

Susan Bell
Commissioner

P.O. Box 110800
Juneau, AK 99811-0800

www.commerce.alaska.gov



Dru Fenster
Communications
Coordinator

907.465.2523
dru.fenster@alaska.gov

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Contact: Dru Fenster
Dept. of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development
(907) 465-2523
dru.fenster@alaska.gov

Kahiltna Birchworks Named Manufacturer of the Year

(Anchorage, AK) – Kahiltna Birchworks is the *Made in Alaska* Manufacturer of the Year for 2011. A family-run business based in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Kahiltna Birchworks is the largest producer of birch syrup and pioneered its use in specialty food products.

"Kahiltna Birchworks is a genuine *Made in Alaska* success story," said Susan Bell commissioner of the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development. "The Palmer company is a valuable contributor to Alaska's growing food manufacturing industry and our economy."

Dulce Ben-East, Michael East, and partner Sally Freund began producing pure birch syrup in 1990. Their Homestead, located 35 miles off the Alaska road system at Quiet Lake, produces "certified organic" pure birch and breakfast syrups. Kahiltna Birchworks recently expanded operations to include another production facility near Talkeetna. This additional production is putting the business on a strong path for additional growth.

The *Made in Alaska* program identifies and promotes the purchase of products manufactured and/or crafted in Alaska, ranging from small gift items to large industrial products. The program is overseen by the Division of Economic Development in the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development. Products that meet program criteria are eligible to use the polar bear and cub *Made in Alaska* logo.

More information about the *Made in Alaska* program can be found online at <http://www.madeinalaska.org/>.

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