

**Seed Savers Exchange** (SSE) was founded in 1975 by Kent Whealy and Diane Ott Whealy as a network of gardeners interested in preserving and sharing heirloom varieties. As the organization grew, individuals began to donate their treasured seeds for preservation, resulting in a collection of over 20,000 open-pollinated varieties. **With culturally diverse stewardship histories, this open-access collection represents America's rich garden heritage.**

Today, we recognize the value of the stories and relationships behind the seeds in protecting this diversity as much as we value the seeds themselves.

As part of the revitalization of Indigenous native systems, many native communities are also developing vibrant seed initiatives to increase access to cultural and traditional healthy foods.

**In 2017, Rowen White, SSE board chair, approached Seed Savers Exchange to participate in the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network Seed Rematriation program. Seed rematriation addresses the desire for Indigenous communities to actively reclaim their ancestral seeds and traditions.** Seed Savers Exchange supports Indigenous communities by rematriating seeds in their collection back to their cultures of origin, with which they can practice sustainable, sovereign, and environmentally and socially responsible agriculture.



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*Seed Savers Exchange stewards America's culturally diverse and endangered garden and food crop legacy for present and future generations. We educate and connect people through collecting, regenerating, and sharing heirloom seeds, plants, and stories.*

Seed Savers Exchange is a 501c3 nonprofit organization, and contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.



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## REMATRIATION: BRINGING SEEDS HOME



**Seed Savers**  
EXCHANGE



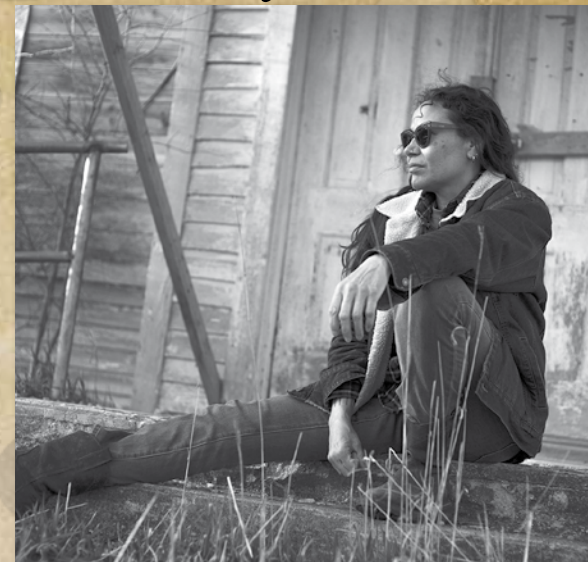
# Becky Webster



# Jessika Greendeer



# Shelley Buffalo



**Ukwakhwa: Tsinu Niyukwayay<sup>^</sup>thoslu**, meaning “*Our food: Where we plant things*,” is the name an Oneida faithkeeper chose for the 10-acre property Steven and Becky Webster purchased in 2017. Here on the Oneida Reservation in Wisconsin, the Websters grow traditional, heirloom foods with an emphasis on Haudenosaunee corn, beans, and squash. Ukwakhwa reflects the philosophy that every time an Indigenous person plants a seed, it is an act of resistance and an assertion of sovereignty. The Websters see this land as a place to host events for the community to learn about planting, growing, harvesting, seed keeping, food preparation, and food storage, as well as making traditional tools and crafts.

**Jessika Greendeer**, seed keeper and farm manager at Dream of Wild Health in Hugo, Minnesota, is a Ho-Chunk Nation tribal member from Baraboo, Wisconsin, and a member of the Deer Clan. Jessika’s lifework is growing and protecting our seed relatives—to regenerate the soils of our Earth—and inspiring future seed keepers. Jessika has worked as the agricultural division manager for her nation and previously served as a garden mentor within her nation’s organic community gardens. She is a U.S. Army combat veteran and completed a veteran-to-farmer training program at the Rodale Institute in Pennsylvania.

**Shelley Buffalo** is food sovereignty coordinator for the Meskwaki Settlement near Tama, Iowa. She is passionate about restoring ancestral foods and the traditional recipes that go with them. Shelley was born near the Settlement and later attended Iowa State University. After moving back to the Settlement, Shelley returned first to Ames for a time, then moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where she connected with its local food movement. Once again, the Meskwaki Settlement called to Shelley, and in her current work she hopes to reverse the influence of government commodities on Indigenous diets and to revive the stories of resilience which guide the Meskwaki lifeway.

## BECKY’S VARIETIES

**Beans:** Tonawanda, Seneca; Six Nation, Iroquois; Seneca Stripe; Hyote; Cornplanter Purple; Pinto Ga Ga Hut; Seneca Indian Cornfield

**Melon:** Seneca Bender

**Squash:** Seneca

**Tobacco:** Iroquois



*Seneca Indian Cornfield*

## JESSIKA’S VARIETIES

**Beans:** Chippewa Indian

**Corn:** Mandan Red Sweet; Bear Island Chippewa; Osage Brown



*Osage Brown*

## SHELLEY’S VARIETIES

**Beans:** Tonawanda, Seneca; Shield Algonquin; Squaw Woman’s Bunch Bean; Potawatomi

**Lima:** Potawatomi

**Watermelon:** Illinois



*Shield Algonquin*