

“Traditional Foods Have Become a Way to Talk About Health”

The Traditional Foods Project 2008-2014

Division of Diabetes Translation

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Dawn Satterfield, PhD MSN RN

Lemyra DeBruyn, PhD

Continuing Education Presentation March 9, 2021

Indian Health Service Division Diabetes Treatment and Prevention

March 9, 2021



Overview

- Background-- Traditional Foods Project 2008-2014
- What We Did
 - Intervention Strategies
 - Evaluation Methods: Quantitative/Qualitative
 - Findings
- What the Traditional Foods Project Meant to Us – Tribal Partners and Native Diabetes Wellness Team
- Discussion

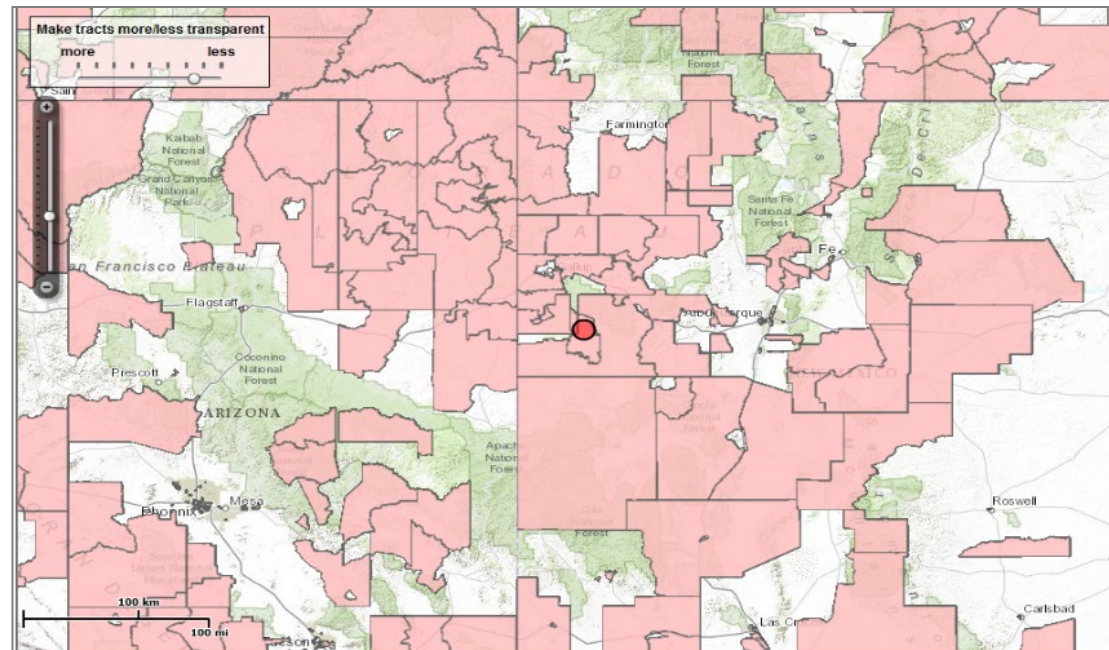
Background

- IHS Tribal Leaders Diabetes Committee/representatives (2000): *“Look to our cultures. Our cultures are the source of health.”*
- Prior projects identified traditional foods for health promotion and chronic disease prevention.
- Public health interventions are effective when communities integrate their own cultures and history into programs.



Background (con't)

- Food insecurity and food deserts
 - Rates of food insecurity among Native children are approximately 2 times national rates.
 - In 2016 nearly 30% of Native households were food insecure, compared with 16% of non-Native households.





Background (more)

- Social determinants of health
 - Recognizing historical, economic, and environmental contributions - social determinants of health - is critical to understanding the trajectory of type 2 diabetes.
 - Decades of federal mandates affected the land and water resources of tribal nations, which, in turn, profoundly disrupted indigenous food systems.

Traditional Foods in Native America

A Compendium of Stories from the Indigenous Food Sovereignty Movement in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities

<http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/ndwp/pdf/part-iv---traditional-foods-in-native-america.pdf>



“The land is our identity and holds for us all the answers we need to be a healthy, vibrant, and thriving community. In our oral traditions, our creation story, we are taught that the land that provides the foods and medicines we need are a part of who we are. Without the elk, salmon, huckleberries, shellfish and cedar trees we are nobody. ... This is our medicine; remembering who we are and the lands that we come from.”

Valerie Segrest (Muckleshoot)

Muckleshoot Traditional Foods and Medicines Program

Traditional Food Partners: 2008-2014



Traditional Foods Project (TFP) Purpose

The purpose of the TFP was to promote access to traditional foods, physical activity, and social support to address community health in Native communities, particularly type 2 diabetes prevention.



TFP Goal was to Answer Two Questions

- How do communities increase and sustain access to traditional healthy foods, physical activity, and social support to promote health and help prevent type 2 diabetes?
- How do culturally and geographically diverse communities, locally and in partnership with one another and a federal program, successfully evaluate interventions?



TFP Objectives

- Support sustainable, evaluable ecological approaches to reclaim traditional foods.
- Encourage local practices to increase access to healthy traditional foods and physical activity.
- Revive and create stories of healthy traditional ways.
- Integrate culture and history to promote community health and help prevent type 2 diabetes.



Intervention Framework

- Community-based participatory research is the foundation of the TFP.
- In community-based participatory research, culture and context are legitimate foci for interventions.
- Partnering with communities in program design, evaluation, and reporting criteria is fundamental.



Intervention Framework (con't)

- Community-based participatory research methods were shaped by tribally driven participatory research.
- The entirety of the TFP approach was framed by food sovereignty.



Food Sovereignty

The right of peoples to define their own policies and strategies for sustainable production, distribution, and consumption of food, a policy that respects their own cultures and systems of managing natural resources.



International Indian Treaty Council. An Analysis of the United States International Policy on Indigenous Peoples, the Human Right to Food and Food Sovereignty. 2002.

Intervention Approach

- Each partner had flexibility to create and implement interventions consistent with local ways, based on local definitions of traditional healthy foods, physical activity, and social support.
- Traditional foods activities could include gardening, subsistence gathering, hunting, and fishing.



Intervention Approach (con't)

- Physical activity interventions focused on organized physical activities and places to conduct physical activity programs.
- We defined social support as any time local participants gathered to support each other, regardless of focus.
- General categories such as health education, health practices and policies, and storytelling were interventions across all domains.

Evaluation Methods

- The TFP used both quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods.
- Mixed methods were critical to demonstrate which elements of each intervention worked (quantitative measures) and why and how communities became engaged across programs (qualitative measures).



Evaluation Methods (con't)

Honoring local knowledge and traditions, TFP partners catalyzed their communities such that farmers, health care providers, tribal leaders, subsistence gatherers, administrators, evaluators, and community members came together for the shared purpose of improving community health.

Evaluation Methods (more)

- Each TFP partner had a local coordinator who helped develop local community-supported programs.
- Each TFP partner had a local evaluator who gathered data in the 3 domains: traditional foods, physical activity, and social support.
- Together we developed (and revised) a Survey Monkey Shared Data Elements Tool to gather data that could be aggregated across partners.
- All domain interventions were designed to improve health, with the long-term goal of helping prevent type 2 diabetes.

Results

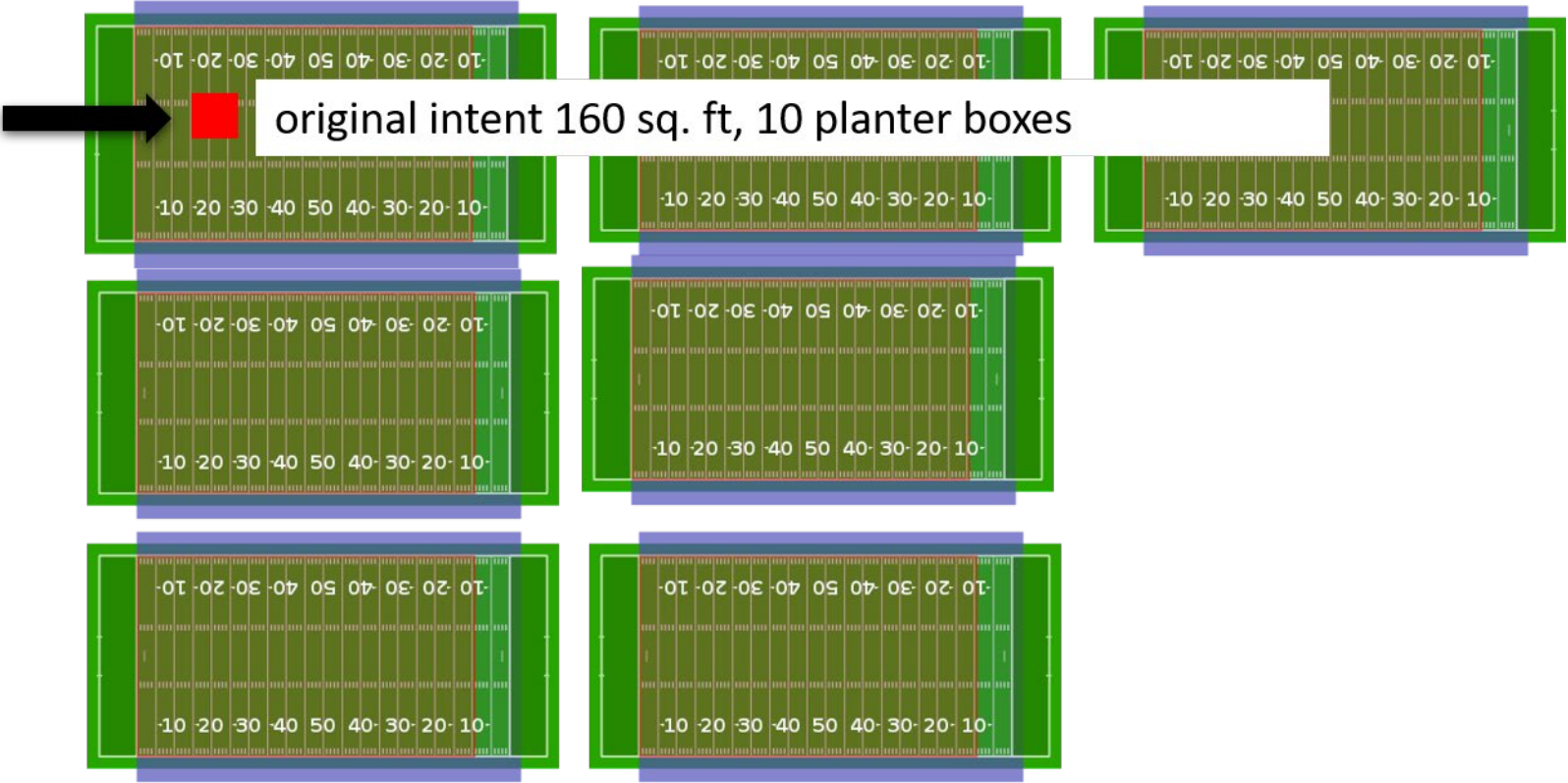
- Quantitative results indicated collaborative community engagement and sustained interventions such as gardening, availability of healthy foods across venues, new health practices, health education, and storytelling.
- Qualitative results demonstrated the importance of tribally driven programs, underscoring the significance of traditional foods in relation to land, identity, food sovereignty, and food security.

Percentage of grantee partner programs engaging in Traditional Foods Project activities by time period, Oct 2009-Sept 2014

Time period (W=winter; S=summer)	T1 (W)	T2 (S)	T3 (W)	T4 (S)	T5 (W)	T6 (S)	T7 (W)	T8 (S)	T9 (W)	T10 (S)	Median (T1-T10)
planting & gardening activities	72.7%	81.8%	82.4%	88.2%	58.8%	94.1%	70.6%	88.2%	75.0%	87.5%	82.1%
composting	0.0%	0.0%	23.5%	23.5%	35.3%	29.4%	29.4%	35.3%	37.5%	31.3%	29.4%
media outreach activities	36.4%	45.4%	64.7%	64.7%	52.9%	64.7%	64.7%	58.8%	56.3%	56.3%	57.6%
collaboration with other agencies	100.0%	90.9%	94.1%	94.1%	100.0%	94.1%	94.1%	100.0%	100%	87.5%	94.1%
organized physical activities	72.7%	72.7%	64.7%	82.4%	52.9%	64.7%	35.3%	70.6%	50.0%	50.0%	64.7%

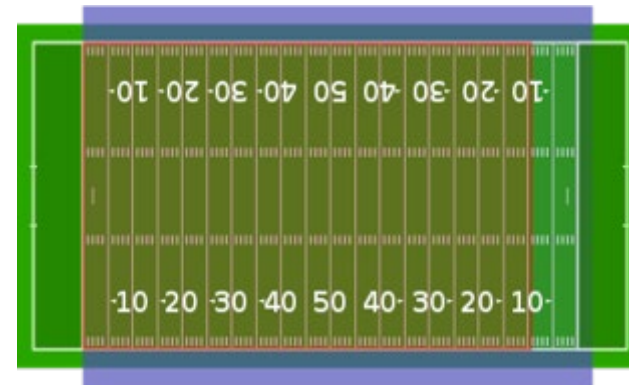
Ramah Navajo – Garden Area 2014

343, 663 sq. ft. = ~7.25 Acres = ~7 football fields
(without end zones)



Some Social Math: Number of Acres in Football Fields, TFP, Time 2 and Time 10

- T2: 206 gardens covering 11.1 acres = ~10 football fields without end zones (with end zones = 8.4 football fields)*
- T10: 415 gardens covering 28.4 acres = ~26 football fields without end zones (with end zones = 21.5 football fields)
- Imagine 26 football fields of crops!



* One acre is 90.75% of a 100 x 53.33-yard American football field, without end zones; with end zones, a football field is 1.32 acres

Numbers of Stories and Participants, by Type of Media, Reported by all Traditional Foods Project Grantee Partners, 2009-2014

Time period (W=winter; S=summer)	Narrative Stories	Narrative Stories	Digital Stories	Digital Stories	Music, plays, & art stories	Music, plays, & art stories	Total	Total
	Number of stories	Number of participants	Number of stories	Number of participants	Number of stories	Number of participants	Number of stories	Number of participants
Time 1 (W)	73	787	14	47	19	740	106	1,574
Time 2 (S)	68	1,180	30	53	100	400	198	1,633
Time 3 (W)	155	1,088	132	68,416 ^a	123	2,995	410	72,499
Time 4 (S)	193	1,495	34	109	136	1,668	363	3,272
Time 5 (W)	146	1,899	31	117	7	265	184	2,281
Time 6 (S)	82	1,319	24	141	37	498	143	1,958
Time 7 (W)	130	7,715	24	434	39	1,052	193	9,201
Time 8 (S)	101	1,717	18	94	113	771	232	2,582
Time 9 (W)	145	7,383	40	325	34	490	219	8,198
Time 10 (S)	112	10,975	55	142	108	899	275	12,016

^a includes persons impacted (social media)

Traditional Foods Project Themes and Quotes

- Traditional knowledge
 - Focusing on tradition is where connections are made. Our elders get this.
 - Traditional ecological knowledge guides the way, in balance with western science.
- Connections to health
 - We are reconnecting land and water with health.
 - Traditional foods have become a way to talk about health.
- Community engagement
 - Youth are being engaged in learning traditional knowledge and helping their people.
 - Our community sees the change this program has made — this is extraordinary for our people who are so often hopeless that they can change their situation. Not only that, but they also stood as witnesses to the successes felt in the larger community of TF partner sites.
- Knowledge sharing and gratitude
 - Food is good medicine. Traditional foodways include responsibility, giving thanks, and sharing.
 - We can talk about how spiritual our traditional foods are.

Traditional Foods Project Themes and Quotes (con't)

- Flexibility to do what works
 - In our experience with federal programs, we are doing what you want us to do most of the time. With this program, we are doing exactly what you want us to do!
 - We are recognizing tribal sovereignty.
- Health practice and policy
 - Policy seems most effective when it comes from grassroots.
 - There are impacts even beyond in substance abuse and environmental health.
- Sustainability
 - It took a long time for our people to get sick... Just imagine what we could do with another cycle! We have shared and borrowed so much from each other already. We could deepen this effort.
 - The Traditional Foods Project has made an impact on this reservation. Maybe a decade or two ago there were only a handful of gardens here. Now, we till over 50. That is equivalent to almost one-fourth of the households raising their own gardens.

Traditional Foods Project



What the TFP Meant to All of Us

- Relationships
 - They were everything.
- Community
 - We were and still are the Traditional Foods Family.
- Sanctuary
 - We could not wait to be together for the next meeting.
- Social and spiritual support
 - We held each other up.

What the TFP Meant to All of Us (con't)



“The message is that even in the 21st century with the problems we face today, traditional ways have health benefits for now and for future generations. We already have everything we need.”



Aubrey Skye
Standing Rock Native Gardens

Last Traditional Foods Program Grantee Partners Meeting
Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan
August 2014



Last Thought and Thank You

“Participation in the sacred may not be a requirement of a federal job, but it is almost always a requirement of working effectively with tribes.”*



* Quote from TFP partner

Conti KM. Diabetes prevention in Indian country: developing nutrition models to tell the story of food-system change. *J Transcult Nurs* 2006;17(3):234–45. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1043659606288380>

DeBruyn, Fullerton, Satterfield Frank. Traditional foods are a way to talk about health: Integrating community and culture to promote health and help prevent type 2 diabetes. *Prev Chron Dis*. 2020;17; 190213. https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2020/19_0213.htm

Jernigan V Blue Bird, Huyser KR, Valdes J, Simonds VW. Food insecurity among American Indians and Alaska Natives: a national profile using the Current Population Survey—Food Security Supplement. *J Hunger Environ Nutr*. 2017;12(1):1–10. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28491205/>
Satterfield D, DeBruyn L, Santos M, Alonso L, Frank M. Health promotion and diabetes prevention in American Indian and Alaska Native communities—Traditional Foods Project, 2008–2014. *CDC Morbidity Mortality Weekly Report*. 2016;65(S1):4-10. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/su/su6501a3.htm>

U.S. Dept. Agriculture (USDA). [Food Access Research Atlas](https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/), <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/>

Wesner C. Traditional Foods Stories. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/ndwp/traditional-foods/index.html> CDC Native Diabetes Wellness Program, 2014.

Part I—[Traditional Foods in Native America pdf icon](#)[PDF – 7 MB]

Part II—[Good Food is Power pdf icon](#)[PDF – 3 MB]

Part III—[Compendium of Traditional Foods Stories pdf icon](#)[PDF – 4 MB]

Part IV—[Traditional Foods in Native America pdf icon](#)[PDF – 7 MB]

Part V—[Traditional Foods in Native America pdf icon](#)[PDF – 8 MB]