



Growing Connections:

A Resource Guide for Farm-to-Food Bank Strategies

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for Northwest Harvest

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Table of Contents

- Executive Summary**..... 5
- Section 1: Farm-to-Food Bank Strategies**..... 6
 - Why:..... 6
 - What we did:..... 7
 - What we found:..... 7
- Section 2: Farm-to-Food Bank Resource Guides** 11
 - Guide 1: Building Farmer Relationships..... 12
 - Guide 2: Marketing your Farm-to-Family Program 15
 - Guide 3: Farmers Market/Farm Stand Gleaning 17
 - Guide 4: Direct Purchasing from Farmers 19
- Appendices**..... 26
 - Appendix A: Farm-to-Food Bank (F2FB) Initiatives Table 27
 - Appendix B: Gleaning Checklist 30
 - Appendix C: Work Party Record and Donor Tracking Sheet 31
 - Appendix D: Farmers Market Gleaning Contract Example 32
 - Appendix E: F2FB Purchasing Contract Example 33
- Bibliography** 35
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Executive Summary

Food banks have seen a persistent rise in the number of people they serve as well as a rising demand for fresh fruits and vegetables. Consequently, communities are using an array of farm-to-food bank (F2FB) strategies to increase the amount of fresh, healthy foods in the hunger relief system. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the range of F2FB strategies and to offer resources to launch or expand such efforts.

This report was commissioned by Northwest Harvest, an independent food bank distributor in Washington State, to learn about sustainable ways to improve access to fresh, nutritious food for their hunger relief partners and the hundreds of thousands of people served statewide. More specifically, the study focused on tools for connecting and working with small farms (those with gross annual sales below \$250,000) which account for 90% of the state's 39,500 farms. While the primary audience is the Washington-state hunger relief network, the findings and resource guides presented here are relevant and useful to the broader national hunger relief network in moving farm-to-food bank efforts forward.

Section 1 describes the top strategies used by hunger relief agencies and networks across the country. The research included interviewing over two dozen leading F2FB efforts across the country as well as visiting five Washington programs. Our research identified the following 4 key strategies:

1. Build Farmer Relationships
2. Increase Local Produce Donated to Emergency Food System
3. Increase Agency Purchasing from Local Growers
4. Support State Level Policies and Programming that Facilitate Small Scale Agriculture and Hunger Relief Efforts

In addition, our study highlighted shared factors among organizations that have successfully implemented and sustained farm-to-food bank programs which include:

- Prioritizing building and maintaining farmer relationships
- Intentional programming with dedicated staff and funding
- Development of F2FB programs with multiple, ongoing initiatives
- Provision of educational information and resources (e.g. recipes, nutrition classes) for food bank clients to more easily incorporate fresh food into their diet and meal planning
- Identifying and soliciting dedicated funds to support F2FB programming

Section 2 offers resource guides to assist agencies that are considering developing a F2FB program. The four guides provide how-to's, tips, and information on: building farmer relationships, marketing your F2FB program, farmers market/ farm stand gleaning and direct purchasing from farmers.

There is ample opportunity to increase the amount and variety of fresh locally-grown produce made available to hungry families into the hunger relief system. This report highlights how an organization, whether at the distribution center or food bank level can begin growing connections with their local farming communities.



SECTION 1: FARM-TO-FOOD BANK STRATEGIES

Food banks have seen a persistent rise in the number of people they serve as well as a rising demand for fresh fruits and vegetables. Consequently, communities are using an array of farm-to-food bank (F2FB) strategies to increase the amount of fresh, healthy foods in the hunger relief system. Some agencies solicit donations through plant-a-row programs at local community gardens; some work with farmers to glean their fields after harvest; and others purchase directly from farmers.

In some cases, hunger relief agencies are making efforts to do all three. In some states that collect state income tax, efforts are underway to incentivize farmers through tax credits for donating crops to food banks.



The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the range of F2FB strategies and to offer resources to launch or expand such efforts. Based on our findings, Section 1 describes the top strategies used by hunger relief agencies and networks across the country. Section 2: Farm-to-Food Bank Resource Guides offers resource guides to assist agencies that are considering developing a F2FB program.

This report was commissioned by Northwest Harvest, an independent food bank distributor in Washington State, to learn about sustainable ways to improve access to fresh, nutritious food for their hunger relief partners and the hundreds of thousands of people served statewide. More specifically, the study focused on tools for connecting and working with small farms (those with gross annual sales below \$250,000) which account for 90% of the state's 39,500 farms. While the primary audience is the Washington-state hunger relief network, the findings and resource guides are relevant and useful to the broader national hunger relief network in moving F2FB efforts forward.

Why:

The rise of F2FB efforts is a response to several trends happening throughout the country:

- More families and individuals are turning to the hunger relief network to meet their daily dietary needs— one in six Americans or 48.9 million people struggled with hunger in 2012.¹
- More than one-third of adults and almost 17% (or 12.5 million) of youth are obese.² Increased public awareness about nutritional health is leading to increased consumer demand for fresh foods.
- Food banks are recognizing that sourcing from local farmers not only provides a supply of nutritious produce, but it also benefits local economies, particularly during an economic downturn.
- Billions of pounds of fresh produce go unharvested and unsold each year due to inefficiencies in the food system and market. Anecdotal evidence shows that produce lost at the farm represents the greatest volume of loss along the food supply chain.³



1 <http://frac.org/reports-and-resources/hunger-and-poverty/> OR http://ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/media-resources.aspx#.UzxpW_ldXQC

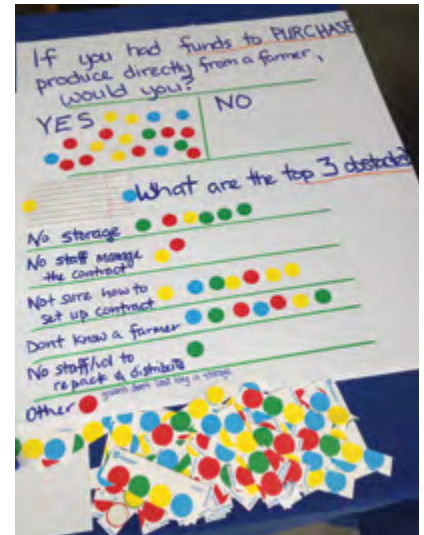
2 <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/facts.html>

3 <http://www.nrdc.org/food/files/wasted-food-ip.pdf>

What we did:

The goal of this report is to identify F2FB strategies—the different methods used to increase the availability of fresh produce from local farming communities into the hunger relief system. Our research methods included:

- A national scan of F2FB programs. This was done through a key-word online search and a request for information through the Comfood Listserv.⁴
- Review of relevant, existing publications including reports, evaluations, and toolkits.
- Interviews with over two dozen programs across the country that have implemented F2FB programs. Interviews were conducted with program coordinators or directors at food bank distribution centers and food banks.⁵
- A survey of over 300 Northwest Harvest partners (i.e. food banks and meal programs) to identify existing efforts and the potential barriers to implementing the identified strategies. A rapid assessment survey was also conducted at the Northwest Harvest 2013 Annual Conference.
- Site visits to four hunger relief agencies in Washington State with established F2FB programs.



Our efforts focused on understanding the following aspects of the F2FB strategies we encountered:

- **Replicable** - To what degree could other hunger relief organizations implement and sustain the programs over time with the appropriate capacity and resources?
- **Organizational scale** - What kind of resources would be needed in order to implement the strategy and what is the appropriate organizational type to implement it (i.e. food bank vs. food bank distributor)?
- **Mutual benefit to farmer** - To what extent does some degree of compensation to the farmer contribute to a program's success? What other kinds of resources can be made available to growers to create a mutually beneficial relationship?
- **Limited resources and literature** - Many organizations have already created useful tools and resources that offer guidance on how to replicate their programs (i.e. gleaning). The Resource Guides in Section 2 are focused on providing information on initiatives with limited resources available. We have also attempted to summarize the key points from among the numerous existing resources on some F2FB strategies.

Our interviews and site visits concentrated on understanding the general background of how the program came into existence, the organizational capacity required to sustain the strategy over time, and the barriers and challenges faced and how they have been addressed. This report focused specifically on building connections between the farming community (i.e. not home or community gardeners) and hunger relief efforts.

What we found:

The following section provides an overview of the key strategies



4 Comfood is an email discussion list for individuals and organizations involved with or interested in community food security across the country. Available at <https://elist.tufts.edu/wws/info/comfood>.

5 The term “food bank” in the state of Washington refers to food pantries or cupboards. The term “food bank distributor” refers to an organization that distributes food to food banks.

used to increase local fresh produce into the hunger relief network and the factors for success learned from the study.

Four Key Strategies

Strategy 1: Build Farmer Relationships: The foundational strategy to developing any F2FB program includes a focused effort on building mutually beneficial relationships with farmers in the community. This strategy takes time on and off season. In interviews, programs at the food bank and distributor level consistently emphasized that this is critical to the success and sustainability of any F2FB effort. Programs tend to have a designated staff person for this outreach and have used their time strategically to connect with their local farming community. Staff members have organized farm visits, held focus groups, attended farm trade shows or conferences, or hosted “Get to Know Your Farmer” appreciation events all in an effort to introduce their programs to farmers and to begin building connections. *See “Promising Practice: Rotary First Harvest’s Grower Round Tables” on page 12.*

Strategy 2: Increase Local Produce Donated to Emergency Food System: Once relationships are established, many farmers are eager to help their community by donating to a local hunger relief organization. Several models exist for negotiating these donations, including farm gleaning, farmers market gleaning, and plant-a-row programs. While this strategy is more commonly implemented at the food bank level, food bank distributors are also known to implement and coordinate such efforts. This F2FB strategy is the primary method agencies use for sourcing fresh, local product, particularly for those with limited resources to procure food. This strategy also takes advantage of inefficiencies in the food system by capturing unmarketable, yet edible, fresh produce that would otherwise be thrown away (or composted). Soliciting donations is particularly effective when working with large scale farmers who have lots of product left in their fields after harvest. Donations from smaller scale farmers can be difficult if the farmer has other alternatives that may bring in some revenue.

Strategy 3: Increase Agency Purchasing from Local Growers: Increasingly, food banks and distributors are making efforts to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables directly from local farmers using general operating funds or dedicated funds raised specifically for this purpose. This strategy allows agencies to work with farmers to plan and grow crops that best meet their clients’ needs and ensure regular, consistent high-quality food. Program staff from around the country concurred that even modest compensation to farmers can lead to increased donations. Some programs are able to contract with farmers before the season starts; others find that purchasing a few cases at the end of the farmers market day or at roadside stands can result in several donated cases. Programs typically have a dedicated staff person who manages the contracts, general procurement, and distribution logistics.

Strategy 4: Support State Level Policies and Programming that Facilitate Small Scale Agriculture and Hunger Relief Efforts: While strategies #1-3 can be implemented at the agency level, this strategy calls for collaboration among various stakeholders—hunger relief organizations, state agencies and departments, advocacy groups, and farmers. There are an increasing number of states implementing policies such as offering tax credits to farmers who donate or state program funds for direct purchasing from farmers in order to increase food bank offerings (e.g. agriculture surplus or clearance programs). While implementation requires a collaborative effort, the strategy often calls for a hunger relief agency to administer or manage the program, typically at the food bank distributor level.



Agencies throughout the country are implementing F2FB initiatives using one or more of the strategies described above. *See “Appendix A: Farm-to-Food Bank (F2FB) Initiatives” on page 27.* These initiatives vary in the resources and organizational scale required to implement and the overall impact on the hunger relief network. *(See Figure 1.)* Some initiatives like gleaning or direct purchasing will have broader impact if implemented by a regional distributor. This works well when working with larger farms that have the volume to allow for regional distribution. The flipside is that when implemented by smaller local food banks working with small-mid size farmers, these initiatives have more direct, local impact on the community and build the local connections more strongly. Local distribution makes more sense when working with smaller farms or when collecting product from plant-a-row programs.

Figure 1

Distribution Impact of Fresh Produce Received via Farm-to-Food Bank Initiatives



Five 5 Factors for Success

This report highlights some of the top F2FB strategies we found in our research. Below are some of the shared factors among organizations that have successfully implemented and sustained F2FB programs.

1. **Relationship-building:** Program staff repeatedly discussed the importance of building and maintaining connections to the farming community. See the Guide to Building Farmer Relationships to learn more.
2. **Intentional programming:** Working with farmers to receive their produce is not a new concept to food banking, however, organizations are increasingly identifying F2FB efforts as one of their program elements and dedicating resources to coordinate such efforts. Many of the programs reported having a fulltime or part-time staff person to coordinate F2FB activities. Regardless of the program type, the program should be named and referred to during transactions to let the community know that efforts to build connections with farmers are underway. See the Guide to Marketing your Farm-to-Family Program to learn more.
3. **Multiple, ongoing initiatives:** In addition to intentionally coordinating F2FB efforts, organizations are often implementing more than one initiative. By not focusing on a “silver bullet” to increase their local fresh produce offerings, organizations leave themselves flexible to engage farmers (and community gardeners) and seek other resources to support their program. For example, an organization’s F2FB program may include farm gleaning with volunteer groups, encouraging plant-a-row efforts with community gardens, gleaning at the end of a farmer market day, offering cooking classes to clients, and contracting with local farmers to purchase directly from them.
4. **Education:** As food banks have increased the amount and variety of fresh produce available, they have also discovered the need to provide education on how to store and prepare unfamiliar produce. Food banks are educating their customers by providing produce labels on shelves, printing recipes, offering tasting or cooking demonstrations, and offering cooking or nutrition classes.
5. **Funding:** Successfully accomplishing this work requires resources. Larger F2FB programs that serve a region or state have identified state and federal grant funds as well as from private foundations. Small programs, operating at a local level, have used community fundraising (i.e. an annual “Harvest Dinner”) or local foundations to support their work. Funds go towards purchasing food directly from farmers, supplemental support for farmers donating (e.g. seeds, fuel, boxes, bins, etc.), staffing for program coordination, and marketing and educational program materials.



The systems-level nature of this work in supporting local food economies and the environment, as well as rising public health concerns around obesity, have allowed hunger relief organizations to seek support beyond their traditional funding sources.

SECTION 2: FARM-TO-FOOD BANK RESOURCE GUIDES

These resource guides include how-to's, tips, and information to get your farm-to-food bank (F2FB) program up and running.

Guide 1: Building Farmer Relationships

Provides the basic steps to learning about your local farming community, resources to identify who's farming, and how to start recruiting them to participate in your F2FB efforts.

Guide 2: Marketing your Farm-to-Family Program

Whether farmers are donating to your agency or you are purchasing from them, it's important to let the community know about your efforts. This guide includes information on the three basic steps: naming your program, promoting your program, and thanking the farmers.

Guide 3: Farmers Market/Farm Stand Gleaning

This section summarizes resources on how to recover produce from local farmers markets and farm stands—a great entry point for your F2FB program.

Guide to Direct Purchasing from Farmers

If your agency is looking for a way to provide high quality, fresh produce on a regular basis for your clients, purchasing directly from local farmers may be the right strategy for you. This section discusses what you need to consider in developing a purchasing program and the steps to get it started.

See Appendices at the end of this report include examples of program documents that can be used for your own efforts.



GUIDE 1: Building Farmer Relationships

Building Farmer Relationships

Regardless of the farm-to-food bank (F2FB) strategy you adopt, building relationships with farmers is critical. Organizations with successful F2FB programs assert that strong relationships have a direct impact on a program's success. Many program staff observe an increase in donations once they have established good relationships with a grower—particularly when some degree of funding is available for their product. Below are strategies and tips to consider as you start your program.



Learn about your farming community

Prior to contacting farmers it is helpful to understand the type(s) of farming, the crops being grown and the size of operations in your local farming community. Are local farmers selling primarily through direct marketing at farmers markets, community supported agriculture (CSA) shares, or farm stands? Or are farmers selling to wholesalers? Do they have facilities to clean and pack? If they pack, what are the volumes—cases or large totes? Are they able to transport and deliver?

As you learn about farming in your community, it may be helpful to understand the farmer's perspective on the industry and their role in it. According to the USDA Census of Agriculture (2007), the average U.S. farm operator is 57 years old. 65% of farmers depend on off-farm employment to cover their household expenses. For most small to mid-sized farms, their interest in donating product may be outweighed by their need to get even a small return for their labor. *See "Farming in Washington State" on page 14.*

What are the trends in your local farming community?

Understanding how farmers in your region operate will help you design a program that most efficiently meets your needs and theirs. Farming communities can vary widely from county to county in the types of crops grown, the size of operations, and the market outlets through which farmers distribute their products. The first step is reaching out to farmers market managers, farm organizations or your local agricultural extension to find out who is farming in your community and what they grow. There are a variety of resources available to identify growers in a given community. If you already have this information, you can begin recruiting farmers who may be interested in your mission. *See "Resources: Farming Agencies, Organizations, and Directories" on page 24.*

Promising Practice: Rotary First Harvest's Grower Round Tables

Rotary First Harvest has been recovering produce and distributing it throughout the state of Washington since 1982. In 2009 they launched the Harvest Against Hunger program in which they placed AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers at 7 communities throughout the state to work on gleaning programs at the local level and to develop the necessary organizational capacity to begin building relationships with local farmers.

In 2013, RFH partnered with the Washington Food Coalition and WA State Department of Agriculture, to host a series of Grower Round Table meetings throughout the state. Through these interviews, farmers shared some of the challenges they face with responding to request for donations. RFH's Grower Round Table Toolkit provides a facilitation guide.

See "Farming in Washington State" on page 14 to learn about some their findings.

GUIDE 1: Building Farmer Relationships

Recruiting farmers

Options for identifying possible farming partners:

- **Farmers markets** - contact farmers market managers or visit the individual farm stalls at the market. Be sensitive to when and how long you stop by their stall so you do not disrupt their sales.
- **Local restaurants and grocery stores** - talk to local businesses to see if they purchase from local farmers and can provide an introduction.
- **Attend farming related events** such as conferences and trade shows.
- **Contact your local extension agent** and other farm-related organizations such as farmers market associations, cooperatives, or commodity commissions.

Once you know where farmers are, you'll have to be prepared to talk to them about what you do and how you would like to partner. Marketing your programs means that you have information ready to share. Develop a brochure or flyer that explains your organization and your efforts to increase your fresh fruit and vegetable inventory. Include information about your organization, the ways farmers can donate, and associated benefits (i.e. tax benefits). Develop and distribute this promotional material throughout the community such as at churches, community centers, and businesses. *See "GUIDE 2: Marketing Your Farm-to-Family Program" on page 15.*

Keep up the momentum during the off-season

The off-season is a great time to connect with farmers. This kind of work requires planning all year round, so post-harvest is a good time to focus on program development:

- **Outreach:** meet with farmers and build new relationships.
- **Recognition:** show supporting farmers appreciation—let the community know how local farmers support you—and how they can support local farmers.
- **Program development:** Check in with growers on how your current arrangements with them are working. How can you improve your program? Are you expanding your program?
- **Fundraising:** In addition to raising awareness about your F2FB programming, let the community know how they can support this effort.
- **Harvest plans:** If you're purchasing from farmers or they plan to donate crops, coordinate the types of crops you prefer. Find out what works for them and if they need to change their plan for the following year. Ask if you can collaborate on planning the types and quantity of crops you would like to purchase. Some organizations begin this process as early as January. If you're interested in expanding the program offerings, fall/winter is the time to connect with farmers.

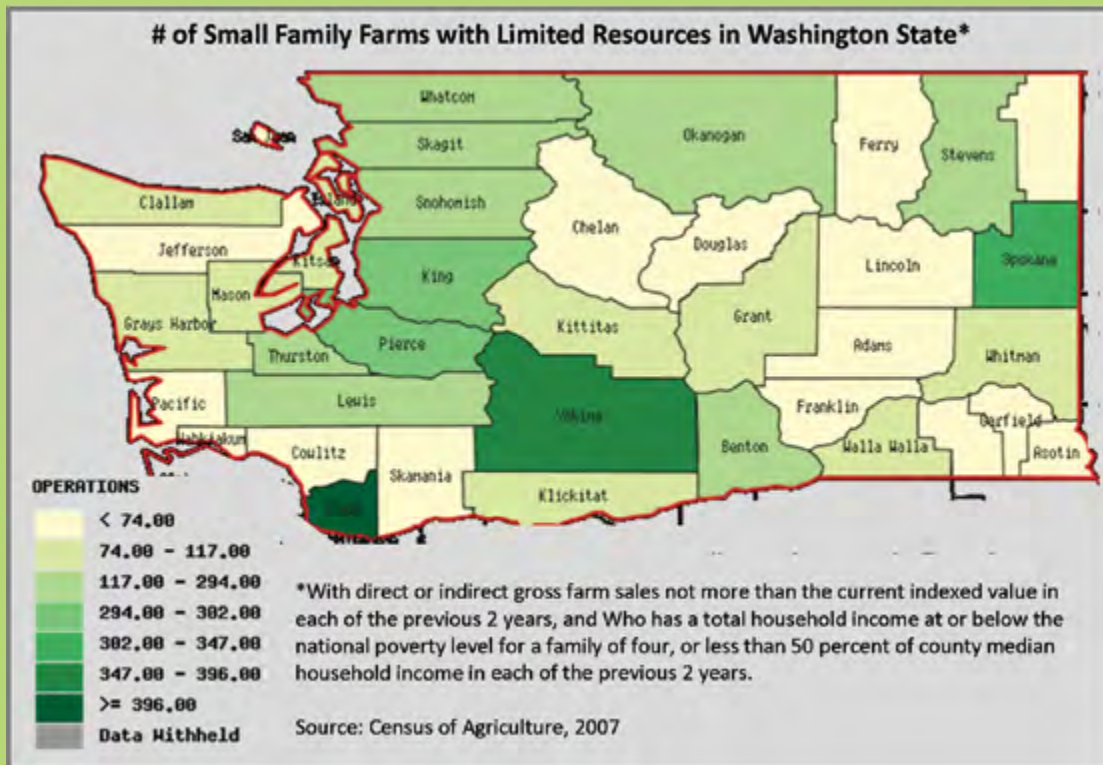
Promising Practice: Tips for Establishing Good Relationships

- Be consistent—having one designated volunteer or staff person as the primary contact gives the farmer a chance to build trust.
- Be accountable—if you say you'll pick up a product, be sure to follow through. It only takes one or two no-shows to derail a productive relationship.
- Be helpful—especially if the farmer is donating the product. Offer to help wash or pack the product, clean the equipment, and complete paperwork on time.

Farming in Washington State

Agriculture contributes extensively to Washington state's economy—\$46 billion in sales. Food and agriculture sectors employ around 160,000 people and contribute 13% to the state's economy. Washington state accounts for 60% of the country's apple production and the 39,500 farms grow and raise nearly 300 types of commodities. Similar to national trends, there has been an increase of women-owned farms, Latino-owned farms, and farms using direct marketing outlets. Unfortunately, Washington is also following the national trend of declining farmland acreage to development.

What is perhaps surprising to some is that around 90% of Washington farms are considered small farms (gross sales below \$250,000) located throughout all of the 39 counties. These small farms produce a wide range of specialty crops and provide a significant income for their families. That said, small to mid-sized farmers are dependent on other income sources. The map below shows that many of the farmers throughout the state are living in poverty.



A recent effort by Rotary First Harvest (see *"Promising Practice: Rotary First Harvest's Grower Round Tables"* on page 12) to learn about farmers' perceptions in their role in hunger relief revealed interesting findings such as:

- While farmers are willing to participate in programs that serve the hungry, many farmers are hard-pressed to give away product that they might be able to sell, even at a reduced rate.
- If farmers didn't grow their own food, they may be in the food bank line too.
- Farmers can use excess food for other purposes like compost to return fertility to their soil, feeding their animals, or finding a seconds market that will pay them.
- Most farmers surveyed reported that they do not know any small farmers making more than \$30k a year, but they are asked repeatedly to make donations or lower their prices. That said, farmers are willing to allow gleaning, some plant-a-row, or other means of donating. They want to feel like they are contributing healthy food to the community.

Source: Census of Agriculture, 2007

GUIDE 2: Marketing Your Farm-to-Family Program

Marketing Your Farm-to-Family Program

Whether your farm-to-food bank (F2FB) program is focused on soliciting donations or purchasing, make sure you let the community know that you are working to increase local fresh produce available through the food bank. The more people know about this work, the easier it will be to recruit donors and make connections in your community.

Name the program

A recent survey of Northwest Harvest partner agencies found that 45% of them are working with local farms to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to the food bank. Most of them considered this something they did “on the side” rather than a real program of the agency. This work actually represents an opportunity to expand the relationships with farmers and perhaps attract more farmers to become partners.

By naming the work you do with farmers, you acknowledge the value that they bring to your efforts and their partnership in helping meet the goals of providing fresh food to hungry community members. The seasonal nature of this work may make it seem like a small part of what you do; nevertheless, it is worth sharing the work with the community and publicly thanking the farmers for their donations.

What you name the program may depend on whether other agencies are doing similar work under a specific name. Something general that lets people know what you do may make the most sense (e.g. “Farm-to-Family” or “Fresh Food on the Table”).

Promote the program

Once you have a name for your program, designing a logo for your promotion materials can be done with very limited resources. Use some basic tools from the internet to find food-related graphics that can serve as a logo, and then choose a color that works for your program.

Using a mix of promotion options can expand your reach to your intended audiences (the community and the farmers). Some common promotion methods include:

Print – Use brochures to briefly describe your program and how it works. Flyers can be used to promote specific events or to announce the launch of a new program. Make sure you use your logo and program name on any stickers, bags, or boxes that the agency uses regularly so the community starts to see your program name.

Social media – Farmers, donors, and volunteers are all using social media to stay on top of community activities. If your organization doesn’t have a Facebook page, blog, or other electronic outreach, it’s time to start one. These tools can be useful if you have a good strategy behind them. For example, you can use Facebook to keep donors updated on your work or Twitter as a fast way to let volunteers know you need help on a project.

Promising Practice:

Promote your program by using the name and logo consistently when you share materials with the community.



GUIDE 2: Marketing Your Farm-to-Family Program

Advertising – Market your program through newspaper ads, agriculture newspapers, and radio announcements. Signs on your building and trucks or vans are another great place to market your program.

Community events – Use existing community, church, or school events as opportunities to share information about your program. Set up an information table at farmer events so farmers are already familiar with your program when the harvest season starts. Ask to get on the agenda of community meetings to speak about your program, share successes, and publicly thank donors, volunteers, and farmers.

Thank the farmers

Showing appreciation for your local farm products can be as easy as sending a thank you note or posting photos from your on-farm events on your social media sites. Some organizations are able to host events that serve to recognize their farmers and raise funds for the agency at the same time. “Meet your Farmer” events are a great way to bring the community together to raise awareness of hunger in the community while at the same time encouraging people to purchase food from local producers.



GUIDE 3: Farmers Market/Farm Stand Gleaning

Farmers Market/Farm Stand Gleaning

Developing a farmers market gleaning program

One way to start building farmer relationships in your community is to learn who is selling at your farmers market or at roadside stands. A farmers market manager can provide a list of vendors who participate or you can just visit the farmers and introduce your program. Over time, you may develop relationships with one or more farmers who become regular donors to your program. For example, Northwest Harvest worked with the Yakima Farmers Market to set up a donation booth that allowed market shoppers the opportunity to donate food they had just purchased or to donate cash for end-of-market purchases by the food bank. This experience demonstrated that even small purchases from farmers can lead to extra donations of produce.

Several resources exist for understanding how to start a farmers market gleaning program. Rotary First Harvest's Produce Recovery Guide is one online tool that provides several case studies from around Washington State, including links to useful tracking and process documents. In this guide we have summarized the recommendations from these resources to offer some promising practices in one place.¹



Designing the program

Launch your program by visiting the farmers market (or roadside stands) a few times and get to know the farmers. It's a good idea to visit the vendors early, before they get busy with customers. Spend some time talking to the vendors about your program and gauge their interest in donating.

As you are designing the program, you will need to think about where the food will be taken. Is your food bank or are others nearby open on market day? Will you need to find cold storage for distribution later? Maybe a church or other facility has a refrigerator they can give you access to for a few days until the food can be distributed to the community. Note that recently harvested produce will have a longer shelf-life than produce typically received from retail outlets.

Farmers markets often happen on weekend days when food banks are closed and it may be difficult to coordinate picking up the produce. Consider partnering with another food bank to ensure regular consistent pick-up for the farmer and reduced volunteer coordination on your end. Think creatively about how to address the logistical challenges that may come up.

This kind of work is most successful if one volunteer or staff person can dedicate time during the off-season to building relationships and learning what farmers are planting. This gives farmers one point of contact, which builds trust over time, especially if several volunteers will be helping during the market season. During the market season farmers are at their busiest. If your food bank already has a relationship with them, it's easier to say hello at the end of the market day and ask for a donation (or offer to purchase some portion of unsold product.)



1 <http://rfhresourceguide.org/Article/35>

GUIDE 3: Farmers Market/Farm Stand Gleaning

How it works

Once the program is designed, create a brochure that can be shared with farmers so they understand how it works and how they might be able to make future donations through the market or their roadside stand.

When you're ready to gather donations or make your purchases, make sure you have your materials ready. Volunteers should have boxes and tracking sheets to record product and amounts donated and some basic training on how to handle fresh produce. It's important to keep detailed records of donations received so you can track your success and provide your donors with the appropriate tax records. Information you should track includes: pounds and type of produce, date, location, number of volunteers, and total volunteer hours. Use tracking sheets to keep tabs on what each farmer has donated. At the end of the season you will need to provide them with a receipt of their donations or sales for tax purposes.

Follow-up

Thanking donors is an important part of this work and farmer donations are no different. There are several ways you can thank your fresh produce donors and the volunteers.

- Mail a hand-written "Thank You" note and receipt to the donor the following day.
- Send a "Thank You" email, phone call, or letter to each of your volunteers for their time—which is often on weekends on a regular basis.
- Post "thank you" comments or pictures of the fresh produce donated or the farmstand to all of your social media sites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

Resources needed

Below is list of resources you may need to run an efficient, sustainable program:

- Regular, trained volunteers who are able to communicate with farmers and familiar with basic produce handling techniques
- Marketing and Communication Materials
 - Program brochure or flyer
 - Thank you letters
 - Photos
 - Social media outlets
- Documents and forms for record-keeping process and program coordination
 - Gleaning checklist (*See Appendix B.*)
 - Work Party and Donation Tracking Sheet (*See Appendix C.*)
 - Gleaning agreement contract outlining responsibilities (*See Appendix D.*)
- Produce storage: boxes, bags, and ties
- Distribution: trucks, cars, storage coolers, etc.



Promising Practice:

At the beginning of the season, give the program coordinator or volunteer in charge all the forms they need to track the food donations, purchases and their own hours for the whole season. Create a drop-off box at the agency office so forms can be dropped off at the end of the market, even if the office is closed.



GUIDE 4: Direct Purchasing From Farmers

Direct Purchasing From Farmers

Hunger relief organizations across the country are seeking ways to increase the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables available for their clients. In order to ensure consistent, high quality fresh produce, distribution centers and food banks are starting to purchase directly from local farmers. Using public and/or private funds, organizations coordinate and contract farmers to grow a variety of crops dedicated to be distributed through food bank(s) when harvested. Food banks and farmers often negotiate the terms such as price and delivery arrangements before the harvest season begins.

Organizations that purchase directly from farmers have noted the following benefits:

- **Improves healthy food offerings:** They are able to provide fresh produce that clients request on a regular basis.
- **Reduces produce shrinkage:** Produce harvested and delivered directly from the fields has a longer shelf life than produce recovered from retail outlets and is therefore more easily stored and distributed.
- **Increases donations:** Very often, farmers increase their donations to support the food bank in addition to meeting their contract obligations through other opportunities such as gleaning.
- **Supports local economy:** Purchasing from local farmers contributes back to local economy and is recognized and appreciated by people being served as well as other organizational supporters such as donors and volunteers.



Program Considerations

Organizations vary in how they structure purchasing programs. Below are some program elements to consider in determining if developing a purchasing program is a potential strategy for increasing the availability of fresh produce to your clients:

Coordination: A farm-to-food bank (F2FB) purchasing program can be implemented at various levels in the hunger relief network. A distributor can coordinate contracts with farmers and arrange for the produce to be delivered to a distribution center or directly to food banks they partner with. Food banks that have staffing to manage a contract(s) and infrastructure to receive and distribute fresh produce can implement this strategy as well. Depending on the



GUIDE 4: Direct Purchasing From Farmers



funds and staffing available, organizations can manage multiple contracts. Regardless of the number of contracts or type of organization, having dedicated staff (paid or volunteer), both on- and off-season, is a critical component for program success. *See Promising Practice: Bellingham's Food Bank Fresh Program.*

Funding: Identifying and seeking funds dedicated to F2FB purchases will ensure the overall program sustainability and impact. Private dollars from local and national foundations, individual donors, and community fundraising events play an important role in supporting these programs. Some programs have utilized public dollars through state departments (e.g. Fresh Food for All program in New York City) or federal grants such as state-administered specialty crop block grants.

Whether public or private, donors have demonstrated support for dedicating funds to local procurement strategies that feed hungry families and generate income for farmers.

In addition to the cost of the contract itself, funds are needed to cover staff time to manage the contracts, infrastructure such as refrigeration, boxes and bags for distribution, and educational programming (e.g. recipe cards or food demos). A seasonal contract with a farmer can start as low as \$500 depending on how much your organization can manage.

Pricing and Payment: The price of the produce will depend on what your organization negotiates with the farmer. Programs can work with local agricultural extension to offer guidance on what is a fair price. Some programs use a CSA (community supported agriculture) model in which the organization provides "seed" capital or puts a down payment for the farm to purchase and plant seeds. Other models pay on delivery or are invoiced by the farmer when the order is received.

Infrastructure Needs: Basic infrastructure needs include the refrigeration and dry space to appropriately store produce. Depending on how the produce is received or how the agency distributes food to clients, they may also need on-site produce-washing facilities. Additionally, you may need a truck to pick

Promising Practice: Bellingham's Food Bank Fresh Program

In effort to increase the availability of fresh produce for their clients, Bellingham Food Bank (BFB) started the Food Bank Fresh Program in 2012. Originally funded by the state Local Farms, Healthy Kids bill, the pilot program raised the issue of food quality for the BFB board. When state funding was cut, the board remained committed to purchasing from local farms and launched a community fundraising effort specifically for this program. For the 2013 season, BFB contracted seven local farmers with an average contract of \$5,000.

A full-time agricultural program coordinator negotiates with the farmers during the winter months to determine the amount and variety of produce to be purchased. Similar to a CSA model, once the wholesale contract is signed by the farmer, BFB sends a check for advance payment. *(See Appendix E.) for their model contract.)*

In addition to managing the contracts, the program coordinator also manages other F2FB efforts such as volunteer gleaning parties.

The Food Bank Fresh Program is supported through community fundraising events raising funds specifically for this program as well as general operating funds.

Through the dedication and partnerships with farmers, volunteers, and the wider community, BFB is able to provide access to fresh, local bounty.

Agency profile:

- Facility: distribution center to 12 food banks
- Number of staff: nine
- Number of clients: 11,200 average monthly visits

GUIDE 4: Direct Purchasing From Farmers

up the produce and bring it to the distribution facility. Many organizations are able to negotiate with farmers to deliver the produce to their facility. This is an easier negotiation when the farmer is being paid for the product.

Understanding Risk: Prior to entering an agreement with a farmer, you should understand the potential risk of crop failure and address it in the contract. Farming is unpredictable and the amount and quality of crop can be impacted by floods, droughts, frosts, etc. Allowing flexibility in the contract in the event of crop failure will help ensure long-term vendor stability. Some organizations address crop failure by providing alternatives (e.g. extending the contract for additional deliveries later in the season) for farmers to meet contract agreements.

Marketing and Communication: Recognizing the benefits of purchasing directly from farmers, organizations often include this in their marketing and communications strategy. Letting the community know of your efforts can lead to further program and organizational support.

Additional Program Components: Organizations that purchase from farmers note the importance of providing education on their fresh new offerings. Tools include providing nutrition and cooking classes, tasting demonstrations, and recipes. Over time the familiarity with items improves—allowing the organization to continually increase the variety of produce provided.

How to Start a Farm-to-Food Bank Purchasing Program

1. Determine if your organization has capacity to implement. Review the program considerations in the previous section and consider the following:

- **Coordination:** Are you able to dedicate a person's time, whether staff or volunteer, for program coordination throughout the year? Does this person have the necessary management and communication skills? While the majority of the coordination occurs during the season, off-season coordination is necessary to maintain farmer relationships and negotiate purchasing agreements. The number of farmers being contracted will impact how much time is necessary.
- **Infrastructure:** Do you have the appropriate cool and dry storage space? Do you need produce-washing facilities? Do you need a truck to pick-up from the farm? Or is the farm delivering to your facility? How will you distribute produce to clients? Do you need packaging supplies (e.g. bags)?
- **Funding:** Do you have designated funds to set up contracts and purchase produce? If not, have you identified potential public and private funders to solicit? What is your strategy to sustain program funding year after year?
- **Other program components:** Can you offer ancillary services such as nutrition classes or recipe cards? If you do not have the resources, are there any organizations you could partner with? For example, some county extensions provide nutrition classes.

2. Design your program. Organizations vary in how they structure their direct purchasing programs. The amount of funding and infrastructure available as well as the farmer's capacity determines the purchasing terms and the overall program coordination. Designing your program includes:

- Learn about your local farming community. What crops are grown? What are their market outlets—farmers markets, CSAs, wholesalers, etc.? Understanding how they operate will help determine how to structure your program.



GUIDE 4: Direct Purchasing From Farmers

- Learn about your clients' fresh produce needs. Are there certain varieties they prefer? Do they need ideas on how to prepare them?
 - Assign the designated staff or volunteer to manage the program and clarify responsibilities and time required.
 - Determine the number of desired farm accounts, type of crops to purchase, and infrastructure required.
 - Determine purchasing terms such as roles and responsibilities of the farmer and your organization, the invoicing process, delivery protocol, etc. Some organizations have a formal contract outlining the agreement while others have a verbal agreement. *See "Appendix E: F2FB Purchasing Contract Example" on page 33.*
 - Identify other program components to be implemented such as educational information and resources.
 - Create a communications plan to promote your program to farmers, clients, and the community.
- 3. Identify farmer(s).** Once you have determined your program capacity you can begin outreach with farmers. There are a variety of ways to connect with farmers in the community (see Guide to Building Farmer Relationships). In addition to starting with your existing relationships with farmers, conduct outreach through their market outlets (e.g. farmers market, roadside stands) or farm-focused resources (e.g. university extensions).
- 4. Set up the purchasing agreement terms.** Whether formally or informally, it is important to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each party. Negotiations include discussing:
- Pricing that specifies types and amount of produce to be received and the time frame
 - Invoice process, including number of payments and when and how to submit invoices
 - Delivery method (farmer delivers or provider picks up) and schedule (day/time)
 - Crop failure protocol—expectations if there is unforeseen circumstances (e.g. flooding) that cause crop failure
 - Communication/contact—clarify who the main contact is and expectations on communications (e.g. weekly phone call)
- 5. Launch the program!** Once you've designed your program and have set a purchasing agreement in place it's time for harvest! You'll want to make sure the following is happening during the season:
- Marketing: Communicate this exciting service through all your communication outlets (newsletters, Facebook, etc.). Recognize the farmer for their contributions.
 - Produce awareness: New products need a push in order to sell. Provide labels or signs identifying produce types and where it came from. Do taste demonstrations and/or have recipe cards.
 - Ongoing farmer communication: set up at least one visit to the farm during the season and

Promising Practice: Client Surveys

Understanding what your clients would like gives your program some direction when it comes to choosing fresh products. Good Cheer Food Bank conducts periodic surveys to understand why fresh fruits and vegetables are important to them. Some responses include:

"I have more energy."

"Better digestion"

"I sleep better."

This information is also helpful demonstrating need to donors and tracking results.



GUIDE 4: Direct Purchasing From Farmers

have regular check-ins with the farmer.

- Program evaluation: Track program impact by getting feedback from clients. Be sure to document what's working and what's not to plan for next year.

6. Plan during the off-season: During the off-season you can plan and prep for the following year. This includes keeping in touch with the farmers. Check in with them on how the purchasing agreement is working for them and if there are any modifications they would like for the following year. You can begin planning the types of crops you would like to purchase to help the farmer determine their planting schedule. Some organizations begin this as early as January. The off-season is also a good time for continuing outreach with farmers as they have more time away from the field. If you're interested in expanding the program offerings, now's the time to connect with farmers.



Examples from the Field:

Just Food's Local Produce Link in NYC—this five year-old program is supported through the New York Department of Health's Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP) and a partnership through United Way of NYC. The program purchases directly from farmers and connects them to participating hunger relief organizations for weekly deliveries during harvest. In 2012 nearly \$370,000 was used to purchase 273,421 pounds of produce directly from local farmers. This food was distributed through 48 agencies. Check out their comprehensive toolkit on how to implement your own program.

Mainers Feeding Mainers—through the support of local private foundations, Good Shepard Food Bank in Maine launched this purchasing program in 2010 and has since purchased and distributed over 2 million pounds of Maine-grown food through their statewide hunger relief network. They currently work with about 20 farmers—half of whom deliver directly to community food banks and the remaining to their distribution centers.



Resources: Farming Agencies, Organizations, and Directories

National

- **Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food (KYF2)** is a USDA-wide effort to strengthen local and regional food systems. Their resources and tools include a Food Compass map where you locate resources in your community. <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=KNOWYOURFARMER>
- **USDA National Farmers Market Directory** is maintained by AMS Marketing Services and is designed to provide members of the public with convenient access to information about U.S. farmers market locations, directions, operating times, product offerings, and accepted forms of payment. Market information included in the directory is voluntary and self-reported to AMS by market managers, representatives from state farmers market agencies and associations, and other key market personnel. <http://search.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/>
- **Census of Agriculture** is a leading source of facts and figures about American agriculture. Conducted every five years, the Census provides a detailed picture of U.S. farms and ranches and the people who operate them. <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/index.php>

Washington Statewide

- **State Commodity Commissions** In Washington there are over 15 state commissions representing commodities throughout the state. The commissions have various programming in research, crop promotion and marketing, and consumer education. A list of Washington State commissions can be found at <http://access.wa.gov/agency/>.
- **WSU Small Farm Team** provides research-based information and educational programs for farmers, consumers, decision-makers, and others involved in local food systems. Their website includes a farm finder directory for counties in **Eastern and Southwest Washington**. With over 40 county extensions and partners, they will be able to offer guidance on where to find farmers in your region. www.smallfarms.wsu.edu
- **Washington State Farmers Market Association (WSFMA)** supports and promotes vibrant and sustainable farmers markets in Washington State. Their online directory provides locations and contact info for the 125 farmers market members throughout the state. www.wafarmersmarkets.com
- **Pacific Northwest Vegetable Association** represents vegetable growers from Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, including specialty crop farmers and large corporate farms. Their member directory provides a searchable database by crop and state. www.pnva.org



- **Tilth Producers of Washington** promotes ecologically sound, economically viable, and socially equitable farming practices. Their Member Directory includes Washington’s organic and sustainable growers, food and farm suppliers, and resources that are searchable by county. www.tilthproducers.org
- **Puget Sound Fresh** provides consumers with resources and tools to help them identify and make informed choices on how to find and purchase seasonal and locally grown, raised or harvested foods. They have directory of farms and farmers markets for the following counties in **northwest Washington**: Clallam, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Mason, Pierce, San Juan, Snohomish, and Whatcom. www.pugetsoundfresh.org
- **WSU County Extensions** provide a range of county-based resources and education programming for communities. **Each county** has a county office or shares a county office with a neighboring county. Contact the local county extension agent to learn about their agricultural and food system programming. www.extension.wsu.edu/locations
- **Washington State Department of Agriculture** provides resources, technical assistance, and information on the state’s farming sector. www.agr.wa.gov

Regional Resources

- **Gorge Grown Food Network** serves counties in southern Washington and Oregon along the Columbia River gorge. www.gorgegrown.com/gorge-markets.cfm
- **Puget Sound Fresh Guide** is available online and in print. Managed by Cascade Harvest Coalition, the guide includes a list of farmers and marketing outlets around the Puget Sound. www.pugetsoundfresh.org
- **Rural Roots Local Food Guide** serves Eastern WA and Idaho www.ruralroots.org



Appendices

Appendix A: Farm-to-Food Bank (F2FB) Initiatives Table

Appendix B: Gleaning checklist

Appendix C: Work Party Record and Donor Tracking Sheet

Appendix D: Farmers Market Gleaning Contract Example

Appendix E: F2FB Purchasing Contract Example



In Yakima, a Northwest Harvest pear gleaning project fills cull bins with fresh produce for distribution from area food programs.

Appendix A: Farm-to-Food Bank (F2FB) Initiatives

<i>Initiative</i>	<i>How It Works</i>	<i>Resources Required</i>	<i>Implementation Level</i>
<i>Local Produce Donated to the Hunger Relief System</i>			
<i>Farmers market gleaning</i>	Farmers donate products to food bank at the end of the market day. Food bank picks up the donations and resorts for distribution. Some models have a formal gleaning agreement signed between the market and food bank.	Trained staff/volunteers for regular pick-up Equipment: boxes/bags, refrigeration/storage, vehicle to transport	Food bank Distribution Center Farm-focused org
<i>Farm cull bin gleaning</i>	Food bank picks up cull bins (boxes used in the field) at farm in which farmer has already sorted out unmarketable produce.	Staff/volunteers to coordinate schedule and pick-up and drop offs of bins Equipment: truck, refrigeration/storage, cull bins	Food bank Distribution center
<i>Field gleaning</i>	Volunteers harvest unmarketable produce or produce left over after the commercial harvest directly from the field. The USDA Toolkit: Let's Glean outlines how to make this happen.	Gleaning equipment (depends on crop type), trained volunteers, staff developing relationship with farmer and coordinating the event.	Food bank Distribution center
<i>Plant-a-row</i>	Farmer/gardener plants rows or acres designated for a food bank. Food bank coordinates with farmer on priority crops, volunteer needs and other related costs (i.e. seeds). Farmer/gardeners or volunteers harvest crop.	Trained staff/volunteers to coordinate with farmer/gardener Equipment: harvesting supplies, seeds	Food bank
<i>Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) donated shares</i>	Farmer donates CSA household sized share(s) to a food bank. Food bank breaks down share to be mixed with other produce donations.	Trained volunteers/ staff to resort shares	Food bank
<i>Food bank farm-volunteer operated</i>	Food bank operates a farm through volunteer support. All products go directly to the food bank. Food bank leases (often at a steep discount) or owns land. Produce can be distributed through a distribution center or connected directly to a food bank. This is a particularly resource intensive initiative that is difficult to sustain over time. Programs that have been able to sustain are able to do so through a unique situation that allows them to minimize overall costs (i.e. steep lease on land, farmworkers through local Department of Justice prisoners, etc.).	Staffing to coordinate; trained volunteers to plant, harvest, etc. Funding for seeds, starts, equipment and other farming infrastructure (cool storage)	Food bank Distribution center

Appendix A

<i>Initiative</i>	<i>How It Works</i>	<i>Resources Required</i>	<i>Implementation Level</i>
<i>Produce Purchased from Local Farmers for the Hunger Relief Network</i>			
<i>Farmers Market Vouchers</i>	Food bank distributes vouchers to clients that can be redeemed at a farmers market for food at cost. The food bank then reimburses the farmers through coordinating with the farmers market manager. This initiative is often used to promote SNAP or WIC benefits at the market.	Staffing for program coordination and fundraising; Dedicated funds to reimburse farmers.	Food bank
<i>CSA sponsored shares</i>	Farmer or food banks solicits “sponsored shares” in which shares are paid at full value by a household or business and the share is then delivered to the food bank. Food bank breaks down share to be mixed with other produce donations.	Volunteers/staff to solicit, market and resort shares	Food bank
<i>Direct Purchasing at Farmers Market/ Farm Stand</i>	In some communities the easiest option for staff may be attending farmers markets or stopping by roadside stands to purchase a few cases when funds are available. This allows for flexibility while at the same time demonstrating to the farming community that the local hunger relief agencies are doing what they can to support local growers.	Volunteer/staff to manage and dedicated dollars to purchase	Food bank
<i>Direct purchasing from farmer</i>	Food bank or food bank distributor contracts and purchases directly from local farmers. This is done during the off-season (as early as December) while farmers are planning their crops. Some programs unable or uninterested in contracting purchase from farmer during the season as an alternative. Programs have raised both private and public dollars for support. Leading adopters of this strategy include NYC’s Local Produce Link and Good Shepard Food-Bank’s Mainers Feeding Mainers programs.	Infrastructure to receive and store product and potentially transport. Capacity (e.g. staff/vol) to manage contracts and administrate the invoicing process.	Food bank Distribution center
<i>Food Bank farm – farmer paid</i>	Food bank owns/ leases land and contracts with a farmer in which the food (or portion of) is given to food bank in exchange for cash. Typically requires volunteer support as well.	Funds to support farmer, farm infrastructure (equipment, seed, storage, etc.), staffing to coordinate and train volunteers	Food bank Distribution center

Appendix A

<i>Initiative</i>	<i>How It Works</i>	<i>Resources Required</i>	<i>Implementation Level</i>
<i>Statewide Initiative to Solicit Donations or Purchase Produce from Local Farmers</i>			
<i>Statewide Donation Promotion Campaigns</i>	A coordinated campaign typically with a hunger relief organization and the state Department of Agriculture or a commodity commission that focuses on soliciting cash or product donations for the hunger relief network. For example, California has dedicated December as “Farm-to-Food Bank Month” to encourage farmers to make donations to food banks.	Staffing to coordinate communications and marketing	Statewide collaboration including representative from the hunger relief network, state agencies, and the farming community
<i>State Tax Credit</i>	Farmers receive a tax credit for donating produce to a food bank. The following states currently or in the past have had this type of tax credit: Arizona, California, Iowa, North Carolina, Colorado, and Oregon.	Staffing and funding: Capacity to provide necessary paperwork and infrastructure to receive fresh produce or to direct to appropriate locations	Statewide collaboration including representative from the hunger relief network, state agencies, and the farming community

Appendix B: Gleaning Checklist

This template and others are available at Rotary First Harvest's online Produce Recovery Guide (www.rfhresourceguide.org).

Gleaning Checklist

Date: _____

- Gas/gas card
- Directions
- Volunteer applications
- Group sign-in sheets
- Timesheet
- Water
- Snacks
- Knives
- Boots
- Gloves
- Sunblock
- Containers (bags, totes, crates)

Appendix C: Work Party Record and Donor Tracking Sheet

This template and others are available at Rotary First Harvest's online Produce Recovery Guide (www.rfhresourceguide.org).

Work Party Record and Donor Tracking Sheet

Work Party Record			
Date:		Number of Gleaners:	
Location/name of farm:		Gleaning Team?	
Time:		Coordinator:	
Other Group?			

Volunteer Sign-In		
Volunteer Name	Emergency Contact Name and Number	Medications and Health Issues

Produce Weigh-In		
Produce Type	Weight	Number of Crates

Appendix D: Farmers Market Gleaning Contract example



Gleaning from the Neighborhood Farmers Markets 2013 Instructions and Agreement Form

1. Contact the NFM to ask if there is availability for gleaning from the market you are interested in. *If you already have a relationship with the NFM, simply fill out this form and send it in.*
2. Complete the gleaning agreement below and send to the NFM (mail, email, or fax) Keep a copy for your records.
3. Train your volunteers/staff on the procedures specified below.
4. You will receive confirmation (verbal or email) of this agreement and any special instructions or amendments to your request.

Food Bank or Organization name: _____

Contact person(s): _____

Phone: _____ email: _____

Farmers market(s) you wish to glean from: _____

Dates you plan to pick up from the market: _____

Method of reporting number of pounds of food picked up each month (circle one): email mail phone

Does your food bank/organization plan to provide Helping Harvest vouchers this year to your clients? _____
If so, please ask for a Helping Harvest agreement form.

Procedures for Market Day Gleaning at NFM Farmers Markets (please read and sign below):

1. **Arrive at closing time**, not before. Farmers must finish their sales to customers right up until the market closing time. As soon as the market closes, they can accept your donation boxes.
2. **Check in** with the market manager.
3. Wear clothing or badges to **identify yourself** as a volunteer/staff from your organization.
4. Be prepared to provide **receipts** each week to any vendors who ask for one for their donation.
5. Hand out your empty donation boxes to the farmers just after market closing time. Give farmers 30 to 60 minutes to fill their boxes before you pick them up.
6. Remember that market vendors' staff may change during the season, and you may need to connect with new vendor staff to explain to them what you are doing. Please ask the market manager if you need assistance.
7. Track the number of pounds of food you pick up each week, and provide a monthly report to the NFM.
8. Inform the NFM a minimum of 48 hours in advance if you cannot pick on one of your planned days. Keep us informed of any changes or issues concerning your gleaning agreement or market day procedures.

Outreach: In addition to gleaning, the NFM encourages each organization or food bank to do at least one day of outreach at the market (set up a table at the market on a specified day(s) and provide information to the public about your organization, services and gleaning at the farmers market). Please list a day or days that you would like to table (we will confirm dates and logistics with you): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix E: F2FB Purchasing Contract Example



Bellingham Food Bank • Alternatives to Hunger

February 12, 2013

XXXX
XXXX
XXXX

Dear XXX,

At the end of February, you will receive a check for \$8,300 from Bellingham Food Bank for your participation in Bellingham Food Bank Fresh for 2013. Receipt of the check is your agreement to participate.

Pricing and harvest

Cucumbers (any green variety): we would like to buy \$2500 of cucumbers—~667 lbs per month in July, August, and September at \$1.25 per pound for a total of 2000 lbs.

Cabbage (any variety): we would like to buy \$800 of cabbage—a total of 1000 lbs at \$0.80 per pound harvested in the period of mid-June to July.

Chard (any variety or a mix): we would like to buy \$2000 of bunched chard—consistent weekly harvests of three-quarter pound bunches spread over the period of September through December at \$1.25 per bunch for a total of 1600 bunches.

Kale (any variety or a mix): we would like to buy \$2000 of bunched kale—consistent weekly harvests of three-quarter pound bunches spread over the period of September through December at \$1.25 per bunch for a total of 1600 bunches.

Green Bell Peppers: we would like to buy \$1000 of green bell peppers—a total of 800 lbs at \$1.25 per pound spread across the period of August, September, and October.

As Bellingham Food Bank will be the logistical agent and receiver of your produce, please direct any inquiry or correspondence to Max Morange (contact info below). Deliveries will be received by Bellingham Food Bank warehouse staff (Matt or Roland), but questions about this agreement should be directed by phone or email to Max.

In order to facilitate receipt of your produce, please call Max at least 3 days prior to your first harvest, in the event that there is a break in your deliveries and then when you plan to start delivering again. We would appreciate if you could deliver to Bellingham Food

Appendix E

Bank's receiving door on Tuesdays between noon and 4pm or Wednesdays from 8—11am. Please let Max know which of these days will be your regular delivery day.

Packaging

Please package all deliveries in uniform box sizes without comingling produce types in boxes and include an invoice with your delivery stating:

- Type of produce delivered
- Number of cases of each type of produce
- Total weight of each produce type delivered

We recognize that this accounting is different from how most wholesale buyers do things, but since we do not sell anything, we account for things in a slightly different manner.

Bellingham Food Bank is very excited about Food Bank Fresh and believes it is an excellent way to partner with Whatcom County growers to ensure that hungry families have a consistent supply of nutrient dense and culturally familiar produce for clients. Thank you for being willing to participate in this program. Please do not hesitate to be in touch with any questions.

Sincerely,

Max Morange
Agricultural Programs Coordinator, Bellingham Food Bank

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*For more information about
Growing Connections, please contact:*

Laura Titzer at 206.923.7423 or
LauraT@northwestharvest.org.

Discover more at
northwestharvest.org



HUNGER
STOPS HERE.

Northwest Harvest
800.722.6924
info@northwestharvest.org