

MVSKOKE FOOD

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative



Monthly Events

www.mvskokefood.org
COMMUNITY CALENDAR

March 10

MFSI Kerr Center Training

MFSI will travel to Poteau, OK with area beginning farmers and ranchers to train at Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture. For more information on this free training program, please call (918) 756-5915.

March 27

MFSI Herb Class - Dried Herbs

MFSI will present a Herb Class, at MFSI Offices, 100 E. 7th St., Ste. 101, Okmulgee, OK at 6 p.m., March 27, 2012 with Richard Belcher. To RSVP or for more information, please call (918) 756-5915.

May - October

Okmulgee Farmer's Market

The Okmulgee Farmer's Market Grand Opening will be May 4, on the square in Okmulgee. If you would like to participate as a vendor, please contact Brenda Brewer, Okmulgee Main Street, Inc. E-mail: onlyinokmulgee@yahoo.com or call (918) 758-1015.

MFSI Corner

Mvskoke Food was honored to participate with Rita Scott of Buy Fresh, Buy Local, in the *Green Country Food Policy Conference: Projects and Policies for Building a Local Food System*, Feb. 24. Other sponsors and attendees included: Farm & Food Alliance, Sustainable Green Country & The Cherokee Nation.

MFSI staff June Marshall, Stephanie Berryhill, and Melodie Reader gave a presentation on gardening, youth and the MCN Food & Fitness Policy Council.

For more information on the MCN Food & Fitness Policy Council, please contact Rita Williams at williams@mvskokefood.org or (918)759-1891.

MFSI will participate April 28, in a Kerr Center Training in Poteau, OK with area farmers and ranchers. For more information, please call June Marshall at (918) 756-5915 or email jmarshall@mvskokefood.org.

Yuchi House Language Program youth sing *dEt@ha*, a children's song about articles of clothing entitled "Shoes," at the Sapulpa Harvest Meal.

Sapulpa Harvest Meal: Sharing Wisdom

Melodie Sivadon Reader, mreader@mvskokefood.org
Communications, Marketing & Research Coordinator

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative, in conjunction with Sapulpa Indian Community Center, hosted a Community Harvest Meal, Fri., Feb. 17, at 4 p.m. at Sapulpa Indian Community Center.

This meal was part of the United States Department of Agriculture's Outreach Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program.

MFSI Community Coordinator and Kerr Grant Program Manager H. June Marshall gave a welcome and briefly described the OASDFR program and harvest meal, along with MFSI programs and resources. "Our goal is to celebrate the harvest of our foods which are grown in our communities," said Marshall. "We celebrate the fact that most of the foods that were used in the meal were from our local Native American farmers and ranchers"

Stephanie Berryhill, MFSI Youth Coordinator, helped cook the harvest meal, talked about food sources for the meal and the importance of buying from local producers, which included longhorn beef and eggs from Williams Farm, Wilson Community and wild onions from Lettie Randall and Tim Golden of Henryetta.

The meal was funded by the USDA, prepared by MFSI staff and youth, and served to over 75 attendees. Many Sapulpa community members contributed to the meal by bringing side dishes and desserts.

Youth from the Yuchi House/Eucler Language Project also participated by blessing the meal with a Yuchi prayer.

"We enjoyed participating," said Yuchi Lead Instructor Renee Grounds. "The youth really loved it." Approximately 18 Yuchi youth participated in the harvest meal event and made an impromptu, yet valuable program contribution through offering the meal blessing and a song. There were 26 total attendees, including parent volunteers and Yuchi staff.

Both youth and adults browsed the sign-in table which offered brochures and pamphlets on MFSI programs and USDA resources. Mvskoke Food's NICOA Administrative Assistant Sue White distributed material related to container gardening, herbal recipes, rain barrels, Kerr Grant Beginning Farmer and Rancher Program, MCN Food and Fitness Policy Council, MFSI programs, along with free gardening seed packets and children's books.

Harvest Meal

MFSI Today



A children's gardening activity, planting Mammoth sunflowers in cups was set-up.

After the homemade meal of *ahv cvmpv* 'sweet potato', *tvlak-cvpko* 'green bean', *tvkak-cate* 'brown beans', *svkonepke* 'hominy and meat', *vctaklike* 'corn bread', *tafympuce* 'wild onion', *pvkanv* 'sem vtehke' 'peach pie', the Yuchi House Language Program children sang *dEt@ha*, a children's song about articles of clothing entitled "Shoes."

MFSI Education and Policy Coordinator Rita Williams gave a presentation on "Growing Healthy Communities." Williams emphasized the importance of growing healthy foods and encouraged the participants to become educated about the foods they are eating

for a healthier lifestyle. Sharing wisdom from one generation to the next was strongly stressed. Youth and elders were encouraged to share gardening, ranching, and farming stories among the group.

Door prizes of Farmer's Almanac, gardening seeds, and gardening books were awarded to lucky attendees. Wanda Weaver, Sapulpa Indian Community Center, was the winner of a gardening tote, which contained potting soil, Miracle Grow, a garden trowel, garden pruners, and gardening gloves.

MVTO to all who assisted in making this event possible: MFSI Staff and volunteers, Sapulpa Indian Community Center, and United States Department of Agriculture.

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Word Coinings

Stephanie Berryhill, Youth Coordinator
sberryhill@mvskokefood.org

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative has been requesting "new" word coining for foods that are relatively recent foreign introductions into the Mvskoke diet. Individuals, families, and / or communities may have made Mvskoke words that they use for foods such as 'soda pop' or 'hamburger'.

If readers have Mvskoke language food terms that they would like to share, whether they are in use or have just been created, MFSI staff members are particularly interested in adding their submissions to a list of food terms

Some of the words that have been submitted and published in previous issues of *Mvskoke Food* include *vhv-tvskocē* or *vhv-kvrpē* 'potato chips' and *Meksekvilke enhompetv hiyat* 'Mexican food'. *Mvskoke Food* is also interested in any tribal stories or "rules" related to food, food preparation, and planting. The major reason for using and collecting these words is that such terms are falling out of use because tribal peoples have stopped practicing many traditional food ways. The Mvskoke language is threatened because there are few, if any, fluent child speakers to make new words in a world with new technology and ideas in which Mvskoke terms have not been created to express. Additionally, the



Rita Williams discusses food policy & gardening.

majority of those that do speak are elders who are faced with fewer people to converse with as family and friends pass away. There is also the ever-increasing use of English to communicate, even among Mvskoke speakers, because such language terms have not been made to talk about "new" foods, diseases, and modern American culture.

The word form for 'to scrape' in the Mvskoke language is different depending on whether the speaker is talking about scraping [out] a pumpkin, scraping a hide, or [accidentally] scraping a knee. Knowing which word form to use in the right situation is kept in the memories of elder Native speakers, many who are women, who have lived experience during an era when traditional food production and Mvskoke language use, storytelling, was still vibrant. Without individual, family, and community efforts to learn about tribal food ways and language, such practices and related

knowledge, language, and stories are lost with the passing of Native speakers.

Mvskoke Food appreciates your contribution – words to think about and / or submit for next month's issue are related to making gardens. According to Martin and Mauldin's *A Dictionary of Creek / Muskogee* there are four different words for 'seed'. 1. *nērkv*; 2. stored seeds: *nērkv-svkerretv*; 3. seed saved for planting: *porwv*; 4. seeds for a garden: *nak-vhockē*

If readers have other words or different dialects of these words, please contact *Mvskoke Food* with submissions. Also, if these words have meanings that may be different from what is written in Martin and Mauldin, *Mvskoke Food* is especially interested in the differences and the situations in which such words may be used. Call (918) 759-0817 or E-mail sberryhill@mvskokefood.org with your suggestions. MVTO!

Traditional Cooking Class: Sharing Heritage

A Taste of Home: Sassafras Tea

Melodie Sivadon Reader, mreader@mvsokofood.org
Communications, Marketing & Research Coordinator

Mvsoko Food SARE Project Manager Stephanie Berryhill has been busy working with Mvsoko Elders at Wilson Indian Community Center to train youth in traditional cooking practices. The free classes were offered in three sessions: osafke, pumpkin cooking & seed saving, and cvtvhakv.



The classes were held Feb. 12, 19, & 26 and hosted by Wilson Indian Community Center. Youth participated in each step of the process in order to receive a hands-on experience.

Step-by-Step cooking handouts with color photos were also created for all attendees to aid in the learning process.



The Osafke Class was taught by Wilson Indian Community Speaker Dicey Barnett and Berryhill.

Barnett discussed each stage of preparing osafke for cooking and had the youth demonstrate each step. Osafke corn was passed around along with other seeds for participate to compare the difference.

Osafke, traditionally was a flint (hard) corn that was cracked into small pieces before being used for the osafke corn drink. The corn is cooked for several hours, lye is added, and the corn is cooked a bit longer.

Once completed, the osafke was served to the elders by the youth.

The Pumpkin Seed Saving Class was taught by Wilson Indian Community Chair Barton Williams.

Williams demonstrated gourd and pumpkin seed saving with the assistance of the youth.

Different methods of seed saving were discussed. According to Williams, it is best to deseed a pumpkin, rinse the seed and then lay to dry on paper for a few days. The dried seed should be stored in a cool, dark, dry place, preferably a freezer until use the following season.



Following the seed saving class, the pumpkins were used for the pumpkin cooking class.

The pumpkins were deseeded, lightly scraped and then placed hollow-side down in a baking pan in about 1/2" water in a 350 degree oven for about 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Once baked, the pumpkins were allowed to cool for 10 minutes and then were scraped. The pumpkin meat was then placed in a well oiled pan, sugar was added and cooked until caramelized.

The youth served the pumpkin, along with beans and salt meat to the elders after everything was completed.

The last session, cvtvhakv class, began at Williams Farm, where the purple hull pea shell burning was to take place. Unfortunately high winds prevented the event. Instead, attendees toured the Wilson Greenhouse and learned about the burning process. Dried purple hulls were shown to youth and elders so they would know what it looks like prior to burning. Then everyone headed back to Wilson Indian Community Center to learn how to make the blue bread *cvtvhakv*.

Kitchen Time: 30 minutes

Ingredients: 4 Sassafras Roots (2" long)
1 1/2 Qt. Water

Directions: Scrub roots with stiff brush, rinse, scrape off bark. Place roots, bark and water in a large pan and slowly bring to a boil. Reduce heat. Simmer 15 minutes. Turn off heat. Steep 10 minutes. Strain and serve.

Enjoy!

Christina Screechow

Glenpool, OK

Again, youth and elders worked together to complete a traditional meal using traditional recipes and means using donated locally grown produce and pork raised on Williams Farm.

It was a great learning experience for youth and elders alike.



There will be additional classes in early summer for lye making and seed saving and pumpkin drying classes set for late fall.

The Traditional Foods Cooking Classes are part of the Mvsoko Traditional Foods Recovery Project Sustainable Community Innovations Grant, A Partnership of: The Southern Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program and The Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC).





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MCN FFPC Update

The MCN Food & Fitness Policy Council met Feb. 8, 2012 from 3 p.m. - 4: 30 p.m. at the MFSI Offices, Okmulgee, OK.

The policy council discussed: 2012 Policy Council Work Plan, MCN FFPC Logic Model, Food Policy for Legislation, FFPC Meetings and attendance at the Green Country Food Policy Conference Feb. 24, 2012. The FFPC discussed increasing meetings to two meetings a month and the need to vote on a new secretary.

The policy council discussed ways of gathering childhood obesity data for native youth and creating healthy recipes and healthy food classes for families with young children.

MCN Department representatives in attendance included: Diabetes Prevention, Johnnie Brasuell and William Fixico; Eufaula/Checotah Indian Garden Manager & MCN FFPC Co-Chairperson Richard Belcher; WIC Program, Connie Fox; Reintegration Program, Keith Green & Carrisa Lewis; Community Development, Diana Billie and Anita Freeman; Tag Office, Lucinda Fletcher; Food Distribution, Ama Cruce; IHS Environmental Health Services, David Hogner; Division of Health, Shoneen Alexander, and MFSI, Rita Williams, Melodie Reader & Stephanie Berryhill.

For more information or to participate in the MCN FFPC, please contact MCN FFPC Chairperson Rita Williams at rwilliams@mvskokefood.org or (918) 759-1891.

Our Mission.....

MFSI is dedicated to enable the Mvskoke People and their neighbors to provide for their food and health needs now and in the future through sustainable agriculture, economic development, community involvement and cultural and educational programs.



Check us out on Facebook!

MFSI Office

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 Wednesday - 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
 Thursday - 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
 Friday - 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

MFSI Staff are here to help you. Please feel free to stop in and visit.
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