

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF SECOND HARVEST FOODBANKS

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LYND FRUIT FARM GIVES COMMUNITY THE CHANCE TO HELP THE HUNGRY

Pick a Bag for the Hungry to Help the Food Pantry Network of Licking County

COLUMBUS – For more than 90 years, Lynd Fruit Farm in Pataskala, Ohio has provided apples and other farm grown produce to tens of thousands of happy customers. What began as an 80 acre orchard in 1919 has expanded into more than 500 acres that is now spread between three townships, allowing for even more customers to experience Lynd Fruit Farm.

What many Ohioans may not realize is Lynd Fruit Farm not only provides a great retreat for customers to visit the farm to pick apples or pumpkins, shop at the bakery or explore the corn maze, the Lynd family is also strongly engaged in the fight against hunger in Ohio. A partner of the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks (OASHF) and an integral contributor to OASHF's Ohio Agricultural Clearance Program, Lynd Fruit Farm provides Ohio's network of 12 Feeding America foodbanks with surplus apples that are given to Ohioans who visit member soup kitchens, homeless shelters and food pantries.

Taking their involvement in the fight against hunger one step farther and leading the way within Ohio's agriculture community, Lynd Fruit Farm hosted the first Pick a Bag for the Hungry Day on September 30, 2011. An event open to the public, customers and volunteers were given the opportunity to pick apples from the orchard to place in specially marked bags, which were collected and then provided to the Food Pantry Network of Licking County (FNPLC).

"We are truly grateful and humbled to work with such generous individuals as the Lynd family. From the inception of the Ohio Agricultural Clearance Program in 1996, Lynd Fruit Farm, in partnership with Ohio apple producers, the Ohio Fruit Growers Marketing Association, the Ohio General Assembly and four Governors, have funded, grown and distributed more than 35 million pounds of apples, apple cider, apple sauce and apple butter to help feed the hungry," said Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, executive director of the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks. "The produce that Lynd's and our network of Ohio farmers provide through the Ohio Agricultural Clearance Program is some of the most nutritious product that we have available to our hungry friends and neighbors. The value of this program is, quite honestly, immeasurable."

Throughout the day, OASHF staff, as well as volunteers from throughout FNPLC and general Lynd Fruit Farm customers participated in Pick a Bag for the Hungry. "It is amazing to see the commitment that Lynd Fruit Farm and the Lynd family has for helping their hungry friends and neighbors here in Licking County," said Charles Moore, executive Director of FNPLC. "Thank you to all who took the time to help in today's event and who helped provide fresh apples to those in need. We are all very thankful!"

To learn more about the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks visit www.oashf.org or call 614.221.4336.

About the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks

OASHF is Ohio's largest charitable response to hunger, representing Ohio's 12 Feeding America foodbanks and 3,100 member charities including food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. In SFY 2011, OASHF and its member foodbanks were able to acquire and distribute more than 150 million pounds of food and grocery items. Follow @OASHF on Twitter and stay connected on Facebook at www.facebook.com/oashf.

About Lynd's Fruit Farm

Currently in the seventh generation of Lynd apple growers, the more than 500 acre Lynd Fruit Farm is located in Pataskala, Ohio. Each year, Lynd Fruit Farm harvests an average of 150,000 bushels of apples. Lynd Fruit Farm is a member of the Ohio Fruit Growers Marketers Association under the Autumn Pride/Ohio Apples® brand, which is sold mostly to Kroger and Walmart chain stores in central Ohio.

About the Food Pantry Network of Licking County

The Food Pantry Network of Licking Country is a cooperative that was established in 1981 to coordinate the acquisition and distribution of emergency food supplies by working through its member food agencies. There are currently 32 pantries and social service agencies who distribute food or provide on-site feeding programs for the needy in Licking County.

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