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MORRIS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[September Community Meal to Feature Indigenous Foods](#)

Summary: Community and campus volunteers will prepare and serve a meal that has its roots in Dakota traditions.

MORRIS, Minnesota (September 24, 2015)—The next Morris Community Meal will feature traditional Native American and locally grown produce on Monday, September 28, from 5:15–7 p.m. at Faith Lutheran Church (108 West 8th Street, Morris, MN 56267). The project provides free, warm, made-from-scratch meals each month and is open to all members of the Stevens County community. This month, volunteers will collaborate with Morris Healthy Eating Initiative (MHE), Circle of Nations Indigenous Association (CNIA), American Indian Science and Engineering Society, and the University of Minnesota, Morris Office of Community Engagement (OCE).

Gabe Desrosiers will share words of gratitude for the harvest and meal before it is served. The meal will consist of Paśdayapi (traditional corn soup made with Dakota corn), Wamnu kci Hma k'a Caŋhaŋpi Tiktica (Native heirloom squash with walnuts and maple syrup), Omnica made into black bean hummus, blue corn chips, and Unziŋziŋtka (tomatoes) prepared with other fresh, seasonal vegetables, and Sakayutapi (melon for eating fresh).

The first people in the place we now call Minnesota and Stevens County were the Dakota and the Ojibwe, indigenous cultures that sustained themselves for thousands of years on foods grown, hunted, and harvested on the land. Traditionally the harvest was shared with all, from the newly born to the oldest members of the community. In keeping with this tradition, the September community meal will feature foods grown from seeds and prepared using methods passed down through Dakota culture and guided by modern-day Dakota gardeners and elders.

From 1887 to 1909, the place that is now the University of Minnesota, Morris was an American Indian boarding school. Today 17 percent of Morris's student body is comprised of American Indian students. Morris students, along with elders, cultural mentors, faculty, staff, and community members, join in preparing and sharing the Native American Community Meal. Beginning with seeds planted in the Native American Garden, this annual sharing of the harvest has grown into a season-long endeavor that helps Morris write a new chapter in its history by deepening knowledge and intercultural connections.

Food for Wayuksapi Wi Wotapi (Corn Harvest Moon Feast) comes from the on-campus Native American Garden, Student Organic Garden Club, Morris Area Farmers Market, Lower Sioux Indian Community, Uncle Super, Willie's Super Valu, and Pomme de Terre Food, Inc.. Teresa Peterson '91 provided traditional corn and heirloom bean seeds to grow and harvest in the Native American Garden and guided learning activities from seed to sharing traditional and current-day Dakota foods, recipes, and culture with the Morris community.

The 2015 Native American Community Meal is co-sponsored by Native American and Student Organic Gardeners, MHE, CNIA, the University of Minnesota, Morris Multi-Ethnic Resource Center, and OCE.

Organizers are looking for businesses and community organizations to serve as meal sponsors next year as well as volunteers to help prepare the food. Community members and potential sponsors can contact OCE at 320-589-6457 or email Sarah Eckel, OCE assistant coordinator, at seckel@morris.umn.edu.

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