

Spring—
Summer
2009



Indigenous Permaculture

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Mission:

Indigenous Permaculture's (IP) mission is to provide knowledge and exchange with Indigenous peoples and to share with local communities using science and methodology in the areas of agriculture, education, integral health, art, agriculture, and protection of biodiversity.

Goals:

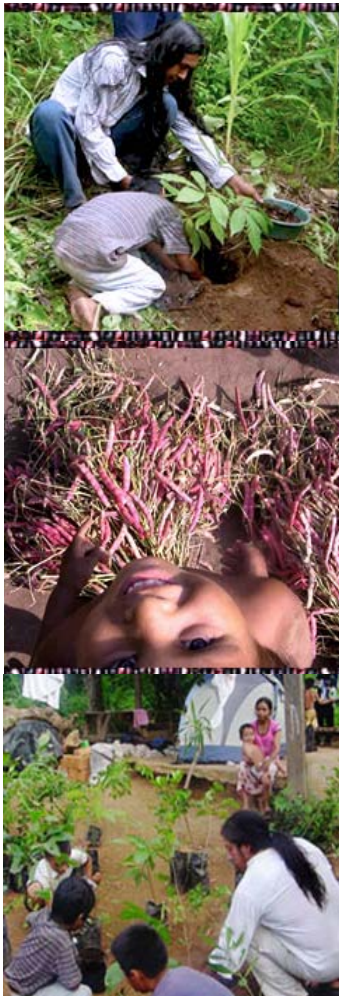
- Re-establish wellness to Mother Earth and her people.
- Improve person and planetary health through holistic sustainable development
- Revitalize Native and low-income communities
- Enhance community food security
- We conduct this work in an affordable way that builds capacity within the community.

Philosophy:

Indigenous Permaculture, or **Cosmovision**, is a way of thinking and living by following the original instructions we were given to live in balance with the world. These teachings assist people in achieving a symbiotic sustainable life within their environment by utilizing indigenous agricultural practices.

Permaculture reconnects human beings and the natural world in an effort to restore balance and natural law that will heal the earth and its people. Indigenous Permaculture is not new, it is wisdom from the past that tells us how to follow our original instructions from the Creator. By doing this we ensure our existence and a future for generations.

Indigenous Permaculture goals for 2009 -2010:



Understanding the urgent needs of Indigenous peoples, our work at Indigenous Permaculture Program (IPP) will always be ongoing as we are continuously seeking involvement in new areas, spaces and levels. Working with a multi-disciplinary diverse staff, IPP works to meet the needs of communities in Central America, specifically El Salvador, Wounjupi, in the South of Pine Ridge.

IPP is strongly supported from the communities that we work with as well as our faithful allies. Some of the projects that we will be working on and that we will need financial support are as follows: Our goals for 2009-2010 are broken down by our working in the following Indigenous communities:

El Salvador:

- The construction of 200 stoves.
- The construction of 2000 compost toilets.

- Planting and maintenance of 6000 trees.
- Implementation of 50 solar panels for water bombs and light for communal housing and three native language school for kids.
- Implementation of 500 rain water collectors.

Pine Ridge, South Dakota

- A tractor and a water pump is needed for the maintenance of sustainable, organic garden.

Other projects that we are working on are:

- Completion of a food security project that involves traditional farming and urban agriculture within the Gilroy Farm and Richmond Garden project here in California.
- Presentation of the Indigenous Permaculture Program (IPP).
- Presentation of our annual budget.

We are also hoping to push forward with the following logistical projects:

- Purchase of a digital projector and two portable laptops for our staff.

IPP is not a for profit organization. Grounded within Indigenous knowledge and practices, we propose to support the integral development of communities, particularly indigenous communities. Development becomes the base of our work as we seek to raise our material and spiritual standard of living, immersed in communities that model creative, productive and systemic work. Based on the work of our ancestors and forefathers and on the capacity of peoples within the communities in which we work, we seek to provide solutions for a sustainable future from the cosmovision and perspective of our peoples.



Save Seeds and Move Toward Community Food Security

By: David Jaber, Indigenous Permaculture

Seed saving is a critical link in reaching individual and community self-sufficiency.

Through saving, you can break the cycle of dependency on external powers - stores, corporations, and other communities. Otherwise, your food supply is at risk because you lack local control.

Cooperation with other beings is important and critical in any ecosystem, but the point is not to have complete dependency.

Seeds represent life. They are our connection with the past and enable us to continue into the future. The foods that we evolved with are our connection with our land and our culture, and without the seeds to grow these foods, we will not be able to provide the foods which embody our culture and sustain our bodies.

Water as a Sacred Right

We are born from water that vibrates with us and around us. We are all water bearers and water carriers as we are made up primarily of water. At the moment of our birth, we are **90 %** water. We flow with the energy of our elders and our ancestors. As we grow older, our skeletons learn to walk on the water contained within our bodies.

Water is the most receptive element on Earth. Countless studies by Japanese scientist Masaro Emoto (see his texts *Hidden Messages in Water*, *The Shape of Love*, and *The Secret Life of Water*) have proven what many of our traditional knowledges knew all along, that water is life, it is a sacred element that must be respected. No other element has the ability to read the vibrational frequencies of the

So, what kind of seeds can we save, and how do we do it?

All kinds of fruit, vegetables, nuts, and legume seeds can be saved. However, for best results, collect and save wild and/or open-pollinated seeds. Watch out for hybrid seeds. Hybrid seeds have parent plants of significantly different species & they don't reproduce true to the seed. You can save hybrid seeds, but the resulting plants are typically dramatically different from one to the other.

Resources to get you started in individual and community self sufficiency:

Native Seeds/SEARCH – a non-profit which provides saved seeds of “heirloom” crops of native significance. <http://www.nativeseeds.org>

Seed Savers exchange—another non-profit providing basic saving information and guidelines by vegetable, as well as a catalog of the seeds that they sell. www.seedsavers.org

world around it and copy it to itself. When we drink water, we drink that which is present in that water, be that chemicals or minerals. And it is that sacredness, that right to enjoy clean water that is increasingly coming under attack from privatization and human induced global warming and drought.

And yet, the average United Statesian uses roughly **150 gallons of water** a day, more than is necessarily to sustain life, while those in what we consider to be ‘developing’ countries are struggling to find **five gallons** a day and are often times surviving on **3 gallons** per day. (Sterling, Vitntinner, 2008;). The United States is also leading the world in drinking bottled water. “**Three out of four Americans drink bottled water, and one out of five Americans drink only bottled water**” (Louaillier; 2008). Drinking bottled water sends the message to corporations that not only is it okay to privatize water but that we will pay oftentimes **100 times more for bot-**

“The seed, for the farmer, is not merely the source of future plants and food; it is the storage place of culture and history. Seed is the first link in the food chain. Seed is the ultimate symbol of food security.”

-- Vandana Shiva, “Stolen Harvest”

Bay Area Seed Interchange Library (BASIL) - a seed library for the San Francisco Bay Area where local gardeners and farmers can “check out” vegetable, herb, and flower seeds, with the agreement that they grow them out and return seeds of the next generation. <http://www.ecologycenter.org/basil>; 2530 San Pablo Ave; Berkeley, CA 94702.

Univ. of MN Bilingual Integrated Pest Management textbook - features photos and details about the life cycles of key beneficial and pest insects, and how to best control and manage them without toxic pesticides. <http://ipmworld.umn.edu>

For more information, please visit <http://www.indigenous-permaculture.com>, e-mail ipp@ecologycenter.org or call us at 415-370-1657

“To understand water is to understand the cosmos, the marvels of nature, and life itself” - Masuro Emoto, *The Hidden Message in Water*

bled water than for tap water, even though in a recent CBS News poll **2/3rds of participants in a blind taste test either preferred tap to the bottled water brand names or couldn't tell the difference**. Privatization of our waters doesn't necessarily mean that the water is any cleaner, any freer of natural containments. **Up to 40% of bottled water, including Aquafina and Dasani, come from the same source of tap water**. The only difference is that tap water, because it falls under national governmental standards, is tested far more frequently than bottled water which can get away with rarely if ever being tested. (Louaillier; 2008).

Notes from a graduate: Recollections by Sergio Nezahalcoyotl



I graduated from the Indigenous Permaculture Program (IPP) in October of 2006 & since then my world has been painted with impossible possibilities of making earth-loving socially, politically-economic environmental changes. I am from San Jose in the South Bay area where, for the most part, people have little idea about what earth steward consciousness is and the potentials for composting, gardening, solar power panels, rain-water harvesting, grey water, etc., which I would learn from IPP.

One of the places that I first learned about the environmental issues was through a class in Environmental Studies where the teacher spoke about transnational organizations that dominate natural resources in order to maxi-

mize profits and whose results are seen in the extinctions of many flora and fauna species. I've also learned about the cosmic philosophy of my ancient Mexican roots that prioritize our four (Earth, wind, water, air) vital elements as the source of life. I continued to make changes with my wife to be responsible and make choices looking ahead for our future generations. When we conceived our first and only child, we searched for the best ways to give him a natural environment using our ancestors' spirituality and sustainable methods adopted to today's modernization.

I would learn about the IPP Certification Training Program at the Green Fest. My aching body called out for this medicine.

I have used and shared this information with my community through our already established business that sells and trades sustainable baby products, body care and through managing an organic produce Community Supported Agriculture (C.S.A.) (M.A.N.O. Ledesma Farms) from our home using the name of Los Antepasados. As a 5 year plan requirement to graduate from the IPP, my goal was to imple-

ment more eco-sustainable services such as community organic gardening, clean air vehicle, children's natural raising and awareness in health using indigenous power foods.

As of today what we can now share with the community of San Jose is our C.S.A. transportation running on Compressed Natural Gas van, a family based support group called "In Ixtli In Yolotl" (True face-One heart) to help raise children using the ancient Tolteca's cosmivision philosophy and this year's big cultural event celebrating the Mexical/Aztec New Year is going to be a "zero waste" event, we will prepare food that is all organic and with native power foods and sponsored by Whole Foods with a 5% of all sales. Indigenous Permaculture will also provide workshops.

I have used the sustainable organic methods learned from IPP and we have converted our backyard into a blossoming community artwork from being barren using grey water, rain water, human "waste", double digging and most importantly relating myself with our cosmos, knowing we are one, the greatest value I learned from IPP. I remember my first day in the program Guillermo said, "Once we see the plants, the water, and the birds as one, we will never feel alone". So true.

In the drive to privatize and commodify all natural 'resources', we have forgotten that water is a common right for all, not just those who can afford to pay. There is a growing movement around the world to interrupt corporate privatization of water with grassroots resistance. The struggles of Indigenous community in Cochabamba in Bolivia and the local community of Stockton in California teach us of the power that community has in standing up to the exploitation of multinational companies and governments who seek to 'own' the right to water.

While it is extremely necessary to build solidarities with communities in the struggle to develop water as a right to be enjoyed by all in order to intervene upon corporatization of water, we can also start much closer to home.

In January, Indigenous Permaculture hosted the *Water is Life* workshop where we learned how we can connect to local solidarity actions as well as take the beginning steps towards rainwater catchment. We also learned how to calculate how many gallons of irrigation water we could collect in one year off of the roofs of our homes, water that we can then use to irrigate our backyard gardens. According to Maude Barlow, California's water supply, along with much of the Southwest, is running out – there is roughly about 20 years of water left in the state (from the movie *Flow*). Considering California's current drought crisis, it becomes necessary to conserve water in order to honor the sacrifices that our ancestors made in preserving this water for us and to ensure that future generations can enjoy the right to clean, pure water. Every little bit counts.

"The true nature of the water crisis is not that there is too little freshwater on Earth, but that humans fail to respect water as a resource and manage it so that every living being dependent on it has a safe and adequate supply" - Sterling & Vitinner, Water Consciousness



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*La Sabiduría de los Antepasados
es Nuestro Futuro*



A special thanks to our sponsors:

- Rose Foundation
- Honor the Earth
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- Rainbow Grocery
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- Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
- Whole Foods Market

We thank them for this support. We see this work as economic and social justice, honoring the spirit of resistance of our ancestors — a spirit that ensures we exist today.

Pine Ridge Field Report



Two acres of garden now grace the hill-top and floodplain, at this site near the heart of the Pine Ridge reservation. Work has included everything from construction of a greenhouse; installation of a drip irrigation system; providing natural fertilizers, plants, soil amendments and pest controls, and sharing information on traditional agricultural practices.

The 2008 harvest turned out to be quite good. There was not only excess to give to elders and individuals in the community, but also enough to take to

an elders gathering in Montana, and several community members come to the site to get produce now. Wilmer Mesteth, our project manager, doesn't care to sell produce and would rather give it away, as he'd like to get recipients to garden themselves and help teach them what to do

This good year is in the face of the fact that nearly all other gardens were eaten by grasshoppers. This garden is one of the few that survived. We speculate that it survived either because a zone was mowed around the garden, and/or possibly because marigolds and other flowers were intercropped into the garden to attract beneficial insects.

We even entered a harvest contest at Oglala Lakota College, and a very large squash received first place! To help at educational events like this, we have a Lakota agricultural display of dried roasted corn, chokecherries, squash, and beans.

Lessons learned from this year:

- The greater garden size puts a strain on the available compost. Since the site is essentially a sustainable organic farm, quality compost is critical. We will be exploring ways to increase the supply of our organic compost
- The amount of water required is creating excess load on the one well that serves both gardens and the extended family home on the site. The plan is to excavate an additional well.

