

Raspberry, Nagonberry — Puyurniq

APRIL-REM PUYURNIT PINGAKTAARAI. – APRIL ALWAYS LIKES RASPBERRIES.



Photo: Lip balm made by Susan Short with raspberries.

The American red raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*) is a recent introduction to Kodiak, brought to the island in the past century. This fast-growing, fruit-producing plant thrives in thickets, clearings, and along the edge of wooded areas. It is now a local favorite. Bushes can be found around many villages. As with other types of berries, families have their own patches. The late Elder Julia Pestrikof planted a patch of raspberries on the hill by her home when she moved to Port Lions, following the 1964 tidal wave. This patch flourished, taking over the hillside.

Despite the raspberry's recent arrival on Kodiak, historic records refer to raspberries as one of the foods eaten by Alutiiq people, and a bay on the western coast of Afognak Island bears the Russian name for raspberry, Malina. These references may reflect confusion with indigenous plants: the salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*), the nagoonberry (*Rubus arcticus*), or the moss berry (*Rubus pedatus*), which produce a sweet, red, segmented, raspberry-like fruit.

The Alutiiq word for raspberry, *puyurniq*, is also distinct from that used for other berries. It comes from the word *puyuq*, meaning smoke. This may be because raspberries have pale grey fuzz around them, like a cloud of smoke.