



Society of St. Andrew

GLEANING AMERICA'S FIELDS FEEDING AMERICA'S HUNGRY

Quarterly Report

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Mileigh of North Carolina gleans Kale at a Harvest of Hope trip last summer.

HAVE YOU BEEN CALLED?

Sometimes, farmers call in January to invite SoSA volunteers out to glean in July. Other times, they call at 4 p.m. on a Thursday, offering to share an abundance of perfectly good food the same day. Either way, one of the unwritten codes at The Society of St. Andrew (SoSA) is never to miss a farmer's call!

Just as important as a farmer's call is the call that happens right after it: the call to volunteers to come out to glean at that farm.

In fact, people who volunteer with SoSA are so passionate they're known



Adults and youth alike gather from different states and glean and work together to harvest fresh kale for locals who do not have enough food.

to do something unconventional—they're known to answer every phone call they receive. These days, that seems crazy! Typically, if you see a call

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2019 Year End Totals

Fresh food saved and donated to feed hungry people

Produce Gleaned.....	19,062,845 lbs
Servings of Fresh Food Provided.....	57,188,535
Events	6,039
Volunteers.....	25,544
Farms/Providers.....	905
Distributing Agencies	2,131

Total Historical Pounds
Total Historical Servings

870 Million
2.6 Billion

Abundance Orchard for VBS!

Year 1: Old Testament
Year 2: New Testament

Learn more and order
your VBS program at:

EndHunger.org/vbs

**Start planning now for your church's
summer Vacation Bible School.**

Both programs are a complete hunger
action-themed VBS, a 2-3 hour program for
up to 5 days.



Executive Director's Report

By Lynette Johnson

Finding Joy Outside Your Comfort Zone

Last year, the Society of St. Andrew hosted more than 6,000 food recovery events — on average about 16 events every single day of the year! Those events included field gleaning and farmers market or farmstand gleaning and pickups



from packing houses of bins or boxes of culled and graded-out vegetables or fruit. It also included crop drops where tens of thousands of pounds of vegetables were bagged and readied for local distribution; and food show recovery where first-quality produce brought for display was gathered up and shared with hungry families nearby.

It takes something special to be a Society of St. Andrew volunteer. It's not like any other volunteer opportunity. Field gleanings often happen on very short notice. The farmer may call just one or two days before they are ready for gleaners to pick the field clean! Gleaners are people who respond quickly when the phone rings or the email arrives. Fields may be 30 or 40 minutes from town, so gleaners are willing to spend some time and gas heading out to the country... where dirt and heat and flies await them while they spend a few hours picking, digging, or gathering the good food remaining in the field. It's not unusual for a person in need to glean next to a bank executive, or for extended families to glean together.

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Most first-time SoSA volunteers have never been in a field before. But when they finish gleaning, big grins stretch across their faces. They've had fun! They've made a game to see who could glean a row the fastest, or who found the biggest zucchini. When you ask how their morning went, they take the dirt and heat in stride, and answer in amazement about how much food they found, still in the

A Tale of Two Truckloads

Toward the end of 2019, the Society of St. Andrew received two calls in a single day about truckloads of food needing to be rescued. One call was about a load of potatoes, the other bananas. Sadly, SoSA was able to rescue only one of the loads.

Wasted food is already heartbreaking when we know so many of our neighbors are hungry. It's even more difficult to accept when it's due to a solvable problem.

A grocery store rejected a load of potatoes due to a simple computer error. Computer logs had failed to communicate

with each other, and the grocery store just didn't need that truckload of potatoes.

This simple error destined 4,000 bags of potatoes for a landfill until SoSA volunteers jumped in and organized an impromptu "crop drop" to sort and distribute them

As it happened, SoSA's volunteer records showed a lot of volunteers nearby, ready to serve. Once alerted, these volunteers

spread the word to feeding agencies, like soup kitchens and shelters. Arranging the logistics so quickly was challenging, but these volunteers were determined not to miss this opportunity.

In a single day, all of the potatoes were unloaded and shared with 20 agencies

across a 100-mile span of North Alabama. These agencies were able to share fresh food with hundreds in their communities, due to the efforts

of dedicated SoSA volunteers who pitched in and worked 'til the job was done.

Unfortunately, in another state that same day, the load of bananas met a different fate. We couldn't rescue them before they were discarded.

While SoSA responded quickly, it was not quick enough. Volunteers were notified and an offloading site was being secured. But while the pieces were

still coming together, the driver had to take off. So the driver dropped the bananas in a landfill.

It would have taken less than 50 volunteers to unload that truck.

A few more volunteers nearby could have changed the outcome and shared this nutritious fruit with thousands of families. We can't expect to rescue every load of food, in every location. But these bananas were a solvable problem. YOU could have been part of the solution if you lived nearby!

Continued – See A Tale of Two Truckloads on page 2

A few more volunteers nearby could have changed the outcome



Sign up today to be an on-call volunteer with SoSA. Help rescue and share good food with your community the next time.



Each box of these wasted bananas weighs 40lbs and contains an average of 100 individual bananas inside.

When you sign up to volunteer at endhunger.org/register your name is added to a list of people interested in rescuing food—like these great bananas — so healthy food can be shared and not wasted.

Sign your group up too! Invite your friends from church, school, or the office. It really only takes a few people to make a huge difference! ■



Adopt a Bushel, Feed a Nation
A new 30-Day, Fundraising Challenge
that raises \$806 when your team works
together to help feed people in need

Take the challenge! Encourage your class, faith community, group, organization, or business to adopt a bushel of fruits and vegetables to support the gleaning and feeding work of the Society of St. Andrew. **Details:** EndHunger.org/abfn

field. They know that what they gleaned is good food and it would have been a real shame, had that good food gone to waste. Often, they load the vegetables into their own vehicles to take to a food pantry, shelter, or soup kitchen in town. When the pantry volunteer or the chef at the soup kitchen is overjoyed to receive the fresh produce, SoSA volunteers have another affirmation that the work they've done is going to make a difference in the lives of people in need.

We hear stories of first-time SoSA volunteers who begin buying their produce at farmstands or farmers markets, after they've been into a field to glean and have met the farmer who grew the food they gleaned. That first step, stretching outside their comfort zone to glean, leads to healthier eating and a real sense of connection and commitment to supporting local farmers. It's exciting to hear people talk, even years later, about their gleaning experience with the Society of St. Andrew.

We're so grateful for every single person who makes the time to glean or to bag or transport produce with the Society of St. Andrew. The volume of food SoSA distributes would be impossible without the thousands of people who volunteer with SoSA every year. First-time volunteers, stepping outside their comfort zone to glean, are crucial to this ministry. And we are ecstatic when first-time volunteers step up to become

regular volunteers, looking for every opportunity to do whatever they can to share good food with hungry neighbors. What those regular volunteers have in common is joy. They've found joy in the outdoors, joy in the hard work, and joy in offering nourishing food to people who need it most.

Need more joy in your life? Join us in the fields and at the markets this year. Signup to volunteer at EndHunger.org/

Harvest of Hope

**Plan Now for
Your Church Mission Trip**

Spring Break ✨ Summer ✨ Fall

Find details at
EndHunger.org/hoh



Recent Donations

These names represent gifts made “In Memory Of” and “In Honor Of” special people and/or significant occasions. As loved ones are honored or remembered these gifts bring people together to harvest and share healthy food, reduce food waste, and build caring communities by offering nourishment to hungry neighbors. Thank you.

In Memory Of

Becky Aduddell
 Bobby Banks
 Virginia Bealer
 Bill Beardall
 Eileen M. Bickett
 Chet Boone
 Dave Borlas
 Peggy Purnell Bowen
 Andrew Brannan
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 William Daniels
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 T.J. Martin Family
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 Kat Stratton
 Mark & Bonnie Swecker
 Team Optimist
 Molly Thorne
 Richard & Bonny Trevillian
 Uncle Ray
 Carolyn Vines
 Jennifer Wainwright-Baker
 Mike Waldmann
 Bill & Betty Waller
 Abi Warmack
 Peter D. Weaver
 Eva Wiggins Mapp
 Terry & Diane Wilson

Have You Been Called

continued from front cover

from a number you don't recognize, you're unlikely to answer.

But when you're serving in the mission to end hunger, you more than likely answer most calls. Because you know that the call may be for a last-minute opportunity to rescue food. Or it may be for a field gleaning right around the corner from your church.

Farmers are a critical component of the gleaning network. Without them, there wouldn't be any food. But as a volunteer, you are an equally important part of the gleaning network.



Prepared with hats, gloves, and glasses, people of all ages, from four churches in Virginia and North Carolina both serve in the fields to help feed hungry families.

Every year, thousands of farmers make the call to share an abundance of food they've grown. And then thousands

of calls are made and emails sent to people just like you! Asking you to serve. Because the food cannot be rescued without you answering the call to serve.

Every year, thousands of calls are made
by farmers wanting to share an abundance of
food they've grown. And none of it can be rescued
without volunteers answering SoSA's call to help.

Burch Farms has been a long-time partner of SoSA. They're one of the largest farms in North Carolina and they grow food to sell it. Like many farms, they don't guarantee SoSA gleaning opportunities every year.



Abby and Claire from Virginia enjoy meeting new friends as well as serving with old friends.

But every year, they do call. For more than a decade, Burch Farms has called SoSA volunteers offering to share fresh food and every year, that partnership feeds more people. In 2018, 27 agencies received food from Burch Farms to share with their hungry clients. By 2019, food shared by Burch Farms went to 49 nearby feeding agencies.

The late “Big Jimmy” of Burch Farms once explained growing food was his “passion” and he lived that passion by sharing good food with his local community.

Sometimes, gleanings need 30 volunteers and other times there’s room for 100 or more, in the fields at one time. One time, there was so

much food the volunteers ran out of bags for the gleaned food – twice! They ran out, sent someone for more bags, filled up those, and sent them out again to buy more bags.

Your community needs you. When you glean with the Society of St. Andrew, you are sharing healthy food with hungry people in your own community. Help your community this year by answering the call to serve. Don’t wait! Go to EndHunger.org/register and sign up today to volunteer with SoSA in 2020. ■

Join the mission to end hunger. You’re more than welcome, you’re invited!



While volunteering is an exciting way to get involved, it’s not a perfect fit for everyone. If you live far from the nearest gleaning event or have a physical limitation that might make gleaning in farm fields difficult, or don’t have a desire to be outdoors lifting, bending, and stooping, then there are other ways you can serve.

Make a donation to SoSA. We do not charge fees for our services but rely 100% on donations. Gleaned food is shared with recipients at no cost to them.

Your donation covers all the logistics of rescuing food, including packaging materials and transportation of the food gleaned by volunteers as well as rejected food from the grocery stores that SoSA rescues. Those materials and transportation bring food safely from the fields and stores to the tables of families who need it most.

It’s simple and a small gift makes a huge impact. A \$25 monthly donation through the 12 Baskets Monthly Giving Program is a great way to start. Your monthly gift brings more than 800 servings of food, every single month, to the tables of families in need.

For more information about 12 Baskets Monthly Giving Program, go to EndHunger.org/12

Receive a daily Lent devotion in your email throughout Lent.

It’s not too late to sign up.

EndHunger.org/lent



Deepen your faith & experience renewal in your own life with Society of St. Andrew, as you join our online readership family during the season of Lent.

February 26 – April 12, 2020

Volunteer Spotlight

Jodi is a volunteer with SoSA, in Indiana. When she's not working full-time, shes volunteering with SoSA or at another hunger relief organization that rescues unsold food from restaurants and grocery stores. Jodi was even named a "Recycling Rock Star" by the Indiana Recycling Coalition for her significant impact in her local community.

"I have done gleaning through the Society of St. Andrew several times in the last few years, as my schedule has allowed, and tried to recruit as many others as possible. I find it an incredibly rewarding experience to be out in the fields. I learn something every time I do it because I don't know a whole lot about our food system or farming. It's always interesting to see what is growing on the farms, the animals, and the machinery used.



Jodi (left) "Recycling Rock Star" gleans corn in Indiana with other SoSA volunteers.

From my perspective, gleaning is an act of food waste

reduction. Even if the food were to be plowed back into the soil to decay and serve as nutrients for the next crop, it's not the highest and best expression of all the labor and energy that went into growing that food. Knowing that the work we are doing is feeding people who need assistance is also a driving force. The work is often not easy, but it feels great to be outside, more connected with the cycles of life, and doing something that is meaningful.

I've had a chance to engage with coworkers; I've recruited to glean, in ways that we never would have interacted before. We have been able to encourage and help each other in physical work, in different kinds of weather to make a difference in something, which really puts into perspective some of the aspects of our normal workday. Gleaning helps me appreciate what I have, but I also gain from the experience every time. "

– Jodi Leamon, Sustainability Coordinator, Allen County Environmental Management Company (Indiana) and Rockstar SoSA Volunteer



THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING FOUNDATIONS & CORPORATIONS that donated \$1,000+ in the 4th quarter of 2019

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For information about SoSA programs call 800-333-4597 • sosainfo@EndHunger.org • EndHunger.org
Connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and sign up for monthly updates
EndHunger.org/signup

