

MVSKOKE FOOD

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative



OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD & FORESTRY FARM TO SCHOOL COORDINATOR CHRIS KIRBY GIVES A SUMMARY OF THE MFSI "FOOD & FITNESS" SYMPOSIUM SPEAKERS AND THEIR TOPIC, SAT., FEB. 19, 2011 AT THE MCN MOUND BUILDING IN OKMULGEE, OKLA.

MFSI Symposium draws visitors from across the United States

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Monthly Events



Begins Feb. 25

Wilson Community

Dr. Ann Wells, DVM will teach a 10-week course on Sustainable Livestock Production from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m, Fridays. Lunch is pot luck. For more information, call Robyn Withrow at (918) 650-9221 or Rita Williams at (918) 759-1891.

March 22

Wilson Community

Permaculture & Raising Strawberries presentations will be given by MFSI Staff beginning at 6 p.m. For more information, call Melodie Reader at (918) 752-6113 or email mreader@mvsokofood.org

March 25-26

Hanna Farms

Hanna Farmers and Ranchers Outreach with a Food Heritage Class. E.C. Hessom will speak. For more information, call Melodie Reader at (918) 752-6113.

Begins April 14

The Pearl Farmers Market

Thursdays, 4-7 p.m., Centennial Park, 6th & Peoria, Tulsa. Live entertainment, www.pearlfarmersmarket.org

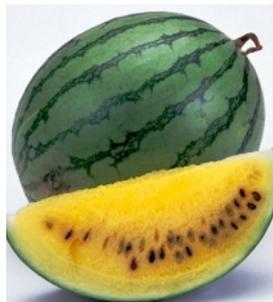
MELODIE READER, MFSI COMMUNICATIONS

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative hosted their 3rd Annual Food Sovereignty Symposium, February 18-19, 2011 at the Mound Building located on the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tribal Complex in Okmulgee, Okla.

Speakers included noted journalist and non-profit management consultant Jackleen de La Harpe, Extension Outreach Specialist and President of Kiowa Native Farms Randall Ware, Lead Coordinator for DINE, Inc. Jamescita Peshlakai, Pawnee Nation Corn Seed Restoration Project Keeper of Seeds Deb Echo Hawk, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food & Forestry Farm to School Coordinator Chris Kirby, Muscogee (Creek) Nation Exercise Program Manager Duane Meadows, President of the Oklahoma

Farmers and Ranchers Chris Jackson, Permaculture Design Consultant and Educator on traditional land management Louie Hena, Wilson Project Farmer Barton Williams, Organic Farmer Luke Fisher, OSU Extension Horticulturist Sue Gray, Director/Founder of CASA del Llano Lydia Villanueva, MFSI Youth Coordinator Cassandra Thompson, Ecological Resources Manager and Etho-botanist of the Chickasaw Nation Steven Bond.

One surprise guest speaker included Koahnic Broadcast Corporation Acting Associate



Muscogee Creek Nation Food and Fitness Policy Council

By Rita Williams

Education & Policy Coordinator

The Muscogee Creek Nation Food and Fitness Policy Council was enacted in to law and signed by Principal Chief A.D Ellis, in Sept of 2010.

The policy council is made up of those from the health systems, administration, legislative branch, judicial branch, farmers and ranchers, community member.

The council will be addressing food issues within the Creek nation and working to make policy change within programs to promote healthy eating through buying local fresh vegetables and fruits from local growers and farmers markets.

The vision is to focus on key food and agriculture policy issues and opportunities that are affected by government and legislation. Address top policy issues as priorities when set forth by the Council.

The purpose is to broaden the discussion of issues to examine more comprehensively the food agriculture systems and how federal, state and local government and public bodies shape the food system.

Create a forum by which people and the public, in conjunction with institutions involved in food and agricultural systems, including government, can meet to learn more about what each does and consider how their actions impact other parts of the systems.

Strive to balance a safe, nutritious, affordable and adequate food supply for all Creek citizens that will prevent food insecurity and hunger.

Focus on food access, production, distribution, and consumption issues.

Advocate for selected food and agricultural policy issues in various forums and venues.

A few of the goals are to; Make recommendations to the executive and legislative branches of government on food and agriculture policy;

Establish an on-going educational program and projects for the public about food and agricultural systems based upon accurate facts and reliable reports and analyses;

Be aware of and work to prevent food insecurity for families and children within the Creek Nation;

Educate farmers, processors, and consumers regarding safe food production, handling, and preparation;

Consumers are beginning to desire fresh grown vegetables due to food education about the pesticides being used in large commercial production. "Know Your Food, Know Your Farmer," is another interest becoming popular with consumers, they are demanding farmers markets, organic vegetables, grass fed beef, fresh eggs, and pork. Knowing how the food is produced lets the people feel safe about what they are eating and feeding to their family. Another important reason for fresh vegetables is for health related

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NICOA

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diets. If we grow enough farmers within the Creek Nation boundaries we increase the access to healthier foods in our communities.

“Many people are not aware of where our food comes from, how far it travels to reach the supermarkets and the time it sets on the shelves to the table. Our young mothers are saying they don’t know how to prepare meals and that a quick drive through McDonald’s is what children are getting for lunch and dinner.”

The Food and Fitness Policy will work toward eliminating

childhood obesity by serving local fresh vegetables and fruit to our head starts and childcare programs.

The Food and Fitness Policy Council will target schools with a high rate of Indian students to serve local fresh fruits and vegetables within the Creek Nation boundaries based on the State law that Governor Henry signed in 2004.

For more information you may contact Rita Williams, MFSI, Policy Coordinator, @ 759-1891.

Food & Fitness continued from page 1

Producer Darla Antoine, from Albuquerque, NM who discussed preserving our heritage through our recipes and a livestock panel on grass-fed beef consisting of Ann Wells, DVM, Mike Everett, Ruby Tucker and Mike Oakley.

Between sessions, attendees participated in the fitness activities, browsed the vendor booths and bid on items in the silent auction.

MFSI Staff did a great job of creating a great learning atmosphere for those gathered.

The small crowds gave the gathering a classroom atmosphere and attendees were able to address speakers at the end of each day during a panel question and answer session.

The traditional meal, prepared by Mary Harjo and family and was delicious. During lunch, many attendees commented on the great food and went back for seconds.

All in All it was an improved symposium over last year, even with the lower attendance. There was a small amount of youth participation, however, next year will have a few more youth-oriented sessions.

Media from Oklahoma Horizons attended the proceedings as well as native college media outlets from across the nation to learn more about food sovereignty and its impact on local food systems.

Visitors from across the nation attended the event, from Portland, OR to Albuquerque, NM to Washington, DC.

“On behalf of the Muscogee Food Sovereignty Initiative I want to express my deepest appreciation for those taking part in our recent Food & Fitness Symposium held at the Muscogee (Creek) Nation,” said MFSI Executive Director Darrell Fox.

“It took a united effort from everyone to pull off an event of this magnitude. The information shared was informative, and thought provoking. Our speakers did an excellent job in conveying their specific areas of interest. The staff at MFSI went above and beyond the "call of duty" and I sincerely appreciate their efforts.”

We've already started planning next years Agenda so mark your Calendars for another informative meeting.

MFSI CORNER



MARCH HEALTH TIPS

Gardening can be a great way to enjoy the outdoors, get physical activity, beautify the community and grow nutritious fruits and vegetables. Whether you are a beginner or expert gardener, health and safety are important.

Below are some tips to help keep you safe and healthy so that you can enjoy the beauty and bounty gardening can bring.

Dress to protect

Gear up to protect yourself from lawn and garden chemicals, equipment, insects and the sun.

- Wear safety goggles, sturdy shoes, and long pants when using lawn mowers and other machinery.
- Protect your hearing when using machinery. If you have to raise your voice to talk to someone who is an arm’s length away, the noise can be potentially harmful to your hearing.
- Wear gloves to lower the risk for skin irritations, cuts and certain contaminants.
- Protect yourself from diseases caused by mosquitoes and ticks. Use insect repellent containing DEET. Wear clothing treated with permethrin, long-sleeved shirts, and pants tucked in your socks. You may also want to wear high rubber boots, since ticks are usually located close to the ground.
- Lower your risk for sunburn and skin cancer. Wear long sleeves, wide-brimmed hats, sun shades, and sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher.

www.cdc.gov/family/gardening/index.htm

The First Sign of Geese

By Rita Williams
Education & Policy Coordinator

The month of February will be over by the time this newsletter reaches you and before long spring will be here. It is always around this time of year when I begin to think about my mother. When we were young I can hear her say at the first sign of geese flying over, "Well it's just about planting time, I guess Dad and I will try to make another garden this year." I remembered her always complaining about the soil being so hard and rocky that each year the garden was in a different place. She would can her foods, make jellies, pick blackberries, poke salad, wild onions, lambs quarters, possum grapes, just about anything she could find that the earth gave freely and grew in the wild.

Mom has been gone twenty four years and Dad ten years. After we lost mom,

my husband, son and I moved in with my father and added another addition to the house. Then we decided to make a garden, I had forgot what mom said about the soil being so hard. She was right, my husband had to bring in some top soil to the garden spot he had tilled.

One day last week, I got a chance to get out in the yard and clean out my raised beds, containers, and arrange my work station to begin seeding in trays. As I was about to come in I heard in the distance a familiar sound coming my way. That sound was a beautiful flock of geese that flew above my head just above the tree tops, and enough for me to get a good look at them. I spoke to them as they flew over. Yes, I see you, "It's just about planting time," and they honked so loud as if my mother sent them.

Spring has always been a favorite of mine, but the seasons are beginning to

change so that it seems we come from winter and immediately into summer. I miss the hint of spring around March and April, the cool clean crisp wind, not cold enough for a coat but a sweater during the day, the luscious green grass just high enough to hide the Easter eggs in and the beautiful yellow jonquils that come up year after year. I talk about these things to my grandchildren, how things used to be and what changes I have seen. I remember my father telling me about the changes he had seen. That is invaluable history to me that I pass to my grandchildren.

With all things, come change, but I hope the geese will continue to come while I am here and for my grandchildren and I will teach them to watch for their coming.

Garden tools for sale at MFSI

By Dicey Barnett
Office Manager

When you are strolling the downtown square, please stop by the Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative Office and visit the Gift Shop. Items in stock include:

- Mvskoke Hompetv Encokv - A Recipe Booklet by Rita Williams
- Native Design throw pillows
- Honoring the Elders CD by Marcus Briggs-Cloud
- Handwoven basket made by a Creek hokte
- Symposium 2011 t-shirts
- Aprons
- Youth Art Contest Posters
- Garden Hoes

By Sue White
NICOA Staff

MFSI now has Rogue Scuffle and Garden Hoes for sale. These hoes are manufactured in the heart of the USA by Pro-hoe Manufacturing using the hardened steel of recycled agricultural disc blades, and they do

stay sharp! Each tool is still hand crafted. The grinding, welding, and sharpening are all done by hand and quality is still the most distinguishing characteristic.

Scuffle Hoe 8oS: This scuffle hoe is used by landscapers and gardeners to undercut weeds, 8" wide.

Scuffle Hoe 4oS: This narrow scuffle hoe works well in flower beds. It gets you off your knees, 4" wide.

Scuffle Hoe 6oS: This is a great tool to weed veggies, flowers, or landscaping, 6" wide.

Garden Hoe 575G: This hoe moves dirt or used on its side can get into tight places, 5.75" wide.

Garden Hoe 70G: If you are looking for a heavier hoe, this is the hoe for you. It balances best on 60" handle, 7" wide.

These garden tools only cost \$30 each. Come by and grab one before they are all gone. If you have any questions, please contact MFSI at 918-756-5915, and ask for Sue.

MVTO!

A big MVTO for all of your support for the Silent Auction at the 2011 Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative "Food & Fitness" Symposium. The following persons were the winners of the items auctioned.

- 1.) HP Printer
Deb EchoHawk
- 2.) Spring to Fall Painting
Deb EchoHawk
- 3.) Garden Starting Kit
Ruby Tucker
- 4.) Native Reflections Mug
Lydia Villanueva
- 5.) Surprise
Lydia Villanueva
- 6.) Pine Pitch Pottery
Lydia Villanueva
- 7.) Bolo Tie
Chief A.D. Ellis
- 8.) HP Photo Smart 7850
Chief A.D. Ellis
- 9.) Nutrition Shoppe Food & Supplements
Lottie RedCorn
- 10.) The Next Green Revolution -
Julie Sharp
- 11.) Garden Books
Julie Sharp
- 12.) The Racecourse - New Mexico
Jackleen de la Harpe

MFSI Youth Roots "Buggin' Out"



By Cassandra Thompson
MFSI Youth Coordinator

February was a cold and unpredictable month for the MFSI Youth ROOTS program. We just visited Parks elementary at the first of March for February's visit and will have six more youth visits to catch up this March. Like our theme for February "Buggin' OUT" all of us are sure to be "Buggin' OUT" to catch up on our work, planting and preparing for the growing season. "Buggin' OUT" focuses on beneficial insects and the importance of their role here on the planet. Without our insects its uncertain what would happen to our environment. It was shocking to find that many of our insects are becoming extinct due to us changing their environment, by building all these new structures and by us using pesticides. There are over 8 million insects; however, we are losing our insect species almost daily. Most importantly, it is us, the human responsible for this. Another astonishing fact is that some insects were used medicinally. Maggots were once used to heal wounds until we had antibiotics, because they would eat the dead skin around the wound and it

would heal faster. Leeches have been used for reconstructive and plastic surgery for their ability to suck the blood and prevent blood clots. A friend told me once Native Americans used ants to help them cure sicknesses by putting them in your body. I'm not sure if that's a fact, but after finding out about the other facts I wouldn't be surprised!

Not only are insects beneficial for the planet and medicinally, but they can be beneficial to your diet. Insects have more protein than meat and other healthy properties because they eat healthy! Most insects eat anything that is nutritious. In some countries insects are food staples and in history they were in Native American tribes too! From personal experience, I can say that grasshoppers are tasty and I am patiently awaiting grasshopper season!

| | Small grasshoppers (100g) | McDonald's® hamburger (107g) |
|-----------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Protein | 20.6g | 12.0g |
| Total Fat | 6.1g | 10.0g |

It was delightful to hear from youth at Parks elementary that they know what pollination is, some families have their own gardens, and that I wasn't the only one that ate a bug. We ended our meeting with making newspaper pots and planting mammoth russian sunflowers for them to take home. I look forward to the rest of my visits this month.

MFSI Seed Bank

MFSI will have a limited amount of garden seeds and heirloom seeds available for distribution this year. Seed donations are appreciated.

To receive heirloom seeds, the grower must attend the free MFSI seed saving class.

For more information, please contact Melodie Sivadon Reader at 918.752.6113, mreader@mvsokokefood.org or visit our offices located at 100 E. 7th, Suite 101, Okmulgee, OK 74447.

Garden Tips



- Start your seedlings in sterile potting soil, then transplant in graduated sized containers to develop a healthy root system.
- Rotate your vegetables every three years. Insects and plant diseases prefer certain plants and can over-winter in your soil.
- Keep a barrel of water in your greenhouse. It will collect heat during the day and emit heat during the evening as temperatures cool.
- Never walk through your garden when it's wet or heavy with dew. Allow the surface to dry to prevent damage to your plants.
- Hold off on mulching your vegetables until after the soil warms to avoid mold damage.
- Welcome birds, bees and butterflies to provide natural insect control and pollination.
- Plan your garden knowing what you want to plant, what your family is going to eat.
- The garden should be placed in an area that gets six to eight hours of direct sunlight per day for maximum growth.
- Some plants don't do well next to each other. Example: cabbage and tomatoes; beans or peas and onions; potatoes or tomatoes or squash and peppers and fennel.



MFSI Recipe Contest

Winners will be selected and notified via e-mail or phone.

Seasonal gifts will be presented to the monthly winner.

For more information or to submit your favorite recipe via e-mail
mreader@mvskekefood.org

A TASTE OF HOME

Wild Onion & Eggs

2 bunches of Wild Onions

2-3 Tbsp. Oil

4 eggs (or more)

salt (to taste)

Pick wild onions when young and tender in early spring. Wash and cut into 1" - 2" lengths and place in warm bacon drippings or oil over medium heat. Cover and cook, adding small amounts of water until tender. Add 4 eggs or

more, depending upon how many onions you have, stirring with fork until done. Salt to taste. Stir and simmer covered on low heat a few minutes longer and then serve and enjoy!

Serves 4-6

Dacey Barnett

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