



# **BUILDING NATIVE AGRICULTURE**

Sowing the Seeds of Growth  
through Capacity Building





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# INTRODUCTION

Building Native Agriculture “Sowing the seeds of growth through capacity building in Native Agriculture” is a [webinar series](#) that assists tribes and tribal organizations to build the dream of economies in agriculture. From a dream to reality, understanding how to build a program around agricultural practices, marketing, and analysis as the building blocks of Indigenous agriculture systems provides a road map to success. Understanding the foodways, cultures, and needs tied to business plans encourages self-determination and protects the traditional food systems of Native peoples. Each section of this report builds upon the previous one to dig deeper into the information you need to launch a successful processing plant or other facilities.



"In 2021, NAAF released “Reimagining Native Food Economies: A Vision for Native Food and Agriculture Infrastructure Rebuilding and Recovery,” which identified the economic impact of Indian Country agriculture and the outstanding need for infrastructure to help develop robust agricultural economies. Infrastructure is essential for the expansion of Native food and agricultural enterprises, as well as for driving success for Native farmers and ranchers. This resource was created as a foundation for developing infrastructure in our tribal communities, to reach the full potential of Native agriculture.” - Toni Stanger-McLaughlin, NAAF CEO

## Section 1: Strategic Planning and Feasibility

### Food Sovereignty Assessments

Food sovereignty assessments are a tool to learn more about issues and/or assets in your community related to health and nutrition, food security, traditional food and agricultural practices, and food system awareness. They can also help you understand your community's needs and what they are asking for. The assessment can take many forms, such as a survey

or a meeting with talking circles. For example, you can meet with tribal elders to discuss traditional foods and ingredients.

You can choose to survey tribal programs (Title VI, childcare centers, casinos, etc.), community members, or both depending on the information you wish to collect.



# SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

- How familiar do you consider yourself to be with traditional foods?
- What is the biggest obstacle that prevents you from buying local or tribally-produced foods?
- Would you buy more fruits and vegetables if they were more affordable?
- Is there a food pantry within a reasonable distance from your home?
- What are you most concerned about when purchasing food?
- Are you concerned about the chemicals, hormones, etc., used in food production?
- What resources would you like to see offered in your community?

## Food Sovereignty Assessments, Continued

The questions in each assessment vary because they should be customized to fit your unique community. Below is a short list of sample questions, but there are resources specifically dedicated to food sovereignty assessments and completed assessment reports made public by other tribal nations that can serve as a starting point.

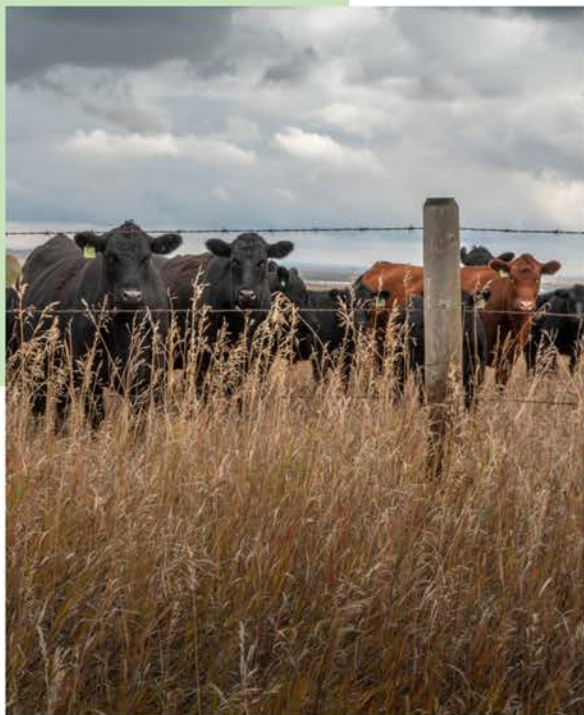
Food sovereignty assessments can be conducted electronically or in person. Some common places to conduct and/or promote the assessments include health fairs, community centers, powwows, and other public spaces. Many assessment responses are collected anonymously to receive the most accurate information on sensitive

topics, such as income, food security, etc. If you think a food sovereignty assessment is right for your community, go into the process with an open mind and be ready to address the responses you receive.

Not all feedback will be positive, but the questions you ask should be intentionally selected based on relevance to your community and how feasible the topic is for you to address. The results of your assessment can serve as a starting point for determining how your organizational funds can be best allocated to build capacity and serve the community.







## DETERMINING YOUR NEEDS

Questions to ask when you are determining the needs of a meat processing facility include:

- How many local facilities are available?

There are different types of processing plants that offer various levels of inspection – some only process custom orders or do not allow resale. If you are interested in providing meat for a retail or other commercial operation, you will need a higher level of inspection. Some states, but not all, have their own state inspection guidelines.

Some states strictly follow the USDA Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) guidelines to ensure proper processing and labeling. Following the FSIS guidelines allows your operation to sell products across state lines, whereas plants that only have state inspections can typically only sell products within that state. There is currently new legislation that allows some state-inspected products to cross state lines but check the requirements for your specific state to be sure. Some chain grocers will require a third-party inspection in addition to a federal inspection.

- How many animals do you currently process?

If you are a small or tribal producer, you first want to look at the types and quantity of animals you produce. What is your end goal for those animals? Where do you want that animal to end up: your personal freezer, grocery stores, farmer's markets, restaurants, or somewhere else? What kind of cuts do you want to offer? These questions will determine the type of processing plant and equipment you will need. For example, selling cooked products like jerky or meat sticks will require a different process than raw products.

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# FEASIBILITY STUDIES

Your project's needs and goals will serve as key information during a feasibility study. Your organization can conduct its own feasibility study or hire a third party for assistance. Some information you will find in a feasibility study include:

- [USDA Census Data](#)
- [Animal Inventory Data](#)
- Number of Farms/Ranches
- Farm-to-table operations
- [Market analysis](#)
- Estimated demand
- Estimated expenses and returns

The feasibility study can be useful for determining the size and scope of your project as well as communicating key information with funders, tribal leaders, or even the community. This data is often the difference between being able to accommodate your tribal members versus outside producers in your region.

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## BUSINESS PLANS



When creating and implementing a business plan asking the right questions are key to a successful business.

### **Where can we build it?**

Plants built on tribal lands may fall under different tax and/or inspection requirements than operations located on fee or non-tribal land.



**How much will it cost to operate?**

Operating costs fluctuate based on region. For example, electricity can be expensive in some regions and cheaper in others. This becomes significant when there are refrigerators, freezers, and other equipment that rely on electricity continuously running in a processing plant.

**Do we have the infrastructure available?**

There needs to be three-phase power, water (typically a 6-inch water main), redundancy options, and sewage available at your selected location. Many processing facilities also rely on internet availability. See Section 3 for more details on utilities and infrastructure.

**How much will it cost to build?**

Each piece of equipment you need to accomplish your goals will take up space. The more space you need to house equipment, the higher your building costs will grow. Developing a floor plan during the business planning phase can help you estimate building costs. Think about how your customers and employees need the floor plan to function. You want the floor plan to be efficient and affordable for you to operate for years to come. Overbuilding can cause your operating costs to accumulate quickly.

**How many employees will it take?**

It is difficult to find skilled processing plant employees, especially in rural areas that lack a large labor force. There will be additional time and costs that need to be considered with training new employees. Look for colleges in your area that may provide certificates and training in meat processing to source labor.







Once you understand the types of expenses you will have, you can begin looking for funding opportunities.

Types of funding can include:

- CARES Act funds
- American Recovery Act funds
- Tribal funding
- Grants
  - USDA Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
  - USDA Rural Development (RD)
  - Others on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)
- Private funders
- Banks

If you are considering a bank or private funder, it would be beneficial to create a financing plan to help understand how interest rates and loan terms will affect your operating costs. Grants and other government funding are the best options when available.

See more in the next section, Funding Opportunities and Writing a Grant.

## Section 2: Funding Opportunities and Writing a Grant

### What is a Grant?

A grant is money provided by a funder for a specific project or purpose. It is not a loan, so you generally do not have to pay back the money if the project is completed as agreed. There are many types of grants: competitive grants, formula funding, continuation funding, and pass-through funding.

Competitive grants are a common type of funding in which you will submit a grant application that will be scored against applications from other organizations for an allotted amount. Only the applications with the best scores will be funded. This section will cover the basics of writing a competitive grant.





## FINDING GRANTS

The first step to grant writing is to find grants. Many funders release their Request for Applications (RFA) or Request for Proposals (RFP) from October to March, commonly referred to as “grant writing season.” The following resources will help you find these requests to build a grant schedule for your organization.

**Grants.gov** is a great resource for finding federal grant opportunities. It is continuously updated as application deadlines pass and new opportunities become available, so check the listings regularly. We recommend checking weekly, as many grants have a short turnaround for applications. To aid in your search, grants.gov allows users to search by keywords (e.g., “agriculture”), by funding organization (e.g., “USDA”), and by eligibility (e.g., “Tribal government”).

You can also subscribe to newsletters from funders or support organizations. For example, the Native American Agriculture Fund writes about funding opportunities in their [newsletter](#), as well as each department of the USDA.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

# Candid.

The final resource we will mention is [Candid.org](#). This is a paid subscription service that has already prepared detailed funder profiles. This will save you time deciding if a specific grant is worth pursuing by describing the projects or industries the organization has previously funded. Funder profiles also include maps of where the funder’s money is going at the state level, as well as the size of the grants. These profiles can be a wealth of knowledge for your organization, but many organizations will be able to meet their needs with the free resources previously mentioned.



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# DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Developing relationships and partnerships with funders is an important part of successful resource development. Grant writers and grant managers should get to know the funding agencies. Do not be intimidated - the staff are just normal people. The RFA documents often include contact information so you can call or email with (educated) questions. Avoid questions that are clearly answered in the RFA. You'll want to read through the resources they provide first. By reaching out, you are also giving the funder a point of contact for your organization in case of future funding opportunities.

If your proposal is funded, having already established a relationship will help resolve compliance questions or schedule site visits quickly if needed. Alternatively, building partnerships with other organizations with similar missions can expand your grant eligibility, strengthen your applications, and allow you to collaborate rather than compete for limited funds. For example, a tribal government could partner with a local school district and/or non-profit working towards a similar vision for the community.







## GETTING STARTED

Once you are ready to begin a grant application, your first step will be to read the RFA thoroughly. Then read it again. The RFA document will have all the eligibility criteria. For federal grants, your organization may need to register for a [\*\*SAM number\*\*](#) if you do not already have one. This process can take several weeks. The RFA document will also outline the grant requirements, such as fiscal matches, reporting commitments, waivers of sovereign immunity, tribal resolutions, and payment schedules. Funders also require grantees to report their progress throughout the grant period. Reports are often due quarterly, semi-annually, or annually depending on the grant. Funders often withhold a small portion of the grant funds until reporting obligations are fulfilled. This and other information about the payment schedule can typically be found in the grant agreement. Other grant requirements for tribal governments may include waivers of sovereign immunity and/or tribal resolutions. These may need to be prepared in advance depending on how quickly your organization is able to complete these requests.



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# PLANNING YOUR PROJECT

Once you understand the grant you are applying for, you can begin planning your project. It is helpful to have projects in mind before seeking out grant opportunities, but we will walk you through the planning process. Whenever possible, your project should be based on data and evidence of past success. Relevant data to include in your proposal can come from the tools used in [Section 1](#), such as food sovereignty assessments, feasibility studies, and business plans.

Planning tools such as logic models, SWOT analysis, and mind maps can help your team organize their thoughts and illustrate them to funders. You will also have to convince funders that your project can be successful in the time frame specified in the RFA. Developing a timeline that specifies the main activities and assigns each task to a staff member will help you define the scope of the project and communicate your approach in the application. The grant period may not align well with certain projects (e.g., growing seasons), so you will have to flesh out alternative strategies to complete your project in their set timeframe.



Finally, it is important to consider the funder's mission and grant objectives when developing your project. If you have multiple project ideas, choose the one that most closely aligns with the funder's interest to maximize your chances of being selected. A frequently overlooked step of project planning is thinking about long-term sustainability. Grantors often want to see that the project they are funding will continue after the grant period. Will your organization be able to sustain the project, or will it be dependent on additional funding in the future? For example, suppose your organization receives a grant to pay for processing plant infrastructure. In that case, the funder will want to know that you have the capacity to cover the ongoing operating costs after the infrastructure is in place.



# TIPS FOR DEVELOPING A GRANT PROPOSAL



Once a grant opportunity is announced, organizations typically only have a 30-90 day window to apply. The earlier you can start developing your application, the less stressful the process will be. Preparing your ideas and data before the grant opens will allow more time for proofreading and revising your application.

Write the application to focus on the funding agency's desired content rather than details you think are important. Grants often have strict word counts or page limits. One way to focus your narrative is to use language directly from the RFA and restate the questions as you answer them. This is basic but helps reviewers locate all the information they need to score your application. Do not attempt to shorten your application by using jargon or abbreviations. You never know who will be reviewing your application or the reviewer's qualifications, so the application needs to be clear and concise. Do not assume reviewers are familiar with your organization, location, or services provided. Briefly summarize these details wherever they fit best in the application. Utilizing your organization's unique strengths will help you stand out from the crowd. Identify what these strengths are and include them in your project.

Finally, be sure to answer all of the questions in a grant application. The RFA often includes questions within questions. Ensure each part is answered before moving on to the next section. If time allows, have someone unfamiliar with the project review the application. This person may be able to identify gaps in the application that were overlooked by those close to the project. Their perspective will be more similar to that of the reviewers'. Once the final revisions are made, you can submit the application. Avoid submitting right at the deadline in case of technical difficulties or other mishaps.



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# WHEN AND WHERE TO GET HELP

Grant writing is an important part of resource development and capacity building, but it can be complicated. Fortunately, there are several resources available. Many grants will host webinars and publish FAQ sheets on their website to answer specific questions about their grant opportunity. For more generalized help, grants.gov offers a [resource library](#) with free basic training videos. There are also grant writing and management trainings offered across the country, though these workshops often require a fee for participation. Finally, your organization may consider hiring consultants to assist with anything from developing a grant schedule to project planning or preparing the grant application.

## Section 3: Standing Up Infrastructure

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### Reimagining Native Food Economies

In the Regional Hub Model, NAAF identified 10 regional food hub locations in Indian Country to provide the necessary processing and distribution infrastructure for food grown and raised by Tribal farmers and ranchers. These Hubs will provide access to critical resources to the broader rural communities. The Hubs will be supported by sub-hubs in Tribal communities that will serve as distribution channels and support community food access. Regional Hubs begin the process of creating a cooperative model of agriculture.

The Regional Hub Model will have many brick and mortar costs, including costs for:

- Meat Processing
- Fruit, Vegetables, Specialty Crops, and Grain
- Fisheries
- Poultry, Eggs, and Dairy
- Warehouse and Storage
- Food Waste Diversion
- Packaging
- Logistics Infrastructure
- Trucking
- Ancillary Costs





NAAF's "**Reimagining Native Food Economies**" report argues that "70% of Tribal producers raise cattle. Investing in meat processing is critical for advancing Native American agriculture. The Regional Hub Meat Processing Center will be Federally inspected to ensure the highest food safety protocols and process multiple species like bison, elk, sheep, and pork" (p. 5).

## Assessing Infrastructure Needs

Assessing your infrastructure needs begins with the tools discussed in **Section 1**. Food sovereignty assessments, feasibility studies, and business plans can help determine what you will make and where the product will go.

Food sovereignty assessments can collect data about your customers and community:

- What resources customers would like offered in the community
- What customers are most concerned about when purchasing food
- If customers are concerned about chemicals, hormones, etc., used in food production

Additionally, when developing your business plan, ask:

- How much will the processing center cost to build?
- How much will it cost to operate?
- How many employees will it take to operate?
- Where can funding come from?
- Where can it be built?
- Is the necessary infrastructure available?





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# SITE SELECTION

Sites should be selected near your customer base. Determine if your customer base will be tribal members, third parties, or if you will copack for outside customers. You will then have to select a location based on the available land types. For tribes, there are a few general types of land on which to build infrastructure: fee simple absolute, trust/restricted tribal ownership, and fractionated land. Fee land is standard non-Indian status land that is potentially under State and local jurisdiction for permitting and local code issues. For land in trust or under restricted tribal ownership, refer to your tribe's 25 CFR or Land Use Plan for regulatory guidance. Land under trust may need an Act of Congress to authorize sales or stand-up infrastructure.

Finally, fractionated land refers to leases that cover more than one tract of Indian land. Each type of land has different pros and cons depending on your Tribe or organization's treaties. An environmental assessment can also help determine the most appropriate site for your facility.

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## UTILITIES



Access to sufficient utilities must be considered when selecting a site for a processing facility. Utilities include water, sewage, electricity, gas, broadband, and redundancy. First, an ample water supply is needed to process food and meet fire code requirements. Water can come from wells, rural water systems, or municipal water for those

closer to cities. Redundancy becomes important if a main source of utilities goes out of operation. Redundancy is needed for every one of the previously listed utilities. For water, this can be a water storage tank or backup water line.



# UTILITIES CONT.

Sewage includes offal (animal trimmings and by-products) as well as restrooms. You will also need to plan for sewage gray water that considers your local codes. How will the waste be treated? Some examples of treatment systems include septic, aerobic, lagoons, incineration, or a combination of multiple systems. Alternative usage of offal waste could be options like tanning hides.

For electricity, most processing facilities require three-phase power. If your preferred site is in a rural area with only single-phase power, you will need a plan to get three-phase power to the building to operate the coolers, freezers, and other large equipment that processing facilities utilize. Since the types of quantities of products that will be produced in the facility were determined in [Section 1](#), you can now estimate your electrical needs compared to the potential sites' capacity and availability.

Gas is a long-term operational cost that must be discussed during the planning phase. Gas can be either natural gas or propane, depending on what is more readily available in your area.



For areas without natural gas, estimating the monthly costs of propane can help assess your operational capacity as well as what equipment can be utilized. Also, consider the seasonal fluctuation of gas prices if used for heating in addition to running equipment.

Broadband can be difficult to obtain in rural areas, but many processing software depend upon it to operate. Insulated cooler and freezer walls, as well as steel roofs or walls, can all obstruct internet access within a facility. Take steps to determine how the internet will reach each room, whether that be wiring it to each room or designing access points that will strengthen the signal throughout the facility.





# PLANNING THE FACILITY

When planning the facility, again think about the products that will be made and where they will go. It may take different equipment to process products for institutional use versus retail.

Schools, hospitals, restaurants, grocery stores, etc., all need products prepared and packaged differently to fit their needs. Refer back to your business plans when planning the facility and blueprints. As mentioned previously, each piece of equipment you need to accomplish your goals will take up space. The more space you need to house equipment, the higher your building costs will grow. Overbuilding can cause your operating costs to accumulate quickly. Some products, such as electrical supplies or furniture, must be ordered months in advance. Refer to Section 1 for more details about business plans.

## Section 4: Labor and Training Opportunities

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### Opportunities to Find Labor

Local universities, both state universities and land grant universities, are great to stay connected with because they offer many specialized degree programs, such as food safety, meat processing, and food processing. They also often offer more generalized agriculture degree programs with a larger pool of students. To make the most use of a partnership with a university, try to work with the department that best fits the program you are trying to develop. If applicable, we also recommend connecting with the university's career center. Be clear about the skills your employees need and the opportunities your company offers to help the career center staff recommend your company to qualified students.

Internship programs can help build your business. Internship programs can be beneficial for several reasons.



First, grant funding is available from [NAAF](#), the [Department of Interior](#), and more to help fund internships' labor and indirect costs. Some interns will accept unpaid internships in exchange for course credit, but you should expect to pay the interns to help them cover the cost of living or even relocation fees.

The [AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America \(VISTA\)](#) and [FoodCorps](#) programs are two federal programs that match volunteers with communities in need. The AmeriCorps VISTA is directed toward ending or reducing the impacts of poverty by focusing on capacity-building activities. VISTA volunteers may sign up for a one-year term (Member) or for a shortened time frame of 8, 9, or 10 weeks as a Summer Associate. It can take from 3 to 5 months for an organization to complete the required steps to be matched with a VISTA member. FoodCorps is a grantee of AmeriCorps with the mission to connect kids to healthy foods in school. This program is only available in select states, but partnering organizations may be matched with service members for an annual fee of only \$7,500 per member in exchange for 1,700 hours of service.

Seasonal farm workers are yet another opportunity to find labor. The [H-2A program](#) allows U.S. employers to bring foreign nationals to the United States to fill temporary (or seasonal) agricultural jobs. The employer must file [Form I-129](#), Petition for a Nonimmigrant Work, on a prospective worker's behalf. The paperwork can be complex and difficult to navigate, but different offices and organizations are available to answer questions. If possible, offer housing to incentivize these workers to travel to your location. Immigrant visas will not work for every operation, but they can be a great tool for expanding the agricultural workforce in applicable regions.

Finally, seek out labor within your local community. This can be challenging in rural areas, but promoting job openings through all available channels and reaching out to youth may attract the workers you need. Having good jobs available that provide workforce training will often generate local interest.



# Training Resources

Depending on your type of operation, such as meat processing, few training opportunities are available. Unlike other topic areas, there is no training curriculum provided by the government. Training resources may include:



## **Community colleges and smaller universities**

look to implement meat training and meat cutter training, but many of these are still in the early stages of development. In these cases, work with partners early. Do not wait until your plant is ready to open.



## **Online resources**

There are a variety of online resources readily available on YouTube and other video platforms that you can use to do guided hands-on trainings. Examples include the following:



## **The Range Meat Academy:**

A comprehensive online private vocational meat trade school. Online programs allow learners to gain extensive and valuable knowledge about cutting, merchandising and selling meat in a curriculum designed using the four major proteins: beef, pork, lamb, and poultry—accessible, flexible, and efficient training method.



## **RegiLearn- eLearning Library:**

Unlimited Regulatory Compliance Training for the Food Industry. For a low, fixed cost, get unlimited access to dozens of courses designed by the industry's top food safety experts.



## **Food Service Excellence- Meat Cutting and Processing:**

Learn the standard meat processing and cutting procedures in this free online food service industry course. This certificate course teaches you about cutting and processing meat for the food service industry, different types of meat and poultry, the terminology used to discuss them, and how meats are inspected and graded.





### **Meredith Leigh:**

Online meat and butchery courses to learn whole hog butchery, the art of charcuterie, dry curing, and more. These online butchery courses and meat classes are video based and provide thorough instruction on various topics.



### **Oregon State University- Western Meat School:**

This online meat business training program, created by the Niche Meat Processor Assistance Network of OSU, along with project partners, is an innovative and unique learning experience that will teach you how to market and sell your meat products successfully.



### **Oklahoma Career Tech:**

The resources in the program include three self-paced online courses and hands-on learning in the processing of beef, pork, and lamb at 14 high schools, one technology center, and via the Mobile Meat Processing Training Laboratory.



### **Local meat plants**

A third resource is your local meat plants, if available. You may be able to develop a partnership and place interested workers there to do hands-on training. For youth, this placement could even be considered an internship.



### **Bureau of Labor Statistics**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics is another good resource that provides labor data by state and region. This resource can help your operation budget for the cost of labor in your area. Labor rates are increasing tremendously, so it is important to continue checking this source as you make financial projections. A final tip is to not only research the cost of labor in the present day but also assess overall trends in cost to predict your expenses at the time when your facility is ready to open.

Unlike meat processing, there are many options for trainings that relate to general produce safety and food safety. These are covered in detail in **Section 5** below.



# TRAINING DEVELOPMENT

If the opportunities above do not fit your operation, you have the option to develop your own training program/materials. This can be as big as a regional training program or focus specifically on your business. While developing training is more work on the front end, NAAF's Regional Hub Model depends on having a variety of skilled laborers in meat processing; food preservation (baking, dehydrating, canning/jarring, fermenting, etc.); fruit and vegetable packing; and more. If you choose to develop a training program, there are organizations available that will provide you with assistance or maybe even grant funding, depending on your needs. The Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative (IFAI), NAAF, and the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) may all be able to assist with different areas of training development.

If you are trying to scale up training that aligns with certain cultural guidelines, it may be in your best interest to reach out to a variety of resources to develop the training. The extra effort will pay off in the long term because it is very important to tribal food sovereignty to ensure that your community has food stocked and preserved in times of need.

## Section 5: Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) and Food Safety Plans

**In this section, learn how to develop a fully fleshed out HACCP plan with information provided by Heidi Tribbett from Mike's Meat Market in Sterling, CO.**

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### What is HACCP?

HACCP provides a framework for establishments to conduct science-based process controls that can be validated as effective in eliminating, preventing, or reducing to an acceptable level the food safety hazards that are reasonably likely to occur in an official establishment's particular production process. It sets up your facility to understand your hazards and how to handle any issues that may arise.





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## THE HACCP FRAMEWORK INCLUDES SEVEN ITEMS:

1. Conduct a Hazard Analysis
2. Determine Critical Control Points (CCP)
3. Establish Critical Limits (CL)
4. Establish Monitoring Procedures
5. Establish Corrective Actions
6. Establish Recordkeeping and Documentation Procedures
7. Establish Verification Procedures

The USDA Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) has the overall authority and oversight to regulate meat and poultry products intended for distribution into commerce. FSIS requires all establishments that produce federally-inspected meat and poultry products to design and operate HACCP systems. It is the processing facility's responsibility to produce safe and wholesome meat and poultry products.





# HACCP PRINCIPLES

## 1

### **Principle 1: Conduct a Hazard Analysis**

A thorough hazard analysis is the key to preparing an effectively designed HACCP Plan. A hazard is defined as a biological, chemical, or physical agent that is reasonably likely to occur, and will cause illness or injury in the absence of this control. For example, a potential hazard to receiving live cattle over 30 months old is specified risk material (SRM). To prevent the hazard, a dentition program for age verification.

## 2

### **Principle 2: Determine Critical Control Points**

Any hazards that were identified in the hazard analysis must be addressed in the HACCP Plan. A CCP is defined as a point, step, or procedure in a food process at which control can be applied. As a result, a food safety hazard can be prevented, eliminated, or reduced to acceptable levels. CCPs are locations in a process at which some aspect of control can be applied to control food safety hazards that have been determined reasonably likely to occur.

## 3

### **Principle 3: Establish Critical Limits**

CL are parameters that include whether the CCP is in or out of control. The maximum or minimum value to which a biological, chemical, or physical parameter must be controlled at a CCP to prevent, eliminate, or reduce to an acceptable level the occurrence of a food safety hazard. The CL should be based on applicable FSIS regulations or compliance guidelines or U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) tolerances. CL must be actual values that can be measured or quantified. Most often, CL are based on process parameters such as temperature, time, physical dimensions, or presence of target pathogens.



# 4

## **Principle 4: Establish Monitoring Procedures**

Monitoring is a planned sequence of observations or measurements to assess whether a CCP is under control and to produce an accurate record for future use in verification. Monitoring has three objectives:

1. Track control of the process. Monitoring the process allows the establishment to identify situations in which a trend is developing that may lead to loss of process control.
2. Determine when there is a loss of control and deviation occurs- Monitoring determines when the process has deviated from the critical limit.
3. Provide a written document to be used in verification. Monitoring results must be recorded on official HACCP records, and such records serve as a basis for verification activities.

# 5

## **Principle 5: Establish Corrective Actions**

Corrective actions must be determined for each CCP in cases where the CL is not met. Corrective actions must consist of the following:

- Identifying and eliminating the cause of the deviation
- Ensuring that the CCP is under control after the correction action is taken
- Ensuring that measures are established to prevent a recurrence
- Ensuring that no product affected by the deviation is shipped

# 6

## **Principle 6: Recordkeeping and Documentation Procedures**

Records are written evidence documenting the operation of the HACCP Plan. HACCP plan records should contain a list of HACCP team and assigned responsibilities; a description of the food, its distribution, intended use, and consumer; verified flowchart for the entire manufacturing process; and a HACCP Plan Summary Table that lists the following for each hazard of concern. These should be supported by your facility's daily operational records.

# 7

## **Principle 7: Establish Verification Procedures**

HACCP systems must be systematically verified through a four-part process to ensure that the HACCP plan is being implemented as written. The establishment is responsible for the first three, and FSIS is responsible for the fourth. The first is known as Validation for determining that the CCP and associated critical limits are adequate and sufficient to control likely hazards. The second process is to ensure, initially and on an ongoing basis, that the entire HACCP system functions properly. The third process consists of documentation and periodic reassessment of the HACCP plan. The fourth process defines FSIS's responsibility for certain actions (government verification) to ensure that the establishment's HACCP system is functioning adequately.



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# FOOD SAFETY PLANNING

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) requires many fruit and vegetable growers to be certified by the FDA to sell produce into the marketplace. There are several types of training that fall under FSMA requirements, depending on your facility and business operation.

Examples of training include:

- **Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) Growers Training**: Teaches basic Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), FSMA Produce Safety Rule requirements, and how to develop a farm food safety plan
- **Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) Courses**: Teaches basic sanitary controls that are required for all food processing plants, wholesale or distribution firms, and warehouses or food storage facilities that handle, store, or process FDA-regulated food
- **Preventive Controls Qualified Individual (PCQI) Certification**: Training to prepare a food safety plan, validate preventive controls, review records, and reanalyze food safety plans. FSMA requires food and beverage facilities to have at least one PCQI.

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## FOOD SAFETY RESOURCES



There are many resources available to those in Indian agriculture. The **Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative** and **Intertribal Agriculture Council** are two examples of organizations that provide free resources, such as food safety needs assessments, webinars, in-person certification trainings, model food code assistance, help establishing a tribal department of agriculture, and more.



# Section 6: Using Tribal Products in Retail and Vertical Integration

## Vertical Integration

Vertical integration means combining two or more stages of production in one organization. For meat processing, the supply chain generally includes feed inputs, feeding facilities, livestock producers, processing facilities, and retail locations. Think about what products you can grow or develop yourself to keep money inside your organization. If your organization can grow the product, process it, and manufacture it yourselves, then you can control the funds and supply chains. Other benefits of vertical integration include rebuilding traditional food pathways as well as the ability to build future capacity for education and outreach, internal training, and funding opportunities.

Vertical integration begins with a planning stage. You will want to develop partnerships to determine where each product will go.

Retail outlets, intertribal co-ops, and other tribal organizations are a few potential partners. Tribal trade takes a slightly different approach to integration by addressing food security at the regional or national level. Think about products that you could grow or produce to potentially trade with other tribes in exchange for things that your organization needs. Tribes can also work together to form intertribal co-ops by coordinating their growing and production operations to develop a successful business that minimizes each partner's risk. Retail outlets can be Tribal or non-Tribal entities from a range of industries. Common examples include casino restaurants, child care facilities, convenience stores, Title VI centers, farmers markets, and more. Overall, it is important to get buy-in from partners, the community, and other stakeholders during this stage.



One place to start when selecting partners is with an analysis of orders from your current operations. For example, you can start by analyzing the food orders from your tribe's casino restaurants or Title VI center. Perhaps you find that the most money is spent ordering meat products, so you decided to vertically integrate to include a livestock operation. Or integrating produce into your organization can lead to greenhouse operations. Each organization's needs will differ, so first, determine your needs and then start planning how to integrate those products into your operation. A variety of business planning tools are available (e.g., feasibility studies, business plans, food sovereignty assessments, etc.). Revisit Section 1 for more information about these tools.

### **Food Security**

Vertical integration helps to reclaim control over your local food system and ultimately provides opportunities to increase community food security. One way this can be achieved is by donating foods that do not meet retail standards. Typically, grocery stores and retail outlets will only take the top grade or quality of products.



Your facility will have to determine where any products with blemishes, scars, or lower grades will go after processing. Finding alternative outlets can help prevent unnecessary food waste, such as donating food to tribal members at funerals, powwows, community meals, schools for banquets, fundraisers, field trips, or even food banks. Internally controlled cold storage and inventory management systems can help assess food levels and even ration products when needed. For example, the Tribes that were able to control and distribute meat as needed during COVID-19 did not have empty shelves like many other outlets. Even waste products can possibly be used for animal feed or compost. Think through every process to maximize food security.





## Section 7: How Tribal Foods Tie into Feeding Programs

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### Benefits of Using Tribal Foods

There are countless health, cultural and economic benefits to using tribal foods in your feeding programs. Notable health benefits include:

- **Addressing gaps of non-tribal food assistance programs through the support of community members -** Unfortunately, with gaps in non-tribal food assistance programs, there are individuals and/or households in need of support that have an income source that is slightly above a threshold that makes them ineligible for food assistance. Tribal feeding programs are extremely important to make sure that everyone that needs food can get it and they are not worried about finding their next meal.
- **Increased food security -** The ability to focus specifically on products that address your tribe's food and/or health concerns.
- **Less concern about chemicals, hormones, or contamination-** If your organization is growing the products yourself, you can control all the factors in the growing process, such as what soil is used, water, fertilizers (if any), and the quality and nutritional value of the food products.






Cultural benefits of using tribal foods include strengthening knowledge about traditional foods. When growing foods on your own lands, you can host training seminars, workshops, field trips, and more. By inviting tribal members and local schools to these events, you can integrate agricultural skills into your educational programs and help

strengthen this community knowledge and bring back traditional foods to your lands. Intentionally selecting traditional, cultural, and local foods for your feeding programs can help rebuild traditional food pathways from seed to table. A lot of this knowledge is lost from generation to generation. Still, elders come out and participate in feeding programs, such as Title VI lunches, and in educational programs to make sure that important lessons are taught to the next generation. These lessons can be on topics like seed saving and the nutritional value of traditional foods, to name a few.

Beyond health and cultural benefits, there are several economic benefits to using tribal foods in your feeding programs. At the most fundamental level, if an organization grows its own products, you can keep the money within your operation. Additionally, you will have control over the supply of the products. No one knows better when these products will be needed than the people within your community. Even during an event like a pandemic, using tribal foods in your feeding programs allows you to control what products are planted and/or what animals are harvested. You can have these products in your warehouse, cooler, or freezer ready to be distributed whenever needed. Using tribal foods also allows you to build future capacity. If you can control the growing environments, such as greenhouses, open land, and storage, you can control the whole feeding operation. For example, internally controlling your cold storage and inventory management means you can stockpile products when the markets allow you to purchase or grow. You will also be able to take donations from groups when they have surpluses.





During the pandemic, semi-loads full of food products were distributed to tribes, but many organizations were restricted on what they could accept due to limited storage capacity. If they did not have warehouse space or cold storage available, they could not take the food. In some cases, tribes leveraged neighboring organizations to hold or even deliver the food, but long term, it is vital to build the capacity to produce and store food for continuous food security.

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## PLANNING TO INTEGRATE TRIBAL FOODS

The first step to integrating tribal foods is determining your needs and setting goals. We recommend using a food sovereignty assessment to identify your community's assets, resources, and needs. Food sovereignty assessments can and should be customized to your community to find the most relevant solutions. With that data, you can conduct a cost-benefit analysis for each potential solution or project. These analyses assess a project's strengths and weaknesses to maximize benefits. Your goal should be to implement as many beneficial projects as economically possible. Education and outreach-based projects can typically be implemented with small budgets, but there may also be other larger projects that need more planning before you are ready to begin searching for grants or pitching ideas to your tribal council. Many funders are looking to support tribal agriculture right now, so the sooner you can identify your goals and get a project "shovel-ready" or construction ready, the better. Strategic plans are another tool to help prepare a project. They help map out the steps needed to reach your food sovereignty goals. These work best if you can assemble a committee of key stakeholders to your tribal food programs, such as tribal members, Title VI programs, childcare facilities, schools, or social service programs. You need to involve many people to get the raw data necessary to build vital programs.

Revisit [\*\*Section 1: Strategic Planning and Feasibility\*\*](#) for more details on each planning tool.



# WHERE TO TIE IN TRIBAL FOODS

Tribal foods can be integrated into several tribal food programs:

- **Title VI** offers the opportunity to incorporate traditional meals into the menu and provide higher-quality ingredients. Other tribes have successfully freed up tribal funds for other elder programming by supplementing food orders with tribal products.
- **At childcare centers**, you can provide snacks, supplement or replace outside meat and produce orders, sponsor a school garden, and more. Some tribes have provided seeds for each child to take those home and encouraged them to plant those seeds with their parents. Others were able to prepare potted seedlings for each kid that could be grown in the classroom or transplanted into a home garden.
- **Farmer's markets and food hubs** can increase tribal sovereignty and food security by maintaining a steady supply of tribal foods. If you have greenhouses, you can provide food year-round to sell, trade, or donate. Some tribes bake bread, pies, and other value-added products to stock their market alongside fresh, local produce. It can be truly amazing to bring in hundreds of tribal members to a farmers market and let them all gather around traditional and nutritious foods.
- The **Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)** is a valuable opportunity to distribute tribal traditional foods. Indian country needs to get to a point where we produce enough food to feed and sustain our people. This process starts with a single community, hopefully yours, and then grows into a regional program before reaching the point where tribal products are available on demand.





# INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure builds the capacity you need to produce enough food to supply feeding programs. Infrastructure can include meat processing plants, greenhouses, and high tunnels, aquaponics, storage facilities, freezers, and cold storage, and more, depending on your operation and goals. You can start with just one piece of infrastructure, or you can go all in and start building several facilities. There are many options available to increase food security inside your tribe, but we recommend thinking long-term about the ultimate goal of feeding your region and the FDPIR program to where we do not have any tribal communities that do not know where their food was grown. Refer to **Section 3: Standing Up Infrastructure** for more details about infrastructure and **Section 4: Labor and Training** for more about opportunities to staff these facilities.



## Section 8: Agriculture Policy

Policy, and specifically agriculture policy, affect everything we do. Fortunately, there are many advocates for tribal agriculture who specialize in policy and produce resources to keep Indian Country informed. These groups include the **Native Farm Bill Coalition** (housed in IAC), IFAI, First Nations Development Institute, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, and many more. This section on Agriculture Policy provides a high-level summary of the research and publications from these groups.

### Agriculture Policy 101

There are two main types of policies: “big P” policies and “little p” policies. Big P refers to state or federal policies and laws. For example, the Farm Bill or city zoning ordinances are Big P policies that impact agriculture. Little p refers to policies at the local, tribal, or organizational level, such as a preschool deciding to procure foods from tribal producers.





Some agricultural issues addressed by policy include:

- Trade
- Regulatory reform
- Environment (Resources)
- Innovation and Research
- Immigration Reform
- Infrastructure
- Food Security

Policy is significant because it ties together agriculture, economics, and society. It is also able to provide guidance and accountability across all levels of government. Finally, policy also determines how tax dollars are spent.

The [Farm Bill](#) is one of the biggest pieces of legislation regulating agriculture in the United States, with a proposed budget of \$428 billion over five years. As a result, the Native Farm Bill Coalition was created with the mission “to advance the policy priorities of Native American Producers in the upcoming 2023 Farm Bill through a strong, united voice.”

## Farm Bill Tribal Provisions

The Native Farm Bill Coalition and the research partners at the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative provide a Title-by-Title summary of provisions, including their publication ["Gaining Ground."](#) There are a total of 63 Tribal-specific provisions in the 2018 Farm Bill that focused on:

- Tribal parity
- Access to Funding
- Training and Infrastructure
- Technical Assistance and Outreach
- Traditional and Native Produced Food

Unfortunately, not all of the provisions were funded and acted upon. The entities mentioned above also track the process of tribal provisions and provide summary reports online. Click here to view the [2018 Farm Bill Implementation Tracker.](#)



# Farm Bill

A few title-by-title provisions to note are:



## **Title I- Commodities:**

Inclusion in the Supplemental Agricultural Disaster Assistance



## **Title II- Conservation**

Alternative funding arrangements to support tribal access to conservation programs and furthering tribal access to conservation programs



## **Title III- Trade:**

Increased market opportunities and access to overseas markets



## **Title IV- Nutrition:**

(1) Supports tribal self-governance and management of FDPIR and added "regionally grown" to the traditional foods provision. This requires the USDA to pay 80% of administrative costs for FDPIR while tribes are required to match 20% of administrative costs, if able. (2) Adds additional nutrition programs, such as micro-grants for food security and the Gus Schumacher Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentives



## **Title V- Credit:**

Improves access to credit for tribal producers



## **Title VI- Rural Development:**

(1) Builds infrastructure and economic development opportunities. This creates a Tribal technical service and assistance office as well as provides Tribal priority, inclusion, and access to broadband programs and funding opportunities. (2) Funds the Rural Innovation Stronger Economy Program that establishes a grant program to create job accelerators and programs in low-income rural areas



# Farm Bill Cont.

A few title-by-title provisions to note are:



## **Title VII- Research, Extension, and Related Matters:**

Inclusion and Parity for Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs). This also includes reauthorization of support for TCUs, updating 1994 Tribal Colleges list, and creates a Native American student scholarship fund for students who attend land grant universities and colleges



## **Title VIII- Forestry:**

Self-governance and parity for healthy forestry management



## **Title X- Horticulture:**

(1) Legalization of Industrial Hemp. Tribal nations can regulate the production of industrial hemp. (2) The Local Agriculture Market Program establishes tribal eligibility in local food programs to grow, process, and market Native foods.



## **Title XI- Crop Insurance:**

Focuses on underserved producers to include Tribal producers in USDA's review and report of whether crop insurance is providing adequate coverage



## **Title XII- Miscellaneous:**

(1) Upholds the Trust responsibility. (2) Establishes a Tribal Advisory Committee at the USDA

More details about each of these provisions and policy recommendations for the 2023 Farm Bill can be found in [\*\*The Farm Bill and Indian Country: Assessing the Present and Looking Ahead.\*\*](#)





## Section 9: Food Distribution, Storage, and Logistics

One area to vertically integrate is food distribution. For new facilities, determine who you will start serving. Each type of end-use facility has different packaging preferences, quantity needs, and safety standards.

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### Planning

As with any project, we recommend starting with a cost-benefit analysis. When thinking about your food storage, distribution, and logistics, you must consider all operational costs. Think about the costs of infrastructure, coolers and freezers, trucking, ongoing facility maintenance, waste management, disposal fees, and staffing. While there are many costs involved in food distribution, there may be even more benefits.

For example, your organization can control the timelines and scheduling of your shipments. You also have more control over the operational costs listed above compared to outsourcing these services. Finally, you will have the opportunity to limit food waste by planning out what you want to do with perishable products and making sure that you always have a place to go with them. You do not want to waste products whether you are growing them, they are donated, or if you are purchasing them. You can compost expired food products, potentially use them for animal feed, and much more without throwing them away.

After a successful cost-benefit analysis, you can choose a location for your facility. This is a broad subject covering many different types of





food distribution from food box programs and processing facilities to growing facilities like greenhouses. This can be a new facility, but food processing facilities can also serve as distribution and storage centers. Think about what types of food are going to be stored in the facility and what requirements they might have, such as climate control or zoning requirements if you are not

on tribal lands. If your operation is located inside of a city, county, or state, you may be subject to their local ordinances. Even tribal governments may have their own food codes with which you will have to comply.

**Tribal food codes** are a key component of food safety. If your tribe does not have food codes in place, there are opportunities to adopt codes adaptable to these types of facilities. If you can be a part of creating these food codes for your tribe, you can get the process set in these food codes to do all the things that you are planning, as well as establish your goals for the future.

Other food safety considerations are inspections (tribal, USDA, and state), licensing, and training. These apply to all your employees from your warehouse workers to the truck drivers. For example, truck drivers must understand the temperature ranges in which food can be safely stored while warehouse employees need to know important skills like how to clean and sanitize the coolers and freezers and trace where products are ending up. If you ever have a recall, you will need to know everyone who has purchased your products. Food plans incorporate all these considerations, and assistance is available for developing all these things, especially if you are a tribal organization.

To recap, you should complete a cost-benefit analysis, choose a compatible location, create and/or update any tribal food codes, and develop a food safety plan before you begin distributing food.



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# FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Shipping and logistics are key components of food distribution operations. Shipping and logistics of food distribution include trucking, labeling and packing, licensing, and more. Common food distribution centers for tribal operations include casino restaurants, grocery stores, childcare facilities, gift shops, Title VI centers, farmer's markets and food hubs, food assistance programs, Co-ops, food boxes, and more. Currently, many organizations are having issues trying to get food processed and transported across state lines. There is also a processing backlog that is leaving many small and mid-sized farmers and ranchers without access to a processing facility. In times like these, regional networks that foster intertribal distribution and trade can help distribute products directly to tribal consumers.

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## STORAGE



There are three main types of storage depending on your operation's needs:

- Coolers: Best for produce, eggs, dairy, and fresh meat
- Freezer: Best for longer term storage of frozen meat, vegetables, dairy, etc.
- Dry Storage: Best for canned goods, shelf stable products, packaging materials, etc.

As you plan the location for these storage areas, consider the volume and demand of products. Creating a well-defined surplus management plan can help quantify the amount of space needed to store each type of product. Surplus management plans can also help sort and direct different grades of products to the best type of distribution center. For example, blemished products may be sent to a food box program, while the best products are reserved for grocery stores. It is also important to plan for all weather when choosing a location and floor plan. This can include rain, snow, dust, heat waves, etc. You need to be able to get trucks into your

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storage facility to safely unload the products without exposing them to the elements or getting them dirty. This includes having docks that are appropriate for the type of trucks you plan to use. Some organizations may need elevated docks, while others may have a building they can back a truck into to unload with a forklift. There are many other options to consider when planning your facility.

For each type of storage, you will need to manage inventory. Employees need to be trained on the shelf life of each produce because it will vary for dry goods versus fresh or frozen products. Employees should also be trained on best practices for rotating stock like "First In, First Out" (FIFO). Traceability refers to knowing what products are being brought in and out of your facility. Tools like printed inventory sheets or bar codes can help trace products as they move through each phase of the facility and enter the market. One thing to note is that inventory barcode systems may differ from retail barcodes. As you choose an inventory management system, do your research on which systems are compatible with your operation or even ask the retailers you plan to work with about the system they use to ensure they will be compatible.



Having a storage facility can benefit the whole community by improving food security. Foods that do not meet retail standards can be donated to tribal members for funerals, powwows, and community meals. Product can also be provided to local schools for banquets, fundraisers, field trips, and more. In addition, surplus products can be sold or donated to food banks to help feed those in need.

Alternatively, having available storage means that you will be able to accept donations from other organizations when they become available. Finally, internally controlled cold storage and inventory management can help your organization store food in times of need. During COVID-19, the tribes with this equipment were able to control and distribute meat and other products as needed to keep their local shelves stocked while the National food chain was disrupted.



# Section 10: Regional Food Models and Opportunities

## Reimagining Native Food Economies

As a review, NAAF published the [“Reimagining Native Food Economies”](#) report that introduces the Regional Hub Model. This model proposes the locations of 10 regional food hubs in Indian Country that will provide the necessary processing and distribution infrastructure for food grown and raised by Tribal farmers and ranchers. These Hubs will provide access to critical resources to the broader rural communities. The Hubs will be supported by sub-hubs in Tribal communities that will serve as distribution channels and support community food access. Regional Hubs begin the process of creating a cooperative model of agriculture.

Regional Hubs will feature:

- Processing facilities
- Warehouse and storage
- Logistics and distribution infrastructure
- Technology and data infrastructure
- Finance and Credit services for Native producers

Our hope is that after reading this report, your organization will have the skills to develop local operations that provide a foundation for the Regional Hub Model.

In the Regional Hub Model, NAAF proposes that regional food trade hubs will serve as a central point for distributing food to Tribal communities. They will also serve as a central point for the aggregation of food produced in the region. This includes food from the following types of processing facilities:

- Meat processing plant
- Grain milling
- Fruits and vegetables
- Poultry
- Egg
- Dairy

With the variety of processing expected, each regional hub will need to include warehouse storage, cold storage, and grain storage. Review the full [“Reimagining Native Food Economies”](#) report on NAAF's website at [NativeAmericanAgricultureFund.org](https://NativeAmericanAgricultureFund.org).





# FOOD MARKETING AND CURRENT EVENTS

Current world events, like the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, created market volatility and uncertainty that showed the public that the consolidated industrialized food system is not as strong and resilient as they previously believed. They also showed that producing Tribal food products is more important now than ever. As people feel uncertain about current events, they tend to look for things they can control, such as their diet and health. This shift creates opportunities for Tribal food processing and distribution projects. Food sovereignty assessments can corroborate this claim: In some tribes, 82-95% of respondents believed better food would lead to better health for their families.

The cattle market has experienced high market volatility, similar to how oil prices have fluctuated. Regional food hubs can help stabilize this instability by minimizing transportation costs, storing food reserves, and providing stability for Tribal producers to market their goods. For cattle, having regional processing facilities means that cattle do not have to be transported hundreds or thousands of miles to a feeding facility to be finished, then hundreds of more miles to be processed, only to come back to your local grocery store. Unfortunately, infrastructure development costs have also increased, including:

- Costs to build: Such as materials and delivery times
- Inputs for animals: Such as corn and wheat
- Operational costs: Such as oil and gas for utilities, cardboard boxes, etc.
- Labor



# EMERGING TRENDS



1. Interestingly, lamb and bison sales are growing even as the world begins to recover from COVID-19. This indicates that people who tried these proteins during the pandemic continue to purchase.
2. People continue to cut back on restaurant dining. While this may be due to the ongoing labor shortage, many are trying to recreate restaurant meals at home creating the opportunity to market “restaurant-style” ingredients.
3. More shoppers are basing a part of their decisions on health, planet, animal welfare, and social responsibility. They are beginning to question whether the companies producing food are taking care of their workers and how the animals are being treated. Are they being responsible in terms of packaging and processing? Are they giving back to their community?
4. Transparency is key to battling alternative meats or plant-based meats. Consumers want to know exactly how your food was raised, how it was processed, and how it was delivered to their grocery stores. This is an opportunity for tribes to reinforce and capitalize on the public’s perception that Indigenous cultures are good stewards of animals and the Earth.
5. Regenerative is emerging as a label claim.
6. Internet shopping has exploded. The younger generations, such as Generation Z and the Millennials, were already shopping online and ordering meal kits long before the pandemic. But during COVID-19, the older generations began to participate as well, even if it was to order groceries for contactless pick-up at the local grocery store.

## MARKETING RESOURCES

NAAF has made a major commitment to providing resources that help navigate marketing challenges. For example, there are [quarterly market updates](#) on the NAAF website that provide current market information and analysis. The NAAF Market basket report can help projects analyze current pricing trends and growth or contraction of distribution.



NAAF also provides access to the SPINS database that can provide valuable information to individual grantee projects regarding category leaders, distribution channels, sales growth (or declines) of individual brands, and key marketing attributes of individual brands. SPINS is one of the major data mining services that tracks the sales and the velocity of individual brands in the marketplace.



## Section 11: Funding Opportunities

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You can use a combination of loans, banks, private funders, tribal funding, and grants to support your agricultural program.

Grant and loan programs vary from year to year, but this brief list of grant programs to watch for as you begin planning your program:

- [Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program](#)
- [Community Food Projects \(CFP\) Competitive Grants Program](#)
- [Disaster Assistance Programs](#)
- [Farmer and Food Worker Relief Grant Program](#)
- [Farm Storage Facility Loan Program \(FSFL\)](#)
- [Farm to School Grant Program](#)
- [Food Lenders Network](#)
- [Heirs' Property Relending Program](#)
- [Indian Community Development Block Grant \(ICDBG\)](#)
- [Indian Housing Block Grant \(IHBG\)](#)
- [Meat and Poultry Inspection Readiness Grant \(MPIRG\)](#)
- [Meat and Poultry Processing Expansion Program \(MPPEP\)](#)
- [Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities](#)
- [Rural Business Development Grants \(RBDG\)](#)
- [Rural Innovation Stronger Economy \(RISE\) Grants](#)
- [Value Added Producer Grant \(VAPG\)](#)

The best way to stay up to date with funding opportunities is to check [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) regularly.





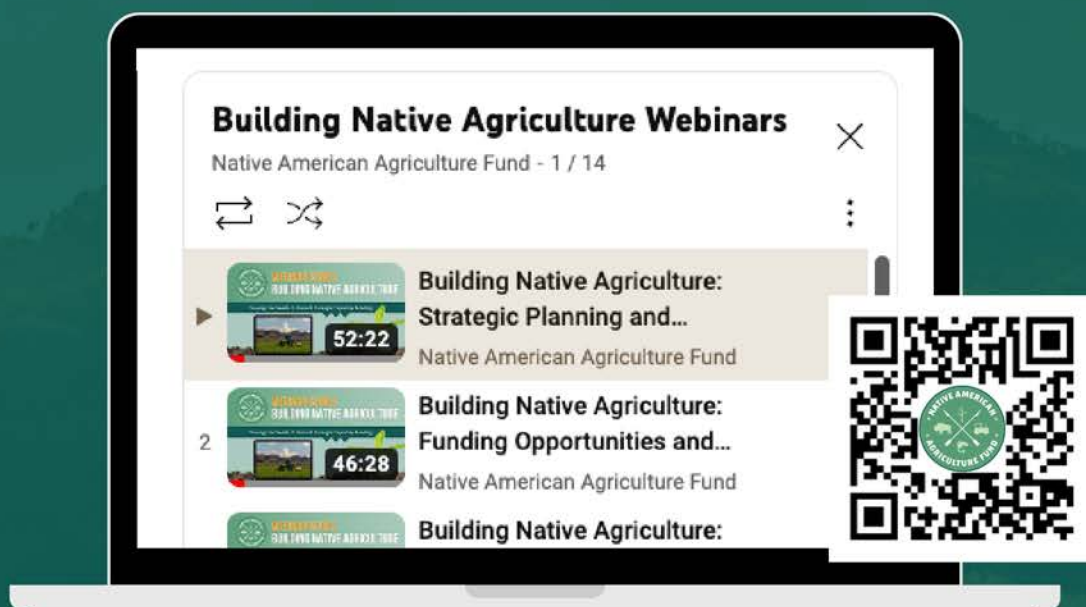
## CONCLUSION

By the end of this report, we hope you have the information you need to launch a successful processing plant or other facility. This report covered topics from project planning, funding, infrastructure development, logistics, food safety, policy, and more with the goal to assist tribes and tribal organizations in building strong agricultural economies. We also covered agricultural practices, marketing, and analysis that serve as the building blocks of indigenous agriculture systems. This information is also presented as a webinar series on [YouTube](#) for your convenience.





# WATCH THE SERIES



**Episode 1: Strategic Planning and Feasibility**

**Episode 2: Funding Opportunities and Writing a Grant**

**Episode 3: Standing Up Infrastructure**

**Episode 4: Labor and Training Opportunities**

**Episode 5: HACCP and Food Safety Plans**

**Episode 6: Using Tribal Products in Retail & Vertical Integration**

**Episode 7: How Tribal Foods Tie Into Feeding Program?**

**Episode 8: Agriculture Policy**

**Episode 9: Food Distribution, Storage, and Logistics**

**Episode 10: Regional Food Models & Opportunities**



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