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## **GrowNYC Greenmarkets Help Feed the Needy Farm Fresh Food Post Sandy Customers Participate in the Donate-a-Bag Program**

**New York, NY**— As residents around the city work together to recover from Hurricane Sandy, regional farmers are happy to return to neighborhood Greenmarkets, bringing with them a bountiful supply of fresh food. In an effort to help those in need, non-profit GrowNYC, which operates over 50 Greenmarkets around the city, has worked quickly to identify kitchens that are serving hot meals to residents affected by the storm. New Yorkers can help the relief effort by buying an extra bag of locally grown food when they shop at a number of neighborhood Greenmarkets: pick up apples, potatoes or storage crops like root vegetables that will keep well, and donate them to the collection site at the market information tent. GrowNYC will then deliver the fresh food directly to a kitchen that can turn your contribution into a hot meal.

GrowNYC's Greenmarkets were up and running 48 hours after the storm hit, just as supplies in many city stores were starting to dwindle. By Saturday, the non-profit had set up donation sites at 13 of its farmers markets. At the end of the day, staff loaded up the generous donations—over 10,000 pounds of local food!—and pooled gas to make deliveries to kitchens that were serving hot meals to those hit hardest by the hurricane.

Greenmarket's Donate-a-Bag program will continue through the coming weeks. A list of markets where customers can make a donation of fresh produce can be found at <http://www.grownyc.org/blog/donate-a-bag/>. Individuals can also sign up to volunteer with GrowNYC's relief efforts.

GrowNYC's Fresh Pantries program works on an ongoing basis to connect food rescue agencies with local farmers who are able to make donations of extra crops. Last year, Greenmarket farmers collectively donated 825,435 pounds of food to local food pantries, homeless facilities, soup kitchens, and community centers in all five boroughs.

“In the wake of Sandy, so many New Yorkers are in need of housing, basic supplies and food. Greenmarket's mission has always been to provide all New Yorkers with access to fresh, locally grown food, and at a time like this, it has never been more important,” said GrowNYC's executive director, Marcel Van Ooyen.

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Greenmarket is a program of GrowNYC, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Greenmarket's mission is to promote regional agriculture and ensure a continuing supply of fresh local produce for New Yorkers.