



Garden Gleaning Projects

A Guide for Relocalizing our Communities

The Relocalization Network

Garden Gleaning • synopsis and roles

Synopsis

Organize a Garden Gleaning Project to harvest food from private gardens, trees and bushes where the produce would otherwise go to waste. In this project, volunteers are matched up with property owners who do not have the time or capability to harvest the food already growing on their property; harvested food can then be shared between property owners and the community, donated to local food banks, or even sold at local markets. The project can range from a few friends and a couple of properties to a citywide organization that coordinates a large group of volunteers, runs workshops, hosts harvesting celebrations and produces preserves, juices, and jams.

Roles

Project Coordinators	Oversee the project and supervise volunteers
Pickers and Team Leaders	Pick the fruit.
Property Owners	Volunteer their unpicked fruit trees for harvesting
Donors	Contribute equipment, knowledge and financial donations
Community Organizations & Food Banks	Make use of the healthy, local produce in their programs

Time Frame

Preparation Time - 1-2 months

Harvesting Season (depends on location)

Tools

Harvesting, pruning, and fruit processing equipment—this may include ladders, work gloves, boxes, bottles, and shears

Vehicle to transport volunteers and picked fruit

Harvesting schedules

Website or phone service for property owners to register their trees

Community kitchen in which to juice, dehydrate, preserve and can the fruit



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Garden Gleaning • project outline & resources

Project Outline

1. Form a core group of volunteers who will be able to see the project through in its completion. These volunteers will contact and coordinate pickers, property owners, donors and community organizations. Develop a Project Plan that establishes roles, objectives, timeframe and guidelines.
2. Establish a website or phone service to allow property owners to contact the project and register their trees and information such as tree location, health, size and type. This can also be used to relay details such as contact information, amount and types of equipment available for use and possible dates for pickers to harvest their trees.
3. Start a promotion campaign to tell your community about the project, and to recruit property owners, equipment donors, pickers, donation receivers, and others. The campaign can take the form of community meetings, email list announcements, going door-to-door, flyers, newsletter announcements, local media coverage, mail-outs, phone callouts or word of mouth.
4. There are many ways to transport pickers, equipment and harvested produce, from cars and trucks to bicycles and public transportation. Equipment such as gloves, ladders, pruning tools and boxes should be collected from donors. Pickers and property owners might have equipment of their own that can be utilized.
5. Once property owners register their trees, they should be matched up with pickers and contacted by a team leader. This team leader will be responsible for locating equipment, contacting pickers in the area and establishing a time and date for harvesting. Over time you can establish a network of volunteers to harvest produce on a regular schedule.
6. Work parties can also be organized to process the harvest: cooking, baking, dehydrating, juicing, preserving, canning, or any other way to make use of the produce.

Numerous other projects with similar aims could be initiated to work in conjunction with or as alternatives to the Garden Gleaning Project. For example, you might work with your local government to encourage planting and harvesting of productive, food-giving trees in parks and public space; or, you might launch a campaign to encourage homeowners to plant fruit and nut trees for public harvest.

Resources

Richmond Fruit Tree Sharing Project (Vancouver, BC): www.richmondfruittree.com

Small Potatoes Gleaning Project (Bellingham, WA): www.gleaningproject.org

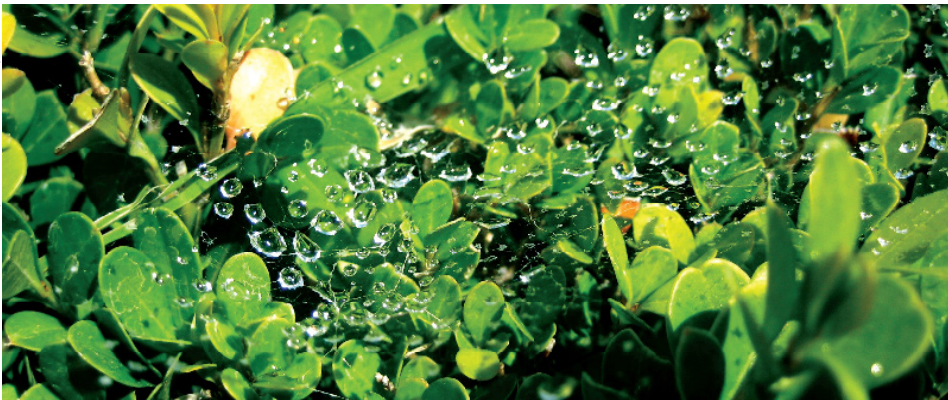
Hamilton Fruit Tree Project (Hamilton, ON): environmenthamilton.org/eatlocal/fruittree.htm

“A Citizen’s Guide to Food Recovery,” U.S. Department of Agriculture:

www.usda.gov/news/pubs/gleaning/content.htm



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Get Involved

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