



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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With 2,098,236 Missing Meals in Clay County, Great Plains Food Bank Helps Launch Statewide Hunger-Free Minnesota

Community can help neighbors in need by joining the movement to fight hunger

Fargo, ND —June 7, 2011— The Great Plains Food Bank, a program of Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota and the food bank serving Clay County, Minnesota is pleased to announce it is a founding partner of Hunger-Free Minnesota. Officially launched today, Hunger-Free Minnesota is a transformational, collaborative movement to fight hunger in our communities initiated by a coalition of partners united in the common belief that food is a basic and essential human right that every Minnesotan should have.

The coalition, which includes the six Feeding America Food Banks serving Minnesota, Hunger Solutions Minnesota and Greater Twin Cities United Way, came together after a series of five groundbreaking hunger-related studies conducted over the past 24 months shed light on hunger's devastating, pervasive and costly grip on Minnesota. Among those studies is the Missing Meals Study, which found an annual shortfall of 100-million meals for low-income Minnesotans including 2,098,236 meals in Clay County.

“The data in those studies made it clear that hunger has a stronger hold on Minnesota than we previously thought—a hold that is hurting our citizens, our communities and our economy,” said Steve Sellent, program director for the Great Plains Food Bank. “And it led the Great Plains Food Bank and all of Hunger-Free Minnesota’s founding partners to say, ‘enough is enough’. The bottom line is that it’s time for Minnesotans to band together and meet the needs of our hungry neighbors once and for all.”

To learn more about Hunger-Free Minnesota, the five hunger-related studies, or to join the movement ensuring our hungry neighbors have enough to eat, visit www.hungerfreemn.org.

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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 7.47 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 100 diverse 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.

About Hunger-Free Minnesota

Hunger-Free Minnesota is a transformational, collaborative movement of community and corporate partners working together to provide 100 million additional meals annually and sustainably for all Minnesotans in need. It was formed by a growing coalition of hunger-relief organizations in Minnesota united in the common belief that food is a basic and essential human right that every Minnesotan should have. The coalition includes the six Feeding America Food Banks serving Minnesota, including North Country Food Bank in Crookston, Minn.; Second Harvest Northern Lakes Food Bank in Duluth, Minn.; Second Harvest North Central Food Bank in Grand Rapids, Minn.; Channel One Food Bank in Rochester, Minn.; Second Harvest Heartland in St. Paul, Minn.; and Great Plains Food Bank in Fargo, N.D., Hunger Solutions Minnesota and the Greater Twin Cities United Way. To learn more, visit www.hungerfreemn.org.