



Native Foodways

Harvest 2021-22

Native Foodways is a First Nations owned and led social enterprise focused on native food production.



Their purpose is to ensure that the native food system grows in a way that is environmentally regenerative, culturally respectful, and socially and economically beneficial to First Peoples. Their goal coming into the Harvest program was to determine ways in which their company could accelerate their growth and achieve greater impact.

The Native Foodways co-founder team is comprised of four Indigenous and one non-Indigenous founder and they are all highly experienced in broad areas of: policy development; large corporate business; social enterprise; and fund-raising.

NATIVE FOODWAY'S HARVEST JOURNEY



At the beginning of the Harvest program they were at very early revenue stage (based on local sales of native food boxes) and while they had a very wide vision they did not have a clear strategy for how it could be achieved. Only one of the founders (Mike Kovaris) was working in the business (others all holding full-time jobs elsewhere) and the runway for maintaining Mike's salary was short and not sustainable.

During the Harvest program, Native Foodways was able to deep dive into the three core components of their business model: regenerative farming; cultural kitchens (where they envisaged working with Indigenous chefs to create value-added products); and 'respectful' markets that would support their impact and value the cultural narrative that is unique to Indigenous people. The team found the F2F core pillars of growth (go-to-market; value chain design; business model design; raising capital; people & capability) provided the structured framework they needed to experiment and to transform their vision of systemic change into a more practical business strategy.

The Farmers2Founders program has been fantastic. We have learned a great deal about the food and agriculture industry & about entrepreneurial development and scaling. We'd highly recommend this program to anyone with a desire to think deeply about their business.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Their key learning from the Harvest program were:

- Deeper understanding of the food and agriculture sector
- Investor readiness
- Product development and testing
- Pitching and business model tools

Native Foodways achieved significant traction during their participation in the Harvest program with highlights including:

- Multiple strategic partnerships: 5+ pro bono; 10+ farms & kitchens; 10+ Indigenous suppliers; 3+ B2B customers; 20+ food box subscribers; RMIT as product development and R&D partners; Carriageworks as sales channel
- \$200,000 philanthropic funding
- 3000+ acres of co-managed land



Native Foodways are currently looking to raise \$5m-\$10m to further prove their sector transformational model. Funds will be used to:

- Acquire three new farms that demonstrate a First Nations-led agroecology model
- Develop five new value-added product ranges
- Implement a digital marketplace and logistics platform trading 100K+ units annually
- Embed new organisational systems
- Build an expanded high-performing team

About Farmers2Founders

We help build agrifood tech and innovation solutions that deliver commercial benefit and industry impact across agrifood, fibre, fisheries & aquaculture. By supporting more producers to collaborate with agrifood tech developers and innovators to fast-track the development, commercialisation and uptake of agrifood solutions.

