

Got Mangoes? Hollywood Fresh Produce Project Launches Clever Initiative to Help Relieve Food Insecurity

By [Ariana Boland](#) - July 30, 2018



Hollywood residents will agree that each summer, the city's countless mango trees put on quite a display, producing an incredible abundance of fruit, much of which goes to waste. With nearly 15 percent in Broward unsure of where their next meal is coming from, this need not be the case, and Ellen Mitchell, a member of the volunteer-based Hollywood Women's Club (HWC), took notice.



This summer, Mitchell began the **Hollywood Fresh Produce Project (HFPP)** to redistribute unwanted fruit to the Community Enhancement Collaboration (CEC), a long-time partner of the HWC, in Hollywood's Washington Park neighborhood.

"The glaring problem came to me years ago. How can we have such an abundance of fresh produce and nearby we have people with limited access to fresh produce? Our food banks

do an incredible job but canned and boxed foods are high in sodium and everyone needs fresh fruits and veggies,” said Mitchell. “We have them rotting on the trees as they all get ripe at the same time and often fall to the ground attracting rats, possum, insects and other unwelcome critters.”

When she looked to see if any local groups were collecting and distributing fruit to those who needed it, she couldn’t find any and decided to start an initiative. Soon after, people began contacting Mitchell to volunteer their time picking and delivering fruit to the CEC.

“The community has embraced the project and I am thrilled at the response we have gotten in just a few weeks, I believe that with the heart of this community that this is just the beginning,” she said.

The fruit donated by the HFPP helps to feed nearly a thousand people receiving help from the CEC.

“I thought it was wonderful that they thought to give fresh fruit to my organization,” said Nadine McCrea, who helped form the CEC.

When club members heard about the clever and resourceful way to help relieve food insecurity, members began spreading the word to help register households and assist with collection.

“We will continue to support both CEC and Ellen’s HFPP in any way possible,” said HWC President Angela Bishop.

The Hollywood Women’s club’s motto is “living the volunteer spirit,” and this summer, they have certainly taken that phrase to heart.

To register yourself as a volunteer or to register your house to donate fruit, go to <https://www.hwfpp.com/retreats>.