

Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance Call to Action

Restoring Native food systems is an immediate and fundamental need for the continued survival and physical and spiritual wellbeing of Native peoples and our Mother Earth – now and into the future. The costs of doing nothing – and the potential benefits of action – are massive. The Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance (NAFSA) is dedicated to restoring the Indigenous food systems that support Indigenous self-determination, wellness, cultures, values, communities, economies, languages, families, and rebuild relationships with the land, water, plants and animals that sustain us. NAFSA brings people, communities (rural, remote and urban), organizations and Tribal governments together to share, promote and support best practices and policies that enhance dynamic Native food systems that promote holistic wellness, sustainable economic development, education, reestablished trade routes, stewardship of land and water resources, peer-to-peer mentoring, and multigenerational empowerment. NAFSA works to put the farmers, wildcrafters, fishers, hunters, ranchers and eaters at the center of decision-making on policies, strategies and natural resource management. We commit to take collective and individual action to address food sovereignty, and to build the necessary understanding and awareness among our Peoples, Nations, leaders and policy-makers, as well as our youth and coming generations, to make it a continuing reality.

The issue of Food Sovereignty from a tribal perspective was recently the subject of an interview with A'dae Romero (Cochiti Pueblo/ Kiowa) on the radio show, *What's for Dinner*. A'dae is currently a candidate in the LL.M. Program in Agricultural & Food Law at the University of Arkansas School of Law. She works with the Indigenous Food & Agriculture Initiative at the Law School.

She founded and serves as the Executive Director of Cochiti Youth Experience, Inc., a non-profit organization created to create opportunities for Cochiti youth to engage in traditional Pueblo farming as an important process to create a healthy, sustainable, and viable community.

<http://beforeitsnews.com/agriculture/2013/10/food-sovereignty-and-native-american-food-systems-2448802.html>

While the local food movement is well recognized in the media and popular culture, a local food/ food sovereignty movement has been gaining strength among native tribes in the U.S. without gaining much outside attention. That is changing.

Pati Martinson and Terrie Bad Hand, Directors of the Taos County Development Corp. (TCEDC) have been working toward a Native American Food Alliance since 2008. That alliance is now a reality. The first meeting was held at the recent First Nations LEAD conference at Mystic Lake Casino and Hotel, Prior Lake, Minnesota. The following Call to Action was adopted.