

American Indian Food Sovereignty Funding

American Indian Food Sovereignty funding provides grants to improve food access and equity in Tribal and American Indian communities, pursuant of **Minnesota Statutes, section 256E.342**, American Indian Food Sovereignty Funding. The Office of Economic Opportunity distributes these funds to Tribal Nations in Minnesota and to non-profit organizations serving American Indian communities.

- Grants awarded through this American Indian Food Sovereignty funding focus on improving access and equity to food security programs, particularly in areas with the highest needs.
- American Indian communities have faced challenges that have led to many communities living in poverty, living at risk of food insecurity, and/or disruptions to traditional food systems. This results in higher rates of chronic disease and diet-impacted conditions in American Indian people.

Program funding and impact

In state fiscal year 2024, The Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), Office of Economic Opportunity was newly appropriated six million the first biennium (SFY 2024-2025) and 4 million in ongoing funding each biennium after to improve food access and equity in Tribal and American Indian communities.

In SFY 2024-2025, DCYF granted:

- \$4.5 million to Tribal Nations in Minnesota through an allocation formula based on population, and;
- \$1.5 million to non-profit organizations through a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP).

Additionally, in SFY 2025, the legislature granted a one-time appropriation of \$2 million additional dollars to American Indian Food Sovereignty Funding, as outlined in [H.F. 5237 - Chapter 115 – Education Finance/Children & Families Supplemental Budget Omnibus Article 22, Section 2, subdivision 9\(a\)](#). [HF 5247 - Combined Supplemental Budget Omnibus Article 53, Section 2, subdivision 9\(b\)](#).

The potential impact of this funding in its initial year is extraordinary and can be seen in the proposed workplans of Grantees including, but not limited to: expansion of Tribal agriculture departments, increased produce production and food preservation methods and resources, creation of educational opportunities, building of commercial kitchens, seed and seedling giveaways, investment in profitable indigenous livestock, increased culturally appropriate and relevant foods in food shelves, increased access to food through delivery services, and capacity building in meaningful ways such as livable wages to staff.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants are federally recognized American Indian Tribes or bands in Minnesota and nonprofit organizations or fiscal sponsors with a majority American Indian board of directors.

Eligible activities include: Planning for sustainable food systems, implementing food security systems, technology for food system, no contact or low contact food distribution and outreach models, providing culturally relevant training for building food access, providing culturally relevant training for building food access, providing culturally relevant training for building food access, purchasing food including culturally relevant food, producing food, processing food, transporting food, storing food, coordinating the distribution of food, purchasing seeds/ plants, purchasing of equipment, purchasing of materials to preserve, procure or grow food.