



SUCCESS STORIES VOL. III

INTERTRIBAL AGRICULTURE COUNCIL





WELCOME

The Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) was founded in 1987 to pursue and promote the conservation, development, and use of our agricultural resources for the betterment of our people. Tribal leaders, in a true expression of self-determination, identified and delegated their representation within the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) Charter, comprising the voting membership that remains in existence today. This organizational leadership structure uniquely positions the IAC to inform policy and USDA programmatic implementation, simultaneously redefining and rebuilding our self-determined Tribal food systems.

We promote the Indian-use of Indian resources for the benefit of Indian People. Programmatic offerings have expanded over nearly four decades to include legal and policy development, USDA technical assistance, natural resources management, domestic and international marketing support, and Native youth in food and agriculture leadership development. Informed by the trade routes and food systems that existed on this continent before colonization, IAC seeks to address systemic inequities to better serve Native producers and Indian Country as a whole.

The IAC continued to grow in capacity and reach in 2021. Nearly 13,000 individual Tribal producers, Tribal government contacts, and partners were assisted through the implementation of over 2,500 Technical Assistance (TA)-based activities. This equates to over 50 TA events that reached hundreds of Tribal producers and partners every week. In addition, IAC implemented a USDA Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) 2.0 outreach campaign to support Tribal producer/USDA Service Center engagement that logged 8,000 producer and key outreach partner interactions through individualized assistance, webinars, newsletters, and social media initiatives. IAC grew the Technical Assistance and program support teams in 2021 to further ongoing assistance across every Bureau of Indian Affairs region in the country.

The IAC also expanded Tribal youth and professional development support through summer internship programming, Native graduate student fellowships, scholarships, and Tribal 4-H show support in 2021. As a result, many of the stories this year seek to highlight impressive young leaders, along with a variety of successful USDA and partner collaborations.

Please enjoy this compilation of selected stories.

Sincerely,

Intertribal Agriculture Council

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LEGEND

The circular identifying icons from our Mission below will be used on each success story to show what kind of success was achieved.



LEGAL AND POLICY



FOOD SYSTEMS



ECONOMICS



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



CONSERVATION AND PRODUCT INNOVATION



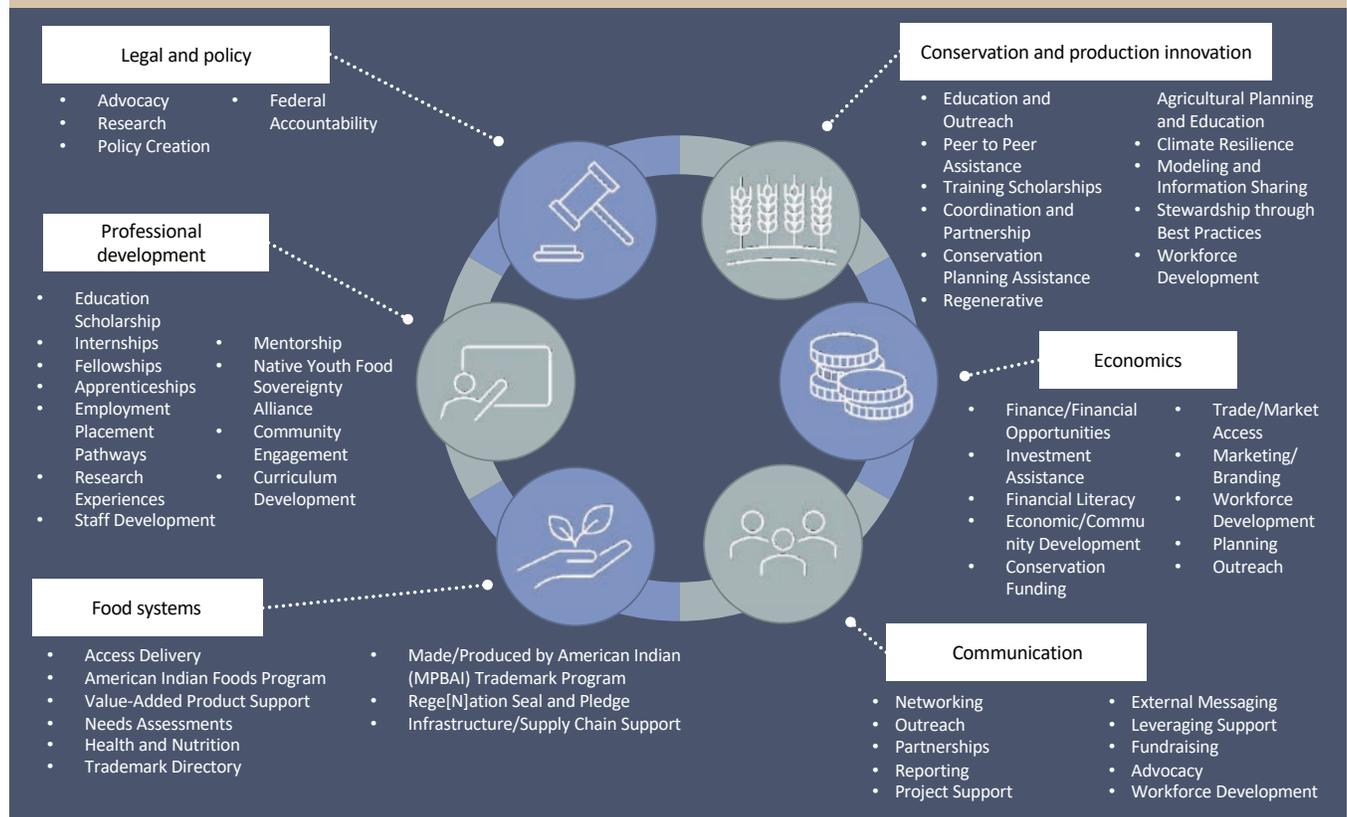
COMMUNICATION



MISSION

TO PURSUE AND PROMOTE THE CONSERVATION, DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF OUR AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES FOR THE BETTERMENT OF OUR PEOPLE.

WWW.INDIANAG.ORG





1ST QUARTER

OCTOBER 1- DECEMBER 31, 2020





FILM PROJECT GENERATES LOTS OF AWARENESS FOR AMERICAN INDIAN PRODUCERS

ALASKA REGION

Through a collaborative approach across four different technical assistance regions, IAC's American Indian Foods program developed a series of videos to highlight the diversity and quality of the food products being produced by American Indian and Alaska Native people. The Alaska Region Technical Assistance Specialist (AKTAS) ultimately identified the Alaska Native film producer who supported the development of the national film as well as the Alaska Region highlight. The AKTAS took lead on the coordination of all logistics to support the production of an Alaska Region highlight, which included three different producers from three communities in Alaska.

The Alaska film included the Tribal producer and owner of Kaawu Oysters who belongs to the Hoonah Indian Association, the CEO of Tribally owned Kodiak Wildsource Seafood, and the Tribal producers and owners of Arxotica. Each company is located in distinct areas of Alaska, which supported the capture of a diverse range of Alaska's ecosystems while also highlighting a diversity of products. The filming included a pre-camera interview, a tour of the facilities and communities, and an on-camera interview. Discussions prior to the filming included exploration of their business structure and potential USDA and IAC programming and resources that might support their operations.

Both the regional film and national film has been used for outreach and educational purposes including multiple conferences, presentations to partner organizations and coalitions, and outreach on social media. In January the video was shared with USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. Subsequently, The AFS global offices requested to share the video with their constituents, which includes Hong Kong, Canada, UES, and Japan. To date, the number of views since it was released on the AIF's social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram) is 5,587.

Additionally, the producers highlighted in the video have since utilized it to help share their story and have integrated it into their own presentations and outreach efforts.



ALASKA REGION
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FOOD DISTRIBUTION PILOTS

GREAT LAKES REGION

The Coronavirus pandemic has posed unique challenges and hardships for most Tribal communities whose elevated health disparities, concentrated living quarters, and generally reduced access to medical facilities have contributed to disproportionate loss and suffering. Food security also was a concern early in the pandemic before many communities were inundated with bulk items, including dairy and frozen pork and chicken from the USDA food box program. While appreciated, much of this bulk food was incompatible with many community members' diets since lactose intolerance is common among Tribal populations. Reflecting on this food access situation while also contemplating how to better support and encourage Tribal food producers, the Intertribal Agriculture Council and partners at Menominee, Oneida, and other organizations developed concepts for intertribal food distribution pilot projects.

The Tribal Elder Food Box Distribution provided the first opportunity to implement an innovative and collaborative approach, featuring bi-monthly distributions to Oneida, Menominee, and Red Cliff from June to December 2021. Funded by a \$428,000 grant from Feeding America in coordination with Feeding Wisconsin, this pilot effort focused on sourcing products first from Tribal producers and then other regional small-scale producers. This purchasing flexibility allowed curation of food boxes designed to appeal to Tribal elders' dietary preferences while providing a major financial boost to participating producers with the capacity to provide the nine hundred units that were provided for each distribution.

The effort has provided an ideal opportunity to refine logistics while supporting Tribal and local non-Native producers as a proof-of-concept. A fundraising dinner was also held in September, providing an opportunity to highlight American Indian Foods and capture media content to continue expanding the story of our foods and these innovative efforts. This initial pilot is connected to the USDA Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) Self-Governance 638 Pilot that is a partnership between Menominee and Oneida with sourcing from



producers at Oneida, Red Cliff, and Fond du Lac.

Feedback from participating Tribal producers has been overwhelmingly positive. However, scaling production to meet the requirements in providing nine hundred units has been a challenge. Dave Cronauer, farm manager for Forest County's Bodwéwadmí Ktégan Farm explained their process for harvesting their aquaponic lettuce has improved substantially from their first distribution that was substantially larger than any previous harvest and sale. They even changed their packaging to better suit this type of large commercial order. Similarly, Little Traverse Bay Band's Ziibimijwang Farm expressed excitement in how a single sale to this pilot effort equaled over a month of farmers market sales. These pilot food distribution efforts are continuing and will provide additional insights to successful strategies for expanding intertribal supply chains and providing new market opportunities while concurrently expanding access to healthy foods.

GREAT LAKES REGION

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NATIVE PLANT WALK PRESERVES TRADITIONAL FOOD AND MEDICINE KNOWLEDGE

GREAT PLAINS REGION

In the first quarter of 2021, numerous IAC producers have reached out for resources and solutions to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic with a specific task in traditional food and medicine. Prior to major pharmaceutical companies creating common retail prescriptions and over-the-counter medication, Indigenous people worked with nature utilizing numerous plant species for nutrition and natural remedies. With a significant demand to preserve traditional knowledge to protect the lives of our valuable producers and stakeholders, the IAC Navajo Region accepted the opportunity to film a plant walk featuring Linda Black Elk to provide a digital resource for producers to access natural remedies from various illnesses.

Linda is a highly knowledgeable ethnobotanist specializing in traditional foods and medicines based in Bismarck, North Dakota. Linda was straightforward in addressing the issue, "most people don't believe you can find food and medicine this time of year (early spring)." She also mentioned taking a plant walk is something everyone can do by demonstrating the parts of each plant species and explaining how it can be prepared and consumed. In the nine-part video series, Linda identified and demonstrated the following plants: Yucca, Cottonwood, Cactus, Rose Hip, Ceremonial Sage, Buffalo Berry, Licorice, and Purple Cone Flower. Each plant has a significant use and a way to harvest and process traditional food and medicine. What the TA immediately appreciated was the commonalities through Indigenous knowledge regardless of Tribal affiliation.

Ongoing efforts planned by the TA for USDA program outreach were supplemented with the video material created which increased confidence relative to working client relationships realizing the need for cultural sensitivity that could only be delivered by a regional resource outreach provider. By preserving and applying sacred knowledge through modern networking solutions, the IAC continues to carry its strong message of promoting the conservation, development, and use of our agricultural resources for the betterment of our people.

The IAC Navajo Region extends its sincere appreciation to Linda Black Elk and her partner for taking time out of their day to share their knowledge with the world.



Linda Black Elk highlighting a piece of Ceremonial Sage.



Linda Black Elk displaying the strength of Yucca leaf fiber.

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GREAT PLAINS REGION

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“FOOD 4 FAMILIES” INITIATIVE

NORTHWEST (OR-ID) REGION

The Intertribal Agriculture Council partnered with Farm-Aid, Indian Land Tenure Foundation, and First Nations Development Institute to create the “Food 4 Families” initiative.

In the planning phase of the “Food 4 Families” initiative, IAC Administration collaborated with Farm-Aid, Indian Land Tenure Foundation, and First Nations Development Institute to share the concept of offering a “Food 4 Families Processing Coupon” to Native youth in 2020 that had a show animal that would not be able to be sold in their canceled live auction sales. This coupon would increase the marketability of their livestock and would give incentive to private treaty buyers to pay a higher premium to the youth, or it would allow the youth to process their animal to feed their own family or community. The Food 4 Families Initiative consists of the following three tracks; Track A: Live Auction Participation, Track B: Processing Coupon, and Track C: Add-On Premium.

The 4-H club qualified for Track C: In which participation requires the 4H, FFA, or otherwise affiliated youth participating in the livestock show to request the IAC’s support in providing an add-on premium in a sale that does not allow for animals to be donated back to the Youth Organization. Youth requesting add-on premium support must complete a brief essay application to secure their check mailed directly to their home address following the show.

Nola Cates, Tribal 4-H Program Director at Fort Hall Idaho was contacted and given the information on IAC’s Food 4 Families Program and if there were any youth who were showing in the Bingham County Fair in Blackfoot Idaho who would be interested in participating. The program was overwhelmingly welcomed by the 4-H youth and Director. The youth were given a brief introduction to IAC and information was distributed to the youth to write their essays to become eligible for the add-on premium of \$320.00 per youth. Fort Hall 4-H Livestock Club members participating were Paizlee Furniss, Lennix Tendore, Dayton Tendore, Beauleah Farmer, Kirstyn Farmer, Susan

Avila-Dixey,
all showing
lambs. Osei

Burns and Tessa Cutler showed lambs and heifers in the breeding stock division. All eight youth participated and sold their lambs in the 4-H Market Animal Sale beginning at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 4, 2021.



NORTHWEST - OR/ID
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CATTLE RANCHERS UTILIZE FSA DISASTER PROGRAM

NORTHWEST (WA) REGION

Delford Johnson was a well-respected member of the Confederated Tribe of Warm Springs. He was a proud owner of a cattle ranch operation. Delford owned a thousand acres of alfalfa and pasture. Delford ran 400 head of cattle on his pasture and adjacent Tribal grazing lands. Sadly, Delford passed away suddenly this past April. Desford's wife and daughter have continued to operate and maintain the ranch.

The summers of 2020 and 2021 in the region suffered a severe drought. Cattle lands have had decreased feed availability. In 2020, Delford and his family, with the assistance of Intertribal Agriculture (IAC), applied for the FSA Livestock Disaster Forage Program (LFP). In January of 2021 and they received their payment. This year, the Johnson family has also suffered from the consequences of yet another drought. The family is currently working with FSA re-applying for the FSA, (LFP).

Global warming projections for the Northwest are for continued and worsening droughts that will increase wildfires, devastate grazing lands, harm wildlife, and greatly impact livestock and hay producers in the region. Disaster assistance programs will become more important and necessary to help the producers in their fight for survival during these difficult times. The Johnson family's situation represents what many producers are



experiencing in the Pacific Northwest.

IAC has been monitoring the Johnson family's progress on their current LFP application. IAC is also currently seeking other possible assistance for the Johnson family's ranch. The Johnsons state "we are very grateful that a program that assists cattlemen are available".

Disaster Assistance Programs will continue to be imperative for the benefit of Tribal Producers in the Pacific Northwest.

**NORTHWEST (WA)
REGION**

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HIGHLIGHTING SOME OF THE BEST OF INDIAN COUNTRY AGRICULTURE WITH USDA-FNS

PACIFIC REGION

In the first quarter of 2021, the IAC Pacific Region was approached to support an agency-wide Native American Heritage Month acknowledgment with the USDA-Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The event was to take place on November 17, 2020 from 1pm-2pm ET. Mike Ladd, the FNS Tribal Affairs Specialist for the Western Region engaged FNS regional and national leadership to participate and asked that IAC design the primary activities for the event. Six Native young professionals engaged in Indian Country agriculture and food systems efforts across the United States were approached. The agenda was developed to enable each young professional to present to the entire agency about areas of their focus.

Azelya Yazzie (Blackfeet/Navajo) presented on Native youth engagement initiatives she has helped lead with IAC since 2015 to bring greater exposure to a college degree and career pathways in agriculture and food systems. Next Padgley Gonzales (Pima/Maricopa, Gila River Indian Community) presented on professional development and western states activities pertaining to Native youth engagement and educational initiatives underway in coordination with IAC. Ellise David (Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs) spoke about her work with Oregon State Cooperative Extension, her family background in agriculture, and her ongoing engagement with IAC.

Following these presentations, Donald Moore (Yurok/Hupa) presented on traditional food practices of his Yurok people and the cultural foundations that are integrated with salmon and other first foods. Next, Nicholas Naranjo (Santa Clara Pueblo) spoke about his family's cattle operation and his pursuits to build his own operation and its growth to become a viable revenue generator for himself and his family. Maria Gladstone (Blackfeet/Cherokee) also presented on her nationally-renowned Indigikitchen initiative that provides education around incorporating traditional foods into contemporary recipes that are healthy and inviting to those interested in bringing more Native/Indigenous cooking into their lives. The event was attended by nearly 500 USDA-FNS employees, including Administrator Pam Miller, and ongoing conversations have continued to discuss a professional development-oriented partnership between IAC and FNS, with internship programming slated to begin in early 2022.

Native Youth in Agriculture

USDA Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services
Celebrates Native American Heritage Month

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm EST
November 17, 2020

Featuring:

- Keir Johnson, Osage Nation
- Azelya Yazzie, Navajo/Blackfeet
- Padgley Gonzales, Pima/Maricopa, Gila River Indian Community
- Ellise David, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
- Donald Moore, Yurok/Hupa
- Nicholas Naranjo, Santa Clara Pueblo
- Mariah Gladstone, Blackfeet/Cherokee

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PACIFIC REGION

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SOUTH CENTRAL CLIMATE ADAPTATION SCIENCE CENTER

SOUTHERN PLAINS REGION

The past several years working with the South Central Climate Adaptation Science Center (sponsored by the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nation but works throughout Oklahoma with all Tribes) there has been a growing need and interest in Native and traditionally important plants to facilitate restoration efforts, cultural activities, and fill the broader application of DOT projects in a rapidly changing Oklahoma with several road and bridge projects. During these years of development many projects, training, and listening sessions have been conducted and what is truly needed beyond more education/outreach is plant material.

A consortium of folks and organizations with IAC's assistance have been envisioning a physical location dedicated to the development of Native plant materials and research around conservation and climate adaptation. Modeled after the ARS and USDA Plant Materials centers, this location or series of locations throughout the state will provide plant materials for critical Tribal and state projects, facilitate ag and climate adaptation research, and provide a training hub for Tribal and state professionals. Oklahoma State University and Oklahoma University are taking the lead in grant development with the full support of the Tribes and a few city municipalities.

The city of Ada, Oklahoma has acquired a 7,000-acre parcel along an important recharge zone that serves the Arbuckle-Simpson aquifer and subsequently the Chickasaw National Recreation Park in Sulphur, OK. This area has a unique ecotone ecosystem with much diversity alongside a history of cattle and crop production. Recently, the area has undergone a moratorium on commercial and agricultural water use and has seen a surge in tourism. Interest in the area is broad including involvement with a water lawsuit from the North Central Texas Watershed Board and proposed sales from Blue River to Dallas, TX.

A grant has been submitted to the Department of Labor for 80 million to begin the process of developing the plant materials center and training appropriate Tribal and state professionals to facilitate conservation of the area and the ongoing projects tied to climate adaptation. IAC will continue to assist with

additional grants targeting funds available in Biden's Build Back Better proposal and other existing USDA resources.



SOUTHERN PLAINS REGION

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MENTORING YOUTH AND SUPPORTING THEIR PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY

SOUTHWEST REGION

The IAC Southwest Region works with Native youth to further enhance their career pathways and resources by introducing them to opportunities in Southwest food and agriculture. The IAC hosts and facilitates local and regional professional development events that provide mentorship and activities with a focus on leadership development. Every year, IAC and the University of Arkansas School of Law hold a Native Youth in Agriculture Summer Leadership Summit that offers exposure to the college experience as they develop leadership skills and classes pertaining to agriculture production and policy.

Ms. Sunshine Tso serves as a leader for the Navajo Nation Youth Council and various Native organizations at the New Mexico State University (NMSU) and has taken the lead for youth in agriculture. She is currently a senior at NMSU majoring in Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business. She began her professional development by attending Southwest and Pacific Regional Youth Summits, and the IAC Annual Conference that inspired her to pursue higher education in agriculture and natural resources. With the personal mentorship, educational and professional development workshops provided by IAC, Ms. Tso continues her professional journey at NMSU College of Agriculture, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences. Her father, Perry Tso sent the following message, "Thank you for the early intervention during her teenage years with IAC programs." Ms. Tso is just one of several successful youth who have participated in IAC's workshops who want to pursue careers in agriculture.

IAC continues to engage younger generations and youth organizations to better prepare and train them in agriculture-related

fields. The opportunities that IAC offers for Native youth teach them leadership skills that play a pivotal role as they pursue their professional journey. IAC also partners with NRCS Pathways Programs that offer additional resources for students and recent graduates interested in studying agriculture and natural resources-related fields of study. Ms. Tso is researching those opportunities as well as the internships that NMSU Cooperative Extension Service provides. As the Native youth population interested in agriculture continues to expand and grow, IAC strives to engage Native youth as the next upcoming professionals in accessing sovereignty, self-reliance, and leadership that exists within their communities.



SOUTHWEST REGION

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IAC AIF HOSTS FIRST VIRTUAL BUYER MISSION WITH BUYERS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

With pandemic concerns and cancellations of in-person activities, the Intertribal Agriculture Council's American Indian Foods program quickly pivoted to offer AIF members a platform to connect and engage with buyers from the Middle East.

Seven buyers from the Middle East, representing companies that import \$1-\$2 billion of food per year, were recruited and introduced to five American Indian producers. Kicking off the four-day event, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Offices of Agricultural Affairs (OAA) staff in Dubai and Riyadh provided a market overview and introduction of opportunities offered through the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service.

"The experience was good," said David Comer, CEO of Red Lake Nation Foods. "Buyers are interested in our wild rice, and we will continue to keep in touch."

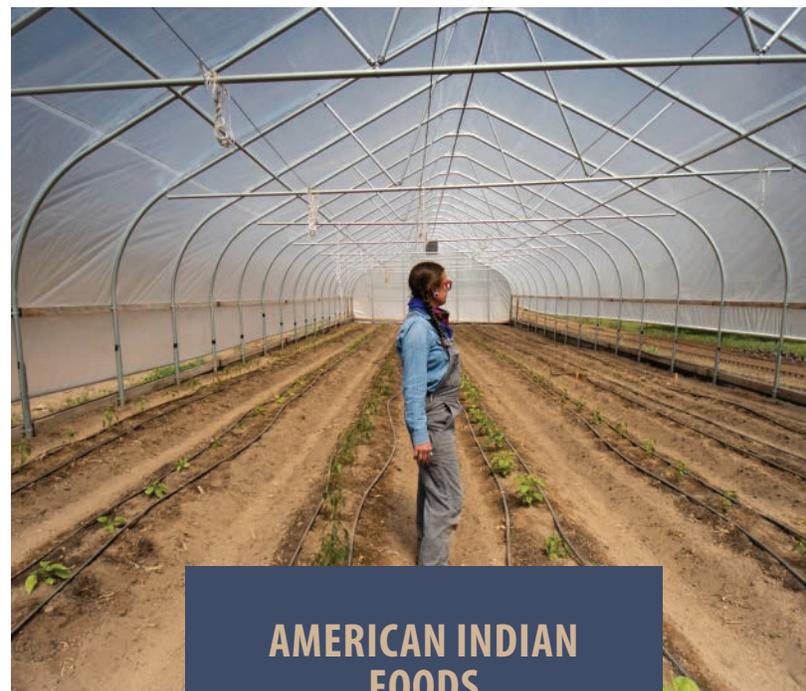
Sales resulting from the trade mission are still being monitored and are reported as they occur.

Through the "Resiliency Through Agriculture" initiative, IAC-AIF quickly partnered with Agricultural Trade Offices and trade experts to provide virtual country briefings of Canada, Japan,



"RESILIENCY THROUGH AGRICULTURE" RESOURCES AND E-LEARNING PLATFORM

IAC's primary focus for November and December was the launch of Resiliency through Agriculture's virtual conference that featured multiple conference tracks and breakout sessions focused on food and agriculture policy, regenerative agriculture, youth professional development, and other topics. The Resiliency through Agriculture initiative helped Tribal producers make informed decisions on COVID-19 related issues. "IAC has seized the opportunity to adapt their programming to bring industry and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) information to producers in Indian Country during these unforeseen circumstances," said Jacob Pelkey with Micmac Farms. "The work of IAC unites the voice of the producer in a way that starts with the grassroots needs of our communities."



AMERICAN INDIAN FOODS
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Hong Kong, and the Middle East. The market overview provided AIF members with ongoing information to prepare for challenges or disruptions stemming from COVID-19.

All material and resources can be found on the IAC's YouTube Channel or the E-Learning Platform.

DATE SHOWS PARTICIPATION AND VIEWS ACCUMULATED THROUGH 2020.

51 Resiliency Through Agriculture & IAC Cares Webinar series

- Zoom Registration: 1,317
- Zoom Views (attendees): 1,537
- FACEBOOK Reach: 30,079
- Youtube Views: 4,781

IAC'S FOOD DISTRIBUTION EFFORTS IN RESPONSE TO COVID

Tribal communities have felt the impact of the pandemic in terms of health, economic distress, and sufficient food supplies. The IAC conducted a COVID Response Survey in early 2020 that revealed widespread impacts along the food system to providers and consumers alike. Farmers, ranchers, and other types of agribusiness owners are experiencing significant losses due to market channels closing unexpectedly. Tribally managed food banks likewise report severe impacts. A study conducted by IAC's partners at the University of Arkansas, Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative revealed that Tribal food pantries report less than one month of inventory and an absence of healthy, culturally appropriate foods.

Rising from a 30-plus year foundation of programming built by Native leaders interested in leveraging lands and natural resources for a more promising future, the IAC American Indian Foods program launched a program to pivot Native food and agriculture business owners to local and regional markets so they could provide foods to their communities in times of scarcity and grow their businesses. The IAC's food distribution model makes good on the promise to grant Native people the autonomy to feed their own communities with foods that honor their lifeways and traditions. This produces the effect of economically empowering Native communities to move closer to food sovereignty which simultaneously improves the health of their people.

The Native Food Connection program staff have been busy filling custom-designed Native Food Connection food boxes with wholesome, high-nutrient foods such as blue cornmeal, bison jerky, olive oil, beans, wild rice, and tuna. Contrasted with the existing model of food distribution products sourced from food conglomerates that offer highly processed, shelf-stable foods, these products promise to restore the health and vitality of people in need of healing. The first stop on IAC's statewide effort to provide foods to all Tribes in Montana was Center Pole, a grassroots food distribution hub located on the Crow reservation that advances food sovereignty and community wellbeing. Funded by the Billings Community Foundation, a shipment of 52 boxes was sent to Center Pole for families to enjoy.

A grant from the Town Pump Foundation assisted Blackfeet Nation kids' backpacks with healthy snacks to enjoy on the weekends when schools are closed. Next stop, all seven of Montana's Tribes via their local, Tribally-controlled Food Distribution on Indian Reservation (FDPIR) sites. A grant from the State of Montana and the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation allowed the IAC to ship food boxes to Montana's Tribal families, supporting Tribal producers. Due to its federal advocacy work, IAC maintains relationships with FDPIR programs and food distributors on Indian Reservations. The Native Connections food boxes are being shipped to these locations where families can pick up a box of food, and COVID protocols are in place to protect recipients. The IAC team seeks to reinforce these shipments through additional funding sources and determine consumer perceptions of Native produced items and the likelihood of continuing to seek out these foods vs. commodity items or processed foods. There is also active recruitment of producers in the state to strengthen the local producer-to-consumer relationship.

Through this intuition, IAC AIF delivered:

- 1,562 Native Food Connection boxes to Montana FDPIR sites.
- 105 Backpack meals to school-aged students in the Browning Public School
- 52 Native Food Connection boxes to Center Pole on the Crow Reservation

Thanks to our generous donors - The State of Montana, Town Pump Foundation, Billings Community Foundation, Dennis and Phyllis Washington, and Native American Agriculture Fund.





2ND QUARTER

JANUARY 1- MARCH 31, 2021



NEW PARTNERSHIPS SUPPORT SUCCESSFUL OUTREACH

ALASKA REGION

Quarter two provided multiple opportunities for advocacy and outreach in the Alaska Region. With the transition of the Federal Government Administration, some of the advocacy included potential policy change that would support the increased engagement of federal programs by Alaska Tribes. The first event was hosted by the DNC Climate Council Alaska and was titled, Alaska: People, Planet, Policy. The event was associated with a national listening tour, to learn about local and regional climate and environmental concerns as it relates to federal policy and programs. The Alaska Technical Assistance Specialist (AK TAS) presented on a panel with 14 other speakers to a group of 100 attendees. The panel was well-received, with strong attendance that included staffers representing key positions within the government.

The second event was a panel discussion hosted by Common grounds Alaska on the topic of how food can help address climate change. The panel included fifteen different panelists from various organizations from across Alaska, all of whom are stakeholders in Alaska's food system. The event attracted 240 attendees, and the presentation by the AK TAS resulted in new relationships and outreach by attendees following the event. The third event was part of the Alaska Food Policy Council's Alaska Food Festival and Conference. The AK TAS was part of a panel to present on and discuss Alaska's Tribal food systems with film director Sanjay Rawal of the film Gather. The panel followed the screening of the film. The event was well attended with over 200 registrants. Through collaborative outreach events like these in Q2, the AK TAS successfully grew awareness of the services IAC provides while simultaneously increasing the network of support and resources available when providing technical assistance. Each event resulted in follow-up emails and new connections. Additionally, the AK TAS was able to highlight specific challenges and barriers that prevent Alaska Tribes from pursuing USDA grant opportunities, which includes but is not limited to limited human capacity, and limited unrestricted funds to meet the match requirements.



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IMPLEMENTING TRIBAL FOOD CODES

GREAT LAKES REGION

The Intertribal Agriculture Council has assisted the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin over the past couple of years in their efforts to adopt a Tribal Food Code and more generally expand their community's food system. The process Menominee is using to support this effort could provide a template for other Tribes seeking to undertake similar efforts.

Realizing Indian agriculture's full potential requires engagement with the Tribal government to not only improve land access and management benefitting Tribal producers, but also in coordinating essential processing, marketing, and regulatory aspects of the supply chain and our food economies. The Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative's Model Tribal Food Code provided a comprehensive resource to assist Tribal governments in establishing agriculture departments and adopting food codes. However, actual implementation requires a dedicated effort that builds educational support, physical infrastructure, and administrative capacity necessary to carry out these codes in a manner that uplifts producers and effectively engages the broader community. Menominee provides a developing example of how a Tribe can approach this type of comprehensive effort.

The pandemic has complicated community outreach on this effort. However, significant progress has been made over the past year in building programmatic and infrastructure support for both production and, more recently, processing. Draft sections of the food code and identification of rezoning for scores of individual parcels have been completed in addition to a Trib-

al resolution to initiate an Agricultural Resources Management Plan. Collectively, these efforts are providing a model for other Tribes interested in implementing Tribal Food Codes, launching an agriculture department, and cooperatively working with other Tribes on production, processing, and distribution.



GREAT LAKES REGION

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INCREASING IAC PRODUCER ENGAGEMENT WITH THE USDA FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE

GREAT PLAINS REGION

Story: The second quarter of the IAC Navajo Region remained in an ongoing virtual environment with producers. The demand for increased virtual resources and opportunities for regional producers remained steady. Following a meeting with the American Indian Foods Program, the IAC Navajo Region collaborated with the Intertribal Agriculture Council American Indian Foods Program to create a video intended to increase producer engagement with the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service to market products internationally.

The first subject in the video was Galen Means from Gettysburg, SD. Galen is a cow-calf operator located on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation. He talked about his families' operation history and how they manage their grazing protocol to maximize forage capacity, especially during drought. In partnership with neighboring ranches, he plans to pursue a locally branded beef business to support a regional food system targeting native consumers. The IAC is beyond excited to continue support for the Means Ranch and the 605 Beef brand.

The second subject was the Cheyenne River Sioux Bison Herd. The ranch holds a bison herd intended for harvest to provide local consumers with meat and other natural products. However, ranch management faces drought and uncertainty in processor availability, shifting their focus to obtain and sort for higher quality genetics to promote a more desirable phenotype. The IAC looks forward to working with ranch managers to find more collaborative opportunities, and help the ranch operation reach their goals.

The third subject was touring the ranch belonging to Shorty Garrett and his family. The Garrett family are commercial and seed stock Red Angus cow-calf operators on the Cheyenne Sioux Reservation. They promote high-quality genetics and retain a few calves to feed their family, friends, and neighbors with a long-term goal of a higher volume operation. Great conversations were held around regenerative grazing concepts complementing their dreams of running more significant numbers of cattle.

The final subject was Elshere Herefords, owned and operated by Cole Elshere. The Elshere family has a long history of raising Hereford cattle in South Dakota. Cole is a Standing Rock Sioux Tribe member, where he and his family operate a seed stock Hereford operation focusing on beef sales. Cole believes in increasing the value of his cattle by retaining fed cattle to be further processed into a retail product for consumers. He is proud to provide beef to nearby schools on his home reservation to give back to his supportive community. Cole also looks forward to taking advantage of IAC AIF programming to market his beef products.

Matthew Denetclaw states, "With other special projects planned in the area, we could not pass up the opportunity to capture and highlight agribusinesses in action, still farming, still ranching, an exceptional example of resiliency during tumultuous times." The video products are available on the IAC and AIF's social media channels, with more products expected for local programming.



Cole Elshere (Standing Rock Sioux) supplementing his cattle herd in early spring.

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REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE A BIG TOPIC

NORTHWEST (OR-ID) REGION

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservations Tribal Farm Enterprise Committee and Tiicham Conservation District Board requested IAC to provide an outdoor workshop with an emphasis on the health of their soils. There is a concern as to the sustainability of the soils after so many years of conventional farming practices

IAC reached out to Chris Schachtschneider, Animal & Rangeland Services Oregon State University Extension, Nick Sirovatka, Soil Conservationist and West Lambert, Range Management Specialist, Oregon NRCS to provide a thorough comprehensive presentation to the attendees.

An undivided interest 40-acre allotment was chosen for the start of the workshop, located in a floodplain, with a landowner who was able to obtain owner-in-use status and was interested in restoring the health of the soil. Soil sampling began by digging test four locations in the four quadrants of the field; soil samples were shipped to Ward Laboratories, Kearney Nebraska for the Haney Soil testing. The Haney test is a dual extraction procedure that allows to landowner to assess

overall soil health. The test is used to track changes in the soil health based on management decisions. This test examines total organic carbon and total organic nitrogen to determine a carbon to nitrogen ratio used to make recommendations on what cover crops to plant. The test also includes a 24-hour CO₂ soil respiration test to look at microbial biomass and potentially mineralizable nitrogen.

Regenerative Agriculture was a big topic of discussion for this workshop. Regenerative agriculture is working to reduce or eliminate the use of chemicals, create crop and biological diversity by planting fewer annuals and more perennials and practices that mimic natural processes. The land has relied on chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and livestock and the preventative use of antibiotics has degraded the soils to the point it is similar to a drug addict and needs its fix to grow a crop. Regenerative Agriculture is a type of farming practice that rehabilitates the whole ecosystem and enhances the natural resources rather than depleting them. Regenerative Agriculture is the most practical, cost-effective, and proven carbon dioxide removal strategy known.



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REGIONAL AND NATIONAL COLLABORATION YIELDS BENEFITS

NORTHWEST (WA) REGION

Michael Shellenberger, the Intertribal Agriculture USDA Technical Specialist for Washington State, along with the South Yakima Conservation District, are working together on providing local producers access to drill seeders at an affordable rate. These seeders can be used to plant native grasses and other pasture forbs to establish healthy pastures, as well as cover crops to fields that have been harvested.

South Yakima Conservation District, is located near the Yakama Indian Reservation and is easily accessible to Tribal Members. Shawna Kalama, a Yakama Nation Tribal Member, has been a client of IAC for 8 years. Shawna, with the help of IAC, has obtained 2 FSA operating loans for hay and cattle production. Shawna rented a small seeder this past spring to plant red clover and forage kochia on 2 acres of alkali ground. The seeding took place in April which was considered to be on the tail end of the optimal time to seed. Due to the timing and lack of moisture this spring, the seeding was not as productive as hoped for but none the less it showed potential. Next year, a re-seeding will occur in February. This will be a more optimal time, allowing the seed to germinate during a time of more moisture availability.

It is the hope of the South Yakima Conservation District and the Intertribal Agriculture Council that more producers will see the benefits of regenerative agriculture principles. The benefit to the land and the individual is priceless. If the principles of regenerative agriculture are not followed there will be great consequences in the future. We can't continue to farm and ranch by conventional methods.

This collaboration with a Conservation District, Producer, and the IAC, is a prime example of what networking can produce. Shawna Kalama has been a pioneer in this collaboration and will provide a great example of the merits of such a program. IAC is excited to maintain and expand this relationship with the South Yakima Conservation District and producers that will utilize the drill seeders to the advantage of the Native American Producers and the lands that they farm and ranch.



NORTHWEST (WA) REGION

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TRIBAL WORK GROUP ADVISORY INFORMS CLIMATE MITIGATION INITIATIVES

PACIFIC REGION

In Quarter 2 of 2021, the IAC Pacific Region TA was asked to present to the Climate Science Alliance’s Tribal Working Group, an intertribal cohort representing over 20 Tribal communities in Southern California to advise on collective priorities. The Climate Science Alliance is fiscally sponsored by the California Wildlife Foundation and focuses on building capacity, resilience, and community towards a mission that seeks to safeguard natural and human communities in the face of a changing climate. The Climate Science Alliance’s Tribal Work Group has been convening since 2017 to coordinate on addressing threats to food security and culturally significant resources.

economically viable Tribal nursery operations and to identify resources to support these ends to address priorities under the Resilient Restoration project. Given the reach of this working group, the USDA and technical resources shared impacted a substantial portion of the Tribal communities working on these priorities across San Diego County and the greater Southern California region. The information was well-received and follow-up with the Executive Director of the Climate Science Alliance identified partnership opportunities with university partners to further Tribal traditional plant nursery management educational programming underway across the state.

In the summer of 2020, the Climate Science Alliance, under the advisement of its Tribal Working Group, submitted a proposal to California’s Strategic Growth Council to develop a project that would focus on climatic impacts to traditional plant populations. The proposal was successful and IAC was named a collaborating partner for the project titled: “Resilient Restoration: Advancing Ecological, Cultural, and Community Resilience with Tribal Nations in Southern California.” The project will engage University of California, Riverside, and San Diego State University researchers as well as the Tribal communities who make up the Tribal Working Group to explore these climate-related impacts and to also look at economic development opportunities that may further traditional plant production. This multi-year project also seeks to design sustainable efforts that propagate traditional plants for restoration and resiliency projects.

On February 23, 2021, IAC Pacific Region presented to the Climate Science Alliance’s Tribal Working Group who had asked for advice on establishing



COMMON PITFALLS TO NATIVE PLANT PROJECTS

- Absence of a Business Plan
- Limited/No Tribal Council "Buy-In"
- Incongruence with Master Planning
- Limited Knowledge of Local Stakeholders/Allies/Market Trends/Resources
- Trying to Grow Too Soon- Limited/No Formal Planning
- Reliance on Volunteer Labor
- Underqualified Personnel Learning While Doing
- Too Many Cooks in the Kitchen/Not Enough Cooks in the Kitchen
- Tribal Staff Pet Project

Salinas Plains Territory

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COMMUNITY GARDENS

SOUTHERN PLAINS REGION

Over the past decade, IAC has assisted with planning, implementation, and training around community gardens and food hubs. Throughout Oklahoma in both the Southern Plains and Eastern Oklahoma IAC has several of these projects that are still providing educational opportunities as well as some fresh vegetables for populations with food insecurities and poor nutrition issues. Oklahoma Tribal Alliance Partners (OTAP), Oklahoma State, Langston University, Chickasaw Nation, Choctaw Nation, Osage Nation, Pawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, Sac and Fox, as well as several religious organizations and schools systems have been working towards developing community projects throughout the state and surrounding area.

Although COVID has hampered these projects during the past year, several sites have been in the development stage and a few sites have been installed with the support of Tribes and OTAP including three sites with the Sac and Fox, a location in Anadarko, OK (will support several Tribes in the area), and Pawnee, OK. Langston University through USDA funding has facilitated installations as well as IAC this past year and a larger push of projects is slated for 2022. Access to equipment, technical guidance, and the nutrition component are

begin orchestrated to avoid the drop-off of these projects.

In past experiences formal commitment of lands and resources have been overlooked and many community garden projects drop-off in merely a few years. IAC is working with other community organizers and entities to formalize this process and provide committed resources to ensure robust and continued programming around citizen food production and the very important nutrition component supported by USDA-FNS. Additionally, IAC is developing a community garden training site in Stratford, OK to have a physical location for field days and provide a site to train practitioners on advanced irrigation, small-scale equipment, and food safety.



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TRIBAL SESSION-USDA AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT UPDATE

SOUTHWEST REGION

The IAC Southwest Region and the USDA State Office in Albuquerque, NM held a Tribal Outreach and Technical Assistance Session for local producers and Tribal Nations by introducing the USDA American Rescue Plan Act for 2021 and providing updates about the Bill. Through the passage of the American Rescue Plan Act, the Bill included several programs that were developed to alleviate some of the current challenges affecting our producers specifically due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of these challenges include unemployment, lack of resources, and financial burdens, and health and economic concerns.

As a result, the IAC Southwest Region collaborated with USDA to provide an in-person event. The session was held outdoors at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque, NM. The session brought together local producers from the Pueblo of Santo Domingo, the Pueblo of Acoma, the Pueblo of Laguna, the Pueblo of Zuni, and the Navajo Nation to share information about the provisions of the American Rescue plan that provides historic debt relief to Socially Disadvantaged borrowers. Other programs that were presented in the USDA American Rescue Plan Act addressed public health and economic concerns; some of the Tribal Nations were interested in learning more about these programs.

Additional information that was presented to the attendees were emergency funding resources, small business grants, financial planning, legal information, and tax planning that would help alleviate some of the concerns the producers had. A special guest from the USDA Office of Governmental Affairs, Elizabeth Archuleta, presented updates on the program and answered questions from producers, borrowers, and local attendees. Approximately 50 people attended the in-person event, and planning for several similar events are scheduled to take place in other areas within the state to secure access to the USDA American Rescue Plan Act updates.

The IAC Southwest Region provides outreach, technical assistance, and advisory services to Tribal producers and Tribal Nations to help build a more functional relationship to further the goal of improving Indian Agriculture. IAC also facilitates government to government meetings between Tribes, Pueblos, and USDA to ensure sharing of data and updated information. IAC Southwest Region continues to host USDA events and in-person training to offer support and education to Tribal producers and Tribal nations to increase access and use of USDA programs and services and to provide the latest information affecting Indian Country.



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TWO NEW BEGINNINGS

WESTERN REGION

January began Padgley Gonzales's first full quarter as the new Western Region Technical Assistance Specialist for the Intertribal Agriculture Council. During these months new and existing relationships were at the forefront with outreach being the foundation for the role of an IAC TA. Coincidingly, priority was also given to connecting with USDA agency contacts within the region to have a greater understanding of various programs and create a connection for Tribes and Tribal producers interested in pursuing USDA programming.

In an effort to pursue this goal, introduction meetings were held with the state offices of the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Rural Development, and Food and Nutrition Service. Comprehensive overviews and intricacies of programs were offered to provide IAC with updates for on-the-ground efforts. Also, the existing relationships with Tribal Nations and producers within the region were an important topic when assessing community needs. With programmatic knowledge in hand, TA was provided on different occasions throughout the region.

In early February, an interest in USDA FSA Farm Loan programs was taken with beginning farmer Nicholas Smith, a member of the San Carlos Apache Tribe. Nic reached out to IAC to begin identifying resources to develop an agribusiness. With the guidance of IAC Staff, Mr. Smith was able to create an LLC, giving a legal structure to the business. The mission of

the business is to provide ancestral seeds to the local community in North Central Arizona and beyond. After establishing the business structure, Nic began working with the Western Region TA Specialist to identify funding resources for the business.

Technical Assistance was provided to begin establishing a business plan and identify USDA funding sources to apply for. During the development process, one-on-one strategic business planning assistance was provided utilizing AgPlan software to help structure these conversations. Due to a busy production season, developing the business plan is slowing down but it remains a priority for applying for an FSA farm loan in the future. Nic is continuing to utilize available resources and IAC assistance to perfect the business plan while growing his knowledge of farming.



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MEAT-TO-MARKET LIVESTOCK ASSESSMENT

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

In our efforts to develop new online learning opportunities for meat and livestock producers and promote the American Indian Foods program, and ideally positively impact Indian producers' ability to market their meat with success and confidence directly, the IAC initiated an assessment led by Olivia Tincani & Co. to understand the barriers producers face.

The needs assessment identified common pain points and patterns in needs and interests for meat and livestock producers or business entities in Finance, Operations, Processing Production, Sales, Marketing, and Strategic Planning training.

The needs assessment process sought to gauge opportunities and priorities for an online or direct Meat to Market program set to launch in mid-summer 2022. IAC's vision of success is to create regionally and culturally universal "shelf-stable" long-lasting curriculum components that inspire livestock producers to consider direct marketing their meat. Producers who engage with the program and become inspired to take the beginning research and planning steps will be regarded as a measure of success.



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PHOTO: ALASKA REGION

3RD QUARTER

APRIL 1- JUNE 30, 2021





ALASKA REGION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SPECIALIST JOINS THE ALASKA FOOD POLICY COUNCIL'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

ALASKA REGION

In the summer of 2020, the Alaska Region Technical Assistance Specialist (AK TAS) began participating in Alaska Food Policy Council's (AFPC) newly formed Indigenous Foods working group. Since joining the working group, the AK TAS has strengthened relationships with board members, which in the spring resulted in the invitation to apply to be a board member. Subsequently, the AK TAS joined the Board of Directors for the AFPC in Q3 and is now a co-chair of the Indigenous Foods Committee. AFPC's goal is to create a healthier, more secure, and more self-reliant Alaska by improving our food system. The AFPC is open to anyone interested in improving Alaska's food systems - agencies and individuals representing federal and state agencies, Tribal entities, schools, university programs, farmers, fisheries, and food systems businesses. Participation on the AFPC Board immediately supported a greater reach for outreach efforts related to IAC initiatives and opportunities available through the USDA. Shortly after joining the BOD, IAC became a partner organization for AFPC's bi-annual conference. Through the sponsorship, an Alaska Native Youth Track will be developed as part of the conference. Additionally, AFPC has committed to being a host site for an IAC youth intern who will support the Indigenous Foods workgroup and the development of the youth track. Both the intern position and the youth track sponsorship are the result of a 5-year cooperative agreement between IAC and NRCS-AK. Work on the board also included participation in the Regional Food System Partnership workgroup as a node leader, which is a project funded by the Agricultural Marketing Services. The workgroup is focused on increasing connectivity across the state and within specific regions through strategic relationship building and asset mapping to create a statewide 10-year

food security action plan, informed by regional Alaskan nodes representing a wide range of locations and stakeholder groups. Stakeholder groups include producers, Tribes, soil and water conservation districts, the State of Alaska, and agriculture-focused nonprofits.

2022 Alaska Food Festival & Conference
Anchorage with in-person and virtual options
March 18-19, 2022

“Everybody Eats: Nourishing Our Culture, Our Health, Our Future”

2022
ALASKA FOOD FESTIVAL & CONFERENCE
MARCH 18-19
ANCHORAGE (IN-PERSON) & VIRTUAL

~MORE DETAILS TO COME... STAY TUNED~

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CALIFORNIA SMALL BUSINESS COVID-19 RELIEF GRANT PROGRAM

NATIONAL

IAC has partnered with the entity Lendistry to provide technical assistance to small businesses that are eligible to apply for the California Small Business COVID-19 Grant Relief Program. This grant program provided micro-grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000 to eligible small businesses and nonprofits impacted by COVID-19. This urgent relief was signed into law by Governor Newsom of California and then designated to Lendistry as an intermediary. With this partnership, we have provided outreach to over 80 Tribally owned businesses and nonprofits. Through this technical assistance, we provided multiple zoom webinars to give an overview of the grant program such as the eligibility requirements, navigating the application process, and required documentation, along with how businesses can use these grant funds, grant funding structure, and how recipients are determined through Lendistry. IAC participated in this partnership through grant rounds 4, 5, 6, 8, and 9.

urgent relief program allowed IAC to provide sufficient funding opportunities to Tribally owned businesses and nonprofits that suffered immensely from COVID-19. This in many ways helped Tribally owned businesses and nonprofits keep going in the midst of an unprecedented time. IAC was one of the only Native American nonprofits to assist with this effort in reaching Tribal communities.



Our technical assistance allowed us to have direct interaction with applicants and guide them through the application on the phone, zoom, or through email. We also created a COVID-19 resource tab on our webpage to allow Native American businesses and nonprofits gain easy access to IAC's application portal. This partnership allowed us to strengthen our relationships with Tribally-owned businesses and nonprofits throughout California. While also enabling us to grow our outreach and database to tribal farmers, ranchers, food producers, and Native American artists/crafters, we also interfaced with various environmental nonprofits, cultural preservation nonprofits, Native American education centers, and Indian health centers. This



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INTERNSHIP PROGRAMMING SUMMER 2021

NATIONAL

During the summer of 2021, the IAC established natural resources internships across the country and employed internship facilitators to administer these programs in the Western states, Central states, and Eastern states. The programming was funded through an NRCS National agreement and employed 16 interns who supported a variety of Tribal projects. Two stand-out interns from the western states were Cara James Denetsosie and Justin Stewart.

Cara James Denetsosie is a member of the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California. She lives in Carson City, Nevada with her family where she is a caretaker for her grandfather and attends the University of Nevada-Reno for Psychology. Over the past 4 months, Cara has stood out as a stellar intern across the IAC internship program and has had her work highlighted in the newsletter this past month. Her working relationship with NRCS was slow to start but has flourished into a larger working relationship with her entire Washoe community.

Cara's host site for her Summer internship has been Demlu Uli Mongil, the Washoe community garden where site managers Laura and Bill Fillmore have been her mentors. The focus of her internship was on growing foods and medicines to share with the community (elders especially) to pave a path of strength and sustainability.

As an aspiring mental health counselor, Cara has experienced healing while working at Demlu Uli Mongil with traditional plants and medicines like elderberry. Her work in the garden reminded her of the different ways to heal physically and mentally by connecting with the soil.

Her dedication to this internship has given her the time and resources to expand her initial project so successfully that the internship program has offered her an extension to continue working through December!

Justin Stewart is a member of the Crow Nation in Montana where he lives and attends Montana State University (MSU). He has shown outstanding commitment to his project, community, and partnerships with IAC and NRCS during his



internship. Montana Indigenous Food Sovereignty Initiative (MIFSI) has been his host working in collaboration with MSU at the Indigenous Learning Garden in Story Mill Community Park.

Justin's project began with seed saving and helping to create seed bundles to send out to Tribal communities and partners of MIFSI. He and his partner Bailey worked in the garden over the summer readying the soil, planting, and harvesting. They held volunteer days where community members could come and help as well as walk through tours of the garden where they talked about their work with MIFSI and importance in Indigenous food sovereignty.

The local NRCS field office in Bozeman, Montana held training days for many of their new agents and Justin was invited to attend all of them. The opportunity to spend so much time with this agency gave Justin the exposure to resources he did not know existed and inspired new relationships to build for his community. Justin's experience with NRCS went so well for both parties they suggested he apply for their Pathways Program.

Due to Justin's commitment and excellent work this Summer IAC internship program has offered an extension for his project through December in which he accepted!

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NRCS TRIBAL LIAISON, DR. CAROL CROUCH INFLUENCES CLIMATE SCANNING TOOLS FOR PRODUCERS

EASTERN OKLAHOMA REGION

There are now at least three TSCAN Tribal Soil Climate Analyses Network units on Tribal land in Oklahoma, said Dr. Carol Crouch, USDA NRCS State Tribal Liaison for Oklahoma. Dr. Crouch has played a key role in assisting with this project. The Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes, the Cherokee Nation and the Choctaw Nation have TSCAN units. "These TSCAN units will be valuable tools to expand the interest for our American Indian youth in the field of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)," Dr. Crouch said. "This includes training on how valuable the units will be in forecasting climate conditions to Elders, Tribal members and local producers." "By participating in this project we can also furnish other data on the climate to all the other institutions, researchers and to the public, and that is important to us," Hart said. "We believe in a system of reciprocity, we all share with each other and people will share with us." The BIA and NRCS combined their technical and financial resources through an Interagency Reimbursable Agreement to purchase and deploy 30 Soil Climate Analysis Network (SCAN) weather stations to eligible Tribes and Nations to support agricultural operations and STEM education. In addition the NRCS is working with three Tribal partners to assist with outreach, education and community capacity building. In terms of education, the weather stations will also serve as a focal point for education of Tribal youth using the STEM model. STEM is an interdisciplinary and applied learning approach to integrate these four disciplines into a cohesive and real-world application. Age-appropriate STEM K-12 education and demonstrations using the weather stations

and resulting data will be supported by the Tribes Department of Natural and Water Resources (DNR / DWR), USDA, NRCS, BIA and United States Forest Service. (USFS). The USDA Hubs will play a key outreach role in this area. Submission Concept: Dr. Carol Crouch, Oklahoma Natural Resource Conservation Services State Tribal Liaison



EASTERN (OK) REGION

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VIRTUAL FOOD SOVEREIGNTY SYMPOSIUM SAMPLER

GREAT LAKES REGION

The National Science Foundation provided a new funding and partnership opportunity with an event grant for the Food Sovereignty Symposium & Festival that was scheduled to be hosted from September 20-22, 2021 at the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community and Northern Michigan University. This event was supported by a planning process stretching over nearly two years. While rising coronavirus delta variant numbers coincided with the final stages in event planning, so the full in-person event was postponed until May 21-23, 2022, a successful virtual event was hosted from September 20-21.

Opening with prayers from Tribal elders on each day, this virtual event featured a dozen sessions on a range of topics from agricultural production to policy issues. The event concluded with a keynote presentation from renowned author and scholar Robin Wall Kimmerer. Blending academic perspectives with in-field practical knowledge, this virtual event provided a preview of offerings that will be featured in the full in-person event.

The virtual event also provided an opportunity to continue refining effective program delivery



that will be important as many organizations contemplate outreach, education, and engagement in this unique and evolving time. Sessions were recorded and are now available on the Intertribal Agriculture Council's E-Learning Platform. Content from the E-Learning platform was streamed during virtual session breaks to both provide continuity and also highlight the platform's wealth of information. Several hundred people registered for the event and dozens attended on Zoom while the event was concurrently live-streamed to Facebook.

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IAC NAVAJO REGION YOUTH PERFORMING AT HIGH LEVELS THROUGH ROBUST PROGRAMMING

NAVAJO REGION

Regardless of difficult circumstances presented to Intertribal Agriculture Council Navajo Region Youth, their motivation remained irrepressible. The third quarter saw positive shifts in public confidence to return to in-person programming, especially with COVID-19 vaccine availability. Numerous IAC youth members took advantage of USDA program resources through robust IAC Technical Assistance and capacity building for 4-H and FFA project knowledge.

Youth member Kellen S. from Sanders, Arizona, had always wished to compete in the market steer show but didn't have the available resources. He spent the first two years of his 4-H career raising calves off his family's ranch and successfully competed at jackpot shows throughout the year. Unfortunately, their calves were born in the late spring or early summer, causing his projects not to meet the minimum weight requirements for competition. With the help of the IAC Navajo Region, Kellen received technical assistance for FSA programming, and with resources secured, he purchased his first show steer. Not only did he successfully raise the steer, but he also ended the show season by winning the Grand Champion Market Steer at the 2021 Resiliency Jr. Livestock Show and Sale in Prewitt, New Mexico. The Resiliency Jr. Livestock Show and Sale is a unique event where Navajo Nation 4-H and FFA members compete in place of the Navajo Nation Fair, which was canceled in 2020 and 2021. It is safe to say that Kellen is looking forward to a whole career in the show cattle business and learning more about the positive impact he is making on localizing food systems by providing a product that will feed his community.

Sakari F., from Mittenrock, New Mexico, is a youth mentor who has observed and fully appreciates the impact of her work in raising livestock through the 4-H and FFA programs. Sakari fully dedicates her time to raising show lambs, goats, pigs,

and cattle for the awards but most importantly the reward of feeding her community. With assistance from the IAC Navajo Region TA, Sakari wrote and submitted an essay for the state-wide New Mexico Cattle Growers Association Youth Ranching Heritage Essay Contest. The bulk of her paper presented her goal of carrying her family's agricultural legacy in food production, especially knowing very few of her peers are active in agriculture. With numerous livestock awards earned, she looks forward to competing at high levels of competition and further developing leadership skills to become a better advocate for Indian Agriculture.

IAC Navajo Region TA Matthew Denetclaw states, "I am beyond impressed with all of our youth members who displayed exceptional interest in our programming ending in numerous success stories. I wish I could write about every single one of them. I look forward to seeing the momentum continuing to build around the incredible work we are doing, especially in USDA program access alongside our partners and stakeholders within the Navajo Region." Professional Development is a crucial mission area for the IAC.



IAC Youth Member Sakari F. accepts a trophy buckle awarded by Matthew Denetclaw to win a youth essay contest.

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REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE REVERSES CLIMATE CHANGE

NORTHWEST (OR-ID) REGION

In the spring of 2021, Intertribal Agriculture Council reached out to the tribes, tribal producers, and tribal landowners with particulars on regenerative agriculture. IAC collaborated with Del Ficke owner of Ficke Cattle Company, Pleasant Dale, Nebraska, Del has a proven history of proven regenerative agriculture success to provide guidance to landowners who desired to transition from traditional agriculture methods to soil sustaining regenerative agriculture practices.

Regenerative Agriculture is the label for farming and grazing that reverses climate change by rebuilding soil organic matter and restoring degraded soil biodiversity, this results in carbon drawdown and improving the water cycle. Regenerative Agriculture is the holistic land management style that draws the power of photosynthesis into the plants to close the carbon cycle, and build soil health, crop resilience, and nutrient density. Regenerative Agriculture improves the health of the soil, primarily through practices that increase soil organic matter. This aids in increasing soil diversity and health also increases biodiversity above and below the surface of the soil, which in turn increases water holding capacity and sequesters carbon.

The Motanic family has a ten-acre allotment, located on the southern side of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, this allotment had been dormant eight years, leaving it to become overgrown with a virtual forest of noxious weeds, it took nearly two years of mowing, burning, and utilizing cattle to graze off the weeds in the spring and fall emergence.

Finally, in March 2021 soil bed preparation began on the Motanic family ten-acre allotment. Soil moisture was good as there had been a snowstorm in February with snow levels at approximately two feet and melted off slowly. In the last week of March, the ten acres were planted with a mixture of orchard grass, clover, and a trifecta of mustard. The mustard blend was chosen because of the deep taproots that break through compacted soils, its richness in essential glucosinolate for pest control, and converting nitrogen back into depleted soils as green manure. Clover was planted to increase nitrogen into

the soil, while also increasing soil tilth and weed suppression. Clover is one of the most effective weed suppressants, and the orchard grass was chosen for erosion control and soil stabilization. From the last week of March to June, it rained three times, very marginal showers. Hopefully, with some luck, the fall rains will bring full fruition to the project.



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A SUCCESSFUL LOAN APPEAL

NORTHWEST (WA) REGION

Colville Tribal Member Mike Watts was seeking funding for a Livestock Hauling Trucking Company in the spring of 2021. WSU Extension Federal Recognized Tribe Extension Program (FRTEP) agent Linda Mclean referred Mike to the Intertribal Agriculture Council's Technical Assistance Specialist for Washington State. Mr. Watts was looking to finance a 1-ton truck and a 20 ft. livestock trailer. Mr. Watts identified a niche market in the region. He realized that many livestock producers needed transportation to get their livestock to areas that required a hauling mechanism that they did not have.

Mike Shellenberger, the IAC TA Specialist for the region, identified that this was a loan that was best suited for a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI). Michael Shellenberger and Mike Watts spent several weeks working on the loan application and developing a business plan.

The loan application was submitted and the loan was denied. The denial was based on misinformation and did not represent the loan application's intent. Mr. Watts and Mike Shellenberger felt it was necessary to appeal the decision. They felt confident that they had a solid case for an appeal and when it was reviewed by the CDFI's loan committee, the decision would be overturned and the loan approved. After the loan committee reviewed the appeal, they approved the loan.

The example, set forth, by the successful loan appeal and its positive outcome, is a great example of why the Intertribal Agriculture Council is so important to

Native Americans and Native American Tribes.

Currently, Mr. Watts is very busy hauling livestock, he states "the success of my business has exceeded my expectations". Mr. Watts's livestock hauling business has not only been a great success for him, it also has provided an invaluable service for the Colville Tribal Members, that needed this type of service, to help them be successful in their livestock businesses!



NORTHWEST (WA) REGION

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YUOK FOOD SOVEREIGNTY DIVISION IS TAKING FLIGHT

PACIFIC REGION

In August of 2020, Louisa McCovey, the Yurok Tribe's Environmental Director, introduced IAC Pacific Region to Taylor Thompson who had just been hired as the Tribe's new Food Sovereignty Division Manager. Louisa had met with IAC Pacific Region the previous year to discuss the function and scope of a Food Sovereignty Division concept for the Tribe and a commitment was made to work closely together when the Manager position was filled, thereby initiating the program's development. In late August of 2020, weekly meetings were established between Taylor and the IAC Pacific Region TA to discuss the building out of program priorities, identify funding opportunities, work through issues, and grow a strategic network of support for the Division. Through consistent engagement, collaboration on funding priorities and program needs was ongoing and fruitful.

The origins of the Yurok Food Sovereignty Division came together through feedback from Tribal community members who highlighted the need for Traditional foods access. A formal research process was implemented and data was gathered through the University of California, Berkeley, USDA, and community-based surveys. The Tribal Council has supported the programming since its inception, offering input into plan-

ning processes and general oversight. The overarching goals of the Yurok Food Sovereignty Division are to establish food production spaces throughout the Yurok Nation, stimulate more educational opportunities in coordination with local schools and community members, grow Tribal farmers' markets, and support Tribal member food production and traditional land management practices. The program has brought in substantial resources over the first year of operation which has enabled many goals to be realized ahead of schedule.

"I am grateful for our ongoing partnership with the Pacific Region Intertribal Agriculture Council office, as their expertise is phenomenal for helping to brainstorm and fine-tune ideas, strategize implementation approaches, and identify available resources. Our regular meetings with the IAC Technical Assistance staff help us focus our program ideas to support our goal of reestablishing food sovereignty for the Yurok Tribe. Although we are only a year into our program, we have achieved many goals that we hoped to complete by our fifth year, such as the development of the Yurok Food Villages program, thanks in part to our work with the IAC" Taylor Thompson, Yurok Food Sovereignty Division Manager.



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ADDRESSING NEEDS IN CHALLENGING TIMES

SOUTHERN PLAINS

Throughout the year IAC provided assistance to several producers through FSA's Disaster Set-Aside Program, Livestock Forage Disaster Program, as well as outreach efforts on CFAP, SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan, EIDL Increase Amounts, and the FSA Loan Forgiveness for economically distressed producers. Producers sought assistance and continued updates on these programs including Sharkly, a dairy farmer in Louisiana living near the coast; Kisha, a cattle producer that runs 300 head near Muskogee, OK, Demetris, a beginning cattle producer working with a small herd of grass-finished cattle in North Central Texas; Red Dirt Farm, a small scale grass-finished cattle operation near Anadarko, OK.

All of the operations encountered during 2021 qualify for loan forgiveness through the initially defined criteria but not all were willing to apply for additional programs or were otherwise ineligible due to failure to make continued payments on their FSA notes. Sharkly had the worst year of her long agriculture career, in late spring she lost her milking barns and went without power for several weeks compounded with heavy rains following the devastating sheer-force winds of one of the most destructive hurricanes on record. Although she was well informed, as she serves on her county FSA Board, she sought assistance through IAC for updates and access to applications since the county USDA Service Center was also without power and incommunicado for weeks. IAC assisted her with applying for the Emergency Disaster Loan to rebuild infrastructure including a "tied-in" generator and new chilling room so she could give her poor tractor a rest and feel more prepared for coming storms. Kisha was reluctant to apply for assistance despite best recommendations she believed if she restructured or took out additional loans she would be disqualified for Loan Forgiveness. Eventually, IAC did assistance with loan

restructure and she still feels trapped in an operation that has very little chance of making work, having bought the bulk of her breeding heifers in 2017 when cattle prices were almost double current prices. Demetris and Red Dirt were fortunate to qualify for assistance in many of the aforementioned programs and await updates on Loan Forgiveness so they may expand operations and continue pursuing their dreams of farming for-profit vs. having to work off-farm to keep things going.

Across the Southern Plains Region, most operations are extremely small and any operate on fractured lands. Continued support from USDA programming and assistance with accessing these programs are imperative to enable this generation of farmers to become sustainable and have a chance of passing this passion onto their subsequent generations. IAC has sought to reach these remote and disparate communities through multiple venues, a commonality amongst the Southern Plains is there is very low to no internet connectivity. So, for the coming year, we will continue to reach out directly to tribal leaders, partners, and producer groups throughout the area and lead as many to the USDA programming as outreach efforts continue to be a driving force in the region.



SOUTHERN PLAINS REGION

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SOIL HEALTH WORKSHOP FOR SOUTHWEST TRIBES

SOUTHWEST REGION

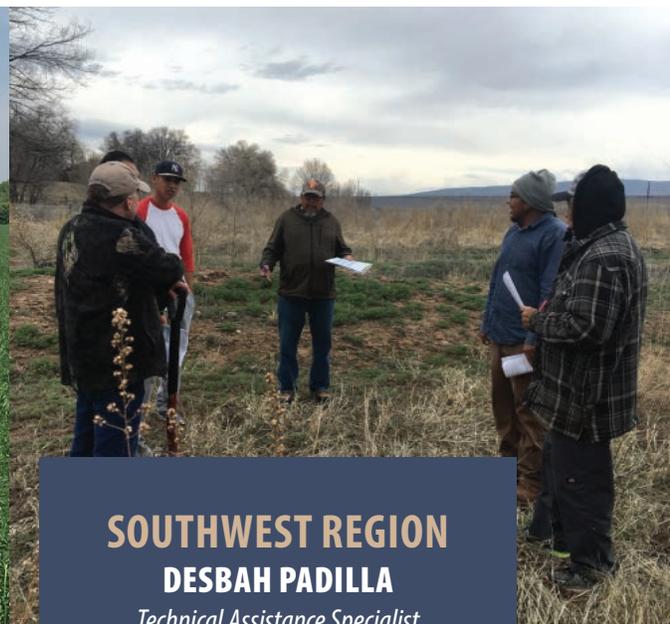
The IAC Southwest Region, NRCS-NM, and the NM Department of Agriculture held a Virtual Soil Health Workshop for the Southwest Tribes to educate Tribal producers about the principles of soil health and soil health management. The session brought together the Pueblo of Zuni, the Pueblo of Sandia, the Pueblo of Santo Domingo, the Pueblo of Acoma, the Pueblo of Laguna, and members of the Navajo Nation to the event. Approximately thirty attendees participated in a two-day training in collaboration with NRCS-NM and the NM Department of Agriculture.

The topics that were presented consisted of Soil Health Principles, the use of Cover Crops, Grazing Pasture management, and Soil Health on Rangelands to cover a broad range of topics useful for the local producers. In this region, the producers consist of both crop producers and livestock operations. An in-field Soil Health Assessment demonstration was presented to educate producers on how to test their own soils for compaction and to identify any resource concerns or amendment adjustments. The attendees learned how to apply soil health principles and systems in their pastures and farmland that included no-till management, cover cropping, and crop rotation, and best practices approach to increase their soil's organic matter and health, therefore, increasing profits and

better yields in the future.

Several sessions are scheduled throughout the year to educate Tribal producers about soil health and gain an understanding of soil health principles. The workshop was held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but an in-field Soil Health Assessment demonstration was performed in Shiprock by NRCS-NM and the IAC. A follow-up site visit is in the planning stages as more producers begin using soil health management systems to improve the health and function of their soil and to develop a better understanding of their rangeland management.

As a result of the workshop, many producers are interested in practicing soil health management and NRCS-NM and the IAC continues to offer technical assistance and provide outreach to ensure their success. The IAC Southwest Region works with Tribes and Pueblos and Tribal leadership to gather data, assess Tribal conservation needs, and provide access to all applicable programs with USDA. Many of the producers that I have talked to are concerned about improving their lands and striving to increase profitability while still protecting the environment and its natural resources.



SOUTHWEST REGION

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A SPOTLIGHT ON OUTREACH AND DISASTER ASSISTANCE

WESTERN REGION

Coming out of a very dry spring when wildfires were at their height, the IAC Western Region Technical Assistance Specialist continued to establish relationships within the region. In doing so, support and technical assistance were provided by writing letters of support for USDA grants, visiting Tribal nations, and providing disaster program resources to communities affected by adverse weather events.

IAC Western Region supported initiatives by writing support letters for Ndee Bikiyaa (The Peoples Farm) of the White Mountain Apache Tribe and the Arizona Association of Conservation Districts' respective grant applications. In collaboration with these organizations, TA Deliverables were offered to support Tribal farmers and ranchers to receive USDA technical assistance, project support, and resource identification.

During this time, visits were conducted to the White Mountain Apache Tribe, AvikwaAme Farms (Ft. Mojave), and the Hualapai Tribe. During the visit to the Hualapai Reservation, a meeting was held with key Tribal agriculture stakeholders such as council members, ag program staff, and the Tribal chairman. IAC provided recommendations for working with NRCS and re-establishing a relationship with the agency to address producer and Tribal conservation needs. Since visiting, a 4-H youth development event is being planned with Hualapai FRTEP to provide educational opportunities for the youth livestock

program. In addition, the Hualapai Conservation District has become active again to pursue NRCS contacts for local producers.

Throughout the spring and into the summer, adverse weather events were not uncommon. As a result, outreach and assistance were provided to the Hopi Tribe and San Juan Paiute Tribe to find relief programs for their livestock producers. In these locations, the drought and flash flooding had caused devastating impacts to herds and infrastructure. Information and resources on USDA Disaster Programs were provided in response. In addition to this, an IAC campaign for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program 2.0 reached over 45 producers and Tribes in the region via printed ads and flyers, email, and virtual outreach events. With continued support and outreach, the region will provide opportunities for increasing access to resources that will benefit Tribal ag producers within the Western Region.



WESTERN REGION

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IAC LAUNCHES THE REGE(N)ATION SEAL AND PLEDGE

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

The Intertribal Agriculture Council celebrates the launch of its regenerative agricultural pledge and seal, Rege[N]ation, to elevate the story of Native American and Alaskan Native agriculture and environmental stewardship.

“The diversification of farming systems and the realization that land is best managed to work with natural systems has been a way of life for Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. A deep understanding and respect for the relationships of the land, environment, natural forces, and the consideration of future generations is core to Indigenous production. There is an ever-increasing desire to find healthy food produced in a healthy way, and the use of the Regen[N]ation seal will highlight those products and make them easier to find,” said Kari Jo Lawrence, IAC Executive Director. “I will be looking for the seal when I make purchases.”



The Rege[N]ation seal complements the IAC’s established American Indian Foods (AIF) “Made/Produced by American Indians” certification trademark and identifies Native American and Alaskan Native agriculturalists -- from farmers, ranchers to



**AMERICAN INDIAN
FOODS**

LATASHIA REDHOUSE

Program Director

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harvesters and foragers, who pledge to:

- Work in tandem with my animals, land, water, and crops to develop a mutually beneficial relationship with them in tune with the environment and self.
- Have a genuine connection with the ecosystem and the citizens of my Tribal, local, and global community that promotes its greater wellbeing.
- Promote the renewal of ancient, Native-led wisdom in my agricultural endeavors that returns us to the type of practices that have been regenerative in nature for generations to come.

“Our connection to the land is inherent, genetic, and spans centuries. As indigenous people, our relationship as stewards of the land is something we hold in high regard. We’re embracing our role as storytellers and using the Rege[N]ation pledge to share that we are the original practitioners of regenerative agriculture on this continent.” Kelsey Scott, IAC Director of Programs, shared.

Approved Rege[N]ation participants will be evaluated annually by IAC AIF to review the producers’ effectiveness to replace or eliminate synthetic and industrialized inputs with natural-based methods and/or traditional agricultural practices specific to the Tribal ag producer. IAC AIF will also review contributions made towards improving the outcomes for land, water, community, and other ecological systems.

Approved Rege[N]ation users will receive a certificate and can be found on the IAC-AIF trademark directory. For more information about applying, visit the Rege[N]ation page on the IAC website.

ABOUT THE REGE[N]ATION SEAL:

Native Nations (feather) working in tandem with the environment/ecosystem (leaf). The seal recognizes and showcases sustainable solutions and regenerative adaptations through traditional, cultural, and Native-led wisdom. Artist: Stephen Paul Judd







4TH QUARTER

JULY 1- SEPTEMBER 30, 2021



ALASKA'S TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SPECIALIST COLLABORATION SUPPORTS LOCAL FOOD CONFERENCE

ALASKA REGION

The Alaska Technical Assistance Specialist partnered with Southcentral Foundation's (an IHS facility) Traditional Healing Clinic by participating on the planning committee for the Annual Tikahtnu Plant Symposium throughout the spring and early summer. As an annual event, each year a different theme is identified; this year's theme was Alaska's berries. The symposium occurred on Aug. 3-5, and as a result of lots of positive feedback from the community, it was considered a success. In addition to the positive qualitative feedback, this year's symposium also had the highest attendance since the symposium was first hosted by SCF. Participants experienced the conference virtually, but those who registered early enough received supplies to complete the demonstrations at home in real-time following along with the presenter. In support of the Symposium, the AK TAS presented ethical harvesting and highlighted specific Alaska plants and their uses as food and medicine. With subsistence foods being an important contributing factor to regional, community, and household food security, the conversation about ethics is an evolving and crucial topic to ensure the continued sustainability of Alaska's traditional food systems. The presentation included considerations such as specific practices, acknowledgment and reciprocity, understanding land ownership and the associated regulations, and provided resources to learn more.

Other presentations included chef demonstrations, presentations by Tribal doctors, an Alaska Native midwife, video highlights, and mindful movement breaks. The conference was structured to allow for medical professionals to receive continuing education units for their attendance, which supports one of the original goals of this symposium. Since the conference began, there was always the goal of creating a meaningful learning experience that would bridge traditional knowledge and western practices as it relates to medical care. As a result of the work done at the symposium, and the resulting increase in awareness, Alaskan plants as food and medicine are more in-

tegrated into the care model offered on campus including the development of recipe cards using traditional foods important to the diets and wellness of Alaska Native people.



Boreal Bounty
Ethical wild harvesting of northern plants

Silas Tikaan Galbreath
*Technical Assistance Specialist
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ALASKA REGION
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GROWING YOUTH SEED STEWARDS THROUGH IAC INTERNSHIP



EASTERN REGION

Korbin Bonafede, a young Seneca Nation Tribal member, began his internship with the IAC Natural Resources Internship Program this summer. His internship was hosted at Gakwi:yo:h Farms located on the Seneca Nation territory of Cattaraugus. Korbin has many times expressed his interest in agriculture and seed saving. Korbin agreed to spend three months with the internship and has proven himself to be a committed and passionate young leader. The farm is diverse in its food projects giving Korbin the opportunity to explore all aspects of Agriculture. Korbin was able to learn to plant different varieties of vegetables and fruit, can pickles, and tour different gardens. Korbin also attended many educational webinars including Land PKS, and Soil Health Course through Integrity Soil Ltd in which he earned a Soil health Certificate. Korbin was able to work closely with NRCS Soil scientist Nicole Kubizcki to learn how to create a conservation plan for his garden and properly design the layout of his own home garden. The Farm's focus is Traditional Foods of the Seneca, including Bison meat and White corn. The farm butchered a bison and used it as a teaching moment for Korbin to learn how to gut, skin, and butcher bison for meat. In Seneca traditions, our traditional white corn is harvested during its milky stage and roasted for a recipe called Roast Corn soup. Korbin learned how to identify when it's in the "green corn stage" and how to roast corn using an open fire pit and a mechanical corn roaster.

Additionally, renowned Seed keeper Angela Ferguson conducted her Seed Saving presentation at the farm for the crew, including Korbin. For Korbin, this workshop was inspiring. Angie gifted him a sacred, ceremonial seed to steward and use for ceremonies. Korbin's aspirations for Seed Stewardship grew and he expressed his interest in attending Cornell University. This led to the coordination of a tour of Cornell University, in partnership with Vegetable Expert Elizabeth Buck. Elizabeth facilitated a tour of Cornell, visiting all the Agricultural sciences departments and Department Directors. This tour set Korbin's path when he submitted his name to the Dean of Students to



confirm his future attendance.

On the way home from the Cornell Tour, Gakwi:yo:h Farms Director Michael Snyder and the IAC Eastern Region TA Tina Square had a meaningful talk with Korbin, discussing college life for an Indigenous person, goals, agricultural careers, and much more. Then Michael confirmed to Korbin that once he graduates high school, Korbin will have a position at the farm waiting for him. With the support of the IAC Natural Resources Internship program, Korbin's path was paved for a future in Agriculture. With the support of his community, family, and IAC. Robin is a true success story for the Seneca Nation, IAC, and all of Indian country.

EASTERN REGION

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IAC CAUCUS WORK FORECASTS TRIBAL FOOD HUB SUCCESS

EASTERN (OK) REGION

The innovative approaches to meeting Tribal goals is evidence that the Intertribal Agriculture Council as a vehicle links Tribal Nations to USDA and partner resources. Livestock traceability was a key point of policy interest at the 2018 and 2019 IAC Regional Caucus agenda, and it can be credited to lived experience and vision of IAC Native Youth into Agriculture efforts. The vision of OK Tribes becoming regional food and agriculture hubs was created out of necessity- the need has been there since before March 13, 2020- the day much of our country began to take pandemic precautionary measures of social distancing as a public health precaution. The innovative approaches to meeting Tribal goals is evidence that the Intertribal Agriculture Council as a vehicle links Tribal Nations to USDA and partner resources. Tribes are well experienced with Natural Resource Conservation management and community champions like Mr. Trenton Kisse, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources Director of the Muscogee Nation and Jann Hayman, Natural Resource Director of the Osage Nation, along with organized legions of grantwriters, collaborative partners such as the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative, Oklahoma State University, The Quapaw Nation whom had successfully developed a USDA Grade meat processing facility prior to the pandemic and accounting experts such as Lacey Horn, Cherokee, a consultant of Native Advisory Group who assisted Tribes in navigating the ethical regulations of the CARES Act Funding. The goal is to feed Oklahoma. This is a shift toward proactive rather than reactive means to support Tribal nations and rural communities in food sovereignty. Local citizen Jeremiah Kitchen said "I have been watching this site develop over the past several months, and it will be good to have local options." The Muscogee Creek Looped Squared Meat processing facility Offering meat processing and retail meats to the public, as well as the Tribe, the facility is expected to employ up to 25 people and be completed by early 2021. The following media excerpt is coverage from the Tulsa World: "Besides making available fresh cuts of beef and pork, it will have a dry-aging room and a large

smoking capability for items such as brisket, pork shoulder ham and jerky. The facility also will be inspected by the United States Department of Agriculture. "Having that U.S.D.A inspection really maintains that quality and that safety approach," Kisse said. "There are a ton of safeguards to make sure we're doing things the right way." Submitted by Electa Hare-RedCorn, IAC EOK Technical Assistance Specialist.



EASTERN (OK) REGION

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FIELD DAYS AND WORKSHOPS

GREAT LAKES REGION

The continuing pandemic has posed a major challenge to hosting in-person events. At the same time, many people are eager to resume in-person activities for interpersonal connections and improved learning outcomes. Although several events were postponed or canceled, careful preparation and distances measures allowed a couple of in-person events to be successfully hosted and smaller in-person activities and meetings provided an opportunity to build additional digital content..

A Regenerative Agriculture Field Day took place at Silverwood Park in southern Wisconsin with sessions on cover cropping and soil health, no-till planting methods, large-scale organic agriculture, and developing an organic heritage orchard with an edible library of a thousand apple and fruit varieties. Most of these sessions were video recorded and further documented with photographs. Another field day was hosted at Oneida in early August, highlighting several innovative projects from both the Tribe and individual growers. Notably, a farm-to-table dinner featuring foods from American Indian Foods Program producers was also hosted as a fundraiser for the Tribal Elder Food Box in late September.

Although small, IAC Great Lakes Region staff also participated

in the first Tribal On-Farm Readiness Review in coordination with Little Traverse Bay Band's Ziibimjwang Farm, the US Food and Drug Administration, and the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative. This session provided a comprehensive evaluation of the farm's operational compliance with the Producer Safety Rule of the Food Safety Modernization Act. Since the review included physical harvesting, direct evaluation of every step of the process allowed better understanding of positive measures in place and opportunities to refine management practices. This review offers template into how similar reviews and trainings may be refined to better educate and inform similar Tribal operations to ensure legal compliance but, perhaps more importantly, proactively work with growers to ensure the highest quality output while best utilizing existing resources and identifying areas for necessary improvements.



GREAT LAKES REGION

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A PRODUCTIVE CHEYENNE RIVER INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE

GREAT PLAINS REGION

Wambi Quintana was a 2021 summer intern for the Intertribal Agriculture Council. He is a sophomore at the Dupree S.D. High School on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation. Wambli is an outstanding student and has expressed the desire to attain a higher education possibly in the area of Conservation. The Great Plains Technical Assistant (TA) came across the opportunity to take Wambli to a local USDA Farm Service Agency office and meet a few local NRCS staff members on his home reservation. One of the staff members of NRCS is also the Tribal Liaison for the two counties that make up the Cheyenne River reservation. Both staff members were very supportive of Wambli and his ambitions for his future. They explained to him what degrees they sought in college to qualify them for the positions they now hold within the NRCS.

Wambi and the IAC TA toured different farms and ranches to explore the many different practices that the NRCS programs have to offer. Wambli had the opportunity to see a freshly planted 2021 shelterbelt that was an Eqip project that a producer established on his farm through the help of the NRCS. The next stop was to a producer's ranch to see an established shelterbelt and the many benefits that it offers the environment with the wildlife habitat and livestock protection. This project is also an NRCS Eqip project.

Both of these shelterbelts were contracted to the Ziebach County Conservation District to plant. Wambi was able to help the Conservation District load up some handplant trees to sell to the Sioux YMCA for a new campsite they are establishing for the local youth. Wambi was able to experience the working relationship between the NRCS and the Conservation Districts. One of the tools and practices that make up a regenerative agricultural system that Wambi was able to see firsthand was a cover crop system on a local farm. The farm has done a

wonderful job increasing Soil Organic Matter and the ability to retain water. It was wonderful that Wambi was able to see some very important practices established on the reservation in which he calls home.

Wambli was a very smart, punctual, and personable intern for IAC. He has his sights set on higher education. IAC is honored to help Wambli explore career and educational opportunities that fit his passions in life.



GREAT PLAINS REGION

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PROMOTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES THROUGH FOOD SOVEREIGNTY



NAVAJO REGION

The IAC Navajo Region, Navajo Ethno-Agriculture, and Pioche Food Group collaborated to produce a video promoting the outcome of USDA program resource utilization by harvesting local Navajo grown produce and beef to create a healthy meal. The IAC is a significant influence on the food sovereignty movement with paralleled visions from Pioche Food Group and Navajo Ethno-Agriculture making a great partnership for the media project. Chef Justin Pioche led the video's narration by explaining the different plant species, preparation techniques, and the overall importance of regenerative agriculture for sustainable local food systems.

The content creation process initialized in the fall season following a couple of planning meetings in the early spring the food that would be harvested and having Chef Pioche build a recipe that would achieve the goal of simplicity without substituting quality was discussed. The recipe features farm-raised butternut squash, shallots, tomatoes, serrano peppers, red leaf lettuce, nasturtium, radish, Mexican truffle, and ranch-raised beef. The dish also featured wild-harvested sunflower, amaranth, and lamb's quarter. Chef Pioche demonstrated food preparation skills before beginning the cooking process with squash in one pan and beef in the other. Later he combined most of the fresh ingredients in the squash pan to saute while creating a healthy gravy from the natural beef broth in the other pan. In the video, you will see more specific instructions for the final product. Overall the project was an excellent solution for both in-person and virtual interactions relative to stakeholder outreach.

Justin states, "thank you to the Intertribal Agriculture Council, Matt Denetclaw, Navajo Ethno-Agriculture, and my staff/crew at Pioche Food Group for this great opportunity. We hope to feed you in the future, and please don't hesitate to reach out to each of us to learn more about our programs." The IAC Navajo Region extends our gratitude to each of the collaborators for

the project's success and for playing a significant role in carrying the message for promoting localized food systems through technical assistance and robust outreach. The twenty-two-minute video is available on the IAC Youtube Channel.



A finished plate of a simple healthy meal with 100% IAC Navajo region-produced food ingredients.



Fresh ingredients locally grown and ready to be prepared.

NAVAJO REGION
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“REZ CHICKS” COOPERATIVE CONTINUES TO GROW

NORTHWEST (OR-ID) REGION

In April 2020, two families on the Umatilla Indian Reservation decided to try raising chickens for egg production for their families, so 28 chicks were ordered online, but wouldn't be delivered until June. In May, 12 chicks were purchased locally, with the intent of learning how to make sure the chicks arriving in June would survive. Well, they all survived: now comes the work; building coops to house the young chickens, purchasing feeders that would keep rodents out of the chicken feed, fabricating watering systems to keep clean fresh water available.

In late December 2020, Diane Gasaway, Director for Northwest Cooperative Development Center was contacted with a request to make a presentation on the formation of a producer cooperative. January 11, 2021 – Rachelle Morrison, Deborah Harris, Paula Wallis, and Katherine Minthorn met with Diane Gasaway, NWDC, online in a ZOOM meeting and discussed the idea of formally developing an egg producers cooperative. It was decided the group would work toward forming a cooperative and meetings began the second Monday of January 2021. The group continues to meet every Monday 1:30-3:00 pm and continues to meet every week.

March 29, 2021, the group filed with the State of Oregon, and Rez Chicks Fresh Eggs Cooperative was officially recognized as a legitimate cooperative. The Umatilla Tribe didn't have regulations in place for the formation of a cooperative. Rez Chicks filed applications for an EIN number, DUNS number, and a SAMS number; also officially opened a business checking account at First Community Credit Union (also a co-op)
An application was submitted for

USDA Rural Development – Value-Added Producer Grant with a request for \$15,000.00 which was successful and will be utilized for: labeling, advertising, egg cartons, insurance, and a commercial refrigerator.

Rez Chicks also applied for Oregon Food Bank's 2021 Grower Support Pilot Mini-Grant \$5,000 (specific to Indian Country) Applications had already closed, however, the application deadline was extended due to no applications from Indian Country. The application was a request for equipment to make production uniform across the cooperative ie; feeders, nesting boxes, watering containers, water tank heaters.

It is the goal for Rez Chicks to become a USDA Vendor for the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) also known as the commodity foods program.



NORTHWEST (OR/ID) REGION

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SUCCESSFUL RELATION BETWEEN TWO INVALUABLE PARTNERS

NORTHWEST (WA) REGION

The Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) and the WSU Colville Reservation Extension Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Program (FRTEP) agent Linda Mclean, have collaborated on many projects. Linda Mclean has assisted in the planning and implementation of the IAC Pacific Northwest IAC meetings and NWIAC Youth Symposium. These meetings occur on an annual basis. Linda has also assisted IAC by providing meeting room space for emergency wildfire assistance for the Tribe and Tribal Members. Linda has referred and assisted IAC on nine FSA youth loans. These loans purchase livestock for 4-h and FFA participants. IAC attends events where the livestock is eventually sold. IAC helps with the loan application as well as on-site visits to ensure that the livestock are thriving. Linda also mentors the youth. The IAC helps the youth livestock sales by providing a monetary supplement. Also, Linda has referred several Colville Tribal Members for FSA Operating Loans as well as several loans that were successful through conventional banking.

WSU Colville Reservation Extension FRTEP produces educational and informational pamphlets on a wide range of topics. These include identifying weeds that are toxic to livestock and the environment and other detrimental pests that harm the native plants and wildlife. IAC utilizes this information while assisting Tribes and Tribal Producers.

The IAC and WSU Extension have a symbiotic relationship that has proven to be invaluable for Tribes and Tribal Relations. The USDA-funded FRTEP program acts as a conduit to provide education and access for many USDA programs. The IAC conversely helps WSU Extension FRTEP the opportunity to assist Tribes and Tribal Members by providing the access to information that can be imperative to their success.

The IAC is looking forward to continuing this invaluable relationship with WSU Extension FRTEP. IAC remains hopeful the FRTEP will remain funded so Tribes and Tribal Members will enjoy continued access to information and assistance to all their endeavors that this collaboration will produce.



NORTHWEST (WA) REGION

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GROWING TRIBAL/NRCS PARTNERSHIPS FOR TRADITIONAL PLANT MANAGEMENT

PACIFIC REGION

After over three and a half years, the NRCS-CA Conservation Planning for Traditional Plants Management pilot projects, under a cooperative agreement with the Intertribal Agriculture Council Pacific Region, wrapped up in quarter four of 2021. The basis of the agreement between NRCS-CA and IAC came together through input that was received from the NRCS-CA Tribal Advisory Committee in early 2017. Tribal representatives were concerned with the applicability of NRCS conservation planning processes within traditional plant management scenarios. In order to facilitate the inquiry into the implementation of the 9-step planning process within certain Tribal contexts, a cooperative agreement was formed to enable resources to be earmarked for Tribal advisory.

Three Tribes and one Tribal land conservancy were ultimately selected to participate in the formal process. The Tribes that were selected were the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation, Kashia Band of Pomo Indians, and the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians. The Tribal land conservancy that participated was the Kumeyaay Diegueno Land Conservancy (KDLC). Given the diversity of lands, cultures, and priorities throughout the state, attention was paid to ensuring diverse representation, from Northern, Central, and Southern California contexts. Early in the project, meetings were convened with each Tribal partner and representatives of local field offices and the state office to develop common language and rootedness in the NRCS 9-step planning process. The Tribal partners also presented their primary resource concerns and discussed the cultural implications and responsibilities inherent to their priorities. Area maps were shared along with context on Tribal history and legacy impacts from settler encroachment.

After initial meetings, representatives from the Tribes and land conservancy worked with their local field office staff to develop a conservation plan that addressed identified priorities. Over the weeks and months, notes were taken by the Tribal representatives on the process to be compiled into final reports which were submitted at the close of the agreement. Substantial guidance was offered by the Tribal partners to NRCS-CA to help to shape conservation planning training and

implementation in the state. During the latter stages of the project, NRCS-CA personnel began incorporating elements of the feedback received from this project and other ongoing efforts into the design of a national Conservation Activity Plan (CAP) tool for traditional ecological knowledge scenarios. This process is ongoing, however, the coordination and outgrowths of the Tribal partnerships during the project period will continue to bear fruit for years to come.



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FT. BELKNAP 4-H FAIR - AN IMPRESSIVE EVENT

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION

While not a lot of social activities took place in the Rocky Mountain Region, the Ft. Belknap 4-H Fair continued without interruption. Thanks to the supporting community and families on the Ft. Belknap Indian Reservation, the students were able to sell and show their animals in competition. Each student that raised a show animal in the Ft. Belknap 4-H Club was eligible for Intertribal Agriculture Council's Food 4 Families program, which was created to support and encourage Native youth to participate in 4-H shows and live auction sales. Food 4 Families was born from last year's initial pandemic restrictions and continued to support Native agriculture youth throughout this year. The Rocky Mountain TA was present to assist with the production of the fair, which was held on August 12th-13th in Lodge Pole, MT.

The Ft. Belknap 4-H Club chose to utilize this program through the processing coupons option. The Food 4 Families program issued processing coupons, which will cover the cost of the processing fees at their local meat processing shop. In return, these students shared their stories with IAC with essays and video presentations. With assistance from the processing coupons, the live auction sale was a huge success since the students were able to market their animals to the buyers with the processing fees covered. With this new eye-catching element, the buyers are more enthusiastic about the sale and this addition sparked excitement and attracted the buyers to support the Native youth through placing higher bids on the students' show animals.

As a direct result, students received well over average prices on every animal sold from the auction sale, this includes three swine and five steers. With these kinds of positive outcomes, 4-H fairs will not only promote and attract more local students to participate in the

future but will encourage other Tribes to take part in Native youth for agriculture. With Tribal 4-H fairs emerging, the Rocky Mountain region plans on continuing to show support for Native youth participating in 4-H events across Montana and Wyoming. Without continued support, Tribal 4-H fairs will not get the support and attention it deserves to succeed. The Intertribal Agriculture Council has found this to be the most efficient method to support youth who are engaged in Tribal food systems while promoting their tireless efforts to serve and feed their communities.



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LENDING EXPERTISE NATIONALLY

EASTERN REGION

Southern Plains is largely comprised of small Tribal governments with some of the smallest number of citizens. Trust land across this region is fractionated and more often than not, leased to non-Tribal producers. Efforts have been made to organize through Tribal leaders in order to take leases back and provide more opportunity for Tribal citizens, though the number of producers and their capacity to operate on said land is a working goal. Furthermore, with the fractionation of lands and checkerboard between Tribal trust and fee simple the non-native contiguous landowners and lessees had long held a competitive advantage. In the last few years, interest has encouraged targeted community projects such as community gardening and leadership opportunities for youth.

Specialty crop development is a longer-term goal for the region since the aforementioned issue of fractionation hampers the scalability of commodity crop production and cattle operations (i.e. lack of large tracks of contiguous lands). Tribes in the region are supportive of developing local vegetable operations to support their nutrition and food security efforts. Partnerships with Kansas State, Kansas Rural Center, Oklahoma State University, and several USDA offices in Texas and Oklahoma have been in the development and post-pandemic will provide an increasingly active network of support to seek grant opportunities, provide ongoing TA alongside IAC, and further investigate the feasibility of specialty crop enterprises in these rural communities. There are many challenges to entering the specialty crop industry mainly being there are few to zero second-generation producers in the region, processing facilities are altogether lacking, distribution and cooling space is also a challenge. This drive to increase vegetable, fruit, and nut production is also continually highlighted as a priority in other regions and Southern Plains regularly offers assistance throughout all IAC Regions.

The last several years have generated some good on-the-ground examples and continue to provide support to additional efforts as Tribes share success stories amongst themselves and invite other Tribes to field days and training. One such example is Seneca Nation which recently with IAC assistance went from less than an acre of vegetables with some traditionally held corn to a 20 plus acre specialty farm with upwards of

80 acres of traditional corn production. Gakwiyo Farm, owned and operated by the Seneca Nation was geared up during the COVID shutdown and continued to provide vegetables with a drive-through boxed veggie program for their citizens. With IAC's support, they brought in several pieces of specialty equipment, were trained on production strategies, got connected with their NRCS folks for over 20 acres of irrigation in a critical watershed, and have continued to grow and expand their operations. Southern Plains and the other IAC regions use examples like Gakwiyo to illustrate the possibility and process toward food security and sustainability with the much-needed assistance of USDA programming.



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OUTREACH TO TRIBES IN CHALLENGING TIMES AND OFFERING SOLUTIONS

SOUTHWEST REGION

On September 28-29, 2021, the IAC Southwest Region held the 7th Annual Southwest IAC Summit remotely to present USDA programs that assist and support tribal producers during these challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the challenges impacting tribal producers such as drought impacts, lack of water, the decline in livestock sale prices, and hay and feed scarcity in some communities. As a result of these challenges, IAC took the lead to address these issues during the SW IAC Virtual Summit and offer solutions. USDA FSA-NM, NRCS-NM, RD-NM, AND NMSU Cooperative Extension Staff began the summit by offering resources that were applicable to tribal producers during the pandemic to alleviate some of the more problematic issues. Each of the agencies took time out of their busy schedules to address each issue and offer solutions.

To address the water issues and drought impacts, the NM Department of Indian Affairs and the NM Office of the State Engineers shared the 50-year Water Plan that was developed to improve stewardship, equity, and sustainability of our most precious resource. The NM Department of Indian Affairs addressed real-time water data and presented water litigation updates affecting tribal producers. There was also a discussion of forming a drought task force and a climate change task force to address the lack of water resources and look for ways to mitigate and address these problems affecting not only the Native producers but the farming and ranching communities in the state of NM.

One of the highlights of the Summit was presented by Dr. Michael Johnson, Research Associate for the Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF). Dr. Johnson is also a producer, author, and a tribal member of the Hopi Tribe. He presented his perspective coming from a Native producer, about how agriculture has evolved from a cultural point of view. He also presented some of the barriers to NRCS-AZ and FSA-AZ programs that create

difficulty for tribal producers to participate in and identified institutional design flaws with USDA.

In closing, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought out challenges and barriers for all agriculture producers and agricultural-related programs. These are challenging times that we are currently facing and immediate action, and awareness of available resources is critical for native producers throughout Indian Country. The Southwest Region will continue to assist with education and resources for disaster assistance that currently affects our tribal producers in the Southwest region.



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EXCEPTIONAL NAVAJO & WESTERN REGIONS' LIVESTOCK PRODUCER GATHERING

WESTERN REGION

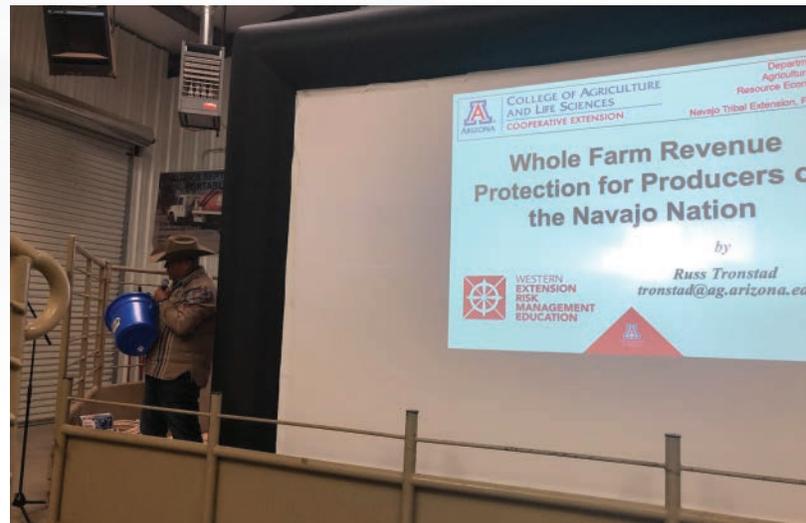
IAC Western Region started the fall season with the IAC Western + Navajo Region Livestock Producer Gathering! The meeting reached over 35 livestock producers from Arizona and New Mexico. Topics covered during the meeting included USDA Disaster Programs + Preparedness, Regenerative Grazing, Cattle Growers Associations' Opportunities.

To start off the 1-day event, producers learned from the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension on Disaster Relief programs and record-keeping basics. We emphasized producers' preparedness for future drought and disaster planning as it coincides with accessing USDA programs. Producers were given a record-keeping binder for organization and a ranch pocket booklet to add to their toolkits. The binders included information and worksheets on livestock records, inventory, livestock sales and treatment, and vaccination records. Of the producers surveyed, around 95% intend to utilize both of the resources in their operation. By offering these tools, when disaster strikes, producers have the necessary records when applying for USDA disaster response programs.

Next, producers were given the opportunity to hear from Bob Kinford on Instinctive Migratory Grazing (IMG). IMG is a low-cost, stockmanship-based practice that helps producers implement regenerative grazing on their operations. IAC has had previous success conducting in-person workshops within the region and there is interest for more after producers participated in this session. By featuring regenerative grazing with an emphasis on soil health, producers were roped into conversations on how to improve their grazing lands and other low-cost methods to help them achieve conservation and forage goals.

Lastly, presenters from Arizona and New Mexico's respective livestock associations were given. Representatives were present to inform producers about the Native American Beef program, memberships, and other opportunities. In the end, Producers left this gathering feeling more prepared and equipped with tools, record-keeping resources, and a greater understanding of stockmanship techniques that benefit re-

generative grazing. One attendee, Stand Fowler, drove over 3 hours to attend the meeting from Northern AZ and hopes to bring education opportunities, such as this one, to his Tribal community in the near future. In addition, three attendees won the grand prize of receiving a soil health kit from IAC!



INTERTRIBAL AGRICULTURE COUNCIL
AGENDA - 2021 IAC NAVAJO + WESTERN REGION LIVESTOCK PRODUCER GATHERING
 FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1ST, 2021 - COW HOUSE AUCTION - KIRTLAND, NEW MEXICO

9:00 AM - Welcome (IAC TA Staff)
 9:10 AM - FSA Disaster Resources Part One (Dr. Russell Tronstad, University of Arizona)
 10:00 AM - IAC Business/Announcements (Break)
 10:15 AM - FSA Disaster Resources Part Two (Dr. Russell Tronstad)
 11:00 AM - IAC Business/Announcements (Break)

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INCREASING VISIBILITY AND AWARENESS OF NATIVE AMERICAN AG BUSINESSES

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

Through funding from the Native American Agriculture Fund, IAC AIF's program purchased over \$270,000 in Native American agriculture products to elevate market development strategies domestically and facilitate product placement for our American Indian producers while heightening awareness of sustainable economic development opportunities that is Indian Agriculture.

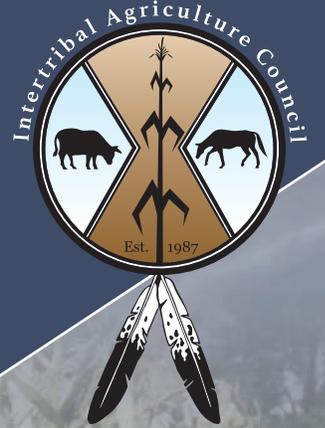
Through the newly formed Native Food Connection program, IAC AIF featured American Indian-grown products at high profile events in Indian Country and partnering organizations like the Museum of Food and Drinks (MOFAD) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). This effort aligns with IAC's strategy to increase producer participation in the domestic and specialty markets to increase the visibility of premium Made/Produced by American Indian products. IAC AIF accomplished fundamental goals, which included expanding public awareness leading to new market opportunities for Tribal producers, developing a sustainable and replicable change in a system that currently disincentivizes food production, and creating opportunities for IAC to reframe the growing Native culinary movement to encompass the

entire spectrum of the Indian Ag and food sector. Major activities included recruiting producers, Native chefs, and experts, reviewing and driving business marketing processes, and making real market connections.



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