

# MFSI News

## Otowoskv rakko Big Chestnut October 2007

### Food Heritage Documentary

The exciting MFSI documentary film project is underway. With enthusiastic cooperation from the Okmulgee County 4-H program and alternative school, the Johnson O'Malley coordinator at Okmulgee High School and many volunteers, we are ready to begin shooting our youth-led interviews with Elders. We have identified several Elders, both Mvskoke and non-Mvskoke, who are willing to share their knowledge and experiences with food: growing, hunting, fishing, cooking, preserving and collecting recipes. It will be up to the youth to design the interview questions and do the actual shooting. Gerald Wofford, who has many years professional video experience, will be providing technical training and MFSI staff will provide leadership, but the actual production, including editing, will all be through the eyes of the youth.

Monday October 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM we are asking all youth who would like participate in this project to meet at Jah Jah's Coffee House on 6<sup>th</sup> Street (next to China Buffet) to get acquainted



and to set the early shooting schedule. This project is open to ALL interested people. The only rules are that all material must involve some aspect of food and the youth need to identify the oldest relative or friend that they know to ask for interviews. We hope many will

take this opportunity to create a first-rate documentary. We plan to submit the finished product to national audiences through independent film festivals, You Tube, Current TV and any other channels available. MFSI will host a Food Film Festival in the spring

to debut our documentary. This is the perfect chance for our young people to gain valuable media skills and, maybe, become stars. See you on the 8<sup>th</sup>.

Film sponsors to date: First Nations Development Institute, Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture

**Sponsorships available now. Individuals, businesses and organizations welcome. See your name in lights!!!**

For sponsorship or general information contact MFSI at 918-756-5915.

**Film Meeting October 8th  
5:30 PM Jah Jah's, Okmulgee**

### Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative

Volume 2, Issue 4

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

MVTO to Jesse Smith Noyes Foundation, First Nations Development Institute, USDA-CFP

## October Gardening Tips by Vicky Karhu

Fall is here and it is time to harvest the last of the summer crops and nurture the late season crops that you planted in August and late September. It is not too late to plant many lettuces (Look for ones in your seed catalog that are cold tolerant. Several red leaf ones are good for this), spinach, beets, chard, carrots, turnips, radishes and kale. If we have an early cold snap with below freezing temperatures for more than one brief night, be sure to cover the tender, new plants with cloth or row cover (available from farm and garden supply stores and catalogs). You can use plastic for cover, but you must be very prompt with getting it back off when the sun comes out or you will burn the plants up. Usually the first cold nights are followed by days or weeks of warmer weather. If you can keep your plants alive through the cold, they will be strong enough to survive most cold days to come. In January it will be good to have the row cover handy for the leaf crops. Underground ones can be protected with mulch as long as the leaves have access to sunlight. I've pulled radishes and turnips with no row cover on them all winter in Okmulgee. Carrots and beets should work, too. Chard will stay alive and then flourish with each warm spell until spring when it will go crazy. Kale likes cold weather and will taste better after a frost. Don't forget to put out garlic for next summer.

If you are not going to grow anything this winter, then it is time to clean up the garden. Your tomatoes are probably finished by now, as are all of the squash family, except late plantings. Clean out all old foliage and mulch and compost it. Many gardeners always place fall leaves on their garden and work them into the soil the following spring. If you haven't made a written record of where you planted each thing this season, now is the time to do that before you forget. When you plant next spring, you never want

to plant the same crops in the same place because the residual insect larva and disease spores and bacteria are there ready to attack the same crops next year. There is a lot of information on the Internet and in gardening books about rotation in the garden. Careful planning really pays off and is a basic principle of organic gardening. Tilling before a hard freeze will help destroy weed roots, especially Bermuda grass. If you are planning your first garden for next spring, you will get a head start by tilling now so that the soil has time to adjust before planting time and the winter precipitation will go deep into the soil.

Good luck and enjoy working in your garden during this beautiful fall weather.

## Indigenous Food of the Month: Pepper by Vicky Karhu

The nights are getting cooler and it is time to start making that chili for after the ballgame or family gatherings. Chili is a great showcase for healthy, indigenous foods as all the major ingredients originate in the Americas: beans, tomatoes, onion and peppers. The meat can be turkey, chicken, ground beef (European addition) or buffalo meat.

This month we will focus on peppers, both hot and sweet. These hardy plants are probably the only things still producing well in the late summer gardens. Capsaicin is the chemical that makes hot peppers hot. It is a natural expectorant and decongestant making hot peppers a popular home remedy for colds and coughs. Research is also revealing that it can act as a blood thinner, stimulant for digestive juices (meaning that it can actually help protect the stomach lining from the harmful acids that

## Indigenous Food, con't

cause ulcers) and a factor in lowering bad cholesterol. Both sweet and hot peppers are rich in the antioxidants beta-carotene and vitamin C. The red or yellow sweet peppers contain more vitamins than the green ones, but all are good sources and can be eaten raw for maximum benefit.

### Homemade Salsa



2 medium tomatoes, coarsely chopped (or 1 small can diced tomatoes)

2 small jalapeno peppers, cut in half lengthwise and thinly sliced

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup minced onion 2 tablespoons minced fresh cilantro

2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice

$\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon salt

Combine all ingredients and mix well.; let stand for at least 30 minutes to let flavors blend. Salsa can be stored in the refrigerator for several days.

## Food Policy Listening Session

The Oklahoma Food Policy Council, along with the Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative, hosted a Listening Session during the evening of August 27, 2007, at the Eastern Electric Cooperative facility in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. The meeting was attended by approximately 20 interested individuals

## Food Policy Listening Session, cont'd:

representing the agriculture sector, food service, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and various government agencies. Participants hailed from Poteau, Okmulgee, Oklahoma City, Wewoka, Catoosa, Henrietta, and Tulsa.

Anita Poole, organizer of the meeting, stated that she felt the session was very successful and that the broad range of topics discussed would be analyzed by the Oklahoma Food Policy Council, to assist in the Council's development of policy initiatives. Some of the topics discussed included consumers' demand for locally grown foods and the need for more small-medium sized fruit and vegetable producers in Oklahoma. Participants also pointed out the need producers have for more technical assistance, particularly in rural areas, as most attendees felt there was great concern that most technical resources seem to be focused on large producers. Participants also discussed farm liability issues, tool share programs with local conservation groups, and the need for a farmer help hotline. Mentoring programs and farm apprenticeships were discussed as additional initiatives that could benefit Oklahoma producers.

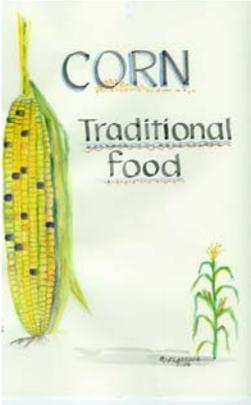
Particular mention was made about the "Buy Fresh, Buy Local" marketing campaign currently underway in the Tulsa area as a joint effort of the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture and the Green Country Sustainable Network. The group all agreed that more marketing outlets are needed. Other discussion topics included: the developing farm bill; distribution models; small-medium processors; senior nutrition; food safety, and developing farmer cooperatives.

Listening Session information is being compiled with summaries from other in-state sessions, and will be presented to the Oklahoma Food Policy Council later this year. For more information, contact Anita Poole at 918-647-9123.

## Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative

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## Calendar of Events

**October 4, 2007** Meeting with Heifer International open to all interested livestock or vegetable producers, both present and future. 7:30 at Jah Jah's Coffee House, 6th Street (next to China Buffet) Okmulgee.

**October 8, 2007** First youth meeting to begin work on the documentary film 5:30 at Jah Jah's

**October 12-13, 2007** Seed Sovereignty Conference at Tesuque Pueblo, New Mexico. Call MFSI for further info.

**October 19, 2007** MFSI Fall board meeting at MFSI office. All day.

## Heifer International Visits Okmulgee

Paul Smith, Director of the Indigenous Peoples Initiative in North America and Mike Everett, Southwest Plains Field Coordinator for Heifer International will be here to introduce themselves and the programs of Heifer International to local food producers. All farmers and ranchers, large and small, are encouraged to attend this meeting to learn of the resources available to assist with production of food in our region. Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative is very proud to have these two strong individuals here to share their experience in ranching, farming and organization development. Come help us welcome them to Okmulgee Thursday night, October 4th at 7:30 PM at Jah Jah's Coffee House, next to the China Buffet on 6th Street in Okmulgee.

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