

GUIDEBOOK

The Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF) is proud to welcome you to the Cultivating Conservation in Indigenous Agriculture Summit.

This guidebook is designed as an essential companion to enhance your experience at our virtual summit. As you navigate through the diverse discussions on conservation practices and Indigenous agriculture, this resource serves not only as a tool for recording key insights but also as a strategic guide for actionable steps.

Each section corresponds to a panel presentation, including capital influence, policy implications, traditional ecological knowledge, federal programming, and the distinct opportunities and challenges in agricultural production and cultivating conservation in Indian country.

Use this guidebook to:

- Take Notes: Ample space is provided by each panel description for jotting down important details, innovative ideas, and questions that arise during presentations.
- Capture Takeaways: At the end of each section, there's a dedicated area for summarizing the key points that resonate with you, ensuring you retain the valuable knowledge shared.
- Develop Action Steps: Based on the discussions, outline practical steps you can take to apply what you've learned, either in your own work or within your community.

By actively engaging with this guidebook, you will be able to connect more deeply with the content, apply the insights from the summit, and contribute to sustainable conservation efforts on Native lands.

AGENDA

Day 1 - Wednesday, April 17

Zoom Link:

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85453264043?pwd=boY4vyu86jPbaJRXc9tWyF9oLh7X8w.1

1:00 PM CT

Welcome: Toni Stanger-McLaughlin, CEO, Native American Agriculture Fund

1:05 PM CT

Keynote Speaker: Kelsey Scott, Chief Strategy Officer, Intertribal Agriculture Council

1:25 PM CT

Representative Teresa Leger Fernandez, NM

Panel 1 - 1:40 PM CT

Implementing NRCS Conservation Practices on Trust Lands

Panel 2 - 1:40 PM CT

Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge
(ITEK) in USDA Conservation Practices

Panel 3 - 2:45 PM CT

Implementing NRCS Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFAs)

Panel 4 - 2:45 PM CT

Telling Their Story: Communicating the Impact of Conservation in Agriculture

Panel 5 - 3:50 PM CT

Climate Smart Agriculture: Growing and Marketing Local Foods

Panel 6 - 3:50 PM CT

Tribal Innovation in Conservation

AGENDA

Day 2 - Thursday, April 18

Zoom Link:

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88957145145?pwd=j5evlQanuqTvGFJqEjfxPO5IDyCG8h.1

1:00 PM CT

Welcome: Whitney Sawney, Director of Communciations and Policy, Native American Agriculture Fund

1:05 PM CT

Main Stage Panel: Acquiring and Utilizing Capital to Fund Conservation on Native Lands

Panel 7 - 2:05 PM CT

Using Data to Inform Decision Making for Producers and Decision-Makers

Panel 8 - 2:05 PM CT

Regenerating Our Lands: Perspectives from the Intertribal Agriculture Council

Panel 9 - 3:15 PM CT

How Extension Partnerships Yield On-the-Ground Conservation Results

Panel 10 - 3:15 PM CT

Youth and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers: Conservation for the Next Generation

4:15 PM CT

Closeout and Final Thoughts

<u>Panel 1</u>: Implementing NRCS Conservation Practices on Trust Lands

Federal trust lands are attached to unique administrative barriers seen nowhere else in the U.S. This panel discusses the unique challenges faced by Native producers working on Trust lands from multiple perspectives.

- Leon LaSalle, Producer, Chippewa Cree Tribe
- Skya Ducheneaux, Executive Director, Akiptan
- Trish Cracroft, Tribal Liaison (MT)
- Roylene Comes at Night, State Conservationist (WA)

Use this area for summarizing the key points that resonate with you, ensuring you retain the valuable knowledge shared. You can use these guiding questions as a foundation, or outline your own questions or takeaways that you can take to apply either in your own work or within your community.

- 1. Do you, a family member, or local community member operate an agricultural operation on trust or fee lands? What challenges do you face in accessing conservation programming?
- 2. From your perspective, what policy changes do you think could help alleviate some of the barriers faced by Native producers operating on Trust lands?
- 3. Has your financial situation impacted your ability to access conservation programming?
- 4. In your opinion, how can we encourage investment in the human capital needed to bring about on-the-ground change?
- 5. What resources exist where you are that allow your community to pool together knowledge and resources?

6. In your opinion, what resources in your community have been successful when pursuing

conservation projects?

<u>Panel 2</u>: Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (ITEK) in USDA Conservation Practices

Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (ITEK) is an experiential science and knowledge base focused on Indigenous ways of knowing and being. The White House has committed to elevating ITEK in federal scientific and policy processes. This panel gathers insights from ITEK practitioners and experts and the Federal government to better understand how ITEK works in tandem with on-the-ground Federal conservation practices.

• Pedro Torres, National Tribal Liaison, USDA NRCS

1 What does Tribal Ecological Knowledge mean to you?

- Cassius Spears Jr., State Resource Conservationist (RI)
- Chris Borden, Tribal Liaison (WI)
- Jeff Mears, Executive Director, Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council

2. What are examples of indigenous led-conservation practices in your area? 3. How do you perceive indigenous knowledge being safeguarded as it is incorporated into policy development processes?

<u>Panel 3</u>: Implementing NRCS Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFAs)

Following the 2018 Farm Bill, Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFAs) present unique avenues for Tribes to participate in USDA NRCS programming. AFAs enable Tribes to address distinct priorities in their communities and that programming aligns with Tribal cultural values and the needs of Tribal producers. This panel discusses current successes and challenges facing producers and USDA as they implement these projects together.

- Leon LaSalle, Producer, Chippewa Cree Tribe
- Kyle Stiffarm, Producer, Fort Belknap
- Kyle Tackett, Assistant State Conservationist (MT)

1. Have you heard of AFAs prior to this panel? What are your thoughts?2. What priorities in your community do you think can be addressed using AFAs after seeing this panel?
3. How can a Tribe best gather input from local producers?

<u>Panel 4</u>: Telling Their Story: Communicating the Impact of Conservation in Agriculture

Delve into the crucial realm of messaging and communication strategies to convey the impact of conservation in agriculture, specifically focusing on implementing Natural Climate Solutions (NCS). Learn more about the national poll results that reinforce the overwhelming support for expanding climate-friendly solutions. The survey indicates public support of implementation approaches that assist farmers and forest landowners in adopting climate-smart management practices in diverse ecosystems such as forests, grasslands, and coastal wetlands.

- Nathan Henry, US Nature4Climate
- Whitney Sawney, Communications and Policy Director, Native American Agriculture Fund

- 1. What are your thoughts on the key findings from the national poll regarding public perception of natural climate agricultural solutions?
- 2. As a reader or audience member, what type of messaging resonates most with you and makes you engage more? For example, positive narratives about successful projects or data driven reports.
- 3. What topic areas are you drawn to the most? For example, soil conservation or agroforestry?

l.What type of media platform do you prefer most? For example, social media, podcasts, newspaper, radio?	
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<u>Panel 5</u>: Climate Smart Agriculture: Growing and Marketing Local Foods

This panel discusses how Tribes across the U.S. are growing and marketing crops and livestock endemic to their region outside of the established cow/calf and row-crop market. NAAF grantees will present the history and growing strategies for foods that feed communities, drive economies, and promote cooperation with the land.

- Roberta Townsend Vennel, Project Director, Kodiak Archipelago Leadership Institute
- Todd Mitchell, Environmental Director, Swinomish Tribe
- Julianna M. Sullivan, Research Scientist, Port Gamble S'Klallam Foundation

1.As a participant, what local foods do you grow or see grown in your area?2.How do you see local foods promoted in your community?3.Where do you access food in your community?4.In your opinion, how are conservation and food systems connected?		

<u>Panel 6</u>: Tribal Innovation in Conservation

Opportunities exist to employ innovative approaches to conservation across Indian Country. Hear about how Tribes use technology to better serve Tribal citizens and increase conservation program access and how current and future policies can support Tribal innovation in conservation.

- Mary Belle Zook, Communications Director, Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative [Moderator]
- Macy Vansickle, Planner, Choctaw Nation Conservation District
- Karli Moore, PhD Candidate, Emmett Interdisciplinary Program in Environment and Resources, Stanford University
- Meagan Baldy, Food Safety Specialist, Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative and USDA Tribal Advisory Council Member
- Pedro Torres, National Tribal Liaison, USDA NRCS

2. What policies would you like to see in your area that could increase innovation?

<u>Panel 7</u>: Using Data to Inform Decision Making for Producers and Decision-Makers

Discover how data is collected, processed, and utilized to help producers and other decision-makers make the most informed decisions they can about the land, their businesses and their communities.

- Leon LaSalle, Producer, Fort Belknap
- Aude Chesnais, Executive Director, Village Earth
- Erin Parker, Executive Director, Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative

	1.In your role (Native producer, Tribal leader, decision maker, consumer, etc.), what kind of data is important to you?		
	2. How do you collect data?		
	3. How do you utilize data to guide your decision-making? 4. What is your willingness to participate in the Ag Census?		

<u>Panel 8</u>: Regenerating Our Lands: Perspectives from the Intertribal Agriculture Council

Intertribal Agriculture Council's (IAC) Stakeholder Services teams regularly lead comprehensive and Tribal producer-led conservation initiatives across Indian Country. Our panel will share insights, experiences, and success stories showcasing how the IAC's five Stakeholder Services departments play a vital role in promoting regenerative food systems, kinship with our land and natural systems, and conservation planning efforts that uplift Traditional Ecological Knowledge through diversified resource pursuits.

- Kelsey Scott, Chief Strategy Officer, Intertribal Agriculture Council [Moderator]
- Tikaan Galbreath, Technical Assistance Network Director
- Emily Luscombe, Natural Resource Director
- Latashia Redhouse, American Indian Foods Director
- Elaini Vargas, Youth Program Director
- Padgley Gonzales, Regenerative Economies Program Specialist

- 1. Have you connected with the Intertribal Agriculture Council staff for technical assistance in your region? What issues have you discussed and what other topics can you share with them?
- 2. What natural resources are available in your region and how are they being sustained?
- 3. What connections do you see between your region's natural resources and your local foods?
- 4. How are the youth in your community involved in the growth or protection of your natural resources and local foods?
- 5. Have you connected with the Intertribal Agriculture Council to discuss how their technical assistance can contribute to a regenerative economy in your community?

<u>Panel 9</u>: How Extension Partnerships Yield On-the-Ground Conservation Results

Learn about the successes and challenges in Extension work with Native producers, as well as a dynamic new partnership between the Sovereign Equity Fund and the National Institute for Food and Agriculture is expanding how extension programming is carried out in Native communities and the impacts thus far.

- Dr. Joe Hiller, Trustee, Native American Agriculture Fund [Moderator]
- Joe Dunn, Director of Agriculture Division, Sitting Bull College
- Vanessa Hamilton, Extension Coordinator and Workforce Development, Nebraska Indian Community College
- Trent Teegerstrom, Associator Director for Tribal Extension Programs, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension
- Courtney Chavis, Sovereign Equity Fund Executive Director

3. What needs do you see in your community that you feel might be best addressed by informal education? 4. Are there other organizations in your community that could help support informal education programs and contribute resources?	1. Are you familiar with agricultural extension services in your area?2. What services does agricultural extension provide, or that you want to see provided, in y community?	your
	3. What needs do you see in your community that you feel might be best addressed by	

<u>Panel 10</u>: Youth and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers: Conservation for the Next Generation

Panelists will discuss how their organizations promote agriculture and conservation for youth and beginning farmers and ranchers, including how youth view risk and early adoption of technologies.

- Cindy Farlee, Program Officer, Native American Agriculture Fund [Moderator]
- Jerica Widow, Program Director Cheyenne River Youth Project
- Elaini Vargas, Youth Programs Director, Intertribal Agriculture Council

- 1. How can more young and beginning producers get involved in agriculture?
- 2. How can generational gaps be bridged between young and beginning producers and older producers?
- 3. How do you think young and beginning producers perceive risk in today's agricultural landscape?

4. Reflecting on your experience in agriculture, what's something you wish you had known before starting?	