



Welcome to the DIGS

Debweyendon Indigenous Gardens

Debweyendon is the Ojibwa word for “Believe in it.” The activities taking place in the gardens support our caring for the Earth. We take ownership of our health by eating garden-fresh produce. Family and community are celebrated in the garden as we work together to tend to the growing plants. Young and old alike take delight in seeing the first seeds germinate from the soil. Lessons in nurturing and generosity become an integral part of us as we water and weed around the vegetable plants and then share the harvest with community members and elders.



Believe in it!

Every growing season KBIC-NRD rents out 20 tilled and fertilized plots, 10’ x 30’, to community members. Vegetable seed, young plants, water, and gardening guidance are all provided to participants.



Honey Bee Hives

The Manidoosheg — *the little spirits* — are the beneficial insects who give so much to support the health of all ecosystems. At the DIGs, three active honeybee colonies gather nectar from the flowering plants and concentrate it to honey. Along with many other native bees, the honeybees effectively pollinate the many flowers blossoming in the garden. The manidoosheg also offer us many opportunities for meaningful learning experiences with youth.



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Food Sovereignty Initiative

The DIGS Community Garden ~
Hoop House ~ Small Fruits Garden ~
Fruit Tree Orchard ~ Beehives



Food Sovereignty is broadly defined and specifically described in novel ways – it is place-based, people-based work that seeks to remedy the many impacts and disparities caused by modern food systems. The KBIC gardens contribute to community-inspired solutions.

The Indigenous peoples of North America were once the healthiest people on the planet and our food sovereignty projects serve to support the journey forward to reclaiming good health — for people and the land.

DIGs Located at 16037 Brewery Road in L’Anse, Michigan

Hoop House



In 2012, as part of an Ojibwa Permaculture Project, the community and demonstration garden began along Brewery Road. The goal was to create opportunities for the community to grow and preserve their own organic, nutritional foods for themselves, their loved ones, and for the local markets. The hoop house enables many veggies to come to full maturity in our northern climate. Strawberry plants growing inside the hoop house yield earlier harvests.

Projects at the DIGs aim to promote food sovereignty, strengthen well-being and cultural identity, and sustain knowledge for future generations. Surrounding the hoop house are over 20 beautiful crop-filled plots, a 3-Sisters garden and our own salsa garden.



Small Fruits Garden



Our small fruits garden is planted with strawberry, blackberry, raspberry patches and blueberry bushes within a fenced area to protect them from browsing wildlife. Grapes and asparagus border the north end of the Community Garden Plots. The fruits we harvest are used in preparing delicious recipes for our community events. These fruits supply us with important vitamins and nutrients vital to good health and building immunity. The many dark-skinned fruits native to this region are rich in health-giving antioxidants, protecting against chronic diseases and leaving us feeling clear, strong and energized.



Fruit Tree Orchard

Apple, pear, plum, cherry, chokecherry, aronia and serviceberry trees are planted in the fruit tree orchard. As these trees mature we expect to enjoy abundant harvests to share with community members. We continue to evaluate our plantings and consider options for other promising fruits to include in the orchard. Thanks to the vision of staff working for the Natural Resources Department, coordination with other tribal departments, and collaborations within the Community, the creation of the DIGs was possible.

