



Community Farm Program

Native Health Matters



Many rural Native American communities lack healthy, nutritious, and affordable food options. Americans in rural communities face increased rates of suicide, diabetes, and other chronic diseases, as well as unemployment, low high school graduation and dropout rates resulting in increased poverty levels.

The primary mission of this Program is to transform the health of rural communities by bringing access to more nutritious food, agriculture education, food security and food independence. This helps increase local economic development and career opportunities while providing social capital, community well-being, civic engagement, and a brighter future in rural communities.



What is a community farm?

A community farm is an agricultural operation that serves the needs and desires of the community. (It's different from a community garden, where individuals can rent small plots of land for their personal use.) Besides growing food, a community farm has other missions such as educational programs, providing food for hunger relief, demonstrating sustainable land use, preserving historic structures and local traditions, and maintaining open space. A community farm is typically run by non-profit organization like Native Health Matters, so the business has oversight by a board of directors who are community members.

Why more small farms?

Adding to the number of small farms will help our region meet pressing changes in climate, population, and food needs. Small farms build popular enthusiasm for fresh and locally grown food, increasing demand and market share for all local farms. They pioneer sustainable farming methods, and are accountable to the communities they serve. Importantly, small farms help create thriving communities of people connected to the place they live.

Why a community farm?

By connecting as many people as possible to the land, community farms create a unique nexus for education, a seedbed of inspiration for land stewardship ideas, and a place for volunteers to involve themselves in the beautiful work of agriculture. Native Health Matters gives people an opportunity to care directly for the place they live and the food they eat.

Who benefits from a community farm?

- Children learn about nutrition, ecology, and farming;
- Students carry out community service projects;
- Adults benefit from programs and workshops of all kinds;
- Youth and adults have access to meaningful work and volunteer opportunities;
- Gardeners, beekeepers, and the like have opportunities to meet and network;
- Food-insecure residents receive fresh local produce provided free or at discount;
- Residents benefit from the positive attention from other communities.
- Future generations see our agricultural heritage and open space preserved.

The program consists of an education curriculum in food safety and cultivation practices for all ages while providing hands on training and experience. Many children and adults alike do not understand how the modern industrial food complex works, this program provides an avenue for them to learn the importance of local food production while teaching the community how their food is produced.



The program will focus on both an indoor and outdoor agriculture curriculum and will offer significant benefits to the communities by providing access to year-round education and training in the cultivation of nutritious, pesticide-free, fresh produce.

The Types of gardens the program will focus on are as follows

- ▶ Non-GMO fresh vegetables locally grown and served for better nutrition.
- ▶ Cultural and traditional Native American plants for heritage and cultural ceremonies.
- ▶ Phyto-remediation plants for bio-accumulating hazardous chemicals in soils that effect local community wellness.





The Program also has organized a local Farmer's Association to give local farmers access to:

- University research and education
- Food safety training
- Genetics and nutrition diversity
- The ability to connect with agricultural experts

The Farmer's Association will also provide other group benefits such as:

- Commercial Crop Insurance
- Commercial Health Insurance



A Rural Community Farm program

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