ALGER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

CONSERVATION NEWSLETTER

Second Edition

Summer Activities!

JULY

7/13 - 7/16	Invasive Species Treatment along Coast Guard Point in Grand Marais
7/17	MI Conservation District Day
7/19	Garden Workshop; Chatham Community Garden, 12 pm (noon)
7/28 - 7/ 29	Soil Life is Farm Life: Farm Tours and guest speaker in Chatham; Pre-registration required.

AUGUST

7/31 - 8/2	Alger County Fair; Find us there!
8/2	Garden Workshop; Chatham Community Garden, 12pm (noon)
8/18	U.P. State Fair; Delta County, Find us there!
8/31	Native Wildflower Sale; Munising Farmer's Market, 4-7PM

SEPTEMBER

9/6	Garden Workshop; Chatham Community Garden, 12pm (noon)
9/11	Stream Monitoring; Scott Creek, Trenary, 9AM - 3PM
9/17	Stream Monitoring; Dexter Creek, Mathias Township, 9AM - 3PM
Date TBD	Community Food System Planning

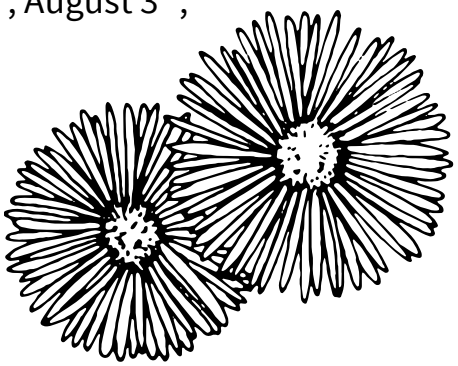
You can also find our calendar of events with more details on our website at www.algercd.com

We'll also be at the Munising Farmer's Market July 20th, August 3rd, 17th, & 31st, and September 14th & 28th



T-shirts from the student art contest are still available.

Shop for flowers & t-shirts here.



The 2026 Wildflower Sale is open for orders now!

Manager's Note
Welcome to the second issue of our print newsletter. We're grateful for all who read the last edition and took the community food system survey. It's still open if you'd like to complete it now!

Thanks for reading,
Eryn Grupido, District Manager

During our last edition we requested you all take the survey at the end to assist us in planning for a community-based food system throughout Alger County. Since then we've had numerous responses and some of you even joined our feedback event at the Trenary Community Center!

You might be wondering *what else are we doing to assist creating a community-based food system?* Let us assure you, we're not just collecting your survey responses.

We're partnering with organizations that are already doing this work in their own communities. Just last month we met with Steve Finley, Director of the Gwinn Food System and Gwinn Lions Member, to learn more about how a community-based food system can feed it's residents. The Gwinn Food System is a network of communal garden beds located at different properties throughout Gwinn. Steve was sure to point out the difference between communal and community for us as well. While volunteers help maintain communal gardens, the beds aren't rented out or assigned to any one individual like many community gardens tend to do. Instead the care is shared by all to ensure healthy produce and overall maintenance.

We have an e-newsletter too. To subscribe to it, please visit www.algercd.com/monthly-newsletter

It's amazing how much these communal beds have produced! So far 1,300 pounds of food has been distributed to over 50 families and a local grocery store. The gardens also host educational workshops throughout the growing season and provide a seed bank at the library.

What makes the Gwinn Food System special though is the fruits, vegetables, other species they're growing. Steve has made sure the seeds shared and grown are all capable of producing hearty quantities in our short growing season and cooler climate. Every garden bed in the system is planned to host these plants, with 138 varieties of produce ranging from beets and melons to greens, potatoes, carrots, tomatoes, and strawberries.

This project is supported by the:

MICHIGAN HEALTH ENDOWMENT FUND

The Michigan Health Endowment Fund works to improve the health and wellness of Michigan residents and reduce the cost of healthcare, with a special focus on children and older adults. You can find more information about the Health Fund at mihealthfund.org.

We enjoyed visiting the Gwinn Food System and seeing how each garden was arranged to maximize growth, aesthetics, and provide for it's community. It was truly an inspiring day!

You can learn more about what's growing in our neighboring county at www.gwinnfoodsystem.com

Native Wildflower Sale is now Open!

Order your favorite flowers by August 16th

1 Quart Pots | 38 Plug Flats | Garden Kits

$9 or 5 for $40 | $85 | $115

Wildflowers

New England Aster
Northern Heartleaf Aster
Smooth Blue Aster
Black-eyed Susan
Blue Vervain
Wild Columbine
Evening Primrose
Fireweed
Foxglove Beardtongue
Cutleaf Coneflower
Gray Headed Coneflower
Pale Purple Coneflower
Purple Coneflower
Indian Tobacco
Wild Blue Iris
Joe Pye Weed
Lanceleaf Coreopsis
Great Blue Lobelia
Butterfly Milkweed
Common Milkweed
New Jersey Tea
Pearly Everlasting
Spotted Bee Balm
Early Sunflower
Tall Bellflower
Thimbleweed

Grasses

Big Bluestem
Fox Sedge
Indian Grass
Mosquito Bulrush

Garden Kits

Wild Bird
Pollinator
Sandy Soils
Wet Soils/Rain Gardens

Shop online to see details for all kits and wildflowers available! www.algercd.com/shop

ALGER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEM SURVEY

Hello and thank you for taking your time to read our newsletter! The following information will give you more background on what information the community food system survey will be gathering and what to expect. Please take your time to read it all before you decide whether to follow the QR code or visit our website and complete this survey. You can also stop by our office and complete it in person if desired.

The survey will take approximately 10 -15 minutes. Your participation is entirely voluntary and appreciated! You may skip any question you do not feel comfortable answering, except for which township you are in. Since we are planning for the uniqueness of each township, that is the only question we have required to be answered. All answers are anonymous, however if you would like to be contacted about anything in this survey or if you state you would like to volunteer etc., please fill out the contact information section and a district staff member will reach out to you.

The survey is divided into 4 sections. **Section 1** is to help us understand your role in our food system and what knowledge you already have about it. **Section 2** will further help us understand your relationship to gardening, growing or finding your food through alternative means than shopping, and what interest you have in learning more about these topics. It will also inform us on your use of community gardens or desire for changes to your local garden, if there is one. **Section 3** is meant to understand the usage and knowledge of assistance programs related to food access and your interest in such programs or other food system activities. Finally, **Section 4** is all about you! This is where you can share your contact information if you want to. Your contact information will not be shared with anyone outside our staff without your permission and you may request us to remove your contact information at any time.

Your responses will help inform us about your experience and strengthen our decision making process as we pursue new programs and long-term planning across Alger County, specific to your townships. We will also be hosting in-person feedback events at various locations in the county from this spring and on through summer of 2027.

You're invited to join these events to provide your feedback in person, ask any questions you have, or take the survey in person. Events will be announced here, in our e-newsletter, and on local bulletin boards.

TAKE THE SURVEY HERE!

Or visit our office in the courthouse. You can also learn more on our website at www.algercd.com/food-systems

THANK YOU!

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email us at algerfoodsystem@macd.org or cal (906) 387-2222