



While we should give thanks all year long for those things we have to be grateful for, Thanksgiving is an excellent opportunity to share them with others. And so I will.

There is a story about a man who falls into a deep hole and keeps calling out for help. A number of people walk by, hear the man ask for help and, with some pity, they tell him that while they'd like to help, the hole is too deep – and they walk on.

Finally another person walks by and looks down. The now exhausted and dispirited man again asks for help in getting out.... only to be told that the hole is too deep to help pull him out. Instead of walking away however, this person jumps into the hole alongside the man.

"Are you a fool? Now we're both down here in the hole".

"Yes we are" was the response, "and together, we'll figure a way out".

I founded AmpleHarvest.org to enable America's growers help hungry families get out of the hole by getting extra food from their garden to a neighborhood food pantry.

I am grateful to have had the inspiration for AmpleHarvest.org as well as the opportunity to put it in place. I am grateful to the two people who volunteered their time and talent to help me build it in early 2009, the people who have since helped fund it, the media people who have helped to report about it, the government officials who used their good offices to promote it, the board and staff of AmpleHarvest.org who have committed themselves to helping it grow, the foundations that have looked outside of their box to support something they've never seen before, the food bank network and faith community that has helped spread the word, the organizations that have, by way of awards ceremonies, given AmpleHarvest.org a hearty slap on the back, the food pantry clients who have written kind words of thanks and my family and friends who inspired AmpleHarvest.org as well as continue to be its loudest cheerleaders.

And not to be forgotten, I am grateful to the growers across America who reach into their backyard gardens to help their neighbors in need.

We live in a country where one in six people are in a hole and when any American is in a hole, we all are.

Working together, we're finding a way out. Visit www.AmpleHarvest.org/waystohelp to see how you can help.

Happy Thanksgiving.

Gary Oppenheimer

Founder/Executive Director of AmpleHarvest.org