



How to Glean Guide

Step 1 - Find a Tree

- Use the Good Food Collective's [Fruit Tree Registry](#) to find trees available for harvest
- Contact the tree owner by their preferred method, introduce yourself, and respectfully ask for permission to come to their property to harvest fruit.
- Work together and make an agreement! This is the info you'll need to the conversation:
 - a. Some **days and times** when you hope to harvest. The property owner determines which will work for them. Confirm that you will inform the property owner ahead of time if you will be late, need to cancel and/or reschedule.
 - b. **How many harvesters** will be in your group (**zero pets**).
 - c. **How much fruit** you are prepared to harvest.
 - d. What kind of **harvest techniques** you'd like to use - are they comfortable with these? (some folks don't want you to shake their trees).
 - e. What **harvesting equipment** you currently have. The property owner can provide suggestions on equipment, such as ladders or chairs. They are not obliged to provide equipment but they may offer if you politely inquire.

Step 2 - Gather your Supplies

- Many household supplies can help with gleaning! Hand-picking low branches allows you to reach only a small proportion of fruit; consider bringing these items to maximize your harvest!
 - **Something to stand on** - ladders, sturdy chairs
 - **A tool to reach higher fruits** - [picking poles](#), rakes, and even shovels make good arm-extensions to shake fruit off branches.
 - **Harvest containers** - bring lots, otherwise you'll overflow and thereby crush your bounty. Reusable or plastic shopping bags, buckets, cardboard boxes, laundry baskets all work. For damaged fruit (majorly bruised/cut, has pests) bring a second container to hold these not-so-good guys. These are called "culls"; bring them back to the GFC we'll donate them to local farmers as pig feed!
 - **Ground cover** - protect falling fruit from damage by using tarps or sheets. Lay them on the ground or hold them up amongst friends to make a fruit-catching net as limbs are shaken.
 - **Head cover** - Not necessary for all fruits, but trust us, you want this when you're harvesting apples and pears. Shaking heavy fruits off branches isn't so fun when one hits you on the dome. Bicycle helmets work great.
 - **Hand cleaner** - You're picking food - have clean hands! Soap and water is best but hand sanitizer (70% alcohol) is good too.

Step 3 - Say Hello & Get a Lay of the Land

- Upon arrival, briefly let the property owners know you have arrived but don't put anyone at risk: Keep your mask on, keep your distance, and wave to your tree-owner.
- Respect your tree-owners, their property, and their fruit. Find the listed tree(s) and shuttle your gear directly to them.

Step 4 - Make a Harvest Gameplan

- **Practice caution: communicate and coordinate!** When gleaning with a group, make sure people coordinate and that only the agreed upon harvesting techniques are used.
- Consider these questions before you start picking:
 - a. Can people climb or do you need ladders or picking poles? Both?
 - b. What are your tree access points? Where should harvesters set ladders/use poles to reach the fruit?
 - c. Is this a shake-the-limbs situation or a hand pick situation? Decide based on fruit ripeness/durability and how you'll use the fruit: eating whole? Pies and/or juicing?
 - d. Planning to shake the tree? Where should your fellow harvesters stand to hold the ground-cover and catch falling fruits?

Step 5 - Harvest!

- Clean your hands, put on masks, and get going!
- Pick a technique:
 - **Shaking:** Harvesters should have helmets on or stand out from under the tree. The ground-cover crew holds up the fabric under the branch and the harvester shakes, aiming for the fabric; a picking pole or a rake is a great way to grab higher branches.
 - **Hand-Picking:** Don't be too rough - one hand grabs the fruit, one hand holds the branch/stem. Then a gentle pull to separate. You want that lovely fruit, not broken branches or leaves!
- Pick as much as you can!
 - Property owners love when you pick a lot! So do food banks - donate any extra fruits you pick. They need more fresh foods, and look what you have: lots of fruit!
- Sort as you go. This makes the harvest easy to put away at the end of the day: good fruit for humans in one place, damaged fruit for compost or pig-farmers in another.
 - Don't overfill your "good fruits" container. Stacking tons of soft fruits on top of each other will cause bruising & smooshing.
 - 1-2 stacked levels for soft fruit; 3-4 levels *maximum* for tougher dudes like apples and pears.

Step 6 - Clean Up

- Tree-owners are far more likely to host future gleaning sessions if harvesters don't damage or create a mess on their property. Show the love and leave it better than you found it.
- Put borrowed equipment back where it came from and do a sweep of the area to be sure you have what's yours.
- Pick up any rogue squashy bad fruits. Throw them in your "bad fruit" container.
- If your tree owner is around, say goodbye from a COVID-safe distance of at least 6 feet.

Step 7 - Share the Fruits of your Labor

What are you going to do with all that fruit? You've got tons of options!

Donation - one of the most impactful ways that fruit can be put to good use. Food banks and pantries often struggle to procure fresh fruits and vegetables, and they're one of the top 3 things that people request to receive!

1. Donate to the Good Food Collective office, located at the Manna Soup Kitchen: 1100 Avenida Del Sol in Durango.
 - a. Bring good fruits: we will distribute them through our food bank network, reaching many different people through a variety of channels.
 - b. Bring damaged fruits: we provide them as pig-feed to livestock farmers.
2. Donate to a food bank of your choice. Call them, let them know you want to bring in fruit and ask them if they have enough cold storage to hold what you have.

Canning, freezing, syrups and jams - these are great ways to use up and preserve huge amounts of fruit.

Share with your friends, family, and neighbors, and pat yourself on the back! You are helping to make our local food system work!