

Gleaning Crops

What is Gleaning?

Food recovery and gleaning is the collection of wholesome food for distribution for those in need. The terms “gleaning” and “food recovery” are often used interchangeably and cover a variety of different methods of food collection.

Field Gleaning

Field gleaning is the collection of crops from farmers’ fields that have already been harvested or fields where it is not economically profitable to harvest. This term can also be used to describe the donation of agricultural products that have already been harvested and are being stored at a farm or packing house.

The Risk Management Agency (RMA) encourages and promotes gleaning efforts of policy holders. Insurance providers are encouraged to allow gleaning in situations where a crop or portion of a crop may otherwise go unused or be destroyed.

Acceptable Charitable Organization

FCIC will allow gleaning only when the crop has been gleaned by charitable organizations defined as a 501(c)(3) (nonprofit organization) and the insured has not received compensation from such organizations.

Additional information can be found in the Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act that protects the insured for liability issues. The [Volunteer Protection Act of 1997](#) may also provide additional resource guidelines.

Gleaning on Harvested Acreage

Gleaning will be allowed on insured crop acreage that has been harvested as long as any remaining crop production on the harvested acreage cannot be harvested using normal and proper harvest methods such as over or undersized potatoes.

Some crop provisions such as for tomatoes and peppers state that production not meeting the specific requirements of the crop provisions will not be considered production to count; other crop provisions may contain similar provisions. Producers are encouraged to permit such production to be gleaned.

Gleaning or food recovery of any salvageable production will be allowed as long as the crop does not contain substances or conditions identified by the Food and Drug Administration or other public health organizations of the United States as injurious to human or animal health.

Harvested production declared zero market value (quality adjusted to zero value or zero production to count) and that is required to be destroyed such as fruit with quality adjustment factor of .000.

Farmer Owner Compensation


No compensation can be received for the Gleaned Crop. If any compensation is received by the policy holder for the gleaned crop from any qualified charitable organization, it will not be considered gleaning for crop insurance purposes.

Compensation for non-crop items, services, labor, etc., as described below is not considered compensation for the crop. Situations not to be considered compensation for the crop include states tax credits and other state and federal tax advantages for donating gleaned commodities. Additional situations include reasonable compensation from a qualified charitable organization to the policyholder for harvest and/or transportation of the gleaned (donated) crop. The qualified charitable organization indicates in writing the amount of compensation and that the compensation is solely for reimbursement of harvest and/or transportation costs incurred by the policyholder. The policy holder certifies (in writing) that the compensation is solely for harvest and/or transportation costs according to USDA Risk Management Agency Loss Adjustment Manual, paragraph 94, Titled: Gleaned Acreage.

Additional Information/Questions

Producers who wish to donate their damaged crops for gleaning purposes should contact their insurance agent and loss adjuster before allowing volunteers on to their fields to ensure equitable claims are paid. It is important that the insurance provider first determines the amount of crop damage before any gleaning activities are performed.

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This fact sheet gives only a general overview of the crop insurance program and is not a complete policy. For further information and an evaluation of your risk management needs, contact a crop insurance agent.

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