



Alaska Food Policy Council

health.
self-reliance.
prosperity.

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



A MESSAGE FROM OUR *Executive Director*

CULTIVATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALASKA

When I first joined the AFPC board in 2018, I was impressed with how impactful the organization was, being solely fueled by volunteer enthusiasm and grit. Truthfully, I thought AFPC was much bigger than it was—a testament to the hard work and collective vision of the many people who contributed to the organization's foundation and direction. To this day, I am continually inspired by the dedication of this diverse group of people working towards the common goal of building a resilient food system for all Alaskans—from our Board and Working Group Members, to conference attendees and everyone in between.

The seeds planted and tended by this incredible group of people have taken even deeper root in 2023. We started the year with our first full-time executive director, and by year's end have added FOUR more staff members, each with their own unique skill set and ideas to contribute. Much of this growth can be attributed to the developing **USDA Islands & Remote Areas Center**, a unique, and potentially revolutionary opportunity. With our partners in Hawai'i, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands, we'll seek to find innovative solutions to the numerous shared challenges and opportunities for developing resilient local food economies.

Each place shares similar challenges, including geographic isolation, food transport logistics, underdeveloped infrastructure, extreme climate change impacts, colonial histories, and legal issues that create a complex set of barriers. The first year of this 5-year project is dedicated to planning. We'll be conducting a landscape analysis and review of the many food systems reports, including our own, **2022 Alaska Food System Action Plan**, which lays the foundation of our Business Center activities. We'll be connecting our various working groups to these efforts as well, ensuring we hear from folks around the state.

In 2023, we hired our first-ever Advocacy and Policy Director, with a generous gift from the foundation **MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger**. With this expanded capacity, we are better able to keep you and our stakeholders informed on legislative and budget issues from state to federal levels, and to make policy recommendations to improve our food system. Stay tuned for more tools and resources to come!

As the work of AFPC is ramping up, we are centered in our three-pillar mission of informing, connecting, and advocating on behalf of Alaska's food system. Thank you for all your support, yesterday, today, and into the future.

Robbi M. Mixon

—Robbi Mixon, Executive Director, Alaska Food Policy Council



Looking FORWARD

What a year it has been! I am nearing the end of my second term as board chair for the Alaska Food Policy Council, and it has been a busy and enjoyable experience. Looking back, I am thrilled with the accomplishments and excited to see what the future holds for this organization.

Alaska is a state of great diversity, with unique landscapes, climates, and people. It is also a land of opportunity, and we can achieve great things when we embrace our diversity and work together. Collaborating with various organizations and groups has been beneficial, as it amplifies our voices and draws attention to food system issues. People are aware of the need to build a more sustainable food system, and I am hopeful that this coming year, we will see increased engagement and support from policymakers and the public. I believe there are many opportunities to find inventive and creative ways to cope with today's challenges.

I am stepping down from my position on the AFPC Governing Board, but I am excited to continue to work with this organization in other capacities. I am confident the organization is in excellent hands with a strong board and new staff joining. I strongly encourage continued collaboration and embracing the diversity we have in Alaska's food system.

We are truly better together.

—Amy Seitz, Chair, Alaska Food Policy Council



2023 INTERN

My name is Summer Sweet; I am a service member with Americorps, serving a year-long project with the Alaska Food Policy Council! I am originally from Arizona and relocated to Alaska in 2015. Since my move, I have been drawn to Alaska's culture, community, and climate. My undergraduate degree is in Public Health Education from the University of Alaska Anchorage. I am pursuing a graduate degree at the **University of Fairbanks in the One Health Masters program**. My first career was in veterinary medicine, and I sometimes still work shifts to continue to keep up with practice. I am very passionate about health equity for all people, animals, and the environment. Some of my special interests include addressing social determinants of health, barriers to basic needs, and health education. During this project, I learned more about food system mapping, initiatives for utilizing local resources, and public policy in Alaska. My future aspirations include working internationally within the One Health initiatives. Otherwise, I have a seven-year-old golden retriever who is the best boy ever and does everything I do; we like to go on Alaskan adventures, including but not limited to backpacking, kayaking, swimming, skiing, yoga, and sometimes hibernating.

2023 AFPC GOVERNING BOARD



2023 AFPC Governing Board (not pictured: Marissa Wilson and Tanya King)

Our AFPC Board spans food system sectors and is geographically spread across the state. Every Board Member volunteers their time, ensuring organizational stability, serving on committees and working groups, and helping to build a better food system for all Alaskans. In 2023, we welcomed two new Board Members, **Tanya King** (Rasmuson Foundation) and **Hannah Hill** (Breadline). In December, we honored two Board Members who served three consecutive three-year terms, **Lorinda Lhotka** (AK DEC) and **Cara Durr** (Food Bank of Alaska), who were integral in the founding and development of AFPC. They have ensured we keep food safety and access at the heart of our work. We'd also like to send a heartfelt thank you to **Amy Seitz** (AK Farm Bureau) and **Marissa Wilson** (AK Marine Conservation Council) for their service. Amy Seitz has been our board chair for two years and supported our tremendous growth, including co-planning the 2023 Alaska Food & Farm Festival. Marissa has provided invaluable insight into the complex world of fisheries and helped set up AFPC's first-ever physical office. **Thank you to each and every Board Member!**

AFPC STAFF

Robbi Mixon, Executive Director, Regional Food Business Center Co-Director, *Homer*

Sundance Visser, Operations & Finance Director, *Homer*

Colin Peacock, Regional Food Business Center Co-Director, *Juneau*

Rachel Lord, Advocacy & Policy Director, *Homer*

Leah Moss, Communications & Outreach Director, *Anchorage*

AFPC GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS

Melissa Chlupach, **SECRETARY** Dietetics & Nutrition Assistant Professor, University of Alaska Anchorage, *Anchorage*

Cara Durr, Chief of Advocacy and Public Policy, Food Bank of Alaska, *Anchorage*

Tikaan Galbreath, **VICE CHAIR** Technical Assistance Network Director, Intertribal Agriculture Council, *Anchorage*

Glenna Gannon, Assistant Professor of Sustainable Food Systems, University of Alaska Fairbanks, *Fairbanks*

Hannah Hill, Executive Director, the Bread Line, *Fairbanks*

Kyle Hill, President, Alaska Commercial Company, *Anchorage*

Tanya King, Program Director, Rasmuson Foundation, *Anchorage*

Lorinda Lhotka, Section Manager, Alaska DEC— Food Safety and Sanitation Program, *Fairbanks*

Rachael Miller, Associate Professor of Business, Alaska Pacific University; Food Systems Consultant, *Anchorage*

Heidi Rader, Associate Professor, University of Alaska Fairbanks; Cooperative Extension Service; Tanana Chiefs Conference, *Fairbanks*

Sara Renard-Woods, Assistant Manager, Alaska Seeds of Change at Alaska Behavioral Health, *Anchorage*

Amy Seitz, **CHAIR** Executive Director, Alaska Farm Bureau, *Soldotna*

Melissa Sikes, **TREASURER** Natural Resource Education Specialist, Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District, *Fairbanks*

Marissa Wilson, Executive Director, Alaska Marine Conservation Council, *Homer*

Evie Witten, Principal, Regeneration North; Co-owner, Ebb Tide Ocean Farm, *Anchorage*

Introducing New Faces AT THE ALASKA FOOD POLICY COUNCIL

The Alaska Food Policy Council (AFPC) is thrilled to welcome four dynamic individuals recently joining our team, each bringing a wealth of experience and a unique perspective to contribute to our mission of fostering a resilient and sustainable food system in Alaska.



COLIN PEACOCK, *Regional Food Business Center Co-Director*

Hailing from Southeast Alaska, Colin Peacock steps into the Regional Food Business Center Co-Director role at AFPC. Colin's journey has ranged from culinary arts and conservation biology to supporting local foods and founding Southeast Alaska's Salt and Soil Marketplace. With a background in field programs spanning Yukon, British Columbia, Namibia, and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, Colin's passion for community-building and conservation aligns seamlessly with AFPC's goals. His experience creating superfood products with rural Indigenous farmers in Peru and initiating Southeast Alaska's food hub demonstrates his dedication to promoting local food systems.



RACHEL LORD, *Advocacy & Policy Director*

Joining as the Advocacy & Policy Director, Rachel Lord's 18 years in Alaska, particularly in Homer, provide a solid foundation for her role. With a background in wildlife biology, Rachel has a history of involvement in various projects, including clean harbors, safe drinking water, and volunteer water quality monitoring. Her expertise in developing effective public policy, demonstrated in her role on the Homer City Council, will help to elevate AFPC's focus on advocacy and policy initiatives. Rachel's dedication to local food systems goes beyond her advocacy skills; she even has a small business, Alaska Stems, specializing in cut flowers.



LEAH MOSS, *Communications & Outreach Director*

Leah Moss, the new Communications & Outreach Director, brings a varied background in food service, activism, writing, event production, marketing, and political campaigns. With a passion for food policy and accessibility, Leah's journey spans from New York City to Texas, where she has worked to promote local farming and sustainable practices. Now in Alaska, Leah's experiences in education, climate advocacy, and community organizing uniquely position her to amplify the voices within Alaska's diverse food system. She will work to build better data systems and advocacy platforms to tell the stories of more Alaskans in our food system. Her commitment to making food accessible, building networks, and supporting policy that works with and for communities resonates deeply with AFPC's mission.



SUNDANCE VISSER, *Operations & Finance Director*

AFPC is delighted to welcome Sundance Visser as the Operations & Finance Director. Sundance's journey from Iowa to Alaska includes diverse roles—tour guide, farmhand, English teacher, kelp processor. Armed with an accounting degree and an MBA in Sustainable Organizations, Sundance blends a love for numbers with a passion for sustainable food systems. Having contributed to AFPC through short-term projects, AFPC is excited for Sundance's transition to a permanent role. Her diverse experiences promise a dynamic contribution, embodying dedication and adaptability in this impactful position.

Together, these new team members enrich AFPC's capabilities and strengthen our collective commitment to building a resilient and sustainable food future for Alaska. We look forward to their contributions and the positive impact they will undoubtedly bring to our organization.



Photo: Hannah Hill (AFPC BOD), Robbi Mixon (AFPC ED), and Tikaan Galbreath (AFPC BOD)



Brad St. Pierre (AFMA/Tanana Valley Farmers Market) and Erica Lujan (Blue Market, Anchorage)



Our Advocacy Committee is made up of representatives from around Alaska's food system.

For the past several years, this committee has been guided by Board Members **Amy Seitz** and **Cara Durr** from the AK Farm Bureau and Food Bank of Alaska. We've received tremendous support and advocacy mentorship from these two organizations, ensuring that AFPC supports policy that builds food production capacity and access to food for all Alaskans.

In February 2023, we joined these organizations and others, including the Alaska Farmland Trust and the AK Farmers Market Association (AFMA), for our annual Food Security Week Fly-In in Juneau to inform lawmakers on food system issues critical to Alaskans. We advocated for resources to address the state's SNAP applications backlog, including **Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE)** education. This option is proven to increase application processing efficiency and effectively supports working Alaskans and seniors on fixed incomes. Collectively, we hosted three Lunch and Learns at the Capitol ("Local Food & Local Retailers," "Improving Access to Food in Alaska," and "Food Production in Alaska"), highlighting the challenges of selling and growing local food and sharing stories and ideas to improve food access.

In March 2023, the Governor's Food Security & Independence Task Force was released. AFPC co-authored and produced this report with the University of Alaska- Fairbanks, incorporating research, with the input of task force members. AFPC continues to assist in helping to guide food systems change, by assisting with the Alaska Food Strategy Task Force, chaired by Senator Shelley Hughes. This Task Force was created under HB 298 in 2022.

On the federal level, we worked with Senator Murkowski and her office on the **Improving ARCTIC Act** to bring Alaska's priorities forward into the 2023 Farm Bill. We will continue working in 2024 to push the priorities of the Alaska food system as Congress continues working to pass a Farm Bill.

This fall, with generous foundation support from **MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger**, we hired our **very first Advocacy & Policy Director!** Since September, we've provided comments on proposed changes to increase parity within Federal Nutrition Programs at the USDA, explored the proposed grocery merger between Kroger and Albertsons, and submitted letters of support for legislation enacting Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility in Alaska (HB 196 and SB 149). With this new capacity, we will continue our work to keep Alaskans informed about potential policies and programs affecting the food system and connected to advocacy efforts.



 akfoodpolicycouncil.org/advocacy

ALASKA FARMERS MARKET ASSOCIATION:

Local Food for Every Family

This past year, we've supported the Alaska Farmers Market Association with two incredible food access programs, which provided locally-grown food to those experiencing food insecurity and directly supported Alaska's farmers and fishers.

Farmers' markets across the state hold the seeds to grow an abundant, secure, local food system for all. The relationship between food access and farmers' markets goes beyond providing access to fresh food—it interlocks our local food system with our state's economy, land, and people. In 2023, the Alaska Farmers Market Association (AFMA) worked with 39 farmers' markets and directly marketed to farmers to launch two new food access programs: the **Alaska Farmers Market Association Market Match Program** and the **Alaska Farmers Market Association Local Food Purchase Program**.

The **AFMA Market Match Program** supports customers who shop with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, Women Infant Children (WIC) Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) benefits, and Senior FMNP benefits at farmers markets and direct-marketing farmers. Market Match allows SNAP-authorized farmers markets and farmstands to double their customers' SNAP/Quest dollars. Seven farmer's markets and one direct-marketing farmer participated in the SNAP Market Match. Participating farmers markets and farmers were able to provide a dollar-for-dollar match up to \$40, giving customers \$80 in spending power. For example, if a customer purchased \$15 with their Quest card, they could spend up to \$30 on locally produced food. This season, farmers markets and farmers doubled over \$12,000 and processed over \$44,000 in Quest purchases. In addition to SNAP matching, Market Match provides WIC FMNP customers with a \$15 boost to their vouchers. Any FMNP-authorized farmer can accept WIC FMNP vouchers and likely saw an increase in purchase amounts with the boost. Market Match increases the capacity to support more community members and provide equitable access to local food.

The **Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA) Program** aims to alleviate hunger in our communities and provide fresh, local foods to those who need them most. Since May 2023, over **\$80,000** in fresh produce has been purchased from Alaskan farmers and fishers and distributed to anti-hunger groups across the state. AFMA's LFPA program works directly with 39 farmers, farmers' market managers, and food hubs to procure fresh local produce. The local food is then delivered to anti-hunger groups like food banks, food pantries, elder outreach programs, and soup kitchens. The LFPA program's benefits feed our communities and bolster local agriculture. Rather than garnering donations from farmers, the LFPA allows market managers to purchase local foods from farmers at full market price.



Market Match is possible through 2022 State Designated Legislative Grant Program funding. Local Food Purchase Program is possible through funding from the State Division of Agriculture under a Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture. Both programs will grow and support farmers and communities throughout the 2024 season.

ALASKA Food Strategy Task Force UPDATE

In August 2022, Governor Mike Dunleavy signed **HB 298**, forming the Alaska Food Strategy Task Force (AFSTF), a continuation and expansion of the **Governor's 2022 Food Security & Independence Task Force**. The AFSTF is composed of 36 individuals representing various aspects of the food system, including legislators and relevant state commissioners. It was formed to 1) develop a comprehensive statewide food strategy, 2) strengthen the state's diverse food systems, 3) improve food security for all residents of the state, and 4) grow the state's local food economies.

The AFSTF is chaired by Senator Shelley Hughes and is broadly supported by the Alaska Food Policy Council, which has two designated seats on the Executive Board (filled by AFPC Board Members Tikaan Galbreath and Evie Witten) and three additional Board Members serving on the task force (Rachael Miller, Kyle Hill, and Cara Durr representing Alaska Pacific University, Alaska Commercial Company and Food Bank of Alaska, respectively). Additionally, AFPC Executive Director Robbi Mixon, Board Chair Amy Seitz, and AFPC Intern Lunia Oriol have provided organizational and research support to AFSTF Chair, Senator Huges throughout the process.

In August 2023, the AFSTF released the first of two reports presenting state policy, budget, and strategy implementation recommendations on the first three of seven assigned focus areas centered on improving food security and independence in Alaska:

1. **Sustainably growing the agriculture industry;**
2. **Sustainably growing markets for locally grown, locally harvested, and locally processed foods;**
3. **Improving transportation and infrastructure to transfer and deliver food in the state;**
4. Enhancing the climate for food and beverage businesses or distribution businesses;
5. Minimizing food waste and diverting it from the waste stream;
6. Improving connectivity, efficiencies, and outcomes in state-run programs affecting food availability and access;
7. Ensuring food security in rural and urban communities.



The AFSTF will address the remaining four focus areas in the coming year and release its final report in August 2024.



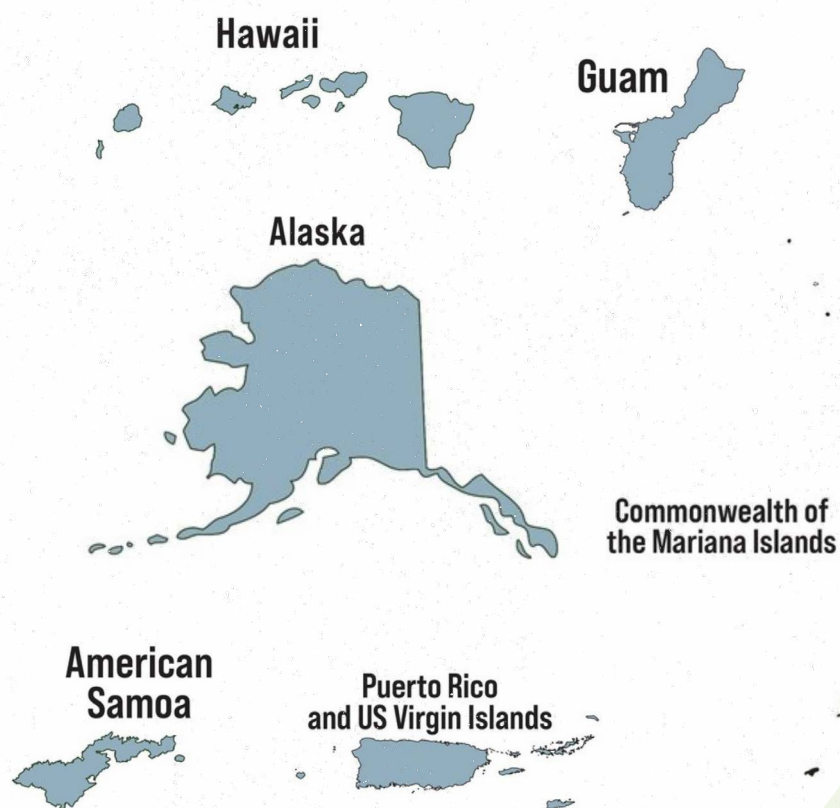
KEY PARTNERSHIP

USDA Regional Food Business Center

AFPC has experienced tremendous organizational growth this year, moving from one staff to a team of five employees! Much of this growth is due to being chosen as a Key Partner for the emerging **USDA Islands & Remote Areas Regional Food Business Center** (RFBC). An innovative cooperative agreement with the USDA created this RFBC, one of twelve centers established across the country in 2023. The lead entry in this agreement is the Hawai'i Good Food Alliance, with AFPC, U.S. Virgin Islands Good Food Coalition, and Guahan Sustainable Culture as key partners, leading their sub-region's planning and activities.

The Islands & Remote Areas RFBC encompasses an enormous geographic area with dramatic environmental diversity. It serves Hawai'i, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Alaska, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. While not contiguous, these islands and remote areas face similar challenges, including food transport logistics, underdeveloped infrastructure, extreme climate change impacts, and legal barriers such as highly regulated shipping requirements. The region relies on imports for over 90% of its non-subsistence food supply, putting it at extreme risk of supply chain disruptions and high food prices.

The agreement began in July 2023 and will operate for five years, with the first year allocated to planning, scaling operations, and conducting a landscape analysis of all subregions to identify technical assistance needs and priority areas. Funding for Alaska activities includes **\$1.6 million** for sub-regional Business Builder grants. Stay tuned for ways to get involved as we intentionally develop this program with partners around the state.



akfoodpolicycouncil.org/business-center

NOVEMBER 10-12 EGAN CENTER, ANCHORAGE, AK



2023 Alaska FOOD & FARM FESTIVAL

Better Together. CELEBRATING OUR ABUNDANCE & DIVERSITY



2023 Alaska Food & Farm Festival

The 2023 Alaska Food and Farm Festival was an extraordinary gathering, bringing together over 500 participants from various corners of Alaska's food system. For AFPC's 7th event, which occurs every 18 months, we partnered with the **Alaska Farm Bureau** and **Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE)**. Held both in Anchorage and virtually from November 10-12, our shared mission was to exchange knowledge, forge connections, and fortify the bonds within Alaska's food community.

Throughout the event, diverse voices, including food policy experts, farmers, educators, and mental health workers, engaged in discussions on vital topics such as the "Alaska Food Strategy Task Force: Report One Listening Session" and traditional plant usage. A poignant moment was the celebration of our **2023 Alaska Food Heroes**—Tanana Valley Farmers Market & Brad St. Pierre, Alutiiq Grown & Robbie Townsend Vennel, and Calypso Farm & Ecology Center—acknowledging their remarkable contributions to Alaska's food system. Arctic Harvest Deliveries' inclusion as an official Egan Center vendor marked a significant step forward, ensuring accessibility for local food producers in future events. The commitment expressed by US Senator Lisa Murkowski and AK Representative Genevive Mina to enhance sustainability and accessibility resonated deeply. The final day featured a vibrant array of vendors and workshops, including insights from keynote speaker Ken Meter, drawing from four decades of promoting a sustainable Alaskan food network.

Our festival was an opportunity to collectively address challenges in Alaska's food system. By emphasizing diversity, resilience, and unity within our community, we believe the conversations initiated during these days will contribute to innovative change, growth, and collaboration. The heartfelt engagement and contributions of each participant made it an unforgettable and successful endeavor and will pave the path forward for our goals of building a viable food network. **AFPC's next event is slated for Spring 2025—stay tuned for location and details!**

To learn more and view past conference sessions, visit: akfoodpolicycouncil.org/2023-festival-conference



OUR 2023 Food Heroes!



ALASKA FOOD HERO AWARDS



Read more about the work of the Alaska Food Heroes at: akfoodpolicycouncil.org/akfoodheroes



Working GROUPS & COMMITTEES

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE



This committee follows issues vital to building a more sustainable food system in Alaska and engages with policymakers and the public to increase awareness of these issues. The committee submits recommendations to the Governing Board on what AFPC's priorities should be for the year, works on comments or suggestions to submit on these issues, and works with other organizations to coordinate efforts in Juneau for Food Security Week. The Advocacy Committee has also taken on developing a candidate survey to use as a way to let voters know how their candidates feel about food system issues.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE



The Communications Committee at AFPC is the creative hub responsible for external engagement. Members collaborate on content aggregation, newsletter creation, social media management, blog and OpEd writing, press releases, and promotion of events like the Alaska Food Festival and Conference. With the recent addition of a Communications and Outreach Director, we're enhancing our data collection and storytelling capabilities and initiating a complete website rebuild. If you love crafting stories, creating content, and networking across platforms, this committee welcomes your passion and creativity. Join us in shaping and sharing the narrative of AFPC's impactful work!



We'd like to extend a special thank you to Kari Odden, Moontide Design, for always making sure we look professional, informative, AND fun!

CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE



The Conference planning committee helps to plan the every 18-month Alaska Food Festival and Conference, one of AFPC's key outreach and networking events that allow us to connect, inform and advocate on the food system. Committee work includes building partnerships, coordinating logistics, recruiting presenters and sponsors, promoting the conference, soliciting donations, coordinating volunteers, and much more! If you like figuring out the little details, coordinating people, and creating memorable events, this committee is for you.



DEVELOPING A FOOD SYSTEM-FOCUSED

AmeriCorps Program

In 2023, AFPC laid the groundwork for a statewide AmeriCorps program focused on food security, with a vision to nurture future food leaders and projects at local, regional, and statewide levels. We endeavored to develop a program that could strengthen local community food projects with tangible people-power and enhance networking and connection throughout Alaska's food system.

We crafted three position descriptions primarily based on feedback from conversations with food partners across the state and the 2022 Alaska Food Action Plan. These positions would address food access (encompassing activities from growing projects to trail building and habitat restoration to improve access to traditional foods), food outreach and education (covering school-based programs, summer camps, and other outreach opportunities), and a food network position at AFPC to help strengthen program and food system connections.

Local partnerships are integral to the proposed program, focusing on locally-defined projects. Each project would center on service members, ideally locally recruited from their communities, by fostering personal and professional networks vital in Alaska's geographically expansive yet interconnected landscape. Engaging service members in direct service activities will equip them with versatile skill sets applicable to diverse roles within Alaska's food system into the future.

Recognizing the program's potential, the AFPC Governing Board unanimously deferred the program application to Serve Alaska for a year due to an influx of new projects and staff heading into 2024. We eagerly anticipate applying to kickstart operations in 2025. Our planning work was funded through **Serve Alaska**, the State Service Commission facilitating federal service programs in Alaska, and we are so appreciative of all that they do across the state. Many thanks to all who provided feedback and engaged in conversations during this planning process. Your engagement showcases an incredible commitment to fostering a resilient and interconnected food system across Alaska.



AmeriCorps



INDIGENOUS FOODS WORKING GROUP



Over the past year, the Indigenous Foods Committee has continued to refine its scope and purpose to help ensure that the priorities being pursued were meaningful to the Committee Members. Through these efforts, participants have emphasized

the importance of identifying and supporting policies that help ensure continued access to traditional use harvest areas, increased funding and technical support opportunities, and strengthened relationships between USDA, the State of Alaska, and Tribes. We want to see increased coordinated support for Tribal food sovereignty and security.

The committee meets on the last Thursday of every month, focusing on networking, discussing policy recommendations, exploring grant, program, and conference opportunities, and sharing work being done across Alaska in Indigenous foods. This group also provided feedback from start to finish on the upcoming report, “Food Security and Sovereignty in Alaska Native Communities: Recommendations for Improving Language and Inclusivity in Food and Agriculture Programming.”

FOOD WASTE WORKING GROUP



In 2023, the Food Waste Committee launched the AK Food Recovery Dashboard, a proactive project to bridge the data gap in mapping food recovery in Alaska. The Dashboard, aligned with the EPA’s food recovery definition, catalogs individuals,

businesses, and institutions involved in diverting food waste from landfills. It serves as the first statewide public database for learning, celebration, and collaboration in food recovery efforts. To facilitate data collection, the committee introduced the AK Food Recovery Survey. Throughout the year, outreach events, such as participation in the International Food Waste Prevention Week and presentations at key conferences, highlighted the project’s significance. The Dashboard is a comprehensive tool for tracking and promoting food recovery initiatives across the state.

Food Hub WORKING GROUP



The USDA Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP) “funds projects that develop, coordinate, and expand local and regional food business enterprises that engage as intermediaries in indirect producer-to-consumer marketing to help increase access to and availability of locally and regionally produced agricultural products.” In autumn 2022, AFPC was awarded an 18-month LFPP planning grant titled **Alaska Food System Research and Knowledge Sharing: Growing Connections for Local Food**. AFPC worked hard on the project’s three objectives throughout 2023.

OBJECTIVE 1: Convene the Alaska Food Hub Working Group

In January 2023, AFPC convened an “Alaska Food Hub Working Group” to focus on improving, supporting, and connecting food hub operations statewide and within regions. The monthly meetings continued throughout the year, encouraging knowledge sharing and building trust between members. In July, the group of six existing food hubs welcomed three emerging food hubs from across the state.

OBJECTIVE 2: Create the Recommendations Report & Operations/Safety Manual

The working group informed the creation of these two reports through discussions during monthly meetings and interviews with food systems researcher Ken Meter of Crossroads Resource Center and Lorinda Lhotka, Alaska DEC Food Safety and Sanitation Program and AFPC Board Member. The reports will highlight best practices and share solutions to food hub challenges across Alaska. These reports will build upon previous manuals and research to make information accessible to emerging food hubs and relevant to Alaska’s context.

OBJECTIVE 3: Provide Peer-to-Peer Learning Opportunities

Group members attended the 2023 Alaska Food and Farm Festival. They participated in the Food Hub Track, which included sessions about State and Federal regulations and grant opportunities, other food hub networks, Alaskan local food infrastructure and retail, and more. Working Group Members presented at the well-attended “Alaska Food Hub Showcase,” and Ken Meter facilitated an effective discussion at “Next Steps for the Alaska Food Hub Network.”

What’s Next?

Watch for the Food Hub Operations & Safety Manual release and the Food Hub Recommendations Report in the spring of 2024. The working group will continue to meet monthly in 2024, even after the completion of the grant. Members will offer support, knowledge, collaboration, and a co-created vision.



FOODHUBS



Interested in learning more or participating? Visit akfoodpolicycouncil.org/food-hubs



Fundraising REPORT

2023 was a big year for our small but effective Fundraising Committee, focused on building AFPC's capacity with resources to implement our mission in robust ways, including hiring four new staff positions. Composed of both Governing Board and community members, this group prioritized grant funding and updating our model for financial sustainability by efficiently using and recruiting resources. Highlights include:

- Our November 2023 Alaska Food and Farm Festival, co-hosted with the Alaska Farm Bureau and Western SARE was extremely successful both in meeting our mission to Connect, Inform, and Advocate for a healthier, more robust food system and in helping us reach fundraising goals. We are extremely grateful to our 22 new sponsors for the event.
- Pursuing and receiving grants to support community-focused programs, policy work, and organizational capacity-building
- Promoted our new Bonfire store, full of AFPC merchandise

As we head into 2024, the **Fundraising Committee** is committed to **3 top priorities**:

- Financial support for our beloved Alaska Food Festival & Conference
- Grow our grassroots donor base
- Welcoming new corporate funding partners

If you or someone you know is interested in serving on the fundraising committee, sponsoring our conference, or becoming a corporate funding partner, please reach out!

Thank you to our Funders, Community Supporters, Volunteers, and organizational partners! Our work is only possible thanks to the generous support of many organizations, agencies, and individual donors.

A very special thank you to our **2023 grantors**:

- Mazon: A Jewish Response to Hunger
- The Rasmuson Foundation
- Alaska Community Foundation
- ServeAlaska—AmeriCorps
- United States Department of Agriculture



AmeriCorps

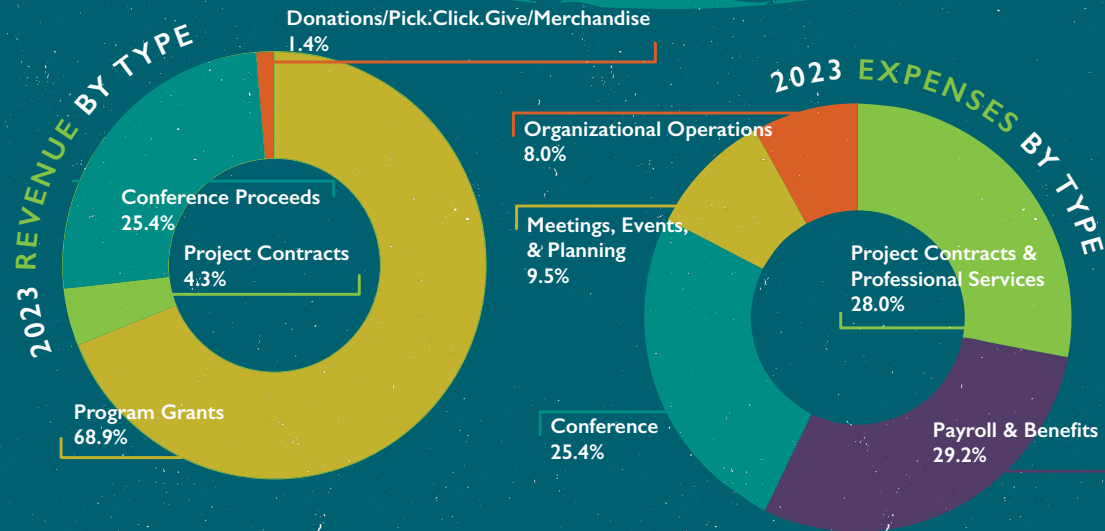
ServeAlaska

MAZON | A Jewish Response To Hunger



mazon.org

Financial HIGHLIGHTS



AFPC is a small but mighty organization with a 15-member volunteer Board supporting the full-time Executive Director. This year, we have seen AFPC grow dramatically, adding two full-time and two part-time staff members to the team. With the help of volunteers, supportive partners, and new staff, we've been able to:

- Hire our first-ever Operations & Finance Director.
- Update Financial and HR Policies.
- Provide consistent monthly reporting for greater transparency as our budget and team grows.
- Fundraise for the 2023 AK Food & Farm Festival.
- Engage in special programs and initiatives, like the emerging Regional Food Business Center.

We extend a **HUGE THANK YOU** to Katya and Koteff Group, for providing us with invaluable bookkeeping services and advice over the past three years! We wouldn't be where we are without you. And we'd like to welcome Brasfield Accounting to the team, who will help us manage our growing team and expanding programs.



Support AFPC: akfoodpolicycouncil.org/join donate



Special Thanks

TO OUR MANY
AMAZING SPONSORS!



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self-reliance.
prosperity.



AUTO | HOME | LIFE | BUSINESS | RETIREMENT



Pick.Click.Give.

Help us meet our mission to: Connect, Advocate, and Inform Alaskans about our food system.
Consider donating on our website and selecting AFPC as your annual Pick. Click. Give. nonprofit of choice.

We are in this together, donate directly to AFPC at akfoodpolicycouncil.org/joindonate