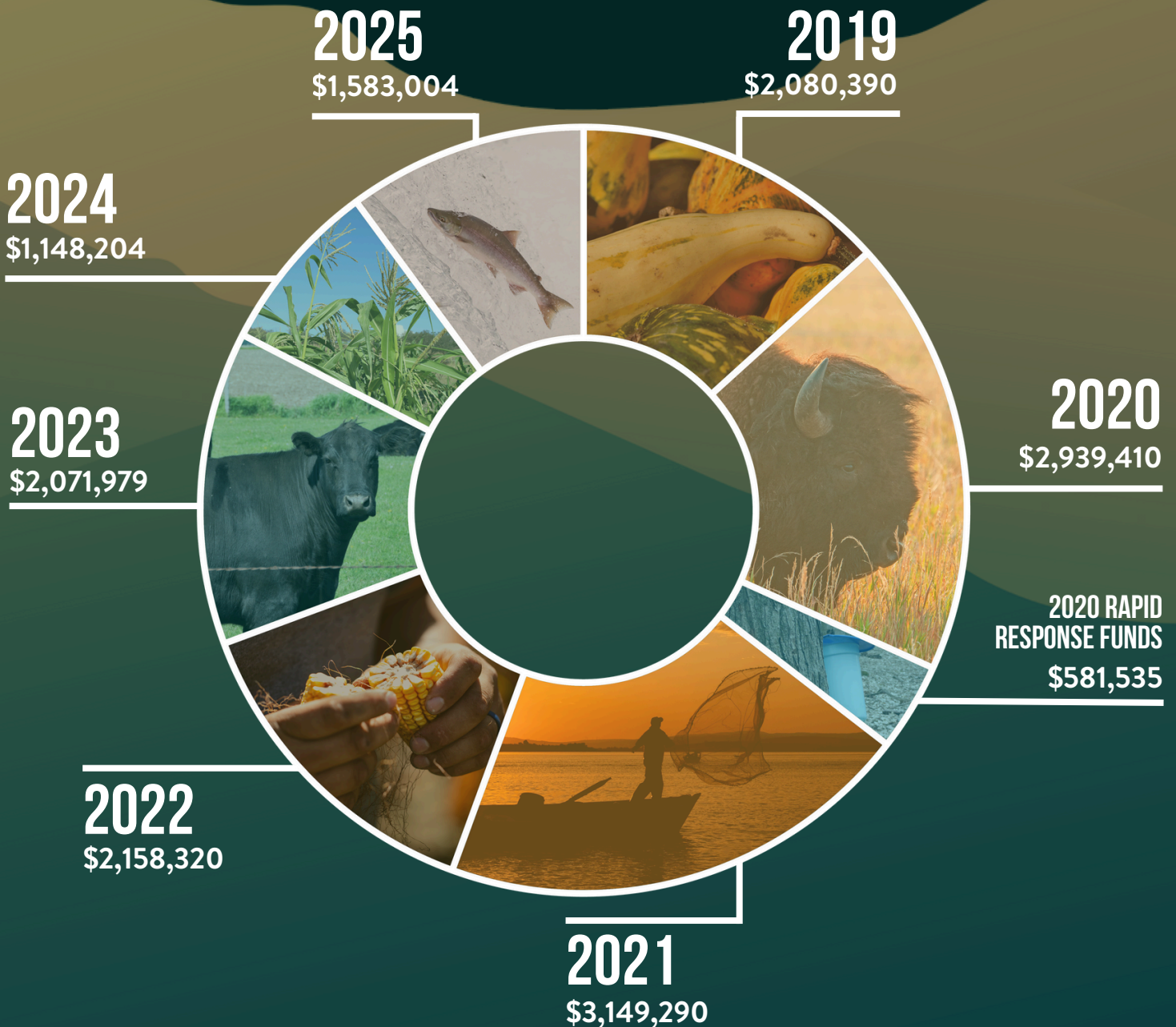




MORE THAN
\$15.7 MILLION
FUNDED TO TRIBES FROM 2019-2025

Through investments in Tribal governments and instrumentalities, the Native American Agriculture Fund (NAAF) supports the growth of food and agriculture systems that create economic opportunity and increase access to capital for farmers, ranchers, fishers, and harvesters.



TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS ARE LEADERS IN BUILDING STRONG, RESILIENT FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SYSTEMS

Through policy, programs, and direct investment, Tribes shape agricultural economies that reflect local needs and values. They are uniquely positioned to advance place-based solutions that strengthen producers and entire communities. Tribal agriculture programs fill critical gaps in access to capital, infrastructure, technical assistance, workforce development, and market opportunities, creating pathways for farmers, ranchers, fishers, and harvesters to grow and thrive.

Between 2019 and 2025, NAAF invested nearly \$16 million to 76 Tribes and instrumentalities, which directly impacted 27,044 individuals, including 20,252 producers and 6,792 students and youth.

WHY INVESTING IN TRIBAL AGRICULTURE MATTERS

Build and sustain food and agriculture systems

Tribal governments invest across the full food system, from production and infrastructure to processing, distribution, and markets. These systems keep food, capital, and economic benefits within Tribal communities while creating stable, resilient local economies.

Expand access to capital and producer readiness

Through Tribal programs, producers gain access to technical assistance, business development support, and financing pathways tailored to their realities. These investments reduce risk, improve financial readiness, and help producers successfully access and leverage capital.

Support long-term rural resilience and growth

Sustained investment allows Tribes to expand programs, modernize infrastructure, and respond to changing conditions.



27,044

INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED

Tribes and instrumentalities directly impacted 6,792 students and youth as well as 20,252 ranchers, farmers, harvesters, and fishers with support from NAAF.

8,313

Farmers

3,780

Ranchers

7,149

Harvesters

2,782

Students

4,010

Youth

1,010

Fishers



IMPACT IN ACTION



2019

KEWEENAW BAY INDIAN COMMUNITY

BARAGA, MICHIGAN

With support from NAAF, the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community (KBIC) expanded its food sovereignty efforts and increased community access to locally-sourced fish, fruits, and vegetables.

KBIC built a fish processing facility and upgraded a teaching facility to meet food safety standards, enabling commercial and subsistence fishers to process and share fish with the community. To support traditional values, the processing waste flows into a collection system and is composted to enrich soil. The Tribe's community garden high tunnels were also expanded to increase vegetable production, providing additional plots and growing space for community members and youth programs. The Teaching Facility hosts food processing, preservation, and educational activities year-round, including workshops on canning, freezing, medicinal plants, and value-added products. Participants gain hands-on experience in traditional subsistence skills while learning modern food safety and processing practices.

Community events brought together members and youth to grow, care for, and harvest crops. Participants also learned sustainable gardening practices, including composting and companion planting, while gaining hands-on experience in traditional food systems. Additional programming supports food distribution through community events, senior lunches, and local sharing initiatives, strengthening access to healthy, locally grown foods.

By combining modern facilities, expanded gardens, and educational programming, KBIC encourages future generations to maintain traditional subsistence pathways while strengthening local food sovereignty. Youth and community members develop skills in gardening, harvesting, food preservation, and sustainable resource management, helping build a resilient and self-sufficient Tribal food system.

**COMBINING TRADITIONAL PRACTICES WITH
MODERN RESOURCES, KBIC FOSTERS FOOD
SECURITY, SAFE PROCESSING, AND SUSTAINABLE
ACCESS TO LOCAL FOODS FOR THE COMMUNITY.**



2020

EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS

CHEROKEE, NORTH CAROLINA

In 2020, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) used NAAF funding to modernize and expand the Tribe's longstanding cannery, creating new opportunities for food preservation, processing, and value-added production.

The upgraded cannery serves both members and the broader community, providing training and support for those using the facility to process their own produce and goods. Cooperative Extension and cannery staff developed new instruction materials and led hands-on sessions, helping community members fully utilize the new equipment.

These improvements have not only increased the efficiency of food preservation but also enabled the development of value-added products that strengthen local and regional market opportunities.

By expanding processing capacity, the cannery helps farmers and producers capture more of the food dollar, keeping revenue circulating within the community and regional economy. Freeze-drying and other specialty processing have been particularly popular, allowing users to preserve produce, spices, and seasonings for long-term use.

The upgrades better position the EBCI Cannery to support agriculture, enhance food access, and foster entrepreneurial opportunities for farmers and community members. By combining modern technology with traditional food preservation practices, the project strengthens the Tribe's ability to process, market, and add value to locally grown foods, creating lasting benefits for the community and the regional food system.

VALUE-ADDED INVESTMENTS HELP TRIBAL PRODUCERS AND THE COMMUNITY PRESERVE, PROCESS, AND MARKET LOCAL FOODS, STRENGTHENING LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY SUPPORTING RURAL ECONOMIC SUCCESS.



2021

RED LAKE BAND OF CHIPPEWA INDIANS

RED LAKE, MINNESOTA

In 2021, the Red Lake Nation engaged youth in hands-on agricultural and food systems education. Participants learned to grow and harvest produce, practice wildcrafting, and explore Native foods and medicines in their own backyard. Youth developed skills in preparing and selling produce at the Red Lake Trading Post and farmers markets, gaining practical experience in negotiation, business planning, and financial literacy.

Throughout the project, participants joined farm- and land-based activities, including planting, harvesting, and caring for crops, as well as gathering and preparing medicinal and culinary plants. They learned to make products such as lip balm, salves, and face serums from local plants, connecting traditional knowledge to modern food and wellness practices. Seasonal wildcrafting activities also helped participants understand the diversity of foods and medicines available on the reservation and fostered a deeper connection to the land.

A key innovation of the project was the integration of agricultural technology. Emerging leaders were introduced to drone operation in the field, learning how technology can support modern agriculture through tasks such as monitoring crop health and managing livestock. By combining STEM skills with hands-on agricultural experience, the project provided an engaging pathway for participants to explore future careers in agriculture and land stewardship.

Additionally, NAAF funding and support facilitated the creation of the Red Lake Nation's Department of Agriculture, which played a key role in facilitating the program, empowering participants with the skills and knowledge to preserve agricultural traditions and expand economic opportunity.



THE RED LAKE NATION AND ITS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION OF NATIVE AGRICULTURAL LEADERS BY BLENDING HANDS-ON FARMING, TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE, AND MODERN TECHNOLOGY.



2022

CHIPPEWA CREE TRIBE

BOX ELDER, MONTANA

In 2022, the Chippewa Cree Tribe (CCT) used NAAF support to provide hands-on technical assistance to producers, helping them implement and maintain key conservation practices. Producers learned to install and manage springs, pipelines, tanks, and fencing, gaining the skills to complete these projects independently, reduce costs, and maintain infrastructure for sustainable grazing operations. These practices also support improved herd management, feed efficiency, and overall farm productivity.

The project reduced limitations to participate in USDA programs and conservation initiatives, including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). The Tribe successfully negotiated Alternative Funding Arrangements (AFAs) with Montana Natural Resources Conservation Service for both the Chippewa Cree Tribe and the Fort Belknap Indian Community, opening doors for producers to access federal programs and setting a precedent for other Tribes nationwide.

By combining hands-on technical training with program access and policy engagement, the project helped producers build long-term financial and operational resilience. Tribal-specific conservation specifications developed through the project now benefit producers within the state of Montana, while participants gained the knowledge and confidence to continue implementing conservation practices independently.

Through these efforts, the Chippewa Cree Tribe has strengthened grazing and land stewardship, increased access to federal programs, and built a foundation for lasting agricultural sustainability.

The project demonstrates how Tribes can leverage technical expertise, program partnerships, and Tribal knowledge to advance both economic opportunity and environmental stewardship.

**THROUGH CONSERVATION, TECHNICAL SKILLS, AND
ACCESS TO FEDERAL PROGRAMS, THE CHIPPEWA CREE
TRIBE IS FOSTERING LONG-TERM AGRICULTURAL
SUCCESS AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE.**



2023

COUSHATTA TRIBE OF LOUISIANA

ELTON, LOUISIANA

With support from NAAF in 2023, the Coshatta Tribe of Louisiana launched a Rice–Crawfish Pilot Project designed to rebuild agricultural capacity and reclaim Tribal lands for Native-led production. The 200-acre pilot established a rotational system cultivating hybrid, high-value rice alongside crawfish aquaculture, creating a foundation for a viable, tribally operated agricultural enterprise and advancing the Tribe’s long-term goals for food sovereignty and economic sustainability.

NAAF funding played a critical role in restructuring the Tribe’s Agriculture Department, which previously focused on small-scale cattle and crawfish operations. With NAAF support, the Tribe hired a Coshatta Tribal member as Director of Agriculture Operations, developed a multi-year rice and crawfish rotation plan, and began easing out non-Native leases. Within the first year, the department cultivated feeder crops for 200 acres of crawfish and planted, harvested, and sold the Tribe’s first-ever rice crop across an additional 200 acres.

Despite historic drought conditions that made the 2023–2024 Louisiana crawfish season one of the most challenging on record, the Tribe improved crawfish quality and generated revenue through market sales and newly accessed federal programs, including USDA’s Local Food Purchase Assistance and drought loss coverage. The project also established critical market relationships with a crawfish dock and a bulk grain terminal, strengthening the Tribe’s ability to compete amid increasing consolidation in Louisiana’s rice industry. Through a new land reclamation plan, the Tribe is steadily transitioning agricultural lands back into Tribally-led production, strengthening long-term control over its food and farming systems. These efforts position the Coshatta Tribe for continued growth and resilience beyond the initial NAAF investment.

BY CENTERING LAND STEWARDSHIP, TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE, AND LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY, TRIBES LIKE THE COUSHATTA TRIBE ARE RESHAPING FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SYSTEMS TO MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS TODAY AND FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.



2024

SPOKANE TRIBE OF INDIANS

WELLPINIT, WASHINGTON

The Spokane Tribe of Indians has long prioritized sustainability and the protection of food sovereignty, security, and safety for its citizens. Agriculture remains a vital part of the Tribe's economy, culture, and connection to the land. Through strategic investments in agricultural management and irrigation, the Tribe is working to strengthen its local food system and support producers for continued success, growth, and stewardship.

With NAAF support, the Spokane Tribe launched the Spokane Tribe Agricultural Management Program and Irrigation Update project. This 24-month initiative supports farmers, ranchers, and community producers by improving agricultural management services, irrigation infrastructure, and access to financial assistance programs. The project directly addresses administrative and economic barriers that can limit producer success, including record-keeping, applying for grants and loans, and managing sales and business operations.

A key component of the project is the creation of an Agricultural Management Program (ARMP) and the hiring of staff to provide hands-on support to producers on the reservation. By offering direct, locally grounded assistance, the Tribe is creating a more accessible pathway for producers to succeed.

The project also focuses on long-term infrastructure improvements, including the rehabilitation of irrigation systems at the Little Falls Farm on the Spokane Indian Reservation. The farm has not been actively cultivated for more than a decade, and restoring its irrigation system is essential to bringing irrigated acres back into production. NAAF's investment will have lasting impacts beyond the 24-month project period, positioning the Spokane Tribe to leverage additional funding, expand technical assistance, and strengthen Tribal agriculture for generations to come.

INVESTING IN AGRICULTURE ALLOWS TRIBES LIKE THE SPOKANE TRIBE OF INDIANS TO STRENGTHEN SOVEREIGNTY, ADVANCE FOOD SECURITY, AND BUILD LONG-TERM COMMUNITY WELLBEING.



More than **\$15.7 million** in NAAF funding has enabled Tribal Nations and instrumentalities to reach tens of thousands of producers, students, and youth who grow, raise, harvest, and steward lands across Indian Country. These dollars translate into tangible outcomes, including stronger local economies, increased capital readiness, and more resilient Tribal food systems.

Learn more about NAAF's impact and investments at nativeamericanagriculturefund.org

