

## **Harvest Project – European Week for Waste Reduction**

As part of the European Week for Waste Reduction, the Green Home team in An Taisce's Environmental Education Unit are organising an event that addresses the themes of waste prevention and reduction and we would like to invite you to get involved. Each year hundreds of fruit trees all over Ireland go unpicked for a number of reasons including:

1. the fact that people don't notice them
2. people may not be physically able to harvest them or
3. there is just too much fruit at one time.

In light of this, we would like to organise a "Harvest Project" with the aim of reducing the amount of perfectly good fruit that is wasted each autumn. Allied to this is the considerable mileage much of the food we eat has to travel. The project also aims to raise awareness about the value of fruit trees and local food production in terms of human health, nutrition and ecology. This is particularly important when it comes to our children as a recent study conducted by the Irish Heritage Council has shown children are increasingly detached from nature. The "Harvest Project" encourages local groups, schools and enthusiastic individuals to harvest the abundance of fruit in their area during the autumn. If you are interested in taking part in this project you can get involved by taking two simple steps:

### **1. Mapping the Fruit Trees and Bushes in your Area**

If you have noticed orchards, fruit trees or bushes around your area whether on public or private land, we would appreciate if you could map them using our Google Map: <http://bit.ly/qi8yjdj> When mapping the fruit please pinpoint the tree as accurately as possible with a short description of the tree/bush e.g. the variety of the tree, when they are ripe, the size of tree. As well as being useful for the purpose of the project, the map gives a really interesting alternative perspective on the city/town or village as an orchard and indicates where there may be gaps in fruit trees.

### **2. Community Harvest**

Link with others in your community, such as a group of neighbours or an existing network, to harvest the abundance of fruit in your area rather than letting it go to waste. Share skills such as preserving, baking and juice pressing when making use of your harvest. Document how your group gets on by sending us in photographs of the group at work and a few lines describing what you harvested, what you did with the harvest and who got involved. Please forward your photographs and testimonials to [nmcdonald@eeu.antaisce.org](mailto:nmcdonald@eeu.antaisce.org)

To keep up to date with the progress of the "Harvest Project" keep an eye on our website [www.greenhome.ie](http://www.greenhome.ie) or find us on Facebook.

Good luck with your harvest and be sure to let us know how you get on!