A Proposal
INDIGENOUS FOOD SOVEREIGNTY STORYTELLING PROJECT

COMMUNITY VOICES • LESSONS LEARNED • EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

Over the past 20 years, a dynamic, grassroots movement to assert food sovereignty has grown throughout Native North America. In communities from arctic Alaska to the desert Southwest, Indigenous peoples have been revitalizing their foodways for a new millennium.

The Indigenous Food Sovereignty Storytelling Project draws upon the experience and wisdom of these community efforts by creating a series of documentary films — along with written action guides and case studies — that explore the themes, approaches, and most effective strategies for building tribal food sovereignty. The project will provide essential resources for Native communities, tribal policy makers, funders, and others working to build healthy, culturally dynamic, and sustainable Indigenous communities.

PROJECT THEMES

NAFSA has identified ten interrelated themes that root and nurture Native food sovereignty. It has also identified key communities, organizations, individuals, and ecologies that can help tell those stories. The exploration of these themes will provide invaluable insights and tools to help guide future efforts to develop resilient and dynamic tribal foodways.

The Indigenous Food Sovereignty Storytelling Project is a program of the Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance (www.nativefoodalliance.org) with partnership from the University of Arizona. For more information, contact Tristan Reader in the Department of American Indian Studies.
PROJECT INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

For Native American communities, food is a window into the complex relationships between cultural identity, ecologies and environments, health and wellness, economics, tribal sovereignty, and community empowerment. Over the past 20 years, a dynamic, grassroots movement to assert food sovereignty has grown throughout Native North America. In communities from arctic Alaska to the desert Southwest, Indigenous peoples have been revitalizing their foodways for a new millennium.

The Indigenous Food Sovereignty Storytelling Project draws upon the collective experience and wisdom of these community efforts to explore the themes, approaches, and most effective strategies for building tribal food sovereignty. It will:

• Produce and disseminate a series of short documentary films exploring ten interrelated themes that root and nurture Native food sovereignty;
• Write and disseminate accompanying action guides and case studies for each theme, providing tools to help nurture community-based efforts to develop resilient and dynamic tribal foodways; and
• Create a searchable archive of written, photographic, video, and audio materials related to Native foodways that will serve as a resource for current and future generations seeking to build resilient and dynamic tribal communities.

The project will provide essential resources for Native communities, tribal policy makers, funders, and others working to build healthy, culturally dynamic, and sustainable Indigenous communities.

PROJECT PARTNERS

The Indigenous Food Sovereignty Storytelling Project is a project of the Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance (NAFSA) with partnership from programs at the University of Arizona.

NAFSA is a grassroots, national non-profit organization founded in 2014 following several years of networking and input from hundreds of Native food producers, communities, and organizations. NAFSA operates under the guidance of a 20-member Leadership Council whose members collectively have over 250 years of experience working to build food sovereignty in Native communities across the United States. Additional information on NAFSA can be found at www.nativefoodalliance.org. With oversight from the entire Leadership Council, eight members of the NAFSA Leadership Council serve as a subcommittee tasked with planning and implementing this project:

• Clayton Brascoupe (Mohawk/Anishnaabe), Traditional Native American Farmers Association
• Dan Cornelius (Oneida), Intertribal Agriculture Council
• Elizabeth Hoover (Mohawk/Mi’kmaq), Brown University
• Terrol Johnson (Tohono O’odham), Tohono O’odham Community Action
• Pati Martinson (Lakota), Taos County Economic Development Corporation
• Loretta Barrett Oden (Citizen Potawatomi), Chef & Food Historian
Nicole Yanes (Opata), Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance NAFSA has chosen to partner with programs at the University of Arizona (UA) to develop and implement this project. Current UA partners include:

- Tristan Reader, Assistant Professor of Practice in the Department of American Indian Studies and the McGuire Center for Entrepreneurship; Co-Founder, Tohono O’odham Community Action (TOCA);
- Dr. Miriam Jorgensen, Director of Research, Native Nations Institute, Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy;
- Dr. Stephanie Rainie, Assistant Professor, Public Health Policy and Management, Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health and Native Nations Institute;
- Graduate students from the following UA departments: American Indian Studies; College of Public Health; Arid Lands Resource Sciences; and Latin American Studies.

**PROGRESS TO DATE**

- **Project Origins** – The vision for the Indigenous Food Sovereignty Storytelling Project emerged from a meeting of the full NAFSA Leadership Council at Santa Ana Pueblo, New Mexico in October 2016 where it was established as one of four of the organization’s strategic priorities for 2017-2018. NAFSA recognized that there was a high demand for – yet few resources related to – strategic assistance for people and programs seeking to build tribal food sovereignty. Tristan Reader, NAFSA Leadership Council Member and newly appointed Assistant Professor of Practice at the University of Arizona was asked to coordinate and facilitate the project’s development in order to help meet this need.

- **Strategic Planning** – On April 8-10, 2017, a series of strategic planning meetings for the project was held at the University of Arizona.1 Seven members of the NAFSA Leadership Council were joined by three UA faculty and six graduate students to finalize the project’s goals and strategies. During these meetings, a facilitated, participatory process (see page 7) led to consensus on several key issues, including:
  
  - **Audience** – The core and secondary audiences for the project were identified and prioritized. The core audiences are a variety of actors within Native communities, including (but not limited to) NGOs, youth, tribal councils, food producers (e.g., fishers, farmers and ranchers), chefs, as well as funders. Several secondary audiences were also identified.
  
  - **Themes** – Ten central themes of Native food sovereignty were articulated to serve as the focus for all aspects of the project (i.e. the films, the action guides/case studies, and the archive). These interrelated themes (also shown graphically on page 1 of this document) are:

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1 In addition to the planning sessions, a public panel – “Why Food Sovereignty Matters: Reflections from Native America” – attracted approximately 60 people from across the UA and the Tucson region. This panel and/or the planning meetings were supported by funding from a wide variety of entities at UA, including: Confluence Center for Creative Inquiry; Native Nations Institute; Center for Indigenous Health Research (CIEHR), Center for American Indian Resilience; McGuire Center for Entrepreneurship; American Indian Studies Department; SBS Dean’s Office; and the School of Anthropology.
• Culture & Language
• Seed Sovereignty & Biodiversity
• Wellness & Community Health
• Natural Resources, Water & Land
• Sustainable Economics & Trade Routes
• Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer
• Tribal Self-Determination
• Relationships with Animal Relatives
• Youth Voices
• Native Chefs & Culinary Arts

• Partners/Subjects – For each theme, a detailed and prioritized list of the people, communities, organizations, and ecologies that are best able to help tell the story, share lessons learned, and provide strategic advice to others was generated.

• Roles and Responsibilities – Although this is a true collaboration between NAFSA and UA partners, the group defined the respective roles and responsibilities of each project partner. Broadly, NAFSA will be responsible for:
  • Visioning and goal setting for the project;
  • Overseeing and partnering on all aspects of project development and implementation;
  • Setting the editorial direction, themes, subjects, and lessons to be shared through the project;
  • Identifying and facilitating access to the communities and organizations to be featured in the project;
  • Reviewing and approving of final video and written products;
  • Disseminating the films and action guides within tribal communities, as well as through national networks; and
  • Establishing protocols for the establishment of Native food sovereignty archive.

Broadly, UA partners will be responsible for:
  • Day-to-day project implementation;
  • Planning, filming and producing ten short films on themes set by NAFSA;
  • Drafting action guides and case studies for each theme;
  • Developing and housing an online archive of written, photographic, video, and audio materials related to Native foodways; and
  • Creating measures of program effectiveness and impacts.

• Intellectual Property – Recognizing the fraught and negative history of “research” within Native communities, it was essential to address and resolve issues related to the intellectual property rights of materials collected and/or produced through the project. It was agreed that:
  • Copyright and intellectual property rights for all material collected, utilized, and archived will be retailed by the subjects of the work (i.e., the interviewee, organization, or community filmed) who shall receive copies of these materials. All
materials, however, shall carry an “Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International” Creative Commons license (see [www.creativecommons.org](http://www.creativecommons.org)) which will allow NAFSA and UA to archive, edit, quote, utilize and disseminate the material through the project.

- Copyright and intellectual property rights for all project outputs (i.e., the films and action guides) shall be held by NAFSA which shall issue an “Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International” Creative Commons license which will allow UA (as well as the broader public) to archive, edit, quote, and utilize them.

- **Budgeting and Funding** – A preliminary budget for the project was discussed (see page 8), and several potential funders of the project were identified. The decision to move ahead on submitting funding requests to two specific funders was approved.

- **Preliminary Filming** – In addition to these planning activities, a set of initial interviews have been conducted and recorded by graduate students in a UA Department of American Indian Studies course on “Indigenous Food Sovereignty” (Spring 2017). The subjects/locations of these student-conducted interviews include:
  - *Tohono O’odham Food Sovereignty* – Over six hours of interviews were conducted with five key leaders in the effort to build food sovereignty within the Tohono O’odham community.
  - *NAFSA Leadership* – Interviews were filmed with seven members of the NAFSA Leadership Council, and a public panel held at UA was filmed.
  - *Great Lakes Intertribal Food Summit* – More than 12 hours of filming and 16 interviews were conducted with people from over a dozen tribes at Jijak Camp in Hopkins, MI in April 2017.

  These interviews and this footage will be incorporated into the seed phase of the project.

## Project Start-Up/Seed Phase

During the proposed six-month start-up/seed phase, the project will accomplish the following:

- **Hiring/Contracting** – The project will require the artistic and technical support of a trained producer/videographer. Tentatively, Jason Aragón, Media Specialist at UA’s Native Nations Institute has been identified as filling this role, although other potential partners will be considered.

- **Filming** – A total of thirty (30) days will be spent conducting interviews and filming in six Native communities identified during the planning process. Initially, these will include:
  - *Tohono O’odham* – For 20 years, Tohono O’odham Community Action (TOCA) has been one of the most dynamic and important grassroots organizations working on tribal food sovereignty. It was identified as being as one of the key ‘cross-cutting’ organizations that addresses several project themes. Moreover, its proximity to the production team make it a natural starting point for developing the initial phases of the project.
• **Northern New Mexico** – Two other key “cross-cutting” organizations are in relatively close proximity to one another. The Traditional Native American Farmers Association (TNAFA) is based in Tesuque Pueblo (NM) while Taos County Economic Development Corporation is located 60 miles north. Therefore, northern New Mexico will be the second location for interviews/filming during the initial phase.

Based upon these initial field interviews and the results of the planning process described above, the four additional communities to be included will be determined by the NAFSA Leadership Council subcommittee.

• **Film Production** – Based upon these interviews/video shoots (as well as material developed during the planning process), the project team will produce a short (5-10 minute) introductory video exploring each of the ten (10) key themes of Native food sovereignty identified in the planning process.

• **Action Guide** – A community action guide on each of the ten (10) key themes of Native food sovereignty will be written, designed and produced to accompany and supplement each film, providing guidance and resources for communities that want to take action to pursue tribal food sovereignty work.

• **Dissemination** – NAFSA will significantly expand its current website to include all of the video and written outputs, providing free access to a critical source of support for strengthening tribal food sovereignty, as well as making printed versions of the action guides available to Native communities, funders, and other audiences.

**EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT**

Initial project assessment will focus on the following:

• Ability to successfully build a project team and project processes that will ensure the long-term success;

• Quality of the film and printed outputs, as well as their usefulness for Native communities, tribal policy makers, funders and others.

• Development of strategies and networks to disseminate the project’s outputs to its core and secondary audiences; and

The long-term assessment of the project will focus on larger issues such as:

• Its impacts on and effectiveness in supporting the development of Native food sovereignty projects in tribal communities;

• Its impacts on the creation of policies by tribal governments that can nurture food sovereignty; and

• The degree to which it impacts funders (both public and private), thereby increasing support for Native food sovereignty at the local, regional and national levels.
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<th>Project Staffing</th>
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<td>Producer/Videographer</td>
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