Nutrition, Culture, and Indigenous Foods in Alaska

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Where is Alaska?
Native Entities in Alaska
Local Markets
Packaged Foods
Fresh Foods
NEW WAYS TO PREPARE TRADITIONAL FOODS
HARVESTING
WHITEFISH
BLACK CURRANTS & RASPBERRIES
BLUEBERRIES & LOWBUSH CRANBERRIES
CROWBERRIES & CLOUDBERRIES
EELS/LAMPREYS

Photo Credit: Sean Larson
ALASKA TRADITIONAL KITCHEN

• National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders
• Recipe “Packages” include
  • Background/Nutrition
  • Recipe
  • Video
  • Podcast
  • Infographic
MOOSE VERSUS BEEF
WOOD BISON

• Wood bison relocated to Shageluk are possibly descendants of the native Athabascan traditional food source

• Photos courtesy of Joy Hamilton
FIREWEED
SERVING A MENU OF TRADITION
CLOSE YOUR EYES
Food as Medicine
Food as Medicine (con’t)

“Let food be thy medicine, and let medicine be thy food.”
- Hippocrates, father of modern medicine
REGULATIONS
• 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 DHSS, school lunch program and senior meal program
• 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
U.S. Code Title 25. Indians –
Chapter 18. Indian Health Care – Subchapter VI
Miscellaneous - Section 1685
TRADITIONAL FOOD POSTER & TOOLKIT

• Alaska traditional foods poster and toolkit
  • National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders, NMS, ANTHC, AK Food Policy Council, AK DEC, and others
HEALTHCARE
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 (con’t)

Vendors/Procurement

• Reindeer
• Wild Alaska Salmon
• Fiddlehead Ferns
• Beach Asparagus
• Bones
• Fish Heads
• Chaga
• Bull Kelp
ANMC TRADITIONAL FOODS DONATIONS

• From the Land
  • Deer
  • Moose
  • Caribou

• From the Sea
  • King Salmon
  • Salmon Bellies
  • Salmon Heads
  • Cod
  • Whitefish
  • Sheefish
  • Hooligan
  • Harbor Seal

• Plants/Berries
  • Fiddlehead Ferns
  • Spruce Tips
  • Dandelions & Buds
  • Arctic Berries
  • Tundra Tea
  • Bladder Wrack
  • Beach Greens

• Local
  • Rhubarb
  • Crab Apples

27,524 pounds
Over 13.5 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 as the Elders’ garden
  - Any kitchen with a DEC permit can receive traditional game directly
THE SIĞĻAUQ

• Traditional foods processing facility
  • An Inupiaq name meaning *ice cellar or cold storage*
  • Grand opening was July 7, 2015
  • Processed 200lb of muskox in September 2015
  • Beginning of traditional foods offerings on Utuqqanaat Inaat’s menu
THE SIGŁAUQ (con’t)
SEAL OIL: ALASKA’S CONDIMENT
UQSRUQ (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)
RESOURCES
Food Guides

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Food Guides (con’t)
Food Security
Traditional Foods
Elders
Healing

“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

Thank you

- Ugheli nanghal’aeni (Ahtna Athabascan)
- Waqaa (Yup’ik)
- Tats gwiik (Haida)
- Daneyosh (Upper Kuskokwim)
- Aang (Aleut)
- Yuxudz yuxogh srigisddheyh go ninuxdatl (Deg Xinag Athabascan)
- Nakhwal’in shoo ihłii (Gwich’in Athabascan)
- Ts’lm’wii’amhaw (Tsimshian)
- Quyana tailuci (Cup’ik)
- Quyakamsi tagilghiisi (St. Lawrence Island Yupik)
- Yak’ei haat yigoode’e (Tlingit)
- Paġlagivsigiñ (Iñupiaq)
- Chin’an gu nin yu (Dena’ina Athabascan)
- Tsen-’ii, shign’ahdal (Tanana Upper)
- Enaa neenyo (Koyukon Athabascan)
- Cama’i (Alutiiq)
- Quyana taaluten (Cup’ik Nunivak Island)
- Awa’ahdah aanda’laxsa’a’ch’t (Eyak)