

IN THIS ISSUE
DUNCAN HILCHEY

**Indigenous food sovereignty
in North America**

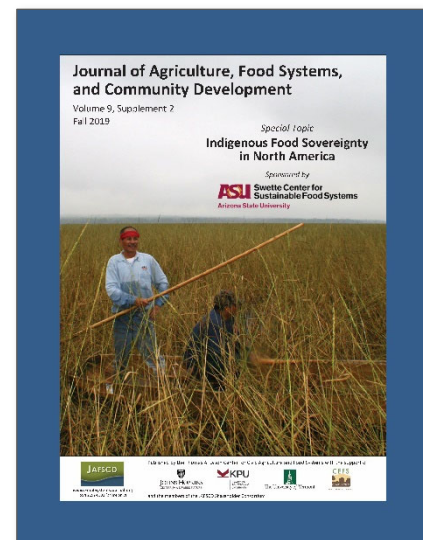
Special JAFSCD Issue
Indigenous Food Sovereignty in North America
sponsored by



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This special issue draws attention to the roles and responsibilities of knowledge producers, knowledge keepers, and food systems actors in managing and enhancing access to culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods in Indigenous communities in North America. Our sponsor for this issue is the Swette Center for Sustainable Food Systems at Arizona State University. With Executive Director Dr. Kathleen Merrigan (former U.S. Department of Agriculture deputy secretary and chief operating officer), the Swette Center has a global mission to create and disseminate knowledge about food systems that drives economic productivity and social progress.

In our call for papers, we sought empirical, theoretical, or pedagogical contributions from academics and practitioners that inform Indigenous food sovereignty policy and practice. We encouraged manuscripts documenting interagency and/or nation-to-nation collaboration, as well as collaboration among public, nonprofit, and private enterprises, and scholar/practitioner co-partners. We hoped for submissions that closely examined processes as well as those that interrogated failed or struggling programs or policies.

In the end, our call yielded 13 peer-reviewed papers, four in-depth commentaries, and three *Voices From the Grassroots* essays, covering a range of themes from ongoing struggles with vestiges of North America's colonial history to powerful stories of reclaiming food sovereignty through reinvigorating or rediscovering traditional and sacred foods and foodways. We're pleased to share this range of projects and perspectives with you, our readers. Along the way, we are not only introduced to remarkable people and projects, but also to a

On our cover: Members of the White Earth Nation (Ojibwe) in Ogema, Minnesota, harvest manoomin (wild rice) in the fall. One tribal member poles the boat through the rice while another uses “knockers” to drop the rice into the canoe.

Photo copyright © 2009 by Duncan Hilchey.

variety of Indigenous research methodologies borne out of collaborations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars, activists, and university staff.

We are grateful for the guidance and leadership of our editorial team for this special issue, including:

- Dr. Andrew Berardy, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Swette Center for Sustainable Food Systems, Arizona State University
- Dr. AL Anderson-Lazo, Director of Research and Evaluation, Rural Coalition
- Dr. John Phillips, Executive Director, First Americans Land-Grant Consortium (FALCON)
- Dr. Janie Simms Hipp, CEO, Native American Agriculture Fund
- Dr. Elizabeth Hoover, Executive Committee, Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance, and Manning Associate Professor of American Studies at Brown University
- Dr. Christopher Wharton, College of Health Solutions, Arizona State University
- Dr. Bryan Brayboy, Professor of Indigenous Education and Justice, School of Social Transformation, Arizona State University

We thank all the JAFSCD reviewers who assisted by not only reviewing but in some cases mentoring a number of early-career and non-academic authors in this issue. I would also like to extend a special thanks to Dr. Keith Williams, First Nations Technical Institute (Canada), for his over-and-above contribution to the issue through reviewing and mentoring authors. A complete list of JAFSCD's reviewers can be found at <https://foodsystemsjournal.org/index.php/fsj/jafscdreviewers>.

Please note that a number of authors have used the terminology for tribal names, foods, places, etc., according to tribal or stakeholder preferences. We have done our best to follow these preferences in a respectful way. Any errors are our own.

We begin this special issue with the always insightful column from **John Ikerd**, entitled *Indigenous Wisdom and the Sovereignty to Eat Meat*, in which he explores the role of meat in the diet of Indigenous North Americans, in sustainable agroecosystems, and in personal dietary choice.

Next are three **Voices From the Grassroots** essays. Voices essays share critical experiences from practitioners' and activists' points of view and are intended to inform the work of organizational peers as well as the research community. **Nora Frank-Buckner** and **Northwest Tribal Food Sovereignty Coalition Members** offer the *Northwest Tribal Food Sovereignty Coalition: An Intertribal Collaboration*. **Rhonda Bowers, Pat Harris, Clarisse Harris, Kathryn Lone Fight**, and **Ina Weed** author *Reviving and Reclaiming Our Native Food System: Leadership Experiences of a Research Project's Community Advisory Board*. **Zachary Paige** writes *White Earth Food Sovereignty Initiative: What Food Sovereignty Looks Like on the Sovereign Nation of White Earth*.

Next up are four in-depth commentaries. **Vanessa García Polanco** and **Luis Alexis Rodríguez-Cruz** write *Decolonizing the Caribbean Diet: Two Perspectives on Possibilities and Challenges*. **K. Nicole Wires** and **Johnella LaRose** present *Sogorea Te' Land Trust and Indigenous Food Sovereignty in the San Francisco Bay Area*. **A-dae Romero-Briones** offers *Fighting for the Taste Buds of Our Children*. **Mary Beth Jäger, Daniel B. Ferguson, Orville Huntington, Michael Kotutwa Johnson, Noor Johnson, Amy Juan, Shawna Larson, Peter Pulsifer, Tristan Reader, Colleen Strawhacker, Althea Walker, Denali Whiting, Jamie Wilson, Janene Yazzie, Stephanie Russo Carroll**, and the **rest of the Indigenous Foods Knowledges Network** present *Building an Indigenous Foods Knowledges Network Through Relational Accountability*.

At the core of this special issue are 13 peer-reviewed papers that take deep dives into a wide range of strategies to understand and reclaim Indigenous food sovereignty in North America.

We begin with a paper by **Tony N. VanWinkle** and **Jack Friedman**, who reveal how the opacity and bureaucratic posturing of two federal agencies are discouraging Native American farmers from receiving their fair share of assistance in *Between Drought and Disparity: American Indian Farmers, Resource Bureaucracy, and Climate Vulnerability in the Southern Plains*.

In *Restoring Northern Arapaho Food Sovereignty*, Arapaho researcher **Melvin Arthur** and colleague and White ally **Christine Porter** correct the historical record of a tribal community's recent and sudden loss of food sovereignty—and its struggle to regain it.

In *Our Hands at Work: Indigenous Food Sovereignty in Western Canada*, **Tabitha Robin** presents stories that explore in-depth traditional foodways, identifying history, connection to the land, relationships, and cultural identity as keys to understanding Indigenous food sovereignty.

Next, **Charles Z. Levkoe**, **Lana Ray**, and **Jessica Mclaughlin** explore the challenges faced by a food policy council in addressing food sovereignty for all residents in *The Indigenous Food Circle: Reconciliation and Resurgence through Food in Northwestern Ontario*.

In *A Holistic Definition of Healthy Traditional Harvest Practices for Rural Indigenous Communities in Interior Alaska*, **Krista M. Heeringa**, **Orville Huntington**, **Brooke Woods**, **F. Stuart Chapin III**, **Richard E. Hum**, **Todd J. Brinkman**, and **Workshop Participants** provide a case example of how food sovereignty can be effectively informed by the deep engagement of community stakeholders.

The development of a new undergraduate degree program in Indigenous food systems based on traditional Haudenosaunee principles and informed by transformative learning theory is the focus of *Good Words, Good Food, Good Mind: Restoring Indigenous Identities and Ecologies through Transformative Learning*, by **Keith Williams** and **Suzanne Brant**.

Using their novel “sovereign storytelling” method, **Rachael Budowle**, **Melvin L. Arthur**, and **Christine M. Porter** investigate the value of home gardening across generations in *Growing Intergenerational Resilience for Indigenous Food Sovereignty through Home Gardening*.

Jennifer Sowerwine, **Daniel Sarna-Wojcicki**, **Megan Mucioki**, **Lisa Hillman**, **Frank K. Lake**, and **Edith Friedman** reflect on their community-based participatory research project to develop a healthier, more resilient, and culturally relevant tribal food system in *Enhancing Food Sovereignty: A Five-year Collaborative Tribal-University Research and Extension Project in California and Oregon*.

In *Contribution of Wild Foods to Diet, Food Security, and Cultural Values Amidst Climate Change*, **Erin Smith**, **Selena Ahmed**, **Virgil Dupuis**, **MaryAnn Running Crane**, **Margaret Eggers**, **Mike Pierre**, **Kenneth Flagg**, and **Carmen Byker Shanks** find that low-income residents of one Indigenous community report that climate change is already impacting their ability to secure the wild foods that are critical to supplementing government food support.

Next, **Staci Emm**, **Jessica Harris**, **Judy Halterman**, **Sarah Chvilicek**, and **Carol Bishop** present the results of their nutrition education project to increase food security for children in *Increasing Fruit and Vegetable Intake with Reservation and Off-reservation Kindergarten Students in Nevada*.

In *Ka'tshatst'isla: “Strength of Belief and Vision as a People”—Oneida Resilience and Corn*, **Lois L. Stevens** and **Joseph P. Brewer II** present a case study of how a remote Oneida tribal community is rediscovering its traditional spiritual connection to corn.

In *Eating in Place: Mapping Alternative Food Procurement in Canadian Indigenous Communities*, **Jennifer Sumner**, **M. Derya Tarhan**, and **J. J. McMurtry** put the spotlight on local projects such as community gardens, greenhouses, and co-operatives that are being initiated redress Indigenous food insecurity.

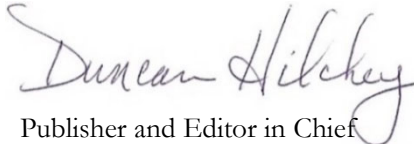
Finally, wrapping up the issue are **Shirley Thompson**, **Keshab Thapa**, and **Norah Whiteway**, who use

innovative land-use map biographies to map an Indigenous community's wild food harvest locations in *Sacred Harvest, Sacred Place: Mapping Harvesting Sites in Wasagamack First Nation*.

With this issue, we hope to begin a long and fruitful exploration into the food sovereignty of Indigenous peoples around the world. There is much to learn about the challenges faced by communities who are using creative means to cast off the cultural shackles of colonialism, while simultaneously enriching all our lives with a profound understanding of the connection of foodways to culture, spirituality, and long-term community resilience. What we learn from the past and present struggle of Indigenous people can inform a resilient future for all of humankind.

We welcome the ongoing submission of research papers and *Voices From the Grassroots* essays on Indigenous food sovereignty, especially those from tribal communities, activists, researchers, and non-Indigenous collaborators.

With appreciation,



Publisher and Editor in Chief