

SEVA Foundation Native American Diabetes Project 1786 Fifth Street, Berkeley CA 94710
www.seva.org

A Traditional Food Book *recipes from the REZ*



*American Indian Talking Circles
Wellness Cookbook of Recipes from the REZ*

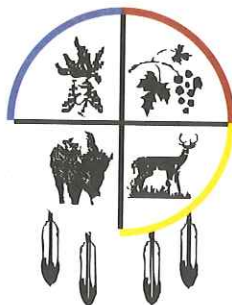


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Diabetes wellness through traditional foods

American Indian Talking Circles is a joint project of the Center for American Indian Research and Education (CAIRE) of the University of Minnesota and the SEVA Foundation's Native American Diabetes Project. Funded by the National Institute of Health, National Institute of Nursing Research (RO1 NR04722), the four year research and educational intervention project targets American Indian adults across four Northern Plains reservations: Winnebago, Nebraska and the Yankton, Rosebud and Pine Ridge reservations of South Dakota. Talking Circles are being tested as a tool to increase knowledge of diabetes and how it is treated, nutrition, and activity/exercise. Additionally, whether the new knowledge leads to behavior change toward wellness is being measured.

Each tribal nation carries the name as they are listed in their tribal constitution, by the United States govern-

ment. They still carry the names for themselves as recognized by the Creator. The Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska refer to themselves as the *Ho Chunk*, or *The People of the Parent Speech*. The Yankton Sioux Tribe call themselves *Ihankunwan Nakota*, or *End Dwellers*.



Winnebago youth taking a break from weeding their corn.

The Rosebud Sioux Tribe call themselves, *Sicangu Lakota*, or *Burnt Thigh*. The Oglala Sioux Tribe of the Pine Ridge reservation call themselves *Oglala Lakota*, or *To Scatter One's Own*.

In this Traditional Food Book, we respectfully offer individual perspectives about traditional food and its relationship to the people, traditional food recipes, modern day recipes using traditional foods such as buffalo, and healthy choice food recipes used in the Diabetes Talking Circle meals. All of these can help restore balance, from across the four reservation project sites. ENJOY!



Winnebago youth ready for the harvest in his corn picking clothes.

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Traditional American Indians, regardless of the Tribe or Nation, all believed that food was a gift from the Creator and a spiritual medicine to be eaten respectfully and in balance. Food would keep Indians well as a people. In contemporary American Indian ceremonies and special events, food is still treated with the highest respect. Before people partake of the meal, a prayer and an offering is made to the four directions. Good thoughts in the minds of those preparing the food bring wellness to all sharing the meals.

Traditional food included wild game, fish, wild fruit and vegetables, and herbs. Corn, beans and squash were planted, harvested and dried by American Indian nations with horticultural traditions. Thanks were given to the Creator for these gifts of food. Thanks could be given through a Green Corn Dance or a Thanksgiving Celebration for a successful buffalo hunt.

Today, a diabetes (Type 2) epidemic is raging across American Indian communities. Therefore, it makes sense to begin nutrition education in relationship to diabetes, with this traditional concept of food. It is hoped that American Indian families will renew their traditional relationship to food beyond ceremonial or special events and bring it back to everyday meals in the home. Balance can be further restored to their diet and lives when accessible traditional foods are reintroduced for everyday family meals whenever possible.

Hunting, fishing, gathering, planting and drying or smoking of traditional foods is a very labor-intensive task. It is an ideal activity to increase physical movement and a recommended exercise for wellness in today's world.

Fortunately, buffalo is available for American Indians who had traditionally hunted and lived in balance with the buffalo. Some initiatives that bring the buffalo to Indians include organizations like the Inter-Tribal Bison Cooperative (ITBC), a national organization of 25-30 tribes with 51 bison

herds across 16 states, provides such accessibility. Learn more about the ITBC at their website: intertribalbison.com.

There is a growing initiative to restore gardens and renew traditional horticultural methods among American Indian communities. One such effort in Winnebago, Nebraska has gained enormous momentum in recent years. Planting, harvesting and drying corn was a traditional way of life for the Ho Chunk. Fortunately, the elders still carried the knowledge and the seeds to carry on the tradition. The Winnebago project renews traditional planting, seed gathering, harvesting and drying corn for tribal use. ■



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From a healer's point of view

BY RICHARD TWO DOGS, TRADITIONAL HEALER
Oglala Lakota, Pine Ridge Reservation, Porcupine, SD

On this day I would like to talk from a healer's point of view. It involves our relationship with our environment and the two-legged and four-legged domain...

Long ago, our people lived with respect for all of creation. For example, they never took more than they needed from the land. They knew the two-legged must never cause an imbalance in our environment. All of life around us had to be sustained in order for the two-legged to survive. Through this way of thinking, we as a people respected all of life, including ourselves. We lived by gathering roots and berries. We sustained our life through the four-legged: the deer, antelope and especially the buffalo. The buffalo provided all of our needs as far as survival – our food, the clothes for our

bodies, bones for tools and weapons, hides for our teepee covers. The buffalo provided survival for us. We looked at them as our brothers. We respected their life. Before we went on a hunt we made a prayer. After a kill was made, we would apologize to the spirit of the buffalo. We made an offering to his spirit.

We needed the balance between the two-legged and four-legged. The Sun Dance tree was forked. On one side of the fork was the figure of a buffalo cutout of a buffalo hide and on the other side of the fork was the figure of a man, also cutout of a buffalo hide. The Sun Dance tree is the tree of life. Because this tree represents life, it represents the good and the bad in the world. It also represents the two-legged and the four-legged and the plant life. So we have come along way, in the sense that we still believe this way as a people of this earth.

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Richard Two Dogs

The white man came and polluted. He's killing everything. But yet we still have this thought: When we raise that sun dance tree we want our brothers, the two legged, the four legged, the wind and the plants, to have life. Long ago and today, we believe that it is important to keep our bodies healthy. Our grandfathers and grandmothers knew that we had to respect our health. There are a lot of things that we take for granted. We can turn on the faucet and get water. We can turn on the thermostat and get heat. But our grandfathers had to work for all of these basic things. I think what hurts us now is that life is too easy. They would go out and hunt for a living. Gather their wood and their water so that they could live.

I would like to remember my grandfather. He was 97 years old. He could still walk from our house to town, which was close to a mile. Every morning he would walk and go downtown and visit with the other old men on the street corners. Then he would get home in the after-

noon. My mother would feed him. I always noticed that he would only eat certain food. He wouldn't eat pies or anything like that. I noticed he always cut the fat off the meat that he ate. He refused to eat pork. He said pork was bad - it was like poison to your body. Our grandfathers knew. They were the first dietitians. They knew what food was good and what food was bad. In speaking to people nowadays diabetes is really rampant on the reservations, because of our diet and the fact that we are no longer hunters.

We don't walk and move around like we use to. We no longer exercise. Long ago our grandfathers were always on the move. They were always trying to find ways to keep themselves busy. I noticed my grandfather was also this way. I would like to say it is important how we view nature and how we view ourselves.

As a two-legged, we are not superior to our four-legged brothers. If anything, we are probably weaker than most of our four-legged brothers. In a sense, we have to be

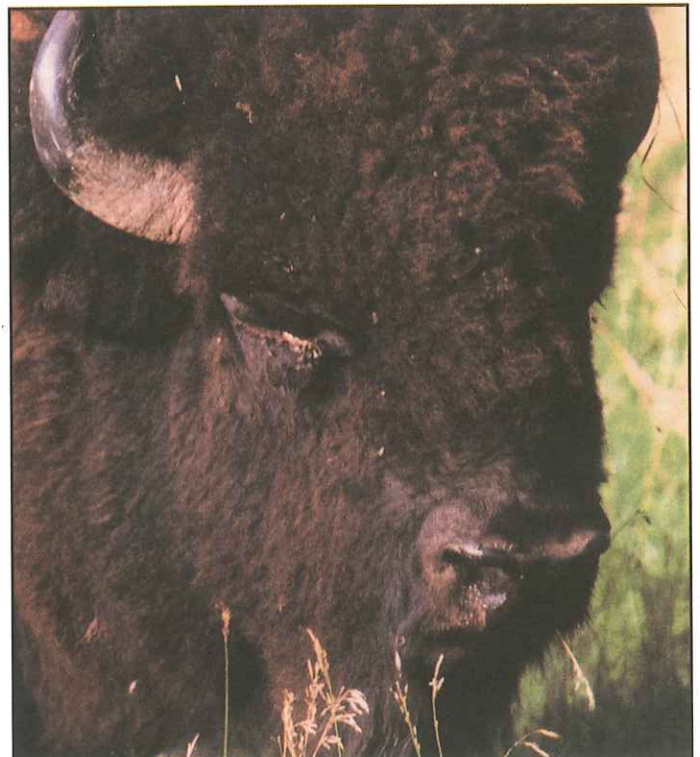
ourselves. Not superior over the animals. I know that this type of thinking gets us in trouble, that we can do anything that we want. We picked this up from the white man. We must respect all of nature and respect ourselves.

We must always remember the Lakota virtues. The virtues of respect for ourselves, respect for nature, respect for fortitude, and respect for our language. We need to have a strong mind. When we are diabetic and we have to change our diet, it takes a strong mind to have the ability to change our diet. It takes a lot of fortitude to live by a healthy diet so we can live a long time.

We need to be generous and to try to pity all of our people, our relatives around us who are suffering with this diabetes. We need to try to help each other. If we see people walking and exercising, we should encourage them. We need to be generous with our encouragement. Encourage them to be healthy people.

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Next we must have courage. We need courage to face this new enemy of our people. Diabetes is the enemy and it is hurting our people. Long ago when a warrior threatened our people, the warriors would go out and fight this enemy - to defeat this enemy. But nowadays I think every one of us have to be a warrior to have courage and fight this enemy. We need to have this generosity, this fortitude and bravery to fight this, because diabetes is going to wipe us out if we aren't careful. I feel that we have to face it as the enemy that it is. I go around and see the people that have to go on dialysis or are amputees. Long ago when our warriors returned from battle, they lost their leg or were injured. Nowadays it's diabetes causing it. We all have to be warriors and we all have to be brave. I encourage all people to face this new enemy and be brave. ■



Young Bull of the Winnebago Bison Herd

The ways of the elders

VIOLA LAPOINTE, HO CHUNK ELDER

Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska

HUNTING FOR FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

I believe that the link between our people and the land now is totally different from what I remember as a little girl. I remember going out with my mother, my brothers and sisters, hunting for food. We had to find the right kind of plants before we could dig. We couldn't just go anywhere and dig. My mother had to find the right plants, the plants that she knew. We would dig up potatoes in the fields. They were just little, like the size of a golf ball. Once we found one plant all you had to do was pull on the root and you would find a whole row that followed it. It was always the supply that we needed. We used to find wild beans, too.

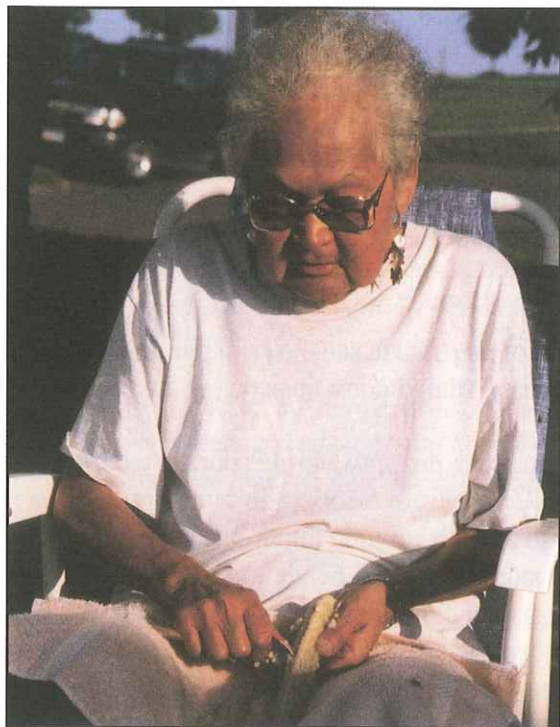
My mother used to plant corn. The wild beans that we found - she would mix them with the corn. We never just had corn soup, there was always beans added. It made the corn last longer.

So during the time that these plants were in harvest we would pick as much as we needed to make it through the winter. My mother would harvest and then would dry them.

Our lives with my mother and father were mostly working. We got to play some. But we would always go pick berries, vegetables, and even nuts. We would walk miles and that would take most of our day. It was walking in the timber. This happened a few times a week and the rest of the week was spent at home helping my mother. It was all work to keep our family alive. But it was fun because we did it together as a family. Us kids would play while we walked, so it was always fun being with my family.

I remember the first fruit in the spring that we would pick chokecherries, then blackberries, raspberries, and the last would be wild strawberries. As the months went by, different berries would be ready to pick. We always went out and picked whatever berries were in season. In the late summer

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Winnebago Elder showing the kids the proper way to spoon corn and prepare for drying.

is when we would find grapes and plums. Once in a while we found an apple tree. Then my mother would have all of us kids sit and string our findings on a string and she would hang them up to dry. They would look like prunes or raisins; you know how they're all shriveled up. We even dried our squash and whatever my mother could plant in our garden this same way. Then in the winter, she would cook all the fruit and vegetables we harvested.

Everything we picked was dried for storage until later on in the 1930's. That was the year they opened a canning center out in our agency. They taught all the women how to can. So the women would bring their fruit and vegetables to this center and can it. They had cans there that the women could use. And then you could seal them. They were just like the cans in the stores nowadays. But I remember my mom would use salt and add sugar to the fruit. That canning was brought to us by, I suppose it was the BIA, trying to help us out (laughter) - showing us how to use sugar and salt.

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WATER

I remember we lived in a ciproke or chee-po-ddo-kay (a traditional Ho Chunk lodge) with a dirt floor. That's where we lived when I was a very small girl. Then my father built us a two room wood house. That was the first time I lived in a "today home." We didn't have running water. My father and some of the other men built a spring right off the side of the creek that went by our home. It was down the hill a ways. We had to walk down the hill and haul our water up to our house.

Later on I remember the BIA building water pumps. There was a pump that everyone, within a half-mile radius, had to come to get their water.

But we would still go to the spring to get our water, because it was the good stuff – fresh and clean. That's what we always drank. Sometimes my mom would make tea with mint leaves and other leaves of plants that she would find in the woods. But most of the time we drank water. The teas were usually used when we were sick.

BEAR CLAN CHANGE OF SEASON FEAST

I'm a member of the Bear Clan. The Bear Clan always put on a change of season feast for the whole tribe. We would have one in the spring and one in the fall.

The feast in the fall was to offer prayers to the creator so that our people would make it through the coming winter. The feast in the spring was to offer prayers of thanks to the creator for letting us survive another winter.

At the change of season feasts we used to all get together and cook the meal. The men went out and hunted the game. The women brought their harvest of the summer or their dried goods left from the winter. The women would clean and cook the game that the men had hunted. They even took care of the fire themselves. The men would sit and visit.

At the meal we always had deer, rabbits and squirrels. But at the spring feast we would sometimes have muskrat and raccoon. In the spring, it's mating season so they would always have to be sure that they didn't kill an expecting mother. They

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didn't kill any animal that was bearing young. Everything that was killed and picked was used. Nothing went to waste. We only took as much as we needed to survive. It was plentiful then.

HUNTING

There was always prayers offered for the meal that we ate. We were thankful to have what we had. It might not have been much, but it was all we needed. My father always prayed to the creator before he went out on a hunt, so that he could get enough to feed his family.

He always prayed after he killed an animal, giving thanks to the creator for supplying meat and also that this animal gave its life to feed his family. He thanked that animal and told it why he had to take its life, so that it would bring life to his body and that of his children and wife.

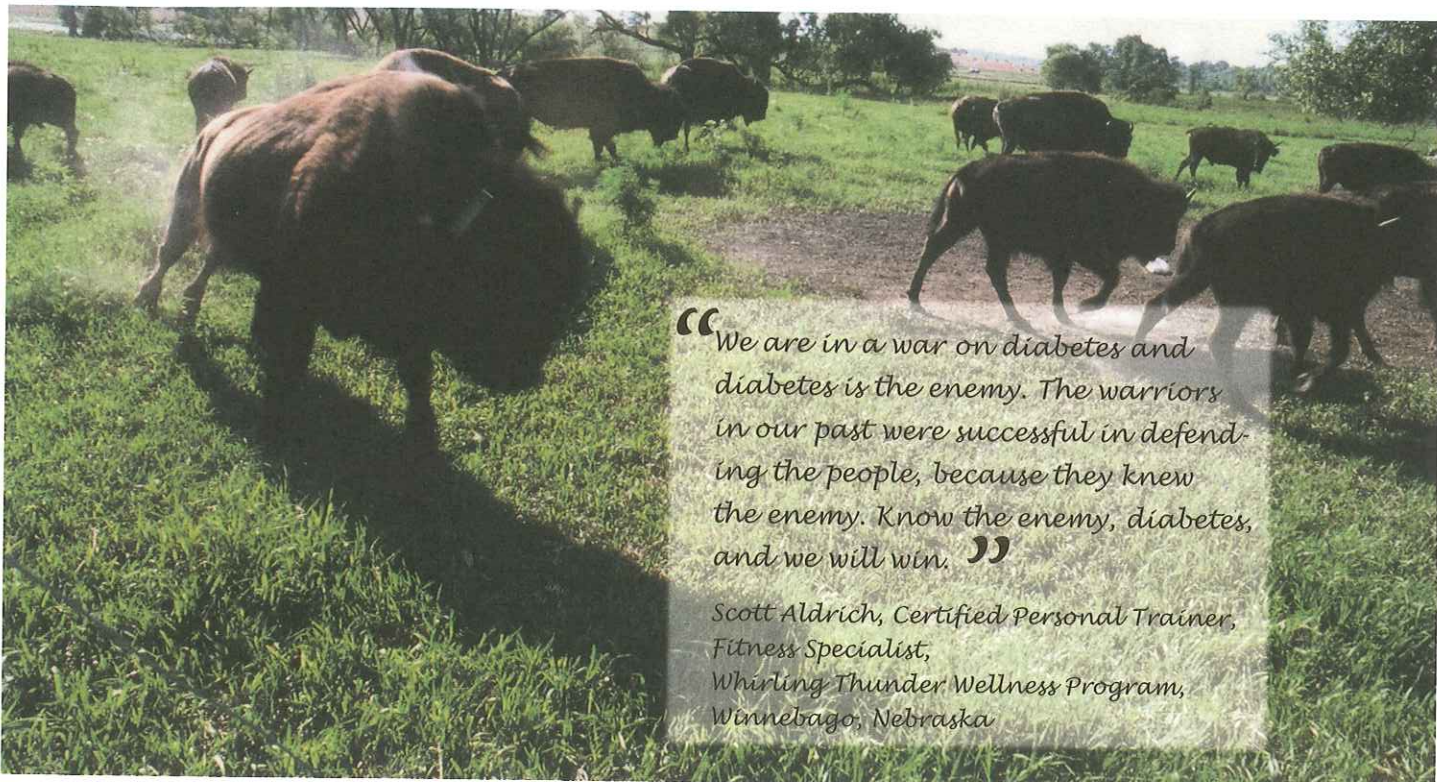
I remember when we worked for the farmers in Minnesota, they would go out and shoot rabbits and squirrels for fun. They knew that we ate them so they would bring them to us. My mom would make our lunch for the next day with those animals. We would carry it to the fields with us the next day.

MODERN FOODS

I don't ever remember having frybread when I was young. My mom used to make biscuits in the wood stove. Before that she made what she called cowboy bread. She would lean it against the coals and rocks to cook it.

I don't ever remember eating frybread until we went to Minnesota to work in the fields. When we got into the white man's world, that's when we started to eat their food. It was a lot of fried food. We didn't have all the wild game we had on the reservation. I know wild game and the nature given food are good for us. But how do we get our kids to eat it, when all they have to do is jump into a car and go to the store to get chips, pop and pizza?

I noticed when we came back to the reservation that you hardly ever saw rabbits and squirrels anymore. It was like that for quite a number of years. But now I can look in my backyard and see them running all over. They're back, so why don't we use them? ■



“We are in a war on diabetes and diabetes is the enemy. The warriors in our past were successful in defending the people, because they knew the enemy. Know the enemy, diabetes, and we will win.”

*Scott Aldrich, Certified Personal Trainer,
Fitness Specialist,
Whirling Thunder Wellness Program,
Winnebago, Nebraska*

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Buffalo & Rice Soup

CHERIE LAPOINTE, WINNEBAGO

Served at Talking Circles in Winnebago, NE

3 lbs. ground buffalo

2 cups rice (any type)

1 tsp. low sodium beef base

Bring 5 cups of water to a boil. Add 1 teaspoon low sodium beef base, add 2 cups of rice, place lid on the pot. While rice is cooking brown the 3 lbs. of buffalo in a pan with water. Drain buffalo of all moisture. Add to the boiling rice. Cook until rice is split open.

Serves 10

Diabetes has reached epidemic proportions among Americans Indians throughout North America. In 1991-1993, the age-adjusted diabetes mortality rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives in the Indian Health Service (IHS) was 31.7 per 100,000.

When the three IHS areas with problems in under-reporting of Indian race on death certificates are excluded, the diabetes mortality rate rises to 41.4 per 100,000.

This is 248 percent higher than the U.S. All Races Rate of 11.9.

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Buffalo Pockets

CHERIE LAPOINTE, WINNEBAGO

Served at Talking Circles in Winnebago, NE

- 1 large onion*
- 1 large red bell pepper*
- 1 large green bell pepper*
- 1 baby yellow zucchini*
- 1 baby green zucchini*
- 3 lbs. buffalo roast*
- Fat Free cooking spray*
- Aluminum foil or*
- aluminum foil pockets*

Slice all vegetables into bite size pieces. (Remember to always wash your vegetables.) Slice buffalo roast into bite size pieces. Make sure all vegetables and meat are sliced thin. Using a skillet, very lightly sprayed with fat free cooking spray, brown the slices of buffalo meat.

Mix all vegetables and meat into a large bowl. Sprinkle with black pepper. Lightly spray foil or foil pockets with fat free cooking spray. Fill pockets to your desire with the vegetable and meat mix.

Preheat oven to 275°. Place pockets on a cookie sheet and place in oven. Cook for 20-30 minutes. Serve with plain rice.
Serves 10

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Buffalo Roast and Veggies

CHERIE LAPOINTE, WINNEBAGO

Served at Talking Circles in Winnebago, NE

- 4 lbs. buffalo roast*
- 1 medium onion*
- 1 bag baby carrots*
- 5 medium red potatoes*
- 6 sticks of celery*

Preheat oven to 325°

Place buffalo roast in roaster with a lid with 1 inch of water. Sprinkle with black pepper and place sliced onions in water and on top of the roast. Cover and place in oven.

While roast is cooking peel potatoes and dice. Dice celery. Leave baby carrots at their size.

(Remember to always wash your vegetables.)

After roast has cooked for an hour to an hour and a half place other vegetables in the water and cook for an additional hour.

Serves 10



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Jon Bellanger Soup

(It seems to be just enough for everyone)

CHERIE LAPOINTE, WINNEBAGO

Served at Talking Circles in Winnebago, NE

3 lbs. buffalo (ground or cubed stewing)

1 baby yellow zucchini

4 sticks celery

1 baby green zucchini

3 carrots

1 can whole kernel corn

1 clove garlic

2 cups California rice

Put 5 cups water, diced garlic, California rice and buffalo into a soup pot, with a lid. Cook at a rapid boil. Slice zucchini, celery and carrots. (Remember to always wash your vegetables.) Drain can of corn and rinse with cold water.

After garlic, rice and buffalo have boiled for 20-25 minutes, add the vegetables and cook for an additional 20 minutes.

Drinking alcoholic beverages raises blood sugars. Abstinence from alcohol intake is best for wellness.

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Buffalo and Noodles Casserole

CHERIE LAPOINTE, WINNEBAGO

Served at Talking Circles in Winnebago, NE

3 lbs. cubed buffalo roast

1 lg. bag No-Yokes egg noodles

2 jars Heinz Low Sodium Beef Gravy

Boil buffalo cubes in a saucepan of water, and then drain. Boil noodles until they are cooked to your satisfaction. While noodles are cooking, heat gravy adding the buffalo cubes over medium heat. Drain noodles and pour into a pan, pour gravy and buffalo over noodles.

Serves 10

“When diabetes is diagnosed early, and when simple changes in diet and exercise are made, people can live long and healthy lives with diabetes. To win this battle, Indians need only draw on our traditions, our customs and ourselves. Through unity as a people and with commitment to this approach, we have the potential to save our children, our elders and ourselves from diabetes. We can return to the state of physical and spiritual health that is our birthright as recently as one hundred years ago.”

Lorelei De Cora, Project Director SEVA Foundation

Buffalo Pie

CHERIE LAPOINTE, WINNEBAGO

Served at Talking Circles in Winnebago, NE

- 3 lbs. ground buffalo
- 1 bag tator tots
- 1 can corn
- 1 can green beans
- 1 can carrots (diced)
- 1 can "Healthy Choice" cream of mushroom soup

Brown ground buffalo and drain all moisture. Drain all vegetables and rinse with cold water. Mix all vegetables and the cooked buffalo together with the mushroom soup. Spread into a cake pan. Place tator tots on the top. Bake at the temperature and time on the tator tot bag.

Serves 10

According to the 1990 U.S. Census, 32% of American Indians lived below the poverty level as compared to 13% of the U.S. All Races population.

Of all ethnic groups, American Indians had the highest percentage living below the poverty level.

This poverty makes it difficult for American Indians to be able to afford healthy foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables.

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Lakota Dried Meat & Dried Choke Cherries – (Wasna)

RUTH CEDAR FACE, PORCUPINE, SD

My Grandmother, Edna Lone Hill Two Dogs, taught me how to make this wasna when I was 12 years old. She is now 84 years old and can no longer make it due to arthritis.

- 2-4 strips of dried deer, beef or buffalo meat (PaPa)
- 2-4 dried choke cherry patties
- 2-4 tablespoons sugar
- vegetable oil

The choke cherry patties need to be soaked over night in water to soften them.

Place dried meat in shallow baking pan in a 350° oven until meat is crunchy, but not burnt! Place meat in a cloth dishtowel and pound until the PaPa (dried meat)

is shredded or ground. (May be able to grind with a meat grinder.) Place in a bowl.

Break up choke cherries in the PaPa. Add a little (approximately 1/8 cup) of the choke cherry water to moisten the mix.

Add the sugar according to your taste and preference. I usually add about 2 tablespoons. Mix well.

Add some vegetable oil about 1/4 cup to keep the mix moistened. Place in a bowl and it's ready to serve.

At some point, kidney fat was used to make the wasna hard for easier carrying. But now, due to the high rate of heart disease and diabetes, we tried to lower the fat content by substituting vegetable oil for kidney fat. It does not change the taste of the wasna.

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Cowboy Bread

VIOLA LAPOINTE, HO CHUNK ELDER, WINNEBAGO, NE

1-2 cups of flour
1 tablespoon of baking power
2 tablespoons of sugar
1 teaspoon of salt
1-1/2 cups of warm water
1 cup of milk

Using a medium size bowl, fill it full of flour. Push flour to the sides making a hole in the middle of the bowl. In the hole pour 1 tablespoon of baking powder, 2 tablespoons of sugar, teaspoon of salt, 1 1/2 cups of warm water and a cup of milk. Mix with hands.

Heat griddle to medium heat.

Make a round flat biscuit, size of your palm.
(Flatten to approximately 1 inch thick.)

Cook slowly on griddle, approximately 5 minutes on each side.

Makes 12 pieces

“The path toward healing must start in the past, if it is to lead to wellness for Native People in the future.”

*Lorelei De Cora, Project Director
SEVA Foundation*

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Ho Chunk Milkweed Soup (mahic) or (mah-heench)

VIOLA LAPOINTE, HO CHUNK ELDER, WINNEBAGO, NE

(Mahic) or (Mah-heench) is what the Winnebago call milk weed. The Europeans call it poison. But we have been eating it for as long as I can remember.

Top leaves of milk weed
Blossoms of the milk weed
1 pinch of salt
Pot of water

You pick it at the very beginning of the spring. The part of plant that you pick is the top four leaves. There may be some little flower blossoms on the top, pick those too. (That's the good stuff.)

Soak leaves and blossoms for approximately 1 hour. Add a pinch or two of salt to the water. The salt gets any little bugs off the leaves.

Bring a soup pot of water to a boil. You usually use the same amount of water as the leaves you harvested. So your pot should be half water and half (mahic) or (mah-heench). Boil for 30 – 40 minutes. Stirring occasionally. It's ready to eat.

“Wellness warriors don't deny diabetes. They fight it!”

Participant in Project Focus Groups

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Ho Chunk Field Corn Bread (woboxiri) or (wah-bo-xee-ddee)

THIS RECIPE IS SHARED BY A HO CHUNK WOMAN,
AS TAUGHT TO HER BY HER CHO-KA (GRANDFATHER).

*(waboxori) or (wah-bo-xee-ddee) - "something that's
squashed by force."*

16 ears of field corn

Flour as needed

Harvest the corn when the corn kernels are milky. Squash with fingers. If corn milk sprays from the kernel, it is ready to be picked.

Remove husks from cob. Scrape the corn off the cob into a large bowl. (Try to only get the top part of the kernel. Using the whole kernel will result in a very heavy bread.)

You can use the sharp edge of a metal lid from a can to scrape the corn.

If it's too watery, add enough flour so it's not runny.

Pour into a greased pan. Bake at 375° for 20 minutes.

*"I think being healthy is eating right
(no greasy or fried foods) and being
active or exercising. Not putting any-
thing in your body that can ruin
your insides or your outsides. This
includes having spirituality in your
overall life."*

Oglala Lakota woman

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Choke Cherry Patties - (Dried Lakota Style)

BURDETTE CLIFFORD, ROSEBUD, SD
Taught to me by my mother

At the end of July, we went down and checked the choke cherries and they were deep red. So we knew we'd have to wait another 10 -14 days. Then we went back the second week of August and many were ready, but not all of them. The ones that were ready were a deep reddish/purple and we ate some. They were juicy and sweet. We put a sheet under each bush and shook the choke cherry bush. The ripe choke cherries just dropped onto the sheet. We put them into buckets we brought with us. We filled up seven gallon buckets and went home.

At home, we setup our old fashioned grinder and cleared the leaves and washed the choke cherries. Then we ground them all up in the grinder. As the

ground choke cherries dropped into the bowl, keeping the juice in them we made thin patties. We made 54 patties out of the seven gallon buckets worth of choke cherries. Then we set them on the roof in the sun for about five days. But we brought them in each night and turned them over each day. Once they were dry after the five days, we stored them in a huge linen bag, which we hung up.

*"All foods are healthy if eaten
in moderation, not cooked in
fat and are balanced with
exercise and activity."*

Participant in Project Focus Groups

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Lakota Indian Pudding – (Wojapi)

BURDETTE CLIFFORD, ROSEBUD, SD

Taught to me by my mother

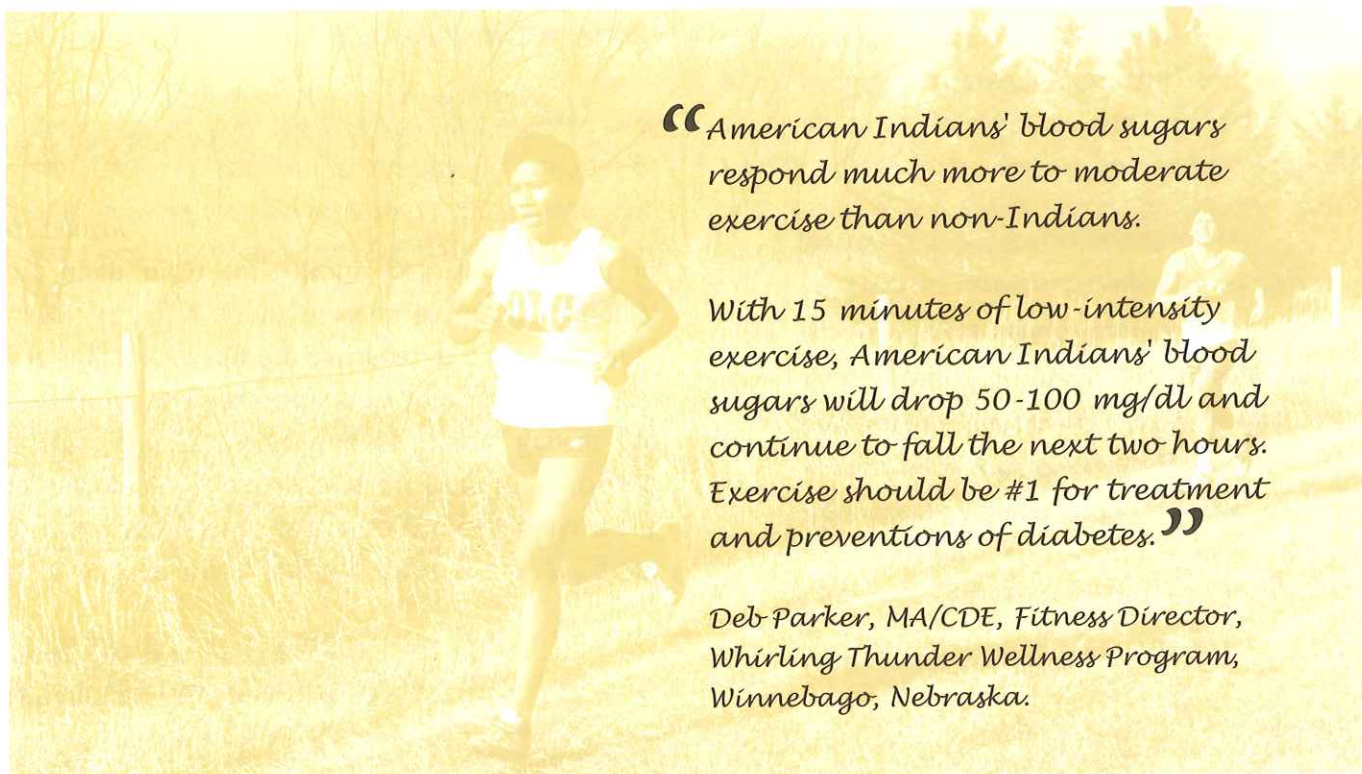
Now, we used the choke cherries patties as we needed them, for wojapi. You have to soak about five patties in water overnight in order to make a small pot of wojapi. Then you put the water and soaking patties onto a medium heat and let them boil for about an hour.

Then after they have boiled for an hour they'll soften up, so you can break them apart in the water as it's boiling. Once they're all broken up and lying loose on the bottom of the pot you turn the heat down to low and you can add a little mix of corn starch and water to thicken it to the consistency of a pudding. Stirring constantly so you don't make lumps. There it is, wojapi.

Others might use the choke cherry patties to make wasna, but that's another recipe.



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“American Indians' blood sugars respond much more to moderate exercise than non-Indians.

With 15 minutes of low-intensity exercise, American Indians' blood sugars will drop 50-100 mg/dl and continue to fall the next two hours. Exercise should be #1 for treatment and preventions of diabetes.”

*Deb Parker, MA/CDE, Fitness Director,
Whirling Thunder Wellness Program,
Winnebago, Nebraska.*

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Lakota Dried Meat – (PaPa)

MARGARET ZEPHIER, WAGNER, SD

I learned this from my stepmother

Take a buffalo roast, cut the meat along the grain with a real sharp knife as thin as you can. Make a cut from one end of the roast and cut from there toward the other end, it should double in size. Repeat the process until you have extremely thin slices and can't cut it anymore. Hang the cut meat in a well ventilated area. It takes about a week to dry thoroughly. Store dried meat in a cloth sack and hang it in your pantry.

“Diabetes prevention to me is a restoration of US as a People.”

Ho-Chunk man, Winnebago, Nebraska

American Indians nationwide are more overweight than the general population with a rate of 40.3% for Indian men (compared to 25% for the U.S. All Races population) and 33.7% for Indian women (compared to 24.1 % for the U.S. All Races population).

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Hubbard Squash

VIOLA LAPOINTE, HO CHUNK ELDER, WINNEBAGO, NE

Farmers nowadays only use Hubbard squash when it is the size of a small football. Farmers pick their squash at this time, because the skin is easier to cut through. But the way I was taught was different. When the squash is large (sort of looking like an alien spore) that is when it is the best, because it gets sweeter.

Using a large knife and a hammer you split the squash open. I usually split one large squash into six pieces. Take out all seeds. Place the pieces of squash into a large pot and boil for approximately 25-30 minutes.

Take squash out of the water using a fork or tongs so you don't burn yourself. Place onto a surface to cool.

When the squash is cool enough to handle with your hand scrape the orange squash from the skin. You can mash all contents together and reheat for eating or you can place into a freezer bag and freeze until you wish to eat it. It is sweet and moist already - you need not add anything else.

When asked whether he thought diabetes is preventable, a young Lakota man said, "Somehow diabetes got here, so there has to be a way to send it back to wherever it came from."

Participant in Project Focus Groups

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Drying Indian Corn – (Washa) Ho Chunk Style

A HO CHUNK WOMAN, WINNEBAGO, NE

Washa means (dried corn) in the Ho Chunk language.

This was taught to me by two of my grandmothers, an aunt, and my mother. Drying corn is not only part of the harvest, but it is time for family and friends to gather and socialize.

Firewood (preferably red elm)

Pitchfork

Outdoor fireplace, with a grate Large cooking pot

Bowls and Spoons

Drying screen

Sheet /tablecloth (which air can get through)

Sheer cloth (example: sheer curtain) you need quite a few pieces of this material

Start your fire and keep it hot. Place the large cooking pot with water in it on the fire. You can begin removing the husk and corn hair from your corn. Place the removed husks near your fireplace. When you husk enough to fill your pot with a batch of corn and the water is boiling in the pot you can begin.



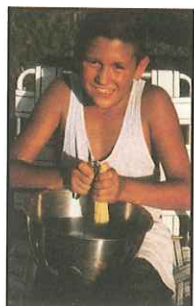
tending the corn



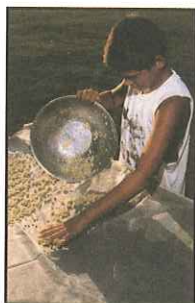
husking the corn

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You need only to boil your corn until the color of the corn changes once. (Example; if it is white boil only until it is a light yellow / if it is lavender boil only until it is light purple) Color change usually only takes about 5-7 minutes if your fire is nice and hot.



scraping the corn



spreading the corn

You then take the corn out using your pitchfork and place it on the husks on the ground near your fireplace. Let cool until you are able to handle it with your hands. (Cover with a sheet so that the corn doesn't attract flies.)

You then take a bowl and spoon and using the edge of the spoon you scrape the corn off the cob into a bowl, but you must get the heart of the kernel. (Run the side of spoon in between the rows of corn lifting the corn off the cob while pushing down the cob, start at one end and push to the other end. Continue until all corn is off the cob.)

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When your bowl is full you are ready to start the drying process. Place one of the sheer pieces of material onto the drying screen and then place your corn from your bowl onto the sheer material. Spread the corn evenly so that all may get sunlight and all will get the wind blowing through the screen. Then place another sheer material on the top of the corn and anchor it down with rocks. Make sure your drying screen is placed where the sun will shine on it all day long. You need to re-spread your corn about two to three times a day; this turns the kernels so that they dry. You leave your corn in the sun light for about two to three days (but make sure and take it in at night and spread it on your table, this way it will not mold or sour).

When the corn is dry and ready for storage it will shrink once in size. Then you place it in freezer bags and freeze it or you can store it in well-sealed jars. You continue

this process until all the corn that you picked is dry. We used to have the kids husk the corn, the men cook the corn and then the women would do the rest. This is what made three circles of peers and the socializing took place. But most of time the young girls had to help the women, so that we learned.

* You must keep a close eye on your corn as it nears harvest time, because there is only one certain time that it is ready for drying. When you can pop a kernel of corn with your fingernail and milk sprays, it's ready.



cooking the corn

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Ho Chunk Corn Soup – (Washa)

A HO CHUNK WOMAN

1 quart of dried corn

Buffalo meat (cubed)

Pot of water

One quart of dried corn will serve about fifty people.

You must soak your corn over night so that it expands to its natural size. In the morning drain the corn and wash it well, so that all loose cob fragments and corn hair are removed. Then place the corn in a large pot of boiling water and cover. Cook the corn until it is soft; around 2 hours of constant boiling. You will need to stir and add water through out the 2 hours that the corn is boiling. So you need to keep an eye

on it. You can then cut small cubes of buffalo roast and place them into the pot. When meat is done, that's it. There's your washa and buffalo.

If cooked outdoors on an open fire the taste is much better.

Nutritional value:

*Beef Filet Mignon 3 oz = 800 kcal, 6 gm fat
(1/2 of this is artery clogging)*

Buffalo Meat 3 oz = 125 kcal, 0.3 gm fat

*Drinking one can of pop a day for one year
is equal to 30 pounds of white sugar intake.*

Indian Corn Hominy – Ho Chunk Way of Preparation

ELAINE RICE, WINNEBAGO, NE

This method for making hominy was taught to me by Scott Snake.

Ears of corn gone hard

Thick pot holders

Readily available water source

Big stir stick

Pitchfork and/or shovel

Tongs (salad-sized)

Hard wood, such as red elm, cut into logs

Strainer with handle

Hose (optional)

Handkerchief

Gallon-sized freezer bags

Metal fireplace (a big grate or grill will do, provided you have blocks of some kind to set it on)

One large kettle (including lid), but two kettles would be better

Piece of string, maybe a foot and a half long

Several containers for storage of kernels in between boiling

Pick corn sometime after the first frost. Shell the corn (take hard kernels off the cobs). The amount of corn you shell is up to you.

Start fire in the fireplace. Keep the fire going throughout the cooking process. Put kettle on to boil, having

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filled it with water about halfway. Break off a piece of coal (maybe fist-sized or so) from one of the burning logs, and pick it up with tongs and put it into water or spill water on it until cool. Wrap the coal inside the handkerchief, tying diagonal corners to each other. Tie the bundle with one end of the string, leaving about a foot of string hanging.

When the water is boiling, drop in the corn kernels. Tie the end of the string onto the kettle handle and drop in the bundle of coal. Allow the corn to boil for one hour, stirring occasionally. If your batch is large, and you have a second kettle, put second kettle full of water on to boil now.

After allowing the corn to boil for one hour, pull the kettle off the fire, and pour out as much water as possible. Pull out one strainer full of kernels at a time and

rinse them well before temporarily storing them in the containers. Once all the kernels have been well rinsed, put them into a fresh kettle of boiling water, making sure the coal bag is tied onto the handle. Boil the kernels with the coal a second time in fresh water for one hour. Put on second kettle of water to boil, if appropriate. Pull off the kettle after one hour and rinse the kernels again.

At this point, you should notice that the kernels have split their skin. Once this has occurred, you will no longer need the handkerchief containing the coal. Boil kernels in fresh water for an hour and rinse a third time. Then do this a fourth and fifth time. Allow hominy to cool. Put it into gallon-sized freezer bags, and freeze it until you need it.

Lakota Dried Meat Soup – (PaPa Soup)

INEZ ROETHER, ST. FRANCIS, SD

Rosebud Reservation

"timpsila" – Lakota word for wild turnip, picked in June and before tops fall off – peel and dry. A bluish purple color flower looking plant, after the tops fall off you cannot find them.

"PaPa" – Lakota word for dried meat "wastunkila" – Lakota word for dried corn

6 pieces of PaPa / dried meat torn to bite size pieces

1/2 string of timpsila / wild turnip*

2 cups of wastunkila / dried corn*

1 large diced onion

1 dash of salt and pepper

6 diced potatoes (optional)

5 quarts of water

*Soak timpsila in water the night before cooking and you can slice them or cut them in half.

*Soak wastunkila in water the night before cooking.

Add 4 quarts of water and start to boil, then add your PaPa, turnips, dried corn. Cook for four hours, if need be. Let cook till turnips are soft (check turnips by slicing one in half). If turnips are done add the onions, potatoes, salt, pepper and more water if needed. Cook until potatoes are done. 8 servings.

(Could be cooked in a slow cooker, start in the morning by adding all ingredients except the potatoes)

“We can worry about it (diabetes) or deny it. We choose the ways we eat and cook.”

Participant in Project Focus Groups

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How To Traditionally Process A Taniga (Tripe)

BURDETTE CLIFFORD, ROSEBUD, SD

As taught to me by my mother, Elizabeth Clifford

"Taniga" – Lakota word for paunch (tripe) of a buffalo or beef

After the buffalo or beef cow has been killed and bled, an incision is made from the neck down to the groin. The internal organs (heart, kidneys, liver, gall-bladder and pancreas) are removed first. The cow has 4 bellies with intestines. These are removed for cleaning. The 4 bellies are cut-open and emptied of contents, washed and cleaned. These will be cut into smaller pieces for cooking or storage. The intestines can be cleaned with a hose of water running down throughout to remove all waste. The smaller intestines can be braided and cut-into cooking size pieces. The larger intestines are cut into cooking size pieces for cooking or storage. Nowadays, taniga is usually frozen after its been processed.

“When I was growing up, I was taught to always listen to my stomach. It will tell me when it is full and to stop eating. If I continued to eat, I would get that bloated feeling after that and that is when the weight problem starts. So, always listen to your stomach and it will tell you when to stop eating and you'll be much healthier.”

Ho Chunk man, Winnebago, Nebraska

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Lakota Plain Tripe Soup – (Taniga Soup)

INEZ ROETHER, ST. FRANCIS, SD
Rosebud Reservation

5 quarts of water
2 packs store bought or traditionally
processed taniga (chopped)
7 cans of white or yellow hominy
or 7 cups of home made hominy
1/2 string of timsila (sliced or halved)
Dash of salt and pepper

Add timsila to water and boil for 3 hours. Add taniga and cook both for another hour and a half until timsila is done. Then add hominy, salt, pepper and water if needed, let cook for half an hour.

10-12 servings

“I am a 73 year old grandmother and I run up to three miles a day with my grandsons because I don't want them or me to get diabetes.”

Oglala Lakota elderly woman

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Lakota Spicy Tripe Soup – (Spicy Taniga Soup)

INEZ ROETHER, ST. FRANCIS, SD
Rosebud Reservation

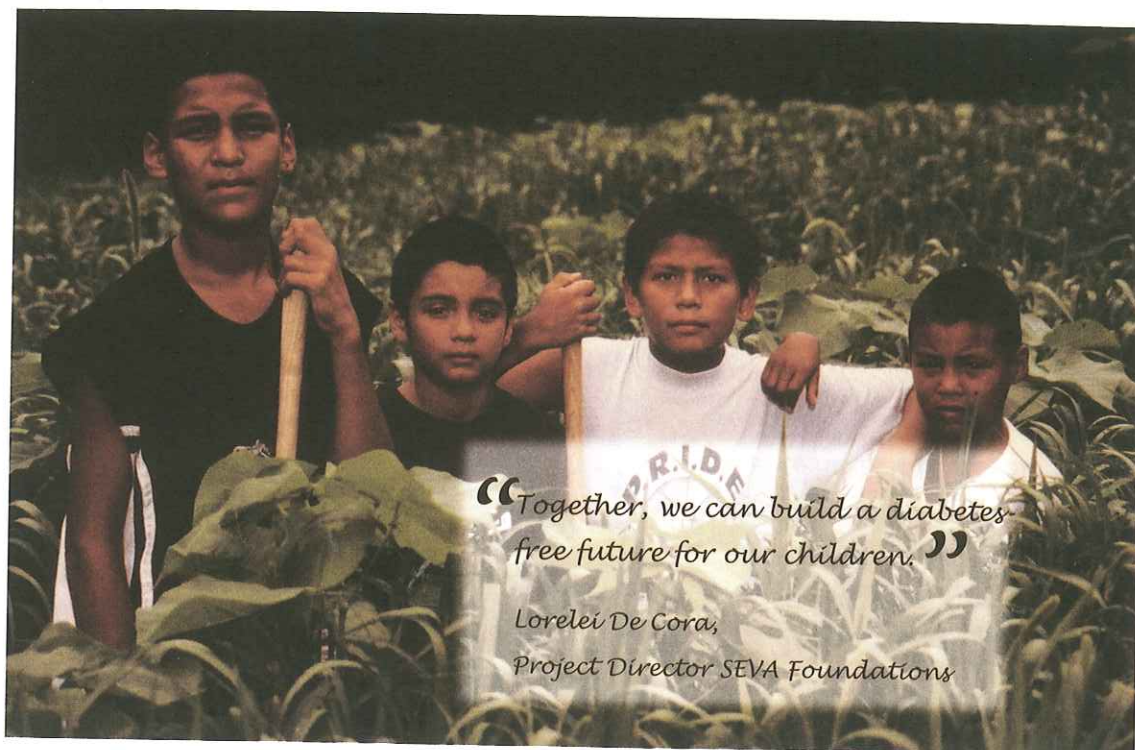
5 quarts of water
2 packs of store bought or tradition-
ally processed taniga (chopped)
7 can of white or yellow hominy or 7
cups of home made hominy
1 large green pepper chopped
1 large onion chopped
1 tablespoon garlic or powder
1 teaspoon chili powder

“The buffalo represents the people and the universe and should always be treated with respect, for was he not here before the two-legged peoples, and is he not generous in that he gives us our homes and our food? The buffalo is wise in many things, and, thus we should always be as a relative with him.”

Black Elk, Oglala Lakota holy man, *The Sacred Pipe*, 1953

Add water and taniga let boil for one and half hours or until taniga is done, add hominy and seasonings and let boil for half an hour. 10-12 servings

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