



ADVANCING FOOD SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY IN NORTHERN ONTARIO INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

THIS PROJECT IS A COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE
UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH, INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN
NORTHERN ONTARIO



UNIVERSITY OF
GUELPH



THIS COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVE BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH, INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY PARTNERS, AND MARCATUS QED

Focused on local workshops, knowledge-sharing, and community partnership development.



Indigenous communities in Northern Ontario, Indigenous communities in Northern Ontario—including Lake Helen Reserve (Red Rock Indian Band), Rocky Bay Reserve (Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek), and Pic Mobert Reserve (Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg)

KEY CHALLENGE SUMMARY:

Northern Ontario's short growing season and harsh winters make year-round food production difficult, with current greenhouse solutions offering only limited extension and requiring costly added heating for full-season use.

- **Community-centered food systems** rooted in local needs, traditional knowledge, and sustainable agriculture
- **Hands-on training and practical implementation** to strengthen food access, preservation, and local capacity
- **Long-term resilience and sovereignty** through education, seasonal growing, and year-round food solutions





FIVE FOCUS AREAS

EACH WORKSHOP INCLUDED BOTH THEORY AND HANDS-ON COMPONENTS



GROWING FOOD

Community gardens and local growing systems tailored to Northern Ontario conditions

FERMENTING AND PROCESSING VEGETABLES

Community gardens and local growing systems tailored to Northern Ontario conditions

AIR DRYING AND SMOKING MEAT

Practical preservation skills for protein sources using safe, adaptable methods

VERTICAL FARM TRAINING & IMPLEMENTATION

Exploring controlled-environment agriculture for year-round production

EDUCATION & NUTRITION CONTENT

Knowledge-sharing that supports healthy eating, food literacy, and community empowerment

WHY THIS PROJECT MATTERS?

A practical response to food access, seasonality, and local capacity building

KEY CHALLENGE SUMMARY:

Northern Ontario's short growing season and harsh winters make year-round food production difficult, with current greenhouse solutions offering only limited extension and requiring costly added heating for full-season use.

PROJECT FRAME

- Community gardens already produce vegetables during the short summer season.
- Long northern winters make year-round fresh food access difficult and expensive.
- The project blends traditional knowledge, scientific research, and hands-on training.
- The aim is stronger food sovereignty, resilience, and community-led local enterprise.

WHAT THE PROPOSAL ADDS NEXT

- Food preservation workshops to extend harvests through winter.
- Training in curing, drying, and smoking meat and fish safely.
- A pilot hydroponic / vertical farming container for year-round production.
- Education, entrepreneurship, and nutrition content so knowledge stays in the community.