

VOL. 4  
Issue 9

# MVSKOKE FOOD

*Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative*



Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative welcomes our new Youth Coordinator Stephanie Berryhill.

## MFSI Welcomes New Youth Coordinator

By Melodie Sivadon Reader  
Communications Coordinator

Welcome to Stephanie Berryhill, new Youth Coordinator at Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative. Berryhill resides in her hometown of Henryetta, OK with her two children, Eco, 12 and Emily, 6.

She is Ecovlke (Deer Clan) and her tribal town is Ocevpofov (Hickory Ground).

A graduate of the University of Oklahoma, Berryhill obtained her Master's Degree in Linguistic Anthropology. Her area of interest is Native language revitalization

and community-based language planning.

She is interested in using her background to intertwine Mvskoke language, as it pertains to beliefs, stories, and traditional knowledge about food and food production, within the MFSI youth program.

Her goals are to seek the help of Mvskoke elders in order to offer young people experiences that can teach them about sustainable farming and ranching practices as well hunting, gathering, and processing wild game and edible

### COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## Monthly Events

[www.mvskokefood.org](http://www.mvskokefood.org)



### September 27

#### Rural Youth Loans

MFSI in cooperation with the USDA Farm Service Agency will host a Rural Youth Loan Workshop (for youth ages 10 - 20 years) on Sept. 27, 2011 at 6:30 p.m at MFSI Offices located at 100 E. 7th, Suite 101, Okmulgee, OK 74447. Refreshments provided. For more information on the workshop or to RSVP, please contact MFSI at (918) 756-5915 or (918) 752-6139, or check out our FB page.



### September 28

#### Healthy Brown Bag Lunch

MFSI will host a FREE brown bag lunch from 11 a.m. - 12 p.m., Sept. 28, 2011 at MFSI Offices. Topic: Planting Fall Bulbs. For more information or to RSVP, call Melodie at (918) 752-6113.

### September 28

#### MCN FFPC Meeting

MFSI will host the MCN Food & Fitness Policy Council Meeting at 3 p.m. at MFSI Offices. Refreshments provided.

### September 29

#### Native Foods Workshop

MFSI will host a FREE Mvskoke Native Foods Workshop, Este Cate Enhompety, September 29, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. at the MFSI Offices. Menu includes Svkonpeke (Hominy & Pork), Cvse (Pumpkin), Yvonkv cate (Beets), Osafke (corn drink) and Nak Cumpe (Dessert). For more information or to RSVP call (918) 756-5915 or (918) 752-6139.

# Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Announces Changes to CRP to Assist Producers Impacted by Severe Drought Conditions

WASHINGTON — Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack recently announced that the Farm Service Agency (FSA) is modifying its Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) policies to help those affected by sustained drought conditions.

“We continue to do all we can to help thousands of farmers and ranchers in the southwestern United States who are struggling from drought,” said Vilsack. “Many ranchers have been or will be forced to sell livestock due to drought and USDA will do what we can to help our farmers and ranchers during these challenging times.”

The policy changes influence FSA rules governing emergency grazing. The period normally allowed for emergency grazing lasts through Sept. 30, 2011. FSA is permitting farmers and ranchers in drought stricken states who have been approved for emergency grazing, including those in Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas, to extend the emergency grazing period to Oct. 31, 2011, without an additional payment reduction.

Producers wishing to participate in emergency grazing must first request permission from the FSA county office by indicating the acreage to be grazed.

As a second condition designed to help livestock producers, FSA will allow producers nationwide to utilize harvested hay from expiring CRP acres when those acres are being prepared for fall seeded crops. Prior to this modification, all mechanically harvested hay was required to be destroyed. This change enables livestock producers to feed the hay that is mechanically harvested to their own livestock or to sell or donate hay. Consistent with existing policy for managed or emergency haying and grazing of eligible CRP acres, rental payments will be reduced by 25 percent for those utilizing this option.

“We are eager to do all we can in the face of this drought crisis across the southern plains,” said FSA Administrator Bruce Nelson. “This has been one of the worst dry and hot spells since the Dust Bowl era of the ‘30s.”

For further information about the Conservation Reserve Program and Emergency Haying and Grazing, producers are encouraged to visit their USDA Service Centers or go online to [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov). Search under Conservation Programs and Disaster Assistance.

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## MCN Food & Fitness Policy Council

### By Rita Williams Education & Policy Coordinator

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Food and Fitness Policy Council has been endorsed through Tribal legislation that supports food security and food sustainability for the people we serve.

The MCNFFPC meets once a month to address their goals and objectives as outlined and have participated in tribal events this summer in awareness campaigns to address childhood obesity.

MCNFFPC approaches the food systems from the standpoint of being chemically unhealthy, high risk of salmonella, ecoli, and other bacteria. Foods distributed to our supermarkets travels over 1400 miles. The nutritional value of the vegetables and fruits sold in our supermarkets deplete and are treated to have the look of freshness and to stay preserved for days.

Consumers are educated to the fact that healthy fresh grown

vegetables are the best choices for them and there is a need for more growers in local towns and cities. Much of the meat that we consume is injected with unhealthy hormones and dyes that flow through our arteries and veins that sometimes the body cannot digest.

The Policy Council addresses the ever increasing health disparities of native people, and their need for better fitness and a good diet.

Food is the center of our traditional lifestyles. How we extend our hospitality and respect to visitors, is through food and at the heart of our culture.

There is a need for tribal communities to exercise their food sovereignty rights to grow their own healthy foods and livestock to regain the common health for themselves, their children, grandchildren and future of our nation.

The Policy Council will work toward developing stronger policies for growing and farming healthy foods for a healthier nation.

## USDA Rural Youth Loan Program Workshop

### By H. June Marshall MFSI Community Coordinator

**M**vskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative (MFSI), in cooperation with USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), will be offering a workshop on how to apply for loans up to \$5,000 for individual youth ages 10 through 20 years, to finance income-producing, agriculture-related projects. FSA loan officers will be available to go over the program and process the

paperwork at the September 27, 2011, 6:30 p.m. workshop offered at MFSI Office, 100 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 101, downtown Okmulgee. Applicants will be required to bring the following documentation, if applying on-site: drivers license (if applicable), social security card and copy of deed where farm operation is located. If you have questions, please (918) 752-6139 or (918) 756-5915 Attn: J. Marshall.

## MFSI Corner



### By Melodie Sivadon Reader Communications Coordinator

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative recently participated in the MCN 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Diabetes Summit at the First Christian Church in Sapulpa, OK.

Attendees were able to participate in activities designed to help keep them healthy and active and participate in sessions and health assessments/screenings, such as BMI or blood sugar.

Education & Policy Coordinator Rita Williams presented in one of the concurrent sessions concerning growing healthy communities, and sharing recipes and stories through the generations. Her classes were packed, as were many others.

MFSI staffers June Marshall, Stephanie Berryhill and Melodie Reader offered Osafke and popcorn from the booth along with information on childhood obesity, local farmer's markets, farmer and rancher outreach assistant manuals, MCN Food & Fitness policy brochures, sustainable recipes and gardening tips.

Mvto to all who stopped by our booth.

## Youth Coordinator (continued from page 1)

foods that Mvskoke peoples have relied on since removal.

Berryhill works with two grants, Community Food Project (CFP) and the Outreach Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (OASDFR).

Under the direction of project managers June Marshall (OASDFR) and Rita Williams (CFP) this includes working with youth in tribal communities, local schools, and organizations, such as 4 H, to help them establish sustainable agricultural projects.

Berryhill also works with youth in the OASDFR program to encourage area youth interest in farming or ranching through cow-calf, hog-raising, or gardening projects.

Some of the obstacles involved in getting youth involved in either farming or ranching has been lack of personal funding.

MFSI, through the OASDFR grant, are currently collaborating with the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) Rural Youth Loan Program which offers loans, up to \$5,000, to assist youth ages 10 through 20 to do farming and ranching projects.

According Okmulgee County FSA Loan Officer Tiffany Larry, almost all youth that receive such loans utilize family land, although Berryhill believes that Native youth that still live on

family allotments or have access to them represent a tribal group minority. Not only is access to land one of issues that MFSI is attempting to address through program planning, but there is the even bigger obstacle of those that are disconnected from the land. It is very difficult to get young people interested in farming, ranching, and gardening when such ways have never been within the realm of their experience.

She and Marshall want to include a focus on urban youth that don't have access to anything other than a small yard and don't have the support of 4-H or agricultural programs within their school programs.

Berryhill believes that developing and supporting projects for youth, such as those that are done through 4-H, have the potential to offer Native youth living in town and urban settings the opportunity to get interested in farming and ranching, and traditional food production.

Recently, Berryhill worked with Wilson 4-H youth preparing entries for the Okmulgee County Fair. Several of the youth placed, which made both parents and youth proud.

Preparing youth by planning and supporting projects that can instill responsibility, while encouraging our next generation of farmers and ranchers and

those that can continue carrying knowledge related to traditional food and food production is what the MFSI Youth program is all about.

Please, stop by and visit with Stephanie Berryhill today and learn about what you can do to become part of this great food, farm and ranch movement.

For more information, please call (918) 759-0817 or email [sberryhill@mvsokkefood.org](mailto:sberryhill@mvsokkefood.org)

### MFSI Healthy Brown Bag Lunch

Topic: Planting Fall Bulbs

Date: September 28, 2011

Time: 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Location: MFSI Offices  
100 E. 7th St., Suite 101  
Okmulgee, OK 74447

PLEASE RSVP by Sept. 26, 2011

Ph: (918) 752-6113

FREE Lunch Provided

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative  
100 E. 7th, St., Suite 101  
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Okmulgee, OK 74447

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# Summer Cranks up the Heat



By Melodie Sivadon Reader  
MFSI Communications Coordinator

With sauna-like conditions during most of the summer, my family spent as little time as possible outdoors.

Considering our garden was a war zone between the puppy and the soaring temperature, it was no wonder our children took entertainment measures into their own hands or rather the frying pan...

Trying to answer the age-old question of "Can I fry an egg on the pavement?" our kids, Hannah and Samuel, whom we homeschool, decided to try to fry an egg, in the pan, on the tailgate of the truck.

Step 1 - place skillet on vehicle in scorching turn-your-brain-to-butter 116 degree heat. Wait an hour or so for it to really heat up. (This really means go inside and watch TV and forget you placed the pan on the car for an hour.)

Step 2 - Spray pan with cooking oil spray wait a bit and then crack and egg and place in the pan. Simple, right? Not exactly. The first egg totally missed getting all the way into the pan, but the second one did pretty well.

Step 3- Wait for egg to cook. After, about 25 minutes, our slow-cooked egg came out of the pan and we were astonished that it actually cooked the egg. And, in case your wondering, "No," we did not eat it.

So, with that handy-dandy experiment out of the way, we moved to cook the egg on the road.

We didn't use a pan this time. We just cracked the egg and dropped it on the pavement.

Big mistake.... The egg just dribbled through the cracks, seeping into the water-starved dirt below the asphalt.

When we returned to the scene of Humpty Dumpty's death a few hours later, we did notice that the egg fluffed up a bit, but was really, still nasty looking. But, in the end, it did kinda-sorta cook the egg. But, I mean really, who wants to eat an egg off the pavement? Again, that was a big "No!", on chowing down on it.

All in all, our kids learned that yes, it does get hot enough to fry an egg on a vehicle in a frying pan. Which, in hindsight, anyone who has lived in Oklahoma for any amount of time could have probably told us to begin with.

Hopefully, we won't be able to prove that point next summer.

However, if it does heat up, we're thinking chocolate chip cookies placed on the dash of a closed up car in the heat, might yield us a tasty treat!

Until next time. Enjoy your garden, the cooler temperature and most of all, take time to enjoy the small pleasures in life...like frying eggs on the nearest vehicle in the driveway.

## Eufaula Indian Community



The Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative would like to welcome Richard Belcher, the new Community Food Projects (CFP) Manager for the Eufaula Indian Garden in McIntosh County. Belcher will work with CFP Project Manager Rita Williams to get the project off the ground. They are currently researching information on a hoop house for the area. Belcher will also maintain the garden at the Eufaula Indian Community Center. For more information on the project, or to become involved, please contact Richard Belcher at (918) 473-3003.

## MFSI Office & Gift Shop Hours

Monday - Closed  
Tuesday - 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.\*  
Wednesday - 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.\*  
Thursday - 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.\*  
Friday - 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.\*  
\*(unless working in the field)

MFSI Staff are here to help you. Please feel free to stop in and visit with us, or give us a call at (918) 756-5915.



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## A TASTE OF HOME

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### Squash Dressing

**2 c. Squash, 1/2 c. onion, chopped,  
1/2 c. celery, chopped,  
1 stick of butter,  
1 can of Cream of chicken soup,  
2 cups crumbled cornbread,  
1/2 t. sage,  
salt & pepper to taste**

Directions: Boil squash, drain & mash. Saute onion & celery in butter. Add cream of chicken soup, cornbread, and seasonings . Mix all well and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Recipe Submitted by:  
September Recipe Winner  
Robyn Withrow  
Henryetta, Okla.



Check us out on Facebook!



### 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, e-mail [mreader@mvsokofood.org](mailto:mreader@mvsokofood.org)

## MVSKOKE FOOD

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100 E. 7th, Suite 101, Okmulgee, OK 74447

[www.mvsokofood.org](http://www.mvsokofood.org)

