Lichen Radionuclide Baseline Research
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Nuclear accidents leading to the release of radioactivity into the atmosphere may have adverse effects on the environment due to atmospheric fallout. Within Alaska, such an occurrence would affect many communities and villages that maintain a subsistence lifestyle. Baseline radionuclide concentrations, particularly $^{137}$cesium and $^{235}$uranium, were measured in lichen and soil samples collected throughout arctic and subarctic Alaska. For both radionuclides, preliminary results showed an increase in activity with an increase in latitude. Lichen samples generally had higher activity for both $^{137}$cesium and $^{235}$uranium than the soil samples. $^{235}$Uranium activity generally increased to the west, with the Bethel samples having the highest activity. These are preliminary results.

References:


