



# 2019-2023

## NATIVE AMERICAN AGRICULTURE FUND FIVE-YEAR IMPACT REPORT



# 5 YEAR IMPACT REPORT

FIVE YEARS OF GROWTH AND  
SUPPORT: A POSITIVE IMPACT  
ON NATIVE PRODUCERS,  
AGRICULTURE, AND  
COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT





## 2019-2023 5 YEAR IMPACT REPORT

The Native American Agriculture Fund is proud to release its Five-Year Impact Report, which illustrates a comprehensive review of NAAF's grantmaking and strategic activities between 2019 and 2023. During NAAF's first five years, the trust sought innovative approaches to support and improve Native agriculture by distributing \$83M to Tribal projects and communities nationwide.

# 2019-2023

## NATIVE AMERICAN AGRICULTURE FUND FIVE-YEAR IMPACT REPORT



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## NAAF'S HISTORY & MISSION

The Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF) is a private charitable trust dedicated to improving the success of Native American farmers and ranchers. Established from the landmark settlement of the *Keepseagle v. Vilsack* class-action lawsuit, originally filed against the USDA in the 1990s, NAAF was established from the settlement as an embodiment of hope and with a vision of the potential progress of Native agriculture. NAAF was created with a twenty-year mandate to address and improve the challenges faced by Native agriculturalists.

At the heart of NAAF's mission and work lies an unyielding commitment to grant making, which provides vital business assistance, agricultural education, technical support, and advocacy services. The grants, intended to improve the success of Native American farmers and ranchers, will play a vital role in ensuring their prosperous and enduring presence in the agricultural sector.

**The *Keepseagle v. Vilsack* lawsuit** was originally brought to address alleged discrimination by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) against Native American individuals seeking access to capital through loans and in servicing loans that were provided to Native farmers and ranchers. Central to NAAF's work is reducing or eliminating the harms that befell these original claimants. Thus, every grant that NAAF makes must incorporate some aspect of access to capital or credit education. The settlement of the case under the Obama-Biden Administration was a significant event, culminating in a \$680 million settlement to provide equity and debt relief to the successful claimants.


# IVE AMERICAN CULTURE FUND



More than 3,600 Native farmers and ranchers received a settlement through this process. Additional actions taken by the USDA in the adjudication of the case included establishing an advisory board for the USDA, enhancements to loan programs, and expanding technical assistance for Native producers.

Included in the final adjudication was a cy pres clause meaning that any surplus settlement funds should be utilized to address circumstances that originally created the problem. After all claimants accepted a settlement, over \$300 million of the adjudicated funds remained. Through a series of actions by the court, additional compensation was paid to successful claimants, and a group of 34 organizations present in the Native agriculture space received a "fast track" payment. After the important second payment to claimants and after the fast-track grantees were identified and funded, the court determined that the creation of NAAF should occur. The parties heard from Keepseagle claimants throughout the country to determine the final details to be included in the settlement agreement, and ultimately, NAAF was established. Governed by a board of Trustees, NAAF carries forward the intentions of the Keepseagle settlement to empower and sustain Native American agriculturalists.

With an operational horizon until 2038, NAAF operates as a spend-down private charitable trust. Through focused attention to the mission and vision that informed its creation, NAAF funds projects through its grant making that will create lasting impact. Since its inception, this organization has relentlessly pursued initiatives that elevate Native agriculture, foster community agricultural sustainability, and secure a vibrant future for the generations that will inherit the rich tapestry of Native American agricultural operations.



***Dear Keepseagle claimants, their families, and other dedicated stakeholders,***

Reflecting on the past five years at the Native American Agriculture Fund, it is with immense gratitude that I share with you the trajectory of growth and impact that we have charted together. Our unwavering quest to support and sustain Native American agriculture has not only cultivated tangible successes but has also sown the seeds of an enduring legacy.

By directing \$83 million in grants and program initiatives over our first five years, we've shown our firm dedication to making real change, sparking numerous projects that have truly made a difference in Tribal communities and nationally. This financial boost has tackled key areas like credit access, improved land use, and broader market opportunities, giving our farmers and ranchers the means to grow and sustain their work like never before. It has been an invigorating push for agriculture at the heart of our Native communities, steering us all toward a richer, more varied Tribal economy.

Our commitments to fostering change have laid a durable foundation for the future. By fostering improved business assistance and financial stability, we have armed our community members with the foresight and skills necessary to prosper in complex agricultural economies. Targeted workshops and technical assistance activities conducted by NAAF, our partners, and our grantees have sparked an even more vibrant entrepreneurial spirit, helping our community members adapt and flourish.

Our young people, who are our future leaders, are at the heart of what we do. We have invested in programs that foster leadership across all facets of agriculture and blend time-honored traditions with the latest in farming and ranching techniques. These programs prepare them to be guardians of a way of life deeply rooted in culture and solidly based on improving agricultural advancements in Indian Country. Through these programs, we are keeping our heritage alive and helping our agricultural methods grow and adapt.

Through pointed advocacy conducted by NAAF, our partners, and grantees, we have championed policies that echo the priorities and contributions of Native agriculture. This has facilitated essential policy changes and ensured a just allocation of resources, framing Native agriculture as an integral part of the national food system. Cont...

# LETTER FROM THE CEO

## FIVE YEAR LEGACY: *Growth, Vision, and the Road Ahead*



In the face of pressing environmental challenges, our efforts towards investing capital in sustainability and resilience have expanded upon agricultural practices that will protect and nurture our lands for future generations. This is an essential pillar of our mission, honoring our traditional responsibility to the earth and its bounty.

The original settlement agreement instructed NAAF to fund four critical areas: business assistance, technical support, agricultural education, and advocacy services. These components are fundamental to the success of Native farmers and ranchers. The central issue in the Keepseagle case was access to capital. Thanks to NAAF's strategic investments and grant-making efforts in these focus areas, progress is being made to fortify Native agriculture and pave the way for a future beyond our ancestors' imaginations.

At the core of NAAF's mission is a determination to address and alleviate the challenges faced by the original Keepseagle claimants and their descendants—central to which was rectifying issues of credit access and services. NAAF's initiatives with key organizations such as The Tribal Agriculture Fellowship Program, numerous Tribal Colleges and Universities; the work of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) that continue to accelerate their own commitment to agriculture lending, and the establishment of Native Agriculture Financial Services, are precisely aimed at tackling many of these core issues head-on.

As we close, let us remember our shared commitment: to tend to the land that provides for us, to celebrate the customs and traditions that shape us, and to welcome the innovations that promise a bright future for Native American agriculture. Reflecting on the progress of the past five years, we now look ahead energized and ready to uphold the spirit of unity, ingenuity, and strength that marks our tribal heritage and embodies the vision of NAAF.

With deepest appreciation and invigorated resolve,

liṁlṁt (Thank you),

Toni Stanger-McLaughlin  
Colville Tribe  
Chief Executive Officer  
Native American Agriculture Fund

# PLANTING SEEDS, TAKING ROOT

Since its inception, NAAF has made impactful investments to support Tribal governments, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and community development financial institutions (CDFIs) in the United States. Through partners' and grantees' feedback, community involvement, and self-reflection, we have learned what our communities are doing to design the best program for the greatest impact.

NAAF investments take the form of annual grant making cycles, closing financial gaps and enabling agricultural impact that would not normally be possible in Indian Country. NAAF is working to achieve the most meaningful long-term impact possible through these annual grant making cycles, creating strategic new initiatives, identifying unmet needs, and collaborating with and supporting strong partners. NAAF invests in a wide variety of activities that address agricultural challenges and create agricultural opportunities in Native communities. Our annual grant process is one way NAAF aligns its investments with its vision and mission. The eligible entities that receive NAAF grants are leading in work across the country that among other impacts, increases access to capital and alleviates food insecurity to meet the needs of Indian Country and build equitable food systems for all.



Tribal governments and Native producers are reclaiming and revitalizing our food systems.

When our food systems are more sustainable and secure, our communities are healthier and our tribal economies also benefit. NAAF is committed to providing access to capital so that Native producers can enhance their efforts in providing food that nourishes our people.

Dr. Joe Hiller (Oglala Lakota)  
NAAF Board Chair (2022-2024)

## NAAF HAS INVESTED \$83 MILLION TO DATE

to stimulate innovation and provide business assistance, agricultural education, technical support, and advocacy services to tribes, non-profit organizations, educational organizations, and CDFIs.

The NAAF Board of Trustees committed more than \$100 million over the next 10 years through annual grants to advance Native American agriculture and establish healthy lands, people, and economies.

NAAF's vision for this multi-year commitment is to achieve systemic and meaningful impacts to address food and nutrition disparities in Tribal communities. NAAF is committed to dispersing approximately \$10 million in grantmaking each year and will sunset in 2038 in accordance with the trust agreement. Through these grants and investments, NAAF aims to increase innovations and growth in Native agriculture enterprises to build a more inclusive and sustainable future.





# HOW NAAF FUNDS PROJECTS

As required by the NAAF Trust Agreement, four types of entities are eligible for NAAF funding, including:

- + Nonprofit organizations with IRS Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.
- + Educational organizations described in Section 170(b)(1)(A)(ii) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- + Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), including Certified Native CDFIs and Emerging Native CDFIs.
- + A federal or state recognized Tribal Nation, including instrumentalities and non-profit organizations chartered under the Tribal law of a state or federally recognized Tribe, that furnishes assistance designed to further Native American farming or ranching activities.

 **867** Proposals were submitted for funding in the past 5 years.

 **525** Proposals were funded. Grants from 2019 to 2023 range from:

**\$14,000 TO \$2,500,000**

The average amount of the 525 total NAAF grants is:

**\$ 341,567**

The total amount of annual grants (general and youth) provided from 2019 to 2023 is:

**\$66 MILLION**



NAAF aims is to make groundbreaking grants that help entities across four thematic areas, as allowed in the NAAF Trust Agreement. This includes:

- + **Business Assistance**
- + **Agricultural Education**
- + **Technical Support**
- + **Advocacy Services**

Each year, NAAF conducted an online Request for Applications (RFA) process for general focused and youth focused projects. NAAF also regularly called for “special focus” topical areas that concentrated on special topics for exploration, or emerging concerns. NAAF funded projects ranging from 12 to 24 months and covered expenses including project support, general organizational support, scholarships, grants, lending programs, and/or capital expenditures. Because the central issues in the litigation that led to NAAF’s creation involved access to capital, NAAF requires all applicants to incorporate strategies to improve access to capital for Native farmers and ranchers in their proposed activities.

NAAF leadership constantly reviews and reassesses grant priorities based on stated need of applicants and stakeholders, the types of outcomes achieved by our grantees, and the changing agricultural landscape. The RFA opens in the spring and the grants are awarded in the fall of each year. The NAAF program and compliance teams process, assess and evaluate the grants on a continuous basis.

# FROM 2019 - 2023

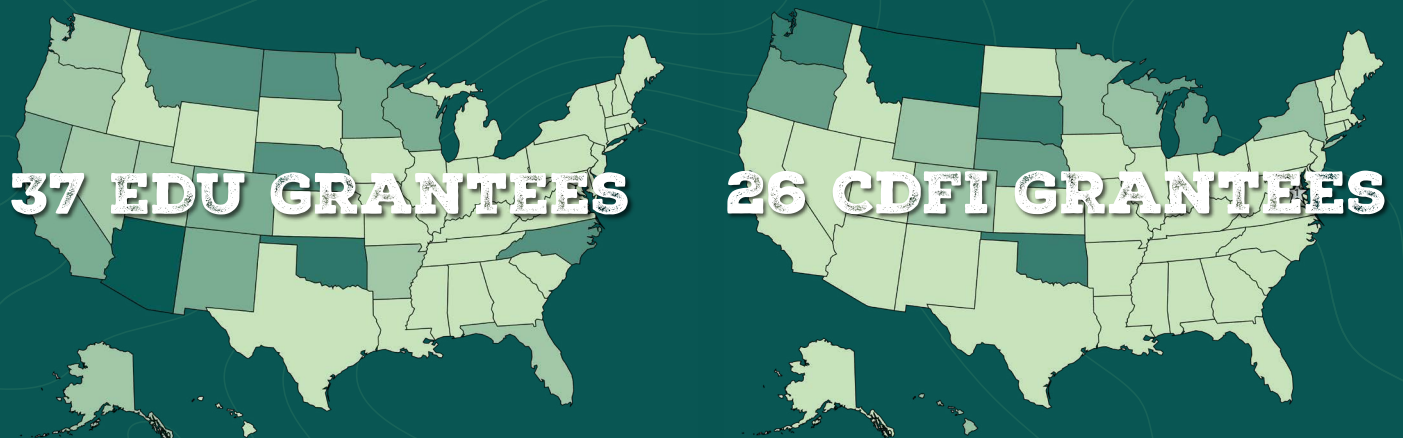
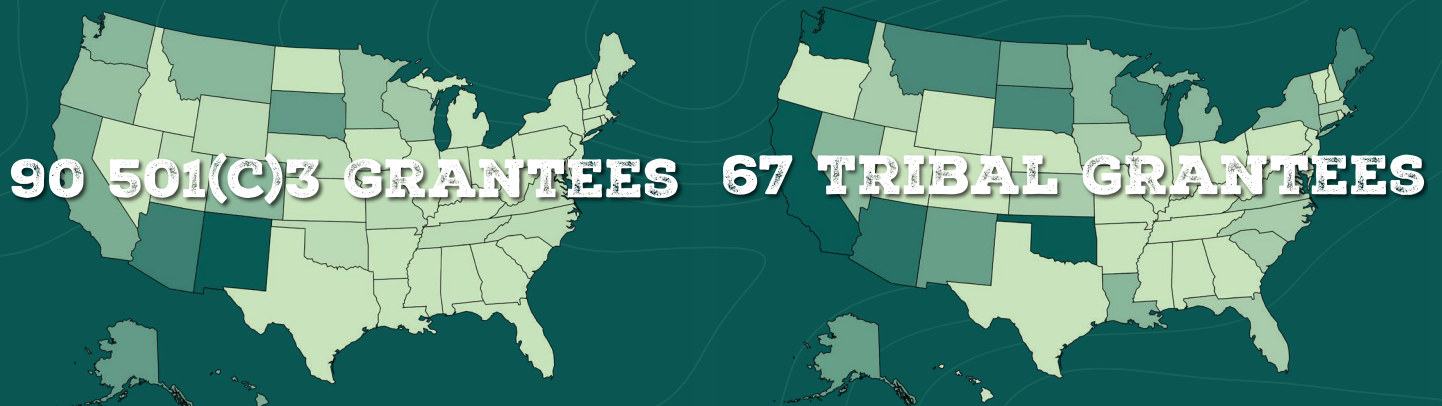
## NAAF FUNDED:

**90** NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

**67** TRIBAL NATIONS

**37** EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

**26** COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS



# SUPPORT FOR NATIVE PRODUCERS

More than 78,000 farmers and ranchers identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, including producers identifying in combination with another race, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In 2022, Native agricultural producers reported \$6.4 billion in production value. These operations cover approximately 63.3 million acres of farm and grazing land. American Indian and Alaska Native farms make up 3% of all farms in the United States and will play a critical role in addressing climate change.

In recent years, Native farmers and ranchers have faced economic hardship due to a global pandemic that destabilized agricultural supply chains and extreme weather and climate events that increased operational risk.

Native agriculture producers are critical to the future of agriculture and food systems of the United States as the demand for food continues to grow. NAAF is focused on helping Native farmers and ranchers achieve success and ensure economic viability. Financial resources are imperative for Native farmers and ranchers. NAAF supports numerous efforts to provide critical technical assistance to Native producers, through our own efforts as well as the efforts of our partners and grantees, through a set of targeted activities. Cont...

Almost all of the grants provided by NAAF are meant to support or focus specifically on Native producers in some form. The objectives and goals of the grants have varied widely. Benefits for Native producers include pilot projects, diverse educational opportunities, financial services, and technical assistance.



## GROWING: SUPPORT FOR NATIVE AGRICULTURE PRODUCERS

These activities include funding capital access programs, and facilitating technical assistance directed specifically to Native producers. We need to ensure that our efforts tackle the vexing needs and chronic challenges to Native producers while taking advantage of emerging opportunities.

An important part of supporting Native producers is building strong partnerships across Indian Country. Another critical aspect of NAAF's work is the development of more robust technical support for Native farmers and ranchers and the development of agriculture and food policy to support the food systems. We engage in these two important efforts through our own actions that add value to the work of our grantees and partners, and through funding grantee-designed and deployed projects targeting these critical technical assistance and policy development bodies of work. We want to help Native producers access value-added food chains if that fits within their business objectives. We support producers who want to keep their enterprise focused on production and we also support those who want to capture more of the processing, marketing, distribution and retailing opportunities. NAAF believes it is important to align and support key partners that will provide strong support to Native producers in the long term. But, we also believe that Native producers best know where their operations should go - our role is to help them get there.

# STORIES OF IMPACT

## *Increasing Access to Capital through Lending: A CDFI's Role in Transforming Native Agriculture*

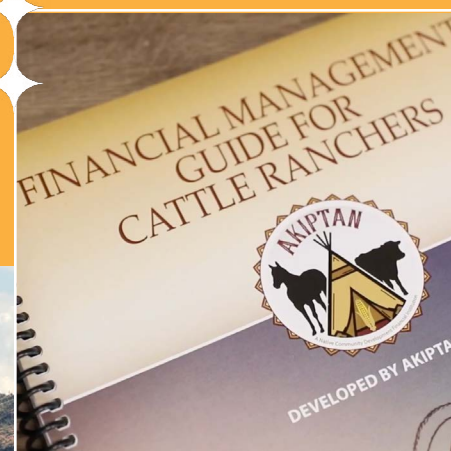
As a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), Akiptan, Inc. is dedicated to revolutionizing Native agriculture and food economies. Their mission is to deliver creative capital, lead paradigm changes, and enhance producer prosperity across the diverse tribal lands of the United States.

With a growing pipeline of producers seeking support, Akiptan's NAAF funded projects aim to address the unmet needs in Indian Country's agriculture sector through lending and technical assistance. Cont...

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Innovative capital that works in Indian Country and is productive in Indian Country wasn't always there. It wasn't an option. So we decided to create the CDFI that would fill that gap. We are built by producers for producers, run by producers, and governed by producers, specifically designed to serve Native agricultural producers in the finance space.

Skya Ducheneaux (Cheyenne River Lakota)  
Akiptan, Inc. Executive Director



## GROWING: SUPPORT FOR NATIVE AGRICULTURE PRODUCERS

Access to capital has long been a significant barrier for Native American producers, leaving many Native agricultural businesses underserved. Akiptan directly addresses these issues by fostering strong, trust-based relationships with their borrowers. They emphasize the relational side of lending as much as the transactional, ensuring that producers feel supported and understood.

The technical assistance provided by Akiptan includes assessing the needs of Native producers and helping them achieve their goals. They offer clear and thorough explanations of loan agreements to ensure borrowers fully understand their commitments, and assist producers in creating detailed business plans and defining their objectives.

One example of how NAAF funding helped support these efforts was through the development of a comprehensive Native agriculture market study conducted by Akiptan which provided insight through data and identified that there is an estimated \$43 billion in unmet needs. Additionally, 75% of producers rely on off-farm income, highlighting the necessity for more effective financial solutions. To address these financial gaps, Akiptan develops new loan products that pair equity grants with financing, providing more holistic support to Native producers.

By fostering the next generation of Native agricultural leaders, Akiptan ensures that young producers have the financial backing to start and grow their agricultural ventures. Through extensive outreach and personalized technical assistance, they guide Native producers through the often-complex loan application process, offering continuous support and follow-up assistance to ensure their success. NAAF funding has gone to support their scholarship program which awarded funds to students, and their internship program which equips participants with essential skills through comprehensive training sessions, including business plan development and financial literacy.



## AGRICULTURAL TRAINING AND LAND ACCESS FOR BEGINNING FARMERS: FORT LEWIS COLLEGE FARMER INCUBATOR PROGRAM

Fort Lewis College is an educational institution in southwest Colorado, with approximately 39% of its student population being Native American or Alaska Natives, representing 113 tribes and Alaska Native villages. The college provides a unique environment for nurturing future agricultural leaders utilizing and leveraging NAAF funding to support their Farmer in Training and regenerative food systems internship program, which offers funding for young agricultural leaders to participate in internships and educational programs. This initiative is part of a broader effort to implement a progressive regenerative food systems curriculum, combining agricultural education, technical support, and business assistance to uplift Native American farmers, ranchers, and food champions.

By promoting land exploration, providing re-grants, and fostering a deep connection to traditional foodways, the program paves the way for a sustainable and prosperous future for Native producers. As participants learn to manage ranches, start market gardens, or return to reservation lands to work in food sovereignty efforts, the program's ripple effect can carry across expanding cohorts of Native agriculture leaders.

Since becoming a NAAF grantee, Fort Lewis College has seen a significant increase in participation from Indigenous farmers and ranchers. These participants engage in various roles, including farmers in training,

incubator farmers, and regenerative food systems interns. The program's focus on high-elevation growing practices, essential for their location at 7600 feet with a three-month frost-free season, equips participants with specialized knowledge and skills through classes, fieldwork, and extensive hands-on training.

The program's holistic approach addresses key barriers faced by beginning farmers and ranchers, such as access to capital, through paid agricultural work, living stipends, and scholarships. The program aims to build capacity through tailored education for the unique needs of Native producers, guided by recommendations from a group of Indigenous food systems leaders and past program cohort members.

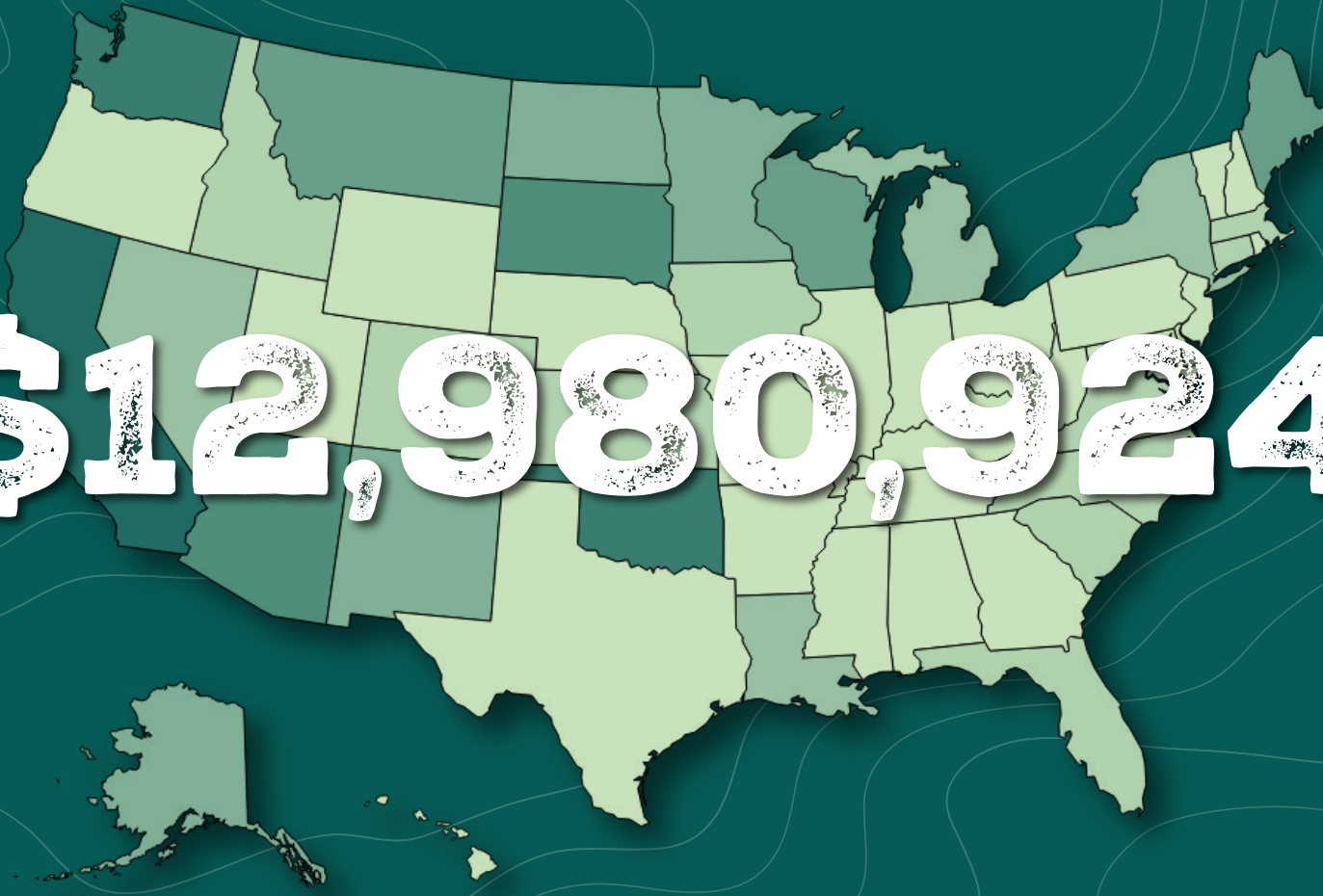
One participant shared their journey, emphasizing the deep connection to agriculture instilled by their grandmother and the importance of traditional foodways. "Our ancestors were very self-sufficient and sustainable. Their deep connection with agriculture and food is one of the reasons we're here today. Programs like this are vital for continuing that legacy. For many Indigenous communities, food deserts and food swamps are significant challenges, where access to healthy food is limited." The training programs at Fort Lewis College and similar initiatives are changing this narrative. These programs can transform entire communities by equipping new farmers with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources.



# SUPPORT FOR TRIBAL NATIONS

FROM 2019 TO 2023, NAAF INVESTED OVER

**\$12,980,924**



**TO TRIBAL NATIONS AND TRIBAL INSTRUMENTALITIES**

NAAF was established with a commitment to help Tribal Nations around the country achieve stronger and more sustainable agriculture programs and services. Five years later, we are still committed to helping Tribal Nations in every way possible. From 2019 to 2023, NAAF invested \$12,980,924 million to Tribal Nations and Tribal instrumentalities.

# STORIES OF IMPACT

## *Empowering Rocky Mountain Native Producers through Conservation and Funding Access*

There are many challenges Tribal producers face when accessing agricultural conservation programs. These barriers include the overly complex requirements of federal program, often related to limitations in the agricultural infrastructure, such as fencing and water systems. Addressing these infrastructure needs is crucial for implementing effective grazing management systems.

The Chippewa Cree Tribe (CCT), located on Rocky Boy Indian Reservation in Montana, used their NAAF funding to support Tribal producers in developing conservation and grazing management plans to help mitigate drought and open the door for higher participation in federal conservation programs and enhance producers' access to capital.

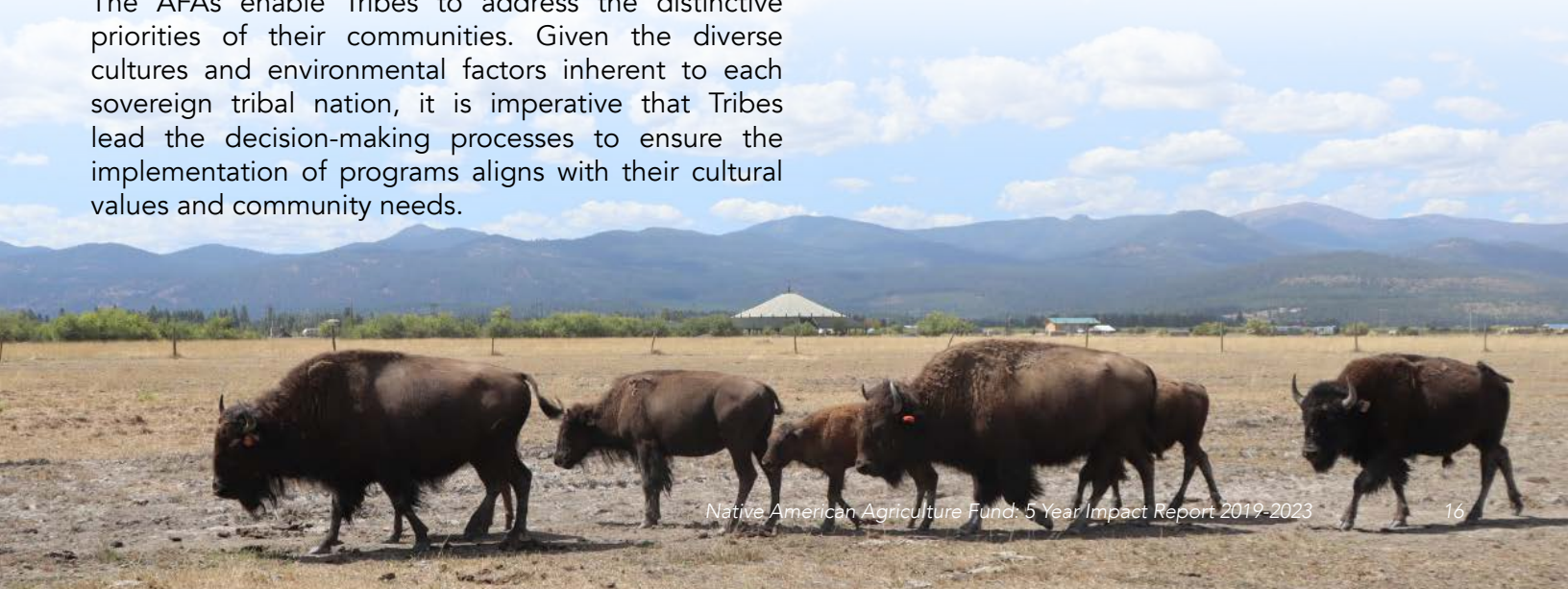
The grant project funding supported efforts for the Tribe to successfully negotiate Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFAs) with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

The AFAs enable Tribes to address the distinctive priorities of their communities. Given the diverse cultures and environmental factors inherent to each sovereign tribal nation, it is imperative that Tribes lead the decision-making processes to ensure the implementation of programs aligns with their cultural values and community needs.



We have helped the Chippewa Cree Tribe and the Fort Belknap Indian Community successfully negotiate the two first alternative funding arrangements in the entire United States under the 2018 Farm Bill. Those are important because now in those arrangements, Tribal producers are able to get a full 90% cost share. Under the old system, producers were led to believe they were getting 90% cost share, but because those were based on region-wide costs NRCS provided, most of the time those cost shares were 50% or less. This was leading to many producers canceling contracts and not moving forward. I think we've really opened up an avenue and set up a template that other Tribes can follow and negotiate their own arrangements.

- Leon LaSalle (Chippewa Cree)





# STORIES OF IMPACT

## *Advancing Agriculture in the Great Plains through a Holistic Lens*

Located in the Great Plains in South Dakota, Sicangu Co. capitalized on a series of impactful NAAF-funded grant projects to advance Native American agriculture through a holistic lens, embracing health, economic self-sufficiency, cultural revitalization, food sovereignty, and climate resilience.

The Great Plains region has a unique climate and terrain, which present both opportunities and challenges for agriculture. Sicangu Co.'s adaptive strategies and grant projects support efforts to address these environmental factors, ensuring that rural areas can thrive despite changing climate patterns. There are also economic barriers such as credit deserts and limited access to resources that influence the Native producers in the region. By identifying strategic opportunities and addressing these barriers, Sicangu Co. was able to use NAAF funding to assess equitable market access and resource distribution opportunities for Lakota producers, while also balancing Lakota cultural traditions as an integral part of their grant projects. By integrating cultural practices into their projects, they ensure that community engagement is respectful and effective, honoring the heritage and values of the Lakota people.

Their projects span technical assistance, traditional food skills development, feasibility studies, and strategic planning, all aimed at supporting Native producers. By offering tailored support in developing agricultural business plans and navigating loan applications, Sicangu Co. has helped Native producers secure financial resources and manage agricultural enterprises more effectively.

Through the expansion of the Wolakota Regenerative Buffalo Range, community members have engaged in buffalo harvest activities, preserving essential cultural practices and building core traditional food skills. In response to the pandemic, an assessment was conducted on the pandemic's effects on the local food system. This included a Regional Market Study to align agricultural production with community needs, ensuring adaptive and responsive strategies.

The hiring of a Loan Specialist in 2023 marked a significant step in building capacity for agricultural lending. Through training and the development of marketing and production classes, their project aims to facilitate access to vital financial resources. This initiative addresses historical biases and fosters growth in Native American agricultural ventures.

Through technical assistance and financial literacy programs, Native producers are making informed business decisions, fostering economic opportunity and self-sufficiency within the community. Traditional food skills development and buffalo harvest activities are preserving cultural practices, ensuring the continuity of Lakota food sovereignty for future generations. Feasibility studies and strategic planning have laid the foundation for sustainable agricultural practices that meet local needs, promoting resilience and adaptability. Assessing the impact of COVID-19 and conducting market studies have enhanced community resilience, enabling adaptive responses to emerging challenges.



## NAAF'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In March 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic touched most lives in the U.S. and Tribal Nations. Native communities were impacted in significant ways. The NAAF team met in April 2020 to discuss NAAF's response and in May 2020, a process for a Rapid Response Funding (RRF) was put forward by the team and approved by the Board of Trustees. The RRF application was offered to existing NAAF grantees to supplement current agriculture programs and keep continuity of projects engaged in agriculture for one or both of the following issue areas: A.) to provide enhanced business assistance to Native farmers and ranchers; and/or B.) to provide technical support to encourage Native food sovereignty and food production for Native communities in response to the impacts of COVID-19.



In February of 2021, NAAF announced a national survey on the critical state of food insecurity in Native American communities, a condition exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Rural infrastructure inequalities, rooted in historic and systemic barriers, have long impacted food access, creating persistent hunger issues in these communities. The survey conducted during the pandemic showed that half of Native American households experienced food insecurity, with challenges more pronounced among families with children, those facing job disruptions, and individuals reporting poorer health. In response to inadequate federal support, Native-led organizations and Tribal governments mobilized rapidly, establishing local food production, distribution partnerships, and emergency food programs. The survey results highlighted the need for robust food system infrastructure—such as local food hubs and processing facilities—to ensure food security. The survey also illuminated the need to reinforce regional and localized food systems that prioritize Native governance over food programs so that tribal communities can build resilience against future crises, supporting both nutritional needs and economic security.



# \$1.99 MILLION GRANTED

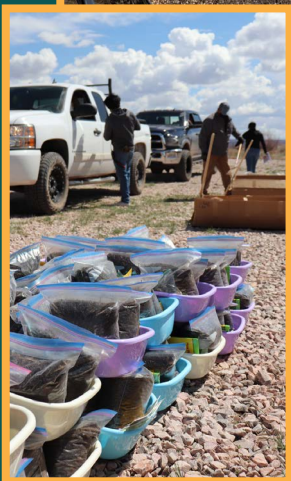
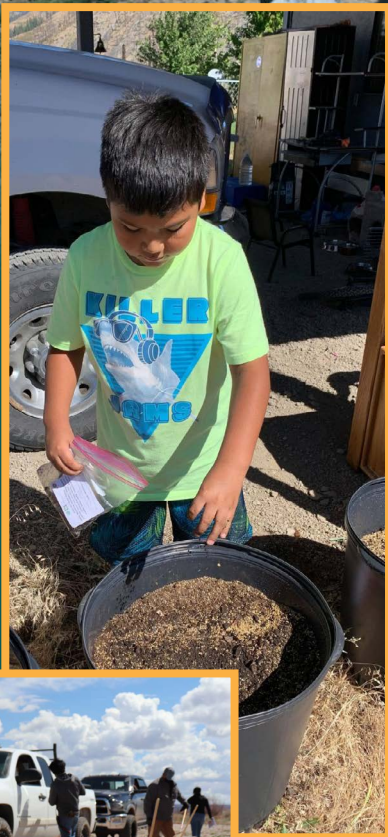
TO 74 ENTITIES FOR COVID-19 RELIEF RAPID RESPONSE FUNDING

**501C3:** \$761,570

**EDU ORG:** \$247,846

**CDFI:** \$406,871

**TRIBES:** \$581,535



## NUMBER OF PRODUCERS IMPACTED THROUGH COVID RAPID RESPONSE FUNDING

<p><b>2,119</b></p> <p>NATIVE FARMERS</p>	<p><b>1,052</b></p> <p>NATIVE RANCHERS</p>	<p><b>86</b></p> <p>NATIVE FISHERS</p>	<p><b>355</b></p> <p>NATIVE HARVESTERS</p>
<p><b>2,141</b></p> <p>NATIVE STUDENTS</p>	<p><b>2,972</b></p> <p>NATIVE YOUTH</p>	<p><b>1,654</b></p> <p>NATIVE ELDERS</p>	<p><b>9,441</b></p> <p>NATIVE COMMUNITY MEMBERS</p>



# GROWING THE NEXT GENERATION OF TRIBAL AGRICULTURAL LEADERS

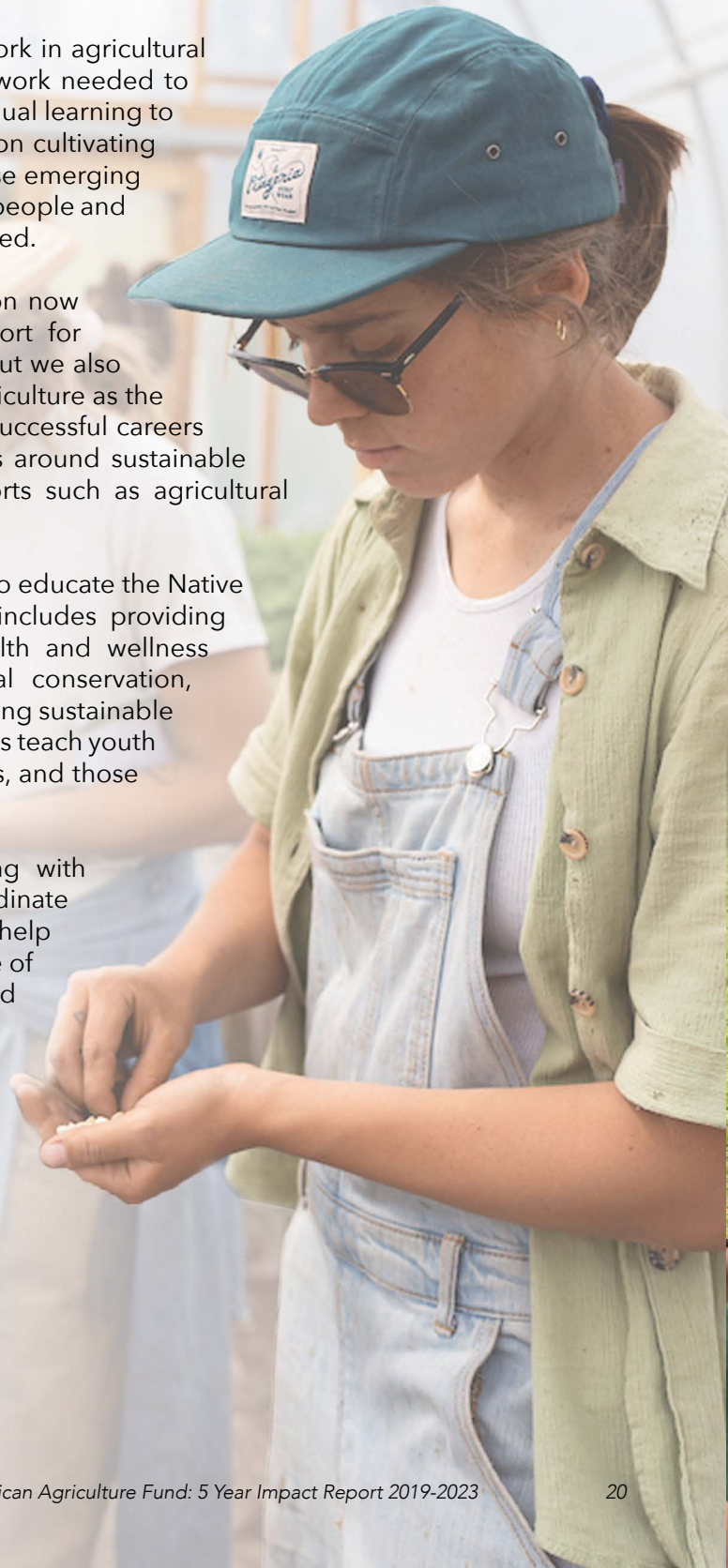
While one of the key responsibilities of NAAF is to fund work in agricultural education. We realized early in the life of NAAF that this work needed to take two tracks. One focused on enhancing adult and continual learning to agriculturalists no matter their age, and the other focused on cultivating the next generation of Native farmers, ranchers, and all those emerging leaders in our communities whose passion for feeding their people and those around us can be championed, nourished, and enriched.

In short, we recognized that our efforts needed to focus on now while also building for our shared future. NAAF's support for work among adults cuts across almost all of our projects, but we also support work focused on educating Native youth about agriculture as the next generation of leaders. We seek to prepare youth for successful careers in Native agriculture by offering educational opportunities around sustainable agricultural practices, food sovereignty policies, and efforts such as agricultural business management.

The best way to create strong, stable Tribal communities is to educate the Native youth who will be the Tribal leaders in the future. This includes providing agriculture education in the classrooms, promoting health and wellness through agriculture education, deepening environmental conservation, expanding the ability to achieve food sovereignty, and creating sustainable solutions to climate change. In addition, many of our grantees teach youth about agriculture in accordance with their own Tribal values, and those may differ from place to place.

NAAF recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Future Farmers of America (FFA) organization to coordinate different elements of school-based agricultural education to help prepare Native students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in global agriculture. NAAF also announced a partnership with the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) to support culturally relevant agriculture education in BIE schools throughout the United States through the development of comprehensive agricultural training and educational resources that delve into areas such as the principles and practices of traditional agriculture and fostering understanding of Indigenous agricultural systems across Native land in the United States.

NAAF has invested significant resources in Native youth programs and education in the past five years. We look forward to continuing to address Native youth and educational needs in the next decade and beyond.



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We don't often talk about subsistence as a form of capital, but the food you produce and use to feed your family directly impacts your bottom line. By teaching kids these traditional practices, we're not only preserving our culture but also helping them understand and access economic opportunities that have sustained our people for tens of thousands of years. We want our youth to understand that the connection to food goes beyond sustenance—it's about preserving our culture, respecting our elders, and sustaining our community. Through these projects, we are nurturing the next generation of leaders who will carry our traditions forward and build a brighter future for all.

Meagen Baldy (Hoopa Valley Tribe)  
Hoopa Valley Tribes Project Lead



## Total Amount for Youth Grants

# \$4,471,874

2019 YOUTH GRANT	\$498,436
2020 YOUTH GRANT	\$1,000,000
2021 YOUTH GRANT	\$1,000,000
2022 YOUTH GRANT	\$912,086
2023 YOUTH GRANT	\$1,061,352



# STORIES OF IMPACT

## *Cultivating Future Leaders: The Impact of a Youth Summit on Native Agriculture*

The Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative (IFAI) is a policy research organization at the University of Arkansas School of Law, focused on advancing food systems, promoting diversified economic development, and preserving cultural food traditions within Native American communities. With NAAF funding and other partners, IFAI has developed educational programs that prepare young Native beginning farmers and ranchers for successful careers in agriculture. One of IFAI's most impactful initiatives is the Youth Summit and Policy Program, a cornerstone effort to foster the next generation of Native agricultural leaders.

The Youth Summit and Policy Program is designed to equip Native youth leaders with the knowledge and skills to overcome capital access barriers and develop effective policy-based solutions. Through classroom instruction and hands-on experiences, young Native farmers and ranchers gain a comprehensive understanding of agricultural business, finance, and policy, ultimately leading to enhanced career preparedness. Throughout the program, students delve into food and agriculture issues they are passionate about, forging cohorts and support networks with peers from Tribal communities throughout the Indian Country. The Summit provides a unique platform for Native youth to connect with experts in various fields, including agriculture, law and policy, agricultural business and finance, nutrition and health, and conservation and land stewardship. These interactions inspire and prepare young people for various careers in Indian Country food and agriculture, ensuring they have the tools and connections needed

to thrive. IFAI's commitment to nurturing these future leaders is evident in the success stories of Summit alumni. Many graduates have gone on to own their own cattle or farming operations, work with the Intertribal Agriculture Council, become agriculture educators, and even serve as agriculture lawyers for Tribal nations. Others have taken on roles as Tribal horticulturalists, aligning their work with their Tribe's food sovereignty initiatives.

A critical component of the Youth Summit is addressing the barriers Native agricultural producers face in accessing capital. Participants learn about the challenges through classroom learning and practical experiences and develop strategies to navigate these barriers. The program emphasizes the importance of policy advocacy and legal support, ensuring that young farmers and ranchers are well-equipped to secure the resources they need for their operations. The summit's comprehensive curriculum covers essential topics such as agricultural business and finance, land stewardship and conservation, agricultural law and policy, nutrition and health, and animal science.

The lasting impact of IFAI's Youth Summit is a space for young leaders to apply their knowledge, skills, and passion for agriculture. They become advocates for food sovereignty, economic development, and cultural preservation, contributing to the health and wellness of Tribal communities.



# STORIES OF IMPACT

## *Revitalizing Traditions through Future Agricultural Leaders: The Hoopa Valley Regeneration of Traditional Fishing*

Located along the Trinity River, the Hoopa tribe has long relied on salmon as a vital source of sustenance. This tradition, passed down through generations, remains strong, and the Klamath Trinity Resource Conservation District supports Native youth through their NAAF funded Regeneration of Fishing Project. This project focuses on cultural sustainability and community resilience through youth education. By passing down traditional knowledge and practices, this project ensures that future generations remain connected to their heritage while also empowering them with the skills needed to thrive economically.

At the heart of this project is the commitment to reconnect Native youth with traditional family fishing practices and bridge generations with traditional practices. By engaging local Tribal fishers to instruct and mentor, young leaders gain hands-on experience in the craft of gill net-making and fishing protocols. The youth learn the significance of proper net-making techniques and the cultural protocols associated with fishing, such as seeking permission from family elders before setting nets in designated areas. This practice ensures respect for the community's resources and helps maintain sustainable fishing practices.

The project is a holistic approach, encompassing the entire process of preserving and utilizing the catch. Youth participants are taught how to fillet, smoke, and can salmon, ensuring that they understand the full cycle of food preparation and preservation. This comprehensive approach not only equips them with practical skills but also instills a sense of responsibility and respect for their food sources.

One of the significant challenges addressed by this project is the barrier to access to capital for agricultural producers and future Native agriculturalists. For many Native youth, traditional subsistence practices such as fishing and farming are not just cultural activities but vital means of supporting their families and communities. By reintroducing traditional agricultural systems and trade practices, the projects aim to teach youth the economic value of these activities.



# INNOVATING

## *Funding Innovation and Building Momentum in Native Agriculture*

NAAF is, first and foremost, a grant-making private charitable trust. In addition to the annual grant funding cycle, NAAF has forged a wider role within the Native agriculture sector by supporting innovative and creative approaches to longstanding Native agriculture needs and challenges. Bringing transformative concepts for Native agriculture to fruition requires a significant investment in the Native organizations that power the ideas needed to solve the challenges facing Native agriculture while also helping to create momentum to help Native producers seize the opportunities before them.

## **NEW INITIATIVES**

In 2023, NAAF invested in an innovative approach to finding solutions for Native agriculture capital access problems, realizing that achieving lasting change without much greater investment in creativity, experimentation, and bold action is impossible. NAAF invested \$12 million to set up the first-ever Other Financing Institution (OFI) within the Farm Credit System (FCS), which is focused on expanding access lending opportunities for Native American producers. The Native Agriculture Financial Services (NAFS) is starting a new chapter within the Farm Credit System by participating in loans with Native Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), investing in agriculture and rural economic development that supports Native farmers and ranchers, originating loans to bridge gaps in financing, and stimulating new partnerships with the Farm Credit System of institutions, the nation's largest agricultural and rural lender. The FCS is a national cooperative lending institution network that provides access to capital to support agriculture and rural communities. NAFS will work within the FCS institutional family to address the credit access gap for Native American farmers, ranchers, fishers, and forest landowners and build bridges and partnerships throughout the Native CDFI network. NAFS's goals are to promote economic growth and prosperity in Indian Country by providing strategic lending initiatives in agriculture and rural infrastructure through technical assistance, and training programs in business-related agriculture-related programs while engaging directly in lending. This historic investment directly addresses the original harms of the Keepseagle case and ensures that future generations of farmers and ranchers have equitable access to credit.



## NAAF INVESTED \$12 MILLION

*to set up the first-ever Other Financing Institution (OFI) within the Farm Credit System (FCS), which is focused on expanding access lending opportunities for Native American producers.*

While \$12 million is a promising start, the true financial needs are significantly higher, with some estimates suggesting a minimum requirement of 50 million for startup funding. As a nonprofit organization, NAFS is ideally positioned to attract a diverse array of funding support, creating a strong and sustainable financial base. By leveraging these opportunities, NAFS is not only set to achieve sustainability but also to thrive as a successful model in resolving the agriculture and infrastructure credit challenges in Indian Country. Investing in NAFS means contributing to an impactful solution that drives long-term economic growth and development in Indian Country.



Native Agriculture Financial Services (NAFS) is grateful for the trust NAAF placed in us to forge a new and innovative path by creating an Other Financing Institution (OFI) within the national Farm Credit system of institutions. Farm Credit is the nation's largest agricultural and rural lender. NAFS will be an institution connected to and within their system. From that vantage point we will be able to partner in new ways with Native CDFIs, Native banks and other lending institutions to bring much needed capital access into our communities. By choosing this innovative bridge path we are addressing the core issues present in the Keepseagle case - reliable capital access. We are excited for the future

-Janie Simms Hipp (Chickasaw)  
President/CEO of Native Agriculture Financial Services



# Native Agriculture Financial Services

## CULTURAL FOODWAYS FUND

FOR TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

### **NAAF PROVIDED AN INITIAL \$1 MILLION IN START-UP FUNDING AND AN ADDITIONAL \$900,000 FOR THE CULTURAL FOODWAYS PROGRAM**

NAAF identified gaps in already established Native agriculture programs and created the Sovereign Equity Fund (SEF) in 2023 as a nonprofit institution to drive equitable funding access, sustainable agriculture, food sovereignty, and economic growth for Native Americans. At the core of SEF's work is building upon NAAF's visionary blueprint for catalyzing rural agricultural infrastructure development that not only benefits Tribal nations but also extends the benefits to rural communities across the United States. SEF aims to cultivate a robust ecosystem of support that will bring the investments to practical fruition. SEF is forging transformative partnerships to enhance the distinct needs, opportunities, and values of Tribal communities to create meaningful results, nurturing a legacy of resilience and prosperity. NAAF provided an initial \$1 million in start-up funding and an additional \$900,000 for the Cultural Foodways program. In 2023, SEF announced its first cohort of Cultural Foodways grantees, made up of six Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), each with grants of \$200,000 for activities over two years. The Cultural Foodways Fund is a grant opportunity to reclaim and revitalize the intersection between Indigenous cultural identity and foodways. Cultural Foodway grants support TCUs in pursuing projects that emphasize the arts and humanities elements of Native agriculture and food systems. The Mellon Foundation contributed \$1.5 million to this important effort.



As Executive Director of SEF, laying our foundation establishes us as pivotal change-makers in the Native agricultural sector. In our first year, clarity about our identity and values is paramount. Personally, I am driven to cultivate partnerships that amplify our narrative. Our ongoing collaboration with the Mellon Foundation is historic, providing a vital platform to highlight our impactful initiatives through their funding support. Strengthening alliances that uphold our mission of equitable funding access, sustainable agriculture, food sovereignty, and economic empowerment for Native agriculture will be pivotal to our success.

- Courtney Chavis (Lumbee)  
Executive Director of Sovereign Equity Fund

## NEW INITIATIVES



One of NAAF's objectives is to influence and improve agricultural education opportunities for Native youth and those involved in educational pursuits. In 2021, NAAF established the Tribal Agriculture Fellowship (TAF) as a founding funder in partnership with Native agriculture industry groups, including the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR), Farmer Mac, John Deere, and Farm Credit. TAF is managed by the Native Agriculture Education Fellowship Program (NAEFP), a nonprofit organization supported by – but separate from – NAAF. NAAF provided an initial \$3 million in start-up funding to TAF. The mission of TAF is to create opportunities for students to advance their education in agriculture, increase specialized knowledge and preserve and promote the legacy of agriculture in Tribal communities. From 2022 to 2024, TAF awarded 27 fellowships to Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian students pursuing technical, undergraduate, and graduate degrees in agriculture to strengthen the flow of Indigenous professionals into tribal agriculture. TAF offers financial assistance to cover education expenses, allowing students to focus on their studies and participate in enrichment activities.



“Native students pursuing degrees in agriculture and other ag-related fields are passionate about the work they are doing and have benefitted from the Tribal Agriculture Fellowship (TAF) for many reasons, but perhaps the most powerful reason is just that “fellowship.” Students greatly benefit from their interactions with each other, creating a national network of students in all different disciplines of agriculture coming together to help each other and their communities. I am so excited to see the impact these students will have on Native Agriculture in the years to come.”

- Nicole DeVon Jackson  
Executive Director of Tribal Agriculture Fellowship

# PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS

NAAF has commissioned reports and produced several publications over the first five years to inform our grant-making and provide national education in this critical area.



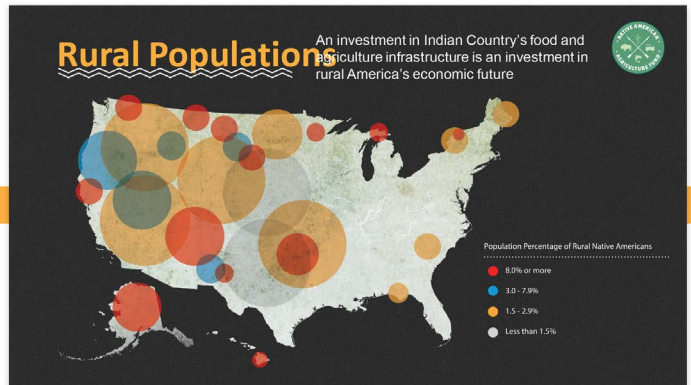
**2020**  
*Advocating for the Federally-Recognized Tribes Extension Program.*

The report advocates for the recognition of the essential role of the FRTEP in supporting Native American agriculture and calls for greater funding and support to enhance its impact and emphasizes the importance of culturally appropriate extension services that respect and incorporate traditional Indigenous agricultural knowledge through extension services.



**2021**  
*Reimagining Native Food Systems: A Vision for Native Food and Agriculture Infrastructure Rebuilding and Recovery*

Calls for a minimum of \$3.4 billion investment to support Native food and agriculture. This landmark report outlines a plan to build processing, packaging, and distribution infrastructure to support Indian country's farmers, ranchers, fishers, and harvesters while simultaneously feeding Tribal communities and meeting their nutritional needs.



**2021**  
*Cooperating to Enhance Native American Food Economies*

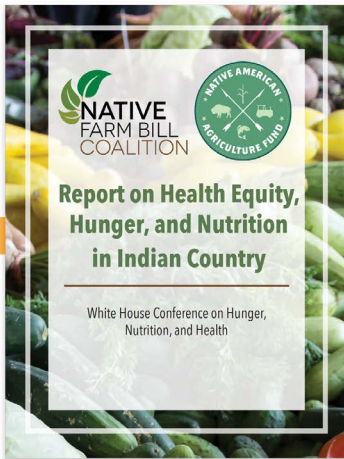
NAAF partnered with the Cooperative Development Foundation (CDF) and the National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International (NCBA CLUSA) for a webinar series on enhancing Native American food systems through cooperatives and understanding legal frameworks, sustainable food systems, shared values with Indigenous people, common challenges, development capital, and practical examples of cooperatives meeting community needs.



**2021**  
*Reimagining Hunger Responses in Times of Crisis: Insights from Case Examples and a Survey of Native Communities' Food Access During COVID-19*

This report developed in partnership with the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) and the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative (IFAI) highlighting the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on food insecurity among Native American communities, exacerbated by systemic issues and inadequate federal responses. Native-led organizations and Tribal governments played a crucial role in addressing these challenges, rapidly adapting to provide food assistance and support. The report emphasizes the need for improved data collection, better infrastructure, and enhanced federal nutrition programs to strengthen food security and sovereignty for Native communities.

## PUBLICATIONS AND REPORTS



**2022**

### *Report on Health Equity, Hunger, and Nutrition in Indian Country*

NAAF and the Native Farm Bill Coalition (NFBC) released a report that provides substantive policy recommendations that can be accomplished through federal agency action and legislative change in food access, nutrition, and health equity. Recommendations include improving credit access for Native producers, partnering with Tribes for culturally appropriate nutrition education, empowering Tribes to administer federal food programs for better efficiency, supporting Native agriculture and youth engagement with food systems, and including Native representation in nutrition research and federal datasets to enhance food access, health, and self-determination for Tribal communities.

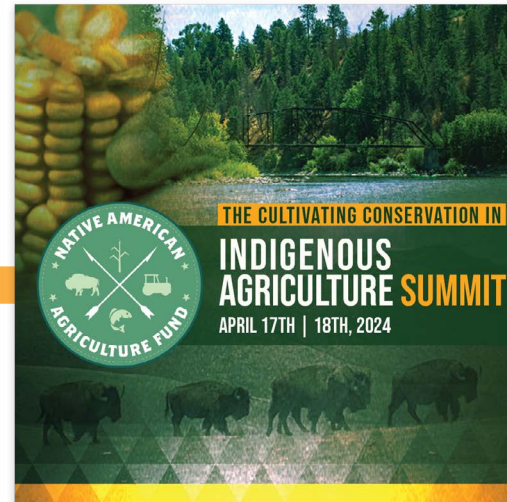


**2022**

### *Building Native Agriculture: Sowing the Seeds of Growth through Capacity Building*

This report provides a comprehensive guide for Tribes and Tribal organizations to develop agricultural economies through strategic planning, feasibility assessments, and infrastructure development. It emphasizes the importance of food sovereignty, detailing steps for conducting food sovereignty assessments, creating business plans, and securing funding through grants and partnerships. Additionally, the report expands on integrating tribal foods into feeding programs, enhancing food security, and leveraging regional food hub models to support Native farmers and ranchers.

**CHANGES FOR NATIVE PRODUCERS**  
 Join us for an insightful webinar on the latest FSA farm loan program updates. Hear from USDA Farm Service Agency and explore how these changes can empower Native producers.



**2024**

### *Cultivating Conservation in Indigenous Agriculture Summit*

NAAF hosted a virtual conference focused on Native agriculture conservation programming, gathering leaders in Native ag, Tribal producers, federal employees from agencies across the U.S. government, Tribal leaders, non-profits, CDFI's, educational institutions and funding and industry partners in agriculture. The summit focused on how conservation practices on Native lands are impacted by capital, policy, traditional ecological knowledge, federal programming, and the unique opportunities and challenges associated with agricultural production in Indian Country.

**2023**

### *Native Ag Media Education Webinar Series*

NAAF communications partners with the Intertribal Agriculture Council and the Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative to lead a two-part webinar series focused on educating media professionals on the history and best practices for covering Native Agriculture in the media. Presentations included "Indian Country 101" and "Telling the story of Tribal agriculture."

# EDUCATION INITIATIVES



NAAF is working to transform Native communities through educational efforts related to Native agriculture. Our significant collaborations with Tribal Colleges and Universities, including a partnership with Haskell Indian Nations University, is helping to improve the lives of Native Americans and reimagine Native agriculture education. By rolling out specialty agribusiness programs, we are equipping our communities with the expertise to lead and innovate within the agricultural industry.



Working with the Bureau of Indian Education, we are bringing together the federal government, Tribal governments, and the private sector to strengthen K-12 education systems within Indian Country to provide Native agriculture education to Native students in their formative years. These educational pathways offer more than just learning; they are steps toward economic empowerment, fostering financial literacy, and improving access to capital.



NAAF support for the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Community Innovation Outreach Project (CIAO)

NAAF partnered with Food Research and Action Center in their cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other partners - UnidosUS, and the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition to disperse subgrants that were available for WIC state and local agencies, including Indian Tribal Organizations and nonprofit entities and organizations, to develop, implement, and evaluate innovative outreach strategies to increase Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) awareness, participation, benefit redemption, and reduce disparities in program delivery.



NAAF established the first-ever partnership with the National FFA Organization and the Tribal Agriculture Fellowship (TAF) dedicated to supporting Native American students pursuing agricultural careers. Agricultural education plays a pivotal role in preparing the next generation of agricultural leaders for the robust world of agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources systems. FFA has more than 14,000 American Indian and Alaska Native members, and more than 2,400 Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander members.



# ANNUAL STATE OF NATIVE AGRICULTURE ADDRESS

*NAAF started the first virtual broadcast to Native farmers, ranchers, producers, Tribal leaders, and community members highlighting the state of Tribal agricultural economies and the leadership of Native producers and Tribes revitalizing food and agriculture economies.*

## Speakers included:

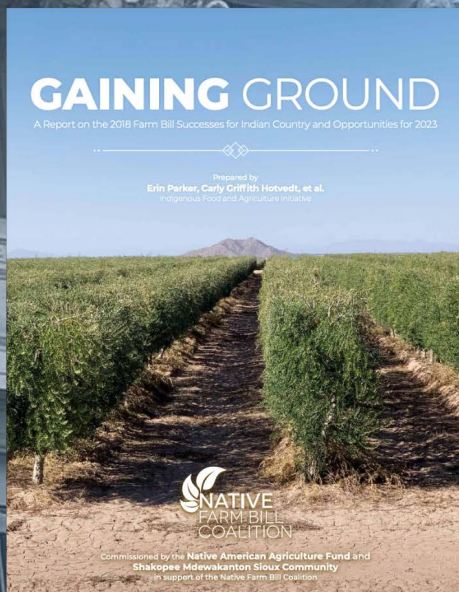
- Secretary Tom Vilsack, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Senator Tina Smith, U.S. Senator for Minnesota
- Senator Amy Klobuchar, U.S. Senator for Minnesota
- Administrator Zach Ducheneaux, Administrator of the USDA Farm Service Agency
- Kari Jo Lawrence, Executive Director of the Intertribal Agriculture Council, Co-Chair of the Native Farm Bill Coalition, USDA Equity Commission Agriculture Subcommittee Member
- Cole Miller, Vice-Chairman of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community and co-chair of the Native Farm Bill Coalition
- Native Producers and Youth Agriculture Leaders



*Native American Agriculture Fund works with Native communities, stakeholders, advocates, regulators, and elected officials to advance Native agriculture initiatives and eliminate barriers to funding.*

In 2023, NAAF co-commissioned a report written by the Native Farm Bill Coalition that underscores the historical and ongoing involvement of Indigenous people in agriculture and food systems. It highlights the foundational role of Indigenous land stewardship in today’s agricultural systems and discusses the challenges faced by Native American producers and federal policies that historically excluded them from agricultural support.

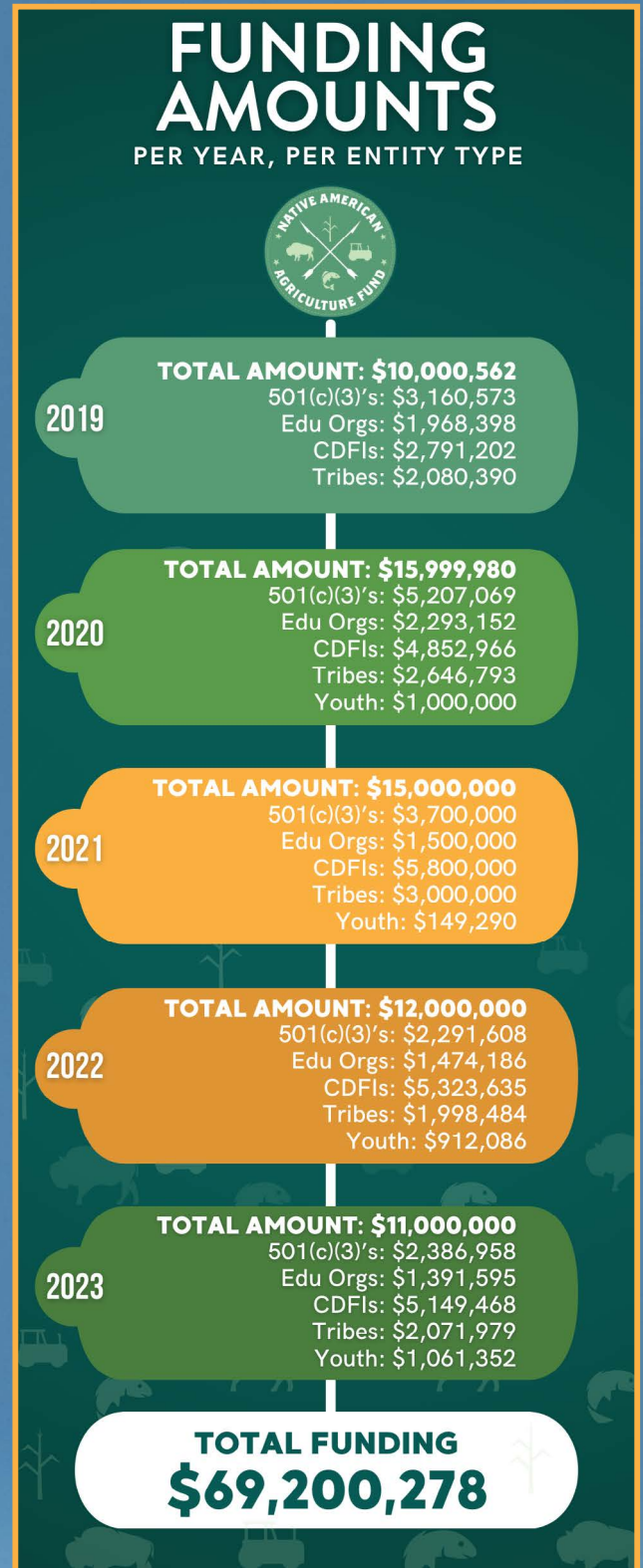
The report plays a crucial role in informing policymakers about the recommendations from Tribes and Tribal producers to enhance food sovereignty, improve economic opportunities, and strengthen the resilience of Tribal communities. By highlighting the unique needs and priorities of Indian Country, the report seeks to ensure that the upcoming 2023 Farm Bill continues to build on the progress made in 2018 and addresses the disparities that Native American producers face.





# NAAF TIMELINE

- 2018**
  - NAAF founded and Trust Agreement launched.
  - Janie Simms Hipp (Chickasaw) name CEO of NAAF
  - First Request for Applications (RFA) announced December 2018.
- 2019**
  - First grants were awarded to 80 eligible entities for a total of \$10 million in funding.
- 2020**
  - NAAF provided \$2 million to 74 NAAF grantees in Rapid Response Funding in response to COVID-19 pandemic.
  - NAAF awards \$16 million to 102 grantees.
- 2021**
  - NAAF awards \$15 million to 74 grantees.
  - NAAF releases vision document - *Reimagining Native Food Economies*.
  - NAAF announces national survey focused on food security in Indian Country.
  - Toni Stanger-McLaughlin (Colville) succeeds Janie Simms Hipp as CEO of NAAF.
  - December 2021 - NAAF announces investment to start the Tribal Agriculture Fellowship Program.
  - NAAF reaches \$25 million in grant funding awarded.
- 2022**
  - NAAF awards \$12 million to 70 grantees.
  - NAAF release report on *Reimagining Hunger Responses in Times of Crisis*.
  - NAAF CEO, Toni Stanger-McLaughlin appointed to USDA Equity Commission.
  - NAAF commits \$100 million for the next 10 years at the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health.
- 2023**
  - NAAF awards \$11 million to 41 grantees.
  - NAAF reaches \$50 million in grant funding awarded.
  - NAAF announces the development of the Sovereign Equity Fund Foodways Fund.
  - April 2023 - NAAF and Mellon Foundation announce collaborative investment in the Cultural Foodways Fund.
  - NAAF announces \$12 million investment to stand up the Native Agriculture Financial Services other financing institution.
  - NAAF hosts inaugural State of Native Agriculture Address, featuring the Secretary of Agriculture.
  - NAAF announces partnership with FFA and Tribal Agriculture Fellowship.
  - October 2023 - NAAF hosts first in-person grantee convening.
  - NAAF begins partnership with Haskell Indian Nations University to stand up an agriculture business degree program.





# NATIVE AMERICAN AGRICULTURE FUND FUNDING SUMMARY FOR 2019-2023

After the original settlement paid out to approved claimants and funds were remaining, NAAF received \$267M from the Keepseagle v. Vilsack settlement. As part of the settlement agreement, a *cy pres* fund was created. The courts directed the remaining funds to be distributed through a newly created organization, NAAF. The organizational structure and purpose were defined in the trust agreement. Per the Trust Agreement, NAAF will not receive any additional funds from the settlement nor any other sources.

## NAAF FUNDING



<i>Initial Keepseagle v. Vilsack settlement</i>	\$ 267.0M
<i>Additional Keepseagle v. Vilsack settlement</i>	\$ 0.2M
<b>TOTAL KEEPSEAGLE V. VILSACK FUNDS</b>	<b>\$267.2 MILLION</b>

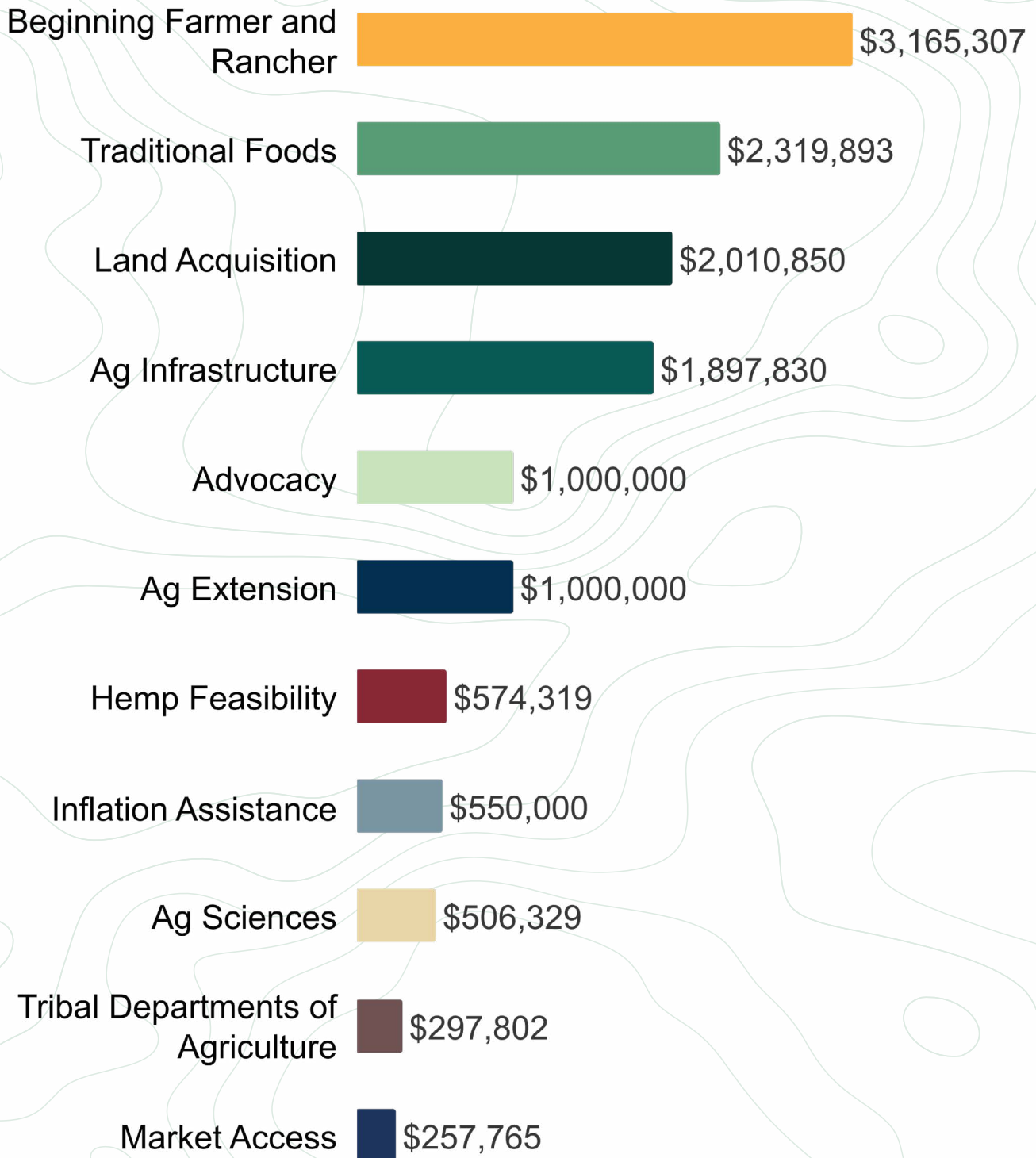


Grants	
Grants Paid	\$ 55M
Grants Liability	\$ 11M
<b>TOTAL GRANTS AWARDS</b>	<b>\$66 MILLION</b>



Agriculture Focused Entities Created & Funded	
Native American Education Fellowship Fund (TAF)	\$ 3M
Native Agricultural Financial Services	\$ 12M
Sovereign Equity Fund	\$ 1M
<b>TOTAL NON-PROFITS CREATED &amp; FUNDED</b>	<b>\$16 MILLION</b>

As NAAF consistently monitors the allocation and utilization of our funding, we remain committed to maximizing the impact of every dollar spent. Building on our past successes in addressing the core challenges that led to the *Keepseagle v. Vilsack* litigation, specifically the limited access to credit and credit services, we have prioritized a focused approach this year. Special Emphasis funding areas include: Traditional Foods, Hemp Feasibility, Ag Sciences, Ag Extension, Advocacy, Agricultural Infrastructure, Tribal Departments of Agriculture, Market Access, Beginning Farmer and Rancher, Communal Land Acquisition, and Inflation Assistance.

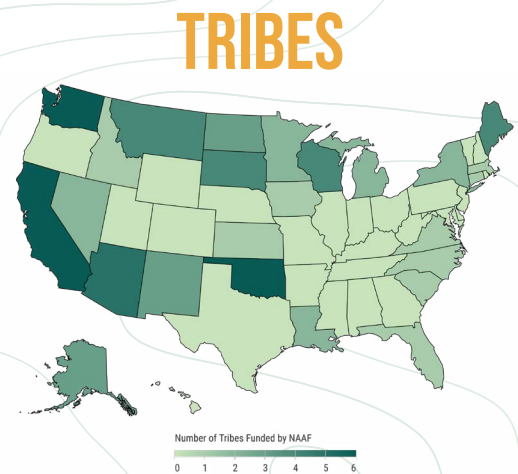
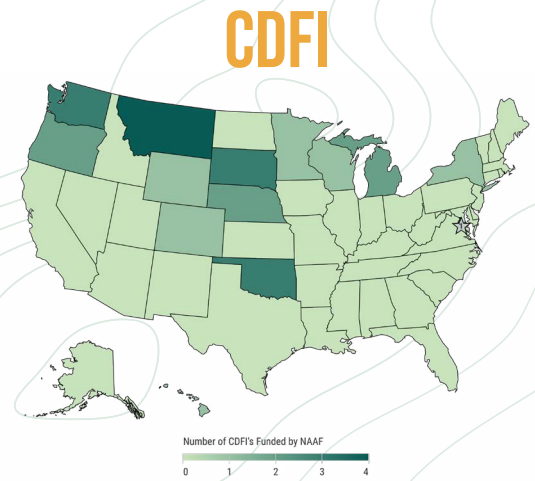


# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

NAAF has invested significant funding into Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), including Certified Native CDFIs and Emerging Native CDFIs to help promote access to capital and local economic growth in Native communities nationwide. The CDFI model provides flexibility to determine the best use of the resources in specific Tribal communities. Native CDFIs often use specialized approaches for investment that consider discrete cultural and geographic diversity as well as remoteness and the special needs of Tribal communities.

*NAAF awarded grants to 26 CDFIs from 2019-2023 for a total amount of **\$24,654,224** (general and youth grants). This funding was awarded to CDFIs, Certified Native CDFIs and Emerging Native CDFIs, including:*

1. Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians Financial Services
2. Akiptan, Inc.
3. Choctaw Home Finance Corporation
4. Citizen Potawatomi Community Development Corporation
5. Four Bands Community Fund
6. Hawaiian Lending and Investments
7. Montana Native Growth Fund
8. HoChunk Community Capital, Inc.
9. Lake Superior Community Development Corporation
10. Pacific Northwest Tribal Lending
11. Mvskoke Loan Fund
12. NACDC Financial Services, Inc.
13. Nakoda-Aaniiih Credit Agency
14. Native 360 Loan Fund
15. Native CDFI Network, Inc.
16. Woodland Financial Partners
17. Nixyaawii Community Financial Services
18. Northern Shores Community Development, Inc.
19. Northwest Native Development Fund
20. Oweesta Corporation
21. Seneca Nation of Indians Economic Development Company
22. Spruce Root, Inc.
23. Lakota Funds
24. Peoples Partner for Community Development
25. White Earth Investment Initiative
26. Wind River Development Fund



# FEDERAL AND STATE RECOGNIZED TRIBAL NATIONS, INCLUDING TRIBAL INSTRUMENTALITIES

NAAF has awarded substantial funding to Tribal Nations and their instrumentalities through various grants. Tribal Nations implement food sovereignty programs to help their communities, and other tribes engage in food production and distribution for economic self-sufficiency. This NAAF funding allows Tribal Nations to exercise self-governance by determining how they want to build out their agriculture programs within the respective Tribal communities.

*NAAF awarded grants to 67 Tribal Nations and their instrumentalities from 2019-2023 for a total amount of \$12,980,924 million (general and youth grants). This funding was awarded to Tribes, including:*

1. Aroostook Band of Micmacs
2. Bad River Tribe
3. Blue Lake Rancheria
4. The Catawba Nation
5. Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
6. Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes
7. Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Buffalo Authority Corporation
8. Chippewa Cree Tribe
9. Coeur d'Alene Tribe
10. Colusa Indian Community Council
11. Confederated Tribes & Bands of the Yakama Nation
12. Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
13. Cowlitz Indian Tribe
14. Crow Creek Sioux Tribe - Hunkpati Processors
15. Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
16. Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe
17. Fort Belknap Indian Community
18. Fort Berthold Land and Livestock
19. Fort Peck Tribes Fish & Game Department
20. Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
21. Grey Snow Management Solutions
22. Hualapai Tribe
23. InterTribal Buffalo Council
24. Kalispel Indian Community of the Kalispel Reservation
25. Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts Point Rancheria
26. Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
27. Klamath Trinity Resource Conservation District
28. Klawock Cooperative Association
29. Lower Brule Corporation (Tribe)
30. Lower Sioux Indian Community in the State of Minnesota
31. Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation
32. Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
33. Mesa Grande Business Development Corporation
34. Modoc Nation
35. Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
36. Muscogee (Creek) Nation
37. Navajo Agricultural Products Industry
38. Oneida Nation
39. Owens Valley Indian Water Commission
40. Passamaquoddy Tribe at Indian Township
41. Passamaquoddy Wild Blueberry Company
42. Pawnee Nation
43. Penobscot Nation
44. Pueblo of Pojoaque
45. Quapaw Services Authority
46. Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
47. Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians
48. Rosebud Economic Development Corporation (REDCO)
49. Sac and Fox Nation
50. Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa
51. Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe
52. San Felipe Pueblo
53. San Xavier Cooperative Association, Inc.
54. San Xavier District of Tohono O'odham Nation
55. Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc.
56. Seneca Nation of Indians
57. Sitka Tribe of Alaska
58. Stockbridge-Munsee Community
59. Suquamish Indian Tribe of the Port Madison Reservation
60. Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
61. Three Affiliated Tribes - MHA Nation
62. Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians
63. United Houma Nation
64. Walker River Paiute Tribe
65. White Mountain Apache Tribe
66. Yavapai-Apache Nation
67. Yurok Tribe Environmental Program

# NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

NAAF has awarded considerable grant funding to non-profit organizations nationwide focused on Native agriculture initiatives. This funding allows non-profit organizations to provide additional agriculture programs, training, and support models to amplify Tribal agriculture.

*NAAF awarded grants to 90 non-profit organizations from 2019-2023 for a total amount of \$18,813,067 million (general and youth grants). This funding was provided to non-profit entities, including:*

1. Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission
2. Ajo Center for Sustainable Agriculture
3. Alaska Village Initiatives
4. Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association
5. Amah Mutsun Land Trust
6. American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association, Inc.
7. American Indigenous Business Leaders
8. American Indian College Fund
9. Native Forward Scholars Fund
10. American Indian Higher Education Consortium
11. Ancestral Lands
12. Arapaho Ranch Field Station
13. Blackfeet Nation Stock Growers Association
14. Buffalo Nations Grasslands Alliance (FS: Indian Land Tenure Foundation)
15. California Indian Museum and Cultural Center
16. Center for Rural Affairs
17. Center of Southwest Culture, Inc.
18. Cherokee Nation Foundation
19. Cheyenne River Youth Project
20. Chief Seattle Club
21. Copper River Native Association
22. Diné Community Development Corporation
23. Diné Traditional Food and Agriculture Policy Project
24. Dream of Wild Health
25. Ecotrust
26. Farm Journal Foundation
27. Farmers' Legal Action Group
28. Flower Hill Institute
29. Fresno American Indian Health Project
30. Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council
31. Healthy Futures Inc.
32. Heart of America Indian Center
33. Homestead Community Development Corporation
34. Indian Land Tenure Foundation
35. Indian Nations Conservation Alliance
36. Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
37. Intertribal Agriculture Council
38. Ke Kula Nui O Waimānalo
39. Keystone Policy Center
40. Kodiak Archipelago Leadership Institute
41. Lakota Youth Development
42. Lumbee Land Development, Inc.
43. Ma Ka Hana Ka Ike Building Program
44. Makoce Agriculture Development Inc.
45. Malama Kaua'i
46. Maqlaqs Geetkni
47. Methow Field Institute
48. NACA Inspired Schools Network
49. Nalwoodi Denzhone: Strength and Beauty Community, Inc.
50. Native American Horse Education Foundation
51. Native Conservancy
52. Native Food And Nutrition Resource Alliance
53. Navajo Ethno-Agriculture
54. New Mexico Community Capital
55. North American Traditional Indigenous Food Systems (NATIFS)
56. North Leupp Family Farms, Inc.
57. Northern California Tribal Court Coalition
58. Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board
59. Numu Allottee Association
60. Ohe.laku Among the Cornstalks
61. Old Harbor Alliance, Inc.
62. Oyate Networking Project
63. Peacekeeper Society
64. Piikani Lodge Health Institute
65. Port Gamble S'Klallam Foundation
66. Red Willow Center
67. Rock House Project Inc.
68. Seeds In Common: Caring for Land, Water, People and Seeds
69. Sangu Community Development Corporation
70. Southern Ute Indian Tribe
71. Southwest Indian Agricultural Association
72. Spokane Tribal Network
73. Sustainable Molokai (BFR)
74. Takshanuk Watershed Council
75. Tanka Fund
76. The Blackfeet Nation Agriculture Development Foundation
77. The Hopi Foundation (Natwani Coalition)
78. The Kohala Center, Inc.
79. The National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development
80. Three Sisters Garden
81. Thunder Valley Community Development Corporation
82. Tolani Lake Enterprises Inc.
83. Trees, Water & People
84. United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.
85. Utah Diné Bikéyah
86. Village Earth
87. Wabanaki Public Health & Wellness
88. Wisconsin Tribal Conservation Advisory Council
89. Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation
90. Zuni Youth Enrichment Project

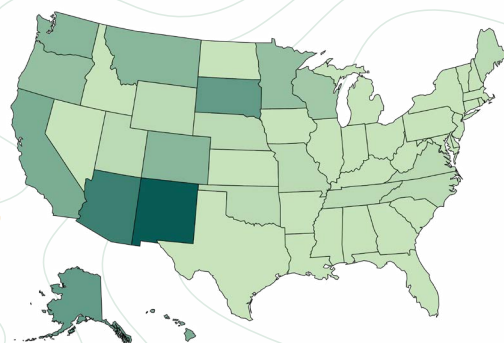
# EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONS

Education is one of the most important cornerstones of self-sufficiency and quality of life for Native people. K-12 and higher education organizations support strong agriculture education opportunities for Tribal communities. NAAF has awarded sizable grant funding to education organizations nationwide, including Reservation Serving K-12 Schools, Tribal Colleges & Universities (TCUs), State Land-grant Universities, and Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institutions (NASNTI). This funding allows education organizations to ramp up the training and agriculture-related programs focused on Native Americans and Tribal Nations.

**NAAF awarded grants to 37 education organizations from 2019-2023 for a total amount of \$9,550,148 million (general and youth grants). This funding was given to education organizations, including:**

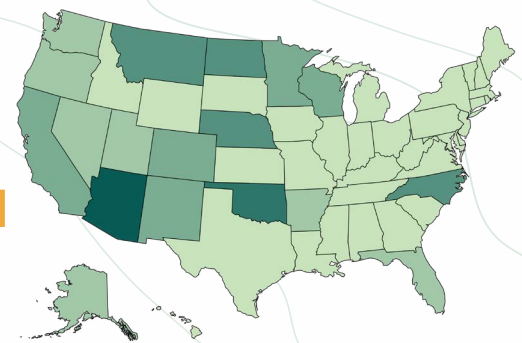
1. Arizona Board of Regents, University of Arizona
2. Board of Regents, NSHE, obo University of Nevada, Reno
3. Cankdeska Cikana Community College
4. Center for Environmental Farming Systems at North Carolina State University
5. College of Menominee Nation
6. Diné College
7. First Peoples Worldwide (University of Colorado at Boulder)
8. Florida Gulf Coast University Board of Trustees
9. Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
10. Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
11. Fort Lewis College
12. Humboldt State University
13. Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative
14. Kayenta Unified School District #27
15. Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe College
16. Little Big Horn College
17. Little Priest Tribal College
18. Mission Valley FFA
19. Montana State University Extension
20. Murray State College
21. Native American Community Academy
22. Nebraska Indian Community College
23. New Mexico State University (American Indian Business Enterprise Center)
24. Northeastern State University
25. Oklahoma State University Foundation
26. Oregon State University
27. Painted Desert Demonstration Projects (STAR School)
28. Pawnee Nation College
29. Robeson Community College
30. Sitting Bull College
31. Tohono O’odham Community College
32. United Tribes Technical College
33. University of Alaska Fairbanks
34. University of Nebraska Tribal Extension Program
35. University of North Carolina at Pembroke
36. Utah State University
37. Washington State University

## NON PROFITS



Number of 501c3 Funded by NAAF  
0 2.5 5 7.5 10 12.5 15

## EDUCATION



Number of EDUs Funded by NAAF  
0 1 2 3 4 5

# WHAT IS ON THE HORIZON FOR 2025 AND BEYOND?

## WHAT AGRICULTURAL NEEDS ARE NOT CURRENTLY BEING ADDRESSED?

What comes next? How do we level the playing field for Native farmers and ranchers? How do Native producers gain access to capital and expand their capacity to improve food security within all our communities? How do we empower Native producers to address climate change and protect ecosystems? How do we equip Native producers to confront any challenge thrown their way? How do we foster investment to revitalize Native communities through food and agriculture?

## THESE ARE PROFOUND QUESTIONS, AND THIS MOMENT IS CRUCIAL IN INDIAN COUNTRY.

Indian country must strengthen its food and agriculture systems at each stage in the food chain. NAAF constantly seeks new and innovative ways to fund Native agricultural programs to level the playing field for Native producers and create an even broader array of opportunities. More than ever before, Indian country holds a strong presence in the food and agriculture space. The Farm Bill is the most significant legislation impacting agriculture and food systems, but significant reforms are needed at the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in order to empower Native agriculture. Tribal communities can be the most rural of the rural communities, and therefore access to resources such as transportation hubs, food processing facilities, broadband access, or distribution channels for agriculture products and services are limited. Investing in regional and Tribal food and agriculture infrastructure can create new opportunities to strengthen our food system resilience, enhance economic growth, and support increased healthy and nutritious food access.

Over the last few years, COVID-19 has exacerbated the gaps and missing links within infrastructure related to food access and the food supply chain. It amplified deficits in local food procurement infrastructure through national supply chain disruption, and many Natives experienced deepening food insecurity. But today, our narrative celebrates the new food hubs emerging to serve as improvements in distribution and marketing channels, storage and processing facilities, and centers for programming to support Tribal agriculture and entrepreneurship. In many areas of the country, Native producers are the key to bolstering rural food economies. NAAF is thoughtful in our funding and unafraid to support new and novel growth areas. This is why NAAF has committed to providing more than \$100 million over the next 10 years to achieve equitable food and agriculture systems.



## WHAT IS ON THE HORIZON FOR 2024 AND BEYOND?

- + To carry out this work, in 2024 NAAF is striving to support the establishment of more tribal agriculture departments to foster intergovernmental collaboration with tribes to foster additional tribal consultation opportunities. The expansion of Tribal Departments of Agriculture (TDAs) will elevate the voice of individual Tribal members and producers and ensure that equitable standards are met with input from all agricultural stakeholders.
- + NAAF also emphasizes initiatives that support youth and education. We believe that by working together, pooling resources, and seeking public and private funding, we can provide enhanced opportunities for Native American students in the field of agriculture. In the coming years, NAAF will collaborate with educational institutions and the federal government to increase awareness and access to high-quality agricultural education across the country.
- + NAAF is also working to bring attention and focus to climate change and protect ecosystems in Tribal communities. Agriculture, fisheries, and forestry are industries highly vulnerable to changing climates. More work must be done to help Native producers mitigate climate change and build resilience. In 2024, NAAF hosted the Cultivating Conservation in Indigenous Agriculture Summit, bringing together leaders in Native agriculture, Tribal producers, federal employees, Tribal leaders, non-profits, CDFIs, educational institutions, and funding and industry partners in agriculture.
- + Native farmers and ranchers face various daily challenges in their fields, from determining how best to suppress weeds in the area to deciding which plant varieties will grow best on their lands. Agricultural research helps farmers make important decisions for many different agriculture-related challenges, and the benefits of such research are unquantifiable. In the future, NAAF will support the production of new research projects and studies.
- + NAAF is increasing its focus on providing grant recipients with access to a wider set of relationships, communications channels, research and technical support, and other means of increasing the momentum behind their leadership. We must ensure equity is sustained for all future generations of Native agricultural producers, which is why NAAF is developing a vast network of partnerships and collaborations to bolster new opportunities for Native agriculturalists.

As a grant making trust, we believe that NAAF is unique in its mission and vision. More than 78,000 farmers and ranchers identify as American Indian or Alaska Native. Dedicated support for Native producers is needed on many levels. NAAF's Board of Trustees, leadership team, staff, and partners are committed to providing unfettered support to the strategies needed to bring about lasting change in Native agriculture in our lifetime. Over the next decade, NAAF aims to continue to grow its grant-making, play a more strategic policy role, and adapt its solutions to reflect changes in Native agriculture. The most important role NAAF will focus on throughout the next decade will include a special focus on assisting our grantees in becoming not only great NAAF grantees but preparing them to advance and leverage their goals through both the public and private sectors. Please join us in ushering in a new focus on diversifying Tribal economies through agriculture.



**FROM OUR STAFF AND TRUSTEES, THANK YOU TO THE NATIVE PRODUCERS THAT FEED OUR PEOPLE, SUSTAIN OUR LANDS, AND GROW OUR ECONOMIES.**

