



Indigenous Foodways Festival

2026 Annual
Impact Report



2026 Annual Impact Report

Prepared by
Edible New Mexico

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome

A Shared Vision Comes to Life

A message from the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture and Edible New Mexico about the partnership that launched the inaugural festival.

Overview

A Year of Impact

Highlights from the inaugural Indigenous Foodways Festival and the outcomes that will guide future growth.

01

Why We Gather

Food as culture, connection, and community.

02

Festival at a Glance

A snapshot of the inaugural festival through key numbers, programming, and participation.

03

Building Something Bigger

How a shared vision became a statewide collaboration.

04

Community in Motion

Who came, who participated, and how the festival created a sense of belonging.

05

Learning Through Food

Celebrating Indigenous knowledge through demonstrations, conversations, and shared experiences.

06

Investing in Indigenous Communities

How the festival generated cultural, economic, and community impact through intentional investment.

07

Growing the Audience

Building awareness through storytelling, partnerships, and strategic outreach.

08

Looking Forward

Building on what we learned and strengthening the foundation for future festivals.



A Shared Vision Comes to Life



MUSEUM OF
INDIAN ARTS + CULTURE

edible
NEW MEXICO

The inaugural Indigenous Foodways Festival was born from a shared belief: that Indigenous foodways deserve a place where they can be celebrated not only as culinary traditions, but as living expressions of culture, history, innovation, and community.

For many years, the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture envisioned creating a festival that centered Indigenous voices through food. That vision became reality through a partnership with Edible New Mexico and the generous support of the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department, sponsors, grant partners, and community collaborators. Together, we combined the Museum's longstanding relationships with Tribes, Nations, and Pueblos Edible New Mexico's expertise in food storytelling, event production, and statewide audience engagement. The result was something none of us could have accomplished alone.

The response to the inaugural festival affirmed the importance of this collaboration. More than 900 attendees gathered to learn from Indigenous chefs, farmers, artists, educators, and knowledge keepers representing more than 26 Native Nations. Beyond the attendance numbers, however, the festival created something even more meaningful: a space where presenters connected with one another, vendors built new relationships, families learned together, and visitors experienced Indigenous foodways through conversation, education, and shared meals.

We were especially encouraged by the diversity of the audience. The festival welcomed visitors from across New Mexico and neighboring states, attracted many first-time museum guests, and drew strong participation from young adults and families—audiences that are often difficult to engage through traditional museum programming. Support from the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department also helped expand access for Native attendees, reinforcing our shared commitment to creating an event that reflects and serves Indigenous communities.

This report documents the inaugural year of the Indigenous Foodways Festival while celebrating the partnerships, investments, and community that made it possible. More importantly, it establishes a foundation for the future. As planning begins for the next festival, we remain committed to deepening partnerships, expanding access, and continuing to create a space where Indigenous foodways—and the communities that sustain them—can thrive.

Thank you to every presenter, chef, artist, vendor, volunteer, sponsor, partner, and attendee who helped transform a long-held vision into an annual tradition.

Signed,
Museum of Indian Arts & Culture and Edible New Mexico



A Year of Impact

The inaugural Indigenous Foodways Festival demonstrated the power of food to bring people together through culture, education, and community. Presented through a partnership between the **Museum of Indian Arts & Culture** and **Edible New Mexico**, with support from the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department, the festival created a new platform for celebrating Indigenous foodways while investing directly in Indigenous chefs, artists, educators, farmers, and cultural practitioners.

Held on June 20, 2026, the festival welcomed **933 paid attendees**, representing more than **26 Native Nations** and drawing visitors from across New Mexico and the Southwest. Throughout the day, attendees experienced **27 educational sessions**, 11 cooking demonstrations, 7 panel discussions, hands-on workshops, a vibrant marketplace, and the **Indigenous Chefs' Tasting Experience**. More than a one-day event, the festival fostered meaningful opportunities for learning, relationship-building, and cultural exchange.

The festival also generated lasting impact beyond the event itself. Nearly **\$94,000 in combined public and private investment** supported educational programming, Indigenous presenter honoraria, local vendors, event operations, and community partnerships. An integrated marketing campaign introduced thousands of people to the festival, while post-event evaluation confirmed strong community response, with 96% of interviewed attendees reporting they felt represented by their community.

This report documents the inaugural year of the Indigenous Foodways Festival and establishes a foundation for its future. It celebrates the partnerships that made the festival possible, measures its impact, and identifies opportunities to strengthen an annual gathering that honors the richness, diversity, and resilience of Indigenous foodways.

2026 AT A GLANCE

933

Paid Attendees

26+

Native Nations
Represented

59

Vendors & Community
Organizations

61

Volunteers

\$31K

Invested in Indigenous
Presenter Honoraria

\$57K

Partner In-Kind
Contributions

96%

Felt Represented by
Their Community

99K

Social Media Views



WHY WE GATHER

Food is one of humanity's oldest forms of storytelling.

Through recipes, ingredients, seeds, harvesting practices, and shared meals, generations have passed forward knowledge, values, identity, and a deep connection to place. For Indigenous communities, foodways are living expressions of culture—connecting people to ancestors, lands, languages, and one another while continuing to evolve through innovation, creativity, and resilience.

The Indigenous Foodways Festival was established to celebrate these living traditions while providing a platform for Indigenous chefs, farmers, artists, educators, and knowledge keepers to share their expertise directly with the public. Through cooking demonstrations, panel discussions, hands-on workshops, storytelling, marketplace experiences, and shared meals, the festival invites visitors to engage with Indigenous foodways not as history alone, but as vibrant, contemporary cultures that continue to shape New Mexico and beyond.

Presented through a partnership between the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture and Edible New Mexico, the festival combines the Museum's commitment to preserving and interpreting Indigenous arts and cultures with Edible New Mexico's longstanding dedication to celebrating the people, traditions, and stories that define New Mexico's food landscape. Together, the two organizations created an experience that extends beyond a traditional food festival by centering education, cultural exchange, and community connection.

The inaugural Indigenous Foodways Festival welcomed attendees from across New Mexico and neighboring states to learn directly from Indigenous chefs, farmers, artists, scholars, and cultural practitioners representing more than twenty-four Native Nations. Throughout the day, visitors explored the relationships between food, history, ecology, creativity, and identity while discovering the diversity and innovation that define Indigenous foodways today.

The festival's success is measured not only by attendance or ticket sales, but by the relationships it fostered, the knowledge it shared, the economic opportunities it created, and the sense of community it inspired. From first-time museum visitors and young families to Tribal community members, culinary professionals, and lifelong supporters of Indigenous food traditions, the festival brought together people from many backgrounds around a common table.

This inaugural Annual Impact Report documents the collective effort that brought the Indigenous Foodways Festival to life. It celebrates the achievements of the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture, Edible New Mexico, Indigenous presenters, volunteers, vendors, sponsors, and community partners while establishing a benchmark for measuring the festival's continued cultural, educational, community, and economic impact in the years ahead. More than an evaluation of a single event, this report establishes a benchmark for measuring the festival's continued cultural, educational, community, and economic impact as it grows into an enduring annual tradition.

FESTIVAL AT A GLANCE

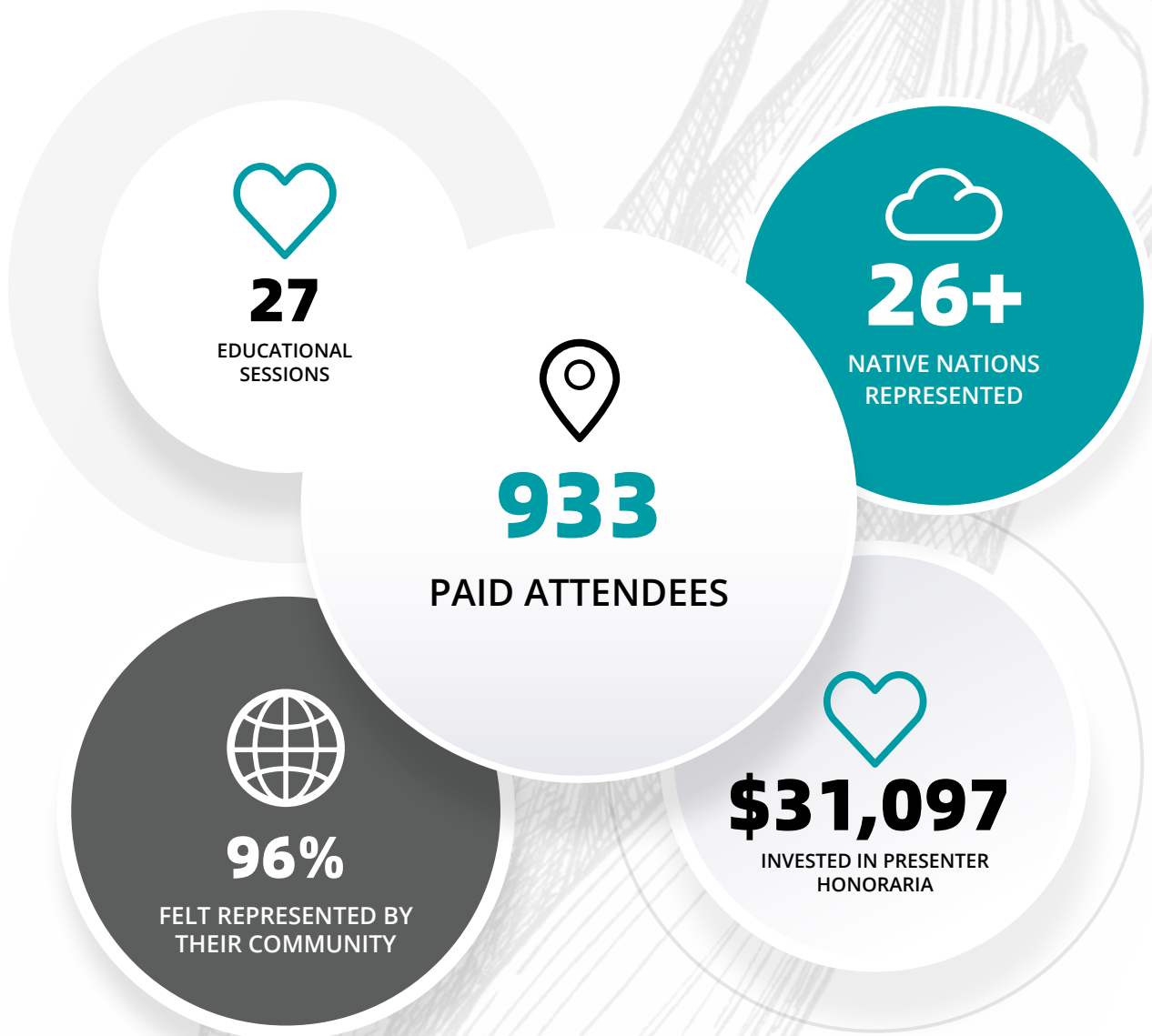
A snapshot of the inaugural Indigenous Foodways Festival.

On June 20, 2026, the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture and Edible New Mexico welcomed hundreds of attendees for a full day celebrating Indigenous foodways through education, storytelling, culinary traditions, and community gathering. The inaugural festival brought together Indigenous chefs, farmers, artists, educators, and cultural practitioners representing more than twenty-four Native Nations to share knowledge, strengthen connections, and celebrate the diversity and vitality of Indigenous food cultures.

From cooking demonstrations and hands-on workshops to panel discussions, a vibrant marketplace, and the Indigenous Chefs' Tasting Experience, the festival demonstrated that food is more than nourishment—it is history, identity, innovation, and community.



By the Numbers



Attendance & Community

933 Paid Attendees

1,000+ People engaged throughout the festival

26+ Native Nations Represented

61 Volunteers

59 Vendors & Community Organizations

27 Presenters, Chefs & Cultural Practitioners

Economic Impact

\$25,495 Ticket Revenue

\$31,097 Invested in Presenter Honoraria

\$93,490 Festival Operating Budget

\$57,064 Combined Partner In-Kind Investment



By the Numbers

The inaugural festival offered a full day of learning experiences celebrating Indigenous knowledge, culinary traditions, and community.

Programming

27

Educational Sessions

11 Cooking Demonstrations

7 Panel Discussions

5 Hands-on Learning
Experiences

402 Participants in the
Indigenous Chefs' Tasting
Experience

Audience

88%

New Mexico Attendees

28%

First-time Museum Programming
Participants

96%

Interviewed Attendees Felt
Represented by Their Community

Marketing & Audience Reach

99,816

Social Media Views

94,500

Newsletter Impressions

10,595

Website Visitors



***“This event made
it feel like such a
community that
brings art and food
together.”***

BUILDING SOMETHING BIGGER

The Indigenous Foodways Festival was envisioned as more than a one-day celebration.

From its earliest planning stages, the festival was designed to become an annual gathering that celebrates Indigenous foodways while creating lasting opportunities for education, cultural exchange, economic investment, and community connection.

Bringing that vision to life required a collaborative approach. Over the course of several months, the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture and Edible New Mexico worked together to develop programming, recruit presenters and vendors, coordinate logistics, build marketing campaigns, engage community partners, and create an experience that reflected the richness and diversity of Indigenous food cultures.

Every aspect of the festival—from educational programming and culinary demonstrations to volunteer coordination, branding, ticketing, and marketplace development—was intentionally designed to create meaningful interactions between Indigenous knowledge keepers and the public.

By festival day, those efforts had grown into a statewide collaboration involving dozens of organizations, businesses, chefs, educators, artists, and volunteers, all working toward a shared goal: creating an event where Indigenous voices, traditions, and innovation could be experienced through food.



A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

The success of the inaugural Indigenous Foodways Festival was made possible through a true co-production between the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture and Edible New Mexico. Each organization contributed distinct expertise, resources, and leadership that together created an experience neither could have accomplished alone.

Museum of Indian Arts & Culture

- Festival host and venue
- Institutional leadership
- Operations and logistics
- Staff coordination
- Facilities and collections context
- Event photography
- Hotel rooms for presenters
- Paid interns and staff support
- Experiential art activities
- \$33,529 in in-kind contributions

Edible New Mexico

- Festival co-production
- Brand development
- Programming development
- Marketing strategy
- Website and ticketing
- Editorial promotion
- Recruitment of approximately 80% of presenters, vendors, and volunteers
- Community partnerships
- \$23,535 in in-kind marketing and communications support



Together We Built

- 26+ Native Nations represented
- 27 educational sessions
- 59 vendors and community organizations
- 61 volunteers
- 933 attendees
- More than \$57,000 in combined in-kind investment



**Fall 2025**

Partnership established

Winter 2025–26

Programming and presenter recruitment

Spring 2026

Marketing campaign launches

April 2026

Festival website and social channels launch

May 2026

Programming Finalized

June 20, 2026

Inaugural Indigenous Foodways Festival

LAYING THE FOUNDATION

Building Community Partnerships

Festival planning began by building relationships with Indigenous chefs, Tribal communities, artists, educators, food producers, and cultural organizations. These partnerships shaped both the festival's programming and its broader vision, ensuring that Indigenous voices remained central throughout the planning process.

Curating Educational Experiences

Education was the foundation of the festival. Rather than centering entertainment alone, organizers developed a program of cooking demonstrations, panel discussions, workshops, storytelling, and hands-on learning experiences that invited visitors to engage directly with Indigenous knowledge holders.

Creating a Distinct Identity

A comprehensive branding and communications strategy established the festival as a recognizable new cultural event. Consistent messaging, visual identity, digital storytelling, and editorial promotion created awareness well before opening day and helped build anticipation across New Mexico.

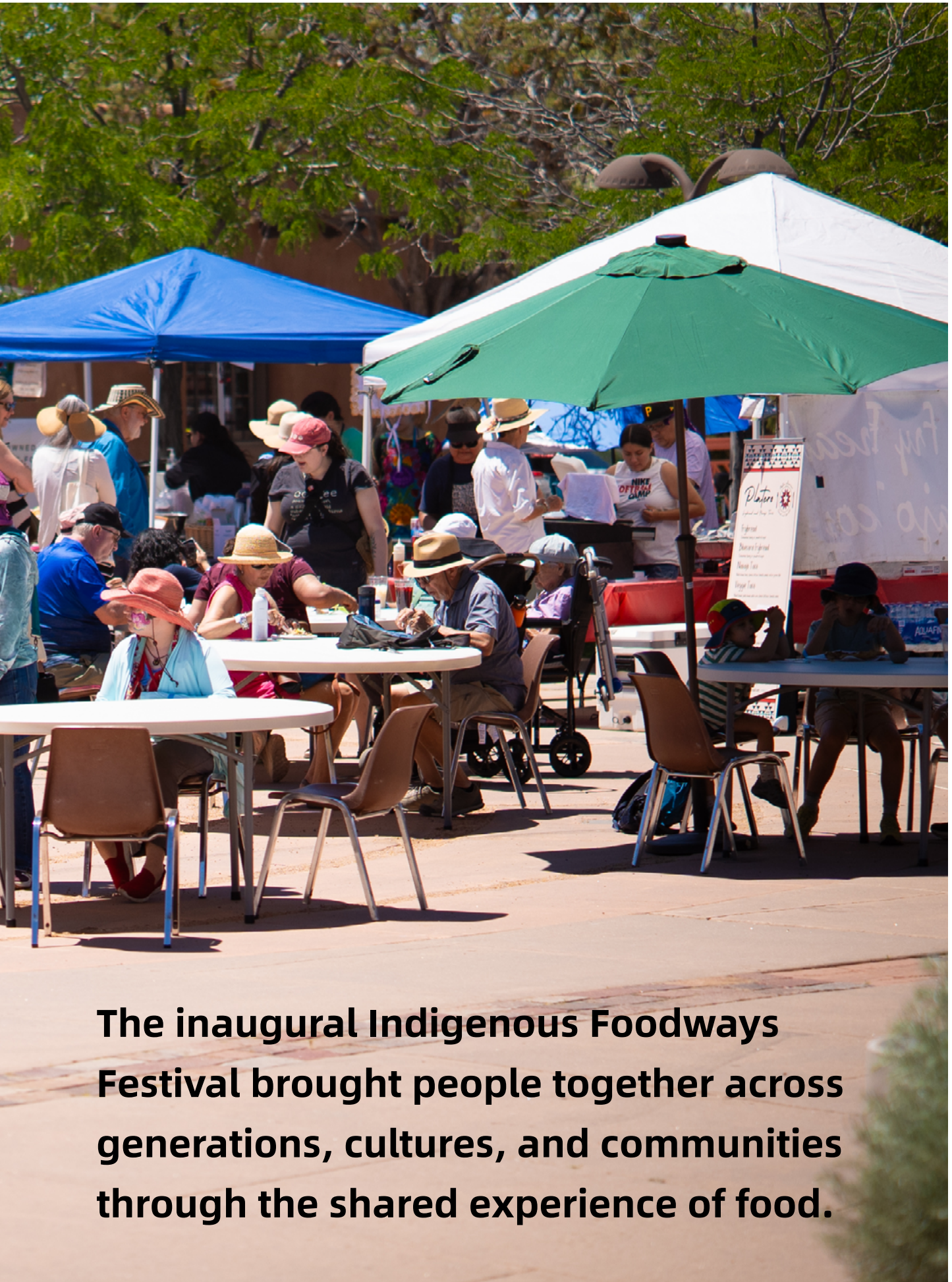
Planning for Growth

Even during its inaugural year, festival planning focused on creating systems that could support long-term sustainability. Processes for programming, marketing, volunteer coordination, ticketing, and partnership development were designed not only to support the 2026 event but to establish a strong operational foundation for future festivals.



COMMUNITY IN MOTION





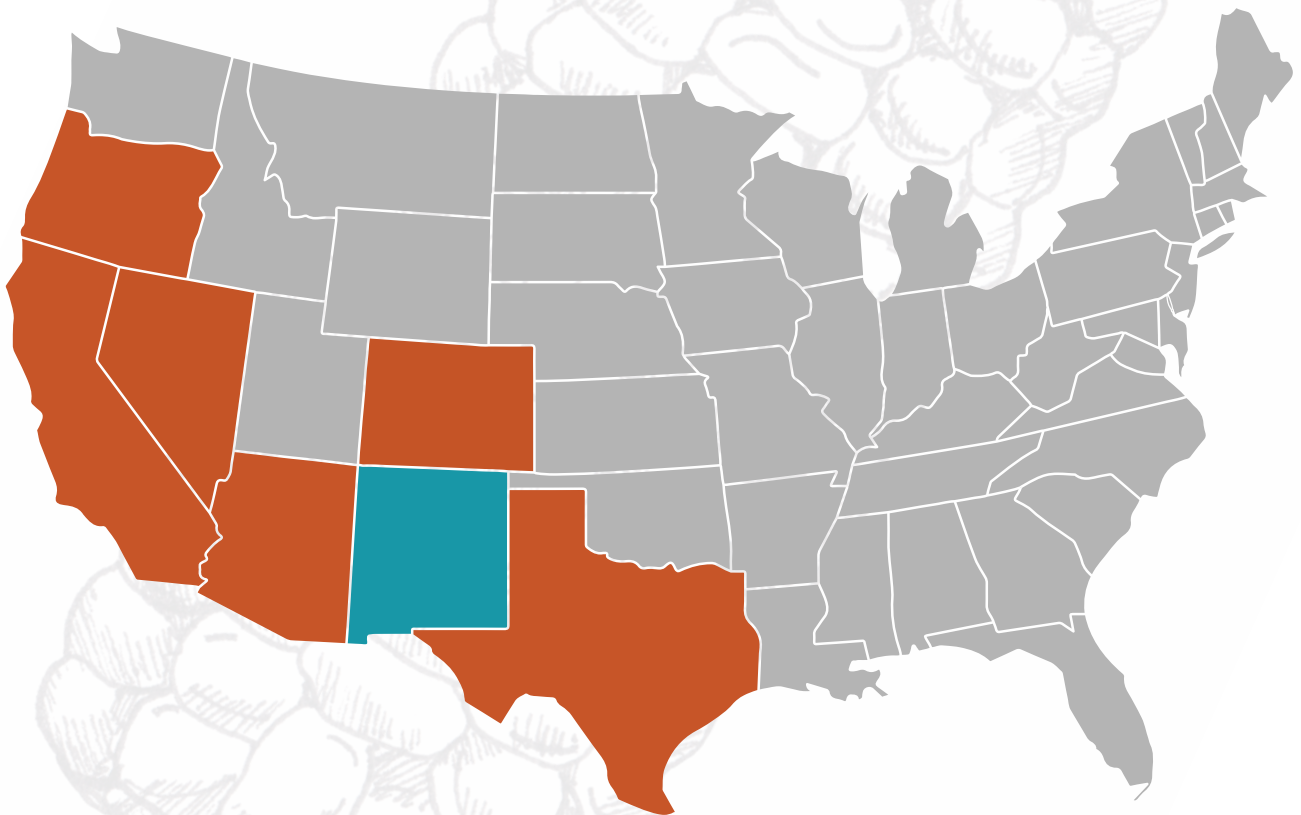
The inaugural Indigenous Foodways Festival brought people together across generations, cultures, and communities through the shared experience of food.



WHO GATHERED

The inaugural Indigenous Foodways Festival welcomed **933 paid attendees** from across New Mexico and beyond, creating a vibrant gathering that reflected both the state's deep Indigenous roots and the festival's growing regional appeal. Registration data showed that approximately **88% of attendees traveled from within New Mexico**, while visitors also came from Arizona, Colorado, California, Texas, Nevada, Oregon, and states across the country.

More than **26 Native Nations** were represented throughout the festival, bringing together Indigenous chefs, artists, farmers, educators, cultural practitioners, and community members for a day of shared learning and celebration. The event was further supported by **61 volunteers, 59 vendors and community organizations**, and **27 presenters** who helped create a welcoming and engaging experience for all who attended.



88% of attendees traveled from within New Mexico

WELCOMING NEW AUDIENCES

One of the festival's most significant achievements was its ability to introduce new audiences to both Indigenous foodways and the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture. Twenty-eight percent of post-attendance survey respondents reported having no previous experience with Santa Fe museum programming, demonstrating the festival's success in attracting first-time visitors.

While survey respondents skewed older—a common trend in post-event surveys—festival observations and day-of attendance reflected participation from families, young adults, and children throughout the day. Organizers also noted strong attendance from Albuquerque and many visitors experiencing the Museum for the first time.

Because many day-of ticket purchasers did not provide email addresses, younger attendees may be underrepresented in the post-event survey results.

28% First-time Museum
Programming Participants

73.6% Survey respondents
from Santa Fe

59 Average respondent age



REPRESENTATION & BELONGING

96% of interviewed attendees said they felt represented by their community.

“This event made it feel like such a community that brings art and food together.”

“It’s been fun to see the Native community show up and show out!”

“I’m with my daughter and I love connecting with her through this.”

“It’s been a great way to be introduced to local vendors and learn from them.”



INVESTING IN THE EXPERIENCE

Survey responses indicate that attendees actively invested in their festival experience. More than four out of five respondents purchased either the Indigenous Chefs' Tasting Experience or General Admission with one or more educational add-on experiences, reflecting strong interest in immersive learning opportunities.

General Admission attendees also expressed high satisfaction with the value of their experience, with 90% indicating they were somewhat or very likely to return. Overall, nearly three-quarters of survey respondents said they were likely to attend the festival again.

81% Purchased premium experiences.

74% Likely to return.

90% GA attendees likely to return.



LISTENING TO OUR COMMUNITY

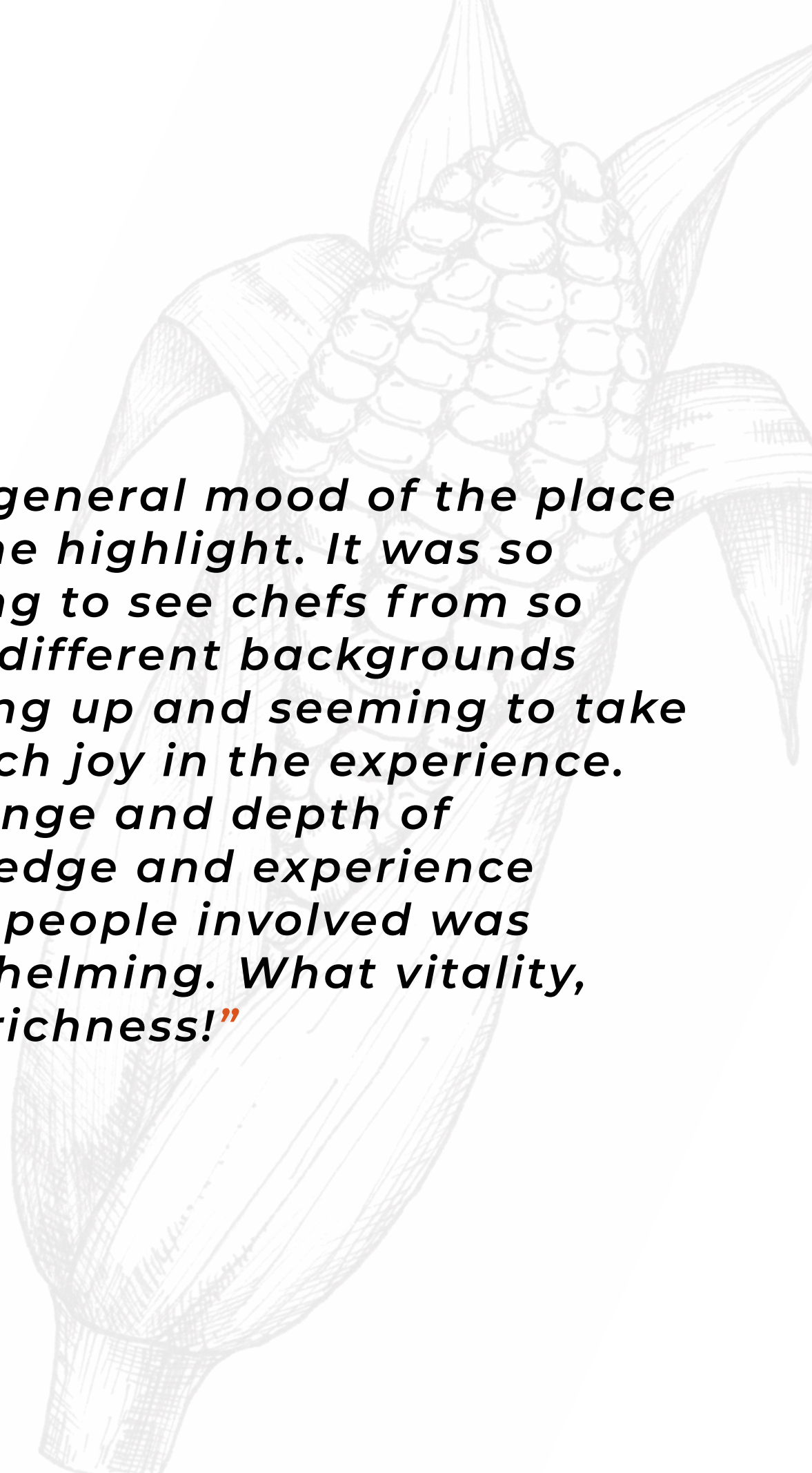
Meaningful evaluation extends beyond measuring success—it creates opportunities for improvement. Attendee feedback identified several priorities that will help strengthen future festivals while preserving the qualities that made the inaugural event so successful.

ATTENDEES ASKED FOR

- More vendors
- More Indigenous dance performances
- Clearer explanation of tasting experiences
- Dietary labeling
- Additional Native community outreach
- Expanded partnerships
- Streamlined registration







“The general mood of the place was the highlight. It was so exciting to see chefs from so many different backgrounds showing up and seeming to take so much joy in the experience. The range and depth of knowledge and experience of the people involved was overwhelming. What vitality, what richness!”

LEARNING THROUGH FOOD

Every demonstration, conversation, tasting, and workshop invited visitors to experience Indigenous foodways as living traditions—shared across generations through knowledge, culture, and community.





EDUCATION AT THE CENTER

Unlike many food festivals that focus primarily on tasting, the Indigenous Foodways Festival was intentionally designed as an educational experience. Throughout the day, visitors learned directly from Indigenous chefs, farmers, artists, scholars, and cultural practitioners through demonstrations, panel discussions, workshops, storytelling, and hands-on learning opportunities.

Each session offered more than a recipe or technique. Presenters shared the cultural, historical, and ecological knowledge that shapes Indigenous foodways, creating opportunities for attendees to deepen their understanding of the relationships between food, identity, land, and community. Whether learning about seed stewardship, regional ingredients, ancestral cooking methods, or contemporary Indigenous cuisine, visitors were invited to engage directly with the people carrying these traditions forward.

This commitment to education distinguished the festival from a traditional food event. By centering Indigenous voices and lived experience, the festival fostered meaningful conversations that encouraged curiosity, respect, and cross-cultural understanding.

By the Numbers

27 Educational Sessions

11 Cooking Demonstrations

7 Panel Discussions

5 Hands-on Experiences

402 Participants in the Indigenous Chefs' Tasting Experience



“Every single event I attended blew me away. I LOVED the add-on experience with Justin Pioche—his approach to cooking is so textured and complex. And I got to see some of the results of Moises Gonzales’ foraging tour—amazing.”

INVESTING IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Every ticket purchased, every booth visited, every meal shared, and every partnership formed represented an investment in Indigenous people, businesses, artists, and cultural knowledge.



ECONOMIC IMPACT

The inaugural Indigenous Foodways Festival generated nearly \$94,000 through public investment, sponsorships, grants, ticket sales, and community partnerships. Those resources directly supported Indigenous presenters, local businesses, educational programming, and event operations, strengthening New Mexico's Indigenous creative economy.

More than \$31,000 was invested in presenter honoraria, recognizing the expertise and cultural knowledge of Indigenous chefs, artists, educators, and community leaders. The festival also created new opportunities for Indigenous vendors, food businesses, and artisans while building relationships that will support future festivals.



BY THE NUMBERS

\$93,490 Operating Budget  **\$25,495** Ticket Revenue 

\$31,097 Presenter Honoraria  **26** Marketplace Booths & Organizations 

\$57,064 Combined Partner In-Kind Support

INVESTING BEYOND THE FESTIVAL

Supporting Indigenous Businesses & Artists

Marketplace vendors introduced visitors to Indigenous foods, art, agriculture, and handcrafted goods while creating opportunities for direct sales and new customer relationships. Several vendors reported selling out of products during the festival, demonstrating strong demand for Indigenous-made products and experiences.

Investing in Indigenous Knowledge

Presenter honoraria recognized Indigenous expertise as professional work worthy of compensation while ensuring visitors learned directly from the people preserving and evolving these traditions.

Strengthening Community Partnerships

Relationships established during planning created opportunities for future collaborations among chefs, Tribal communities, museums, educators, artists, and organizations across New Mexico.





PARTNER INVESTMENT

Museum of Indian Arts & Culture

\$33,529 In-kind support

Including: Staff, interns, presenter lodging, event photography

Edible New Mexico

\$23,535 In-kind marketing

Including: Branding, editorial, website, social promotion

Public Investment

New Mexico Indian Affairs

Department, Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Santa Fe Economic Development

Sponsors

La Montanita Co-op, Bookworks, Tumbleweed Nutrition, Kids Cook!, New Mexico Beef Council, Southwest Grassfed Livestock Alliance, Enchanted Farms Mushrooms, New Mexico Youth CF



Together, the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture and Edible New Mexico contributed more than \$57,000 in in-kind support, demonstrating a shared commitment that extended well beyond financial investment. Their combined contributions strengthened marketing, educational programming, operations, and the overall visitor experience, making the inaugural festival possible.

GROWING THE AUDIENCE



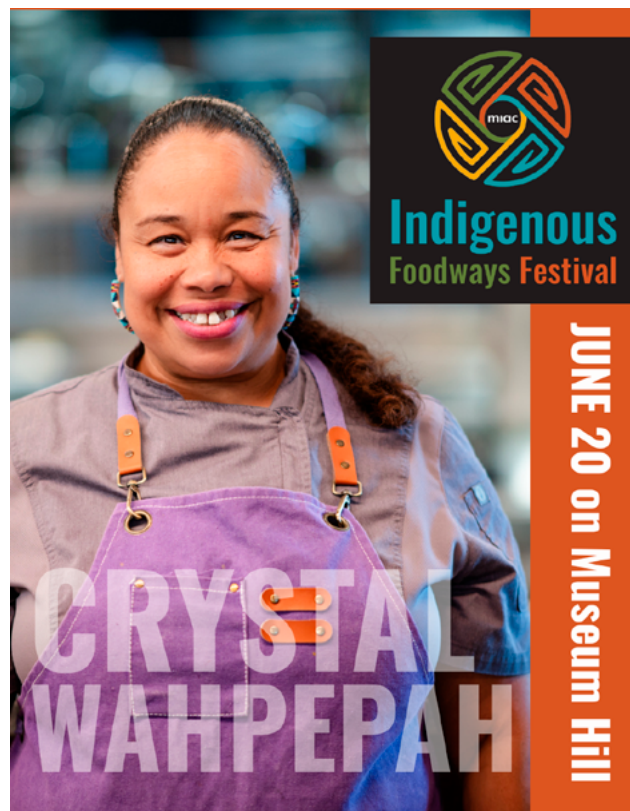
From a standing start, the festival reached audiences across New Mexico and beyond.

Months before the festival opened, the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture and Edible New Mexico launched an integrated marketing campaign designed to introduce audiences to a new celebration of Indigenous foodways. Through consistent branding, editorial storytelling, social media, earned media, paid advertising, and community partnerships, the campaign built awareness while establishing a recognizable identity for the festival.

The campaign reached audiences across multiple platforms, attracted visitors from throughout New Mexico and neighboring states, and generated strong engagement leading up to the inaugural event. Together, these efforts helped establish the Indigenous Foodways Festival as a new cultural destination while expanding awareness of the Museum and its mission.

Campaign Highlights

- 47 Instagram posts
- 31 tagged collaborations
- 15 newsletter inclusions
- 6 dedicated email campaigns
- 13 collaboration posts with Edible New Mexico
- 7 collaboration posts with MIAC



MARKETING BY THE NUMBERS

99,816

Social Media Views

94,500

Newsletter Opens

10,595

Unique Website Visitors

15,479

Website Visits

495

Instagram Followers (from a standing start in April)

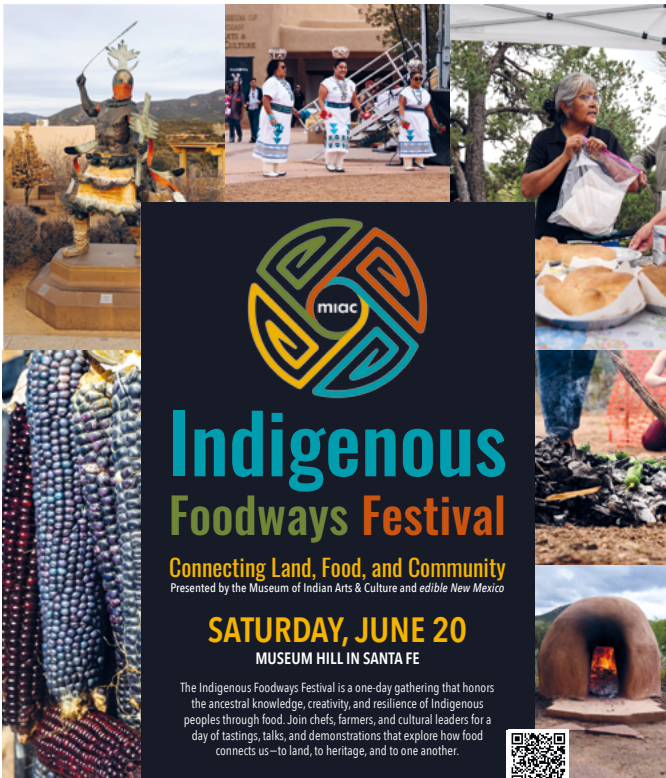
BUILDING AWARENESS



The festival's success was amplified through the combined reach of the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture, Edible New Mexico, media partners, sponsors, and community organizations. Editorial coverage, strategic advertising, and collaborative promotion extended the festival's visibility far beyond traditional event marketing, laying the foundation for continued audience growth in the years ahead.

Earned media coverage from KRQE, the Albuquerque Journal, and the University of New Mexico further expanded awareness while reinforcing the festival's educational mission and cultural significance. Paid advertising in regional publications, digital campaigns, and outdoor advertising complemented these efforts, creating a cohesive campaign that introduced thousands of people to the festival for the first time.

Print • Digital • Social • Editorial • Outdoor • Earned Media •

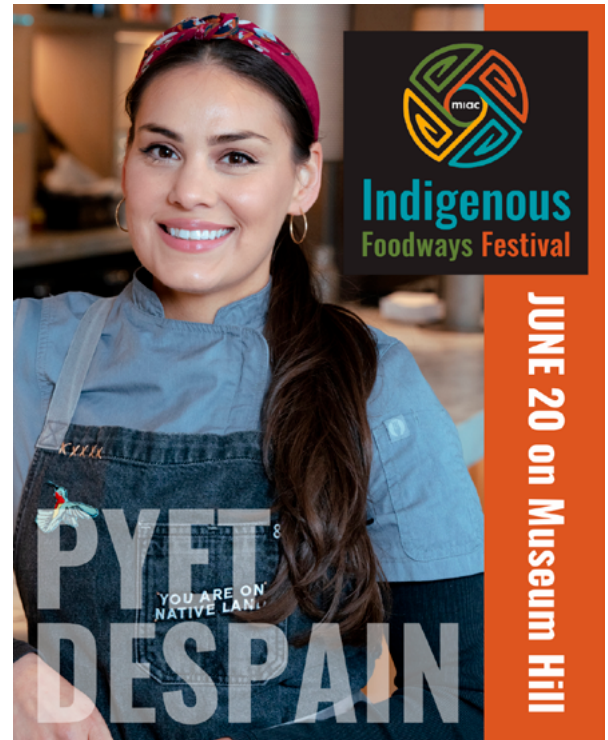


Indigenous Foodways Festival
Connecting Land, Food, and Community
Presented by the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture and *edible New Mexico*

SATURDAY, JUNE 20
MUSEUM HILL IN SANTA FE

The Indigenous Foodways Festival is a one-day gathering that honors the ancestral knowledge, creativity, and resilience of Indigenous peoples through food. Join chefs, farmers, and cultural leaders for a day of tastings, talks, and demonstrations that explore how food connects us—to land, to heritage, and to one another.

In partnership with *edible* NEW MEXICO | Learn more and get involved at indigenousfoodwaysfestival.com



Indigenous Foodways Festival

JUNE 20 on Museum Hill



Celebrate Indigenous cuisine at the Indigenous Foodways Festival

INDIGENOUS FOODWAYS FESTIVAL
SPONSORED BY MUSEUM OF INDIAN ARTS & CULTURE
NOW WHAT MAKES EXTRA SPECIAL



Indigenous Foodways Festival

JUNE 20 on Museum Hill



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EVENT | SANTA FE
Inaugural Indigenous Foodways Festival celebrates Native culinary traditions

The event features Indigenous chefs, tastings and panels highlighting Native American food culture and culinary innovation



BUILDING ON WHAT WE LEARNED

Deepen Indigenous Partnerships

Continue expanding relationships with Tribal governments, Indigenous organizations, and cultural practitioners to strengthen programming and broaden participation.

Expand Access

Refine registration, increase outreach to Native communities, improve visitor navigation, and continue removing barriers to participation.

Strengthen the Festival Experience

Focus future programming around fewer overlapping sessions, enhanced volunteer support, expanded marketplace opportunities, and continued investment in educational experiences.

Grow with Intention

Build sponsorships earlier, strengthen earned revenue opportunities, and continue leveraging partnerships that maximize community impact.





A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

The inaugural Indigenous Foodways Festival established more than a successful event—it established a community committed to gathering again. Through education, storytelling, culinary traditions, and shared experiences, the festival created meaningful opportunities to celebrate Indigenous knowledge while investing in the people and partnerships that carry it forward.

The success of the inaugural festival belongs to everyone who helped make it possible—presenters, chefs, artists, volunteers, vendors, sponsors, community partners, the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture, Edible New Mexico, and every attendee who chose to gather around a shared table.

As planning begins for the next Indigenous Foodways Festival, the relationships built during this inaugural year provide a strong foundation for continued growth, stronger partnerships, and an enduring annual tradition that celebrates the richness and resilience of Indigenous foodways for generations to come.



With gratitude to the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department, the New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, our sponsors, community partners, volunteers, presenters, vendors, and attendees for making the inaugural Indigenous Foodways Festival possible.

Indigenous Foodways Festival

2026 Annual
Impact Report



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NEW MEXICO



MUSEUM OF
INDIAN ARTS + CULTURE

indigenousfoodwaysfestival.com