

## **Save the Cayuga SHARE Farm: Support the Sovereignty of Native Nations**

*We hope this announcement finds you well. You are invited to support an online fundraiser to save the Cayuga SHARE Farm in the interest of the traditional* people of Cayuga (Gayogohó:nq' - People of the Pipe), a sovereign nation of the Haudenosaunee confederacy. It is an urgent need to ensure that Gayogohó:nq' traditional leadership of chiefs and clan mothers can keep SHARE Farm, the only land which they currently have stewardship rights to within their people's homeland. Donations made through Groundswell Center for Local Food & Farming will be used to ensure the farm continues to be a place for education, healing, and Haudenosaunee culture.

New York State still will not recognize Gayogohó:nq' sovereignty and the Bureau of Indian Affairs names Clint Halftown as the Cayuga Nation "tribal representative". Because of NYS and BIA's refusals to recognize Gayogohó:nq' as a sovereign people, Cayuga County is claiming, in spite of treaty law, 14 years of unpaid property taxes against the Cayuga SHARE Farm without notifying the traditional chiefs and clan mothers. The total amount demanded by the county is \$116,000. The deadline to raise funds in order to keep the farm is April 16th, 2021.

### **Why is keeping the Cayuga SHARE Farm so important?**

In the words of Cayuga Chief William Jacobs, "this is a wonderful thing for our people. It gives us a base and a place to call home where we can reestablish ourselves as Cayuga people".

The farm's 70 acres of land (compare this to the estimated 1.9 million acres that is the homeland- defined by Owasco Lake to the east, Lake Ontario to the north, Keuka Lake to the west and into what is currently Pennsylvania state to the south), rematriated in 2005, marks a historic land return event in the face of Cayuga Nation's denied land claim the same year. This rematriation was possible due to the monetary and organizing efforts of the SHARE (Strengthening Haudenosaunee-American Relations through Education) group. Bernadette "Birdie" Hill, Cayuga Heron Clan Mother, now passed, gave encouragement and inspiration to the members of SHARE.

Birdie told stories of her people thriving before George Washington ordered General Sullivan to burn entire communities, hundreds of acres of orchards and crops and to drive out the people during the Revolutionary War. The Cayuga SHARE Farm is near to the site of Goyogouen (Cayuga Castle, the largest Gayogohó:nq' community) and Great Gully, a sacred place of refuge for the Haudenosaunee. The farm became an important place of healing for Haudenosaunee

and Americans, and important for cultural and community connections with annual peach tree plantings in the orchard and big picnics during the strawberry moon (June).

Since the farm resides in a NYS-determined “reservation area”, the traditional leadership can and will use legal means to prevent the county’s tax claims in the future. But there is no future for the Cayuga SHARE Farm if we don’t raise \$116,000 by April 16th. If the farm is taken, Halftown could consolidate more power while the traditional people lose educational and cultural opportunities through another separation from their land. Indigenous sovereignty and government needs a homeland in order to function. Raising funds to pay off Cayuga County’s tax claim- which is actually not legally defensible, as taxing Haudenosaunee nations is against treaty law- is currently the only viable means to keep the farm. Having land is important for the Gayogohó:nq’ leaders’ continued efforts to gain recognition of their people’s treaty rights by NYS and the US, and the security of their cultural freedom as a sovereign people.

[~Donate here~](#)

[See the Cayuga SHARE Farm webpage](#)

- *Help promote the fundraiser campaign on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#)*
- *Join for events, workshops, performances, and demos related to connection with the land through April 16th, stay tuned for more*

*This fundraiser’s fiscal sponsor is Groundswell Center for Local Food & Farming! Groundswell is a 501c3 not for profit. Your donation to support this fundraiser and Save the Cayuga SHARE Farm is tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.*

[Learn more about Groundswell](#)