

Searching for *Haknip Achukma* (Good Health): Challenges to Food Sovereignty Initiatives in Oklahoma [Abstract]

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In the last three decades, tribes have initiated numerous food projects, including seed distribution, farmers' markets, cattle and bison ranching, and community and school gardens. These enterprises are steps towards achieving what many food activists refer to as "food sovereignty," that is, tribal self-sufficiency and the ability to supply nutritious and affordable foods to tribal members. As many food activists have discovered, food production and distribution and maintaining healthy environments for farming, hunting, and gathering involve a complex meshing of social, political, religious, economic, and environmental concerns. Oklahoma is home to thirty-eight tribal nations. The state's multifaceted history, environmental issues, and current politics—including uneven food quality, poor indigenous health, intratribal factionalism, racism, and the glaring dichotomy of affluence and extreme poverty—presents opportunities for discussion about food initiatives. This paper discusses the meaning of "food sovereignty" and uses examples from Oklahoma to address some challenges of creating self-sufficient food systems and reconnecting tribal members with their traditional foodways.

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