

Seeds of Strength

CULTIVATING FOOD SECURITY IN OUR COMMUNITY



Our Mission

- *Our mission is to create a cooperative food sovereignty model that helps to ensure food security and support sustainability for our community while also providing skill building and employment opportunities through effective partnerships.*



A Vision of Abundance

Empowering our Community Together

Our vision is to cultivate a self-sustaining community where we grow food, raise chickens, grass-fed cattle, hunt wild game, fish, forage, and engage in storing and preserving food.

By embracing these traditional practices, we ensure that our community has access to healthy, safe, and nourishing food, free from dangerous pesticides and growth hormones.

Our goal is to become the central hub for food production and distribution, providing year-round sustenance for everyone. Through this initiative, we not only honor our cultural heritage but also build a resilient and thriving community.



Cultivating Tradition

In our community, food sovereignty will be more than just a project—it's a return to our roots and a celebration of our cultural heritage. Through gardening, canning, and butchering game and free-range animals, we are not only ensuring food security but also reviving traditional practices that have sustained our people for generations.

This initiative fosters a sense of unity and cooperation, as families come together to share knowledge, skills, and the fruits of their labor. By engaging in these activities, we are strengthening the social fabric of our community, creating lasting bonds, and empowering each other to build a resilient and self-sufficient future.



Complete Food Sovereignty
takes time but...
we are moving in the right
direction!

*4 Common Pillars of Indigenous Food Sovereignty**

Community
Ownership



Inclusion of
Cultural Food
Knowledges



Environmental
Sustainability



Inclusion of Local &
Traditional Foods

Start Small – Do It Well – Then Expand

- ▶ The Kikendaasogamig Healthy Living Program (now Neyaashiinigmiing Healthy Living) started out working with youth and families at the elementary school.
- ▶ Focus on 4 main areas of engagement:
- ▶ *School Nutrition, Community Nutrition Education, Local Food Systems and Land-Based Education.*
- ▶ These initiatives help to: reduce childhood hunger, increase community access to good food, reinforce traditional food practices, and strengthen intergenerational relationships with seniors/elders



Simple Beginnings – 2015

Our Boxes are Here!



On The Grow



Harvest Time



Edible/Beneficial Landscapes at Kikendaasogamig (2018)



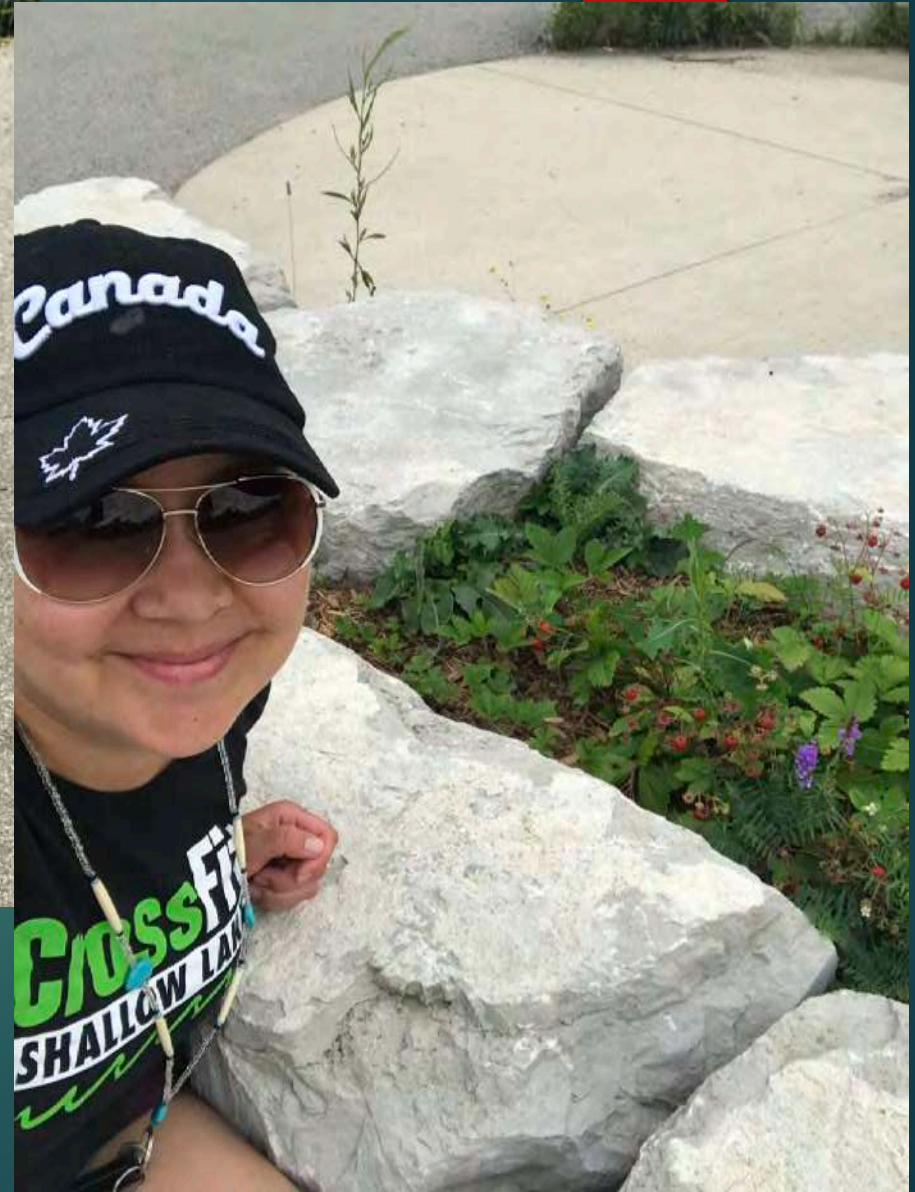
Beneficial School Landscapes

- ▶ Vision to have a completely beneficial school landscape
 - ▶ Edible
 - ▶ Medicinal
 - ▶ Traditional Uses
-
- ▶ First task – remove ornamental plants

Removing Ornamental Plants

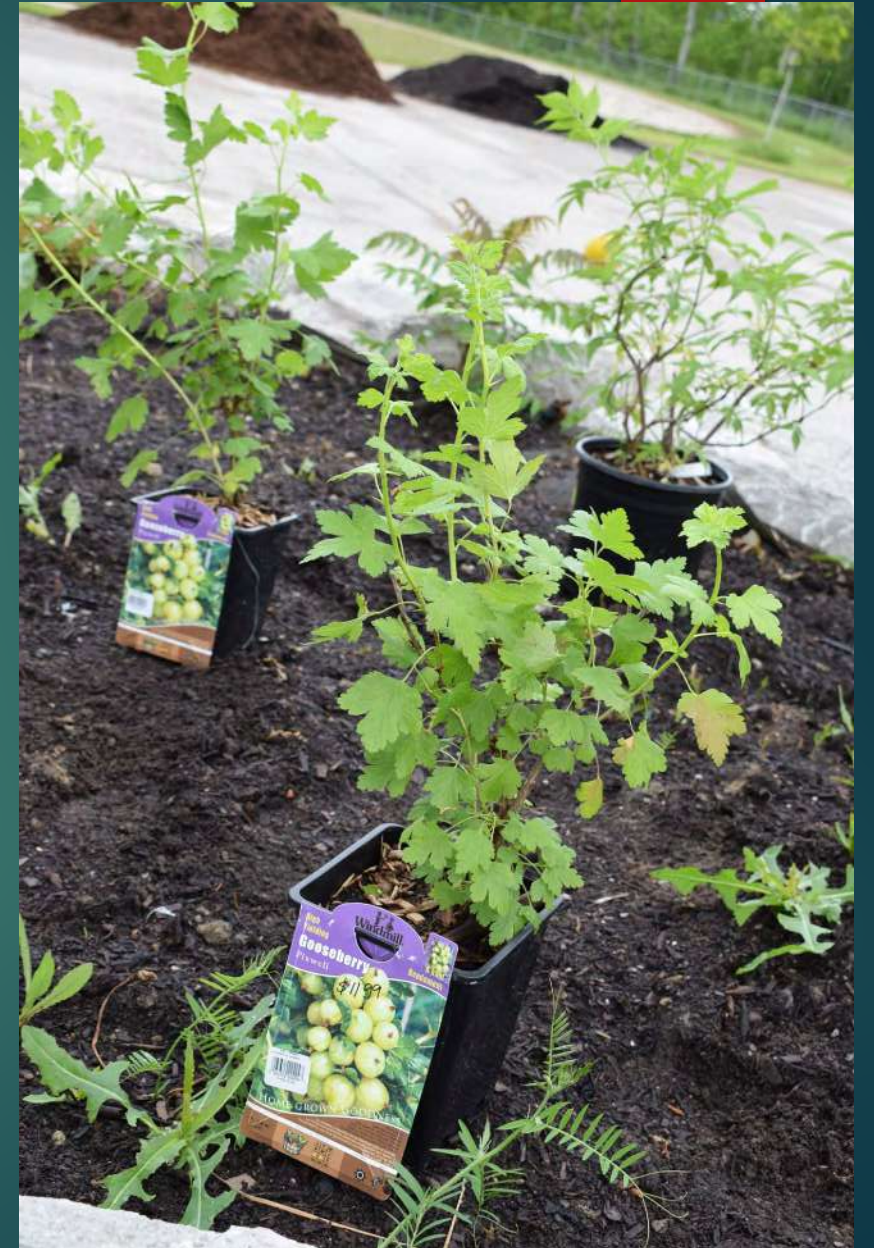






Edible/Beneficial Landscape Expansion (2019)







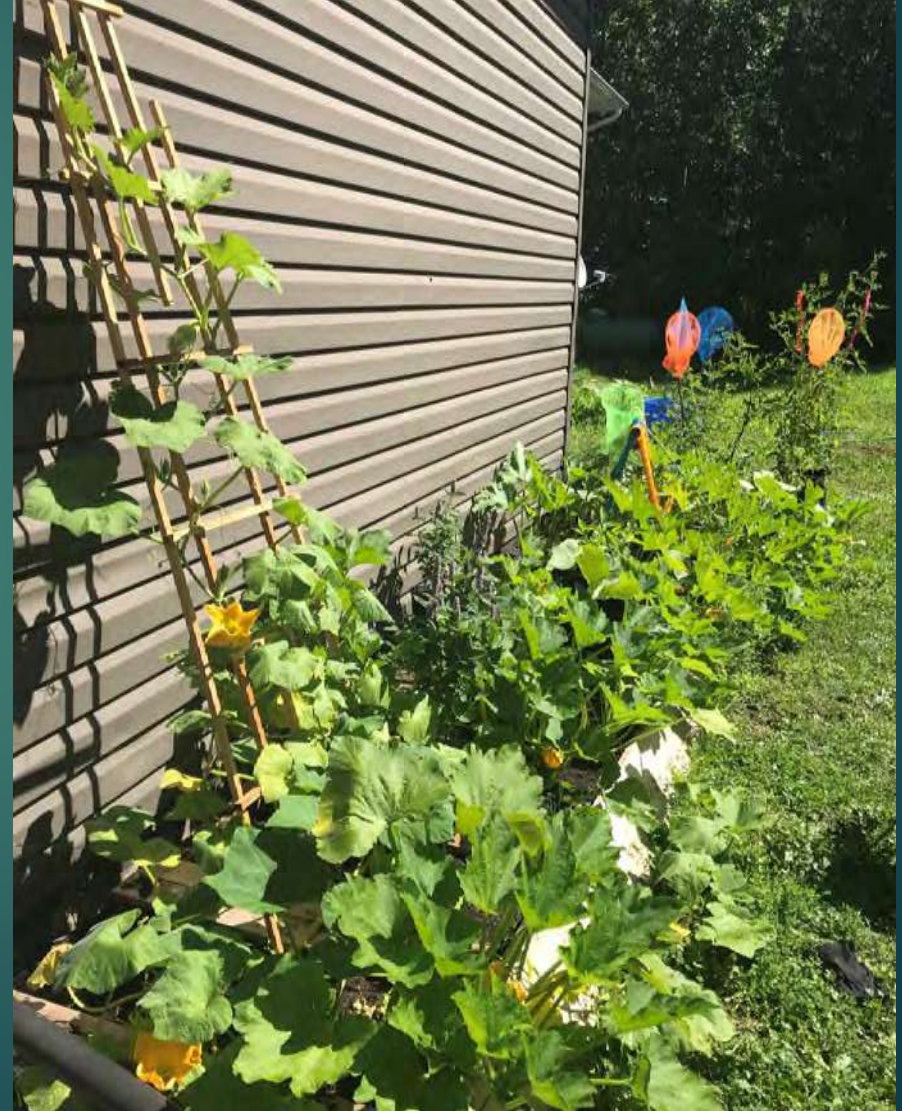






Nawash Small Home Gardens

(2020)



Potential Gardening Barriers

- ▶ Land type
 - ▶ Space
 - ▶ Lack of resources
 - ▶ Lack of knowledge
-
- ▶ What to do?



Just do it!

- ▶ Start small
- ▶ Partnership with other programs
- ▶ Over 150 households had some type of garden
- ▶ Provide gardening supplies including:
 - Planter bags
 - Soil Blend
 - Seeds and starter plants
 - Basic education on container gardens







School Gardens & Edible Landscapes – Kikendaasogamig (2021)





- ▶ School gardens continue to be a source of teaching and hands-on learning at Kikendaasogamig Elementary
- ▶ Students are responsible for:
 - ▶ *Plant starters*
 - ▶ *Amending Soils for garden boxes*
 - ▶ *Watering/Weeding garden*
- ▶ The edible landscapes are thriving and have become a place that bring students, families and community members joy throughout the growing season.
- ▶ Foods are enjoyed fresh (wild strawberries, black raspberries, mint, etc) OR are preserved for future use (either by drying, freezing or canning).
- ▶ Things like sweetgrass are also harvested and used for crafting purposes

Future Plans

- ▶ Continue school gardens and expansion – orchard
- ▶ Growing home garden sizes
- ▶ Supporting community growers from start to finish
- ▶ Provide education/sharing sessions for gardeners
- ▶ Teaching preservation methods
- ▶ Continue to support community garden
- ▶ Discuss small livestock possibilities



Nawash Community Garden (2021)



Nawash Community Garden

(2021)



- ▶ 2021 was the first year that the community garden was overseen by a team of Nawash Programs
- ▶ Programs committed to certain days of the week and were responsible for watering/weeding the garden
- ▶ Community families committed to weekend watering over the summer months and into the new school year
- ▶ Produce was distributed to community as it was harvested fresh – either by road side stand, at the garden or through various programs like the Health Centre and School

New Beginnings







“No water” obstacle finally solved!



Harvesting!





Food Distribution





Geodesic Grow Dome (2025)





Growing All Year Round

- Canadian Feed the Children – grant application to Public Health Agency of Canada
- Diabetes 2 Prevention initiative
- Arctic Acres Geodesic Grow Dome
- Off Grid System that will allow us to grow all year round
- Pilot project of what we hope is the first of many grow domes in Nawash
- A new opportunity for our community to learn about this type of growing and gain skills while helping community
- Possibilities are endless!





Into the Future

- ▶ *Our vision is to create a resilient and self-sufficient food system that empowers our community to sustainably feed itself as we grow. By amalgamating our food bank, community garden, and the newly donated year-round off-grid grow dome, we aim to foster a culture of food sovereignty and security. This innovative project will ensure that every member of our community has access to fresh, nutritious food throughout the year, regardless of external conditions. The grow dome's off-grid capabilities will be a cornerstone of our efforts, enabling continuous food production and reinforcing our commitment to environmental sustainability.*
- ▶ *Central to this vision is the establishment of a new training center, which will provide comprehensive education and hands-on experience in agricultural techniques, safety protocols, and office skills. This center will empower community members with the knowledge and expertise needed to contribute to the project's success. By cultivating a sense of ownership and pride in our food sovereignty efforts, we aim to build a community that is equipped, informed, and united in its pursuit of sustainable living. Together, we are creating a future where food security is a reality for all, and where every individual has the skills to support our collective well-being.*

Dreaming Big

Community owned farm

Produces a diverse range of organic fruits, vegetables and herbs. Implementing farming practices to ensure long-term soil health and biodiversity.

Local food hub

Central hub that aggregates, stores and distributes the food for the entire community

Community Kitchen and Education Center

Offering cooking classes, nutrition workshops, food preservation and agriculture techniques.

Food Forest

Develop a permaculture-based food forest that mimics natural ecosystems and provides continuous supplies of fruits, nuts and vegetables.

Seed Bank and Exchange Program

Preserving heirloom and indigenous seeds ensuring genetic diversity and resilience.





Miigwetch!



We are honoured to present this project and wish to recognize the support of the Coldwater Trust, Canadian Feed the Children, Neyaashiinigmiing Healthy Living Program Coordinator - Deidre Millar, Nawash Social Services and all the community programs & volunteers who work extremely hard to ensure the success of the Nawash garden.