Rhodiola Rosea as a New Alaskan Crop?

The biggest challenge that Alaskan farmers face is trying to grow crops that don’t want to live in Alaska. However, what kind of commercially profitable crops can you grow that like our harsh environment?

Enter Rhodiola rosea. Rhodiola is a plant that is native to Siberia and is harvested for its roots. Rhodiola has many uses, but is primarily used as a non-toxic substitute for caffeine. Once Alaskan production reaches 200 acres, it will be the most valuable crop in the state...not counting our recently legalized cannabis crops.

Palmer is ground zero for the development of Rhodiola in Alaska. All the University of Alaska Fairbanks Rhodiola research is being conducted at the Matanuska Experiment Farm. Research agenda include improving production, developing best practices for processing and creating value added products such as blueberry, birch and Rhodiola flavored vodka.

This presentation will be led by Dr. Stephen Brown who is the Principal Investigator for the project. He is a Professor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and serves as the Matanuska/Copper River District Agricultural Agent. In his spare time, he is an avid mountaineer and marathon runner.
History Night – January 2017

A fantastic & unusual historical Colony collection was brought by Denny Hamann. Denny has been gifted his grandparent’s items, which were not in ‘collection’ form when he received them. Denny has been systematically organizing the items for the past few years.

This collection includes 1000’s of items including the slip of paper drawn by colonist Leroy Hamann to determine the tract Leroy & Gretchen would live on, tract 108, & Leroy’s Farmall tractor, (which still operates) and everything in between!

Denny is guessing his grandparents didn’t throw away even a piece of paper – and he has many receipts to prove it!

Thank you, Denny, for preserving & sharing the Hamann Colony story!

Leroy Hamann’s Exercise & Dictation Book

We welcome Denny Hamann to the 2017 Board of Directors.

Denny joins past Board Members Joan Campbell, Gerry Keeling, Sheri Hamming, Carol Strouse, John Stuart & Barb Thomas to comprise the 2017 Palmer Historical Society Board of Directors.

The Board looks forward to a great year of preserving Palmer History!

Many Thanks to Carol Lombardo for her service on the Palmer Historical Society Board of Directors. Carol has chosen to step down from her role on the Board to allow her more time doing what she is very talented at - Archiving!

Archiving is a very important & necessary part of preserving our history. We are happy to let you know we are working our way through the Colony House Museum and cataloging items that have been waiting for the skills & patience of an Archivist.

We are excited to have Carol stay on as Archivist! Assistant to the Archivist - is this something you can help with? This job comes with huge benefits of preserving Palmer History! ☺ Give us a call if you have a couple of extra hours to help.
Excerpt from Matanuska Valley Record September 1952

By Clarence Bell, Manager Matanuska Dairy

The Matanuska Valley today has the most modern creamery in Alaska, operated by the Matanuska Valley Farmer’s Cooperative Association in Palmer. The creamery which has been operated by the MVFCA since 1941, has continued to improve its facilities until it has emerged one of the most up to date creameries in the world. It is located in one wing of the MVFCA Trading Post building in Palmer.

A brick making machine forms the ice cream and packages it into the familiar Matanuska Maid cartons, in quart, pint, and half-pint sizes. Matanuska Maid ice cream contains 14 percent butter fat, an increase of four percent over United States standards. Fresh fruit is often added to enrich the flavor of the ice cream. The plant’s peak production for the month of August was about 40,000.00 gallons.

The annual report of the fiscal year ending July 31st showed that the creamery produced 281,228 gallons of Matanuska Maid ice cream during the year for the people of “the land of ice and snow.” We have always had ice cream for our customers, but not always the flavor they wanted. Seventy-five percent of all sales are for vanilla flavor, with chocolate, strawberry maple walnut, Hawaiian delight, cherry, black raspberry and pistachio running in about that order.

“This week’s special, Peach Ice Cream”  
Was the “Special” flavor a surprise???
Yes! I want to Preserve, Promote, and Protect the History of Palmer Alaska!

Please sign me up! I will circle the level I would like to commit to for 2017

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Cut out form - Please mail to Palmer Historical Society, PO Box 1935, Palmer, AK 99645 or bring to History Night!

THANK YOU for your generous contribution – Palmer History will be preserved because of you!