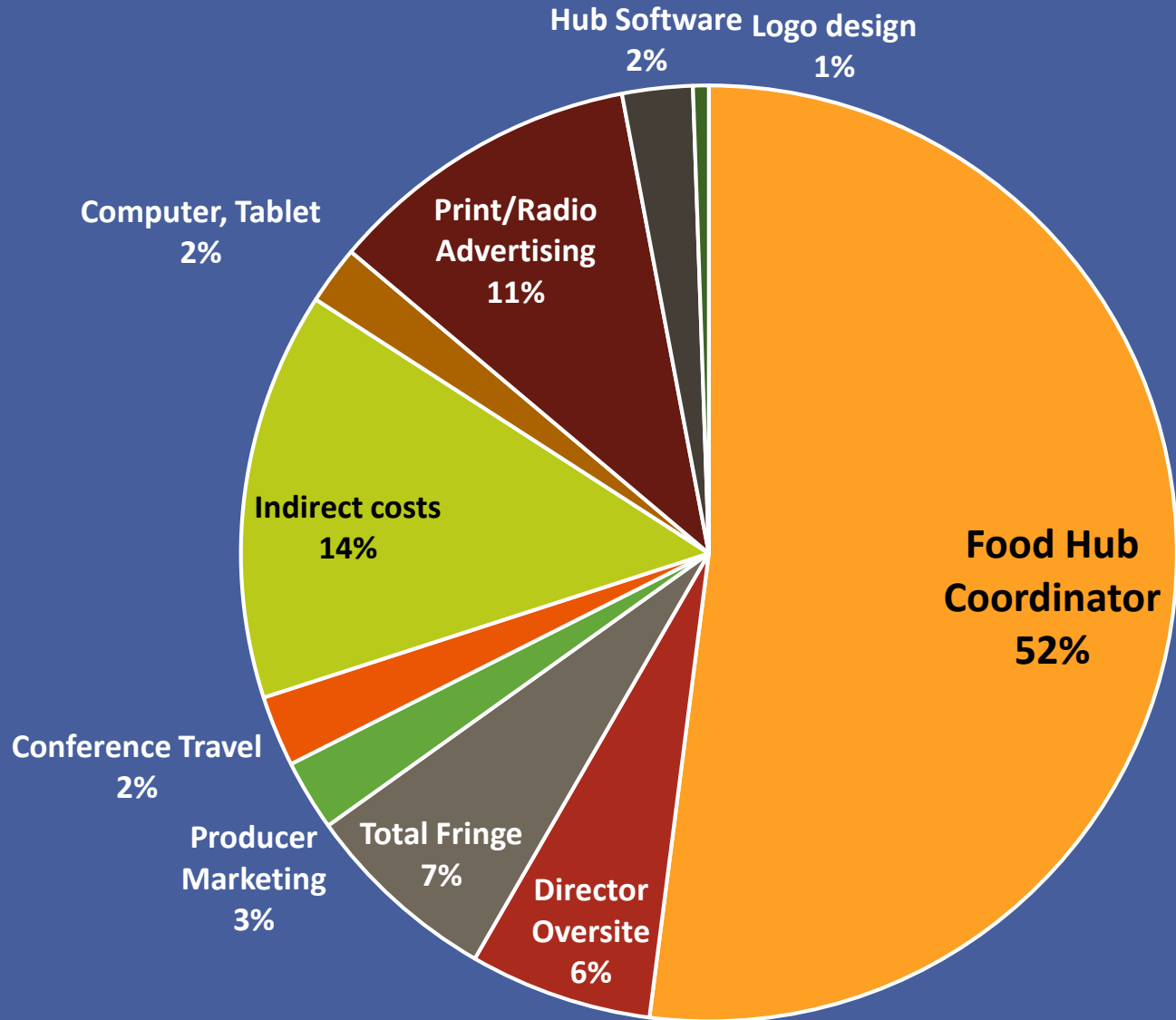
1. Develop an online food hub system that will be live by April 2016.
2. Establish & grow producer engagement
3. Market the food hub
4. Market food hub producers







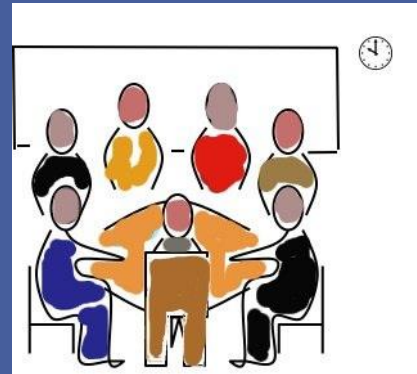
## Our 2-Year Budget





# Getting Going

- Advisory Committee
- Set a Tight Schedule
- Networked Outside
- Community Meetings
- Software





# Advisory Council

- Producer, Emily Garrity, Twitter Creek Gardens
- Producer, Margo Reveil, Jakolof Bay Oyster Co.
- Producer, Paul Castellani, Will Grow Farm
- Producer, Kenai, Steve Dahl
- Alaska Marine Conservation Council, Hannah Hemibuch
- Seldovia Village Tribe, Amy Rattenbury
- Sustainable Homer, Kyra Wagner
- Homer Soil & Water Conservation District, Brad Cesar
- Kenai Soil & Water Conservation District, Heidi Chay
- Cook Inletkeeper, Rachel Lord (Facilitator) and Robbi Mixon (Program Manager)



# Advisory Council

Voting body for  
decision-making,  
presenting a range  
of interests

Product
Food hub name
Website
Logo
Drop-point established
Business entity established
Written policies/guidelines
Producer/Vendor meeting FALL
Producer/Vendor meeting SPRING
Facebook page
Newspaper & Radio ads
Community presentations
Promotional video
Producer marketing materials developed
Evaluation metrics & plan
Year-one assessment
Final assessment





# Kenai Peninsula Food Hub

## LAUNCH: April 15<sup>th</sup>!

- Name
- Policies
- Drop locations
- Software
- Website
- Logo (in progress)
- Community meetings
- Vendor sign-ups
- Kenai/Soldotna MOU

### Kenai Peninsula Food Hub

**An Introduction to the Kenai Peninsula Food Hub for Participating Produce Growers, Seafood Harvesters, Value-added Vendors, and Crafters**

*Note: This document is not meant to be a comprehensive work but rather an overview of some of the possibilities and considerations for growing a vibrant and sustainable regional market system. No one has all of the answers and there are no guarantees for success. The Kenai Peninsula Food Hub has been developed with much thought and producer input that anticipates a lot of the issues that might evolve. We will work through unanticipated issues as they arise as best we can. The patience of all involved will be necessary to the success of the Kenai Peninsula Food Hub.*

*For the purposes of this document, the Kenai Peninsula Food Hub will be referred to as "the Food Hub" and sellers as "Producers."*

Cook Inletkeeper initiated the concept of the Kenai Peninsula Food Hub in early 2015. Through the funding of Local Foods Promotion Program, a two-year grant provided by the USDA, the Food Hub will open for business in April 2016.

The purpose of this document is to share the vision of the Market steering committee, how the Food Hub will operate, and to define the rights and responsibilities of producer participants.

The goal of the Food Hub is to provide opportunities for Kenai Peninsula producers and consumers to connect in a way that will create benefit for both, as well as strengthen the Kenai Peninsula economy, increase food security, and reduce the carbon footprint created from importing food. In so doing so, the Food Hub will:

- Provide locally produced food and products direct from our producers, connecting producers to consumers
- Serve local consumers of all income levels
- Support sustainable, local, high quality agricultural practices
- Provide a network for the production and distribution of locally prepared



# Policy Considerations

- Products allowed
- Memberships and Fees
- Standardized product labeling, packaging and quality
- Timing for weekly cycle- listing through pick up
- Permitting, licenses, insurance
- Decision making and conflict resolution
- Liability to Food Hub vs. Producer

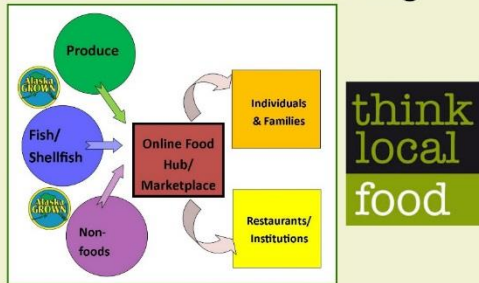




# Community Outreach

**Attention: Local Growers, Fishers,  
Value-added Producers**

Kenai Peninsula Food Hub  
**Online, Pilot Project**  
Informational Meeting



Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association  
40610 Kalifornsky Beach Rd, Kenai, AK

Thursday, February 17  
at 6:30 pm

Come learn more about the online Food Hub, launching this Spring, 2016. We'll give a demonstration of the online software, discuss logistics and costs, and gather feedback from you.

**Meeting Info:** Heidi Chay  
kenaiswcd@gmail.com  
**Project Info:** Robbi Mixon  
robbi@inletkeeper.org



Homer and Kenai:

- Software demo
- Why participate
- Feedback on costs and days, times, and location of operation

Additional outreach to come:

- Producer and customer sign-up and training demos
- Online how-to videos



# Software Selection Criteria:



- Built by multiple engineers on robust platform
- Intuitive for users
- Ability to distinguish producers
- Scalable/ Contractible
- Customer support
- Cost
- Credit card sales







# Local Foods Marketplace

## Meet your Farmers!

Our local farmers are working together to meet the growing demand for local, sustainable food in the NH Seacoast and North Shore, MA area. If you are interested in becoming one of our producers, please send an email to our [Customer Service](#).



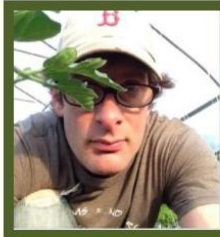
[Heron Pond Farm](#)

South Hampton, NH



[Stout Oak Farm](#)

Brentwood, NH



[Meadow's Mirth](#)

Stratham, NH



[Tuckaway Farm](#)

Lee, NH



[Kellie Brook Farm](#)

Greenland, NH

## Vendor Profiles

**Meet our producers!** Click on drop-down menu at left to learn about each farmer. Inform yourself about their growing practices, personal stories, products and more! We encourage you to contact the farmers, ask questions and arrange visits.

✓ Select a Producer

Alder Springs @ Northwest Premium  
Angel Earth Farm  
Ballard Cheese LLC  
Ballard Cheese Shipment  
Beaver's Nursery LLC  
Big Sky Organic Feed  
Blessed Earth Herb Farm  
Blue Barn Produce  
Brown's Buffalo @ North West Premium  
C&G's Wild Alaska Salmon  
Cabalo's Orchard & Gardens  
Canyon Bounty Farm  
Carp Solutions  
Catalpa Urban Farm  
Chook's Pond  
Cliff's Country Market  
Country Natural @ Boise Gold Storage

## Angel Earth Farm

Kathy Noble

P.O. Box 4189  
413 1/2 First Ave North  
Hailey, ID 83333

### what we sell

Dairy and Eggs - Eggs  
Poultry - Chicken

Meats - Pork

### about us

Angel Earth Farm is located three miles southeast of Bellevue, within the Bellevue triangle. What started out six years ago as noxious weeds and grass, was my vision to turn ten acres of land into a beautiful organic farm with vegetables, blooming shrubs, fruit trees, windbreaks, greenhouses, chickens, piglets, and a menagerie of rescued cats and dogs to keep everyone in line. Over the last six years I focused primarily on creating top soil, and it finally paying off. I've created one-half acre of top soil that is two feet deep (with the help my chickens and Weaner piglets). Every year I pasture raise a flock of French Heritage broilers for meat and Rhode Island Reds and Barred Rock chickens for beautiful brown eggs. In addition, I pasture raise large Black/Red Waddle pigs, that just so happen to dig up and eat the quack grass in that field so that I can reseed it to something more beneficial. Currently I am working toward organic certification, but have decided to utilize organic practices without certifying due to cost.

### practices

Even though chickens are raised on pasture, some feed is used and is sourced from the Dynamite Feed Mill at 611 North Main Street, Meridian, Idaho. The scratch is cracked corn and whole red wheat. The Weaner pig feed is also sourced from The Dynamite Feed Mill.





# Local Foods Marketplace

Sorry, the ordering period for this week will open Thursday, November 12 at 10:00 AM. Please check back then for an updated list of products.



Filter By Producer:

All Producers

Filter By List:

What Was Available

Search Product List:

Search

Sort:

By Category

## PRODUCT CATEGORIES

- Locally Grown Produce & Grains (46 items)
- Locally Raised Meat & Poultry (Frozen) (95 items)
- Cooperative Bundles (1 item)
- \$5 Friend Credit (1 item)
- Bee Products (4 items)
- Bread & Baked Goods (13 items)
- Cheese (7 items)
- Chocolate, Caramels, Toffee & More! (20 items)
- Donate (2 items)
- Eggs (3 items)
- Fermented Products (14 items)
- Fruits (2 items)
- Gift Certificates (1 item)
- Granola Products (4 items)
- Herbal Remedies (2 items)
- Mixes (4 items)
- Mushrooms (1 item)
- Oils & Vinegars (3 items)
- Preserved Foods (121 items)
- Soups (6 items)
- Wholesale (3 items)

ORDERING IS CURRENTLY CLOSED

PLEASE BROWSE THE CATEGORIES TO THE LEFT TO SEE WHAT PRODUCTS WERE AVAILABLE LAST PERIOD.

Product  
Selection/Availability

### ONLINE MARKET HOURS

Opens: Thursday, 8 AM

Closes: Saturday, 5 PM

PICK-UP LOCATIONS

VIEW OUR PRODUCTS

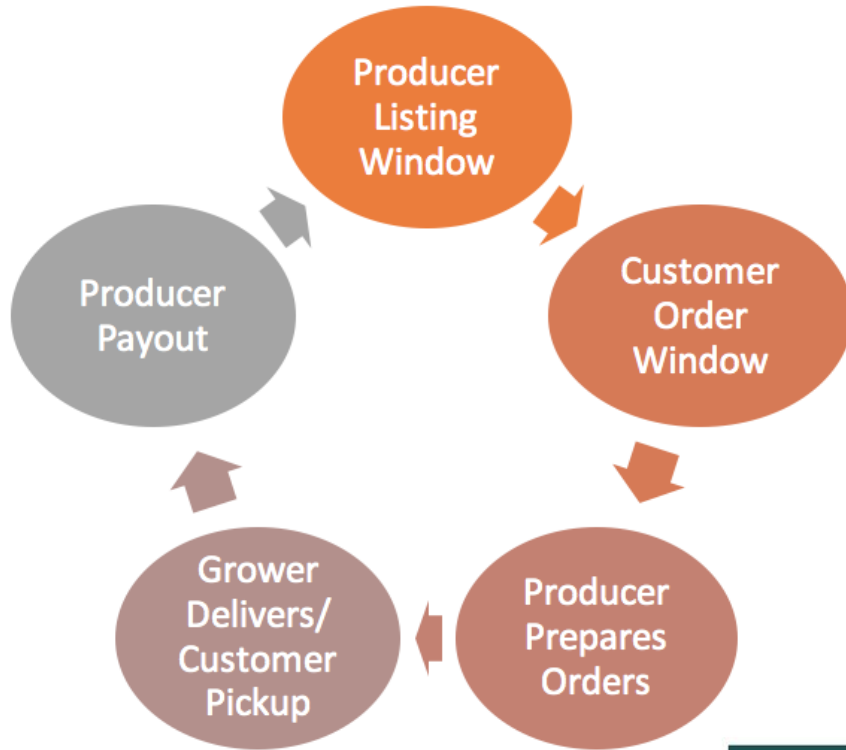
JOIN HERE!

MEMBER LOGIN



# Local Foods Marketplace

Weekly Ordering Cycle



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
SHOPPING OPEN	SHOPPING OPEN  <b>UNTIL 5:00PM</b>	PRODUCERS HARVEST & PROCESS PRODUCTS	<b>1:00PM- 3:00PM</b> PRODUCERS DELIVER  <b>3:30PM- 6:00PM</b> CUSTOMERS PICK UP	PRODUCERS ENTER PRODUCTS ONLINE	<b>7:00AM</b>  SHOPPING CYCLE BEGINS ONLINE	SHOPPING OPEN



# Local Foods Marketplace

## **Initial producer basic profile set-up: 1-3 hours**

- Program manager/volunteers provide training

## **Weekly Maintenance: 10-20 minutes**

- Editing profile/photos/growing practices
- Updating availability
- Adding new items
- Changing prices







# Costs

## Goal: To Keep Costs Low and Be Sustainable

- Overhead: staff, software, advertising, administration costs (bookkeeper, insurance...)
- Membership fees
  - Customers- \$20/year
  - Producers- \$40/year
- Volunteers
- 25% mark up on products
  - Producers set their prices
  - Food hub adds a mark-up
  - Customer only sees the final price





# Benefits to Vendors

- All purchases through the Food Hub are Tax-exempt (501(c)3 through Inletkeeper)
- Food Hub pays credit card fees (normally up to 3.5%)
- A variety of reporting and tracking tools
- Low Overhead: membership and 25% markup
- Less waste= only harvest what is sold
- Easy & collective marketing
- Expanded customer base





# Challenges...so far!

## Weekly Drop/Pick-Up Location

- Cost
- Infrastructure (tables, shelter, parking)
- Proximity to city center
- Availability on preferred day

## Developing policy

- Community feedback
- Regulatory challenges (i.e. Cottage Foods)





# Questions?

For more information:

[robbi@inletkeeper.org](mailto:robbi@inletkeeper.org)

[www.inletkeeper.org/clean-water/local-foods](http://www.inletkeeper.org/clean-water/local-foods)





# Resources

**Cook Inletkeeper** ([www.inletkeeper.org/clean-water/local-food](http://www.inletkeeper.org/clean-water/local-food))

**Alaska Cooperative Extension** (Janice Chumley) ([www.uaf.edu/ces/districts/kenai/](http://www.uaf.edu/ces/districts/kenai/), 907.262.5824)

**Homer Soil & Water Conservation District** ([www.homerswcd.org](http://www.homerswcd.org), 235.8177 x5)

**Homer Farmers Market** ([www.homerfarmersmarket.org](http://www.homerfarmersmarket.org))

**Sustainable Homer** ([www.sustainablehomer.org](http://www.sustainablehomer.org))

**Alaska Marine Conservation Council** ([www.akmarine.org](http://www.akmarine.org))

**The Wallace Center** ([www.wallacecenter.org](http://www.wallacecenter.org))

**Local Foods Marketplace** (<http://home.localfoodmarketplace.com>)

**Healthy Food Access** ([www.healthyfoodaccess.org](http://www.healthyfoodaccess.org))