

A Glimpse of **Gleaning** at Seattle Farmers Markets



A guide of best practices & creative ways
hunger relief programs can access farmers markets.

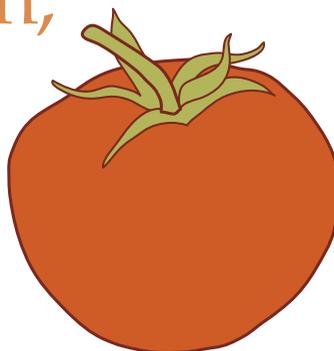
By Emma Kent

*MLK AmeriCorps VISTA at Jewish Family Service,
in conjunction with Ben Rasmus, Rotary First Harvest*

Introduction

- ▶ This *Guide* addresses a variety of creative ways in which hunger relief programs have used the farmers markets, some of the current challenges incurred and many resources available to create stronger gleaning programs.
- ▶ With severe cuts in the funding of social services on virtually every level, this is the perfect time to fully utilize resources at hand, especially those that have multiple values to our community. Farmers markets provide community education, reduce environmental impact and, at the same time, improve the food distribution system starting at the roots. In 2010, the Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance alone donated over 50,000 pounds (25 tons) of fresh produce to local food banks. Other Seattle farmers markets participated in gleaning efforts as well, with over 20 local food banks and meals programs being the recipients of this generosity.
- ▶ It may seem obvious that market gleaning is good for the vendors and good for hunger relief organizations. However, there are challenges in utilizing this program to its fullest. Understanding these challenges beforehand is essential if hunger relief organizations are to create consistent, sustainable relationships with their farmers markets.
- ▶ This *Guide* is a collaboration of work from Rotary First Harvest, Meals Partnership Coalition and Jewish Family Service, striving to streamline the gleaning process between farmers markets and hunger relief programs.
- ▶ As a long-standing member of the Seattle Food Committee and the King County Food Coalition; the Jewish Family Service *Food Bank* serves people of all denominations from Downtown Seattle to the Madison Valley (zip codes 98101, 98112, 98121 and 98122) as well as providing kosher food for those in the Jewish community who require it. On average, more than 1,500 different people are served each month — with over 300,000 pounds (150 tons) distributed on an annual basis.

Gleaning,
by definition,
is collecting
what remains.



Market Organizations

There are five organizations that operate 17 neighborhood farmers markets in Seattle:

1. Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance (seven markets)
2. Seattle Farmers Market Association (five markets)
3. Pike Place Market (three markets)
4. Meadowbrook (single market)
5. Queen Anne (single market)

Whether you are starting a new gleaning program or picking-up from the previous season's site, it is important that you first contact the appropriate market umbrella organization to confirm gleaning arrangements. Advanced arrangements with each market ensure that folks know when a gleaning group is scheduled, and make sure that there are not too many groups showing up for a single market. Some markets have groups that pick-up on a standby basis to supplement their regular food supplies. (This works well when you have a few motivated and flexible volunteers.) Markets tend to prefer to arrange gleaning with a single organization or a couple of groups for the entire season. This simplifies things for the food bank or meal program, the market organization and for the vendors themselves.

1. Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance

► <http://www.seattlefarmersmarkets.org/>

This is a community-based, state registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that operates seven farmers markets in Seattle: Broadway, Columbia City, Lake City, Magnolia, Phinney, U-District and West Seattle. The mission is to support Washington's small farms and farming families by providing effective direct sales sites and by educating consumers about local farm products and the benefits of buying direct from local farmers.

2. Seattle Farmers Market Association

► <http://seattlefarmersmarketassociation.wordpress.com/>

This Washington state registered non-profit operates European-style farmers markets in neighborhoods throughout Seattle: Ballard, Georgetown, Madrona, Interbay and Wallingford. These markets offer a wide array of fruits, vegetables, grains, legumes, meat, seafood, poultry, cheese & dairy products, baked goods, products made by local food artisans, prepared foods and local crafts.

3. Pike Place Market PDA

► <http://www.pikeplacemarket.org/>

The Pike Place Market Preservation & Development Authority (PDA) is a not-for-profit public corporation chartered by the City of Seattle in 1973 to manage the properties in the nine-acre Market Historic District. The PDA is required to preserve, rehabilitate and protect the Market's buildings, increase opportunities for farm and food retailing in the Market, incubate and support small and marginal businesses and provide services for low-income people.

4. Meadowbrook Farmers Market

► <http://www.meadowbrookfm.org/>

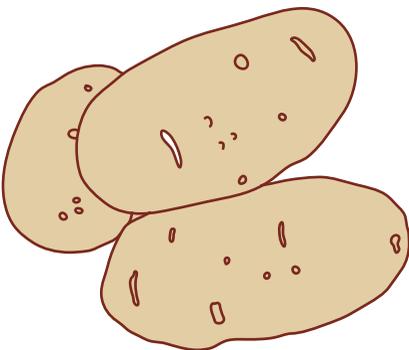
The Meadowbrook Farmers Market is a non-profit organization dedicated to cultivating a sustainable and healthy community by offering high-quality local organic and bio-dynamic foods, artisan goods and educational opportunities. The Market serves as an integrative model for youth and school involvement while providing support for the local economy and community development.

5. Queen Anne Farmers Market

► <http://qafma.org/>

This is a community organized independent farmers market. Queen Anne neighbors serve on the steering committee, staff and “street team” of volunteers who are also greeters, traffic guides and chef assistants.

For information on other farmers markets in King County and around Washington State, visit www.wafarmersmarkets.com.



“For the 2009-2010 market season, JFS gleaned over 8,000 pounds of food at a value exceeding \$20,000.”

– Carol, Jewish Family Service

The Eight Steps to Successful Market Gleaning

1. Market organizations are the first point of contact

- Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance
- Seattle Farmers Market Association
- Pike Place Market PDA
- Meadowbrook Farmers Market
- Queen Anne Farmers Market

2. Volunteers

- Recruit early
- Recruit a dependable group
- Prepare a flexible back-up list

3. Materials

- Vendor recruitment sheet
- Volunteer procedures
- Volunteer release
- Spreadsheet for recording poundage
- Google Docs

4. Logistics

- Transportation
- Parking
- Vendor preferences
- Gleaning estimation sheet*
- Meal program/food bank directory for extra produce

5. Nutrition

- Promote unfamiliar produce
- Create recipes

6. Communication

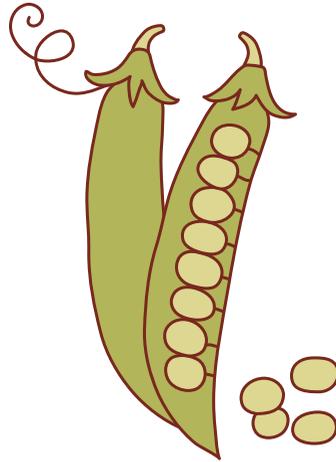
- Booth manager check-in
- Among volunteers
- Vendor pick-ups

7. Pictures!

- Document on Facebook
- Save for other programming
- “Thank you” for volunteers or as reminder for next season

8. Wrap up

- Gleaning poundage report or e-mail
- Vendor appreciation
- Volunteer party



* JFS plans to create a “*produce cheat sheet*” in 2011. To streamline produce pick-up and processing, the sheet will provide estimated weights for boxes of produce. If you are picking-up from a market this year and would like to contribute to this project, please contact Emma at ekent@jfsseattle.org.

Timeline

► 4 Months Prior To Market Start (Around January)

- Contact the market organization to determine if there will be opportunities to glean at their market(s), obtain necessary permissions and agreements as well as other pertinent information.
- Determine if the market schedule works with your food bank hours of distribution... will the produce last?
- Consider appropriate volunteers for this project (often a single, committed group works best).

► 3 Months Prior

- Contact the gleaning coordinator or market manager to determine particulars such as start/end dates, market location, times, etc.
OR
- Start working with your organization's Volunteer Coordinator or get an idea of the number of volunteers who might be interested in working for the majority of the farmers market season.

► 2 Months Prior

- Recruit/confirm volunteer groups.
- If a group is unable to commit this early, be sure to cover your first two market pick-ups with reliable regular volunteers or staff.

► 1 Month Prior

- Conduct a volunteer orientation/training session. Be sure to review the procedures sheet and any keys or codes they may need for storage on the day of the event. **You must have each volunteer sign a release form.**
- Verify the vendor list with the appropriate market organization.
- Prepare literature and/or handouts for new vendors that might generate interest in donating extra produce and goods.
- Prepare procedure page for volunteers on market day.

► Market Season

- Check-in with the on-site market staff immediately upon arrival each day that you pick-up.
- Table at markets to recruit for market and field gleans — and to provide folks with information about your organization's services and relationship with the farmers market.
- Keep excellent up-to-date records of farm donors, contact information and a history of the relationships (Excel spreadsheet is a great tool for this).
- Adjust volunteer count to match produce flow.

► After Market Season (or halfway through for year-round markets)

- Throw a celebration to recognize volunteer commitment to the market season.
- Give certificates of appreciation to participating vendors — thank them for their participation and advise them of the total poundage donation for the entire market season. Provide data about how many families the food helped feed.
- Distribute an informational flyer to new vendors or vendors who may be interested in joining the food recovery program for the following season.

Logistics

► Transportation

- Have volunteers bring their own vehicles...matching gleaned produce quantities with the size and number of vehicles needed.
- If parking is limited, use a food truck (if available) or larger volunteer vehicle to limit the number of trips.
- Ask the market organization or on-site market staff for parking suggestions.

► Boxes

- Bring sturdy crates, boxes or containers that can be reused time and time again.
- Some farmers will give you their boxes — make sure to return them for re-use at the following market pick-up and at the end of the season.

► Back-Up Plans

- Have additional volunteers on-call and keep their contact information handy.
- Have a list of local organizations that you can contact in case you gather more produce than you can store: food banks, meal programs, shelters or low income housing buildings.
- Always, always, always meet your scheduled pick-up time. Donors glean their produce for you and expect to have it picked-up. If you don't follow through, the market contact may need to dispose of the produce which can ruin the relationship you have built.

► Cold Storage

- Search for donated cooler space or create a partnership with a business near the farmers market or hunger program that will allow storage of gleaned produce. Please note that the following produce does NOT require refrigeration: potatoes, onions, tomatoes, winter squash, garlic, bananas and most fruits that are not yet ripe. Locate a cool, dark spot on a shelf for these items.
- Keep incompatible fruits and veggies separate to prevent rot caused by ethylene gas. (Ethylene is a ripening agent produced by many fruits and some vegetables including apples, avocados, bananas, pears, peaches, plums, cantaloupes, honey dew melons, mushrooms, tomatoes, leafy greens, beans, carrots, cucumbers, eggplant, peas, peppers and potatoes.)
- Keep produce whole. Leaving stems and leafy parts intact extends produce life.
- Do not seal fruits and vegetables in airtight bags because they need to breath. If you bag lettuce, try to use a perforated plastic bag.
- Wilted lettuce can oftentimes be brought back to life by soaking the whole head in cold water overnight.

“The food someone receives from a meal program may be all they eat that day, and it is our responsibility to help them meet their nutritional needs.”

– Shayne, Meals Partnership Coalition

Volunteer Recruitment & Training

► Who

- Volunteers committed to the entire or a significant portion of the season.
- Volunteers located close to the market, food bank or meal program drop-off site.
- Volunteers available during the scheduled market date and time.
- Small business owners and folks with flexible schedules for (summer) market season.
- Identify lead volunteers from schools, congregations and activity clubs who can leverage pools of volunteers.
- Recruit a single school, congregation or organization that would like to be your food bank's farmers market partner for that year and then supplement with other interested volunteers.

► When

- Begin recruiting about three months prior to market start date.
- Volunteer orientation should be during the month of market start date.
- Have a designated volunteer train all new volunteers as they join your team.
- Volunteer celebration can be during the last month of market season (or halfway through for year-round markets) to recognize a committed effort to the farmers market gleaning program.

► How

- Fliers, e-mails, press releases, news publications, Facebook, university clubs, Rotary clubs, faith groups, schools, volunteer websites (United Way, Volunteer Match, serve.gov, Craigslist and, by all means, your existing volunteer base).
- Minimize the number of times a volunteer must contact your organization to become involved (when you offer them the opportunity, be sure to have the volunteer waiver form and market dates and times available for the entire season).
- Prepare procedure page according to your market schedule and number of volunteers on-hand.

► Tips

- If possible, recruit a single volunteer group with at least 15 people so they can schedule their own shifts, keeping food bank staff updated on who will be gleaning each week.
- Recruit early from a committed, convenient (neighborhood) volunteer team that can rotate, yet participates regularly.
- Early in the season, aim for a weekly group of 3-5 volunteers, with at least one vehicle.
- Late in the season (during peak), aim for a weekly group of 5-7 volunteers, with a minimum of at least two decent sized vehicles. Consider dividing into two groups, those that get food from the market and those that sort it as it comes back to the drop-off site, composting and bagging as needed.
- Provide volunteers with "official" attire from your organization such as a vest or t-shirt. If this is not possible, request that they wear a coordinated color such as red or white so that it is easier for on-site market staff to recognize them when they check-in.
- Consult individual farmers to know preferred method of collection, do not rush the farmers.
- Take pictures to document market gleaning. These can be used the following season to recruit vendors and volunteers.

Resources

► Google Docs page

Ask the market organization to set-up a Google Docs page for you to record and report weekly poundage gleaned. With a username and password, this can be seen by the market organization, volunteers, recipient agency and anyone else on the account. However, it is also possible to just e-mail a report to the market organization. Additionally, it is important to keep your own records. It is helpful for volunteers to be able to see an Excel spreadsheet like this example:

Date of Pick-Up 5/8/2011		Sample Market Gleaning Sheet		
Item List	Qty.	Received From	Volunteers	Comments
Various Salad Greens	200	Full Circle Farms	Rick & Justus	Too much of a good thing is
Summer squashes	2 boxes	Alverst Farms		sometimes too much. We
Onions	4 boxes	Alverst Farms		froze 1/2 of them & used
Tomatoes	4 boxes	Oxbow		them for a recipe. Asked for
Strawberries	34 half flats	Haydon Farm		less and left with a
Raspberries	2 flats	Haydon Farm		reasonable amount.
Leeks	20 bushels	Alverst Farms		We also invited another
Carrots	10 bushels	Alverst Farms		program to share our
				week with us.

► Summary of Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act

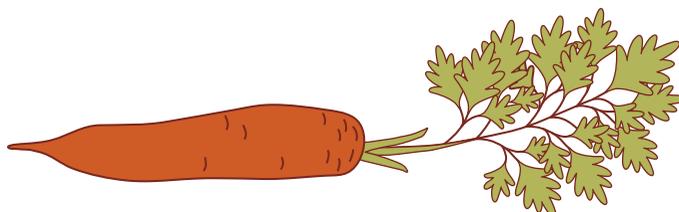
Potential donors, including vendors and market managers, are usually aware of this law, but it is useful to keep it in mind when responding to liability concerns. Passed in 1996, this piece of legislation removes legal responsibility of donors for food donations as long as they take reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of the donated food. This law makes it easier to donate and accept food by assigning donor liability only in cases of gross negligence. Remember ... ***donations are often tax-deductible!***

► Directory of Seattle meal programs

<http://www.mealspartnership.org/>

► Directory of Seattle food banks

<http://seattlefoodcommittee.blogspot.com/>



► **Sample page for vendors**

It is imperative that you inform vendors that there is a community resource ready, willing and able to capture their excess food. (The sample flier below is what JFS used to solicit participation from the Broadway Farmer’s Market.) Work with markets to have a booth for a day of education with an outreach component. Consider distributing a flyer to let folks know about your organization and the work being done within the community — it is a great way to start a relationship with a farmer. This is also a great opportunity to scout for field gleaning project sites.

FRONT

BACK



Feed the JFS Food Bank that feeds the community.

On-site Food Bank open three days a week on Capitol Hill • 1601 16th Avenue
Clients of all denominations shop once a month

Thank You Broadway Sunday Farmers Market!

For the past few years, a handful of farmers donate their end-of-Market produce to Jewish Family Service. If you think this helps feed the JFS Food Bank, you are 100% correct. During the 2010 season, we have picked-up over 8,000 pounds (4 tons) of your donated food – at a value exceeding \$20,000. The more farmers who participate in 2011, the greater the opportunity we'll all have to bag hunger here on Capitol Hill.

Who is served by the JFS Food Bank?

- The JFS Food Bank serves people of all backgrounds and denominations from Downtown Seattle to the Madison Valley (zip codes 98101, 98112, 98121 and 98122) — as well as providing kosher food for those in the Jewish community who request it.
- 47% must choose between paying for food and paying for utilities – the “Heat or Eat” dilemma.
- The average monthly household income is \$1,130 – 18% under the federal poverty line.*
- A grant from the City of Seattle Human Services Dept. helps fund monthly Home Delivery of groceries to nearly 400 frail elderly and adults with disabilities who are isolated and homebound.
- Member of the Seattle Food Committee and King County Food Coalition
- **Food Lifeline: Hunger in America 2010, Western Washington Findings** • www.foodlifeline.org/2010study

JFS Food Bank by the Numbers

- The 1,848 community members who used the JFS Food Bank this October represent a 26% increase from October, 2009. (50% were seniors; nearly 10% were children).
- JFS distributes, on average, 25,000 pounds of food (12-1/2 tons) month-in and month-out.
- Amount of food JFS must purchase to meet the increased demand is up 38% over 2009.

Best Practices “Consumer Choice” Food Bank

- 2010 expansion of the JFS Food Bank was made possible by a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant, available through the Federal stimulus package, as recommended by the City of Seattle, and generous support made possible by Kathy and Steve Berman.
- The JFS Food Bank now offers the best practices model of “Consumer Choice” where clients actually shop according to personal needs as opposed to receiving two pre-packed bags.

The JFS Food Bank is one of 10 diverse programs of Jewish Family Service.

Founded in 1892, the mission of Jewish Family Service is to deliver essential human services to alleviate suffering, sustain healthy relationships and support people in time of need.



JEWISH FAMILY SERVICE
www.jfseattle.org • (206) 461-3240



Sample Volunteer Form

JFS VOLUNTEER SIGN IN SHEET

Group/Event:

I agree to assist Jewish Family Service (JFS) in a volunteer capacity by donating my services. I expect no pay, benefits, or compensation of any kind or in any way for my charitable assistance to JFS. I recognize and agree that some volunteer activities may be strenuous and involve certain risks, I expressly assume these risks, I expressly assume these risks, whether such risks are known or unknown to me at this time. I release and hold harmless JFS and its officers, directors, employees, agents, representatives, sponsors, from and against any liability for injuries or harm I may sustain in the course of my participation.

I understand that any information I may obtain directly or indirectly from clients, staff or other volunteers while I am volunteering at JFS is confidential and that this confidentiality is protected by law.

I grant Jewish Family Service full permission to use photographs from my volunteer activity on behalf of JFS. I understand that these pictures may be used by Jewish Family Service for publications and promotional purposes, and I waive all claim to compensation for such use or for damages. I am aware that I am under no obligation to be photographed and do so voluntarily.

I have carefully read and understand this agreement. I am voluntarily signing this form, constituting a commitment to the statements above. Before participating I have had the opportunity to ask questions about participation in this activity.

Date: _____

FIRST NAME, LAST NAME (one per line - please print)	STREET ADDRESS, CITY, ZIP	PHONE	E-MAIL	SIGNATURE

Sample Procedure Page

Market Date & Time: _____

Market Location: _____

Time to Leave Meeting Location: _____

Parking Instructions: _____

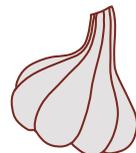
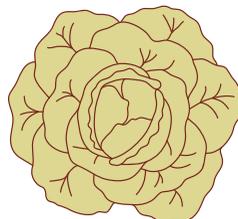
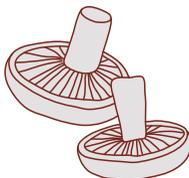
Things You Must Bring (for example)

- Waxed boxes back to vendors
- Hand cart or hand truck
- Empty black crates or other empties to fill-up that the day

Gleaning Instructions (for example)

- Check-in at the staffed market booth
- Introduce yourself and proceed to introduce yourself to vendors (names are posted)
- Bring empty boxes to following vendors:

- After 15 minutes or so, go around and pick up the filled boxes. Thank each farmer!
- After you return to the food bank, allow another 15 – 30 minutes for weighing and processing (bagging, snipping and discarding items that are unusable).
- Be sure to record all poundage on the Google Docs page.





This project was created by Emma Kent during her year as an MLK AmeriCorps VISTA at Jewish Family Service, in conjunction with Ben Rasmus at Rotary First Harvest. Special thanks to Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance, the Meals Partnership Coalition and the Seattle Food Committee. Please send your feedback to Ben Rasmus at rotary@firsharvest.org. Thank you!

