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MDARD, Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan Announce \$925,000 Grant for New Tribal Food Sovereignty and Safety Project

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) and [the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan](#) (ITCMI) today announced a new grant of nearly \$925,000 to strengthen food sovereignty and safety in [Tribal Nations across the state](#).

The Tribal Food Sovereignty and Safety Project, an initiative driven by ITCMI, furthers MDARD's innovative work through the [Farm to Family Program](#) to improve communities' access to nourishing, locally grown foods. It also builds on MDARD's existing [Food Safety Education Fund Grants](#) by supporting community-driven food safety training and infrastructure projects.

"Every community deserves access to safe, nutritious and culturally relevant foods," said **Governor Gretchen Whitmer**. "That's why I'm proud to partner with the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan to support locally driven food security and safety initiatives across Michigan's Tribal Nations. Together, we will continue to build food systems that promote the health and prosperity of communities throughout our state."

"Safe, secure and sustainable food systems are the cornerstone of healthy communities," said **MDARD Director Tim Boring**. "This exciting new project will support Michigan's Tribal Nations as they continue investing in tools and infrastructure that promote food access, food safety and food sovereignty. I'm proud of the work MDARD is doing to improve families' access to nutritious, locally grown foods throughout our state - and I'm grateful to our partners at the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan for their support in achieving that goal."

"On behalf of the Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, we extend our sincere gratitude to Governor Gretchen Whitmer and MDARD for their partnership and support of the Tribal Food Sovereignty and Safety Project," said **ITCMI Executive Director Clayton Kincheloe**. "This investment reflects a shared commitment to advancing safe, nutritious and culturally relevant foods within the Tribal Communities across Michigan, while strengthening sustainable, community-driven food systems that will improve the health, resilience and quality of life for the next seven generations."

Under the Tribal Food Sovereignty and Safety Project, MDARD will provide ITCMI with \$924,984 of grant assistance over the next four years to:

1. Support Michigan's Tribal Nations as they plan and implement food infrastructure projects that enhance storage, processing, distribution and other capacities.
2. Deliver educational programming on food safety, production and nutrition and conduct community outreach on food access and infrastructure needs.
3. Create a new mobile application that provides culturally relevant food safety, nutrition and environmental health guidance for wild game, fish and foraged foods.
4. Assess every Michigan Tribe's food sovereignty needs, environmental risks and infrastructure gaps.
5. Build sustainable food systems and align national, state and tribal food safety standards.

The Tribal Food Sovereignty and Safety Project joins a suite of other MDARD grant programs designed to enhance quality of life in Michigan. Since the start of Governor Whitmer's administration in 2019, [MDARD has delivered more than \\$250 million of grants](#) to grow Michigan's food and agriculture industry, strengthen regional food systems, advance agriculture research and protect Michigan's natural resources.

Founded in 1968, ITCMI is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation and consortium of Michigan's 12 federally recognized Tribal Nations. Among other activities, ITCMI advocates for and supports the development of programs and policies that improve the economy, education and quality of life for Michigan's Native Americans.

For more information about food and agriculture funding opportunities, [visit MDARD's grant web page](#).

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