
2011
First Nations Development Institute

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The mission of First Nations Development Institute is to strengthen American Indian economies. We invest in, support and develop innovative economic development strategies for asset control in tribal nonprofits, tribal governments and tribal for-profits.

Our guiding principle is that when armed with the appropriate resources, Native Peoples hold the capacity and ingenuity to ensure the sustainable, economic, spiritual and cultural well-being of their communities.

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CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Feast days are the most important time of the year for my family and community. At Jemez Pueblo, community members gather on the plaza for traditional songs, dances and prayers that are connected to seasonal activities that have been part of our way of life for time immemorial.

Just off the plaza, people open their doors in welcome to friends and visitors alike, who sit down for meals that took days to prepare. It's the very best home cooking: soups and dishes feature corn posole, chiles and other fruits of the Southwest. Food is central to not only the celebration but also our very cultural lifeways as indigenous people.

That is why I am pleased to see First Nations Development Institute strengthen and expand the Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative begun more than a decade ago. Food is essential to healthy, strong tribal nations. Having enough good food to eat – food security – is just one element of food sovereignty. That involves controlling and managing all of the factors that contribute to a sustainable food system.

Land stewardship is a critical element, and historically indigenous peoples were experts at coaxing productivity from even the harshest landscapes. Proper stewardship requires a sustainable relationship with the land based on mutual benefit and respect that withstands generations.

In support of Native food sovereignty and of our many other Native economic and community development initiatives, First Nations embraces the same values of respect, reciprocity and stewardship of resources, be they financial or otherwise. This approach to investment and partnership has served our organization well over 31 years, just as it has worked in my community for centuries. On behalf of the board of directors, I extend my gratitude to you for sharing in our efforts to help more Native American communities make sustainable change.

B. Thomas Vigil (Jicarilla Apache/Jemez Pueblo)

B Thomas Vigil

Chairman, Board of Directors

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

While careful not to flatter ourselves by comparison, I see a parallel between First Nations and our work in food systems, and the way in which Howard Schultz saw Starbucks and coffee. Let me explain.

In the case of Starbucks, the company took something that for most of its life was purchased as a commodity without much conscious thought, but at the same time was part of many people's everyday ritual. Starbucks made coffee something to think about and something for which people would pay a premium.

For Indian people, the commodity (full pun intended) in question is food, similarly purchased without too much thought. But for Native peoples from time immemorial, food has been a rich part of our cultural fabric, our society and our ritual. So let's start to think about food differently. More specifically, let's put it in our conscious thought and think about it in the context of our overall economies – at the family level and even more broadly at the community and tribal nation level. And history supports this connection.

Connecting the dots between traditional Native food systems and economies is fairly easy. As is the case with a growing U.S. economy, agricultural and food systems production provided the backbone of trade and exchange for most Indian nations, a fact not lost on a U.S. government bent on subduing Indian nations by deliberately destroying their food systems and their economic livelihood and power.

In many reservation communities, this willful destruction and disruption is reflected today in the lack of a strong private sector, which surely hinders the vibrancy seen in more healthy local and regional economies – specifically, dollars turning over two, three and even four times before exiting the economy. In most economies, this dollar turnover, or multiplier effect, makes $1 introduced or imported into the economy really worth $2, $3 or $4. Conversely, empirical data shows the reverse for reservation communities. In the early 1980s, reservation economic impact studies conducted by First Nations demonstrated that a dollar entering local reservation economies flowed out to border town communities almost immediately and, thus, greatly reduced or even eliminated this multiplier effect/ benefit for the reservation itself.

So how does that feed (yes, pun yet again intended) into a discussion on food systems? At First Nations, we believe that while food systems are important for the proper health of community members, we also believe that they can create a multiplier effect on the health of the local economy.

Think about it. Everyone has to eat. According to the USDA publication "Food Spending Patterns of Low-Income Households," even impoverished people spend upwards of 30% to 40% of their income on food. So a 5,000-person reservation community, where the per-capita income is $8,000 per year, spends between $12 million and $16 million on food. And with little or no retail food infrastructure, these precious dollars leave the reservation at lightning speed. The spending in border towns located near reservations creates between $25 million and $50 million in economic value, even if we assume a conservative two times to three times multiplier effect. Just imagine the impact if we could keep these dollars circulating within reservation communities!

And we haven't even begun to talk about the effect of institutional customers – schools, Head Start programs, elderly meal programs, health centers and even gaming enterprises. This is where an organization like First Nations Development Institute gets 'geeked up' about the economic possibilities.

When we begin to talk about what this might mean from a food, diet and health perspective for local communities to control the nutritional options for their people and their food system – Wow! It gets even better still. Healthier, more productive people and retention of even more dollars that are currently

being exported on rising health care costs for the treatment of obesity, heart disease and Type 2 diabetes.

But in order to help folks see this, we needed good methods and good tools. So in 2004, with the generous support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and others, we developed the Food Sovereignty Assessment Tool (FSAT). The FSAT systematically examines a range of community food assets, and takes a solution-oriented approach that looks at assets and resources. It increases knowledge about those needs and resources by building collaboration and capacity.

So what does our experience with the FSAT and our knowledge of the primary data tell us about what is happening in Indian Country? In the United States, 22% of Native households are food insecure, with close to 10% experiencing hunger. Native peoples in 22 states receive food from the USDA's Food Distribution Program – known among Indian peoples as Commodity Foods. Included in this number are more than half of the United States' 565 tribes. A look at the list of foods in the program begins to tell the story: butter, peanut butter, cheese, shortening, macaroni and cheese, and canned meat.

I said before that commodity foods are the modern-day smallpox-laden blankets for today's U.S. Indian policy. And the policy is proving to be effective. Now 6 out of 10 American Indians are apt to develop Type 2 diabetes, mostly as a result of poor dietary health and a diet based on high sugar and high fat commodities. The startling fact is that diabetes – which was essentially unknown among Indian peoples in 1912 and still clinically nonexistent among Indians in 1930 – is today consuming a majority of American Indian health care resources at an alarming rate.

So now that I have you feeling all warm and fuzzy, let me share some hope.

At First Nations Development Institute, we believe a community is defined as food secure if all of its members have access to nutritionally good, safe, affordable and culturally-appropriate food at all times and through non-emergency sources. That sounds simple enough, and with the FSAT, we can begin to help communities better understand the economic opportunities connected to their food systems.

We also believe that food traditions and agricultural holdings of Native tribes and communities afford a strong incentive for renewing Native food systems, so as to improve food security and food sovereignty across Indian Country.

Today, more than 47 million of the 54 million acres of Indian Trust Lands in the U.S. are rangelands and croplands – an enormous potential resource. Throw in Indian nations' billions of acre-feet of water rights and you can bet something will start to grow.

But there is a catch.

Seventy percent of Indian cropland is leased to non-Indians, as is 20% of their rangelands, effectively reducing Natives' control of their food systems at their source. And although 8,000 Indian farmers operate on reservations, they produce few crops for consumption by local Indians. And those farmers are further hampered by age-old discrimination by federal agencies like the USDA (for which they have instigated a class-action lawsuit that is still pending in U.S. courts).

This lack of control of Indian resources is at the heart of First Nations' work. First Nations is working to restore Indian communities' control of the assets they own, which will result in healthy economies and communities built on sound and historically-proven cultural beliefs.

How can we ignore this healthy body and healthy economic opportunity for Indian Country?

Gunalchéesh (Thank you),

Michael E. Roberts (téix sháach tsín)
(Tlingit)
President

Food sovereignty is the right of peoples, communities, and countries to define their own agricultural, labor, fishing, food and land policies which are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances. It includes the true right to food and to produce food, which means that all people have the right to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food and to food-producing resources and the ability to sustain themselves and societies.

Food Sovereignty: A Right for All
Political Statement of the NGO/CSO
Forum for Food Sovereignty
June 13, 2002, Rome

Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative

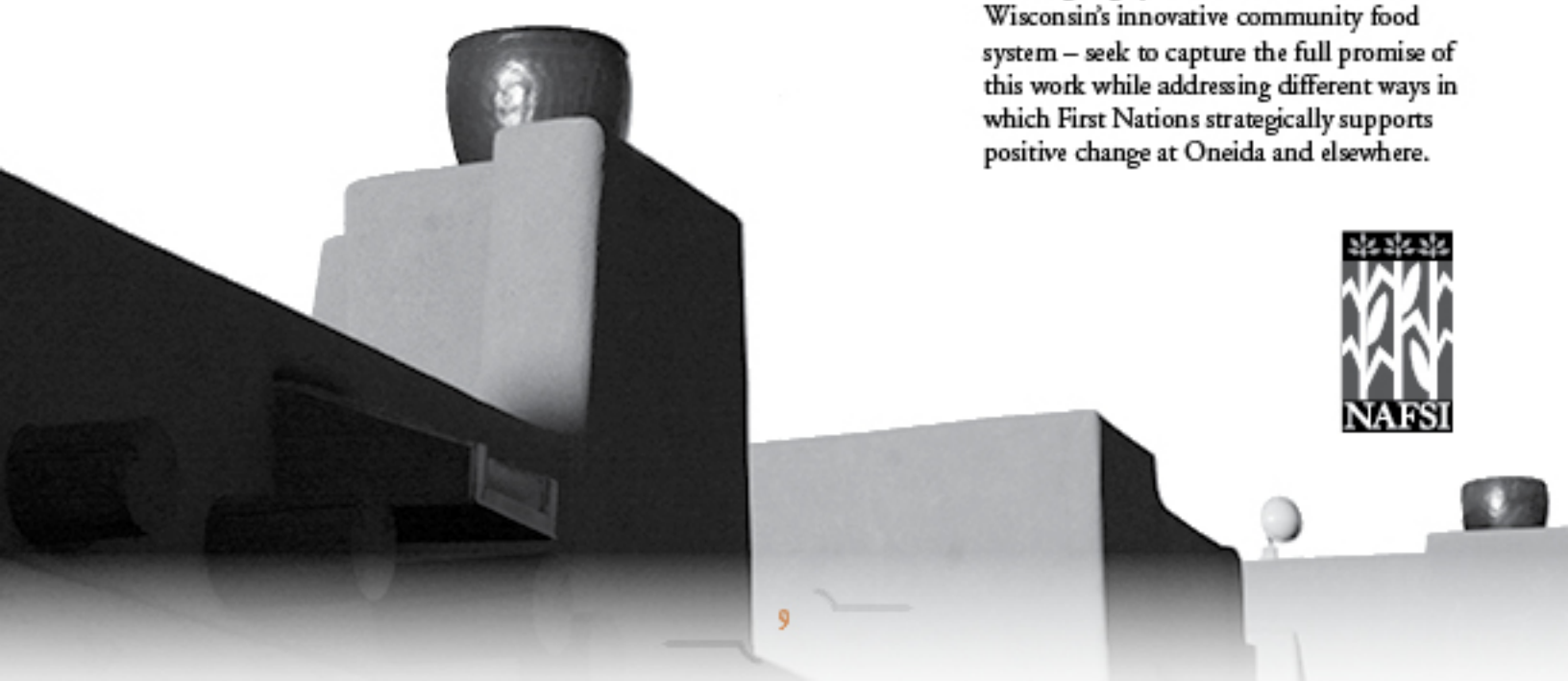
The national movement for healthy, sustainable food has taken hold in American Indian communities. But it isn't just about tilling the soil and getting your hands dirty. It's about reconnecting to the land and rediscovering growing practices in tune with the environment. It's about revitalizing rich cultural traditions tied to seasonal growing and gathering practices. It's about nutrition and health, reversing a tide of unhealthy eating resulting from the loss of land and traditional lifeways.

Revitalizing food systems is also about economic development, helping local food producers with capital and knowledge so they can take their food to market, while also at times creating a market where none existed before. If a healthy, sustainable Native community is represented by a woven basket, food is a strand that ties together economic, physical, social and cultural vitality.

Given the world's increasing complexity, there is no such thing as a silver bullet or simple solution. Complex challenges require complex solutions. In Native communities, food can be the centerpiece of more integrated, holistic strategies that are necessary to respond to challenges many years in the making.

Under the Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative, First Nations Development Institute has more than a decade of experience in supporting Native food systems. This work has intensified over the past two years due to increasing tribal interest and major funding from national foundations and the federal government. For its partner communities, First Nations re-grants funds, provides technical assistance, supports networking and learning, and advocates for more resources and policy change. Future plans call for First Nations to help create a national Native Food Alliance by spreading knowledge and resources.

The following stories in this report – focusing largely on the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin's innovative community food system – seek to capture the full promise of this work while addressing different ways in which First Nations strategically supports positive change at Oneida and elsewhere.



ONEIDA COMMUNITY INTEGRATED FOOD SYSTEMS

Caring for Three Sisters

In October 2011, a special celebration of 50 Oneida tribal members began in the traditional way. "We offer thanksgiving for all the gifts of life," one youth recited in her tribal tongue, offering a common prayer the Haudenosaunee people use to express gratitude to all living things.

The event celebrated the first traditional Three Sisters Garden planted and raised by a group of young women at the Oneida Nation High School. In such a garden, corn, beans and squash plants grow together in a mutually beneficial arrangement. Tall corn is grown in the middle. Climbing beans grow up the stalks. And squash plants provide ground cover.

The youth prepared a meal for their families featuring "sister white corn, sister bear beans and sister acorn squash." The meal was the culmination of a women's studies class taught by Kalanaketskwas Brooks that offered lessons about the high nutritional value of white corn and how to make traditional corn bread, soup and corn mush. During the process of planting and harvesting a garden at the high school, the young women learned ceremonies for seeds, strawberries, green corn and the harvest.

"I know that I will pass my experience on to my family and children," wrote one participating student in thanking her teachers. "(Our) people are forgetting the importance of our culture. I know others see it, too."

Much of this effort to connect youth to their food and cultural traditions was funded by a grant to the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin from First Nations Development Institute under its Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative.

"I feel it is important to teach our youth how to make our traditional foods," says Vickie Cornelius, supervisor of the Oneida Tsyunhehkwa Cannery. "A lot of families have moved back and were not taught how to make them. I tell the girls that our white corn goes all the way back to our Creation story. Our ancestors were always agricultural people and practiced food storage. That is how I was raised."

Oneida Nation of Wisconsin

The Oneida Nation of Wisconsin is a federally recognized tribe with some 16,000 enrolled members, about 9,000 of whom live on or near the reservation. Located west of Green Bay, the area is home to a successful casino, bank and other business development. In 1822, the Wisconsin Oneida moved from ancestral homelands in New York. Disconnected from the land, the move hastened the deterioration of culture and language.

The Oneida is one of Six Nations of Iroquois, or Haudenosaunee, people. Traditionally, Oneida culture is a matrilineal society, with women playing significant roles in both social and political systems. Under Oneida tradition, a Chiefs Council is primarily responsible for day-to-day decisions, while Clan Mothers look out for long-term interests. With a previous First Nations grant from the Native Youth and Culture Fund, the Oneida sent a group of young women to New York to participate in and learn women's ceremonial practices that had fallen into disuse since relocation.

Grants to the Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin

2011 – To utilize food preservation processes related to white corn in order to mitigate the negative effects of climate change ($30,000)

2010 – For mechanical upgrades to increase efficiency in food processing ($25,000)

2008 – To revitalize and retain traditional women's ceremonies ($20,000)

Life Sustenance

It's called Tsyunhehkwa, a program supporting more locally grown, nutritious food while also revitalizing cultural traditions of the Oneida people. In the tribal language, Tsyunhehkwa ("joon-hey-qwa") translates loosely to "life sustenance."

"We are an educational program," says director Jeff Metoxen, trying to sum up the multi-faceted approach. "When I tell other tribes that we are a food program, they think of their [federal government] commodity program. It takes a while to explain what we do."

Tsyunhehkwa is both mindset and place. It's an 80-acre, certified organic farm with free-range chickens, farm fresh eggs, grass-fed beef, organic vegetables and heirloom white corn. The program sells eggs and chickens to community members, while helping tribal citizens start their own gardens with seeds, starter plants and gardening classes. The best time to visualize the concept of Tsyunhehkwa is harvest time.

"We hand-pick our six acres of white corn," says Metoxen. "We couldn't do it without the community, and sometimes busloads of children show up. It's an Oneida cultural process of taking care of the corn."

It's a labor-intensive job of snapping, husking and braiding the corn together so it can hang and dry over the winter months. The dried corn becomes flour, soup and a half-dozen other products. Although modern harvesting would complete the job more quickly, the point is to engage Oneida people in hands-on learning that also builds community.

"Food brings people together," says Metoxen. "When we talk about just food, our differences go away."

"The secret is relationship-building"

When you meet Bill VerVoort, he is quick to clarify his role as coordinator rather than supervisor. He coordinates partners of Oneida Community Integrated Food Systems (OCIFS): Tsyunhehkwa's organic farm, food cannery and processing kitchen; a 4,000-tree apple orchard; a conventional tribal farm that raises bison and Angus cattle; a tribal food-distribution program; a health prevention program; and a retail health food store.

The Oneida Nation created OCIFS in 1994 to address high rates of obesity and diabetes and low rates of community members' self-esteem and sense of empowerment, while creating a platform for agriculture-related business development.

"The secret (of our success) is relationship-building," says VerVoort. "It really is. We help make a connection between people with needs and people who have resources." He describes a collaborative philosophy of partners filling gaps in order to meet shared goals, working side-by-side, not by issuing directives.

VerVoort points to an effort to jumpstart a farm-to-school program. First, OCIFS staff helped a local entrepreneur set up a greenhouse known as a "hoop house" so he could grow sprouts popular in school lunches. When the grower sought payment upon delivery to ease his own cash-flow challenges, there was a delay in reimbursement through the school system. As a solution, OCIFS turned to a different partner willing to up-front the grower's money and wait for later repayment.

Such collaboration supports an integrated approach across agriculture, food processing, culture, education, health and economic development.

"You can't talk about one without talking about the others," says Metoxen. "It's all connected. Good food is connected to health. Everything depends on a balance with the environment. We work closely with schools. Our programs have budgets and staff, and acreage costs money."

OCIFS addresses the food system continuum, from planting to harvesting to processing. With full Food and Drug Administration certification, the cannery processes white corn and other vegetables from the Tsyunhehkwa organic farm, as well as producing jams, jerky and other products sold in the retail store. Just as the farm provides assistance to local gardeners, the cannery offers food preservation classes and even processes food grown by community members.

"The original intent of developing a community cannery was to help families become food self-reliant," says Vickie Cornelius. "Families make appointments to process, dry or freeze their meat, fruit and vegetables. We also give workshops on making salsa, jams and pickles.

The community has responded positively to OCIFS services. At the beginning, fewer than 10 people signed up for gardening workshops and the number now approaches 50. In the past few summers, vendor turnout has doubled at a weekly farmers' market.

"Another requirement is commitment," says VerVoort. "You can talk commitment and talk the talk all you want…but when the community sees it, it's a totally different kind of bonding with them."

Seeking Balance

If Tsyunhehkwa is an educational program, its knowledge of "life sustenance" is perhaps its most critical resource. The retail store features organic products, vitamins and local herbs for use in teas and medicinal purposes. With an eye to the future, the program regularly engages youth in issues of healthy eating, animal and food science, career exploration and more. As a teacher, Jeff Metoxen's mantra is "just do it:" start small and seek incremental progress.

"It's really easy to get frustrated if you plant too much," he warns. "When summer comes and it's hot, it's hard to get motivated to be out working on a big half-acre (plot). We tell people to start with a tabletop garden, something easier. Success (on that level) leads to success later."

Bill VerVoort agrees that the critical first step is getting stakeholders engaged on their terms. "Until they are interacting with it, people don't change. They have to get personally involved."

This hands-on, learn-by-doing philosophy applies organizationally and culturally. It reflects Oneida culture grounded in seasonal traditions, sustenance living and disciplined practice that once were part of daily survival.

The focus on tradition, however, doesn't prevent OCIFS from looking forward. Tsyunhehkwa has used First Nations grant funds to purchase a modern air-flow dryer to increase white corn yield by reducing crop loss due to high moisture and mold. Separately, the cannery used grant funds to purchase a state-of-the-art "steam jacket" kettle to improve cooking and preservation processes.

With survival defined differently today, it is Oneida culture and language that are endangered. From a wellness perspective, obesity is at epidemic levels with tribal adults as well as children. And in a time of tightening budgets, a new challenge is to bring in more revenue to offset programmatic costs.

"We're looking at everything: costs we don't necessarily need and savings now and in future," says VerVoort. "But we're not talking just about making money. We're talking about saving money. My program may not make money, but we are educating people and making change. How much money would we save if 20 percent fewer Oneida people had diabetes? What's that cost?"

Promoting food security, food sovereignty and sustainable food systems has been part of First Nations Development Institute's programming for more than 10 years. In the past two years, this work has intensified and expanded under the Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative. This map tracks food-related partners and grant projects since 2006.

The Oglala Sioux Parks and Recreation Authority is working to develop and implement a bison meat distribution program on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation to create healthier food options for low-income and elderly tribal members.

On the Fort Belknap Reservation, tribal college staff are working to create and pilot a not-for-credit community education agribusiness curriculum for Native American Beginning Farmers as well as increasing food security through the utilization of a co-op.

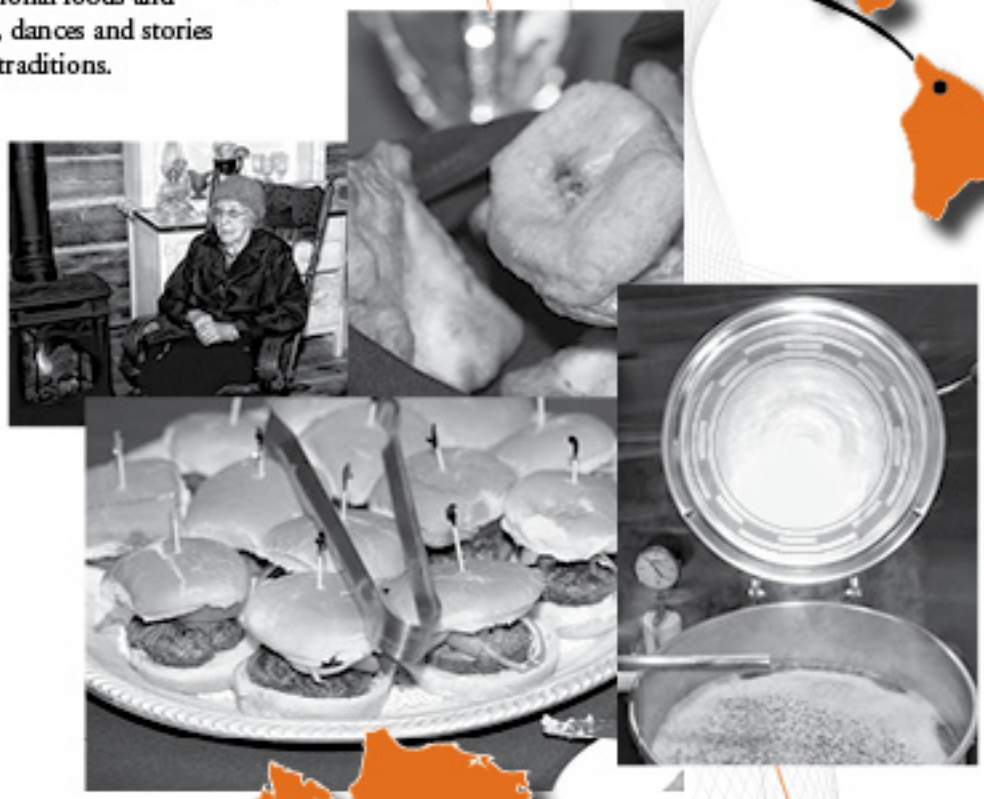
The Wind Hollow Foundation is creating stronger producer-consumer connections through a business incubator and the development of key marketing strategies.

The Notah Begay III Foundation is leveraging culturally-based health education to control obesity and diabetes within San Felipe Pueblo youth and their families.

In the Bay Mills Indian Community, tribal members are increasing healthy, free-range chicken production as well as expanding community-based education at the tribal college.

NATIVE AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS INITIATIVE

Kanu o ka 'Aina Learning 'Ohana created a cultural immersion after-school program for grades 6 to 12 where students begin and end the day with traditional protocol, and integrate spiritual practices when planting, harvesting, gathering and preparing traditional foods and medicines, as they learn songs, dances and stories to perpetuate taro cultivation traditions.



The Eyak Preservation Council is creating an environmentally friendly cold-storage plant to support traditional Native subsistence living.

Providing Individualized Support to Tribal Producers

Tsyunhehkwa provides services to dozens of community gardeners, just as First Nations Development Institute does in different ways. Working with multiple partners, First Nations has supported individual tribal ranchers and farmers from the Southwest to Montana. In 2011, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) funded projects to engage "socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers" on the vast Navajo Nation, where nearly 20,000 individuals work mostly on small family farms less than 10 acres in size (according to 2007 USDA figures).

The ultimate goal was to increase the capacity of rural Navajo (or Diné) communities and producers—who reported an average of $5,000 per producer in agriculture sales in 2007—in order to increase their participation in USDA programs. To provide a range of information from conservation planning to financial management, First Nations partnered with the land-grant office of the tribal college, Diné College, and two nonprofit organizations, North Leupp Family Farm and Shonto Community Development Corporation. Other partners were two chapters, or local governance structures, on the reservation.

The effort took information directly to those chapters, and two centrally located training institutes were open to individual farmers and ranchers and organizations serving them. With a majority of sessions presented in the Navajo language, one topic addressed the Diné philosophy of sustainable development based on integration of *Hozho* (harmony), *K'e* (kinship solidarity) and *K'ei* (clan system).

As one rangeland management specialist put it, "We are stewards of the land and should be thinking of our children. We should be managing for our future generations. I am here today to serve as legal counsel for native plants."

An added benefit was tribal approval to expand the North Leupp Family Farm from 13 to 100 acres. This highly unusual action was a testament to the farm's track record and commitment to promoting the creation of food-secure communities and development of sustainable agriculture.

An Epidemic of Obesity and Diabetes

In 2009, 74 percent of Native American adults in Wisconsin were obese as defined by having a body mass index of 30 or above. From 2004 to 2008, heart disease, cancer and diabetes were the leading causes

of Native deaths in the state, with obesity playing a significant role. A 2006 study in 40 states found overweight and obesity rates to be higher in Native American children than in any other racial or ethnic group. Nationally, the rate for Type 2 diabetes in children is much higher among Native children than any other ethnic group.

According to the Leadership for Healthy Communities program of the R.W. Johnson Foundation (RWJF), a complex interplay of social, economic and environmental factors contributes to excess weight and obesity. However, there are limited data to assess these factors' impact on Native youth. RWJF does cite two relevant studies of urban-suburban Native youth. One showed only 60 percent of these Native high school students have green salad in a given week (compared to 70 percent of white students). In the other study, 45 percent of Native high school students watch more than three hours of television on an average school day (compared to 32 percent of white peers). RWJF noted that a separate study of 8th and 10th graders found youth weight to be associated with the number of hours spent watching television.

Sources: 2009 Diabetes Audit, Indian Health Service Bemidji Area; 2010 Community Health Profile, Great Lakes Intertribal Epidemiology Center; 2006 Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance Report, Centers for Disease Control; 2008 Testimony by Dr. Francine Kaufman to Children and Family Subcommittee of U.S. Senate Education Committee; Rutman et al., "Urban AI/AN Youth: Youth Risk Behavior Survey 1997-2003," *Maternal and Child Health Journal*; Delva et al., "Epidemiology of Overweight and Related Lifestyle Behaviors," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 2007.

Building Capacity for Effectiveness and Change

At Oneida, the first phase of developing a community collaborative focused on a strong core for organizing and managing partners' activities. Similarly, First Nations works with grantees to increase organizational and community readiness to achieve change.

To better understand their local food environment, tribes and communities can use the Food Sovereignty Assessment Tool that First Nations created several years ago. Despite challenges created by historical practices and current environments in Native communities, there are many examples of successful projects whereby people are reclaiming local food systems, educating community members about diet-related diseases, revitalizing agricultural traditions, and developing new food enterprises. The assessment walks communities through questions to assess their own food ecology and context.

First Nations tailors technical assistance to fit identified needs of grantees based on their makeup as nonprofits, tribal governments or for-profits. One example is the Community Food Project funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA sought assistance from First Nations to increase the capacity of 10 Native nonprofits and tribes annually to apply for their own USDA grants, overcoming challenges in preparation and qualification.

"USDA was asking why aren't tribes applying?" said Tina Farrenkopf, First Nations senior program officer. "We did a pre- and post-organizational assessment along with capacity-building training. We also helped groups understand that the (federal grant's) 1:1 match requirement could be met through in-kind resources such as office space, land, water, meeting space, volunteers, and equipment that has value."

Hasbidito, a Navajo nonprofit that was part of a separate First Nations capacity-building project, was able to qualify for its own USDA Community Food Project grant.

Supporting the Next Generation of Agribusiness Entrepreneurs

The Oneida Nation's community food partners look on and off the reservation for allies in promoting healthy eating and returning to traditions. The nearby College of Menominee Nation is one such resource, through its cultural and educational programs and the Sustainable Development Institute housed at the college.

Several tribal colleges and universities have been part of First Nations' food systems initiative, including the oldest institution,

Diné (or Navajo) College, which was founded in 1968. Tribal colleges have taken on broader roles in community agriculture and food systems since receiving status as land-grant institutions in 1994.

In Montana, First Nations Development Institute has partnered with three tribal colleges and their land-grant consortium, First Americans Land-grant College Organization and Network (FALCON). With USDA funding, the partnership is developing an agribusiness curriculum targeting new farmers and ranchers.

"If you look at the demographic trends, it's an aging population," says FALCON director John Phillips. "Most established farmers and ranchers are in their 50s and 60s and…a lot of younger family members are pursuing other career paths. You see the same trends in Native communities. We're trying

to encourage new operators to get in the field and be successful."

FALCON is developing several modules, addressing agribusiness basics, financial management and accounting, financial literacy, economics and land use. Aaniih Nakoda College, Blackfeet Community College and Fort Peck Community College (FPCC) are piloting the curriculum. FPCC offered a series of classes linked to the curriculum, which culminated in business plan development by farmers and ranchers to help qualify for USDA support.

"The class went well, and a lot of time was spent talking about the contents of their business plan and need," says Carrie Archdale, director of FPCC agriculture/ extension programs. "As the plans are fine-tuned, our office would be available to meet with participants to provide technical assistance and prepare them for their (USDA) visit."

After testing and revision, the learning materials will be available to other tribal colleges and to other Native communities through the First Nations and FALCON websites.

Summer School Redefined by the Suquamish Tribe

A 2011 Native Youth and Culture Fund grant from First Nations helped the Suquamish Tribe launch an unusual youth internship program spanning food systems, traditional plant knowledge and tribal culture.

The Suquamish Gardens Summer Youth Internship Program is an intensive, 10-week program that provides a range of experience in different elements of community food systems. Youth ages 15 to 19 participate three days per week in the paid internship, which touches on everything from food preparation and soil science to plant identification and the cultural meanings of plants and food sources.

"It also gives them a chance to see how many different types of jobs are out there that relate to environmental work or food security or natural resources," says Julia Bennett-Gladstone, coordinator of the Suquamish Traditional Plants Program.

The hands-on curriculum literally lets youth get their hands dirty, planting gardens, mapping invasive plant species and keeping project journals. In addition to interviewing tribal practitioners, youth create stories based on Suquamish knowledge or their own imagination. The creations have included a poem on huckleberries, a story about how the camas plant came to the people, and a tale about how the yarrow plant can help during a zombie attack.

There is a heavy dose of such traditional practices as net-making, the Lushootseed language and intergenerational learning involving elders. A practical first step is food-handling certification so youth can safely prepare meals for elders, and youth also take part in a commitment ceremony to acknowledge their cultural and community responsibilities.

"Most of the things they harvest are for the elders," says Bennett-Gladstone. "We stress the spiritual aspects of feeding your people and the protocols that have to happen when you're out harvesting or preparing food."

2011 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Financial & Investor Education

Economic Empowerment for Native Victims of Abuse – Supported by Allstate and Ameriprise

Financial Literacy: Life on Your Own Terms - Supported by the Daniels Fund

New Distribution Channels for Investor Education – Supported by the FINRA Investor Education Foundation

Oklahoma Asset-Building: Promoting Economic Security for Life - Supported by the Ford Foundation

School-Based Financial Education Project – Supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Combating Predatory Lending

Tax Time Taxing Enough Without Deception – Supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Bank Payday Lending: A Debt-Trap Wolf in Sheep's Clothing – In partnership with the Center for Responsible Lending

Model Tribal Consumer Protection Code – Supported by The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Consumer Protection in Native Communities - Supported by The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Guide to Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Site Development in Native Communities - Supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Native American Business Development

First Nations Oweesta Corporation – An independent subsidiary corporation of First Nations Development Institute

Tribal College Agribusiness Curriculum Development – Partnership with First Americans Land-grant College Organization and Network (FALCON) – Supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, CHS Foundation and Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Foundation

Michigan Indian Tribal Assets Outreach Project – Supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Native Asset Building Partnership Project – Supported by the Northwest Area Foundation, the Otto Bremer Foundation and USDA Rural Business Opportunity Grant program

Navajo Western Agency Agribusiness Project – Supported by USDA Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers program

Private Equity for Native Small Business Development – Supported by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation

Strengthening Native American Nonprofits

Native American Youth & Culture Fund – Supported by the Kalliopeia Foundation and The Susan A. and Donald P. Babson Charitable Foundation

Strengthening Native American People One Community at Time – Supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Strengthening Communities Fund (SCF)

Combating Domestic Violence in Native American Communities – Supported by the U.S. Department of Justice - Office on Violence Against Women

Training the Next Generation of Native American Leaders (LEAD Program) – Supported by American Express Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Native American Foods & Health

Healthy People & Sustainable Communities - USDA Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program (USDA-CFP)

Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative Project – Supported by Walmart Foundation and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Improving Native Food Systems Strengthens Native Businesses & Economies – Supported by The Kresge Foundation

GRANTS, GRANTMAKING AND PHILANTHROPIC SERVICES

In 1993, First Nations Development Institute launched its first grant fund, the Eagle Staff Fund, to bring critically needed funding to projects and organizations in Indian Country. Since then, First Nations has managed multiple grant programs with a myriad of foundation and corporate partners and individual donors. We have successfully managed more than 750 grants totaling $17.25 million.

In addition to providing financial support, First Nations also offers specialized training and technical assistance workshops, convenings and conferences to Native nonprofit and tribal entities.

First Nations works closely with each partner to ensure that we connect the appropriate strategies, issues and resources in order to develop and expand effective programming. For more information, see the "Philanthropic Services" tab of our website, www.firstnations.org.

Together with investor partners, First Nations' resources support asset-based development efforts that fit within the culture and are sustainable. First Nations offers grant support through the Eagle Staff Fund, including special initiatives within it, as well as through other donor-advised and donor-designated funds.

First Nations is currently managing the following grant funds:

Eagle Staff Fund

Native Youth and Culture Fund

Little Eagle Staff Fund

Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative

Native American Asset Watch Initiative

Raymond James Native American Development Fund

Grant opportunities are listed through the "Grant Seekers" section of our website, www.firstnations.org. To receive updates, sign up for email notifications through links on the website.

2011 GRANTS

Organization		Amount	Project Description
Asset Building			
Akwesasne Housing Authority	Akwesasne, NY	$500	Utilize staff to support the Innovative Native VITA Site Development Models Project research.
Chief Dull Knife College	Lame Deer, MT	$10,000	Increase services offered under the VITA program in Montana, including linking clients to benefits and social services.
College of the Menominee Nation	Keshena, WI	$500	Utilize staff to support the Innovative Native VITA Site Development Models Project research.
Four Bands Community Fund, Inc.	Eagle Butte, SD	$1,000	Utilize staff to support the Innovative Native VITA Site Development Models Project research.
Lakota Funds	Kyle, SD	$500	Utilize staff to support the Innovative Native VITA Site Development Models Project research.
Native Community Finance	Laguna, NM	$500	Utilize staff to support the Innovative Native VITA Site Development Models Project research.
Native American Community Development Corporation	Browning, MT	$1,000	Utilize staff to support the Innovative Native VITA Site Development Models Project research.
Northwest Native Development Fund	Nespelem, WA	$10,000	Increase services offered under the VITA program in Washington, including linking clients to benefits and social services.
White Earth Investment Initiative	Omega, MN	$500	Utilize staff to support the Innovative Native VITA Site Development Models Project research.
Ysleta del Sur Pueblo	Ysleta del Sur Pueblo, TX	$1,000	Utilize staff to support the Innovative Native VITA Site Development Models Project research.
Eagle Staff Fund - Discretionary			
Native American Rights Fund, Inc.	Boulder, CO	$5,000	Enable organization to host Boarding School Healing Project Symposium
ONABEN, A Native American Business Network	Portland, OR	$2,000	Leverage support for organization's Native Americans Entrepreneurial Efforts.
Leadership and Entrepreneurial Apprenticeship Development (LEAD) Program			
Native American Youth & Family Center	Portland, OR	$48,000	Identify and recruit 8 to 15 emerging Native nonprofit leaders to be LEAD fellows for one year. Utilize staff and facilities to provide trainings and workshops to LEAD fellows. Leverage local network contacts to provide a forum for LEAD fellows to connect with nonprofit leaders.
Native Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative			
Blackfeet Community College	Browning, MT	$30,500	Utilize college staff to create a not-for-credit community education agribusiness curriculum for Native American Beginning Farmers and to pilot this curriculum.
Fort Belknap College	Harlem, MT	$30,500	Utilize college staff to create a not-for-credit community education agribusiness curriculum for Native American Beginning Farmers and to pilot this curriculum.
Fort Peck Community College	Poplar, MT	$30,500	Utilize college staff to create a not-for-credit community education agribusiness curriculum for Native American Beginning Farmers and to pilot this curriculum.

2011 GRANTS

Organization		Amount	Project Description
Navajo Nation Tolani Lake Chapter	Winslow, AZ	$5,000	Increase the capacity of the organization to improve and expand services by developing a financial accounting system and improving fund-raising skills.
Navajo Nation Tonalea Chapter	Tonalea, AZ	$5,000	Increase the capacity of the organization to improve and expand services by developing a Youth Program on Traditional Culture Farm Methods, establishing a Farm Board for the Commercial Farm, developing a Plan of Operation, developing Business Plans and Financial Plans for the Commercial Farm.
North Leupp Family Farms	Leupp, AZ	$2,000	Utilize existing networks to identify and support Chapters to participate in the Navajo Western Agency Chapters Technical Assistance Project. Leverage funding from other sources to assist in training and technical assistance provided to identified Chapters.
Shonto Community Development Corp., Inc.	Shonto, AZ	$5,000	Increase the amount of capacity and funding for projects that immediately relate to the service area of SCDC in the areas of farming, ranching, and their related fields. Assist individuals and organizations in developing their capacity as well as bringing in technical assistance that will allow these entities to diversify their funding opportunities. Increase the ability of clients to meet requirements to utilize USDA services and opportunities.
Native Coalition Building			
Oklahoma Policy Institute	Tulsa, OK	$40,000	Enable organization to create asset-building campaign.
Native Youth and Culture Fund			
AlterNative Soulutions	Polson, MT	$19,400	Enable the organization to create theatre productions performed by youth in both Salish and English languages based on the stories they have captured from tribal members.
California Indian Museum & Culture Center	Santa Rosa, CA	$19,400	Increase and retain the Pomo language through a partnership of elders and youth recording conversations that will be used to create a distance learning curriculum.
Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation	Shawnee, OK	$19,350	Increase and retain leadership development, renewal of assets, culture preservation, language and heritage of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation.
College of the Menominee Nation	Keshena, WI	$19,300	Enable the organization to create a documentary on "Leadership in Crisis" in the era of the Termination Act that will be produced by Menominee Nation Tribal youth.
Cowlitz Indian Tribe	Longview, WA	$19,350	Utilize events to create intergenerational connections, increase healthy behaviors, develop leadership skills and strengthen the Cowlitz tribal community.
Fort Peck Community College	Poplar, MT	$18,100	Leverage Nakota and Dakota language usage through a Summer Language Immersion Program.
Hawaiian Community Assets, Inc.	Honolulu, HI	$19,400	Utilize culturally relevant financial education to strengthen future generations.
Hopi Credit Association	Keams Canyon, AZ	$10,200	Leverage financial education with a cultural emphasis through the Financial Literacy Camp.
Lakota Language Consortium	Pierre, SD	$14,550	Create a method to communicate traditional Lakota values in a modern storytelling medium and retain the language within a new generation of young people through the Lakota Berenstein Bears Project.

Organization		Amount	Project Description
Longhouse Media	Seattle, WA	$19,400	Suquamish Tribal School Youth will create a full length film project on environmental changes and the effects on the Suquamish people.
Lummi CEDAR Project	Bellingham, WA	$19,400	Leverage leadership training curriculum and participation in the annual inter-tribal canoe journey to empower high risk youth.
Makah Cultural and Research Center	Neah Bay, WA	$19,300	To retain Makah cultural practices, leverage sustainable usage and increase healthier lifestyles, Makah youth will be taught traditional knowledge and skills to utilize the natural resources of the area.
Marketplace Of Ideas-Marketplace For Kids Inc	Bismarck, ND	$19,400	Utilize the Native Youth Entrepreneurship Program in the Three Affiliated Tribes, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa and Spirit Lake Reservations.
Native American Community Board	Lake Andes, SD	$19,400	Increase the number of fluent, young Dakota speakers in a 6-week summer language immersion program by leveraging cultural heritage and traditional knowledge.
Native Vote Alliance of Minnesota	Cass Lake, MN	$10,000	Annual Youth Civic Camp creates an opportunity for youth to blend traditional civic education with renewable energy and localized farming with a cultural emphasis.
Northwest Native American Basketweavers Association	Covington, WA	$8,000	Create the opportunity for Pacific Northwest youth to learn basket weaving from master weavers while utilizing the cultural aspects of the art.
Potlatch Fund	Seattle, WA	$19,400	Increase community involvement of Native youth in the Canoe Journey by including them in the grant process and in planning the annual Funder's Tour.
Rocky Mountain Indian Chamber of Commerce	Denver, CO	$850	Increase Native educational assets by supporting the Colorado Indian Scholarship Program.
Round Valley Indian Tribes	Covelo, CA	$13,400	Leverage the importance of family, elders, symbolism of regalia, and traditional language while developing leadership skills.
Sacred Pathways Inc	Pembroke, NC	$19,400	Revive and retain cultural practices, beliefs and values through youth personal development, leadership and empowerment.
Santa Fe Indian School	Santa Fe, NM	$15,650	Leverage positive youth development through empowerment and education to prevent future risky activities.
Tewa Women United	Santa Cruz, NM	$19,400	To increase cultural values, A'Gin Girls Empowerment Program will leverage a culturally appropriate approach to address teen sexual violence, substance abuse, pregnancy and HIV/STDs utilizing peer support, intergenerational sharing and mentoring.
The Notah Begay III Foundation Inc	Bernalillo, NM	$19,400	Leverage a culturally-based health education program to control obesity and diabetes within San Felipe Pueblo youth, their families, the San Felipe Pueblo Community and other local Native communities.
The Suquamish Tribe	Suquamish, WA	$19,400	Increase organic gardening life skills for Suquamish youth. Create an awareness and understanding of traditional and contemporary Suquamish food systems and the impact of food security on the tribal community.
Raymond James Native American Fund			
Ak-Chin Indian Community	Maricopa, AZ	$250	Increase support for programs making a positive impact on Native American families in low-income areas.

2011 GRANTS

Organization		Amount	Project Description
Bad River Housing Authority	Odanah, WI	$500	Increase support for programs making a positive impact on Native American families in low-income areas.
Colorado River Residential Management Corporation	Parker, AZ	$250	Increase support for programs making a positive impact on Native American families in low-income areas.
Jicarilla Apache Nation	Dulce, NM	$500	Increase support for programs making a positive impact on Native American families in low-income areas.
Lac Courte Oreilles Housing Authority	Hayward, WI	$500	Increase support for programs making a positive impact on Native American families in low-income areas.
Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe	Cass Lake, MN	$500	Increase support for programs making a positive impact on Native American families in low-income areas.
Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin Housing Department	Keshena, WI	$500	Increase support for programs making a positive impact on Native American families in low-income areas.
Mescalero Apache Housing Authority	Mescalero, NM	$250	Increase support for programs making a positive impact on Native American families in low-income areas.
Northern Arapaho Tribal Housing	Ethete, WY	$500	Increase support for programs making a positive impact on Native American families in low-income areas.
Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation	Mayetta, KS	$250	Increase support for programs making a positive impact on Native American families in low-income areas.
Sitting Bull College	Fort Yates, ND	$250	Increase support for programs making a positive impact on Native American families in low-income areas.
Turtle Mountain Housing Authority	Belcourt, ND	$500	Increase support for programs making a positive impact on Native American families in low-income areas.
White Earth Reservation Housing Authority	Waubun, MN	$500	Increase support for programs making a positive impact on Native American families in low-income areas.
Strengthening Communities Fund, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services			
Montana Indian Business Alliance	Great Falls, MT	$4,000	Create strategic plan and increase organizational development.

Total (59 grants) = $639,100.00

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