I appreciate the time tribal leadership and tribal program directors take to attend meetings with state officials on many different subject matters. I believe that these meetings help us to get to know each other and opens the door for understanding and collaboration.

This past month we have met with Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe on issues that included housing, education, economic development and game, fish, and parks. We have also had a law enforcement meeting with some of the tribes and will have two more similar meetings this month.

I look forward to traveling to the tribal nations that share South Dakota's borders and we have already planned Governor's visits with the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe and the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate. I am excited for the opportunity to visit and learn from them.

I was also invited to speak to the South Dakota Ag and Rural Leadership Program and attended a tour of a Springfield facility that may be used to originate a tribal veteran mental health treatment facility.

There are many positive outcomes from these meetings for both our native and non-native citizens.

Please feel free to contact our office with any questions or concerns. We welcome tribal leadership to stop by the office here in Pierre.

Secretary Steve Emery

SD Dept. of Tribal Relations
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Pierre, S.D. 57501
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www.facebook.com/TribalSD
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The Oglala Sioux Tribe is working in partnership with the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen’s Association, Rocky Mountain Tribal Leadership Council, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis Center for Indian Country Development and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development to host the Great Plains Tribal Leaders’ Economic Summit on May 8 - 10, 2017 in Rapid City at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel.

“USDA has expanded investments in native and tribal community businesses, education, food security, housing, health care, and infrastructure,” said South Dakota USDA Rural Development Acting State Director Bruce Jones. “This summit will continue our support and efforts to promote economic development and job creation in tribal communities.”

The Great Plains Tribal Leaders’ Economic Development Summit invites tribal leaders from the Great Plains and Rocky Mountain regions to collaboratively develop regional economic development strategies. Through interactive sessions facilitated by the University of Arizona’s Native Nations Institute and other experts, tribal leaders will learn about innovative governance strategies, best practices, and resources to create environments for successful economic development in Indian Country.

Tribes from South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Washington, Nebraska and Western Minnesota are invited to participate in this important event.

Registration is now open. For questions about registration and exhibitor/sponsorship opportunities, please contact Kim Tilsen-Brave Heart at kimtilsenbh@gmail.com.

USDA Rural Development invests in housing, water and wastewater, rural small businesses, renewable energy, and broadband. To learn about Rural Development programs, visit www.rd.usda.gov/sd.
The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks signed a cooperative agreement with the Oglala Sioux Tribe earlier this week in Rapid City. The occasion marks the completion of a project to formalize cooperative operations between the Tribe and State. The signing is the third cooperative tribal agreement to be put in place in state history.

On Tuesday, May 2, Game, Fish and Parks Secretary Kelly Hepler met with Harold Salway, the director of Oglala Sioux Parks and Recreation Authority, to sign the agreement which will allow the state and tribe to address issues of mutual concern quickly. The agreement gives state and tribal wildlife counterparts formalized processes to share information, coordinate resources and better manage shared natural resources throughout Oglala Lakota, Jackson and Bennett counties.

"I thank the Oglala Sioux Tribe for partnering with the state in a historic way. The sound management of our natural resources is something we all have an interest in, and this is an example of how we are working together to achieve that," Gov. Dennis Daugaard said.

The new development is part of a larger effort undertaken by GFP and the Department of Tribal Relations to further establish collaboration between the state and the tribes. The Daugaard Administration has also entered into agreements with the Lower Brule Sioux and Rosebud Sioux tribes.

"We appreciate the opportunity to work with our tribal partners and we look forward to continuing that partnership to ensure that our natural resources will be preserved for generations to come," Secretary Hepler said.
The South Dakota Department of Education’s Office of Indian Education (SD OIE) invites you to submit a proposal to present at the 2017 Indian Education Summit. The 14th annual summit will be held at Pierre’s Ramkota Conference Center, September 24th – 26th, 2017. Speaker presentations will be scheduled to take place Sunday evening through early Tuesday afternoon.

Each year, education professionals from across the state and around the country attend this summit to access high quality professional development, information on the latest trends and proven best practices in the field of Indian education. We seek to showcase successful projects, programs and initiatives for all ages, from preschool to postsecondary.

Preference will be given to proposals addressing one or more of the following strands:

- Achievement
- Culture and Language
- Success from Within
- Building Future Leaders

**Schedule/format:** Presenters may choose to lead one-hour or two-hour sessions. The first hour of two-hour sessions is to be informational, with the second hour an opportunity for attendees to work in small groups to develop action plans based on the information presented.

For more information, contact Marta Neuman:
- (605) 773-8194
- Marta.Neuman@state.sd.us
- https://indianeducation.sd.gov

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The Department of Social Services’ Division of Medical Services (DMS) outreached to each tribal chairman and tribal health director in May 2016 to schedule visits to learn more about tribal health services and identify opportunities.


DMS identified opportunities for tribes including: enrolling as a waiver provider to seek reimbursement for services already being performed by tribes including personal care, homemaker and adult-companion care; partnering with IHS Health Homes; ensuring all services eligible to be billed to Medicaid are being billed; increasing efficiency by using IHS billing software if available and centralizing billing to increase staff capacity.

DMS staff continue to work with tribes to support these efforts. DMS held the last Tribal Consultation meeting on April 6, 2017, the next meeting will be July 13, 2017 in Pierre.
USDA Invites Applications for Rural Business Development Grant

USDA Rural Development South Dakota Acting State Director Bruce Jones has announced the agency is accepting applications for the Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) program.

“This grant promotes long-term economic growth and community vitality in rural areas,” said Jones. “We encourage non-profits, tribes and public agencies to apply.”

The Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) is designed to assist with startup and expansion of small and emerging private businesses and/or nonprofits in rural communities. Eligible applicants include public bodies, government entities, Indian tribes, and non-profit organizations. Funds can be used for business incubators, leadership and entrepreneur training, acquisition or development of land or buildings, capitalization of revolving loan funds to be re-lent to local businesses and many other purposes – all to assist small businesses.

For example in 2016, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate (SWO), utilized RBDG funds for a market assessment of value-added foods in demand in the market area, plus a farm-level feasibility study for local food producers located in a poverty and StrikeForce area. “The RBDG was a very competitive grant and we greatly appreciate that we were selected and received funding from USDA. This grant will provide us the opportunity to conduct a feasibility study and marketing assessment of our locally grown products, which are our buffalo, honey, produce and walleye. This has the potential to open many doors for the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate and its membership,” said Ella Robertson, Planning Department Director for SWO.

Funds have been set aside nationally to assist Native Americans, and additional monies will be allotted among the states for non-set aside applicants. All grants will be awarded competitively, based on several areas including:

Evidence showing job creation to occur with local businesses;
Percent of nonfederal funding committed to the project;
- Economic need in the area to be served;
- Consistency with local economic development priorities; and
- Experience of the grantee with similar efforts.

Two pools of grants funds are available, the Native American set-aside and statewide funding. The first deadline is March 31, 2017 for the Native American grant funds. The second deadline is for the RBDG statewide allocation, estimated to be about $150,000 and the deadline for that grant is April 28, 2017.

Applicants are encouraged to contact a local Business & Cooperative Program Specialist or the State Office for more details about the application requirements and process.
The Indigenous Food and Agriculture Initiative (IFAI) was selected by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to provide Native American Outreach, Training, Technical Assistance and Education to ensure compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). The FSMA was passed by Congress in 2010 and the final requirements implementing the FSMA were put into place in late 2015.

The IFAI has developed a series of food safety webinars designed to help Native American farmers, ranchers and food producers to begin to understand the importance of food safety and what is necessary to reach compliance under the FSMA. Attendees will learn about produce safety, food-borne pathogens, worker health, wildlife, land use, post-harvest handling, and legal issues associated with food safety in Indian Country. This series is part of a two-fold effort to reach producers and food businesses. In the coming days, IFAI will launch a series of two-day in-person events in regional locations. Stay tuned for the announcement of these hands-on trainings.

Please use the links below to register for the webinars in this series. All presentations are free and open to the public, and each session will include time for attendee questions and discussion of issues with the presenter. Many of the presentations use Produce Safety Alliance approved materials and serve as an important preparation for attending in-person events.

Tuesday, Feb 28, 2 – 4 pm Central
Introduction to Produce Safety (Part 1)
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8864712168343522563

Thursday, March 9, 2 – 4 pm Central
Introduction to Produce Safety (Part 2)
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8135479540610317827

Thursday, April 13, 2 – 4 pm Central
Microbiology Basics (Part 1)
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2886616426887218435

Thursday, May 11, 2 – 4 pm Central
Microbiology Basics (Part 2)
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/448567171533965577

Thursday, June 8, 2 – 4 pm Central
The Intersection of Business Planning, Risk Management and Food Safety
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2817221850011820803

Thursday, July 6, 2 – 4 pm Central
Worker Health, Hygiene and Training
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4843329411863508622

Thursday, August 10, 2 – 4 pm Central
Wildlife, Domesticated Animals and Land Use
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/9021521873970463747

Thursday, Sep 7, 2 – 4 pm Central
Postharvest Handling (Part 1)
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4382652629569950531

Thursday, Oct 22, 2 – 4 pm Central
Postharvest Handling (Part 2)
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/513536320311304377

Thursday, Nov 9, 2 – 4 pm Central
Legal Issues in Tribal Food Safety (Part 1)
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/339407525632664323

Thursday, Dec 7, 2 – 4 pm Central
Legal Issues in Tribal Food Safety (Part 2)
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/9549097560489546563

Any questions about this webinar series or other FSMA trainings should be directed to IFAI director Janie Hipp (jhipp@uark.edu), Sandy Martini (smartini@uark.edu) or Dr. H.L. Goodwin (hgood@uark.edu).

Secretary Emery of the South Dakota Department of Tribal Relations spoke to the South Dakota Agricultural and Rural Leadership (SDARL) Class IX about Native American culture and its unique importance to agriculture in South Dakota.

SDARL is a private, non-profit organization created in 1999 and dedicated to identifying and developing leadership for agriculture and rural communities in order to enhance the quality of life for all South Dakotans. To ensure that the South Dakota rural and agricultural communities can keep pace with the rate of change, SDARL seeks to continue to supply informed, decisive, communicative spokespersons to represent South Dakota industry and communities, keeping the public factually informed, as policies are constructed and decisions are made.

Each class is composed of approximately 30 individuals who are actively involved in production ag or in agribusiness and participate in a series of 12 seminars over the course of an 18 month period.

Secretary Emery met with the most recent class during one such seminar in Lower Brule, SD. During the seminar, he gave a brief overview of his personal history as well as tribal history, he then took questions from the group ranging from historical topics to current agricultural projects. Secretary Emery said of the class, “I was impressed with the size of the class and look forward to seeing how the individuals participating in SDARL can positively impact all South Dakota communities.”

To find out more about the SDARL Program visit them at http://sdarl.org/.
The Value Added Producer Grant Program is a program designed to help farmers, ranchers, and rural business owners increase the value of products that they produce and expand their markets and customer base, strengthening rural America in the process. In doing so, these grants may be used to develop new projects and create additional uses for existing ones.

Grants may either be used for Planning Purposes such as developing business plans, feasibility studies, and marketing plans, or they may be used for Working Capital to help get a new value added business venture up and running.

One example of a Working Capital type of grant is a rural ag producer in Jackson County, SD, who was looking for an additional revenue stream to support his family ranching business. The ag producer found a knowledgeable partner and set up shop in an existing small facility where his heritage white corn is now being transformed into several different flavors of moonshine. The VAPG funds will be used in developing a website, pay for outreach marketing such as billboards and digital signage, and help to create a “brand” by utilizing unique bottles, labels, and logo designs.

One example of a Planning Purposes type of grant is a rural dairy farm in Hamlin County, SD, who was looking to analyze the best way to go about installing an anaerobic digester. The VAPG funds will be used to pay for the professionally developed business plan and will provide guidance on how to go about planning the digester.

All grant funds must be matched on a 1:1 basis. Matching funds may be in the form of cash or eligible in-kind contributions, of which the cash portion of the match must be at least 50%. The maximum award for a Planning grant is $75,000, and the maximum award for a Working Capital grant is $250,000. The maximum grant length is 3 years, and the work on an awarded grant must start within 90 days of the award.

In making grant awards, USDA is required by law to prioritize projects that increase opportunities for (1) small- and medium-sized family farms and ranches, (2) beginning farmers or ranchers, (3) socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, and (4) veteran farmers or ranchers.

If you would like additional information on the VAPG program, please contact any of the USDA Rural Development Offices in South Dakota.