

## Livery Food Initiative - Operation Farm Gate

***This is not a further appeal for money but for help from your membership and the wider food production community.***

In December 2023 the Livery Food Initiative issued its second ask to Livery Companies and Charities. You can access the document here: <https://liverycommittee.org/lfi-request-2024/>

Thanks to the generosity of your Livery Charities, we have already raised more than £90,000 towards the £270,000 costs that will keep a truck on the road for three years. This means we are in a position to launch the newly LFI-liveried lorry on 5<sup>th</sup> March from Mansion House and, for the second year running, the Lord Mayor has kindly agreed to do this. We will be inviting your Companies and Charities to attend the launch.

**However, raising money for the truck was the first of three asks in the document. The second ask is very simple: City Harvest also needs more food, and we hope Livery companies and your members can help.**

Cost of living, inflation, conflict and Brexit all contribute to growing levels of deprivation in Greater London, which continues to have the highest levels of food poverty in the country. Latest figures from the Food Foundation show 25% of the London population are living in food poverty, this increases in several specific boroughs, particularly in East London (e.g. Newham, where the LFI's predecessor, the Livery Kitchen Initiative, distributed thousands of ready meals during lockdown in 2020).

We are all familiar with the ghastly phrase coined last summer of the 'holiday hunger' of children. This has tragically been superseded by the choice for many of heating or eating this winter... So the need for surplus food distribution has never been greater and sadly shows no signs of diminishing. Unfortunately, since the end of the pandemic, major food distributors (e.g. Amazon, *Ocado* etc..) have invested heavily in AI purchasing programmes which have resulted in dramatic drops in available waste from these sources. Whilst this is fantastic management of resources, it has impacted on the City Harvest team's ability to reduce their waiting list. This coupled with steadily increasing demand means City Harvest are having to go further afield to collect food surplus donations. Thus the need for the new LFI truck.

So this second ask, is for your members' support in finding food distributors, at any stage of the production process (from farm to factory), who have surplus food they are willing to donate to City Harvest.

Through the remarkable tenacity of Food Sourcing Manager, Ben Logue ([BenL@cityharvest.org.uk](mailto:BenL@cityharvest.org.uk)), City Harvest will collect any edible produce of pallet size upwards either themselves or through a well-established logistic network throughout the Country. The attached documents provide more information as well as some testimonials from those from whom they already collect. This short clip reinforces how easy it is: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=IhC\\_g1wDsc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=IhC_g1wDsc)

**Please can we, therefore, ask you to send this message to anyone in your membership (or through them beyond to their wider networks) to help find, collect and use any surplus food to feed those in perpetual food poverty in our Capital.**

We will keep you abreast of Operation Farm Gate's developments in the coming months.

Please [click here](#) for City Harvest Overview and [here](#) for Testimonials