



1 2

BARREN LANDS FIRST NATION / BROCHET:

Youth Garden Project

People have been growing their own gardens in Brochet for a long time, but our gardening project expanded in 2013 under the direction and management of our health center and with the support of external partners, and it has been growing ever since.

The cost of food in Brochet is very high. Some subsidies are in place, but things are still very expensive. A 4-L jug of milk is \$14.95, while a 10-pound bag of potatoes is \$33.

Also, we need positive things for our youth to do, and ways for them to gain employment and learn how to be leaders in our community. Our garden project helps to address these challenges. In 2013, we built a 14' x 20' greenhouse at the community garden site and also started a fruit patch. Out of the success and interest from 2013, we applied for additional support from the Northern Manitoba Food, Culture & Community Collaborative to expand this great work.

To get better at gardening, our youth have travelled to Leaf Rapids to learn with experienced boreal horticulturalist Chuck Stensgard. Youth from Leaf Rapids have

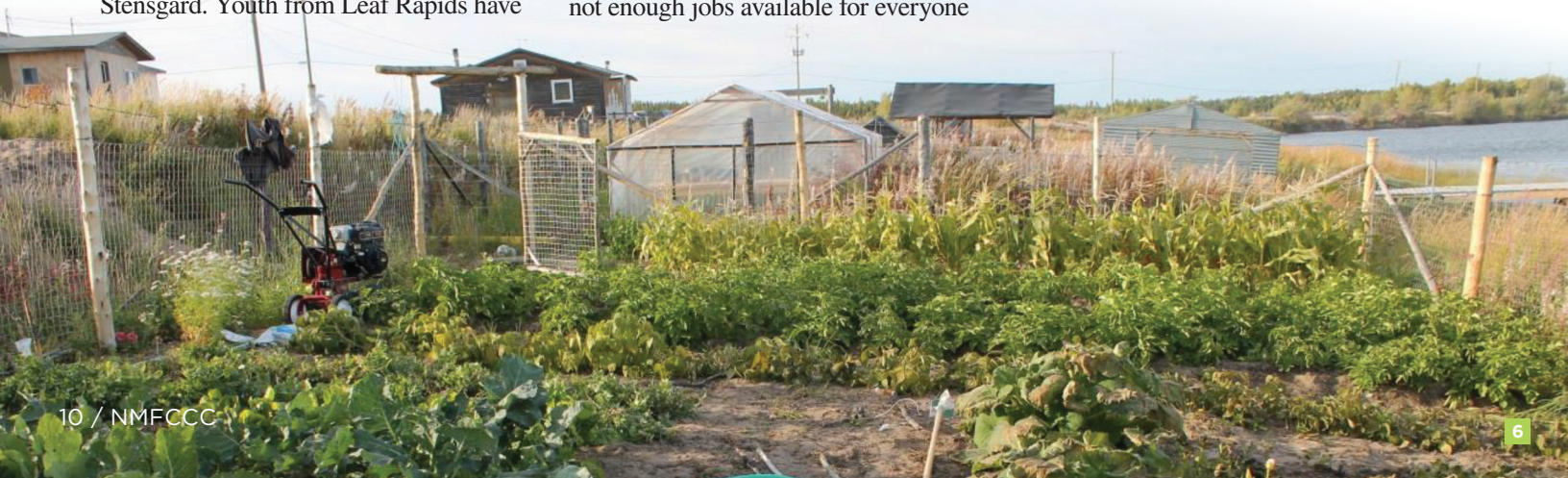
also traveled to our community to help us build new garden beds and improve the soil. We have also received seeds and strawberry plants from Leaf Rapids that are adapted to be strong in our northern climates. Developing the soil and getting the right equipment to move soil to our gardens have been challenges for us to work on. Sometimes the Northern Stores saves rotten fruit for us to add to the soil.

The workers at our garden (usually 5-7 youth and 1-2 adults) plant and maintain the main garden, as well as visit people's homes and help them build their own home gardens (in-ground and raised beds). Since we started we have doubled the size of the community garden. There is a positive impact for those employed. For the youth, it gives increased job skills, garden training, confidence about their ability to contribute to their community, as well as some spending money. For the adults involved, the money supplements the high costs of food to feed their families and helps them gain confidence in gardening skills. There are lots of young people that would like to work in the garden but not enough jobs available for everyone

interested. It's sad turning people away but we always invite people interested to join us by volunteering in the garden.

The interest in the project has increased because the community has celebrated the work and accomplishments. Food produced is shared through the Elder's lunch, youth cooking classes, and local food boxes distributed to Elders. These connections all contribute to the strengthening of the belief that delicious, healthy food could be grown in the community.

Gardening has become a huge part of our community and has brought the people closer. A growing number of people have stopped by the community garden to see how everything has been going and they are really shocked and excited about the results. Some community members have even come to lend a hand to the garden advisors. Having a garden in Brochet helps with saving money and allows people to purchase other things that we can't grow. Because of the garden, people are cooking healthier and getting exercise, because having a garden is a lot of work but also worth it.





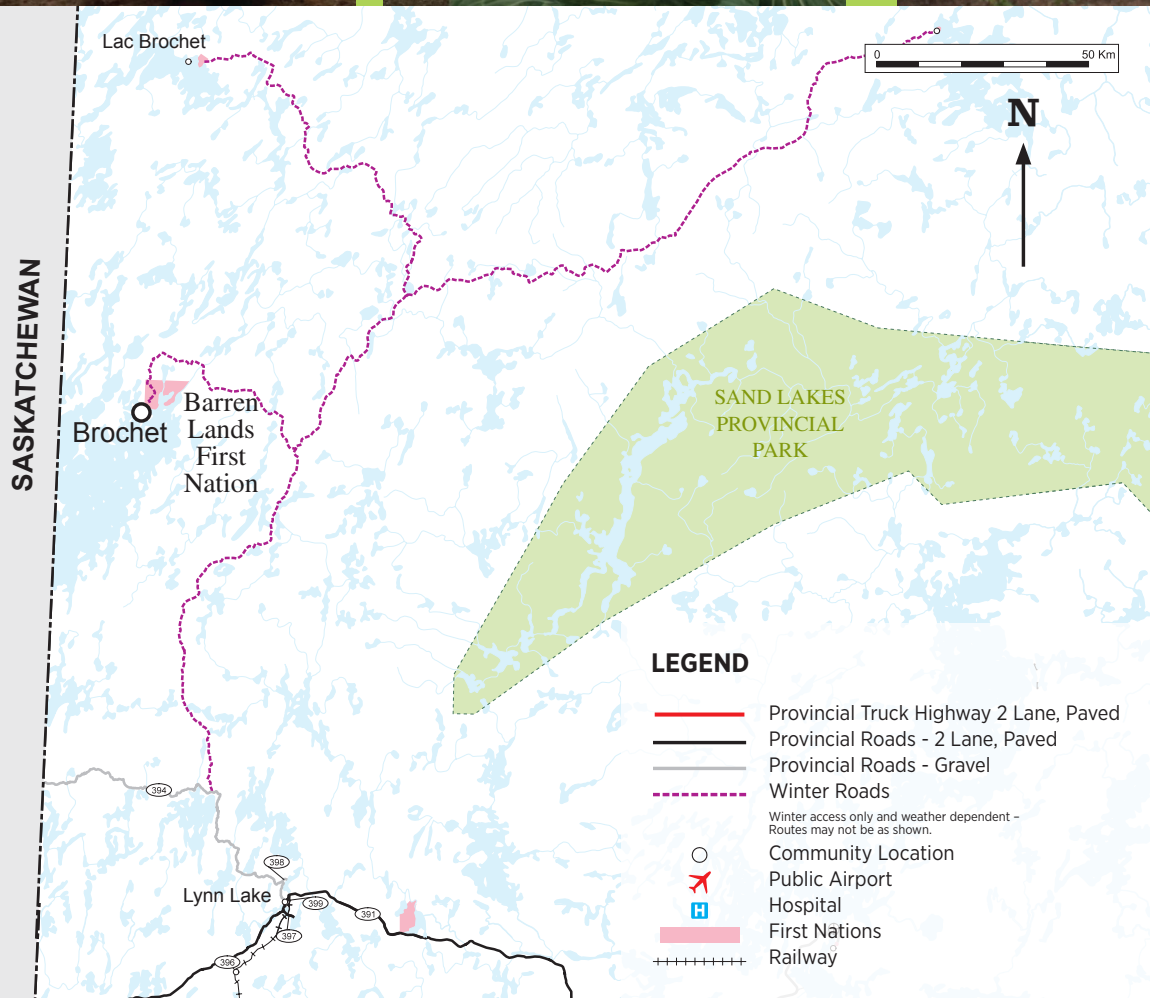
3



4



5



NFMCCC funding

- ☒ 2014
- ☒ 2015
- ☒ 2016
- ☒ 2017

> OBJECTIVES

To grow good food in the community, build cooking skills, and to create positive employment options and training for youth.

> LOCATION

The Barren Lands First Nation and Brochet Community are two of the most northern communities in Manitoba, situated on the northern shore of Reindeer Lake. The community is 928 kilometers north of Winnipeg and 19 kilometers east of the Saskatchewan border, with a total population of 619 people.

> PHOTO DETAILS

- [1] Brochet family by their home garden. [2] Brochet crew practicing ground development. [3] Grace tilling soil in Brochet. [4] Malcolm (grade 9 in this photo) and his monster northern cabbage. [5] Garden crew from left: Logan Mersaty, Josh Bighetty, Cassandra Bighetty, Rachelle Bighetty, Alanna Disbrowe and Malcom Disbrowe. [6] Large garden in Brochet.

They (youth workers) cooked with local onions, potatoes, cabbage, and carrots to make a delicious cabbage salad and potato latkes. The fifteen youth and five adults who cooked and ate the food that day were amazed that it had all been grown a stone's throw from the school grounds.

- Chloe Donatelli, former Food Matters Manitoba staff.

The garden project has create meaningful job opportunities for the young people in the community. They are looked up to as role models and it builds their confidence.

- Cassandra Bighetty, community organizer