



# Revitalizing Berry Picking in the Apsaalooke Community: Preserving Traditions and Improving Community Health



Government

Scientists

**Introduction:** Using the holistic process we discover the needs of the Apsaalooke community and discuss culturally appropriate ways to improve the quality of life. Faith, tradition, and language are important to the Apsaalooke people. Traditional foods such as, baáchuawuuleete, June berries, or *Amelanchier alnifolia*, baáchuutaale, chokecherries or *Prunus virginiana*, baalashiishe, buffalo berries or *Sheperdia canadensis*, and buluhpé, wild plums or *Prunus americana*.

**Hypothesis:** Traditional language, culture and human health can be improved by revitalizing the tradition of berry picking.



Figure 2. Tracie, Andrew and Chris Present pictures of berries and tools to 4<sup>th</sup> graders from Hardin Intermediate

**Materials & Methods:** In order to gain an Apsaalooke prospective on current issues we used pictures of people practicing the picking of berries, traditional tools, and traditional and modern packaging and storage techniques to stimulate discussion with the 107<sup>th</sup> Meridian Committee of Elders in Crow Agency, MT. The same pictures were used to stimulate discussion with high school students in Lodge Grass, MT and with elementary students from Hardin in Bozeman, MT. Diagramming exercises were done with the students in the form of bubble maps to demonstrate concerns of the community and plans of action to address those concerns.

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Figure 1. June berries, or *Amelanchier alnifolia*.



Figure 4. baáchuutaale, chokecherries or *Prunus virginiana*

**Recommendations:**  
1. Revival of Culture through berry picking.  
2. Healthier food alternatives  
3. Good exercise along with positive recreation  
4. Community based involvement Knowledge

**Literature Cited:**

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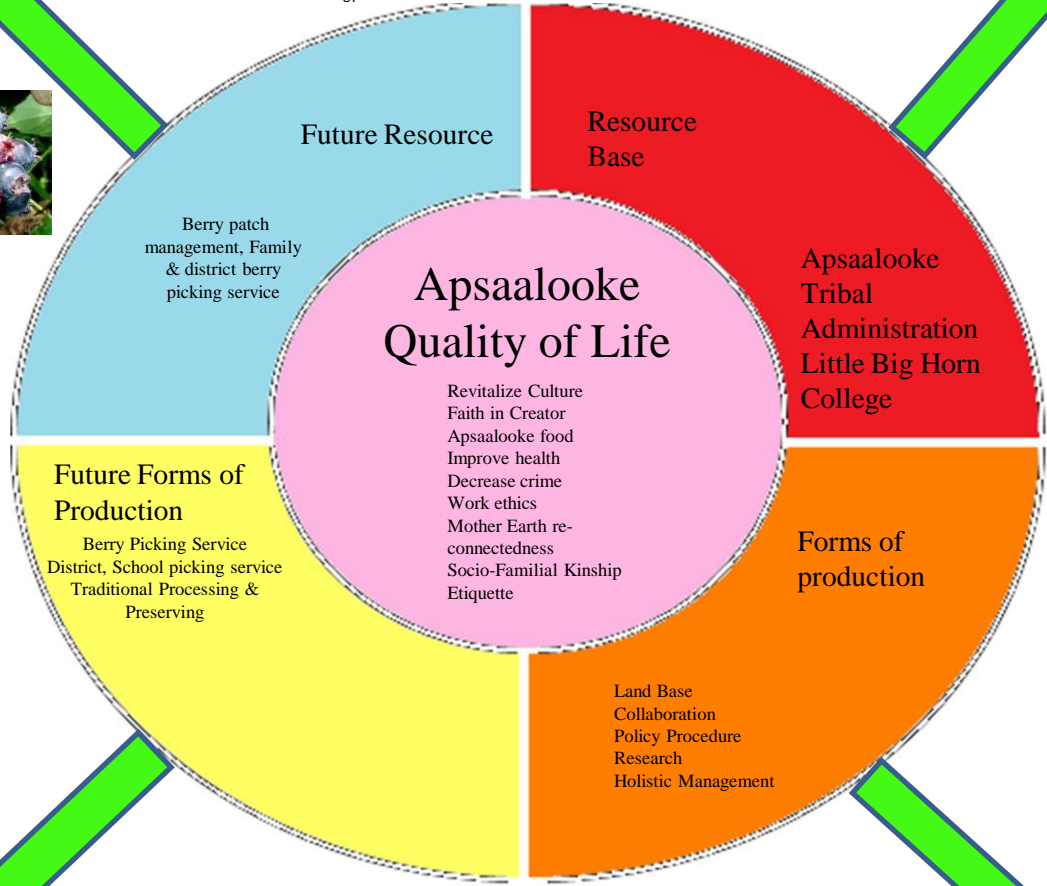


Figure 3. Kurrie Small explains Apsaalooke Teasing class

**Results:** The Quality of Life amongst the Apsaalooke people was surrounded by one main idea culture, within the idea of culture several sub-ideas were brought out. Some of these thoughts consisted of language, prayer lodge, family, and traditions. One of the main traditions in the Apsaalooke community is berry picking, this is a tradition that has started to slowly fade with the younger generations mainly, but had also been forgotten amongst other members of the community. The elders who have the most influence on the community would like to see berry picking revived amongst the community. The youth also expressed interest in berry picking if it was made readily available, and even when talking with the younger children they also appeared enthusiastic about going berry picking. Berry picking provides nutritional food, exercise, recreation, and a strong community based involvement. Helping to revive a solid berry picking program on the Apsaalooke Reservation would truly help the people and culture.



Figure 5. buluhpé, wild plums or *Prunus americana*.



Figure 6. baalashiishe, buffalo berries or *Sheperdia canadensis*

NGO's & IGO's

Students