

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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### Sitka to host three farmer's markets in August

**SITKA, July 29, 2008** — A series of three Sitka Farmer's Markets are being held in August, giving Sitka residents a chance to buy and sell locally produced food and crafts.

The Sitka Farmer's Markets take place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the last three Saturdays in August — on Aug. 16, 23 and 30 — at the Alaska Native Brotherhood Hall and the Baranof Island Housing Authority-owned parking lot located right next to ANB Hall between the waterfront and Katlian Street. The markets will feature local seafood (fresh, frozen and cooked and ready to eat), locally grown vegetables, live entertainment, locally brewed and roasted coffee, kids' activities, music, local arts and crafts, and a variety of other items gathered or made in Sitka.

"Having a local fish and foods market was identified as a top priority at this year's Sitka Health Summit," said Doug Osborne, a health educator at the SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC). "A public market like the one we are planning can do so much in terms of building a healthy and sustainable community."

"I can imagine an event to parallel Seattle's Pike Place Market," said Roby Koolyeikh Littlefield, who is serving as market host for the Alaska Native Sisterhood. "How exciting! Everything is harvested or made in Sitka: garden food; wild berries or plants; fresh, dried or cooked seafood; flowers; medicines; arts; crafts; tools; jewelry; music; clothing and books!"

Sitka Farmer's Market Co-Coordinator Kerry MacLane, who has participated as a vendor at many public markets over the last 20 years, summed it up by saying: "Farmer's markets are a great place to spend a Saturday morning with your neighbors, enjoying hot coffee and fresh-cut flowers. The Sitka Farmer's Market is going to be great for people who want to sell and eat locally caught fish."

This event is sponsored by the Sitka Health Summit, Alaska Longline Fisherman's Association, ANB/ANS, Baranof Island Housing Authority, University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service, Sitka Advancing Our Community, Sitka Conservation Society, SEARHC Health Promotion and Diabetes Prevention programs, and the State of Alaska Comprehensive Cancer Control Program.

"The ANB Hall seemed like an ideal location because our plan is to blend the western way of purchasing with cash with the traditional method of trade or barter," Osborne said. "If someone has a big crop of a certain kind of garden vegetable, they can bring in the excess and trade it for something they don't have. In Sitka, we don't have a bunch of big farms to support this effort. However if we get a lot of people to bring and do what they can to support this endeavor, then we can have a fantastic market and this year will be the start of something great for Sitka."

Vendor fees have been waived this year, and vendors have indoor and outdoor table options available. If you would like to reserve a table, review market guidelines or take the pre-market survey about what you might buy at a weekly public market, go to <http://www.sitkahealthsummit.org/>. For more information about the project, contact Sitka Farmer's Market Co-Coordinator Linda Wilson at 747-3096.

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