



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAN IN PARTNERSHIP WITH QUALITY MARKET, TRUE NORTH COMMUNITY COOPERATIVE AND WASAYA AIRWAYS BRINGS FRESH FOODS TO NORTHERN FIRST NATIONS

THUNDER BAY, ON: Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) in partnership with Quality Market, True North Community Cooperative and Wasaya Airways are increasing access to healthy foods in Northern First Nations. February 19 to 24, 2011, fresh and nutritious foods will be sent by road and air to 12 NAN communities.

“Access to affordable, nutritious foods for families living on fixed incomes has been lost over the years and has resulted in high rates of diabetes, obesity, and heart disease among First Nations in Northern Ontario, including youth,” said NAN Grand Chief Stan Beardy. “Wholesome foods such as fresh fruits and veggies play an essential role in healthy development of our young people. There must be proper framework in place for a food distribution system that can be implemented and used to provide affordable, nutritious foods for families living in NAN First Nations.”

In November 2009, NAN hosted a Food Symposium to provide an opportunity for community members to talk about the issues related to food and to have dialogue on how to increase access to healthy foods in the North. Since then, there have been ongoing discussions with local producers and retailers to find creative ways to get fresh, affordable, organic, and nutritious foods into NAN communities.

“The goal of this initiative is to provide healthy alternative food choices that are cost effective and reduce the consumption of processed, chemical laden, high fat foods that are normally available at low cost in communities,” said Wendy Trylinski, NAN Community Program Manager. “This is a very exciting partnership between Wasaya Airways, True North Community Cooperative and Quality Market because by working together we can begin to address the disparity of food costs in the North at a grassroots level.”

The food boxes will include items such as: locally produced whole wheat/rye flour, barley pancake mix, bran muffin mix, whole wheat pizza dough, oats, natural cheese, local honey, herbal teas, and local naturally-raised beef along with fruits, vegetables, rice and beans. Each food box will also contain information on the farmer, where some of the foods were produced and healthy low-fat recipes.

The 12 NAN communities who will be receiving the food boxes are Deer Lake, Kashechewan, Neskantaga, North Caribou Lake, Mishkeegogamang, Moose Cree, Muskrat Dam, Sandy Lake, Wahgoshig, Wapekeka, Poplar Hill, and Keewaywin.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation is a political territorial organization representing 49 First Nation communities in James Bay Treaty No. 9 and Ontario portions of Treaty No. 5 – an area covering two thirds of the province of Ontario.

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