

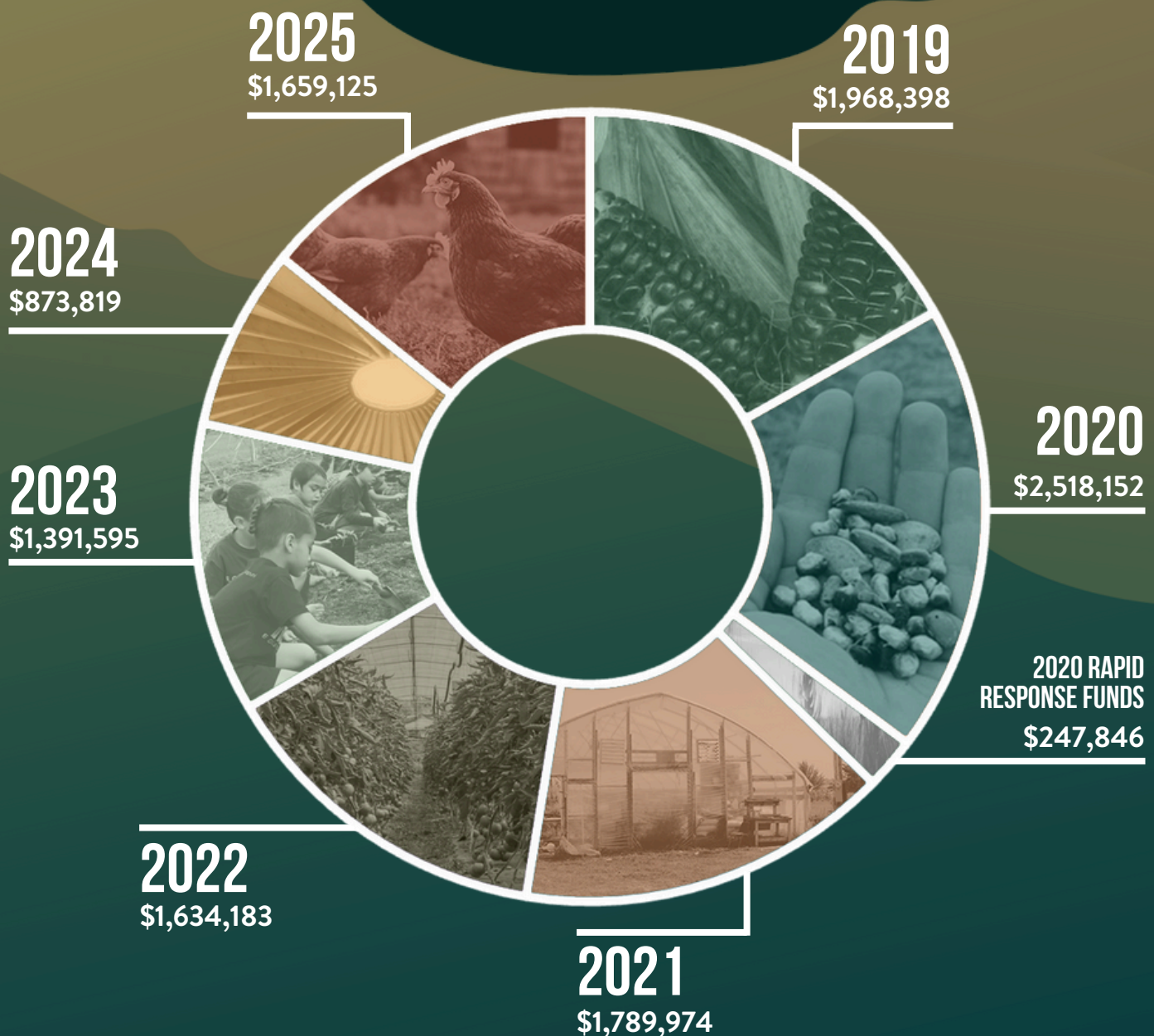


MORE THAN

# \$12 MILLION

FUNDED TO EDUCATIONAL  
ORGANIZATIONS FROM 2019-2025

The Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF) believes that supporting the next generation of farmers, ranchers, and food leaders means building confident, informed, and capable individuals who will lead agriculture forward.



# ADVANCING AGRICULTURE THROUGH EDUCATION

Across Indian Country, Native-led educational institutions and organizations are preparing the next generation of food and agriculture leaders. From classrooms to community gardens, Tribal colleges to child development centers, NAAF grantees are helping students build the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to lead food systems rooted in sustainability and innovation. NAAF is proud to support the incredible work its grantees are undertaking to prepare tomorrow's farmers, ranchers, and food champions.

Between 2019 and 2025, NAAF has invested more than \$12 million across 44 grantees and 111 education projects that have reached more than 21,000 individuals, including 12,084 students and youth as well as 9,247 ranchers, farmers, harvesters, and fishers.

## WHY INVESTMENTS IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS MATTER:

### Strengthen Agricultural Workforce Pipeline

A skilled agricultural workforce fuels rural development, especially in Tribal communities that are often remote and underserved. By strengthening skills and knowledge, investments in education can encourage more individuals to pursue careers as producers and agriculture professionals, supporting local job growth, expanding food production, and contributing to more self-sustaining economies.

### Sustain Momentum

Continued investment in education builds long-term capacity, leadership, and impact across Indian Country. It also ensures that rural communities have the talent and tools to drive local innovation and resilience.

### Close Gaps

By equipping students and producers with critical tools and training, grantees are opening doors to careers in food production, agribusiness, natural resources, and policy. These educational pathways expand opportunities where they are needed most, especially in remote areas where resources are limited but the potential for impact is great.



# 21,331

INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED

Educational grantees directly impacted 12,084 students and youth as well as 9,247 ranchers, farmers, harvesters, and fishers with support from NAAF.

3,861

Farmers

3,214

Ranchers

1,464

Harvesters

5,130

Students

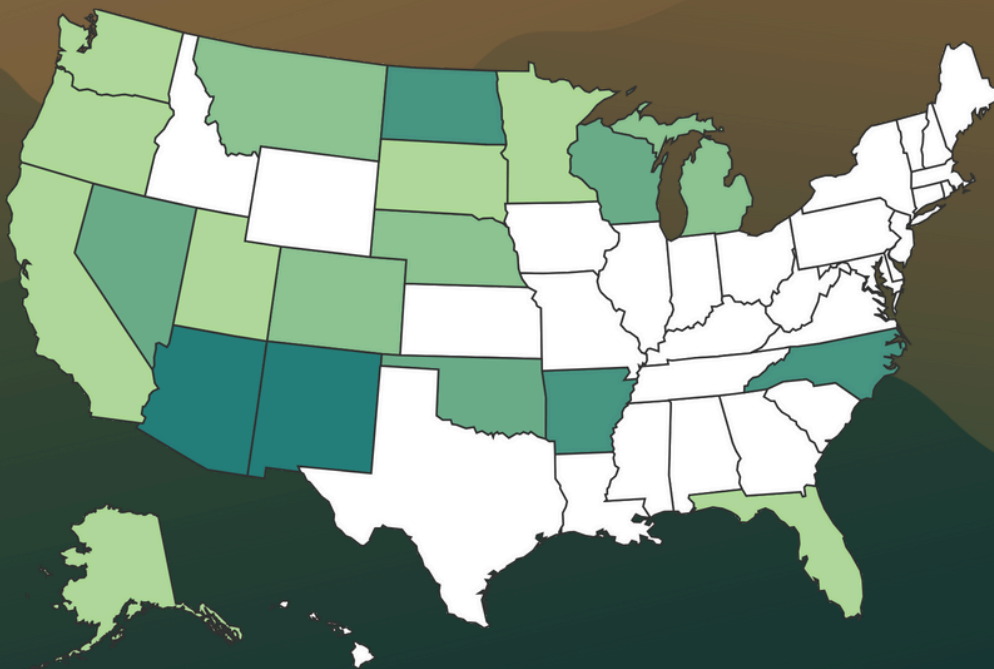
6,954

Youth

708

Fishers

## NAAF Funded Grant Projects by State - Educational Institutions 2019-2025



MORE THAN

**\$3 MILLION**

**TO TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

Between 2019 and 2025,  
NAAF provided more than  
\$3 million to 13 Tribal  
Colleges and Universities.

Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) are vital hubs of education, culture, and innovation, providing accessible and relevant education that strengthens both individual learners and the broader community. They offer academic programs and workforce training tailored to local needs, ranging from agriculture and natural resource management to business development and health care. This ensures students gain the skills necessary to thrive while preserving and advancing Indigenous knowledge systems. By serving as both educational institutions and community anchors, TCUs foster leadership, empower self-determination, and create opportunities that ripple far beyond campus boundaries.

TCUs supported through NAAF's investments have advanced a wide range of innovative and culturally grounded programs in agriculture and community development. Their work includes providing scholarships for students pursuing sustainable agriculture degrees, supporting youth through agricultural camps, and creating new degree programs such as an Associate of Applied Science in Agricultural Science and a Veterinary Technician training program. TCUs have also developed hands-on initiatives, from hydroponics projects that enhance public health to food sovereignty workshops, Master Gardener classes, and hemp manufacturing research. They've launched bilingual food safety certification programs, shared equipment cooperatives, and continuing education opportunities for farmers, ranchers, and growers. Many programs emphasize practical skill-building, offering training in greenhouse operations, welding, solar technology, business entrepreneurship, and even drone applications in agriculture. Together, these efforts strengthen and expand economic opportunities, support food systems, and ensure that agricultural knowledge and innovation continue for generations to come.



**CULTURAL FOODWAYS FUND**

**FOR TRIBAL COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

In 2023, the Native American Agriculture Fund, the Mellon Foundation, and the Sovereign Equity Fund launched the Cultural Foodways Fund to invest in the arts and humanities of Indigenous foodways through direct grants to TCUs.





# FUNDING THAT MULTIPLIES

NAAF TCU GRANTEES LEVERAGED **\$3 MILLION** IN  
SUPPORT TO IMPACT **4,576** INDIVIDUALS

FROM 2019-2025



**2,956**

STUDENTS & YOUTH



**1,312**

FARMERS & RANCHERS



**308**

FISHERS & HARVESTERS

# IMPACT IN ACTION



# 2019 MURRAY STATE COLLEGE TISHOMINGO, OK

With support from the Native American Agriculture Fund, Murray State College in Tishomingo, Oklahoma, introduced a course focused on agricultural financial literacy, a vital skillset for the next generation of producers.

NAAF's funding helped make college more affordable for agriculture students, creating a ripple effect that benefits not only the students themselves but also their families, communities, and the broader agricultural economy.

The course provided students with practical tools to manage farm finances, navigate credit systems, and build sustainable operations.

The instructor's real-world experience as both a rancher and business professional offered valuable insights that left a lasting impression on participants and will continue to shape their careers in agriculture.

Beyond the course development, NAAF support also provided scholarships for students pursuing agriculture-related degrees. Many participants have since advanced to earn higher education degrees and are now building careers within the field.

This investment has not only strengthened agricultural education, but has also built capacity and leadership among youth committed to feeding their communities. Through targeted financial education and direct student support, Murray State is helping shape the future of agriculture in Oklahoma and beyond.

**REDUCING BARRIERS TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR  
NATIVE AGRICULTURE STUDENTS CREATES  
RIPPLE EFFECTS THAT STRENGTHEN FAMILIES,  
TRIBAL COMMUNITIES, AND THE BROADER  
AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPE.**



2020

# SITTING BULL COLLEGE

## FORT YATES, NORTH DAKOTA

Sitting Bull College — a Tribal college located in Fort Yates, North Dakota on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation — supports the future of agriculture through hands-on, place-based education. With funding from the Native American Agriculture Fund, Sitting Bull College created a Veterinary Technician Training Program to address the growing need for veterinary care across the northern Great Plains.

The program delivered a series of equine educational clinics that combine classroom learning with community service. These clinics provided essential care such as castrations, dental floats, hoof trims, farrier clinics, and routine medical treatments that benefit local ranchers and livestock operations.

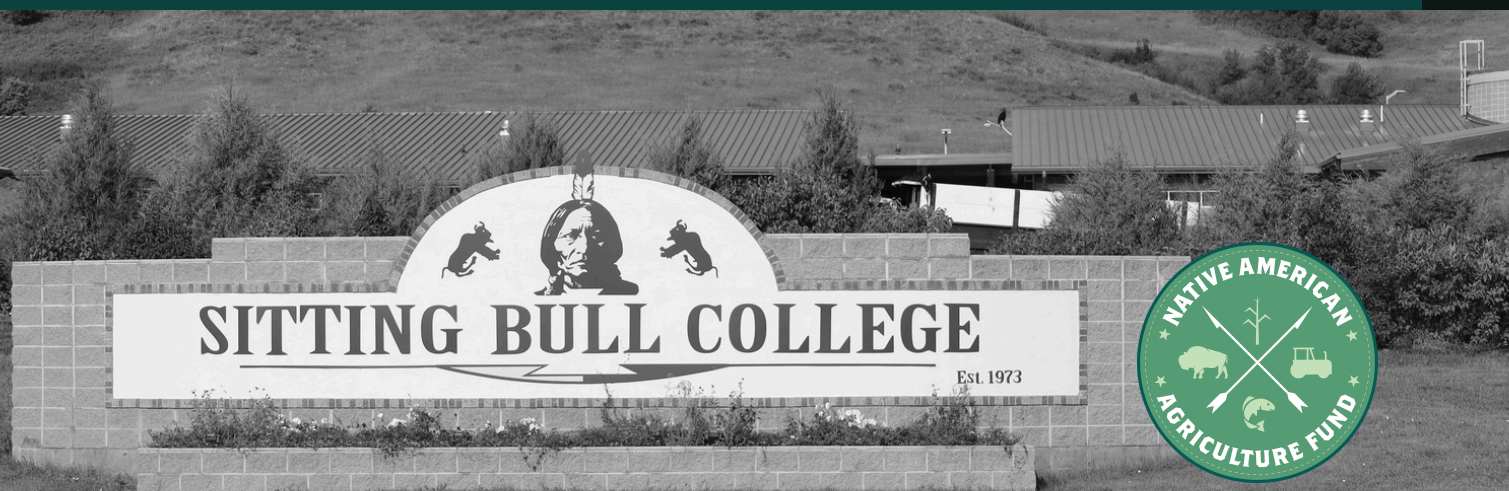
This region faces a shortage of large-animal veterinary services critical to maintaining livestock health and supporting agricultural economies. By training students in veterinary science and animal husbandry, Sitting Bull College is advancing Tribal-focused solutions to local challenges while opening career pathways in a critical and high-demand field.

Through dedication and collaboration, the institution established a program that equips students with the knowledge, skills, and credentials needed to contribute meaningfully to the animal health and ranching industries, strengthening both the workforce and regional food systems.

The program complements Sitting Bull College's broader agriculture offerings and strengthens the region's capacity to care for its herds, food systems, and future producers.

Financial investment has significantly enhanced Sitting Bull College's ability to create additional opportunities that benefit rural communities across the Plains.

**SITTING BULL COLLEGE TRAINS THE NEXT  
GENERATION OF ANIMAL HEALTH  
PROFESSIONALS, HELPING TO ADVANCE  
TRIBAL SOLUTIONS TO COMMUNITY  
CHALLENGES WHILE ALSO OPENING  
CAREER PATHWAYS.**



# 2021 INDIGENOUS FOOD AND AGRICULTURE INITIATIVE FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS

The Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative (IFAI) strengthens food sovereignty by educating and empowering the next generation of agriculture leaders. With support from the Native American Agriculture Fund, IFAI hosts its annual Native Youth in Agriculture Leadership Summit, providing beginning farmers and ranchers with a strong foundation in agricultural education, policy, and food system leadership. Participants engage in both classroom instruction and real-world learning experiences that emphasize land stewardship, resource management, and access to capital.

In 2021, NAAF supported IFAI's Policy Leadership Program, a one-time initiative designed to deepen participants' understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that affect agricultural producers. This initiative provided targeted instruction for students and early-career professionals interested in shaping agricultural policy and improving food systems.

As part of the program, participants explored how federal credit policies influence producers' access to capital, dedicating two days and more than 14 classroom hours to learning about the Farm Bill and discussing strategies to address barriers to credit. They also collaborated in a simulated congressional setting to analyze laws and propose solutions that could strengthen financial access and opportunity for agricultural communities nationwide.

**THE POLICY LEADERSHIP PROGRAM  
ENHANCED STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF  
THE LEGAL AND REGULATORY  
ENVIRONMENTS THAT IMPACT  
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS.**



2022

# UNITED TRIBES TECHNICAL COLLEGE

## BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA

With support from the Native American Agriculture Fund, United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) enhanced its Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems (SAFS) program by designing and building a 5,000-square-foot greenhouse.

The project had a significant impact on students, faculty, and community members. Events supported through this initiative introduced hundreds of students, many new to agriculture, to concepts of food sovereignty, traditional knowledge, and agricultural science.

The greenhouse itself has become a centerpiece for experiential learning and a catalyst for sparking interest in sustainable and culturally grounded agricultural practices.

This new facility serves as both a teaching tool and a community resource, allowing students to apply classroom knowledge in a hands-on environment while advancing broader goals of food sovereignty and self-sufficiency for the campus and surrounding region.

Through these real-world experiences, students gain an understanding of accessing capital, managing risk, and developing sustainable operations.

The investment supports long-term success by equipping future generations with the infrastructure, skills, and confidence needed to sustain agriculture and strengthen community food systems for years to come.

**IMMERSIVE AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCES  
PREPARE STUDENTS WITH KNOWLEDGE OF  
CAPITAL ACCESS, RISK MANAGEMENT, AND  
SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES.**



2023

# NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY

## LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO

With support from the Native American Agriculture Fund, New Mexico State University launched a project to serve farmers and ranchers through a combination of financial education, technical assistance, and specialized workshops.

The initiative fostered a strong sense of community among participants, encouraging collaboration and knowledge-sharing that extended beyond the duration of the grant. Farmers and ranchers built connections with business partners and regulatory experts, strengthening local networks for continued growth.

Through targeted training, the project provided essential guidance on accessing capital, conducting financial analysis, and improving business management practices. It also offered hands-on workshops focused on freeze-dry manufacturing, helping participants navigate licensing, regulatory compliance, and value-added processing for both produce and meat products.

By addressing financial barriers, simplifying market entry, and creating pathways for producer collaboration, the project supported long-term economic resilience and empowered agricultural entrepreneurs with the tools and skills needed for sustained success.

**THE PROJECT BUILT A STRONG SENSE OF  
COMMUNITY, STRENGTHENED LOCAL  
NETWORKS, AND EQUIPPED PRODUCERS  
WITH THE TOOLS, CONNECTIONS, AND  
CONFIDENCE TO GROW THEIR OPERATIONS  
AND ACHIEVE LASTING SUCCESS.**

