

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: COMBATING THE FOOD CRISIS IN INDIAN COUNTRY

By Jasmine Locklear



A person wearing a striped shirt is holding a basket filled with fresh vegetables, including a large green bell pepper, several red tomatoes, and leafy greens. The scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter.

HOW DO YOU/YOUR COMMUNITY
DEFINE FOOD SOVEREIGNTY?

DECLARATION OF NYELENI

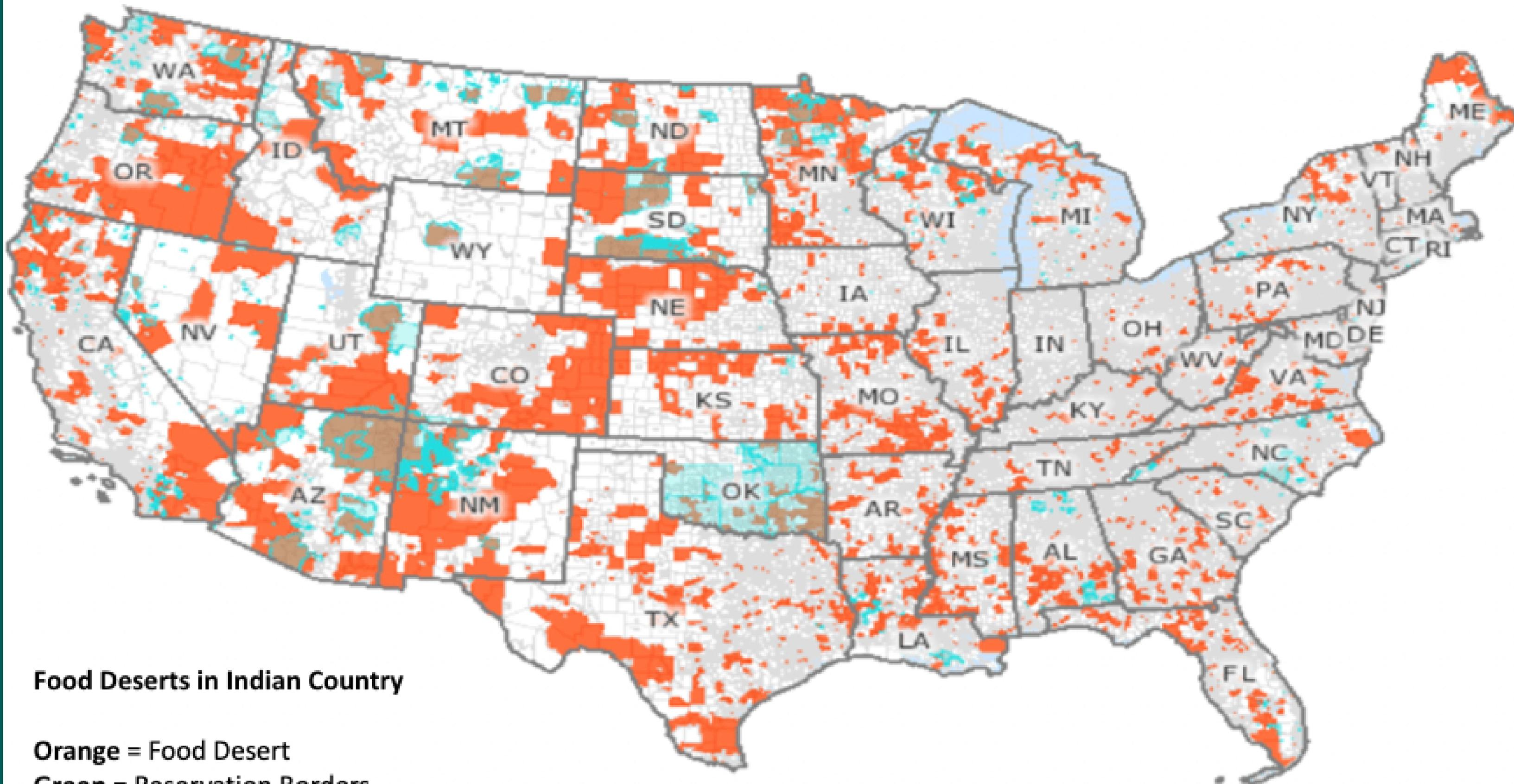
Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations.

–The First Global Forum on Food Sovereignty
(Mali, 2007)

FOOD INSECURITY

ACCORDING TO THE USDA, “FOOD INSECURITY IS A LACK OF CONSISTENT ACCESS TO ENOUGH FOOD FOR AN ACTIVE, HEALTHY LIFESTYLE.”

- **HIGH RATES OF INSECURITY OFTEN OCCUR IN LOW-INCOME FAMILIES.**
- **FOOD INSECURITY BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE.**
- **FOOD INSECURITY BY GROCERY STORE ACCESS.**

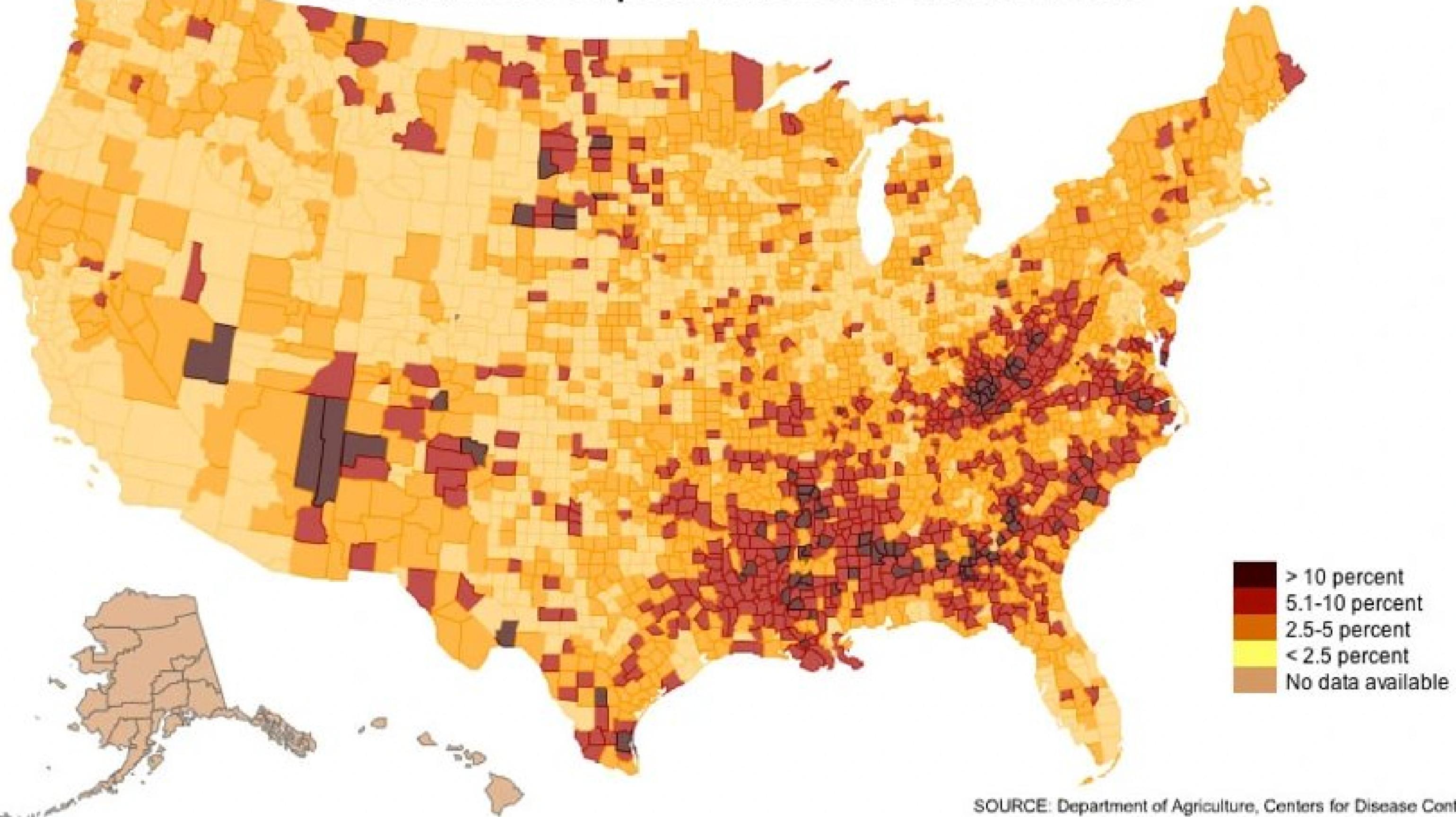


Food Deserts in Indian Country

Orange = Food Desert
Green = Reservation Borders

Source: USDA ERS

No Car and No Supermarket Store Within a Mile



SOURCE: Department of Agriculture, Centers for Disease Control



WHAT ARE SOME OF THE
CHALLENGES TO ACHIEVING FOOD
SOVEREIGNTY IN YOUR
COMMUNITY?

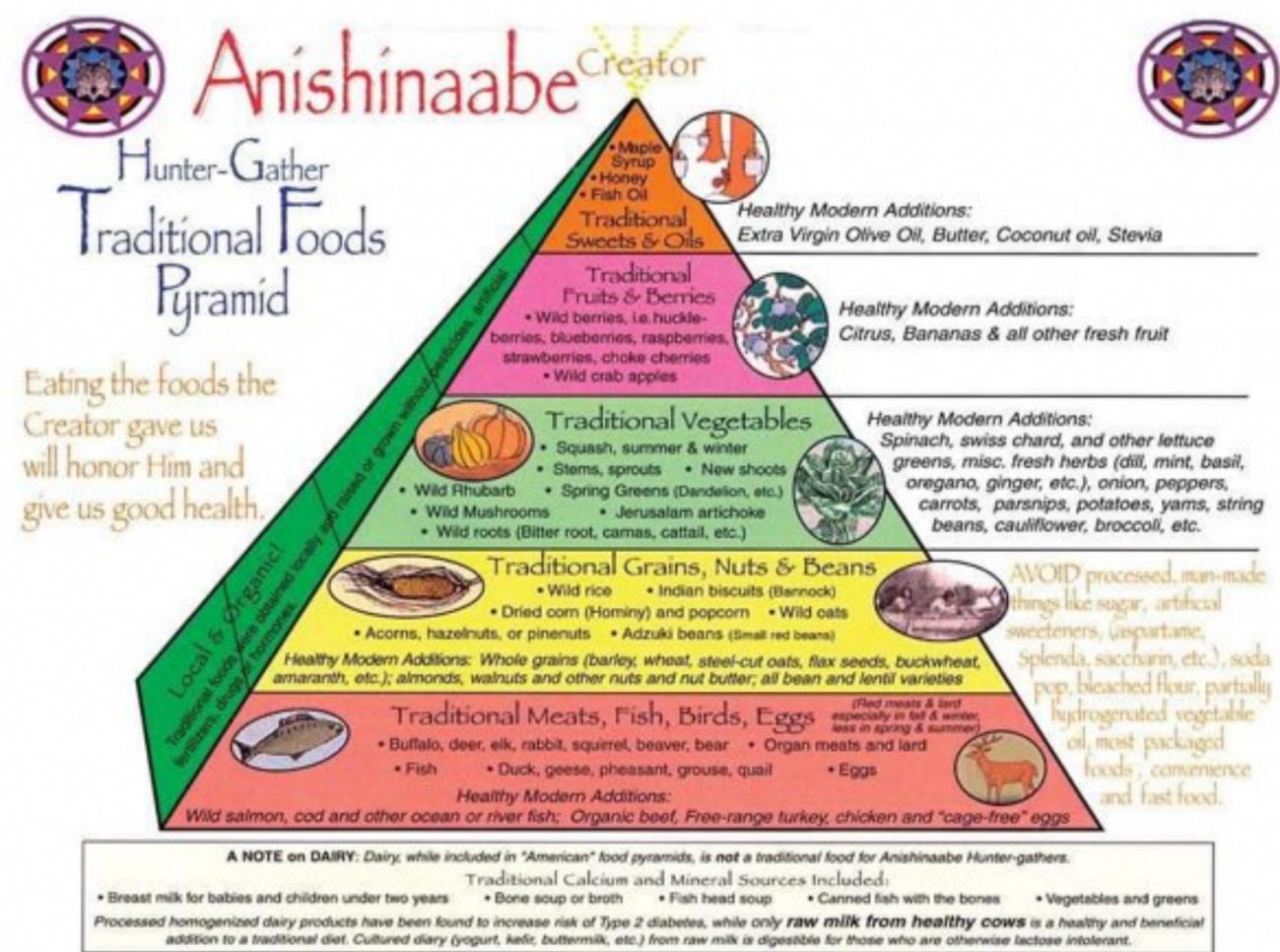
ACHIEVING FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

1. FOCUSES ON FOOD FOR PEOPLE
2. VALUES PRODUCERS AND BUILDS COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS
3. PROVIDES KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF PREVIOUS GENERATIONS
4. WORKS INTRINSICALLY WITH NATURE

FOCUSES ON FOOD FOR PEOPLE

PROVIDES CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE AND HEALTHY FOODS FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

- IDENTIFY WHAT CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE FOODS LOOK LIKE IN YOUR COMMUNITY
- INCREASE AFFORDABILITY
- INCREASE ACCESSIBILITY



FOOD FOR PEOPLE FOCUSES ON LOCAL FOODS

- INCLUDES SEASONALLY APPROPRIATE FOODS
- INCLUDES TRADITIONAL FOODS
- SWEETS AND OILS
- FRUITS AND BERRIES
- VEGETABLES
- GRAINS, NUTS, AND BEANS
- MEAT, FISH, BIRDS, AND EGGS

Eat According to the Seasons & the Land

Colder Weather
 increases the need for heavier foods such as **meat (venison, buffalo)**, it's naturally occurring **fat** (like lard) and **starches** found in **potatoes, winter squash** and **wild rice** (and other foods which can be stored over the winter months). This might also include **dried jerky (pemmican)**, **dried berries, corn (hominy)**, **canned goods, etc.**

WINTER

Spring Time
 is a time of renewal. **Fish, eggs, fresh shoots** (such as horsetail and cattail sprouts) and **tender greens** (such as lambs quarters which is also known as wild spinach, dandelion, plantain, perslane, mint, wintergreen, nettles, wood ferns, and creeping snowberry leaves) help us to cleanse our systems from the heavy winter foods.

SPRING

Fall or Autumn
 is a time to enjoy the harvest and to prepare for the winter months. Cooler weather brings hunting season, some which is dried or smoked to save for winter. **Squash, tubers** (like potatoes, yams and carrots), **corn, apples** and other fall harvested **fruits and vegetables and nuts (acorns, etc.)** are collected and many are stored for winter use.

FALL

In the Summer Time
 we tend to be more active and need more high energy foods like **berries, nettles and fish**. An abundance of **fresh greens and vegetables** from gardens are available now to be enjoyed, some are canned for winter use. Summer is not a good time to hunt game because of ticks, bacteria and it's too warm to hang the animal. In late summer wild rice is harvested and prepared for winter use.

SUMMER

FOCUS on LOCAL

Eating the foods that are grown in the soil and climate that you live in is very important. These **STAPLE** foods provide the specific nutrients your body needs. The Creator has given us everything we need literally within walking distance from where you live (wild rice, fish, deer, corn, various greens, and the other traditional foods mentioned above.) How else could people have survived without modern transportation? ... and they did so for thousands of years.

While citrus and other tropical fruits may be a healthy treat for us, their nutrition is better geared for those who live in the regions they are grown in. If the Creator would have thought we needed bananas or pineapple or coconut he would have had them grow here, but they cannot. This does not mean we cannot ever enjoy them, they simply **should not be the STAPLES** of our diet.

VALUES PRODUCERS AND BUILDS COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS

- WORK WITH LOCAL FARMERS AND RANCHERS TO GROW/RAISE INDIGENOUS FOODS IN YOUR COMMUNITY (LOCALIZE FOOD SYSTEMS)
- IDENTIFY MEANS OF MARKETING THESE GOODS TO TRIBAL COMMUNITIES WITH PRODUCERS
- “A LOCALIZED, NATIVE-LED FOOD SYSTEM STRENGTHENS FOOD SECURITY FOR NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES”. -REIMAGINING HUNGER RESPONSES

PROVIDES KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- INTRODUCES THE KNOWLEDGE OF PREVIOUS GENERATIONS (PRODUCTION METHODS, SEED SAVING, AND TRADITIONAL FOOD KNOWLEDGE)
- FOOD SOVEREIGNTY EFFORTS “ENABLE(S) COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LOCAL FOOD ECONOMY. WILD HARVESTERS... SUPPLEMENT THEIR INCOME BY HARVESTING TRADITIONAL FORAGED FOODS.” – REIMAGINING HUNGER RESPONSES

WORKS INTRINSICALLY WITH NATURE

- PROMOTES SUSTAINABILITY
- INCREASES REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE PRACTICES
- IMPROVES OVERALL RESILIENCY OF LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS



WHAT DO YOU THINK
COMMUNITIES THAT EXHIBIT FOOD
SOVEREIGNTY EFFECTIVELY LOOK
LIKE?

TRIBAL FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

- ACCESS TO HEALTHY, CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE FOOD
- THEY GROW, GATHER, HUNT AND FISH SUSTAINABLY (LONG TERM)
- DISTRIBUTE FOODS AND ALLOW PEOPLE TO OBTAIN WHAT THEY NEED TO STAY HEALTHY
- ADEQUATELY COMPENSATE THOSE PROVIDING THE FOODS.
- UTILIZE TRIBAL TREATY RIGHTS AND POLICIES THAT ENSURE CONTINUED ACCESS TO TRADITIONAL FOODS.



“
Understanding the rates of food insecurity and hunger challenges that affect the communities we directly serve is critical to identifying how we continue to make effective efforts in our collective work to repair America's broken food system.”

—
– Toni Stanger-McLaughlin
CEO NAAF