



Press Release

For Immediate Release
Sept. 23, 2009

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Ozarks Food Harvest to announce Initiatives at a press conference tomorrow morning, to unveil *Hunger in the Ozarks* video *Doug Pitt of Care to Learn to be present*

WHAT: Press Conference to announce Ozarks Food Harvest's *Feeding Hope* Initiatives
WHERE: The Food Bank, [2810 N. Cedarbrook Ave.](#), Springfield, Mo.
WHEN: Thursday, Sept. 24, 2009 at 10:00 a.m.

SPRINGFIELD (Sept. 23, 2009)—Ozarks Food Harvest is unveiling its three-year strategic initiatives at a press conference tomorrow morning. Doug Pitt of the *Care to Learn* Fund of the Springfield Public Schools Foundation will be present, along with food bank supporters such as the Community Foundation of the Ozarks, Rotary Clubs of Springfield, Kraft Foods and Female Leaders in Philanthropy, among others.

The Musgrave Foundation, Roy W. Slusher Foundation and Heuer Foundation will also present a new video just released in conjunction with Ozarks Food Harvest, highlighting *Hunger in the Ozarks*.

Ozarks Food Harvest's *Feeding Hope* Initiatives—Feeding Children, Feeding Families and Feeding Seniors—will allow Ozarks Food Harvest to address the significant surge in demand for emergency food assistance over the past year, which has recently been driven by first-time clients due to record unemployment.

—More—

Transform Hunger into Hope™ at ozarksfoodharvest.org

Ozarks Food Harvest | 2810 N. Cedarbrook Ave. | P.O. Box 5746 | Springfield, MO 65801-5746 | P 417-865-3411 | F 417-865-0504



In taking a proactive approach, The Food Bank developed the initiatives to address the dramatic increase in need for food assistance in southwest Missouri. Taken together, Ozarks Food Harvest officials say these targeted initiatives touch each of the hungry populations that turn to The Food Bank's network for help. Achieving the goals of the *Feeding Hope* Initiatives will require \$9.5 million over the next three years, or by the end of Ozarks Food Harvest's fiscal year 2012, according to Bart Brown, president/CEO of The Food Bank.

Feeding America—the nation's largest domestic hunger relief charity in which Ozarks Food Harvest is a member—recently stated that most economists project that unemployment lags the return of economic stability following a recession by one to two years, meaning that the incredible strain on the nation's charitable food assistance network is not likely to dissipate any time in the foreseeable future.

Feeding America released a new survey on Sept. 14 illustrating the profound effect the economic downturn and continuing rise in unemployment is having on food banks and their ability to feed millions of Americans living at risk of hunger. The increase is nearly universal, according to the recently released survey—99 percent of all participating food banks reported a significant increase in requests for food assistance over the past year; Missouri is listed as one of the hardest hit states.

Ozarks Food Harvest dedicated its larger, more efficient distribution center on Sept. 15, 2009. It is the only food bank in southwest Missouri and serves more than 350 hunger relief organizations, reaching more than 55,000 people each month in 29 Ozarks counties. OFH distributed seven million pounds of food during its last fiscal year—the highest distribution in The Food Bank's 25-year history—made possible due to its network of charities and direct-relief programs such as the Weekend Backpack Program™, Kids Cafe® and the Mobile Food Pantry™ program. Learn more at ozarksfoodharvest.org.

For details regarding next week's press conference, please call (417) 865-3411 or contact [Lindsey Neddenriep](#).

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Please find original advisory distributed Friday, September 18, 2009 here:

http://www.ozarksfoodharvest.org/OFHStrategicInitiativesAnnoucement_PressAdvisory.pdf

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