

# News Release



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## **AMPLEHARVEST.ORG NAMED TOP 25 FINALIST IN THE THIRD ANNUAL "STAY CLASSY" PHILANTHROPIC AWARDS COMPETITION**

***Nationwide hunger/nutrition initiative enabling thousands of food pantries to receive excess garden produce nominated for "Most Effective Awareness Campaign By A Charity" award.***

### **For Immediate Release**

**West Milford, NJ** – (August 8, 2011) – The AmpleHarvest.org Campaign, created by CNN Hero Gary Oppenheimer in 2009 has been named as one of the top 25 charities competing for the "Stay Classy" Award for its work in educating, encouraging and enabling millions of home gardeners to donate their excess garden produce to local food pantries.

A public vote will determine the top 10 finalists. Simple instructions are available at [www.AmpleHarvest.org/vote](http://www.AmpleHarvest.org/vote). Voting closes on August 25, 2011.

The AmpleHarvest.org Campaign was originally created to help growers share their garden bounty with those in need by providing an online clearing house listing neighborhood food pantries accepting donations of fresh produce. More than 4,100 food pantries spread across all fifty states have registered and more are signing up daily. A national map of the registered food pantries can be viewed at [www.AmpleHarvest.org/map](http://www.AmpleHarvest.org/map).

According to founder Gary Oppenheimer, "we saw more than 50 million Americans including 1 out of 4 children under the age of 6 not having access to a reliable supply of food compounded by the crisis of childhood and adult obesity now ravaging the country, while at the same time, more than 40 million people growing food in home gardens, often more than they can use, preserve or give to friends and decided that it did not have to be this way.

We created the AmpleHarvest.org Campaign as a tool to enable these millions of gardeners to easily find a neighborhood food pantry eager for their excess garden produce - important because fresh produce is almost never available at food pantries, forcing pantry clients to rely on processed food instead. More importantly, children do not grow up with the habit of eating fresh fruit and vegetables – something that can lead to a less than healthy diet in their later years.

“We set out on a two tiered program... both to educate the gardening community that they could and should donate their excess garden produce while at the same time, educating America’s network of food pantries that they could accept and distribute fresh produce without incurring the costs of refrigeration or storage; and these two education campaigns were done simultaneously!”

“Our challenge was that gardeners historically did not know where they could donate excess garden produce, and that food pantries were not used to working with fresh produce. We sought to make that connection and judging by the large number of gardeners and pantries now working together, it’s apparent we have had a major impact.”

The CLASSY Awards are America’s largest philanthropic awards ceremony recognizing the most outstanding achievements by charities. The top finalists selected by public vote at [www.AmpleHarvest.org/vote](http://www.AmpleHarvest.org/vote) will be announced on August 30<sup>th</sup> followed by an Oscar’s style awards ceremony in September.

A vote for AmpleHarvest.org helps to fund hunger reduction and improved nutrition while simultaneously helping the environment – all at no cost to the donor.

About AmpleHarvest.org, Inc.

AmpleHarvest.org, Inc. is a not-for-profit 501c3 charity which has received backing and support from the USDA, Google, Inc., National Gardening Association, the Garden Writers of America, Rotary International, National Council of Churches, Veterans of Foreign Wars and numerous faith groups. The AmpleHarvest.org Campaign works to diminish hunger, improve nutrition and help the environment in America by enabling gardeners to easily find a local food pantry eager to receive the excess garden bounty. For more information on the campaign, visit [www.AmpleHarvest.org/press](http://www.AmpleHarvest.org/press) or call AMPLE-6-9880 (267-536-9880).

About StayClassy.org

StayClassy is the easiest and most affordable way for organizations to raise funds and manage donor relationships online. Based in San Diego, CA, the company develops easy-to-use web-based fundraising software for nonprofit organizations. StayClassy launched its new platform in May 2010, and has over 2,000 customers using its services. StayClassy is also the host of the Annual CLASSY Awards, a national award show that recognizes outstanding philanthropic achievements throughout the world (<http://www.stayclassy.org/classy-awards>).

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