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Press Release

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Pilot Grant Program, *Nutritional Alaskan Foods in Schools*, Set to Commence this School Year

(Juneau, AK) – A pilot grant program entitled Nutritional Alaskan Foods in Schools will begin this school year. The goal of the program is to encourage school districts throughout the state to purchase nutritious Alaska grown produce and seafood to serve to students. All of Alaska's schools are eligible for this funding.

"The program will help Alaska students benefit by being served locally harvested foods high in nutritional value and quality in school meals," said Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development Commissioner Susan Bell, "while it helps Alaska build a strong, local and sustainable healthy food system and increase economic development by creating jobs and diversifying the economy."

This program was sponsored by Representative Bill Stoltze of Chugiak as a way to make Alaskan grown and harvested foods available to school children while bolstering Alaska's economy. The \$3 million program allows each of the state's 54 school districts to be reimbursed for the purchase of products harvested in Alaska. The reimbursement is based on enrollment and the education funding formula, and ranges from \$25,000 for small single site school districts, to \$210,000 for larger districts such as Matanuska-Susitna Borough or Fairbanks North Star Borough, and up to \$642,000 for Anchorage School District. The list of qualifying items include:

- Finfish or shellfish caught or harvested in Alaskan waters
- Livestock raised in Alaska
- Milk produced from livestock raised in Alaska

- Native produce including fruits, vegetables and berries commercially harvested in Alaska
- Poultry and poultry products grown in Alaska
- Grains harvested in Alaska

Please visit our website for more information about the program and links to Alaska Grown vendors at: <http://commerce.alaska.gov/dca/grt/NAFS.htm>.

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