

Grow-A-Row Facts and FAQs

It is the middle of summer when the realization hits you that you WAY over planted your garden space this year! There is no way you are going to be able to eat all that! Or maybe a space has opened up next to you from the community gardener that cruised out of town leaving only the plot of towering weeds in their wake. If this is the case, you are a prime candidate to grow for donation! It is easier than you think. The main suggestion is to find a local pantry on our attached list and make a connection. They can help you help people in need. Other common questions are answered below.

FAQs about growing for donation:

1. Do pantries even use fresh produce?

Yes, yes, yes! One cannot live on canned goods alone. Pantries often distribute or cook using fresh produce. Often times there is such a demand they have to go out buy produce to supplement their donations.

2. What happens if I have too little or too much?

While it is best to check in with your local pantry before donating, most pantries can combine your “too little” with others, or save your “too much” for another meal.

3. What are the best crops to grow?

It is a good idea to grow common fruits and vegetables that are prolific growers and have good storage capability. A few examples would be: summer squash, cucumbers, tomatoes, hardy greens, winter squash, onions and garlic, potatoes, and apples.

4. Where is the closest pantry?

Attached is a list of local pantries that take in fresh produce. Ask around, as there may be others.

5. What about food safety? Can I get sued?

People that donate food are protected under the Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act. However, it is a good idea to practice safe harvesting techniques such as clean hands, sterilized harvesting equipment (clean knives and clean bags) and kitchen surfaces (1 tsp of bleach to 1 gallon of water is a good and simple sterilization spray), and tossing fruits and vegetables that look diseased or questionable.

6. Can I transmit COVID-19 (coronavirus) through my donated produce?

The risk of transmitting COVID-19 through food is thought to be very low. According to the Center for Disease Control, “Currently, there is no evidence to suggest that handling food or consuming food is associated with COVID-19.” Following the safe harvesting techniques described above can help to make sure your produce is safe for consumption. More information can be found on the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/food-and-COVID-19.html>

We are happy to help with other questions and more specifics that will have you growing for donation in no time! Remember Plant! Grow! and Donate!