



USDA Indigenous Food Sovereignty Initiative Fact Sheet



What is Indigenous Food Sovereignty? Indigenous Food Sovereignty is the ability for tribal nations and communities to feed their own people on their own terms. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is partnering with tribal-serving organizations to reimagine foodways from an Indigenous perspective. Launched in 2021, the USDA Indigenous Food Sovereignty Initiative promotes traditional food ways, Indian Country food and agriculture markets, and Indigenous health through foods tailored to American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) dietary needs.

Benefits

- ✓ Indigenous foods can enhance health and food security for tribal nations and communities.
- ✓ This approach to agriculture promotes sustainability, biodiversity, and conservation.

Latest USDA Investments in Food Sovereignty

- A new manual - “Transitioning from Cattle to Bison”
- Six seed cleaning/fanning mills purchased to help launch Indigenous seed saving hubs in the Midwest and Southwest.
- Videos on foraging wild and Indigenous plants
- Recipes and cooking videos on how to combine foraged and Indigenous foods with foods available through USDA’s Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR).



Saving Seeds, Gathering Community

“We are a small nonprofit that has been working with sustainability within and around the tribe for over 30 years. One of the things we do is grow the seeds of our ancestors ... to get our tribal people eating their original foods more for their health. We spend a lot of time cleaning seeds by hand and it is very labor intensive. This machine will make this easier plus we would make it available to other farmers. Our facility is a community gathering place, so it would be a perfect place for something like this to be available to more people.”

-- Roxanne Swentzell, President, Flowering Tree Permaculture Institute

Partners

Intertribal Buffalo Council (ITBC) | Indigenous Seed Keepers Network (ISKN) | Linda Black Elk | Lisa Iron Cloud
Addelina Lucero | North American Traditional Indigenous Food Systems (NATIFS)

Learn more at www.usda.gov/tribalrelations