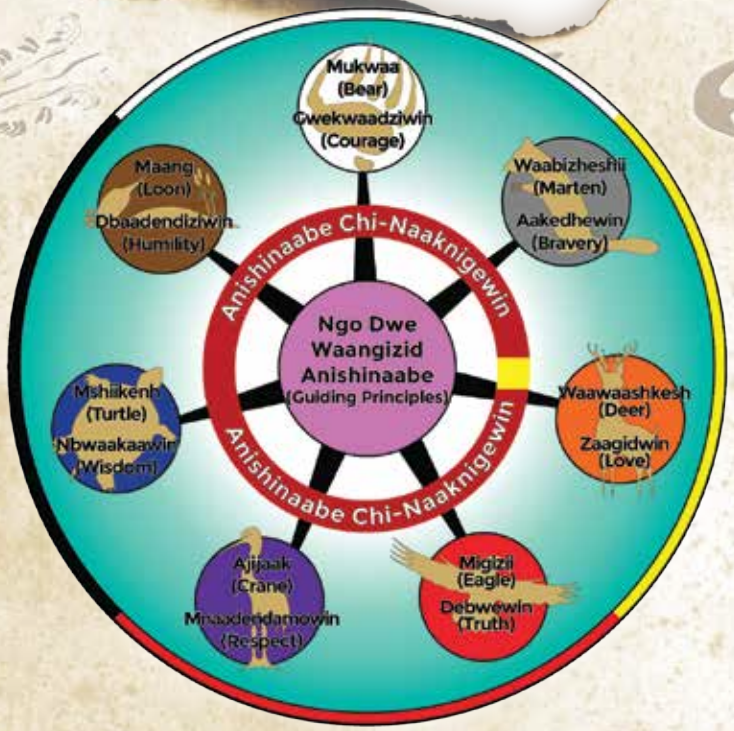
ANISHINABEK NATION
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
Final Report | 2019/20




Anishinabek Nation - Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
2019/20

For additional copies of the publication, please contact:
Lands and Resources Department
Anishinabek Nation
P.O. Box 711
North Bay, ON P1B 8J8
Tel: (705) 497-9127

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
This Round Table summary report was funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Photos are courtesy of the Anishinabek Nation. We thank all the Anishinabek community members and staff for participating, sharing their experiences, and providing recommendations.



NGO DWE WAANGIZID ANISHINAABE

One Anishinaabe Family

Debenjiged gii'saan anishinaaben akiing giibi dgwon gaadeni mnidoo waadiziwin.
(Creator placed the Anishinabe on the earth along with the gift of spirituality.)

Shkode, nibi, aki, noodin, giibi dgosdoonan wii naagdowendmang maanpii shkagmigaang.
(Here on mother earth, there were gifts given to the Anishinabe to look after, fire, water, earth and wind.)

Debenjiged gii miinaan gechtwaa wendaagog Anishinaaben waa naagdoonjin ninda niizhwaaswi kino maadwinan:
(The Creator also gave the Anishinabe seven sacred gifts to guide them. They are:)

Zaagidwin, Debwewin, Mnaadendmowin, Nbwaakaawin, Dbaadendiziwin, Gwekwaadziwin miinwa Aakedhewin.
(Love, Truth, Respect, Wisdom, Humility, Honesty and Bravery.)

Debenjiged kiimiingona dedbinwe wi naagdowendiwin.
(Creator gave us sovereignty to govern ourselves.)

Ka mnaadendanaa gaabi zhiwebag miinwaa nango megwaa ezhwebag, miinwa geyaabi waa ni zhiwebag.
(We respect and honour the past, present and future.)

Preamble to the Anishinaabe Chi-Naaknigewin (Anishinabek Nation Constitution)
Adopted by the Anishinabek Grand Council - June 6, 2012

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OBJECTIVES OF THE TRANSFER PAYMENT AGREEMENT

The Anishinabek Nation (AN) and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) established a relationship in 2016, when the two organizations entered into annual Transfer Payment Agreements which outlined the scope of deliverables. Agriculture and food in Ontario includes overlapping areas of interest and concern for the AN and presents a variety of potential opportunities for engagement and development of initiatives. The AN communities seek to increase awareness of the importance of the agricultural sector, as well as contribute traditional ecological knowledge, experience and skills within the agricultural sector to foster a better quality of life, access to natural resources and economic opportunities for AN citizens.

A previous agreement with the OMAFRA enabled the AN to begin a relationship with the Province on agriculture and food initiatives, such as on the Fish Food Safety Modernization for provincial fish processors and on the Agricultural Soil Health and Conservation Strategy development for Ontario. This resulted in raising awareness of these initiatives with the 39 member communities and providing them with opportunities for input into the initiatives of the Province.

The goal of the relationship is to provide both parties with education, awareness and technical and policy support concerning the Province's initiatives relevant to both AN's participation in the agri-food system, including but not limited to agriculture, aquaculture and food processing. Other related initiatives where knowledge was transferred include the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP) program, and agri-environmental initiatives such as the Soil Health and Conservation Strategy.

The AN hosted a series of Round Table information sessions to provide opportunities for the community representatives to provide feedback including concerns and interests to the Province regarding initiatives that may include proposed policies, programs, legislation and regulations. Along with knowledge sharing and discussion of the Province's agri-food initiatives, these tables aim to explore AN community involvement in education and awareness, economic development and environmental stewardship as they relate to the agri-food system.

The AN has been working with OMAFRA through a process commonly refered to as the Regional Framework. In this framework, representatives of each member community of the AN attend a table corresponding to their region. The purpose of the Tables is to improve the ability of the Anishinabek communities to engage with and benefit from the development of agricultural and aquaculture initiatives.

This report covers the period from April 1st, 2019 to March 31st, 2019.

STEERING COMMITTEE

A Steering Committee was established and includes three members representing the AN and OMAFRA. Members of the Steering Committee for the 2019-20 fiscal year included:

Anishinabek Nation	OMAFRA
Jason Laronde, Director of Lands and Resources Phone: (705) 497-9127 ext. 2263 Jason.laronde@anishinabek.ca	Rick Berthiaume, Manager Economic Development Programs and Information Services (519) 826-4093 (phone) (519) 993-4698 (cell) rick.berthiaume@ontario.ca
Lynn Moreau Program Coordinator, Agriculture Lands and Resources Department (705) 497-9127 ext. 2334 Lynn.moreau@anishinabek.ca	Terri Bulman Manager, Food Safety and Environmental Policy Branch (519) 826-4184 (office) (519) 993-4698 (cell) Terri.bulman@ontario.ca
Rhonda Gagnon Policy Analyst, Lands and Resources Department (705) 497-9127 ext. 2318 Rhonda.gagnon@anishinabek.ca	George Ferreira Economic Development Specialist, Economic Development Division (519) 831-4786 George.ferreira@ontario.ca

The Steering Committee meets quarterly throughout the year, two times in Northern Ontario and two times in Southern Ontario, or via teleconference. The Committee identifies regional priorities for action and ensures that work plans and action items are being monitored and carried out. They discuss issues and share information about potential opportunities, agricultural related activities, workshops, conferences and events throughout the year.

ROUND TABLES

A series of 3 Regional Round Table sessions organized in the Anishinabek regions in 2019-2020. Information from the Round Tables will continue to be shared on an ongoing basis and support is offered to member communities on agriculture as requested.

The agenda for the Round Table discussions was finalized in advance by the Steering Committee. The topics covered this year are included in Table 1.

LANDS AND RESOURCE FORUM

A Lands and Resources Forum was held at Nipissing University from October 22-24 in North Bay. A separate report is being prepared on this event and this event was considered to cover the fourth Round Table as per the deliverables of OMAFRA's transfer payment agreement.

Region Acronyms

NS - Northern Superior **SE/SW** - Southeast/Southwest **LH** - Lake Huron

*(10) 15 – First number in column 5 represents number of individuals present from a First Nation. Second number represents total number of people present at the meeting including presenters and government representatives.

Table 1: Round Table Sessions

Date	Region	Location	Topics	# Present	Communities Present
May 22, 2019	NS	Sault Ste. Marie	OMAFRA Programs, Services and Funding The Wikwemikong Community Garden Story Ripple Farms Federal Aquaculture Act AN Caucus	10 (15)	Biigtigong Nishnaabeg Long Lake 58 Red Rock (Lake Helen) Namaygoosisagagun Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek (Rocky Bay)
May 23, 2019	LH	Sault Ste. Marie	OMAFRA Programs, Services and Funding The Wikwemikong Community Garden Story Ripple Farms Aquaculture in Ontario	9 (11)	Sheguiandah Zhiibaahaasing Thessalon Sheshegwaning Serpent River Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory Pays Plat
May 29, 2019	SE/SW	Rama	OMAFRA Programs, Services and Funding The Wikwemikong Community Garden Story Aquaculture in Ontario Chiblow Fish Anishinabek Nation Caucus	6 (10)	Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory Mississauga #8 Curve Lake Aundeck Omni Kaning Aaamjiwnaang
July 10, 2019	LH	North Bay (AN Headquarters)	Local Food and Farm Co-ops Thunder Bay Indigenous Food Circle Board's Honey Environmental Farm Plans Rural Agricultural Information Network Study Report	7 (15)	Thessalon Nipissing Sheshegwaning M'Chigeeng Sagamok Anishnawbek Whitefish River
July 17, 2019	NS	Thunder Bay	Thunder Bay Indigenous Food Circle Local Food and Farm Co-ops and RAIN (Rural Agricultural Innovation Network) 4H Ontario Food Policy for Canada RAIN Study Report/Ag Advisory Panel Discussion	7 (13)	Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek (Rocky Bay) Long Lake 58 Red Rock (Lake Helen) Biigtigong Nishnawbeg

July 25, 2019	SE/SW	Casino Rama	Thunder Bay Indigenous Food Circle Local Food and Farm Co-ops Indian Agricultural Program of Ontario Black Duck Wild Rice RAIN Study Report/ Agricultural Advisory Committee Discussion	7 (11)	Chippewas of the Thames Sheguiandah Chippewas of Rama Aamjiwnaang Curve Lake
October 22-24, 2019	All Regions (Lands Forum)	Nipissing University, North Bay	Opening Address and Joint Leadership Discussion Anishinabek Nation Building Councils Canada's New Impact Assessment System OMAFRA Regulatory Updates and the Agrifood Environment Plan Species at Risk and Roads Aamjiwnaang Storyboard Mapping Project Biigtigong Nishnaabeg & Pic Mobert Mapping Project Mining Innovation AN Consultation Tool Geotechnical and Corridor Management GIS and Mapping Projects Aquaculture Opportunities in Ontario Canadian Coast Guard Presentation Off-Reserve Procurement and Best Practices	Day 1: 58 (69) Day 2: 32 (55) Individuals including two Tribal Councils and Provincial/ Federal Government Day 3: 30 (34)	Whitefish River Pays Plat Nipissing Sheguiandah Aamjiwnaang M'Chigeeng Sagamok Anishnawbek Red Rock (Lake Helen) Wahnapitae Namaygoosissagagun Munsee Delaware Atikamekshen Anishinabek Kettle and Stony Point Thessalon United Chiefs and Councils of Manitoulin Mississauga #8 Long Lake 58 Biigtigong Nishnaabe Aundeck Omni Kaning Pays Plat Magnetawan Dokis Curve Lake Pikwakanagan United Chiefs and Councils of Manitoulin Wasauksing Shawanaga

cont.	cont.	cont.	24 Nations Treaty Belt of 1764 Anishinabek Nation Caucus	cont.	Mississaugas of Scugog Island Garden River AN Kwe-Wuk Council Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory
January 16, 2020	SE/SW	Casino Rama	Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance and Response Plan Indigenous Habitat Participation Program (DFO) The Canadian Coast Guard Establishing a Relationship The Ugly Barn Farm Mushroom Culture OMAFRA Policy Initiatives: • Fish Processing Regulation • Trespass to Property Act • Sale of Crown Lands for Agriculture • Funding Opportunities Anishinabek Legal Case Law Document	15(17)	Moose Deer Point Rama Alderville Aamjiwnaang Beausoleil Mississauga #8 Cambium Aboriginal Magnetawan Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory Curve Lake
January 23, 2020	LH	North Bay (AN Headquarters)	Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance and Response Plan Indigenous Habitat Participation Program (DFO) The Canadian Coast Guard Establishing a Relationship The Ugly Barn Farm Mushroom Culture OMAFRA Policy Initiatives: • Fish Processing Regulation • Trespass to Property Act • Sale of Crown Lands for Agriculture • Funding Opportunities Anishinabek Legal Case Law Document	17 (20)	Wiikwemkoong Unceded United Chiefs and Councils of Manitoulin Wahnapitae Atikameksheng Anishinabek Thessalon Robinson Huron Waawiizdaamaagewin Dokis Wabnoong Bemjiwang Tribal Council Whitefish River United Chiefs and Councils of Manitoulin Sheshegwaning Aundeck Omni Kaning

January 28, 2020	NS	Thunder Bay	Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance and Response Plan Indigenous Habitat Participation Program (DFO) The Canadian Coast Guard Establishing a Relationship The Ugly Barn Farm Mushroom Culture OMAFRA Policy Initiatives: • Fish Processing Regulation • Trespass to Property Act • Sale of Crown Lands for Agriculture • Funding Opportunities Anishinabek Legal Case Law Document	8 (30)	Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek Long Lake 58 Pays Plat Red Rock (Lake Helen) Biigtigong Nishnaabeg

From the perspective of the Anishinabek Nation, the Transfer Payment agreement was a success. During the Round Table and Lands Forum sessions, a total of 144 individuals were reached. The program was successful in enhancing the awareness of Anishinabek communities about the programs and services of OMAFRA and in agricultural opportunities in general. The Round Table sessions are now well known by the AN communities as regularly scheduled sessions that are normally well attended by member communities. The Round Table are a successful mechanism of reaching the technical staff within AN communities. They provide an excellent opportunity for the communities to provide feedback on proposed policy, programs, legislation and regulations. They also provide an excellent venue to educate, raise awareness and provide the communities with technical and policy support concerning the Province's initiatives.

Information was also shared using an email distribution list, the Mzinhigan newspaper, the Anishinabek News and via teleconferencing.

One lesson learned is that technical staff are not always the ideal target for agricultural education and outreach since the capacity to participate in agriculture at a band level is lacking. Additional audiences that we are required to reach include youth, off-reserve community members, on-reserve members who may have an agricultural interest, librarians within the communities who are in a good position to disseminate information, and agricultural business owners. To reach these wider audiences, the Anishinabek Nation hopes to move forward to develop an agricultural asset inventory which will identify and map existing agricultural business locations and farms and also map potential food consumers such as daycare children, schools and seniors residences. Development of a map will allow for more extensive networking between communities. We also hope to employ Zoom technology and social media (Facebook, twitter, snapchat, etc) to further enhance communications around agricultural opportunities.

MAY 2019 ROUND TABLES

OMAFRA Programs, Services and Funding

During the Anishinabek Nation Round Table sessions in May, a presentation was prepared that provided an overview of the OMAFRA/AN TPA, the mission of OMAFRA and OMAFRA's indigenous engagement strategy.

Many of Ontario's communities face food insecurity and health and economic development challenges. In Northern communities, a lack of access to healthy food is associated with numerous health concerns. Support is provided for food production, processing and business development. Support for improved marketing of Indigenous food products also exists.

OMAFRA has a local food approach and some of the initiatives include the Pollinator Health Action Plan, the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, the Environmental Farm Plan, the Indigenous Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative and other Federal Funding Programs.

The Local Food Act supports colleges, universities, hospitals and municipalities to purchase local food. OMAFRA encourages the buying and consumption of local food to create jobs and economic growth.

OMAFRA has a wide array of resources and specialists for the following industries: maple syrup, wild rice, honey, organic farming, community gardens, chicken farming, and many more!

OMAFRA has a number of agricultural and rural economic development advisors in your region.

More detailed information is available on the various funding programs, please contact Lynn.

Aquaculture Opportunities

Steve Naylor, DFO

Aquaculture is a growing industry in Ontario. Aquaculture is the farming of aquatic organisms, including fish, molluscs, crustaceans and aquatic plants. The demand for seafood currently exceeds fisheries capacity. Aquaculture is a sustainable and healthy source of food, and provides the means to allow rehabilitation of wild fish populations. More than 50% of seafood comes from farms, climbing to 62% by 2030. Most aquaculture in Canada currently takes place in British Columbia, where salmon and oysters comprise 72% of the industry and 6% of the national supply respectively. Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan grow trout (4% of the industry total) and mussels (14% of industry total) are grown in the Maritime Provinces.

Rainbow trout were introduced from the west coast by fishery managers into the Great Lakes. These species are considered naturalized and are genetically hardy. Rainbow trout are the focus for most Ontario aquaculture operations, based on more than 100 years of research. Domestic strains of trout have been bred to improve on performance and yield. Fish are fed commercial feeds available from several suppliers. Water temperatures are the biophysical resource base throughout much of Canada and in most locations they are near to ideal. An established market exists for rainbow trout, and since these species are naturalized in most parts of the country, they pose little to no threat to wild populations.

The top 10 producing countries currently include Iran, Turkey, Peru, France, Italy, China, Russia, the U.S., Denmark and Spain. In Ontario, rainbow trout comprise 93.5% of the species farmed. Other species farmed include tilapia, barramundi, shrimp, lake whitefish, perch, walleye, arctic char and bass. There are a total of 240 Ontario fish farms with the largest farms being located in the North Channel of Lake Huron off the coast of Manitoulin Island. Farmed trout production in 2015 reached approximately 4500 tonnes annually, with the majority of that being done through cage production. Aquaculture can also be done utilizing ponds, land-based raceways, circular tanks, octagonal tanks and floating containment systems but net pens are the largest contributor to the industry. Most trout in Ontario come from Indigenous fish farms.

Scientific study of the impact of aquaculture has been conducted at the Experimental Lakes Area by Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) staff where controlled experiments to address aquatic issues were established in 1968. These studies, led by Dr. Cheryl Podemski of the Freshwater Institute looked at whole lake system effects to understand how aquaculture affected fish population dynamics and abundance. In locations where aquaculture was done, lake trout were found to grow faster and fatter, with an earlier age of maturity, increased annual survival and increased recruitment (more fish spawning each year). After cages were removed, fish populations returned to pre-culture abundance two years after cage culture was stopped. Scientific efforts have also been conducted at existing commercial operations to examine the impacts of sedimentation on North Channel farms.

Net pens face a myriad of issues during operation. These include ice movement which can damage cages, resulting in fish escapes. Other issues include fluctuating water temperatures and high energy wave action which can impact fish feeding and cage stability.

Recently, more sophisticated rearing strategies have been developed including Recirculating Aquaculture Systems (RAS) and aquaponics. These systems are expensive and technically complex and are isolated from the natural environment. A RAS facility is currently being developed at Mississaugi First Nation and an aquaponics system is being developed at Moose Cree First Nation. Other communities are successfully rearing walleye and whitefish.

The Northern Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (NICFI) has been developed in collaboration with Waubetek to assist Indigenous groups in growing self-sustaining community-based commercial fishing enterprises. This project creates opportunities for capacity building and generation of employment opportunities. Eligible projects include communal commercial fishing enterprises and aquaculture development with a focus on business development planning, advice and training. NICFI is a 5 year program funded and administered by DFO. For more information on the NICFI program, please contact Nicholas Huber, Aquaculture Development Officer at Waubetek.

https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/aboriginal-autochtones/nicfi-ipcin/index-eng.html

The Wiikwemkoong Community Garden Story

Christianna Jones and Jocelyn Bebamikawe, Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory

Agriculture and food production in Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory has been going on since time immemorial. In the early 1900's Wiikwemkoong shipped large quantities of maple sugar and syrup to markets in southern Ontario. There are many homesteads throughout the community that were once productive working farms that provided meat and produce for community members. Jocelyn and Christianna began gardening because they had a passion for it. They gained independence and saved money by producing food themselves. They also enjoyed educating others to gain skills and confidence in embracing this healthier, more active lifestyle. They did this by creating partnerships with friends and family, colleagues and community organizations. They started out with doing community gardening workshops in 2014.

In 2015 they initiated a raised bed gardening project and began tilling community member's plots. They also hosted gardening workshops and partnered with Ontario Works, Wikwemikong Development Corporation (WDC), and the Health Centre and the Family Centre. In 2017 they applied to the Rural Economic Development Fund for a value added apple study and applied to Sustainable New Agri-food Products and Productivity Fund (SNAPP) for apple presses. They also applied to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for a Foodshare Coordinator. They won an AVIVA fund for $50,000 to build a greenhouse at the high school and worked in partnership with Focus Forward for Indigenous Youth to put this plan to action. In 2018, the Foodshare Community Gardens program was initiated and they applied to Trees Canada for fruit trees. They started the Wiikwemkoong Gitigaan Club and started a Bee Club. They began revitalization of pre-existing grape and asparagus plots. Their plans for 2020 and beyond are to start development of a fully functioning Market Garden and Community Farm & Food Co-op. They also plan to train community members as fruit tree arborists and continue beekeeping training. Funds were raised through the sale of rain barrels.

Some tips they have for others beginning these programs are that the people selected must be passionate about the work, and you need the support of the community. Look for both internal and external partnerships. Plan budgets for your projects and find a central location for your gardens. Grow things familiar to your community and in the first year, plant easy crops. A central person will be needed to coordinate where volunteers are involved.

Ripple Farms-Aquaponics

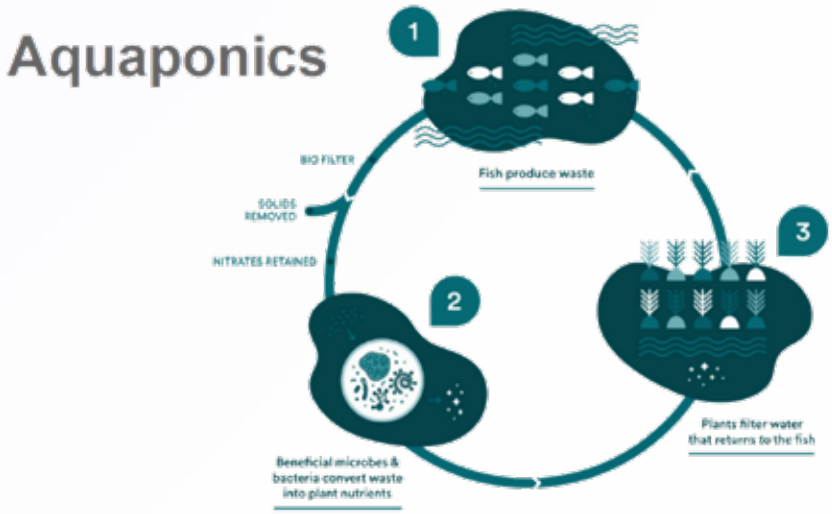
Brandon Hebor

Ripple Farms is an urban aquaculture (aquaponics) company based in Toronto. Aquaponics is a system where waste from living fish is utilized by plants which filter the water, and convert waste from the fish into plant nutrients, using beneficial microbes and bacteria. Plants are grown in a floating mat on top of the water. Alternatively, plants can be grown in a growing medium separate from fish, but where the waste water from the fish is used for nutrients. Nitrates are retained in the system, while solids are removed. Aquaponics was founded by the Aztec who grew plants on islands called Chinampas.

Ripple Farms has built an Education Hub in Toronto and an Innovation Hub at Seneca College. Through the precision agriculture system, they grow microgreens for restaurants in Toronto. They have formed an alliance with Nelson & Pade in Montello, Wisconsin where an Aquaponics Centre of Excellence is being developed. This facility includes a classroom, hobby greenhouse and commercial systems centre. Ripple Farms is currently producing seafood for Toronto restaurants and is certified by Oceanwise. They educate school groups and have workshops for Grades 3-8, and Grades 9-12. They

also have educational workshops for adults. They have developed three different sizes of aquaponics systems for commercial sale, including those designed for homes and classrooms, hobby farms/community gardens, commercial production, cannabis production and decoupled systems ranging in size from 50 square feet to 200,000 square feet

http://ripplefarms.ca/



Chiblow Fish

Bob and Rita Chiblow

Chiblow Fish was founded by Bob and Rita Chiblow. Bob started out working as a fisherman and Fisheries Coordinator for his home community of Mississauga First Nation. As a fisherman, Bob found that he was at the mercy of buyers and due to competition, was unable to make a living as a commercial fisherman. He now runs a full service catering company that hosts a travelling fish and chip wagon catering mainly to the summer pow-wow trail. He has established a pan-fried fish reputation that is now well established and growing. He has catered a wide range of community and corporate events as a vendor. Some of the barriers he has faced in the development of his business include funding; aboriginal agencies are tougher than banks. Municipal regulations are another barrier. City Health agencies are pretty helpful and provide him with temporary licenses. He has achieved success by financing much of the business himself, and progressing and scaling up his business slowly. One lesson he has learned is that to be prepared to do everything yourself. Bob currently obtains his fish product (zander) from an overseas supplier, since it is less expensive than purchasing local product

http://www.chiblowfish.com/Fish-Catering.html

JULY 2019 ROUNDTABLES

Local Food and Farm Co-ops

Peggy Baillie

Local food and farm co-ops is a member-driven provincial network with several program areas;

- Co-op field schools, which include trainings, webinars, facilitation and mentoring
- Trade Routes Project which includes infrastructure, co-op development and feasibility research in the north
- Northern Food Distribution Network - includes networking and planning for strengthening the Northern Ontario food system

- Northwest Beef Co-operative which includes raising, processing and marketing beef together
- Co-ops for All: facilitating food security at food and farm co-ops
- New members services such as bookkeeping and communications/marketing
- The Fair Finance Fund which is administered by Local Food and Farm Co-ops

A co-op is a democratically structured corporation that is jointly owned, and is formed to meet the needs of members. Some examples of well known co-ops in Ontario include the Cooperators (insurance), the Cloverbelt Local Food Co-op, and Gay Lea Foods.

International principles of co-ops include voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, member economic participation, autonomy and independence, the provision of education, training and information, co-operation with other co-ops, and concern for the local community. Co-ops are formed to meet the needs of their members, to improve quality of life in communities, to give communities control over the goods and services they need, to create employment, to fill a gap unaddressed by governments, and to serve as a succession strategy for existing business owners. Common barriers with co-ops are a lack of understanding and knowledge about why co-ops are formed. Co-ops are responsive to the needs of a community because they are composed of community stakeholders. Profits created are used to sustain the organization, and co-ops have a social purpose and training goals.

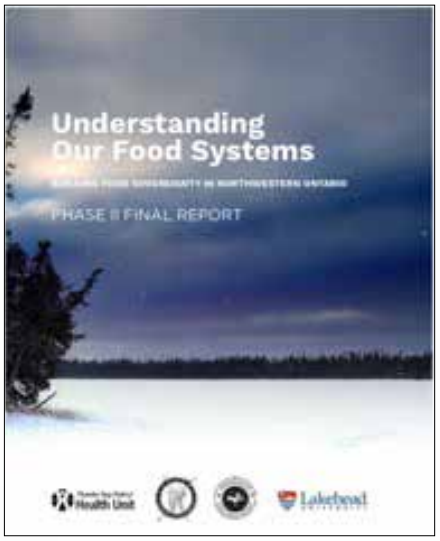
In Canada, co-ops have a significant economic and social impact contributing 44.1 billion to the economy in 2016. 7.9 billion of this arose from agriculture, forestry and fishing in 2016. Co-ops created 101,567 full and part time jobs and had over 9.1 million members in 2016. Co-ops are also long-lived, with over half of Canadian co-ops having been in existence for 21-40 years. Co-ops are often formed by agricultural producers and can also be put online. For example, the Ottawa Valley Food Co-op includes monthly online ordering of local food products sorted and distributed across Renfrew County and Ottawa. Co-ops can also be worker based or can be owned by multiple stakeholders (Example: By the Bushel Community Food Co-op, Peterborough, Ontario).

FAIR FINANCE FUND

Local Food and Farm Co-ops also administers the Fair Finance Fund. The Fair Finance Fund offers loans with five year terms, an interest rate set at 6%, with simple monthly payment, is open to regionally owned food and farm enterprises with a social purpose, is provided with support from experts in the sector, is flexible and committed to diversity, equality, social purpose, healthy communities, people and the planet. Loans can be set between $20,000 and $100,000 and no collateral is required. The average repayment time is five years, with a semi-annual reporting schedule. Loan requirements include a business plan, cash flow statements and projections, a complete application, character references, an on-site visit and a credit check. The impact of the loan is measured through impact indicators such as job creation, increase in sales, and increase in proc urement of local food.

Thunder Bay Indigenous Food Circle

Jessica McLaughlin and Dr. Charles Levcoe



The Thunder Bay Indigenous Food Circle was created as a response to a lack of engagement with the Indigenous population throughout the creation of the Food Strategy. The Indigenous Food Circle is a coalition of 22 indigenous organizations that aims to better understand and promote indigenous perspectives and experiences around food. The Circle uses food as a tool for reconciliation and resurgence by creating the space to reclaim and weave Indigenous knowledge into the Thunder Bay and region's food systems. The Circle attempts to develop the capacity of Indigenous peoples to respond to relevant challenges and opportunities and to improve programming and policy.

Key priorities of the Indigenous Food Circle are to develop a regional, intergenerational network to support connections through food systems, to

improve Indigenous food security, to support Indigenous food sovereignty, to support the resurgence of Indigenous food networks across the region and to establish meaningful relationships with settlers through food. The organization members include health, education, social service and political organizations.

Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agricultural systems. Indigenous food sovereignty includes fishing, hunting and gathering as key elements of a food sovereignty approach and challenges the present day industrial agriculture-based economy, which has been developed and industrialized by settlers through the process of colonization. Indigenous food sovereignty highlights the need for those that produce, harvest and eat food to have decision-making power, not corporations or governments, and puts control of productive resources into the hands of people. It also builds on traditional knowledge and passing this knowledge on to future generations.

In December-March of 2018, the indigenous food circle completed a Phase 1 Project (needs assessment) which identified a number of needs, barriers and opportunities. These included:

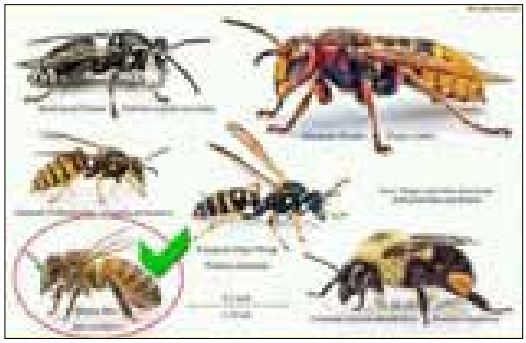
- Wild game and traditional food access
- Cultural sensitivity training
- Sustainable funding (capacity)
- Infrastructure (kitchens, buildings)
- Training (preserving, preparing, gardening)
- Information/research
- Elders and knowledge keepers
- Networks and collaborations

In Phase 2 (Sept-March 2019), in collaboration with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit and Lakehead University, the Circle began development of Community Food Plans based on the community priorities identified in the first phase of the project. This phase included a regional scan of possible solutions and methods to develop regional approaches for Northern communities and organizations to reach their food system goals. The project included community visits and a January gathering and the outcome was the development of a community food sovereignty vision for each community involved. Next steps for the circle include control of all research and projects, establishment of a funding co-operative, expansion of partnerships and collaborations, responding to organizational and community needs, conducting research on key issues, and supporting organizations and communities in their sovereignty visions.

https://foodsystems.lakeheadu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/IFC-Annual-Report-2018-2019.pdf

Board's Honey

Jaime Board



In her presentation on Beeyond Honey, Jaime Board of Board's Honey provided a presentation on how bees are so much more than honey producers. She discussed the importance of wild pollinators and honey bee anatomy. She discussed how hydroponic greenhouses use imported bees and other pollinators. When you keep a small number of colonies they can be kept healthy more easily. She discussed the role of varroa mites and the small hive beetles. The healthier your bee population, the more mites you will find. Bees travel 3-6 kms, and honeybees never sleep. Over 50% of the food you eat every day requires a bee to pollinate it. Bees have been pollinating flowers since before the dinosaurs, and humans have been eating honey for over 10,000 years. Honey has been found in Egyptian tombs. Honey has been used as a food and a wound healer.

Jaime Board described the seasonal activities associated with bee keeping, the honey extraction process, the natural flora that bees feed upon, and the problems associated with herbicide and pesticides. She discussed the natural healing properties of honey, royal jelly, propolis and pollen and the positive by-products of honey such as beeswax. She also discussed the field of apitherapy and the beneficial components of honey and bee venom.

Keeping bees is an excellent agricultural opportunity for individuals and communities all over Ontario and bees are integral in planetary health.

http://boardshoneyfarm.com/

Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association-Environmental Farm Plans

Claude Peloquin

Claude Peloquin of the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association presented on Educational and Cost-share opportunities offered by the Association. The main three workshops that are currently offered include the Environmental Farm Plan, Biosecurity and Growing Your Farm Profits workshops. The Environmental Farm Plan workshop allows you to assess your farm's business challenge or opportunity, prepare an Action Plan, and implement the Action plan. During the implementation phase, some activities may be eligible for cost share funding assistance. The Environmental Farm Plan is a voluntary environmental education and awareness program. Benefits of completing the program are that they allow you evaluate your farm business against a set of standards, identify potential environmental risks, learn about legislation, discover Best Management Practices and develop prioritized Action Plans.

The Growing Your Farm Profits workshop allows you to plan for business success in seven key areas; production management, marketing, financial management, human resources, social responsibility and succession planning, and development of business goals. Benefits of attending such a workshop include the ability to review management practices, set and prioritize goals, identify resources to help meet these goals, build on strength and learn about cost-share opportunities. As an outcome, you develop a prioritized Action Plan.

Biosecurity Workshops allow you to understand the benefits of an on-farm biosecurity program by identifying current practices that could be putting your farm at risk. You work with a veterinarian or Certified Crop Advisor to enhance biosecurity protocols on your farm.

The Provincial Premises Registry is the official registry to obtain an Ontario Premises Identification Number. If you are going to apply for Canadian Agricultural Partnership funding, you need such a number. The Canadian Agricultural Partnership focuses on three key priority areas; economic development, environmental stewardship, and protection and assurance. There are a variety of project categories. For more information, please visit the Ontario Soil and Crop website.

https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/ *https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/canadian-agricultural-partnership/*

Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre-Rural Agricultural Innovation Network (RAIN)

David Thompson

The Rural Agri-Innovation Network (RAIN) is a division of Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre with support from farmers and communities to enhance the agriculture and food sector in Algoma. The mission of RAIN is to build a resilient farm and food sector in northern Ontario through innovative research and agriculture development projects. RAIN encourages business growth and improved capacity for farmers and food businesses, collaborates with industry, government and communities, and leverages digital technologies to grow the agricultural sector.

Key activities include applied research, market development, regional infrastructure and funding opportunities. RAIN is currently doing malting barley research to increase cash crop production and performance and bio-fertilizer research.

RAIN is also scaling up maple syrup production in Northern Ontario by providing funding under the Advancing Northern Maple program, which seeks to expand the maple sector by enabling producers to increase production, grow markets, adopt new technology and create innovative maple products with support from FedNor.

The SNAPP program is also executed through RAIN. SNAPP stands for the Sustainable New Agri-food Products and Productivity Program and is an initiative of RAIN, a division of the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre, in partnership with the Northern Ontario Farm Innovation Alliance and the Northwestern Ontario Innovation Centre. The program supports Northern Ontario agriculture and food producers, businesses, collaborations, communities and First Nations to create new products, enhance productivity and adopt clean technology to support improved environmental performance while fostering growth.

http://rainalgoma.ca

Photo courtesy of Black Duck Wild Rice

Black Duck Wild Rice (Manoomin)

James Whetung

For the last 36 years, James Whetung (Spirit name Binesi-Thunderbird) of Curve Lake has been rehabilitating, protecting and promoting wild rice. James lives on Chemong Lake. The name of his reserve, Curve Lake, has been changed many times. It used to be called Mud Lake due to its connection with the muskrat. Muskrats love wild rice. Wild rice is described in a prophecy outlined in the Mishomis Book by Edward Benton Banai; in the story, food grows on water. Wild rice is also called Menominee-the good seed. This food nourishes not only the people, but our relatives, the crawlers, swimmers and four legged. Wild rice is a part of the history of Anishinabek people. The lakes and rivers around Curve Lake were once considered to be the rice basket of Turtle Island. However, the construction of the Trent-Severn waterway flooded the wild rice beds and destroyed them. The decline of the rice was also attributed to the use of agricultural fertilizers which affected the water quality and the practice of cottagers to dredge up the rice beds in front of their cottages.

About 38 years ago, a permit was issued by the government for a non-native person to commercially harvest wild rice in Ardock. After an uprising by the local First Nation community, the commercial permit was reneged and James learned from the Ardock community about how to conduct traditional wild rice harvesting activities. He decided to return home and started planting wild rice close to his reserve, in an attempt to rejuvenate his culture and feed his community.

James was determined to restore the wild rice beds of Rice Lake. James met with community elders to learn where the traditional rice beds had been, and received their direction to replant their traditional harvesting grounds. Pigeon Lake was his grandfather's traditional hunting, fishing and ricing grounds and he dedicated himself to restoring the ecosystem which had been destroyed.

James teaches people of all cultures about the gathering, roasting, dancing and winnowing of the rice at an annual Manoomin camp. James gathers wild rice using an airboat and processes the wild rice into food using home-made machines. Most of the rice he harvests goes back into the lake as seed and he sells the excess. Communities and individuals may contract the services of Black Duck wild rice for any or all of the stages of processing wild rice into food. This may include gathering, curing, roasting, dancing, winnowing and packaging. Black Duck wild rice provides consultation services to communities and individuals interested in rehabilitating wild rice. This can include in-person site visits to evaluate suitable locations to seed, estimating the amount of seed required, and instructing community members in planting techniques. Seed is available in the fall, but those interested are asked to place their orders in August.

https://www.blackduckwildrice.net

4H Ontario

Meaghan Moniz, Coordinator, Volunteer Support

4-H is a Positive Youth Development (PYD) program that engages young people in intentional, productive, and constructive ways while recognizing and enhancing their strengths. These programs promote positive outcomes by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and giving the support that is needed to develop young people's assets and prevent risky behaviors. 4H stands for Head, Heart, Hands and Health.

4-H provides a safe, fun and inclusive environment and can happen anywhere. The club has a 100 year history and teaches youth the core competencies; judging and critical thinking, meeting management, communication, hands on skill development and community contribution.

Goals of the 4H Indigenous Community Program are to provide a safe and inclusive environment where youth can learn in a way that is meaningful to their community and cultural values, increase community involvement and awareness, increase the personal resources of youth, providing an awareness of opportunities for youth within the agricultural sector, develop project resources that reflect indigenous cultural values and ways of knowing and create sustainable partnerships which will provide positive outcomes for youth and their communities.

4H Clubs are comprised of a minimum of six 4H Members and two Volunteers who act as Club Leaders. The club decides on a topic and through Leader instruction and hands-on learning, work to complete a project. The total meeting time is 12 hours and celebrate their achievements publicly. Some examples would be a bake sale, showing an animal at the fair or even a camping trip. Members can belong to as many clubs as they wish. 4H provides impact areas by engaging youth, families, communities and volunteers.

4H is looking to work with individuals who would like to run a 4H club or have an idea for a project which would benefit the community. Another alternative is to collaborate with an existing community group or school.

4H is for youth from 6-21 years of age, with additional programming for those up to 25 years of age. Small amounts of funding are available to assist volunteers in running these programs.

https://www.4-hontario.ca/

Chronic Wasting Disease Prevention and Response

Chris Heydon, Ministry of Natural Resources

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a disease that infects native moose, deer and elk. It is caused by prions, a particle that causes proteins to form which are concentrated in the lymphatic system, but do damage to the brain of an animal. Prions also cause scrapie and mad cow disease in cows. Prions are shed through blood, and tend to concentrate in certain parts of the body and muscle tissue. They can be transmitted by animal to animal contact or by contact with infected body fluids or the environment. They can be taken up by plants, and animals that eat those plants can become infected in this way. If a scavenger eats a dead animal, prions can also be spread by defecation. Once an animal tests positive for prions, it will die within 2 years, but will appear uninfected for up to 18 months. Prions have the ability to jump from one species to another and it is currently unknown if humans can become infected. Feral pigs are one potential avenue of infection in Canada. Ontario is currently CWD free, but the disease has spread to Quebec and 26 American states. Once infected, CWD spreads quickly and no jurisdiction has been able to get rid of it. CWD is fatal to cervids and if detected in Ontario, could significantly reduce the number of deer in Ontario and/or significantly depress older age classes. Initially detected in Colorado, CWD came to Saskatchewan in the early 1980's after deer from South Dakota were shipped there. Deer were also shipped from Korea to Canada and caused infection in Saskatchewan and Alberta. In 2017 in Ontario, deer hunting generated $275 million to the Ontario economy.

In Quebec, where CWD was found in a large domesticated herd, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency had to destroy the herd. The Quebec Ministry of Forests, Wildlife and Parks prohibited hunting and vehicle traffic within the control area surrounding the farm, culled 750 deer in the control area and enacted mandatory testing of hunted deer within a 45 m radius enhanced monitoring area. Deer hunted within the 45 km enhanced monitoring area were required to be registered and butchered within the zone. For the 2019 hunting season, hunting rules were relaxed to help maintain a low-density population.

Ontario has a CWD surveillance and risk model which relies on early detection.

Where a swift response to CWD is necessary, agencies involved include the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Canadian Border Services. Methods to try and eliminate the spread include prohibitions on deer luring, which causes deer to congregate, thus potentially spreading the infection, and the requirement for permits where deer imports are planned, to ensure they are inspected by a veterinarian prior to entry into Ontario. Fencing is a requirement for deer being grown for human consumption. Increased wildlife surveillance monitoring is required and there is potential for the Anishinabek Nation to assist in the surveillance and monitoring program.

Sick and/or dead deer should be reported as soon as possible to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) Information and Support Centre or the Canadian Wildlife Health Co-operative.

Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative: 1-866-673-4781

MNRF Natural Resources Information and Support Centre: 1-800-667-1940

The Ugly Barn Mushroom Farm

Ivan Vincent

Ivan Vincent and his wife founded the Ugly Barn Mushroom Farm in 2015. After learning about permaculture and the health benefits of mushrooms, he decided to begin growing mushrooms and currently markets his mushrooms through wholesale markets and to restaurants, primarily in the Greater Sudbury area. His farm is located in Markstay.

Mushrooms are more closely related to animals than they are to plants. They inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide, forming mycorrhizal relationships with plants. They help plants and trees grow by holding onto water in the soil. Mushrooms help heal your body and help prevent disease. They contain ergestrol, which converts sunlight into vitamin D. Reishi and chaga are known as the king and queen of mushrooms because of their disease fighting properties. Loaded with antioxidants, mushrooms have even been found to combat cancer, multiple sclerosis and Alzheimer's' disease and current research is examining the role of mushrooms in the development of antibiotics. Mushrooms also can heal the land and have been known to break down hydrocarbons. They can be used for land remediation and can be used to filter water.

Ivan has developed a great deal of infrastructure at his farm to begin his operation. He houses his operation in a corrugated steel prefabricated building constructed on a concrete pad. His rooms include those for mushroom incubation, fruiting, a lab, a processing room, a walk-in cooler and a certified kitchen which in total encompass 1200 square feet. He heats his facility with an outdoor wood boiler and circulates hot water to the floors.

Ivan's products include a wide variety of mushrooms, dried mushrooms, mushroom jerky and pickled mushrooms. He also sells mushroom growing supplies to other growers including dowels injected with mycelium which can be used to grow mushrooms outdoors on hardwood tree substrates. Growing mushrooms requires a careful balance of light, humidity, energy and warm temperatures to colonize the mushrooms on a carbon-sourced substrate. He starts all his mushrooms using a laminar flow hood, which serves to filter out particulates. Mushrooms can be grown bot h indoors and outdoors, and provide a viable economic development opportunity for First Nation communities.

Forum meeting

Snapshot of Anishinabek Agriculture and Food

Table 1 (below) illustrates known existing Anishinabek Nation agriculture and food-related initiatives as of December 2019. The top three agricultural activities among the Anishinabek Nation are community gardens, maple syrup bushes, and tied for third, utilization of wild fisheries for commercial fish sale, aquaculture and greenhouses. This information is provided as a baseline to monitor future development of agricultural initiatives.

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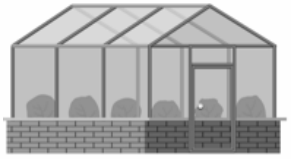

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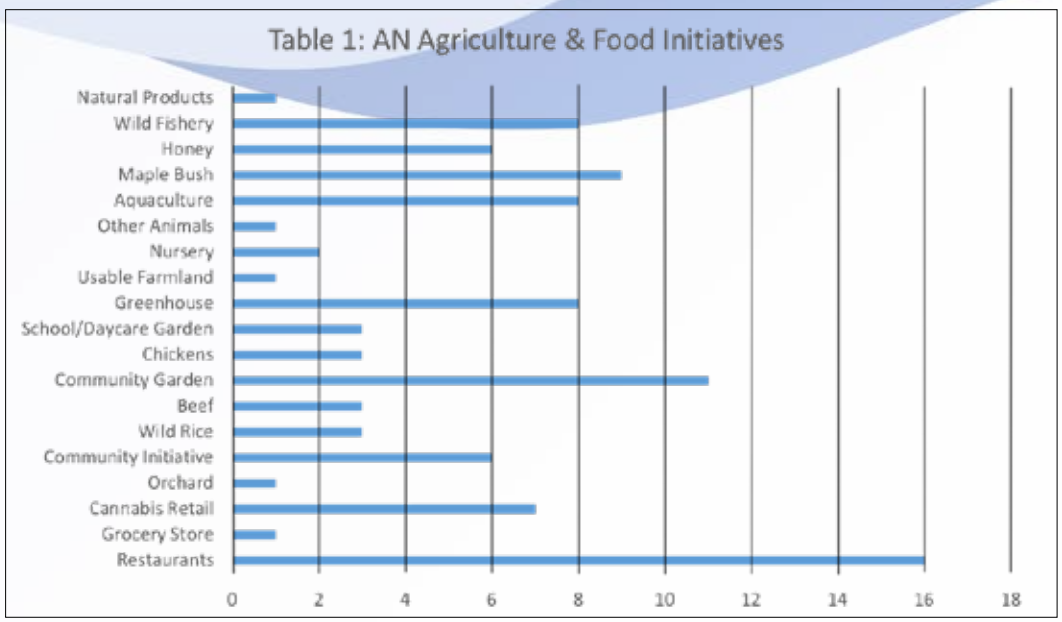

ANISHINABEK NATION SWOT ANALYSIS

The SWOT Analysis below has been developed to provide an overview of the state of agriculture in the Anishinabek Nation communities.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• A wide variety of potential funding sources exist at the Provincial and federal level • Some existing AN agricultural business in sectors including maple syrup production, beekeeping/honey, aquaculture, beef farming and cannabis • Some existing agricultural initiatives at community level including greenhouses, good food box, community gardens etc. • Some suitable lands for farming on some reserves and access to large traditional territories • Strong sovereignty position on aquaculture in the Great Lakes • Access to a wide variety of traditional food sources within large territorial areas of Ontario • A wide variety of support organizations exist for the agriculture industry • Access to strong array of planning tools and resources for agriculture exist through OMAFRA • There is a strong and growing interest in local food production and food sovereignty among First Nation communities • Anishinabek communities have natural laws around food collection • Excellent communication mechanisms throughout the AN to disseminate information on agriculture • Existing agricultural and aquaculture associations are welcoming to First Nations	• Lack of capacity at community level to write funding proposals • Lack of knowledge of support organizations and organizations associated with agriculture • Lack of training opportunities or funding for community members to obtain training • Some food regulations limit the ability of communities to carry out traditional activities, impacting on aboriginal and treaty rights (i.e. • Lack of egg grading stations in Northern Ontario and other infrastructure required to develop agricultural projects • Lack of capital for First Nation communities to enter into the quota based systems of large agriculture (Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Egg Farmers of Ontario, Beef Farmers etc) • Lack of suitable farming land on many reserves depending upon location • Impacts of colonization as related to agriculture

Opportunities	Threats
• Huge opportunity in the cannabis industry and in other food industries such as aquaculture (huge demand) • Existing training institutions for agriculture in Ontario with opportunity for youth training and capacity building • Strong community interest in re-invigoration of traditional forms of food collection and processing including hunting, fishing, berry collecting, medicine collecting, canning, pickling, root cellars etc. • Global warming may be seen as either a threat or an opportunity depending upon location and impact (ie. Expansion of northern ranges) • Lack of laws and policies for agriculture on federal lands (regulatory gap) but opportunity to develop strong laws and policies on agriculture on reserves. • Foodshare programs and group purchasing clubs	• Lack of abattoirs within suitable proximity for butchering of farm animals especially in Northern Ontario • Lack of processing facility infrastructure, especially in the north • Threats to seed sovereignty exist • For cannabis, lack of clarity on regulatory and jurisdictional issues • Wild food sources may be contaminated by pesticides, herbicides or other chemicals from industrial activities and may result in health impacts from consumption • Diseases such as but not limited to chronic wasting disease can affect traditional food sources such as deer and moose • Industrial activities may cause contamination of fish food sources due to water quality impacts • Global warming may be viewed either as a threat or an opportunity depending upon the location and impact • Conservation of green spaces by conservation groups further limits First Nations access to traditional lands for agriculture • Environmental impacts of cannabis production including use of fertilizers, pesticides and land use planning considerations may need to be considered and further assessed • Lack of First Nation agricultural laws/policies on reserve leads to uncertainty and risk

ISSUES AND BARRIERS

Wild Game Issue

For communities in Northern Ontario who wish to serve wild game to people off-reserve, the Health Protection and Promotion Act (Regulation 493) prevents this. No uninspected meat is allowed to be served off reserve. Wild game cannot be served community feasts off reserve, which has been raised as an issue by northerly communities.

This is according to section 38 of Part 7 (Commodities) of the Regulation 493. Wild meat cannot come into contact with inspected meat.

Case Study-Meno-Ya-Win Health Centre

The Meno-Ya-Win Health Centre in Sioux Lookout is able to serve wild meats (including wild moose, wild duck, wild goose, wild caribou, wild muskrat, wild rabbit, wild deer, wild beaver, wild elk or wild muskox that was hunted in the wild. Some of the conditions of this are outlined in Section (6) of Section 38 of the regulation. and are as follows:

1. The meat is handled, prepared, processed and stored for the sole purpose of serving it to patients, visitors and staff at the Health Centre.
2. The meat is handled, prepared, processed and stored so that it does not come into contact with other food before the other food is served.
3. Patients, visitors and staff at the Health Centre are informed in writing each time before they are served the meat that it has not been inspected in accordance with either Ontario Regulation 31/05 (Meat) made under the Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001 or the regulations made under the Meat Inspection Act (Canada), and that meat that has been inspected is available for consumption.

4. Patients, visitors and staff at the Health Centre are informed in writing that meat that has been inspected in accordance with either Ontario Regulation 31/05 (Meat) made under the Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001 or the regulations made under the Meat Inspection Act (Canada) is always available to be served on the premises.

Butchering of wild game

Another issue raised in meetings is that under the Food Safety and Quality Act will not allow a food animal (cow, hog) that was slaughtered outside of a licensed plant to be processed in that plant unless it was slaughtered by an "examiner". The butcher shop will not accept hunted game meat because it must be kept separate from inspected meat in the shop. Therefore, First Nation communities have an inability to have a hunted game or food animal processed in a local processing plant.

Another issue raised was the shortage of slaughterhouse and processing facilities in Northern Ontario.

Chemical contamination of wild and agricultural food sources

First Nation communities are fearful of the dangers posed by contamination of agricultural food commodities with pesticides. They are also fearful of potential contamination of wild foods (meat products such as moose, deer, duck) and wild medicine plants that normally grow in forests and other natural areas, that may be contaminated as a result of forestry related aerial spraying. This issue has been brought up in Round Table meetings. Also raised is the issue of whether it is safe to undertake agriculture under hydro lines and the potential contamination that could arise from electromagnetic fields if plantings are done in these areas. Communities also have a large amount of concern regarding the impacts to wild fisheries that is posed by contamination from a variety of sources; radiological, chemical, biological and toxicological.

Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act, 2019-Bill 156

On December 2nd, 2019, the Ontario government announced the Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act, 2019. The act was proposed to protect farmers, agri-food workers, truck drivers, and farm animals and was created to ensure food safety for public health. The most troublesome aspect of this legislation is that it authorizes the owner or occupier of a farm to use "force" to "arrest" a trespasser (Section 9). The bill establishes "Animal Protection Zones" with substantial fines for trespassing. The Act requires that when entering private property, the property owner give consent. The Act also includes a provision that would protect farmers against civil liability for injuries sustained by trespassers. There is potential that this Act could compromise the safety of First Nation individuals who have a legal right to hunt on private lands in areas where the lands are not being used for agriculture. The most common scenario is that during the fall hunting season, an animal wounded from a hunt on Crown land passes onto private farm land and is then hunted/retrieved by the hunter who must cross onto private lands to do so.

Case Study-Death of Colten Boushie

Colten Boushie was a youth from the Cree Red Pheasant First Nation who was fatally shot on a rural Saskatchewan farm. The farmer, Gerald Stanley, stood trial for second degree murder and was acquitted. The youth, who had a flat tire, had trespassed onto Stanley's property and attempted to start an ATV. The shooting was deemed an accident.

Land Dispositions without Consultation-Sale of Crown Lands for Agriculture (MNRF)

In the late summer of 2019, the Ontario government introduced a policy, the Applicant's Guide to applying for Crown Land for Agricultural Purposes in Northern Ontario. This policy is a newly promoted provincial policy that was developed in conjunction with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

The intent is to support the growth of the province's agri-food industry by diversifying the economies of Northern Ontario communities as per the Province's Growth Plan for Northern Ontario and the Northern Ontario Agri-food Strategy. This policy outlines a methodology for proponents interested in traditional crop/livestock projects where Crown land may be required. The policy includes a process for completing dispositions (sale or lease) of Crown lands at fair market value in Northern Ontario, (generally identified by the Province as north of Parry Sound). The Ministry will consider the disposition of Crown land for agriculture both within and outside of municipal boundaries. The Ministry will screen the applications under the Class Environmental Assessment for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development Projects (RSFD) to determine the appropriate category and level of assessment required and inform the proponent. This EA screening will also ensure all factors (environmental, land use, socio-economic and Indigenous) have been addressed to the Ministry's satisfaction.

The applicant will be required to consult with potentially affected stakeholders and Indigenous communities, consistent with the Class EA for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development Projects and as per Section 35 requirements. The applicant will also ensure that the Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and the Sustainable Forestry License holders, if applicable, have been provided with notices of the pending disposition.

The role of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) is to participate in the review of formal applications and to provide guidance to proponents on what information may be required for the disposition process. OMAFRA will also be responsible for review of the proponent's business plan to ensure that the proposal is viable and sustainable. The role of MNRF is approve or deny the application and if approved, to issue the occupational authority for the disposition, following a client-initiated appraisal (based on fair market value) and legal survey.

First Nations should be properly consulted with regard to proposed agricultural projects initiated in their traditional territories.

Consultation is required on this initiative. To date no consultation has been completed on this issue. The privatization of any land is a permanent impact to the treaty rights of AN Communities.

https://files.ontario.ca/mnrf-applicants-guide-apply-for-crown-land-agri-purpose-northern-on.pdf

Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic wasting disease is very concerning to our communities for a number of reasons. If CWD enters Ontario and there is a need to cull deer, the rights of First Nations to harvest deer and other animals could be impacted due to the access restrictions that would likely be put into place. Deer as a traditional food source could be heavily impacted. The trucking in of deer to deer farms in Ontario should be stopped. The Chiefs of Ontario have opposed deer farming altogether. There is a need for stronger regulations for farmers of deer in Ontario with more stringent inspections by enforcement officers. There is an opportunity for development of a communications plan with Chiefs to provide communities with additional information on regulations around deer farming and on chronic wasting disease and the risks it poses. Other opportunities for First Nations in collaboration with OMAFRA and MNRF include:

- Involving First Nations in enhanced monitoring and surveillance, and involving First Nations in hunting/culling and emergency planning if or when chronic wasting disease enters Ontario, as First Nations have hunting and shooting capabilities.
- Enhanced testing of deer for human consumption for pathogens and prions.
- Training of First Nations on how to remove testing structures from the brain and/or development of some type of field testing kit.
- Development of communication protocols with communities to plan for the event of a cull within the traditional territories.
- Research into the potential for water as a vector in the spread of chronic wasting disease.
- Development of programs (ie. Hats for Heads) similar to Hats for Hides program, to ensure utilization of the whole animals, as hides of these and other animals present an economic development opportunity for First Nations.
- Consider the role of the Anishinabek Ontario Fisheries Resource Centre as a centralizing agency that could do additional work on chronic wasting disease at a technical level.

Funding and Capacity Building

There is a clear lack of capacity for agricultural projects at the community level. Communities do not have the capacity to complete the proposal writing necessary to seek funding for agricultural projects. Communities require funding to develop sustainable traditional initiatives such as blueberry picking, sugar bush harvesting, wild rice planting and harvesting and other pursuits which may not meet the definition of "agricultural" activities according to some funding agencies but which constitute traditional agriculture for First Nation communities. If each community had an agricultural staff person this would assist in building capacity at the community level.

Difficulty with entry into Traditional Agriculture

Supply management is a national agricultural policy framework used in Canada that controls the supply of dairy, poultry and eggs through production and import controls and pricing mechanisms, designed to ensure that these farms can be profitable and Canadians have access to a high quality and secure supply of products. The use of quotas imposed by Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Beef Farmers of Ontario and Egg Farmers of Ontario make entry into these industries very challenging for the small farmer. It is recommended that similar to how Chicken Farmers of Ontario introduced an artisanal program, the other large regulators could consider potential for opening of the market for smaller producers.

Infringement of Rights to access Traditional Food Sources and Medicines

First Nations still traditionally rely upon the wild fishery and wild forest for their food and medicine. The collapse of fish populations in the Great Lakes has greatly impacted the ability of communities to rely on this food source. The disposition of crown lands for mining and other development related projects has impacted on First Nation people's ability to access treaty lands for trapping. In particular, more recently communities are being engaged on dispositions related to the sale of crown land to conservation organizations (ie. Nature Conservancy of Canada), which has resulted in impacts on First Nation businesses (ie. Guiding and tourism) and impacts on aboriginal and treaty rights when access to lands is eliminated. First Nations must be consulted on government dispositions as the changing of land to private status shrinks the already minimized treaty area.

Regulatory Gap for On-Reserve Communities in Waste Management and Land Use Planning for Agriculture

The regulatory gap that currently exists with respect to landfills on reserve in Ontario First Nation communities must be addressed and there is potential for a portion of this waste stream to be utilized for agricultural projects in the form of composting and/or energy from waste. There is a need to focus more study on this subject.

The regulatory gap extends to agricultural planning for First Nation communities on-reserve. Communities require the ability to create their own laws and policies for agricultural lands on reserve and this is a potential future area of collaboration for the AN and OMAFRA.

OTHER EVENTS

These events and training sessions were attended by Lynn Moreau, Project Coordinator unless otherwise stated.

- March 19th, 2019-Attended Profitable Pastures, at 250 Clark Street, Powassan
- March 27, 2019-Attended Sudbury Farm to Table Forum, Steelworkers Hall, Sudbury
- April 13th-Attended Foodfest, Powassan
- July 15th-Attended Northern Poultry Tour, Powassan
- July 26th-Attended Small Ruminant Production Course, North Bay (Powassan)
- September 10th-Attended Shrimp Farming Workshop, Estaire (Sudbury)
- September 12th-Attended Traditional Medicine Workshop, Nipissing First Nation
- October 29th, 2019-Access to Wild Game-Urban Access to Traditional Indigenous Foods
- October 30th, 2019-Chief Ed Wawia attended Food In Health Care, A Community and Holistic Approach featuring the Miichim Program
- December 9, 2019-Thessalon First Nation to discuss Agricultural Opportunities
- January 17, 2020- First Nations Maple Syrup Seminar, Whitefish River

Attendance at these events resulted in the ability to network and develop alliances with support organizations, in addition to identifying additional clients for the Anishinabek Nation. Attendance at these events allowed the Anishinabek Nation to build internal capacity. Information from the numerous training and learning opportunities was placed on an online Dropbox to allow individuals from the member communities to gain access to all the available information on any subjects of interest.

NEXT STEPS

The Anishinabek Nation will be pursuing further funding to continue the Agriculture and Food Portfolio for the next three years through the Grassroots Growth Program.

The goal of the project is to revitalize agriculture in Anishinabek First Nation communities. The objectives of the project are to increase the engagement of AN communities in local agri-food development, increase youth involvement and leadership in the agri-food sector, and enourage local agri-food economic development.

Every community has different traditions, capacities and interests related to agriculture and agri-food and this Project aims to help provide access to the information, knowledge, tools, and training needed to help communities begin to identify and advance their specific objectives. However, the project will focus on the following key agricultural sectors that hold the strongest level of interest for AN communities:

1. Maple syrup/honey production
2. Aquaculture
3. Field crops/cannabis
4. Greenhouses/aquaponics

The Project will ensure that AN communities have access to relevant information related to key provincial agri-food initiatives, programs, and technical information. It will also enable communities to provide timely feedback to the Ministry on proposed policies, programs, legislation and regulations that may impact Aboriginal and treaty rights of AN communities.

Year 1 of the project will focus on development of an agricultural planning blueprint for the Anishinabek Nation to enhance participation in the agri-food economy. As its foundation, the policy/strategy blueprint will include development of an agricultural asset inventory and development of an agricultural profile for each community.

Year 2 of the project will focus on youth engagement in agriculture by targeting AN schools, daycares and post-secondary institutions and the provision of educational and training opportunities for AN members.

Year 3 of the project will focus on partnership development in the agriculture industry and agriculture capacity building by bringing together agricultural business owners and youth seeking employment in the agriculture and aquaculture industries. A First Nation toolkit is another potential outcome that could be utilized to provide guidance to individual communities seeking to undertake agricultural projects.

The Anishinabek Nation established the Union of Ontario Indians as its secretariat in 1949. The UOI is a political advocate for 39 First Nations across Ontario.