

News Release

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Great Plains Food Bank Distributes 100th Million Pound of Food

A major milestone in their fight to end hunger and feed hope statewide

Fargo, ND – *February 15, 2011* – The Great Plains Food Bank, a program of Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota, has been recovering surplus food from the local, regional and national food industry and distributing it to charitable feeding programs serving the hungry and homeless since opening its doors in 1983. Today, the Great Plains Food Bank reached a major milestone. They are distributing their 100th million pound of food, a package of vacuum sealed fresh vegetables, to the Salvation Army in Bismarck.

“Reaching this milestone is truly a testament to the generosity and commitment of our many incredible partners who make our work possible,” says Steve Sellent, Great Plains Food Bank program director. “We extend our thanks to the food industry which supplies so much of the product we distribute, the volunteers who help us get the product ready for shipment, our financial supporters who provide the means to collect and distribute all the food, and our partner network across that state that works so diligently to get it into the hands of those that need it most.”

In 2010, the Great Plains Food Bank distributed 7.5 million pounds of food, providing assistance to more than 66,000 children, seniors and families - both all time record highs. Great Plains Food Bank partner feeding programs – which depend on the Food Bank for two-thirds of their food supplies – reported food shelf visits were up 8.4%, and emergency meals served by more than 9% compared to 2009.

“Today is about more than just reaching the 100 million pound distribution mark,” shares Sellent. “Each and every one of those pounds of food has touched a person in a very direct and meaningful way...whether it was a child who didn’t have to go to bed hungry and could learn to their full potential at school, a senior who didn’t have to make the difficult choice between paying for food or medicine, or hardworking parents who didn’t have to worry about where the next meal for their family was going to come from.”

The Great Plains Food Bank expects to distribute an estimated 8 million pounds of shelf-stable and perishable product to their network of soup kitchens, shelters, pantries and other charitable feeding programs operating in North Dakota and Clay County, Minnesota in 2011.

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About the Great Plains Food Bank

The Great Plains Food Bank strives for a hunger-free North Dakota and western Minnesota by recovering and distributing surplus food and grocery product, engaging in community partnerships and advocating for social change. In 2010, the Great Plains Food Bank distributed a record 7.5 million pounds of food, valued at nearly \$12 million, touching the lives of more than 66,000 individuals – nearly 40% being children. As the state’s largest hunger-relief provider, their partner network includes 270 charitable feeding programs operating in 94 communities. The [Great Plains Food Bank](#) is a program of Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota, a nonprofit social service agency serving one in nine North Dakotans annually from offices in five cities with 19 programs that strengthen individuals, families and communities.