



PRESS RELEASE

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**Religious Leaders of All Faiths to
Give Sermons on Food Waste**

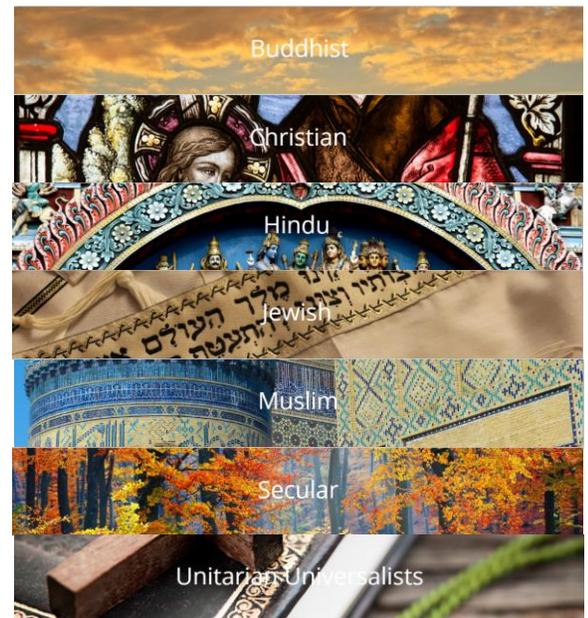
Weekend of September 8-10, 2017

Newfoundland NJ – (June 1, 2017) –

AmpleHarvest.org - the unique nationwide nonprofit that is eliminating food waste and hunger by linking 42M American home gardeners to local food pantries - has announced the second annual Food Waste Weekend will be September 8-10, 2017 (#FoodWasteWeekend and www.FoodWasteWeekend.org). This is a global invitation and opportunity for the faith community to learn about and address the waste of food, in the weekend's religious services.

Food Waste Weekend was launched in 2016 to help the faith community shift its focus from 'feeding the hungry' to 'ending hunger'. "For the past 10 years, an increasing number of food industry leaders, non-profits, government officials and others have been tackling the issue of food waste in America. One critical group – the faith community – has been largely absent from the conversation, until now," says AmpleHarvest.org's Founder and Executive Director Gary Oppenheimer. "Since 70% of America's food pantries are located in a house of worship, faith leaders are critical partners in helping get that excess food to hungry families. We knew we should invite clergy of all religions to learn, and then speak from their own faith perspective, about food waste.

Clergy nationwide are enthusiastic about the opportunities of this second annual event. Rev. Jacob Bolton of New York noted that "Food Waste Weekend addresses the complex, global issue of food waste and overconsumption, with tangible, local, and 'spiritually cultivating' practices that any faith community can undertake. The possibilities surrounding this weekend are sundry and full of hope. This is the invitation faith communities have been looking for." Rabbi Joshua Ratner from Connecticut echoed his sentiments: "I think



this is a fantastic opportunity for people of all faiths to actualize the biblical injunction to share the gleanings of our fields with those in need. Donating our food surplus, rather than throwing it away, reinforces the conservationist ethic that is a part of all religious traditions. I hope houses of worship of all faiths will participate”

Food Waste Weekend strives to educate the clergy about the issue of food waste, and then give them the tools they need to share the issue with their congregation. General and detailed information about food waste, faith-specific sample sermons, newsletter bulletins and more are available to clergy who sign up at

www.FoodWasteWeekend.org. They can also select a number of

‘calls to action’ based on the type of engagement their

congregants will be most responsive to. Examples include finding a nearby food pantry at www.AmpleHarvest.org that is eager for

excess garden produce, using shopping lists to reduce the impulse to buy food that may not be consumed, or even helping employers find ways to reduce food waste in the office or cafeteria. Rev. Ben Collins of Florida states, “Pastoring a congregation with a deep social conscience means issues like hunger, waste, and environmental impact are front and center. They are integral not only to religion, but humanity, which we believe makes the responsibility profoundly sacred.”

Food Waste Weekend materials at www.FoodWasteWeekend.org were specifically developed for Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu and Unitarian-Universalists communities, and other faiths are welcome to adapt them for their use. Clergy are urged to mark September 8-10 on their calendars to give sermons on the waste of food and further discussions about how reducing food waste can help congregations follow their faith traditions, save money at the grocery store and help improve the health of both themselves and the planet. Through AmpleHarvest.org, the key beneficiaries of Food Waste Weekend will be food pantries nationwide that will receive food, especially locally grown food, that otherwise would have been lost to waste

About AmpleHarvest.org:

AmpleHarvest.org, Inc. is a not-for-profit 501c3 organization which works to diminish food waste and hunger in America by educating, encouraging and empowering growers to easily find a local food bank eager to receive the excess garden bounty. Follow AmpleHarvest.org at twitter.com/AmpleHarvest and at Facebook.com/AmpleHarvest.org. For more information, visit www.AmpleHarvest.org/presskit or call AMPLE-6-9880 (267-536-9880).



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