



Volunteers pick the fruit of a neighborhood tree. The property owners are grateful both that the fruit has been harvested and that it will go to feed hungry people.

Sharing the Backyard Bounty Good for Everyone

by Jane Rands

On a sunny Sunday morning, a crew of Harvest Club volunteers arrived at a west Fullerton home with ladders, boxes, picking bags, and fruit picking tools. The homeowners greeted the eager team. One of the Harvest Club founders, Jeff Lebow, collected waiver forms from new harvesters and provided a safety orientation.

"Use your knees not your back to pick up boxes. And if you have bad knees, get someone else to pick up the box." The group chuckled. When he was done giving instructions, everyone started to work.

Within a half hour, three 40-pound boxes of oranges were sitting in the driveway, ready to be loaded and delivered that

same morning to the food bank at Wilshire Ave. Community Church in Fullerton.

The outfit moved across the street and into the next backyard where more sweet, fresh oranges awaited picking. The pickers climbed, clipped, picked and packed seven full boxes of oranges. The gleeful husband and wife at the home were pleased that the food from their tree would be going to feed hungry people rather than fall to the ground and spoil. Their tree provided far more than they could eat and the chore of picking the fruit was too time consuming for the busy couple.

The seven boxes from that one tree were split between the Fullerton Armory Emergency Homeless Shelter on Sunday night and the Monday night hot meal for needy families.

The Harvest Club was started a few years ago in Huntington Beach by people who wanted to help develop "food security" and build community. The club has since joined the OC Food Access Coalition, a project sponsored by OneOC, and grown to include over 100 growers throughout the county.

The Harvest Club has some growers and pickers in Fullerton. If you would like to do some volunteer picking here and throughout the county or if you would like some help sharing the food growing in your front or backyard, please contact the Harvest Club.

You can sign up online at www.theHarvestClub.org or call (714) 564-9525 to share the bounty of backyard food for better health and a better community.