



**July 2014**

### **Produce World gives its FareShare**

The Produce World Group has opened its fields to a team of volunteers from Gleaning Network UK to allow them to 'glean' cauliflowers for the charities FareShare and the Ferry Project. Produce World, the UK's largest grower and supplier of fresh vegetables, has been working with FareShare for a number of years.

FareShare redistributes produce that would otherwise not be used to food poverty organisations like homeless hostels, women's refuge centres and breakfast clubs. A group of volunteers from Gleaning Network UK, an initiative run by Feeding the 5000 working in partnership with FareShare, travelled to Produce World Butterwick and descended on one of the cauliflower fields.

'Gleaning' is the act of entering a field after the owner has harvested their crop and gather what has been left that does not meet a graded standard. Volunteers visited a cauliflower field to 'glean' the vegetables that had been left following harvesting.

Gleaning is spreading all over the UK, with new Gleaning Network hubs springing up in Manchester, Bristol, Brighton, Cambridge, London and Kent. In 2013, approximately 48 tonnes of produce, equal to over 200,000 meals was gleaned.

Rachel Ilgunas, Agronomy and CSR Administrator at Produce World says: "About eight volunteers came down to Produce World Butterwick. Some of these people were from the Cambridge and London areas and some from South Lincolnshire."

"We believe that through this activity we have donated one and a half tonnes of brassicas – approximately 18,750 portions for the hungry and food insecure. We hope this is something that we can go on to develop and increase the tonnage that we donate and build a relationship with Gleaning Network UK".

Produce World Butterwick has opened its gates to gleaners before but this was the first time that volunteers have operated in a commercial field.

Produce was sent to FareShare centres in Birmingham and Leicester, and from there is being distributed to localised food charities such as homeless centres and soup kitchens. The Ferry Project also took a donation, providing support to local food banks, homeless hostels and the elderly.

Martin Bowman at Gleaning Network UK says: "We are thrilled to be working with the Produce World Group. They have given us a great opportunity to harvest vegetables, and get them to those who need them most".



**Ends**

**Website:** [www.produceworld.co.uk](http://www.produceworld.co.uk)

**Twitter:** [@produceworld](https://twitter.com/produceworld)

**Media Enquiries:**

High resolution image available

For further information, please contact Laura Bowyer at the Produce World press office on 01223 272800 or email [laura.bowyer@war.uk.com](mailto:laura.bowyer@war.uk.com)

**About Produce World Group**

Produce World Group is one of the largest expert growers and suppliers of high quality fresh vegetables in Europe. It is a privately owned business, founded by the Burgess family in 1898, and the family ethos and values remain in place. The Produce World Group business is customer and category focused and it is an industry leader in sustainable and responsible agronomy, growing and lean supply chain management.

Its sourcing is a combination of produce from its own farming division Burgess Farms, joint-ventures, and collaborative working with dedicated grower groups, supplying a variety of root vegetables, potatoes, brassicas, alliums, and organic produce to leading retailers, food service and manufacturing customers.

In September 2013 Produce World Group featured in primetime TV programme Harvest in a bid to raise consumer awareness of how the nation's food gets from field to fork. The Produce World Group also secured three finalist slots at the 2013 Re:fresh awards for its CSR work, employee engagement and team management. Other successes include winning the Treading Lightly Waitrose Way Award, acknowledging the work Produce World Group does with I Gvative irrigation technologies.

## **About Gleaning Network UK**

The Gleaning Network UK is a new project creating a unique partnership between farmers, volunteers and food charities which harvests fruit and vegetables that would otherwise have been waste on farms and redistributes this delicious fresh produce to charities that are fighting the increasing levels of food poverty in the UK. It is part of Feeding the 5000, founded by Tristram Stuart, and winner of the 2014 BBC Food and Farming Award for Best Initiative in British Food. Feeding the 5000 are the food waste campaigning organisation also behind Feeding the 5000 events and the Pig Idea campaign.

In 2013, the Gleaning Network already gleaned approximately 48 tonnes of produce, equal to over 200,000 meals, with over 200 volunteers across 18 gleaning days. Apples, pears, plums, strawberries, cauliflower, cabbages, lettuces, pumpkins and parsnips are just some of the produce already gleaned, and new hubs sprung up in Manchester, Bristol, Brighton, Cambridge, London and Kent. In 2014, the Gleaning Network plans to glean far more in the UK, and is also expanding to countries around the EU including France, Spain and Poland in partnership with EU FUSIONS.

Gleaning Network UK also campaigns to change retailer policies which lead to food waste on farms, such as strict cosmetic standards. According to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) 20% of fruit and vegetables grown in Europe are lost from the food chain at farm level. Whilst the Soil association estimate that 20-40% of UK Fruit and vegetables are rejected on cosmetic grounds before they reach the consumer. Meanwhile, 5.8 million people live in deep poverty in the UK, and this figure on the rise.

Farmers and volunteers who want to join the scheme or find out more should contact Martin Bowman of the Gleaning Network UK on [martin@feeding5k.org](mailto:martin@feeding5k.org), or [sign up to join our gleaning list](#). For further information, see our website at: <http://www.feeding5k.org/gleaning.php>

### **For more information on FareShare**

Visit: <http://www.fareshare.org.uk/>

### **For further information on The Ferry Project**

Visit: <http://www.ferryproject.org.uk/>