

As you explore the garden, take a moment to think about the history of the food, the land, and the people. These traditional crops have fed generations of people at the Intervale and beyond.

St. Francis/Sokoki Band of the Abenaki Nation at Missisquoi and the Sacred Seeds Network, a project of the Missouri Botanical Garden and New Chapter Organics.

Open this brochure for an Abenaki Heritage Garden map.

Corn, beans and squash also complement each other nutritionally: corn provides carbohydrates, dried beans are rich in protein, and squash is a good source of vitamins. Each could be eaten fresh or dried for winter consumption.



THE THREE SISTERS

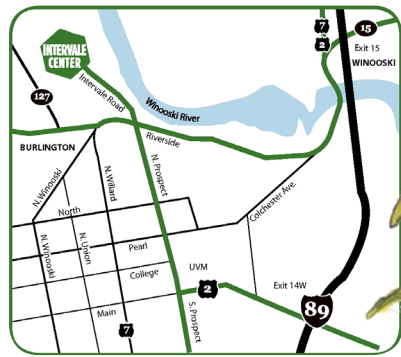
EXPERIENCE THE GARDEN

The garden is located at the Intervale Center, 180 Intervale Road, Burlington, Vermont

Visit: The garden is open to the public for self-guided tours during daylight hours. Guided tours are available by reservation.

Volunteer: We welcome community members and school groups to help with planting, weeding, harvest, and special events.

Contact: To volunteer or sign up for a tour, contact Rob Hunt at 660-0440 x106 or rob@intervale.org



PARTNERS

The Abenaki Heritage Garden is a partnership of the St. Francis/Sokoki Band of the Abenaki Nation at Missisquoi, Burlington Area Community Gardens, the Intervale Center, UVM's Environmental Program, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Friends of Burlington Gardens, Gardener's Supply, and the Sacred Seeds Network.

The **St. Francis/Sokoki Band of the Abenaki Nation at Missisquoi** is part of Vermont's Abenaki community. Our tribal headquarters in Swanton is home to the Abenaki Heritage Garden at Missisquoi, a Sister Garden established as part of this special partnership.

Abenaki Tribal Museum & Abenaki Self-Help Association
100 Grand Ave., Swanton, VT 05488
(802) 868-2559 • sogomo@comcast.net
www.abenakination.org

Burlington Area Community Gardens is a program of the Burlington Department of Parks and Recreation operating 11 Community Gardens sites around the city. The Abenaki Heritage Garden was initiated by the BACG Advisory Board.

Burlington Area Community Gardens
Department of Parks and Recreation
645 Pine St., Suite B, Burlington, VT 05401
www.enjoyburlington.com

The **Intervale Center** manages 350 acres of farmland, nursery, trails, and wildlife corridors along the Winooski River. Our mission is to strengthen community food systems. The Abenaki Heritage Garden honors the culture and agricultural tradition of the land we are proud to steward.

Intervale Center
180 Intervale Road
Burlington, VT 05401
(802) 660-0440 • www.intervale.org

UVM's Environmental Program
www.uvm.edu/~envprog/
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
www.nrcs.usda.gov
Friends of Burlington Gardens
www.burlingtongardens.org
Sacred Seeds Network
www.sacredseedssanctuary.org
Gardener's Supply
www.gardeners.com

Support for the Abenaki Heritage Garden is generously provided by New Chapter and Will and Lynette Raap.

Not all the crops were for food. Tobacco, a sacred plant used in ritual, was among the most important — and may have arrived before corn.

The woodlands and rivers of Vermont provided a wide variety of plants and animals that the Abenaki depended on for their food. Agriculture based on corn, beans, and squash made its way to the Champlain Valley from Mexico and the Southwest well before Europeans arrived. It took time and skill to select varieties of these southern species that could mature in our short summers. By 1,200 AD the Abenaki were growing a range of crops in fields by their villages, but still moving seasonally to hunt, fish and forage for wild plants. The agricultural crops supplemented the wild food and provided food security — especially during the winter.

AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE

ABENAKI & THE INTERVALE

ABENAKI HERITAGE GARDEN

at the Intervale in Burlington, Vermont

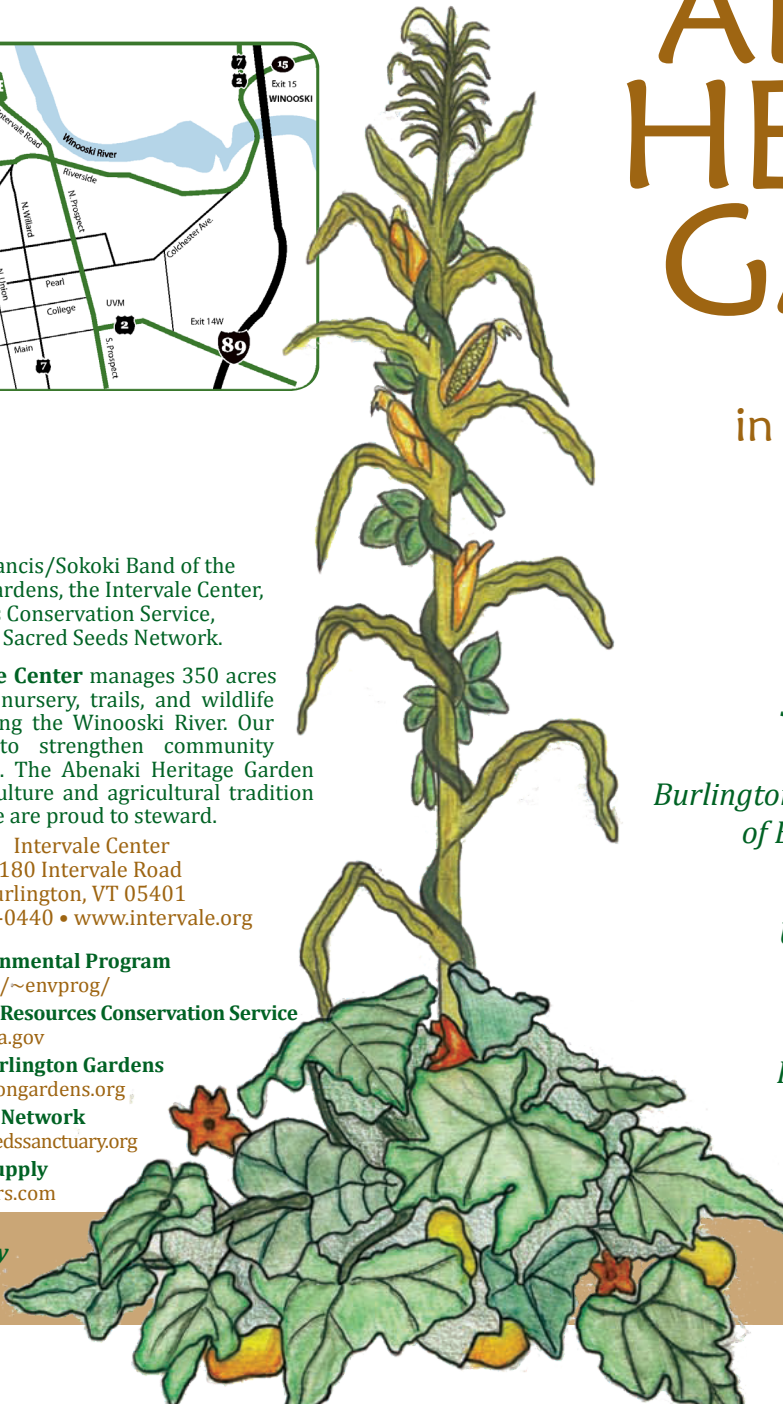
A partnership of:

- St. Francis/Sokoki Band of the Abenaki Nation at Missisquoi
- Burlington Area Community Gardens, a program of Burlington Parks and Recreation
- Intervale Center
- UVM Environmental Program
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Friends of Burlington Gardens
- Gardener's Supply

Proud member of the Sacred Seed Network



By about 5,000 years ago the ancestors of modern day Abenaki were well established in the Champlain Valley and at the Intervale. They were the western-most group of the Wabanaki Federation — Native American Algonquian speakers whose homelands included much of Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and Quebec. The earliest native people, the Paleoindians, arrived here much earlier, probably around 11,000-12,000 years ago. During the Woodland period, the Abenaki lived a life carefully tuned to the seasons. Part of the year they spent in villages located near Lake Champlain and the Winooski river. They moved seasonally in smaller groups to fish, hunt, and to harvest a wide variety of roots, berries, nuts, greens and fibers. They also maintained long distance trade networks with other Native Americans, traveling by birch bark canoes and dugout canoes. Archaeological evidence shows that Abenaki people were living seasonally very near where the garden is located today. Recent excavations have yielded a cooking hearth and pieces of tools and pottery.



ABENAKI HERITAGE GARDEN SELF-GUIDED TOUR

Please do not pick any of the vegetables, herbs, or flowers. The sweetgrass and tobacco are sacred plants and should not be touched or photographed. Thank you for respecting the garden!

THREE SISTERS PLANTING

The three main crops — corn, beans, and squash — are in hills much as the Abenaki would have planted their crops.

Discussions with Native American elders and research of the historical record indicate that although all Native American tribes planted in hills, different tribes had different strategies based on the local environment and the varieties of seed they planted. These strategies varied in the distance between hills, the size of the hills themselves, and the number and type of seeds planted in the hills.

The hills here are 24 to 30 inches in diameter and spaced about 6 feet apart on center. Each hill contains 4 corn seeds, 4 bean seeds, and 2 to 4 squash seeds.

The corn is planted toward the four directions — East, West, North and South. Beans are planted between the corn around the circle, and the squash is planted on the periphery of the hill.

The corn provides a natural pole for the climbing beans, which fix nitrogen on their roots, improving the overall fertility of the soil. The squash vines provide shade to keep the soil moist and inhibit weeds.

1 The Abenaki grew several varieties of corn. Popcorn was dried and stored, flint corn was ground for flour, and other varieties were eaten fresh. The varieties of corn planted here are **Roy's Calais Flint, Koasek, and Tom Thumb Popcorn.**

7 Sweetgrass and Tobacco are sacred crops.

8 Gourds

Beans are a multi-purpose crop that are used in many ways. They can be eaten fresh whole, shelled when slightly older, and dried once fully ripened. Dried beans can be stored throughout the winter.

2 **Jacob's Cattle** beans are growing on west side of the garden and **Wobenaki True Red Cranberry** beans are on the east side.

3

The nine varieties of squash grown in the garden represent different harvest times, use, and storage. The summer squash — **White Bush Scallop** and **Yellow Crookneck** — mature early and are used fresh throughout the summer. They are planted in the mounds on the north end of the garden. The winter squash are planted in the center mounds. These varieties — **Table Queen Acorn, Burgess Buttercup, Waltham Butternut, Boston Marrow, and Blue Hubbard** — are used when ripe and store well over the winter. The **New England Pie** and **Connecticut Field pumpkins** are planted on the southern-most mounds. They are usually sliced and dried for use over the winter.

4

5

6

9 Jerusalem Artichokes

WHAT'S IN THE GARDEN?

Roy's Calais Flint Corn is an excellent Vermont flint corn that was recognized by the Slow Food "Ark of Taste" as a historic variety worth preserving. It makes an excellent cornmeal, flour, or hominy. Roy's Calais Flint is an Abenaki native corn maintained by Roy Fair of Calais, Vermont and preserved by Tom Stearns of High Mowing Seeds.

Koasek Corn was grown in the Connecticut River Valley up and down river from Newbury during the Late Woodland Period, the Contact Period and into present time.

Tom Thumb Popcorn was bred by Elwyn Meader at UNH. The dwarf plants grow to 3 1/2 feet tall and produce one or two 3- to 4-inch long ears.

Jacob's Cattle Bean is an heirloom in the Pike and Clark families of Lubec, Maine. It came as a gift to them from the Passamaquoddy Indians of Maine to Joseph Clark, the first white child born in Lubec. This is thought to be a very old variety and possibly related to other similar Native American beans throughout North America.

Wobenaki True Red Cranberry Bean is one of the 1,186 beans given to Seed Savers Exchange in 1981 by John Withee and his Wanigan Associates. Wanigan is the Abenaki word used for the cook shacks on rafts which floated down the rivers of the Northeast during the spring lumber drives, where huge quantities of beans were cooked and served. This bean is thought to be original to the Connecticut River valley.

White Bush Scallop Squash is a very ancient Native American heirloom squash, grown by the North American Indians for hundreds of years. This type was depicted by Europeans as far back as 1591.

Yellow Crookneck Squash is one of the oldest varieties of squash, dating back to pre-Columbian times. It was introduced to colonial gardeners in the early 1700's by the Leni Lenape of the Delaware River Valley.

Table Queen Acorn Squash is similar to squash grown by the Arikara tribe from the mid-west. Accounts by an early naturalist of the squashes found in the Northeast include squash that would fit this description.

Burgess Buttercup Squash is thought to be derived from a Native American squash from the Northeast.

Waltham Butternut Squash is thought to have been derived from a Native American squash common the Northeast and Canada. This particular variety used the Canadian Crookneck as parent stock.

Boston Marrow Squash was originally obtained from Native Americans in Buffalo, New York. It is fine grained with a sweet flesh and has excellent eating qualities.

Blue Hubbard Squash is an old variety that stores well. It is most likely derived from New England squashes and is related to the Boston Marrow.

New England Pie Pumpkin is thought to have been derived from a small Native American pumpkin common to the Northeast.

Connecticut Field Pumpkin was a heirloom pumpkin of the New England settlers. It is one of the oldest pumpkins in existence. It was given to us by the Native Americans pre-1700.

Jerusalem Artichoke is a cross of two different sunflowers. It produces tubers that can be eaten much like potatoes. The tubers store well in the ground through the winter, so they can be harvested in the fall or spring.

Sweetgrass is an aromatic perennial grass that is sacred to the Abenaki. Its long leaves have a sweet scent that stays potent for many years when woven into braids or baskets. It is also used for smudging ceremonies, as a purifier, and some drink it as a tea.

Tobacco is a sacred plant grown for ceremonial use. Planting and care was the responsibility of men. They planted it in small fenced plots and dried both flowers and leaves for smoking.

Illustration by Jessica Avison

This garden was established in solidarity with the Abenaki Heritage Garden at Missisquoi, located at the Abenaki Tribal Headquarters in Swanton. The food grown at both gardens is distributed within the Abenaki community and greater Swanton area. For more information about the Sister Garden in Swanton, contact the Abenaki Self-Help Association at sogomo@comcast.net