



## **CROS Ministries Gleaning Program Volunteer Packet**

### **Welcome**

Welcome to the CROS Ministries Gleaning Program! Thank you for your interest in volunteering with us. By joining our gleaning efforts, you are helping rescue fresh, nutritious produce and get it to those who need it most in our community.

This packet provides everything you need to know before heading into the field - from what gleaning is, to safety guidelines, and how to get involved.

### **What is Gleaning?**

Gleaning is a program of CROS Ministries, in partnership with area food banks and other food distribution agencies in Palm Beach and Martin Counties. It is a food recovery strategy that allows produce that is below top-market grade or unmarketable - but equally nutritious - to be harvested and distributed to people experiencing food insecurity instead of being plowed back into the soil.

Since most people live apart from where their food is grown, gleaning relies on volunteers to bridge the gap between the field and the pantry/or hot meal program. Farmers donate produce they cannot sell to CROS Ministries. Volunteers gather the produce, and our partner agencies distribute it free of charge to individuals and families with low incomes, seniors, people with disabilities, and the unhoused.

### **How to Get Involved**

You can participate in a gleaning event in three ways:

#### **1. Weekly Gleaning Email Notices**

- Sent every Monday with details for events Wednesday through the following Monday, including weekend and weekday opportunities.

- Attendance is optional. You may unsubscribe anytime by emailing Robynne at [rryals@crosmministries.org](mailto:rryals@crosmministries.org).
- 2. **SignUp Genius Web Page**
  - View and reserve slots for gleaning in Martin, Hendry, and Palm Beach Counties.
  - Locations may vary depending on crop availability; final directions are sent each Wednesday.
- 3. **Direct Contact with Robynne, Gleaning Program Director**
  - Email [rryals@crosmministries.org](mailto:rryals@crosmministries.org) or call 561-713-4317 to select a date or ask questions.

## Before You Glean

1. Review the Rules and Helpful Hints below for yourself and your group.
2. Complete the Gleaner's Liability Waiver.
  - Each volunteer, including adults supervising groups, must complete a waiver for every event.
  - Bring the form(s) to the field and give them to the CROS staff or field supervisor.
3. Bring water and gloves. Encourage group members to bring their own too.

**Note:** ☁ all events are weather-dependent. Wet or unsafe conditions may prevent access to fields. For questions, contact **Robynne at [rryals@crosmministries.org](mailto:rryals@crosmministries.org)**.

## Rules for Gleaners

- You are on another person's property. Treat it better than your own. Do **NOT** leave water bottles, gloves, candy wrappers, or trash behind.
- All gleaners under 18 **must** have a parent-signed waiver **and** be accompanied by a supervising adult.
- Elementary through high school volunteers **must always have supervision**, including students 18+ in high school.
- Follow directions from the CROS Gleaning Director, staff, or field supervisor. Only glean in designated areas.
- Children 5+ may glean only with direct adult supervision. Ages 5–6 must remain within arm's reach.
- Safety is critical:
  - Do not climb trees or fences.
  - Do not ride in the back of moving vehicles.
  - Stay away from farm machinery, canals, and roadways.
  - Staff and/or field supervisors may cancel gleaning if rules are not followed.
- **⊘ No pets allowed—this is both unsafe and violates food safety practices.**

## Helpful Hints for a Successful Gleaning Day

- Dress in layers. Long sleeves and pants are recommended in the morning; shorts or short sleeves may be better later.
- **Closed-toe shoes are mandatory.** No flip-flops, open-toed, or heeled shoes.
- Long pants are recommended in cornfields; corn leaves can be sharp.
- Wear hats, sunscreen, and bring bug spray.
- Bathrooms are typically unavailable - use facilities before arriving.
- **Mangoes are part of the poison ivy family. Anyone with allergies should avoid mango gleaning.**

## Frequently Asked Questions

### When will I know where we are gleaning?

Final field directions are usually sent Wednesday morning for the upcoming weekend.

### Can I choose where we glean?

We recover what produce is ready, when it is ready, and where it is ready. Locations may vary, and volunteers may need to travel farther to prevent crops from going to waste.

### Are there bathrooms in the field?

No.

### Event times:

Gleaning events run **8:30 am–11:30 am**. Volunteers should arrive 20-25 minutes prior to events to check-in. Events may finish earlier if produce is collected quickly.

## Gleaning & the Bible

Gleaning as a practice to combat hunger is thousands of years old. In Hebrew Scriptures, the most vulnerable—widows, orphans, and sojourners—benefited from gleanings:

“When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest... Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the Lord your God.” — *Leviticus 19:9–10*

Other references: *Deuteronomy 24:19–22* & *Ruth 2:2ff*.

## Weekly Gleaning Schedule Overview

Full schedule available on **SignUp Genius**: <https://bit.ly/crosgleaning25-26>.

- **Wednesdays & Fridays:** Large school, company, and community groups; smaller groups may join depending on size. Arrive before 9:30 am. Locations: Boynton Beach/Delray Beach & Belle Glade.
- **Thursdays:** Primarily in Belle Glade; volunteers must be **13+**.
- **Saturdays:** Multiple events across Palm Beach, Martin, and Hendry Counties; open to individuals and groups.
- **Sundays:** Boynton Beach/Delray Beach areas.
- **June & July:** Mango gleanings in Lantana (**8:00–11:00 am**). Mangoes are part of the poison ivy family—anyone with allergies should avoid these events.

## Thank You

Every box you pack, every crop you help rescue, and every hour you volunteer makes a real difference in the fight against hunger.

## About CROS Ministries

CROS Ministries provides food for the hungry and the food insecure in collaboration with our partners in the community.

**Address:** 3677 23rd Avenue South, #B-101, Lake Worth Beach, FL 33461

**Phone:** 561-233-9009 | **Website:** [www.crosministries.org](http://www.crosministries.org)

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