NATIVE AMERICAN FOOD SOVEREIGNTY ALLIANCE -NAFSA-



Reclaiming Abundance

2025 IMPACT REPORT

Restoring, Supporting, & Developing Indigenous Food Systems.

Cover Photo Credits: Native Roots Farm Foundation and Mereya Blanco



Photo Credit: Mereya Blanco

About NAFSA

The Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance (NAFSA) is a national network of Indigenous leaders dedicated to restoring food systems that support tribal self-determination and community wellness. NAFSA brings together proven strategies with innovative thinking as we support and promote Native Food Sovereignty initiatives that renew natural resources and enhance traditional cultural life ways to mentor a new generation of Native food sovereignty activists, chefs, farmers, seed keepers and land stewards.

Our Vision

We envision a future where Indigenous peoples exercise their inherent right to self-determination, fully controlling their traditional foodways. Rooted in our ancestral knowledge, we strive to ensure the persistence of food security, cultural continuity, and environmental sustainability.

Our Mission

We believe in empowering communities as they foster traditional, Indigenous food practices to ensure sustained wellbeing for our future generations.

Relatives,

This impact report comes at a time of unraveling. Across this land, hard-won protections are being dismantled, violence against Indigenous, Black, and Brown, and communities is escalating, and the Earth and Indigenous sovereignty are treated as expendable. Yet the story held in these pages is not one of defeat, but of endurance, imagination, and movement.

In 2025, NAFSA continued to move resources directly into Indigenous hands, supporting growers, seedkeepers, and community-led food initiatives across 20 states. Together, we redistributed $246,000 to Indigenous-led organizations, individual growers, and cultural food practitioners, while strengthening the governance and financial systems that allow this work to be carried with integrity over the long term. With fewer resources than the moment demands, our relatives have done extraordinary, deeply grounded work.

What this report documents is a living ecosystem. It holds buffalo-based meals shared with elders, youth stepping into leadership on the land, ancestral seeds protected for future generations, and knowledge carried in ceremony, story, and daily practice. It shows that Indigenous food sovereignty is a network of relationships and responsibilities that refuse erasure.





NAFSA is helping to co-create a mycelial web of interdependent, values-aligned partners in the face of a broader climate of fear, scarcity, and policy-level harm: organizations, collectives, communities, farmers, producers, growers, and seedkeepers who share a commitment to Indigenous self-determination and land-based healing. Beneath the surface, these connections move like mycelium, deftly carrying nourishment, strategy, and solidarity from place to place.

While the current need for Indigenous food producers and communities trying to reclaim food sovereignty still outpaces the resources, many of the relatives doing this sacred labor remain food insecure in their own homes, and the scale of investment required for land, water, and infrastructure is immense. Our aim with every move we make is to nourish- we cannot build a just food future on the burnout of the very people feeding our communities.

Let this report be both celebration and call. Celebrate what Indigenous communities, with NAFSA as a trusted conduit, have already built, despite dispossession, underfunding, and ongoing violence. And answer the call to stand with us: to invest more deeply in NAFSA's work, in our partners, and in a future where Indigenous foodways flourish, our communities are safe and nourished, and sovereignty is a daily practice.

With gratitude and determination,

Stephanie Morningstar
Mohawk (Six Nations)
Interim Executive Director
Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance

Our Theory of Change

SOVEREIGNTY IN ACTION

We create change by connecting relatives to one another, sharing technical and cultural knowledge, and standing alongside partners who are rebuilding food systems on Indigenous terms. Our work is rooted in three sources of strength: ancestral knowledge, community initiative, and the resources we move into Indigenous hands.

Rooted Knowledge

NAFSA's work begins with:

- Ancestral Knowledge
- Community Initiative
- Mobilized Resources

Shared Practice

NAFSA creates change through:

- Providing Resources
- Facilitating Community Connections
- Offering Training
- Fostering Organizational Partnership

Community Strength

This work supports:

- Equitable Resource Distribution
- Improved Access to Traditional Foods
- Community Empowerment

Future Generations

NAFSA is working toward:

- Regenerative Economics
- Policy Influence
- Food Sovereignty



Photo Credit: Flowering Tree Permaculture Institute

NAFSA by the Numbers

$246K
total resources redistributed to Indigenous communities.

20+
states reached across 5 regions.

40
total recipients of grants and stipends.

Direct Community Investment

- **$176,000** Awarded to 10 Indigenous-led community organizations.
- **$70,000** Awarded to 30 Indigenous individuals, including growers and seed keepers.
- **100%** Success rate in funding projects that center locally sourced, culturally significant ingredients.

Untapped Opportunity

- **70%** of Indigenous food organizations surveyed have never received funding from NAFSA, representing a massive pipeline for future growth.
- **44%** of Indigenous growers surveyed are seeking connection and community but have not yet found it.

Network & Knowledge Infrastructure

- **50%** Increase in members in the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network (ISKN) national listserv.
- **180** Indigenous participants across two major in-person gatherings.
- **162** Participants reached through the "Gathered to Grow" learning series.
- **14+** Regional coordination calls held in the Upper Midwest and Southwest regions.

Organizational Stewardship

100%
Implementation of core financial and HR systems (Bill.com, ADP, etc.)

30
Indigenous leaders seated on the Food & Health Committee.

13
Leadership Council Members

Data from the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network

Food as Medicine in Oglala Lakota

2025 HEALING MEALS GRANTEE

In Hot Springs, South Dakota, a Healing Meals grant enabled **Oyate Wóokiye** to include intergenerational participation and wíčozani (holistic wellness) into its meal distribution program. Led by Jeanne Eagle Bull, the microgrant supported a vision creating a community sustained program that restores ancestral practices. Her work centers youth, elders, and veterans through shared meals. By establishing a reliable home for these meals, Oyate Wóokiye continues to uphold three core practices:



Intergenerational Knowledge

Elders shared traditional food and wellness protocols, ensuring ancestral wisdom is passed down at every meal.

Youth Leadership

Young people trained in food preparation and community service, taking active roles in caring for elders and veterans.

Cultural Continuity

Traditional foods, like buffalo, anchored community gatherings to create space for spiritual and historical reconnection.



> *Without this grant, we would not have been able to offer this nourishment, this healing space, and this reconnection to our food traditions.*
>
> – Jeanne Eagle Bull

Our Strategy

BUILDING THE ECOSYSTEM

Indigenous food sovereignty shows up as many efforts that together form a living ecosystem of relationships, responsibilities, and land-based practice. Our communities need stronger pathways for resources, connection, knowledge sharing, and dependable support. In 2025, NAFSA focused on four strategic areas to support long-term sustainability.

Resource Redistribution

We moved funding and decision-making power directly into Indigenous hands.





Networks & Leadership

We connected local leaders to support resource sharing and collective action.

Knowledge & Culture

We provided resources and space to ensure ancestral food traditions remain a daily community practice.



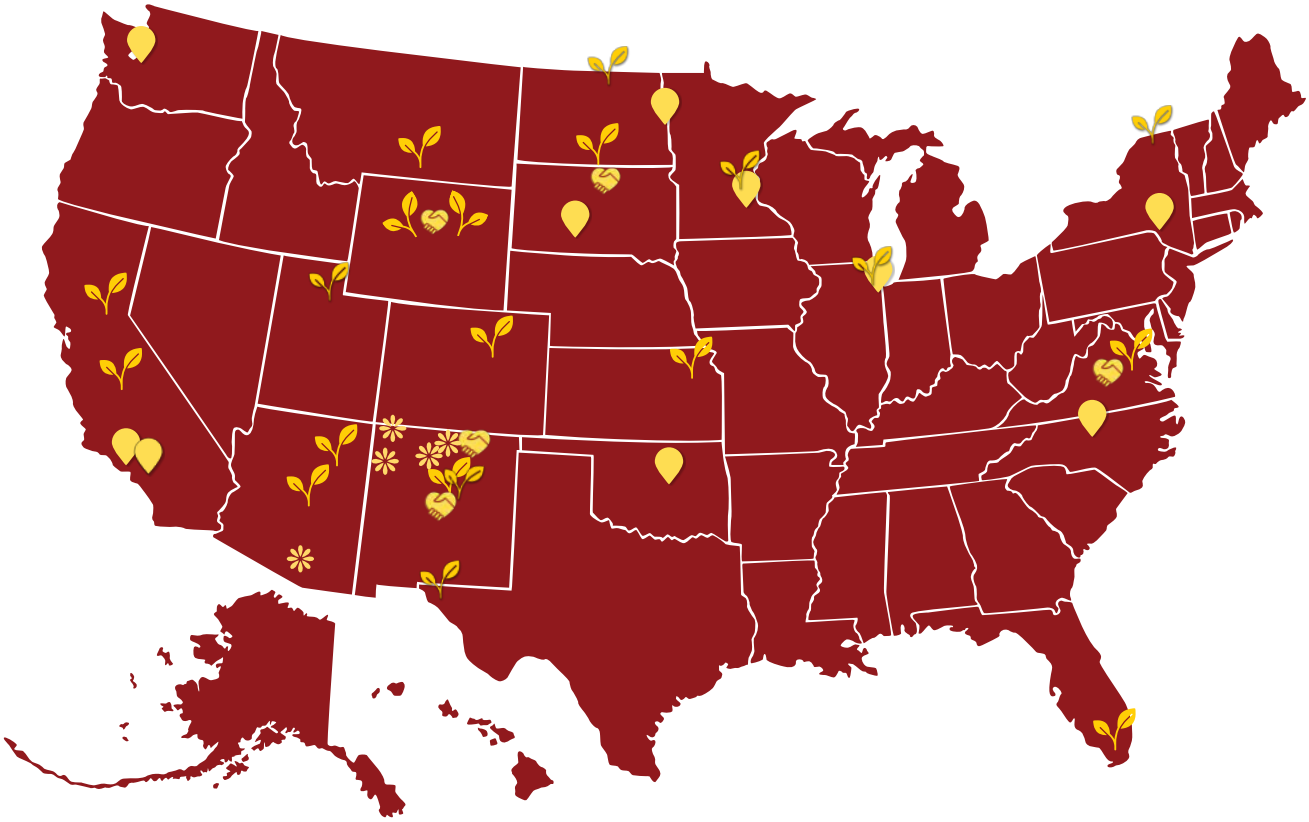


Organizational Stewardship

We are building organizational structure and systems to ensure we are protecting and managing resources with integrity.

Resource Redistribution

In 2025, NAFSA supported Indigenous food work in more states and communities across the country than ever before. Across 20 states, we moved capital directly into Indigenous hands, trusting communities and Indigenous-led organizations to define food sovereignty on their own terms.



Total Redistributed in 2025: $246,000 across 20 states

Macrogrant Capacity	$150,000	5 Organizations in Year 2
Rooted & Rising Growers	$40,000	20 Individual Seed Keepers & Growers
Healing Meals	$30,000	10 Cultural Food Practitioners
Event Sponsorships	$26,000	5 Community-Led Organizations

WHY FLEXIBLE FUNDING MATTERS

Many of our relatives do this work without compensation or reliable funding sources. By investing in the work they are already carrying forward, we can help communities remain in ancestral practices over generations.

$70K

to Individuals

who continue the work of seed sovereignty, traditional food growing, and knowledge sharing.

$176K

to Organizations

who create spaces for community to access traditional foods, share knowledge, and continue ancestral practices.



Photo Credits: (L-R Clockwise) Xavier Colon, Ben Initiative, and Mereya Blanco

A Journey of Reciprocity

2025 GROWER STIPEND RECIPIENT

For Mark Rainbow Walker, food sovereignty is a daily practice of kinship. Based on the Pamunkey reservation in Virginia, Mark's work serves as a powerful example of how Indigenous growers are transforming local food systems when given the space and resources to grow. Before 2025, Mark focused on a small-scale home garden and personal seed saving. Through the Grower Stipend, he was able to expand his garden and contribute to the local food economy.





Expanding the Footprint

Mark established an entirely new garden plot directly on the Pamunkey reservation, moving beyond his backyard to tribal land.

Scaling Seed Stewardship

He transitioned from casual saving to preserving ancestral seeds at a scale that ensures long-term security for the Pamunkey people.

Feeding the People

His growth directly fuels the tribal food distribution program, where his harvests now provide weekly fresh, locally grown food to his community.

> *"Without this funding, I wouldn't have been able to scale up or contribute food to the tribal distribution program."*
>
> – Mark Rainbow Walker

Photo Credits: Mark Rainbow Walker





Grantee Photos

Clockwise, Starting at the Top Right: Native Roots Farm Foundation's Rooted in Resilience event, Casita del Barrio's Healing Meal event (2 photos), and MIGIZI's youth Healing Meal event.





Photo Credits: Mark Rainbow Walker

About ISKN

The Indigenous Seed Keepers Network is shaped by the people who show up, share what they know, and continue this work in their own communities. To the seed keepers, growers, knowledge holders, partners, and relatives who have gathered with us, joined conversations, shared resources, and stayed connected across the network: thank you.

Your participation is what gives ISKN its strength. Every connection made, story exchanged, seed cared for, and relationship built contributes to a larger movement grounded in seed sovereignty and the continuation of Indigenous seed traditions across Turtle Island. We are grateful to be in this work together.

Mission

The mission of the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network (ISKN) is to nourish and assist the growing Seed Sovereignty Movement across Turtle Island (North America). As a national network, we leverage resources and cultivate solidarity and communication within the matrix of regional grass-roots tribal seed sovereignty projects.



Networks & Leadership

ISKN NETWORK

50% Member Increase

Our national listserv is made up of farmers, youth, and knowledge holders across the country. Through virtual meetings and in-person gathering, they share seeds and resources.

Regional Coordination

We hosted 14+ virtual talking circles, and two regional in-person gatherings (one in the Upper Midwest and one in the Southwest region). These were active working spaces where growers collectively problem-solved.

Indigenous-Only Spaces

Our Southwest ISKN Gathering in Arizona provided a rare, resourced space for ceremony and seed storytelling for up to 150 participants. Additionally, two Upper Midwest calls were open only to Indigenous growers.







Photo Credits: (L-R Clockwise) Trena Bizardi, and Mereya Blanco

COLLABORATIONS

Indigenous food sovereignty shows up as many efforts that together form a living ecosystem of relationships, responsibilities, and land-based practice.

The Intertribal Plant and Seed Working Group

The Inter-Tribal Native Plant & Seed Working Group is a collaborative network led collectively by representatives from various tribal nations and Indigenous peoples, with development support from the National Wildlife Federation and the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals.

Food and Health Advisory Committee

In 2025, NAFSA's Food & Health Committee, a subcommitte of our Leadership Council, welcomed 25 thought-leaders as Advisory Members. A mix of chefs, educators, business owners, organization leaders, and knowledge holders, members shared their expertise and experiences, bringing community perspectives to the heart of the committee's work and NAFSA's greater program initiavies.

Alliance Building

We engaged 12+ organizations through our grant offerings and collaborative efforts, including Tewa Women United, the Intertribal Agriculture Council, and Ancestral Lands, creating new pathways for funding and land-based training.

160+
ISKN members connected through our national listserv.

14+
Regional coordination calls & talking circles for ISKN members

180
(Max) Indigenous participants across two in-person gatherings

25
Indigenous Food Sovereignty leaders and practitioners with deep cultural and culinary expertise serving on NAFSA's Food & Health Committee as Advisory Members.

NAFSA prioritized hosting community gatherings that would connect practices, experiences, and relatives. We know lasting change happens when communities work together.





Grantee Photos

Clockwise, Starting at the Top Right: Tiwa Women's Circle member at a blue corn crop, Healing Meals recipient Rematriation, and Ben Initiative's Farmers in REZidence program



Knowledge & Culture

NAFSA invested time and resources into developing and sharing educational resources. We centered Indigenous growers, seed keepers, chefs, and cultural leaders as the primary experts and teachers. One of our goals was to create opportunities for others to learn and uplift each other's work.

Learning Archives

Indigenous knowledge lives in people and land-based practice. We documented practices that community members chose to share, teach, and carry forward:

- Published the **ISKN Seed Saving Workbook** by Aaron Lowden and the **ISKN Lunar Planting Workbook** by Rowen White on the NAFSA website. These resources offer practical guidance shaped by Indigenous teachings, planting practices, and relationship to land.
- Launched a dedicated **Webinars and Learning** webpage to house technical and cultural resources.
- Published hidden and archived **YouTube videos**.

Gathered to Grow Webinar Series

Our ISKN team organized this webinar series to make Indigenous-led teachings and knowledge more accessible across communities and regions.

- **5** sessions reached **≈ 162** participants across multiple regions.
- Participants included first-time and experienced growers, community organizers, & cultural knowledge keepers.
- Attendees learned practical skills related to funding, growing food, seed stewardship, and community-based farming practices.
- Topics ranged from Financial Literacy, REZonomics to Traditional Southwest Birthing Practices.



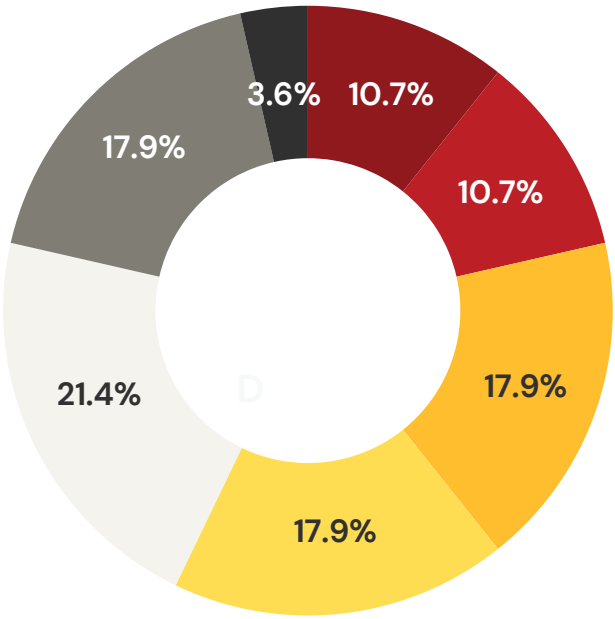
Featured Webinar Hosts: (L to R) Padgley Patch, Dominique Nault, Joey Tallier, Abby Buraglio, Joe Rocchi, Zachariah Ben, Chasity Salvador, and Mary Oxendine

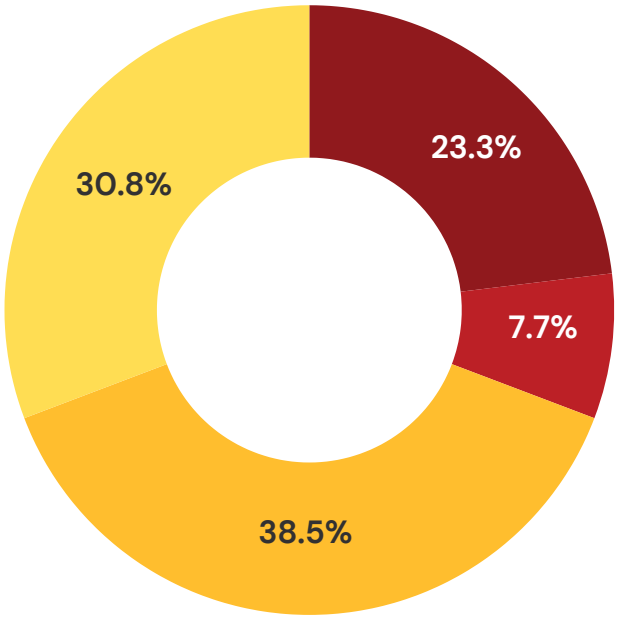
Webinars by the Numbers

Percentages and takeaways are based on a formal data set of 28 respondents from the total attendee pool.

Which best describes your relationship to food/seed work?

- First Time Grower: 10.7%
- Experienced Grower: 10.7%
- Community Organizer: 17.9%
- Cultural Knowledge Keeper: 17.9%
- Educator or Youth Worker: 21.4%
- Technical or Program Support: 17.9%
- Other: 3.6%





How did you hear about this webinar?

- NAFSA Newsletter: 23.3%
- Partner Organization: 7.7%
- Social Media: 38.5%
- Word of Mouth: 30.8%

100%
of respondents expressed a commitment to attend future webinars

100%
of respondents reported being satisfied with the webinar

86%
of respondents identified as Indigenous peoples*

Note: This represents the individuals who chose to share their affiliation; 14% chose to leave this field blank.
Data from the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network

Organizational Stewardship

COMMUNITY ACCOUNTABILITY

Our internal systems are being shaped to support the work ahead. Following two Leadership Council convenings in 2024, NAFSA has been working to clarify roles, develop communication, and improve processes to reflect how we want to work together and on behalf of our communties.



1

Council Stewardship

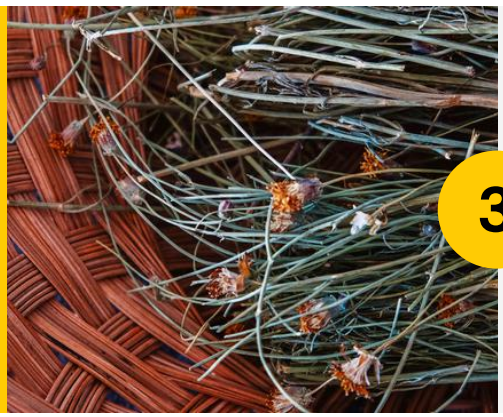
We confirmed new board members and established clear term limits to ensure steady, accountable guidance.

Governance Repair

We worked to bring leadership into closer alignment around communication, responsibility, and the direction of the work ahead.

2





3

Community Governance

Our Food & Health Committee was formed as a space to work through priorities and decisions that shape NAFSA's food and health efforts.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

NAFSA is responsible for how this work is held and carried forward. We are making changes to our practices so they reflect the same trust, care, and responsibility we ask others to place in us. This work includes:

Resource Realignment

Worked with external accountants to strengthen the accuracy, clarity, and transparency of our reporting.

4





5

Technology Integration

Implemented digital tools to track grants, automate workflows, and better follow each resource through its full lifecycle.

Financial Stewardship

Reviewed and corrected past financial records and 990s so our books better reflect the responsibility we carry.

6



Financial Snapshot

STEWARDSHIP IN PRACTICE

This past year, NAFSA moved resources in support of Indigenous food sovereignty. We did this with care, transparency, and a clear responsibility to strengthen the systems that allow our work to continue.

Moving Resources with Care

NAFSA's revenue was primarily supported by foundation and institutional grants. These resources made the work in this report possible, but much of the funding remained restricted or donor-directed. As we work toward stability, we see the need for support that strengthens core staffing, operations, and organizational systems.

Strengthening Internal Stewardship

NAFSA invested in the systems needed to hold this work responsibly. We:

- Created clearer financial processes so payroll, gifts, and organizational expenses are handled with care and consistency.
- Integrated financial tools, including Bill.com and ADP, to improve security and tracking.
- Worked with external accounting support to guide financial reviews and Form 990 preparation.

$653K

FY2026 Approved Organizational Budget

$867K

2025 Total Organizational Expenses

$910K

2025 Total Organizational Revenue



Photo Credit: Marzzz Gardenz

Our role is to move resources with care, reduce barriers where we can, and support the people already carrying food sovereignty work forward.

RELATIONAL GIVING

Indigenous food sovereignty is carried through a living ecosystem of relationships, responsibilities, and land-based practice. As we build toward sustainability, we are learning what support can look like when it is rooted in relationship.

The Good Relative Campaign

This campaign was an opportunity to frame support as reciprocity rooted in relationship, rather than as a one-way act of charity. Our relatives showed up for us, raising over $9,045.52 through merchandise and contributions.

Giving Practices

In 2025, the stability of our new leadership and staff gave us room to dream. As we explore how to invite others into shared responsibility, an important question is emerging: How do we build an “Alliance Ecosystem” rooted in trust and reciprocity, where support flows beyond simple transactions? We remain deeply inspired by the work and dedication of our communities.







Photo Credit: (Clockwise from the Top Right) Benjamin Butler, Xavier Colon , and Naya Marie Anllo-Valdo



Photo Credit: Marzzz Gardenz

Growing the Navajo Nation Future

2023-25 MACROGRANTEE

In Shiprock, New Mexico, NAFSA's Macrogrant supported BEN Iniatitive. Led with traditional Navajo farming practices, BEN Iniative is improving early childhood outcomes through perinatal care, safe and abundant environments, and ancestral nutrition. Through the Farmer-in-REZidence program, Indigenous youth farmers received access to land and equipment, and hands-on technical training.



Youth Farming Pathways

Graduate, Kiera McCabe, launched her own farm business, Skoden Farm, expanding Indigenous-led food production in the region.

Community Nourishment

Ben Initiave shared harvest and cooking practices, farm-to-school food distribution, and donated donation traditional foods to 200-300 community members.

Cultural Continuity

Several hundred pounds of seeds were saved and distributed, supporting future growing seasons and the continuity of Indigenous foodways.



> *"We are very happy with the progress of our Farmer in REZidence program.*
>
> *- Zachariah Ben*

Pathways Forward

2026–2029 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Our communities have already shown what food sovereignty can look like in practice. As NAFSA enters its next phase, we are focusing our organizational resources on five priorities that support stability, accountability, program clarity, and long-term impact.

Value-Centered Governance

NAFSA is rebuilding the internal practices that support steady leadership and shared responsibility. This includes clearer roles, stronger governance, and decision-making that can hold the organization through transition.

Sustainable Revenue Stabilization

The work ahead requires resources that are more reliable, flexible, and aligned with NAFSA's mission. This priority focuses on strengthening revenue, caring for organizational health, and reducing dependence on funding that limits our work.

Ecosystem Building

Food sovereignty is held through relationships between growers, gatherers, seed keepers, partners, donors, and communities. NAFSA is tending those relationships with more intention, accountability, and care.

Program Alignment

NAFSA is paying closer attention to how each part of the work connects back to our mission, community need, and Indigenous foodways. This means carrying existing work well before taking on more than the organization can responsibly hold.

Evaluation Development

NAFSA is building ways to learn from the work without reducing it to numbers alone. This priority centers useful reflection, shared learning, and Indigenous Data Sovereignty as part of how impact is understood.

In Gratitude

To our Good Relative Fund contributors, we are honored to recognize the individuals and organizations who have chosen to partner with us through spirit, kindness, and resource. May your generosity return to you in abundance.

In-Kind Sponsors

Green Mountain Center for Sustainability at Prescott College
Slow Food Prescott

Seed Sponsor

Feather & Stone Consulting Advisors LLC

Individual Givers

Aliza Yair
Keja Whiteman
Margot Reisner
AA Feldstein
Abigail Fenton
Adina Karantza
Aimee Sholl
Allen Flint
Allison ODell
Amanda Porter
Angela Heis
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Elissa Fields
Erika Ayala
Ethan Reneke
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Olivia Honahnie
Orion Becker
Rachel Brylawski
Rachel Fisher
Rebecca I.
Rebecca Schpok
Robert O'Reilly
Sarah Kate Orbach
Shawn Hansen
Shayna Ingram
Sibley Barlow
Sienna Riley
Sofia Grost
Trevor Hosek
Wade Henderson

good relative

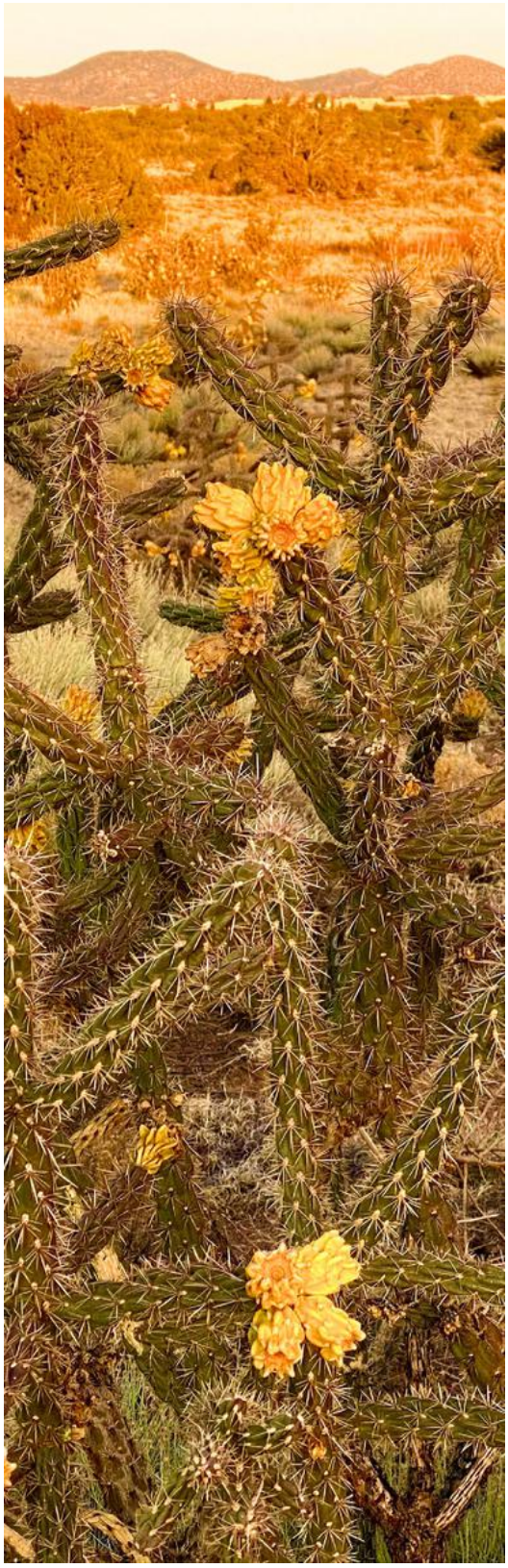
NAFSA's work is made possible by Indigenous growers, seed keepers, families, and organizers. This report reflects their work far more than it reflects ours.

We are grateful for the communities who continue the daily, often invisible work of feeding people and rebuilding Indigenous food systems.

We give thanks to the NAFSA Leadership Council and our dedicated staff. Their commitment has helped NAFSA remain rooted in its purpose through every season of this work.

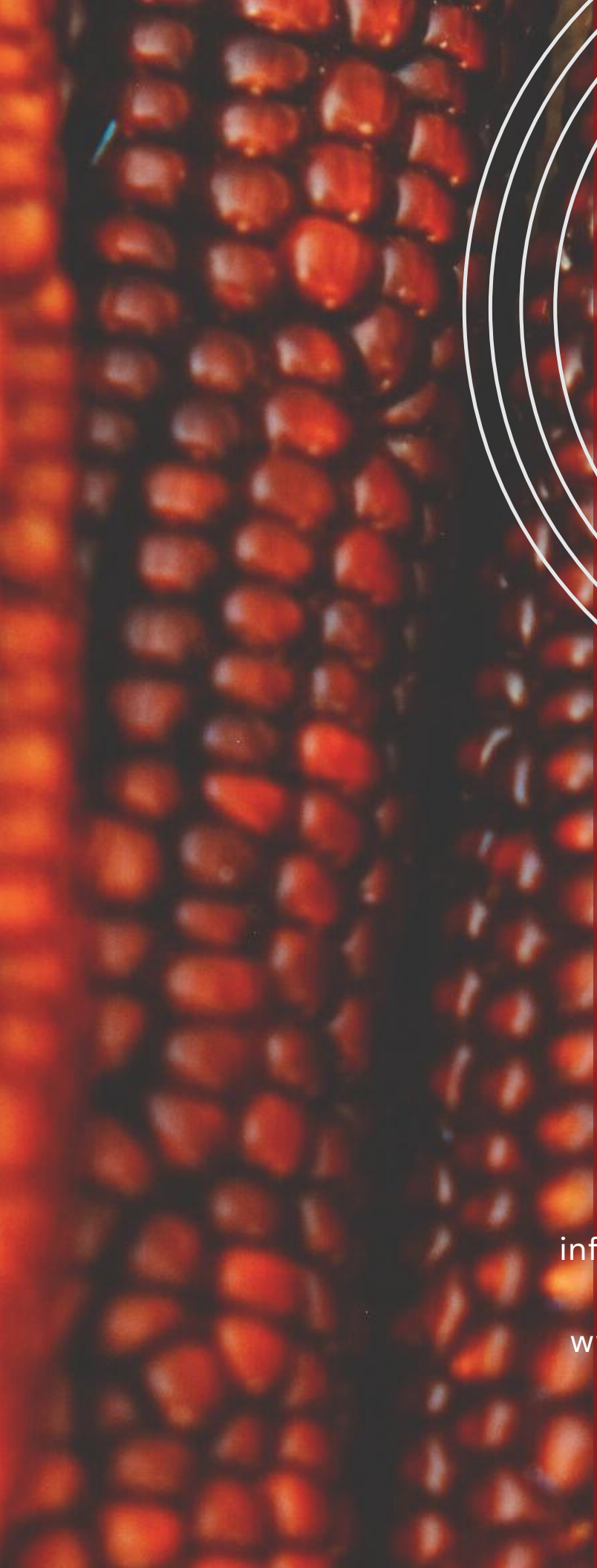
We extend our deepest thanks to our partners in philanthropy who show up as good relatives. Your generosity allows our communities to grow, reclaim ancestral practices, and to live in our purpose and truth.

We honor the ancestors and the future generations who guide this work. Indigenous food sovereignty travels across time, carried from generation to generation. We are humbled to carry this responsibility forward.



Back Cover Photo Credits: Mereya Blanco

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