



SAN DIEGO COUNTY
**CHILDHOOD
OBESITY
INITIATIVE**

Working Together to Shape a Healthy Future

icansandiego.org

Gleaning: Working Together for the Health of the Community

Resources for Faith Communities

There are simple ways your faith community can help bring fresh, nutritious foods home to children and families throughout the year. One way is by gleaning. Gleaning is the act of gathering food, packaged goods, or garden grown items that would otherwise go to waste. Gleaning has been around for many years and dates back as far as some religious text. Faith communities all over the United States have started gleaning to help provide food to the hungry. Your faith community can organize a group of volunteers to glean local orchards and farms, gardens, farmers' markets and grocery stores. Gleaning can be as simple as gathering fruit and vegetables from your own backyard to share with others in your community or to give to local food banks, soup kitchens and food pantries.

Why is gleaning necessary?

- **To prevent childhood obesity and other chronic diseases.** Childhood obesity is a major health concern in San Diego County. Providing fresh fruits and vegetables for children and families can help improve their nutrition, health and prevent disease.
- **To reduce hunger in America.** One in six children are at risk of hunger (Share Our Strength, 2009). Gleaning can help ensure food to these families in need.
- **To help eliminate food waste.** Did you know? Nearly half of America's food goes to waste each year and nearly 50 percent of all food ready harvest never gets eaten (Harrison, 2004). Your faith community can help recover edible food before it reaches the trash and help put food back on the table for those in need.

Other Ways to Help:

- **Start a community garden.** Community gardens are a great way to increase access to healthy food. For more information about starting a community garden visit www.icansandiego.org.
- **Partner with a community organization to offer garden classes at your site.** Faith communities can teach children and families how to grow their own produce. Teaching gardening classes provides children and families with tools to grow their own food for a lifetime.

Faith communities don't have to grow alone. Organizations such as Victory Gardens San Diego and San Diego County Master Gardener Association are here to help! For more information, visit the links below.

- Victory Gardens San Diego
<http://www.victorygardenssandiego.com/>
- San Diego Food Bank
<http://www.sandiegofoodbank.org/>
- San Diego County Master Gardener Association
<http://www.mastergardenerssandiego.org>

Core funding for the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative provided in part by:



a project facilitated by:
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