Growing Together

What Paul First Nation learned from our compost bins, greenhouse and community garden

[Beyond The Bin 2026] [Nadia Paul, Paul First Nation Capital Projects]

Agenda

1. **Our story**
   Why we started
2. **Our composting bins**
   How we turn food scraps into soil
3. **Our greenhouse**
   How we grow food through more of the year
4. **Our community garden**
   How we grow and share together
5. **Lessons and how to start**
   What we learned and how we can help

What we built

In collaboration, Paul First Nation Capital Projects and Paul First Nation Health Services developed two 42ft diameter Geodesic Domes for the purpose of creating a Community Garden in one dome and Elder's Traditional and Cultural Medicines. Within the infrastructure housed in 20 ft container is our Batch Composter Drum to create fertilizer.

Composting bins

We have a Actium Batch Compost Drum that we use to compost chicken and bison droppings, and plans to collect organic waste,

Greenhouse

We have two 42 ft Diameter Artic Acres Domes with one GH a Community garden and the other an Elder Traditional and Herb Medicines .

Community garden

With a 1375 sq ft there are six beds with a perimeter extending around the dome. Members are given heirloom seeds and grow for themselves.

What we hope you take home:

We have the infrastructure and desire to incorporate Land base Teachings from the wisdom of Elders, gardeners and to our youth and those in wellness to establish a foundation in food sovereignty.

SECTION 1



Our story

Why we started and who made it happen

Land base Service models/Food Sovereignty

[1]

Community Garden Self contained ecosystem allows the community to be self-sustaining with yield from the domes extending the growing season to 9 months.

[2]

We are able to have Land base Seminars because of the infrastructure with one on Ithiga Berry Teachings and another on Sacred Tobacco harvesting.

[4]

Four seasons to collect organic waste from Wihnemne school, Chicken feces from PFN Chicken Coop Project and Bison droppings for our herd.

Why we started

Land base Healing

- *To provide an alternative healing to wellness clients to aid in their recovery.*
- *Food Sovereignty creation in supplementing community food necessities with harvest from domes.*
- *Land-base healing services models to use the land to reconnect people to their identity, culture, language and traditions.*

Composting Curriculum

- *Upcoming plans to teach students about composting in block of extra circular activities to make aware of opportunities.*
- *Gauge student interest in transferring organic waste from Wihnemne with hands on/demonstration of our Composter.*
- *Highlight benefits of composting and establish knowledge base foundation of various types of composting with intent to build a career in the community.*

SECTION 2



Our composting bins

How we turn food scraps into soil

How our composting works

1. Collect

Nitrogen based manure from chicken or bison

2. Mix

Manure, organic produce waste, hemp bedding, and leaves.

3. Turn

Allow mixture to turn in composter for roughly 72 hrs

4. Use

Create piles to further breakdown materials then utilize as fertilizer for community use.

What goes in our bins, and what stays out

Goes in	Stays out
Fruit and vegetable scraps	Meat, fish and bones
Coffee grounds and tea bags	Dairy, grease and oils
Eggshells	Pet and human waste
Leaves, grass and garden trimmings	Plastic, glass and metal
Hemp bedding and chicken feces	Treated or painted wood
Bison droppings	*Dead wood*

What worked for us



What worked

The composter accelerates the process of breaking down the materials.



What we changed

Collaboration with PFN Education to add curriculum for students to engage with their food waste and our composter.



Our tip for you

Build local capacity with local champions, youth leaders to create regenerative cycle food ecosystems.

SECTION 3



Our greenhouse

How we grow food through more of the year

Our greenhouse



Location

Paul First Nation

Size and type

42 ft diameter Geodesic Dome

What we grow

Fruits, vegetables, Tobacco, Sage, Sweetgrass

Who runs it

David Rain, Paul Shuchuk

What it gives the community

Food Sovereignty, Land base Teachings

SECTION 4



Our community garden

How we grow and share together

Who uses our garden



Elder

Share their wisdom and knowledge about what they've learn through their culture and traditions



Teachers

Facilitate student exposure to Community Greenhouses and infrastructure



Families

Participate in gardening, Land base Seminars and activities.



Land base facilitators

Create opportunities to incorporate Elder, Student, Teacher and Community members in LB teachings.

Each part feeds the next: our waste becomes soil, and soil becomes food



SECTION 5



Lessons and how to start

What we learned and how we can help

Lessons we would share

1	**Volunteer**	*Interest has to be based on passing of knowledge and experience*
2	**Protocols**	*Community must be invested for participation to thrive.*
3	**Planting & Harvesting**	*Youth is target audience as they have the time and curiosity*
4	**Composting**	*Waste management, food security/sovereignty, and education department to incorporate a curriculum composting*
5	**Evaluation/Feedback**	*Measure performance, gather feedback, make necessary improvements*

Who made it work

Annie Bird
(Health Director)

Secured grant for community to build infrastructure

Kristof Bostoen
(Capital Project Mgt.)

Oversaw and directed Project Management

David Rain
(Land base Coord.)

Secured contractors, helped develop design, main maintenance caretaker

Paul Shuchuk
(Maintenance Assist.)

Water plants, assist with maintenance duties, aids in events.

Nadia Paul
(PFN Housing)

Coordinating Waste Management, Education and Health services to work together.

Name
(Education Director)

Facilitating incorporation of Composter curriculum for Wihnemne School.

How we can help your community start



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Contact

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Thank you

Questions and discussion

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