



**SENIOR GLEANERS OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY**  
**For more information:**  
**Lisa Lindgren (619) 972-4328**  
**Call to cover a grocery pick-up or produce-harvesting crew.**

Sept. 18, 2024  
For immediate release

**SENIORS CELEBRATE 30 YEARS**  
**HARVESTING SURPLUS FOOD COUNTYWIDE**  
*City and county declare today “Senior Gleaners Day”*

Senior Gleaners of San Diego County, a volunteer organization with a mission to address community hunger, celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary today at an event attended by volunteers and residents who are donors of food.

The City of San Diego and San Diego County declared today “Senior Gleaners Day.” Attending to recognize the accomplishments of the food recovery group was Margaret Doyle, representing the office of City Council Member Jennifer Campbell.

Four primary Senior Gleaners board presidents provided remarks as well. Founder and 20-year board president Laurel Gray spoke by video. He recalled early days of the organization—the first gleaning group in the county—and thanked all who have supported the mission.

Monte Turner, board president for four years, whose wife, Barbara, also served for one year, recalled how the group’s volunteers and donors of food rallied to quickly respond to the exploding, critical need for food during the pandemic.

Board president serving in 2022 through early 2024 Margaret Burton reported that gleaner volunteers have made the 30<sup>th</sup> year a banner year with 200,095 pounds gathered to date—topping totals for the past five years. Volunteers picked 31 types of crops in 346 locations. They worked nearly 5,300 hours. More than 100 new volunteers have joined this year—another five-year record.

Pradip Mistry, who took the reins as president in June, thanked residential and farm donors and food distribution partners helping feed San Diegans in need. He also recognized the work of volunteer board members to streamline operations and develop a strategic plan recently.

The event, held at The Point at Mission Bay, which included a silent auction, raised \$5,200. Senior Gleaners relies on individual donations and grants. They do not charge for harvesting nor do they charge the 50-plus food distributors receiving the food they gather.

To learn more about the group and to register as a volunteer or donor of crops, visit: [www.seniorgleanerssdco.org](http://www.seniorgleanerssdco.org) or send a message to: [info@seniorgleanerssdco.org](mailto:info@seniorgleanerssdco.org).

**About Senior Gleaners of San Diego County**

Since 1994, Senior Gleaners volunteers ages 55+ have gleaned tons of food annually throughout the county. Besides gleaning produce, the group collects unsold products donated by grocers. All the food is provided at no cost to the San Diego Food Bank, Feeding San Diego, churches, food pantries and similar organizations. In 2023, the group collected nearly 150,000 pounds of food that otherwise would have been wasted.

*For use in calendar/announcement notices:*

**SENIORS SEEK HELP TO HARVEST  
FRUIT FOR HUNGRY SAN DIEGANS**

*Volunteers needed as prime citrus harvest nears*

A group of seniors picking surplus fruit throughout the county needs help now to prepare for the upcoming peak harvest of citrus. Senior Gleaners of San Diego County also needs people who can haul several filled banana boxes of fruit in their own vehicle. Most volunteers (ages 55+) work for 3-4 hours one day per week working with a crew near their homes. To learn more about the group and to register as a volunteer, visit:

[www.seniorgleanerssdco.org](http://www.seniorgleanerssdco.org) or call 619-633-9180.