

## Indian Country Priorities and Opportunities for the 2023 Farm Bill Title X: Horticulture

### Key Points and Recommendations

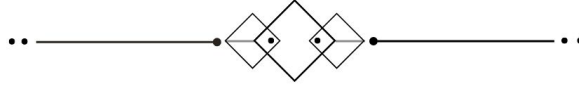
- Many traditional foods fall under the designation of specialty crops. Support for the production of these foods bolsters food sovereignty and healthy food access in Indian Country.
- The Farm Bill needs to include provisions to protect Native foods in the marketplace, as well as Native seeds and traditional foods.

### **Background Information and Context**

Tribal production of horticulture crops is a growing and vibrant agricultural sector today, with the most recent National Census of Agriculture showing a 24% increase in the counted number of Native-operated fruit/tree nut farms and a 20% increase in Native-operated greenhouse production. With the growth that Indian Country is seeing in this sector, increased Indian Country access to Horticulture Title programs will provide additional funding, technical assistance, and other resource supports for Tribal horticultural activities. This will help Native producers access markets for their products and give this growing sector of Indian Country's agriculture industry long-term stability and viability. In turn, stable growth in horticulture operations in Indian Country will improve local food access for everyone in Tribal communities.

### **Opportunities for Indian Country in the Horticulture Title:**

- ***Acknowledging Tribal sovereignty in Horticulture operations: Pesticide regulation***
  - Amend Sec. 9101 of Title X to enable Tribal Nations to regulate the use of pesticides under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).
- ***Tribal inclusion in the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program***
  - Include Tribal departments of agriculture or similar Tribal entities as eligible entities in the SCBG Program to promote parity for Tribes, acknowledge Tribal sovereignty, and ensure that Native producers could go directly to their Tribal governments for support.
- ***Support for Tribal honey and beekeeping***



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- Reports on honey or beekeeping should specifically include the growth and increase in beekeeping and honey operations in Indian Country.
- ***Support Tribal Farmers' Markets***
  - Implement 10% Tribal set-aside in programs like the Local Food Promotion Program to ensure better Tribal access to programs that help build farmers' markets.
- ***Support for Tribal organic producers and Tribal organic programs.***
  - Amend Title X of the Farm Bill to include Tribal governments alongside States as authorizing entities and regulators for avTribal Organic Program.
  - Provide AMS with cooperative agreement authority to work with Tribal organizations to provide better technical assistance to Native producers who wish to transition to organic production.
- ***Increased support for food safety compliance and market access***
  - Create a program that focuses on improvement access to GAPs audits in Indian Country and rural/remote places.
- ***Protecting Tribal seeds and Traditional foods***
  - Incorporate key language from the *Native American Seeds Protection Act of 2019*, requiring USDA to:
    - Engage in consultation with Tribal governments to determine the best means by which seeds may be protected; and
    - Conduct a study that at minimum identifies Tribal seeds cultivars and assesses current availability; assesses production, storage and harvesting processes to protect Tribal seed banks; evaluates the extent to which federal law and programs protect Tribal seeds from unlawful or unauthorized use and commercialization; and evaluates methods to preserve and ensure the availability of seed for future generations; and
    - After consultation and study, would then develop guidance for ensuring protection and preservation of seeds.