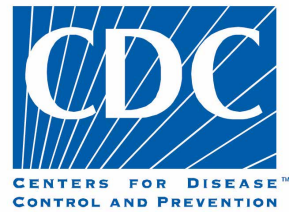




PART V
**TRADITIONAL FOODS IN
NATIVE AMERICA**

A compendium of traditional foods stories
from American Indian and Alaska Native communities



Our foods connect us to who we are and where we come from. Our foods are central to our creation story and our ceremonies. Our foods are in the mountains and meadows such as “dee-chi” (berries), our foods are in wetlands such as “gus” (camas), our foods are in the rivers such as “lhuk” (fish), and our foods are in the ocean such as “lvt” (seaweed).

KATHY KENTTA-ROBINSON & SHARLA ROBINSON
Healthy Traditions Project, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Native Diabetes Wellness Program (NDWP) expresses gratitude and thanks to the University of South Dakota's Chelsea Wesner (Choctaw), who collected the stories that inspired this report. Ms. Wesner wrote this report in collaboration with NDWP.

Collaborators would especially like to thank staff and tribal members from the programs and organizations featured: Eagle Adventure Program, Chickasaw Nation Nutrition Services and Oklahoma Tribal Engagement Partners; Healthy Traditions Project, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians; Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation, Oglala Lakota Nation; Wozupi Tribal Gardens and Seeds of Native Health Campaign, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community; Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (APIA); Feast for the Future, Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health, Santo Domingo Pueblo, Navajo (Diné) Nation, and White Mountain Apache Tribe; Inter Tribal Buffalo Council; and the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC). This report would not have been possible without the sharing of their stories and diverse experience in restoring traditional food systems.

In addition, it is important to recognize the many tribes, organizations, and institutions that sustain this work. Among these leaders are the First Nations Development Institute's [Nourishing Native Foods and Health program](#), the [Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative](#) at the University of Arkansas School of Law, the [Seeds of Native Health Campaign](#) led by the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, the [Notah Begay III Foundation](#), and the funders of these organizations and institutions. Each of these institutions works independently and collectively to provide funding, training and technical assistance, and resources that promote and support food sovereignty, healthy food security, and health in American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

The answers to questions are the direct voice and opinions of the authors contributing to the stories in this compendium and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the US Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Suggested citation: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018). Traditional Foods in Native America—Part V: A Compendium of Stories from the Indigenous Food Sovereignty Movement in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities. Atlanta, GA: Native Diabetes Wellness Program, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



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PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Commissioned by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) [Native Diabetes Wellness Program](#) (NDWP), this report is the fifth and final part of a compendium of stories highlighting traditional foods programs in culturally and geographically diverse American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities. The entire compendium, [Traditional Foods in Native America](#), can be accessed at www.cdc.gov/diabetes/projects/ndwp/traditional-foods.htm.

As noted in parts I through IV of the compendium, the [NDWP's Traditional Foods Program](#) has helped leverage human and natural resources to promote sustainability and traditional foodways and to improve health through a cooperative agreement with 17 tribal grantee partners between 2008 and 2014. The partner grantees represent tribes and tribal organizations from coast to coast, each taking a unique approach to restoring and sustaining a healthful and traditional food system. While supporting health promotion and type 2 diabetes prevention efforts, these projects also addressed critical issues such as food security, food sovereignty, cultural preservation, and environmental sustainability.

[Part I](#) of the compendium features six traditional foods programs and initiatives; [part II](#) highlights six of NDWP's Traditional Foods Program partner grantees; [part III](#) includes nine stories, a combination of partner grantees and traditional foods initiatives independent of NDWP; and [part IV](#) features nine stories with a central theme of reclaiming and preserving ancestral homelands to support subsistence traditions and strengthen Native foodways. As the collection of stories has evolved, central themes have emerged within each part of the compendium. Parts I and II focus on building capacity for food security. Part III highlights the role of storytelling in preserving cultural knowledge and foodways. And part IV describes the significance of land as a social determinant of health in tribal communities. Inspired by previous editions of the compendium, the stories presented here comprise part V in the series with the central theme of sustainability.

To collect this compendium of stories, NDWP partnered with Chelsea Wesner, a member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and faculty member in the University of South Dakota's Department of Public Health. Based on conversations with key stakeholders in each community, the stories in this compendium demonstrate how traditional foods programs are building healthy food security, preserving cultural knowledge, and restoring health.

Methods

This compendium uses ethnographic methods to understand the cultural significance and benefits of traditional foods programs in Native American communities. These methods guide the collection of stories through informal and structured speaker conversations and help identify the common themes among them. Following an informal conversation, each speaker was asked to respond in writing to four or five open-ended questions. This method gives the storyteller time to think about what she or he would like to say, allowing a rich and thoughtful narrative process.

Fourteen traditional foods programs and supporting organizations participated in this report to share their innovative approaches to encouraging traditional foods promotion and promising practices. A total of nine programs shared the stories featured in this report.

This compendium is a collection of forty stories in five story sets shared by AI/AN communities and tribal organizations. Seven of these stories share progress over time with the same community and initiative. Stories were collected from 2013 to 2017 from program partners representing the AI/AN tribal communities and organizations outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Programs featured in compendium.

TRADITIONAL FOODS IN NATIVE AMERICA				
A Compendium of Stories from the Indigenous Food Sovereignty Movement in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities				
PART I	PART II	PART III	PART IV	PART V
Mohegan Foodways (Mohegan Tribe)	*Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.	*Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.	Ahchâôk. Ômâôk. Keepunumuk. (Hunt. Fish. Gather.) (Washington University in St. Louis)	*Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.
Myskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative (Muscogee (Creek) Nation)	*Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma	*Building Community, Strengthening Traditional Ties (Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa)	Eagle Adventure Program Chickasaw Nation SNAP-ED Program (Chickasaw Nation)	*Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (Spotlight on Traditional Foods Preschool Curriculum)
Oneida Community Integrated Food Systems (Oneida Nation)	*Ramah Navajo Community	*Community Health Program (Salish Kootenai College)	Fish-to-School, Center for Alaska Native Health Research (University of Alaska Fairbanks)	Eagle Adventure Program Chickasaw Nation SNAP-Ed Program (Chickasaw Nation) ¹
Seven Arrows Garden (Pueblo of Laguna)	*Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC)	Food is Our Medicine (Seneca Nation)	Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative (University of Arkansas School of Law)	Feast for the Future (Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health, Santo Domingo Pueblo, Navajo (Diné) Nation, White Mountain Apache Tribe)
Suquamish Community Health Program (Suquamish Tribe)	*Standing Rock Sioux Tribe	*Healthy Traditions Project (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians)	Muckleshoot Traditional Foods and Medicines Program (Muckleshoot Indian Tribe)	*Healthy Traditions Project (Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians)
Traditional Plants and Food Program (Northwest Indian College)	*Tohono O'odham Nation	First Nations Development Institute (FNDI)	NATIVE HEALTH	Inter-Tribal Buffalo Council (Rapid City, SD)
		*Healthy Roots (Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians)	Niqipiaq Challenge (North Slope Borough Health Department)	Seeds of Native Health (Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community)
		NATIVE HEALTH (Phoenix, AZ)	Sherwood Valley Pomo Tribe	*Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC)
		*Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC)	Store Outside Your Door (Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium)	Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation (Oglala Lakota Nation)

* Indicates Traditional Foods Program grantee partners, a program under CDC's Native Diabetes Wellness Program.

¹ Reorganized in 2017 as Oklahoma Tribal Engagement Partners (OKTEP).

Sustaining Native Foodways and Food Sovereignty in Indian Country

The stories in this compendium highlight the significance of traditional foods in Indigenous communities across North America. While this collection of stories represents only a few of the growing number of tribal communities involved in food sovereignty efforts, it provides an understanding of the momentum, traditional knowledge, lessons learned, and success of diverse tribal communities in building healthy food security. More importantly, these stories illuminate the renaissance of Native American foodways and illustrate the unique cultural practices and methods of fishing, gathering, growing, hunting, processing, and sharing traditional foods.

Woven throughout the stories in this compendium are accounts of the significance of land as a determinant of health, the role of food sovereignty in building healthy food security and strengthening economic development, the sharing of cultural and traditional ecological knowledge, community-driven planning and engagement, and the use of traditional foods as a way to share stories and messages about health. Similar findings and themes are published in a summary of CDC's Traditional Foods Project (2008-2014)¹ and informed by previous literature on the evolution of CDC's Native Diabetes Wellness Program.²

The stories that follow emphasize the role of sustainability in planning for the future and practicing ecologically sound methods of growing, gathering, and processing local and traditional foods. Sharing stories of food sovereignty efforts and traditional knowledge of Native foodways remains a priority among tribal leaders and tribal communities.¹ While this compendium will come to an end with this report, we are hopeful the stories here will continue to empower and inspire tribal communities on their pathway to building healthy food security and sustainable Native foodways.

Key Findings and Shared Themes

In this report, key findings and shared themes reveal traditional foods programs in Native American communities hold a number of common beliefs and practices to support the process of reclaiming a traditional food system. While themes of sustainability are woven throughout the stories and serve as the focus of this report, the most commonly shared theme across the stories is traditional foods knowledge. Derived from the programs featured in this report, the following themes are listed in order from the most shared beliefs and practices to those more culturally and geographically unique.

- 1. Traditional foods knowledge:** Sharing the connection of traditional food with stories and ceremony; desire within communities for more traditional foods educators and recipes that blend traditional foods with more common store-bought foods; engagement through food sovereignty initiatives;

1 Satterfield, D., DeBruyn, L., Santos, M., Alonso, L., Frank, M. (2016). Health Promotion and Diabetes Prevention in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities — Traditional Foods Project, 2008–2014. *MMWR Suppl* 2016; 65place_Holder_For_Early_Release:4–10. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.su6501a3>

2 Satterfield, D., DeBruyn, L., Francis, C., & Allen, A. (2014). A Stream Is Always Giving Life: Communities Reclaim Native Science and Traditional Ways to Prevent Diabetes and Promote Health. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 38(1), 157-190.

using gardens as classrooms to teach about traditional foods; designing curricula with traditional foods knowledge for children and youth; sharing knowledge and traditional values that are rooted in environmental stewardship of land, water, air, and food; preservation of Native American heirloom seeds, practices, and stories; hosting cultural camps that focus on and share traditional foods knowledge and practices; and community demonstrations on how to harvest and prepare traditional foods.

2. **Community engagement:** Using community visioning and listening sessions to ensure efforts are tribally driven and reflective of local priorities; engaging the community through family-centered curricula and programming; engaging youth in the design of their community; and engaging the community through traditional foods cooking demonstrations during wellness gatherings and health fairs.
3. **Cross-system partnerships:** Collaboration within and across tribal departments (e.g., health, culture, and historical preservation; commerce; and economic development); using non-tribal partnerships to leverage human (e.g., university-based faculty to support research and program evaluation efforts and cooperative extension offices to provide education), financial (e.g., US Department of Agriculture [USDA] Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education [SNAP-Ed]) and [Farm to School Grant Program](#) funding to support curricula on traditional foods and health), and natural (e.g., [US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management](#)) resources to provide space for cultural camps and access to ancestral lands for hunting and gathering; establishing food sovereignty coalitions and councils to bring together diverse stakeholders and guide the process of restoring local foodways; and the intertribal creation of a seed bank for traditional food preservation.
4. **Sustainability:** Focus on creating a regenerative and sustainable community; using geothermal methods to grow food in greenhouses; creation of a small demonstration farm using sustainable agricultural methods; designing landscapes in public spaces that provide food and support native plants; focus on growing food that nourishes the earth, community, mind, and body; emphasis on environmental sustainability and fair labor practices; using tribally supported agriculture (TSA) to support local foodways; and using tribal lands to grow, gather, raise, and process traditional foods.
5. **Economic development:** Focus on increasing local food production within tribal communities; restoring buffalo herds as a way to contribute to cultural preservation, food security, and economic development; using community farm and poultry production as a way to increase local food, generate revenue, and support local jobs; and emphasizing fair labor practices.
6. **Schools:** Focus on school-based traditional foods and health programming; developing a food sovereignty curriculum for use in schools that is specific to a tribe and shares its history of food; plans for a Farm-to-Table program in local [Tribal Head Start](#) programs; focus on early intervention and education through local Tribal Head Start programs (e.g., a traditional foods curriculum and plans for a farm-to-table program); leveraging the USDA Farm to School Program to incorporate tribally raised buffalo in school meals; and USDA support for incorporating traditional foods in school meals per the [Child Nutrition Programs and Traditional Foods memo](#) (TA01-2015) (see Appendices).
7. **Health and well-being:** A healthy traditional foods curriculum that uses stories to share health messages; emphasis on cultural practices that promote health and wellness; investment in health and well-being through supporting local food systems; developing culturally appropriate childhood obesity prevention programs; focus on chronic disease prevention across the lifespan; and emphasis on reducing risk factors for type 2 diabetes.

Other shared themes that were less common include: 1) blending diverse sources of funding; 2) building healthy food security; 3) creating more opportunities for intergenerational storytelling, activities, and programming; 4) supporting cultural and historical preservation through traditional foods programming; and 5) the importance of promotion in creating local foodways and supporting food sovereignty.

Featured Stories Shared By Program Partners

This section includes stories from nine traditional foods programs and initiatives. Stories from four tribal communities include the following: the Eagle Adventure Program, a children’s program led by a partnership between Chickasaw Nation Nutrition Services and Oklahoma Tribal Engagement Partners; the Healthy Traditions Project of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians; the Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation, serving members of the Oglala Lakota Nation; and Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community’s Wozupi Tribal Gardens and Seeds of Native Health campaign.

Following the tribal community stories are five intertribal collaborations: two stories from the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc., including an update on their traditional foods programming and a spotlight on a new traditional foods preschool curriculum; Feast for the Future, a tribally driven program co-designed by the Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health, Santo Domingo Pueblo, Navajo (Diné) Nation, and White Mountain Apache Tribe; school-based traditional foods programming through the InterTribal Buffalo Council; and an intergenerational culture camp through the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC).



Tribal Communities

Eagle Adventure Program

Chickasaw Nation Nutrition Services and
Oklahoma Tribal Engagement Partners
Oklahoma

Healthy Traditions Project

Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians—Oregon

Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation

Oglala Lakota Nation—South Dakota

Wozupi Tribal Gardens and Seeds of Native Health Campaign

Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community—Minnesota

We are an Eagle Adventure School!



Together We Can Prevent Diabetes!

Images and photos courtesy of Eagle Adventure.



CHICKASAW NATION &
OKLAHOMA TRIBAL ENGAGEMENT PARTNERS
Eagle Adventure
Chickasaw Nation Nutrition Services
“Get Fresh!” Program
Oklahoma

The following is a conversation with staff from Eagle Adventure, a program that began as an initiative with the Chickasaw Nation Nutrition Services “Get Fresh!” Program and the Oklahoma State University Department of Nutrition Sciences SHINE team with support by the USDA’s SNAP-Ed program. The team reorganized in 2017 as [Oklahoma Tribal Engagement Partners LLC](#) (OKTEP) with the goal of extending Eagle Adventure programming to more tribes in Oklahoma and across the Nation. The program incorporates Native stories, food demonstrations, play, and curricula in a school-based setting. Their story highlights the sustainability of Eagle Adventure and its success in promoting health, nutrition, and type 2 diabetes prevention among children and their families.

Learn more about past work by the Eagle Adventure program, an innovative tribal-university partnership spanning 10 years, in “[Part IV – Traditional Foods in Native America, Chickasaw Nation Nutrition Services Get Fresh! Program and Oklahoma State University](#)” (pages 62-67).

For more about the *Eagle Books* series for both early readers and youth, visit CDC’s [Eagle Books website](#) for toolkits, ebooks, graphic novels, and more.

Q: Describe some of the cross-system partnerships that have played a leading role in the success and sustainability of the Eagle Adventure program.

A: SNAP-Ed funding has been essential to the sustainability of the [Eagle Adventure](#) program in Oklahoma. Partnerships with technical assistance experts have encouraged the development and evaluation of a research-based program that allows for continued funding and expansion of Eagle Adventure. OKTEP was established to enhance cross-system partnerships and is helping extend Eagle Adventure to more Tribal Nations in Oklahoma in coordination with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services SNAP-Ed agency. The spirit of resource sharing and integration enables the program to “live” in ways that would not be possible without partnerships.

Within the Chickasaw Nation we partnered with the Department of Culture and Humanities in creating the Eagle Play, incorporating Chickasaw language into the program as well as seeking guidance to make sure that we are representing the Chickasaw culture appropriately in games and activities. The Chickasaw



Sharing health messages through colorful posters. Image courtesy of Eagle Adventure.

Nation Commerce Division worked with our program to include signage in stores to promote choosing water as an everyday drink choice using the *Eagle Books* images as a brand that children and families recognize.

Our joint social marketing campaign, “[Diabetes Is Not Our Destiny](#),” is also instrumental in spreading our message of type 2 diabetes prevention statewide. The billboards, radio, and media public service announcements highlight Native American families leading their tribes and communities in health.

Q: Sharing health messages through storytelling, activities, and nutrition education is a central theme of the Eagle Adventure program. Which health messages resonate most with the children participating in your program?

A: Together we can prevent diabetes! With each contact we have with students, including the play and

in-class lessons, educators lead the Eagle Adventure song and dance. It is an interactive song with motions that students can easily follow along with, and they love it! The words of the song encourage activity and eating fruits and vegetables. The last line of the song is “Together we can prevent diabetes! Hurray!” This line is also what we have engraved on the back of the program medals we give to each student who participated in the Eagle Adventure program. It is a simple message that drives home the hope that children and families can prevent type 2 diabetes.

I want to be healthy and strong today! This is another easy to remember and relevant health message that children often use over and over. When we have facilitated group discussions in the classroom, students often work into their answer being “healthy and strong.” When teachers are doing activities that take the concepts and health messages learned in Eagle Adventure a bit further, they have asked them to complete sentences that start “Mr. Eagle says” or ask students their favorite part of Eagle Adventure or what they learned from Eagle Adventure. The phrase “healthy and strong” is often a part of these sentences as well as drawings and thank you cards from students.

Q: Based on your experience using the [Eagle Books](#) series, can you think of other methods that would complement or build on the series?

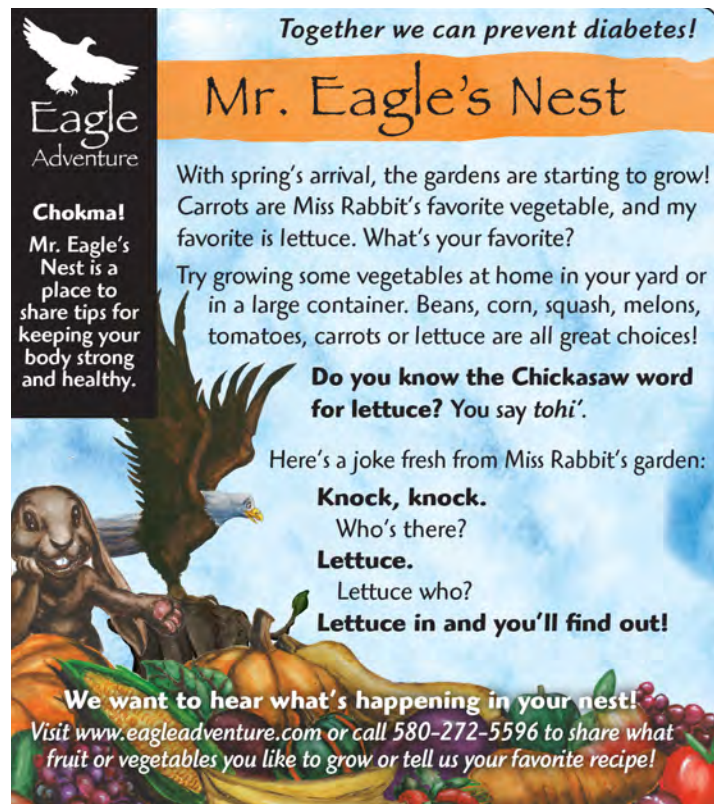
A: The [Eagle Books](#) series is a great starting point for many educational outlets. The artwork in the books is beautiful and could be used to lead students to further explore visual arts such as drawing and painting. The stories are also perfect for engaging youth in performing arts. We worked with the Department of Culture and Humanities at the Chickasaw Nation to develop a short play, but puppets could also be used to tell the stories.

Although our programming is mostly in schools or after-school programs, the books are also great for story time at a local library. The reader could even dress as Mr. Eagle or Miss Rabbit, or bring puppets for use during the stories. Physical activity could also be included with the stories through yoga and imagination play.

The third book, “[Plate Full of Color](#),” is a wonderful resource for working with students on a school or community gardening project. This book incorporates messages about taking care of our resources and the importance of traditional foods. The images and messages from this book are currently being used at the community garden in Ada [Oklahoma].

Our OKTEP team hosts booths at health fairs and community fitness events and has Mr. Eagle and Miss Rabbit participating in activities. The children love to meet the characters in person, and we have the opportunity to meet with families and strengthen community relationships. The posters we created for school use are also used in pediatric clinics throughout the Chickasaw Nation. The messages of making healthy choices and starting type 2 diabetes prevention at a young age can be shared in all environments.

The new series for older students presents opportunities for working with middle school students to engage them in becoming health leaders in their own schools and communities. As the characters in the books have grown up, they are using the messages learned from Mr. Eagle and his friends to make



Eagle Adventure promotional materials. Courtesy of Eagle Adventure.

changes in their own communities—from their families to the school, the local convenience store, and the community garden. Our youth face these same challenges, and by using the books to engage students in communication via book clubs, reading classes, or after-school programs, we can help them generate their own action items within their families, schools, and communities.

In the [CDC toolkit](#), there are some great resources as well. The [science cards](#) highlight traditional agriculture, math, and technology. The [wellness activities](#) challenge students and families to move more and choose fruits and vegetables more often. The art projects have templates and handouts that make it easy for everyone to participate in [Eagle Books](#) art.

Q: The Eagle Adventure program is designed to target multiple levels of influence. What are some of the key factors at each level of influence (individual, family, school, community, policy) that have the most promise in improving health and preventing type 2 diabetes among youth in the Chickasaw Nation?

A: Direct education of the Eagle Adventure program begins with the Eagle Play kickoff and continues through a series of four in-class lessons where children are reached at the individual level through facilitated group discussions and hands-on learning experiences. Children have the opportunity to try an ingredient in class and connect culturally to local tribal nations through language taught with each lesson. Also, with each in-class lesson, students are given an Eagle folder of take-home materials that are designed to reach the family. Activities in the folder encourage family physical activity and also provide families with nutrition information through “Nestwork,” or health homework, and a tip sheet. Easy-to-prepare and

NESTWORK



Eagle Adventure, Lesson 1

This week we learned how important it is to move our bodies, play hard and eat healthy foods. Eating fruits and vegetables and being active helps keep our bodies in balance. Balance is the key to staying healthy and strong.

Here is a chance to talk to an adult in your home and ask them the questions on this page. Write their answers on the line below each question. Remember to return this Nestwork in your folder, and you will get an Eagle Sticker.

Ask an adult in your home...

Did you know that eating fruits and vegetables and being active helps keep your body in balance?

1. _____

When you were my age, what outside activity did you like to do that needed balance?

2. _____

Now what is your favorite outside activity that needs balance?

3. _____

What is your favorite fruit?

4. _____

What is your favorite vegetable?

5. _____

What outside activity would you like to do with me this week?

6. _____

What new fruit or vegetable would you like to try with me this week?

7. _____

Use the answers above to complete the story and read it to an adult in your home.

To stay balanced, Rain That Dances wants to move his body, play hard and eat healthy foods. He really enjoys playing _____ and _____ outside. When Rain That Dances gets hungry, he makes his favorite snack with _____ or _____. With his friends, Rain That Dances likes to _____ and eat _____.

Answer from 2. *Answer from 3.*

Answer from 4. *Answer from 5.*

Answer from 6. *Answer from 7.*

Parent or Guardian Signature: _____

Materials funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This institution is an equal opportunity provider. Eagle Adventure is an initiative of the Chickasaw Nation. For more information, visit www.eagleadventure.com.



Example of Nestwork. Courtesy of Eagle Adventure.

inexpensive snack recipes encourage increased fruit and vegetable consumption at the child and family levels of influence.

At the school level, we offer Eagle Announcements that can be used over the intercom daily or written into scrolling announcements used on television screens or marquee-type signs. We also share a few different-sized posters that correspond with the in-class lessons and ask that they be displayed in highly visible areas, like the lunchroom and outside of restrooms. An Eagle Adventure banner is typically displayed in front of the school to let everyone at the school and anyone who passes by the school know that Eagle Adventure education is in progress at the school.



The *Eagle Books* series for young readers.
Courtesy of Eagle Adventure.

To reach the community level of influence, monthly informational and brightly colored Mr. Eagle's Nest segments are included in the tribal newspaper. Our team has also created radio segments that encourage increased fruit and vegetable consumption and physical activity, and travel stop signage to promote everyday food choices. With the expansion of the in-school Eagle Adventure program to additional after-school lessons in recent years, our team encouraged policy changes related to school wellness and snacks. Soon, our team will be able to offer resources and ideas for school administrators, teachers, and professionals who are interested in updating their school snack policies or other similar policies related to food served in the school environment but outside of the lunchroom.

Q: Share with us your vision for Eagle Adventure.

A: SNAP-Ed funding has been essential to the continuation, maintenance, and growth of Eagle Adventure. Our team is committed to sharing the program with tribes throughout the nation and promoting SNAP-Ed as a mechanism. Ideally, tribes could implement culturally relevant programming and evaluation on a long-term basis.

Training and technical assistance support are essential components of Eagle Adventure programming. During the summer 2017, our team hosted an experiential workshop, bringing together tribal partners to engage in Eagle Adventure lessons and cultural activities supporting Eagle Adventure. The workshop was only the beginning. OKTEP is collaborating with tribes to hire Eagle Adventure educators that will be housed in each Tribe's jurisdictional boundaries. Current collaborations include the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and Otoe-Missouria Tribe and there are plans underway with additional Tribes in Oklahoma. We are about sharing what works. We will continue to support training and evaluation for any partners with interest in Eagle Adventure, as our team has realized the positive impact Eagle Adventure programming has had on youth, families, teachers, and school environments.



I Want to Be **Healthy** and **Strong** Today!

Sharing health messages through colorful posters. Courtesy of Eagle Adventure.

The Eagle Adventure Program continues to grow through:

- A collaboration between the National Park Service Chickasaw National Recreation Area and the Chickasaw Cultural Center to integrate the Eagle Adventure program with outdoor “eagle watching” events for the public
- Eagle Adventure Partnership Workshops to help meet the growing interest of tribes across the country in this program.
- OKTEP expansion to implement Eagle Adventure in three area tribes, and to make training available to other interested tribes, with support from a new USDA SNAP- Ed award.



Photos courtesy of
Healthy Traditions.



CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF SILETZ INDIANS

Healthy Traditions Program

Oregon

The following is a conversation with Kathy Kentta-Robinson and Sharla Robinson, coordinators and founders of the Healthy Traditions program. Healthy Traditions was created in 2009 with support from CDC's Traditional Foods Program, a six-year cooperative agreement. The Siletz Reservation is about 1.1 million acres located along the central Oregon coast. The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians is comprised of 27 tribes and bands whose ancestral homelands span from Northern California to Southern Washington and from the Pacific Ocean to the Cascade Mountains. Their story highlights the sustainability of Healthy Traditions after the CDC Traditional Foods Program ended in 2014.

Learn more about the work of the Healthy Traditions program of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians in [“Part III – Traditional Foods in Native America, Healthy Traditions program, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians-Oregon”](#) (pages 38-42).

Q: Describe how you helped ensure the sustainability of Healthy Traditions after initial funding ended.

A: The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians received five years of funding (2009-2014) from CDC to start a traditional foods program based in Siletz, Oregon. During the first four years of the project, Healthy Traditions was focused on community education and outreach. In our final year of funding, we evaluated the program to measure community change and determine next steps for the program. The evaluation assisted in describing the impact of the program on individuals and the community, which was then presented to the Tribal Council.

What we found through the evaluation was that Healthy Traditions was very important to the community. This was documented through quantitative program ratings and qualitative testimonial statements demonstrating increased knowledge, skills, and behavior changes. The Tribal Council ultimately dedicated funding to keep the Healthy Traditions program running after the grant funding ended in 2014. The funding comes from third-party revenue through the Siletz Community Health Clinic. The project has continued to provide healthy programming and will continue working to secure grant funding to grow the program.

Q: Describe the importance of a traditional foods program in the Siletz community. What are some of the traditional foods and medicines specific to your region?

A: As Indigenous people, we revere our elders and ancestors. We remember the wealth and abundance of our homeland in pre-contact times. Our ancestors were extremely self-sufficient and sustainable. When our



Photos courtesy of Healthy Traditions.



families were removed from these resources and lifestyle, they were forced to rely on nontraditional foods and food distribution programs funded by the US government. The term “food insecurity” commonly is used when discussing hunger, access, and affordability of food. Many Siletz tribal members experience food insecurity in these ways, and in addition, in the form of restricted access to culturally valuable foods for maintaining our health and lifestyle.

Healthy Traditions gave our tribal families the ability to regain their health, pass on knowledge of traditional foods, and seek out healthy cultural practices. We owe this to the CDC Traditional Foods Program.

Hunting and gathering were central to the everyday lifestyle of our ancestors, and our foods connect us to who we are and where we come from. Our foods are central to our creation story and our ceremonies. Our foods such as “dee-chi” (berries) are in the mountains and meadows, our foods such as “gus” (camas) are in wetlands, our foods such as “lhuk” (fish) are in the rivers, and our foods such as “lvt” (seaweed) are in the ocean.

Q: What are some of the key partnerships you have established to help support and sustain Healthy Traditions?

A: Healthy Traditions has best been able to continue programming through our partnership with the Siletz Community Health Department and the Siletz Tribal area offices located in Portland, Salem, and Eugene, Oregon. We rely heavily on the staff in these offices to continue the programming they provide to our membership throughout our ancestral lands.

Q: Describe some of the ways Healthy Traditions adds value to the Siletz community.

A: Siletz tribal members are eager to learn cultural practices, and Healthy Traditions has increased cultural education and related programming. The programming is hands-on and intergenerational and helps tribal members connect with their ancestral lands and continue their relationship to those places. Healthy Traditions also served to educate the public and outside agencies about the importance of our traditional foods resources and building relationships to help protect our ancestral gathering places. The Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service offices within our original reservation are working with the tribe to partner and collaborate on enhancement projects focused on forest, stream, and ocean plants that are important food and traditional basketry plant sources.

Q: Share with us your vision for Healthy Traditions. What are your hopes and plans for the next decade?

A: Our vision is that Healthy Traditions will be able to grow and include work in championing these programs. The biggest barrier for Healthy Traditions is access to our traditional foods and food security. In the future, we envision mobilizing tribal families to designate protected cultural gathering sites for future generations. We want to work to get our hunting and fishing rights protected.



Photo courtesy of Healthy Traditions.

Health programming will continue to be a priority for Healthy Traditions. The community would like to see more traditional foods teachers, a school-based cooking/nutrition/garden program, healthy lifestyle skills programming in cooking/nutrition/exercise, and increased social support and community building.

Our ancestors' whole day revolved around traditional foods. We would like this traditional form of a career and lifestyle to be more available to our tribal members. We would like to develop jobs in increasing access to our ancestral foods and making them available to our families. Currently, our traditional foods are being harvested by "professional foragers" and sold to fancy restaurants in big cities. We would like Indigenous peoples to have priority in getting access to these foods and to be able to work in a culturally appropriate profession. Our tribal members would be able to harvest in a good way and make these foods available to our tribal families who are hungry for them. This could be in the form of entrepreneurship training. Ultimately, this would increase access to our ancestral foods for our tribal families and future generations.



OGLALA LAKOTA NATION
Thunder Valley
Community Development Corporation
South Dakota

The following is a conversation with a team from the [Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation's](#) (hereafter referred to as "Thunder Valley") Food Sovereignty Initiative, including Nick Hernandez, Ernest Weston, Billie White, and Thunder Valley's director of communications, Cecily Engelhart. Founded in 2007, Thunder Valley uses a tribally driven model that includes the following strategies for change and growth: 1) engaging the community, 2) creating an ecosystem of opportunity, 3) supporting an equal relationship between people; the planet; and prosperity, equity, and place), 4) advancing equity, and 5) ensuring all initiatives are place-based and comprehensive. The following story highlights Thunder Valley's Food Sovereignty Initiative and their description of the development of regenerative community on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.



Photo credits:
Andrew Iron Shell,
Thunder Valley.



Q: Share with us the history of Thunder Valley and your plans for a new regenerative community on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

A: [Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation](#) started as the result of young families thinking about the future for their children, and what they could do to create more opportunities for their children close to home. We started with a desire to do something to better our community, but we had to identify the “what” and “how.” Community engagement sessions were an essential part of our organization’s beginnings. We spent hours having conversations and meetings with community members to identify local priorities and what people wanted for the future, then used that information to determine how we could make those ideas into reality. Now in our 10th year as an organization, community engagement still remains one of our core practices, which feeds into our current and future plans for the Thunder Valley regenerative community.

The community itself is serving as an “ecosystem of opportunity” in which every building, facility, and space was created to serve the needs of local people. Whether people are looking for professional development opportunities, housing, meeting spaces, recreation, etc., there are options included in this plan. We will have people who live here, others who just work here, and others who are business owners in the community, or some who might seek services like childcare or access our fitness center. All of this is still in our vision for the future, but considering we are nearly finished with our first set of homes, this vision is well on the way to becoming a reality.

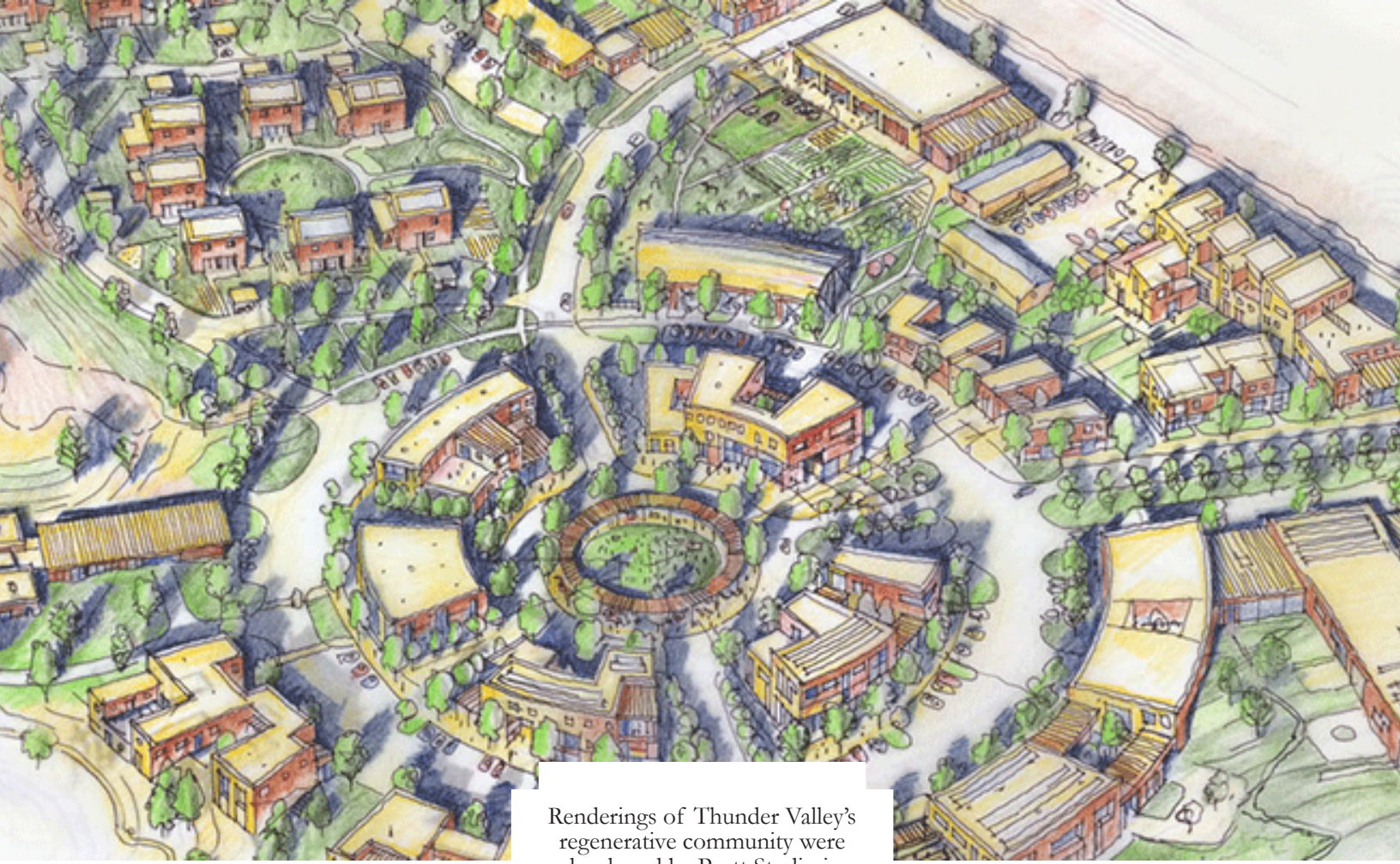
Q: Describe the role of community members in designing the regenerative community. What are community members most excited about?

A: Throughout the whole planning process, we have always included the community’s opinions when designing our regenerative community, especially opinions of youth. Sometimes we target certain audiences for certain components of the community, such as the park, where we discussed with local youth what they would like to see in a community park. All the work we do at Thunder Valley is the result of listening sessions and discussion events with the community and youth. Each initiative—including programming, classes, events, and development—are direct results of discussion.

Community members are excited about a lot of different components of Thunder Valley. From the single-family homes being built to all of the construction going on, there is certainly a lot to be excited about. With the Food Sovereignty Initiative, people are especially excited about completion of our geothermal green house, and of course our poultry house, which is also known as the “Chicken Palace.”

Q: What are some of the ways the Food Sovereignty Initiative is strengthening and restoring the local food system?

A: The Food Sovereignty Initiative is strengthening and restoring the local food systems by increasing access to knowledge for community members and those interested in the food sovereignty movement on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Some of the components of our Food Sovereignty Initiative here at



Renderings of Thunder Valley's regenerative community were developed by Pyatt Studio in partnership with Thunder Valley. Images courtesy of Thunder Valley.



Thunder Valley are the following:

- **Small demonstration farm:** Our two-acre demonstration farm uses poultry-based sustainable agriculture practices which change the way food is produced. We raise free-range chickens that produce healthier and more nutritious eggs while creating healthier soil and biodiversity. In addition, our demonstration farm can be used as a way for families and individuals to become catalysts for change supporting food sovereignty and food security. The farm also offers economic opportunities through agriculture.
- **Lakota Food Sovereignty Coalition:** The coalition is comprised of community members, key stakeholders, other nonprofits, extension offices, and tribal programs. One of the main purposes of the coalition is to unite those already working on food sovereignty, and to establish a unified front on creating change within communities. The coalition also promotes community self-reliance through increased access to education on growing your own food and consuming healthy foods, creates more opportunities for local food producers, and engages tribal leaders in a discussion on food sovereignty.
- **Community gardens:** In addition to the demonstration farm, we also have a garden that we use as a classroom for those interested in learning about gardening. Our garden includes various organic gardening methods that are demonstrated through gardening workshops and classes that are free to community members. In addition, we also demonstrate different ways to prepare, preserve, and store the produce, such as drying squash. Some of the organic gardening methods include the following:
 - The Mittleider method
 - Traditional row gardening
 - Small plot gardening
 - Raised bed gardening
 - Hay bale gardening
 - Three sisters method
 - Trellis gardening
 - Growing in a green house
- **Lakota Food Knowledge Group:** This is a group of community members and individuals who come together to share knowledge of traditional foods. The group also compiled stories and recipes that will make up the Lakota Food Knowledge Recipe Book. This recipe book will focus on the harvesting, handling, and preparation of traditional foods and plants and will also be accompanied by demonstration videos.

Another component of our initiative is a food sovereignty curriculum that is specific to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, covers the history of food on the reservation, and defines food sovereignty as a term. The curriculum also covers food, health, and wellness. Our curriculum is written at a fifth-grade reading level, with the hopes that we can one day implement it in our local schools. In addition, we are working on a pilot farm-to-table program for our Head Start programs on the reservation.



Photo credit: Andrew Iron Shell, Thunder Valley.

Q: What traditional foods and plants will be a part of the regenerative community’s edible landscape?

A: Throughout our regenerative community we plan on using native plants—such as native grasses, trees, fruit-bearing trees, and shrubs—as part of our landscape. Also, our demonstration farm uses three local fruit shrubs as part of our regenerative agriculture practices; these include the buffalo berry, chokecherry, and American plum. These fruit shrubs are in our paddocks which is also where our free-range chickens graze. This will provide fruit for our consumption as well as for the chickens. Residents of our community will have communal spaces which they can use for gardening and/or planting of traditional plants. The public park will have an herb garden that will be open to the public, featuring local herbs such as sage, sweet grass, and culinary herbs.

Q: Thunder Valley is rooted in indigenous knowledge and guided by comprehensive, replicable, and scalable models. What are some ways other tribes and communities can learn from your approach?

A: A lot of the work we are doing here at Thunder Valley has never been done in Indian country. One of the main reasons why we are so successful is because we are not a tribal program and are able to bypass bureaucracy. We also work closely with our tribe on a lot of different levels, and projects are successful because we use one of our greatest assets, our own people, and especially our youth who are the visionaries of our people’s future. Guided by the seventh generation philosophy, we have created an ecosystem of opportunity which allows us to dream big and achieve big.



Photo credit: Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community's (SMSC) Wozupi Tribal Gardens.

SHAKOPEE MDEWAKANTON SIOUX COMMUNITY **Wozupi Tribal Gardens and Seeds of Native Health** Minnesota

The following is a conversation shared by team members of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community's (SMSC) [Wozupi Tribal Gardens](#) and [Seeds of Native Health](#) campaign. Wozupi Tribal Gardens was founded in 2010 to improve local access to healthy, organic food, and the Seeds of Native Health campaign was established in 2015 as a national campaign to improve nutrition across Indian Country. The SMSC is located southwest of the Minneapolis and St. Paul metropolitan area in Minnesota. Guided by the Dakota tradition of helping others, the SMSC aims to foster community partnerships and support local and national efforts through a charitable foundation. Since the 1990s, the tribe has donated more than \$350 million to organizations and causes and has contributed millions more to support local governments and infrastructure.



Photo credits:
SMSC's Wozupi Gardens.



Q: Share with us a bit about the history of the Wozupi Tribal Gardens and the Seeds of Native Health campaign.

A: In March 2015, the SMSC launched a national philanthropic campaign, Seeds of Native Health, to help improve the nutrition of Native Americans. At the local level, the SMSC opened Wozupi Tribal Gardens in 2010 to provide SMSC community members with greater access to fresh, organic food. Wozupi is committed to growing food in a way that nourishes the earth, the community, and people’s minds and bodies. Using environmentally sustainable and fair labor practices, they grow vegetables, herbs, and fruit; produce eggs, honey, and maple syrup; and provide educational, therapeutic, and fun opportunities at the farm and through community outreach. Their produce and eggs are USDA-certified organic.

Q: As a founding partner of the Seeds of Native Health campaign, what is your vision for the future of food sovereignty in Indian Country?

A: Seeds of Native Health envisions a future in which Native Americans are in good health and have access to fresh, healthy foods. Seeds of Native Health partners are working together to address dietary problems in Indian Country by supporting educational campaigns and funding research to improve the overall health and well-being of Native Americans.

Q: What do members of the SMSC enjoy most about Wozupi Tribal Gardens and its education program?

A: The members of the SMSC enjoy the preservation of their heritage. Since opening in 2010, Wozupi, which means “garden” in the Dakota language, encompasses the tribe’s focus on being a good neighbor, good employer, and good steward of the earth.

To preserve rare Native foods, Wozupi grows several heritage varieties of corn, squash, and beans in a garden primarily tended by SMSC community members. In this three sisters garden, the heritage vegetables depend on each other to grow—the corn offers support for the beans to crawl, the beans infuse the soil with helpful nitrogen, and the squash, with its prickly leaves, keeps pests away from all three crops. Wozupi also collects its own sap to make pure maple syrup—a natural food indigenous to this area.

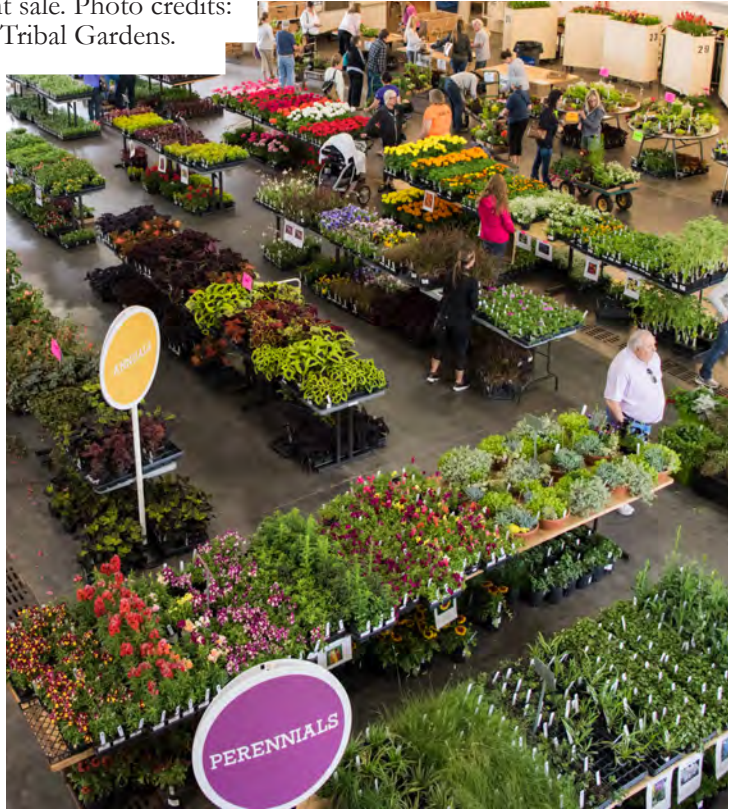
Wozupi is committed to preserving Native American heirloom seeds through production, seed saving, and donations to other tribal nations that have come together to develop a seed bank. They continually provide enriching experiences through classes, tours, and educational events that embrace and share the Native American heritage.

Q: Describe SMSC’s approach to planning for the sustainability of Wozupi and Seeds of Native Health.

A: Through Wozupi and Seeds of Native Health, the SMSC is investing in the health and well-being of future generations, both locally and across the nation. By improving Native American education, eliminating food deserts, expanding access to healthy foods, and researching nutritional challenges of Native Americans, we can change the future for Native Americans.



Above: An aerial view of SMSC's Wozupi Tribal Gardens. Below (from left): Greenhouse and plant sale. Photo credits: SMSC's Wozupi Tribal Gardens.



Intertribal Collaborations

Aleut Diet Program and Other Traditional Foods Programming
Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association
Alaska

Qaqamiigűx̋: Head Start Traditional Foods Preschool Curriculum
Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association
Alaska

Feast for the Future
**Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health,
Santo Domingo Pueblo, Navajo (Diné) Nation
& White Mountain Apache Tribe**
Arizona & New Mexico

InterTribal Buffalo Council
South Dakota

WISEFAMILIES
Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium
Alaska



The Aleutian Pribilof Islands. Photo credit: Josephine Shangin.

ALEUTIAN PRIBILOF ISLANDS ASSOCIATION, INC
**Aleut Diet Program and
Other Traditional Foods Programming**
Alaska

The following is dialogue with Sue Unger, wellness program coordinator for the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (APIA). With funding from the CDC Traditional Foods Program, a cooperative agreement in place from 2008-2014, APIA developed and led the Aleut Diet Program with a focus on engaging local communities through fishing, gathering, hunting, preparing, and using traditional foods to promote health and prevent type 2 diabetes. APIA's activities included intergenerational culture camps and development of a book on the history and present use of traditional foods in the region. APIA provides health care, education, employment, and family and social services as an intertribal consortium of 13 Alaska Native communities in the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands region. The spotlight that follows this story highlights APIA's new Traditional Foods Preschool Curriculum that was developed for and with the Head Start programs in the region.

Learn more about the development of “Qaqamiigű: Traditional Foods and Recipes from the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands” from author Suanne Unger in [“Part III – Traditional Foods in Native America, An Interview with Suanne Unger”](#) (pages 9-12).



Above (from left): Salmon drying and child holding seagull egg. Below (from left): Josphine Shagin with fresh putchki (crown parsnip) and braided seal gut. Photo credits: Josephine Shagin.



Q: Share with us some of the traditional foods activities and efforts that have been sustained since CDC’s Traditional Foods Program ended in 2014.

A: In 2016, APIA’s Health Department received a Seeds of Native Health Promising Program Grant from the Notah Begay III (NB3) Foundation to create a traditional foods curriculum for the preschool Head Start program in the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands region. These grant funds are intended to assist Native communities in the implementation of culturally appropriate childhood obesity prevention programs by providing resources and technical assistance.

The traditional foods curriculum that was developed is based on the resource entitled: “Qaqamiigű: Traditional Foods and Recipes from the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands.” This book was produced with funding from the Native Diabetes Wellness Program in CDC’s Division of Diabetes Translation under a grant entitled, “Using Traditional Foods and Sustainable Ecological Approaches for Health Promotion and Type 2 Diabetes Prevention in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities.” Qaqamiigű received awards from the National Indian Health Board as well as from the Alaska Public Health Association.

The title of the curriculum is: “Qaqamiigű: Head Start Traditional Foods Preschool Curriculum.” The curriculum was completed in 2017 and has been utilized in Head Start programs throughout the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands region. In fall 2017, the APIA Head Start program conducted a training on the curriculum and fully implemented it with staff.

In addition to the newly developed curriculum, APIA also received funding for technical assistance from the NB3 Foundation to produce digital stories related to traditional foods. Three digital stories were produced to accompany the newly developed curriculum. The topics of the stories included: overview of traditional foods in the region, making fish pie, and tidal foods.

APIA continues to highlight traditional foods and offer cooking demonstrations at local wellness gatherings, such as health fairs and other community events.

Q: Describe the importance of traditional foods in the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands. What are some of the traditional foods and medicines, from both land and sea, specific to your region?

A: Traditional foods are an integral part of Unangan/Unangas culture. Many traditional values are expressed through the harvesting and preparation of local food: the importance of sharing; respect for elders; helping and taking care of others; not being greedy; and taking care of the land, air, and water; to name a few. Core values are compromised as traditional food use declines.

The Unangan/Unangas traditional diet historically depended on foods from the sea: seal, sea lion, whale, fish, and tidal foods provided the majority of nutrients in the diet. Birds, plants, caribou—and later reindeer in some communities—were also important sources of food. All of these foods continue to be used today and are supplemented with store-bought foods. The recipes have changed dramatically over the years with the increased availability of store-bought foods and the influence of different cultures.

Q: Share some of the ways traditional foods are woven into the intergenerational Urban UnangaꝔ Culture Camp and other APIA activities.

A: Traditional foods continue to be an important component of the Urban UnangaꝔ Culture Camp in Anchorage and in other cultural activities. During the week of June 19-23, 2017, APIA hosted its 10th annual Urban UnangaꝔ Culture Camp in Anchorage. Josephine and Tim Shangin, from the Village of Akutan, facilitated the traditional foods classes with youth during the camp. One of the activities they conducted was a demonstration of how to braid seal gut. Josephine demonstrated the process of cleaning and then preparing the gut for braiding to the class. As she demonstrated how to do the braiding, children, parents, and elders in the room watched and used rope to shadow her braiding demonstration. Once the seal gut has been braided, it is then boiled and cut up to eat. It is considered a delicacy today.

Q: What resources and partnerships help sustain traditional foods knowledge and practices in your region?

A: QaqamiiḡuꝔ continues to be a great resource that can be utilized to develop additional educational materials on traditional foods. For example, funding from the Notah Begay III (NB3) Foundation was obtained based on a proposal to use this resource to develop the preschool curriculum. The Notah Begay III (NB3) Foundation has been a great resource for APIA to continue some of the work we started with funding from CDC to support traditional foods. Partnership like the APIA Head Start program also help build our capacity to sustain some of these initiatives.

Q: Share with us your vision for APIA's traditional foods programming. What are your hopes and plans for the next decade?

A: APIA has a vision of promoting traditional foods from the region as a healthy and nutritious part of the diet as well as an important component of individual and community wellness. APIA is very excited about the newly developed preschool curriculum. We hope to have a curriculum designed for all age levels and to have it incorporated as part of the regional school curriculum. We also wish to promote the nutritional benefits of consuming traditional foods to the greater community through education at health fairs, clinics, and community events.





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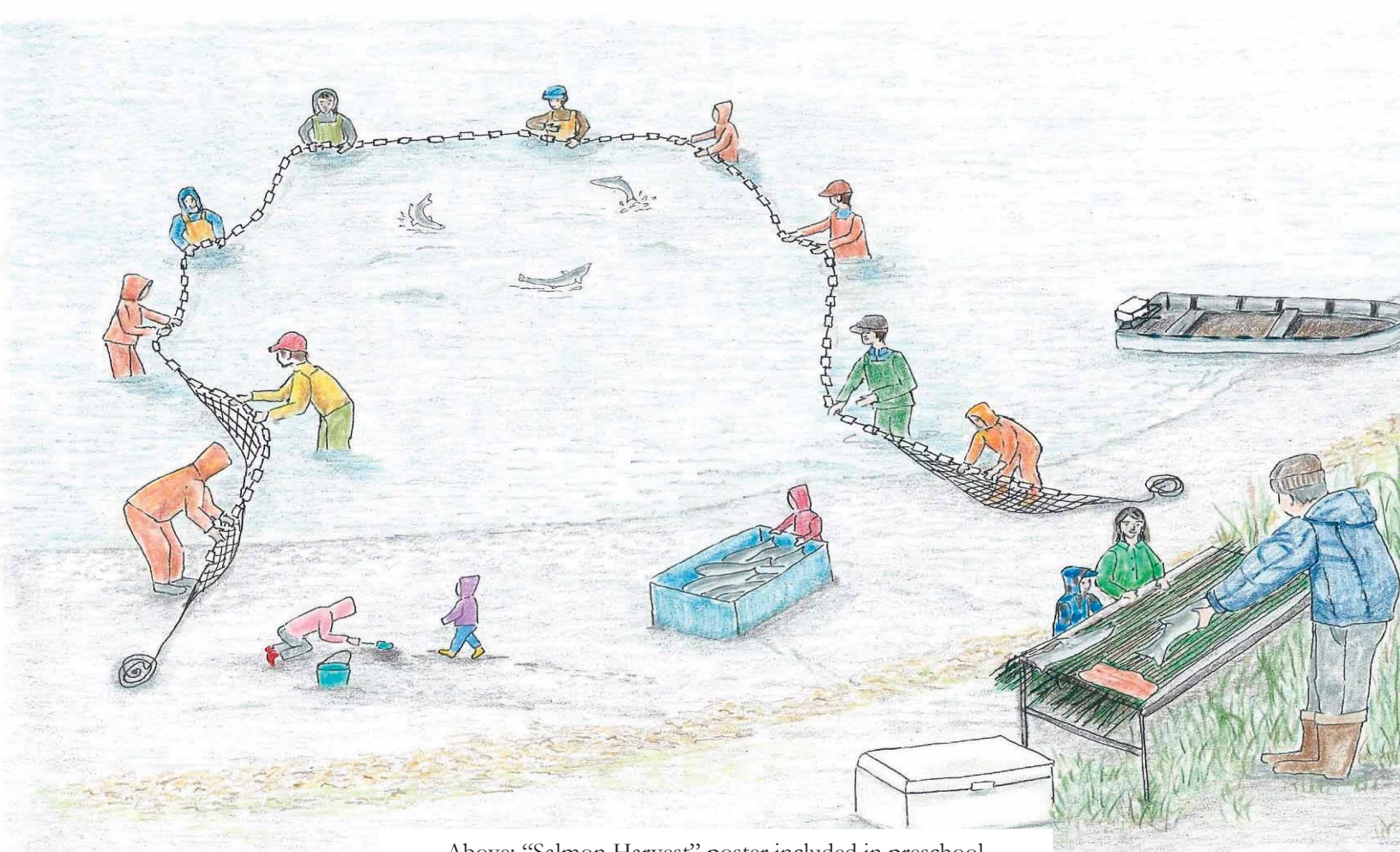
“Traditional Foods Harvesting” poster included in the preschool curriculum. Artwork by Sharon Kay.

TRADITIONAL FOODS SPOTLIGHT

Qaqamiigűx̋: Head Start Traditional Foods Preschool Curriculum

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.
Alaska

In the spirit of sustainability, this spotlight highlights a new traditional foods preschool curriculum developed by the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (APIA). APIA was a grantee of the CDC Native Diabetes Wellness Program’s Traditional Foods Program (2008-2014), a six-year cooperative agreement that championed 17 tribal programs with diverse cultures and geographies. In addition to leading, supporting, and developing traditional foods programming during the CDC cooperative agreement, APIA’s Suanne Unger worked closely with cultural mentors, scholars, and linguists to create the award-winning book, *Qaqamiigűx̋: Traditional Foods and Recipes from the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands*. *Qaqamiigűx̋* is a beautifully written book that documents and illustrates traditional foods and practices of the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands region. As the Traditional Foods Program came to a close in 2014, APIA was eager to



© Sharon Kay

Above: "Salmon Harvest" poster included in preschool curriculum. Artwork by Sharon Kay. Below (from left): Unalaska preschool students learn about the salmon harvest and fish. Head Start teacher Marie Schliebe prepares a recipe with salmon in an Unalaska classroom during the pilot program for the new preschool curriculum. Photos courtesy of APIA.



sustain its support of traditional foods for the 13 Alaska Native tribes in the region, some of whom still rely on subsistence traditions of hunting, gathering, and fishing.

Building on the success of Unger’s Qaqamiigűx, APIA received a Seeds of Native Health Promising Program Grant from the Notah Begay III (NB3) Foundation to develop a traditional foods curriculum for Head Start programs in the region. The preschool curriculum, “Qaqamiigűx: Head Start Traditional Foods Preschool Curriculum,” is based on Unger’s Qaqamiigűx and was developed by Moses Dirks, Julia Sargent, Tracy Stewart, and Suanne Unger in collaboration with APIA departments, APIA Head Start teachers, and numerous other contributors.

Role of Cultural Mentors

The contributions and expertise of local cultural mentors shine through in the curriculum’s content, design, and illustrations. Central to the curriculum development is Moses Dirks, an Unanga̋ scholar, educator, and linguist who served as the cultural mentor for the project. Born and raised on Atka Island, Alaska, Dirks was taught subsistence traditions at a young age and practices subsistence hunting and gathering to this day. With more than 25 years’ experience as a teacher, Dirks has taught Unangam tunuu (Aleut language) in local schools, universities, and during culture camps. His love for Unangam tunuu has inspired his lifelong commitment to the preservation of the language. In addition to playing a central role in curriculum development, Dirks’ traditional knowledge and expertise informed the illustrations of traditional foods and harvesting methods that are part of the curriculum.

Sharon Kay, APIA cultural mentor, brought to life Dirks’ stories and traditional knowledge by developing original artwork for the preschool curriculum posters. Originally from Unga Island, Alaska, Kay is an expert basket weaver and artist. Kay’s Attu-style baskets are beautifully intricate and sold worldwide. Some of her most prized baskets are displayed in the Alaska Native Medical Center, Ted Stevens International Airport, Unalaska Museum, and at APIA.

Overview of Curriculum

The “Qaqamiigűx: Head Start Traditional Foods Preschool Curriculum” was developed to fill a gap in relevant, culturally informed nutrition education for Alaska Native children in the region. Head Start, a federally funded early childhood education program, provides nutrition education curricula for all Head Start and Early Head Start programs to use in the classroom. The Head Start nutrition curriculum is representative of most communities in the United States, and promotes healthy foods such as cantaloupe, broccoli, and grapes. However, the developers of the APIA traditional foods curriculum and local Head Start teachers began noticing that these common foods are neither grown nor available in local stores in the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands region. These discussions led to the vision for and design of a traditional foods preschool curriculum that showcases local foods, incorporates the Unangam tunuu language, engages children through storytelling, and promotes intergenerational activities.

The curriculum includes six units with corresponding activities, stories, and posters, including: 1) marine mammals, 2) fish, 3) birds, 4) caribou/reindeer, 5) plants, and 6) tidal foods. Each unit begins with a



“Sea Lion Harvest” poster included in the preschool curriculum. Artwork by Sharon Kay.

listening lesson on how words are pronounced in Unangam tunuu, such as seagull (slukaḵ) and ribbon kelp (qahnguḵ). An associated online glossary with audio recordings of the words is available through APIA’s website. Following the language lesson is an introduction to the unit, a harvest poster depicting a scene from the region, nutritional information, a recipe, a nutrition activity, activity extensions, coloring pages, and a family letter. The family letter engages family members through requesting donations of traditional foods, sharing recipes to try at home with nutrition information on traditional foods, and a reference to the language lessons.

To supplement the preschool curriculum and Unger’s book on traditional foods in the region, APIA was awarded a second grant from the Notah Begay III (NB3) Foundation for digital storytelling. The digital stories focus on traditional foods preparation ranging from cooking demonstrations during culture camps to traditional methods used to hunt Chuuchiigan (small migratory birds).

The traditional foods preschool curriculum was developed in 2016 with a one-year, \$40,000 grant from the Notah Begay III (NB3) Foundation. It is now available on APIA’s [website](#).



Feast for the Future
community garden. Photo credit:
Johns Hopkins Center American
Indian Health.

Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health,
Santo Domingo Pueblo, Navajo (Diné) Nation & White Mountain Apache Tribe

FEAST FOR THE FUTURE

Arizona & New Mexico

The following dialogue was shared by Reese Cuddy and the [Feast for the Future](#) (FFF) team at the [Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health](#) (JHCAIH). FFF, one of JHCAIH's newest programs, aims to promote health and prevent obesity through building healthy food security and supporting Indigenous foodways. JHCAIH has been partnering with tribal communities through collaborative health research for nearly four decades on topics such as infectious disease prevention, maternal and child health, early childhood development, sexual and reproductive health, alcohol and drug abuse prevention, nutrition promotion and chronic disease prevention, injury prevention, environmental health, and adolescent health. In addition to co-designing interventions with tribal communities, JHCAIH is a national leader in training AI/AN scholars in health care and public health.

Q: Share with us a brief history of the Feast for the Future program.

A: JHCAIH has a long-standing partnership with Native communities in the southwest. Several communities collaborated with JHCAIH on the FFF program: Santo Domingo Pueblo, the Tuba City community on the Navajo (Diné) Nation, and the White Mountain Apache Tribe. Since 2010, the three communities developed, implemented, and evaluated their own customized FFF programs. Upon demonstration of efficacy, the three communities have taken over the programs, and they are now self-sustaining.

The FFF program is an innovative and holistic model program that ensures American Indian children and communities have access to healthy and nutritious foods. The FFF program promotes Native communities' capacity to reintroduce indigenous foods and agriculture. The overarching goal of the FFF program is to reduce the incidence and prevalence of obesity and obesity-related diseases among American Indian families. The strategic objectives are to:

- Increase gardening and nutrition knowledge, attitudes, and practices;
- Increase the sustainable practice of traditional farming; and
- Increase access and availability of healthy foods.

There are six FFF program components that were developed, implemented, and evaluated:

- 1. The Edible School Garden Program:** A school-based program that teaches third through fifth graders the fundamentals of nutrition and gardening/farming and meets the Common Core Standards set by the states of New Mexico and Arizona in math, reading, science, language arts, and social studies.
- 2. The Traditional Foodways Education Program:** A program focused on traditional foodways that is primarily taught by elders and farmers in the community to youth aged 5–18 and emphasizes traditional language instruction.



Above: (left) Feast for the Future partners from White Mountain Apache Tribe and (right) harvest photo.
Below: Children from Santo Domingo Pueblo helping in a community garden.
Photo credits: Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health.



3. **Community Gardens, Orchards, and Greenhouses:** Community-appropriate places to develop traditional agricultural foodways, including gardens, orchards, and greenhouses maintained in collaboration with local partners.
4. **Farmers Markets:** Farmers markets developed, implemented, and sustained to increase access to local healthy foods for the community and to support local farmers.
5. **Farmers Workshops:** A series of regular (monthly or quarterly) farmers workshops designed to build and share capacity for local farmers to efficiently produce healthy, fresh foods by sharing traditional and contemporary wisdom.
6. **Family Gardens:** Individual families and households develop home gardens to improve access to local, fresh foods. (Note: family gardens were developed only with the White Mountain Apache Tribe.)

Q: Describe the “community visioning” process that led to the program’s key components.

A: In 2009, JHCAIH and community stakeholders from the three participating communities engaged in a rigorous “community visioning” process to create a community-driven plan for promoting children and families’ broad-based nutrition and healthy foods access. National consultants in the areas of pediatrics, nutrition, food distribution, agricultural restoration, and community and school gardening were engaged to share expertise with each community. The national consultants and local stakeholders came together in March 2010 in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where detailed community plans for each of the three pilot sites were developed.

Following the initial community visioning process, all program activities were guided by a community advisory board comprised of passionate community stakeholders interested in revitalizing traditional food systems and preventing obesity and type 2 diabetes using a community-based program approach. Throughout the program implementation phase, the community advisory board met on a monthly to quarterly basis to review program activities and provide direction and guidance on all FFF program components.

Q: What have your tribal partners enjoyed most about the program?

A: Program evaluations across the three pilot sites have shown that FFF program activities have had an overwhelmingly positive impact on youth, elders, and other community members. Results from a PhotoVoice evaluation in 2013 showed FFF participants felt a strong cultural connection to the program activities and viewed the program as important to their well-being. Youth hoped that farming/gardening traditions would persist and grow, and the older participants reported that their health had personally benefited from FFF. During the summer of 2016, a comprehensive mixed methods program evaluation was conducted that aimed to understand the impact of FFF on participants’ knowledge, attitudes, eating behaviors, gardening/farming, and connection to culture. Respondents indicated FFF had positively changed their communities by promoting traditional cultural activities, healthy eating, and traditional farming/gardening, and talked about how they were farming/gardening more, eating healthier, and becoming reacquainted with traditional agricultural practices because of the FFF program. The intergenerational transmission of knowledge was noted as a key strength of FFF, with community members describing how FFF activities were taught in a style that honored traditional ways of teaching and



Above: Feast for the Future family garden. Below: Harvest photo. Photo credits: Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health.



learning. In addition, the Edible School Garden youth survey results demonstrated significant improvement in knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy related to nutrition and gardening.

Q: What resources are available to tribal communities with interest in implementing and adapting the program?

A: JHCAIH has developed an online toolkit designed to help interested communities develop and customize the FFF program to match their communities' needs. Interested communities can visit www.feastforthefuture.org to learn more. Once users have created an account, they will have complete and free access to all six FFF program components, which include: the Edible School Garden resources that consist of an implementation guide, reference manual, overview charts, fall/spring curriculum for third through fifth grade, student workbooks, and evaluation tools; and the other five FFF components that consist of comprehensive interactive worksheets that help users think through and develop every detail of creating each FFF program component tailored for their community. For each interactive component, users are able to input data specific to their community in a guided format that is compiled into a printable, uniquely tailored "Program Plan" at the completion of the worksheet. In addition, each of the five interactive worksheets have examples, tips, and resources to supplement each program component.

Q: Share with us your vision for the program.

A: The FFF program was created in response to the participating communities' concern for the health of their people and an interest in strengthening their local food systems through the power of their traditions. Having developed a unique, holistic, very well received, and thoroughly evaluated program, our goal is to provide tools to other communities to empower them to revitalize their traditional foodways and improve their health through structured, sustainable programs. We believe that all American Indian children and their families deserve to be healthy, connected to their cultures, and free of obesity and type 2 diabetes. Our current vision is to disseminate FFF widely to enable as many tribal communities as possible to tailor FFF to their needs by utilizing the online toolkit to create sustainable programming in their own communities. It is an honor and a privilege to share this comprehensive program with interested communities.



INTERTRIBAL — BUFFALO —



COUNCIL

INTERTRIBAL BUFFALO COUNCIL

South Dakota

The following dialogue was shared by Dianne Amiotte-Seidel of the Intertribal Buffalo Council (ITBC), with a special focus on ITBC's role in promoting the use of buffalo meat in tribal school meals. Established in 1990, ITBC works toward the return of buffalo to Indian Country and assists tribes in establishing buffalo programs. Located in Rapid City, South Dakota, ITBC has a membership representing nearly 60 tribal nations and a collective herd of more than 15,000 buffalo. ITBC also provides education and training programs and technical assistance for its membership. It also develops marketing strategies and coordinates the transfer of surplus buffalo between national parks and tribal lands.



Photo credit: ITBC.

Q: Describe the cultural and historical significance of buffalo for American Indian people. How has ITBC helped to restore buffalo herds across Indian Country?

A: The relationship between tribal people and buffalo has existed since time immemorial. For many tribes, buffalo provided everything needed to survive—food, shelter, clothing, and economic support—and was the foundation for religious customs. The positive significance buffalo held for tribes was almost lost when the government decided that, in order to pacify the plains tribes, all buffalo must be killed. This and other acts of cultural genocide made life very hard for tribal communities.

Tribes and tribal members have been involved in preserving buffalo since the 1800s, and ITBC has been involved since 1992 in an effort to reestablish the historic buffalo cultures into today's society. ITBC helps the tribes acquire buffalo and raise them as wildlife, as well as incorporate them back into the daily lives of tribal members.

Q: In recent years, ITBC was awarded grants from the Administration for Native Americans and USDA's Farm-to-School program to improve health and diet among American Indian children. What did you enjoy most about these projects?

A: It was really exciting to watch kids realize they were eating buffalo and recognize the associated stories they had been told by their families about buffalo. The level of knowledge that resurfaced as a result of this work was tremendous, and the continued existence of buffalo in the lives of tribal members will pay dividends for the foreseeable future.

INCORPORATING
**BUFFALO
MEAT**
INTO THE SCHOOLS' LUNCH MENU



2013 - 2016



This ITBC report highlights a recent program that aimed to prevent type 2 diabetes in children through incorporating grass-fed buffalo meat in tribal school meals. Cover photo features Joaquin Rodrigues, a student at Taos Day School. Report and images courtesy of ITBC.

Q: What are some of the key partnerships you have established to help improve access to traditional foods and practices in tribal schools?

A: We have been able to work with the various levels of tribal government and communities involved in the decision making process required to get buffalo raised on tribal lands to the plates of tribal members. In addition, we have worked with USDA and state regulatory programs on the requirements for labeling, processing, and inspections. We also have worked with label companies and processors to ensure proper labeling and portion sizes, and with a number of non-governmental organizations involved in the Farm-to-School program across the country.

Q: In 2015, USDA formally acknowledged its support of serving traditional foods in school meals through the Child Nutrition Programs and Traditional Foods memo (TA01-2015) [see Appendix]. Describe your role in the development of this important memo.

A: ITBC has continually promoted the inclusion of traditional foods in federal food programs and has used buffalo to advance this effort.

Q: Share with us your vision for ITBC. What are your hopes and plans for the generations to come in regard to health and traditional foods?

A: ITBC envisions a return to locally raised and processed traditional foods in all levels of the food systems on tribal lands. We feel that this would return tribal members to the healthy, strong individuals we were in the past and allow communities to deal with social issues in a responsive manner.

Learn more about the work of intertribal organizations and traditional foods programs in “[Part IV – Traditional Foods in Native America, Chickasaw Nation Nutrition Services Get Fresh! Program and Oklahoma State University](#)” (pages 10-31). Featured programs include the Muckleshoot Traditional Foods and Medicines Program of the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe in western Washington; NATIVE HEALTH Urban Garden, serving urban American Indians in the city of Phoenix Arizona metropolitan area; and the Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians in northern California.



Intergenerational traditional foods activities during the Adult Culture Camp in Kake, Alaska.
Photo credit: Georgina Davis-Gastelum.

Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium WISEFAMILIES Alaska

The following dialogue was shared by Clara Gray and Georgina Davis-Gastelum of the Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC), which focuses on the sustainability of the WISEFAMILIES Traditional Foods Program. WISEFAMILIES was created in 2008 with support from CDC's Traditional Foods Program, a six-year cooperative agreement. In this interview, Davis-Gastelum shares her experience in helping to coordinate the Adult Culture Camp in Kake, Alaska, which started under the WISEFAMILIES program. Established in 1975 and located in Sitka, Alaska, SEARHC is one of the oldest and largest tribally managed health organization in the nation serving Alaska Native tribal members across 20 health facilities in southeast Alaska.

Learn more about the 2013 Traditional Foods Program Grantee Partner Meeting hosted by SEARHC, which helped grantees share their experiences, culture, and community through traditional foods, in [“Part III – Traditional Foods in Native America, Healthy Traditions Project, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians-Oregon”](#) (pages 17-21).

Q: Describe how you helped ensure the sustainability of the WISEFAMILIES program when the CDC’s Traditional Foods Program ended.

A: The Adult Culture Camp in Kake, Alaska, is a three-day camp that started five years ago under the SEARHC WISEFAMILIES program with funding from CDC’s Traditional Foods Program and has been sustained since funding ended in 2014. We started the camp at the request of elders wanting their own culture camp after attending the tribe’s [Organized Village of Kake] annual Youth Culture Camp. From the beginning, we worked closely with our local tribe, which continued to support the camp after our WISEFAMILIES grant ended. The coordinating group is our Kake Coalition, made up of volunteers from various community entities.

The long-term goal of the WISEFAMILIES program is to support community-driven, culturally competent initiatives that enable people to adopt healthy lifestyles that prevent chronic disease and support traditional Tlingit knowledge and activity. Our delivery model is simple. Rather than try to tell our residents what we think is good for them to reduce their risk of type 2 diabetes, we invite them to participate in the process of planning and delivering activities that address risk factors and also strengthen ties to culture, family, and community.

Q: Describe the importance of a traditional foods program in the Alaska Native communities you serve. What are some of the traditional foods and medicines specific to your region?

A: The camp provides an opportunity for elders and younger adults to share their methods of preparing traditional food: fish, seal, gumboots, and shellfish. Some methods shared during the camp are known by only a few people in the community, and presentations offer an opportunity to broaden the knowledge base of traditional foods preparation. During the most recent camp, we added time for sharing knowledge about berries and medicinal plants.

“Our food is our way of life” is a saying often used to describe our traditional food. Our Adult Culture Camp is a tool that provides a way for adults to gather, prepare, share and teach—not only the method of food preparation, but passing on values to the next generation, which links us to our ancestors. This brings people and communities together, and makes our community a healthier place.

Q: What are some of the key partnerships you have established to help support and sustain WISE-FAMILIES?

A: One big reason for our success is our many partners that make us strong. They include the Organized Village of Kake; Keku Diversified; SEARHC; Kake Coalition; US Forest Service (USFS); University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service; SOS Value Mart; Kake Tribal Fuel; Future Farmers of America; Kake City School District; Southeast Senior Services; Arrowhead LP Gas; Cedar House; Tame the Mane; Wrangell, Alaska (for their donation of hooligan, an ocean fish that is also known as “candle-fish”); and the generosity of individual community members. In addition, our tribe has an agreement with USFS to use their land and facilities for the camp. Having purchased equipment during the earlier years of the CDC cooperative agreement, we were well-equipped to continue the camp after the funding ended.



Above: Three generations at Adult Culture Camp in Kake, Alaska. Below: Elders preparing salmon during the Culture Camp. Photo credits: Georgina Davis-Gastelum.





Sunset during the Adult Culture Camp in Kake, Alaska. Photo credit: Georgina Davis-Gastelum.

Equipment includes worktables, awnings, chairs, pots, and pressure canners, all of which we continue to use for the Adult Culture Camp.

Q: Describe some of the ways WISEFAMILIES adds value to local Alaska Native communities.

A: WISEFAMILIES adds value to local communities through providing supplemental traditional foods. Traditional food that is processed is given to participants and also to the Senior Center lunch program. In addition, community members donate fish, crab, deer, and seal to the camp for participants to use in their demonstrations. During the camp, lunch is shared daily and donated by community members. Sometimes it is a big pot of deer meat stew and corn bread, and other times it is a big pot of crab.

The program also adds value through sharing cultural knowledge. The traditional foods demonstrations naturally lead to a time for storytelling. We also have time set aside to share on the last day, when we request input from participants. Elders are appreciative of our camp, their own camp, and time to share their knowledge.

The camp provides education on processing and preparing traditional foods. The camp is followed by a safe foods processing class. During the class, we use pressure canning to preserve fish and meat, which helps community members learn how to safely process their food. Pressure canners are available for people to borrow if they do not own one.

Finally, the camp provides an opportunity for the community to gather together and celebrate our

gathering at our harvest festival, held in October—the ending to our Culture Camp. Traditional foods are shared, native dancers join in the celebration, speeches of appreciation are given, and we have a community social with games for children and adults alike.

Q: Share with us your vision for WISEFAMILIES. What are your hopes and plans for the next decade?

A: This camp has become a priority and continues with support from our local coalition and tribe. It is important to our elders, and it is important to us. To sustain the camp, one of our coalition members applied for and received a grant from USFS, through the local tribe, to continue the Adult Culture Camp.

Our tribe sees the Adult Culture Camp as a valuable program and is committed to continuing in the years to come, along with their youth culture camp, which has been ongoing for 30 years. Neighboring communities have contacted me, hoping to start their own Adult Culture Camps. My plans are to create a desk manual that will help others re-create their own program in their communities.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. & Traditional Foods Preschool Curriculum

Contact: Suanne Unger

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www.apiai.org

Eagle Adventure Program

Oklahoma Tribal Engagement Partners

Contact: Teresa Jackson

Email: teresajackson@oktep.com

oktep.com/eagleadventure

Feast for the Future

Johns Hopkins

Center for American Indian Health

Contact: Reese Cuddy

Email: feastforthefuture@jhu.edu

www.feastforthefuture.org

Healthy Traditions Project

Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians

Contact: Kathy Kentta-Robinson

Email: kathyk@ctsi.nsn.us

InterTribal Buffalo Council

Contact: Dianne Amiotte

Email: DAmiotte@ITBCBison.com

Seeds of Native Health & Wozupi Tribal Gardens

Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community

Contact: Kelsey Hagen

Email: Kelsey.Hagen@Shakopeedakota.org

seedsofnativehealth.org

www.wozupi.com

WISEFAMILIES / Adult Culture Camp

Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC)

Contact: Georgina Davis-Gastelum / Martha Pearson

Email: georginad@searhc.org /

marthap@searhc.org

searhc.org/service/health-promotion

Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation

Oglala Lakota Nation

Contact: Andrew Iron Shell

Email: andrew@thundervalley.org

www.thundervalley.org

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**Traditional Foods Program - Native Diabetes Wellness Program
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

www.cdc.gov/diabetes/projects/ndwp/traditional-foods.htm

Native American Foods and Health Program - First Nations Development Institute

www.firstnations.org/programs/foods-health

Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative (IFAI) – University of Arkansas School of Law

www.law.uark.edu/ifai/

Indian Health Service - Division of Diabetes Treatment and Prevention

www.ihs.gov/MedicalPrograms/Diabetes/index.cfm?module=programsSDPI

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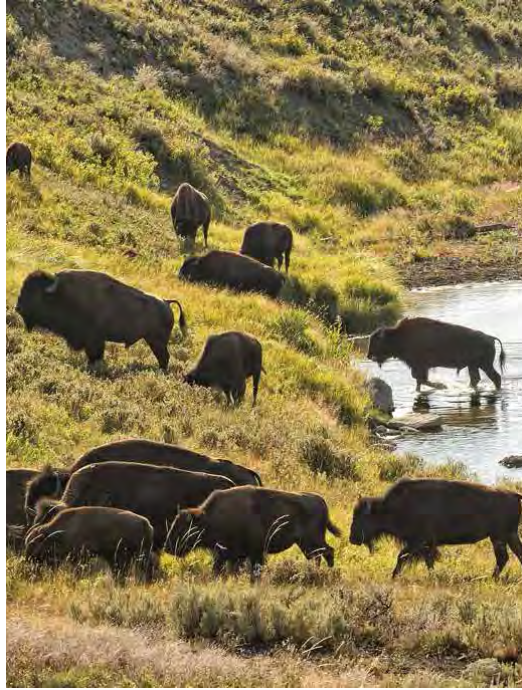
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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). Part III—Traditional Foods in Native America: A Compendium of Stories from the Indigenous Food Sovereignty Movement in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities. Atlanta, GA: Native Diabetes Wellness Program, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

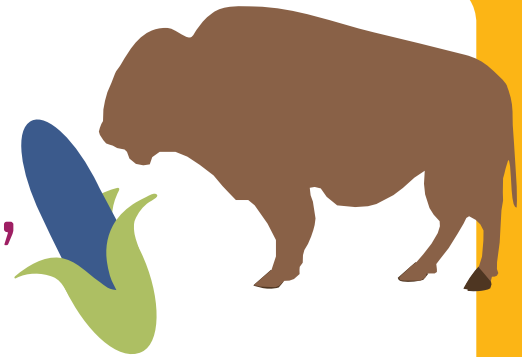
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). Part II—Good Food is Power: A collection of traditional foods stories from the Ramah Navajo Community, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and Tohono O’odham Nation. Atlanta, GA: Native Diabetes Wellness Program, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2013). Part I—Traditional Foods in Native America: A Compendium of Stories from the Indigenous Food Sovereignty Movement in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities. Atlanta, GA: Native Diabetes Wellness Program, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.





BRINGING TRIBAL FOODS AND TRADITIONS INTO CAFETERIAS, CLASSROOMS, AND GARDENS



SCHOOLS AND NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES across the country are incorporating traditional foods like bison, wild rice, and ancient varieties of squash and corn into school meals and providing complementary educational activities that teach students about nutrition and Native American food traditions. There are more than 560 tribes recognized by the U.S. government, each with its own food and agricultural history and culture. Operating a farm to school program in a tribal setting or in a school with a high Native American population can help connect students to this history and expand markets for local and Native American farmers. This fact sheet explores how schools and tribes are integrating traditional foods into child nutrition programs (CNPs), buying traditional foods locally, and incorporating multicultural nutrition education into classroom curriculum and hands-on lessons in school gardens.

Incorporating Traditional Foods into Menus

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) encourages Indian Tribal Organizations, along with all operators of CNPs, to serve traditional and locally grown and raised foods. **The Child Nutrition Programs and Traditional Foods memo (TA01-2015)** explains that traditional foods may be served in CNPs and includes examples of how several traditional foods may contribute towards reimbursable meals. The **USDA Food Buying Guide (FBG)** is a great place to start when creating menus that incorporate traditional food items since it includes crediting information and portion sizes needed to meet the nutritional standards for federal reimbursement.

The Circle of Nations Boarding School located in Wahpeton, North Dakota, a charter under the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate tribe, incorporates bison meat from the Intertribal Buffalo Council (ITBC) Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate herd into lunch meals. Bison meat is substituted for ground beef in items such as chili and spaghetti sauce. In addition, food from the school garden is served daily on the salad bar. Lise Erdrich, School Health Coordinator, says that the students rated her salsa verde recipe, made with traditional green tomatillos, “better than guacamole!”

Meat from domesticated and wild game animals, including many traditional foods like bison, may be served in child nutrition programs.

*For information about serving meat, see the memo, **Procuring Local Meat, Poultry, Game, and Eggs for Child Nutrition Programs (SP01 CACFP01 SFSP01-2016).***

While the FBG provides a list of products commonly served in CNPs, it is not an all-inclusive list. If a food is served as part of a reimbursable meal, but not listed in the FBG, the yield information of a similar food or an in-house yield may be used to determine the contribution towards meal pattern requirements.

Since traditional foods may provide a different nutrient yield than the substitutes listed in the FBG, it is important to pay attention to preparation techniques and the nutritional content of the foods being substituted.



Enhancing Food Sovereignty and Supporting Local and Native American Farmers

According to USDA's 2012 Census of Agriculture, there are more than 46,000 American Indian or Alaskan Native farms and more than 2,000 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander farms in operation in the United States. When CNP operators purchase traditional foods from these farms, everyone wins: Kids have an opportunity to eat nutritious, local, traditional foods; producers get an economic boost; and tribal communities enjoy more food sovereignty.

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians operates the largest reservation based school system east of the Mississippi with over 2,200 students. The Nutrition Director works closely with local vendors, both on and off the reservation, and has incorporated muscadine grapes, sweet potatoes, squash, catfish, peas, tomatoes, melons, and blueberries from local vendor, Choctaw Fresh.

Traditional Food and Agricultural Education for Native American Students

Lessons in history, health, math, English, and science can all be used to teach students about Native American foods, food traditions, and agricultural practices. Incorporating nutrition education related to traditional food items into cultural activities such as ceremonial songs or story telling helps students to identify with food as part of Native American culture. Additionally, Native American school gardens can give students a first-hand look at traditional farming practices. For example, a Three Sisters garden (where corn, squash and beans are planted together) is a great way to connect traditional agricultural practices to healthy food choices.

Cherokee Central Schools in North Carolina, a district whose three schools (elementary, middle and high) are all on the same campus, is home to a thriving garden program. Foods grown in the garden come primarily from heirloom varieties of seeds saved for generations by Cherokee people. Students are regularly brought to the garden for soil-related lessons, seasonal garden rotation days, and more exploratory days of tasting and learning. The garden harvest is used in classroom cooking lessons, cafeteria taste tests, and in the high school life skills class. Additionally, special guests from the community are invited to teach students about traditional Cherokee uses— edible, medicinal, and ceremonial—for the plants.

Additional Resources

- **Farm-to-Cafeteria Initiatives: Connections with the Tribal Food Sovereignty Movement**
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/113799805/Tribal-Farm-to-School-project>
- **Indigenous Farm to School Programs: A Guide for Creating a Farm to School Program in an Indigenous Community**
http://www.firstnations.org/sites/documents/INDIGENOUS%20FARM_TO_SCHOOL_PROGRAMS.pdf
- **Native Food Systems Resource Center: Farm to School**
<http://www.nativefoodsystems.org/communities/farmtoschool>
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Traditional Foods Project**
<http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/projects/ndwp/traditional-foods.htm>
- **National Farm to School Network Native Communities Page**
<http://www.farmtoschool.org/our-work/native-communities>

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For more information, and to sign up for the bi-weekly e-letter from the Food and Nutrition Service's Office of Community Food Systems, please visit www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool. Questions? Email us at farmtoschool@fns.usda.gov.

