

Indigenous Agroforestry

Survey Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



INDIGENOUS
AGROFORESTRY
NETWORK

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The survey was developed and disseminated by the Indigenous Agroforestry Network. The Indigenous Agroforestry Network is made up of a coalition of partners from a larger project, “Building a Community of Practice for Tribal Agroforestry Producers and Youth in the Pacific Northwest.” This larger project builds on findings from a series of roundtable discussions and feedback collected through webinars held through the Pacific Northwest Tribal Agroforestry project. The project seeks to improve access to USDA programs and services that support agroforestry for Indigenous agroforestry practitioners and to build a network of partners and practitioners that support Indigenous agroforestry in the Northwest.

Survey overview

The Indigenous agroforestry survey team gathered data over six months, receiving 195 responses. The survey assessed familiarity and interest in agroforestry systems among self-identified Indigenous respondents and those who work closely with tribes or Indigenous groups.

Demographics

- Majority identified as women (67%) and were under 40 years old (52%).
- Represented at least 83 tribes across North and South America, with significant responses from the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Confederated Tribes and Bands of Yakama Nation, and Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation.
- Mostly urban respondents, 82% (135) were in an urban ZIP code, and the remaining 18% (29) were rural.

Key Findings

Familiarity with agroforestry

- 36% said that they were familiar or very familiar with agroforestry.
- 38% reported low familiarity with agroforestry concepts.
- Fire use emerged as the most recognized and desired practice among respondents.

Interest in learning

- 82% expressed strong interest in agroforestry, preferring in-person learning opportunities and published materials.

Preferred practices:

- High interest in practices like fire use (79%), forest farming (78%), and riparian buffers (73%).
- Most familiarity with fire use (46%), riparian buffers (46%), forest farming (36%) and windbreaks (36%).

Land access:

- 64 respondents owned land, all of which said that they utilized it for some form of gathering and/or traditional practices.
- 128 said that they accessed land in several ways: federal land not owned by a tribe (42%), land owned by their tribe (41%), and state land not owned by a tribe (36%).

Insights from Meaning-Making Session

Demographic trends:

- Emphasis on the need for outreach to older generations and broader geographic representation.

Fire use:

- Recognized as a key area for future resources and training.

Learning preferences:

- Strong desire for in-person connections and community-led initiatives.

Cultural context:

- Need to integrate TEK into agroforestry practices while acknowledging the limitations of Western scientific frameworks.

Political and socioeconomic factors:

- Highlighted ongoing changes in USDA programs and the role of the BIA in tribal governance.

Recommendations

- Focus on enhancing access to programs and increasing community connections.
- Develop targeted outreach for fire use and forest farming based on expressed interests.
- Improve survey distribution methods to reach less digitally connected populations.
- Conduct further data analysis to explore relationships between land ownership and agroforestry practices.

Next Steps

- Separate data for analysis by region, state, or other affinity for more nuanced results.
- Prioritize curriculum development for fire use and forest farming.
- Integrate insights into upcoming Indigenous Agroforestry Network events and resource creation.

These findings affirm a larger project scope to increase access and relevancy of programs and services that support Indigenous agroforestry practitioners and tribes.

To learn more about the Indigenous Agroforestry Network, visit indigenousagroforestry.org