Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

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Location

- We are located on the Navajo Nation, Northeast of Arizona in the four corners area.
- In the small rural community called Tsaile and Wheatfields.
- We worked in three areas; Tsaile Farms, Upper Wheatfields, and Lower Wheatfields Farms.
The Goals of this Grant

- The purpose of this grant is to aid farmers and ranchers within the Navajo Nation.
- We want to increase the production of produce, herd health, and overall knowledge for producers to become self productive.
Our partners

- We had the privilege to work along with a non-profit organization called the Tsaile Wheatfields Dineh Water Users Association.
- Farmers within the Tsaile and Wheatfields community
In 2017, The Tsaile Wheatfields Dineh Water Users Association was very fortunate to receive a grant from the Navajo Nation for $5 million dollars.

With this money it will last for a remainder of 4 more years to help the cause of revitalization of farming in Tsaile and Wheatfields.

The purchase of brand new machines, vehicles, fencing materials, seeds, irrigation pipes, and farming equipment.
The Challenges

- The setbacks we face is the lack of participation in farmers.
- The poor soil in most farm plots due from top soil erosion and 30 years of being neglected.
- Old, broken perimeter fences.
Last years results

- Perimeter Fence Progress:
  - **Lower Wheatfields**: 96 percent (5.8 miles) of the perimeter fence has been completed in Lower Wheatfields.
  - **Upper Wheatfields**: 0 percent of the perimeter fence was completed

- Hay Production
  - **Tsaile Farms**: 257 bales
  - **Upper Wheatfields**: 329 bales
  - **Lower Wheatfields**: 574 bales

- Acres cultivated: **521 acres**
- Farmers Participating: **Total of 32 producers**
Strategies of improvements

- The implement of reaching out to new farmers.
- Have producers make a profit from their crops.
- Proper water management practices
- Cultivate fields for farmers.
- Provide seeds, irrigation pipes, and any other equipment needed.
- Build perimeter fences.
- Have infrastructure provided such as high tunnels, hoop houses, and green houses.
Perimeter Fencing

- The main purpose of the perimeter is to keep out livestock and wildlife.
- 6ft tall
- Surrounds all three farms in Tsaile, Lower and Upper Wheatfields
- Weld H-Braces
- Worked in upper Wheatfields this past summer.
Irrigation

- Helping the irrigation process with farmers
- Setting irrigation pipes
- Helping new farmers understand the basics of irrigation
- Transporting pipes
Workshops

- We hosted many workshops with our farmers year round.
- Informing them about soil management, Business planning, planting, record keeping, farm tours, traditional cooking presentations, food safety practices, invasive species management, etc.
Chuska Farmers

- A Co-op of a group of farmers within the Tsaile and Wheatfields Community.
- They used the Land Grant’s high tunnel greenhouse to grow their produce.
- Weekly Salad sales.
- Over the summer they raised $1,200 selling their produce.
Farmer Markets

- We hosted 19 Farmer Markets across the reservation in order for our farmers to make a profit from all their produce.
- We provide services for our farmers in order for us to sell and they receive all profits.
Year End Results

- Perimeter Fence Progress:
  - **Lower Wheatfields**: 98 percent (6 miles) of the perimeter fence has been completed in Lower Wheatfields.
  - **Upper Wheatfields**: 61 percent (3.6 miles) of the perimeter fence is finished in Upper Wheatfields

- Hay production:
  - **Tsaile Farms**: 497 bales
  - **Upper Wheatfields**: 1,130 bales
  - **Lower Wheatfields**: 2,122 bales

- Acres cultivated: **494 acres**
- Farmers Participating: **Total of 47 producers**
Acknowledgements

- The Land Grand Office
- Diné College
- Tsaile Wheatfields Dineh Water Users Association
- FALCON
- The tribe of the Navajo Nation