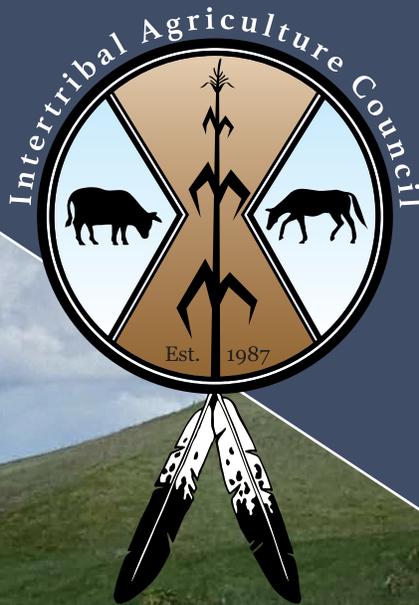


2020 SUCCESS STORIES

INTERTRIBAL AGRICULTURE COUNCIL



INTERTRIBAL AGRICULTURE COUNCIL'S TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE AND YOUTH PROGRAMS SUCCESS STORIES

1ST QUARTER

JANUARY 1, 2020 - MARCH 31, 2020





FOOD ACCESS VISIONS

EASTERN OKLAHOMA REGION

On a Monday morning in January, Electa Hare-RedCorn and two motivated women had a morning coffee at Pawnee Nation Cultural Resource Division. They had hopes of meeting at a local small business that offered homemade pastries, coffees, and teas. Unfortunately, the coffee shop was closed – still, the three women’s minds were in business and their years of experience has promise of asserting Native Food Connections in Northern Oklahoma.

Hare-RedCorn met with Rita Scott, a grant writer who had co-designed the Native Food Sovereignty assessment tool that surveyed Pawnee Tribal members and citizens in 2017. She is a regional coordinator and volunteer for the Oklahoma Farm and Food Alliance which founded the Cherry Street Farmer’s Market. During the years since the Food Sovereignty assessment tool came to fruition, Scott connected with a Pawnee caterer (and six-time National Indian Taco championship chef) Monie HorseChief of Horsechief Catering. Both women had supported the growth of the Pawnee Seed Preservation project, an initiative focused on maintaining the Tribe’s homeland ties with the Pawnee’s home state of Nebraska. Scott began to mentor Horsechief in entrepreneurship and farm to market philosophy.

Horsechief recognized some of the barriers of being an Indian land homeowner and the need for local markets when it comes to the issue of food access. She outlined the lack of knowledge in Indian country of what United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs are available to beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. Being part of a large Pawnee family, Horsechief has a vision to “grow the growers” of the Pawnee County area.

Horsechief’s own children have developed a passion for land and plant management and an eye for citizen science opportunities – IAC recognizes her drive. While she would rather not travel long distances to large cities for annual meetings, she is



interested in the local movement and opportunities to highlight successes of others in food security.

Hare-RedCorn coordinated a sponsorship for Horsechief to attend a Horticultural Education meeting focusing on Climate Change Awareness. Even though there were some weather hitches, she attended and brought the knowledge and passion back home to her community. Horsechief has recently been connected to the IAC Native Food Connections network, where she will receive guidance and support for domestic marketing and trade, as well as work towards contributing her homemade salsas and other native food ingredients into the Pawnee Farmer’s market and beyond.

In the coming months – Hare-RedCorn, Scott and Horsechief have plans to meet with the Oklahoma Conservation commission and to also highlight some traditional squash and corn cuisine at regional leadership meetings. Our native caterers are valuable cogs in the food systems wheel and IAC is grateful to be able to provide support and encouragement to Horsechief and Scott’s food access vision.

EASTERN - OK REGION

ELECTA HARE-REDCORN

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CONFIDENT STEPS TO CATTLE DREAMS

EASTERN OKLAHOMA REGION

On January 31, 2020, the Eastern Oklahoma Region Technical Assistance Specialist (TA) telephone rang at a quarter to four p.m. On the other end of the line was a mother from Midwest City, Okla., informing Hare-RedCorn that her son, Ethan Channel, had received his award letter from his county Farm Service Agency (FSA) manager. The family had contacted the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) back in October, after hearing the IAC Leadership Development Specialist Zachary Ilbery speak at an FFA event. One of the Eastern Oklahoma region caucus issues is representation of Tribal youth in FFA programming. This story aligns with that goal.



The young Creek Nation citizen had the vision, a slew of welding skills he had acquired from his time at his county technical school, a supportive family, and the drive to ask his mother to coordinate a meeting at a halfway point between the family's creek allotment outside of Muskogee and the family's home in Midwest City. On the first day that Hare-RedCorn and the family met back in October, Channel informed her they had just completed a Natural Resources Conservation (NRCS) survey of their family land. Channel and his family, along with his FFA advisor, have been stewarding a beginning cattle management

operation out on the back acreage of his suburban home with a few head.

Hare-RedCorn educated the family about an online ag business planning tool that could help the family establish SMART goals and an agricultural business plan. She also encouraged them to call their local Farm Service Agency (FSA). A call was pulled together during that first meeting and initial inquiries looked bleak for the family to live out their dream in their current situation of living in an urban area. Fortunately, there was a misquote during the call, and Hare-RedCorn and the IAC team were able to point out a rule change in the 2014 Farm Bill that opened the door to youth who live in an area with populations more than 20,000 to apply for FSA loans.

Hare-RedCorn linked up the family with an IAC TA in Montana, who has a wealth of experience in applying for Farm Service Youth Loans. It was a busy time for Channel who was a senior and highly involved in fundraising, welding, and other FFA and school obligations. Then finally, on the last day of January, the news arrived of a successful application completion! Excitedly, Hare-RedCorn received the call, congratulated the family, and awaited the email providing proof of a promissory note.

At that point in time, Hare-RedCorn forwarded his award letter to the IAC home office in Billings, Mont. and in a short amount of time, Channel received a \$500.00 youth equity grant that can help him purchase further ag equipment or go towards repaying the agriculture loan as he raises his herd.

To quote famous Oklahoman Will Rogers, Ethan Channel can now agree that, "If you want to be successful it is just this simple – know what you are doing, love what you are doing, and believe in what you are doing."

Developing leaders in Indian Country is taking that first risk and supporting confident steps towards success in utilizing USDA and NRCS programs.

EASTERN - OK REGION

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