



Press release for Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance. For immediate release.

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## ARKANSAS GLEANING PROJECT HAS RECORD BREAKING YEAR

**LITTLE ROCK, AR (January 12, 2017)**– For the Arkansas Gleaning Project, a program of the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, 2016 was a record breaking year. Working with 21 growers from around the state, the project gleaned **2.1 million pounds of fresh produce** to help supplement the nutritional needs of low-income Arkansans.



community gardens in underserved locales around the state.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are among the most desired foods by hunger agencies, however, the high cost and limited availability of fresh produce makes it challenging for food banks and pantries to offer these nutritious options. The Arkansas Gleaning Project, with assistance from Society of Saint Andrew, the Arkansas Department of Correction and Arkansas growers, rescues produce that remains in growers' fields after harvest and distributes it to member food banks and pantries. The gleaning project also partners with Little Rock Parks and Recreation to establish *hunger gardens* in unused park land around the city and works with other organizations to introduce



“Gleaned produce alone will not yet meet the demand our Feeding America food bank members have for fresh fruits and vegetables,” said Michelle Shope, Alliance food sourcing and operations director, “but with continued support from donors and partners, we hope one day it will.” The Arkansas Gleaning Project serves as a model for many other agricultural states looking for ways to reduce food waste and increase access to nutritious food for their people in need. Feeding America, the nation’s largest charitable food distribution network, has endorsed the gleaning concept and hosted representatives of the Arkansas Gleaning Project at their annual Food and Operations National Conference.

Since the project began in 2008, **more than 9 million** pounds of produce have been gathered at cost of **less than than five cents per pound**. Growers, large or small, who are interested in being part of the Arkansas Gleaning Project should contact Brandon Chapman, food sourcing and logistics program coordinator, at [bchapman@arhungeralliance.org](mailto:bchapman@arhungeralliance.org).

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### **About The Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance**

Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, lead partner in Arkansas for the No Kid Hungry campaign, is a non-profit collaborative network of more than 480 hunger relief organizations across Arkansas. Our founding members include the Arkansas Foodbank in Little Rock, the Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas in Jonesboro, Harvest Regional Food Bank in Texarkana, Food Bank of North Central Arkansas in Norfolk, Northwest Arkansas Food Bank in Bethel Heights and River Valley Regional Food Bank in Fort Smith. The Alliance is dedicated to reducing hunger through direct relief, education and advocacy. We invite you to visit [www.ARhungeralliance.org](http://www.ARhungeralliance.org) for details on hunger relief programs, donor and volunteer opportunities.

### **The Arkansas Gleaning Project**

The Arkansas Gleaning Project is a partnership between Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance, Society of St. Andrew, the Arkansas Department of Correction and the growers of Arkansas who donate their unharvested crops to feed Arkansas's hungry. Volunteers and others go into the fields and gather produce that is left after harvest. The cost of operating the Arkansas Gleaning Project is less than 5 cents per pound. In 2016 the project gleaned 2.1 million pounds of fresh produce that was distributed to food banks, pantries, soup kitchens and shelters across the state. For more on the Arkansas Gleaning Project, contact [bchapman@arhungeralliance.org](mailto:bchapman@arhungeralliance.org) or visit <http://www.arhungeralliance.org/programs/arkansas-gleaning-project/>