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NEWS RELEASE

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Plant Materials Center Manager Wins Award Stoney Wright recognized by USDA-NRCS

Palmer, May 25, 2012 — Stoney Wright, Manager of the Northern Latitude Plant Materials Center in Palmer, Alaska has been selected to receive the Meritorious Service Award from USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. Wright is recognized for more than 33 years of service to Alaska and plant material science. A leader in the development of plant species for northern latitudes, he has authored more than 139 technical documents benefiting natural resource conservation in Alaska, including the award-winning "Alaska Coastal Revegetation and Erosion Control Guide" Wright's dedication to the development and use of plant materials has been a tremendous asset to Alaskans. Wright manages seven major programs:

1. Revegetation
2. Alaska Ethnobotany Research Project / Teaching Garden
3. Rural Village Seed Production Project
4. Foundation Seed Program
5. Commercial Development of Native Seed & Plants
6. Potato Disease Control Program
7. Invasive Plants and Agricultural Pest Management

The Alaska Plant Materials Center provides testing, production, development, and distribution of materials to meet environmental requirements and promote commercial development of native species. The PMC is a knowledge base for reclamation, revegetation, erosion control, research, and technology transfer for Alaska. The use of native species in revegetation allows Alaskan roadsides, stream banks, landfills and other disturbed areas to be reseeded and planted with the best adapted plant cover. "By using native plant material, disturbed sites can be brought back to a condition as close as possible to what was there before the disturbance." (PMC 2009-2010 Annual Report)

Not to be overshadowed, potatoes and certified seed potatoes are critical to Alaskan growers (and consumers). The Plant Materials Center provides high quality certified seed potato stock free of disease allowing Alaska to be a top producer of potatoes and seed potatoes.

The PMC is more than seeds and potatoes, however. It is home to the Alaska State Seed Laboratory, the only certified seed laboratory in the state. There is also an ethnobotany teaching garden, a high tech classroom and webinar facility, and plenty of information on invasive species (weed) control. For more information about the Alaska Plant Material Center, visit plants.alaska.gov. Resources, publications, services, and guides are available on the site.

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