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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 21, 2014

Students learn to Glean at Serving Fresno Day

(Fresno, CALIF.)- On Saturday, November 22nd from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Fresno State volunteers will have the opportunity to choose from two different projects for Serving Fresno Day. The projects include a trail restoration and construction at the McKenzie Table Mountain Preserve with Sierra Foothill Conservancy or gleaning with the help of Fresno State's Richter Center, Associated Students, Inc. (ASI) and the Food Recovery Network.

ASI will assist Fresno State Food Recovery Network's Gleaning Program by providing transportation for students to and from the Student Recreation Center, as well feeding them breakfast and lunch in appreciation of their service. The goal is to glean and donate 20,000 pounds of fresh produce from Fowler Packing Company to the Fresno Community Food Bank to feed food insecure families in Fresno.

Gleaning consists of organizing student volunteers to pick and gather fruits and vegetables that were left over from the commercial harvest. Typically, the produce does not make the grade due to minor cosmetic blemishes but still has all of the nutritional value.

Local agricultural business like Fowler Packing make gleaning possible by donating picking supplies for the operation. The Fresno Community Food Bank typically donates bins to transport the produce back to the food bank.

On Saturday, students will be gleaning either grapes, pomegranates or mandarins from packing farms in Fowler, CA. Student volunteers will receive a safety and training orientation on-site before gleaning and throughout the serve day, Richter Center student reflection leaders will help student volunteers reflect on their experiences as they learn about food security efforts like these gleaning projects.

Manuel Merin is a Business Administration student focusing on entrepreneurial business and minoring in Ag business is the Gleaning Program's chair for the student operated Food Recovery Network at Fresno State. Merin will be the coordinator for Saturday's gleaning and is very excited about the opportunity to get more students involved in.

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“This is an effort to combat food insecurity in a nutritional way. Everyone usually donates canned and boxed foods to the local food bank, but how many people think about gathering and donating fresh produce to the families?” said Merin.

For questions regarding the Food Recovery Network or any of its programs like the Gleaning Program, contact Manuel Merin at fresnostatefrn@gmail.com

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ASI is a body of elected student representatives that encourages student involvement in campus-wide decisions and funds student programs. As the student government we ensure that students' rights are protected and their voices are heard.