Land Acknowledgement

The Cannon River chapter of the Sustainable Farming Association is located throughout Dodge, Goodhue, Steele, Rice, LeSueur, Dakota, and Scott Counties on Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Dakhóta) homeland taken under Cession 289 in 1851. Please consider supporting Dakhóta lápi Okhódakičhiye (Dakota Language Society), a 501c3 nonprofit organization of Dakota community members, language learners and speakers dedicated to reversing the trend of language loss and raising future generations of Dakota speakers.

Executive Summary

The Cannon River chapter of the Sustainable Farming Association believes that the foundation of a thriving foodshed comes from approaching agriculture with a holistic, systemic view where all community members have autonomy to participate. It is clear that the systemic injustice within our food, land and agricultural systems disproportionately affect the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) communities. This is an injustice we need to address as both individuals and as an organization where clear, measurable objectives lead to lasting change within our 7 counties.

Full Statement

Cannon River SFA takes a collaborative, community-centered approach to the health and wellbeing of our foodshed. We are farmers and small business owners working together, providing space for voices from every aspect of our foodshed to be heard. We are not a ‘drop-in’ organization. We are deeply invested in, live in, farm in and spend our lives in the communities we are actively working to see thrive. By investing in the communities we are connected to, we seek to be self-sustaining and see our work be of service to our community for years to come.

Our chapter knows that we must look at agriculture from a holistic, systemic view, where short-term fixes and treating symptoms simply can not lead to the thriving foodshed we are striving to create. We have work to do in confronting the systemic injustice within our food, land and agricultural systems that disproportionately affect the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) community. The BIPOC community is involved with every facet of agriculture but is not given the access, opportunity and exposure that is afforded to other participants within our agricultural systems.

It will take all of us, thinking creatively, opening up conversation and space so that our long-term goals of equitable access and opportunities within the agricultural system are enjoyed by all members of our community. This means working as individuals to address our gaps and biases to learn what steps we need to take to grow. As an organization we must create clear, measurable objectives to uplift and support voices from the BIPOC community. Our first objective is to reach out to members of the Cannon River SFA to begin to understand the demographic makeup of our membership. We will send out a member survey in May. By
learning who is a part of our membership, we can create a plan to meet the needs of community members we are not currently serving.

**Additional objectives and action plans to be completed by the end of 2021:**

Plan small, outdoor or virtual activities to increase engagement and community within our CRSFA chapter, with a focus on increasing our understanding of the demographic makeup of our membership: i.e. learning circles, women farming groups (remember women are a minority in farming) mentorship, farmer happy hours.

Host an educational opportunity within the membership that discusses the history of the BIPOC community and agriculture. (Book clubs, educational series, etc)

Identify additional community opportunities that increase mentorship, food access, and community building within the larger BIPOC community. We could partner with LSP to help with this, and work with the greater SFA.

We must continue working to create the change we want to see within our food and farming systems.