



### Western SARE Program

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## STRONGER AG ON INDIAN LAND

### Program Overview

This project addresses the educational needs of agricultural professionals working with American Indian producers and governments in a four-state region, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon and Washington. The curriculum seeks to address issues and needs unique to agriculture professionals working with American Indian producers and governments on reservations. It features analyses of primary and secondary data.

Research from 2005 through 2007 included face-to-face interviews and online and mail surveys with participating reservations designed for American Indian partici-

pants and agriculture professionals working on reservations. The surveys featured identical questions to compare perceived quality of life indicators on Indian reservations. Questions enabled comparison and contrast of attitudes toward adoption of sustainable agriculture practices on reservations held by American Indian producers and agriculture professionals. Secondary data analysis included a historical review of federal Indian policies and the effects of policies of reservation quality of life.

Quality of life survey research (online and face-to-face) was extended through December 2007 to increase the number of participants. Data are currently being analyzed.

### Curriculum Development

#### Chapter One

#### American Indians of the Western Range: Columbia Plateau and Great Basin

The American Indians of the western range are tribes who reside in the area bordered on the west by the Sierra and Cascade mountains and on the east by the Rocky Mountains. This chapter introduces the curriculum, describing and honoring the early cultures of American Indian people who have lived in this region for generations. It outlines the educational purpose and value of the curriculum, identifies its target audience and identifies overall learning objectives. It also describes the four-state area targeted in the curriculum, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon and

Washington and highlights selected American Indian reservations located within the four-state area.

### Chapter Two

#### Federal Indian Policy: A Brief Overview

An understanding of contemporary quality of life issues on American Indian reservations in the United States requires at least a rudimentary awareness of the history of federal Indian policy. This chapter reviews policies spanning two centuries, beginning with the Trade and Intercourse policy era and concluding with the Self-Determination policy era. The roles of the Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny in shaping these policies are considered. Recent federal Indian policies are presented reflecting shifting sociopolitical views of federal policy makers and the self-determination efforts of American Indians.

### Chapter Three

#### American Indian Land Tenure

The federal government enacted several policies in the 1800s to motivate development and settlement of the Western United States. One policy, in particular, the General Allotment Act (1887), was intended to settle American Indian peoples who had historically been semi-nomadic. It would dramatically influence American Indian land tenure for generations.

This chapter discusses the effects of this policy on American Indian land tenure, defining and distinguishing various

### Professional Development

#### Program Grant

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Title: Strengthening Sustainable Agriculture Programming with American Indian Producers in the West

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*Western SARE, a USDA organization, funds grants for research and education that develop or promote some aspect of agricultural sustainability, which embraces*

- *profitable farms and ranches*
- *a healthy environment*
- *strong families and communities.*

*The Western Region, one of four SARE regions nationwide, is administered through Utah State University.*

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Indian land tenure types that exist today and considering the challenges that complex Indian land tenure presents to achieving economically efficient and sustainable natural resource management decisions and actions.

### **Chapter Four** **Agriculture Irrigation and Water Rights**

Agriculture professionals who desire to work on reservation lands must have a basic understanding of American Indian water rights. This chapter provides an overview of agriculture irrigation projects and water rights as they have evolved on reservation lands. Water rights allocation issues on reservation lands are as complicated as land tenure issues. This chapter attempts to explain the complexities of these issues and raise awareness of the unique considerations concerning fee structures of BIA irrigation systems, water right settlements and the future demand for water. The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Reservation and the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe and Walker River Paiute Tribe are highlighted.

### **Chapter Five** **The Structure of Tribal Government and the Federal Relationship**

The history of American Indians is unique in that Indian people over the last hundreds of years have been influenced by non-Indian social, economic and political influences. Historians have provided several accounts about the identity of the American Indian beginning with a kinship group and/or clan untouched by civilization and resulting into a 21st Century American Indian Tribe. (Goldberg-Ambrose, 1994)

This chapter will explore two key concepts that characterize American Indians relationship with the federal government, explaining the char-

acteristics of tribal governments and the relationships between the federal government and American Indians. The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation in Washington and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Tribe in Oregon are highlighted.

### **Chapter Six** **Self-Determination and Independence**

The history of American Indian Affairs is based on the idea that American Indians need to function and survive in modern civilization. It is only until recently that the culture, survival, ingenuity and independence of the American Indian has become an important part of federal American Indian policy. Federal Indian Affairs began by the concept of assimilating American Indians and placing the Indian people on specific reservations creating new group life expectations of federal administration interdependence (Goldberg-Ambrose, 1994). In 1975, after years of federal domination, the policy of Indian Affairs changed again in an effort to promote American Indian independence. The term to be discussed in this chapter and for this new era of Indian Affairs is "American Indian Self-Determination."

### **Chapter Seven** **Implementing Ag and Natural Resource Programs for American Indians**

Agriculture activities occur in many different ways on reservations. The photographic lens we choose when driving onto that reservation and working with the people that gives us perspectives. The complexities of land tenure designations on American Indian reservations have created additional layers of frustration when trying to get farm bill programs on the ground. This chapter provides exam-

ples and the perspectives when implementing agriculture and natural resource-related programs for American Indian agriculture producers and tribes. Key concepts of reframing problems into opportunities and there is more than one right answer are discussed. It is about implementing the appropriate programs to the reservation environment and the needs of the reservation. Specific examples are explained and the Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program is highlighted.

### **Chapter Eight** **Quality of Life on American Indian Reservations in Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington: Analyses of Perceptions**

This chapter presents the results of the analyses of primary data collected between 2005 and 2007 from American Indians living on reservations and agriculture professionals working on reservations in Idaho, Nevada, Oregon and Washington. The purpose is to provide insight into perceptual differences regarding quality of life issues on selected American Indian reservations within the western range.

Perceptions are compared between American Indians who live on reservations and agriculture professionals who work with American Indian producers and tribal officials on reservations. Similarities and differences are identified. Perceptual differences that may impede the efficacy of these professionals to work with American Indians on reservations are considered. Finally, this chapter explores strategies to improve the capacity for natural resource and agriculture professionals who work on reservations in order to strengthen sustainable agriculture practices on reservation lands.