

Federally-Recognized Tribes Extension Program
2008 HIGHLIGHTS

FRTEP UNIT: Fort Belknap Extension

PROGRAM AREA (Ex. Agriculture, Nutrition etc.): Agriculture, gardening, food nutrition

PROGRAM TITLE: Back to Basics Gardening Nutrition and Education

ISSUE(S) ADDRESSED: In FY2005, Fort Belknap Indian Health Service Unit's Ten-Leading Causes of Direct Outpatient care are all diet related diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension and cancer. In FY2006 Montana Vital Statistics Report, published by the Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services indicates cancer, heart disease and diabetes as the top leading causes of death, with cancer being the leading cause, followed by heart disease and diabetes being the sixth leading cause of deaths in the State. Again, these are all nutrition/diet-related diseases, which indicate the great need to address the types of foods we eat, the preparation and the amount of physical exercise we are initiating. According to a Childhood Obesity: Causes & Prevention Symposium, in 1998, sponsored by the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, U.S. Department of Agriculture, "at least one child in five is overweight and that trend continues to grow. Over the last 20 years, this number has increased by more than 50 percent. The number of extremely overweight children has nearly doubled." A speaker in this same report states, "if we could get a handle on the problem of obesity starting in childhood, we could reduce risk for cardiovascular diseases, and diabetes, and some forms of cancer. Some of the main factors for obesity are the lack of physical activity and poor nutrition. Diabetes being the number two disease out of ten leading causes of direct outpatient care on Fort Belknap Reservation is evidenced by the number of patients who travel ninety miles round trip, to Havre, for dialysis, 2-3 times a week and in the number of patients who are amputees, on the Fort Belknap Reservation.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: The Back to Basic Gardening, Nutrition Education & Training Project focused on promoting nutrition education and healthy lifestyles by demonstration garden projects in three communities to address nutrition education and to help Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservation participants and those eligible to establish healthy eating habits and to learn the importance of maintaining a more physically active lifestyle. This project was a partnership with Fort Belknap Extension and Fort Belknap College's Horticulture Project, on the Fort Belknap Reservation.

PROGRAM IMPACT: The project provided low income individuals and families with opportunities to participate in garden and landscape training. Over 65 people attended gardening and landscape sessions. The project provided the equipment and materials and established sites for gardening at each senior center on the reservation. Four senior centers each received a greenhouse, 3 box raised beds and a garden site. Part of this

project was to demonstrate, display and give the participants an opportunity to harvest the different types of vegetables that can be grown in this area.



Over 120 adults and 40 youth attended the fall garden tours and received vegetable and nutrition information and harvested vegetables from the Fort Belknap College demonstrations garden. The attendees also took part in a taste testing lunch with vegetables from the garden.



Over four thousand pounds of potatoes were harvested with over 70 people receiving 60-70 lb bags of potatoes at a drastically reduced cost.



Canning and food preservation classes were implemented to the communities on the reservation to provide a chance for people to learn to can and preserve healthy foods. Over 60 people attended the food preservation and food nutrition classes with over 325 quarts of produce canned.



A large scale root cellar is under construction. This will help to demonstrate the types of vegetables that can be stored long term and will be part of an overall garden and horticulture demonstration project.



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