



## 12 Native-Owned Food Businesses to Support on Indigenous Peoples' Day

Ways to honor the original stewards of this country, through reverence, respect, and remuneration.

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Today, on Indigenous Peoples' Day, we celebrate and honor the original Americans. To be Indigenous means to be inextricably intertwined with one's homeland since time immemorial. Entire societies and cultures were and still are organized, defined, and shaped around the foods the land offered. The American landscape is productive today because Indigenous people actively managed and cared for it for thousands of years. And we still do.

Our cultures and foodways are so ingrained in American culture that many often see Native food traditions as American food traditions. But foods like cornbread, maple syrup, and turkey with cranberry sauce all have Indigenous origins.

I am often asked how non-Indigenous allies can support Indigenous people. The first step is to begin understanding the peoples and cultures who have had relationships with this land for millennia. In practice, this means learning, unlearning, understanding, and honoring the original stewards of your country, region, city, and neighborhood. A great place to start is [this map](#) from the Canada-based nonprofit Native Lands Digital. Spend some time researching the environmental and cultural history of the lands where you are standing. Every square inch of this land now called "America" carries wisdom and stories of the continent's first citizens.

Next, you can support Native food businesses, such as the 12 listed below and others listed [here](#). Food is the ultimate connection between humans and the land, and many of these entrepreneurs are continuing their traditions, just as their ancestors have done before them.

## Bow and Arrow

*Ute Mountain Ute Tribe*

While Ute people have been growing heirloom varieties of corn for millennia, Bow and Arrow Foods started in 1962 at the base of the legendary Sleeping Ute Mountain on the Ute Mountain Ute reservation in southwest Colorado. Bow and Arrow sells blue, white, and yellow cornmeal in quantities for home cooking as well as commercial uses.

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## California Indian Museum and Cultural Center

*Pomo and Miwok youth*

High in potassium, protein, magnesium, calcium, acorns are known as a superfood across Indian Country. The Tribal Youth Ambassadors of the California Indian Museum and Cultural Center decided to make **Acorn Bites** snack bars to support their community food efforts. This gluten-free, protein-packed snack provides Pomo and Miwok youth the chance to **advance cultural opportunities to reclaim nutrition**.

## Moore Brothers Natural

*Lumbee Tribe*

Moore Brothers Natural is a Native owned and operated cattle operation on the ancestral Lumbee lands in North Carolina. Their high-quality beef is raised on pasture without the use of antibiotics or growth hormones.

## Native American Natural Foods

*Oglala Lakota*

To be Tanka means to “live life powerfully” in Lakota. Native American Natural Foods has set out to do just this by providing sustainably grown products that are minimally processed and made by Native American producers. Based on traditional wasna and

Moore Brothers Cattle Company.

pemmican, they have combined high-protein, prairie-grazed buffalo and cranberries to make the Tanka Bar, a culturally relevant product that supports Indian Country.

### **O-Gah-Pah Coffee**

*Quapaw Nation*

Many centuries ago, the Quapaw Nation followed the Mississippi River into their traditional homeland in Arkansas. This is the origin of the name “O-Gah-Pah,” which can be translated as the “Downstream People.” In 2016, the tribe established an in-house roastery in Quapaw, Oklahoma to serve the its casino and tribal government. Now, their passion for coffee has led them to source directly from Indigenous producers in south and central America.

O-Gah-Pah Coffee.

### **Passamaquoddy Maple**

*Passamaquoddy Tribe*

Harvesting maple syrup is a time-honored tradition for the Passamaquoddy people and tribes across the Northeast and Great Lakes regions. **Passamaquoddy maple syrup** is 100 percent certified organic and sustainably harvested from the tribe’s land in Maine.

### **Ramona’s American Indian Foods**

*Akimel O’Odham (Gila River Indian Community)*

Ramona Button and her husband Terry have been farming at their home on the Gila River reservation in Arizona for over 40 years. They share their culture and traditions through their heirloom and traditional food products like corn meal, grits, tepary beans, and pinole (roasted flour). The tepary bean has gained a reputation as being the world’s most drought tolerant bean, along with being higher in protein and fiber than other beans.

## **Red Lake Nation Foods**

*Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians*

The Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians reservation surrounds Lower Red Lake, the largest lake in Minnesota. The lake plays an integral role in the traditional harvesting and producing practices of the region's famous wild rice. Based in the area, Red Lake Nation Foods sells the rice, in addition to jams, jellies, and other traditional foods. The company is dedicated to representing their cultural heritage for the benefit of over 10,000 members of the Red Lake Nation.

Ramona Farms

## **Sakari Farms**

*Valdez Native Tribe*

Sakari Farms grows and produces teas, body care products, and hot sauces. Based in Bend, Oregon, the farm also offers on-farm technical assistance through classes and conducts research based tribal seed production.

## **Seka Hills**

*Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation*

Tucked away in Northern California's Capay Valley, the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation grows olives on their traditional homeland and presses their own oils. The Tribe, which continues to preserve their language and the legacy of their ancestors today, also produces high-end wine, honey, and other specialty foods.

## **Spirit Lake Native Farms**

*Fond Du Lac Band Of Superior Chippewa*

Based in Sawyer, Minnesota, Spirit Lake Native Farms produces high quality, custom-finished wild rice. The company uses the tribe's traditional technique of hand-roasting the rice over an open fire.

## Takelma Roasting Co.

*Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe*

Named after the traditional language of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua in Southeastern Oregon, Takelma Roasting roasts sustainably-sourced, specialty grade coffee with the intention for it to be shared over good conversation—in Takelma, or any other language.

*All photos courtesy of Maria Givens / the Native American Agriculture Fund.*

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