



# Dream of Wild Health

*The Youth are the Seeds of Our Future*

November 2016

## 2016 Annual Report

Restoring health and well-being in the Native community by recovering knowledge of and access to healthy, indigenous foods, medicines and lifeways.



Sara Rubinstein

### **Dream of Wild Health appreciates your financial support!**

Please use the enclosed envelope to show your support of quality Native American youth leadership programs and greater community access to healthy and indigenous foods.

*Miigwetch and Pidamaye!*

Dream of Wild Health is all about healthy food! We work with Native people to recover the teachings of our ancestors by returning to indigenous foods and medicines.

From our humble beginning as a small garden in 1998, Dream of Wild Health has grown into a 10-acre farm in Hugo, MN, where we produce five tons of organic vegetables each year. We grow and protect the rare, tribal seeds that were a gift from Cora Baker, a Potawatomi Seed Keeper. Cora believed that returning to our indigenous foods was the way to heal the health of our community. Our traditional diet that was based on foods we hunted, gathered, and grew, was disrupted by the move to reservations and dependence on high fat, high starch commodity foods. We are so grateful to elders such as Cora, who cared for our corn, squash, and bean seeds, knowing that our children would need them.

With each season at the farm, with every community garden, and every plant that we grow ourselves, we are reclaiming our right to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food. We are recovering the knowledge that was displaced by assimilation, teaching Native youth and families how to rebuild a relationship with the land and our food. At the farm and our Minneapolis Phillips neighborhood office, we offer programs that teach gardening, healthy cooking and nutrition, and the pride that comes from reclaiming our food system. Today, more than ever, we need to treat Mother Earth with loving kindness, and to stand up for her when she needs us.

*We send blessings and prayers for our Water Protectors.*

## ReBuilding Food Sovereignty

After developing 3/5 of the foods that are eaten today, we know that Native American people are some of the best agriculturalists in the world!

At Dream of Wild Health, we provide access to healthy food through three Farmers' Markets in the Twin Cities, an Indigenous Food Share that is distributed weekly, donations to local food shelves and the Elders Lodge, and by providing delicious meals to the youth and families in our programs. With help from our youth, this summer we grew more of our indigenous seeds, including two varieties of Dakota corn, three kinds of beans, including Black Turtle Beans, Rabbit Beans, and some Mandan Shield Figure Beans, and enjoyed a sweet variety of Iroquois melon. Youth learn the importance

of protecting these seeds, including hand pollination, and the threats they face from the GMO crops that surround us.

Berries were always an important food in our diet, so we are nurturing two acres planted with chokecherries, juneberries, high bush cranberries, elderberries, and more. A two-acre Pollinator Meadow provides the habitat and food that is so essential for our native bees and butterflies. In every sense, we strive to be good relatives to the land, and to teach our children these values.

Every farm needs good equipment, and we are very proud of our new pole barn and walk-in cooler, which help us maintain excellent food safety standards. After planting our first crop in our new high tunnel, we have arugula and tomatoes in late October! These structures will help us expand our season in 2017.

*“Changes I’ve seen in myself at DWH are that I feel more independent, significant and knowledgeable. I learn so much every day, especially from the elders, and I’m able to take the advice and stories they use, and apply them to real life situations.”*

*- Garden Warrior 2016*



**DWH supports the East Side Indigenous Garden as a collaborative garden project for Native families living or working in St. Paul. Many thanks to Maggie Lorenz for all her efforts coordinating the work!**



### What You Can Do...

Volunteer Fridays at the farm

Make a donation

Start a garden & Grow Organic

Plant Heirloom seeds

Choose carefully where you buy your food

Working in partnership with Bdote Immersion School, DWH brings the children to the farm, reinforces Native languages and exposes more of our youth to indigenous food and cultural practices.

## Strengthening Community with Youth Programs

Early each morning throughout the summer, a van delivers 15 Native American youth, to the farm where they step away from their cell phones to be present in mind and body. Beginning each day in circle, a prayer from our cultural director, the youth learn language and begin their garden lesson in the fields. Youth take turns preparing a wholesome, delicious lunch for the entire group, developing cooking skills and learning the basics of healthy nutrition. Most of all, these youth are learning to respect and nurture the land as our Mother, and to give thanks for her gifts.

Each summer, we host Native youth as part of our Cora's Kids (ages 8-12) and Garden Warrior (ages 13-18) programs. These youth come from inner-city neighborhoods and all of them face the challenges of growing up as a Native youth in the Twin Cities. When provided with a safe environment at the farm, healthy food, stable adults, and high expectations, these youth thrive.

To provide new learning and opportunities, the Garden Warriors attended a Berry Camp at the White Earth Reservation where they learned to gather and cook wild food, canoe, and camp. Sixteen teens represented Dream of Wild Health at the First Medicines conference at the Bois Forte reservation, teaching a workshop on the traditional game of double ball, and making a kale salad. When youth

speak, their words carry a powerful message of hope and healing.

The most successful Garden Warriors are invited to join our Youth Leaders program, where they learn to advocate for healthy lifestyles in their community by supporting a Healthy Food policy, speaking at events, attending conferences, and participating in partner programs with Roots for the Home Team, Climate Generation, and Fund of the Sacred Circle. We believe these skills and experience will help them succeed in their lives, and help them achieve social justice in a sustainable world.

*We are so proud of all of our youth! We especially want to congratulate Sedric Oliver, in 11th grade, who was awarded the Sally Auger Rising Star Youth Scholarship for his impressive work ethic and maturity.*



**Cooking programs are one of the most important ways DWH engages families in learning how to use indigenous foods in contemporary and traditional recipes. We host workshops in basic cooking and food preservation, such as making hominy and canning.**



# Dream of Wild Health

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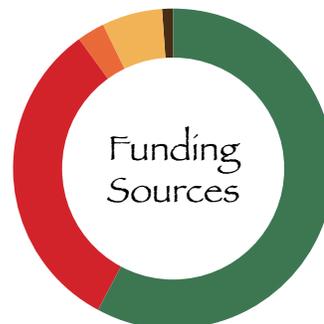
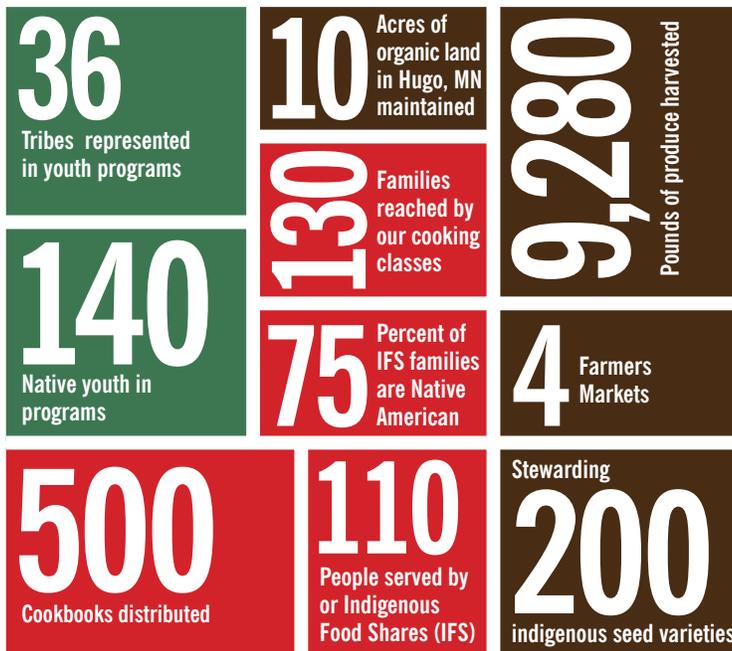
NOV. 17, 2016

On November 17, we have **24 hours** to raise as much as we can!

During **Give to the Max Day**, your donation (\$25 minimum) could win us an extra \$1,000! Please give what you can to invest in the health and well-being of our Native community.

Donate online on Nov. 17th at:  
[www.givemn.org/organization/Dreamofwildhealth](http://www.givemn.org/organization/Dreamofwildhealth)

## What does your donation support?



Miigwetch and Pidamaye!