



NORTHERN MANITOBA Food & Culture Community COLLABORATIVE

- 2015 -

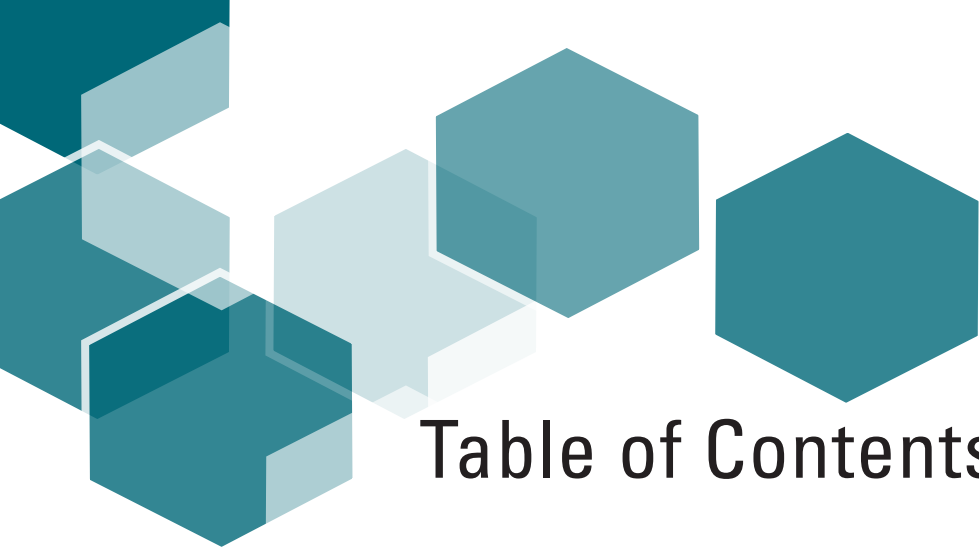


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Executive Summary

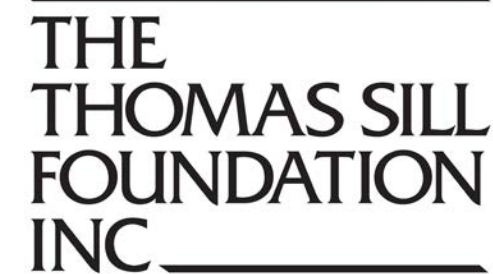
The remote communities in Northern Manitoba currently struggle with very high rates of poverty, food insecurity and related health issues. But it was not always this way. In response, community members are launching an increasing number of innovative local food solutions. Neighbourhood gardens, wild food programs, bee apiaries, chicken coops and greenhouses — these are just some of the ways Northerners are using food to build community, improve health and strengthen local economies.

In 2014, the Northern Manitoba Food, Culture, and Community Collaborative (NMFCCC) was established to assist communities address northern Manitoba's serious food security challenges. In 2014, 54 projects in 26 northern Manitoba communities leveraged more than \$750,000 in grants due to the fund. In 2015 NMFCCC supported 19 projects with grants totaling \$247,273.00. NMFCCC is a community-led collaborative funding model that believes that positive change at a systems level starts at the local level. And, that solutions are best understood and led by the people who are closest to the challenge. The model is more than a tool. The Fund is an active collaboration between funders, local northern advisors and communities in the region. Their shared goal is to revitalize cultural traditions, improve access to healthy foods and develop resilient local economies. When produced sustainably and shared equitably, food builds community, improves health and local economies and protects land and water. As people and the communities in Northern Manitoba reclaim cultural traditions and improve their health, there will be a sense of hope and strength as they face complex challenges.

Project descriptions (pages 5-36) are drawn from grant applications, community reports and interviews with project leaders, describing intended accomplishments, successes, challenges and next steps in moving to food sovereignty. Project descriptions are reviewed and edited by the communities prior to inclusion in this booklet. This year, projects ranged from healthy living practices that focused on community and home gardens, beekeeping, berry picking, fruit orchards, seed gathering, (ice) fishing, and hunting and gathering food; to encouraging cultural practices through nature walks, medicine picking and sweat lodges; to educating youth and community members through workshops and hands-on training; preserving food through canning and smoking; purchasing equipment such as fishing equipment, garden tools, community freezers and dehydrators; and to building community infrastructure such as processing facilities, composters and smokehouses. All Initiatives increased local capacity, community development, supported the transfer of traditional food skills from Elders to youth, provided paid and unpaid local employment opportunities, mitigated the challenges of a cold, wet growing season in Northern Manitoba and enhanced community resources and knowledge .

The NMFCCC is a collaborative of Northern Manitobans and private and government organizations committed to principles of shared learning and reciprocity; the Fund is administered by Tides Canada and guided by five Northern Advisors and peer review committee. More information on the Northern Advisors is found on pages 39-40. An in-depth explanation of the project's guiding framework is detailed in the theory of change on page 43. For further information, contact: Julie Price, Julie.price@tidescanada.org or visit: tidescanada.org

Meet the Collaborative



NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2014
- ✓ 2015
- ✓ 2016

Barrows Community Greenhouse

Location Barrows, Manitoba has a population of about 100 and acts as the service centre for smaller surrounding communities. It is located near Red Deer Lake and the Saskatchewan border.

Objective To enhance community resources and knowledge on sustainable living by growing local food and promoting healthy eating habits through the community greenhouse.

In 2013 a mid-sized greenhouse for vegetables and bedding plants for the local community was constructed with support from Manitoba Agriculture Food and Rural Development. In 2014 operations were refined in the greenhouse, and local enthusiasm for and knowledge about food production grew. This year the community planned to enhance the community greenhouse and expand by adding fruit trees and berry plants, facilitating preservation workshops and selling additional plants to neighbouring communities for additional revenue.

Successes

- Every community household grew a vegetable garden.
- Fruit and vegetable preservation workshops, including canning and smoking, were provided by the Northern Association of Community Councils.
- Many of the vegetables grown were preserved through canning, smoking and freezing.
- Community members shared healthy recipes.
- Community members purchased plants from the greenhouse for their home gardens.
- People from nearby communities purchased plants from the greenhouse, stimulating the local economy.
- Community buildings, such as the hall were used at no-cost for project events and activities.
- Nothing went to waste at the end of the season; unsold flowers were planted in the cemetery or donated to the school.
- The greenhouse provided job opportunities to 3 community members.
- Council was extremely supportive of the project and supplied organizational oversight.



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“ More people are preserving, freezing, canning and wanting to do it.

Challenges

- Some seeds had low germination rates.
- Low air flows and circulation did not provide an optimum environment, fans are required.
- Could not maintain a consistent temperature for ideal growth during colder nights.
- Low volunteer participation by youth and young adults.

Next Steps

- Raise plant prices, could potentially discourage purchasing.
- Try new varieties of plants in the greenhouse.
- Improve greenhouse ventilation by installing high-quality fans.
- Install an interior wood stove to combat fluctuating temperatures.
- Increase advertising to encourage more business for the greenhouse.
- Apply for funding to purchase more fruit trees.
- Plan and host more workshops on food preservation.
- Encourage young people to get involved in the project.



“ Our greenhouse is a project that is benefiting the community in more ways than I first imagined.



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Bayline Regional Roundtable (BRRT) Food Cooperative

Location **Thicket Portage, Ilford/War Lake, and Pikwitonei** are located along the Bayline Railway. Small communities with populations under 150 with no year round roads are accessible only by train, plane, or winter roads.

Objective Supporting communities to plan and implement a co-op model of monthly bulk food purchasing and distribution using the rail line that will increase access to healthy, perishable foods.

Access to healthy food is difficult for residents in participating communities. Local stores are absent or small. People must take an expensive, three-day round trip to Thompson to grocery shop. Over the past three years, residents and leaders of the communities have been working towards starting a Food Buying Co-operative to improve access to healthy foods and reduce food access costs. In 2014 a pre-feasibility study was completed. In 2015 support was provided for community meetings and community feasts to gather input and ideas to pilot the project in 2016.

Successes

- Community member in Thicket Portage is opening a store to sell milk, bread, snacks and produce.
- 5 people in Pikwitonei have their own gardens to supply their families with healthy food.
- Healthy Together Now (HTN) have funded a daily snack program at the Pikwitonei school.
- AFFIRM (Affordable Food in Remote Manitoba) has engaged with the communities and intends to partner on the Food Buying Cooperative.
- Lush Cosmetics was introduced and intends to partner on the Food Buying Cooperative.

NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2015
- ✓ 2016

Challenges

- Local payments are limited to cash or money order as Interac cannot be used in Thicket Portage or Pikwitonei
- Community gardens in Pikwitonei were not very successful in 2015 due to the cold growing year.
- The greenhouse in Pikwitonei is not being used for growing plants.
- Food storage in the communities is a challenge.
- It is challenging to find local people who are able to run programs and businesses.
- Shipping goods by train is difficult because the train does not have refrigeration.
- The train is unreliable and often late when it stops at each community.

Next Steps

- Start a steering committee with members from each community and BRRT
- Engage and work with Via Rail representatives to determine capacity and use of train for shipping, including refrigeration options.
- Explore the possibility of council or local corner-store owners picking-up and delivering goods from trains in each community.
- Pay community coordinator in each town to collect money, do ordering and oversee distribution of food.
- Over the long term, open up a retail food store in each participating community.
- Explore the possibility of using Wabowden as a central location for food storage for the food co-op.
- Look into insurance for co-op to provide a contingency plan to prevent food loss (e.g., loss due to train derailment).
- Launch a four month pilot run of the food buying Co-operative starting in June of 2016

“ A co-op means working together to get healthy food into the communities.

NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2014
- ✓ 2015
- ✓ 2016

Garden Hill Wabung Fisheries Producers Co-op

Location

The Wabung Fishers of Garden Hill First Nation are located in **Garden Hill First Nation**. The community has 3,954 living on reserve. Ojibway-Cree and English are the primary languages. It is part of the Island Lake region.

Objective

To re-build the fish packing station so it meets industry standards. To enable community members to fish, share their catch locally and sell their catch regionally, while reconnecting them to traditional foods practices. To provide meaningful employment opportunities in the community.

The commercial fishing plant in Garden Hill First Nation was closed for many years. The project sought to re-open the local fish packing station. The Wabung Fisheries Producers Co-op will strengthen its governance and operations and purchase new supplies and conduct renovations to create an adequate facility to provide employment for community members as fishermen and fish packers. The Co-op would market fish locally and to customers outside of the community with an established agreement with Freshwater Fish—a federal Crown corporation that buys, processes, and markets fish.

Successes

- Fishers shared their catch with family and friends.
- Fish was sold and shared directly from packing station to the community
- Fish packing facility was renovated and met minimum standards.
- Fishing equipment and packing equipment was purchased and is in working condition.
- Docks at the fish packing station were rebuilt for delivering transporting fish from facility on sea-planes and by boat.
- Support from NMFCCF gave the community leverage to negotiate better pricing with Freshwater Fish.
- Community members were employed at the Garden Hill fish packing station.
- Fishers from St. Teresa Point and Wasagamack were able to bring fish to the fish packing station.
- Fish packaged in the station was sold to nearby communities.
- The blast freezer in the Fish Packing Station helped support the country foods chicken program occurring in the community by storing 600 processed chickens.

“The opening of the fish plant is important because fishing has been our tradition for a long time. Now there are 10 people working at the plant and 15 fishers bringing fish each day.

Challenges

- Not having a full-time project manager made it difficult to oversee the project properly and to adequately report.
- Limited local training and mentorship opportunities were available for the new fishers in the community or for local management of the fish packing station.
- Funding was delayed as the grant from Northern Manitoba Food, Culture, & Community Collaborative (NMFCCC) went through the University of Manitoba. Garden Hill First Nation is not recognized as a registered charity, resulting in a 15% loss to administrative fees.

Next Steps

- Work with Employment and Training to hire a local manager. Meet with Freshwater Fish to plan for management training.
- Approach Aki Energy for a management workshop in Garden Hill.
- Plan to renovate the fish packing station into a fish processing station to create higher value fish products
- Explore “adding value” to the product, such as smoking the fish.
- Host more community meetings to strategize for the future and engage the community.
- Find other sources of funding.



NMFCCC Funding

✓ 2015

Lac Brochet Ice Fishing

Location

The Northlands Dene First Nation and the community of Brochet are side by side near the Saskatchewan border. They are at the same latitude as Churchill, Manitoba. Lac Brochet has a population of 629 and a median age of just under 20 years old. It is the most northern town in Manitoba with no permanent road or rail connection to other parts of Manitoba.

Objective

To build youth skills and knowledge on fishing and strengthen cultural values in the community by deepening the connection to traditional food and the land it comes from.

In partnership with the Health Centre and local school, skilled fishers from the community received an honorarium to take groups of students out on educational fishing trips. Workshops on processing and preserving fish occurred in home-economic classes at the school. A portion of the fish caught were shared with families of the students and the remainder stored in the community freezer for the community to use.

Successes

- Fishing trips filled two freezers with fish, including: white fish, mariah, pickerel, trout, and jack fish.
- Fish were shared with over 20 elders and used for the winter festival and other promotional events.
- Youth participated in the project by helping with cleaning, filleting and distribution of fish to elders.
- Fish nets and equipment purchased for the project continue to be used and maintained in the summer and upcoming winter seasons.

Challenges

- Youth were unable to go on the fishing trip due to very cold weather.
- Unpredictable weather and people's schedules made coordinating ice fishing trips difficult.
- Maintaining equipment; a broken auger had to be replaced by plane during a trip.

Next Steps

- Include youth in future fishing trips to transfer skills and deepen their cultural values.
- Expand the supply from trips to provide more country foods for Elders and community events.
- Find other sources of funding to increase opportunities for youth participation in traditional food practices.

“*Reliance on food from the land is part of the way of life, the reason for setting up the community and has ensured that community members continue to live long healthy lives with lower rates of diabetes and other food related illness than most remote communities.*”



“*Fishing is one of the best sources of healthy food for Lac Brochet.*”

NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2013
- ✓ 2014
- ✓ 2015
- ✓ 2016

Nothern Beekeeping Project

Location

Spence Lake, Dawson Bay, Homebrook, Meadow Portage and Barrows are located throughout the northern interlake and western region of Manitoba and are communities with populations under 150. They are all members of the Northern Association of Community Councils.

Objective

To expand and explore the potential of beekeeping in communities in the remote north for community economic development, increased food security and improved pollination.

In 2013, 5 families and 3 communities began beekeeping and in 2014 relationships were developed with local trainers and mentors and the program planning and implementation evolved. In 2016 the project sought to expand by adding 1 new community to the project. New participants would be provided with training, mentorship, equipment and bees to learn how to keep bees and process resources from the hives. Existing participants would train and mentor new members. All profits are encouraged to be used in sustaining the project.

Successes

- Beekeeping collaborative expanded from 5 families to 9 and in 2 new communities.
- Training for new families was improved based on previous experience.
- NACC developed a project manual with 5-year plan for supporting participants involved in beekeeping
- Bees pollinated surrounding areas, increasing garden yields for residents.
- Use of local honey offset grocery bills as people substituted honey for refined sugar.
- Honey was donated to a local student for her project to design a label for packaging and marketing.
- Workshop at the local school educated students on honey production and extraction.
- NACC improved record keeping which allowed for a more successful and organized project.
- Families reinvested their profits from selling honey into their apiaries, increasing their self-sufficiency.
- Relationships between the participating families were strengthened.

Challenges

- Many families reported difficulties with getting queens to re-queen their hives.
- One family lost their crop due to a bear getting into the hive.
- Removing honey supers without hurting the bees was difficult for new beekeepers.
- Poor weather and lack of wild alfalfa flowers reduced plant availability for pollination and honey.
- A delay in the delivery of the NMFCCC grant prevented some bees and supplies from arriving until later in the season, making it difficult for production and maintenance of hives.

Next Steps

- Invest in the project to expand and add 3 more communities and up to 15 families.
- Reduce support given to long-term participants to encourage self-sufficiency.
- Explore working with beeswax through workshops and training.
- Expand hives so families are able to sell more and eventually become self-sustaining.
- Look at new techniques for managing larger amounts of data, processes and information to oversee the growing initiative.

	Honey (lbs)	Hives
Family 1	5	1
Family 2	180	1
Family 3	375	2
Family 4	400	2
Family 5	1800	26
Family 6	382	4
Family 7	430	4
Family 8	350	4

“ We have replaced over 50% of sugar in our diet with honey.

5 communities
8 beekeepers
44 hives
3,922 lbs of honey



Nothern Fish Composting Stations

- Location

Objective
- Pine Dock** and **Dawson Bay** are both located in northern Manitoba and have a population under 100. They are both members of the Northern Association of Community Councils and they identify as fishing communities.

To provide community infrastructure to turn a waste product into valuable fertilizer that is not readily or economically available in participating communities, for use in community gardens, home gardens and around fruit trees.

NACC planned to provide support to three communities, Pine Dock, Matheson Island and Dawson Bay, to create plans for fish composting and determine the best sites and material needed. Intending to work with the community council, contractors and Environment Canada, training and education would be provided to community members to learn how to properly manage fish waste and compost sites.

Successes

- Fish Composting Station Plans were created based on consultations with specialists.
- Composting recipes and training material for composting were developed.
- Manitoba Composting Association helped identify the need for in-vessel composting.
- Innovat, a Manitoba company, designed and manufactured the compost drums for fish composting stations.

Challenges

- Matheson Island Council decided to drop out of the program, which affected the site planning for Pine Dock.
- Process for site approval for the composting machine was difficult to navigate due to provincial regulations and requirement of a map of the site, coordinates, proximity to other infrastructure and past history.

“The project will provide a use for all the fish refuse that is the by-product of fishing.”

NMFCCC Funding

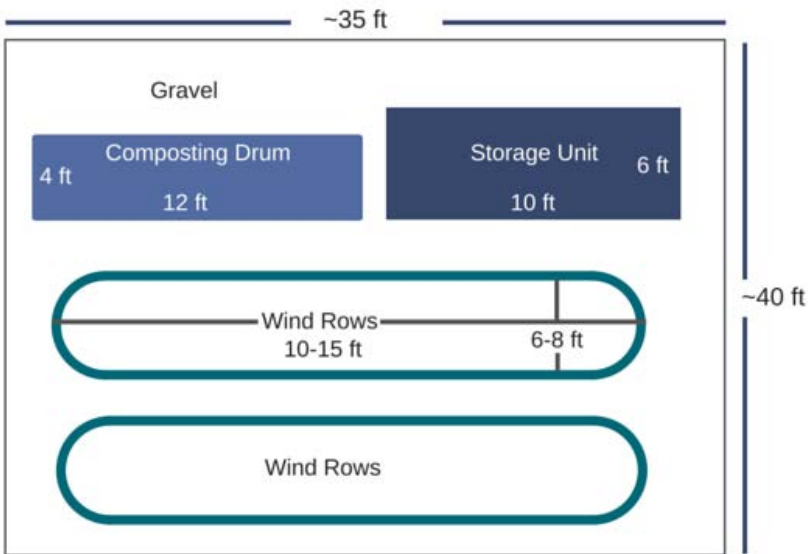
✓ 2015

✓ 2016

Next Steps

- Hold a training session to prepare community members to use the composter.
- Activate the compost stations. Use local fishermen’s raw fish waste in composters to provide a local supply of fertilizer and compost materials for the community to use for gardens and fruit trees.
- Expand compost production to service nearby communities.
- Eventually create jobs for community members to manage and maintain the machine.
- Produce enough compost to sell, increasing local income.
- Create a website for information exchange to support fish composting stations.
- Engage with community members to increase enthusiasm for project.

“Our community will be able to utilize the local fishermen’s raw fish waste that is generally dumped out on the lake, or filling our local waste disposal site, and hopefully create some jobs to stimulate the economy in our community.”



Dawson Bay Site Plan



Opaskwayak Cree Nation *Mino Pimaticiwin*

Location

Accessible by rail, road, water and air the **Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Manitoba** has about 5,000 on-reserve residents and 2,000 off-reserve. It is located on the banks of the Saskatchewan River.

Objective

To increase the number of healthy, active families in OCN by providing garden spaces and opportunities for people to learn and grow food together. To support food sovereignty and healthy living.

In 2014, 3 community gardens and a fruit tree orchard were started and families began working together to learn together, grow food and increase knowledge on how to use fresh garden foods. This year, the participants planned to add 2 new gardens in the 'Big Eddy' area of the community, focus on landscaping areas on the reserve for community gathering spaces and build an open-air community kitchen for cooking classes.

Successes

- 3 new community garden sites were established and fully utilized.
- Fruit tree orchard continued to flourish.
- 10 new families joined the garden community and were active in planting, weeding and harvesting community gardens.
- More children participated in the planting and harvesting of vegetables and fruits. They were particularly interested in the pumpkins.
- The 'main garden', located centrally, was landscaped and became a gathering spot with trellises, a gravelled walking path, a shed, a fence around the garden and picnic tables.
- The open air kitchen was constructed and nearly completed (except for water)
- New wildflower bed and pumpkin patch attracted community members to participate.
- Plants and tools for the garden were donated by individuals and local stores.
- Gardens became an attraction for neighbouring communities, tour groups, conference delegates and visiting dignitaries.
- Media coverage of the garden was positive with stories appearing in videos, social media and the local newspaper (Natotawin).
- The OCN Recreation Department continued to be helpful and responsive to project needs.
- A beekeeping workshop was held in December to begin planning and training for an apiary.
- Support base was diversified through a new partnership with Lush Cosmetics.



NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2014
- ✓ 2015
- ✓ 2016

Challenges

- Due to a late rain season, gardens were slow getting started.
- Two new raspberry patches have not yet born fruit.
- Animals and crows got into gardens and ripped up some plants.
- Watering the garden was challenging in a drier season without adequate supplies.
- Occurance of mild vandalism in the pumpkin patch.
- Community kitchen construction was delayed due to difficulties getting materials and no water hook up.

Next Steps

- Complete community kitchen.
- Schedule waterworks to be piped into the main town site garden for fall.
- Add bees and beekeeping to the project.
- Increase topsoil for wildflowers and community gardens.

“ People always go to see the garden when they come . . . It's become a place to visit.

“ It's important for our community to have healthier food options.



OPCN: Ithinto Mechisowin Program (IMP)

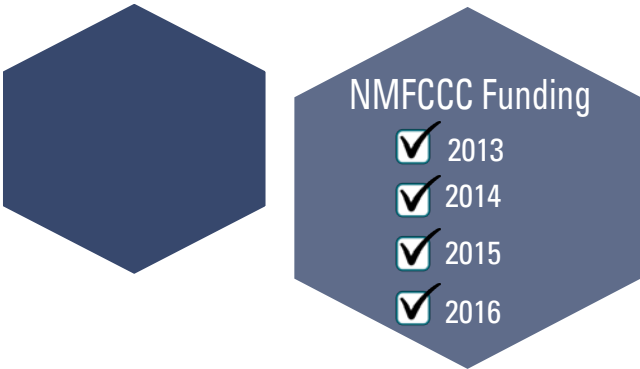
Location **O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation (OPCN)**, also known as **South Indian Lake** has a population of about 1,200 consisting of mostly Aboriginal, mainly Cree, peoples. It is located about 300 km north of Thompson, Manitoba and is connected by all-weather road that includes year-round cable ferry to cross the river.

Objective To achieve food sovereignty by expanding the country foods service to community members in need while re-establishing the connection to cultural foods, good physical health, and social interaction.

In 2012 a community-led initiative that trained youth and provided elders with teaching opportunities intended to revitalize traditional practices was established. A diverse local steering committee has guided the project ever since to harvest food through a community garden and plan for hunting trips to distribute food to community members in need. Through 2013 and 14, the IMP program grew, gaining their own food distribution and processing building, improved equipment and hired local staff. In 2015, the project continued to support the food distribution project by planning to provide workshops for youth on hunting, fishing, trapping, gardening and shared country food through cultural gatherings and youth training campouts.

Successes

- Wilderness course taught youth basic navigational and survival skills.
- Elders led youth workshops on traditional medicines.
- Youth gained traditional skills on fishing and hunting trips.
- 12 students took part in a beaver dressing workshop; learning to skin, quarter, and package beavers for elders.
- A partnership with Big Sand Lake Lodge (BSLL) allowed for a larger amount of moose meat (15 tonnes from 25 moose) to be harvested and stored.
- 6 students went to BSLL to learn about the lodge and tourism/hospitality, exposing them to business development.
- Local food was distributed monthly to 40 households (200 people), to help off-set their grocery bills, including people with diabetes, single parents and elders.
- 8 new home gardens were added.
- Materials, tools and tilling machinery were shared with community gardeners.



Challenges

- No regular access to a vehicle made delivering food to those who cannot pick-up difficult.
- No internet in the food program office made it difficult to share information through Facebook or e-mail.
- Difficult to get annual accounting reports for the project from the band office.
- IMP Program Coordinator's pay was not enough to keep up with living expenses.
- Local elected support for the project was not very strong.
- Local steering committee was not as active as it once was.
- One garden could not be used due to a violent incident that happened at the site.

Next Steps

- Add different programs to diversify and expand the project, such as greenhouses and a social enterprise approach to program components.
- Grow the gardening component of the program.
- Finalize construction of a bigger garden across the channel.
- Add a canoeing skills program to teach youth about safety on the water.
- Build a storage place for program equipment such as sleds and augers.
- Grow seedlings in the new greenhouse.
- Buy or designate a vehicle for the program for food deliveries and travel.

“People are getting more of their food from the land. It keeps people from spending so much on groceries.”



NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2014
- ✓ 2015
- ✓ 2016

Peguis Community Garden

Location

Peguis First Nation is located in the Interlake Region of Manitoba. It is the largest first nation community in Manitoba and has a membership of approximately 10,000.

Objective

To regain and rebuild Peguis First Nation's heritage around the culture of agriculture by creating a community garden, to promote healthy living by working cooperatively, sharing resources and increasing community economic development.

Community gardens were developed in 2012 and have flourished and expanded with support from partnerships in 2013 and 2014. Approximately 9 acres are under cultivation in addition to many home gardens. The Community Garden produces food for the community, and occasionally some food is sold in Winnipeg at Neechi Commons Market. Food is shared at community events, distributed to elders, and gifted to the food bank. This year the gardens and participating community members continued to be supported and strengthened, while economic opportunities based on gardening would be explored by project leaders.

Successes

- Vegetables from gardens were shared with elders, visitors, the health centre and local food bank.
- Two Elder Days at the gardens brought over 130 elders to learn about the project and share their knowledge and feedback.
- Four Arrows Regional Health Authority (FARHA) maintained a small garden plot for seed purposes and provided a great deal of support with workshops and trainings.
- Held a Garden Workshop in early June with over 40 people in attendance.
- New home gardens were developed with assistance from project leaders.
- The project was a headliner in a video made with four other communities (Na-tas-kek: Reconnecting with Mother Earth) on food security in rural communities across the province.
- A Red River College student did a 6-week practicum with the project that proved invaluable for both the project and student.
- The tobacco experiment was a success with a good crop and seeds saved.
- Project leaders attended the Neechi Commons Farmers' Market in Winnipeg and their supply was sold out before the end of the day.



Challenges

- Maintaining necessary equipment: a garden tiller broke and had to be written off, at least 2 more were marked as needing repairs; push mower needed to be repaired; and tractor needed to be replaced.
- A cold front in late May damaged some of the vegetables.
- Not enough storage areas for tools and for winter root cellaring of seed potatoes and other crops.

Next Steps

- Expand the tobacco initiative.
- Start an orchard with a variety of fruit trees and berries.
- Provide further opportunities for training and education in horticulture.
- Research the potential for co-operative farming.
- Explore further opportunities to sell surplus vegetables.
- Replace and repair garden tools and machinery.
- Expand the number of home gardens in the community.
- Build and strengthen relationships with supporting organizations.
- Increase community participation and interest in the project.
- Encourage new leaders to help run the project



“We have to keep teaching and showing, hands-on is really important to helping our people learn. This is what keeps [us] going.”



Sayisi Traditional Foods

Location

Sayisi Dene First Nation is one of the most northern communities in Manitoba and is located in Tadoule Lake. The remote community has an on-reserve population of approximately 300.

Objective

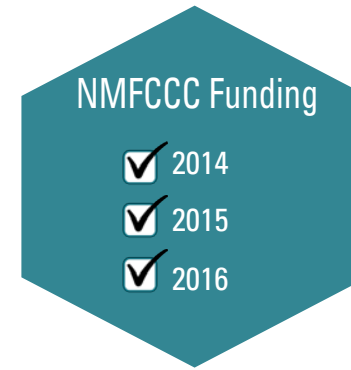
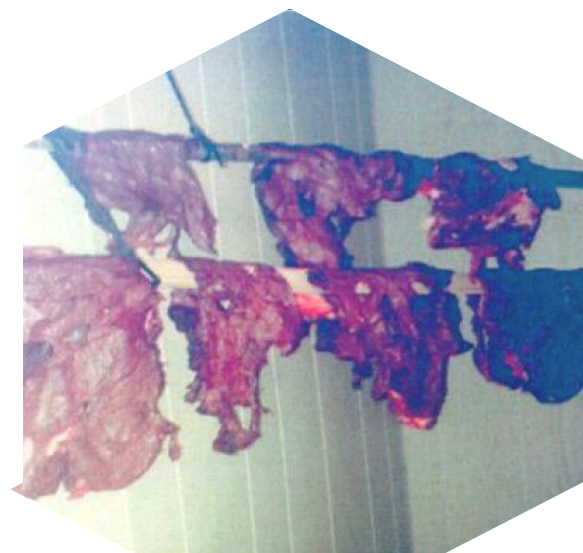
To administer a positive food and cultural program to transfer knowledge and skills on traditional cultures to the younger generation.

The food and cultural program planned to encourage healthy living by providing support and funding to hunters, elders and youth to participate in caribou hunting to harvest, preserve and share meat with community; fund 3 ice-fishing trips during winter months to fish, harvest, preserve and share fish caught; teach survival skills to youth on trips; teach preservation skills at community workshops; and record on-the-land teachings of food preparation to share with community members and others.

Successes

- Hunters and youth went out on the land together for the caribou.
- Traditional hunting skills were passed down to youth.
- Survival skills were passed down to youth.
- Elders taught students food preservation skills and the history of the Sayisi Dene foods. Drying Caribou meat is an example.
- Families and Elders shared caribou meal recipes and taught students how to prepare caribou with frying, baking, marinating and stewing.
- Youth were very excited about the foods project.
- Honoraria was given to hunters, elders and youth who participated.
- Meat was shared with families of participating families and elders.

“ This is the beginning of teaching [youth] how the traditional knowledge is given to them.



Challenges

- High diabetes rate that has increased with poor eating habits.
- Caribou herd is declining due to outside sources and development in cabin grounds. Conservation regulations may restrict future hunts.
- Increased local support to volunteer for and run the program would strengthen it and involve more people.
- Cost of getting out onto the land is high (fuel, sleds, and tools).

Next Steps

- Increase opportunities to transfer knowledge between generations.
- Continue to rebuild cultural and traditional knowledge within the community.

“The kids enjoyed the different ways we prepared the caribou – whether it was frying, stew[ing], baking, or marinating.”



**SAYISI DENE FIRST NATION
TADOULE LAKE, MB**

NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2014
- ✓ 2015

Sherridon Kitchiwapaw Clan Mothers Garden

Location The **Kichewapaw Clan Mothers** live in Sherridon, MB with a population of 75 residents, most of whom are Aboriginal. It is a post-mining town (mine closed in 1952) that still deals with the leeching of acids into local lakes and streams. It is part of a federal Orphaned Mine Site Rehabilitation and more than \$34 million in federal money has been invested in site rehabilitation.

Objective To mentor youth in gardening skills and provide community members with locally grown, healthy foods.

While the project sought to construct and prepare a garden for the 2014 growing season, this occurred in 2015. Local volunteers and Cold Lake School children participated and learned about gardening. Connections with the school and advertisements through community flyers encouraged community members to participate. Financial administration and project support was provided by Food Matters Manitoba.

Successes

- Greenhouse was built to produce seedlings and vegetables throughout the season.
- Location was finalized next to the youth centre and it was an accessible spot for community members and highly visible.
- Harvested vegetables were shared with over a dozen community families – many of whom helped with planting and garden maintenance.
- Networking opportunities expanded through working relationships in the community.

Challenges

- The greenhouse was too hot for plants in summer.
- Securing an accessible garden location impeded progress.
- Poor weather and cold rain slowed the growth of many plants.
- Forest fires kept many community members from attending training, as people were employed to fight the fires.
- High staff and volunteer turnover required continuous training and made it difficult to maintain community interest.

“ The harvested vegetables were shared with over a dozen families, some who helped with the garden.

Next Steps

- Increase ventilation in the greenhouse to plant heat-loving vegetables.
- Continue building interest in the community to increase participation.
- Provide more training on greenhouse maintenance and planting, harvesting and processing vegetables

“ This project began with great intentions of local partnerships with similar projects and spawned other working relationships within the community.



Sherridon Smoke House

Location Located near the MB-SK boarder just south of Flin Flon, Sherridon, Manitoba is home to 75 residents, most of whom are Aboriginal. It is a post-mining town (mine closed in 1952) that still deals with the leeching of acids into local lakes and streams. It is part of a federal Orphaned Mine Site Rehabilitation and more than \$34 million in federal money has been invested in site rehabilitation.

Objective To expand the traditional foods distribution project, developing a stronger sharing and bartering economy to support those who struggle to access healthy, land-based foods.

In 2014 the infrastructure and equipment needed for harvesting food was constructed. This year, the community planned to expand by building a community smokehouse, sourcing equipment and supplies and increasing interest in the project through workshops and gatherings. Additional project support and financial administration was provided by Food Matters Manitoba.

Successes

- New smokehouse was built for the community and used often in fishing and moose hunting season.
- The smokehouse was located in a secure place and overseen by a dedicated community member, no vandalism occurred during 2015.
- Community members from The Pas used the smokehouse to harvest and process their food prior to shipping it back via train.
- Smokehouse provided a place for community members to gather and learn about traditional food processing techniques from each other.
- Food preserved reduced what people spent on groceries.
- Local elders received 100 lbs of fish.
- Youth involved in washing, grinding and bagging the fish. Youth really liked to help make fish patties.



NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2014
- ✓ 2015
- ✓ 2016

Challenges

- Not enough vacuum sealer bags to freeze fish.
- Not enough racks in the smokehouse.
- Stored wood supply ran out very quickly.
- Difficult to find the right balance between the wood stove and propane system in order to conserve wood and maintain flavour.

Next Steps

- Have a community wood harvesting day and store more wood for the upcoming season.
- Install more racks in the smokehouse to increase space for fish and meat.
- Use available materials to make hangers for sausage.
- Expand the processing shed to keep fish and meat separate.
- Post procedures in council office and local store for requesting and using the fileting shack and smokehouse.
- Offer workshops with the 'Kids Come First' committee to increase youth engagement.

“ The more enjoyable you can make it, the more people will get involved.

“ It brought a lot of old family members back home to visit and use the smoke house . . . the camaraderie was awesome.

Smoked Meat	Weight (lbs)
Caribou	85
Caribou sausage	30
Ground Fish	400
Jackfish	30
Moose	10
Lake Trout	250
Walleye	610
White fish	530
Total	1945



NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2015
- ✓ 2016

Wasagamack Wasake Fishers

Location

Wasagamack is an Ojibway-Cree First Nation community located in the Island Lake region. Accessible by plane and boat in the summer and an ice road in the winter, Wasagamack has a registered population of 2,114, with 1,913 living on-reserve.

Objective

To restore the connection to traditional foods and practices and increase economic opportunity and jobs, by providing facilities and materials for the people of Wasagamack to fish.

Commercial fishing was a practice of the community for many generations but recently stopped. By purchasing equipment and providing training to the community the project planned to encourage fishing to become a livelihood for community members and provide food to eat locally and sell to nearby communities.

Successes

- Fishing equipment (nets, knives, jiggers, etc.) that was purchased, shipped, and distributed allowed for fishing to occur all year-round; 15 fishers went out in fall to fish.
- Women participated in commercial fishing, a first for the community.
- Many young fishers used the mentorship program (Fish Helpers Program) for training and skill-building.
- The program allowed for multiple trips for youth and community members to spend time fishing and cooking at Pelican Lake.
- Fishing provided youth with an alternative to drugs and alcohol.

Challenges

- Scheduling and pricing the delivery of goods was difficult due to a short winter road season.
- The grant from NMFCCC went through the University of Manitoba as Wasagamack is not currently recognized as a registered charity, resulting in a 15% loss to administrative fees. However, Dr. Thompson's SSHRC from that university was able to make up the loss and provide further funding.
- The grant money was not transferred to the University until late in the season, resulting in a delay to the start of the project.
- Scheduling, planning and organizing fishing trips was difficult with so many fishers.

“ People went out and fished! They enjoy being out on the land the way their ancestors used to do.

Next Steps

- Meet with Freshwater Fish to plan a workshop on winter fishing and Employment Insurance benefits in relation to fishing.
- Finalize on-the-land programs so they can be offered as accredited high school provincial courses for youth and community members.
- Grow local leadership in the project.
- Structure the Meechim Market so it functions as a store to provide healthier food options.
- Host a healing program for youth that ties into fishing.
- Upgrade ice systems so fish are packed and preserved properly.

“ There are a lot of community feasts in Wasagamack, and people often have fish on the table. It's not easy to eat at Wasagamack, but if you are eating it is likely wild foods, particularly fish.





NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2014
- ✓ 2015
- ✓ 2016

Brochet Youth Gardening Project

Location

The **Barren Lands First Nation** and **Brochet Community** is located on the northern shore of Reindeer Lake and have no year-round road access. In the winter, temporary roads connect the community, in the summer boat and air access is available. The diverse community of 600 people speak Cree, Dene and English.

Objective

To connect youth and elders in the community through mentorship and education around the growing of fresh and traditional foods.

In 2013 a community garden was built through partnership with Thomas Sill Foundation. In 2014 the community partnered with NMFCCF to include cooking classes and support for home gardens. This year a partnership with NMFCCF and Lush planned to provide garden supplies and funding for 2 adults and 4 youth part-time Garden Advisor positions (to assist home gardeners and oversee the community garden) and schedule workshops to involve local middle school students in the greenhouse and community garden. Financial administration and additional project support was provided by Food Matters Manitoba.

Successes

- The return of 2 garden advisors strengthened local capacity and transferred past knowledge to new hires.
- Garden Advisors' organizational skills enabled effective coordination and management of community and individual gardens.
- 15 new home gardens were planted and harvested.
- A new greenhouse and foundation were built on reserve land and was used to grow vegetables.
- Seeds planted at a Seed Starting Workshop (attended by middle school students) were transplanted by Garden Advisors into the community garden.
- Vegetables were given to community Elders during harvest.

Challenges

- Lack of involvement from youth in gardens.
- Not enough soil for garden beds.
- A land dispute resulted in a smaller space for the community garden and fewer vegetables produced.
- Poor weather provided mediocre growing conditions.
- Uncoordinated payment system led to loss of cheques.

Next Steps

- Coordinate payment system
- Continue to reach out to youth to spread awareness, increase involvement and expand the gardens.
- Continue partnership with Food Matters Manitoba to enhance the garden.

Cross Lake Garden Project

Location

Cross Lake First Nation is located just north of Lake Winnipeg in Cross Lake, MB. It is a large northern community with 7,254 members (5,385 living on-reserve).

Objective

To support community development through improved access to, and education about, fresh and local foods for young and low-income families.

In 2013 a community garden was started in an area of the community known to be lower-income. In 2015 the focus of the project was to strengthen community capacity with 2 paid Garden Coordinator positions, expand the community garden and support students in the garden club at Mikisew School to garden at home. Financial administration and project support was provided by Food Matters Manitoba.

Successes

- Vegetable plants donated from Manitoba Hydro filled 10 community garden beds.
- 'Planting Day' event brought children from all across the community to learn about and assist in gardening.
- Garden Coordinators grew peas, herbs, and carrots.
- Garden Coordinators learned about gardening and the value of local foods.

Challenges

- Garden Coordinators were unable to commit to a full summer of work as planned.
- Few people were involved with the community garden after 'Planting Day', despite showing interest.
- A wet and cold growing season produced only a few types of vegetables.
- Garden Coordinators did not have access to a lawn mower needed for garden maintenance.
- The community has one of the highest diabetes prevalence rates in northern Manitoba (86% in 2011).

Next Steps

- Improve tool access to maintain the garden.
- Strategize to increase community involvement in the garden.
- Hire two garden coordinators for 2016, one with recent training on youth engagement

NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2015
- ✓ 2016



God's Lake Narrows Horticultre

Location

God's Lake First Nation is located in the Northeast section of MB, only accessible by airplane or a winter road. The community is home to approximately 1,500 First Nation members.

Objective

To assist and mentor community members to start gardens to be healthy, active and reconnect with traditions

Over the past five years the community has focused on creating home gardens. In 2014, 20 gardens were added to the community as either small raised beds, container gardens or in-ground gardens. In 2015 the community planned to start 25 new home gardens, provide garden equipment, order seeds and chicks, allocate items to create raised beds and support families raising poultry by enhancing 5 chicken pens. project support was provided by Food Matters Manitoba.

Successes

- Community members grew carrots, onions, pumpkins and potatoes in the gardens.
- Community members started planting fruit trees.
- Elder helped community members with gardening.
- 20 families gardened in 2015.
- Four families raised chickens. One family raised 50 chickens and shared them with people on the island (the metis community).
- Northern store helped community members source seeds and donated groceries to events.

Next Steps

- Increase community participation.
- Source soil requested by community members.
- Landscape around the fish boat monument.
- Expand the project to include fishing and access funds to provide equipment.
- Explore the possibility of building a community smoke house.



NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2014
- ✓ 2015

Challenges

- Greenhouse was too hot to be used in summer.
- The grant from Northern Manitoba Food, Culture, & Community Fund (NMFCCF) arrived late in the season as it went through the Bayline Regional Roundtable as God's Lake FN is not currently recognized as a registered charity.
- One family lost their chickens to dogs and weasels due to poor securing of livestock.
- One family dropped out of raising chickens, but were replaced by another family.
- Cold spring created a shorter growing season.
- Difficult to get proper growing soil. 30 homes requested soil and did not receive it.

Leaf Rapids Horticultural Centre

Location

Leaf Rapids, Manitoba is a post-mining town. In 2002, when the mine closed, it had 2,000 people and now has about 450 people. It is accessible by all-weather roads from Thompson, Lynn Lake and South Indian Lake. The population is diverse and comprised of metis, first nation, and settler people.

Objective

To empower youth through gardening to share healthy living practices, increase food security and address chronic health conditions; to be a hub of sharing and learning on gardening and green house techniques for northern Manitoba communities

Leaf Rapids Horticultural Centre has developed over the past 5 years into a well-known northern horticulture training and testing centre. Two greenhouses, a seed-saving room and the Churchill River Nursery make up the local infrastructure of the project. In 2015 the focus for the organization planned to engage University Students and local youth to volunteer in gardens and greenhouses while redesigning the program.

Successes

- 2 students from the University of Manitoba Service Learning Program, affectionately known as the 'garden girls', managed greenhouses and planted seeds in the Churchill River Nursery.
- The garden girls volunteered regularly in the greenhouses and gardens. Another 6 girls volunteered on occasion.
- All gardens produced a good harvest. Strawberries could still be harvested as late as October.
- 5 workshops were held with classes from Frontier schools to provide hands-on learning opportunities in the greenhouses.
- 3 video broadcasts about gardening techniques was made for many northern communities.
- Hundreds of plants were given to surrounding communities.
- The main staff person continues to provide knowledge and guidance on northern growing techniques.

Challenges

- Schools were not built for plants and working areas with plant experimentation and training sessions. Concerns about grow lights and indoor growing stations.
- Youth interest and participation dissipated when the garden girls left.
- A late frost and cool, wet summer challenged plant growth.
- Transportation to and from Leaf Rapids for workshop attendees was difficult to provide.
- Difficult to find time for communication and travel to work with other communities as the project has only one main staff person.

Next Steps

- Explore having a communications person to connect with surrounding communities, organizations and support networks.
- Host more workshops to reach a wider range of schools and community groups.
- Look at ways to make healthy food immediately accessible through local business partnerships.
- Secure permanent housing for out of town volunteers.
- Continually testing and developing ideas' and processes to green (northern) schools and instructional components connecting children with the environment.

NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2014
- ✓ 2015
- ✓ 2016

Mosakahiken Community Foods Project

Location **Mosakahiken Cree Nation** is a member of the Swampy Cree Tribal Council and has 1,896 members, with 1,429 living on-reserve located. It located on the shore of South Moose Lake, Manitoba.

Objective To strengthen multi-generational relationships in Mosakahiken Cree Nation through gardening and harvesting traditional foods.

Community members sought to learn skills through healthy living and traditional practices. The community planned to establish home gardens, start berry picking and seed gathering; encourage cultural practices such as nature walks, medicine picking, a sharing circle and a sweat lodge; and work on food preservation with canning classes, cutting and preserving meats and purchasing a community freezer and dehydrator. Financial administration and project support was provided by Food Matters Manitoba.

Successes

- Community garden was established.
- New home gardens were created.
- Soil, a garden tiller, a community freezer, preservation supplies and lumber were provided to support growing and preservation of traditional foods.
- Local canners held canning and preservation workshops.
- Elders' cultural knowledge about the land and harvesting practices increased the appreciation and interest in the project by local people.

Challenges

- Not enough volunteers to help with coordination of workshops.
- The community garden was prone to vandalism.

Next Steps

- Move the community garden to site proposed by Elders to avoid vandalism.
- Expand engagement and education of community members and organizations.
- Increase the number of community and home gardens.
- Identify additional funding and support for land-based activities.

NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2015
- ✓ 2016

Thompson Multicultural Centre Horticulture

Location **Thompson, MB** is a city in Manitoba known as the 'hub of the North' as a regional trade and service centre of northern Manitoba. It has a population of about 13,000 residents.

Objective To establish a community garden to allow residents to have access to healthy foods, lower food costs and improve health through physical activity.

The Thompson Multicultural Centre is managed and utilized primarily by new Canadians who live and work in Thompson. Since 2013, horticultural opportunities for interested members have been created. In 2014 raised beds were established and a greenhouse was re-constructed on the site. In 2015, a new greenhouse was ordered to better meet the needs of gardeners. They intend to continue to improve horticultural opportunities as the price of healthy foods in this northern center is about twice as high as in Winnipeg.

Successes

- Ten families continued in participation.
- Gardening days and events occurred.
- Crops were harvested and shared with people in the community to promote participation.
- Confidence of newcomers involved grew from skills learnt.
- Good cold weather crops were produced (cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, broccoli, garlic, zucchini, etc.)
- Many kids were involved in the gardens and greenhouse activities.
- A new greenhouse was purchased and shipped to Thompson for use in 2016.

Challenges

- Unanticipated situations required flexibility during planting season.
- Larger areas for growing was needed and land was difficult to secure in the area.
- Greenhouse was not well-oriented or well-suited in its design for the space at the Multicultural Centre.
- A heater was needed in the greenhouse to keep temperatures warm during colder periods.
- The delivery of the funds from NMFCCC were delayed into late summer because of challenges from CRA and the City of Thompson (a financial partner of the project).

Next Steps

- Expand funding and support sources to enhance the project.
- Erect the new greenhouse.
- Acquire heaters and grow lights to support growing in the greenhouse.
- Work with the City of Thompson to access land outside of the city for significantly expanded growing areas.
- Acquire more agricultural inputs, such as a tractor and equipment.

NMFCCC Funding

- ✓ 2015



2015 Learning Trip

Each year The Collaborative works to create learning opportunities and interactions between collaborative members and the participating communities to improve understanding, provide support and mutual inspiration and explore ways to improve partnerships with communities. This year the learning trip consisted of visits to the Wabung Fisheries Producers Co-operative project and Meechim Inc. in Garden Hill First Nation.

Successes

The trip created an opportunity for thoughtful and respectful idea exchange between Collaborative members and community members by sharing stories and discussing NMFCCF's role with participating communities. As a result, collaborative members that attended have a better understanding of the community realities, projects and feasibility. These personal connections provided insight on how to support northern communities in an appropriate and meaningful way. The students at the local school were very pleased to have members visit them, and they embraced the role of local guide and storytellers to our group for the time members were at the school. Two of the northern advisors were able to attend the trip and helped to provide reflection and at times interpretation to the community happenings.

Challenges

A group trip to a remote, fly-in reserve community can be difficult to coordinate. The details were not finalized up until a few weeks prior to the trip, resulting in a number of collaborators not being able to attend. This is a very expensive part of the province to visit, and members had to transport most of their food with them. Accommodations located in the community were not available so members had to commute by boat each day from an island accommodation. Land transportation was a challenge as local drivers became unavailable or their vehicles broke down.

Trip Participants

Representatives from Tides Canada, J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Aboriginal & Northern Affairs and 2 Northern Advisors were able to join the 2015 Learning Trip.

Trip Reflections

“ I loved meeting community members and gaining some better understanding of challenges, opportunities and realities that people are facing. These encounters forced a lot of mixed emotions and stirred up many questions for me. Working through these emotions and questions was a very valuable thing for me.

(The best thing was) meeting the people gives way more understanding of the projects. Getting a sense of the time that is needed for change to happen.

I can't pick a specific event that was best, but the best effect for me was how the trip shaped my understanding. When I think back to my approach to the previous round of grant applications, it lacked an understanding for the specific conditions that may impact programs in northern Manitoba.”

The trip is my first time travelling to a reserve in the north. I consider it to be an important step in trying to understand the life there, and their challenges.

The best part of the trip was meeting people and giving us their time to share their stories. I enjoyed sharing the meal and local stories.

The experience is something that I will always carry with me.

The trip completely transformed my understanding of the program and will continue to inform my approach. This will influence my practical approach (how does geography, local politics, community involvement influence the on-the-ground success of the work?) as well as my 'cultural' understanding (how does a locally generated program act as a vehicle for healing?). Meeting the people gives way more understanding of the projects and helped to get a sense of the time that is needed for change to happen.

I really appreciated the thoughtful and respectful idea exchange of the group and the gifts shared (stories, ideas) from Sophia and Ervin.”



Northern Advisors

The Collaborative is made up of funder organizations, in-kind support organizations and northern advisors. Northern Advisors offer their local and cultural knowledge to provide critical insight about how best to partner with, and develop relationships with northern communities in the movement towards food sovereignty. They also participate in crafting strategic direction of the Collaborative.

Ervin Bighetty

I am Ervin Bighetty. I am a continuous learner of the importance of growing and maintaining healthy fresh food. I have worked in a garden for 8 years, my duties consisted of maintaining the ground and clearing more area for garden beds. I worked with Chuck Stensgard my mentor and friend and along side Christopher Brayley my closest friend, both of these guys have taught me and have molded the person that I am today. They helped me learn and understand the importance of teamwork, work ethic, and the power of gardening. I have been recruited by Julie Price to join the NMFCCF to provide input and strive for a better tomorrow for everyone in Manitoba and possibly for the world. I am the filler of the gap that splits the north from the south and helper of delivering the knowledge of gardening and cultural differences.

I continue to help with the project because I know that we can make a difference for everyone. If we continue what we are doing, we may very well make a tomorrow that is brighter for the current and future generations that are to come. The project has a lot of potential to make all of Manitoba closer and help remove the sicknesses like diabetes, obesity, etc. that are ever so present in Northern communities. I know that we can help change the current lifestyles of many in that live in the North, because healthy food isn't affordable or not available. I know we will help everyone learn how to make a garden, better their health, and become a sustainable community.



Ervin designed NMFCCF's new logo intended to symbolize the values of the Fund:

- The hands show hard work, care, collaboration and diversity.
- The plant represents the transfer of knowledge.
- The colour scheme reflects the changing temperature from south to north through use of the Weather Network's colours.



Jim Beardy

I've been with Keewatin Tribal Council for close to 24 years. That's where my heart lies. With the Cree and Dene communities that we serve. I'm Cree myself from the York Factory First Nation. I help out with the Northern Manitoba Food, Culture & Community Fund because it's an opportunity to provide input, share knowledge and to learn from others that have similar interests. I know the work they are doing is important and will benefit the small, northern and Aboriginal communities they target.



Hilda Dysart

I am from South Indian Lake and have lived here all of my life. I have been involved with many community committees and am involved in all aspects of our community life. I have always lived off the land and for as long as I can remember my family has had gardens. I am one of the founding steering committee members of Ithinto Mechisowin Program, a food sovereignty program in our community. I enjoy working with youth and have worked at the school for 32 years as the school counselor.



I help out with the Northern Manitoba Food, Culture & Community Collaborative because I was really interested in having the traditional foods coming back to the community and finding ways to help them come back. I am grateful for all of the different organizations that have decided to work together to help out in my community and so many others in northern Manitoba. It's better to work together.

Moneca Sinclair

My name is Moneca Sinclair and I am Cree originally from The Pas and Mooselake areas. My family moved to Thompson when I was seven years old and lived here until I finished grade 12. Shortly after high school I became involved as a volunteer with food security issues in the north end of Winnipeg and now in the North area of Manitoba.



Sophia Rabliauskaus

I was born and raised in Poplar River, Manitoba. I grew up with the teachings from my parents and grandfather, they taught me the importance of the land and life on that land that the creator has given to us. They taught me the importance of living off the land from the animals, birds, plants and water, that sustain our health, and the importance of always showing respect for that life. This has led me to continue to work on the protection of the land and to pass on this knowledge to our future generations.

Currently I work for Pimachiowin Aki World Heritage Project, which includes our traditional territory, that will provide, when approved, a strong protection for our land and our way of life.





The Collaborative Funders

J.W. McConnell Family Foundation

The Foundation's purpose is to enhance Canada's ability to address complex social, environmental and economic challenges. We accomplish this by developing, testing, and applying innovative approaches and solutions; by strengthening the community sector; and by collaborating with partners in the community, private, and public sectors. We recognize that creating enduring change takes time, and involves more than granting. The Foundation's current areas of focus and emerging initiatives include, Social Finance and Impact Investing, Sustainable Food Systems, Indigenous-Focused Philanthropy, Cities for People, and RECODE—catalyzing social innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education.

Lake Winnipeg Foundation

Lake Winnipeg Foundation (LWF) is an environmental non-governmental organization seeking solutions to ensure a clean, healthy Lake Winnipeg and watershed now and for future generations. We are working to achieve this goal through research, public education, stewardship and collaboration. LWF leads the Lake Winnipeg Health Plan, which identifies eight key actions to restore and protect the health of Lake Winnipeg and its watershed. In addition, for the past two years LWF has worked alongside the Lake Winnipeg Indigenous Collective to support the genuine inclusion of Indigenous Peoples in collaborative processes to identify concerns and solutions for Lake Winnipeg. LWF is pleased to be involved with the NMFCC because we understand that a healthy environment is linked to the cultural, social and economic well-being of communities. We support improved access to healthy foods and the development of resilient local economies.

Province of Manitoba

The Manitoba government is a proud supporter of the Northern Manitoba Food, Culture and Community Fund. Through the combined efforts of community members, Elders, northern advisors and funding partners, this innovative initiative is increasing access to healthy food and creating economic opportunities in northern Manitoba communities.

Thomas Sill Foundation

Mr. Thomas Sill, C.A. lived in Winnipeg, was an astute investor who built a fortune, and in his last will established the foundation for charitable purpose which bears his name. The Thomas Sill Foundation provides grants throughout Manitoba in the areas of health, education, arts and culture, heritage and environment, and responses to the community.

The TSF is a member of this collaborative because everyone should have good food at reasonable cost. Nutritious food promotes health, but also contributes to happy families and peaceful communities. It results in better educational outcomes. We are also gratified when people learn the skills necessary to take care of themselves and reduce costs as a result of their own sweat equity. Good, affordable food tastes great and it comes with so many fringe benefits.

USC Canada & The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security

USC Canada promotes vibrant family farms, strong rural communities and healthy ecosystems around the world. With engaged Canadians and partners in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, we support programs, training and policies that strengthen biodiversity, food sovereignty and the rights of those at the heart of resilient food systems – women, indigenous peoples and small-scale farmers. Our domestic field program, The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security is building a national movement to conserve and advance seed biodiversity, keep seed in the public domain, and promote ecological seed production

USC Canada is a partner in the collaborative through our domestic field program, The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security. We are excited to support the strong leadership of communities across Northern Manitoba to build healthy food systems. We are committed to listening and learning in order to be a good partner, standing in solidarity with the local leaders doing the important work on the ground.

The Winnipeg Foundation

The Winnipeg Foundation Mission: To be a catalyst for strengthening community well being, now and for future generations, by promoting philanthropy, creating partnerships and supporting diverse charitable organizations.

An Anonymous Donor with a vision of people in our communities being healthy, educated and economically self-sufficient.

The Theory of Change

A theory of change (TOC) is a tool for developing solutions to complex social problems. It provides a methodology for planning, participation and evaluation to promote social change. It outlines guiding values for actions and interventions. The TOC defines long-term goals and works backwards to describe how positive change will occur due to the framework of the model.

Values

Reciprocity: Participants (funders, community people, northern advisors, support organizations) reciprocate, or give in return, to each other's efforts. This principle is rooted in a mutual respect for what each other has to give.

Shared Learning: We all have wisdom to give, and we can all grow in understanding and capacities when we receive wisdom. No one party has all of the answers and our understanding can always become deeper.

Collaborative: To work in partnership by pooling resources, knowledge, networks, and ideas. Rooted in the belief that we are stronger and have more potential when we work together. Mandates interdependency.

Relational: The nature of this collaborative is not transactional, but relational. We approach relationships in an interpersonal and interactive way and they are developed through conversations, personal visits, story sharing, and personal exchange.

Slow: We recognize that it has taken many generations to get to a state where healing and re-skilling is so urgently required. We recognize that change will take a longer time horizon than most governments or funders typically consider. We recognize that slow but steady pacing will allow for communities and their local infrastructure to evolve in a sustainable and rooted way. Despite the urgency, fast may not be the best path, and may result in more damage than healing.

Committed: We seek to demonstrate to communities that we will extend support in a dependable and steadfast way as long as the partnership is sought. This could include through grants, networking, problem solving, friendship, story-sharing, and more. We value the commitments that community members make to each other and their work.





DRAFT