In 2013, a generous gift through the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation supported six gleaning coordinators working ten hours a week for six months with the following network partners: Belknap County Conservation District, Community Kitchen in Keene, Hillsborough County Conservation District, NH Farm to School, NOFA-NH, and Seacoast Eat Local.

The goals of this pilot year were to communicate with farmers about possible gleaning opportunities during the harvest season, enlist the help of volunteers to glean, and coordinate deliveries with recipient organizations. All coordinators were asked to collect data on the amount and types of produce gleaned, number of volunteers, number of farms with gleaning opportunities, and number of food pantries or other end-recipients that received the produce.
The Community Kitchen in Keene leveraged these funds to increase the number of hours their gleaning coordinator worked. The Community Kitchen was able to glean the most produce, over 16,000 pounds.

Seacoast Eat Local and NOFA NH incorporated the gleaning position into existing part-time positions, creating more diverse, better paying positions.

Hillsborough County Conservation District had to ask their board for more funds to support their gleaning coordinator as she did not want to let any gleaning opportunity go by because of funding limitations.

Belknap County Conservation District has not used their funds yet preferring to get a better understanding of the opportunities available in the Lakes Region first. A coordinator will be hired this winter.

NOFA NH worked to get the word out to their farmers as well as how to engage volunteers. They now have 30 individual volunteers and/or volunteer groups. One farm is going to grow extra food specifically for NH Gleans in 2014.

Seacoast Eat Local took advantage of their presence at farmers markets to glean at the end of 2 to 3 markets every week. They will also be gleaning at the winter markets this season. Opportunities for on farm gleans arose out of their presence at the farmers markets.

NH Farm to School’s coordinator set up a backyard gardener drop off day, established a relationship with two farms where multiple gleans took place and engaged students from Colby-Sawyer college to help glean.
Lessons Learned

✓ For some coordinators, 10 hours a week was not enough time. Ideally, the hours would vary according to time of year with more hours being needed during the high gleaning seasons of summer and fall. Winter and spring activities would include gleaning from farms that have extended their season with high tunnels or hardy vegetables, lining up volunteers, and communicating with food pantries and schools to determine their limitations or preferences for receiving and handling gleaned produce. Off season activities would also include mailing information to farmers about the gleaning program and reporting progress from the previous season.

✓ At some point, NH Gleans would need its own director/project manager with dedicated time and resources for growing the network.

✓ A variety of tactics were employed to collect produce:

  - In the Kearsarge Valley, the coordinator set up a garden drop off day to collect excess produce from home gardens. This was only somewhat successful and would require much more outreach to the community to be successful.
  
  - On the Seacoast, gleaning at the end of farmers markets is very successful. Most farms will donate something preferring not to haul it back to the farm. Saturday markets seem best as most farmers markets occur Wednesday-Saturday and the farmer may not have an outlet for anything for several days if it’s not sold on Saturday.
  
  - In Hillsborough County, the coordinator’s daughter did face painting at the farmers market to collect money to buy produce to distribute to the food pantry. Baked goods were also gleaned from farmers markets.
  
  - A relationship with Stonyfield Yogurt has been established as they frequently have excess yogurt products to donate.
  
  - The Community Kitchen has an established backyard garden drop off day and the coordinator also gleans from farm stands.

### Highlights as of November 2013

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of volunteers</td>
<td>94</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total number of farms</td>
<td>58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total number of recipient organizations</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total pounds of produce gleaned</td>
<td>28,864</td>
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<td>Activity</td>
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**TOTAL**  
$0

**Why expand NH Gleans**

129 food pantries and soup kitchens, 1/3 in the state, responded to a recent NH Food Bank survey...

- 36% said that they receive fresh produce from more than 50 NH farms. 21% would like to receive fresh produce more often.
- Most are getting tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, apples, carrots, lettuce, corn, beans, kale, and onions. Many responded they would take any fresh produce they can get.
- 52% said they have volunteers who could respond to a gleaning opportunity at a farm.
- Other sources of donated fresh produce include the NH Food Bank, supermarkets, backyard gardens, community gardens and school gardens.
Media Mentions

NH Gleans and the host organizations were featured on WMUR-TV, NHPR, as well as in the Keene Sentinel, Manchester Union Leader, Monadnock Ledger Transcript, and The Villager.


• http://www.sentinelsource.com/news/local/new-program-to-glean-fresh-produce-for-keene-food-pantry/article_0c4ddf65-554c-583d-a8b7-02e6c0366175.html

• http://www.ledgertranscript.com/business/8868501-95/her-mission-is-feeding-others

• http://www.unionleader.com/article/20130923/NEWS12/130929767/1009

• http://www.sentinelsource.com/news/local/national-stories-of-hunger-prompt-calls-for-change-in-monadnock/article_75d0d652-be30-526c-83fe-01da531bbceb.html?fb_action_ids=10202460121961956&fb_action_types=og.likes&fb_ref=UopL7REqC4w.liked&fb_source=other_multiline&action_object_map=%7B%2210202460121961956%22%3A1374885922759260%7D&action_type_map=%7B%2210202460121961956%22%3A%22og.likes%22%7D&action_ref_map=%7B%2210202460121961956%22%3A%22UopL7REqC4w.liked%22%7D
Housed at the Sustainability Institute at the University of New Hampshire, NH Farm to School is a statewide program working to connect New Hampshire farms and schools.

Such sustainable food systems work is a key component of the Sustainability Institute. Sustainability is a core value of UNH, shaping its culture, informing behavior, and guiding its work. As a nationally recognized leader, UNH draws on the Sustainability Institute to act as convener, cultivator and champion of sustainability on campus, in the state and region, and around the world.

Learn more at www.nhfarmtoschool.org and www.sustainableunh.unh.edu.