

P R E S S R E L E A S E
Karuk Tribe

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KARUK TRIBE RECEIVES USDA FARM TO SCHOOL GRANT

**Promoting healthy lifestyles by Increasing Local Foods in School Cafeterias and
Expanding K-12 Nanu’ávaha (Our Foods) Curriculum**

Orleans, CA –The Karuk Tribe is pleased to announce that they are one of 65 projects spanning 42 states and Puerto Rico receiving support this year through the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Farm to School Grant Program, an effort to better connect school cafeterias and students with local farmers and ranchers. “Increasing the amount of local foods in America’s schools is a win-win for everyone,” Secretary Perdue said. “Our children benefit from the fresh, local food served in their meals at school, and local economies are nourished, as well, when schools buy the food they provide close to home.”

With its \$ 100,000 support service grant, the Karuk Tribe will be able to impact over one hundred tribal and non-tribal students across the Karuk Aboriginal Territory. “Being able to continue some of the work we’ve done over the past five years of our Food Security Grant is a true gift to Karuk Country,” commented Nicole Woodrow, the project director and the Karuk Tribe’s K-12 Environmental Education Division Coordinator, referring to a USDA-funded and UC Berkeley-led intertribal, multi-agency collaborative grant project.

The Karuk Tribe’s **Upiftánmaahti** (pronounced something like: ooh-pif-TAN-maw-ti, which means “Growing from a Seed”) **Project** builds upon the experience and materials developed under its subcontract to the Mid-Klamath Watershed Council’s 2015-2016 Farm to School Klamath Roots Food Project and Food Security grant. Leveraging this valuable experience with the U.S. Dept. of Education-funded Píkyav Field Institute Project, the Karuk Tribe will further enhance the understanding and direct experience of our local K-12 students on the connections between traditional foods, physical health and diet-related disease prevention.

Objectives for the Upiftánmaahti Project include expanding our culturally relevant “Native Health” lesson plans; implementing lessons promoting healthy lifestyles and physical health; facilitating Day Camps to participating schools for students to learn experientially about Native foods, fibers, and medicinal plants; conducting Native plant processing, traditional regalia and basket making; and implementing Native foods cooking classes for a “hands on” approach to embracing Karuk cultural heritage.

To round out the Project with contemporary foods, the Karuk Tribe will improve and expand upon a total of six gardens, allowing students to not only profit from “getting hands dirty” with their parents, school teachers, Tribal and our Mid Klamath Watershed Council partner’s staff, but also from preparing and consuming local foods at school-sponsored events. In addition to the Native Foods Cookbook, students will also have plenty of opportunity to engage in the physical activities outlined in the project’s Traditional Games Booklet.

“The disproportionate burdens of diet-related illness that remain the inheritance of our contemporary Tribal youth are, unfortunately, a fact,” notes Leaf Hillman, Director of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy for the Karuk Tribe. “The Upiftánmaahti Project represents an important contribution to our local efforts in changing this trajectory.”

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