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AFDF Announces 2021 Seaweed Farm Start-up Training Program

WRANGELL, Alaska (December 18, 2020) – The Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF) and partners released the [registration](#) for a ***Seaweed Farm Start-up Training Program*** to be held for Alaska residents interested in starting their own seaweed farm in Alaska. Registration for the program is now available on the [Alaska Sea Grant website](#) and will remain open until **February 1, 2021**. In 2020, this program was held in Kodiak, Ketchikan, and Sitka as part of Phase 2 of the Alaska Mariculture Initiative. **In February of 2021, this program will be held again for a new cohort of participants, and will be conducted virtually via Zoom due to COVID-19 health and safety mandates.** This virtual format will allow significant expansion of the training program, from 48 participants in 2020 to over 100 in 2021. *Registration for the training program will be completed in two parts: 1) all interested Alaska residents are invited to register for a webinar to be held on February 2, 2021 at 4:00pm-6:00pm AST; and 2) webinar attendees will then be eligible to register for an in-depth series of virtual technical multi-day workshops over one week beginning on February 22 (2-3 hours each session).* **Participation in the February 2 webinar is required to be eligible for the technical workshop series.** Please see below for more information.

The goal of this program is to provide the tools and training necessary for Alaskans to start their own seaweed farm. The program is targeted towards commercial fishermen, Alaska Natives, and fishing communities. The program will be completed in four sections: 1) online webinar on February 2, 2021; 2)



Kodiak Kelp Farmers harvest Sugar Kelp

series of virtual technical multi-day workshops over one week beginning on February 22, 2021; 3) one-on-one mentoring for high-performing participants; and 4) potential in-person hands-on field training in Spring/Summer 2021 (COVID-19 permitting). Although there is no expected cap on the number of participants for the webinar, the series of technical multi-day workshops will be capped at 150, and will be granted on a first-come first-serve basis for eligible participants. Registration for the series of technical multi-day workshops will open on February 3, following the introductory webinar, and remain open for 1 week. Materials, final workshop dates/times, and workshop information will be distributed to registered participants prior to both the webinar and technical workshops. Topics covered will include

identification of seaweed species, lifecycles of seaweed, the hatchery process, site evaluation, use of the Mariculture Map, farm gear and equipment design, business plan development, farm financing, state lease application process, gear deployment, seeding and harvesting techniques, quality handling, and safety considerations. Information and instruction will be provided by GreenWave, Alaska Sea Grant, ADNR, ADFG, Blue Evolution, OceansAlaska, Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association, AFDF, AMSEA, seaweed farmers, and others.

Register today to become a seaweed farmer in Alaska! Please visit the [AFDF](#) and [Alaska Sea Grant](#) websites for more information.

IMPORTANT DATES

- **December 16** – 2021 training program and registration period announced
- **February 1** – webinar registration closes
- **February 2 @ 4:00pm-6:00pm AST** – Seaweed Farm Start-up Training Program Webinar
- **February 3-10** - registration period for technical workshops for webinar participants
- **Week of February 22** – series of virtual technical multi-day workshops over one-week (2-3 hours each session), **exact dates and times TBD**

About the Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation

Founded in 1978, AFDF is dedicated to identifying common opportunities in the Alaska seafood industry and developing efficient, sustainable outcomes that provide benefits to the economy, environment and communities. For more information, visit <http://www.afdf.org/>.

