

STEP 4: Celebrate The Harvest

Starting at mid season, enlist the media in building to the harvest party and cut-off date for recording donations. As the garden season peaks, the weekly totals will climb dramatically; so, don't give up on reporting the totals. It takes a newspaper, radio or TV host very little space to report climbing totals.

Wrap up the campaign at the cut-off date with a harvest party. It can be as simple as a gathering to load the last produce at a community garden, anything upbeat that says "thanks" to the network members, business sponsors, contributors and media. Invite a celebrity to make a statement on how local donations have boosted the national *Plant A Row* totals for the year. Congratulate your gardeners and announce next year's *Plant A Row* campaign!

About PAR

Plant a Row for the Hungry is a public service program of the Garden Writers Association. GWA's goal is to help to feed the hungry by establishing *Plant A Row* networks in communities everywhere.

Launched in 1995, annual *Plant A Row* donations top more than 1,000,000 pounds. *Plant A Row* is funded by the Garden Writers Association Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit charity, and supported by donations from The Scotts Miracle-Gro Co., Gardener's Supply Co., the National Garden Bureau, Fafard, Inc., Bradfield Organics and other Green Industry organizations.

Plant A Row has been endorsed by Master Gardeners, the American Community Gardening Association, the American Nursery and Landscape Association, the National Gardening Association, and by nurseries, seedsmen, and other garden suppliers. Visit our website (www.gardenwriters.org) and click on the *Plant a Row* tab.

What Is The GWA?

The Garden Writers Association is a highly-respected organization of professionals communicating about horticulture, gardening and the environment. Its mission is to provide leadership and opportunities for education, recognition, career development, and a forum for diverse interactions for professionals in the field of garden communication.



Available Resources At www.gardenwriters.org

- Take the GroGood Pledge information brochure
- How to Start Your Local Campaign brochure
- PAR Committee Workbook & Press Kit
- Local Volunteer Committee Contacts
- Find Donation Locations
- PAR Public Service Video
- Cooking Vegetables Recipes

For information on *Plant A Row* in your area, contact:

Carol Ledbetter
PAR Program Administrator

Tel/Fax: (877) 492-2727
E-mail: PAR@gardenwriters.org
Web: www.gardenwriters.org



Plant A Row for the Hungry is a public service program of the Garden Writers Association Foundation

Feeding the Hungry

How to Start Your Local Campaign



Plant a Row
For The Hungry 

Garden Writers Association Foundation
www.gardenwriters.org
Call Toll Free (877) 492-2727

GARDENERS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

STARTING A LOCAL PLANT A ROW FOR THE HUNGRY PROGRAM

The Garden Writers Association (GWA) sponsors *Plant A Row for the Hungry* (PAR), a communications program encouraging garden communities to donate fresh vegetables, fruit, herbs and flowers to food pantries and/or soup kitchens in need.

STEP 1: Enlist A Network

The first step is to recruit volunteer participants. Some successful *Plant A Row* campaigns are run by one person backed by a media employer, but most are networks of garden writers, individuals, Master Gardeners, community gardeners, garden clubs and nurseries. They usually include these elements:

Local Coordinator to recruit the network and run the campaign — a dedicated person with connections in the gardening community.

Food distribution agency partner to contact organizations that want garden produce and will give PAR donor receipts. Look for a dynamic staffer from a food bank, soup kitchen or shelter.

Publicist to distribute stories about your local campaign and support it from kickoff through the growing season. Publicity is important!

Events Organizer to arrange your campaign “kickoff” day and site and the closing harvest celebration. We supply (free) brochures, row markers and other supplies for “starter kits” to give away. Look to local nurserymen, seedsmen and other businesses for input. Check into, and be sure to comply with, all municipal laws.

Collections Organizer to arrange qualified recipients to receive donations at drop-off sites and issue *Plant A Row* donation receipts.

STEP 2: Plan Your Program

GWA provides campaign how-to information based on feedback from successful field networks, along with communications supplies. GWA publishes and celebrates your success as you fit your campaign to your community’s needs and opportunities.

Getting Started:

Call a planning session 10 to 12 weeks before the planting season. We provide the PAR Workbook & Press Kit. Show the PAR video and the public service announcement. Ask the food bank representative to describe the need for produce and which garden produce is wanted.

The Campaign:

Here’s how a typical PAR campaign looks.

When planting season opens:

- Create an attention-getting launch for the campaign and give away “starter kits.”
- Publicize the need to *Plant A Row*.
- Ask extension services, community gardens, churches, schools, garden clubs, businesses, even food banks to start *Plant A Row* gardens.

As harvest season advances:

- Organize gleaning opportunities from home gardeners, orchards and truck farms. Have them donate produce directly to qualified

food distribution agencies. Get receipts for your donors!

- Call your food distribution agency partners weekly to ask for donation reports.
- Celebrate and publicize the donations!
- Announce a final harvest date for your campaign.

STEP 3: Publicize Your Program

Publicity is the key to success. So, the first move is to publicize a date and site for the kickoff.

The challenge is keeping your campaign and drop-off sites before the public during the entire season. Enlist media contacts and feed them news breaks, feature stories and photographs all season long. Send clippings to the PAR office. We need them!

When you know the kickoff date and site, announce it to media contacts. Offer GWA’s PAR video and PSA to local TV. Build attendance by asking them for mentions of gardeners and garden groups joining the campaign and photos of local gardens and newsworthy sites.

When you get coverage, thank the editors!

Ask for regular, preferably weekly, publication of the pledges and donations received and the addresses of drop-off sites. Arrange a “first donation” photo opportunity in a soup kitchen with staffers setting a table with produce and flowers donated by a garden club.