

## Produce

### Ag Against Hunger 2011 Volunteer Gleaning Season Begins

by Ag Against Hunger

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Spreckels, CA – This past Saturday, Ag Against Hunger held their first volunteer gleaning session for the 2011 season. Over 100 volunteers gleaned 7,200 pounds of fresh, beautiful Artisan Lettuce, which was donated to local food banks in the tri-county area of Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito counties. Tanimura and Antle reserved one acre for the gleaners to harvest behind their offices in Spreckels. Throughout the session, Brian Antle gleaned alongside volunteers, and answered any questions related to farming, harvesting and the commodity.

Many of the gleaning volunteers came from various local companies and groups like: Markon Cooperative, First Presbyterian Church, First Capital Bank, and the National Charity League. The Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner, Eric Lauritzen, also gleaned along with his two children.

After the glean, Ag Against Hunger held a barbecue sponsored by Markon Cooperative at their office in Spreckels as a thank you to all of the volunteers for their hard work they will do this season. Central Coast Young Farmers and Ranchers provided delicious tri-tip barbecue, and Red Blossom Farms prepared strawberry shortcake.

Ag Against Hunger's gleaning program, which runs from May through October, is a program which gives local community members an opportunity to help feed those in need and learn about local agriculture. After harvest, there is an abundance of high-quality, beautiful produce left in the field due to the size, shape or color of the commodity that is usually tilled back into the soil. Gleaning is a practice that is first mentioned in the Book of Ruth chapter 2, and means to gather leftover produce to give to those in need. This fresh-picked produce goes to the Food Bank for Monterey County, Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Cruz County, California Grey Bears, and the Community Food Bank of San Benito County, feeding over 158,500 people in need.

Ag Against Hunger is a nonprofit agency providing fresh donated produce to food banks in the tri-county area (Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito), throughout the State of California, and across the West Coast. Since 1990, area growers and shippers have donated more than 178 million pounds of fresh, surplus fruit and vegetables to help feed people in need.

For more information about gleaning and the 2011 schedule, please visit [www.agagainsthunger.org](http://www.agagainsthunger.org), become a fan on Facebook or follow on Twitter @agagainsthunger.

Source: Ag Against Hunger