

WILLING HANDS

delivering donations of wholesome food
to our neighbors in need



A Few Highlights:

- *Last fall, Willing Hands volunteers helped harvest over 20,000 lbs. of apples, corn, potatoes and carrots at gleaning events held at Riverview Farm, Edgewater Farm, Crossroad Farm and Whitman Brook Orchard. We're at it again this year, and we send special thanks to our volunteers for their good work and to our local farmers for their remarkable generosity!*
- *Our nutrition education committee has put together a collection of recipe sheets for our drivers to hand out with their deliveries. Each sheet focuses on a single vegetable and is packed with simple, delicious options.*
- *Turning Points Network in Claremont is the latest addition to our list of 58 organizations that receive deliveries of produce every week from Willing Hands.*



One of our recipients makes her selection from our delivery to the Earl Bourdon Center in Claremont

WILLING HANDS, AN INSIDER'S VIEW

Willing Hands is a small organization with a big mission. By year's end we expect to have delivered 200 tons of donated fruit, vegetables, milk, eggs, locally baked bread, and frozen meat to our neighbors in need. Willing Hands runs all of its programs with the full-time equivalent staff of fewer than two people and a budget under \$110,000. How do we do it? With your help.

Willing Hands is so much more than a few folks heaving boxes of food from place to place. Sure, we deliver about 4 tons of fruits and vegetables every week, but as executive director, I get to get to see how it really is. Our food donors take extra care in sorting and organizing their donations for pick-up. Our delivery drivers go the 'extra-mile' in creating mixes of produce to meet the needs of each particular recipient organization. Staff at those organizations make every effort to ensure that the food we deliver is put to the best use.

I have the privilege of working with an amazing corps of volunteers. They serve on our Board of Directors and Advisory Committee, run our Farm Garden, Gleaning, and Cooking programs, drive our delivery truck on Sundays, and help us get our food to those who need it most. Even our coordinators of volunteer activities are volunteers.

Many of you support Willing Hands as funders. One anonymous donor gave to Willing Hands "in honor of the good folks at the Norwich Farmers Market". Another, "In honor of our neighboring small farmers in VT and NH." We received a \$100 check last Christmas from a group of our food recipients. The note enclosed said, "we receive far more benefits from that produce than we can ever repay."

The caring attitude of everyone along this remarkable chain of good will is what keeps our program thriving. You are the true strength of Willing Hands. Thank you, one and all. And please, keep up your excellent work!

The Numbers:

Estimated value of food dumped in landfills in the US every year*	\$165 billion
Amount of their food that Americans throw away ever year*	40%
Vermonters receiving food stamps through 3SquaresVT	97,000

*NRDC 8/21/12



Willing Hands' volunteers gleaning carrots at Edgewater Farm

FEATURED FOOD DONOR: EDGEWATER FARM

1973 was a big year for Pooh and Anne Sprague. They graduated from UNH, got married, and started to farm. In the beginning their venture did not flourish. In order to make ends meet, Anne taught school while Pooh took on part-time jobs including work as a musician. He told us: "To the musicians I was a farmer. To the farmers I was a musician."

Then one day a farm agent advised them: "That lower meadow - I see Red Gold. Plant strawberries!" So they did and this marked a major change in their fortunes.

Now nearly 40 years later, the Spragues' Edgewater Farm includes 70 cultivated acres and 22 greenhouses. The strawberry patch has grown to 6 1/2 acres. Their daughter Sarah is gradually taking over the management of the greenhouses - their son Ray, the field work. Working together, the Sprague Family runs a thriving business. It is hard work, but work that they enjoy.

"You can really feel the seasons", Pooh told us recently. "Most of us are back at in January - grafting tomatoes...I have to produce about 3500 grafted plants a year." Snow must be cleared from the greenhouses. "A six inch storm generates enough machine and hand labor to occupy three or four people for a full day."

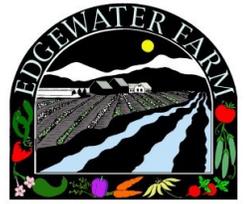
Edgewater Farm has been a major food donor to Willing Hands for many years. Pooh recently joined the board of directors, saying with his typical modesty, "I just wanna be useful." Last year Edgewater Farm donated over 6 tons of vegetables. Every time we express our thanks, Pooh stops us, arguing that we are providing a service to farmers. "The fact is that Willing Hands takes that food and makes the connection for us." True enough. But then he adds: "Willing Hands doesn't have to thank us."

Sorry, Pooh. We just can't agree with you about that!!

WILLING HANDS FARM GARDEN

56 volunteers worked about 800 hours this season to seed, tend and harvest some 5,000 pounds of vegetables in the Willing Hands Farm Garden. WH Board member, Andrea Colgan, oversees the project. Dubbed "Most Fun, Funny, Dedicated, Weed-Aversive, Corn-Loving, Superbionic Crew Director-in-Chief," Andrea reports that her crew of volunteers has grown into a dedicated team that returns year after year and "somehow manages to make hard work seem like fun." With the expert support of Will Allen, Luke Joanis, and intern Zsuzsa Mitro, all of Cedar Circle Farm, the WH Garden is one of our primary suppliers of farm-fresh organic produce.

The dry growing season proved challenging this year. We hope to secure funding for an irrigation system so that next year we will be able to maximize the efforts of our volunteer team and reward them with an even greater sense of satisfaction as they contribute so generously to the health of our neediest neighbors.



The Spragues:
long-term
food donors to WH

"the first selection our people head for is the produce table...they say it sure beats opening a can." R.H. Thetford Foodshelf



The Willing Hands Farm Garden



Harvest Ready For Pick-up



Andrea Colgan & Will Allen

WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

- Go online and check out our new video at www.willinghands.org. Many thanks to local filmmaker, Richard Neugass, for creating such a lively and moving portrait of the service that WH provides.

- Willing Hands met our goal of raising \$5,000 during the month of June and so received a matching grant from the NH Charitable Foundation. Many thanks to all of you who made this possible!

- Willing Hands engages volunteers in about 15 gleaning events each harvest season. Gleanings at Edgewater, Riverview, and Crossroad Farms and at Whitman Brook Orchard typically yield about 11 tons of farm-fresh produce. New this year were spinach gleanings at Hurricane Flats Farm, a blueberry gleaning at Green Dragon Farm and a tomato gleaning at Killdeer Farm.



Just a few of the 650+ pounds of tomatoes gleaned by volunteers at Killdeer Farm



- The need for the charitable food system in our region remains urgent. Demand for good quality fruits, vegetables, milk, eggs and frozen meat has not diminished in the least since the downward spiral of the U.S. economy several years ago. “We are small trades people who have been significantly affected by the 2008 recession” one of our recipients wrote to us this spring. “Our income has not improved...but the Willing Hands Program is helping in a very tangible way... Please pass our heartfelt appreciation on to the farmers, the bakers, the Coop, the other grocers, and to all the volunteers who are Willing Hands!”

“Our folks are so appreciative and depend on this delivery every week. They are usually here waiting...”
D.N. United Church of Cornish

- The Upper Valley Haven requested that we add an additional delivery to their foodshelf. We now deliver there 6 times per week. That added up to over 19,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables to The Haven during just the 3rd quarter this year!



P.O. Box 172
Lebanon, NH 03766
802-698-0265

Yes, I want to help Willing Hands deliver donations of healthy food!

Enclosed is my tax deductible contribution of:

- ___ \$30 to cover the cost of delivering 20 five-pound bags of apples
- ___ \$100 to cover the cost of delivering 8 big boxes brimming with nutritious food
- ___ \$290 to cover the cost of delivering 1,000 pounds: an entire day of deliveries!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

- I'm interested in volunteering to help Willing Hands with:
 ___ The Farm Project ___ Nutrition Education ___ Sunday Driving ___ Committee Work

Please contact me at this phone number: _____ or this email address: _____



COLLABORATIONS ARE KEY TO OUR SUCCESS

Willing Hands Extends Special Thanks To Our Recipient Organizations

(every week, year 'round, making sure that the food we deliver gets to the folks who need it most)

In New Hampshire:

Child & Family Services
Claremont Manor Apartments
Claremont Soup Kitchen
Cornish Food Pantry
Earl Bourdon Center
First Baptist Church of Lebanon
Good Folks Pantry
Green Mtn Childcare Centers
Hannah House
Headrest
HIV/HCV Resource Center
Lebanon Towers
Listen Community Services
Maple Manor
Mascoma Area Senior Center
Mascoma Village
Next Step
Open Hands Mission
Orford Senior Center
Pathways
Roger's House
Romano Circle Family Housing
Southwest Community Services
Stepping Stones
Students Fighting Hunger
Turning Point Network
United Methodist Church of Enfield
Upper Valley Hostel
Upper Valley Senior Center



"There's an elegant simplicity to what we do: helping folks in need with healthy food."

Mark Pennell
WH Delivery Driver

Wellspring Community Dinner & Foodshelf
West Central Behavioral Health
WIC - Women's Health Resource Center

In Vermont:

Bugbee Senior Center
Fairlee Food District
Family Place
Graystone Village
Hillcrest Manor
Hollow Drive family housing
Journey Church Foodshelf
Junction Teen Center
Northwoods family housing
Norwich Senior Housing
Olde Windsor Village
Overlook Housing
Praise Chapel Foodshelf
Red Door Community Meal
Royalton Senior Center
St. Francis of Assisi Foodshelf
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Sharon Foodshelf
Thetford Foodshelf
Turning Point Club
UU Church of Hartland Foodshelf
Upper Valley Haven
VA Medical Center
Village Apartments
West Fairlee Foodshelf
Willow Grove Transitional Housing

BEHIND THE SCENES:

Board of Directors:

Jack Lyons - President
Peter Carter - Vice President
Terry Lyons - Secretary
Mark Lindberg - Treasurer
Andrea Colgan
Carolyn Frye
Tom Ketteridge
Amy Miller
Pooh Sprague
Jay Van Arman



Executive Director:
Heather Bagley

Driving Staff:

Chuck Egner
Jim McCracken
Christy Parker
Mark Pennell
(substitute: Chico Eastridge)

At the Hartford-Norwich Holiday Basket Helpers event last December, this scout troop helped Willing Hands distribute 150 boxes (1.5 tons!) of apples and potatoes donated by Poverty Lane Orchard and Edgewater Farm.

Contact Us!

info@willinghands.org 802-698-0265 P.O. Box 172 Lebanon, NH 03766 volunteer@willinghands.org
www.willinghands.org

