

Lesson 11: Traditional Foods (Wóyute)

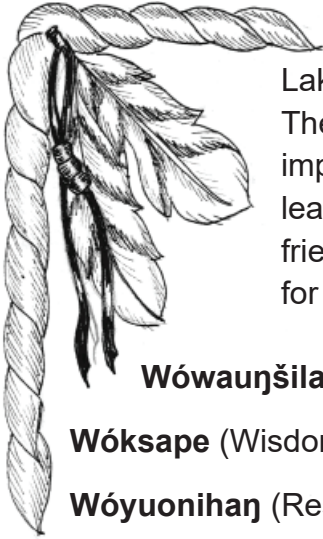
Traditions are passed from one generation to the next and are rooted in the customs and beliefs that we follow. Traditions are also rooted in the environment and surroundings where we live. Our elders were very skilled and had many methods to obtain food from their unique environment. The land, water, plants, and animals provided the nourishment needed to be healthy.

In this month's lesson, you will learn:

- Why eating traditional foods is important
- The 4 Food Way - proteins, fruits and vegetables, grains and starchy vegetables, and healthy drinks
- A way to help your family know how much to eat using My Native Plate

Lakota Values

For Wičhózaŋni Étkiya Lol'íwaħ'an (Cooking for Health)



Lakota Values are essential to balance, happiness, and everyday life. They are also linked to our overall health and well-being, choices we make, importance of eating healthy foods and portion sizes, diabetes management, learning about healthy foods, and promoting health and wellness to family, friends and others. Below are the Lakota Values as they relate to the Cooking for Health project.

Wówaunšila (Compassion) for my family and friends to stay healthy

Wóksape (Wisdom) to make healthier choices to live a long and prosperous life

Wóyuonihan (Respect) our bodies and the gift of food by eating healthy

Wóuŋšiičiye (Humility) to recognize the importance of my health and better manage my diabetes through good nutrition

Wówačhaŋtognake (Generosity) to promote wellness for my family, friends, and others

Wóohitike (Courage) to educate the truth about the dangers of diabetes and eating unhealthy foods

Wówačhiŋthaŋka (Patience) for me and my family to make healthy food choices



Challenge Yourself!

Set a Goal

Choose (kañníga) one of the goals below (or set your own) to try during the next month:

- ☐ I will talk to elders to learn more about traditional foods.
- ☐ I will eat meals using a 9 inch plate and will not stack foods higher than 1-1½ inches.
- ☐ I will make a plan of where and how to gather local fruits, berries, turnips, or mint when in season.
- ☐ I will make a recipe from this lesson.
- ☐ I will: _____



Why Eating Traditional Foods (Wóyute) is Important

The foods that we eat and nourish our bodies with have changed over time. Many foods that we purchase and eat today contain food additives or preservatives, such as sodium, fats, sugars, and food dyes, etc. Food additives can be easily recognized on the food ingredient list because they are usually the long unfamiliar names. The purpose of food additives is to keep foods from spoiling, give flavor, keep foods fresh longer, and to make foods look nice and appealing.

Food and water are essential to keep our bodies healthy and heal us when we are sick. Traditional foods serve this basic need. Traditional foods do not have food additives or preservatives. They are low in sodium (salt), fat, and sugar.

**Would your ancestors recognize the foods you eat today?
Reclaim sovereignty over your food by choosing healthier traditional options.**

Choose these alternatives:

- Wild Turnips (tinpsila)
- Wild Rice
- Chokecherries
- Wild Strawberries
- Dried Corn
- Buffalo (t̥hathánka)
- Deer (t̥háħča)
- Fish
- Mint Tea
- Chokecherry Juice





The 4 Food Way

The 4 Food Way uses the Medicine Wheel and reflects a traditional diet.

The traditional diet eaten by our ancestors consisted of meat sources (mostly buffalo) and was rounded out with vegetables, fruits, and other plant foods.

Protein	Fruits & Vegetables	Grains & Starchy Vegetables	Healthy Drinks
Traditional:	Traditional:	Traditional:	Traditional:
Buffalo	Chokecherries	Wild Turnips	Water
Elk	Wild Onion	Wild Potatoes	Mint Tea
Deer	Dried Corn	Wild Rice	Chokecherry Juice
Antelope	Buffalo Berries	Beans	Non-Traditional Alternatives:
Non-Traditional Alternatives:	Wild Strawberries	Non-Traditional Alternatives:	Lemon Water
Turkey	Wild Raspberries	Brown Rice	Lime Water
Chicken	Blueberries	Potatoes	Water Flavored with Natural Fruit Slices
Fish	Cranberries		Tea (no sweetener)
	Non-Traditional Alternatives:		Coffee (no sweetener)
	Carrots		
	Peas		
	Green Beans		
	Corn		

- **Tatanka** - the most important food source for the Lakota was the buffalo. Buffalo meat has less fat than beef. If overcooked, it can get very tough and hard to eat.
- **Canpa Sapa** – the Lakota name for chokecherries. Chokecherries were often dried for use in the winter months.
- **Tinpsila** – the Lakota name for the prairie turnip. The prairie turnip was gathered and dried for use in the winter months.
- **Mni** – Water is the first medicine of the Lakota. Water sustains life. Remember to drink plenty of water.

My Native Plate

Eating healthy is a key component to managing diabetes. Choose fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy foods at every meal, and try to drink and eat less sodium, saturated fat, and added sugars. My Native Plate is a different way to look at My Plate which has been covered in previous months/lessons. Both are tools to help you know how much to eat.

The My Native Plate diagram shows what a typical healthy plate should look like. Each section of the plate shows how much food from each food group should be eaten every day. Before you eat, think about how your plate compares to the My Native Plate guidelines.



Remember these 3 steps:

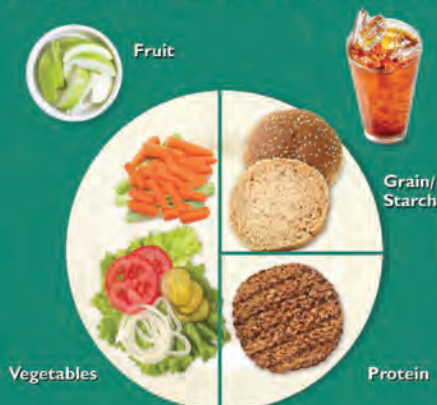
1. Use a 9 inch plate or 9 inch area of a larger plate.
2. Fill $\frac{1}{2}$ plate with vegetables, $\frac{1}{4}$ plate grains/starch, $\frac{1}{4}$ plate protein, and add a side of fruit.
3. Stack food no higher than 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches.



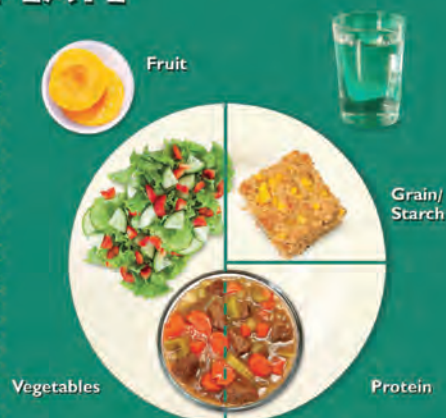
More Ideas for MY NATIVE PLATE



Pictured here: Yogurt with strawberries, salsa, scrambled eggs with zucchini, tortilla, coffee



Pictured here: Apple, carrots, celery, lettuce, tomato, onion, pickle, beef patty, bun, unsweetened tea



Pictured here: Peaches, salad, beef and vegetable stew, cornbread, water

Ways to Add Variety to Meals and Snacks

Vegetables and Fruits

Tips

- Stock up on fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables and fruits.
- Keep fruits and vegetables on hand for snacking.
- Plan some meals around a vegetable main dish, such as a stir fry, stew, or soup.
- Enjoy fruit as a dessert.

Examples

Vegetables: Wild greens, tomatoes, carrots, leafy greens, zucchini, avocados, broccoli, green beans, cucumbers, onions, peppers, okra

Fruits: Berries, melons, apricots, peaches, citrus fruits, bananas, apples, pears

Proteins

Tips

- Choose fish, beans, lentils, eggs, and nuts more often to cut down on meat.
- Instead of a beef patty for your burger, try a veggie, black bean, turkey, soy, or bison patty.
- Grill, stew, or bake meat instead of deep frying.
- If milk upsets your stomach, try yogurt, lactose free milk, or soy milk.

Examples

Animal proteins: Fish, wild game, bison, poultry, mutton, beef, pork, eggs

Plant proteins: Beans, lentils, nuts, nut butters, seeds, tofu, soy products

Dairy proteins: Milk, lactose free milk, yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese

Grains and Starches

Tips

- Choose whole grain foods, such as whole wheat breads, corn tortillas, oatmeal, and wild or brown rice.
- Try whole wheat flour instead of white flour.
- Add wild or brown rice to main dishes, such as a stir fry, stew, or soup.
- Bake or roast potatoes instead of deep frying.

Examples

Grains: Pastas, breads, crackers, rice, oats, quinoa, barley, cereals, tortillas, flour, cornmeal

Starchy vegetables: Potatoes, corn, green peas, winter squash

Produced by the IHS Division of Diabetes Treatment and Prevention
For more information and materials, visit www.ihs.gov/diabetes
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Tip to add calcium and vitamins:

- Add a glass of low-fat milk
- Add a slice of cheese
- Top fruit with low-fat yogurt



Why Others Feel Eating Traditional Foods (Wóyute) is Important...

“The buffalo and other keystone species of the prairie provided the exact micronutrients that we needed to be healthy. Contemporary foods like we buy at the grocery store...easy foods, like pizza, lasagna, Banquet chicken and etc. are not as healthy and filled with preservatives.”

“Buffalo (tḥatḥánka) is lower in cholesterol than beef and what our bodies were used to before other foods came along. Our bodies were used to a lean diet versus the higher fat diet and processed foods that are eaten today. The processed foods diet is the root cause of our modern ailments.”

“Growing, preparing and eating traditional foods brings so much pride to an individual. It helps you to connect with our ancestors and culture.”



Challenge Yourself!

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Ceyaka (Mint) Tea

Ingredients

- ¼ cup dried crushed ceyaka (mint)
- 3 cups boiling water
- ½ cup honey
- 5 cups ice water

Nutritional Information

Calories 63.8

Total Fat 0.0g

Sodium 5.6g

Total Carbohydrates 17.3g

Protein 0.1g

Instructions

Place 3 cups of water in a sauce pan with ¼ cup of dried crushed cayaka and bring to boil. Once it begins boiling, let boil for 10 minutes or until the water turns a green color. Pour through strainer (to separate loose ceyaka) into pitcher and stir in honey. Add ice water and serve.

Wild Mint

Wild mint or ceyaka is often infused to make a traditional tea. This tea is sweetened using honey and often used for medical purposes. Ceyaka is found growing along creeks and other waterways. Ceyaka is best harvested until mid-August. Ceyaka can be utilized while fresh or dried for later use.

Did you know?

Wild mint can be used to treat colds and upset stomachs.



Chokecherry Patties

Ingredients

- Ripe Chokecherries

Nutritional Information

Calories per serving 97

Protein 1.8g

Total fat 1g

Sodium 3g

Total Carbohydrates 20.2g



Instructions

Grind whole chokecherries, including pits until it is a fine consistency. Using about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of chokecherries, shape into round, thin patties. Place patties in a dehydrator; leaving $\frac{1}{2}$ inch space between patties. Chokecherry patties will take 12-16 hours to dry. Flip patties every 2-3 hours to ensure even drying.

Chokeberries

Traditionally, chokecherries were a very important part of the Native Americans' diet. Chokecherries are collected in the fall when the berries ripen. The berries are high in vitamins A and C. There are many uses for the chokecherries. Chokecherries can be dried into patties and consumed later. Chokecherries are also used in the making of Wasna and Pemmican. Chokecherries can also be used to make syrups, jams and jellies. The bark was mainly used for medicinal purposes.



Did you know?

Chokecherries have a medical use. Chokecherries can be used as an astringent for coughs and colds and can be used to treat digestive problems.

Make Your Own Wasna

Ingredients

- 2 cups shredded beef or bison jerky
- 1 cup chopped tart berries (chokecherries, sour cherries, or cranberries work best)
- 6 Tablespoons beef tallow or vegetable shortening

Nutritional Information

Calories per serving 83.5

Total Fat 5.3g

Cholesterol 20.0 mg

Sodium 16.0mg

Potassium 94.5mg

Total Carbohydrates 0.8g



Instructions

Shred the jerky and berries in a food processor. Mix in tallow or shortening and stir until well incorporated. Form the mixture into patties and dry in a dehydrator or refrigerate and eat within 3 days.

Wasna

The Lakota diet was high in protein and often the tribe either had much food to eat, such as after they killed a buffalo, or very little. One of the traditional recipes that the Lakota have passed through the generations is Wasna. Wasna derives from “wa” meaning “anything” and the “sna” meaning ground up. Non-Lakota people sometimes refer to it as Pemmican. This dish consists of dried buffalo, dried berries, and fat or bone marrow. Early Lakotas would grind the ingredients together with pounding a stone. Wasna is often seen as a sacred food and was often used in ceremonies and rituals. It also has less cholesterol, yet a mere four ounces provides more protein than half a dozen eggs. Wasna, because of protein it contains, can raise a person's iron level within 15 minutes. Today, Lakota people believe their ancestors did not suffer from diabetes, heart disease, or cancer due to the healing powers of Wasna.

Tinpsila Wasna

Ingredients

- 2 cups wild turnips
- 4 Tablespoons kidney fat (buffalo or choice of wild game)



Instructions

Harvest turnips in early June or soak dried turnips for two days in water. Shred or grind the turnips to the desired texture. Render the kidney fat in a skillet and add to the ground turnips or break pieces of kidney fat and add to the ground or shredded turnips. Add these two ingredients to your desired consistency, or about 80 percent turnips and 20 percent kidney fat.

Tinpsila

Tinpsila Wasna is one of the four types of Wasna.

Tinpsila (wild turnip) is harvested in early June when the wild turnip flower is visible. After it is picked, the wild turnip flower is put back in the soil to ensure a regrowth for the next year. The Tinpsila is then peeled and either dried or used



right away for Wasna. If it is dried and used for a later day, the Tinpsila bulb is usually soaked in water for two days before it is either grated or ground for Wasna.

Did you know?

One bulb of Tinpsila (wild turnip) contains the same amount of potassium as 3 whole bananas.

Papa Wasna

Ingredients

- 2 cups of ground, dried meat
- 4 Tablespoons kidney fat or rendered fat

Nutritional Information

100 grams of raw buffalo (95%) lean has a total fat of 4.6g

127.94 kcal calories

54.76mg of cholesterol-- all which is significantly lower when compared to beef, pork, turkey and chicken

Buffalo has a total of 20.77g of protein which is more protein than beef, pork, turkey and chicken



Instructions

To dry the meat, first fillet thin layers of raw meat while rolling the meat and cutting as you move along. Once you get a thin layer of meat cut out, hang your fresh meat over a line or pole and dry in a cool dry place. Lightly salt and turn once a day. When the meat is completely dry, grind meat to desired texture, but you usually want some fluff to the meat. Once the dried meat is ground to the desired texture, add kidney fat to the dried meat, mixing as you add the fat.

Papa (dried meat) Wasna

Papa is one of the four types of Wasna. Traditionally, dried meat was used in most traditional foods for the Lakota. Throughout the year, dried meat was constantly stored, maintained and almost always readily available. Papa Wasna is one of the four types of sacred Wasna utilized in many Lakota ceremonies.



Did you know?

Long ago, the Lakota use to have a game with the children to soften the dried meat in preparation for Wasna. Elders would lay the dried meat on a hide and cover with a thin layer of hide while the children would continuously jump up and down on the hides, which softened up the meat for Wasna.

Corn Wasna

Ingredients

- 1 cup of ground roasted corn
- 4 Tablespoons kidney or rendered fat



Instructions

Grind the roasted corn kernels with a food grinder, or a stone grinder into a fine powder. Add in kidney or rendered fat to the mix. Work in the mixture with your hands. The corn Wasna can be stored in a container for a later use.

Papa (wagmiza) Wasna

Stove top roasted corn kernels are ground into a fine powder. After it is ground down, rendered kidney fat is added to give it flavor. Modern versions include the addition of: cornmeal, raisins, and sugar to add flavor and sweetness to today's ever-changing taste palate. This form of Wasna can be used right away or stored for later use. Wagmiza Wasna is one of the four types of sacred Wasna utilized in many Lakota ceremonies.

Did you know?

Corn Wasna is a great source of dietary fiber, iron, and phosphorous. It also contains complex carbs and other nutrients, and they can help prevent diseases like diabetes, heart disease and some cancers.

Buffalo Minestrone

Serves 6

Ingredients

- 1 pound ground buffalo
- ¼ cup chopped prairie onions
- 1 clove garlic crushed
- 1 cup shredded cabbage
- ½ cup uncooked elbow macaroni or broken spaghetti
- 1¼ cups water
- 2 cubes beef bouillon
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 2 stalks celery, thinly sliced (approximately 1 cup)
- 1 medium zucchini, sliced (approximately 1½ cups)
- 1 can (28 ounces) whole tomatoes, undrained
- 1 can (8 ounces) kidney beans, undrained
- 1 can (8 ounces) whole kernel corn, undrained
- Grated Parmesan cheese

Nutritional Information

Calories per serving 184

Protein 22g

Total Fat 3g

Sodium 721mg

Total Carbohydrates 19g



Instructions

Cook buffalo, onion, and garlic in Dutch oven over low to medium heat stirring occasionally until buffalo is brown; then drain. Stir in remaining ingredients except cheese, breaking up tomatoes. Bring soup to boil, reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until macaroni is tender. Serve with Parmesan cheese.

Prairie Onion

The prairie onion can be used fresh or it can be dried and saved for later use. Plains tribes, particularly the Lakota, used prairie onions to flavor soups. The onion has more of an intense flavor the longer it is left to grow. However, they become more bitter once they begin to flower.

Did you know?

Prairie onions help with healthy cholesterol levels and also provide high anti-cancer sulfur compounds.

Lakota Skillet Bread (Gabubu Bread)

Serves 6, one 4" round piece of bread per serving

Ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 1 Tablespoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 Tablespoon canola oil
- ¼ teaspoon sugar
- 1 ½ cups 1% milk



Instructions

Mix all the dry ingredients together. Make a small well in the middle of the flour and add the milk and oil. Mix together slowly and gently. You may need to add a little more flour to mix the dough until it is easy to handle. Separate dough into six balls.

Fry bread one piece at a time using a non-stick fry pan with 1 Tablespoon canola oil. Flatten dough with your hands, lay dough flat in hot, greased pan. Fry on low until golden brown. Flip dough and fry other side until golden brown, adding more canola oil as needed.



Chef's Notes

Tip: Grease your hands with canola oil when you handle the dough. It will keep the dough from sticking to your hands.

Quick Roast with Veggies

Ingredients

- 4 pounds buffalo roast
- 1 onion, diced
- 5 carrots, sliced ¼ inch thick
- 5-7 medium potato, chopped in squares
- 5 stalks of celery, sliced 1/3 inch thick
- 1 Tablespoon beef base

Nutritional Information

Calories per serving 250

Protein 33g

Total fat 3g

Sodium 103mg

Total carbohydrates 22g

Serves 13

Nutritional Value of a Buffalo

Prairie onions help with healthy cholesterol levels and Calories-A 100 grams serving of bison meat- about 3.5 ounces, or about ¼

pound contains about 146 calories. This makes it one of the lowest calorie meats. A similar serving of lean beef contains about 176 calories, while pork contains about 218 calories and turkey contains about 149 calories.

Fat and Cholesterol-One serving of buffalo meat contains 7.21 grams of fat, and about 55 milligrams of cholesterol. To put that in perspective, the same size serving of 90 percent lean beef contains about 10 grams of fat and about 65 milligrams of cholesterol.

Instructions

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Place buffalo roast in roaster with lid. Place 1 inch of water in the bottom of the roaster. Sprinkle roast with black pepper and place diced onions over the top of the roast and in the water. Add beef base to water after the roast has cooked for 1 ½ hours, place carrots, potatoes, and celery in the water and cook for another hour, until roast is completely cooked.

Buffalo

Over 1 million Native Americans shared the land of North America with the buffalo. The buffalo were very important to Native Americans and to their survival. Native Americans used every part of the buffalo as a source of food, clothing, and shelter. Native Americans treated the buffalo with respect, and the buffalo was very sacred to them. There were many traditional uses for the buffalo. Native Americans use buffalo bones for arrowheads, eating utensil, knives, shovels, and war clubs. Buffalo fat was used for soaps, tallow, and hair grease, among other things. Buffalo hair was used for braided ropes, headdresses, pillow fillers, and moccasin lining. Buffalo tails were used as fly swatters, knife sheaths, whips, and medicine. Buffalo meat was traditionally used primarily for consumption. Buffalo meat can be immediately consumed, dried into a jerky, or used to make Wasna (pemmican).



Quick Buffalo Stew



Ingredients

- 2 pounds ground buffalo
- 2 cans (16 ounces) mixed vegetable
- 2 cans (16 ounces) chopped tomatoes
- 2 cups elbow macaroni uncooked
- 6 cups water

Instructions

In a large soup pot, cook ground buffalo between low and medium heat. Stir until brown. Add water, macaroni, vegetables, and tomatoes. Stir ingredients together and season to taste with salt and pepper. Reduce heat and simmer until macaroni is completely cooked.

Buffalo

Buffalo meat has a very little fat compared to beef or pork. Buffalo meat can be expensive. Since buffalo has less fat, there is less waste when compared to other meats. Buffalo will also cook faster, since it has lower fat content. Buffalo should be cooked at lower temperatures to keep the meat from becoming tough. When cooking buffalo, the drier the cooking method, the more tender the meat will be. Cooking methods such as boiling, roasting, and grilling are most ideal. Buffalo can be substituted for beef in recipes.

Did you know?

Buffalo is very nutrient dense food. It is an excellent source of protein, vitamins B12 and B6, as well as iron and zinc.

Nutritional Information

Calories per serving 167

Protein 22g

Total fat 2g

Sodium 266g

Total Carbohydrates 14g

Papa Soup (Dried Meat Soup)

Serves 8

Ingredients

- 6 pieces of Papa (dried meat)
- ½ string of tinsila (turnips)
- 2 cups of dried corn
- 1 onion, diced
- 6 potatoes, diced
- 5 quarts of water
- Salt and pepper to taste

Nutritional Information

Calories per serving 173

Protein 21.5g

Total fat 1.0g

Sodium 40g

Total Carbohydrates 33.8g



Instructions

Soak tinsila and corn in water overnight. Boil 4 quarts of water. Add Papa, turnips, and corn. Cook until turnips are soft. Add onions and potatoes. Cook until potatoes are done. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Tinsila

Tinsila or wild prairie turnips are an important food for Native Americans in the Great Plains region. Tinsila is gathered every summer. The tinsila plant is dug, then the stem is placed back into the ground to spread the seeds. Tinsila is often braided and dried for later use in foods. Tinsila is used in many traditional foods, such as Papa soup.



Did you know?

Tinsila can be dried and ground into flour.

Wojapi

Ingredients

- Fresh berries or chokecherry patties
- Water
- Cornstarch
- Sugar, Splenda or honey

Nutritional Information

Calories per serving 42

Protein 0.5g

Total fat 0.2g

Sodium 1.8mg

Total Carbohydrates 10.4g



Instructions

You can use fresh berries or you can use chokecherry patties. Soak five patties in water overnight in order to make a small pot of Wojapi. Place the water and soaking patties onto medium heat and boil for an hour. Break apart the patties in the water as its boiling. Once they're all broken up, turn the heat down to low and add a little mix of corn starch and water to thicken the consistency of pudding. Stir constantly to avoid lumps.

Wojapi

Long ago, Wojapi consisted of ripened chokecherries and crushed tinsila (wild turnips). Our ancestors would only use the ripened dark chokecherries, so sugar wasn't needed. The crushed wild turnip was used to add thickness to the chokecherries, giving it a pudding like texture. Nowadays, we add sugar and cornstarch into our Wojapi for flavor and texture. Chokecherries contain the highest amounts of an antioxidant called anthocyanin, which studies have shown to reduce the severity of colon cancer by 80 percent. Numerous studies have shown that the antioxidants in chokecherries have huge health benefits for cardiovascular disorders, anti-inflammatory responses, colon cancer and diverse degenerative diseases.



Plums when ripe can also be used to make wojapi.