

The Wâwiyiyaw

National Circle Newsletter For Indigenous Agriculture & Food

NEWS

UPDATE



NCIAF Partnership with Canadian Western Agribition

We are proud to announce an exciting new partnership with Canadian Western Agribition (CWA)! After great conversations with Shaun Kindopp, CEO of CWA, we are thrilled to collaborate on bringing Indigenous agriculture to the forefront of Canada's largest livestock and agricultural show.

As part of this partnership, the NCIAF will co-host the Indigenous Agriculture Summit (IAS) presented by FCC in November 2025 during the Canadian Western Agribition. This summit serves as a vital space for knowledge-sharing, economic development, and celebrating the leadership of Indigenous producers, entrepreneurs, and communities in the agriculture sector.

The IAS will highlight Indigenous innovation, sustainability, and food sovereignty on a national stage, reinforcing the importance of Indigenous contributions to Canada's agricultural landscape. Through panel discussions, keynote presentations, and networking opportunities, attendees will gain insights into the future of Indigenous food systems and the critical role they play in advancing agricultural sustainability.

Nourishing Nations, Empowering Generations: NCIAF at FCC's Future of Food Conference



The NCIAF was proud to take part in FCC's Future of Food Conference, an event bringing together leaders in agriculture and food to discuss how Canada can shape the future of the industry. Anchored in Canada's Agriculture Day, the conference provides a platform to connect, learn, and get inspired by the innovations and collaborations driving positive change in the sector.

President and CEO, Kallie Wood, delivered an impactful presentation titled "Nourishing Nations, Empowering Generations – Working Together to Build Stronger Indigenous Communities." Her segment emphasized the importance of collaboration in strengthening Indigenous food systems, increasing capacity in Indigenous agriculture, and fostering long-term economic growth and sustainability in Indigenous communities.

Joining her at the event were Senior Vice President Chris McKee, Director of Business Development Michelle Sandercock, and Director of Capacity Development Kate Fraser. Their attendance underscored our commitment to engaging in vital industry conversations and advocating for Indigenous-led solutions in Canada's food landscape.

Events like Future of Food serve as crucial opportunities for knowledge sharing and relationship building to integrate Indigenous voices and perspectives into the broader dialogue on food security, sustainability, and innovation.



wo inina 2025: Advancing Indigenous Food Sovereignty

On February 12, 2025, we hosted wo inina 2025, a one-day gathering dedicated to the future of Indigenous food sovereignty. Held in Ottawa, Ontario, this landmark event brought together leaders in agriculture and food systems from Indigenous communities, along with advocates and stakeholders from across Canada, to celebrate, reflect on, and advance Indigenous food systems and elimination of food insecurity.

wo inina 2025 is an event centered around empowering Indigenous voices and celebrating the resilience and innovation of Indigenous businesses and communities. Attendees were engaged through powerful presentations, dynamic panel discussions, and inspiring keynote addresses, highlighting the significant strides the NCI AF has made in supporting Indigenous food sovereignty. The day concluded with a networking reception, providing an opportunity for participants to build lasting connections in an informal setting.

wo inina 2025 provided a platform for community leaders and advocates to share their experiences, challenges, and visions for a future of reclaimed food sovereignty. Participants reflected on the impact of our initiatives in addressing food security issues by collaborating with Indigenous agricultural leaders and change-makers.

Discussions emphasized the need for continued investment, policy development, and reconciliation-focused efforts to foster and protect culturally significant food systems and the sustainability of Indigenous food systems.

Our team extends its deepest gratitude to all speakers, attendees, and partners who made wo inina 2025 a success. As we move forward, we remain committed to strengthening Indigenous food sovereignty and ensuring the continued growth of Indigenous agriculture in Canada.



Attendee Feedback *wo inina 2025*

"In a time of negative news and uncertainty, the tone and messaging at this event was refreshing. [It was] so nice to see people working together, liking each other, and succeeding."

"[The most value I got from wo inina 2025 was] the individual and community stories of struggle and success. Listening and allowing the communities to guide the changes and build programs that are meaningful to their people."

"[The most value I got from wo inina 2025 was] thinking through the significant difference between broadacre agriculture and working to bring that together with Indigenous food sovereignty."

"[I valued the] expertise and storytelling, as well as the networking - best audience pool I have been in."

Words attendees used to describe their wo inina 2025 experience:

celebration fun humbling valuable
great challenging heart-warming indigenous
connecting inspiring learning
opportunity thinking affirmation
inspirational excited engaging ag positive
loved food interesting open stories
informative eye-opening full engaged empowering
commitment fulfilling
agri-food

Funding & Advancement Opportunities

[Indigenous Entrepreneur Startup Program \(IESP\) | Futurpreneur](#)

Young Indigenous entrepreneurs can access startup loan financing, mentorship, tools, and networking to support their business success. Open to Indigenous entrepreneurs launching or running businesses for less than a year.

[Indigenous Women's Entrepreneur Program | NACCA](#)

Indigenous women entrepreneurs can access business support, training, and micro-loans to help start and grow their ventures. Open to Indigenous women across Canada.

[Women Entrepreneurship Strategy | Government of Canada](#)

The Women Entrepreneurship Strategy is a nearly \$7 billion initiative to support women entrepreneurs in Canada by improving access to financing, networks, and expertise. Open to Indigenous women entrepreneurs.

[Indigenous Entrepreneur Loan | BDC](#)

Up to \$350,000 in flexible financing for business growth and expansion, with additional resources to help Indigenous businesses thrive. Open to Indigenous entrepreneurs across Canada.

[Indigenous Business Development | Government of Canada](#)

Indigenous Services Canada offers programs and services to support Indigenous entrepreneurs and business owners in Canada. Open to Indigenous business owners and entrepreneurs across Canada.

[Ontario Indigenous Business Support | Government of Ontario](#)

\$9.2 million in grants and funding to support Indigenous entrepreneurs, businesses, and communities through the Indigenous Economic Development Fund and Indigenous Community Capital Grants Program. Open to Indigenous businesses and entrepreneurs in Ontario.

[Indigenous Business Grant | CCIB](#)

Provides grants and CCIB membership to Indigenous businesses for additional resources and empowerment. Open to Indigenous entrepreneurs across Canada.

[Digital Marketing Bootcamp | Jelly Academy](#)

Train yourself or your team in digital marketing—at no cost—through fully funded Digital Marketing Skills Canada training, covering social media, SEO, Google Ads, analytics, and more, to help grow your agricultural business. Underrepresented applicants in Canada are encouraged to apply.

[Indigenous Foodways in Schools Grants | Farm to Cafeteria Canada](#)

Indigenous school communities across Canada can apply for grants up to \$20,000 to support long-term visions of Indigenous food security and food sovereignty in school settings.

JOIN OUR TEAM



NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR SUMMER
STUDENT POSITIONS:

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE

- SEND RESUME TO MICHELLE@NCIAF.CA

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE

- SEND RESUME TO KATE@NCIAF.CA

DEADLINE MAR 21 - **APPLY NOW!**

Event Highlights

[AWC West - Mar 16-18, 2025](#)

Location: Calgary, AB

[Indigenous Business Gathering - Mar 25, 2025](#)

Location: Saskatoon, SK



Please reach out to info@nciaf.ca if you would like to list an event.

NCIAF's Communications Specialist Featured on Podcast

We are excited to share that our Communications Specialist, Justice Acoose, was recently featured on an episode of [The Extensionists](#) podcast. In this insightful episode, hosts Jay Whetter and Toban Dyck discuss with Justice the importance of Indigenous food sovereignty, the role of Indigenous agriculture in Canada, and how the NCI AF is working to support Indigenous producers and communities.

Listen to the full episode [here](#).

Applications Open for Canadian Agricultural Youth Council

Are you an Indigenous youth or a young person from northern Canada with a passion for food and farming?

The Canadian Agricultural Youth Council is looking for creative and outspoken individuals to help shape the future of agriculture in Canada. This volunteer council meets regularly with key leaders at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to discuss challenges, explore solutions, and ensure young voices are heard. If you're between 18 to 30 years old and have experience or knowledge in food systems—whether through your upbringing, studies, work, or other experiences—apply today to be part of this exciting opportunity!

Learn more and submit your application [here](#).

Website: nciaf.ca

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Stay Informed

