

OHIO ASSOCIATION OF SECOND HARVEST FOODBANKS

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OHIO FOODBANKS RECEIVE 1.5 MILLION EGG COMMITMENT FROM OHIO FARMERS

Ohio egg farmers give back, partner with foodbanks in fight against hunger during National Egg Month

COLUMBUS – For the fifth year, the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks (OASHF) and the Ohio Poultry Association (OPA) have joined forces in the fight against hunger as the two organizations partner with Ohio’s egg farmers to provide wholesome, nutritious food to Ohioans in need. Representatives from OASHF and OPA, Ohio Department of Agriculture Director David T. Daniels, as well as egg farmers from across the state, gathered at an event held today at the Mid-Ohio Foodbank in Grove City to celebrate the milestone 1.5 million egg donation by Ohio farmers.

Eight Ohio egg farmers have committed the 1.5 million eggs to be provided to local hunger charities through OASHF’s network of 12 regional Feeding America foodbanks. The contribution has an estimated retail value of \$168,750.

“Our partnership with the Ohio Poultry Association and Ohio’s egg farmers is integral in helping us meet our critical mission to provide food to hungry Ohio families,” said Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, OASHF executive director. “This donation from the state’s egg farmers will generously fill an ever-increasing food gap and will provide our clients with wholesome and nutritious meals. We are extremely thankful for our agriculture partners and their continuous support.”

According to new research from Feeding America, the nation’s largest hunger-relief organization, more than 2 million Ohioans, or 18.1 percent of the state’s population, are considered food insecure, meaning they don’t always have access to food. Organizations like OASHF help bridge the food gap by providing nourishment to those in need.

The OASHF and its network of providers served more than 2.3 million Ohioans in the last three months. Approximately 35 percent of those served were children (under the age of 18) and about 14 percent were seniors (age 60 and older). Additionally, more than 4.4 million meals were served to Ohioans visiting shelters and soup kitchens.

Because of its long-standing partnership with OPA and Ohio’s egg farmers, OASHF can provide fresh, Ohio-produced eggs that mean hungry Ohio families can have nutritious, wholesome meals. Jim Chakeres, OPA executive vice president, said the egg donation is just one example of how Ohio’s egg farmers give back to their communities.

“Ohio’s egg farmers always have been champions in the fight against hunger,” said Chakeres. “We are proud of our 11-year partnership with the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks that provides our neighbors in need with safe, highly nutritious eggs.”

Ohio farms participating in this year’s donation include: Trillium Farms of Croton; Ft. Recovery Equity of Fort Recovery; Hemmelgarn & Sons, Inc. of Coldwater; Hertzfeld Poultry Farms of Grand Rapids; Stoller Farms of Van Wert; Weaver Brothers, Inc. of Versailles; Rindler Poultry of St. Henry; and Ross-Medford Farms of New Weston.

Ohio Department of Agriculture Director David T. Daniels said the generous donation by Ohio’s egg farmers to help those in need confirms their commitment to be good stewards and food ambassadors. “Ohio’s agricultural community always rises to the occasion to help their neighbors in need,” said Daniels. “Today’s donation confirms what many of us already know – Ohio’s farmers are compassionate for and passionate about providing to those who need assistance.”

In addition to the statewide egg donation, OASHF has partnered with Ohio's farmers for 15 years through the Ohio Agricultural Clearance Program (OACP). OACP is a statewide effort to direct Ohio's surplus of agricultural products through the network of foodbanks in the state to ensure that Ohio families have a source of nutritious, Ohio-grown and raised, and produced food products. The program works with Ohio farmers and commodity groups to provide foodbanks with surplus and unmarketable agricultural products at production cost.

OASHF's 12 member foodbanks provide hunger relief in all 88 Ohio counties. In 2011, OASHF distributed more than 150 million pounds of food and grocery items to 3,300 member charities, food pantries, soup kitchens, homeless shelters and other food assistance organizations.

For more information regarding the OASHF, visit www.oashf.org. For more information about OPA, visit www.ohioeggs.com.

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