

# FOOD SOVEREIGNTY INITIATIVE

*funded by Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment and designed by the*

## Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council Collaborative Work Group

### Background

Throughout US history, policies and practices have removed land from Native Nations. These very lands, through farming, fishing and harvesting, provided nourishment to communities for over a millennium prior to colonization. In addition to forced displacement, other economic, political and environmental disruptions were imposed. Over time, these disruptions contributed to disparities in food security and access to healthy foods contributing to high rates of obesity (a risk factor for 13 cancers), cancer (low quality diets are independently associated with increased cancer risk) and other chronic diseases. In response, an intentional movement to increase food sovereignty across Native American communities began. Indigenous Food sovereignty, put simply, is the ability for tribal nations and communities to feed their own people on their own terms. The goals of this movement are to shift power back to local communities and restore Indigenous food systems to improve food security, increase access to nutrient rich traditional foods, and reduce health inequities.



Figure 1.



Figure 2.

### Program Overview

In Phase I, GLITC and the Lac du Flambeau community focused on solutions that would heal the historical trauma this community has faced. This focus is targeting wellness and access to a basic human right, nutritional food, by developing a food sovereignty initiative. Over the course of Phase I, GLITC evolved this idea and leveraged its partnership with Hunger Task Force to provide the physical infrastructure (concrete footing, green house, utility connection, storage shed, updated fencing and other peripheral supplies) needed to realize the critical first steps of the Phase 2 goal, a food sovereignty initiative.

The Food Sovereignty Initiative will support sustainable programs and policies to address risk and improve the health of the community, and also contribute to the literature on the impact of these efforts for multi-level outcomes.

### Key Activities

- Convene an advisory board
- Establish a community garden offering increased access to locally sourced, nutritious foods
- Develop and implement a culturally relevant community wellness program that can be integrated into the community garden and other ongoing community activities
- Evaluate the effects of the food sovereignty program at the individual, interpersonal and community level.

### Program Aims

- Aim 1: To increase ties to Native culture and identity to foster increased interest in traditional nutrient rich foods and practices.
- Aim 2: To increase access to locally sourced, fresh nutritious foods through a community garden project.
- Aim 3: To develop, implement and evaluate a wellness program drawing on cultural assets, values and practices to support reduced cancer risk and improved quality of life.

### Community Partners

GLITC staff, board, and infrastructure  
Hunger Task Force  
Elder Traditional Food Box Program  
Dan Cornelius, Intertribal Agricultural Council  
Tribal Adolescent Substance Use Treatment Center

Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (and numerous tribal offices/programs)  
Peter Christensen Health Center  
Dept. of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection  
UW Extension Tribal Food Sovereignty-Native Nations Team  
Native American Cancer Foundation

SNAPed Program  
IHS Food Prescription Program  
Marshfield Mammography Van  
WI Native American Tobacco Network

### Collaborative Work Group Initiative Network



Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc.  
Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin

