



The Society of St. Andrew (SoSA) and the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance (the Alliance) have partnered to form a gleaning network within the state of Arkansas.

Gleaning is the Biblical practice of hand-gathering crops left after harvest. SoSA and Alliance volunteers glean fields and orchards donated by growers. The produce is then given to local pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters that feed or distribute food to their neighbors in need.

The Alliance members serve over 900 of these hunger relief organizations in every county of Arkansas, making this a natural partnership. Wherever there is food to glean there is a distribution outlet.

In order to build a successful network of growers and volunteers, SoSA and the Alliance are reaching out to other organizations to strengthen their efforts. In an unprecedented collaboration the following groups have worked towards ending hunger in Arkansas through gleaning: Farm Bureau of Arkansas, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Services, Arkansas Dept. of Agriculture, Justice for Our Neighbors, the Office of Governor Mike Beebe, the Office of Senator Blanche Lincoln, the Office of Senator Mark Pryor, Arkansas Coalition for Excellence, United Methodist Conference, and Winrock International.

Since these groups first met on May 29, 2008 through August 2012, almost **3 million** pounds of fresh produce have been gathered. Arkansans in need have had healthy, nutritious items such as fresh cabbage, squash, sweet potatoes, watermelon and tomatoes available to them.

We are having a fabulous season in 2012. With a mild winter and spring, our farmers are donating record amounts. With assistance from the Arkansas Agricultural Department, we have distributed information about the gleaned produce to our clients. Now, not only will our clients receive this nutritious food, they will know how to store and cook the product! Nutrition information, history, storage requirements and a recipe are all on the flyer!

As wonderful a success story as this is, there is much more to be done. There is much more available right here in Arkansas. With rising gas and food prices and falling donations, Arkansas' food banks need this local source of food to help meet the rising need and you can be part of the solution. Programs costs to operate the Arkansas Gleaning Project average less than \$.03 per pound of produce and there is never a charge to the feeding agency or the client.

Please contact Kathy Webb or Michelle Shope at 501/399-9999 for more information.