

# Harvest Rescue 2017 Volunteer Orientation Package



## About the Nelson Food Cupboard

The Nelson Food Cupboard aims to increase access to fresh and healthy food in the Nelson community through a variety of programs, including: Food Skills, Good Food Bank, the Garden, and of course Harvest Rescue. Please see [www.foodcupboard.org](http://www.foodcupboard.org) for more information about the organization.

## About Harvest Rescue

As a program of the Nelson Food Cupboard, our mission is to connect interested volunteers with fruit tree owners who have excess produce for gleaning purposes. Volunteers who pick, sort and transport fresh, local produce allow the Food Cupboard to distribute it to people in need of food.

## How to Become a Volunteer

**Step 1:** Fill out a 2017 Volunteer Info form, linked to on our website at [foodcupboard.org/harvest-rescue](http://foodcupboard.org/harvest-rescue). Or contact Heather, the 2017 coordinator either over e-mail, phone (contact info at bottom) or in person at the Food Cupboard office at 602 Silica Street.

**Step 2:** Watch for (almost) weekly e-mails about upcoming picks, and/or show up for our "Fruity Tuesdays" weekly picks. Contact Heather if you would like to participate.

**Step 3:** Make sure you [fill our 2017 Waiver](#) (new this year so each volunteer must fill it out)

**Step 4:** Follow directions over phone or e-mail about where to go and what to bring for your first pick!

## Fruity Tuesdays 2017 (starts August 8)

This year we are scheduling two regular times for volunteers to gather for picking opportunities. We meet Tuesdays at the NFC Garden (corner of Ward and Hoover St) each Tuesday at 9:15 am and 5:15 pm to

confirm location, gather equipment and to set up carpooling. Please call ahead to confirm your participation for either time on Tuesdays.

### **Preparing for a Pick**

Make sure you show up prepared to be outside for a few hours. It's best to come with a water bottle, hat, sunscreen, good shoes and snacks. When we meet at the Food Cupboard Garden, you can fill up your water bottle and use the bathroom there before we go. If you are driving, it's good to have a sense of the neighbourhood we'll be going to. You do not need to have a car to be a volunteer but it helps to coordinate with a driver in some way, i.e. you pick it and someone else transports it later. Heather will be facilitating picks that happen on "Fruity Tuesdays" but not always on other days.

### **Fruit Picking Best Practices**

- If possible, leave the stems on to help fruit stay fresh longer.
- Fruit can be picked on the under-ripe side.
- Communicate with fellow volunteers and help each other .
- Use ladders wisely and mindfully.
- Please pick only "best quality" fruit for the NFC.
- Please do your best to avoid shaking the trees.

### **When You Are Done Picking Fruit**

- Leave the donor with 1/3 of fruit unless otherwise mentioned.
- Leave a thank-you note—our donors should be shown appreciation
- Weigh the fruit (approximately), let Heather know the amounts
- Make sure the yard is as clean as you found it.
- Contact Heather to arrange fruit drop-off at the Food Cupboard

### **Wild Animals and Fruit Trees**

Fallen fruit is one of the major attractants of bears to our city. We do our best to pick all fruit from the trees we harvest. Please keep windfall and inedible fruit separate from the good quality fruit. If the donor does not

have a compost, please bring the compost with you to add to the Garden or to take to your own compost pile.

### **The Risks**

Be aware that there are risks involved when gardening and picking fruit. Please read and sign the [Harvest Rescue 2017 Volunteer Waiver](#) and return it to Heather. Only volunteers who have signed waivers will be able to help. Please remember that your safety comes first. Should you come across any situation that you find unsafe or uncomfortable, please notify Heather immediately.

### ***Equipment Available for Volunteer Use***

Orchard Ladders	9- 12 feet in height, very big and will need to be strapped to roof, three legs, and are made in a way that makes them sturdy even when set up on uneven ground
Small step ladder	Only to be used on solid, even surfaces - it should feel steady and sturdy when set up
Picking Poles	Long pole with basket at end, has 'fingers' which you can use to gently twist off the fruit. These poles allow you to reach about 4 - 5 feet higher than arms alone.
Picking Bags	Large nylon bags that you can wear across your shoulder while you pick, thereby keeping both hands free.

This equipment will be available for your use from the Garden at the corner of Ward St. and Hoover. It is locked up near the lower laneway (behind the brewery building) and Heather can give you the combination if needed.

Please notify Heather ahead of time if you have time limitations. Please call or email when you have finished your glean and let us how it went. If any part of the process is not working for you then please inform us.

Thank you for volunteering with us and happy harvesting!

**Please contact Heather, the Harvest Rescue Coordinator, with any questions:**

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