



# Rolling Harvest Food Rescue Director's Report 2014

## *Connecting local farmers with neighbors in need*

*Mission Statement: "Our goal is to increase access to donated fresh produce and other healthy foods to area hunger-relief sites that serve the at-risk, food-insecure population by providing local farmers and food producers with free, effective delivery and distribution."*

### **Dear Friends, Partners and Supporters:**

I want to thank you so much for your ongoing generosity and support of Rolling Harvest Food Rescue. There is so much to share about our growth and progress in 2014.

We reflect on another extraordinary harvest season for Rolling Harvest Food Rescue, now into our sixth year, with a 143% increase in food donations over 2013! Now more than 45 hunger-relief sites each week receive healthy, delicious produce during the growing season from May through December. As of the close of 2014, 386,000 pounds of locally grown food have been delivered to more than 14,200 of our neighbors in need each month. That's more than 1.9 million additional servings of healthy fresh fruits, vegetables and organic meats on the plates of area children, seniors and families in need. This is in large part thanks to the commitment of so many new and existing farms and growers donating regularly to us.



Cabbage gleaners John, age 83 and Ariel, age 5

***"This is the kind of food my doctor keeps telling me to eat, but no way can I afford it. Thanks so much." --Food pantry client***

None of the work we do is possible without the efforts of our dedicated corps of 70 incredible volunteers, who help with gleaning, driving, delivering and daily operations. Food rescue work means responding quickly to farmers' needs and is often last-minute, based on weather and other unforeseen

circumstances. This demands great flexibility, commitment and spontaneity, all of which our volunteers bring daily throughout the harvest season.



Volunteer Ben carefully collects donated organic tomatoes



Gleaning rice at Blue Moon Acres

More than 25 local farms and producers now partner with us. They generously share their surplus and wonderfully irregular produce with us to distribute wherever the need is greatest. These farms also invite us to pick in their fields, with 19 gleaning/harvesting volunteer events in 2014 that provided many more thousands of pounds of gorgeous produce to distribute at its peak. Rolling Harvest volunteers braved heat and cold and storms to harvest this gift for the food pantries. We are creating partnerships with several area schools, creating "teen glean teams", connecting youth with nature and supporting community-service values.

Our wonderful farm partners at None Such Farm in Buckingham, PA selected Rolling Harvest to be the beneficiary of their delicious annual **Farm to Table Dinner** in September. This brought us more awareness and much-needed financial support. And that is in addition to the weekly good food donations they share to help their neighbors in need.



At the end of the year, we received an unexpected gift from farm partner Zone 7: a 14-foot refrigerated truck. We can now be even more efficient and effective with our logistics, and transport larger quantities of nutritious foods, such as fragile greens and organic meats, even more safely.

Gravity Hill Organic Farm also continues to be an essential partner, providing resources for us way beyond the organic produce they donate. We gratefully acknowledge their commitment to the work we do, and appreciate the many times they have hosted our organization's functions and meetings.

***"I put your veggies in with our spaghetti dinner, and couldn't believe my kids ate it all up!" --Food pantry client***



Rolling Harvest recently completed the second year of a pilot program with the United Way of Bucks County, as part of their BKO campaign to Knock Out Hunger.

Our generous, community-minded farmers and growers once again came through with more than 20,000 additional pounds of fruits and vegetables for this worthwhile program.



This year, we have been able to add more than 100,000 pounds of natural, organic meats to our deliveries. In partnership with the Bucks County Opportunity Council's Food and Nutrition Network and Applegate Natural and Organic Meats, we rescue damaged packaged meats from their plant that are otherwise perfect, delicious and healthy.

One of the most rewarding aspects of our operation is that we are able to be more responsive, and flexible enough to immediately serve new hunger-relief sites that reach out to us for help. We continue to strengthen our relationships with local social service organizations like the Bucks County Opportunity Council, Bucks County Housing Group, Bucks County Foodshed Alliance, YWCA social service programs and the Hunger Nutrition Coalition to better identify underserved areas. Several new distribution sites were added in 2014, including Mercer Street Friends Food Bank and Homefront, both in Ewing, NJ. That has enabled us to serve more of the low-income senior population that is becoming increasingly vulnerable to hunger.



Free Farmers Market set up in Lower Bucks County

Rolling Harvest Food Rescue held 25 free farm markets at various food pantries in Bucks and Hunterdon County this year. When pantry families learn how to cook our easy and inexpensive recipes, then taste the many delicious crops we get donated, they are much more likely to take it home and easily cook it for their families. Think kale, swiss chard, and kohlrabi. Yum! We now have a Nutrition Educator who is available - free of charge - to work individually with food pantries, shelters directors and client families, allowing us to expand our impact more significantly.

Of course, the work we do would not be possible without the generous support from so many caring, community-minded private donors. This help has proven to be essential in covering daily operating costs including food deliveries, outreach programs, and gleaning events, in addition to ensuring the sustainability of our mission. There is never a charge to either the farmers or the hunger-relief sites for the services we provide.

***"As farmers, it is very rewarding to know that our work is being shared and distributed so widely. Thank you Rolling Harvest!" --New Jersey Farmer***

Rolling Harvest was honored to be one of 14 recipients nationwide of a grant from the newly formed Specialty Food Foundation. Locally, we were awarded a Partnership in Youth Services grant from Foundations Community Partnership, and were chosen by The United Way of Bucks County as a recipient for their "Multiplier Award". Also, we are proud to be recognized by Edible Jersey Magazine as their reader's choice for Local Nonprofit Hero of the Year. In December, our Founder and Executive Director, Cathy Snyder, was invited to present at the nation's first food waste and recovery conference "The Last Food Mile" at University of Pennsylvania, along with global and national leaders in the field.

With the recent cuts in benefits to families on food stamps, and the lingering economic hardships from the recession, Rolling Harvest must do even more to fill the gap in nutrition and access for all. Food pantries and other hunger-relief sites are already stretched to their limits. They are still seeing increases in the number of families coming for help. We all know that well-nourished children learn better, and well-nourished workers earn better. Everyone deserves the chance to benefit from the abundance around us, especially the most vulnerable among us who struggle every day to make hard economic choices between food, rent, medicine, education and other basic necessities.

We will continue to source and distribute fresh, healthy, locally grown food that provides our neighbors in need with much healthier food choices. There is so much surplus available in our area, that we at Rolling Harvest Food Rescue are committed to continuing to connect farmers to families in need.



Kids love our veggies, too!




Thanks a bushel,

Cathy Snyder

Founder and Executive Director, Rolling Harvest Food Rescue

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[Donate to support our essential programs](#)

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**Please show our farm partners in New Jersey and Pennsylvania some love!  
Shop and thank them for all they do and give!**

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Blue Moon Acres  
Chickadee Creek Farm  
Doublebrook Farm  
Gravity Hill Farm  
Honey Brook Organic Farm  
Ralston Farm  
Rolling Hills Farm  
St. Ho Pao Farm  
Sandbrook Meadow CSA  
Whistling Wolf Farm

**Bucks County Farms**

Anchor Run Farm  
Blooming Glen Farm  
Blue Moon Acres  
Carversville Farm Foundation  
Myerov Family Farm  
None Such Farm  
Roots to River Farm  
Snipes Farm and Education  
Center  
Solebury Orchards  
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**Healthy Food Donors**

Applegate Natural and Organic  
Meats  
Basil Bandwagon  
Big Bear Natural Foods  
Brick Farm Market  
Door to Door Organics Tristate  
Fresh From Zone 7

**Rolling Harvest Food Rescue is grateful for generous**

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**STAY CONNECTED**

