Muckleshoot Food Sovereignty Project
Guiding Principles

- Strengthens pre-existing and helps build new partnerships.
- Create platforms for people to share their gifts.
- Includes everyone and honors all efforts.
- Offers and supports community education and involvement.
- Fair and equitable access to healthy foods.
Puget Sound Traditional Food Principles

In our conversations with elders and traditional food specialists about what a modern traditional foods diet might look like, we noticed that many Indian people hold common values that are as applicable today as they were generations ago. We call these Traditional Food Principles. They address the physical and spiritual health of individuals and communities, in conjunction with the wellbeing of the land.

Cook and Eat with Good Intention

The way we eat is just as important as what we eat. Eating is a reminder that we are human. Cooking is a time to honor the land we eat on, and to pay respect to the life that has been grown to nourish our bodies. The food we consume ties us to our place and our purpose in that place. Good intentions become a part of what we prepare, serve, and consume. It is important to check the plants and animals that give their life for you to sustain yours.

Wild and Organic Foods are Better for Health

Wild foods are diverse in systems and in flavor, colors, and guarantee that we are getting all the nutrients our bodies need. Processed and refined “foods” (like high-fructose corn syrup) tend to provide empty calories and more rather than part of food. This contributes to weight gain as one body, its natural wisdom, saw all the missing parts of processed and packaged food. Since the organic or traditional foods, we are supporting a healthier body and a healthier environment.

Food is at the Center of Culture

People traditionally harvested, processed, prepared, and shared food together. Their unity is an integral part of cultural identity, but storing food, cooking, and eating food have been culturally and religiously tied into the traditions of today. With food, individuals have nourished and enriched, not only by their traditional foods but by sharing with the ones they love.

Honor the Food Web & the Food Chain

Living in harmony with nature is a Native teaching. As we know, everything is connected. It must be remembered that the removal of one plant or one animal can be seen in the health of plants, animals, and ultimately ourselves. We have a responsibility to maintain the health of our food system as our ancestors did, so that we pass down a world that will support generations to come.

Eat with the Seasons

A traditional food diet is diverse and based on the seasons. The power of being in the moment and harvesting what is available ensures that a variety of foods will be in the moment. Seasonal foods, eaten by people the seasons change as well. For example, eating seasonal fruits helps support local economies of the local and seasonal.

Treaty of Medicine Creek, 1854

ARTICLE 3: The right of hunting, fowling, and fishing, at all times, and on ancestral grounds and waters, is hereby reserved to the Indians to continue their existence as a nation, and to purchase for themselves useful and valuable supplies, and to maintain and support the government of the confederated tribes of the Yakima Nation, under a compact, entered into between the same and the United States of America, and transmitted to their successors.

The Treaty Today

Part of tribal sovereignty is a community’s ability to harvest and enjoy foods that are traditional and are part of an environment. Food sovereignty means the “inherent right of a community to choose their food system.” The treaties of Puyallup Hill and Medicine Creek illustrated the ancestors’ desire to ensure that future generations have access to traditional foods. Harvesting, fishing, and honoring our traditional foods is more than just a treaty right, it is also our responsibility as Indian People.

Muckleshoot Community Gardens

In 2016, the Muckleshoot Tribe established several community gardens on reclaimed land to provide opportunities for tribal members. The gardens were intended to grow food for the community. In 2017, a group of members in the community reached out to the Tribe with an interest in learning how to grow food. The group began organizing and planning a community garden on reclaimed land in 2018. A community garden was established in the community in 2019. The garden is now fully operational and is open to the public.

Muckleshoot Utility District

The Muckleshoot Utility District is a public agency that provides water and wastewater services to the community. The utility district was established in 1991 and is responsible for providing water and wastewater services to the community. The utility district is funded through rates and fees charged to customers. The utility district is governed by a board of directors, which is elected by the community.

Muckleshoot Tribe

The Muckleshoot Tribe is a federally recognized tribe that represents the Muckleshoot people. The tribe is headquartered in Auburn, Washington, and is affiliated with the Confederated Tribes of the Súxhúsh (Salish) and the Confederated Tribes of the Yakama Nation.

Muckleshoot Tribe’s “Food of the Year” Program

In 2016, the Muckleshoot Tribe launched a program to celebrate and promote traditional foods. The program highlights a different food each year, and provides recipes and information about the benefits of eating traditional foods.

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Tribal School Orchard
Tribal College Native Berry Garden
Honor the Gift of Food