



MEDIA RELEASE

EARTH DAY 2021: COULD FOOD FORESTS BE THE KEY TO RESTORING THE PLANET?

TORONTO April 15, 2021 - Four Indigenous communities in Alberta and Saskatchewan are looking to food forests to address the twin challenges of [severe food insecurity](#) and [climate change](#), and will kickstart the process just in time for Earth Day on April 22.

Based on the science of permaculture, **a food forest is a nature-inspired multifunctional agricultural system** that provides fruits, vegetables, other edibles, medicines and more. Unlike a traditional farm, a food forest is **self-sustaining once established**. This means it can feed families for generations while helping Indigenous communities re-establish food sovereignty.

“It’s all about working with nature rather than against it as mainstream monoculture practices do,” says Glenna Cayen, Food Forest Project Coordinator for Canadian Feed The Children. “It’s about knowing the contours of the land, practicing sustainable earth ethics, and creating self-contained ecosystems.”

Glenna, a member of Muskeg Lake Cree Nation in Saskatchewan, was instrumental in helping establish the community’s food forest in 2018. Now, other communities are joining in.

Nearby Whitefish Lake First Nation (Atikameg), Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation, and Beardy’s and Okemasis’ Cree Nation will all come together to establish three new food forests in their communities, building on the success in Muskeg Lake. The food forest expansion project is implemented in partnership with [Canadian Feed The Children](#), and funded through the TD Bank Group’s [TD Ready Challenge](#).

By taking its cues from nature, a food forest can not only provide accessible, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food, it can also create jobs, revitalize local ecosystems and reverse some of the damaging effects of climate change and unsustainable agricultural practices. This is important for the communities involved with the project, as they have observed local vegetation and wildlife die off due to contamination from pesticides and other chemical pollutants.

On April 20th, representatives from each community are meeting to kick-off the project. Over the next year, they will prepare the land and plant the first layer of vegetation. The project will be completed within three to five years, after which local families can enjoy the literal fruits of their labour for generations to come.

The theme for Earth Day on April 22nd is “Restore Our Earth,” and these four communities are confident that food forests can do just that. Canadians wishing to support the food forest project can visit canadianfeedthechildren.ca/foodforest for more information.

ABOUT CFTC

Canadian Feed The Children is an award-winning registered Canadian charity that envisions a world where children thrive free from hunger and poverty. We have been taking action against childhood hunger in Canada and around the world for over 35 years. We partner with 27 Indigenous communities across Canada, taking a community-led approach to support communities as they achieve their own long-term sustainable change.

FOR MEDIA INQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT

Erika Bockstael

Country Director, Canada

Canadian Feed The Children

Email: ebockstael@canadianfeedthechildren.ca

Telephone: 204-781-0773