



AmpleHarvest.org – Defining The Difference

AmpleHarvest.org – Defining The Difference (summary)	
Traditional Food Recovery	AmpleHarvest.org
Moves Food	Moves Information
Typically logistics heavy	None needed
Typically needs volunteers, staff, etc.	None needed
Typically organization driven	Individual (gardener) driven
Typically episodic	Seasonal, recurring, community based
Typically “have to have not”	Even food insecure pantry clients can donate
Food processed through a system	Food locally grown, donated, consumed

Elevator Speech: *Much as Uber and Lyft are information-based companies solving a transportation problem, AmpleHarvest.org is an information based nonprofit solving America’s hunger and food waste problems on a sustained basis. Learn more here:*

AmpleHarvest.org – Introduction

AmpleHarvest.org is a non-profit organization that runs a 50 state hunger/food waste program of the same name.



AmpleHarvest.org looks at hunger and food waste through a different lens to focus on the abundance of surplus food grown by 62 million home and community gardeners nationwide.

It built a nationwide public awareness program and a customized search engine to enable growers to act on the information, thus establishing without the need for storage, refrigeration, or logistics, a way for millions of Americans in need to get surplus freshly grown food.

AmpleHarvest.org is an information-based, cost efficient, brick-and-mortar free solution to hunger/food waste and diet-related disease. With AmpleHarvest.org, the cost of the food as well as the logistics of warehousing and moving it, the two most costly parts of traditional food programs, vanish as the gardeners grow, harvest and transport the food themselves. This

scalable solution does not incur the historically large costs of any other food program. The result is an extremely high ROI that is unmatched by any other similar non-profit.

AmpleHarvest.org has decentralized the food donation process by bypassing the regional Feeding America food banks entirely - with the full support of Feeding America and the food banks themselves - effectively “flattening” the supply chain. The AmpleHarvest.org solution engages legacy resources – America’s home and community gardeners plus the existing national food pantry network, and links them through a custom food pantry search engine to do what the centralized food bank network has been unable to do – utilize locally grown fresh food that otherwise would have been lost to waste.



In short, AmpleHarvest.org works because it leverages both the pent up supply of food as well as grower goodwill. According to a recent Cisco Systems analysis, once both are unleashed, growers are likely to continue donating their surplus produce for the rest of their gardening lives, which makes AmpleHarvest.org's impact systemic and sustainable.

AmpleHarvest.org – What it isn’t?

1. It is not a food pantry/bank program

AmpleHarvest.org does not feed people directly. Food pantry/bank type programs are in a never-ending costly loop of securing funding, acquiring (typically processed) food and then distributing the food. Rinse and repeat. While they do feed people, they do not address underlying root-cause issues nor is their focus on fresh food. AmpleHarvest.org is instead a



program that taps into the passion of tens of millions of gardeners who have always hated wasting their surplus food, and connects them with one of more than 8,000 local food pantries eager for that surplus. This sustained pipeline assures that the food gets to a hunger/feeding program without AmpleHarvest.org actually “touching” the food. Most importantly, it permanently solves the two information problems of gardeners who thought they could not donate fresh food, and food pantries that did not know that this food was freely available to them.

2. It is not a traditional food recovery program

AmpleHarvest.org does not actively recover, pickup or transport surplus/unused food from gardens, stores, restaurants, or farmers markets. However, many of these food recovery programs rely on AmpleHarvest.org's search engine to help them do their work. These programs are logistics heavy, meaning the cost of running these programs as well as the difficulty in building and managing a team of volunteers prevents them from scaling. Lastly, as conventional programs require teams of volunteers vs. AmpleHarvest.org's use of the individual gardener, AmpleHarvest.org is the only program with social distancing built into the solution.



3. It is not a gardening program

AmpleHarvest.org does not set up gardens nor teach people how to garden. Other programs, such as the USDA Extension Master Gardener program, do an excellent job of helping new gardeners learn how to garden. AmpleHarvest.org steps in after that point.



4. It is not a food drive

AmpleHarvest.org is not a collection point to which people can bring food (especially purchased food) for redistribution to food programs. Rather, it enables growers to directly donate their

surplus harvest to a local pantry as soon as its been harvested, and at a time that is convenient to the grower and on a date and time shortly before the pantry clients pick up food. This eliminates any need for refrigeration and storage.



Furthermore, the fact that food travels from the donor (gardener) to the hungry family (by way of the local food pantry) in hours, guarantees that the food will be "garden fresh" by the time it reaches the family.

5. It is not a peer to peer “food sharing” program

AmpleHarvest.org does not facilitate nor encourage people “sharing” food with strangers. While these programs do reduce the waste of food, they generally do not benefit hungry families. Plus there is no legal protection for the donors.

6. Nor is it a gleaning program

AmpleHarvest.org does not focus on farms where organizations bring in volunteers to harvest leftover food. It is instead focused on home/community gardeners that grow food for personal use. Note: During the crisis experienced by farmers during the COVID-19 pandemic, AmpleHarvest.org slightly repositioned itself to help smaller family farms unable to bring their harvest to market, to instead donate it just as gardeners do.



AmpleHarvest.org – What *Is* it?

It is an incredibly simple solution to hunger and food waste based on the idea that the problem isn't the food itself, but rather misinformation and missing information.

The AmpleHarvest.org model is an information and technology-based solution to a nationwide problem most people never knew about: the waste of over 11 billion pounds of surplus harvest from America's home and community gardens. Ending the waste of this locally grown fresh food dramatically decreases hunger and malnutrition on a permanent basis.



Until now, there has been no way to supply locally grown fresh produce into the food pantry network because the food bank network's hub and spoke design prevented acceptance of this food. The legacy system buys/collects packaged food, moves it to a centralized location (a regional Feeding America food bank), and then delivers it to pantries. The refrigeration, special trucks, and timely delivery required to supply fresh produce has been impossible under this model.

The AmpleHarvest.org model solves the problem by enabling gardeners to connect with local pantries to which they can deliver their own surplus harvest year after year. By “überizing” or flattening the process, the freely available food travels the least distance in the shortest possible time, to a food pantry within the community.

Harvesting and transporting the food to the pantry is done by the gardener. The ultimate distribution of the food to hungry families remains with the food pantry.

This simple solution addresses:

- Hunger
- Food Waste
- Malnutrition including diet-related diseases
- Climate change and wasting water
- Community Engagement



AmpleHarvest.org – Extreme Efficiency

As an information-based program, it incurs nearly none of the costs typically associated with traditional hunger relief programs:

- It does not have to buy food because the food already exists in the community
- It does not have to ship food because the grower transports the food directly to the local food pantry
- It does not have to refrigerate food because the harvesting, transporting and ultimate distribution of the food all takes place on a same day/next day basis
- It does not have to maintain office space in the communities it serves because the technology provides the necessary ubiquity
- It does not have to hire local staff because the work of growing, harvesting, and delivering is largely performed by both the grower and the pantry staff.

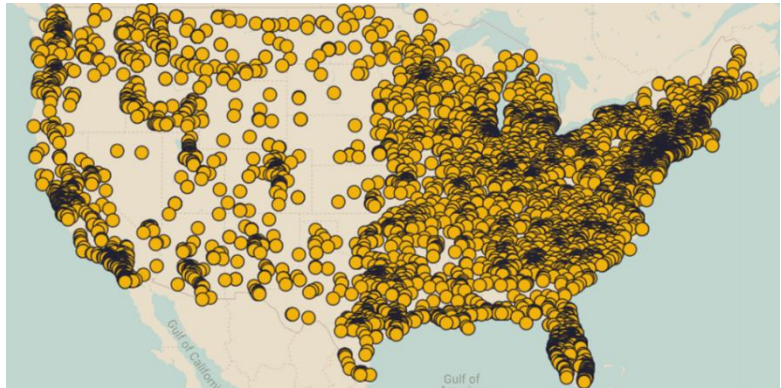


AmpleHarvest.org – A Scaled Viral Solution

Because AmpleHarvest.org operates as a cloud-based solution, it can scale to any community in “real time.” As of 2026, more than 8,600 food pantries in 5,700 communities (and now Native American reservations) in all 50 states have joined AmpleHarvest.org with more signing up daily.

Once a food pantry has registered, it can start receiving food from nearby growers in the harvest season as soon as it is verified by AmpleHarvest.org’s staff.

In addition to AmpleHarvest.org promoting the program nationwide through social and traditional media and byway of a massive Google marketing grant, posters and boilerplate press releases are provided to each food pantry to help them promote it locally. Additionally, a large scale partnership with Bonnie Plants and The Home Depot is providing critical outreach to the entire gardening community, both directly and through Point of Sale programs.



Lastly, as each gardener learns about their capacity to donate their surplus bounty to a nearby food pantry, many expand their gardens to grow more for donation, and they tend to share the news with neighboring gardeners, who in turn themselves start sharing it further. Like lighting one match in a pack of matches, it quickly spreads.

To better understand the impact of this scaling, a team from the Harvard Business School Alumni Association in early 2020 created a tool to illustrate the impact of this one of a kind solution.

For example, a one time \$100 donation to AmpleHarvest.org results in 206 lbs. of food donated in the first year. Because more growers learn from each other that they can donate, the second year, 278 lbs are donated, and this increases annually.

Impact of Donations to AmpleHarvest.org		\$ 100 <<Enter Donated Amount here				
Year Number	1	2	5	10	20	
Impact of a one time donation over 20 years						
PRODUCE DONATIONS						
Total lbs of produce donated - not wasted (each year)	206	278	684	3,065	61,625	
Total lbs of produce donated - not wasted (cumulative)		484	1,190	5,335	107,273	
Total value of produce donated	\$ 496	\$ 670	\$ 1,647	\$ 7,386	\$ 148,517	
NUTRITION						
Servings of produce donated - not wasted (each year)	823	1,111	2,734	12,260	246,501	
Servings of produce donated (cumulative)		1,934	8,194	44,936	948,436	



By the 20th year, 107,273 lbs worth \$148,517 will have been donated! This tool is publicly available at www.AmpleHarvest.org/ourimpact. Feel free to explore it.

With a donation to a conventional hunger/food waste program, most of the money is applied toward acquiring and distributing the food. Once consumed, the impact of that donation ends. More money is needed to acquire and distribute more food.

With a donation to AmpleHarvest.org, most of the money is applied toward connecting more growers to more food pantries. And as that happens, growers increasingly share this new donation opportunity with neighboring growers, creating an ever-expanding impact.

AmpleHarvest.org – The End Game

Ultimately, the future has all gardeners in America knowing about their opportunity to donate their surplus harvest to a nearby food pantry, and all food pantries in America being visible and accessible to any nearby gardener eager to donate their surplus harvest.

AmpleHarvest.org will never “end hunger.” For one thing, no one grows corn flakes or bread in their back yard. The American food bank system will always need a supply of commercially produced food to help sustain hungry families. Additionally, most gardeners cannot grow/harvest in the winter months.

It should be noted that AmpleHarvest.org scales in real-time to any community in the country. Because 80% of gardeners, once given the opportunity, want to donate their surplus harvests (and 50% will expand their garden explicitly for donation if they have the space), the sooner we make them aware of the possibility and the sooner a nearby pantry joins AmpleHarvest.org to create the opportunity, the sooner a permanent supply chain of fresh food is created. Our key need for support is to make that happen as quickly as possible.

AmpleHarvest.org's impact on America's food safety net is that it enables America's gardeners to reduce malnourishment on a vast and sustained basis using locally grown food harvested hours before hungry families get it. At no cost to the community or the country.



In closing, AmpleHarvest.org is the hunger/food waste solution that ensures America makes the most of the surplus harvests gardeners have historically wanted to donate but couldn't, thus helping their neighbors in need, for the rest of their gardening life.



ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION

Programs

AmpleHarvest.org has built a number of programs that complement and wrap around our core program to expand the reach and impact of our work. For example, while our core mission is educating and enabling gardeners to donate food, that same technology is used to enable hungry families to find a nearby food pantry likely to have locally grown fresh food.

All of our programs remain "true" to our mission while expanding its impact.

AmpleHarvest.org	Core program ending hunger/food waste by educating and enabling America's gardeners to donate surplus harvests to local food pantries
AmpleHarvest.org/Government	Special program specifically for mayors and county/state officials to more rapidly implement AmpleHarvest.org in their communities at no cost and without the need for new programming or legislation.
Faith Fights Food Waste	Educating and enabling clergy of <i>all</i> faiths to give food waste/garden food donation sermons
Crisis Response	Warm standby program to enable gardeners to help in major crisis (floods, tornadoes, etc.) after first responders leave
Healthy Pantry Search	Enables hungry families to find a food pantry likely to have fresh food in the growing/harvest season.
ProducePedia	Enables hungry families to learn about the food gardeners have donated.
AmpleHarvest.org in Indian Country	A special adaptation of AmpleHarvest.org's core program designed to meet the special needs/challenges of Tribal communities nationwide.

Learn More

[CNN Hero Videos](#)

[PBS's "Growing A Greener World"](#)

[AmpleHarvest.org TEDx Talk](#)

[Food Pantry "Thank You" videos](#)



AmpleHarvest.org

Gary Oppenheimer
 AmpleHarvest.org Founder/Executive Director
 -CNN Hero / World Food Prize Nominee-

gary@AmpleHarvest.org T:973-409-4093
 @GaryOppenheimer C:973-632-7568

"No Food Left Behind" 