

MVSKOKE FOOD

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative



Greenhouse Seeding Time
Rita Williams, Policy Coordinator

Greenhouse seeding has begun. We have red acre, golden acre and chinese planted. All three are coming up and noticed the white bunching onions were beginning to peek through this evening. It's so enjoyable to seed and watch them grow. Everyday we check on them, three or four times a day to see if they are going to break through. They are just like babies: we seed, plant and water, then we have to regulate the heat at night so it will be the right temperature for them to germinate. When we have mild days and the sun is out, the temp raises to 100 and above, the fans come on and dries out the soil, so we check with a water gauge how much moisture is in the plant and shut down the heat during the day. We have to keep the fans on to circulate the temp. But, we love it!!!! I am posting some pictures for you readers as we journey through this process. We do have some Homestead tomatoes, sweet peppers, and onions planted, they are doing well. The ladies at the office will be joining in this week to start seeding for the farmers' market. Looks like we will have an early warm up again this spring. Already people are seeing lots of mosquitoes, snakes out, ticks and insects. Our winter was mild so farmers expect that our garden enemy insects did not die out. Catch you next time.

March 1st, 2013

Seeding Demonstration Class, Wetumka
Indian Community Center, 7 pm

March 5th, 2013

IHCRC Park Elementary After School
Program, 3-5 pm

March 6th, 2013

MCN Elders Meeting, Mound Building,
10 am. Contact Sue White 918.756.5915

March 9th, 2013

Beginning Farmers and Ranchers
Program Horticulture Training, MFSI,
8:30 am - 4 pm Contact J. Marshall
918.752.6139

March 11th, 2013

Okmulgee County Wellness Coalition
Healthy Lifestyles Committee Meeting,
12 pm, Okmulgee County Health
Department

March 27th, 2013

4-H Meeting with Sheila Stevenson,
Langston University. MFSI, 1 PM.

In the Spring,
At the end of the day,
You should smell
like dirt.

~Margaret Atwood

March Message From Executive Director Darrell Fox

I don't know about you, but I am eagerly anticipating the beginning of Spring-time. Although this Winter has been mild thus far, I still yearn for the warmth of the Sun and the promise of growth. This anticipation at times lends itself to getting a bit tense in the process of waiting. As God's creation we continually look for something other than the monotony of life. That is because the Great Creator is dynamic and since we are made in His image we welcome change. Our seasons change, babies are born, life ends, calendars mark new beginnings and we are always anticipating what is around the bend.

I think Gardeners are the most impatient in awaiting change for they know Winter will soon yield to Spring and our planting will begin. There are gardens to be tilled, fertilizers to be spread, rows to be made, and seeds to be planted. This is a universal effort for gardeners, whether you live in Chicago, Illinois, Bogota, Columbia, or Okmulgee, Oklahoma. We all anticipate what lies ahead for us.

We here at the Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative encourage you to get involved with us and our organization. Food and water sustainability are crucial to our future well-being and survival as a Nation. We are at a critical time in our history. Do we adopt the practices of our elders and live healthy life-styles by eating right and keeping our bodies fit or do we traverse down the road of diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and all the other ailments associated with an unhealthy existence.

As I stated earlier, I get tense when anticipation approaches, but I have to remember that change is just around the corner and my anticipation will surrender to the realities of change. My prayer for you is that if you are living a life-style that is unhealthy, make a conscience effort to make a positive change. If you do this, then you can anticipate feeling better, looking better, and having an overall different view of life!

In the words of Kasey Kasem, "keep your feet on the ground and keep reaching for the Stars".

Darrell Fox, Executive Director
MFSI

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Muscogee (Creek) Nation Food and Fitness Policy Council Annual Symposium

Rita Williams
Policy Coordinator

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Food and Fitness Policy Council will be hosting their yearly symposium April 26 - 27, 2013. More information with the draft agenda will be posted soon.

The Policy Council is pleased to have this year two renowned Native American chefs, Lois Ellen Frank and Walter Whitewater of Red Mesa Cuisine, LLC, who are well known throughout the United States and Marc Anderson who promotes reversing type 2 diabetes among our Native American through healthy eating habits.

Lois Ellen Frank, Ph.D.,

RED MESA CUISINE, LLC Chef/Owner ~ Kiowa

“NATIVE AMERICAN FOODS WITH A MODERN TWIST”

A Santa Fe, New Mexico based chef, author, Native foods historian and photographer Lois Ellen Frank was born in New York City and raised on Long Island, New York with her father's side of the family. She is from the Kiowa Nation on her mother's side and Sephardic on her father's side. Her first career experiences were as a professional cook and organic gardener.

Lois received her Ph.D. from the University of New Mexico in Culinary Anthropology in July 2011. Her dissertation entitled *The Discourse and Practice of Native American Cuisine: Native American Chefs and Native American Cooks in Contemporary Southwest Kitchens*, will also be one of her next books, tentatively entitled *The Turquoise Plate*. She received her Master of Arts in Cultural Anthropology in May, 1999 where she focused on the importance of corn as a common thread to all Indigenous tribes throughout the Americas.

Lois has spent over 20 years documenting foods and life ways of Native American tribes from the Southwest. This lengthy immersion in Native American communities culminated in her book, *Foods of the Southwest Indian Nations*, featuring traditional and

contemporary recipes, published by Ten Speed Press. It won the James Beard Award in the Americana category and was the first Native American book to win the award. She has worked with world-renowned chefs, scientists and academicians and collaborated with them to publish many culinary posters and cookbooks.

Chef Frank is a featured cooking instructor at the Santa Fe School of Cooking where she teaches about Native American foods of the Southwest. Guest Chef appearances have taken her to many famous restaurants around the country where she, with Native Chef Walter Whitewater (Diné) have prepared delicious menus from the foods she has studied. She continues to teach about foods as a guest chef, lecturer, and instructor nationally. Dr. Frank is an adjunct professor at the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA), in Santa Fe, New Mexico and teaches Indigenous Concepts of Native American Food.

Walter Whitewater

Walter Whitewater was born in Pinon, Arizona and is from the Diné (Navajo) Nation. He grew up traditionally and began cooking as a young boy after seeing people cooking at some of the traditional ceremonies his family attended. He began cooking professionally in 1992 in Santa Fe, New Mexico at Cafe Escalera under executive chef, David Tannis. Chef Tannis was taught to cook by the legendary Alice Waters of Chez Panisse, in Berkeley, California.

As Culinary Advisor on the cookbook, *Foods of the Southwest Indian Nations*, Whitewater along with Lois Ellen Frank won the James Beard Award in the Americana Category in 2003. He has appeared on several Food TV shows including, “Southwest Cooking with Bobby Flay” Food TV Network 2005, “Native Foods and Farming: Market to Market” Iowa Public Television IPTV 2005 and “The Secret Life of Southwest Foods” Greystone TV 2006, Food TV Network.

Chef Lois Ellen Frank started a Native American Catering and Food Company named Red Mesa Cuisine., where Chef Whitewater and Chef Frank cook for private events, weddings, parties, and corporate meetings, gallery openings

as well as Native events for Native organizations all over the United States.

During Chef Whitewater's professional cooking experiences, he has remained active in many of his traditional ways at his home in Pinon, Arizona returning for ceremonial obligations and help his father the their flock of sheep which include the Navajo Churro breed, Chef Whitewater is helping to reintroduce into his family's sheep. Presently, Whitewater teaches cooking classes at the Santa Fe School of Cooking, on Native American Foods of the Southwest with chef Lois Ellen Frank. Their cooking classes feature recipes from the James Beard Award winning cookbook, Foods of the Southwest Indian Nations. Walter Whitewater also teaches private Native American cooking classes and does guest chef appearances have taken him to many restaurants nationally. He is currently working on two Public Education DVD's featuring plant based ancestral Native American ingredients for healthy Native American cooking entitled "Traditional Foods that prevent and Heal diabetes "

Marc Anderson

Marc Anderson (Seminole) was born in Norman, OK in 1952 and is a Great-Great-Great Grandson of Chief Billy Bowlegs. He received a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Michigan in 1980 and is a Professional Engineer and Certified Water Right Examiner in Oregon where he resides.

He has worked as an environmental & water resources consultant for Tribal governments since 1997 to build their capacity for environmental protection. Mr. Anderson has recently teamed with the Physicians for Responsible Medicine (Washington DC) to spread the message about a plant-based diet to reverse type 2 diabetes in Native American communities, which also promotes food sovereignty, public health, environmental stewardship, and cultural affirmation.

Wetumka Indian Community gets Ready for the Growing Season Community Seeds Tomatoes, Peppers and Cabbage

WETUMKA -- Wetumka Indian Community members have recently seeded tomatoes and peppers and are preparing for the upcoming growing season.

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative organized the demonstration class for indoor seeding that was attended by a dozen tribal members, including two children. Participants seeded several varieties of tomatoes, peppers, and also cabbage.

The demonstration class is set-up with three basic components that include planning, training, and hands-on learning. The classes are very informal and are organized by MFSI Staff Member Stephanie Berryhill, who completed the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Program in 2012. Berryhill is new to growing food and focuses on bringing organization and planning to community efforts to access healthy, whole foods. "The community directs the planning -- they tell me what they want and I provide training and materials. It's a collaborative effort in an atmosphere where there is an informal and open exchange of learning," Berryhill said.

The next session at Wetumka Indian Community Center will be held at 7 p.m., March 1 where class participants will report on the progress of their seedlings and receive additional information on tomato and pepper plant care. Training and information on growing watermelon, cantelope, cucumbers, and corn will also be offered. Wetumka Indian Community has both new and experienced growers who are participating in demonstration classes. They are motivated to grow food at the individual level through home garden plots or container gardens, but they enjoy coming together as a community to plan and prepare for growing, said Berryhill. It's important for new growers to get support to help them be successful in their efforts to begin growing food and that includes training, information, and materials, she said.

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative was originally invited into this community by Community Chair Jennie Lillard last May with a request for a tomato and pepper demonstration class. Lillard is a fellow in MFSI's 2013 Beginning Farmer and Rancher Program and is taking the horticulture training track. Margaret Hobia, another Wetumka Indian Community member, is also a BFR fellow in the livestock training track.

Lillard's position of leadership in this community and her participation in the BFR program make the working relationship between Wetumka Indian Community and MFSI an ideal situation, Berryhill said. One of the things that MFSI is striving for in rural communities, such as Wetumka, that have obstacles associated with accessing healthy, whole foods is the establishment of local farmers markets. "And who better to offer this from the level of organization to the food growers and producers than local peoples."

Preventing and managing diet-related diseases and the connection to issues of access to healthy, whole foods is a matter that is a priority for Muscogee (Creek) Nation Food and Fitness Policy Council work. Coming up with solutions to problems, such as rural "food deserts," is being done through work that focuses on community organization efforts to access healthy, whole foods and through tribal policy that strengthens such initiatives. In rural communities,

such as Wetumka and Dustin, access to affordable foods often includes a 60-mile, round-trip drive to supermarkets in larger towns like Okmulgee.

The BFR program is a USDA-funded project that is administered by the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture in Poteau. Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative's approach to fulfilling its role as one of the Kerr Center's BFR program partners includes a focus on training that is held at tribal community centers, although classes are offered at no cost and are open to the general public.

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation Food and Fitness Policy Council is organized under MFSI and supported by Communities Creating Healthy Environments, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

For more information on community (ceremonial grounds, tribal towns, churches, etc.) efforts to access healthy, whole foods -- including growing, harvesting, or preparing food -- contact June Marshall, MFSI Beginning Farmer and Rancher program manager, or Berryhill at (918) 756-5915. For more information on the work of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Food and Fitness Policy Council, contact Rita Williams, CCHE, at (918) 759-1891.



Park Elementary After School Program children listening to Mr. Eagle and Rain that Dances discuss the importance of being physically active and eating the right foods to help prevent Type 2 diabetes during the Eagle Play on Tuesday February 5th, 2013

Tulsa Creek Indian Community Organizing Youth Teens Learn How to Make Grape Dumplings

TULSA -- Tulsa Creek Indian Community is organizing a youth group with strong interest in projects and activities related to growing and preparing food and has already held a class on grape dumpling cooking.

The youth group is currently considering a garden project and has recently learned how to cook the traditional Mvskoke dish grape dumplings. The class size was small, but had an ideal attendance number for such hands-on learning. It was taught by community members Pat Powell and Johnna Gouge. Gouge, and her husband, Leonard, are also leading the organization of the group.

They recently requested that MFSI attend their meeting held in early February. MFSI looks forward to helping Tulsa Creek Indian Community and other tribal youth groups in their efforts to related to accessing healthy, whole foods.

The Tulsa youth are just beginning, but are in a good place with the support of adults who are committed to organizing and teaching them, Stephanie Berryhill said. "They have started off well in terms of setting up a learning opportunity that can be fun and will appeal to young people. Most of the youth that attended were related; organizing classes where participants are peers who have connections, whether biological family or community memberships, have the potential to support the continuation of Mvskoke food ways such as preparing grape dumplings," Berryhill said.

For more information on starting Mvskoke community (ceremonial grounds, tribal towns, churches, etc.) youth projects related to healthy, whole foods -- including growing, harvesting,

or preparing food -- contact Berryhill at (918) 756-5915.

Above: Tulsa Creek Indian Teens learn how to make grape dumplings. The young ladies were quick learners and did a nice job rolling out the dough for grape dumplings.



Park Elementary School children stretching before singing and dancing The Eagle Song. The Eagle Adventure Program is taught in four lessons using the four eagle books written by Georgia Perez who was visited by an eagle in her dream that inspired her to write the books. The four stories help us learn how to be healthy and strong: Through the Eyes of the Eagle, Knees Lifted High, Plate Full of Color, and Tricky Treats.

Oklahoma Market Gardening School, Tulsa, OK

H. June Marshall,
Community Coordinator

The 2013 Oklahoma Market Gardening School provided by the Oklahoma State University, Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation, Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry began January 15 and will end on March 5 has been a great educational opportunity to learn about crops in Oklahoma. The course outline has been followed pretty much to the T: Getting started/resource management, soils and fertilizer management, irrigation-pecan-strawberry production, crop establishment and fruit production, vegetable crop production, pest management, season extension techniques, and food safety and marketing. The course presenters have been excellent. Dr. Lynn Brandenberger and Ms. Kenda Woodburn have been instrumental in keeping everything organized for the students besides being presenters. Last week's training was about growing vegetables in Oklahoma. Students were provided a guide, Oklahoman's Guide to Growing Fruits, Nuts, and Vegetables (E-995), that will be used to discuss tomatoes that everyone loves to grow and eat. Dr. Brandenberger talked about the following crops: Brassica Head, Bulbs, Cucurbit, Fruiting Vegetable, Leafy, Legumes, Root and Tuber, and other crops such as asparagus, okra, and sweet corn.

Tomatoes are a warm season crop, and can be grown all summer way into the fall. Tomatoes like a well-drained medium textured soils pH of 6.0 to 6.8, lime at pH levels below 5.5. Tomatoes grow best when night temperatures are above 60°F and day temperatures are below 90°F. Tomatoes are not normally direct seeded in Oklahoma. What this means is that seeds are grown in greenhouse or in your home before transplanting to the soil and only after all dangers of frost are over (Oklahoman's Guide to Growing Fruits, Nuts, and Vegetables, pg. 84). A Fact Sheet from the Oklahoma Cooperative

Extension Service HLA-6035, Commercial Vegetable Varieties for Oklahoma, provided the following tomato varieties that are adapted to the area:

Red:

- *Florida 47R, Vf1,2,ASC, St
- *Florida 91, VF1,2,ASC, St
- *Mountain Fresh Plus, VF1,2,N
- *Mountain Glory, VF1,2, TSWV
- *Paragon, VF1,2
- *Scarlet Red, VF1,2,ASC,St
- *Solar Fire, VF1,2,3,St
- *Top Gun, VF1,2,ASC,St, TSWV
- *Valley Girl, VF1,2

Yellow:

- *Carolina Gold, VF1,2

Red Cherry:

- Washington Cherry
- Baxter's Early Bush
- *Cherry Grande, V,F,ASC
- *Mountain Belle, V,F

Yellow Cherry:

- *GoldNuggett, V

Pink, LightRed, Plum:

Principe Borghese

*Above tomato Disease resistance codes:

V = Verticillium wilt

F = Fusarium wilt (with races 1,2,3 denoted)

N = Southern root knot nematode

ASC = Alternaria stem canker

St = Stemphylium (gray leaf spot)

TSWV = Tomato spotted wilt virus

Fact Sheets are available at <http://osufacts.okstate.edu>



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<http://www.mvskokefood.org>

March 2013

RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED



Fall 2012 Possum Grape Season, Dicey Barnett helps her niece, Emily, harvest possum grapes by pulling down the vine

Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit, organized exclusively for charitable, educational and scientific purposes.

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

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