

## **Celebrate Traditional Foods!**

*Plan a special dinner with members of your community,  
and learn more about traditional foods.*

The best way to learn about traditional foods is not through research, but through experience! Preparing and eating a ceremonial meal together offers many opportunities to ask elders about traditions and your shared history.

Use the ideas below to plan a community dinner that will showcase traditional foods. Include family, community members, and elders in your planning.

To start, decide how you will divide the work for this dinner. There are many ways you could do this, and you can adapt the ideas below for your own event.

Depending on what you plan, you will need people to work on the following committees:

**Food:** this committee will organize food contributions, receive food, prepare food, set up the service area, and serve food. They will also plan for eating utensils, plates, napkins, and beverages. Of course, to keep costs low, all these things can be brought from homes or donated. Some questions this committee must decide include:

- Will this be a pot luck dinner where everybody contributes something or will a volunteers make food from traditional recipes?
- How will you ensure that you have a wide variety of traditional foods at you dinner?
- Will you supply plates, utensils, napkins, and beverages or will people supply their own?
- Will the food be self-serve, or will you have servers?

**Facilities:** this committee will arrange for a place to hold the dinner (a school cafeteria or community center might work) and ensure that there are enough tables, chairs, and trash cans. They will set up and clean up the facility. This committee decides:

- How will tables be arranged?
- How many people can you serve?
- What spaces are available for entertainment?

**Entertainment:** this committee will arrange any entertainment that you decide to have at your community dinner. This could include a storyteller, dancers, music, or games. This committee will consider:

- What type of entertainment will you have?
- What equipment will be available for the entertainment (like a sound system or a projector)?
- Will the entertainment take place during the meal or after?

- Will you want to have one or two people host the dinner and entertainment? These hosts would introduce entertainers, guide participants, and organize any rituals like a blessing or a prayer associated with eating and food preparation.

***Publicity and documentation:*** this committee will put out notices about the dinner and will arrange to document the event through video, audio, photographs, and written stories. This committee should also consider:

- Will you publish the recipes for traditional foods served at the dinner? If so, will they be published on paper or on a Web page?
- What needs do the other committees have that you can help publicize?
- What community groups can you ask for help for your dinner?
- Can you write about your event for a local newspaper or school newsletter?

Good luck planning your meal!