

News Release



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AMPLEHARVEST.ORG CAMPAIGN ANNOUNCES PARTNERSHIP **WITH THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**

AmpleHarvest.org and the faith community work to help food pantries get fresh produce

For Immediate Release

West Milford, NJ – (March 3, 2011) – The AmpleHarvest.org^(SM) Campaign announces a partnership with the National Council of Churches (NCC) as part of its ongoing effort to help more of Americas food pantries (also known as food cupboards, food shelves, food closets or food banks in some locations) receive locally grown and freshly harvested garden produce for distribution to pantry clients.

Created by CNN Hero Gary Oppenheimer in May 2009, the AmpleHarvest.org Campaign is a nationwide program that enables the 40 million Americans who grow food in home gardens, often more than they can use, preserve or give to friends, to find a neighborhood food pantry eager to receive their excess garden bounty.

According to Michael Livingston, Director of Poverty Initiative for the NCC, "AmpleHarvest.org responds to needs at many levels: the needs of persons struggling to make ends meet to have access to fresh

produce for themselves and their families, and the needs of gardeners to respond to God's call to be faithful and productive neighbors to all members of their community. It's a fruitful ministry, and it's a blessing to all who encounter it." "Providing and sharing fresh food is not only eco-just -- it's biblically sound and theologically prophetic" according to a recent NCC publication available at www.ncccusa.org/news/110214ampleharvest.html.

"By working together, AmpleHarvest.org and the NCC create an excellent opportunity for every church based food pantry in America to learn about AmpleHarvest.org and register themselves by visiting www.AmpleHarvest.org/faith" noted Carol Hayes, AmpleHarvest.org Faith Outreach Coordinator

Max Finberg, Director of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships for the US Department of Agriculture commenting on the partnership between AmpleHarvest.org and the National Council of Churches stated that "Providing people access to healthy foods is a key component of First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! Initiative. She has challenged the faith community to help expand access points to fresh produce and our partnerships with the National Council of Churches will do just that. Churches already provide food to millions of hungry people. By partnering with gardeners around the country, they'll be expanding and improving that work. All houses of worship should consider what more they can do to help address the two sides of malnutrition-obesity and the threat of hunger, and take a look at www.letsmove.gov for further ideas of how to get involved."

Currently, nearly 3,300 food pantries across all 50 states are registered at AmpleHarvest.org with more signing up daily. Food pantries that have not yet registered at AmpleHarvest.org should do so promptly (www.AmpleHarvest.org/faith) to be ready to receive donations when gardeners harvest their spring crop. There is no cost to the food pantry or the gardener, and due to the unique design of AmpleHarvest.org, extra refrigeration is not needed.

"An estimated 70% of the 33,500+ food pantries in America are located in houses of worship" notes founder Gary Oppenheimer. "We are reaching out to the faith community with two separate goals in mind:

to help more food pantries register at AmpleHarvest.org and to educate, encourage and enable the gardeners in those communities to donate the excess portions of their bounty. It is our hope that the clergy in these churches will remind their congregation of their obligation to help feed the hungry. While many people are having their own economic challenges limiting their capacity to donate money to a charity, AmpleHarvest.org enables millions of Americans to reach into their backyards instead of their back pockets to help their neighbors in need.”

About AmpleHarvest.org:

AmpleHarvest.org, Inc. is a not-for-profit 501c3 charity which has received backing and support from the US Department of Agriculture, Google, Inc., National Gardening Association, the Garden Writers of America, Rotary International, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and numerous faith groups. The AmpleHarvest.org Campaign works to diminish hunger in America by enabling gardeners to easily find a local food pantry eager for their excess garden bounty. For more information on the campaign, visit www.AmpleHarvest.org/press or call AMPLE-6-9880 (267-536-9880).

About the National Council of Churches:

Since its founding in 1950, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA has been the leading force for shared ecumenical witness among Christians in the United States. The NCC's 37 member communions -- from a wide spectrum of Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, Evangelical, historic African American and Living Peace churches -- include 45 million persons in more than 100,000 local congregations in communities across the nation.

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Note to Editor: Please be aware that the proper name is “AmpleHarvest.org” or “the AmpleHarvest.org Campaign” – not “Ample Harvest”.