

***This project respects and acknowledges the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Dakota, Dene, Oji-Cree and Red River Métis as the Traditional Custodians of the land and waterways on which this display stands.***

**Story Seeds: Cultivating Wellness and Depth through Indigenous Plant Traditions** is an exhibit that explores the better-known crops and plants domesticated, developed, and harvested by Indigenous people of the Americas. This knowledge is grounded in relationships: living culture, local narratives, landscapes, records, and material items that are all unique, and yet interconnected. It centers Indigenous women as knowledge keepers and celebrates the life experiences that support this wisdom. The roots of this work seed an appreciation for food systems that grow cultural narratives, family, and community. It is a foundation that invalidates the myth that history began with the arrival of Europeans. These biases are deeply entrenched in mainstream thought and **Story Seeds** presents educational resources that enrich our understanding. It fills in the gaps and builds on one-dimensional accounts that limit Indigenous experiences to bison hunting.

The depth of Indigenous history and knowledge grounds our living memories and local footprints. Winnipeg is a Cree placename honouring a lake north of the City where “win” is associated with muddy, murky and “nippee” means water. A community at the confluence of the Assiniboine and Red River’s, the Anishinaabe name “Miskwagama Sipi” speaks to the red-brown silt that is the DNA of this red water river. For the earth and all living things like plants, crops, animals, and people, water is essential. From carrying water to support life, to the composition of our bodies, to the river routes that were ancient highways. The exhibit presents an opportunity to build on these layers and remember our shared connections to water and land through agriculture, nutrition, and wellness. I hope it cultivates your curiosity. Please take time to explore the QR Map and perhaps take a road trip to the Kenosewun site, considered a gift of the replenishing Red River and surrounding resources.

As part of an ongoing movement to have Indigenous people’s unique contributions celebrated alongside other Canadian narratives and their experiences recognized, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released 94 Calls to Action in 2015. As such, archives, libraries, and museums are taking an active role in advancing the process of reconciliation. It is important that we define our narratives as Indigenous people and as a Métis artist and researcher, **Story Seeds** is an Action on my part. Weaving contemporary issues with ancestral storywork empowers me as a caregiver and feeds my spirit as an Indigenous woman. Our garden edibles provided nourishment during significant life stages involving pregnancy, birth, and breastfeeding and then became a source for food security when navigating peanut and dairy allergies in our children. These story seeds and traditions are embedded in our family culture and we love getting our hands dirty!

**Curated by Vanda Fleury**

**In partnership with:**

**With special thanks to:**

**Sarah Ramsden, Senior Archivist  
Archives and Records Control Branch,  
City Clerk's Department**

**E. Leigh Syms (PhD),  
Heather Komus,  
Jarad Buckwold, Jesse Green,  
Sylvie Berthelot-Dilk and Jonathan Rash**

**Colette Dufault, Customer Service Librarian  
Winnipeg Public Library**