



"Sharing your garden bounty with Neighbors in Need"

Backyard Gardeners vs Hunger in America

If you are like many other gardeners, it can feel like forever while you wait for your garden to start giving you tomatoes, cucumbers, carrots, squash, etc. – and then when they do come, they come with a vengeance.

You harvest your crop, eating some fresh from the garden, cooking some, canning some, and then giving more to your friends and neighbors. Then you harvest some more. Overwhelmed, you start to leave some of the harvestable crops in your garden where they wither and rot. No one needs to tell you, the people who operate food pantries, how difficult it is to meet the needs of your community today.

Meanwhile, nearly 50 million Americans (18% of the population) are hungry and rely on local food pantries to help sustain their families. And economic challenges are pushing more families closer to hunger every day.

It does not have to be that way.

Most food pantries are small operations housed in local houses of worship. They are often hard to locate - many don't have a web site or even a phone number. They make a best effort to help feed hungry families in the community, but all too often, not enough is on hand to meet the growing need.

Nearly all of the food available from a pantry is processed – canned fruit and vegetables, boxed cereal and pasta, packaged meat and cheese, etc. Fresh produce is rarely, if ever, available.

You can change that.

If you are a backyard gardener who harvests more fruit and vegetables than you need, the AmpleHarvest.org^(SM) campaign can help you diminish hunger in America by finding a food pantry near you.



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Created by CNN Hero Gary Oppenheimer, the AmpleHarvest.org Campaign^(SM) is a nationwide grass roots effort connecting millions of gardeners with thousands of local food pantries across all 50 states. With the support of the US Department of Agriculture, Google, the National Council of Churches, the National Gardening Association and many more, we are diminishing hunger, improving nutrition and helping the environment simultaneously – without costing the donor (you!) a dime.

We do this by asking you to reach into your backyard instead of your back pocket to help your neighbors in need.

Just because an apple has a slight blemish, the “red” peppers remained green, you are overwhelmed with tomatoes or you got tired of peas doesn’t mean they should be left in the garden to rot. If they are good enough for you to eat, they are good enough to share with neighbors in need.

If you know of a local food pantry (also called food shelf, closet, cupboard or food bank in some areas) or if you know backyard (patio, rooftop and window sill too) gardeners, please urge them to visit www.AmpleHarvest.org.

An estimated 100 billion pounds of food – enough to totally eliminate hunger in America, is lost annually to waste.

It does not have to be that way

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