Native American Food

Native Americans were always very resourceful. For instance, they learned how to completely live on the terrain and everything on it alone, and they not only survived but thrived for so many years. They had different techniques that they used in everyday living. Part of their everyday living included eating, hunting, and how they obtained their nourishment. Native Americans mastered the ability to obtain food from the land, and preserve it.

One of the Native American’s main methods of obtaining food was hunting for game meat. They hunted deer and buffalo, as well as bear, moose, wild birds, rabbits, prairie dog, beaver, lamb, and pork (Indian.org 1). Most Native American tribes favored hunting buffalo, or bison. Most often, they would “get the buffalo to stampede off a cliff or into a pit” (Ducksters.com). This would make it easier for them to capture the buffalo, and then eat it, and use it for everyday life. When it came to hunting “deer, ducks, rabbits, and other animals” the “American Indians hunted using weapons such as the bow and arrow or using snares and traps” (Ducksters.com). When it was time for the Natives cooked the meat, it was “roasted over an open fire on a on a twisted string that rotated as it unwound like a rotisserie grill” (Miller 16).

Native Americans also harvested from plants on the terrain. They mainly learned how to grow and harvest corn which was a major source of food for them. The Natives made this type of
pastry with corn called Johnnycakes which was “thin batter or cornmeal, which was poured onto a hot soapstone slab” (Miller 17). On top of corn, Native Americans also gathered “wild berries, roots, nuts, and veggies” (Miller 14). They would then harvest maple sugar and maple syrup (Miller 14). They used this as a “sweetener and a preservative” (Miller 14) for everything they had gathered. It became so useful that they ended up “carrying this with them in small leather pouches when traveling” (Miller 14).

Once Native Americans obtained and hunted for their food they had to figure out ways that they would preserve it, and maintain it. Maintaining food was especially important for winter seasons. The natives stored their food in cache pits, or houses. Cache pits are “deep holes in the ground lined with grass and bark to keep corn and seeds dry” (Miller 16). This would allow the food to be kept in a safe place. When the pit was full, it “was covered and hidden so enemies couldn’t find the tribes food supply” (Miller 16). Whenever food was stored in houses, it was stored “in rafters and ceilings of houses, tribes stored pumpkins and squash that had been cut into strips and dried” (Miller 16). They planned ahead of time, they knew that storing food would come in handy during the winter where it is harder to obtain food.

Native Americans were a very skilled group of people who learned to thrive for many years. They lived around the world and environment around them and became masters at surviving. They obtained food they needed for survival in the smartest ways they possible could. They knew how to gather food, hunt food, and preserve food. Native Americans mastered the ability to obtain a healthy diet from the land, and preserve it.