

# Gleaning



**39 % of all food losses** are caused already in the stage of **food production and processing** (find our more in the [info sheet on food waste](#)). Apart from the production of by-products such as bones in the meat production (= unavoidable loss), the main reasons for these losses are that **misshapen fruits and vegetables** or damaged food (sometimes with only very little damage) get thrown away or that there is an **overproduction<sup>1</sup>** of food (= avoidable food losses). This is where gleaning comes in place as an action to prevent food waste.

The idea of gleaning is to go to farms and **harvest those fruits and vegetables** that are not edible for sale because of overproduction or because they are misshapen, slightly damaged, or simply don't have the right size<sup>2</sup>. Farmers throughout Europe do not have the choice but to leave them unharvested because they fail to meet the strict cosmetic standards of retailers or because of overproduction. Instead of wasting this fresh and nutritious food, it gets collected by volunteers in a gleaning action and transferred to food banks or used for "[Feeding the xxx](#)" or similar events. Therefore food that was already dedicated to be thrown away gets a new purpose and will feed those people that can't afford a decent diet. In order to do so, the Action Developer will have to coordinate between the farmer, the volunteers and food redistribution charities in order to organise the gleaning day. In addition to the gleaning itself, participants of the actions learn about food waste and are provided with tips on how to reduce food waste at home.

## Objectives

- ▶ Raise awareness amongst participants on how much food is wasted due to overproduction and strict cosmetic standards
- ▶ Introduce the concept of gleaning to a wide audience and make them aware of the vast opportunities to reduce food waste and save money through gleaning in harvest seasons
- ▶ Encourage the establishment of a gleaning network that conducts gleaning activities on a regular basis
- ▶ Make European citizens aware that actions to reduce food waste can be taken on a daily basis
- ▶ Raise awareness among the participants about good habits for food waste reduction
- ▶ Establish relationships between farmers, volunteers, and food banks and encourage collaboration on a regular basis (in harvest season)

## What you need

- ▶ A farmer that is willing to participate in this action
- ▶ Know about harvesting time. Find out from your farmer what food you can glean during the EWWR or before
- ▶ A local **food bank** where you can bring the collected food (as an alternative you can organise your own "[Feeding the xxx](#)" event)
- ▶ A **transporter** for the day of the action, taking storage and hygiene previsions into account
- ▶ **Information and communication material:** Advertise for your gleaning action by putting up promotional posters on strategic points or via other communication means. Inform the farmer, volunteers and food bank about the

<sup>1</sup> Or that the prices paid for the products are too little

<sup>2</sup> As for example small potatoes that get left in the field because the harvest equipment doesn't take small sized potatoes.



action and give out information on [why food waste prevention is important](#) to farmers and volunteers before the event.

## Preparing and implementing the action

### **Before the EWWR (at least one month beforehand)**

- ▶ Decide on your target audience: Who do you want to reach as volunteers for this gleaning action? Pupils, employees, neighbours, the general public?
- ▶ See if you can combine your gleaning action with a [“Feeding the xxx” event](#) or something similar
- ▶ Prepare a poster to advertise for your gleaning action or use the EWWR posters ([download here](#))
- ▶ Send the information on your action and the [EWWR factsheet about food waste](#) per mail to your target group or print it and give it out to them
- ▶ Invite people to participate in your event

### **Pre-EWWR (one or two weeks beforehand)**

- ▶ Enhance advertisement of your event, remind people about the event and invite them again to take part
- ▶ Clarify the details of the action with the
  - Farmer: when will you come to harvest the fruits and vegetables? Will all necessary tools be provided by the farmer or do you have to bring something (boxes, reusable bags, etc.)?
  - Food bank: Make sure that they are available to receive the food on the day of your gleaning action
- ▶ Print information material to be distributed during the action

## Implementing the action = day of the action!

- ▶ Implement your gleaning action
- ▶ Use the event to inform about the problematic of food waste and to give out tips and tricks to participants on how to reduce food waste in everyday life, distribute the information material
- ▶ Take pictures and videos
- ▶ **Conduct a food waste trash audit** ([EWWR food waste calculator](#)) to evaluate the amount of food harvested and redirected to the food banks. On this basis you can then evaluate how much waste was avoided
- ▶ Communicate the results of your food waste audit to the participants!

## Evaluation and feedback

### **After the EWWR**

- ▶ Give feedback to your Coordinator: number of participants, amount of waste avoided, etc.
- ▶ Send back pictures and videos of your action to your Coordinator
- ▶ Help to establish a gleaning network and/or collaboration on a regular basis between the farmer and the food bank: Convince farmer to establish this as a regular practice and see how it could be organised



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## More information

### ► Information material

- Food waste and its impact: [Do you dare to be aware?](#)
- Tips to reduce food waste:
  - [Shopping & Planning](#)
  - [Storing](#)
  - [Cooking & Eating](#)
  - [Use-by / best-before dates](#)

► EWWR Coordinator's website/contact: [www.ewwr.eu/list-organisers](http://www.ewwr.eu/list-organisers)

► European Week for Waste Reduction: [www.ewwr.eu](http://www.ewwr.eu) [contact@ewwr.eu](mailto:contact@ewwr.eu)

### ► Relevant stakeholders:

- Gleaning Network (UK): [www.feeding5k.org/gleaning.php](http://www.feeding5k.org/gleaning.php)
- Disco Soupe (FR) : [discosoupe.org](http://discosoupe.org)
- Feeding the 5000: [www.feeding5k.org](http://www.feeding5k.org)
- FoodCycle [foodcycle.org.uk/about-us/our-story](http://foodcycle.org.uk/about-us/our-story)
- Fareshare [www.fareshare.org.uk](http://www.fareshare.org.uk)
- Plan Zheroes [www.planzheroes.org](http://www.planzheroes.org)
- Food AWARE [www.foodawarecic.org.uk](http://www.foodawarecic.org.uk)

### ► Interesting links

- European Commission: [Stop Food Waste](#)
- [European Environment Agency](#) (EEA)
- [European Environmental Bureau](#) (EEB)
- [Every Crumb Counts](#)
- [Food and Agriculture Organization](#) (FAO)
- IGD: [Food redistribution](#)
- [Love Food Hate Waste](#)
- Love Food Hate Waste: [Food waste recycling - What to do with the food you can't eat?](#)
- OECD [Food Chain Network](#)
- [SAVE FOOD initiative](#)
- [Slow Food Movement](#)
- [Think.Eat.Save.](#)