

Mission Statement

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative works 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, cultural and educational programs

**May - Kehvse
Mulberry Month
June - Kvcohvse
Blackberry Month - 2008
July - Hiyuce
Little Harvest**

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative Reaches Far to Help Other Groups to Improve Their Health and Wellness. By Ben Yahola

In January, Earth Keepers Voices for Native America (EKVNA), a grass roots organization under the fiscal sponsorship of MFSI, began dialog with other organizations in the upper Midwest to recognize and recover Indigenous cultural resources such as foods, land, languages, sacred sites and places. Through the old way of messengers running with a specific concern EKVNA, along with the First Nations United and the Ho-Chunk Native Cruzers, relayed a run 500 miles across the great plains and prairie of South Dakota and Minnesota. The two groups of marathon runners get involved in social betterment causes for Indian country and competitive marathon runs across the nation. The run from Ft Thompson, South Dakota served two functions. One was to acknowledge the ancient mound complex along the Missouri River and to serve notice to the general public that the integrity of old Indian burial sites should be honored. The other function was to take heirloom seeds of corn, beans and squash to the Dakota people for their seed bank and to promote organic food sources and healthy life ways through physical activity.

EKVNA consulted with one group of the Seven Council Fires called the *Dakota Oyate Oceti Sakowin* that is now living at Crow Creek Sioux Indian Reservation, South Dakota. They were exiled from the

Minneapolis, St Paul MN area they call "*Maka Cokaya*" the center of the universe. It was a place where they fished and hunted game. They gathered wild plants for medicines and cultivated crops in agricultural fields. It is still their cultural resource and many had forgotten that, but the Dakota Elders remembered. The Dakota have always lived with ancient mound sites and believe they too were mound builders much like the Mvskoke people. They were happy to be included in this process of protecting Indian cultural resources.

Through the work of MFSI and EKVNA, friends and supporters of food security in the Minneapolis St Paul, Minnesota area plan to start traditional Native seed banks. The Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota now living in Mendota, MN believe small farm and garden projects are one way they can begin exercising their inherent sovereign rights. They are also planting heirloom seeds of corn, beans and squash to add to their seed banks.

**You're Invited!
MFSI OPEN HOUSE
Thursday, July 24th
5:00-7:00 PM
208 W. 6th Street
Refreshments**

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative

Volume 3 Issue 3

May/June/July 2008

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Jackson Barnett

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Sharon Iverson- MCN Dietitian

Emman Spain – MCN Cultural Preservation

John West – University of Tulsa Horticulturist

Yvette Wiley – MCN Environmental Services

Steve Wilson – National Society for American Indian Elders

Donna Williams –MCN Citizenship Office

Ex Officio Members

Lester Ligons – USDA/NRCS Tribal Liaison

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Staff

Executive Director - Vicky Karhu
Co-Director-Ben Yahola

Office Manager—Dicey Barnett
Youth Coordinator—Speedy Harley

A majority of the Board, Advisory Committee and staff are Muscogee (Creek) citizens.

MVTO to Jesse Smith Noyes Foundation, Seventh Generation Fund, USDA/CSREES, First Nations Development Institute, Honor the Earth Fund of the Tides Foundation, SSAWGT&TA and our friends who have donated time and money to MFSI.

Outreach Project

By: Vicky Karhu

MFSI will soon begin an outreach project to help inform farmers, ranchers and landowners of the various federal, state and regional assistance programs that are available. This project is supported by a grant from the USDA Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service. The project entitled "Outreach for Producers' Empowerment Project" will start October 1st and continue for three years with the goal of getting more people to expand or begin farming and ranching operations on their lands. MFSI will develop a Farmers and Ranchers Resource Manual outlining assistance, loan and incentive programs offered by USDA and other agencies. This manual will be delivered directly into communities in five counties in the Muscogee Nation utilizing the MFSI Mobile Resource Center. Local residents will have the opportunity to meet with an informed, Native American MFSI staff person to discuss their ideas and specific needs for their land who will be able to point them in the right direction for further assistance and will be a liaison between the citizens and the USDA officials. While the Mobile Resource Center is in the communities; everyone who is interested in gardening, farming and Mvskoke food and agricultural history will be welcome to come in, sit down, visit and utilize the library books and information resources in the Mobile Library.

MFSI is working with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency, OSU Agriculture Extension Service and the Okmulgee County Conservation District to collect current information and make this project a success. We will also research and publish marketing opportunities for local growers to sell their produce. All of the information and publications will be provided for free to interested farmers, ranchers and gardeners. We hope that this project will result in many more people being able to grow food or raise livestock to meet the food needs of our region. Our dream is to reinvigorate the proud Mvskoke agricultural heritage to regain "food sovereignty" or control of our food system. Please let us know if you have ideas to make this project successful. We expect to have the resource manual ready by Spring 2009 and will begin making community visits then. Meanwhile, we would like to hear from you as to what you would like to see in the manual and what kind of resources would be useful to your family or community.

MFSI Mobile
Resource
Center



Summer Garden Tips

By: MFSI Staff

It's hot summertime and we are in the middle of the gardening season. Here are a few tips from our staff:

From Dicey - Try to get outside and work in the morning before 10:00 or in the evening after 5:00.

Hoe a little everyday.

Let the bumblebees pollinate the purple hull peas.

If your plants aren't doing well, think about moving to a different location where the soil is not depleted. Work on improving the soil.

From Vicky - Save your grass clippings from mowing the lawn to use as mulch around the base of the plants. This will help retain water in the soil and to catch dew to water the roots every morning.

Plant flowers all around the garden to attract beneficial insects.

Pull weeds and till for weed control during the last quarter of the moon, if possible.

Water in the morning to prevent diseases on plants, especially the tomatoes.

Remember to water your compost pile.

Observe, appreciate and learn from all the life in your garden including insects.

Leave wild brush and weeds around the edges of your garden to provide habitat for beneficial insects and birds that will eat insect pests.

Mow grass between your rows instead of tilling.

From Ben -To keep mosquitoes away, wear white clothing because mosquitoes are attracted to dark colors.

Spend time in your garden to develop harmony and balance with your food source.

Remember and share garden stories.

Teach your children and get them involved from the garden to the table.

Share your bounty with those who can not grow their own foods.

Give thanksgiving.

MFSI ACTIVITIES

Santa Fe NM Conference-May 5-7, 2008

Through a scholarship, the staff and the Executive Director of MFSI attended the "The 6th Annual Southwest Marketing Network Conference". It offered so many different sessions, such as, Organic Marketing, Beginning Farmers, Youth Leaders in Farming, Food Policy Councils, Grant Writing, etc. One topic was "Buy Fresh-Buy Local" foods and the reasons to eat local foods are:

- it tastes better and has more variety,
- is fresher and retains more nutrients,
- local food preserves genetic diversity,
- local food builds community
- have longer to ripen,
- thousands of miles fresher,
- supports the local economy,
- helps local farmers and ranchers stay in business,
- keeps us in touch with the seasons and land,
- and increases community food security.

The things you can do to support local foods are:

- Spend more on locally produced food,
- Shop at a local farmer's market,
- Support local restaurants and stores that carry local foods,
- Plant a garden and grow as much of your own food as possible,
- Learn what foods are in season in your area and plan your diet around them,
- Experiment with food preservation,
- Use Season extension methods,
- Get dirty-start your school or community Garden.

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Diabetic Recipe-Submitted by Dena Lindley, Nutrition Education, OSU Cooperative Extension Service

Remember that it's just as easy to eat well as not. Everyone craves something sweet now and then. Satisfying that craving doesn't have to be unhealthy or costly. Here's a simple and inexpensive recipe for everyone to use and enjoy from "How to Cook for People with Diabetes", published by American Diabetes Association.

Sweet Potato Pie

- 2 large sweet potatoes
- 2 egg whites, beaten
- 1 Tbs. sugar or *Splenda*
- ¼ cup raisins (optional)
- ½ tsp. cinnamon
- 2 Tbs. butter or margarine
- 1 cup low-fat milk
- 1 9-inch ready-made pie crust

Wash the sweet potatoes and boil them in a covered saucepan until soft. Peel the potatoes and mash them in a medium bowl. (You should get about 1 ½ cups of mashed potatoes.)

Preheat the oven to 450* F. Add all the ingredients in the order given. Mix well and pour into the pie shell. Bake until lightly browned on top

8 – 1 slice servings

- Starch Exchange...2
- Fat Exchange...2
- Calories...220
- Total Fat...11 g
- Calories from Fat...99
- Cholesterol...3 mg
- Sodium...232 mg
- Carbohydrate...30 g
- Dietary Fiber...0 g
- Protein...4 g

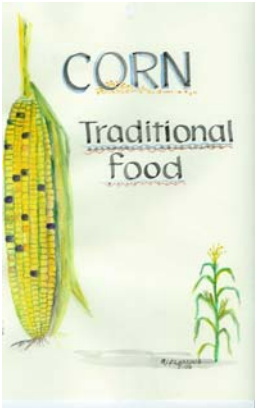


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Support the Farmer's Market on the lawn of the Creek Council House 8 a.m. to
12:00 noon every Friday

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative

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We are at a new location!

The Office of Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative has moved downtown to 208 W. 6th St., on Main Street between the Nutrition Shoppe and Britt's Hairspray Salon. Our office hours will be from 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Tuesday thru Friday. Appointments outside of office hours are encouraged and welcome.

Wish List for Our New Office!

Book Cases (2)	Easy Chairs
Floor desk mats (3)	Pickup Truck
Floor Lamps	Office Copier
Desktop Computer & Printer	
Gardening and Mvskoke history books.	
Filing cabinets	

If you have an excess of any of the above, we will be very happy to accept them. If you do, please call 756-5915.

Calendar of Events

-July 24, 2008- Open House for MFSI

The hours will be from 5-7 p.m. You are invited to come and see our new office. Refreshments will be served. Special blessing ceremony by Second Chief Alfred Berryhill and Mike Berryhill at 6 p.m. Everyone welcome!

August 5 & 6, 2008—Future Farms '08 Planning For Change Conference, Bricktown Convention Center, OKC sponsored by the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture. August 5-Farm tours (\$40), August 6- Conference (\$35). Registration forms and details available at the MFSI office or at www.kerrcenter.com

Every Friday—Okmulgee Farmers' Market 8 a.m.

2 p.m. on the lawn of the Creek Council House Museum.



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