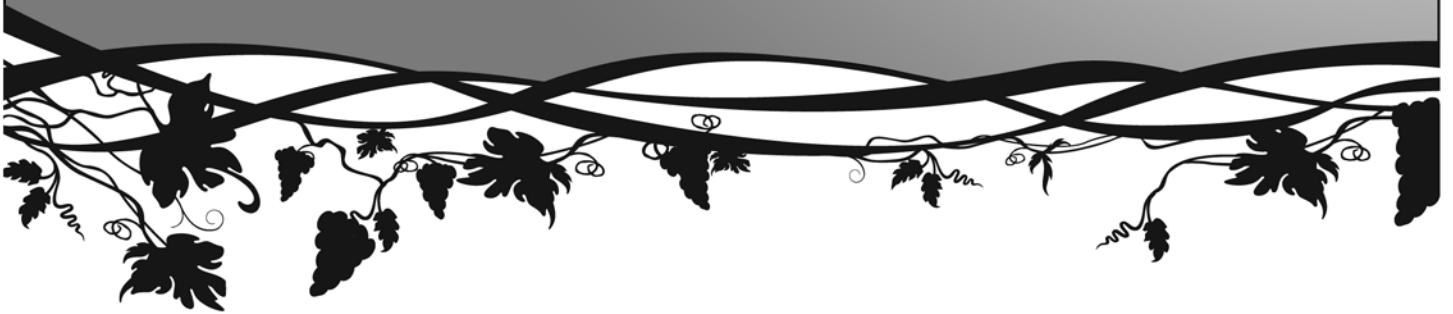


FIELDS TO FAMILIES

# Seasonal Harvest



## A New Project Takes Root: Fields to Families Begins Its Own Garden to Help Feed Hungry



*On September 11, fourteen Blackbaud employees volunteered as part of Trident United Way's Day of Caring. They built the "Shedquarters" at the New Fields to Families Garden.*

by **Lindsey Salmony**

Several local businesses, a Moncks Corner landowner, and Fields to Families have sprouted a relationship that they hope will help make a difference in the lives of hungry citizens in the Lowcountry.

The idea stemmed in May, 2009, when Jack Schurlknight asked Fields to Families Director Jacki Baer if she thought the organization could plant and manage a garden on his

property to use in the organization's food-distribution program.

Since that day, many milestones have been achieved to help bring the exciting project to life. Mr. Schurlknight has agreed to lease a plot of his land to Fields to Families as an in-kind donation. With the help of a grant from the Berkeley County Land

Trust, the land was cleared, and on September 11, fourteen enthusiastic Blackbaud employees came to lend a hand as part of Trident United Way's "Day of Caring." They hammered, sawed, and nailed together a 10-foot by 15-foot shed with a soaring roof.

The land will be used to help yield approximately 27,000 pounds of produce annually – an equivalent of 21,600 meals – which will be turned over to people in need. The shed, which has been aptly named the organization's "Shedquarters," will be used to store the tools and equipment that Fields to Families will need to make the garden flourish.

"I feel so fortunate to have been a part of the shed-building project," said Rosie

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## Did You Know?

You can stay informed about Fields to Families projects, news, photos and accomplishments by becoming a fan on Facebook, following us on twitter (<http://twitter.com/Fields2Families>), subscribing to our blog (<http://fieldstofamilies.wordpress.com>), and checking our flickr account (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/fieldstofamilies>).

## Jacki Baer Wins Benevolent Spirit Award from Charleston Magazine



In September, Fields to Families Director Jacki Baer was Charleston magazine's pick for "Benevolent Spirit" in their fifth annual Giving Back awards. (Photo courtesy of Zach Suggs/Charleston magazine)

by Lindsey Salmony

Each year, Charleston magazine, in association with the Coastal Community Foundation, honors individuals, businesses, and nonprofit organizations whose commitments to giving back to the community are especially noteworthy.

This year, Jacki Baer, Fields to Families director, won a Giving Back award in the category of "Benevolent Spirit." The award is given to an unpaid volunteer who has "given generously of his or her time, energy, heart, and soul to a specific nonprofit."

"Jacki works full time — in fact, overtime — in her duties," noted Fields to Families Board Member Melanie Mathos in her nomination letter to the magazine. "It is with exceptional vision and passion that Jacki leads the organization and makes a real impact on the hungry in our community."

Jacki received the award at the Giving Back Awards Luncheon on September 24, and was featured in Charleston magazine's September issue.

To Jacki, the true reward is the joy in people's eyes when they see fresh vegetables on their plates rather than the usual canned or processed foods, or nothing at all.

"If we don't ensure that our hungry are fed nutritious meals, we aren't providing them with the ability to thrive," said Jacki. "I will continue to serve the hungry as long as I am able."

This is the fifth year that the magazine has conducted the Giving Back awards. Other award recipients included Rawle Murdy Associates, Hulsey Law Group, East Cooper Community Outreach, Jerry Zucker, and Debby Stephenson of Courageous Kidz.

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Bradham, a board member for Fields to Families. "Everyone who came out to help proved that teamwork and caring can help those in need and also make for a totally gratifying experience at the same time."

Peter Loy, President of Citadel Enterprises, generously agreed to send his star builder, Dave Herring, and the company van for the day. Dave conceived the plans for the shed, and he masterfully headed up the mini "barn raising." Pat Crowe and his team at Guy C. Lee graciously sold the building materials to Fields to Families at cost and delivered them for free. In addition to providing volunteers, Blackbaud funded the project.

Soon enough, Fields to Families will begin to plow, prepare the soil, plant, weed, water, and harvest in order to significantly increase the number of food-insecure people it can serve.

"We are so grateful to Jack Schurlknight, Citadel Enterprises, Guy C. Lee, Blackbaud, and Trident United Way who have given us such a good start," said Phyllis Ford, chairperson for Fields to Families.

"With so much more needing to be done, we are hoping that people will be able to lend their spirit, enthusiasm, and willingness to volunteer to make this project a success," said Jacki Baer.

For updates on the project, information on how to help, or to make a donation, visit [www.fieldstofamilies.org](http://www.fieldstofamilies.org).



## How well do you know...? Brock White, Boone Hall Plantation, Donor Agency

by *Melanie Mathos*

*Brock White is a Fields to Families board member and director of agriculture at Boone Hall Plantation.*

**H**usband and wife Brock and Brooke White share the same passion. In their “day jobs,” they work at Boone Hall Plantation, one of the oldest family-owned working plantations in America. In their “spare time,” they volunteer as board members with Fields to Families. According to Brock, Boone Hall’s director of agriculture at Boone Hall, the mission behind Fields to Families is what pulled them in. “As a farmer, my job is to feed people,” said Brock. “Through Fields to Families, we can take excess product that would otherwise become fertilizer and feed someone; it’s very rewarding.” I recently had a chance to sit down with Brock to learn more about his involvement with Fields to Families and to explore his life as a farmer:

### **Q: How did you get involved with Fields to Families?**

A: It took Jacki [the organization’s director] about five minutes to convince me. I looked at her and said, “That’s brilliant.” We were committed to what we were doing as a donor agency, and I wanted to see if there was another way to help out. We thought it would be a good addition to have a farmer on the board to provide a perspective from the production side versus the collection side.

### **Q: How often do people glean at Boone Hall?**

A: Twice a week between late June and July and then periodically as crops come in.

### **Q: What are the most common crops they glean?**

A: Tomatoes, peppers, and lettuce.

### **Q: Can you describe the gleaning process for volunteers?**

A: Once volunteers sign up online, complete the waiver and get scheduled to come out to glean, it is really simple. We usually ask gleaners to meet at the U-pick, and then we point them to the field where they’re going to pick. We usually put a big Fields to Families sign in front of it so they know exactly where to go. My employees know that Fields to Families is an organization that Boone Hall supports, so they all help out.

### **Q: How many pounds has Boone Hall donated to Fields to Families?**

A: In 2008, we donated around 11,000 pounds.

### **Q: What do you love best about farming?**

A: It’s obviously

not the money! There has to be an intrinsic value that is associated with what I’m doing. For me, that’s getting harvest. My favorite day of the whole year is harvest, because that is when you get to see the fruits of your labor. With farming, there is a lot of hard work and labor involved in something you don’t get to see until the end. Harvest time gives you a chance to reflect on all of your hard work. Plus, you can’t hand someone a basket of strawberries and not see a smile on their face!

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*return to:*

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**Q: What time do you get up in the morning?**

A: Usually, around 6 a.m., and when things are busy, about 5 a.m. Unless there is a freeze coming — then I'm up all night watching the thermometer!

**Q: What is a typical workday like for you?**

A: Organized chaos. It's almost not definable; it changes on an hourly basis. Fertilizing, watering, harvesting, opening the U-pick operation...

**Q: What is your favorite vegetable/fruit to eat?**

A: Any kind of pepper. We grow bell and specialty peppers. If I had to pick one kind, it would be Cubanelle — they have a wonderful flavor to them. I also love strawberries, watermelon, and blueberries.

**Q: What is your least favorite vegetable to eat?**

A: Okra. We do grow it, and I really dislike it. I don't like the taste of it, the smell of it...I don't even like to look at it!

**Q: What is the hardest crop to farm?**

A: Strawberries, because they have the longest season. Preparation started in late July and the season ends in late June. The harvest season is three months. I ordered 160,000 plants this year, and we're in the process of getting the land ready.

**Q: What is the easiest?**

A: Corn is pretty simple because you can do most of it with machine. Watermelons are too — they aren't very picky.



*about Fields to Families*

**our mission:**

The mission of Fields to Families is to help increase nutrition to the area hungry by coordinating distribution of fresh produce obtained from local gardens and farms.

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