



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **For Immediate Release**

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## **FOOD BANKS NEED HELP WITH VALLEY CITRUS Seek Volunteers to be Citrus Pickers**

**Phoenix** – Each year, property owners in the Valley of the Sun see an abundance of citrus and the accompanying problems, what to do with all that fruit, how to harvest citrus if they have physical limitation, or the possibility of roof rats invading because they cannot harvest their fruit quickly enough. Food banks encounter a similar problem, the need for the fruit and not enough volunteers to pick it.

Most food banks have reached their capacity for what they can do with the limited number of volunteers available and are now appealing to groups of people who would be willing to pick the fruit and deliver it to designated locations.

Food banks are appealing to faith-based groups, service clubs, Boy Scout or Girl Scout troops and others willing to commit a few hours of doing a valuable community service and helping “bring in the backyard citrus harvest” this season. “Frankly, any group that can come together for a few hours on a weekend or even during the week can be connected to property owners who cannot pick their own fruit,” said Ginny Hildebrand, Executive Director of the Association of Arizona Food Banks. “We are making our toll-free number available for those wanting to volunteer to pick or donate their fruit,” said Hildebrand.

People can call the toll-free number Monday through Friday between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm. Staff will be available on those days and hours to take their information and then match willing volunteer groups with one or more property owners who need fruit picked.

Food banks encourage people to pick and donate their own fruit, if possible. Donation sites are available at each of the food banks, as well as locations in Sun City, Scottsdale and North Phoenix.

To get more information, volunteer or to donate, please **call 1-800-445-1914**.

Locations to drop-off donated fruit are:

St. Mary’s / Westside Food Bank Alliance – Phoenix  
2831 N. 31<sup>st</sup> Ave (Thomas Rd. & 31<sup>st</sup> Ave.)

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St. Mary's / Westside Food Bank Alliance – Surprise  
13050 W. Elm St. (Dysart Rd. & Bell Rd.)

Desert Mission Food Bank – Phoenix  
9229 N. Fourth St. (7<sup>th</sup> St. & Hatcher Rd.)

United Food Bank – Mesa  
358 E. Javelina (US 60 & Mesa Dr.)

Society of St. Vincent de Paul  
420 W. Watkins (7<sup>th</sup> Ave. & I-17)

Goodwill Industries - Phoenix  
8921 N. Seventh St. (7<sup>th</sup> St. & Dunlap)

Goodwill Industries - Scottsdale  
2115 N. Scottsdale Rd. (Scottsdale Rd. & Thomas Rd.)

Sun Bowl – Sun City  
107<sup>th</sup> Ave. south of Peoria Avenue (west side)

Sun Dial – Sun City  
14801 103<sup>rd</sup> Avenue (and Boswell)

Bell Center – Sun City  
16820 N. 99<sup>th</sup> Ave. (and Hutton Dr. NW Corner)

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*The Association of Arizona Food Banks is a private, non-profit organization established in 1984 to bring a more efficient, coordinated approach to the enormous task of providing emergency food to the growing number of Arizona's hungry citizens. The Association maintains a partnership between the public and private sectors to improve service delivery and maximize food resources at every level of distribution. The Association was one of the first state food bank associations in the nation and was instrumental in the development of a statewide gleaning project in Arizona.*