

## Production

In the past, the goods that First Nations and Inuit needed in their lives were made by hand, mostly using stone and bone tools. People became very skilled at using resources in the most efficient ways. For example, the Innu used all parts of the caribou. The meat was used for food, the bones were made into tools, and the hides were used for shelter, clothing, and footwear.

In most regions, people travelled during the year to harvest or hunt resources as they became available. For example, in spring, many nations traditionally went to the coast or rivers to fish. In some nations, whole communities travelled together. In other nations, people travelled in smaller family groups. Within a group, everyone usually worked together on the most important jobs of the day. Men and women often did different jobs. For example, men would hunt, and women would prepare the meat and hides.

## ***A Part of Nature***

Even though there were differences in traditional economies from region to region, all First Nations and Inuit societies have similar beliefs about the use of land and natural resources. They believe that people and nature are not separate. Instead, people are part of a natural system that includes the land, water, plants, and animals. In this view, the land and natural resources are seen as the source of life and must be used wisely to ensure the survival of future generations. An important part of the traditional production of goods would often be prayers and other ceremonies to show respect and give thanks for resources. For example, it is an Innu tradition for the community to have a special feast called the *Mukushan* [mo-go-SHAN] after a successful caribou hunt. The *Mukushan* is held to honour the spirit of the caribou.

