

The Indigenous Insight-er

February Newsletter

2008

Indian Education Department

NATIVE FOOD: WASNA— PEMMICAN

Pemmican or wasna is a concentrated food consisting of dried pulverized meat, dried berries and rendered fat. It was invented by the native peoples of North America and widely used as a high-calorie food. Properly packaged, it can be stored for long periods of time.

The specific ingredients used in pemmican were whatever was available. The meat was often bison, moose, elk or deer. Fruits such as cranberries, saskatoon berries, cherries, currants, chokecherries and blueberries were also used.

The highest quality pemmican is made from lean meat and bone marrow fat; the pemmican buyers of the fur trade era had strict specifications.



Inside this issue:

Wasna info	2-3
Round Dance	4
Honoring Our Youth Pow Wow	5

Special points of interest:

Youth Conference is taking place on April 18th, any questions regarding the conference please feel free to contact Kathy Sharbono.

Reasons to try Wasna

- One ounce of wasna contains 8.5 grams of protein, 9.5 grams of fructose, and is 100 calories.
- Wasna can raise your iron level within 15 minutes.
- Buffalo meat has 1.44 times as much iron per ounce than beef, and 70% to 90% less fat than beef.
- Buffalo meat has an average of 50% less cholesterol.
- A small 0.4 ounce portion of buffalo meat has more protein than 6 eggs.
- A long time ago, when the Lakota people ate wasna daily, they never had diabetes, heart disease, or cancer.

Modern twist on Wasna

Native American Natural Foods, based in Kyle, launched its first nutritional product, the Tanka Bar, in October. Demand for the product has been phenomenal, and the company has been scrambling to supply enough Tanka Bars to meet that surging demand.

The Tanka Bar is an energy bar made of dried bison meat and dried cranberries. It's based on a traditional Native American staple called wasna. It's healthy, natural, high in protein and low in carbohydrates. Yet it has a sweet taste and a soft texture that is nothing like the beef-jerky toughness that most people associate with dried meat.

And people just can't get enough of it. "The kids here have renamed it 'buffalo candy,'" said Mark Tilsen, president of Native American Natural Foods.

Excerpt taken from www.tankabar.com

Indian Education Department

1700 South Ave West
Missoula, MT 59801

Phone: 406-728-2400 ext
5046, 5045, 5046 and 5017

