

# Culturally Adapted Produce Prescription Pilot Reduces Food Insecurity and Increases Fruit And Vegetable Consumption In 3 Native Communities

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## Background

American Indians and Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations face disproportionately high rates of nutrition-related health issues.

The Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Inc. (ITCMI) partnered with three Michigan Tribes to culturally tailor and pilot **Food Farmacy**, a produce prescription program aimed at addressing high rates of food insecurity and nutrition-related chronic conditions in their communities.

Produce prescription programs increase access to and consumption of fruits and vegetables as well as support healthy behavior change among patients with low incomes and chronic disease risk. Each participating tribe had a goal unique to their community needs and health challenges.



### Hannahville Indian Community

Improve high rates of nutrition-related diseases like diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular disease by improving access to fresh and traditional foods.



### Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians

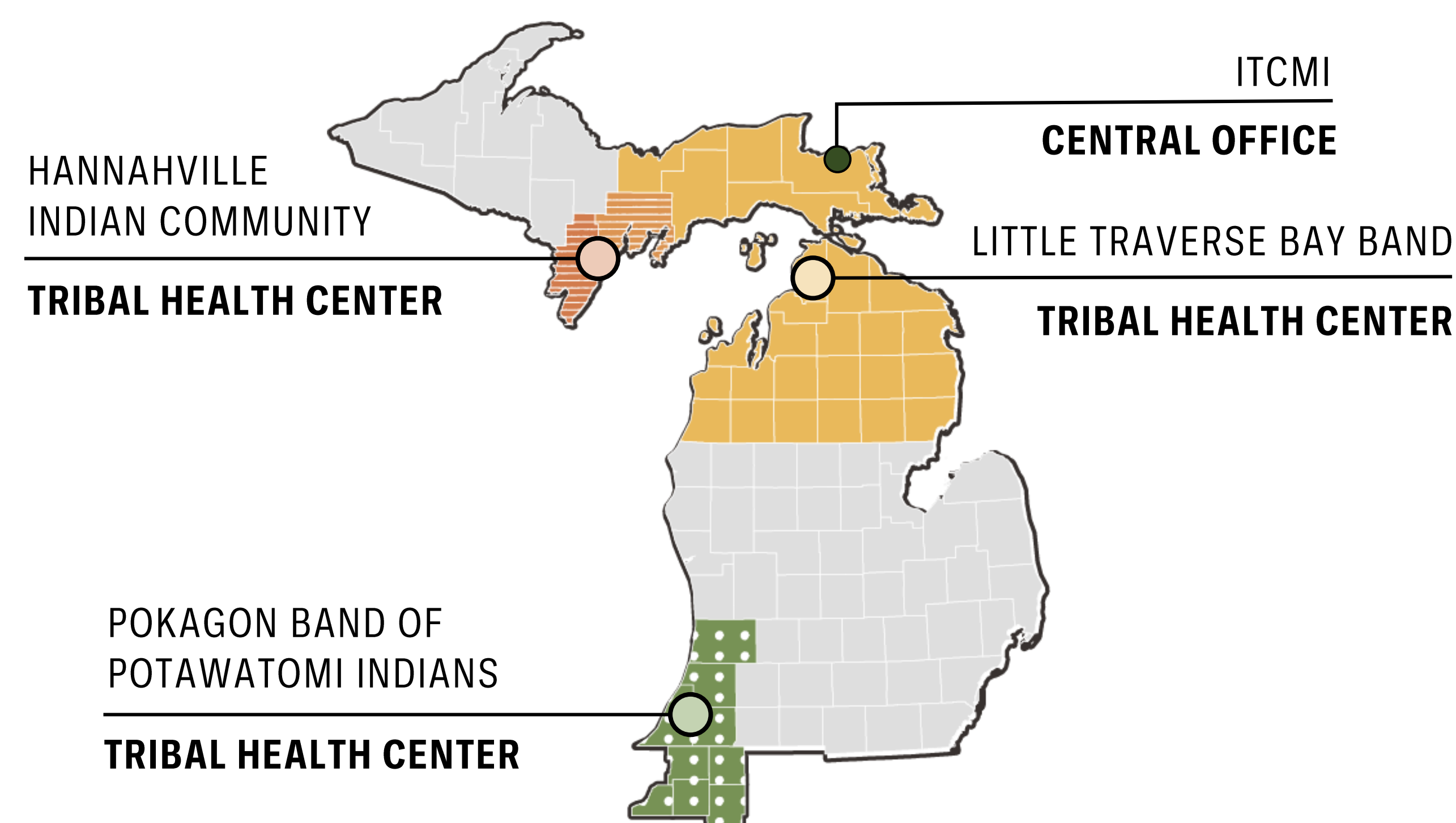
Overcome affordability challenges and limited food access, especially for low-income members who did not qualify for federal nutrition assistance yet still faced difficulties obtaining healthy foods.



### Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians

Improve access to fresh, nutritious foods and support community members in learning how to shop for, store, and prepare fruits and vegetables, many of which were unfamiliar or underused.

## Tribe Locations & Service Areas



## Food Farmacy Program Details

Each tribal community designed and implemented a customized Food Farmacy program tailored to their unique resources, seasonal availability, and community interests. While each program was unique, all included a combination of nutrition education, counseling or goal setting, and vouchers redeemable at local food sources in exchange for fresh foods. Program lengths, food sources, and program activities included:

### Hannahville Indian Community // 12 weeks

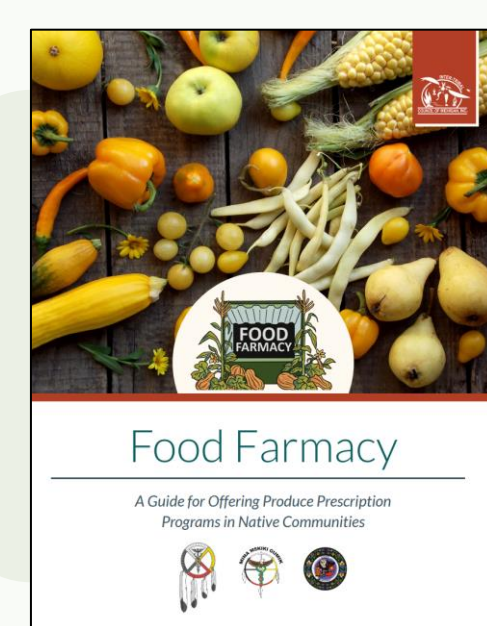
- Different food sources for different seasons (On-site farmer's market, tribally-owned aquaponics greenhouse & local meat market); Garden kit incentives; Facebook Live cook-along demonstrations.

### Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians // 5 months

- Three food sources; Vouchers for fresh fruits & vegetables, lean meats, and mature plants with education materials.

### Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians // 18 months

- Six food sources; (tribally owned farm, local farmers markets, & natural food co-op); Vouchers for fresh & frozen fruits, vegetables, lean proteins like meats & seafood, as well as dried fruits & legumes.



To see detailed information about each tribe's tailored Food Farmacy Program, check out our implementation guide!



Scan me with your smart phone camera

## Program Evaluation

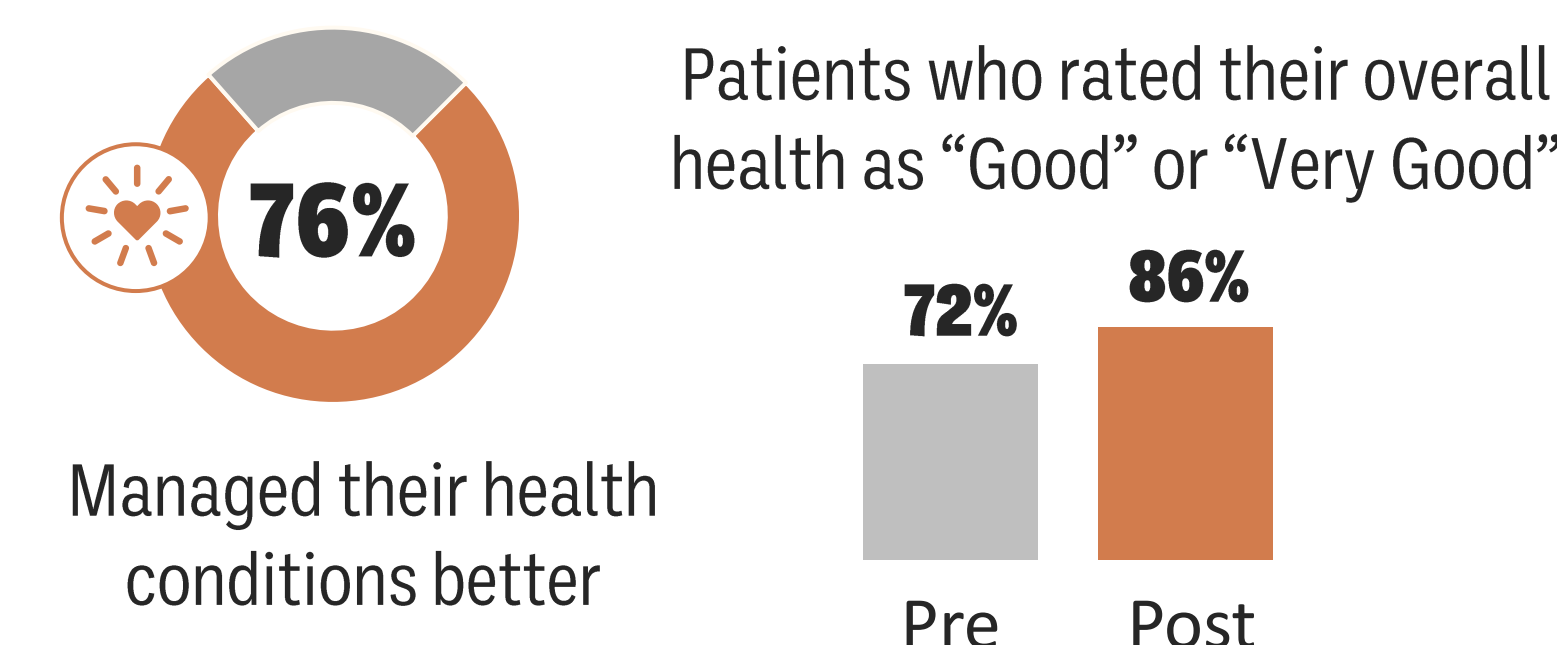
Program evaluation was conducted in partnership with the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) and overseen by the MPHI Office of Research Integrity and Compliance. Key data sources included program process maps, monthly check-ins, and quarterly reports detailing partnerships formed, patients enrolled, and vouchers distributed.

## Pre- and Post- Program Surveys

Participants completed surveys at the start and end of the program. The survey evaluated patient outcomes and satisfaction, focusing on skill development, behavior change, fruit and vegetable consumption, food insecurity, chronic health condition improvements, and overall experience.

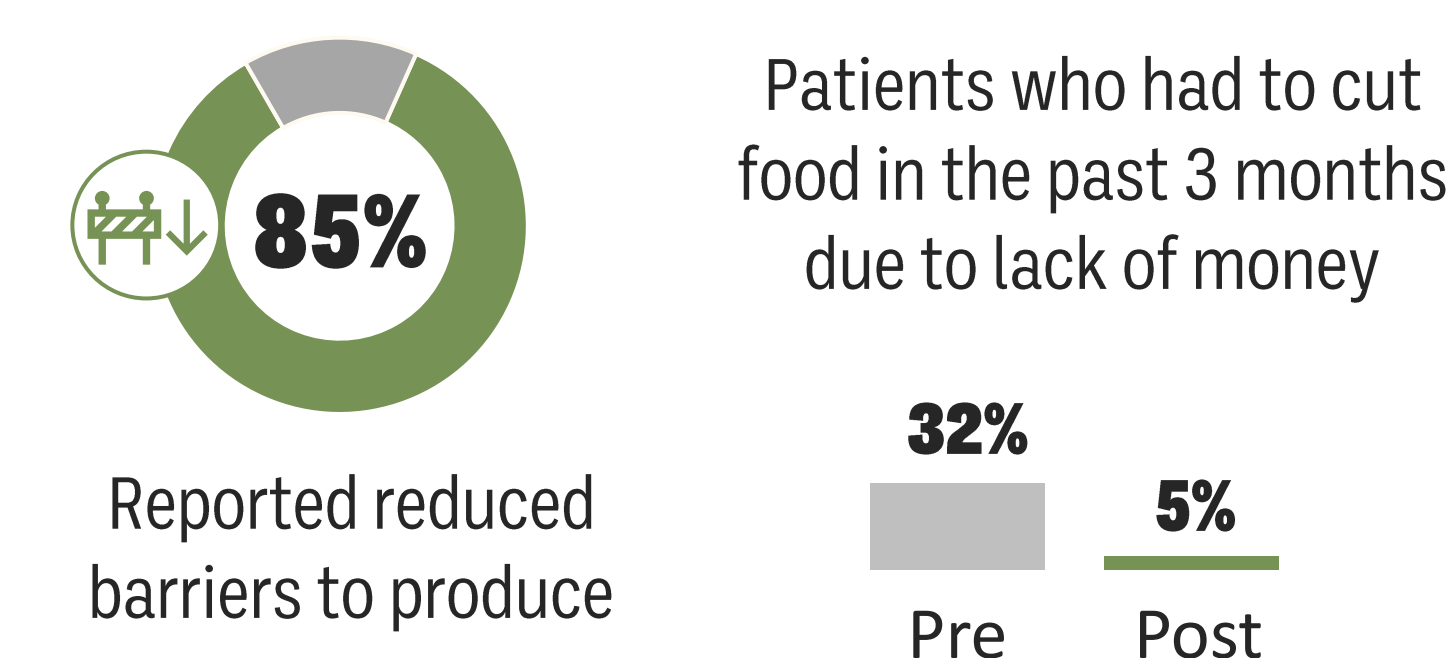
## Survey Results

### Hannahville Indian Community (N=86)



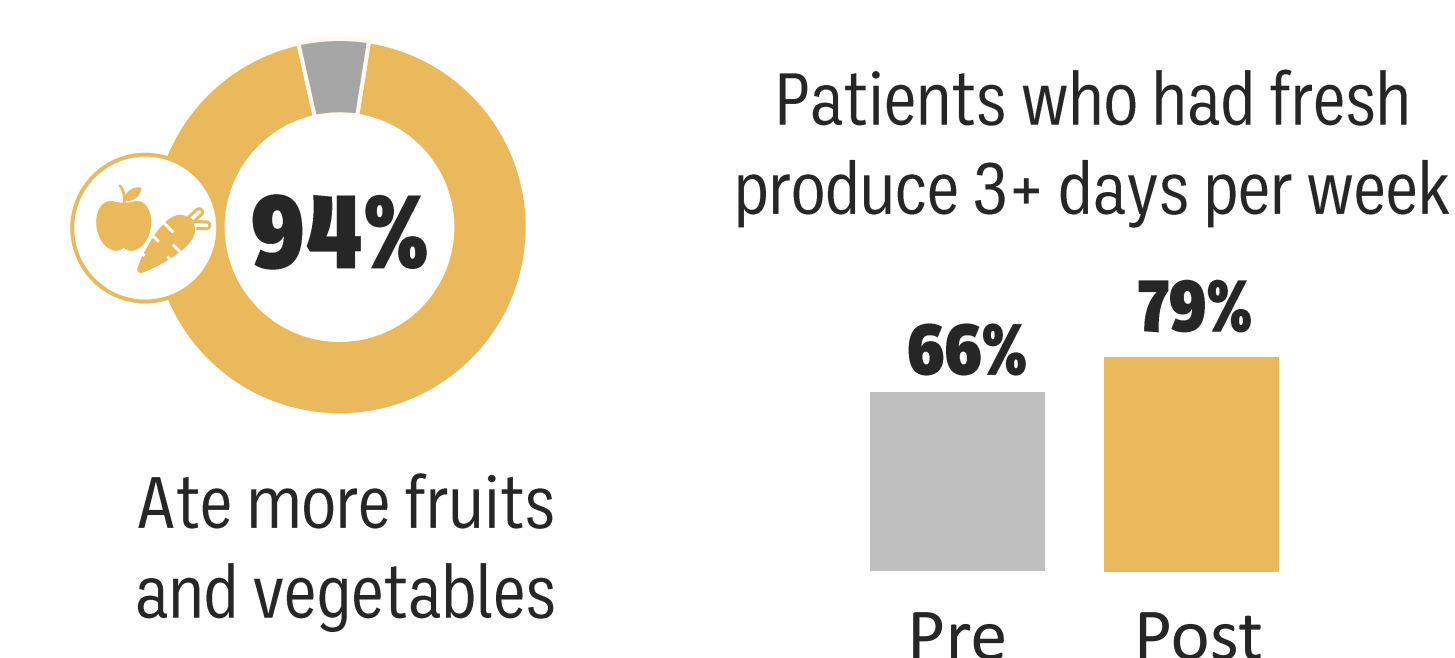
"My blood glucose went down!"  
- HIC PATIENT

### Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians (N=40)



"We had more money for fresh produce."  
- PBOPI PATIENT

### Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians (N=152)



"The Food Farmacy program made it so much easier to purchase healthy food."  
- LTBB PATIENT

### Overall Program Satisfaction (All Tribes Combined)



## Future Directions

The Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan received new funding from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund to expand the Food Farmacy project to four more tribal communities, with a focus on collecting both health outcomes and self-reported behavior data to demonstrate the program's long-term impact.

THANK YOU to our partners, funders, and food sources:

