

Seedhead News



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Accomplishments:
*Native Seeds/SEARCH's
2016 Annual Report*

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Seed Sovereignty in
the Face of Climate
Change

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SPRING 2017 NUMBER 122

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The nonprofit mission of Native Seeds/SEARCH is to conserve and promote arid-adapted crop diversity to nourish a changing world. We work within the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico to strengthen regional food security.



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Front cover:

Conservation Center volunteers collecting seed of Tohono O'odham Yellow Watermelon.

Community Seed Grant recipient Native Health provided a traditional garden where fresh corn, peas, beans, and amaranth greens were harvested in early December (see story page 9).

From the Executive Director

2017 marks the beginning of our 35th year as a nonprofit. The mission of Native Seeds/SEARCH remains just as vital today as it was in 1983, because we continue to believe that culturally important, nutritious heirloom crops are deeply relevant to the challenges of modern farming.



You can tell a lot about the vitality of a farming system by the character of its seeds; the diverse seeds in the NS/S collection tell of a specific vision for agriculture—one that makes sense for our desert climate, that is socially inclusive and economically equitable, that respects indigenous intelligence and culture, and that is both resource-conserving and culture-preserving. Seeds saved from year to year in a bank are only one part of the picture: seeds are alive and need a living home; and so it is up to all of us to not only share and conserve seeds, but to actively work to re-build the elegant, sustainable farming systems in the Southwest that were, and can be again, their home.

I have worked at NS/S for nearly 5 years in different capacities, and am excited to now be taking on the role of the Executive Director. I am humbled and grateful to be a part of this amazing group of hard working, passionate people; and while we are not a large staff, we are blessed with some of the most dedicated

nonprofit members in the Southwest. I'm looking forward to getting to know you all better — all the members, donors, and volunteers who have steadfastly made our work possible for over three decades. Just this past year, your financial and volunteer support enabled us to:

- * Grow our Bulk Seed Exchange program to 9 farmers who produced seed for over 25 accessions, some of which will be returned to the seed bank, and the rest shared within the community
- * Hire and train new conservation staff
- * Continue to invest to modernize our farm equipment
- * Publish (and translate into Spanish) *Saving Seeds in the Southwest*, a first-of-its-kind guide
- * Distribute more free seed to underserved communities than ever before in our history, and provide outreach support to grant recipients to ensure the grants have a lasting impact

These are just a few of the many program accomplishments highlighted in this issue of *Seedhead News*. Each brings us closer to a future where seed sovereignty for each community in our region is a given, and where nourishing, arid-adapted crops live again on our farms and on our tables.

Our plan for our 35th year is to continue to do what we do best, which is to grow and share beautiful seeds. We'll also be laying the groundwork for more innovative programs that build regional capacity for on-farm crop adaptation, develop ethical markets for heirloom varieties, and train more young farmers in quality seed production. So stay tuned! And stay with us. You're important. With every contribution you make to this work, you can be proud that you are playing a critical part in creating a vibrant regional agriculture.

Joy Hought

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From left: Robyn Pailzote, Julius Badoni, and Laura Perez Olivera.

Meet our Conservation Farm Interns!

Last summer and fall, we welcomed three interns to the organization. The emphasis of this program is in training individuals who are positioned to implement what they learn from their internship experience within Native American communities in the Southwest. Based at our Conservation Farm in Patagonia, AZ, interns received 6 months of training and hands-on experience. They were vital members of the farm crew and engaged in all farm preparation work. Internships curriculum included readings and discussions about crop agronomics and conservation as well as indigenous knowledge and seed sovereignty components.

The 2016 internships were supported by funding from the Giles Mead Foundation and Lush Cosmetics. This funding also allowed each intern to obtain training outside of their work with NS/S including a week long Indigenous Sustainable Communities Design Course organized by the Traditional Native American Farmers Association in northern New Mexico.

Robyn Pailzote is a member of the White Mountain Apache Tribe. She came to NS/S with experience working with Ndée Bikíyaa, The Peoples' Farm, located in Whiteriver, Arizona. Robyn's dream is to one day have a seed bank within her community and become one with her homeland. Robyn shared "It is exciting to see what we have all harvested but now it's amazing to see all the seeds that came out of our hard work."

Julius Badoni is originally from Blue Gap/TahChee Arizona, located on the Navajo Nation. He has spent many years on grassroots organizing. He has been planting corn and squash since he can remember but is alarmed by the decrease of farming within his community and wants to assist his community to achieve food security/sovereignty. According to Julius "One of my goals for some time now has been to immerse myself in an environment that is conducive for learning about conservation of native seeds. Basically, I want to combine the western approach to conservation with community knowledge/experiences."

Laura Perez Olivera is a recent graduate from UC Berkeley where she studied genetics and plant biology. She is originally from the coast of Oaxaca and migrated with her family to the Central Valley of California when she was 7 years old where her parents worked as farm workers and gardeners. These experiences shaped her interests and desire to work in sustainable agriculture. According to Laura, "I hope to positively contribute to the learning experience of community members who are also dedicated to conserving seeds, improving agriculture, and securing food sovereignty for the future of indigenous Oaxacan communities in America."

The interns are central to the seed work we do and will be greatly missed now that their internship has ended. It has been a very successful growing season and internship. They all display impressive maturity and the ability to competently teach about seeds, about the connection between seed and food sovereignty, and about their work with NS/S. We are looking forward to maintaining relationships with these dynamic young people and we're excited to collaborate with them in the future.

Volunteer Salute!

Over the last year our gardens at the NS/S Conservation Center have undergone some major revamping and reorganization. The goals with the gardens are to demonstrate seed saving and aridlands gardening techniques while growing out seeds for the seed bank. We owe our garden progress to our committed and dedicated volunteers. New AmeriCorps VISTA member Michelle Langmaid will be heading up the coordination of the gardens. Contact Michelle at the Conservation Center and look for garden workdays and volunteer opportunities if you are interested in helping out and learning more about aridlands gardening and the agricultural history of Tucson.

Garden projects and activities include planting, weeding, watering, and harvesting. Tasks also include general grounds upkeep as we prefer to use good old fashioned hard work over chemical spraying to keep the weeds suppressed. Volunteer Tom Tladky is working on building a tool shed and an adjoining compost bin for sifting finished soil. So far this season, we have constructed waffle beds and dug out last year's corn remnants. While it may be a little late for wildflower planting, we attempted it nonetheless! Our volunteers from Rincon High School planted Firewheel and Arizona Poppies. In the coming weeks we'll start having more conversations about how we want to design the garden. Volunteer input on the design is welcome.

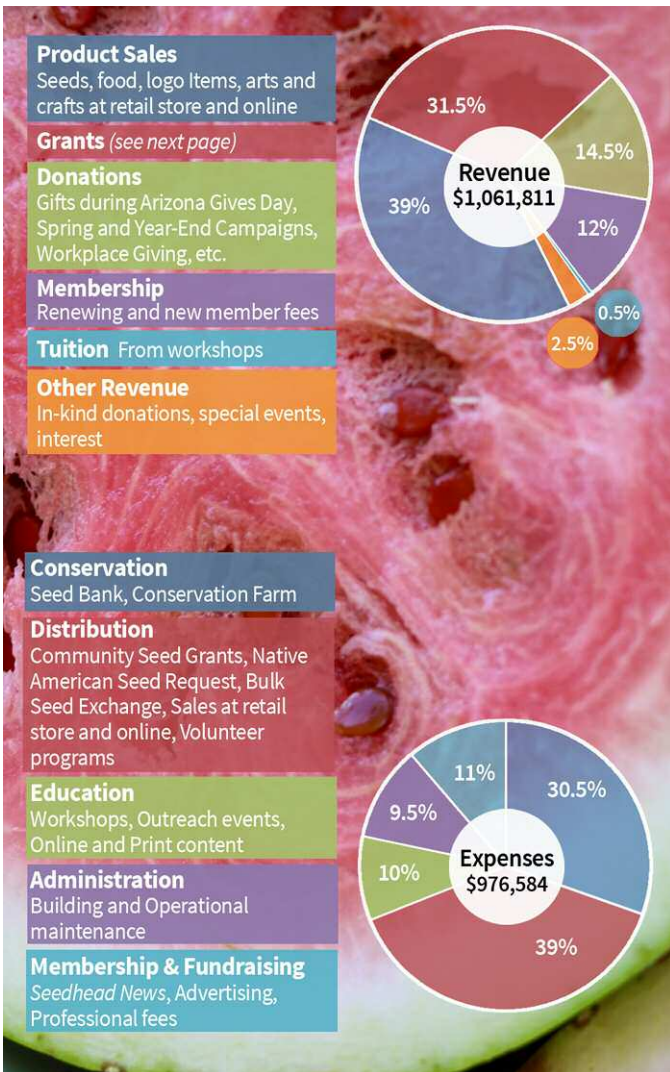
The Conservation Center gardens have been particularly helped by staff member Nancy Reid and regular Saturday volunteers Tom and Tatiana Tladky along with Alexandra Mele. All were drawn to Native Seeds/SEARCH out of an interest in preserving native plants, a love of vegetables, and a desire to work outside! Volunteers Tom and Tatiana learned about NS/S soon after they moved to Tucson from the Bay Area in 1988 and began volunteering once they were both retired. Alexandra learned about NS/S from a friend. Originally from North Carolina, she is a student of naturopathic medicine. She is also vegan and loves to cook, so veggies are very important to her!



Volunteers Tom and Tatiana constructing Zuni waffle-style garden beds. The waffle design helps retain water.

Program Accomplishments

(OCTOBER 1, 2015 — SEPTEMBER 30, 2016)



During the 2015/2016 fiscal year we had several strategic goals to focus on our organizational mission to provide food security through seed security. Seed security relies on **seed availability** (reliable and sufficient seed quantities), **seed access** (affordability), and **seed use** (based on knowledge). This past fiscal year we targeted each of these needs in the Southwest region by increasing the availability of arid-adapted, regionally-appropriate seeds; expanding and strengthening Native Seeds/SEARCH's existing programs that provide low-cost seed access; and enhancing our education and outreach efforts to further support regional capacity for climate-appropriate agriculture and seed security. We also continued our core work of crop conservation and maintaining our seed bank collection.

Our goals were to:

- * Increase and diversify the participants in our Seed Access Programs (Native American Seed Request, Community Seed Grant, and Bulk Seed Exchange).
- * Present and develop educational content targeted to backyard gardeners and seed savers, K-12 Educators, Native Americans, Spanish speakers, and those interested in creating or using Seed Banks and Libraries.
- * Provide free educational programs for Seed Access Program participants.
- * Focus on increasing seed production to supply diverse varieties and bulk quantities through our Seed Access Programs.
- * Provide seed conservation training via paid internships.

This page, from top: Yoeme Purple String Bean and Navajo Red Seeded Watermelon.





This page, from left: Mayo Colima Cowpea and Apache Red Sorghum. Below: Yoeme Kama Squash.

We were generously supported in this work through membership, individual donations, product purchases as well as several institutional grants. Specifically, we would like to acknowledge the following:

The **Robert Rauschenberg Foundation Climate Change Solutions Fund** awarded \$75,000 over two years to enable NS/S to provide much-needed outreach and educational support to recipients of our Native American Free Seed, Community Seed Grants, and Bulk Seed Exchange growers. Outreach events were produced collaboratively with many partners, and have reached participants in Arizona and New Mexico. The grant also supports our partnership with Seed Broadcast, who have produced photography and essays on the topic of climate change and seed sovereignty in vulnerable communities (see story on page 9).



The **Punch Woods Endowment**, administered by the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona, award for \$2,900 in support of our collaborative Spanish-language course held Spring 2015 and translation of educational materials including a seed saving manual coming in Spring 2017.

The **Gila River Indian Community State-Shared Revenue Program** awarded a \$200,000 grant over 2 years that supports our educational programs and seed production to supply seed access programs. With funds from this grant we supported educational workshops and curriculum development, produced and printed *Saving Seeds in the Southwest* seed saving manual, outreach and recruitment for seed access programs, and invested in seed

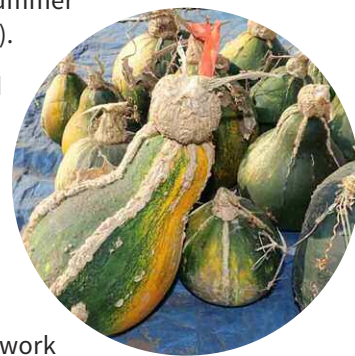
production. Participants in our seed access programs were offered attendance at NS/S hosted workshops at no charge because of this funding.

The **Clif Bar Family Foundation** awarded \$8000 to support educational programming.

An award of \$50,000 from the **Lillian Goldman Foundation** was used to increase seed growout capacity through farm equipment and supply purchases including a rotary tiller, riding mower, and general operating costs.

Half of the 2 year \$50,000 grant from the **Giles W. and Elise G. Mead Foundation** and a \$48,930 award from **Lush Cosmetics** funded three 6-month paid internships located at the Conservation Farm over the summer and fall of 2016 (see story on page 3).

The **Gardeners of Tucson** provided \$2,000 for equipment and supplies for our gardens at the Conservation Center which grow seed for our seed bank as well as demonstrate aridlands gardening techniques.



And **YOU!** We could not do this work without the generous financial contributions of our members and supporters.





2,563

Members
supported our work this
past fiscal year

3,230

Volunteer Hours
were logged by
individuals

Membership & Volunteers

98

Individual Volunteers
donated their time at the
Conservation Center processing
seeds, packaging orders, working
in the garden or assisting with
administrative tasks

3

Conservation Farm Interns
see story on page 3



415

People participated in
educational programs at NS/S
and with community
partners

250

Scholarships were provided
to Community Seed Grant and
Native American Free Seed
participants to attend
NS/S events

Looking Ahead to 2017

Increase capacity to grow seeds at our Conservation Farm.

Some funding secured to acquire new equipment. Our wish list includes ca. \$80,000 for irrigation upgrades and \$105,000 for Almaco Combine to increase grain and bean production.

Focus on continuation of viability testing of seed bank samples, cataloging samples, and upgrading packaging for increased security.

Funding necessary for part-time Conservation Assistant (\$20,000). Is currently completed with volunteer assistance.

Hire 3 Interns to work at the Conservation Farm and provide them with training opportunities.

Funding has only been secured for 1 internship position. An additional \$50,000 needed.

Expand our on-line educational offerings through blog posts and videos.

Partial funding secured for part-time Education Coordinator. Additional \$20,000 for full-time position.

Education & Outreach

25 Outreach Events & Public Talks including the Celebration of Seeds on the Hopi Reservation, the Harvest Celebration at White Mountain Apache, San Ysidro Festival in Tucson, Arizona Herb Society, and the Food, Faith, and Climate Forum at the University of Arizona

8 Educational Workshops were offered at NS/S including Teaching with Seeds for K-12 Educators, 2-Day Introduction to Seed Saving, Olla Building, introductions to Seed Banking and Seed Libraries, and Conservation Farm Field Day

14 Blog Posts written and shared including "How To Guides" on growing heritage wheat, 3 sisters gardening, olla irrigation, and saving watermelon seeds

2 Educational Programs in New Mexico were offered in conjunction with the Traditional Native American Farmers Association, Pueblo of Tesuque, Pueblo of Acoma, Southwest Conservation Corps, and SeedBroadcast

1 Publication of *Saving Seeds in the Southwest*, a 70+ page seed saving guide focused on crops, techniques, and traditions specific to our region. A Spanish translation will be released in 2017

15 Educational Programs featuring NS/S were hosted by community partners including the Pima County and Phoenix Public Libraries, Changemaker High School in Tucson, Native Health in the Phoenix, STEAMazing Institute, the Food Sovereignty Summit hosted by Alianza Indigena Sin Fronteras in Tucson, and a Heritage Seed Production and Cooperative Models at a gathering at San Xavier Food Coop in Tucson



35,561

Seed Packets Distributed
plus another 200 lbs of
bulk seed

555

Native American Seed
Requests Fulfilled

123

Community Seed Grants
Awarded

Distribution

100

Different Tribes/Native
Identities Represented
through Native American Seed
Request, from 19 U.S. states

9

Bulk Seed Exchange
participants were provided with
seed for 25 different varieties

68

People Checked Out Seeds
from the NS/S Seed Library and 37
seed varieties were donated

In the coming year, we will continue our vital seed conservation work and continue our seed access, education, and conservation programs. We have several specific goals and initiatives:

Increase and diversify participation in Native American Seed Request and Community Seed Grant Programs.

Funding needed for cost of seeds donated and mailing (ca. \$15,000). Funds exist for outreach and advertising of programs and program assessments.

Host educational workshops and continue to provide free educational opportunities with community partners.

Funding secured and workshops scheduled! Full scholarships available for Seed Program participants.

Expand our education and outreach outside of the Tucson area.

Funding secured for workshops in Northern New Mexico, rural Southern Arizona, and the Phoenix area.

Provide educational opportunities in Spanish.

Funding secured for translation of Saving Seeds in the Southwest and additional educational content. Funding needed to produce Spanish language video content and offer in-person workshops (ca. \$10,000).

Document agronomic characteristics of seed bank collection to increase use by farmers and backyard gardeners.

Ca. \$20,000 of funding needed. Several grant proposals pending for field rugged tablet computers and personnel.

Expand and improve demonstration gardens at the Conservation Center.

Funding secured for infrastructure, interpretive signage, and personnel from the Southwestern Foundation for Education and Historical Preservation. Seeking funding or donation of small greenhouse.

Volunteers needed to assist with Conservation Center gardens, seed processing and packaging.

Integrate member/donor/customer data to improve efficiency.

Funding needed for software, training, and IT specialist.

This page, from top: Tarahumara Frijol Estaca Runner Bean and Zuni Bean.



76

Seed Accessions Grown
at the Conservation Farm
and Center

2500

Sq. Footage of Greenhouse
added to produce seedlings
and isolate crops for seed
production

Conservation

140

lbs of Tohono O'odham U'us Mu:n Cowpea
produced in summer 2016 along with over 100 lbs each of
Pinacate Tepary and Yoeme Purple String Beans

536

Accessions Publicly Available
from the Seed Bank Collection containing
over 1,900 accessions

1,298

Germination Tests Performed
to monitor the viability of the collection

7

Seed Bank Collection Varieties Introduced
to public including Chamisal Quelites and Rio Grande
Red Seeded Watermelon

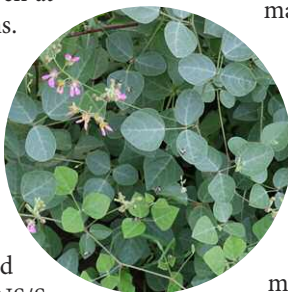


Collection Spotlight: *Wild Cocolmea Bean*

by Sheryl Joy, Collections Curator

A beautiful vine with rounded blue-green leaves and delicate purple flowers graced the interior of one of the isolation tents at the Conservation Farm last summer. Eventually the flowers were replaced by wide, flat, pods that the sun shone through to reveal small seeds forming. By late in the season these pods had turned to plump, beige catapults. Our farm staff had to take care in harvesting, because the pods could spring open at the lightest touch, flinging fat mottled beans in all directions. This adaptation (called *dehiscing*) increases seed survival rates in the wild but makes seed harvesting more difficult.

This was no common bean. The Wild Cocolmea bean, *Phaseolus maculatus*, is a perennial trailing vine that grows wild above 5000 feet in northern Mexico, Arizona, and Southwest New Mexico. The seeds grown in summer 2016 came from one of 17 accessions of *P. maculatus* in the NS/S seed bank collection. This accession was originally collected by NS/S founders Barney Burns and Mahina Dress near a shrine site in Northwestern Chihuahua, Mexico in Tarahumara (Rarámuri) country. Drees and Burns visited this site several times over the years and saw a “mother plant” hanging over a canyon wall there, spreading seeds in the area. On their last visit they noted that the roots of the mother plant had



washed out of the canyon wall and the continuation of this wild treasure was in danger.

Wild Cocolmea was used extensively within and beyond the region since ancient times. The beans can be used as food, both green and dried, but also as medicine, in fermentation, and as forage. The Tarahumara make a glue from parts of the plant to mend gourd containers. This bean is a gene source for disease resistance in lima beans.

Native Seeds/SEARCH conserves 185 accessions of crop wild relatives like the Wild Cocolmea bean. Though often overlooked, many of these wild seeds have untold value as cultural and historical resources and also as genetic resources to help maintain the health of domesticated crop varieties. Our harvest this year produced only enough seed to make it available for NS/S members and Native American seed requests. This seed has not been available to the public since the late 1980s, so we are especially pleased that we can offer it now even in limited quantities. Your continued support makes it possible for us to increase the quantities of rare ethnobotanical treasures.

Celebrating the Desert's Bounty: *Arid Abundance Potlucks* by Chad Borseth, Retail Manager



With Tucson's recent designation as a UNESCO World City of Gastronomy, we get a lot of questions as to what that means. Some assume it is related to gourmet restaurant scene, but it is really so much more than that. The best way to describe a city of gastronomy is a city with great taste of place, with strong local food traditions and yet welcoming of contemporary fusions of flavors and culture.

In 2016 we started a monthly series of community potluck dinners. The goal was to demystify many of our unique desert foods and celebrate our recent UNESCO honor. We call our potluck series Arid

Abundance because there truly is an abundance of delicious and healthy foods that grow in the Sonoran desert. Every month we focus on a different edible food that either grows wild or is commonly cultivated in our arid climate. Last year we featured such desert delicacies as cholla buds, mesquite beans, and verdolagas (purslane). Popular dishes included a verdolagas potato salad, mesquite cornbread, and chiltepin cheese spread. Information is presented on how to identify, cultivate, harvest, and use the featured ingredient. Attendees are encouraged to bring dishes with desert ingredients or produce from their home garden. Recipe sharing is encouraged!

Above: Chad presents cholla buds with prickly pear nectar and balsamic vinegar. See back cover for more information on our upcoming potlucks and more events!



Community Seed Grant Highlights

by Melissa Kruse-Peebles, Education Coordinator. Photos courtesy Native Health.

During 2016, NS/S awarded 123 Community Seed Grants, distributing over 2,600 packets of seeds! The Seed Grant program serves as an integral part of our conservation work by encouraging use of the seeds we steward and local seed saving.

While seeds were distributed to numerous types of projects, most serve schools or other youth programs. For example, recipient **Northern Youth Project** in Abiquiu, New Mexico, hosts an annual salsa challenge to showcase ingredients grown while empowering local youth by reviving our connections with the Earth. Camilla Johnson, School Garden Instructor for **Quail Run Elementary** in Marana, Arizona attended a Basics of Seed Saving workshop. She said “All of this would not be possible without your seed grants, and scholarship opportunities for teachers to attend classes.” **Manzo Elementary** in Tucson is saving seeds from their grant and using in their gardens as well as sharing with **Tucson High Magnet School** and **San Simon School** on the Tohono O’odham Nation. Each seed donated has the power to touch many lives.

A project near and dear to me was the Traditional Garden maintained by **Native Health** within the **PHX Renews** community garden on Central and Indian School in mid-town Phoenix. The garden is within the site of the former Phoenix Indian School. It was great to see the area, identified with historical trauma of the boarding school era and a symbol of abandoned urban cores, thriving with agricultural fields for indigenous and non-indigenous projects. We harvested fresh corn, peas, beans, and amaranth greens in early December as part of Native Health’s monthly *Read it and Eat* program that combines family story time with healthy eating.

Unfortunately the Traditional Garden and the entire PHX Renews project had to close the site on Indian School. Long story short, the project had temporary use rights from a private developer who owned the land. In February 2017 the developer settled a lawsuit and the land reverted ownership back to the Department of Interior. While it is unlikely that the land will be developed any time soon, the current administration has not yet granted the project access to continue the gardens. All projects on the 15-acre site have been forced out. New, smaller project areas have been identified and are in transition. This is an example that many face when trying to grow food and community — a lack of land access. We will continue to support **Native Health** and other projects as they find new homes.

A full list of Community Seed Grant awardees during the 2016 fiscal year can be found on our website. Applications for the Community Seed Grant Program are accepted each year in January, May, and September. Details and applications can be found on our website at: nativeseeds.org/resources/communityseedgrants.



Seed Sovereignty in the Face of Climate Change

With support from the **Robert Rauschenberg Foundation** last year we began a partnership with **SeedBroadcast**, a collaborative non-profit that explores bioregional agri-Culture and seed action through collective inquiries and hands-on creative practices. The purpose of the collaboration is to work with farmers across New Mexico to explore bioregional seeds and climate appropriate agriculture. NS/S provided 2 separate Growers’ Gatherings and Farmers’ Field day education events in Spring 2016 in collaboration with the Traditional Native American Farmers Association, Pueblo of Tesuque, Pueblo of Acoma, and the Southwest Conservation Corps. The events included a Seed Story workshop from **SeedBroadcast**.

As part of the larger project, **SeedBroadcast** is working with four farmers who attended the workshops to share their stories about agri-Culture in a changing climate through photo essays and audio interviews. They have visited the farmers to learn about what they do, why they do it, and how these actions affect their communities. Through the project they wanted to bear witness to the real-time challenges each of these farmers face in a changing and extreme climate. Farmers participation in the project include Larry Emerson of Tse Daa K’aan Lifelong Learning Community, Aaron Lowden and the Southwest Conservation Corps Acoma Ancestral Lands Program, Beata Tsosie-Peña of the Española Healing Food Oasis, and Ron Boyd of Mer-Girl Gardens.

Photographs and interviews are shared in the *Agri-Culture Journal*, a bi-annual print publication produced by **SeedBroadcast**. Copies are available at **Native Seeds/SEARCH**. We hope to find resources for an additional publication or exhibition to share these stories of cultivating seed, food, and community resiliency to a wider audience.

More information about the project, including recorded seed stories from the Growers’ Gatherings, can be found at seedbroadcast.org and nativeseeds.org.



Left to right. Back: Michelle, Nicholas, Melissa, Sheryl, and Joy. Front: Laura, Lahsha, Carly, Betsy, Liz, and Sheri.



Ben (left) and Morgan (right).



From left : Melissa, Laura, Nancy, and Chad.

We envision the Greater Southwest as a place where farms and gardens, kitchens and tables, stores and restaurants, are brimming with the full diversity of aridlands-adapted heirloom crops; people are keeping the unique seeds and agricultural heritage alive; and the crops, in turn, are nourishing humankind.

Conservation Center Tucson
520.622.0830

ADMINISTRATION & DEVELOPMENT

Executive Director **Joy Hought**
Finance & Operations Manager **Sheri Morgan**
Accounting Assistant **Wendi Mogul**
Membership Coordinator & Administrative Assistant **Lahsha Brown**

CONSERVATION & COLLECTIONS

Conservation Program Manager
Nicholas Garber
Collections Curator **Sheryl Joy**

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Education Coordinator
Melissa Kruse-Peebles

AMERICORPS VISTA MEMBERS

Garden and Volunteer Coordinator
Michelle Langmaid
Program and Outreach Coordinator
Carly Herndon

DISTRIBUTION

Distribution Manager **Laura Jones**
Fulfillment Coordinator **Betsy Armstrong**
Distribution Coordinator **Liz Fairchild**

Conservation Farm Patagonia
520.394.0227

Farm Manager **Morgan Parsons**
Farm Operations Technician
Ben Gonzales

Retail Store 3061 N. Campbell, Tucson
520.622.5561

Retail Manager **Chad Borseth**
Retail Associates **Nancy Reid,**
Melissa Barrow, and Laura Neff

Your Support Makes a Difference

Essential partners of Native Seeds/ SEARCH are our funders — generous foundations and individuals who share this vision. We offer donors the following options for helping to further our important work. Make a gift using our convenient and secure website — nativeseeds.org/support — or call 520.622.0830 ext. 100.

Direct Donation Gifts can be made for unrestricted support or for a specific purpose.

Memorial Giving Celebrate the lives and achievements of special individuals by making gifts in their honor.

Workplace Giving Help sustain NS/S through the Combined Federal Campaign, your local United Way, and other workplace campaigns. Many companies offer an Employee Matching Gift Program where they will match your contributions even after you're retired. Check with your employer for more information.

Legacy Giving Bequests and life income gifts help ensure food security for future generations. Legal Counsel should be consulted prior to creating or amending any Will.

If you have questions or would like to support NS/S in any of these ways, please call us at 520.622.830 or email us: donate@nativeseeds.org. Thank you for your support!

Did you know our Education Coordinator is located in Phoenix? We will be expanding our education and outreach opportunities in the Phoenix area. If you have any opportunities, please contact Melissa at: mpeebles@nativeseeds.org. Visit our website for upcoming events.



Conservation Program Manager Nicholas Garber discusses weeds with Distribution Coordinator Liz Fairchild.



Michelle and Carly planting at the Conservation Farm.

News & Notes

We are excited to welcome Joy Hought as our Executive Director as well as Nicholas Garber, Michelle Langmaid, and Carly Herndon.

Nicholas Garber has joined the NS/S team as the Conservation Program Manager. A lifelong resident of Arizona, Nicholas is committed to the history, cultures, ecology, and food security of our region. He received his PhD in Plant Pathology from the University of Arizona in 2013. His research examined biological control of aflatoxin contamination among corn and cotton and he worked intimately with farmers in Arizona and Texas. He has also examined aflatoxins in mesquite pods in Southern Arizona leading to new standards in wild harvesting. Nicholas will be directing our Conservation program and is responsible for the Seed Bank Collection as well as working with growers around its use.

Michelle Langmaid is serving as our Garden and Volunteer Coordinator for one year through the AmeriCorps VISTA program. Originally from Vermont, Michelle has always been involved in agricultural projects of some sort (her mother went into labor with me halfway through evening milking). New to Tucson, she is very happy to be a part of this community and learn more about growing food in arid lands. Michelle studied Environmental Science with a focus on how agriculture impacts natural resources at the University of Vermont. Michelle will be working in our gardens at the Conservation Center in Tucson and with volunteers.

Carly Herndon is joining our team as an Outreach and Program Coordinator for one year under the AmeriCorps VISTA program. She is a graduate from the University of Arizona in Environmental Science and is currently working on her masters in Geographic Information Systems Technology (GIST). Carly will use these new skills as she works on program assessments of our seed distribution programs. Carly has been living in Tucson for about four years and is originally from North Carolina. You can find Carly out and about in our community as she provides outreach about NS/S programs.

NS/S bids farewell to **Raymond Antone** who is starting as a Food Production Assistant with San Xavier Food Coop. Raymond began with NS/S as a Conservation Intern in 2015 and continued working on the NS/S Farm through the 2016 internship season to provide leadership and training to the new interns. Raymond got his start farming in his grandmother's garden on the San Xavier Reservation. We are delighted to hear that he is returning to work there and hope to continue our valuable relationship both with Raymond and the San Xavier Food Coop. Thank you, Raymond, for all you've done and continue to do!

In Memoriam

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of former NS/S staff member **Linda Parker**. Linda started assisting NS/S as a volunteer since almost the very beginning. She was an intern and eventually became Seed Bank Curator. She was involved in all aspects of seed conservation including curation, storage, mailing, and planning growouts. Linda and her husband Dan Parker did our first farm-scale seed growout for one summer on donated farmland in Eden, Arizona long before NS/S acquired the Conservation Farm in Patagonia in 1997. We are forever grateful for her contributions.

Happy Fifth Anniversary!

In January 2012, Native Seeds/SEARCH started the first seed library in Arizona. Seed libraries are a global movement to increase access to locally adapted seed diversity and now can be found in dozens of communities across the Southwest.

The NS/S Seed Library, located in our Retail Store in Tucson, offers locally grown seeds donated from other users to “check out” and plant. Instead of returning the same seeds, as you would with a book in a traditional library, we ask that the grower save seeds from their garden harvest and return a portion to the library to continue the cycle of saving and sharing.



Through our educational offerings and Community Seed Grant programs, we have supported several seed libraries in our region including libraries in Phoenix, Albuquerque, Flagstaff, and rural communities throughout Arizona, Colorado, and New Mexico. Visit our website to learn more about where to find seed libraries in your area and how to save your own seeds.



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Permit # 2157

Save the Date



Arid Abundance Community Potlucks

NS/S Conservation Center, 3584 E. River Road in Tucson, 4–6pm

One Saturday every month we focus on a different food plant that either grows wild or is commonly cultivated in our arid climate. We encourage attendees to bring dishes with Sonoran ingredients, every potluck is an educational opportunity to learn how to identify, cultivate, harvest, and use the many food plants that are present throughout the local landscape. Seed Bank and Garden tours during the event. Free event, all ages welcome.

April 22: Edible desert flowers | **May TBD:** Palo Verde/ Ironwood
June TBD: Nopales (Prickly Pear pads) | **July TBD:** Mesquite beans

April 14–16 | Spring Plant Sale

NS/S Retail Store, 3061 N. Campbell Ave., Tucson

Spring vegetable starts, heritage fruit trees, grapevines, and herbs.

May 12–14 | Mother's Day Plant Sale

Native Seeds/SEARCH Retail Store, 3061 N. Campbell Ave., Tucson

Native wildflowers, shrubs, and cacti.

June 17 | Preparing for Monsoon Planting Workshop

Phoenix Public Market, 721 N Central Avenue (at McKinley), 9am–12pm

Free event! Join NS/S and learn more information about monsoon season gardening. Seeds and garden supplies will be available for sale during and after the workshop.

June 24 | Conservation Farm 20th Anniversary Celebration!

NS/S Conservation Farm, 45 San Antonio Rd., Patagonia

Join us for fun day at the farm. Farm tours, activities, and celebration for all ages.